UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Rethinking the role of mediation in Africa: A decolonial feminist analysis of the Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022)

By

Kgomotso Komane

A mini-dissertation in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Diplomatic Studies

in the

Department of Political Sciences

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: **Prof. Cori Wielenga**

Co-Supervisor: **Ms. Nontando Ndhlovu**

October 2022

ABSTRACT

Mediation processes have witnessed low levels of participation of women. Existing literature ascribes this to prevailing patriarchal environments, cultural norms and gender stereotypes, women's victimhood in conflict and various other factors. Several structures and policies have been established to redress the low participation of women in mediation. However, what remains evident is that despite the creation of and existence of extensive policy frameworks aimed at increasing the participation of women in mediation, women's marginalisation persists. This research study uses a decolonial feminist analysis to reveal that there are potential commitments that are overlooked by these structures and policy frameworks which are evident in the conflation of gender and women in literature and policy documents concerning women, peace, and security.

Gender identities intersect with other identities such as race, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, geographical location et cetera, but this is rarely acknowledged in mediation structures such as the African Peace and Security Architecture and in policies such as the Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022), which is the particular interest of this study. This policy framework, it is argued, adopted a cookie-cutter approach, which hinders the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 because it does not acknowledge gender minorities, intersecting identities, and structural inequalities. The failure to acknowledge this perpetuates and persists, as do the barriers to women's meaningful participation in mediation as well as ensuring an inclusive, holistic approach that takes into account gender minorities and intersecting identities and what contributions they can make to mediation and ultimately to fostering lasting peace.

Keywords: decolonial feminism, peace, security, mediation, SADC, policy frameworks

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Full name of student: Kgomotso Komane

Student number: 16321635

Degree/Qualification: MA Diplomatic Studies

Title of Dissertation: Rethinking the role of mediation in Africa: A Decolonial Feminist analysis of the *Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022)*

I declare that this mini-dissertation, for the degree Master of Arts at the University of Pretoria is my own original work and has not been previously submitted for another degree at a different university. Where secondary resources were utilised, these have been appropriately acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the requirements of the department. I understand what plagiarism is and am I aware of the policy of the University in this regard.

ETHICS STATEMENT

I, Kgomotso Komane have obtained, for this research, the applicable research ethics approval and declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for researchers and the Policy Guidelines for responsible research.

Initials: K. Komane

Date: October 22

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the beginning of my masters journey I have always joked about how my acknowledgements page would be longer than my abstract because of everyone I would have to thank. Little did I know that this would be true. I could have not gotten this far without the help of each and every person mentioned here. I want to start by thanking God for the strength and wisdom to complete this dissertation.

To my entire world, my mother Regan Komane, I appreciate all that you did for me throughout this journey. Thank you for reminding me each day that I am always living in an answered prayer. To my father Schneider Komane, thank you for pushing me to start my masters journey and believing in me throughout. To my amazing sisters Thlokomelo Komane and Lebogang Komane, all I can say is that God knew that I needed you both in my life and I am so honoured to have you as my sisters. Thlokomelo, you are a selfless being and my hope for you is that you realise what a powerhouse you are. Lebogang, you are the epitome of grace and I express great appreciation to you for your sacrifices. To my sweet nephews Ntsako Mathibe-Junior Komane and Jayden Kamogelo Komane that I love so dearly, may this dissertation serve as a reminder as you grow up that you can achieve whatever you set your mind to.

To the love of my life Teboho Mokoena thank you for always believing in me even when I did not believe in myself. You have always been my constant motivation to pursuing my dreams. To my cousin Gift Shikwambani, thank you for being my cheerleader. To my friends and family, thank you for your love and persistent and invaluable support that I will always be indebted to.

To my supervisor Nontando Ndhlovu, thank you for pushing me to find my own voice and to embrace it within literature and I appreciate your kind words that would encourage me to never give up. To my supervisor Prof Cori Wielenga, no words can even begin to express my gratitude to you. However, I will say thank you, thank you for your guidance, support, and patience throughout this dissertation. More than anything, it was a privilege to be guided by you.

To my mother Regan Komane and supervisor Prof Cori Wielenga I dedicate this dissertation to.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGA	African Governance Architecture
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CBO	Community-based organisation/s
HoS	Head/s of State
NAP	National Action Plan
OPDSC	Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation
RAP	Regional Action Plan
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT ii

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY iii

ETHICS STATEMENT iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS v

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS vi

CHAPTER ONE 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Research Problem 4

1.3 Research Question 5

1.4 Research Objectives 5

1.5 Research Aim 6

1.6 Research Methodology 6

1.6.1 Research Approach and Design 6

1.6.2 Data Collection Method 7

1.6.3 Data Analysis 7

1.6.4 Data Analysis Process 8

1.6.5 Coding of SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) 9

1.6.6 Ethical Considerations 9

1.6.7 Limitations of the Study 9

1.7 Chapter Outline 10

1.8 Conclusion 10

CHAPTER TWO 11

DECOLONIAL FEMINISM IN MEDIATION 11

2.1 Introduction 11

2.2 Eurocentric World 12

2.2.1 Eurocentrism 12

2.2.2 Colonialism 13

2.2.3 Modernity 14

2.3. The Notion of Coloniality 16

2.4. Coloniality of Power 17

2.4.1 Control of Economy 18

2.4.2 Control of Authority 18

2.4.3 Control of Knowledge and Subjectivity 20

2.4.4 Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa 21
2.5 Mediation 23
2.5.1 Mediation in Africa 26
2.6 A Shift Toward Decolonial Thinking 30
2.6.1 Decolonial Peace 33
2.6.2 Decolonial Mediation 35
2.7 Feminism 36
2.8 Control of Gender and Sexuality 41
2.9 Decolonial Feminism 43
2.9.1 A Decolonial Feminist Perspective in Mediation 47
2.10 Conclusion 48
CHAPTER THREE 50
WOMEN AND MEDIATION IN AFRICA 50
3.1 Introduction 50
3.2 Women, Peace and Security: A Framing Overview 53
3.3 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 59
3.4 Women and Mediation under the African Union 62
3.4.1 Women in Mediation: Mediation Tracks 67
3.5 The Southern African Development Community 69
3.5.1 SADC Mediation 71
3.5.2 Southern African Women in Mediation 71
3.5.3 SADC Mediation Policies for Women 73
3.6 A Decolonial Feminist Analysis 74
3.7 Conclusion 82
CHAPTER FOUR 84
A DECOLONIAL FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY REGIONAL STRATEGY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (2018-2022) 84
4.1 Introduction 84
4.2 Assigned Codes and Patterned Observations 85
4.2.1 Patterned Observation 1: Inclusion 86
4.2.2 Patterned Observation 2: Participation 88
4.2.3 Patterned Observation 3: Identity 90
4.2.4 Patterned Observation 4: Representation 91
4.3 A Decolonial Feminist Analysis 92
4.4 Conclusion 99
CHAPTER FIVE 101

CONCLUSION: RESEARCH SUMMARY AND MAJOR FINDINGS 101

5.1 Introduction 101

5.2 The Research Summary 101

5.3 Major Findings 102

5.3.1 Objective 1: To understand how women engaged in mediation processes in Africa 102

5.3.2 Objective 2: To identify the challenges that have impeded the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) 103

5.3.3 Objective 3: To examine the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on Women, Peace and Security using a decolonial feminist analysis 103

5.4 Conclusions and Recommendations 103

6. Bibliography 106

List of Tables

Table 4.2 i: Patterned Observations in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) 85

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Existing literature reveals the pattern that there are low levels of participation of women in mediation, particularly in Track I mediation, in Africa. Mediation is widely considered to be a non-coercive and voluntary form of conflict management by a third party. Jones (2000:649) defines mediation as a structured, collaborative process that is practiced by an accepted, impartial and neutral third party by the conflict parties who have no authoritative decision-making power to assist disputing parties in voluntarily reaching their own mutually acceptable settlement of the issues in dispute. Mediation has different approaches and the particular strand that this study will focus on is mediation tracks. These are Track I,II,III and recently 1.5. Track I is official, state-to-state, formal negotiations carried out by Heads of States (HoS), diplomats, and high-level government officials focused on decision-making. Track II is non-official but influential (religious leaders and academics engage in unofficial dialogue with non-state actors such as private individuals). Track II is linked to decision-makers (official peace process) and serves to compliment Track I negotiations. Track III focuses on grassroot and civil society advocacy. Track I is regarded as formal peace processes whereas Track II and III are considered as informal peace processes. Recently, a new Track was formed - Track 1.5, it refers to processes involving both Track I and II or individual actors in their own capacity.

Scholars in mediation contend that despite ample efforts to create policies that will ensure an increase in the number of women participating in mediation processes, particularly at Track I mediation, by the international community through the United Nations (UN), regional institutions such as the African Union (AU), as well as sub-regional institutions such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), implementation falls short of success, with only 2.4% of chief mediators being women between 1992 and 2011 (UN Women 2012:3; O'Reilly *et al*. 2015; Limo 2018; Sugh & Ikwuba 2017; Connell 2005; Jaiyeola & Isaac 2020:5). There has not been much improvement on this in subsequent years as recent figures show that the increase of women as chief mediators only rose to 6% by 2019 (UN Women 2022b).

This has been attributed to, amongst other things, the prevailing patriarchal environment of African and global societies and organisations, the absence of trained women mediators, non-implementation of international treaties focused on increasing the participation of women in mediation and the selection criteria of mediators that favours seasoned diplomats, presidents or former HoS. It is worth mentioning that there are generally few women HoS in Africa such as the current president of Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan and the current president of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde. Although some of the literature acknowledges the need for a feminist approach that will dissect the continuous exclusion of women in mediation, in particular, Track I mediation, and lead to the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), there is little attention given to the perpetual and subliminal systems of coloniality that linger in the political, social, and economic structures of Africa as well as the modus operandi of the mediation processes, which arguably justifies the continuous failure in mediation attempts within the continent.

This study examined the Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022) - SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) henceforth - as an instrument in ensuring the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 in efforts to accommodate the contribution of women in mediation in Africa. It is important to state from the onset that during the duration of this study, the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) was extended to 2030 and is referred to as the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2030). However, this study will refer to the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) because the current policy document used in this study has not been updated to the new extension.

This study uses a decolonial feminist perspective to analyse the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022). The following central research question served as a guide for the study: How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325? Moreover, in order to interrogate the continuous exclusion of women in mediation, despite the existing policy frameworks, the central research objective of this study was to examine the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) commitments in advancing women's contribution in mediation using a decolonial feminist perspective in efforts to understand the limited role women play in mediation processes in Africa.

This study uses a policy analysis of UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022). This study employed a qualitative approach and the theoretical framework of a decolonial feminist lens was used to explore the research problem. Decolonial feminism is a theory that deconstructs Western gender concepts that are taken as the norm and seeks to recover indigenous perspectives of gender amongst other things (Lugones 2010). Decolonial feminism challenges the colonial, racial, gender, class and sexuality blindness of these policy frameworks and structures. Moreover, mediation processes are male-dominated, militaristic and are adopted from Euro-North American notions - the assumption that European and North American thoughts, views and experiences are universal. This is evident in the manifestation of coloniality of power found in mediation. Ndlovu-Gatsheni summarises that coloniality of power articulates the persistence of colonial mentalities, psychologies, and worldviews into the so-called "postcolonial era" and draws attention to the social hierarchical relationships of exploitation and dominance between Euro-Americans and Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:8). In other words, coloniality of power is the persistence of colonial legacies, realities, patterns, and forms of knowledge found in colonised geographies – such as Africa - after the end of colonialism.

Decolonial feminism acknowledges the continuity of colonial and sexist patterns as well as other forms of inequalities in the policies and structures of mediation that remain as barriers to women's meaningful participation. Therefore, decolonial feminism addresses issues of colonial structures, patriarchal societies, capitalist systems and heteronormative gender dynamics. This paradigm understands the intersection of racial and gender oppression with other forms of oppression that are overlooked in existing policy and normative frameworks. The significance of decolonial feminism as a theoretical framework is that it ascertains gender as a colonial construct. Thus, within mediation practice, decolonial feminism addresses why the representation of women in mediation "remains persistently low despite normative commitments made to increase women's roles in peace and security" (Turner 2017:2). It is against this backdrop that this study employs decolonial feminism to examine how the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Using a decolonial feminist lens in research might help to contribute to a process of knowledge production that will serve marginalized populations if it embraces varied locales and epistemes.

In chapter two, the study uses literature to define and extensively explain the significance of a decolonial feminist theoretical framework. The chapter highlights how the rest of the world continues to operate under Euro-North American-centric modernity. Euro-North American-centric modernity refers to intellectual thought that centres European and North American histories, experiences and knowledge. Grosfoguel (2011) characterised Euro-North American-centric modernity as a "racially hierarchised, patriarchal, sexist, Christian-centric, heteronormative, capitalist, military, colonial, imperial, and modern form of civilisation". In chapter three, the study uses literature on Women, Peace and Security as well as existing policy frameworks within the AU and SADC and the UNSCR 1325 to provide an overview of how women have engaged in mediation processes. The study foregrounds the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies and structures on women in mediation to show the implications of establishing policies and structures that are a reflection of Euro-North American-centric worldviews. In chapter four, the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) is critically analysed through a decolonial feminist perspective. Chapter five concludes the mini-dissertation by providing a summary of the mini-dissertation and research findings.

1.2 Research Problem

The possibility for the contribution of women in mediation in Africa has witnessed much-increased support to include women in mediation processes through the formation of structures such as the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and policies such as the UNSCR 1325. However, such support has been limited in terms of time and scope (limited to addressing sexual violence, for example, but not the substantive involvement of women as mediators). Moreover, there is a gap in providing the necessary mechanisms, training, as well as resources for women mediators in Africa especially within the frameworks that were created to address such gaps, particularly, the AGA and APSA.

There is an extensive set of policies and commitments established to emphasize the inclusion of women in mediation such as the UNSCR 1325, however, their inclusion has been confined within structures such as the APSA and the AGA that limit the scope of their participation. Although the AU and its regional actors have created action plans to address these limitations, these action plans tend to focus on increasing the participation of women for the purpose of addressing 'women' issues such as tackling matters of sexual violence. Thus, this study employs a decolonial feminist analysis to question the continuous poor inclusion of women in

mediation and to address the constant poor implementation of existing policies, in particular, the study uses decolonial feminism to examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

1.3 Research Question

Despite the existence of policy frameworks and action plans to implement those policy frameworks, women continue to be excluded from mediation processes. Part of the reason for this is that the UNSCR 1325 and, as a result, SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) do not reflect the realities of women on the ground in Africa. The study asks the following central research question: How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325?

The research seeks to answer the following sub-questions:

- How has coloniality of power manifested in mediation processes in Africa?
- What attempts have been made to translate the UNSCR 1325 into action through AU policy frameworks and SADC policies?
- Why is decolonial feminism suitable to examine the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) and the UNSCR 1325?

1.4 Research Objectives

The central research objective for this study is: To examine the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) commitments in advancing women's contribution in mediation using a decolonial feminist perspective. The study specific objectives are:

- To understand how women engaged in mediation processes in Africa
- To identify the challenges that have impeded the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022)
- To examine the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on Women, Peace and Security using a decolonial feminist analysis

1.5 Research Aim

Using the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) as a case study, this research seeks to undertake a policy analysis of the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) to understand the challenges that interfered with the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 through a decolonial feminist lens. The assumption on which this study is based is that there are potential commitments such as prioritising intersecting identities (gender, sexual orientation, class) that are overlooked by the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) which fragments the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on the ground. A decolonial feminist lens is crucial as it helps identify the overlooked potential commitments by challenging the colonial/gender/class/sexuality oppression.

1.6 Research Methodology

This section outlines the research methodology. It describes the research process by providing the method that was adopted for the study. The section includes the research approach and design, data collection method, the research data analysis, the ethical considerations, and the limitations of the study.

1.6.1 Research Approach and Design

To meet the research objectives, this study employed a qualitative research design. A significant feature of a qualitative research design is that it is particularly focused on the perspectives of social actors and the ways in which those individuals interpret their social world (Blaikie 2010:215). Using a qualitative research design allows for the utilisation of feminist theory which "draws on the lived experience of women and their communities" and focusing on a quantitative approach does not lead to "transformative change, which is the core principle of feminist peace" (Kezie-Nwoha 2020:11). Furthermore, qualitative research "investigates local knowledge and understanding of a given programme, people's experiences, meanings, relationships, social processes and contextual factors that marginalize a group of people" (Leedy and Ormrod 2001 cited in Mohajan 2018:23). It is within this context that a decolonial feminist lens will be explored. Qualitative research is a "form of social action that stresses the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences to understand the social reality of individuals" (Mohajan 2018:24). Through the use of extant literature found in secondary sources, the use of qualitative research for this study reinforces an understanding of the continuous exclusion of women in mediation despite existing policy and normative

frameworks. It goes beyond the surface to get an understanding of what decolonial feminism offers.

A qualitative research design has many advantages, such as viewing the area of interest in the natural setting (real world); focusing on the complexities of the phenomena; and recognizing that the issues are multidimensional and have multiple layers. It also aims to fill in the gaps of the existing knowledge of that phenomenon which, in the context of this study, provides an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of particular policies and practices in existing knowledge (Leeds & Ormrod, 2015:253). Moreover, qualitative research provides the researcher with an opportunity to identify the issues in the study they seek to undertake.

1.6.2 Data Collection Method

A desktop study was undertaken and data was sourced from secondary sources such as articles, books, and policy documents including UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks such as AU Gender Policy (2009), AU Agenda 2063 as well as SADC policies to review literature that answers the research question(s) and accomplishes the research objectives(s), including the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) which acts as an overarching framework for SADC to mainstream gender into SADC's "peace and security mechanisms and processes in order to address the specific challenges experienced by women" (SADC 2018:1).

1.6.3 Data Analysis

This study employed a qualitative document and content analysis to analyse secondary sources. A qualitative document analysis refers to the process of reviewing digital and printed documents to provide meaning around a topic and is "often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation" (Bowen 2009:28). A document analysis is synthesised throughout the chapters of this study. Documents are frequent and come in a number of formats, making them a very accessible and dependable data source. According to Bowen (2009:31), documents are also fixed data sources, which means they may be read and reviewed several times without being unchanged by the researcher's influence or the research process. According to Berelson (1952), the use of documents used frequently necessitates the use of a specialist analytic technique known as content analysis. Content analysis is a form of a document analysis strategy that examines qualitative data systematically and identifies patterns (Mayring 2000; Schreier 2012). The relevance of this approach is to help identify meaningful texts and ensure the research is critical and comprehensive respectively.

Moreover, qualitative content analysis is the study of existing literature which enables the researcher to examine previously recorded literature and therefore, the results of the study will be present in terms of themes (Kohlbacher 2006). Kyngäs (2020) defines content analysis as a research method for studying and/or retrieving meaningful information from documents. Any kind of written communication, such as textbooks, novels, newspapers, and so on, can be used as a source for content analysis. It is more broadly defined as a method of describing and analysing the objects of a community or social group (Marshall and Rossman 1995; Eisner 1991). Content analysis is used in this study because documents are controllable and practical resources, and document analysis is an efficient and successful means of acquiring data. The purpose of content analysis is to provide information and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Downe-Wamboldt 1992:314). The significance of content analysis is that it allows researchers to analyse huge amounts of data in an orderly manner. It also enables them to ascertain and define the focus of individual, group, institutional or social attention (Weber 1990).

1.6.4 Data Analysis Process

The data analysis process concerns the collection of steps required to make sense of the available data. Using a qualitative content analysis is suitable for my central research question "How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325?" because the research question within a qualitative content analysis specifies what to analyse and what to create in a data analysis process (Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Schreier 2012). In particular, this study will employ a deductive approach to content analysis. In a deductive analysis data are analysed according to an existing framework (Patton 2002: 1286). Kibiswa (2019:2062-2066) offers a three-phase and eight-step schema. 'Phase One: Early Steps of Analysis or the Preparation Phase' includes the first three steps- (i) Developing the study's frame and operational definitions; (ii) Determining the unit of analysis and sampling materials to be analysed; (iii) Getting a sense of data, which have been completed as I repeatedly read and actively engaged in literature to identify patterns. 'Phase Two: In-Depth Steps of Analysis or the Data Analysis Phase' includes the second set of the next three steps (iv) Data coding and organising; (v) Making connections, interpreting them, and drawing conclusions; (vi) Verifying interpretations plausibility and ensuring trustworthiness which will be completed in chapter four. 'Phase Three: Reporting the Analysis Process and Resultsor the Final Phase' includes the last two

steps (vii) Making an appropriate outline for a detailed presentation; (viii) Thick description of the research history and findings which will be completed in chapter five.

1.6.5 Coding of SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022)

The SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) is a policy framework that seeks to operationalise the Women, Peace and Security commitments (in particular the UNSCR 1325) amongst others. To critically analyse the Regional Strategy and answer the research question(s) and research objective (s) this study employs coding. Coding is just one way of analysing qualitative data out of many other ways (Saldaña 2013). *Descriptive Coding* Descriptive coding condenses the main idea of a section of qualitative data into a word or phrase, most frequently as a noun. To clarify, Tesch (1990:119) differentiates that "it is important that these [codes] are identifications of the topic, not abbreviations of the content. The topic is what is talked or written about. The content is the substance of the message". *Evaluation coding* is the process of applying (mainly) non-quantitative codes to qualitative data to make determinations on the value, importance, or merit of policies or programs (Rallis & Rossman 2003:492). Evaluation data describe, compare, and predict, according to Rallis and Rossman (2003). The primary focus of description is on patterned observations of qualities-relevant characteristics and features. Comparison investigates how the program compares to a reference point or ideal. If change is necessary, prediction offers suggestions on how it might be achieved. This research study will use both Descriptive Coding and Evaluation coding to analyse the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022), this will allow for the patterned observations to be identified.

1.6.6 Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to anti-plagiarism regulations and operates within the ethical research guidelines established by the University of Pretoria. The sources of information are open to the public and do not require any special permission to access. The study will use material from sources that are freely available in the public domain via websites, such as resources that may be obtained and lawfully accessed via the internet, university libraries, and bookstores, therefore reducing ethical problems. The sources used will be properly cited and acknowledged.

1.6.7 Limitations of the Study

The study was only limited to policy frameworks, namely, UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and importantly the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) due to the

word count requirements and time constraints. Interviews with women in mediation and policymakers who are advocating for the inclusion of women in mediation could have been conducted in this study to provide a more in-depth analysis as the interviews would have offered a more comprehensive insight.

1.7 Chapter Outline

This mini-dissertation is organised into five chapters. Chapter one provided an overview of the study and outlined the research problem, research questions, aim, objectives, and methodology of the study. Chapter two will serve as the 'Literature Review' and 'Theoretical Framework' which will highlight existing literature related to the study and identify a gap that needs to be addressed. It will not only highlight how the leading voices are typically white Western men in literature that assume that the Western experiences and understandings of mediation processes apply universally but demonstrate that the world operates on systems that perpetuate racial, gender, class, and sexuality oppression. Therefore, this chapter will introduce decolonial feminism as a theoretical framework. Chapter three examines existing policy frameworks and structures, particularly, the UNSCR 1325, AU Policy Frameworks and SADC policies and structures for women in mediation. Chapter 4 will critically analyse the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) through a decolonial feminist lens. Chapter five concludes the mini-dissertation by providing a summary of the mini-dissertation and research findings.

1.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter gave a summary of the mini-dissertation structure. It outlined how the mini-dissertation is guided by the following research question: How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325? This chapter has presented the research questions and objectives, aim as well as the methodology. This study will be using the theoretical framework of decolonial feminism. Therefore, this chapter has shown that the mini-dissertation will illustrate that to ensure for meaningful contribution of women in mediation, existing policy frameworks and structures need to incorporate a decolonial feminist lens.

CHAPTER TWO

DECOLONIAL FEMINISM IN MEDIATION

2.1 Introduction

How the rest of the world comes to understand and experience itself is confined within Eurocentric colonial global power structures. This was achieved by colonial conquests that characterise the Eurocentric world such as the Spanish colonial order of Latin America (Grosfoguel 2000:355), European colonial order of Asia and North America (Kissinger 2014:5), and the British colonial order of the entire world (Quijano 2000:533; Grosfoguel 2000:360). What is peculiar is that Africa suffered more brutal and violent attacks by European civilisations compared to other regions that were colonised. As Nyere (2020:29) stipulates, "the most recent and direct aspect of the African experience is the colonisation of Africa by Europe. As a result, colonialism is to be regarded as a phenomenon that uniquely afflicted Africa". As a result, Africa is consumed by Euro-North American ways of knowing and doing. This is evident in Africa's adoption of international law, Christian thought, culture, and European languages (French, Portuguese, and English). Albeit trying to free itself from the shackles of colonialism, it goes without saying what implications colonialism would have on the way Africa 'does' peace. It is therefore crucial to bring to the fore the literature that foregrounds and critiques Euro-North American centric systems and knowledge production to cultivate a pathway that allows mediation to shy away from lingering colonial patterns such as international law and policies like the UNSCR 1325.

The theoretical lens of decolonial feminism is critical for this study's analysis of women's role in mediation because it aids in understanding the global systems and structures that are shaped in a colonial and patriarchal order on mediation. The significance of decolonial feminism as a theoretical framework is that it ascertains gender as a colonial construct. Thus, within mediation practice, decolonial feminism addresses why the representation of women in mediation "remains persistently low despite normative commitments made to increase women's roles in peace and security" (Turner 2017:2). It is against this backdrop that this study employs decolonial feminism to examine how the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325. This will be addressed in chapter four whilst chapter two foregrounds how coloniality of power has manifested in mediation processes in Africa.

This chapter provides the literature review and theoretical framework for the study. This chapter is divided into several sections. The first three sections conceptualise coloniality within Africa. This is followed by foregrounding mediation in the fourth section whilst highlighting that coloniality of power finds full expression in Africa and contributes to the failure of mediation in Africa. The fifth and sixth sections provide the theoretical framework decolonial feminism and situates it within mediation.

2.2 Eurocentric World

This section conceptualises the Eurocentric World through a discussion of eurocentrism, colonialism, and modernity.

2.2.1 Eurocentrism

Throughout history the narrative of the 'rise of the West' with a 'triumphalist teleology' - the idea that the West is victorious over the rest of the world and thus is granted the power to assert dominance over the rest of the world - skewed our understanding of the world because it focused exclusively on the West as the origin key actors for expansion and foundations of moral and political progress and implied that the rest of the world is unimportant. This allowed Europe to position itself as the centre of the world by occupying a 'god eye view' on the world, a position previously thought to be occupied by God (Zondi 2018:11; Nyere 2020:32). In this, it established itself as the focus of all inquiry as well as the repository of all knowledge. In so doing, it neglected the reality of being only one of the many hierarchies and civilisations in the world (Nyere 2020: 32). The European narrative silenced voices, experiences, histories that did not reflect itself. As a result, Eurocentrism emerged. Eurocentrism is the interpretation of non-European histories and cultures by Europeans whilst positing European history and culture as the 'norm'. According to the late Egyptian-French scholar Samir Amin, Eurocentrism is a modern construct involved in a set of preconceived ideas and ways of thinking by the West about the rest of the world (Amin 1989:177). This line of thought has ramifications on how the world understands concepts such as peace or practices such as mediation. In accordance with the research question(s), it will be made clear that Eurocentrism is a 'binary and dualist perspective' on knowledge that bestowed Europeans the right to analyse the rest of the world (Quijano 2000:542). A binary and dualist perspective pairs contrasted opposites of good/bad This means Eurocentric understandings of the world revolve around subjects/subjectivities, beings/non-beings.

In this, Eurocentrism centred itself as the doyen of scientific enquiry and knowledge, dismissing any other forms of knowledge (Nyere 2020:32). Moreover, the elements of Eurocentrism are rooted in the idea that the history of human civilization began in Europe and lies in the view of racial (differences) hierarchy between Europeans and non-Europeans (Quijano 2000:542). To situate Eurocentrism within the context of this study is to demonstrate how Eurocentric binary perspectives prevail. Eurocentrism is reflected in mediation in various ways, the international community (mostly European and North American countries) centred themselves as doyens of mediation studies, practitioners of mediation on the African continent capable of resolving the continents conflicts through their UN-led mediation efforts, appointment of mediators, funding and training, and other intervention methods which will be discussed in this chapter.

2.2.2 Colonialism

There are various understandings of colonialism as a configuration of power, a specific form of oppression, a form of domination and exploitation, a force that established the European empire within and outside Europe, a system of exclusions (Nyere 2020: 33; Taiwo 1993: 895). Cesaire understood colonialism as 'disruptive', 'decivilising', dehumanising, exploitative, racist, violent, brutal, covetous, and 'thingifying' system (Cesaire 2000). Colonialism is European settlement that exercised political dominion, economic exploitation and violent dispossession over the Americas, Australia, Asia, and Africa. Without engaging in large-scale historical and geographical explanations of colonialism, Ndlovu-Gatsheni explained colonialism in Africa as follows:

> Colonialism is a historical process that culminated in the invasion, conquest, and direct administration of Africa by states like Spain, Portugal, Britain, and France for purposes of enhancing their prestige as empires, for exploitation of natural and human resources and export of excess population, for the benefit of the empire. Colonialism as a historical process came to an end in the post-1945 period that witnessed the withdrawal of direct colonial administrations and with those that were reluctant to do so facing confrontation from national liberation movements
>
> (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:13)

Moreover, a cornerstone of colonialism is race. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:11) argued that race, as an organising concept that hierarchised human beings according to ideas and binaries of 'primitive vs. civilised' and 'developed vs. underdeveloped', lies at the heart of colonialism. This amplified Zondi's (2013) argument that Europeans assume the position of superiority to

tower over beings by reducing them to commanded sub-beings that should follow instructions laid out by Europe. In this, subjects and subjectivities were created under the guise of the philosophy of civilization and developing the world. As a result, the organisation of society would materialise subjects and subjectivities of European clone (Mignolo & Walsh 2018:119). Subsequently, Quijano asserted that the spread of European colonialism and the categorisation of geocultural identities, such as European, Indian, and African, forced on the rest of the world, "permeated every area of social existence and it constitutes the most effective form of material and inter-subjective social domination" (Quijano, 2001:1).

The agency of the colonised was not the focus of colonialism. In fact, Fanon's assertion that "[i]t is the colonist who constructed and continues to fabricate the colonised subject" finds expression in this sense (Fanon 1961:2). African scholars like Achebe, Mazrui, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Ndlovu-Gatsheni argue that because colonialism invades a people's mental universe, destabilising them from what they previously knew into learning what colonialism has brought in, colonialism as a power structure continues as a metaphysical process and as an epistemic project. It then commits "crimes" like epistemicide (killing and displacing pre-existing knowledges), linguicide (killing and displacing of people's languages and imposing European languages), and culturecide (killing and replacing the cultures of a people) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010: 283). Mazrui's conclusion was that colonialism had an epic impact on Africa and Africans to the range that: "What Africa knows about itself, what different parts of Africa know about each other, have been profoundly influenced by the West" (Mazrui 1990).

2.2.3 Modernity

Modernity refers to a set of beliefs that fundamentally influences the nature of the political, social, economic and spiritual spheres. In this, Europe created a 'template' of modernity and used it to compare to the rest of the world (Hunt 2014: 109). This 'template' classified Europe as the standard and the 'other' as always lagging or catching up. According to Quijano (2000:543), Europeans imagined themselves as exclusive creators of that modernity. This European modernity distorted historical writings especially of the places outside Europe. This is what Chakrabarty referred to as a 'master narrative' in which Europe was able to position histories of the rest of the world as variations of European history (Chakrabarty 1992:1). This 'master' narrative allowed Europe to narrate itself as the saviour of the rest of the world and of Africa where conflict is deeply rooted and violence is common. However, modernity "is clouded with, and equally credited for, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' wars and

violence" (Nyere 2020:44). Mamdani (2004:3) argues that the "world wars and colonial conquests; civil wars, revolutions and counterrevolutions" attest to that.
Moreover, Kissinger demonstrates the centrality of Europe to modernity and contends that "Europe loomed as a geographic designation, as an expression of Christianity ... centre of enlightenment of a community of the educated and of modernity" (Kissinger 2014: 11). Therefore, Europe claimed itself as the centre of civilisation, knowledge and geo-political power (Nyere 2020). As a geo-political power, Europe assumed the zone of being and the rest of the world was labelled as the zone of non-being. African scholars such as Chinua Achebe (1977; 1998) challenge the very idea of Africa as a mere 'geographical expression' as propagated by the anthropologist Melville Herskovits. Achebe's (1977; 1998) point is that Africa is one with its people, dismissing Eurocentric arrogance of using Africa as a laboratory of their exotic development theories.

Where modernity reaffirms Europe's position as the centre of the world (Kusnierkiewicz 2019), transmodernity is a notion introduced and explored by Argentine Philosopher Enrique Dussel (1977) who sought to challenge postmodernity and respond from perspectives of their own experiences "from another place another location". Dussel indicated "the possibility of a non-eurocentric and critical dialogue alterity, one that fully enables 'the negation of the negation' to which the subaltern others have been subjected, and one that does not see critical discourse as intrinsically European" (Escobar 2010: 41). Moreover, Mignolo (2010: 12) points out that transmodernity:

> …introduces a horizon to imagine global futures: modernity can no longer be superseded within the history of Europe itself, either by postmodernity or altermodernity; in that regard, asserts and reclaims what has been denied to the non-European world: their capacity to think, to govern themselves, to prosper without the guidance of modern, post-modern or alter-modern agents and institutions
>
> (Mignolo 2010: 2).

Like transmodernity, coloniality contributes to a non-Eurocentric critique to Eurocentrism (Mignolo 2010: 12). The notion of coloniality condensed in modernity views Europe, compared to the rest of the world, as dramatically superior in humanity, advancements, civilisations, and development (Fasakin 2021: 903-904; Achebe 1977:783).

2.3. The Notion of Coloniality

The notion of coloniality interrelates the legacies of European colonialism. How Eurocentrism came to birth coloniality stems from the very notion that pervades Europeans superiority over the rest of the world today. Coloniality, as argued by Fasakin (2021: 903), "is responsible for the acquisition and possession of power to dominate, control and exploit the people of the world as carefully schemed by" Europe over the rest of the world. There are various definitions of what 'coloniality' is, with leading voices in defining coloniality emerging from scholars from the Global South such as Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2007: 170) who described coloniality as the continuation of colonialism and current form of domination in the world. This was echoed by Grosfoguel (2011:14), who explained coloniality as "the continuity of colonial forms of domination after the end of colonial administrations, produced by colonial cultures and structures in the [Capitalist/ Patriarchal Western-centric/ Christian-centric] modern/colonial world-system" that should not be reduced to the presence or absence of colonial administrations. Quijano (1998:11) uses the concept of coloniality rather than colonialism to highlight the historical continuities between the colonial and so-called "post-colonial" eras. In addition, Quijano uses coloniality to indicate that "colonial power relations are not limited to the economic-political and legal-administrative domains of peripheral centres, but also have an epistemic, or cultural, dimension" (Quijano 1998:19). For Grosfoguel (2011:14), the concept of coloniality is connected to the global multifaceted system of control and domination designed to succeed direct European colonialism in non-Western contexts.

This aligned with Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:11), who outlined that coloniality existed for centuries as a recurrent pattern of global imperial designs. Conforming to this, Maldonado-Torres maintained that the end of colonialism did not signify the end of coloniality because coloniality outlives colonialism. This is evident in, amongst other things, cultural patterns, the notion of self, common sense, and the way of everyday life (Maldonado-Torress 2007:243). This signifies that even with the end of colonialism, people outside of the west continue to live under European-American exploitation and domination even in the most basic ways through basic components of power. Nyere argues "[i]n the same fashion as modernity outlived the modern era, coloniality outlived colonialism as it produced, among other things, patterns of thought, being, culture epistemology and consciousness modelled on European thought and standard" (Nyere 2020:47). Notably, this is the shift from 'global colonialism' to 'global coloniality', where non-Europeans continue to be subject to crude Euro-American definitions,

exploitation, and dominance while being governed by a postcolonial system that is similar to colonial rule (Fasakin 2021: 906). This is a manifestation of the coloniality of power.

2.4. Coloniality of Power

The notion of coloniality of power emerged from Latin American scholars who aimed to "construct a decolonial thinking that refracted and transcended the present problematic postcolonial neo-colonised world underpinned by Western epistemologies of domination and exploitation" (Quijano 2007). Quijano (1991, 1993, 1998) informed and attributed to the notion of coloniality of power and articulated coloniality of power through four levers of coloniality: 'control of the economy', 'control of authority', 'control of gender and sexuality' - which will be explored later in this chapter under decolonial feminism, and 'control of knowledge and subjectivity' (Quoted in, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015:487). Nyere (2020:55) signals that "the patterns that emerged as a result of colonialism and continue to fester and consolidate modern empire and its operations are constitutive of coloniality of power". Many scholars such as Grosfoguel (2002), Georas (2007), Mignolo, (2007) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) drew from Quijano's notion of coloniality of power.

Accordingly, Quijano (1991, 1993, 1998) traced the coloniality of power from the sixteenth century demonstrating the historical point and origination of the global, capitalist, colonial, modern power system that started in the Americas which expanded globally thereafter. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni summarises that with its roots in centuries of European colonial expansion and current manifestations in cultural, social, and political power relations, coloniality of power articulates the persistence of colonial mentalities, psychologies, and worldviews into the so-called 'postcolonial era' and draws attention to the social hierarchical relationships of exploitation and dominance between Euro-Americans and Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:8).

Mignolo and Escobar (2013) go beyond Quijano's understanding of coloniality of power and contend that coloniality of power is not just a question of the Americas for people living in the Americas, but it is the global reach of imperial capitalism. Adding to Quijano, Grosfoguel & Geuros (2000:87) contend coloniality of power "addresses the way social power relations today continue to be organized, constituted, and conditioned by centuries of [Euro-North American] colonial expansion". Without a doubt, colonial conditions that were intended to be 'approximated' internationally to what is now recognised as the modern world order originated

in and were centered in Europe. In other words, Europe's narrow conception of order, which Kissinger called ‘an accident’, took on characteristics that “became the hallmarks of a new system of international order” (Kissinger 2014: 3). The accident that “shaped and prefigured the modern” era of Europe into a framework that is relevant to everyone everywhere is fundamentally where coloniality of power rests (ibid: 4). The configuration of the global power structure is determined by this universally/globally appurtenant structure.

2.4.1 Control of Economy

Europe’s assumption of the ‘centre’ of global culture, knowledge, and being, while positioning the rest of the world as ‘peripheries’, led to economic exploitation through European colonialism. Race is at the heart of European colonialism, and European colonialism employs capitalism as a tool for European colonial dominance over other races. Evidently, the capitalist market-system and European colonialism are inherently connected. Quijano points out “capital’s specific social configuration was geographically and socially concentrated in Europe, and above all, among Europeans in the whole world of capitalism” (Quijano 2000:539). This is evident in the occupation of the Black labour force forcibly imported through the Slave Trade, from Africa to Europe for unwaged or nonpaid labour. Arguably, this move signalled the beginning and legitimatising of slavery and subjugation of the Black race as “slavery was assigned exclusively to the ‘black’ population brought from Africa” (Quijano 2000:539). Europe became the centre of global capitalism that had control of the world market, imposing its colonial dominance over the rest of the world by “incorporating them into its world-system and its specific model of power" (Mignolo 2001:424). Fasakin contends that “through the control over the economy, the coloniality of power enables the global hegemonic model of capitalist power around the world.” (Fasakin 2021: 905). In Africa, the control of the economy prohibited Africa economies from benefitting. As various scholars argue:

> The colonial economy stifled global competition by preventing the colonies from engaging in the production of goods that would compete with manufacturing industries in advanced economies and confined African economies to primary commodities and natural resource exports under the resource extraction model of development.
> (Akyuz & Gore 2001, Easterly 2002, Fofack 2010; Akyeampong & Fofack 2012: 30-31)

2.4.2 Control of Authority

The ecologies of knowledge, being and thinking were afforded to Europeans by Europeans because only the European conception of man as a rational being, capable of thinking and

reasoning was a norm implied in human history, science, theology, and theory, whilst the colonial project reduced the rest of the world to natives, kaffirs, slaves, animals and savages (Zondi 2015). Alluding to this, Kant (1777, 1965, 1948) classified races into four races (white – Europeans; yellow- Asians; black- Africans; red-American Indians), in this he contended that the Asians, Africans and American Indians were incapable of rationality and moral authority because they lacked 'talent' which guarantees rational and moral order and is a 'gift' of nature. The arrangement behind this racial classification is the belief that the skin colour white is superior while the others are inferior in proximity to whiteness. Rationality came with entitlement and rights where the thinking subject is located in the Euro-North American civilisation. As expounded by Nyere "the authority of the Euro-North American-centric modernity is geographically derived from the Western Hemisphere" (Nyere 2020:61).

Rationality necessitates authority because in various disciplines, particularly the social sciences, the forefathers and authority figures were all white cis-gendered men from Europe such as Aristotle, Plato, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, Immanuel Kant, Antony Giddens, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Niccolo Machiavelli and Karl Max. "International Relations [IR] is thought to have its true genesis in the observations of Thucydides in History of Peloponnesian War, Thomas Hobbes in Leviathan and Niccolo Machiavelli in The Prince. It evolved through the development of its key schools of thought that have white men as fathers. The fathers of realism, including Hans Morgenthau [through to] fathers of the English School including Barry Buzan" (Zondi 2018:5). Nyere (2020) contends that while knowledge production appealed to European authority can be viewed as coloniality of knowledge, it is equally coloniality of authority because "the Euro-North American-centric modernity views itself as the only legitimate authority of knowledge and truth, and hence the only legitimate authority to produce knowledge and order other civilisations" (Ramose 2003:5). This is evident in mediation where the international community renders itself capable of meddling in African conflicts.

To further illustrate, Nyere (2020) points out that international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and the creation of Bretton Woods International Financial Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank "are used to camouflage coloniality of power by the Euro-North American-centric civilisation. Which makes these institutions nothing more than representatives of coloniality of authority" (Nyere 2020:61). The IMF and the World Bank are institutions that sustain capitalism and created a set of rules for conflict resolutions. In this, mediation efforts were institutionalised according to the rules of

engagement set out by these institutions. Moreover, this is also evident in peace and security efforts in Africa where the major donors are the UN, former colonial powers, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, European Union countries, and economic groupings like the Group of 8 support the APSA (Klingbiel *et al.* 2008:67). These major donors have their own goals in the APSA that are aligned with their beliefs, for instance, Germany seeks to support the APSA through policy development with the alignment of German values of democracy, rule of law and human rights in peace and security. The APSA plays a central role in mediation efforts in Africa which includes increasing the participation of women in mediation, hence the financial support that APSA receives affects mediations efforts. Moreover, the maintenance of peace and security is enshrined in international law under the United Nations (UN) Charter, which need to be adhered to irrespective of a country's consent. This is a reflection of coloniality of authority and thus the coloniality of power in Africa persists.

2.4.3 Control of Knowledge and Subjectivity

The 'ecologies of knowledge' constructed from experiences of the Global South are marginalised by the tedium 'realism-idealism-constructivism-Marxism' debates, which are inherently born of Western civilisation and its sciences. Because it causes epistemicides and other types of displacement of other voices and modes of knowing, it makes the claim to be universal. The universalist assertions result in epistemicides since other epistemologies must perish for it to survive as the only knowledge. For instance, the declarations of the end of history, ideology, theory, and the 'Great Debates' in International Relations Theory (IRT) typifies what is deeply unjust about the nature of IR as a discipline and its theory. This personifies the imperialism of thinking "as a case of coloniality of knowledge whose implication is to exclude, denigrate, neglect, ignore, subordinate and destroy fundamental diversity of ways of knowing" (Zondi, 2018:14). This supports the need for the restructuring of knowledge 'ends' in IRT, "which is to go beyond the diversity of voices within Eurocentric disciplines, but asks us to contemplate de-centring the Eurocentric story to make possible true epistemic pluriversality" (Zondi, 2018:14).

Who is considered 'human' is embedded in knowledge imperialism because only 'humans' were capable of and can contribute to knowledge production. The conception of 'the human' of Euro-North American modernity inevitably resulted in the 'clash of civilizations' instead of blending/dialogue of civilisations (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015:6). In this, the colonial project denied societies of their humanity. Moreover, the levels of power, knowledge, and being have

a diverse absent dimension in which the human experience is "rooted in colonial ideologies and practices that established a fundamental difference between colonisers and the colonised" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:79). These colonial ideologies deny people from the Global South the very humanity with which to justify such forms of violence as slavery, colonial conquest, dispossession, imprisonment, rape, shooting, and killing. Colonisers weaponised violence to keep the colonised in a subordinate position, forcing them to endure all forms of exploitation and abuses (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:128). As Ndlovu-Gatsheni continually emphasizes this includes intellectual knowledge. The African subject was and continues to be represented as without substance, being, soul, history, writing, rationality, etc., (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013:80). This is born from the Cartesian paradigm of humanity which "permits racism, genocides, wanton violence, suppression and exploitation of one set of human beings by others based on embedded ideas of superiority and inferiority underpinned imperialism, colonialism, coloniality of power and the dominance concept of humanity/humanism in the age of globalization" (Zondi 2015:1).

African scholars such as Chinua Achebe challenge the very idea of humanity according to Eurocentrism. Achebe's point is that Africa is one with its people, dismissing Eurocentrism arrogance of using Africa as a laboratory of their exotic development theories. He argues "[i]f the philosophical dictum of Descartes—I think, therefore I am—represents a European individualistic ideal, the Bantu declaration—*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a human is a human because of other humans)— represents an African communal aspiration" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015:7). No person or group can be human alone. Just like Achebe, Mazrui (1990) underscored the uniqueness of the humanistic mindset of African people. He explained how Africanness as 'sentiment' of collective African common identity emerged within a colonial context of a paradigm of difference in which being African was designated as sign of 'Otherness' and how colonial practices of domination, exploitation and discrimination provoked an awareness/consciousness of being African.

2.4.4 Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa

Many African states gained independence between 1945 and 1960 through the process of decolonisation which Zeleza (2003:vi) called the "proudest moment" of African nationalism. This was regarded as the triumph of black liberatory nationalism over white exploitative and oppressive colonialism. Decolonisation was used to encompass being liberated and/or emancipated as a singular condition of being. According to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2009),

decolonisation is rendered as a process of 're-membering' as opposed to colonialism that instituted 'dismemberment of Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 14). Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1993) introduced the idea of 'moving the centre.' Moving the centre entailed shifting the base from its narrow focus on Europe to 'a multiplicity of centres'. However, as Fasakin articulates that because colonial arrangements that were institutionalised continue to exist unimpaired in postcolonial Africa, there is no 'fundamental transformation' from colonialism to postcoloniality (Fasakin 2021:906). Therefore, in Africa, coloniality of power finds full expression. The coloniality of power manifested a by-product that afforded new actors such as China to continue to exert influence albeit without any military force (Fasakin 2021). This is what Byekwaso referred to as 'subtle imperialism' in which both Euro-North-American powers and new powers like China use market forces through commercialisation of the economy to influence African economic policies (Fasakin 2021: 907-908). Many African countries are enmeshed in the coloniality of power that structures and continues to sway African development, politics, and governance, which is a testament to the persistence of the colonial predicament in postcolonial Africa. Notably, "the coloniality of power makes many countries in Africa perpetually dependent on external powers and limits their people's agency and freedom to develop independent action – or an African alternative –but also makes it impossible to blame anyone but Africans for lacking the initiative to develop" (Fasakin 2021: 908).

Following the colonial legacies, the end of the Cold War, the process of decolonisation that manifested itself through conflicts, recurrent violence and instabilities that are entrenched on the African continent, Africa continues to struggle to free itself from the shackles of violent global imperial designs and colonial matrices of power that aggressively work to disrupt and constrain the African development trajectory. Accordingly, colonialism was not just an episodic event that started and ended with formal decolonisation but a grand strategy, a 'global design' that entangles and distorts the 'local histories' of the colonised people (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015). Africa witnessed numerous political and economic changes throughout the continent. This phenomenon referred to as the "post-Cold War wave of democratisation" promoted and pressurised African states to enact inherently Euro-North American-centric concepts of pro-democratic and liberal reforms (Brigevich 2008:1).

The constructed world of European modernity/coloniality governs every aspect of the African world in a manner that makes colonialism invincible, and makes the 'modernity' of Africa

impossible. Concepts such as liberal democracy which are inherently European are used as a magic wand to political and economic challenges across the world, particularly Africa. Moreover, the use of foreign debt as a crucial instrument for the development of African survival and development is the very essence of coloniality of power. The post-colonial African continent failed to incorporate such concepts and was characterised by political instability, underdevelopment, persisting socio-economic issues, fragile economies, and inequality which fosters conditions for large-scale conflict (Gounden 2015:401; Ocheni & Nwankwo 2012:51; Ong'ayo 2008:2). It is within this context that Bercovitch (2011:1), stated that the post-Cold War era was characterized by internal, intense, and deep-seated conflicts.

2.5 Mediation

Historically, the study of mediation has been characterised by a startling lack of information. Bercovitch (2003:2) contends that mediation practitioners wanted to uphold the image of mediation as a mysterious practice "taking place behind closed doors" and mediation scholars did not question the susceptibility of this practice to systemic analysis. Moreover, several studies have made an effort to analyse mediation systematically, looking at both its incidence and the circumstances that lead to successful results (Bercovitch 1986, 1989; Bercovitch *et al*. 1991; Bercovitch & Houston 1993; Bercovitch & Langley 1993; Butterworth 1976, 1978; Frei 1976; Haas 1983; Haas *et al*. 1972; Holsti 1966; Kleiboer 1996; Levine 1971; Miall1992; Raymond & Kegley 1985; Wall 1981). Berocovitch (2003:7) in his systemic analysis of mediation defines mediation as:

> [A] process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own efforts, where the disputing parties or their representatives seek the assistance, or accept an offer of help, from an individual, group, state or organization to change, affect or influence their perceptions or behaviour, without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of the law
>
> (Bercovitch 2003:2)

Bercovitch articulated that "mediation is about as common as conflict itself" (Bercovitch 2011: 1-2). Furthermore, mediation is a structured, collaborative process that is practiced by an accepted, impartial and neutral third party by the conflict parties who have no authoritative decision-making power to assist disputing parties in voluntarily reaching their own mutually acceptable settlement of the issues in dispute (Jones 2000:649). Mediation is widely considered to be a non-coercive and voluntary form of conflict management, particularly practical within the intricate dynamics of international relations dominated by the principles of preservation of

actors' independence and autonomy (Bercovitch 2005). Nathan defines mediation as "a process of dialogue and negotiation in which a third party helps disputants, with their consent, to manage or resolve their conflict[1]" (Nathan 1999: 2). Mediation as a distinct form of conflict management is used interchangeably with peacemaking. Peacemaking as defined by the UN includes various diplomatic processes such as mediation, taken to get warring parties to end or suspend their conflict and lay the foundation for reconstruction of political, economic, social structures (Mpoumou 2004). Mediation was regarded 'a relatively complex word in English' by Raymond Williams (1983) because of its uses as a key term in several systems of thought. This was followed by Da Rocha (2017: 12) who stated that mediation has always been a contentious concept with many different styles and methods to learn from. Although true mastery is achieved by the application of experience and expertise. Some consider mediation to be a form of art (Nathan 1999). While others contend that mediation is a science with generalisable principles that apply to all mediated processes (Da Rocha 2017: 12).

Mediation has been an accepted practice for many years to point out that mediation is still one of the most significant methods for handling and resolving conflict. Mediation has always existed to assist in resolving conflicts, regardless of the degree of political or social organisation, regardless of their location in time and space, and regardless of the political sophistication of a community. Bercovitch (2003:7) contends that "a mediation system comprises (a) parties, (b) a mediator, (c) a process of mediation, and (d) the context of mediation. The interaction among these elements determines the nature, quality and effectiveness of any form of mediation".

There are various dimensions that have been proposed to structure how to engage mediation and the analysis thereof, such as, the five step phases by Da Rocha (2017), strategic principles of mediation (Nathan 2018), old and new approaches to mediation (Pisani 2020), problem-solving approaches (Touval & Zartman 1985: 8-9; Princen 1992: 6) and transformative approaches (Bush & Folger 1994, 2005) to mediation, mediation tracks (Christien 2020; Aggestam & Svensson 2018; Lundgren & Svensson 2020) as well as characteristics of mediators (Da Rocha 2017). The mediation process needs committed attention as it plays a

[1] Aduda and Bussmann (2020: 65) provide a similar definition: "mediation is a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, state, or organisation to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of the law."

significant role in how society responds to conflict. In this, mediation was greatly emphasised as a foundational tool since 1990 (Gounden 2008:403). Since resolving these conflicts is typically quite difficult, mediation may be the closest thing to an efficient conflict resolution method available in the 21st century. Although when it comes to defining conflict most literature writes about how conflict arises - due to "perceived incompatibilities of interests" and when conflict arises – entering a sphere of warfare due to irreconcilable differences (SADC 2018). Conflict comes in different forms and stages, it can be violent, non-violent, intra-interstate, it can escalate or de-escalate over time. Different stages of conflict require different tools of intervention. Existing literature underscores the role mediation plays in resolving conflicts by offering non-violent mechanisms (Ramsbotham *et al*. 2011). Conflict is managed constructively through mediation. Wright (2014) contended that conflict implies not only difference, disagreement, or inconsistency, but action to resolve these conditions, thus jeopardising the peace. That mediation plays a central role in modern-day conflict resolution (Duursma 2014:81).

Without further deepening the debate (see Duursma 2014), this study focuses on a particular strand of mediation, international mediation and more specifically, political mediation (Da Rocha 2016). Political mediation belongs to the realm of peacemaking, complementing traditional state actions with an impact on sovereignty (such as sanctions, good offices, embargos, diplomacy, shuttle diplomacy, etc.). Article 33 (1) of the UN Charter urges all Member States to use mediation as a tool to settle disputes. Given that mediation is already evidently specified in article 33 of Chapter VI of the UN Charter, this chapter recognised the critical role mediation plays in modern-day conflict resolution. This assertion is supported by evidence, since 1945, mediation was employed in 70% of all conflicts, and the likelihood of a peace agreement being reached is 6 times higher when third-party actors are present (Bercovitch & Gartner, 2009; Frazier & Dixon, 2009). Moreover, Chapter VIII of the UN Charter exhorts Member States to use regional organisations such as the AU to employ mediation to settle disputes.

What is explicit in these articles is the reinforcement of power relations as Article 54 states that states/regional organisations need to 'inform' the UN of any and all activities with regards to peace and security. This creates a parent-child relationship where the child (states/regional organisation) report to their parent (UN) about what happens in their lives (countries). This is a reflection of Eurocentrism that assumes superiority over the rest of the world. A case in point

is when the Burundi mediation witnessed the dismissal by the Belgians to include a platform that would address the violence of colonialism as well as post-independence violence side-lining the interests of parties to the conflict. Zondi (2017: 126) contends that the UN mediation efforts provided in Burundi were temporary conflict resolutions that were short-lived as the country slid back into conflict in 2015.

It is evident that mediation is a central instrument of the UN to resolving conflicts. Thus, mediation is taken as the status quo for resolving conflicts. Bercovitch (2003:8) states that apart from regional/international regional organisations, mediation can also be carried out by individuals, government officials, religious figures, small states, large states, ad hoc groupings. Moreover, the occurrence of mediation is used when the conflicts are long and complex, warring parties have reached an impasse or when warring parties are ready to resolve conflict (Bercovitch 2003:8). Nonetheless, mediation is thus an instrument that can be used throughout the whole conflict cycle. It is established that the central, yet essential role of mediation is the maintenance of (international) peace and security. This was reiterated in the significant report of the UN High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) in 2015. Upon detailed observation, the report recommended that "conflict prevention and mediation must be brought back to the fore" (UNGA/UNSC, 2015: 11, 38, 62-81). The report also recommended a more comprehensive understanding for building "stronger, more inclusive peace and security partnerships [for] the future" (UNGA/UNSC, 2015:10). This wider concept of peace operations implies that "a stronger global-regional peace and security partnerships (such as between the UN and the AU) are needed to respond to the more challenging crises of tomorrow" (UNGA/UNSC, 2015: 10). Subsequently, the argument here is that mediation should be the key instrument for responding to new and emerging conflicts. Bercovitch and Jackson (2009: 32) highlight the central role of mediation by stating that "mediation is the closest thing we have to an effective technique for dealing with conflict in the [21st] century", while Bercovitch (2011:2) posited that mediation is crucial in meeting the "challenge of building a more peaceful world".

2.5.1 Mediation in Africa

Conflict in Africa has seen a plethora of changes over the several centuries; from the conflict brought about in the colonial period, wherein divide and rule tactics were used by colonial powers to ensure the subservience of the colonised state (Christian 1988:234), to the liberation wars of the 20th century, which sought to overcome the oppressive regimes of the colonial era

(Zeleza 2008:5). However, the last four decades have seen a surge of, seemingly unsolvable, intra-state conflicts in African states. Zondi argues that this rise in civil conflict on the African continent is a perpetuation of colonial violence at the heart of African statehood, which has yet to be overcome through robust and long-term peace processes (Zondi 2017:108). Given the "successive processes of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and globalization" that came to produce the world system (Zondi 2015: 4), Africa has been entrenched with violence and instability as a result of colonial legacies, the end of the Cold War, intra-state conflicts, and the system of Apartheid in South Africa (Austin 2010; Gounden 2015; Kleiboer 1996). This is a colonial factor that is deeply rooted in many conflicts in Africa. Scholars such as Mokwugo Okoyo (1977), Bonny Duala-M'Bedy (1984), Claude Ake (1985), and Herman J. Cohen (1995), argue that the colonial past cannot be ignored when addressing political instability in Africa.

Mediation is used as an essential tool in conflict resolution by the international community, however, it has failed to fully exercise its intended purpose on the African continent. Africa has suffered through eurocentrism, colonialism, and modernity. These processes collectively represent coloniality as a global power structure that allows asymmetric power relations to endure between the Global North and the Global South (Melber 2018:5; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:11). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:11) cogently argued that coloniality as a power structure lies at the heart of the current world order. It is within this context that this study brings in how coloniality of power affected mediation in Africa. The perceptive analysis of power and knowledge hierarchies is often absent when debating questions about the failures of mediation in Africa. As Faißt (2019) contended, "African mediation would benefit from interrogating whose knowledge and power influences mediation processes and how this shapes mediation". These hierarchies of power and knowledge can be detected in several aspects of African mediation and consequently, shape mediation practices.

The adoption and practice of neoliberal democracy, and most of the continent's economic policies, but also in security, military, culture, religion, sexuality, aesthetics, knowledge production and a host of other areas, the invincible, crisscrossing hands of the Western idea of modernity are present in postcolonial Africa. The Euro-North American influence reduces, silences, dominates, oppresses, exploits and overshadows postcolonial Africa's agency (Fasakin 2021:908). A failure to link the state of these African countries to the coloniality of power thus obfuscates the legacy of colonialism in Africa. The 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement

serves as an illustration to this point. During the mediation process of the Darfur Peace Agreement, the negotiators from the rebel groups evidently lacked negotiation experience. In addition, the Agreement was written in English and was only translated later in the process (Faißt 2019). This caused confusion, not only because the rebels had difficulty understanding English, but also because the Arab translation had mistranslations (Faißt 2019; Nathan 2006:11).

Thus, this mediation process was based on a process and document that not all parties could comprehend well enough. It is therefore imperative that mediation is based on knowledge shared by all parties involved in the conflict (Faißt 2019). Furthermore, the mediation process was funded by the international community, allowing external actors to influence the process. This speaks to the control of authority. As Fasakin (2021) articulates that "coloniality of power makes many countries in Africa perpetually dependent on external powers and limits their people's agency and freedom to develop independent action – or an African alternative – but also makes it impossible to blame anyone but Africans for lacking the initiative to develop" (Fasakin 2021:907). The mediation process during the Darfur Peace Agreement shows how destructive the coloniality of knowledge and power is. The unequal power relations between the parties at conflict and the external actors "were reflected in the domination of the mediation process by the international community and the lack of local or African ownership" (Faißt 2019).

The coloniality of power finds full expression in postcolonial Africa because of the failed colonial transformation in Africa. In particular, Zondi (2017) argued that there is an incomplete transition of Africa from colonial to postcolonial, resulting in the persistence of coloniality and coloniality of power which need to be considered when analysing mediation efforts in Africa. In this, failure to acknowledge coloniality of power resulted in failed mediation efforts on the African continent foregrounding the lack of colonial transformation as being the primary reason why mediation efforts have failed. An example of such failed international mediation efforts is the intervention in Burundi during the 1994-2003 period. Zondi (2017: 126) contends that the UN mediation efforts provided in Burundi were temporary conflict resolutions that were short-lived as the country slid back into conflict in 2015. This testament to the continuity of the colonial situation in postcolonial Africa puts many African countries in the vortex of coloniality of power that structure and continue to manipulate African development, politics, and governance.

Equally, Zondi (2017: 126) highlights the exclusion of indigenous civil society, state-building, and transformation in mediation efforts that are crucial to conflict resolution. In this, mediation efforts- whether short-term or long-term- will continue to fail at the lack of prioritisation of the above-mentioned. Furthermore, the obsession with preserving the neo-colonial state in Africa is deeply rooted in the colonial experience. In a neo-colonial state, there is a failed colonial transformation from colonial to postcolonial resulting in the persistence of colonial patterns and legacies despite the end of colonialism. This is the very essence of coloniality of power. Consequently, mediation solely concerns the attainment of a 'functioning' state in place rather than transforming the conflict or "boosting indigenous civil society structures" (Zondi 2017: 126). At the heart of the problem with international mediation is the lack of capacity and resources that can facilitate successful mediation efforts as well as the extreme reliance on external funding as a result of the failure for the overall transformation of African states (Nathan 1998; Nathan 2005: 9; Zondi 2017: 126).

Evidently, the UN assisted the AU with aid in the intervention of Burundi, however, such mediation efforts witnessed the lack of adequate resources for successful mediation efforts. Subsequently, the majority of mediation processes are heavily funded, championed, and influenced by various non-African experts, states, international institutions that carry ideologies that are Westernised and are inherently rooted in the colonial experience (CSS 2008: 18). Such deep rigid reliance heavily impacts mediation outcomes that continue to lead to the failure of mediation efforts. For instance, the Burundi mediation witnessed the dismissal by the Belgians to include a platform that would address the violence of colonialism as well as post-independence violence side-lining the interests of parties to the conflict. This contributes to failures and inconsistencies of mediation in policy and practice (Ferreira, 2009:74). Nonetheless, the inclusion of indigenous civil society, which women are more involved in, results in the inclusion of the voices of the marginalised (Mutasa 2008; Mottiar & Van Jaarsveld 2009:22). For example, in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, religious organisations, youth, and women's groups played a significant role and faith-based institutions were instrumental in getting warring parties to the table in Burundi, Rwanda, and Angola (CCR 2006).

International mediation is colonial in its DNA and "it cannot expand without self-liquidation" specifically in its engagement in Africa (Mgonja & Makombe, 2009: 34). Mediation success

in Africa is militated by coloniality. It accounts for why prolonged conflict has replaced sustainable peace in the continent (Achankeng, 2013, Adebajo, 2010: 37-40). Decolonial scholars argue that mediation in the continent is hampered gravely by coloniality of power. They opined that the mediation process in Africa could achieve a lasting peace when colonial practices are replaced with African solutions (Zondi 2017; Duala-M'Bedy 1984:10; Okoyo 1977:93). Critics of the decolonial thought opine that former colonies should have used their colonial experience to improve on the future, it is within this context the next section situates a shift towards decolonial thinking.

2.6 A Shift Toward Decolonial Thinking

Given that coloniality of power still finds full expression in Africa, it is necessary to shift toward decolonial thinking. The leading voices (which are inherently Western) in the literature assume that the western experiences and understandings of peace processes apply universally. Zondi (2015:9) argues that African experiences of international relations filtered through Western negations are subject to distortions, fabrications, omissions, and erasures. Subsequently, this affects how mediation processes are facilitated in Africa. Zondi (2017:107) posits that the perpetual and subliminal systems of coloniality that linger in the political, social, and economic structures of Africa as well as the modus operandi of the mediation processes, justify continuous failure in mediation attempts within the continent. A shift toward decolonial thinking is necessary. The concept of 'decolonial' emerges from Global South scholars who seek to think from a place of the oppressed and marginalised. Although Pérez (1999) contends that the decolonial is a term of transition from colonial to postcolonial, Tlostanova (2010) discounts Pérez by contending that postcolonialism relies heavily on Western postmodernist concepts that rarely reject colonialism. Tlostanova (2010) argues that decolonialism examines the universalising aspect of postcolonialism and, rather than merely criticising, goes beyond and deconstructs the power matrix formed in modernity. It fundamentally re-evaluates what knowledge production entails and is continually open to new environments and epistemologies.

Accordingly, Mignolo (2011) argues that decolonial thinking occurred in the Americas, in Indigenous and Afro-Caribbean thinking, later continued in Asia and Africa and it stems from the very foundation of modernity/coloniality as its counterpoint. In Latin America, the decolonial perspective means to think differently about the histories of their societies by continuing the discussions about colonialism, the philosophy of liberation, the pedagogy of the oppressed, and theories of dependence. It extends beyond the examination of world-systems

Wallerstein (2006) that concentrate on the global labour market and geopolitical military struggles within processes of capitalist accumulation globally (Castro-Gómez & Grosfoguel 2007: 14). The same application is found in Africa as Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues for shifting the geography of knowledge because this contests the imperial/colonial historical inclination of using European and North American history as the standard for evaluating other historical events and of believing that these two regions are the exclusive sources of rational thinking (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018).

The decolonial option as offered by Mignolo and Escobar (2013) necessitates an alternative way of thinking, an-other-thinking as theorised by Catherine Walsh (2013). Put simply, the decolonial option requires epistemic disobedience, a non-capitalist political economy, a non-mono-national (i.e., pluri-national), and an epistemological split that is non-linear and temporal (but spatial) understanding of the state. The decolonial choice emerges as de-linking negativity found in Eurocentrism, colonialism, and modernity about the rest of the world and rather focuses on the perspective of areas hushed, suppressed, vilified, and devalued by the West's triumphal chorus of self-promoting modern epistemology, politics, and economics.

Furthermore, the West's triumphal chorus of self-promoting modern epistemology, politics, and economic requires decolonisation, which can be accomplished only through a decolonial epistemology that explicitly posits decolonial geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge as grounds of departure for radical critique. The first step in altering course is to disturb old ways of being and prior habits that help to deepen exclusion and marginalisation. Scholars use the term 'decolonial turn' as an organising category to characterise both practical and theoretical efforts that react to the challenge of coloniality and appear in various contexts in diverse ways. The decolonial turn was described by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1993, 2009) as "moving the center" (from Eurocentrism/Europhonism to a multiplicity of cultures) toward "re-membering Africa" (addressing the fragmentation of Africa brought about by imperialism and colonialism). To this end, it is evident that the struggles against racism, the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, and apartheid are at the core of the decolonial turn. According to Maldonado-Torres (2011:2), "[t]he decolonial turn does not refer to a single theoretical school, but rather points to a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern age, and of decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished". A decolonial turn implies that a huge corpus of literature, enormous theoretical and epistemological advances, and their related actions have generated a pulse and then a wave

significant enough to literally ‘turn’ attention towards the topic of study, in this instance decoloniality.

The main argument of Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) is that what decoloniality is trying to achieve is placing knowledge that experienced epistemicides through coloniality at the centre of knowledge production. Decoloniality ascends as one way of rewriting history from the experiences of the global south from their perspective. Currently, Africa suffers from the unconnectedness of knowledge applied by the West to the African experience as it seeks to “disempower rather than empower individuals and communities” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 492). This section defines decoloniality “as an epistemological and political movement and advances decoloniality as a necessary liberatory language of the future for Africa” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 487). Decoloniality speaks to the deepening and widening of decolonisation movements in those spaces that experienced the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, neocolonialism, and underdevelopment. This is because the domains of culture, the psyche, mind, language, aesthetics, religion, and many others have remained colonized. Accordingly, Ndlovu-Gatsheni establishes that the decoloniality voice encompasses “re-telling of the history of humanity and knowledge from the vantage point of those epistemic sites that received the ‘darker side’ of modernity” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015: 493). Decoloniality gestures toward pluriversality (a world within which many worlds fit). This is in tandem with for instance, South Africa’s push for ubuntu (the African ethic of community, co-humanness, unity, and harmony) (Campbell, 2013). These are typical examples of the decolonial horizon.

Accordingly, Quijano (2000a, 2000b, 2007) and Mignolo (2007, 2011) foregrounded that decoloniality emerged from the dehumanisation of the modern/colonial system of power. The slave trade is an example of the dehumanisation of the colonial system of power in that the coloniality of being took the form of hierarchisation of human races and questioned the very humanity of black people. This is the major departure points of decolonial approaches. Moreover, it is clear that decoloniality cannot be fully understood without colonialism and two things are evident, firstly it emerges from Quijano's concept of coloniality in which the transformation triggered the concept of modernity, secondly as a concept it manifested within the concept of coloniality. Decoloniality is a shift from centring the focus on establishing sovereign nation-states to engaging other ways devoid of Western civilisation and of Eurocentrism. Decoloniality is a consequence of the revelation of coloniality. Decoloniality seeks an alternative to the existing global power system, by disrupting the absolute

universalism and conceptualisation of the global. It affirms other ways of re-existence that are unconforming to the "borders and cracks of modernity" (Mignolo and Walsh, 2018:4). It is both theoretical and praxical and aims to "unsettle and disobey the reign of theory over practice" yet it is not an academic discipline rather another option of re-existing that aims to disconnect and remodel from Western epistemology and ontology that has permeated all spheres globally (Mignolo, 2018: 5, 106). Decoloniality is however not an ontological and macro narrative as it "is specific to local geo-political and body –political histories" (Mignolo, 2018:120).

2.6.1 Decolonial Peace

The concept of peace with no clear definition has often been viewed as the absence of war. However, scholars such as Johan Galtung have come to define peace through two dimensions, peace as "negative peace" as "the integration of human society" and/or "non-violent and creative conflict transformation" and "positive peace" which focuses on creating the social, economic, and political frameworks required for long-term peace rather than just preventing conflict (Galtung 1996; SADC 2018). Outlining how common perceptions of peace vary across languages and cultures could be the starting point for exploring a definition of peace. Almost all definitions of peace in Western languages place a strong emphasis on the absence of war and other overt acts of violence. When taken from non-Western languages and cultures, the idea of peace acquires new nuance. For instance, the roots of the Hebrew and Arabic terms for peace, shalom and salaam, respectively, signify "whole" or "undivided" (Anderson 2004). Whereas Eastern conceptions of peace typically emphasise the existence of certain attributes rather than the absence of others, whereas the majority of Western definitions of peace emphasise the absence of violence. The absence of variables like violence as well as the existence of factors like balance, harmony, and unbrokenness should both be considered in a truly global conception of peace (Anderson 2004:101).

However, liberal peace has been the dominant norm for controlling and defending international peace interventions and therefore, according to Marko Lehti (2019:142) "it is obvious that peace mediation cannot remain outside of this normative basis". This is evidenced by the Western-dominant knowledge approaches to peacebuilding such as the liberal peace theory (Ginty 2008:139; Merlingen & Ostrauskaite 2005:297). Liberal peace is "characterised by the promotion of liberal norms, practices and values, especially those associated with democracy and the market economy" (Cavalcante 2014:142). The rise of liberal theories are 'one-size-fits-

all' approaches (Newman *et al*. 2009; Sabaratnam 2011). In this, liberal theories assume universalism in which universalist claims lead to epistemicides in that for it to thrive as the only 'knowledge', other epistemologies have to die.

Generally, the peacemaking process applies internationally endorsed blueprints of liberal peace, instead of concentrating on the local politics of building peace (Lehti 2019:69; Cubitt 2013:94). This is due to the coloniality of knowledge and power as conflict resolution focuses on Western approaches, in doing so, local traditions of conflict resolution are neglected in Africa (Lehti 2019:72; Brigg & Bleiker 2010:273). As such, the universalisation of liberal ideas must be rejected and instead, ideas surrounding peacebuilding and mediation should be more specific to an African context (Zambakari 2016). As Zondi (2017:106) states, when assessing endeavours at peacebuilding in Africa, "the incomplete transition of Africa from colonial to post-colonial, resulting in the persistence of [coloniality of power], must be borne in mind". Thus, it is imperative that the colonial factor is considered in efforts to address African conflicts (Achankeng 2013).

Zondi (2017:107) posits that the perpetual and subliminal systems of coloniality that linger in the political, social, and economic structures of Africa as well as the modus operandi of the mediation processes, justifies continuous failure in mediation attempts within the continent. To remedy this Zondi prescribes 'decolonial peace' which aims to realise sustainable peace through the continuous decolonisation of African states and entails pursuing peace whilst simultaneously tackling the continuities in the nature of the inherited state characterized by undertones of violence and war, as well as the colonisers "model of the world and its colonial political economy" which continues to bedevil post-colonial African societies (Grosfoguel 2009:10). In essence decolonial peace seeks to break away from Eurocentric worldviews in the mainstream literature on peacemaking that discount the fundamental problem of coloniality and constrain the transition to lasting peace and prosperity in African conflict situations. The decolonisation of mediation involves accommodating diverse approaches in different contexts by pluriversalising rather than universalising mediation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Zondi 2016). Faißt (2019) explains how mediation should be based on "African epistemologies, concepts, and methods that local people can relate to". Greater prominence should be given to voices and views of the marginalised who have been typically excluded in elite-driven mediation as seen in Burundi.

Mediation efforts undertaken by the UN, AU, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have a profound flaw in that they envision peace without dismantling the inherent logic of coloniality and its support for recurrent violence as observed in the Darfur Peace Agreement and the UN mediation efforts in Burundi. Thus, mediation efforts present temporary fixes instead of long-term solutions. To this end, decolonial peace is about focusing on systemic and structural issues at a deep level to explain peace and the lack thereof. Structural and systemic issues/inequalities are understood to be a reflection of power imbalances institutionalised in social structures such as ethnic, religious, and gender discrimination, socio-economic status, poor health, limited education etc. Furthermore, decolonial peace is about asking the questions about fundamental bases of the current trajectory of conflict and violence, digging deeper than the surface most thoughts focus on. It is to link the idea of peace not to hierarchical notions of power but to living well and co-creation and co-existence. Decolonial peace envisages a lasting peace achieved through detoxicating Africa of colonial values (Zondi 2017: 106, Mignolo 2007). A decolonial lens considers the colonial factor of mediation and seeks to remedy this through a 'decolonial peace' that accommodates the experiences of people who lived them. Essentially, decolonial peace challenges the Eurocentric worldviews in mainstream literature of peacemaking that disregard coloniality as the root cause that hinders the transition to lasting peace and prosperity in African conflicts.

2.6.2 Decolonial Mediation

Drawing from the argument that disciplines such as the social sciences subscribe to European authority, this is apparent in the case in the disciplines of conflict resolution and mediation. This is perfectly illustrated in the example of the Burundi mediation efforts above. Imposing Euro-North American centric conflict resolution methods ultimately leads to a disconnect in mediation because it ignores the unique requirements of the indigenous people, depriving them of the chance to settle disputes on their terms. Engaging in non-Euro-North American forms of meditation would be a decolonial approach to meditation. This means taking into account the historical context of conflicts that exist on the continent. Hence, decolonial mediation, although not an officially coined term to date, can be argued to be a perspective that takes into consideration the colonial ways of being, thinking, and existence which continue to hold hostage colonial nation-states that are built on a colonial political economy (Grosfoguel 2009:10).

A decolonial mediation approach would arguably entail an alternate practice of conflict resolution that resolves disputes in such a way as to promote knowledge and perspectives specific to local geopolitical histories. To this end, the goal is to disrupt Euro-North American centric knowledge and power structures that shape and dominate mediation processes. Decolonial mediation seeks to establish peace that goes beyond “the mere silence of guns within a state founded in violence”, it is rather “peace achieved by transforming the fundamentals on which the modern/neo-colonial state and society in Africa are founded” (Zondi, 2017:109). It is argued by Zondi (2017:107), that “Eurocentric worldviews in the mainstream literature on peacebuilding…discount the fundamental problem of coloniality and constrain the transition to lasting peace and prosperity in African conflict situations”. It is within this context that Zondi (2017) suggested a shift towards decolonial peace. Decolonial peace requires epistemological reconstitution, to achieve this, conflict resolution strategies that attempt to demolish the global colonial institutions that support and prolong coloniality in Africa will need to be used. Accordingly, Hudson (2016:196) emphasises that decolonial mediation should seek to reform structures and institutions that confine mediation practices within liberal contexts and agency should be afford to all those who have been affected including gender minorities.

2.7 Feminism

The subjugation of non-Europeans went hand in hand with the oppression of women. Historically, the subordination of women by men was justified as ‘nature’ and power was afforded to men only, power to determine how to live, work and what roles each gender will assume. These lived experiences were produced from the perspectives of men while silencing women’s experience and knowledge. Women were regarded as invisible and unimportant in the world; this was furthered by Eurocentric colonial beliefs of the family that domesticated women as ‘mothers’ ‘wives’ or ‘caregivers’ dependent on their husbands with nothing else to contribute to the world. To engage with feminism, it is important to firstly foreground the concept of patriarchy as a concept for oppression against women. According to Walby (1990: 20), patriarchy is a “system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. Facio (2013:3), describes patriarchy as:

> A form of mental, social, spiritual, economic and political organization/structuring of society produced by the gradual institutionalization of sex-based political relations created, maintained and reinforced by different institutions linked closely together to achieve consensus on the lesser value of women and their roles. These institutions interconnect not only with each other to strengthen the structures of domination of

men over women, but also with other systems of exclusion, oppression and/or domination based on real or perceived differences between humans, creating States that respond only to the needs and interests of a few powerful men.

Facio (2013:3)

Patriarchy is deeply embedded in African societies where women remain on the margins in political and economic spaces as most African countries have not reached the 50-50 gender parity in political structures and (formal) economic sectors , where women and girls remain the poorest group with limited educational opportunities, where discriminatory laws such as the Sharia law in Nigeria are biased by punishing women for crimes that involve the participation of both women and men such as adultery or the Penal Code that does not recognise marital rape as unlawful (Makama 2013) this is ingrained in religious and cultural customs and norms all over Africa, the control of women's bodies in health and reproduction (abortion laws that prioritise the woman's life as a reason for abortion instead of having no reason for an abortion restricts a women's choice and this is glaring as only 3 out of 54 countries allow women to have an abortion without restriction to reason (Guttmacher 2018), and justice systems that discriminate against female victims who have experienced gender-based violence at the hands of men. Put simply, patriarchy sought to teach women 'their place' in society as one not equal to men but significantly inferior. The concept of patriarchy has been used by feminists to analyse the oppression of women.

Therefore, women assume subordination and power is associated with the actions of men as their birth right founded in masculinity. Jaiyeola and Isaac (2020:5), describe masculinity as a "set of attributes, behaviours, traits and roles connected with men and boys in varying contexts and locations, which attests to their quality of manliness". These traits are argued to be socially constructed - it is also within this context that this study defines gender as socially constructed - but some phenotypical factors apply. These traits and attributes bring with them some patriarchal power between men and women in African societies (Connell, 2005; Jaiyeola & Isaac 2020:5).

Although there are various definitions of what feminism is, most definitions (see Krolokke and Sorenseen 2005) centre a narrow understanding that centres the equality of the sexes. This is not reflective of the diverse body of thought that is feminist theory with its many diverse strands. Feminism is both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that advocates for equity for women and the abolition of all forms of sexism. Feminists advocate for human

rights for women and an end to their marginalization in political, social, economic, cultural, and legal systems (Freedman 2001:1). Madsen (2000:200) argues that feminism addresses the position of women in society and "asks questions about oppression, consciousness and gender". Feminism, evidently not a monolithic body of thought, is intended as activism or scholarship that starts from the lives of women to make visible and subvert gendered relations of power in society (Ackerly 2000:17). Feminist scholarship, driven by a desire for social justice, offers a diverse set of viewpoints on social, cultural, economic, and political events (McAfee 2018). Feminism refers to the belief that there are injustices against women and there is a need to advance and protect the rights of women and girls. Although feminism has diverse perspectives and strands, gender - which they believe is socially and symbolically constructed - is the overarching unit of analysis.

Since the middle of the 1980s, feminist IR problems investigated the part that gender plays in issues like war, conflict, and international security (see, among others, Elshtain, 1987; Enloe, 1996; Peterson & Runyan, 1993; Peterson, 1992, 2000; Sylvester, 1996, 2002; Tickner, 1992, 2001, 2002). Feminist academics have extensively critiqued the false portrayal of women as 'natural' peacemakers (Reardon, 1985, Reardon, 1993, Ruddick, 1989, Aretxaga, 1997) Porter (2008), Cockburn (1998), and Alison (2010). It has been described as an essentialisation that has the potential to be 'a hazardous political force' that upholds dominances and operates on the fixed and preconceived dualism of 'women victim, male fighter' (Cockburn 1998: 13). Feminists advocate for gender sensitivity and for the inclusion of women in formal peace process such as mediation. Women are on the margins in mediation and in most countries, this is because of the patriarchal culture and norms at play. Brewer (2010) contends that the domestication of women to the 'private' realm limits their participation to what is considered 'public' as such mediation and to a large extent decision-making.

In order to promote peace that centres the struggles of women, the concept of 'feminist peace' emerged. Albeit with no clear definition, feminist peace applies feminist principles that aim to eradicate patriarchal violence and gendered power to the practice of peace processes. Feminists move beyond the gendered and passive nature of peace that sees women as passive victims of conflict in need of protection because of their feminine traits whilst attributing masculine traits as capable of leaders of peace. According to the Women's International Peace Centre (2020:3), feminist peace "embodies social justice, demilitarized security, the dignity of women, applying feminist approaches, choice and agency of women, that takes into account the differential

impact of conflict on women and address the root causes of conflict". Feminist peace in mediation foregrounds the underrepresentation of women and highlights the marginalised role women play as active participants in peace process.

Feminists have advocated for women's visible participation at Track I mediation which tends to be militaristic and male-dominated. In this, Feminists centre gender sensitivity at Track I mediation and argue that women "deserve to participate on an equal basis with men" (Bell and O'Rourke 2007:30). This is informed by the gendered differential impact conflict has on women. While consensus among contemporary peacebuilders and peacemakers that the more inclusive a peace process, the greater the chances for sustainable peace agreements to be signed for lasting peace is acknowledged by scholars and practitioners of mediation alike, both traditional and external mediation approaches are exclusionary in terms of women participation (Murithi,and Ives, 2007; Tarnaala, 2015). In keeping with this observation, scholars such as Tarnaala (2015:77) and O'Reilly *et al*. (2015:1), have argued that including women in mediation is simply an approach that potentially will increases the durability of peace and strengthen peace agreements. Increasing women participation in mediation, and especially on the negotiation table, and according to Tarnaala (2015:77), can bring about a transformative and inclusive peace process that is able to change conceptions of the status quo, fight gender-based violence. Moreover, the risks associated with women's agency in promoting post-conflict peace and security might be greatly reduced by involving them in post-conflict planning. It could potentially lead to the progressive realisation of a structural violence free society that promotes women participation. However, it can be argued that gender-sensitive peace agreements do not necessarily result from such tangential and nominal efforts to include women in peace processes.

Despite feminist advocacy for women's meaningful inclusion in mediation, the evident vital role women play in preventing conflict and helping forge peace and existing policies and structures which will be discussed in detail in chapter three and chapter four, the involvement of women in mediation is characterised by exclusion. The main critique from feminist analysis is that peace processes, especially mediation is gender blind (Strickland & Duvvury 2003; Sørensen 1998). Mediation processes are gender blind because they do not take into account gender nor see the differences between gender which further deeps the exclusion of women in mediation.

Research shows that peace negotiations between 1992 and 2019, women were rarely included as they only made up 6% of chief mediators (UN Women 2022b). 19% of the 1,187 peace agreements signed at the same time specifically addressed or alluded to women. Since women's needs differ from men’s and they are frequently more vulnerable, which is disregarded or forgotten in the negotiating process, experts on the topic of establishing lasting peace emphasise the importance of including women in the peace discussions. Due to the restricted humanitarian responses, this makes peace agreements less effective and less likely to be effective (Kumalo 2015; UN Women 2012). Bigio and Vogelstein (2016), contend that the achievement and longevity of peace agreement occur when women are involved in formal peace processes. Furthermore, Paffenholz *et al.* (2016) cited that conflicting parties were likely to agree to negotiations and ultimately reach an agreement when women’s groups exerted pressure and influence on the negotiation process. This research study argues that the very way mediation, in particular Track I, is done excludes the kinds of contributions women make.

Criticisms against feminism is that it assumes universal experiences for women, using gender as a single category of analysis. As a result, feminist scholars are aware of the limits of employing gender as the exclusive analytical category. Notably, scholars argue that “feminism…involves so much more than gender” (Davis 1983). Moreover, feminism has been criticised by Black women in America (Crenshaw 1989), Latin Women (Lugones 2008) and African women (Essof 2001) for its inherently Western notions that continue to privilege white Western feminist and universalise the white women experience for women around the world. These scholars (Davis 1983; Crenshaw 1989; Lugones 2008; Essof 2001) argue that feminism goes beyond gender and concerns structural inequalities and intersecting identities. Situating feminism within intersectionality considers the interwoven and intersecting structural identities including, but not restricted to gender, class, race, sex, ethnicity or age (Yuval-Davis 2006; Collins 1986; Crenshaw 1989, 1991). Postcolonial feminist scholars such as Spivak (1985; 1988; 1999) and Mohanty (1988; 1991; 2003a; 2003b), maintain that “feminist writings discursively colonise the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the Global South, which produces a composite, singular Global South woman – the homogenized, gendered ‘other’ – an image that carries with it the authorising signature of Western imperial discourse”.

Critical feminists like Peace Medie and Alice Kang (2018) assert that Western feminist scholarship for studying women in the Global South are tainted by colonial and neoliberal

presumptions, which serve to reinforce existing global disparities. The lived experiences of women from the Global South are understood through the lens of women from the Global North that depict Global South women as victims of particular cultural and socio-economic systems and are defined by their gendered identity who are in need of rescuing. This enables Global North women to assume themselves as "saviours of their poor Third World sisters" (Mendoza 2002:301), and take advantage of and colonize the complexity that are inherent in the lives of women in the Global South (Mohanty 2003a). This systematic appropriation of the figure, identity, and image of women in the Global South has resulted in a characterisation of these women that only emphasizes their femininity (sexual constraint) and their status as "Third World" that is, their ignorance, poverty, lack of education, adherence to tradition, religiosity, domestication, and focus on their families (Mendoza 2002; Mohanty 2003a, 2003b; Spivak 1988).

2.8 Control of Gender and Sexuality

The control of gender and sexuality speak to the Eurocentric underpinnings of who is considered 'human'. As alluded by Nyere (2020:61), "coloniality of gender and sexuality speak to the broader concept of coloniality of being". Accordingly, Grosfoguel (2007:220) argued that the hegemonic, colonial, racial, and patriarchal colonial matrix of power shaped and reinforced global dynamic power structures such as colonial Eurocentric global capitalism that imposed norms in the socio-economic structure of colonial societies that underpinned the colonial gender system. Accordingly, Lugones argues that the coloniality of gender persists in the present and lies at the intersection of race, class, and gender "as central constructs of the capitalist world system of power" Lugones (2008:746). Velez and Tuana (2020) stress the significance of colonial institutions in power, ontology, and epistemology, as well as its entanglement with imposed categorial logics of race and gender. It is within this context this study brings in the coloniality of gender as explored by Maria Lugones. Lugones foregrounded coloniality of gender on Quijano's concept of the coloniality of power which is crucial to understanding the coloniality of gender as there are constitutive of each other. Lugones (2007), emphasizes the need to locate gender within a historical context where actors through enunciations created a dichotomous hierarchy of the human/non-human; man/woman. Upon that assumption racial and sexual colonial differences were established.

Furthermore, the traceable history of who was considered 'woman' can be seen using the Religion in Europe, in particular Christianity, which was taken and exploited as the ontological

macro narrative of modernity to establish the colonial difference. Foregrounding Mignolo's (2018:158) example of the African slave trade that began in the 16th century, he notes, "it was necessary to situate the human and humanity in relation to people whom the Bible did not account for". As a consequence, "enslaved Africans became Black and, therefore, lesser beings in relation to the prototype of the (White) human". Therefore, Western Christianity was underpinned by racism that pervaded sexism. Notably, race, class and geography played an important part in sexism where, for example, European bourgeois white women were regarded as somewhat superior women compared to Indian and African women who "were not properly considered women by Christian men", they could be anything but women hence "the ascendancy of racism over sexism", which still anchors the contemporary global order, where "colonial-racial differences encroached upon colonial-sexual differences" (Mignolo, 2018:158). Moreover, the world came to understand European white bourgeois women in a way that saw them as human, as woman, and as the standard of femininity whereas women of other races were left at the margins and came to assume subordinate positions that excluded them from being seen as not only human but woman. This also aids to geography as a key instrument in sustaining coloniality because humanity is given to those who are located in the Global North while the Global South assumes 'other' or 'sub-humanity'.

For Lugones (2008:13), "they were understood as animals in the deep sense of 'without gender', sexually marked as female, but without the characteristics of femininity". The racialisation of some women as lesser resulted them in being "turned from animals into various modified versions of "women" as it fit the processes of Eurocentered global capitalism" (Lugones, 2008:13). Lugones' (2010), understanding of coloniality of gender emerged from her analysis of the colonial power systems as oppressive capitalist, racialised, and gendered colonial systems. Prior to her analysis, Lugones (2008) rendered the global power structure that anchored the concept of gender as 'colonial/modern gender system'. Other scholars such as Oyewumi (1997), Sylvia Marcos (2006), Paula Gunn Allen (1992) and McFadden (2001) understand the gender system and gender relations as a colonial gender imposition that has permeated all spheres of social existence. It is a recognition that patriarchy is inseparable from colonialism. Instead of focusing on patriarchy as the axis of analysis, instead the point of departure should be "to understand the relation of the birth of the colonial/modern gender system to the birth of global colonial capitalism – with the centrality of the coloniality of power to that system of global power" (Lugones, 2007:186-187). On the matter of gendered power

relations, it is important to foreground how gender identities influence and intersect with other factors such as race, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, geographical location.

Gordon (1996:7) also states that the capitalist economy which is the global power structure, sustains patriarchy and it is within this foundation that the system of patriarchy should be examined in the African context. The power axis that emerged from the history of colonial dominance and is now structuring interactions between states, peoples, and beings is constantly attempting to obliterate the diversity of epistemic viewpoints. At the same time, it tries to maintain the colonial idea of 'difference' as defined by degrees of development. Thus, the issue is how gender has and continues to operate in coloniality of power (Mendez 2015:51). It is within this context that this study situates decolonial feminism. As established above, decolonial thinking is about shifting the centre of analysis and focus to the excluded and marginalized.

Criticisms against the "canon" of decolonial theory is that it is comprised largely of and dominated by heterosexual cis-men. This is particularly evident in the centring of Aníbal Quijano, Walter Mignolo, Enrique Dussel, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres as primary articulators of the "decolonial turn" (Velez & Tuana 2020). Decolonial feminism is introduced as a framework to provide space for silenced voices of women from the Global South, particularly Africa to recognise their meaningful contribution in mediation. In addressing who is to be considered human, Lugones (2010) argues that 'humanity' and 'gender' were never assigned to colonised subjects. Therefore, acknowledging coloniality of gender allows decolonial feminism to challenge the category 'woman' (Velez 2019: 399). Nevertheless, the goal of decolonial feminism is to encompass non-white, non-heterosexual, and non-cis gendered women.

2.9 Decolonial Feminism

As seen through the discussion of eurocentrism, modernity, and colonialism above, ways of knowing, doing, and living for the rest of the world are part and parcel of the Eurocentric world. In this, many critical voices from the margins such as Bernardino-Costa and Grosfoguel (2016) argue that coloniality of knowledge, being and authority reproduce a global racist-sexist-capitalist system (Bernardino-Costa & Grosfoguel 2016; Gill & Pires 2019). This study sheds light on the marginalisation and suppression of non-white, non-heterosexual, and non-cis gendered voices in Africa, as well as the gendered colonial divide. Decolonial feminism

focuses on understanding inequality from the vantage point of the downtrodden (the former colonised in the case of decolonial theory, women in the case of feminist theory). Decolonial feminism is pioneered by Lugones (2008; 2010), who situates decolonial theory within a racial/gender feminist paradigm. Decolonial feminist theory interacts with discussions around coloniality/modernity, indigenous identity and gender in the Global South, and provides a platform for the voices and experiences of silenced, 'othered' women.

According to Verges (2021:13), decolonial feminism contributes to the movements that question the Eurocentric narrative of the world by challenging the Western-patriarchal economic ideology that "turned women, Black people, Indigenous people, and people from Asia and Africa into inferior beings marked by the absence of reason, beauty, or a mind capable of technical and scientific discovery". 'Decolonial' and 'Feminism' both imply that the problem of inequality is mostly structural (framed by colonial legacies in decoloniality, by patriarchy in feminism). They both believe that fundamental societal reform is required to address colonial/gendered/capitalist/heteronormative systems. Changing this colonial perspective, which is also prevalent in feminist studies, necessitates "the eradiction [...] of the colonist in each of us" (Fanon 1961). Akin to this, decolonial feminism seeks to destruct racism, capitalism, and imperialism (Verges 2021). Furthermore, decolonial feminism, as discussed by Lugones (2010:746), is a resistance to gender coloniality that develops "a critique of racialised, colonial, and capitalist heteronormative gender oppression as a lived alteration of the social".

At its centre, decolonial feminism recognizes an alternative point of view as a critical breakthrough as it implies that there is no such thing as a universal point of view, rather hegemonic points of view are manifestations of a specific identity and are sustained for the imposition of a certain global order. Subsequently, decolonial feminism concentrates on hegemonic power relations, global cruelty, and postcolonial hierarchal inequities. It also examines the relevance of geography as a component of higher hegemonic histories. Evidently, a decolonial feminist lens is necessary so as to reject "racial dominance and the colonial violence of Eurocentric epistemological and ontological macro narratives" (Mignolo 2007; Lugones 2007; Patil 2013). Decolonial feminism strives to eliminate gender/class/race/sexuality oppression, which originated with the colonial past and is still rooted in the capitalist world system of power (Kusnierkiewics 2019). Verschuur and Destremau (2012: IV) contend that the decolonial feminist approach therefore serves as a

bridge between the symbolic, constructed, and cultural dimensions of gender relations and their economic and political dimensions, from the personal to the local to the global levels. By examining the distinctive vantage point from which women speak up in the social struggle, this viewpoint also focuses on their fights for economic and social rights. This perspective attempts to illustrate how gender relations fit into the economic system with a focus on women's inclusion in the new international distribution of reproductive and productive labour (Verschuur & Destrmau 2012: IV).

A decolonial feminist viewpoint emphasizes the need of recognising that identities cannot be divorced from power relations within a specific setting. It emphasizes the need of investigating power systems in society and why they are hard to change. According to decolonial feminist notions, hegemonic global systems such as colonialism, imperialism, and global capitalism, for example, amplify power disparities (Lugones 2010; Quijano 2007; Mignolo 2007). Decolonial feminism results in the depatriarchalization of revolutionary struggles. In other words, feminisms with decolonial politics contribute to the centuries-long battle of a segment of humanity to claim its right to exist. Revealing the levels of subordination is a crucial epistemological development of decolonial feminism. It promotes a more comprehensive view of world politics by exposing and revealing the dominant system of gender discrimination, violence against women and other oppressed groups may be examined from a global perspective with such an awareness of the implications of the colonial heritage.

Despite the end of colonialism, gender coloniality continues to oppress people through the intersections of gender, class, and race as essential parts of the power structure (Lugones 2010:746). The colonised live in a broken environment created by the imposition of difference, and they are torn between their identity and their actual reality. Decolonisation necessitates moving beyond viewing persons as ‘oppressed’ and recognising the beauty of resistance as a means of self-protection. Decolonial feminism implies that true emancipation occurs not just at the level of global politics or knowledge creation, but also at the level of individual being, feeling, and knowing. Individual freedom is thus a crucial objective of decolonial feminism. International relations take place on a global scale, but its consequences are felt most acutely in the local environment. Similarly, the abstract idea of gender coloniality discloses oppressive mechanisms, but it is communities that suffer and lose their identity in order to live under the current Eurocentric systems. The emancipatory objective of decolonial feminism is realised not only when the international power structure shifts, but also when the individual is

emancipated. Seeing the personal as international (Enloe 1989:196) transforms perspectives and helps to fully see the connection between individual experiences of resistance and changing global politics.

The presence of coloniality of gender is a prerequisite to the existence of decolonising gender. Decolonial feminism provides ways for decolonising gender and recognizes the diversity of beings that reject gender coloniality. Decolonising gender is hence "necessarily a praxical task. It is to enact a critique of racialised, colonial, and capitalist heterosexualist gender oppression as a lived transformation of the social" (Lugones 2010, 746). Decolonising gender permits an investigation on the relationship between gender and women. Lugones (2010:746) argues that the notion of divided gender identities, that is masculinity and femininity, are Eurocentric brought by colonialism to colonised subjects. In this, the colonised subject was understood as a 'savage' 'sexless' being. Lugones's central assumption is that Eurocentric modernity naturalised and universalised everyone as racialised and gendered as central axes through which power can be wielded. Put simply, Eurocentric modernity yielded power through race and gender by bestowing the highest power to the cis-gendered white European male while disregarding other parts of the world where race and gender are not means through which power can be wielded.

Further, in efforts of decolonising gender, decolonial feminism challenges heteronormativity- the assumption that cis-gendered men with masculine traits and cis-gendered women with feminine traits are the norm, and that heterosexuality is natural (heterosexuality as false universalism). Heteronormativity is accompanied by gender norms which Hudson (2005:156) argues are the socially learnt behaviours and expectations that separate masculinity and femininity on the basis for gender as a unit of analysis (Peterson & Runyan 1993). These gender norms – the deeply held expectations of the roles and behaviours of men and women –create an interaction with other identity factors such as age, class, ability, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. This is Eurocentric at its core and therefore what is understood by 'woman' needs to be reconsidered (Butler 2004). Thus, intersectionality as a critical feminist lens and as a mechanism to decolonise the human subject reveals the absence of sexual and gender minorities (Hudson 2016:203). Decolonial feminism foregrounds the shift that goes beyond identity factors such as being 'black' or 'lesbian' but critiques the socialisation and normalisation of gender binaries such as male versus female, heterosexuality versus homosexuality, "that reproduce hegemony via the production of 'constitutive others'" (Dietze

2014:261). What is apparent in heteronormativity is that when colonialism qualified who was to be considered 'human', it further oppressed gender and sexuality to two sexes, confining it to a gender binary.

Subsequently, this narrow understanding of who qualifies as a man or a woman excludes other marginalised identity groups such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community. This generates a new area of 'othering' because if there are only two sexes that is men and women (what was biologically assigned at birth) than the other is 'animalistic, nongendered, overtly sexual'. This understanding of gender is inherently Eurocentric and as such, decolonial feminism seeks to move beyond this gender binary. It is within this context that this study defines gender as socially constructed and gender minorities or gender identity as an individual's self-expression and experience of their own gender.

In sum, decolonial feminism argues that the person who talks and their ethnic/racial/gender/sexual epistemic location are always dissociated. The myth of a true universal knowledge that Western philosophy and sciences are capable of creating obscures, that is, hides who is speaking as well as the geopolitical and body-political epistemic location in colonial power/knowledge structures from which the subject speaks, by delinking ethnic/racial/gender/sexual epistemic location from the subject that speaks.

2.9.1 A Decolonial Feminist Perspective in Mediation

While a decolonial analysis of mediation seeks to eradicate coloniality/modernity and a feminist analysis seeks to dismantle patriarchy, decolonial feminism seeks to challenge both systems of coloniality and patriarchy. McKay and Mazurana (2007:3) contend that a feminist analysis is about centring the experiences and perspectives of women. Young (1992) asserts that "it separates itself from a patriarchal world view and the constraints of a male- dominated theoretical analysis by seeking to explain the importance of women's oppression in terms of their unequal status in society" (cited in McKay & Mazurana 2007:3). Feminist analysis of mediation brings women to the forefront of peace research by pointing to the social, political, and economic impact of violence against women in peace and war. Ndhlovu (2019) contends that "[w]omen play crucial roles before, during and following conflicts, yet their participation and the acknowledgment of that role has been with mixed result and slow progress". In order to account for global power dynamics that regard global colonial history and racial power, a decolonial feminist perspective is imperative. For example, it shifts narrow focus on women

and incorporates the experiences of women from the Global South. As a result, it negates violating the fundamental principles it was built on, namely of representing the voices of the marginalized. Hudson (2016:20) contends that a decolonial feminist approach to peace processes such as mediation must involve the transfiguration of patriarchal, heteronormative, and racialized relations.

A decolonial feminist perspective takes into account the historical, socio-economic, and geo-political reality of transnational women (Lugones 2010; Schiwy, 2007). Paludi *et al.* (2019) provide three advantages of decolonial feminism in organisation studies, these advantages can apply to mediation as well. When used in mediation, a decolonial feminist theoretical framework challenges coloniality/modernity, capitalism, and patriarchy that allows researchers, activists, and policymakers to reconsider mediation as a Western gendered institution. Mediation as a Western gendered institution can be seen through the arguments made above on decolonial mediation and the need to decolonise gender. The second advantage in adopting a decolonial feminist viewpoint allows for the engagement of silenced marginalised voices in the Global South. Hence, decolonial feminism sheds light on the experiences, knowledges, and worldviews of voices that are typically marginalised in the global arena. The third advantage calls for plurality where a multiplicity of knowledges, ideas, and experiences in mediation are incorporated. In this, decolonial feminism embraces an epistemic shift "in which all individuals and all communities have the freedom to be unique since everyone is seen as equal and all cultures and nationalities are treated equally" (Paludi *et al.* 2019). Akin to this is pluriversalism (coined by Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015) which imagines many worlds and embraces all geographies, and all identities are given equal recognition.

2.10 Conclusion

In sum, this chapter examined how mediation operates along colonial, racial, patriarchal, gendered, capitalist, and heteronormative systems. The failure to acknowledge these systems leads to the failure of mediation efforts on the African continent which in turn limits the meaningful participation of women in mediation. Decolonial feminism therefore highlights the price of ignoring the colonial axis of power, a lack of awareness of global politics, the imposition of an uneven global order, and the ongoing oppression of vulnerable communities. This chapter has demonstrated the importance of decolonial feminism in mediation as it calls for widening the awareness of the world by 'changing the geography of reason', which means expanding reason beyond Eurocentric modernist understandings of knowledge and developing

epistemes outside of the fitted boundaries of ways of knowing and doing. This entails attending to issues that arise in places of struggle for liberation from dominance.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN AND MEDIATION IN AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

Women play multiple roles in peace processes as survivors, perpetrators, victims, combatants, activists, and advocates, however, women's efforts in conflict management particularly mediation continues to be marginalised even though the contribution of women in peace, negotiations, and mediation has long been acknowledged. The contribution of women in mediation is aligned to their inclusion in mediation, however, this inclusion is limited. The inclusion in the sense that women are seen as victims of conflict in need of protection and therefore are confined to addressing matters of sexual violence in conflict. Often the representation of women in mediation is taken as the representation of women's needs and ensuring that women's rights are recognised which tends to be problematic. This runs the risk of not only stifling warring parties' willingness to engage in mediation but stunting the meaningful contributions of women to mediation. Understanding a decolonial feminist analysis of women and mediation requires an examination of existing policies and normative commitments that promote meaningful participation and contribution of women in mediation.

This chapter seeks to address the following research sub-questions: What attempts have been made to translate the UNSCR 1325 into action through AU policy frameworks and SADC policies? And address the research sub-objectives: (i) to understand how women are engaged in mediation processes in Africa and (ii) To examine the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on Women, Peace and Security using a decolonial feminist analysis. It is therefore of paramount importance to first understand how women engaged in mediation processes and ultimately interrogate why women continue to be excluded despite the existing policy frameworks, in order to address the poorly tackled challenges of women in mediation and ultimately rethink the role of mediation using decolonial feminism.

This introduction sheds light on the roles women played in peace (mediation) during precolonial, colonial and postcolonial times. In examining the dynamics of women and peace, research has shown that "women are never not involved in peacemaking" (Baricako 2020 cited in Shiferaw & Desmidt 2020). The relationship between women and peace can be traced back to pre-colonial societies where women were involved in traditional peacemaking and

peacebuilding roles where they participated in conflict prevention and mediation within and between societies (Isike 2009: 49; Isike & Uzodike 2011). Using the story of the Queen Nzinga of the Ndongo and Matamba Kingdoms (now Angola), this brief introduction illustrates how women in pre-colonial Africa acted as both warriors and mediators. Queen Nzinga as an ambassador was successful in negotiating a peace agreement that sought to end the slave trade in her kingdom. However, the peace agreement was not honoured and this motivated Queen Nzinga to form an alliance with the Dutch against the Portuguese. This example is a reflection of her military prowess and diplomatic and mediation skills, especially her fight against colonialism (Hendricks 2020:70). Queen Nzinga remains as one of the key reminders that women in precolonial Africa were active in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Moreover, women enjoyed their positions as queens, regents, empresses, leaders, and mediators, and their political input was allowed in precolonial Africa (Isike 2009:49). While women were actively involved in mediating and preventing conflict, however, women's approaches that were used to mediate peace were stereotyped as 'female attributes' of being 'good wives', 'caregivers', and 'peace promoters' in their families and communities during the precolonial period in Africa (UNESCO 2003: 3; Isike 2009:50). During the colonial period, colonialisation brought new understandings of gender roles and made women became subjects of patriarchy which confined women to domestic work disrupting the pre-colonial socio-cultural order (Nzeogwu 2000). In this, "the colonial period made gendered systems of power and authority…and, in turn, restricted the powers that pre-colonial women enjoyed by deepening patriarchal domination" (Scanlon *et al*. 2020:2). These new gender roles were linked to the introduction of colonial economies, consequently, "men became conceptualised as people linked with categories such as politics, economics, or race, while women became reduced to gendered beings bound by their relationships to men as wives, widows, mothers or daughters" (Bradford 1996:369; Scanlon *et al.* 2020:2). Subsequently, the system of patriarchy as understood through Eurocentrism was cemented and deepened in African societies.

Following this, the post-colonial period witnessed the persistence of the marginalisation of women's roles despite their various campaigns for their rights and their participation in independence struggles during the decolonisation wave that swept across the continent (Scanlon *et al.* 2020:2). From Ghana to Zimbabwe, women clamoured for and received promises of inclusion and respect in all facets of the post-colonial polity (Scanlon *et al*. 2020:3). However, exclusion continues for much of the 21st century. Moreover, because of gendered

systems of power, the matters of conflict, peace, and mediation became associated with politics in which politics was not only linked to men, but an arena where women played minimal roles if they were not completely excluded (Isike 2009:57; Kittilson & Schwindt-Bayer 2010; Hendricks 2020). Women's complete exclusion to participate in the public realm meant that matters of peace and mediation were left to men because political leaders - duties assigned solely to men - were assigned mediator roles. This testament is seen through the selection criteria of appointing seasoned male politicians, diplomats, presidents, or former HoS as mediators which in turn marginalizes women, even where women have the experience to be mediators.

Using the political participation of women in Nigeria through a feminist lens as an illustration Jacob *et al*. (2012:1078), maintain that women's appointment at all levels of governance have been reduced to 'sideline' actors. For example, only 6 women constituted cabinet members out of 49 members and only 3 were given substantive roles (Jacob *et al*. 2012:1078). For this reason, feminist scholarship advocates for women's political agency as well as an end to women's marginalization in political, social, economic, cultural, and legal systems (Freedman 2001:1). Many African countries believe that politics is the business of men because of the violence involved in politics. This has confined women to the quasi-political spaces of women's clubs and civil society which are regarded as safer "alternatives to the exclusions and marginalisation they face in the more conventional political arenas" (Tripp 1988:93). In this, Turner (2017:3), argues that this exclusion has implications because the exclusion of women in politics ultimately leads to the exclusion of women in mediation, in particular Track I mediation process.

This chapter seeks to provide an overview that foregrounds feminist scholarship's argument that women are not always victims of conflict but are agents of change, capable of contributing to the public sphere (Gardam & Charlesworth 2000; Pettigrew & Schneiderman 2004; Hughes 2009; Moghadam 2013; Tripp 2015; Asaf 2017; Berry 2018; Andrabi 2019). However, decolonial feminism argues that hegemonic global systems such as colonialism, imperialism, and global capitalism, for example, amplify power disparities (Lugones 2010; Quijano 2007; Mignolo 2007). While feminism argues for the inclusion of women in mediation, decolonial feminism contends that this inclusion will reinforce power disparities if the global colonial, patriarchal, gendered, capitalist, heteronormative systems are not challenged. Hence, this

chapter will use decolonial feminism to highlight how international policies contribute to these power disparities.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the lack of implementation of existing policy frameworks in addressing the inclusion and meaningful participation of women in mediation, particularly in Africa. This chapter will also provide an overview of the various arguments about women, peace and security. A decolonial feminist analysis is employed to examine the contribution of women in mediation. It argues that although there are an extensive set of policies and commitments established to emphasize the inclusion of women in mediation such as UNSCR 1325, their inclusion has been confined within systems that limit the scope of their participation. Although the AU and its regional actors have developed action plans to address these constraints, these plans tend to focus on increasing women's participation in order to address 'women' issues such as sexual violence. Thus, this study employs a decolonial feminist analysis to question the continuous poor inclusion of women in mediation and to address the constant poor implementation of existing policies, in particular, the study uses decolonial feminism to examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

3.2 Women, Peace and Security: A Framing Overview

Having read through the literature, it is apparent that there are various arguments on women, peace and security. The first argument conducted through extensive literature is that women, girls, men, and boys experience conflict differently (Myrttinen *et al*. 2014). Moser and Clark (2001) contend that existing literature has been dominated by efforts to disseminate the differential and gendered impact of conflict on women. Wright (2014) argues that men suffer from conflict as they make up the majority of combatants and are therefore more likely than women to be victims of homicide. However, while this ignores how women combatants suffer from conflict, it can be argued that women suffer from conflict because they are raped by the very combatants who end up being victims of homicide, ultimately women disproportionately bear the brunt of conflicts. This section will further illustrate this point. Desmidt *et al.* (2017:2), point out that women suffer from both physical and psychological violence such as sexual violence, forced sexual slavery, forced abortions, displacement, etc. Hence extant literature (Mutisi *et al*. 2011; Ceesay-Ebo 2011:131) has been preoccupied with the portrayal of women as victims during conflict. This is because women disproportionately bear the brunt of conflicts.

In this, women are the most vulnerable victims of conflict because, during times of war and violent conflict, women are subjected to a number of gruesome crimes like gender proportion killings, rape, kidnapping and abduction, and all other various forms of torture (Skjelsbaek & Smith 2001; Warsame 2002; Ali 2007; Ceesay-Ebo 2011: 131; Mutisi *et al*. 2011; Karam 2000; El Jack 2003). Of concern is conflict-related sexual violence, for instance, during the Rwandan genocide over 500 000 women were raped (Skjelsbaek & Smith 2001). In Liberia, between 61%-77% of women experienced sexual violence during the second Liberian civil war (WHO 2005). Notably, Warsame (2002) and Ali (2007:69) strongly argue that women as victims continue to experience trauma even when the conflict is over, which is often overlooked in post-conflict reconstruction processes (Rubio-Marin 2006; Rombouts 2006; UNDP 2010; True 2013). Women were targeted specifically because of their maternal gender role and because women are seen as embodied boundaries of the nation-state thus attacking women is equivalent to attacking the nation, and in most African societies' women are seen as symbolic bearers representing one's 'culture' thus raping the women was a symbol of defiling that very 'culture' (Elshtain 1987:67; Ali 2007: 69). This rape culture that equated women's bodies to national identities generated a deeply patriarchal, misogynistic and gruesome tactic termed 'rape as a weapon of war' which uses raping women to 'attack' nations.

In view of this, women's bodies became political playgrounds for warring parties. Feminist scholarship highlight that 'rape as a weapon of war' gives a means of expression to "the systematic, pervasive, and orchestrated nature of conflict-related sexual violence that marks it as integral rather than incidental to conflict" (Kimura 2008; Campbell 2007; Ni Aolain & Rooney 2007; Engle 2005; Ross 2003; Buss 2007, 2009: 146). According to Brownmiller (1975), there is a difference between rape used as a weapon against women by men during 'peace' and 'conflict' times because in 'conflict' times rape is a weapon used against both women (as women) and part of an attack against 'the enemy'. It "is a message passed between men—vivid proof of victory for one and loss and defeat for the other" (Brownmiller 1975: 13). Rolland (2021) using the experiences of rape victims from the DRC, illustrates that victims see that "rape is not only a weapon of war but the war itself" (Maedl 2011: 146). It is only recently that rape during armed conflict is acknowledged as a weapon of war. The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1820 (2008) to hold perpetrators accountable and recognize that rape as a weapon of war is a serious threat to international peace and stability (UN Women 2013; Domingo et al 2013; Jones et al 2014). This acknowledgment indicates that rape has not only become a 'by-product' of war but a planned and targeted policy (UNSCR

1820 (2008); Buss 2009: 145). Supporting policies include UNSCR 1888 (2009), UNSCR 1960 (2010), UNSCR 2106 (2013), and UNSCR 2467 (2019).

Despite the adoption and progress of many international policies and resolutions that protect women against sexual violence during conflict at international, regional, and local levels and impose harsher sanctions on perpetrators, rape is still being used as a weapon of war with recent reports of mass rape in the DRC (Jones 2013; Kitharidis 2015:453). A recent example is the sexual violence and rape experienced by women in the South Sudan conflict, 65% of South Sudanese women experiencing widespread rape, constant harassment, and violence in the country (Pinna 2018). One of the main characteristics of armed conflicts in various African countries such as Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, and South Sudan is the mass rape and sexual violence as well as the targeting of women as a weapon of war. In these conflicts, women are repeatedly raped in order to forcefully impregnate them, and they are also rape with the deliberate intention to infect the victims with HIV (Smith 2002; Kudakwashe & Richard 2015). Although it has been established in the literature that men and boys also suffer from sexual violence in conflict zones, it is however at a lower scale compared to women and girls (El Jack 2003; Bastick, *et al*. 2007; Abdi 2011), and the physical consequences are vastly different for male and female bodies.

Women have a harrowing experience of conflict that continues past the end of conflict. Hence, it is not surprising that existing literature examining women's involvement in conflict is preoccupied with depicting women as victims. Throughout history, war has been considered as actions of men whilst portraying women as powerless victims thus limiting conflict resolution to the role of men (Pettigrew & Shneiderman, 2004; Ali 2007: 67; (Mlambo-Ngcuka & Coomaraswamy 2015; Tripp 2015; Berry 2017, 2018; Asaf 2017; Kolås 2017; O'Reilly 2018; Sjoberg 2018; Andrabi 2019). This ignores the multiple roles women have played in war not only as victims but also as perpetrators of violence. This literature is often ignored because the victimhood of women is assumed during wartimes and if women were involved, the roles were masculinised and militarised thus reducing the significance of the roles played by women (Uchendu 2007: 105; Ndhlovu 2019: 29).

Albeit ignored, recent literature focuses on the active participation of women in conflict and in perpetrating violence either as combatants, supporters of conflict, or decision-makers (Mba 1982, 1989; Abdullah 1996; Mama 1996, 1998; Uchendu 2007; Mutisi *et al*. 2011; Mama &

Okazawa-Rey 2012; Ndhlovu 2019, Ndhlovu & Wielenga 2021). Historically, women have participated as freedom fighters in national liberation wars in the mid-twentieth century in different parts of Africa including Eritrea, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Using the experience of women during the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, Ndhlovu (2019: 27-28) illustrated how women actively participated in the national liberation war as political activists, and combatants who transported arms and ammunition and demanded the same military training as their male counterparts. Notably, Ilesanmi (2017) demonstrated that women's fight against colonial powers did not yield gender equality. Kombo (2012) explains that women's involvement in liberation struggles did not transfigure gender norms and roles nor their status in societies. This is the essence of patriarchy that is grounded on notions of exclusion and thus as a consequence, preserves the public spaces and national politics to men while women remain disrate to the private spaces of caregiving roles (Mckay & Mazurana 2004; Coulter *et al*. 2008). Ali (2007:71) lists the multiple roles women play in conflict namely as cooks, cleaners, carriers of weapons and gunpowder to the cannons. Therefore, the nature of patriarchy is to relegate women's efforts to the private sphere regardless of the contributions women make in public spaces.

There is widespread consensus in literature that viewing women as survivors who have the vigour and imagination to effectively influence peace processes is more beneficial than concentrating on women's victimhood in conflict (AusAID 2006; Shepherd 2014). This argument in literature is characterised by the view that the likelihood of achieving lasting peace solutions is greatly increased by the systematic and inclusive participation of women in peace processes as mediators, arbitrators, and negotiators (Myrttinen 2016; Gizelis, 2009; Boals 1973; Byrne 2014; Hunt & Posa 2001; Krause *et al*. 2018: 985). This line of thought is supported by feminist scholarship, which believes that women's participation in peace processes is commensurate with "gender-sensitive perspectives in addressing critical issues in conflict and post-conflict processes" (Mutisi *et al*. 2011:10). This perspective, which regrets the lack of women in significant decision-making roles and peace processes, is led by Moser and Clark (2001). They contend that the inclusion of women would guarantee lasting peace since the needs and viewpoints of both men and women would have been taken into account during the peace processes. However, as Mpoumou (2004:122) revealed, the Congolese government and other warring parties rejected the inclusion of women in peace processes because "war and peace are exclusively the business of men". Such statements are understood to be a reflection of power imbalances institutionalised in social structures such as gender

discrimination. Additionally, such statements are deeply rooted in patriarchal gendered systems that further reflect coloniality because patriarchy sustains coloniality.

Another argument in literature is that women's inclusion in peace processes and mediation is justified because they make up the majority of the population, so any decision involving conflict prevention or conflict resolution should take into account their opinions, experiences, and the suggestions of other stakeholders on how lasting peace might be achieved. This is the justification for including women in peace processes and mediation. It is necessary to uphold their right to take part in decision-making as guaranteed by international conventions and national legislation. Studies have also shown that although they are not included in formal peace processes, women are active agents of peace in rural and grassroots communities (Desmidt *et al*. 2017). Thus, the equal representation of women in formal peace processes would broaden the scope of peace processes, increasing the likelihood of addressing gender concerns in society. Mbwadzawo and Ngwazi (2013:3), argue that it is simply a matter of equality, and equity because the future of any conflict-ridden society depends on peace agreements and what is included. However, decolonial feminism challenges the heteronormative gender dynamics observed in the above argument by Mbwadzawo and Ngwazi (2013:3), because of the narrow understanding of gender equality and the conflation of women and gender. As a result, there is a failure to acknowledge that gender minorities and intersecting identities who also bear the brunt of conflicts and remain targets to hate-crimes because of their gender or identity are a part of the population.

Research led by Radhika Coomaraswamy (2015) examined the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at national, regional, and international levels as well as how it influenced the language used in crafting peace agreements. According to the report, 27% of peace agreements signed since 2000 have made mention of women, which is more than a 'double increase' over peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2000. Similarly, in a report to the Security Council, the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) emphasized the growing trend of women's participation in peace processes. He added that 50% of the 16 peace agreements concluded in 2014 included gender or women requirements, which increased from 22% in both 2010 and 2011 to 30% in 2012 (UNSC 2015). These findings reveal that progress has been made in enhancing the role that women play in promoting peace, but that this development may also be primarily attributable to structural elements of the procedure, such as the application of quotas (Andersson & Swiss 2014).

However, Ellerby (2016) argues that this form of inclusion is not enough to guarantee women's meaningful contribution to peace. Thus, the argument that Ellerby (2016) puts forward is that there is a need to move beyond the mere inclusion of women in peace processes and focus on transforming peace tables and peace processes. This means that, in order to promote women's agency, they must be included at all levels of participation in peace processes, particularly Track I mediation, where women's participation remains low. Thus, Ellerby (2016:15) contends that it is very important to engage with 'how' women participate in peace processes. Discourse that concerned the inclusion of women in peace and security inspired the development of several international policies aimed at unmuting the silenced voices of women globally, and one such normative policy is UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted on 31 October 2000 by the UN Security Council (UNSC). Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) acknowledges that the role of women in peace and security extend beyond their victimhood and call for their meaningful inclusion in peace processes at all levels.

UNSCR 1325 was the first of its kind to advocate for the participation of women in peace processes and acknowledge the unique contribution women make in processes (UNSC 2000). There are approximately seven other UNSC resolutions - UNSCR 1820 (UNSC 2008), UNSCR 1888 (UNSC 2009a), UNSCR 1889 (UNSC 2009b), UNSCR 1960 (UNSC 2010), and UNSCR 2106 (UNSC 2013) - that seek to broaden and strengthen UNSCR 1325 by highlighting the various contributions women make to peace processes. Nine subsequent resolutions were passed, all of which emphasized the need of implementing UNSCR 1325 and underscored issues that this resolution overlooked, such as SGBV, monitoring and evaluation, and combating violent extremism. These resolutions have come to be collectively known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

The WPS agenda is an innovative mechanism with four pillars (Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery) that recognises women as critical actors in ensuring international equitable peace and seeks to increase the participation of women in peace processes, however, the agenda has its gaps. A common theme when critiquing the WPS agenda concerns the low numbers of women in peace processes despite existing policy frameworks and therefore advocates for holistic approaches that will allow women to transform their societies. Various scholars have critiqued the WPS agenda (see Hudson 2010; Olonisakin & Okech 2011; Ellerby 2015; Olonisakin *et al*. 2015; Murithi & Ives, 2007; Tarnaala, 2015:77).

In their critique of the WPS agenda, Olonisakin *et al*. (2015:385) contend the WPS agenda "perform[s] the role of guardian or gatekeepers to the structures that perpetrate gender inequality, which in turn sustains the cycles of insecurity for women". In 2012, UN WOMEN stated, "women's participation in peace processes remains one of the most unfulfilled aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda". This study contends that this is due to the lack of the WPS agenda to acknowledge gender minorities, intersecting identities, and structural inequalities in the women, peace and security framework.

Moreover, the WPS agenda places 'women' as an umbrella term for marginalised groups. The agenda fails to acknowledge that gender minorities and intersecting identities that bear the brunt of conflicts and are targets to hate-crimes because of their gender or identity. While the acknowledgement of women in peace and security is necessary, it cannot make further progress if structural inequalities, intersecting identities and gender minorities are ignored because 'women' are included in these groups. One cannot think of 'woman' and ignore their intersecting identity (race, class, sexuality, religion) or the structural inequalities (colonial, patriarchal, gendered, capitalist systems) that they face.

3.3 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

Prior to the unanimous adoption of the UNSCR 1325, feminist scholars, gender activists, and policymakers advocated for the need to highlight and focus on the gender differential impact of violent conflict, the roles women and men assume in conflict, as well as addressing the challenges that women faced in peace and security structures and processes through policy documents such as the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action for Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (2000). These policy documents laid the foundation for the UNSCR 1325. Thus, the UNSCR 1325 seen as the 'founding moment for women, peace and security' (Hendricks 2015: 366), reaffirms "the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding", underscores "the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security", and urges all actors to "increase their decision-making roles in peace processes" (UNSCR 2000). The resolution is a legal framework that governs women's participation in all efforts for the promotion of peace such as mediation. It has long been recognized that women may be strong forces for peace. The historic resolution

not only addressed how conflict affects men and women differently, but it also underscored the important role that women play in conflict prevention and peaceful settlement. To this end, the resolution acknowledges the absence of women from formal mediation and the consequences it holds for inclusive peace agreements. This was aimed at appointing more women to senior UN peace-related positions and urged actors to involve women in decision-making regarding peace (O'Reilly *et al*. 2015).

Another important aspect of the UNSCR 1325 for women in mediation is the participation pillar enshrined in the WPS agenda which calls for the participation of women in decision-making at the national, regional, and international levels. This calls for the appointment of women to roles in politics and public life as well as the commissioning of women to serve as government representatives in regional, continental, and international institutions. This entails, among other things, ensuring women's community-based organizations (CBOs) and groups are represented at the negotiating table. To guarantee that parties at the negotiating tables designate female representatives, significant measures are needed. Thus, the inclusion of women as mediators will be guaranteed when more women are appointed to national political offices, given that the majority of mediators tend to be seasoned politicians and diplomats. In order to remove barriers to women's engagement in peace processes, the UNSC issued Resolution 1889 in 2009, strengthening the UNSCR 1325 participation pillar. It calls for the UN Secretary-General to provide the Security Council with a specific set of indicators to track the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The UN, member states, donors, and civil society are urged by UNSCR 1889 to ensure that post-conflict evaluations, planning, and programming collectively take into consideration the critical factor of women's protection and empowerment (Mutisi *et al* 2011:20).

Importantly, the adoption of UNSCR 1325 was widely praised by African women's groups and CBOs as the first international framework to acknowledge the connections between women, peace, and security, as well as a significant step toward attaining gender equality and improved conditions for women worldwide. At the national, regional, and continental levels, African governments, the AU, and RECs have made an effort to implement UNSCR 1325 and have incorporated its principles and provisions into their legal and policy framework and structures. The UNSCR 1325 has been instrumental in increasing the participation of women in politics in countries such as Burundi which introduced quotas for women while leading to legal reforms in the area of gender equality in some countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and

Sierra Leone. The design of a peace and security policy such as the UNSCR 1325 that takes into account the concerns of women have advanced significantly on an international, continental, and regional level; yet, the real role of women in establishing, maintaining, and sustaining peace is still developing.

Existing literature observes a pattern when critiquing UNSCR 1325 that despite these global efforts, the number of women in peace process still remains low, especially at Track I mediation (Mbwadzawo & Ngwazi, 2013; UN Women 2012:3; Murithi & Ives, 2007; Tarnaala, 2015). Mminele (2019) contends the selection criteria that favours seasoned diplomats, presidents and former HoS continues to marginalise women's participation as Special Envoys. This is a reflection that institutionalised patriarchal and militarised systems remain and persist as barriers to women's meaningful participation in mediation (UN Women 2018; UN Women 2019). More importantly, these existing policy frameworks and structures did not challenge colonial, patriarchal, capitalist, heteronormative beliefs that are deeply embedded in African societies. Patriarchy, amongst other factors, continues to play a key role in excluding women from Track I mediation. Ilesanmi (2018: 5), reiterates that "gender stereotypes imply entrenched societal and systemic gender stereotypes, which often prevent women from participating in decision-making". There is a prevailing structural environment of patriarchy in African societies which renders women inadequate to perform masculine peace and security work, rather they perform their assigned duties at home as wives, caregivers, etc. Culture, perceptions, and beliefs that see women as subordinates and secondary to men play a key role in cementing the exclusion of women in political and peace processes (Limo 2018; Ilesanmi 2018:4; Agbalajobi 2009). This ultimately hinders the participation of women in Track I mediation and the kinds of contributions they make.

Moreover, if women were involved in any mediation processes this was because of mounting pressure from civil societies, however, they were assigned soft ways of doing peace. Turner (2017:2) emphasised that "focusing exclusively on empowering women at the local level perpetuates a distinction between the "soft" work of peacebuilding conducted by women and the "hard" work of peacemaking that is the preserve of men". This is seen in Track I and Track III respectively.

3.4 Women and Mediation under the African Union

Mediation in Africa was systematised following the creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and its evolution into the African Union (AU) in 2002. Since then, the continent has positioned itself as a prominent actor in mediating and resolving conflicts (Gounden 2017). The end of the Cold War witnessed long-lasting intra-state conflicts, along with other types of violence and insecurity, with disastrous repercussions for civilians, especially women, gender minorities, and children. As a result, Africa has been embroiled in violent conflicts, which the AU attempted to resolve. In efforts to address the research sub-objectives: What attempts have been made to translate the UNSCR 1325 into action through AU policy frameworks and SADC policies? This section of the chapter will highlight the instruments that offer ample opportunities for member states to apply the principles of UNSCR 1325 with a focus on AU policy frameworks. Given the ongoing and pervasive conflicts on the continent, African stakeholders were instrumental in bringing the topic of women in armed conflict to the fore, and the Windhoek Declaration of May 2000 – aimed at ensuring the effective and equal participation of women as active agents of peacemaking/peacekeeping/peacebuilding, championed by Namibia, served as inspiration for the UNSC to pass the first historic resolution on women, peace, and security later that year.

It can be argued that because Africa is a continent deeply embedded in patriarchy, the UNSCR 1325 is instrumental in advancing women's rights. Hence, the UNSCR 1325 acts as framework and international legal tool for African countries to employ in multilateral, regional, and sub-regional cooperation as well as peace and reconciliation processes (Ceesay-Ebo 2011). Accordingly, Diop (2011), emphasised that the "...UNSCR 1325 provides African women with a legitimate platform to hold African states accountable for the respect of women's empowerment, gender equality and mainstreaming in peace and security policies and to demand adequate protection for women and girls during conflict". The resolution gives women and girls agency in that they are recognised as individuals who are affected by conflict, individuals who are capable of fostering etc., which can be seen as normative progress for women and girls who face discrimination in their societies.

Moreover, to advance women's involvement in conflict prevention and resolution, a vast array of policies and commitments have been implemented since the AU's founding in 2000. In the same breath, the AU has embraced setting gender equality policies, this is evident in the organisation's active advocacy for equal opportunities for men and women in peace and

security structures on the continent, in accordance with UNSCR 1325. This is also evident in the organisation's commitments, including former chairperson Nkosana Dlamini-Zuma's establishment of the Office of the Special Envoy for Women in 2014 primarily in charge of the implementation of the WPS where Bineta Diop was appointed as the first Special Envoy (Desmidt *et al*. 2017:8; Haastrup 2019:10). This commitment saw the establishment of the Office of the Special Envoy for Women is a direct replication of AU's efforts that translated the UNSCR 1325 - which calls for increased participation of women as Special Envoys - into action. Ms. Bineta Diop from Senegal, was the first Special Envoy for Women, Peace, and Security appointed by the AU in 2017. Ms Diop as the AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security was one of the two women involved in the commission inquiry in South Sudan (AU Commission of Inquiry in South Sudan - AUCISS). According to Desmidt *et al*. (2017:28), "[t]he AUCISS was the first of its kind and mandated to document human rights abuses and offer recommendations on justice and reconciliation". The gender and status of women were specifically mentioned in the AUCISS approach. This is related to the Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security's presence, which gave the AUCISS the motivation it required to include issues relating to women, girls, and gender in its work. Going back to the Office of the Special Envoy for Women, it can be argued that this Office relegates women to the issues of women. This means that women are only included in such spaces because they are women capable of resolving 'women's issues'.

The AU's commitment to the UNSCR 1325 is notable in a range of policies and commitments. In Article 10 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (2003) women's active participation in resolving conflicts and their roles in the maintenance of peace is greatly emphasized. The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004) called for the "full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes and for the appointment of women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the AU". Prior to the establishment of the Office of the Special Envoy for Women, the AU only saw a relatively low percentage of women engage as Special Envoys. The Gender Policy (2009), Framework for Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (2006), Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform (2011) and Agenda 2063 (2015) all advocate for women to be included in peace and security structures and processes and that gender equality be achieved. The Gender Programme of the AU's Peace and Security Department (2015-2020), the APSA Roadmap (2016-2020), and the AU Gender Strategy (2018-2028), all call for the importance of inclusive peace processes, and several also cite in accordance with the UNSCR 1325.

The AU has also adopted a Continental Results Framework for Reporting and Monitoring on the Women Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018-2028) as a means to track the progress of the WPS agenda. Moreover, the AU Assembly declared 2010-2020 as the 'African Women's Decade', this saw Africa record women such as former President Joyce Banda of Malawi (2012–2014), Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila of Namibia (2015-present), and President Sahle-Work Zewde of Ethiopia (2018-present) to name a few, serving as presidents and prime ministers, the positions of highest authority in the government. In 2017, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) formed the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa). This network sought to ensure and strengthen women's meaningful participation in mediation through capacity-building and networking (AU 2017).

Interestingly, these commitments as outlined above are guided by two overlapping architectures, namely the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA). This overlap is apparent in mediation (especially Track I mediation) where the participation and representation of women remain significantly low. An interesting point worth mentioning is that the AU recently changed its selection criteria of AU Election Observation Mission carried under the AGA to "a person that knows the intricacies of elections and is able to conduct mediation in a volatile political atmosphere" (Johals 2016) to increase the number of women heading missions. This change presents a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the word 'person' provides for the inclusion of women and other gender minorities who are capable. On the other, it reinforces gender power parities because as established above, politics has historically been seen as the preserve of men. In this, women will be seen as 'persons with least knowledge'. Moreover, despite the fact that women and mediation under the APSA saw a gender-balanced in 2017, when three members of The Panel of the Wise (PoW) were women and the other two were men (Dr. Speciosa Kazibwe (Uganda), Mr. Amr Moussa (Egypt), HE. Ellen Sirleaf (Liberia), HE. Nzet Bitéghé (Gabon), HE. Hifikepunye Pohamba (Namibia), most AU mediation efforts are carried out by Special Envoys or Representatives that have been appointed. This creates a gap where women are placed in structures and positions where they cannot effectively contribute change in mediation.

In post-conflict countries where women have taken an active role in politics and held a number of political positions, this is particularly glaring. Increased numbers of women are participating in governance as a result of several African countries implementing gender quotas to ensure

female representation in their political systems (Murias *et al.* 2013) and, particularly, occupying more parliamentary seats. Due to gender quotas, women in Rwanda received 63.8% of the vote in the 2013 election, breaking records globally (Guariso *et al*. 2017). The argument here is that because of ingrained sexism in politics, a hostile political climate, and discriminatory cultural norms, and attitudes toward women that limit their political participation are changing (Domingo *et al*. 2014). This demonstrates normative progress of women's participation in the political sphere. However, the inclusion of women within these political spheres without transforming the structures will not produce any change for women but force women to participate in the very structures that promote their oppression. Decolonial feminism challenges colonial patterns lingering within these structures by exposing and revealing the dominant system of gender discrimination found in the political sphere.

Yet, despite normative progress, the AU efforts did not sufficiently engage with women's, gender minorities, and structural inequalities. This is seen in the Agenda 2063 that lumped the issues and empowerment of women with the youth (different identities, different concerns) and it reinforced gender stereotypes that saw women as carriers of peace in Aspiration 5 (Hudson 2016:200). Overall, the AU's approach narrowly focused on women but "also paradoxically shying away from gender equality when it looks as if women's empowerment will exclude men" (Haastrup 2014; Hendricks 2015). This means that the AU understands gender equality as the advancement of women's rights at the expense of men's rights and opportunities. This is inherently a patriarchal and colonial way of viewing discrimination. Furthermore, despite the fact that the AU has a strong normative framework for peace and security, experts claim that it lacks an implementation strategy capable of directing its operations in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as implementing UNSCR 1325 (Desmidt *et al*. 2017:8; Haastrup, 2019:10). Additionally, an examination of peace agreements that were signed following mediation by the AU and/or RECs reveals a glaring underrepresentation of women in senior roles and in Track I mediation due to the fact that only 4 peace agreements following a woman-leading mediation team were signed between 2012 and 2016 (Desmidt *et al.* 2017:14). According to Desmidt *et al.* (2017:14), this reveals that 86% of peace agreements were signed by a man leading as a mediator.

Despite the establishment of these architectures and policies, despite 22 years after the adoption of UNSCR 1325 to ensure increased participation of women during the peace process, and the reality on the ground and despite the fact that African countries have embraced and

implemented UNSCR 1325, there is a growing gap between international and continental commitments and women are consistently underrepresented in overall peace processes. This is worsened in mediation and mediation leadership; where, in the history of mediation in Africa, women have not been deployed as leaders of mediation teams. Mminele (2019) highlights that between 2007 and 2014 only 1 out of 13 AU Special Envoys were women. Aggestam and Svennson (2018) reveal that 20 African women were involved in mediation between 1991 and 2014, however, only 6 women acted in facilitation/mediation/witness capacity. Accordingly, Limo (2018:1), highlighted that "the absence or low level of African women's participation in mediation and at the peace table is the unfinished business of UNSCR 1325". Ilesanmi (2018:1) argues "concerns over women's marginalization and invisibility in Africa policymaking, remains a fervent international discourse. These concerns are likely due to restrictive laws, cultural diversities and practices, institutional barriers, as well as disproportionate access to quality education, healthcare, and resources". This is seen in the discussion of the Penal Code in Nigeria above in chapter two. There are a number of challenges identified which African women face, in relation to mediation which includes patriarchal culture, religion, gender stereotypes, lack of political will and commitments by African governments, RECs and AU to implement UNSCR 1325. This is evident within the SADC region as only 6 out of 16 member states adopted National Action Plans (NAP) for the implementation of the WPS agenda, particularly the UNSCR 1325 (2022).

African societies wrestle to free themselves from the deep bondage of their oppressors, this is because the coloniality of power finds full expression in Africa. Through the control of authority; the control of the economy; the control of gender and sexuality, the control of knowledge and subjectivity demonstrated in chapter two illustrate that because Africa is chained by coloniality, a policy such as UNSCR 1325 and its universalist notions would be difficult to implement. At the end, the legacies of Eurocentrism, modernity and colonialism manifested in the coloniality of power are evident in Africa which not only affects how mediation is performed but how it is understood. In turn, policies and structures aimed at the increased participation of women in Track I mediation are fruitless if they do not challenge colonial, racial, gendered, capitalist, heteronormative systems. In chapter two, this study demonstrated how decolonial mediation is a suitable approach to mediation in Africa.

This chapter has thus far highlighted aspects of the UNSCR 1325 and how the AU and its policy frameworks have made significant efforts to ensure the implementation of the UNSCR

1325. However, it has also been highlighted that women remain excluded at certain levels of peace processes such as mediation, especially Track I. It is within this context that this chapter situates the participation of women in mediation tracks in Africa.

3.4.1 Women in Mediation: Mediation Tracks

It is argued that men resist sharing power with women. This is a challenge that women continue to face in mediation and mediation leadership. The implication for mediation is apparent in the current and historical trend where few women participate, especially in Track I mediation. Moreover, recent studies have also pointed out that even when women participate in mediation processes, there is little documentations or analysis of women's mediation efforts. This study seeks to add to the analysis of women in mediation by focusing on a particular strand of mediation approaches that is mediation tracks, mediation Tracks I, II and III and ultimately 1.5, because the WPS agenda and in particular the UNSCR 1325 which were discussed earlier in this chapter, is an apt example of both Track I and Track II as it demonstrates the process from informal advocacy to formal negotiations. This will highlight the role of mediation and offer an opportunity to rethink the role of mediation to accommodate the contribution of women in mediation in Africa through a decolonial feminist lens.

It is important to understand that mediation processes are multitracked - operate on several tracks simultaneously - and occur at various levels, from formal peace negotiations to informal peacebuilding. Therefore, meaningful participation of women across all tracks is required for building sustainable peace. The mediation tracks are Track I,II,III and recently 1.5. Track I is the practice of official, formal, government involving formal negotiations and decision-making between high-level political leaders – including HoS, high ranking officials, diplomats, and military leaders (leaders of warring parties). Magalhaẽs (1988:17) describes Track I mediation as, "[a]n instrument of foreign policy for the establishment and development of contacts between the governments of different states through the use of intermediaries mutually recognized by the respective parties". The official discussions at this level include peace talks, cease-fires, and peace agreements. This is the mediation track where women are significantly underrepresented, this was discussed in the exclusion of women in peace agreements above and the fact that women constituted of 6% of chief mediators between 1992 and 2019 (UN Women 2022b). Track II is the practice of non-official, informal, non-governmental interaction between influential leaders such as academic, religious, and NGO leaders and decision-makers, private individuals or groups (non-state actors). At this level, unofficial dialogue and problem-

solving strategies takes place in efforts to influence public opinion to resolve the conflict (Montville 1991). Track II serves to compliment Track I negotiations. Track III is a grassroot, civil society, and people-to-people practice. At this level, the focus is on political and legal advocacy for marginalised groups and this a level where women are overrepresented. Track 1.5 refers to processes involving both Track I and II (this means official and non-official actors work together) or individual actors act in their own capacity. This Track offers an opportunity to rethink the role of mediation to accommodate the contribution of women in mediation in Africa.

Accordingly, Hendricks (2020:69) describes mediation processes for women as ‘sites for struggle’ due to the limited success of the inclusion of women in mediation in the last 20 years. Evidently, the highest participation of women as lead mediators was 20% respectively in the DRC North Kivu and South Kivu talks and 33% in Kenya between 1992 and 2011. Examples of African women involved at Track I include Lindiwe Zulu as a facilitator in Zimbabwe, Mme Marie-Madeleine Kalala-Ngoy’s participation in a high-level mission dispatched to Guinea by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the AU Pre-Electoral Assessment Mission to Burundi, Betty Bigombe in her consistent mediation efforts in northern Uganda. Zulu and Bigombe faced numerous challenges from Zulu being referred to as a ‘street woman’ by the late and then Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe to Bigombe who was regarded as a government operative.

Women are frequently treated as war victims and/or are not given enough room to participate in formal peace process (Track 1 mediation), which continue to be overwhelmingly dominated by men. A case in point is the coup d’état that broke out in Madagascar in 2009 resulting in a political crisis. Malagasy women were instrumental in their roles in fostering reconciliation at all levels. Various women’s movements such as the Vondrona Miralenta ho an’ny Fampandrosoana (VMLF- Platform for Gender Equality and Development), representing women from different political parties, as well as the Ainga 30-50 (which aimed to ensure the achievement of 30% women’s representation in decision-making positions by 2012 and by 50% 2015), advocated for the inclusion and participation of gender in the transition process (Mbwadzawo & Ngwazi 2013:7). The VMLF saw a membership increase from 400 in 2009 to 3000 in 2011. However, despite these developments, it is unclear how many women were involved in the negotiations resulting in the signing of a SADC Roadmap that remained gender

neutral and did not acknowledge the contribution of women in mediation, thus failing to be gender sensitive.

Notably, Track II mediation has provided a platform for women to meaningfully participate in conflict resolution efforts. In Liberia, women-led Track II efforts prior to Track I negotiations by interacting with warring parties. Liberian women were consistent in their engagements as they persisted in their efforts to bring warring parties to "the negotiating table, reaching the peace agreement, and ensuring the implementation of its provisions—for example, by raising awareness about the [Comprehensive Peace Agreement] and assisting in the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process and the electoral preparations" (Dayal & Christein 2020:4). Track II mediation includes parties that would not otherwise be included at the peace table; thus, they can support and complement Track I mediation directly or indirectly. Dayal and Christien (2020:4) find that between 1989 and 2017, 60% of the peace processes were traced back to informal peace process and 71% demonstrated the contributions by women's groups. As Burgess and Burgess (2010) observe, "Track II does not stop...when Track I starts. It proceeds simultaneously as well, sometimes feeding ideas into the Track I process and sometimes supporting the Track I process by helping out with research, training, and other assigned or requested tasks. And Track II also can continue the work with mid-level leaders and the public to further engage the size of the grassroots peace constituency" (Burgess & Burgess 2010:73-74). It is within this context that this study contends that Track 1.5 is an opportunity for accommodating the contributions women make in mediation and this can be achieved through a bottom-up transfer from Track II to Track I. This would mean that the groups that were involved in peacebuilding at Track II transfer those efforts upwards to Track I without excluding women's groups in the process.

3.5 The Southern African Development Community

The AU acknowledges eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to undertake mediation efforts in their respective regions as a basis for wider African integration, and eventually continental integration. A crucial part of the peace and security architecture in Africa is the interface between the AU and RECs that enables the two sides to coordinate their response to peace interests. RECs have a responsibility to respond to conflict in their region and to coordinate with the AU in this as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) sought to do in Zimbabwe 2008-2013. Moreover, there is a growing gap, that this study seeks to explore, using regional commitments to ensure increased participation of women in

mediation. This study focuses on the commitments, particularly, the policies and mechanisms that were established regionally by the SADC. Specifically, this study has chosen to focus on the Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022) (SADC 2018). This Regional Strategy is often referred to as SADC's Regional Action Plan (RAP) – the SADC RAP because this Regional Strategy is of the regional action plans (RAP) created under the AU. This study will use the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) and the SADC RAP (2018-2022) interchangeably henceforth. This Regional Strategy promotes the search for a "prosperous and peaceful Africa in which women, men, girls and boys are all able to live with human dignity" (SADC 2018:i). Historically, the Southern African region has been entrenched in violence and instability as a result of colonial legacies, the end of the Cold War, the system of Apartheid in South Africa and flooded by a series of violent intrastate large-scale conflicts between the 1970s and 2011 as the region experienced a diverse range of anti-colonial and civil wars followed by violent election disputes.

As such, the development of the SADC sought to 'restructure' these misfortunes through regional integration as its predecessor from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). SADCC deliberately excluded issues it regarded as 'political' such as peace and security from its agenda. In this, SADC focused on creating solutions where stable and peaceful relations within the region was possible. A key objective of SADC is that of "consolidating, defending and maintaining democracy, peace, security and stability" (SADC 2001). However, domestic, political and structural instability such as the election disputes, a mutiny and an external military intervention in Lesotho in 1998; election disputes in Malawi in 1999; a constitutional crisis in Zambia in 2001; election disputes on the Zanzibar island of Tanzania in 2001; undemocratic elections and state repression and violence in Zimbabwe from 2000 onwards; and violent protests and a coup in Madagascar in 2009 to the terrorist attacks in northern Mozambique persisted and manifested in forms of large-scale recurrent violence. Although, the majority of the countries in the region have experienced relative peace and stability in the past few years, the region is wrecked with violence compared to the peace arrangements it achieved, as is evident in Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Madagascar where SADC made efforts to mediate conflicts over the years but violence continued. Evidently, the southern African region struggles with its colonial and postcolonial past as the region is the last part of the African continent to be 'freed' from colonialism (Aeby 2019).

3.5.1 SADC Mediation

The SADC has a unique strategy for achieving peace that prioritizes 'soft power strategies' like arbitration and mediation over other punitive measures, which are only used as a last resort. SADC's peacemaking mandate is found in its founding treaty and its 1996 Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC) Protocol which utilizes methods such as mediation amongst others, "to prevent, manage and resolve conflict by peaceful means" (SADC 2001:11-12). The OPDSC established a Mediation Unit structure consisting of Panel of Elders (PoE) made up of experienced and esteemed individuals whose role include conflict prevention, promotion of peace, and leading mediation missions. The PoE is supported by a Mediation Reference Group (MRG) "to deliver expertise in conflict resolution and is administered by a Mediation Support Unit for logistical support and technical issues" (Hartmann 2013:8). Despite the frequency of mediation processes in the region, there is an absence of a dedicated mediation unit. This is seen in the recent establishments of the SADC mediation unit despite conflicts in the region dating back to 30 years ago since the establishment of the regional organisation.

3.5.2 Southern African Women in Mediation

Over the past years, women's involvement in mediation in southern Africa show that women are never not involved in peace, however, a common denominator is that women remain excluded in matters of peacemaking at the highest levels. Thus, this section seeks to illustrate this point by drawing from the experiences in Mozambique and Angola. The civil war in Mozambique caused by the government forces, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambican Liberation Front, FRELIMO) and opposition Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambican National Resistance, RENAMO) claimed one million lives. The civil war was also characterised by widespread sexual violence against women, however, women were side-lined in mediation efforts between 1977-1992. Although prior to mediation efforts, women made a tremendous contribution to promoting peace by becoming the primary messengers of peace in their communities. The FRELIMO and the RENAMO agreed to an all-male mediation team composed of Mário Raffaelli from the Italian government, Andrea Ricardi and Matteo Zuppi from the Santo Egídio Community, Mozambique's Archbishop of Beira, Jaime Gonçalves and members of the Catholic hierarchy that led to a peace agreement that did not address the concerns of women, thus the Accord was not gender sensitive (Mbwadzawo & Ngwazi 2013:6). After the signing of the General Peace Accord, Mozambican women continued in their efforts of fostering peace.

Another case in point is the exclusion of women in negotiations with regards to the signing of the Lusaka Protocol in Angola in 1994. Women's groups actively fought for inclusion in the peace processes, but there was no civil society involvement and no women were on the Joint Commission, nor the delegations from the Angolan government, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the UN, Portugal, Russia or the United States (Tripp 2015:151). This resulted in a peace agreement that did not address the concerns of a cohort of people who were affected by the conflict and/or actively engaged in the conflict. While the agreement made provisions for men ex-combatants, women ex-combatants were not acknowledged. Donald Steinberg (2007), one of the US negotiators, stated at the time that "the agreement was gender neutral" because there was not a single provision in the document that discriminated against women, he later regretted this statement years on stating "I have no doubt that the exclusion of one-half of the population from the Angolan peace process – and from institutions of governance and the formal economy – meant that inadequate attention was paid to areas essential to consolidate peace and reconstruct the country" (Steinberg 2007). Other instances that saw the exclusion of women and other marginalised groups is the 2003 Sun City talks to bring about peace in the DRC did not include any women mediators, and only 16% of the negotiation parties in Zimbabwe's 2008 mediation process were women but none of the signatories (Hendricks 2015:370).

Despite the highlighted examples of how southern African women have contributed to peace negotiations and mediation efforts that show the various perspectives and practical solutions that women bring to the table, as well as the rising efforts being made to improve this recognition, it is clear that women's meaningful participation and contribution are consistently excluded, particularly at track I mediation. It is within this context that this study highlights one of the very rare cases that saw the inclusion of a Southern African woman involved in Track I mediation, in particular, the mediation role Graça Machel in the conflict in Kenya. Graça Machel was the only women in a mediation team of three (the other two were the late Kofi Annan and the late Benjamin Mkapa) appointed to resolve the 2008 post-election violent conflict in Kenya. The profile of Graça Machel as a distinguished stateswoman with personal prestige made her suitable to mediate the Kenyan conflict. She was, amongst other things, the Minister of Education and Culture in the government of Mozambique, First Lady of both South Africa and Mozambique, has had various assignments in the UN, a member of The Elders, a group of elder statesmen, peace and human rights activists tasked by Mandela to 'use their

political independence to help resolve some of the world's most intractable problems' (The Elders.org 2007).

Machel played a critical role in ensuring that women participated in these negotiations, most notably by persuading women's groups to organise themselves so they could effectively contribute to the peace talks. McGhie and Wamai (2011:16) noted that women's groups "required the impetus of Graça Machel, calling the women together, for them to overcome their own divisions in order to work together to press for a greater focus on women's issues in the process". Kenya has a robust civil society and a large number of women's groups and peace organisations that wished to influence the peace agreement by working with political party members and political leaders. During this mediation effort in Kenya, women made up 33% of the lead mediators (Desmidt *et al*. 2017:14). Machel's long engagement with women's rights issues, gender sensitivity, position and influence were key to negotiations.

3.5.3 SADC Mediation Policies for Women

SADC, in line with the AU, has positioned itself as a prominent actor in mediating conflicts and promoting peace within the region. The main objectives of SADC are, among others, to promote and defend peace and security in the region. In efforts to address the research sub-objectives: What attempts have been made to translate the UNSCR 1325 into action through AU policy frameworks and SADC policies? This section of the chapter will highlight the instruments that offer ample opportunities for member states to apply the principles of UNSCR 1325 with a focus on SADC policies. Simultaneously, it will also highlight policies that guide SADC's efforts in resolving conflict and fostering peace. This is in attempt to introduce the RAP that is the basis of this study – SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) which will be examined in chapter four. SADC established a number of policies on peace and security in accordance with the SADC Treaty (1992) institutional mechanisms. The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) called on member state to achieve 30% representation for women in political decision-making structures. The SADC Gender Unit (1998) was tasked with mainstreaming gender into policies and structures of the SADC structures. The SADC Secretariat was tasked to facilitate the achievement of empowerment of women and the promotion of gender mainstreaming in order to achieve gender equality in the region. The Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security (2001) and the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO) (2003 - revised in 2010) sought to carry out the implementation of policies in peace

and security. The SADC Gender Policy (2007) states that SADC will, amongst others, undertake to:

> b) Advocate for increased representation and participation of women in key decision-making positions in conflict resolution and peacekeeping initiatives; c) Advocate for the inclusion of women in national policy dialogue and legislate for provisions on peacekeeping and conflict resolution as reflected in the international and regional instruments…m) Support and facilitate the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
>
> (SADC Gender Policy 2007:24-25)

The Protocol on Gender and Development (2008 – revised in 2016) also seeks to further the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. Moreover, these policies and structures achieved normative progress in implementing their desired goals as the region witnessed, in particular, increased participation of women in decision-making structures as seven member states have more than 30% representation of women in parliament (SADC 2018).

Despite these existing policies and structures, women's participation in SADC mediation remains low. This is extremely concerning for SADC because the regional organisation prioritizes Track I mediation but has achieved relatively low participation of women in mediation. This study has demonstrated that this Track does not accommodate the kinds of contributions women make nor does it allow women to assume mediation leadership positions. Thus, it is necessary for SADC to move away from only one way of mediation. SADC has managed to attain comparatively low percentage for the appointment of women to lead or take part in mediation teams. Less than 10% of mediation teams often consist of SADC women (Mbwadzawo & Ngwazi 2013:3). This reveals power structures that are embedded in society and the prevailing patriarchal nature of mediation. Thus, there is an acknowledgment for a need of inclusivity for mediation in southern Africa that will challenge the race/gender/class/sexuality oppression.

3.6 A Decolonial Feminist Analysis

A decolonial feminist analysis is necessary to challenge the above-mentioned policies and structures. The main critique of the WPS agenda is the need to shift from 'women, peace and security' to 'gender, peace and security' to address gendered power dynamics, gender roles and expectations. Decolonial feminism understands gender is a relational concept which means factors such as class, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, and geographical location are created in relationship with gender identities. For the WPS agenda to be effective, any and all

gendered dynamics encountered need to be taken into account. Another area that is not considered is the lack of challenging colonial and patriarchal systems. According to Motoyama (2018), the framework of the WPS agenda represents the liberal order of power rather than introducing the voices of women into the domains of peace. The WPS allows liberal countries to exert their privileged position within the global security system by imposing moral authority on the remainder, with little benefit to civil societies in need of delinking from the colonial past (Motoyama 2018:50). This is seen in the Burundi mediation when the Belgians dismissed any prospects to include a platform that would address the violence of colonialism as well as post-independence violence side-lining the interests of parties to the conflict.

Decolonial feminism compels one to scrutinize global development initiatives with skepticism and attention to the greater axis of power relations. A decolonial feminist theory of geography is required for more in-depth knowledge of world issues. This is due to a number of factors. First, the described global system of power is based on mainstream geographical conceptions that localise the places of violence and rationalise those who are victims and perpetrators. This is visibly evident in the little to no attention given to how conflict affects gender minorities and what role they could play in peacemaking. Such imperial reasoning is naturalised in the WPS agenda and is Eurocentric at its core. Decolonial feminism, in essence, challenges us to investigate the relationship between violence and specific geographical areas. This crude geopolitical division indicates a series of imperial policies critical to the fulfilment of the Western narrative. This has several ramifications for marginalised women, gender minorities, women from the Global South, people of lower-class status, black and brown women (men in some contexts). Put simply, gender identities intersect with other identity factors such as class, age, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation which are rarely considered within the WPS framework.

Moreover, there is a need to reconsider ‘gender’ within the UNSCR1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies. This is because there is a conflation of women and gender in these policies. These policies apply a blanket approach to gender, one that assumes women and gender as synonymous, and this is evidently seen in the UNSCR 1325. Through the resolution, the Security Council mandated that institutions involved in establishing, maintaining, and re-establishing peace, as well as post-conflict reconstruction, incorporate gender into their policies and procedures and ensure women's participation in peace and security. It admonished the UNSG “to appoint more women as Special Representatives and Special Envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf”, and urged actors involved in peace negotiation and peace agreement

implementation to embrace a gender perspective and take further steps to encourage local women's peace initiatives (UNSC 2000:2). Moreover, in regard to mediation, the resolution categorically stipulates that "Member States are to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict" (UNSCR 2000:2). While it is argued that the resolution offers a broad, all-encompassing, and complete policy framework for resolving the difficulties and gaps relating to women, conflict, peace, and security. Intersecting identities (race, class, gender, sexuality, geographies) and structural inequalities (colonial, racial, patriarchal, gendered, and heteronormative systems) are not considered. The resolution acknowledges that women are disproportionately affected by conflict-related violence, but it also emphasizes the important roles that women play in preventing conflicts and calls for their involvement at all stages of peace processes, including peacekeeping, negotiations, and peacebuilding. However, such progress/achievements are limiting as they do not challenge intersecting identities (race, class, gender, sexuality, geographies) and structural inequalities (colonial, racial, patriarchal, gendered, and heteronormative systems). Decolonial feminism advocacy for the inclusion of gender minorities in all spheres of policies and this is evidently ignored in the UNSCR 1325. This is also observed in the resolution's inclusion of the Participation Pillar that only focuses on the participation of women. This resolution falls short because it does not acknowledge intersecting identities (race, class, gender, sexuality, geographies), structural inequalities (colonial, racial, patriarchal, gendered, and heteronormative systems) and the inclusion of gender minorities.

Furthermore, the lack of the UNSCR 1325 to challenge structural issues that undermine gender mainstreaming is criticised. However, gender mainstreaming itself should be up for critique based on its understanding of gender equality between men and women while blatantly ignoring other gender minorities. Decolonial feminism considers 'gender equality' as a reflection of liberal understandings of equality which focuses on the equality of the sexes instead of challenging gender oppression. Thus, through a decolonial feminist perspective, the UNSCR 1325 as a policy aimed at the advancement of women in mediation falls short because it did not challenge the coloniality of gender and gender oppression. Hence the aim of focusing on women in mediation whilst acknowledging gender minorities and intersecting identities is at the heart of decolonial feminism. Moreover, the aim of focusing on women in mediation whilst acknowledging gender minorities and intersecting identities is to move away from the patriarchal/traditional/heteronormative practice of mediation that is cis-gender-male-centred

and move towards mediation that sees the inclusion of women and gender minorities in all aspects of the mediation processes.

At the heart of critiquing the UNSCR 1325 is that the resolution has neoliberal underpinnings (Cohn *et al*. 2004; True 2013) and that the resolution ignores the visible issue that is to enable women to contribute in any progressive and transformational discourse, structural reforms are required. Because the resolution offers an all-encompassing framework at regional, continental, and international levels, it does not contextualise the structures that are deeply rooted in coloniality of gender that prevent women's participation in mediation. It rather generalises that women worldwide are on equal footing. The general assumptions that women globally are on equal footing is the very essence of Western feminism. Subsequently, "[t]he resolution was seen to be doing little to challenge structural or root causes and power hierarchies that perpetuate women's inequality with further claims that the UN uses the resolution to validate their inability to address structural changes" (Bosetti & Cooper 2015; Olonisakin *et al*. 2010; Hendricks 2015). Further highlighting the significance of structural changes, Bosetti and Cooper (2015) argued that increasing the number of women would not result in any substantial change or success if they are simply forced into the same systems that are designed to prevent their meaningful participation. Therefore, without removing and addressing structural barriers, the participation and significant contribution of women will be restricted and will only serve as 'smokescreen'. As the UN prepared for the celebration of 22 years of this landmark resolution, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, in her speech titled 'Let's put an end to 'where are the women?" further foregrounded the need to 'honour our commitments' in relation to the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (UN Women 2022a). At its core, this speech demonstrated the lack to acknowledge the root causes that hinder the full implementation of the UNSCR 1325, instead it focused on an 'add and stir' approach which is detrimental to the participation of women.

Moreover, what is missing from the UNSCR 1325 critique is threefold: the lack of literature challenging the particular strand of feminism that is represented in UNSCR 1325. Although it has been established that feminism is not a monolith, Western feminism is assumed in the UNSCR 1325. This is a reflection of the control of knowledge and subjectivity where universalist notions of 'women' are implied and applied. Secondly, operationalising the resolution takes a state-centric approach which further entrenches coloniality of power in

Africa. The African state, albeit a contested concept, was inherited from its gruesome colonial past which failed to transform from colonial to postcolonial and is currently in a neo-colonial state. Furthermore, the obsession with preserving the neo-colonial state in Africa is deeply rooted in the colonial experience. Most African states are grappling to find their feet within Euro-North American imposed notions of 'state', instead what is evident in most African societies are hybrid political orders. Political hybrid orders refer to a combination of traditional African governance and formal (colonial) institutions that were inherited from former colonial powers.

Consequently, the resolution applying a state-centric approach to hybrid political ordered societies is inherently a reflection of coloniality because coloniality demonstrates how "…revolutions and independence struggles in the colonies transformed outward coloniality [European direct control over colonies] into internal colonialism [local elites managing the colonial nation-states according to the script of the European idea of modernity]" (Mignolo 2018:122). Ultimately mediation solely concerns the attainment of a 'functioning' state in place rather than transforming the conflict or promoting indigenous civil society structures (Zondi 2017: 126). Lastly, the lack of recognition of structures of global capitalism, imperialism, and coloniality of power that the world is produced and continues to operate in and thus informs the UNSCR 1325.

The UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies do not challenge coloniality of gender. Lugones (2010) argues that 'humanity' and 'gender' were never assigned to colonised subjects. Therefore, acknowledging coloniality of gender allows decolonial feminism to challenge the category 'woman' (Velez 2019: 399). These policies use a colonial construct categorisation of 'woman' that does not acknowledge gender minorities, intersecting identities and structural inequalities. Decolonial feminism calls for decolonising gender as it permits an investigation on the relationship between gender and women. Lugones (2010:746) argues that the notion of divided gender identities, that is masculinity and femininity, are Eurocentric brought by colonialism to colonised subjects. As a result, any progress made by these policies in the framework of women, peace and security only play into the very structures that furthers women's oppression and marginalisation.

Furthermore, there are other dimensions in the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies on women and peace that are rarely acknowledged and one of those dimensions

is the lack of challenging the imperia/capitalist systems and how women engage within the economy. There is a lack of challenging the imperial/capitalist system that societies live under which remain the root causes of conflict in some African societies. The global capitalist power order is not a natural order, it is an order of inequality that was manufactured for Euro-North American interests, which is reflected in the economy as the distribution of wealth is according to a racial/ethnic/gender/location group one belongs (Mignolo 2007). In this, the lowest class status is assigned to the 'black', the 'woman', the 'ethnic minority', the 'gender minority' from the Global South while the highest-class status is given to the cis-gendered white male from the Global North. This is the colonial economy that wrecked Africa along with its gendered division of labour that further saw the economic marginalisation of African women.

Nevertheless, the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies take grand stance on the economic empowerment of women to rectify historical economic marginalisation. The understandings of women's economic empowerment by these policy frameworks have liberal undertones. While these frameworks acknowledge that women's economic empowerment is instrumental for women's agency, development as well as durable peace, Haastrup (2014) argues that emphasis on women's equal representation (for instance, adding women) as seen within these policy frameworks reflect the pragmatic interpretation of Western liberal principles. Rhetorical commitments to "the empowerment of women, the eradication of domestic violence, and the equal social, economic and political development of men and women" are not enough to shift patriarchal power relations (Haastrup 2014:107). Moreover, Gordon (1996:7) also states that the capitalist economy which is the global power structure, sustains patriarchy and it is within this foundation that the system of patriarchy should be examined in the African context.

Furthermore, the method employed for women's economic empowerment is rooted in liberal Western feminism as it focuses on including women into the formal economy and ignores the contributions women make in the informal economy. The informal economy contributes an estimated average of 43% to the GDP of African states (Hara *et al*. 2017: 3). "This also relates the findings that in Africa most of the cross-border trade is undertaken by the informal sector, and hence referred to as informal crossborder trade (ICBT)" (Hara *et al*. 2017: 3). "It is estimated that over 70% of the informal cross-border traders in the SADC region are women" (Hara *et al*. 2017: 3). In Africa, the informal sector is the primary employer and the engine of economic growth, accounting for 80.8% of jobs. For instance, research conducted by Jimu in

2017 at various border posts, specifically those situated between South Africa and Zimbabwe found that informal cross-border trade showed that at the Beitbridge border post 89% of the fish traders were female and 11% were male. However, women in African fisheries are marginalized despite being the predominant actors in the sector (COMESA 2011; Hara *et al*. 2017; Jimu 2017). It is becoming increasing important for regional as well as global trade to empower women within this context because understanding economic empowerment through this context enables the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies to challenge their neo-liberal understanding of economic empowerment and apply a decolonial feminist understanding which challenges the imperial/capitalist system that societies live under.

Furthermore, decolonial feminism challenges gender/sexuality oppression as discussed in Chapter Two. At the heart of critiquing gender/sexuality oppression, decolonial feminism challenges heteronormativity- the assumption that cis-gendered men with masculine traits and cis-gendered women with feminine traits are the norm, and that heterosexuality is natural (heterosexuality as false universalism). However, heteronormativity is assumed within the policies discussed in this chapter. The UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies subscribe to international law which is founded on Euro-North American notions that assume heteronormativity. These policies and normative frameworks are inescapably confined by masculine and heteronormative boundaries. Subsequently, mediation takes cis-gendered men's bodies and experience as a point of departure. Heteronormativity in mediation is often seen in the describing a mediator based on either masculine traits such as 'trustworthiness', 'impartiality', 'assertive', 'credible' for male mediators and feminine traits such as 'emotional', 'partial' (because on their gender). These descriptions are not only detrimental to women but further perpetuate heteronormativity within mediation that does not acknowledge other sexual orientations. Moreover, the belief that mediation is gender-neutral reinforces the already gendered nature of conflict which ultimately reproduce power structures and unequal gender relations. Sapiano affirms that "the structures and institutions constraining peace mediation practices and design are grounded in and reinforced by international legal and political frameworks bounded by assumptions of masculinity and femininity that uphold the international patriarchal order" (Sapiano 2020:460).

Moreover, Hudson (2016) questions "if we acknowledge that gender is about more than just women, can we push the boundaries of the term to include other marginalized groups and individuals?" Hudson (2016) contends that the narrow heteronormative understandings of who

is considered 'women' and 'men' which is Eurocentric at its core, explains the slow progress in implementing the UNSCR 1325. This is the same with the AU policy frameworks and SADC policies. Part of the problem is that these policies seldom, if at all, "mention masculinities, femininities, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, [queer], intersex and [asexual] (LGBTQIA+) community, with serious consequences for policy and the capacity to address gender-based violence against transgendered people, for instance" (Hudson 2016). This is visibly evident in the AU's Gender Policy (2009) which only acknowledges 'women, men, girls, and boys' as the only 'two sexes'. The inclusion of LGBTQIA+ issues remain largely ignored in Africa, taken as 'unAfrican', 'unnatural' or even seen as 'going against God'.

At the heart of this chapter is the need to highlight the 'blindness' of the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC policies. There is a lack of recognition of colonial, racial, capitalist and gendered systems. This further perpetuates power imbalances institutionalised in these systems; thus, these are the implications of establishing policies and structures that are a reflection of Euro-North American-centric worldviews. Moreover, these policies employ a 'binary and dualist perspective' which pairs contrasted opposites such as man versus woman, this is inherently Eurocentric as Eurocentrism views the world through binaries of being versus non-being, civilised versus primitive. There is a need to reconsider mediation as a Western gendered institution, in that Eurocentric notions are taken as universal in policies that guide women's participation in mediation. Evidently, decolonial feminism challenges the colonial, racial, gender, class and sexuality blindness of these policy frameworks and structures. Therefore, decolonial feminism addresses issues of colonial structures, patriarchal societies, capitalist systems and heteronormative gender dynamics. This paradigm understands the intersection of racial and gender oppression with other forms of oppression that are overlooked in these existing policy and normative frameworks.

While these policies solely focus on women or conflate women and gender, a decolonial feminist perspective on policy would take into account the how gender identities influence and intersect with other factors such as race, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, geographical location. As a result, a decolonial feminist viewpoint allows for the engagement of silenced marginalised voices in the Global South. Hence, decolonial feminism sheds light on the experiences, knowledges, and worldviews of voices that are typically marginalised in the global arena. Decolonial feminism considers what mediation and these existing policies that guide mediation would mean for the non-white, non-gendered, non-heterosexual

individuals. This ties together with the calls for plurality where a multiplicity of knowledges, ideas, and experiences in mediation are incorporated. In this, decolonial feminism embraces an epistemic shift "in which all individuals and all communities have the freedom to be unique since everyone is seen as equal and all cultures and nationalities are treated equally" (Paludi *et al.* 2019). Akin to this is pluriversalism (coined by Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015) which imagines many worlds and embraces all geographies, and all identities are given equal recognition. Thus, the failure to embrace all identities and geographies results in the persistence to the barriers to women's meaningful participation in mediation as well as ensuring an inclusive, holistic approach that takes into account gender minorities and intersecting identities and what contributions they can make to mediation and ultimately to fostering lasting peace.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided an overview of Women, Peace and Security in efforts to give an account of the roles of women in peace processes. Although this chapter acknowledges the normative progress regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325, challenges persist at international, continental, and regional levels. Thus, at the heart of this chapter is structural inequality blindness - lack of recognition of colonial, racial, patriarchal, gendered, and heteronormative systems - in policies advocating for women's participation in mediation is brought forward highlighting the colonial and gendered nature of conflict and mediation. Centring existing policies and structures such as the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC, this highlighted through referencing existing literature how women continue to be side-lined despite these existing policy frameworks.

The chapter recognizes a common theme that reveals that despite existing policies and structures, women's participation in mediation remains very low. The cited reasons for this in literature include but not limited to selection criteria; patriarchy; culture, religion and norms; political will and lack of commitment by African governments, RECs and AU to implement UNSCR 1325; limited resources or lack thereof. However, much criticism regarding the lack of implementation of the UNSCR 1325 is its lack to challenge the existing structures that perpetuate women's exclusion in peace process and in particular mediation.

It is within this context that this chapter highlighted the importance of using a decolonial feminist lens because it strives to eliminate gender/class/race/sexuality oppression, which originated with the colonial past and is still rooted in the capitalist world system of power

(Kusnierkiewicz 2019). Towards the end of this chapter, the study focuses on SADC in effort to introduce the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) which will be analysed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

A DECOLONIAL FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY REGIONAL STRATEGY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (2018-2022)

4.1 Introduction

This study has chosen to focus on SADC's RAP – the *Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022)* (SADC 2018). This RAP seeks to advance, amongst other things, the participation of women in peace and security process which includes mediation and promotes the search for a "prosperous and peaceful Africa in which women, men, girls and boys are all able to live with human dignity" (SADC 2018:i). Moreover, the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) "serves as an overall guide for SADC to mainstream gender into SADC's peace and security mechanisms and processes in order to address the specific challenges experienced by women..." (SADC 2018:1). Overall, the RAP serves as a guide for SADC to carry out its vision, goals, and strategies for women in peace and security, conflict, and post-conflict recovery contexts. It also provides an implementation matrix. Importantly, the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) is a policy framework that seeks to operationalise the Women, Peace and Security commitments (in particular the UNSCR 1325) amongst others and seeks to further the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 in the region.

Thus, this chapter aims to delve deeper in the central research question of the study: How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325? Using qualitative data presentation and the interpretation of the research findings, this chapter integrates the data from the research findings with the theoretical framework, the literature review and methodology and makes a link to the study research question (s) and research objective (s).

In the methodology section in chapter one, this study described the research approach and design for the study, the data analysis method was based on qualitative content analysis through a deductive approach which was used to generate patterns guided by the research question (s),

objective (s) and theoretical framework. From the data analysis, four patterns emerged from the data, namely inclusion, participation, identity and representation.

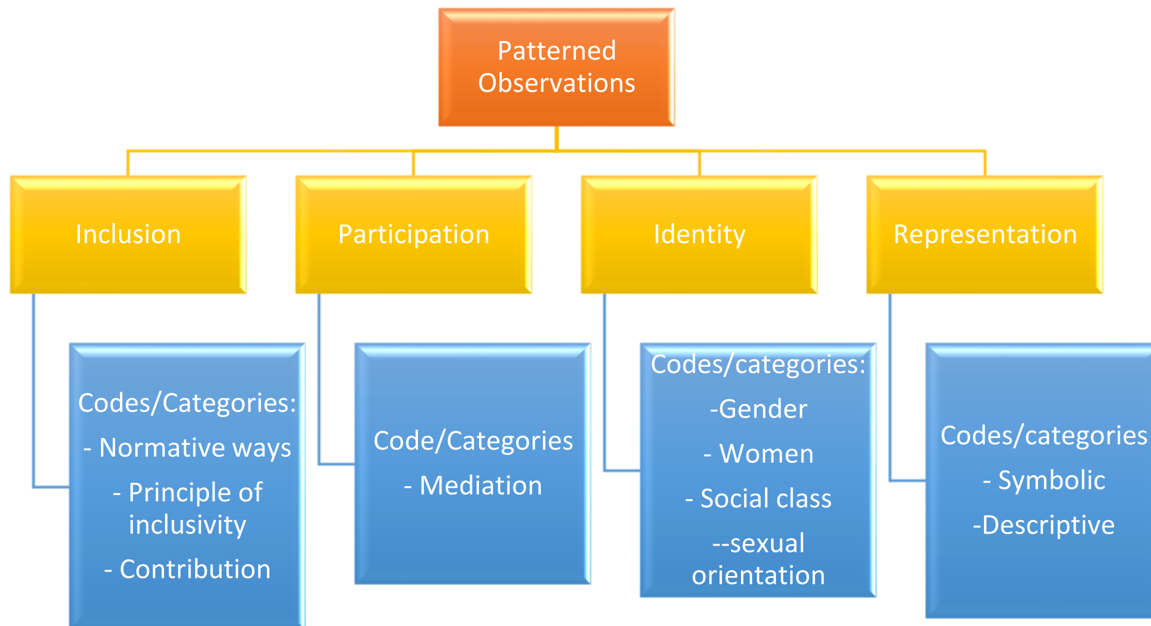
The aim of this chapter is to analyse the Regional Strategy in order to rethink the role of mediation to accommodate the contributions of women in mediation in southern Africa and broadly the African continent.

4.2 Assigned Codes and Patterned Observations

For each of the patterned observations made, numerous codes were identified and assigned using an illustration in the form of the table demonstrated below (Table 4.2). Patterned observations within literature are assigned codes that will be used to analyse the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022).

- **Inclusion**: why should women's participation in mediation be considered?
- **Participation**: what role women play in society, women in high-level decision-making positions, women in mediation, women acting in the capacity of a mediator
- **Identity**: gender is the unit of analysis however other identities such as social class and sexual orientation are used to limit women's participation in mediation
- **Representation**: understanding how women are represented

Table 4.2 i: Patterned Observations in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022)



4.2.1 Patterned Observation 1: Inclusion

To capture the nature and extent of women's inclusion in mediation processes is based on the normative ways that concern why and how women should be included in mediation processes. The Regional Strategy makes statements that women should be included on the principle of inclusivity and the contributions they would bring to mediation. Contributions highlight the efforts women make in peace processes. According to the Regional Strategy the women's distinct experiences, concerns and well-being are not sufficiently accounted for, leaving women exposed and unprotected during the post-conflict period (SADC 2018). To remedy this, the strategy, in accordance with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development seeks to support and facilitate the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. The UNSCR 1325 reiterates the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in decision-making structures and processes.

The strategy advocates for the inclusion of women through policy, "c) Advocate for the inclusion of women in national policy dialogue and legislate for provisions on peacekeeping and conflict resolution as reflected in the international and regional instruments" (SADC 2018:10). One of the objectives of the Regional Strategy is to "enable the development of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security and to strengthen the capacity for their implementation" (SADC 2018:33). Since the adoption of the Regional Strategy (2018) and at the time of writing (2022) there are six National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security by member states Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia,

South Africa. The strategy emphasises that "all countries in SADC should adopt plans or strategies for implementing the agreed to UNSCR 1325, Maputo Protocol and Article 28 of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol" (SADC 2018).

Anil argues that "most, if not all, international commitments have to be 'domesticated' before they are actually implemented". Thus, NAPs on WPS are created with the purpose to ensure that the International WPS agenda and in particular, UNSCR 1325 is domesticated. According to the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2022), despite existing international policies, "women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of the consequences of conflict, remain marginalised from peace processes and high SGBV prevalence rates continue unabated" (SADC 2018:2). The Regional Strategy contends that this is in part due to "the *non-domestication* of these global instruments and a lack of translation of the policy frameworks into specific strategies at national and regional levels" (SADC 2018:2). The strategy emphasises the importance of NAPs. It is within this context that this chapter foregrounds the NAPs on WPS of Namibia and South Africa. Worth noting, Namibia helped birth the UNSCR 1325 on WPS as the country held the UNSC presidency. Namibia's NAPs on WPS (2019-2024) aims to advance, among other things, the inclusion of women in peace processes such as mediation, this is in line with the country's political will to create gender equality.

This is evident in the many legal and policy frameworks that promote women's empowerment such as the National Gender Policy (2010-2020) that outlines strategies for women's inclusion in the peace and security sector such as all levels of decision-making peace processes. Moreover, in efforts to demonstrate commitment to the full and effective implementation of the UNSCR 1325, Namibia launched an International Women Peace Centre in 2020 reaffirming the country's commitments to women's inclusion and peace. This centre aspires to capture the diverse contributions women make in peace and security and seeks to strengthen regional and international innovation to advance the implementation of the WPS agenda. Currently 44% of the National Assembly constitute of women and the Deputy Prime of Namibia and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation is Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah a woman who led together with others the efforts to introduce the WPS agenda at UNSC which ultimately resulted in the historic UNSCR 1325.

South Africa has consistently served as an example for women's participation in peace processes. During Apartheid, women banded together across party lines and requested 30%

representation in the negotiations. This is where they also developed the Women's Charter, which was adopted in 1954 and outlined the essential gender equality principles that served as the foundation for the gender-sensitive peace agreement and later the country's 1997 constitution. The Women's Charter played a significant role in setting the tone for today's democratic order in South Africa. Therefore, it is not surprising that South Africa is the only southern African country leading gender representation in governance. Following the elections in May 2019, the country achieved gender parity, with women making up 50% of the Cabinet and 44% of the Parliament. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation is Naledi Pandor a woman who advocates for women's inclusion in mediation. Moreover, South Africa is the only country in the region to have a woman preside over the Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans since 2012. South Africa endorsed UNSC Resolution 2493 (2019) of WPS, demonstrating its dedication to the ongoing and complete implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and all subsequent resolutions on WPS in a mutually reinforcing way. The UNSC approved the Resolution on October 29, 2019.

4.2.2 Patterned Observation 2: Participation

It has been established in chapter three of this study that women play multiple roles in peace processes. Subsequently, the Regional Strategy acknowledges the multiple roles women play in conflict situations and makes references to women's roles as combatants (11) in defence forces, rebel movements and extremist organisations across the continent; as activists (4) and/or human rights defenders (2) in line with the role of local peacebuilders, civil society activists and providers of humanitarian support (SADC 2018:1). The Strategy also highlights that whether women assumed the roles of victims or actors in conflict, they are excluded when formal peace processes (peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding) begin. As a result, their experiences and concerns are not taken into consideration (SADC 2018). The Regional Strategy is dominated by commitment to address sexual violence and is preoccupied with the roles of women as victims compared to women as peacemakers. The Strategy makes references as follows: women as victim (2), victims (11), victimhood (1), SGBV (196), sexual violence (14), protection (20), protection of women (11), patriarch (2), structure violence (1), participation (58), peacekeeping (25), peacekeepers (20), peacebuilding (31), peacemakers (0), peacemaking (2) mediation (26), women mediators (5), women in mediation (1).

With regards to participation, the Regional Strategy defines participation as ensuring that men and women have equal opportunity (1) to fully engage in and be represented in organizations

and activities connected to peace and security. Moreover, the Strategy emphasises women's roles on the ground such as peacekeeping/peacekeepers/peacebuilding while little attention is given to women's roles as peacemakers/involvement in peacemaking. The Strategy seeks to ensure the participation (58) and representation (29) of women in peace and security decision-making structures and processes, much like article 28 of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which urges States Parties to make every effort to implement measures to ensure that women are equally represented and participate in key decision-making roles in peace processes for resolving disputes and fostering peace. Moreover, Article 10 of the Maputo Protocol iterates that State parties are called upon to take appropriate measures to ensure the participation of women in, amongst others, the systems and processes used at all levels—local, national, regional, continental, and international—for conflict prevention, management, and resolution all in accordance to the UNSCR 1325.

The strategy states that the SADC Organ Directorate is the lead implementer of the strategy and the Gender Unit will occupy an oversight role of the implementation of the strategy. What is overlooked is the need to reform institutions such as the SADC Organ Directorate which is gender neutral, failure to do this results in vicious cycle of adding women in the same institutions that perpetuate their inequality. The SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) under Strategic Objective 4 seeks to ensure that there is an increase of participation of women in mediation in the Panel of Elders, Mediation Support Unit and the Mediation Reference Group as well as ensuring that these structures are gender balanced and trained on gender mainstreaming in mediation. In 2018 South African President and then Chairman of the Organ Cyril Ramaphosa sent his team consisting of one man and two women to mediate in Lesotho. However, it is unclear if his decisions were influenced by the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022). Nevertheless, on the 28th of February 2022, H.E President Masisi appointed letters to SADC Panel of Elders which only comprised of 4 men and the Mediation Reference Group which has 2 men and 2 women (SADC 2022). The MRG aims to improve member states' use of mediation as a tool for peaceful conflict prevention, containment, and resolution as well as their comprehension of the main causes and possible triggers of conflict among SADC countries. Thus, the inclusion of women in this institution holds prospects for women's participation in mediation.

The Regional Strategy acknowledges the poor representation of women in mediation (26) and peacebuilding (32) and thus advocates for change in this area (SADC 2018:25). However, areas

such as 'women as special envoys' and 'women as senior representatives' are not mentioned in the entire document. The 'missing words' solidifies that the involvement of women in mediation, especially Track I in southern Africa is not a high priority to SADC. A focus that generalises the inclusion of women in mediation without acknowledging where they are least represented (Track I) is a commitment overlooked by the Regional Strategy which reinforces gendered mediation practices. The Regional Strategy refers to *many* mediators appointed to resolve conflict across the region and continent, however, the 'many mediators' were overwhelmingly men, missing ample opportunities to appoint women mediators as seen in SADC's Commission of Inquiry into the death of Mahao were there was only one woman in a mediation team of ten (SADC 2018). The Regional Strategy acknowledges that women's participation in mediation is low however the Strategy overlooks the underrepresentation of women as lead mediators. The importance of women's participation is articulated in the UNSCR 1325 urging "the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf" and again in UNSCR 2122 (2013) which requests the strengthening of the appointment of women at senior levels as mediators; and again by the AU's The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality accents the importance of implementing UNSCR 1325 and calls for the appointment of women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the AU. This is a potential commitment to foreground the contribution of women at high-level decision-making that the Regional Strategy unfortunately overlooks, despite the UNSCR 1325, UNSCR 2122 and The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality acknowledging the underrepresentation of women within Track I mediation.

4.2.3 Patterned Observation 3: Identity

The Regional Strategy mentions 'identity' only once as a cause of conflict in SADC, 'women' are mentioned 310 times, 'gender' is mentioned 361 times (in some contexts it concerns policies or structures), 'men' are mentioned 25 times, while other identity factors such as class, age, ethnicity, sexuality are not mentioned. The Regional Strategy assumes that these identity factors (class, age, ethnicity, sexuality) in no way affect the participation of women and gender minorities in peace and security processes and structures. In other words, there are no considerations of how conflict and structural violence could potentially result in gender differentiated experiences that could be contributed to peacemaking/mediation. Thus, the Regional Strategy applies a blanket approach to gender, one that assumes women and gender as synonymous, and this is evidently seen in other gender policies discussed in chapter three. The Strategy mentions 'equal' 8 times, 'equality' is mentioned 58 times. In terms of equal

opportunities for both women and men, the Strategy assumes men and women are on the same level playing field. The failure to acknowledge that men have an advantage in society benefits men because gendered power relations are reinforced, and women assume a subservient position in relation to men. Lastly, the mode of communication written in a European language (English) further exacerbates a disconnect between the Regional Strategy to the individuals who it is meant to assist.

4.2.4 Patterned Observation 4: Representation

The Regional Strategy mentions 'representation' 56 times and 'gender parity' 7 times in terms of increasing women's political empowerment and decision-making structures. The concept of representation is varied, complex and multidimensional. Heywood (2002: 224) believes that the relationship through which a person or group advocates for or takes action on behalf of a wider group of people is known as representation in politics. Pitkin (1967) offers one of the most straightforward explanations of political representation, that is, to represent is to "make present again". The Regional Strategy heavily relies on political representation as a means to increase women's participation and representation in decision making structures as well as peace and security structures and processes as seen with statements such as "a more concerted effort needs to be put in those countries that have representations below 30% and more encouragement and an enabling environment needs to be created for those that are well on their way to reaching 50%" (SADC 2018:24).

This demonstrates that the Regional Strategy's understanding of representation is that women make up half of the population in the region which needs to be reflected in their societies and that women have unique and important contributions to make in decision-making and security structures. This is what Pitkin (1967) referred to as 'descriptive representation' which is the extent an individual representative "stands for" the represented by virtue of sharing traits with the represented, such as race, sex, age, class, occupation, gender, ethnicity, or region; which goes hand in hand with symbolic representation where the "symbolic importance attributed to women in positions of political leadership is routinely invoked as an explanation for the need to elect more women, regardless of whether men can represent women's substantive interests" (Kurebwa 2015:52). These concepts of representation "speak for", "act for" and can even "stand for" something that is not present (Pitkin, 1967; Carroll, 2001; Barker, 2006). Thus, only gender is used as the descriptive and symbolic representation in the Regional Strategy. Women representing women can be seen as a form of direct participation in decision-making structures.

Symbolic Representation occurs when a representative becomes 'symbolic' for the group that they represent. This is important for women in leadership because these women can become a 'symbolic icon' that women (in general) can look up to (Pitkin 1967:92-111). Descriptive representation emphasizes the quantity of representations. The argument is based on the notion that in order to achieve political representation, it is important to be representative of all social groups. This concept authenticates the notion that "one of us" represents us while decisions are being made (Pitkin 1967: 60-91). Hence, it is evident to see the connections of these concepts of representation with the Regional Strategy. The call for increasing the representation of women in the SADC Organ Directorate because women only make up 33% of unit (SADC 2018:27) are references of symbolic and descriptive representations present in the Strategy. This is also seen in the following reference, "having high numbers of women in the security sector institutions will enable SADC Member States who send peacekeepers to the AU and UN peace missions to send more women as peacekeepers" (SADC 2018:24). This can be understood as both descriptive representation where the focus is on increasing the number of women in these peace and security structures as well as symbolic representation where calls are made to elect more women.

4.3 A Decolonial Feminist Analysis

Given the above patterned observations, namely, inclusion, participation, identity, and representation, a decolonial feminist analysis on the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) is necessary. Decolonial feminism challenges colonial/gender/class/sexuality oppression which is crucial in this study because international resolutions such as the UNSCR 1325 are institutional frameworks that guide mediation processes. Therefore, decolonial feminism is able to take into account the varied and complex experiences of women and gender in mediation. Moreover, it allows for an analysis of the interlinking of colonial, structural, patriarchal, capitalist, heteronormative aspects of societies. Most academic and policy analyses have neglected this intersectional aspect that guides mediation. This is evident in the exclusions of women, gender, and intersecting identities in mediation processes, especially Track I.

This research study employed a qualitative content analysis with a deductive approach and used Description Coding and Evaluation Coding to analyse the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022). This chapter will use Phase Two and steps (iv), (v), and (vi) from Kibiswa's (2019) three-phase and eight-step schema. Given that decolonial feminism is the theoretical

framework that guided the study, it is within this context that this section will integrate the research findings with the theoretical framework- decolonial feminism.

The first patterned observation found in the SADC Regional Strategy is 'inclusion'. The Regional Strategy seeks to include women in decision-making structures and peace and security structures through increasing their participation in these very structures. However, inclusion in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS has neo-liberal Western feminism underpinnings and understandings of inclusion in that it regards inclusion as a matter of equality. Put simply, neo-liberal Western feminist understandings contend that if women are included, there is equality. This results in the problematic 'add-stir' approach visible in the Strategy that seeks to merely include women in gendered institutions instead of reforming and transforming the very institutions that limit women's participation. Decolonial feminism requires challenging the very structures that perpetuate women's exclusion as well as other marginalised identities. Moreover, the constant mention of 'inclusive' and/or 'integrated' and/or 'holistic' approaches to women's participation in peace processes by the Regional Strategy needs further observation. The understandings of 'inclusive', 'integrated' or 'holistic' here is grounded on a narrow understanding of male-female categories. This is seen in gender mainstreaming which integrates men and women's concerns and experiences in policies and programmes. Such an interpretation of inclusion negates other gender identities who are equally affected by structural inequalities, conflict, and violence. Decolonial feminism prioritises 'pluriversalism' – a universe where all identities are given equal recognition compared to the universalist notions found in Eurocentrism that centre European understandings of knowing, thinking and being.

Moreover, SADC seeks to 'localise' or 'domesticate' the UNSCR 1325 through the Regional Strategy as well as NAPs. This means that SADC will lead the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 by advocating for the adoption of NAPs because there is a lack of translation of the UNSCR 1325 at national levels. However, Olonisakin *et al* (2015:386) argue that it "is difficult to observe real transformation in the key areas that form the focus of NAPs". Nevertheless, the Strategy will prioritise 'local ownership, local responsibility and local commitment' (SADC 2018). However, the desire to localise the knowledge surrounding the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 will clash with the lack of the Strategy to challenge coloniality/modernity, capitalism as well as patriarchy that are evident in the Southern African region. Adopting a decolonial feminist viewpoint allows us to empathize with the social and economic challenges

faced by women, gender minorities, as well as other intersecting identities in the region. At the heart of the problem is that the domestication of the UNSCR 1325 is a top-down approach where the international community sets the precedent for the rest of the world.

In other words, the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 by SADC means that knowledge production comes from the international level (which is inherently Eurocentric) and the rest of the world (in this case SADC) has to apply this knowledge which is universal and does not challenge the colonial/patriarchal/gendered/capitalist/heteronormative operations of the world. Hudson highlights how knowledge produced about gendering peacemaking “gains respectability by virtue of being produced in the West, as part of the liberal family” (Hudson 2016:5). In this setup, local contexts are “domesticated” as sites of empirical knowledge where Western theory is applied (Hudson 2016:5). Thus, the local is “viewed in terms of its potential to provide content to be studied and explained and not as having theoretical agency of its own” (Hudson 2016:5). Equally, Autesserre argues that “what constitutes peace[making] at the national and international levels does not automatically ‘trickle down’ to the local levels” (2017: 124).

Decolonial feminism centres an alternative viewpoint that understands various experiences, perspectives, worldviews of women, gender minorities, and other intersecting identities. For SADC, a decolonial feminist approach would mean incorporating a bottom-up approach where local and indigenous knowledges that acknowledge how the world is produce is prioritised. In this, the SADC is able to understand itself through its own experiences and worldviews instead of using international policies such as the UNSCR 1325 as yardsticks to measure their commitments to women, gender minorities, and other intersecting identities. Hudson (2016:19), argues that instead of merely including gender as a variable in peacemaking discourses and practices, a bottom-up logic would examine the gendered implications of capitalism and militarism and how these individuals resist such processes. This would reveal how peace is constructed. Thus, the already established NAPs in South Africa and Namibia should challenge the universalistic notions found within these policies, or else their efforts to foster peace for the benefit of all individuals will be futile.

The second patterned observation is how the Regional Strategy understands the participation of women in peace and security processes and structures. The Strategy defines participation on a narrow understanding of distributing ‘equal’ opportunities to men and women. This is clear

in the policy document's definition of participation as "equal opportunities for women and men" (SADC 2018:x). However, patriarchy as a system ensured that men as a dominant gender benefitted in political, economic, and social contexts. Thus, the assumption that men and women are given equal opportunities because both men and women stand on equal footing reinforces gendered mediation practices that centre cis-gendered male bodies. This further benefits men at the expense of women who continue to remain on the margins. Hudson (2016:15) states that "[t]he interdependence of racialized, classed, gendered, sexualized, national, ethnic, cultural, and religious dimensions further make it difficult to argue that the overlapping identity categories are all equal". Moreover, the Strategy understands women's participation through women's victimhood. This is seen in the Strategy's preoccupation with women as victims of conflict or the constant 'women and children' or 'women and girls' references which inherently play into the prevailing patriarchal culture that sees women in need of protection from men by men. Akin to this, Hudson contends that "liberal discourses work with a binary of femininity vs. masculinity, women are cast as victims, immediately reinforcing the positive masculinity (protector) and negative masculinity (perpetrator) of men" (Hudson: 2016:202).

Although the Strategy recognises women's low participation in mediation, a staggering discovery is that the Strategy remains silent on the appointment of women as Special Envoys or Senior Representatives or their roles in mediation at senior levels. This study has shown that this is the level where women's participation remains low despite the fact that they have significant contributions to make in mediation. This is the decision-making level where peace agreements are forged and signed. Although this study acknowledges that women's involvement does not equal women's representation, it does however show that the exclusion of women in Track 1 mediation means that peace agreements that are signed are gender-neutral and do not address the issues women face within that society. This is a reflection of gendered power relations where power continues to predominantly remain at the hands of men. The men are seen as capable of mediation leadership and fostering peace while the inclusion of women in mediation is a numbers game.

The third patterned observation is identity, in particular gender. It was within this context that this study defines gender as socially constructed and gender minorities or gender identity as an individual's self-expression and experience of their own gender. Hudson (2016:11) argues that gender identity shapes the way individuals respond to conflict and violence. When gender is

taken into account, it embraces the recognition of how conflict affects men and women differently, as well as the unique knowledge and experiences that all groups—men, women, and gender minorities—bring to the peace table. Thus, it is necessary to understand the role of gender in shaping conflict and peace because this will allow for rethinking the role of mediation practices and policies that are gendered.

At the crux of the issue is the conceptual conflation of sex and gender equality. Such conflation and binary thinking emerge from liberal thinking. Although 'women' cannot be separated from gender, gender is more than just women-centred activities. Decolonial feminism challenges such dichotomous thinking on sex and gender and acknowledges the complexities of sex and gender. Furthermore, gender equality has become synonymous with women's representation. Hence, Hudson (2016:9) reveals that the lumping together of gender equality and women's representation results in shallow liberal-feminist ideas and practices that serve as the models for peace and security.

This section deconstructs gender identity constructions as well as other group identities such as social class and sexual orientations. The Regional Strategy is considered a gender-responsive document, however, Hudson (2017) contends that such documents often operate with a 'specific gender logic' that is either treat gender as an empirical identity category (biological) or an analytical category "that reflects relations of power" (Scott 1986). This is evident in the UNSCR 1325 as a gender-responsive document which assumes universal experiences for women, using gender as a single category of analysis highlighting the Western feminism underpinnings found within these texts. Using UN Peacebuilding Commission texts, Shepherd (2017: 102) concludes that the logic of gender is treated as "loosely synonymous" with sex and women. This negatively affects women because women's concerns are neglected in policies when gender acts as a substitute for women. This is a gender-women slippage which conflates/lumps gender and women. Sheperd (2017:102) argues that the policy focus shifts from "women, to women and men, and finally, back to men". The SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) – for instance, mentions women 310 times and gender 361 with refence to "women, men, girls, boys" mentioned only 4 times. At first glance, policymaking institutions appear to be making progress; however, a closer look reveals that the transformations required for women's full and meaningful participation are being overlooked. Subsequently, gendered power relations are reinforced, and women assume subservient position in relation to men.

The Regional Strategy employs gender-equality language through integrating gender perspectives in all peace and security processes and the consistent references for increasing the participation and representation of women in peace and security- which the strategy listed as one of their strategies. Gender perspective (3) is foregrounded in the strategy's Foreword which states that "[a] gender perspective has to be integrated into all these processes, considering that women, men, boys and girls have different needs, experiences and are differently affected by the effect of conflicts" (SADC 2018:iii) and emphasised again within the context of the Strategy will ensure the participation of women in peace and security structures "… by incorporating a gender perspective in all the areas of conflict prevention and resolution; peace building and peacekeeping" (SADC 2018:iii). The Strategy in accordance with the UNSCR 1325 resembles the international liberal-feminist gender mainstreaming approach through equal opportunities and strategies of inclusion (Hudson 2017:14). For instance, the term 'gender equality' is used 40 times, references to gender-aware policies (20), gender sensitivity (16), gender sensitive (54) are found in the strategy. The Strategy also links gender equality with women's empowerment (9) their participation (58), and their human rights (19). Shepherd, who argues that, in practice, "women" is used as an umbrella term representing "both the diversity of actual women seeking greater voice at multiple sites of political struggle, and also a whole array of gender arrangements which implicate men and women" (Kirby & Shepherd 2016a: 252).

Evidence of the conflation of gender and women is extended through the lumping together of "women and girls". The phrase is repeated 15 times in the Strategy- for instance, in terms of the gendered impact of conflict (4). Another phrase is "women and children" (31), Hudson (2017:14) argues that although "women and children" concerns the vulnerability of both groups, it however 'infantilises' women (Shepherd 2017: 113), "casting them as being in need of care, like children". This construction is what Cynthia Enloe calls "womenandchildren". This reflects a preoccupation with women and girls and women and children as a homogeneous identity category.

As Hudson (2017:14) illustrates that "an unintended consequence of this tendency to conflate gender and women is the negation of multiple overlapping identities, which manifest when women and men experience security at the intersections of gender, race/ethnicity, age, class, sexuality, and disability, to name a few". In efforts to interrogate group identities that are lumped together, a thorough rereading of the Strategy was required. It was then evident that

the Regional Strategy remains silent on the different identity groups because it made no mention of bias/biases, race/racial/ethnic, caste, class, sexual orientation, disability/special needs, location in the entire document. This is the case with the UNSCR 1325 and AU Gender Policy (2009:9) which recognizes "the equal status of women and men, girls and boys, with *both sexes* thriving together harmoniously, in a peaceful and secure environment characterized by equal partnership in decision-making in the development of the Continent" The Strategy mentions human security (13) challenges and recognizes the security issues, amongst others, such as poverty (12) in terms of women's vulnerability, Xenophobia (2) therefore supports dealing with "root causes of conflicts" (1). This has numerous negative implications because the Strategy did not account for the complex experiences of women and their identities. For instance, what does this Strategy mean for a poor bisexual special needs woman from an Ethnic minority group affected in armed conflict but is passionate about peace and security with future hopes of being lead mediator for SADC? Most academic, political and policy analyses have neglected the intersectional aspect in group identities resulting in the exclusion of not only women but other marginalized group identities. This is unfortunately very evident in the Regional Strategy and its cookie cutter approach as it overlooks potential commitments of including marginalized group identities in peace and security.

The fourth patterned observation is the representation of women as symbolic or descriptive in the Strategy. The Strategy understands women's representation as symbolic in that their inclusion means they are representatives for 'women' and the descriptive representation of women is focused on increasing the number of women within peace and security structures. According to Heinecken (2013:151), this is the liberal-feminist approach to gender mainstreaming because it solely focuses on numbers without reckoning the challenges these women face such as lack of training, agency, discrimination, etc. Moreover, symbolic and descriptive representation means that women 'stand for' and 'speak for' women. This assumes universalists notions of 'woman' which at its core is Eurocentric because decolonial feminism understands that 'woman' as a gender intersects with other identity factors such as age, race, class, ability, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Thus, it is evident that the Strategy's understanding of women's representation is confined within situating 'women' as an umbrella term for other marginalised groups.

Other observations found include the guiding principles of the Strategy. Liberal norms and principles found in the Regional Strategy include Democratic (15); democracy (6);

democratization (1); rule of law (3) civil society (15); “Respect for rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedoms, sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law;” freedom from fear, freedom from want. This is in focus on establishing sovereign modern nation-states. Given African history, it is imperative to dissect these norms as evidently such principles are still struggling to find their feet in Africa today. This is evident in Burundi and the DRC discussed in chapter two. Zondi (2017:128) emphasizes that “[u]ntil the very idea of the modern nation-state on African soil (which is colonial in its DNA) is resolved, Africa will remain a mortuary where beautiful concepts and models of peacebuilding die, failing to bringing about lasting peace”. Moreover, the UNSCR 1325 is an international framework grounded on liberal underpinnings which guide mediation. Thus, a decolonial mediation approach necessary and entails an alternate practice of conflict and resolution that resolving disputes that promotes knowledge and perspectives specific to local geopolitical histories. On the matter of the use of a European language by the Regional Strategy, decolonial feminism contends that shifting Eurocentrism from the centre includes its languages. This entails shifting towards plurality of languages moving away from European languages (Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1993: 10). Ngugi wa Thiong’o argues that “[v]iewing the world from the perspective of the colonizers is the best manifestation of a colonised mind. This has to fundamentally change as the African minds undergo decolonization” (Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1986:87). To this end, the goal is to disrupt Euro-North American-centric knowledge and power structures that shape and dominate mediation processes.

4.4 Conclusion

The central research question of the study was to explore how a decolonial feminist analysis examined whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Using Kibiswa’s three-phase and eight-step schema, the research findings through a decolonial feminist lens reveal that the Regional Strategy’s blindness to the structural inequalities hinders the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

This chapter presented and interpreted the study’s research findings. These findings, the literature review and theoretical framework as well as methodology were integrated. The key patterned observations detected were inclusion, participation, identity, and representation. The chapter aimed to delve deeper into the central research question: How does a decolonial feminist analysis examine whether the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has

helped or hindered the implementation of UNSCR 1325? The research findings revealed the Regional Strategy overlooks potent commitments such as intersecting identities, gendered power relations hindering the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. The next chapter summaries the research study, key findings and provides recommendations on the account of the research of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: RESEARCH SUMMARY AND MAJOR FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The central research objective of this study was to examine the SADC regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) commitments in advancing women's contribution in mediation using a decolonial feminist perspective. The study objectives were to:

- To understand how women engaged in mediation processes in Africa
- To identify the challenges that have impeded the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022)
- To examine the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on Women, Peace and Security using a decolonial feminist analysis

This chapter will give a summary of the research and recap of the major findings using the research objectives. The chapter also gives recommendations based on both the research objectives and findings of the study. The chapter concludes the dissertation by restating the findings of the study and identifying areas that need further study.

5.2 The Research Summary

This research study began by stating that women's participation in mediation is confined despite existing policy frameworks. The research study was guided by the research question(s), objective(s) and theoretical framework. A qualitative document and content analysis was employed to explore how the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) has helped or hindered the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

Mediation processes operate and are guided by international frameworks that subscribe to Euro-North American universalist notions. This allows mediation to be dominated by male, heteronormative and European bodies, voices, and knowledge. Thus, through the use of literature, chapter two focused on European colonialism and modernity, coloniality of power, a decolonial approach to mediation that envisages decolonial peace, where feminism fits in and towards the end it grounds the theoretical framework of this study- decolonial feminism. The structure of chapter two sheds light on why mediation in Africa continues to fail. This is

significant because it reveals not only how the world works, but also how mediation fits into these systems.

On women, peace and security, the research study has shown that women play multiple roles in peace processes. Yet their contributions do not translate into meaningful inclusion of women in mediation, especially Track I. The UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks, and SADC policies put in place to address women's exclusion from peace and security processes all have one thing in common: they do not challenge the colonial/gendered/capitalist/heteronormative implications that perpetuate women's exclusion. This necessitated a decolonial feminist lens.

The thrust of the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) is to increase the participation of women in peace and security processes in accordance with the UNSCR 1325. Using a decolonial feminist lens, it was discovered that the Regional Strategy, in tandem with UNSCR 1325, took a cookie cutter approach that did not challenge structural inequalities. In accounting for the key findings, the research study has shown that the inclusion of women in mediation processes especially at Track 1 is not a priority for SADC due to its silence on women as special envoys or assuming senior level positions in mediation.

To this end, the research gap that this study sought to address is the continuous poor implementation of increasing women’s participation in mediation despite existing extensive policy frameworks. Using the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022) as a case study, it has been demonstrated that a policy framework that does not account for the intersections of identities, seek to dismantle Euro-North American notions of democratic norms, visibly advocate for women as special envoys in policy/theory and in practice is ineffectual. Thus, contributing to the slow/lack of implementation of the Strategy. The research study also shows that in order to close the implementation gap of the UNSCR 1325 in the SADC region, it needs to be domesticated, localised to fit the realities of women on the ground.

5.3 Major Findings

The research findings are outlined using the research objectives.

5.3.1 Objective 1: To understand how women engaged in mediation processes in Africa

This research study’s first objective sought to understand how women engaged in mediation processes. Through the use of literature, it was demonstrated that women are underrepresented in mediation especially Track I while showing adequate participation of women at Track II. It

is then revealed that Track 1.5 is an opportunity to rethink the role of women in mediation that will accommodate the contribution of women in mediation. However, research findings reveal that the Strategy does not acknowledge the need to increase the participation of women as special envoys or women in senior positions in mediation. Moreover, through the decolonial feminist lens employed the research findings have shown the understanding of inclusion and participation in tandem political empowerment of women mentioned in the Strategy reflect liberal Western feminist notions as inclusion in gender equality is achieved through political reform (advocating of including women in political structures/processes). There is a glaring need to rethinking access to mediation through political participation. A shift from inclusion to transformation, and from numbers to impact, is required.

5.3.2 Objective 2: To identify the challenges that have impeded the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022)

The second objective sought to identify the challenges that have impeded the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022), this objective is addressed fully in chapter four. The research findings show that the slow implementation or lack thereof of the UNSCR 1325 is because there are potential commitments overlooked by the SADC Regional Strategy such as the recognition of intersecting identities (race/class/gender/sexual orientation), Euro-North American democratic norms, little attention is given to women in mediation while text of Regional Strategy is dominated by women as victims or peacekeepers/peacebuilders, lack of challenging gender neutral structures, employing a cookie cutter approach adopted from the UNSCR 1325 that is minimalist and state-centric.

5.3.3 Objective 3: To examine the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on Women, Peace and Security using a decolonial feminist analysis

The third objective relates decolonial feminism to the existing policy frameworks and structures focused on women, peace and security. Through the use of literature, this research study examined the UNSCR 1325, AU policy frameworks and SADC Policies through a decolonial feminist lens and further revealed that these policy frameworks do not challenge colonial/capitalist/gendered/heteronormative systems which subsequently contributes to the slow implementation of the UNSCR 1325 or lack thereof.

5.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The research study has shown that coloniality of power finds full expression in Africa as well as mediation processes in Africa. The constructed world of European modernity/coloniality

governs every aspect of the African world in a manner that makes colonialism invincible and makes the 'modernity' of Africa impossible. Concepts such as liberal democracy which are inherently European are used as a magic wand to political and economic challenges across the world, particularly Africa. This leads to the continuous failures of mediation efforts in Africa.

The study has shown that women are never not involved in peace at all levels. The mediation roles of Graca Machel in Kenya and Bineta Diop in South Sudan highlight the significance of accommodating the contributions women make to mediation because the lead to gender sensitive peace agreements that address women's needs. Through the literature on women, peace and security, this research study revealed that the focus on women did not take into account other marginalised groups who suffer from conflict and could meaningfully contribute to mediation.

The research study has revealed the importance of questioning the policy frameworks and structures on Women, Peace and Security and the very way mediation is conducted using a decolonial feminist lens. The study has shown through the use of decolonial feminism that existing policies overlook potential commitments that could translate into the implementation of the UNSCR 1325, this is revealed in the SADC Regional Strategy on WPS (2018-2022).

By way of recommendation of specific measures which will help close the implementation gap of the UNSCR 1325, below are recommendations for the SADC Regional Strategy and other African Regional Strategies on WPS at large:

- The decentralisation of power in international, continental and regional frameworks is necessary as this challenges the colonial matrix of power that benefits Euro-North American interest. There is a potent need for the region to address the colonial aspect of how the region comes to understand 'conflict' and how it does 'peace'. Given the "successive processes of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and globalization" that came to produce the world system (Zondi 2015: 4), Africa has been engulfed in violence and instability as a result of colonial legacies, the end of the Cold War, intra-state conflicts, and the system of Apartheid in South Africa (Austin 2010; Gounden 2015; Kleiboer 1996). This is a colonial factor that is deeply rooted in many conflicts in Africa. Scholars such as Mokwugo Okoyo (1977), Bonny Duala-M'Bedy (1984), Claude Ake (1985), and Herman J. Cohen (1995), argue that the colonial past cannot be ignored when addressing political instability in Africa.

- It is of utmost importance to reimagine the way mediation is conducted in the region (through political and economic empowerment) as this reflects such liberal Western feminist underpinnings. Thus, indigenous knowledge systems in southern Africa need to be of priority.
- It is high time to move away from taking marginalised groups into institutions that were never created for them, instead a bottom-up approach that considers these marginalised groups and what they have to say is necessary.
- A decolonial feminist approach to policies that advocate for other gender minorities' inclusion is necessary as these are the very policies that will be transferred to mediation processes.
- Reforming policy frameworks and structures that seek to ensure the participation of women in mediation is crucial. This requires a reform of institutions that implement these policy frameworks. This means that SADC needs to transform their institutions such as the SADC Organ Directorate not in terms of merely increasing the numbers of women into this structure but to ensure transformative approaches that will allow for women's full, effective, and unrestricting engagements.
- A decolonial feminist perspective to mediation as well as a dedicated specialised unit for mediation in SADC might have the potential to not only break the cycle of recurrent conflicts but how gender contributes to mediation. As a relatively new unit that is instrumental in setting the tone for future mediation efforts, the SADC Mediation Unit is a starting point for change.

6. Bibliography

Abdi, C. 2011. *A Gendered Perspective on the Impact of Conflict in the Horn of Africa*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Achankeng, F. 2013. Conflict and conflict resolution in Africa: Engaging the colonial factor. *African journal on conflict resolution*, 13(2):.11-38.

Achebe, C. 1977. An image of Africa. *The Massachusetts Review*, 18(4):782-794.

Achebe, C. 1998. *Africa Is People*. World Bank Presidential Fellow Lecture. New York: World Bank.

Adebajo, A.A. (2021). Women and Peace Processes in Africa. In: *The Palgrave Handbook of African Women's Studies*, edited by O, Yacob-Haliso, & T. Falola, T. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Aeby, M. 2018. Peace and security challenges in Southern Africa: Governance deficits and lacklustre regional conflict management. *Policy Note* 4, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Aeby, M. 2019. SADC–The Southern Arrested Development Community?: Enduring Challenges to Peace and Security in Southern Africa. *Policy Dialogue* 14, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

African Union (AU). 2002, *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union*. Adopted at the Assembly of the African Union, First Ordinary Session, 9 July, available at www.peaceau.org. Accessed: 8 December 2021.

African Union (AU). 2003. *The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*. Adopted on 11 July at the second AU Summit in Mozambique, available at https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights-rights-women-africa. Accessed: 20 March 2022.

African Union (AU). 2004. *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa* adopted on 6-8 July at the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Ethiopia, available at

https://au.int/en/documents/20200708/solemn-declaration-gender-equality-africa. Accessed: 20 March 2022.

African Union (AU). 2006. Framework for Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development. *Internet*: https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/pcrd-policy-framwowork-eng.pdf. Accessed: 20 March 2022.

African Union (AU). 2009. Gender Policy, 10 February 2009. Internet: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Gender/African_Union_Gender_Policy_2009.pdf. Accessed: 20 March 2022.

African Union (AU). 2015. African Union Agenda 2063, 31 January 2015. *Internet:* https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview. Accessed: 14 November 2021.

African Union Commission (AUC). 2016a. Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa. Report by the AUC Chairperson and prepared by the Office of the Special Envoy of the AU Commission Chairperson on Women Peace and Security, July, available at http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/special-envoy-report-2016-final- 2.pdf. Accessed: 30 April 2022.

African Union Commission. 2016b. Implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa, July 2016. Internet: https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/pubs/2016womenpeacesecurity-auc.pdf. Accessed: 30 April 2022.

African Union Commission, 2019. Continental Results Framework For Monitoring And Reporting On The Implementation Of The Women, Peace And Security Of Agenda In Africa (2018-2028), 15 May 2018. Internet: https://au.int/en/documents/20190204/continental-results-framework-reporting-and-monitoring-implementation-women-peace. Accessed: 1 May 2022.

Agbalajobi, T.D. 2009. The role of African women in peace building and conflict resolution: The Case of Burundi. *Journal of Global Media*, 8(15): 1-20

Aggestam, K. & Svensson, I. 2018. Where are the Women in Peace Mediation? In *Gendering diplomacy and international negotiation* edited by A. Towns & K. Aggestam. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ake, C. 1985. Why is Africa not developing. *West Africa*, 17:1212-1214.

Akyeampong, E. & Fofack, H. 2014. The contribution of African women to economic growth and development in the pre-colonial and colonial periods: historical perspectives and policy implications. *Economic History of Developing Regions*, 29(1):42-73.

Akyuz, Y. & Gore, C. 2001. African Economic Development in a Comparative Perspective. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 25:265-288.

Ali, F.A. 2007. Women and conflict transformation in Africa. *Feminismo/s*, 9:67-78

Alison, M. H. 2010. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-National Conflict*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Amedzrator, L.M. 2014. Breaking the Inertia: Women's Role in Mediation and Peace Processes in West Africa, 1 October 2014. Internet: *https://www.africaportal.org/publications/breaking-the-inertia-womens-role-in-mediation-and-peace-processes-in-west-africa/*. Accessed: 25 February 2022.

Amin, S. 1989. *Eurocentrism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Anthias, F. & Yuval-Davies, N. 1983. Contextualizing Feminism: gender, ethnic and class divisions. *Feminist Review*, 5(1): 139-167.

Anderson, R., 2004. A Definition of Peace. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 10(2):101.

Anderson, M.J. & Swiss, L. 2014. Peace Accords and the Adoption of Electoral Quotas for Women in the Developing World, 1990-2006. *Politics & Gender*, 10(1):33-61.

Andrabi, S. 2019. New wars, new victimhood, and new ways of overcoming it. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development,* 8(1): 1–12.

Aretxaga, B. A. 1997. Shattering silence: women, nationalism and political subjectivity in Northern Ireland. New Jersery: Princeton University Press.

Asaf, Y. 2017. Syrian women and the refugee crisis: Surviving the conflict, building peace, and taking new gender roles. *Social Sciences,* 6(110):1–18.

Atteya, N. 2021. Women, religion, and peacebuilding: a case analysis of Sudan (Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria).

AusAID. 2006. *Impacts of HIV/AISA 2005–2025 in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and East Timor: Synopsis Report of the HIV Epidemiological Modelling and Impact Study*, Canberra: AusAID.

Austin, G. 2010. African economic development and colonial legacies. *Institut de hautes études internationales et du développement*, 1:11-32.

Autesserre, S. 2017. International Peacebuilding and Local Success: Assumptions and Effectiveness. *International Studies Review*, 19:114–132.

Barker, G. 2006. Revisiting the Concept of Representation. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 59 (1): 155-172.

Bastick, M., Grimm, K., & Kunz, R. 2007. *Sexual violence in armed conflict: Global overview and implications for the security sector*. Geneva, Switzerland: SRO Kundig.

Baxter, E. P. & Jack, M. S. 2010. Qualitative Case Study Methodology: study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4): 544-559.

Bercovitch, J. 1986. International mediation: A study of the incidence, strategies and conditions of successful outcomes. *Cooperation and Conflict*, *21*(3):155-168.

Bercovitch, J. 2003. Managing internationalized ethnic conflict: Evaluating the role and relevance of mediation. *World Affairs*, 166:56.

Bercovitch, J. 2005. Mediation in the most resistant cases. *Grasping the nettle: Analyzing cases of intractable conflict*, 1:99-122.

Bercovitch, J. 2011. *Theory and practice of international mediation: Selected essays*. New York: Routledge.

Bercovitch. J, Anagnoson, J. T. & Wille, D.L. 1991. Some conceptual issues and empirical trends in the study of successful mediation in international relations. *Journal of Peace Research,* 28:7–17.

Bercovitch, J. & Houston, A. 1993. Influence of mediator characteristics and behavior on the success of mediation in international relations. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 4:297-321.

Bercovitch, J. and Langley, J. 1993. The nature of the dispute and the effectiveness of international mediation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 37(4):670-691.

Bercovitch, J., & Jackson, R. D. W. 2009. *Conflict resolution in the twenty-first century: principles, methods, and approaches*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Berelson, B. 1952. *Content analysis in communication research*. Michigan: Free Press

Bernardino-Costa, J. Grosfoguel, R. 2016. Decolonialidade e perspectiva negra. *Sociedade e Estado*, 31(1): 15-24.

Berry, M.E. 2018. *War, Women, and Power: From Violence to Mobilization in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bigio, J. & Vogelstein, R. 2016. How women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution advances US interests. *Council on Foreign Relations*.

Blaikie, N. 2010. *Designing Social Research*. United Kingdom: Polity Press.

Boals, K. 1973. Some Reflections on Women and Peace. *Peace & Change*, 1(2):56-59.

Bosetti, L. & Cooper, H., 2015. Where are the Women? How the UN is Falling Short on Gender and Conflict. *Tokyo: United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, November*, *17*.

Bowen, G. 2009. Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal,* 9:27-40.

Bourke, J. 2014. Rape as a weapon of war. *The Lancet*, 383(9934): e19-e20.

Bradford. H. 1996. Women, Gender and Colonialism: Rethinking the History of the British Cape Colony and in Frontier Zones, c. 1806-70. *The Journal of African History*:37(3):351-370

Brigevich, A. 2008. *The post-Cold War wave of democratization: Regime transitions in sub-Saharan Africa and postcommunist states compared*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina.

Brigg, M. & Bleiker, R. 2010. Postcolonial Conflict Resolution. In *Mediating Across Difference: Oceanic and Asian Approaches to Conflict Resolution*, edited by M. Brigg & R. Bleiker. Honolulu, US: University of Hawaii Press.

Browne, J., Coffey, B., Cook, K., Meiklejohn, S. & Palermo, C. 2019. A guide to policy analysis as a research method. *Health promotion international*, 34(5):1032-1044.

Brownmiller, S. 1975. *Against our will: Men, women and rape*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Burgess, H. & Burgess, G. 2010, Conducting Track II Peacemaking, 2010. Internet: *http://newconversations.net/pdf/Conducting-Track-II-Peacemaking.pdf.* Accessed: 20 June 2022.

Bush, R.A.B. & Folger, J.P. 1994. *The promise of mediation: Responding to conflict through empowerment and recognition*. Jossey-Bass.

Buss, D. 2007. The curious visibility of wartime rape: Gender and ethnicity in international criminal law. *Windsor Journal of Access to Justice,* 25:3–22.

Buss, D.E. 2009. Rethinking 'rape as a weapon of war'. *Feminist legal studies*, 17(2):145-163.

Butler, J. 2004. *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge.

Butterworth, R.L. 1976. Organizing for collective security: The UN Charter's chapter 8 in practice. *World Politics*, 28:197–222.

Butterworth, R. 1978. Do Conflict Managers Matter? An Empirical Assessment of the Interstate Security Disputes and Resolutions Efforts, 1945-1974. *International Studies Quarterly, 22:*195-214.

Byrne, S. 2014. Troubled Engagement in Ethnicized Conflict: Negotiating Difference among Feminist Activists in Israel/Palestine and Northern Ireland. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *16*(1):106-126.

Campbell, Kirsten. 2007. The gender of transitional justice: Law, sexual violence and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. *International Journal of Transitional Justice,* 1: 411–432.

Campbell, E. 2013. Political animals: Human/animal life in Bisclavret and Yonec. *Exemplaria*, *25*(2):95-109.

Carrol, S. 2001. Are Women Legislators Accountable to Women? The Complimentary Roles of Feminist Identity and Women's Organisations. In *Gender and Social Capital* edited by B. O'Neill & E. Gidengil. New York, NY: Routledge

Castro-Gómez, S. & Grosfoguel, R. 2007. Prólogo. Giro decolonial, teoría crítica y pensamiento heterárquico. In *El Giro Decolonial: Reflexiones Para Una Diversidade Epistémica Más Allá Del Capitalismo Global* edited by S. Castro-Gómez & R. Grosfoguel. Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores.

Cavalcante, F. 2014. The influence of the Liberal Peace Framework on the United Nations approach to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau. *RCCS Annual Review. A selection from the Portuguese journal Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, (6).

Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR). 2006. The peacebuilding role of civil society in Central Africa, Douala, 3 April 2006. Internet: https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Vol_15-PRCSCA_Report_Final.pdf. Accessed: 3 May 2021.

Centre for Security Studies (CSS). 2008. Unpacking the Mystery of Mediation in African Peace Processes. Mediation Support Project, 10 December 2008. Internet: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/114861/Mediation_in_Africa_full.pdf. Access: 5 November 2021.

Ceesay-Ebo, A. 2011. Gender Dimensions of the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture: A Regional Perspective on UN Resolution 1325. In *ECOWAS and the Dynamics of Conflict and Peace-Building*, edited by T. Jaye, D. Garuba, & S. Amandi. Dakar, Senegal: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.

Cesaire, A. 2000. *Discourse on colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chabana, L. 2018. South Africa's International Mediation Efforts: promoting the Participation of Women (Masters dissertation, University of Pretoria).

Chakrabarty, D. 1992. Provincializing Europe: Postcoloniality and the critique of history. *Cultural studies*, *6*(3):337-357.

Christien, A. 2020. Advancing Women's Participation in Track II Peace Processes, February 2020. Internet: https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Good-Practices-for-Womens-Involvement-in-Track-II.pdf. Accessed: 20 May 2022.

Christopher, A.J. 1988. Divide and Rule: The Impress of British Separation Policies. *Area*, 20(3):233-240.

Cockburn, C. 1998. *The space between us: negotiating gender and national identities in conflict*. London: Zed.

Cohen, H.J. 1995. What should we do when nations get angry? *Nexus Africa*, 1(2):11-14.

Cohn, C., Kinsella, H. and Gibbings, S. 2004. Women, peace and security resolution 1325. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 6(1):130-140.

Collins, H. P. 1986. Learning from the Outsider Within: the sociological significance of black feminist thought. *Social Problems*, 33 (6):14-32.

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). 2011. COMESA Fisheries Program, 3 July 2011. Internet: https://www.comesa.int/comesa-fisheries-program/. Accessed: 9 September 2020.

Coomaraswamy, R. 2015. *Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace: A global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. New York: UN Women.

Connell, R. 2005. Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and Society*, 19(6):829-859.

Coulter, C. Persson, M. and Utas, M. 2008. *Young female fighters in African wars: conflict and its consequences*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Crenshaw, W. K. 1989. Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: a black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 140 (1):138-167.

Crenshaw, W. K. 1991. Mapping the Margins: intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43 (6):1241-1299.

Creswell, J. W. 2014. *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 4th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Davis, A. 1983. *Women, Race, & Class*. New York: Vintage.

Da Rocha, J.P. 2017. *The International Mediator: A Handbook*. Beau Bassin: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.

Dayal, A.K. & Christien, A. 2020. Women's participation in informal peace processes. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, *26*(1):69-98.

Desmidt, S. & Aggad, F. 2017. De-securitising conflict responses in Africa: What prospects for a structural conflict prevention approach? In Discussion Paper 209, *European Centre for Development Policy Management*.

Desmidt, S., Apiko, P., & Fannar Sævarsson, K. 2017. Women and mediation in Africa under the APSA and the AGA. (*Discussion Paper* 217). Maastricht: ECDPM.

Desmidt, S. & Davis, L. 2019. Rhetoric and real progress on the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Africa, 18 March 2019. Internet: *https://ecdpm.org/work/rhetoric-and-real-progress-on-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda-in-africa*. Accessed: 18 May 2022.

Dietze, G. 2014. Decolonizing gender—Gendering decolonial theory: Crosscurrents and archaeologies. *Decoloniality, Postcoloniality, Black Critique: Joints and Fissures*, 245-69.

Diop, B. 2011. The African Union and implementation of UNSCR 1325. In *Women, peace and security: Translating policy into practice,* edited by F. Olonisakin, K. Barnes, & E. Ikpe. New York: Routledge.

Domingo, P., O'Neil, T & Foresti, M. 2014. Women's participation in peace and security: Normative ends, political means. *Overseas Development Institute Briefing* 88.

Downe-Wamboldt, B. 1992. Content analysis: method, applications, and issues. *Health care for women international*, 13(3):313-321.

Duala-M'Bedy, B. 1984. African problems: Any links with the past. *Cameroon Tribune*, *10*, p.6.

Dussel, E.1977. *Filosofía de Liberación*. México: Edicol.

Duursma, A. 2014. A current literature review of international mediation. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 25(1):81-98.

Easterly W. 2002. How Did Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Become Heavily Indebted? Reviewing Two Decades of Debt Relief. *World Development*, 30(10):1677-1696.

El Jack, A. 2003. Gender and Armed Conflict, Overview Report. BRIDGE Institute of Development Studies University of Sussex.

Ellerby, K. 2015. (En)gendered Security? Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes. In *Gender Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Resolution 1325,* edited by T.I. Gizelis, & L. Olsson. London: Routledge.

Ellerby, K., 2016. A seat at the table is not enough: Understanding women's substantive representation in peace processes. *Peacebuilding*, *4*(2):136-150.

Elo, S. & Kyngäs, H., 2008. The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 62(1):107-115.

Enloe, C. 1989. *Bananas Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, Berkeley CA: University of California Press.

Elshtain, J.B. 1987. *Women and War*. New York: Basic Books.

Engle, K. 2005. Feminism and its (dis)contents: Criminalizing wartime rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *American Journal of International Law,* 99:778–816.

Escobar, A. 2010. Latin America at a crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?. *Cultural studies*, *24*(1):1-65.

Facio, A. 2013. What is patriarchy. *Women's Human Rights Education İnstute.*

Faißt, R. 2019. Decolonizing Mediation: Exploring Questions of Knowledge and Power Shaping African Mediation. Internet: https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2019/01/29/decolonizing-mediation-exploring-questions-of-knowledge-and-power-shaping-african-mediation/. Accessed: 21 November 2021.

Fanon, F. 1961. *The wretched of the earth: The handbook for the black revolution that is changing the shape of the world*. New York: Grove Press.

Fasakin, A., 2021. The coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa: experiences from Nigeria. *Third world quarterly*, *42*(5):902-921.

Farr, V., Myrttinen, H., & Schnabel, A. 2009. Sexed pistols: The gendered impacts of small arms and light weapons. Geneva: United Nations University Press.

Ferreira, R. 2009. Inconsistencies in peacekeeping policy and practice. *Politeia*, 28(2):74-93.

Freedman, J. 2001. *Feminism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Fofack, H. 2010. Africa and Arab Gulf States: Divergent Development paths and Prospects for Convergence. *Journal of African Development*, 2(1):97-130

Folger, J.P. & Bush, R.A.B. 1996. Transformative mediation and third-party intervention: Ten hallmarks of a transformative approach to practice. *Mediation Quarterly*, 13(4):263-278.

Forde, S., Kappler, S., & Björkdahl, A. 2021. Peacebuilding, Structural Violence and Spatial Reparations in Post-Colonial South Africa. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 15(3):327-346.

Frazier, D. V. & Dixon, W. J. 2008. Third-party intermediaries and negotiated settlements, 1946– 2000. In *International conflict mediation: new approaches and findings,* edited by J. Bercovitch, & S.S Gartner. New York: Routledge.

Frei, D. 1976. Conditions affecting the effectiveness of international mediation. *Peace Science Society (International) Papers*, 26(1):67-84.

Galtung, J. 1996. *Peace by peaceful jeans: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilisation*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

Gardam, J. & Charlesworth, H. 2000. Protection of women in armed conflict. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 22(1) 148–166.

Gartner, S. S., & Bercovitch, J. 2006. Overcoming obstacles to peace: The contribution of mediation to short-lived conflict settlements. *International Studies Quarterly*, 50(4):819-840.

Gill, A. & Pires, T. 2019. From binary to intersectional to imbricated approaches: Gender in a decolonial and diasporic perspective. *Contexto Internacional*, 41:275-302.

Gizelis, T-I. 2009. Gender Empowerment and United Nations Peacebuilding. *Journal of Peace Research,* 464:505–523.

Goncalves, M.J. 2013. The structure and operation of the SADC: a comparative assessment of its conflict management approach: case study-Madagascar (Masters dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Gordon, A.A. 1996. *Transforming capitalism and patriarchy: Gender and development in Africa*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Gounden, V. 2015. International Mediation in Africa: Experiences and Challenges. *International Negotiation*, 22(3): 402-430.

Grosfoguel, R. 2000. Developmentalism, modernity, and dependency theory in Latin America. *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1(2): 347-374.

Grosfoguel, R. & Georas, C.S. 2000. "Coloniality of power" and racial dynamics: Notes toward a reinterpretation of Latino Caribbeans in New York City. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power,* 7 (1): 85-125.

Grosfoguel, R. 2002. Colonial Difference Geopolitics of Knowledge, and Global Coloniality in the Modern/Colonial Capitalist World-System. *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, 25(3):203-224.

Grosfoguel, R. 2007. The epistemic decolonial turn: Beyond political economy paradigms. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3): 211-223.

Grosfoguel, R. 2008. Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality. *Eurozine*, 80:1-24.

Grosfoguel, R. 2009. A Decolonial approach to political-economy: Transmodernity, border thinking and global coloniality, *Kult 6 - Special Issue: Epistemological Transformation*, Fall, 10–37.

Grosfoguel, R. 2011. Decolonizing post-colonial studies and paradigms of political-economy: Transmodernity, decolonial thinking, and global coloniality. *Transmodernity: journal of peripheral cultural production of the luso-hispanic world*, 1(1).

Guttmacher Institute. 2018. Abortion in Africa, March 2018. Internet: https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/factsheet/ib_aww-africa.pdf. Accessed: 30 August 2022.

Guariso, A., Ingelaere, B & Verpoorten, M. 2017. Female political representative in the aftermath of ethnic violence: A comparative analysis of Burundi and Rwanda. *WIDER Working Paper*. 2017/74. Finland: UNU-WIDER.

Haas, E.B. 1983. Regime decay: Conflict management and international organizations, 1945–1981. *International Organization*, 37:189–257.

Haas, E.B., Butterworth, R.L., & Nye, J.S. 1972. *Conflict management by international organizations.* Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press.

Haastrup, T. 2014. Where Global Meets Local: The Politics of Africa's Emer- gent Gender Equality Regime. In *Handbook of Africa's International Relations*, edited by T. Murithi. New York: Routledge.

Haastrup, T. 2019. Women, Peace and Security–the African Experience. *Political Insight*, 10(1):9-11.

Hara, M., Greenberg, S., Thow, A.M., Chimarito, S. & du Toit, A. 2017. Trade and investment in fish and fish products between South Africa and the rest of SADC: Implications for food and nutrition security. *Working Paper* 47. PLAAS, UWC: Cape Town.

Hartmann, H., 2013. The evolving mediation capacity of the Southern African Development Community. *conflict trends*, *2013*(1):3-10.

Heinecken, L. 2013. Building Capacity from Above and Below: Why Gender Matters in the Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Contexts. In *Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development in Africa: Concepts, Role-players, Policy and Practice*, edited by T. Neethling & H. Hudson. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Hendricks, C. 2015. Women, Peace and Security in Africa. *African Security Review*, 24(4):364–75.

Hendricks, C. 2017. Progress and Challenges in Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the African Union's Peace and Security Architecture. *Africa Development*, 42(3):73-98.

Hendricks, C. 2021. Women and mediation in Africa. In *Southern African Security Review 2020* edited by G. Khadiagala, & D. Deleglise. Johannesburg & Maputo: The Centre for Defence and Security Management & Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Heywood, A. 2004. *Political Theory: An Introduction*. New York, Palgrave, Macmillan.

Holsti, K.J. 1966. Resolving international disputes: A taxonomy of behavior and some figures on procedures. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 10:272–96.

Hudson, H. 2005. 'Doing' security as though humans matter: A feminist perspective on gender and the politics of human security. *Security Dialogue*, 36(2):155-174.

Hudson, H. 2010, Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations: Can Africa Learn from International Experience? *African Security Review*, 9(4):18–33.

Hudson, H. 2016a. Decolonising gender and peacebuilding: feminist frontiers and border thinking in Africa. *Peacebuilding*, 4(2):194-209.

Hudson, H. 2016b. Decolonizing the mainstreaming of gender in peacebuilding: toward an agenda for Africa. African Peacebuilding Network (APN) *Working Paper*, 8.

Hudson, H. 2017. The Power of Mixed Messages: Women, Peace, and Security Language in National Action Plans from Africa. *Africa Spectrum*, 52(3):3-29.

Hudson, H., 2021. It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges. *Insight on Africa*, 13(2):142-159.

Hughes, M.M. 2009. Armed conflict, international linkages, and women's parliamentary representation in developing nations. *Social Problems*, 56(1):174–204.

Hunt, S. 2014. Ontologies of indigeneity: The politics of embodying a concept. *Cultural geographies*, 21(1):27-32.

Hunt, S. & Posa, C. 2001. Women waging peace. *Foreign Policy*, 38-47.

Ilesanmi, O.O. 2018. *Women's Visibility in Decision Making Processes in Africa—Progress, Challenges, and Way Forward*. Centre for Gender and Development Studies, Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.

Isike, C.A., 2009. *Feminising the peace process: A comparative analysis of women and conflict in the Niger-Delta (Nigeria) and Kwazulu-Natal (South Africa)* (Doctoral dissertation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal)

Isike, C. 2017. Soft power and a feminist ethics of peacebuilding in Africa. *Peace Review*, 29(3):350-357.

Isike, C. & Uzodike, U.O. 2011. Towards an indigenous model of conflict resolution: Reinventing women's roles as traditional peace-builders in neo-colonial Africa. *Africa Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 11 (1):32-58.

Jacob, F.O., Ighodalo, A., Justine, C., & Okpo, O.C. 2012. Feminism and political participation in Nigeria: An empirical analysis. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, *7*(1):1077-1092.

Jaiyeola, E. O. & Issac, A. 2020. Patriarcy and colonization: The "Brooder House" for gender inequality in Nigeria. *Journal on Women and Gender*, 10:3-22.

Jimu, T. 2017. Assessment of the Type, Extent And Modalities Of Intra-Regional Fish Trade: A Case Of South Africa And Other Southern African Development Community (SADC) Countries. *Land and Agrarian Studies at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS)*, 1(1): 1-137.

Johais, E. 2016. The African Union's women-only observer mission to the Seychelles, *International IDEA*, 31 October 2016.

Jones, S. 2013. Gender Monstrosity: Deadgirl and the sexual politics of zombie-rape. *Feminist Media Studies*, 13(3):525-539.

Kanengoni-Malinga, T. 2016. The influence of culture on the implementation of the SADC protocol on gender 2008: A multi-case study on Namibia and Zimbabwe. (Masters Dissertatio, University of Zimbabwe)

Kant, I. 1777. Of the Different Human Races. *The Idea of Race. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing*.

Kant, I. 1965. The doctrine of virtue. *Ethics*, 75(2).

Kant, I. 1948. La filosofía como sistema (No. 1). *Instituto de Filosofía de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*.

Kapinga, N. 2015. The Role of Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Conflict Resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 1998-2003:'an Appraisal' (Masters dissertation, University of South Africa).

Karam, A. 2000. Women in war and peace-building: the roads traversed, the challenges ahead. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 3(1):2-25.

Kezie-Nwoha, H. 2020. Feminist Peace and Security in Africa, September 2020. Internet: https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621054/dp-feminist-peace-security-africa-210920-en.pdf. Accessed: 19 July 2022.

Kibiswa, N.K. 2019. Directed qualitative content analysis (DQlCA): A tool for conflict analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(8):2059-2079.

Kimura, M. 2008. Narrative as a site of subject construction: The ‘comfort women’ debate. *Feminist Theory*, 9: 5–24.

Kissinger, H. 2014. *World order: Reflections on the character of nations and course of history*. New York: Penguin Books.

Kitharidis, S. 2015. Rape as a weapon of war: Combating sexual violence and impunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the way forward. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 15(2):449-472.

Kleiboer, M. 1996. Understanding Success and Failure of International Mediation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 40(2): 360-389.

Klingebiel, S., Blohm, T.M., Eckle, R., Grunow, K., Heidenreich, F., Mashele, P., & Thermann, A. 2008. Donor contributions to the strengthening of the African peace and security architecture. *DEU*, 38:24.

Kohlbacher, F. 2006. The use of qualitative content analysis in case study research. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 7(1):1-30).

Kolås, Åshild. 2017. *Women, Peace and Security in Nepal: From Civil War to Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kombo, E.E. 2012. Women in national liberation wars in the settler colonies of Kenya and Zimbabwe: Pathways to political empowerment. (Masters dissertation, University of York).

Krause, J., Krause, W., & Bränfors, P. 2018. Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace. *International Interactions*, 44 (6): 985–1016.

Krolokke, C. & Sorensen, A.S. 2005. *Three Waves of Feminism Gender Communication Theories and Analysis: From Silence to Performance*. Troudale: New Sage Press.

Kronsell, A. & Svedberg, E. 2012. *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military and Peacekeeping practice*. New York: Routledge.

Kudakwashe, M.A. & Richard, B. 2015. Causes of armed conflicts and their effects on women. *International Journal of Research*, 77.

Kurebwa, J. 2015. A review of Hanna Pitkin's (1967) conception of women's political representation. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, *5*(11):50-60.

Kusnierkiewicz, A. 2019. The coloniality of gender and the politics of difference. *E-International Relations*, 1-8.

Kumalo, L. 2015. Why women should have a greater role in peacebuilding, 26 May 2015. Internet: *www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/05/why-women-should-have-a-greater-role-inpeacebuilding/*. Accessed: 26 January 2022.

Kyngäs, H. 2020. Qualitative Research and Content Analysis. In *The Application of Content Analysis in Nursing Science Research*, edited by H. Kyngäs, K. Mikkonen, M. Kääriäinen. Cham: Springer.

Lehti, M. 2019. Mediation Success in the Frame of Liberal Peace Critique. In *The Era of Private Peacemakers*, edited by M. Lehti. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2015. *Qualitative Research Methods. In Practical Research, Planning and Design*. England: Pearson Education.

Levine, E.P. 1971. *The Mediation of International Disputes*. Yale University.

Limo, I. 2018. What do networks of women mediators mean for mediation support in Africa? *Conflict Trends*, 2018(1):42-49.

Lindgren, M. 2016. Peacemaking up close: Explaining mediator styles of international mediators (Masters dissertation, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University).

Lugones, M. 2007. Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System. *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, *22*(1): 186–219.

Lugones, M. 2008. The Coloniality of Gender. *Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise*, Spring, 1-17.

Lugones, M. 2010. Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, 25(4):742-759.

Lundgren, M. & Svensson, I. 2020. The surprising decline of international mediation in armed conflicts. *Research & Politics*, 7(2):205-243.

Mac Ginty, R. 2008. Indigenous peace-making versus the liberal peace. *Cooperation and conflict*, 43(2):139-163.

Madsen, L. D. 2000. *Feminist Theory and Literary Practice*. London: Pluto Press.

Maedl, A. 2011. Rape as Weapon of War in the Eastern DRC? The Victims' Perspective. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 33(1):128-147.

Magalhaẽs, C. J. 1988. *The pure concept of diplomacy*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Makama, G.A. 2013. Patriarchy and gender inequality in Nigeria: The way forward. *European scientific journal*, 9(17):115-144.

Maldonado-Torres, N. 2007. On the Coloniality of Being. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3):240-270.

Malebang, G.G.G. 2014. A Critical Assessment of Conflict Transformation Capacity in the Southern African Development Community (SADC): Deepening the Search for a Self-Sustainable and Effective Regional Infrastructure for Peace (RI4P) (Masters dissertation, 広島大学 (Hiroshima University)).

Mamdani, M. 2004. *Good Muslim, bad Muslim*. New York: Jacana Media (Pvt) Ltd.

Mama, A. & Okazawa-Rey, M. 2008. Editorial: Militarism, Conflict and Women's Activism, *Feminist Africa*, 10: 1–8.

Manning, J. 2021. Decolonial feminist theory: Embracing the gendered colonial difference in management and organisation studies. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(4):1203-1219.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. 1995. *Designing qualitative research (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Mayring, P. 2004. Qualitative content analysis. In *A companion to qualitative research,* edited by U. Flick, E. von Kardorff & I. Steinke. London: Sage.

Mazrui, A. A. 1990. *Cultural Forces in World Politics.* London and Portsmouth: NH: James Currey and Heinemann.

Mbwadzawo, M. & Ngwazi, N. 2013. Mediating peace in Africa: Enhancing the role of southern African women in mediation. ACCORD *Policy Brief* 025.

McAfee, N. 2018. Feminist philosophy, 28 June 2018. Internet: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-philosophy/. Accessed: 21 November 2021.

McClintock, A. 1995. *Imperial Leather. Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest.* New York: Routledge.

McGhie, M., P. & Wamai, E.N. 2011. Beyond the Numbers: Women's Participation in the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation. *Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue*.

Mckay, S., & Mazura, D. 2004. Where are the girls? Girls in fighting forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 28(5):385–397.

Medie, P. & Kang, A.J. Power, Knowledge and the politics of gender in the global South. *European Journal of Politics*, 1(1-2):37-53.

Mendez, X. 2015. Notes toward a decolonial feminist methodology: revisiting the race/gender matrix. *Trans-scripts*, 5:41-56.

Mendoza, B. 2002. Transnational feminisms in question. *Feminist Theory*, 3(3):295–31

Merlingen, M. & Ostrauskaite, R. 2005. Power/knowledge in international peacebuilding: the case of the EU police mission in Bosnia. *Alternatives*, 30(3):297-323.

Mgonja, B.E.S. & Makombe, I.A.M. 2009. Debating international relations and its relevance to the third world. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3(1): 27-37.

Miall, Hugh. 1992. The peacemakers: Peaceful settlement of disputes since 1945. New York: St. Martin's.

Mignolo, W. 2001. Coloniality of power and subalternity. *The Latin American subaltern studies reader*, 424-444.

Mignolo, W.D. 2007a. Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality. *Cultural studies*, 21(2-3):449-514.

Mignolo, W. D. 2007b. Introduction: Coloniality of Power and De-colonial Thinking. *Cultural Studies*, 155-167.

Mignolo, W.D. & Escobar, A. 2013. *Globalization and the decolonial option*. New York: Routledge.

Mignolo, W., & Walsh, C. 2018. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.

Mminele, L. 2019. Women's Participation in Mediation Leadership as Special Envoys In The African Union. (Masters Dissertation, University of Pretoria)

Mlambo-Ngcuka, P. & Coomaraswamy, R. 2015. Women are the best weapon in the war against terrorism. *Foreign Policy*, 10 February 2015. Internet: *https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/10/women-are-the-best-weapon-in-the-war-against-terrorism/.* Accessed: 27 February 2022.

Moghadam, V.M. 2013. *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Mohajan, K. H. 2018. Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Related Subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7 (1): 16-17.

Mohanty, C. 1988. Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Feminist Review*, 30(1):61–88.

Mohanty, C. T. 1991. Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In *Third World women and the politics of feminism* edited by C.T. Mohanty, A. Russo, & L. Torres. Bloomington Indiana:University Press.

Mohanty, C. T. 2003a. *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Duke University Press.

Mohanty, C. T. 2003b. "Under Western Eyes" revisited: Feminist solidarity through anticapitalist struggles. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(2):499–535

Mohanty, C.T. Russo, A., & Torres, L. 1991. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Montville, J. 1991. Track Two Diplomacy: The Arrow and the Olive Branch: A case for Track Two Diplomacy. In, *The Psychodynamics of International Relations: Vol. 2. Unofficial diplomacy at work* edited by V. D. Volkan M.D., J. Montville, & D. A. Julius. Massachusetts: Lexington Books.

Moser, C. & Clark, F. 2001. *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. London: Zed Books.

Motsamai, D. 2018. Evaluating the Peacemaking Effectiveness of SADC (Masters Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, School of Governance).

Motoyama, H. 2018. Formulating Japan's UNSCR 1325 national action plan and forgetting the "comfort women". *International Feminist Journal Politics*, 20(1):39-53.

Mottiar, S. & Van Jaarsveld, S. 2009. Mediating Peace in Africa: Security Conflict Prevention. *African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes*, 1-49.

Mpoumou, D. 2004. Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Discourse in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In *The Implementation of Quotas: African Experiences Quota Report Series*, edited by J. Ballington. Sweden: International IDEA publication.

Murias, R., Tonnesson, L., & Wang, V. 2013. Exploring the relationship between democratization and quota policies in Africa. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 41:89-93.

Murithi, T., & Ives, P. M. 2007. Under the Acacia: Mediation and the dilemma of Inclusion. In *Conflict Mediation in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*, edited by K. Papagianni. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

Mutisi, M., Ogunsanya, K. & Ettang, D. 2011. *Resolution 1325 in 2020: Looking Forward, Looking Back.* South Africa: The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes.

Mutasa, C. 2008. A critical appraisal of the African Union – ECOSOCC civil society Interface. In *The African Union and its Institutions*, edited by J. Akokpari, A. Ndinga-Muvumba, A. & T. Murithi, T. Cape Town: Jacana Media, Auckland and Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR).

Myrttinen, H., Naujoks, J., & El-Bushra, J. 2014. Rethinking Gender in Peacebuilding. March 2014. Internet: *https://www.international-alert.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Gender-Rethinking-Gender-Peacebuilding-EN-2014.pdf.* Accessed: 13 August 2022.

Namibia. 2019. National Action Plan on women, peace and security (2019 – 2024). Namibia. Windhoek: Government printers

Najam, A. 1995. *Learning from the Literature on Policy Implementation: A synthesis Perspective*. Laxenburg: International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

Nathan, L. 1998. A Case of Undue Pressure: International Mediation in African Civil Wars. *Independent Mediation Service of South Africa and Centre for Conflict Resolution*, 3(5): 1-15.

Nathan, L. 2005. Mediation and the African Union's Panel of the Wise Discussion Paper. Crisis States Development Research Centre, 1-16.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2012. Beyond the equator there are no sins: Coloniality and violence in Africa. Journal of Developing Societies, 28(4), pp.419-440.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. 2013a. Why decoloniality in the 21st century. *The thinker*, *48*(10):5-9.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2013b. *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization*. Dakar: CODESRIA Book Series.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2013c. *Empire, Global Coloniality and African Subjectivity*. (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. 2013d. The entrapment of Africa within the global colonial matrices of power: Eurocentrism, coloniality, and deimperialization in the twenty-first century. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 29(4):331-353.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni. 2015. Beyond 'Clash of Civilizations.' Towards 'Pluriversality:' Culture. Identity, and Power in Africa. *Archie Mafeje Research Institute for Applied Social Policy*, 1(1): 1-10.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2016. *The Decolonial Mandela: Peace, Justice and Politics of Life*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Ndhlovu, N. 2019. A gender analysis of the transitional justice framework in Zimbabwe. (Masters Dissertation. University of Pretoria).

Ndhlovu, N. & Wielenga, C. 2021. Unequal access to redress for women ex-combatants in Zimbabwe: an intersectional analysis. *African Identities*, 1-16.

Newman, E.P.R. & Richmond, O. 2009. *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding*. New York: United Nations University Press.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. 1986. *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Nairobi: Heinemann.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. 1993. *Moving the Centre: The Struggles for Cultural Freedoms*. London: James Currey.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. 2009. *Re-Membering Africa*. Nairobi/ Kampala/ Dar es Salaam: East African Educational Publishers Ltd.

Ni Aolain, F. & Rooney, E. 2007. Underenforcement and intersectionality: Gendered aspects of transition for women. *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 1: 338–354.

Nyere, C. 2020. A Decolonial Perspective on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's Invasion of Libya in 2011. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).

Nzeogwu, N. 2000. African women and the fire dance, 2000. Internet: *http://www.westafricareview.com/vol2.1/nzegwu2*. Accessed 14 Aug 2022.

O'Barr, J.F. 1975. Making the Invisible Visible: African Women in Politics and Policy. African Studies Review, 18(3):19-27.

Ocheni, S., & Nwankwo, B. C. 2012. Analysis of Colonialism and Its Impact in Africa. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 8(3): 46-54.

Okoyo, M. 1977. Africa and political stability. *Africa*, 74:93-96.

Olonisakin, F., Barnes, K., & Ikpe,E. 2010. *Women, Peace and Security. Translating Policy into Practice*. New York: Routledge.

Olonisakin, F., Hendricks, C., & Okech, A. 2015. The Convergence and Divergence of Three Pillars of Influence in Gender and Security. *African Security Review*, 24(4):376–89.

Olonisakin, F. & Okech, A. 2011. *Women and Security Governance in Africa*, Cape Town: Pambazuka Press.

Ong'ayo, J.K., 2008. *Factors affecting job satisfaction among the nursing staff at Kenyatta National Hospital*. (Masters Dissertation, University of NAIROBI).

O'Reilly, M. 2018. *Gendered Agency in War and Peace: Gender Justice and Women's Activism in Post-Conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina*. London: Palgrave

O'Reilly, M., Súlleabháin, A., & Paffenholz, A. 2015. *Re-Imagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes*. New York: International Peace Institute.

Opongo, E., Muthui, C.W., & Ondeng, F. 2021. Levels of Change in Women Participation in the Peacebuilding Process in Africa. *HIPSIR Research Series*, (4):01.

Oyewumi, O. 1997. *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press.

Paffenholz, T., Prentice, A.P., & Buchanan, C. 2015. *Fresh Insights on the Quantity and Quality of Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes.* Porter, Antonia. CMI/ Graduate Institute Geneva/Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding *Policy Brief*.

Paludi, M.I., Helms Mills, J. & Mills, A. 2019. Cruzando fronteras: the contribution of a decolonial feminism in organization studies. *Management & Organizational History*, 14(1):55-78.

Patil, V. 2013. From Patriarchy to Intersectionality: A Transnational Feminist Assessment of How Far We've Really Come. *Signs Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38(4):847- 867.

Patton, M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pérez, E. 1999. *The decolonial imaginary: Writing Chicanas into history*. Indiana University Press.

Peterson, S. 1992. *Gendered States. Feminist (Re) Vision of International Relations Theory, Gender and Political Theory: New Contexts*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Peterson, S.V. 2002. On The Cut(ting) Edge. In *Critical Perspectives in International Studies*, edited by F.P. Harvey & M. Brecher. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Peterson, S.V. & Runyan, S.A. 1993. *Global gender issues*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Pettigrew, J. & Shneiderman, S. 2004. Women and the Maobadi: Ideology and agency in Nepal's Maoist movement. *Himal South Asian*, 17(1):19–29.

Pinna, M. 2018. Rape as a weapon of war: Women in South Sudan speak out, 24 September 2018. Internet: *https://www.euronews.com/amp/2018/05/31/south-sudan*. Accessed: 14 March 2022.

Pitkin, H. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pisani, A. 2021. Old and New Approaches to Mediation. In *Southern African Security Review 2020* edited by G. Khadiagala, & D. Deleglise. Johannesburg & Maputo: The Centre for Defence and Security Management & Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Porter, E. J. 2008. *Peacebuilding: Women in International Perspective*. Abingdon:Routledge.

Pratt, N. & Richter-Devroe, S. 2011. Critically examining UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 13(4):489-503.

Princen, T. 1992. Mediation by a transnational organization: The case of the Vatican. In *Mediation in International Relations*, edited by T. Princen. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Quijano, A. 1993. Modernity, Identity, and Utopia in Latin America. *Boundary 2*, 20(3):140-155.

Quijano, A. 2000. Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1(3):533-580.

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2):168-178.

Rallis, S. F., & Rossman, G. B. 2003. Mixed methods in evaluation contexts: A pragmatic framework. In *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research,* edited by A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ramose, M.B. 2003. The struggle for reason in Africa. In *The African philosophy reader,* edited by P.H. Coetzee & A.P.J. Roux, A.P.J, 2nd edition. New York: Routledge.

Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H. & Woodhouse, T. 2011. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Raymond, G.A. & Kegley Jr, C.W. 1985. Third party mediation and international norms: A test of two models. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *9*(1):33-52.

Reardon, B. 1985. *Sexism and the war system*. New York, N.Y. : Teachers College Press.

Reardon, B. 1993. *Women and peace: feminist visions of global security*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Rehn, E., & Sirleaf, E. J. 2002. *Women, War and Peace*. New York: UNIFEM.

Rolland, A. 2021. Weapsonisation of female bodies: Rape as a weapon of war in the DRC, 26 February 2021. Internet: *https://thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/weaponisation-of-female-bodies-rape-as-a-weapon-of-war-in-the-drc*. Accessed: 17 April 2022

Rombouts, H. 2006. Women and reparations in Rwanda: a long path to travel. In: *What happened to the women: gender and reparations for human rights violations,* edited by R. Rubio-Marín. Social Science Research Council, New York.

Ross, F.C. 2003. *Bearing witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa*. London: Pluto Press.

Rubio-Marín, R. 2009. *The gender of reparations: unsettling sexual hierarchies while redressing human rights violations*. Cambridge University Press.

Ruddick, S. 1989. *Maternal thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Sabaratnam, M. 2011. The Liberal Peace? An Intellectual History of International Conflict Management, 1990-2010. In *A Liberal Peace?: The Problems and Practices of Peacebuilding*, edited by S. Campbell, D. Chandler & M. Sabaratnam, M. London: Zed Books.

Saldaña, J. 2013. The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. New Delhi: SAGE.

Sapiano, J. 2021. *The Boundaries of Peace: A Feminist Analysis of International Mediation Processes.* Melbourne: Australian Research Council Discovery Project.

Schiwy, F. 2007. Decolonization and the Question of Subjectivity: Gender, Race and Binary Thinking. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3):271-294.

Scanlon, H., Makan-Lakha, P. & Hamilton, M. 2020. The Twentieth Anniversary of UNSCR 1325: What's Next in the Era of COVID-19? *ACCORD*:2-14

Schmidt, S.M. & Kochan, T.A. 1972. Conflict: Toward Conceptual Clarity. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 359-370.

Schreier, M. 2012. *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. London: Sage

Senarathna, T. 2015. Women in Peace Processes—Real Inclusivity or 'Just Add Women'?. Development Dialogue. *Inclusive Peacebuilding: Recognised But Realised*, 81-88.

Shepherd, L. 2014. *Advancing th women, peace and security agenda: 2015 and beyond*. NOREF: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre.

Shiferaw, L. T & Desmidt, S. 2020. Is meaningful inclusion the next frontier in women in mediation in Africa? 22 June 2020. Internet: *https://ecdpm.org/work/is-meaningful-inclusion-the-next-frontier-in-women-in-mediation-in-africa*. Accessed: 17 July 2022

Sjoberg, L. & Via, S. 2010. *Gender War and Militarism: Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Praeger Security International.

Sjoberg, L. 2018. Jihadi brides and female volunteers: Reading the Islamic State's war to see gender and agency in conflict dynamics. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 35(3): 296–311.

Skjelsbaek, I. & Smith, D. 2001. *Gender, Peace & Conflict* available at *https://www.prio.org/publications/669*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute (PRIO).

Smith, M.K. 2002. Gender, poverty, and intergenerational vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. *Gender & Development,* 10(3);63-70.

Sørensen, B., 1998. *Women and post-conflict reconstruction: Issues and sources* (No. 3). WSP Occasional Paper.

South Africa. 2020. National Action Plan on women, peace and security (2022 – 2025). South Africa. Pretoria: Government printers.

Southern African Development Community (SADC). 2001. Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. (Blantyre, Malawi, August 14, 2001), available at *https://www.sadc.int/files/3613/5292/8367/Protocol_on_*Politics_Defence_and_Security20001.pdf.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) .2009. SADC Framework for Achieving Gender Parity in Political and Decision Making Positions by 2015, available at *https://www.sadc.int/document/sadc-framework-achieving-gender-parity-political-and-decision-making-positions-2015*.

Southern African Development Community. 2015. SADC Commission of Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao: Final Report, November 5, 2015.

Southern African Development Community (SADC). 2016. Gender Policy. Internet: *https://www.sexrightsafrica.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/SADC_GENDER_POLICY_-_ENGLISH.pdf*. Accessed : 24 October 2021 .

Southern African Development Community (SADC). 2018. Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022). Botswana: SADC, available at *https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/RAP-2018-2022-SADC.pdf*. Accessed: 1 September 2021.

Southern African Development Community (SADC). 2022. H.E President Masisi presents appointment letters to SADC Panel of Elders and Mediation Reference Group and urge the region to use their expertise, 1 March 2022. Internet: *https://www.sadc.int/latest-news/he-president-masisi-presents-appointment-letters-sadc-panel-elders-and-mediation*. Accessed. 18 August 2022.

Spivak, G. C. 1985. Subaltern studies: Deconstructing historiography. In R. Guha (Ed.), Subaltern studies IV (pp. 330–363). Oxford University Press.

Spivak, G. C. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? In *Marxism and the interpretation of culture,* edited by C. Nelson & L. Grossberg. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

Spivak, G. C. 1999. A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present. Harvard University Press. Stockett, M. K. (2005). On the importance of difference: Re-envisioning sex and gender in ancient Mesoamerica. *World Archaeology*, 37(4):566–57

Steinberg, D. 2007. Failing to Empower Women Peacebuilders: A Cautionary Tale from Angola, April 25, 2007. Internet: *http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/gissue_hr_part_failingtoempowerwomenpeacebuildersangola_international_crisis_group_2007.pdf*. Accessed: 15 June 2022.

Strickland, R. & Duvvury, N., 2003. Gender equity and peacebuilding: from rhetoric to reality; finding the way. *Discussion Paper*.

Sugh, T. & Ikwuba, A. 2017. Women in mediation and conflict resolutions: Lessons, challenges and prospects for Africa. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(1):1-6.

Swain, A., Bali Swain, R., Themnér, A. & Krampe, F. 2011. Climate change and the risk of violent conflicts in Southern Africa. *Global Crisis Solutions*.

Sylvester, C. 1994. *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sylvester, C. 2002a. *Feminist International Relations: An Unfinished Journey*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sylvester, C. 2002b. ''Progress'' as Feminist International Relations. In Critical Perspectives in *International Studies*, edited by F.P. Harvey & M. Brecher. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Tarnaala, E. 2015. Getting the past right in West Africa and beyond: Challenging structures through addressing gender-based violence in mediation. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 15(2):57-80.

Taiwo, O. 1993. Colonialism and its aftermath: The crisis of knowledge production. *Callaloo*, 16(4):891-908.

Tesch, R. 1990. *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools*. New York: Falmer Press.

Tickner, J.A. 1992. *Gender in International Relations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tickner, J.A. 1996. *You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminists and IR Theorists.* Working Paper No. 1996/6, Department of International Relations, Australian National University and National Library of Australia.

Tickner, J.A. 1999. Searching for the Princess? Feminist Perspectives in International Relations. *Harvard International Review* (Fall):44–48.

Tickner, J.A. 2001. *Gendering World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tickner, J.A. 2002. Feminist Theory and Gender Studies. In *Critical Perspectives in International Studies*, edited by Frank P. Harvey and Michael Brecher. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Tlostanova, M. Decolonial Feminism and the Decolonial Turn. In *Gender Epistemologies and Eurasian Borderlands*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tripp, A.M. 1988. Expanding 'civil society': women and political space in contemporary Uganda. In: *Civil society and democracy in Africa. Critical perspectives*, edited by N. Kasfir. London: Frank Cass.

Tripp, A.M. 2015. Women's Rights in Peace Agreements. In *Women and power in post-conflict Africa*, edited by A.M. Tripp. Cambridge University Press.

True, J. 2013. Feminist problems with international norms: gender mainstreaming in global governance. In *Feminism and International Relations,* edited by J.A. Tickner & L. Sjoberg. US: Taylor & Francis.

Turner, C. 2017. Women in Mediation: Connecting the Local and the Global. *Strategic Security Analysis*, (5).

Turner, C. 2020. 'Soft ways of doing hard things': women mediators and the question of gender in mediation. *Peacebuilding*, 8(4):383-401.

Uchendu, E. 2007. *Women and conflict in the Nigerian Civil War*. Trenton: Africa World Press

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2010. Eight Point Agenda for Women's empowerment and Gender equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery, available at *http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/undp-cpr-8-point-agenda-practical-positive- outcomes-girls-women-crisis.pdf*.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). 2003. *Women and peace in Africa: Case studies on traditional conflict resolution practices*. Paris, UNESCO.

United Nations General Assembly/United Nations Security Council (UNGA/UNSC). 2015. Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, 1 June 2015. A/70/95-S/2015/466.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2000. "Resolution 1325 (2000)": Women Peace and Security, available at *http://www.un-documents.net/sr1325.htm*. New York.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2008. "Resolution 1820 (2008)", available at *http:// www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1820(2008)*

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2009a. "Resolution 1888 (2009)", available at *http:// www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1888(2009)*

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2009b. "Resolution 1889 (2009)" , available at *http:// www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1889(2009)*

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2010. "Resolution 1960. (2010)", available at *http:// www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1960(2010)*

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2013a. "Resolution 2122 (2013)"

United Nations Security Council (UNSC). 2013b. "Resolution 2106 (2013)", available at *http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2106(2013)*

UN Women. 2012. Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence. Internet: *https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/03AWomenPeaceNeg.pdf*. Accessed: 18 November 2021.

UN WOMEN. 2018. Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements. Report of the Expert Group Meeting; 2019 Open Letter to Permanent Representatives to the UN: Recommendations on the Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). 24 October 2019. Available at: *http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/open-letter-unsc-wps-anniversary-october-2019/*

UN Women. 2019. Increasing Women's Participation in Mediation Processes: What Roles For The United Nations, Regional Organizations And Member States? 3-4 December 2019. Internet: *https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2021/Increasing-womens-participation-in-mediation-processes-en.pdf*. Accessed: 3 June 2022.

UN Women. 2022a. Speech: Let's put an end to 'Where are the women'? 15 June 2022. Internet: *https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/speech/2022/06/speech-lets-put-an-end-to-where-are-the-women*. Accessed: 1 August 2022.

UN Women. 2022b. Facts and figures: Women, peace, and security, 14 October 2022. Internet: *https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures*. Accessed: 20 October 2022.

Velez, E.D. 2019. Decolonial feminism at the intersection: A critical reflection on the relationship between decolonial feminism and intersectionality. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, 33(3):390-406.

Velez, E.D & Tuana, N. 2020. Toward Decolonial Feminisms: Tracing the Lineages of Decolonial Thinking through Latin American/Latinx Feminist Philosophy. In *Hypatia*, edited by B.J. Mann, E. McKenna, C. Russell, & R. Zambrana. State College: Cambridge University Press.

Verschuur, C. & Destremau, B. 2012. Decolonial Feminisms, Gender, and Development. Revue Tiers Monde, 209(1):7-18.

Wall, J. (1981). Mediation: An analysis, review and proposed research. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 25:157-180.

Wallerstein, I. 2006. *European universalism: The rhetoric of power*. New York: The New Press.

Walsh, C. 2013. Shifting the Geopolitics of Critical Knowledge: Decolonial thought and cultural studies ‘others' in the Andes. In *Globalization and the decolonial option* (pp. 78-93). Routledge.

Warsame, A. 2002. Queens without Crowns: Somaliland women’s changing roles and peacebuilding. Nairobi, SOWRAG/Life & Peace Institute, *Horn of Africa* series 4.

Weber, R.P. 1990. *Basic content analysis*. London: Sage Publications

WHO. 2002. World report on violence and health. Geneva: World Health Organization. Available at: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf. Accessed: 5 April 2022.

Yin, K. R. 1993. *Application of Case Study Research*. California: Sage Publication.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 13(3):193–209.

Zartman, I.W. & Touval, S. 1985. International mediation: Conflict resolution and power politics. *Journal of social issues*, 41(2):27-45.

Zambakari, C. 2016. Challenges of liberal peace and statebuilding in divided societies. *Conflict trends*, *2016*(4):18-25.

Zeleza, P.T. 2008. The Causes and Costs of War in Africa: From Liberation Struggles to the ‘War on Terror’. *USIU Africa School of Humanities and Social Sciences*: 1-35.

Zondi, S. 2015. Decolonial humanism and the Africa’s presence in international diplomacy. *CODESRIA*, 1–14.

Zondi, S. 2017. African Union approaches to peacebuilding: Efforts at shifting the continent towards decolonial peace. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 17(1):105-131.

Zondi, S. 2018a. Decolonising International Relations and Its Theory: A Critical Conceptual Meditation. *Politikon*, 45(1): 16-31

Zondi, S. 2018b. Amilcar Cabral and Theory as a Weapon of the Oppressed, 21 April 2018. Internet:*https://www.up.ac.za/political-sciences/news/post2671448-prof-zondi-inaugural-lecture-amilcar-cabral-and-theory-as-a-weapon-of-the-oppressed*. Accessed: 1 July 2020.