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“OH, HOW PRETTY YOU WOMEN ARE TALKING ABOUT SECURITY”

A qualitative perspective on how female
internal mediators in Colombia view
gender as affecting their influence in
peace negotiation

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Abstract

Peace diplomacy has been a male dominated area for centuries. The internal mediator, an actor taking part within peace negotiations, plays an essential role in increasing the likelihood of negotiated agreements. Participation of female internal mediators in peace negotiations is remarkably limited and we know little about the context in which these women work. From a qualitative perspective, this thesis examines the views of female internal mediators in Colombia who have been taking part in the peace process between FARC-EP and the Colombian government since 2010. By focusing on the peace process in Colombia, in which the large number of women participating was groundbreaking, this thesis aims to investigate how female internal mediators in Colombia view the role of gender in the peace negotiation process. Do they see being a woman as something which limits or enhances their influence in peace negotiation? If so, in what ways? By conducting a descriptive single case study on Colombia, with the use of semi-structured interviews, several views on the role of gender in peace negotiation was found. In sum, It was found that stereotypical gender roles and the gendered division of labour, recognition, and networks all work as both limiting as well as enabling factors for female internal mediators' influence. The result show that female internal mediators on the one hand realize the need for having recognition in order to get appointments and assert influence, but on the other hand express not wanting it due to threats and internal resistance.

Key words: Colombia, gender, internal mediator, interviews, peace negotiation

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1. Introduction and General Aim

How do female internal mediators in Colombia view gender as part of their mediation work? Do they see being a woman as something which limits or enhances their influence in peace negotiation? If so, in what ways? This is what this thesis aims to investigate. The internal mediator, a kind of mediator in peace negotiation who emerges from within the conflict, plays a unique role in the peace building process. Today, the participation of female internal mediators in peace negotiations is remarkably limited and we know little about the context in which these women work. Therefore, this study focuses on investigating their views on how gender limits or enables their influence in peace negotiation.

To put this in context, peace diplomacy has been a male dominated area for centuries. This has led to certain specific norms and principles underlying the diplomatic infrastructure that regulates and constructs expected roles of actors, mediators and negotiators in terms of gender (Aggestam & Towns, 2018). These norms and principles are part of the structural barriers that prevent women from participating and exercising influence in sustainable peace processes.

The positive correlation between women's influence in peace negotiations and the possibility of achieving sustainable peace agreements have been established (Paffenholz, et.al, 2016), pointing out the importance of women's meaningful participation and influence within peace negotiation. However, does the impetus for including women in peace processes have to depend on a rationality of effectiveness? Or is it simply enough to say it is their right to participate? In this study, I am drawing on the latter argument, leaving aside the discussion on women's impact on durable peace.

Instead, the study focus on obstacles and opportunities that female negotiators may experience within their work as negotiators. Previous research addressing how gender might limit or enable for women's meaningful participation mainly focuses on women's participation in a general sense by examining women in general and as organized groups (Bell, 2003; Coomaraswamy, 2015; Reimann, 2014; Operation 1325; Paffenholz, et.al, 2016).

Another body of work focuses on top-level mediators in international diplomacy, investigating gender barriers and gendered institutions within peace negotiation (Aharoni, 2011; Aggestam & Towns, 2018; Turner, 2018; Svedberg, 2018). My focus on internal mediators is thus novel, adding a new empirical focus to the study of gender and diplomacy.

There are several ways of participating in peace processes, within official and unofficial negotiations or workshops at both national and regional levels. This makes peace negotiations complex since many of the activities overlap and feed into each other. Lately, peace negotiations have developed by including participation by various parts of civil society. This shift towards a 'local' and inclusive perspective in the practice of international peacebuilding is slowly replacing the traditional exclusive peace negotiations with only a few main armed groups included (Paffenholz, 2015). The shift also involves intervention by not only external or third-party-mediators, but also internal mediators who emerges from within the conflict (Wehr & Lederach, 1991).

The internal mediator gains legitimacy and acceptability as a mediator based upon relationships of trust with the conflict parties (Wehr & Lederach, 1991:87). The internal mediator, in contrast to the external mediator, is determined to live with the results of the peace negotiations. They will not leave signing a peace agreement, which contributes to them gaining trust from all sides of the conflict (Wehr & Lederach, 1991:87). The internal mediators furthermore play an essential role in increasing the likelihood of negotiated agreements (Svensson & Lindgren, 2013). Their access to information about the parties is more extensive, since they are locally established and commonly serve as civil society-based or faith-based representatives (Svensson & Lindgren, 2013:703).

At the formal negotiation table, internal mediators may participate within delegations of the main conflict parties or by having a delegation of their own. Beside the negotiation table, internal mediators can participate through various modalities. Hence, the role of the internal mediator is complex. It involves working with peace negotiation within the local context as well as adapting to and working within the context of international peace negotiation. The

combination of the unique role of the internal mediator and the fact that a shift towards a more local perspective on peacebuilding is in progress, makes understanding the conditions of these internal mediators work pressing. There are, to my knowledge, few in-depth single case studies within this field focusing on the role of the internal mediator.

The agreement reached between the Revolutionary Armed Forces, FARC-EP, and the Colombian government in 2016 after more than 50 years of conflict has been honored as the first gender equal peace agreement in history (Wallström & Lövin, 2016). At the United Nations Security Council in New York in October 2018, Swedish foreign minister Margot Wallström argued that “the peace agreement in Colombia is a model when it comes to inclusion” (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018). The large number of women participating in the peace process was groundbreaking and stands out in comparison with other peace processes around the world (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). During the negotiations, women mainly participated through the first-ever sub-commission on gender. Participation within other fields not explicitly tied to gender was much more limited.

How do female internal mediators in Colombia view the role of gender in the peace mediation process?

In the next chapter, existing scholarship on how gender shapes women’s influence in peace negotiation is presented, pointing out the lack of research on female internal mediators. Thereafter, I present the theoretical approach of this study, starting with a constructivist view of gender, to then develop a theoretical framework on four forms of influence in peace negotiation that allows me to structure the inductive analysis of the ways in which gender may be understood to shape peace negotiations. The methods chapter describes the research design - a descriptive single case study on Colombia - and the use of interviews to answer the research questions. The ensuing chapter analysis starts with a section presenting the participation of women in peace negotiation in Colombia, followed by the analysis of how female internal mediators view gender in mediation. In sum, my study finds that stereotypical gender roles and the gendered division of labour, recognition, and networks all works as both

limiting as well as enabling factors for influence, wherein personal threats are put forwards as an obstacle that hinders striving for recognition.

2. Literature Review: scholarship on gender and peace negotiations

The research on women's participation in peace negotiation has recently grown rapidly, mainly focusing on the general inclusion of women at all levels of negotiation. Recently, a growing number of scholars have turned to investigating women's participation in international peace negotiation as external mediators. In this chapter, I will start by presenting existing scholarship on the participation and influence of women in general in peace negotiation, and how it addresses gender factors as limiting or enabling women's influence. Thereafter, I discuss scholarship on the participation and influence of female external mediators within international diplomacy, and how it addresses gender factors as limiting or enabling for women's influence. Finally, I point out the lack of scholars investigating female internal mediators, arguing that my focus on how these mediators view gender in mediation is an important addition to the scholarship on gender and diplomacy.

2.1. Scholarship on participation of women in general

Much of the research touching upon women's participation in peace negotiation are policy-oriented reports, mostly carried out by various international organisations. A dozen scholars investigating under what conditions women are participating in peace negotiation have been influential during the last decades. These scholars outline various gender-related factors limiting and enabling female participation and influence (Porter, 2013; Chinkin & Kaldor, 2013; Enloe, 2014; Buckley-Zistel, 2013; Druliolle & Brett, 2018; Bell, 2003; Coomaraswamy, 2015; Reimann, 2014; Operation 1325). The scholars make rather general claims by looking at women's participation at all levels in peace negotiation. External mediators are not investigated, yet the group of internal mediators have been included in most of the scholarship, though not investigated as a separate group.

Gender factors identified as relevant in this prior scholarship include gender roles and the gendered division of labour, insecurity and personal threats, and the role of women's groups

and networks. Stereotypical gender roles and the gendered division of labour are identified as obstacles for women's participation and influence within peace negotiations. Stereotypical gender roles are reinforced during war (Chinkin & Kaldor, 2013). This includes women being portrayed as peaceful by nature while men are attributed characteristics associated with war, resulting in men being viewed as both the aggressors and the protectors and women as in need of protection (e.g. Enloe, 2014). Within the international political system, women are commonly portrayed and framed as victims, resulting in women being excluded and limited within peace negotiation based on the stereotypical view of women as victims and uncritical advocates for peace (Enloe, 2014:30; Reimann, 2014). The view of women as victims, can also serve as an opportunity for women's participation in peace negotiation. Since the local perspective on peacebuilding tries to put victims at the centre of peacebuilding, seeing victims as political actors might open opportunities for social recognition of women, breaking through the regime of denial (Buckley-Zistel, 2013:95–96). Another obstacle frequently stressed by numerous scholars is women's insecurity and personal threats leveled against women, limiting their participation and influence within peace processes (Bell, 2003; Coomaraswamy, 2015; Reimann, 2014; Operation 1325). Moreover, the role of women's groups and networks have been proven to affect women's participation positively at all levels in peace negotiations (Paffenholz, 2016). Women's groups, networks or movements could therefore appear as an enabling factor for women's participation and influence within peace negotiation.

2.2. Scholarship on participation of female external mediators

The study of women as external mediators is limited, but has recently been grown (Aggestam & Towns, 2018; Aharoni, 2018; Aharoni, 2011; Tickner, 1992; Svedberg, 2018). The majority of these scholars focus on the inclusion of women, rather than investigating their influence within peace negotiation. Aggestam and Svensson (2018) present five main groups of peace mediators, in official peace negotiations: high-ranking representatives of international organisations, lower-level mediators from small states, high-ranking ministers, power mediators, and lastly the insider, also known as the internal, mediator (2018:158). Like

many of the scholars, they include the internal mediator when investigating women's participation but the group of internal mediators is not investigated as a separate group.

Among studies of female external mediators gender roles and the gendered division of labour, lack of recognition of women, and male networks are recurring themes. Gender roles and gendered divisions of labour often work as obstacles for women's inclusion (Aharoni, 2011). Women tend to cluster in 'feminine' or 'soft' fields traditionally connected to the private sphere and/or linked to women as a group (Aggestam & Towns, 2018). Men on the other hand tend to cluster in 'hard' fields such as the military. Aharoni (2018:197) argues that war is an event which has resulted in women being excluded from political decisions related to war, due to the gendered division between 'battlefront' and 'home'. Men have been seen as the protectors of the state and of the women whom are living within it (Tickner, 1992). The lack of recognition also limits women's influence in peace negotiations (Aharoni, 2011). Aharoni argues that female mediators become invisible to the public by being placed as mid-level negotiators, professional and legal advisors or serving as spokeswomen and secretaries without much recognition (2011). Moreover, male networks dominating international peace negotiation hinder participation of women at high-level appointments and contribute to the norm of masculinity within peace negotiation, which limits women's influence (Svedberg, 2018).

2.3. Missing scholarship on participation of female internal mediators

More studies are needed in order to answer unaddressed questions regarding women's meaningful participation and influence in peace negotiation. Many reports from organisations ranging from the United Nations to foreign ministries, call attention to the urgent need for research within the field. Problematically, the large majority of the reports investigate women in general. Female internal mediators and the conditions in which they work within peace negotiation have not yet been addressed or investigated as a separate group, especially not with respect to how gender affects their influence as peace negotiators. It becomes clear that research investigating female internal mediators' participation and influence within peace negotiation is lacking, even though this group could play a significant role in the peace

building process. Therefore, this study focuses on the views of female internal mediators in Colombia, to explore whether they perceive gender as limiting or enabling their influence in peace negotiation. By doing so, I will contribute to the field of peace negotiation in the sense of more knowledge about how gender shapes peace negotiation, which is of great importance in order to work on greater inclusion and influence for women in peace processes.

3. Theoretical Approach: gender and influence in peace negotiation

This thesis relies on an inductive approach. Nevertheless, I use theory to help structure the analysis in terms of themes: four forms of influence in peace negotiation. In the first part of this chapter, I will present gender performativity as the constructivists theoretical foundation, in order to explain how gender is interpreted in this thesis. I then present four forms of influence in peace negotiation, as gender can shape each of the four forms. Since gender is contextual, I work inductively, meaning I do not work with preordained answers. But in order to structure the analysis, I use the four forms of influence, as an analytical framework.

3.1. *Ontological Assumptions*

This thesis relies on a constructivist perspective on gender. Judith Butler, author of *Gender Trouble*, has been most influential in asserting that neither sex nor gender are bodily given. The sexed body established as a natural fact serves as an excuse for the construction of gender, which in turn results in gender being purported as natural expressions or consequences of sex (Butler, 2006:8-10). According to Butler, sex, gender and sexuality are culturally constructed through the repetition of stylized acts. These acts constitute gender. Gender, along with sex and sexuality, is in this sense understood to be performative (Butler, 2006).

Additionally, Butler argues that the repetition of acts, are in compliance with dominant societal norms, implying that gender roles are constructed by society and cultural institutions. Gender is thus understood as performed differently in different situations and contexts. The specific societal norms underlying peace diplomacy and peace negotiation what construct and regulate gender within that context. This includes expected roles of actors, mediators and

negotiators in terms of gender. Since peace negotiations have been particularly ingrained with masculinised norms of power (Aggestam & Towns, 2018), these norms have been crucial in constructing and forming gender within mediation.

3.2. Four forms of influence

This thesis focuses on how gender might shape the influence of women (and, in extension, men) in internal mediation. To unpack this, we need a sense of what kinds of influence a mediator may exercise. Thania Paffenholz, a prominent researcher within the field of gender and peace negotiation, points out four forms of influence of any included actor within peace processes (Paffenholz, 2016:16). Influence is assessed by looking at ability to: *1) bring issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda; 2) put issues into the substance of the agreement; 3) take part in the implementation of an agreement; and, 4) demand that negotiations begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed* (Paffenholz, 2016:16-17).

As Paffenholz points out, there are various factors related to gender that shape each of these four forms of influence. In order for women to have influence on the content and bringing issues onto the negotiation agenda, inclusion of women in the pre-negotiation phase is crucial. Since the actors at this stage of negotiations map out the road ahead for negotiations, inclusion in this pre-negotiation phase is vital in order for women to gain recognition and legitimacy to participate (Paffenholz, 2016:30). Additionally, inclusion in the early phase of negotiations is important in order to ensure the continuous involvement of women and women's groups throughout the peace process (Paffenholz, 2016:8).

Women's ability to influence the outcomes and putting issues into the substance of the agreement is strongly affected by gender roles. In cases where women have a recognised role as mediators in society, women have greater opportunities to influence the outcomes (Paffenholz, 2018:187). Conversely, in cases where women do not possess a recognised role as mediator or negotiator and where women's rights are contentious, female participants have to endure various threats, sexually harassments and assaults.

In order for women to participate in the implementation of an agreement, one important factor is the existence of prior commitments to gender sensitivity and women's inclusion (Paffenholz, 2018:188). Such commitments give women a legitimate claim to participate in the process and in the post-agreement implementation of an agreement (Paffenholz, 2016:54).

Within the fourth form of influence - the demand that negotiations begin, resume or an agreement being signed - the existence of strong women's groups and networks prior to peace negotiations affects the opportunity to make demands. In such cases, women were able to utilize experience and resources to push for their meaningful participation and facilitate the start of peace negotiation (2018:186). The existence of strong women's groups is closely interlinked to the opportunities for coalition-building, which allows women to mobilize around common issues and negotiate as a unified cluster (Paffenholz, 2016:8). This in turn increases the chances of being heard. By sharing grievances and formulating joint positions on key issues these coalitions manage to exercise much more influence at the negotiation table (Paffenholz, 2016:8).

The four forms of influence compose the theoretical framework of this study. The factors identified by the interview subjects are furthermore categorized as being either limiting or enabling women's influence. The analysis is nonetheless primarily inductive, as I do not work with preordained answers. Instead, since I am interested in investigating the views and experiences of my interview subjects, I embrace a more open approach. To structure the inductive analysis, Paffenholtz' approach is summarized and utilized as an analytical framework for examining gender factors that affect women's influence in peace negotiations:

Table 1: Gender factors in peace negotiation

	<i>Limiting factors</i>	<i>Enabling factors</i>
<i>Bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda</i>		
<i>Putting issues into the substance of the agreement</i>		
<i>Taking part in the implementation of an agreement</i>		
<i>The demand for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed</i>		

4. Specified Aim and Research Question

This thesis aims to describe the views of internal female mediators regarding how gender affects their ability to exercise influence within peace negotiation. More specifically, my thesis asks:

- *Do female internal mediators view gender as limiting or enabling in bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda? In what ways?*
- *Do female internal mediators view gender as limiting or enabling in putting issues into the substance of the agreement? In what ways?*
- *Do female internal mediators view gender as limiting or enabling in taking part in the implementation of an agreement? In what ways?*
- *Do female internal mediators view gender as limiting or enabling in the demand for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed? In what ways?*

5. Research Design and Methods: a single case study on Colombia

In order to answer the questions on how female internal peace mediators in Colombia view how gender affects their influence in peace negotiation, interviews with six female internal mediators in Colombia were conducted during the winter of 2018/2019. The chosen design of a single case study on peace negotiations in Colombia and the use of long semi-structured interviews for collecting data enabled exploring these individuals' rationales and ideas regarding how gender affects their influence in peace negotiation. The various perceptions of these individuals were further on structured in accordance with the analytical framework. In this chapter, I start with describing the chosen research design of a single case study. Thereafter I present how the interviews have been conducted. Lastly, I discuss the inductive approach and methods used in order to analyze the data within this study.

5.1. Research Design: a single case study

In this qualitative research study, hypotheses are not tested. Instead, this paper focuses extensively on the research questions stated above. The ambition is to answer how female internal mediators in Colombia perceive gender as limiting or enabling, rather than answering how gender de facto works as a factor affecting these mediators influence within peace negotiation. Consequently, the results in this thesis will not answer whether female internal mediators in Colombia generally face gender as a factor for influence in peace negotiation. Neither will the findings be able to rule out the possibility of other existing thoughts or perceptions not presented in this thesis.

This study has been carried out as a single case study, specifically looking at the peace negotiations in Colombia between FARC-EP and the Colombian government during the years 2012-2016. The peace negotiations in Colombia is one out of several peace negotiations in which internal mediators have been part of the peace process. Fourteen major peace processes have taken place since the year of 2010, six of them are still ongoing (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). All these fourteen peace processes, which compose the population within this study, have been characterized by previous armed conflict defined as a contested incompatibility between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, that

results in at least twenty-five battle-related deaths per calendar year (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018).

The peace negotiations in Colombia have been characterized as transparent and highlight the large number of women participating through civil society organizations. The peace process between FARC-EP and the Colombian government resulting in a peace agreement in 2016 stands out in comparison with other peace processes around the world regarding the number of women included. With a percentage of 33% women taking part in the process, only the peace negotiations in the Philippines reach the same numbers (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). The fact that a large number of women in Colombia have been participating within the peace process makes this case suitable to investigate, due to the large number of internal mediators.

The movement of women's organizations in Colombia have been prominent and most visible, and well coordinated for a longer time (Céspedes-Báez & Jaramillo Ruiz, 2018). The culture and tradition of a strong network of women organizations in the country have frequently been presented as one of the reasons for women being included and having a strong influence within the peace process. The fact that women are said to have had a strong influence in combination with the peace agreement being named the first gender equal peace agreement in history, makes this case critical to investigate when looking at gender factors affecting influence for female internal mediators. Gender factors limiting their influence might occur and operate in a similar way in other peace negotiations in which female internal mediators have been taking part without the same amount of influence or participation in the process.

Several previous attempts to reach a solution to the long lasting civil war between the two conflict parties have been made during the years. In this study, the last period of negotiations between the FARC-EP and the Colombian government with the start of 2012 are investigated. Various activities within the peace negotiations in Colombia have been taken into account in this study, not solely focusing at the formal peace talks at the highest official level. The peace talks between FARC-EP and the Colombian government during the years of

2012-2016, as well as the secret phase between 2010-2012 and the implementation phase which today is still ongoing, are the focus of this study.

The definition of internal mediator used in this study, in accordance with Wehr and Lederach broader definition, is stated ‘as one(s) who attempts to help the principals reach a voluntary agreement’, and emerges from within the conflict (1991:97). These internal mediators compose the interview subjects in this study. The interview subjects, Colombian female internal mediators, have been selected on the basis of maximum variation in order to increase the number of possible gender factors being discovered (Esaiasson et. al., 2017:270). It is likely that people respond differently to my questions depending on, for example, their experiences of peace negotiation, age, and region whereas the individual has been active as an internal mediator. Age was seen as relevant individual attribute, in the attempt to reflect the interview subjects to a larger public within the group of female internal mediators in Colombia. However, one interviewee did not want to state her age, and therefore her age has not been able to include in this study. The conflict in Colombia has been taken different forms in different regions regarding intensity of cease fire and insurgent groups, wherein rural areas have been more affected than metropolitan areas. Chocó and the northern parts of the country are areas still affected by ongoing violence (Sweden Abroad, 2019). Therefore the region as a parameter are of great importance. Details about the selection of interviewees and ethical considerations can be found in Appendix I.

At the beginning of the peace talks in Havana, the two main conflict parties could have up to ten delegates at the formal negotiating table. In the end of 2015 women accounted for 20 percent of the government delegators and 43 percent of the FARC-EP delegates (Céspedes-Báez & Jaramillo Ruiz, 2018:97). Additionally, eighteen representatives of women’s organizations participated in the peace process deliberations between 2014 and 2016 (Céspedes-Báez & Jaramillo Ruiz, 2018:97). The women interviewed in this study have been taking part at either the formal negotiation table in Havana as delegates or in high-level solving workshops part of the peace processes. In the analysis, interviewees have been named with a letter ranging from A-F. When quotes are presented, they will be referred to by the use

of their letter. Quotes by the interview subject “A” will initially be referred to as “A1”, “A2”, “A3”, and so on. Each of the six interviewees within this study is quoted in the results at least once. Below you find a table over the interviews taking part within this study.

Table 2: Interview subjects

Interview subject	Age	Residence	Profession	Level of negotiation
A	-	Medellín	Psychologist/Founder of ‘Asociación Mujeres Oriente’	Regional
B	37	Bogotá	Militar	National
C	68	Mocoa	Teacher/Founder of ‘Alianza de Mujeres Tejedoras de Vida’	National and Regional
D	45	Firavitoba/Bogotá	Occupational therapist/Director of ‘la Alianza Iniciativa Mujeres Colombianas por la paz’	National and Regional
E	62	Boyacá/Bogotá	Strategic Director of ‘la Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica’	National and Regional
F	57	Chocó	Historian/Part of ‘la Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas’	National and Regional

5.2. Methods for gathering data: semi structured interviews

The study relies on qualitative in-depth interviews in order to study female internal mediator’s perceptions about gender in peace negotiation. Qualitative research interviews are particularly suitable when studying individuals perceptions of their world (Esaiasson et. al., 2017:261-262), as well as when investigating complexities and processes in detail or discovering unknown aspects of a certain topic (Marshall & Rossman, 1989:46).

Unlike survey polls, which measure the quantity of reasons in a population, this thesis will not be able to make claims about frequency, as in how many individuals think in a certain way. Qualitative interviews makes it possible to capture unexpected arguments and perceptions, which might have gone unnoticed using other methods (Esaiasson et. al., 2017:260-261).

The selection of interview subjects was made after identifying several female internal mediators in Colombia, as well as by using the nonprobability sampling technique known as snowball sampling, whereas the interviewees suggest new interview subjects relevant for the study with attributions varying in the categories (Esaiasson et. al., 2017:190-191). The method of using the snowball sampling was proven crucial in order to establish contact with the interviewees and gaining trust by being introduced and presented by a third person already known by the interview subject. The number of individuals interviewed in this thesis was not determined in advance. Instead, the collection of material and the interviews proceeded until no more perceptions or trains of thoughts appeared (Esaiasson et. al., 2017:268).

The interviews in this thesis were conducted in Colombia during the winter of 2018/2019. Some interviews were conducted via video calls due to the current instability in the region. The interviews are designed as semi structured interviews, in order to allow for the interviewer to question and check the interpretations of the thoughts and perceptions stated by the interviewees. By doing so, the risk of the interviewer making inaccurate interpretations of perceptions and reasonings or having a negative impact on the validity of the results reduces (Esiassion et. al., 2017:243-244). The interviews were held and recorded in Spanish, without the use of a translator. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. The option of anonymity was offered for the interviewees, in order to reduce the risk of the interviewees being dishonest or withholding their true thoughts or perceptions.

When conducting interview studies, it is critical for the researcher to be aware of what signals the interview subject might perceive regarding the interviewer and how this might affect the results. In this case, me being a foreigner and Swedish citizen might affect the results in being slightly distorted in highlighting international and Swedish involvement in the peace negotiation, since Sweden has been and continuous to be a large donor within the work of peace negotiation in Colombia (Sida, 2017). On the other hand, this might also contribute to the perception of the interviewer being sincere, resulting in the possibility to gain trust amongst the interviewees. The trust is crucial in order to create an atmosphere in which the interviewees feel safe and comfortable, generating openness and willingness to participate. Unfortunately, the interview scenarios were not practised beforehand with individuals within the population, due to difficulties in getting access to interviewees. The interview guide was only tested on individuals not part of the population, in order to reduce the risk for making mistakes. This might result in the first interviews being not as fluent in comparison with the interviews conducted later on.

The interviews followed an interview guide, based on the analytical framework. Before asking the questions related to the four themes, I began with a few warm-up questions in order to make good contact with the person. Thereafter, I asked the thematic questions divided into the four themes: 1) *bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda*; 2) *putting issues into the substance of the agreement*; 3) *taking part in the implementation of an agreement*; and, 4) *the demand for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed* (Paffenholz, 2016:16-17). Lastly, the interviewee was given the opportunity to elaborate on topics not discussed within the interview in order to track down additional thoughts of trains not yet discovered.

5.3. *Methods for analyzing data*

The interviews have been transcribed. The written text was then used as to identify and sort perceptions into the categories of analytical framework. Discussion of factors that encompass opposition and resistance to negotiations, to agreements and to its implementation are defined as negative for influence (Paffenholz, 2016:16-17). In this study, this definition of negative

preferences for influence will outline the definition of preferences as limiting for influence, which includes expressions such as ‘disadvantage’, ‘not being able to’, ‘difficult’, ‘discrimination’, ‘struggle’, and ‘resilience’ from the interviewees in order to classify the views as limiting. Conversely, preferences that do not encompass opposition, and in which the preferences encompass opportunities to assert influence, these preferences will outline the definition of preferences as enabling. This include expressions such as ‘advantage’, ‘being able to’, ‘effective’, ‘influential’, ‘favorable’ from the interviewees in order to classify the views as enabling.

When classifying views and trains of thoughts into the eight boxes within my analytical framework, I work inductively. I use a more open empirical strategy in order to reduce the risk of overlooking interesting findings not presented in previous research (Esiassion et. al., 2017:223-224). This open approach gives the interviewees the opportunity to elaborate on what obstacles and opportunities they experience, and it allows me to investigate these female internal mediators’ views about gender as limiting or enabling their influence within peace negotiation. Hence, my job is to investigate what factors related to gender these women experience as limiting and enabling, and thereafter classify their answers into my analytical framework. The views of the interview subjects are investigated based upon what these female internal mediators consider as gender, and what they consider as limiting or enabling. Accurate quotation is possible due to the interviews being recorded with the consent of the interviewees.

6. Analysis: Colombian female internal mediators’ influence in peace negotiation

In this chapter, I will present and discuss the findings following the structure of the analytical framework. The findings are also discussed in relation to previous research on gender stereotypes, gendered division of labour, recognition of women, and gendered networks.

6.1. Bringing issues onto the agenda

The agenda for the Colombian peace talks was short and focused with the primary aim of ending the conflict, not focusing on resolving all ills (NOREF, 2018). Hence, the parties focused on topics being considered as absolutely necessary to end the conflict. The agenda was not chronological in design, which led to some topics, such as laying down weapons, ceasefire, and victims' rights, were pushed back towards the later stages of the talks. As Paffenholz highlights, inclusion in pre-negotiation phase is vital in order to assert influence on the design of the agenda (2016:30). In the interviews, it became clear that the interviewees experienced difficulties contributing to and having an influence on the negotiation agenda due to exclusion in pre-negotiation phase.

“The process begins with a secret phase, which you surely already know. Thereafter the phase opens and negotiation begins. Everything was secret, and nothing is made public until everything is agreed.” ... “When those documents came out, we realized that they included mothers as heads of households, pregnant women, elderly women, disabled women, wives, but women as political subjects were not there” ... “In the first phase when we were there [in Havana], we were saying: “Mrs, you have to review everything you have agreed”. And that’s very difficult.” (E1)

The interviewees indicate that the fact that women were not seen as political subjects had an effect on the possibility to influence the negotiation agenda, since this resulted in having to influence the agenda after it had already been agreed upon. Interviewees furthermore claimed that the common view of women as victims rather than as political actors affected the possibilities to be taken into consideration.

“I think that people have an easier time acknowledging the topic known as violence against women. That is to say, when women are seen as victims. Those aspects are seen with greater shame or are the ones where we are most taken into consideration. But when talking of equal participation, when talking about decision-making, when talking about women as political actors, not as victims, the conditions change. And things get tougher.” (E2)

This perception aligns with previous research highlighting that women frequently are portrayed as the victims within the international political system, resulting in women being excluded and limited within peace negotiation (Enloe, 2014:30; Reimann, 2014). The

stereotype of women as passive victims in need of help was also identified as making alliances difficult:

“The men hear but do not listen” ... “So the fact of being a woman is difficult because of that interlocation, even though they apparently open the doors to us because they have a discourse of appearing as those that somehow help. I say to them: don’t help us. Don’t help us, you have to change. Those who have to change are you. Don’t help us. We will do what we have to do. Let’s make alliances. Don’t help us.” (A1)

This quote aligns with research stressing that men have been seen as the protectors of the state and of the women whom are living within it (Tickner, 1992). Women’s ability to make political alliances is limited when they refuse this role of needing help. Additional interviewees stressed that not being listened to affects their work and possibilities for influence. They expressed difficulties as a woman in bringing up issues due to the fact of being silenced.

“They do not value you, do not take you into account. I can have an idea, I speak it, and if it is the same as my boss, he says “wonderful, what a good idea, why haven’t anyone told me?”. And I go “but, I said it a month ago and nobody listened to me”. So including everything that has happened you can still feel that every day. It is super difficult to break with because if a man says it, it is the best idea. And if a woman says the exact same thing it simply do not exist.” (B1)

The discrimination based on being a woman is experienced as not being listened to, not being taken into account, and therefore limiting when trying to bring issues onto the discussion. Interviewees also expressed that not being taken seriously varies depending on the area or subject of the discussion.

“I think that negotiation issues, peace issues, security issues, I work particularly in security, are topics that are considered tough issues and are considered male issues. So, to be able to talk about these issues and to be taken seriously is very difficult. “Oh, how pretty you women are talking about security”, “Oh, yes, you bring interesting perspectives but not fundamental things”. So, I think for them to take you seriously is a very hard struggle.” (E3)

To be taken seriously and to be seen as a legitimate advocate for peace within all areas are experienced as a struggle, specifically within security areas considered as male issues. This

view of a division between “female” and “male” issues aligns with the perception of gendered division labour within international peace diplomacy, that men tend to focus and participate within ‘hard’ fields of military and finance, and women tend to cluster in feminine or soft fields (Aggestam & Towns, 2018). The gendered division of labour limits women due to the fact that it is harder to be able to talk or to be taken seriously within ‘hard’ fields considered male issues.

In contrast to views expressed as being limiting within this first form of influence, the interviewees also expressed views on gender factors enabling their influence in bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda. The common view of women as victims makes it easier for women to work with issues regarding victims and violence against women, since women are taken into consideration within this field (E1). This in turn results in women having legitimate participation within this field, enabling them to bring issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda. This aligns with research pointing to this as an opportunity to gain a space for participation within the peace process (Buckley-Zistel, 2013:95–96). Buckley-Zistel also emphasizes that this results in the view of victims as political actors which might implicate opportunities for social recognition, breaking through the regime of denial (2013:95–96).

6.2. Putting issues into the substance of the agreement

The final peace agreement was structured and based on six areas; rural reform, political participation, end of the conflict including ceasefire, illicit drugs, victims, and implementation and verification mechanisms (The High Commission for Peace, 2016). As Paffenholz argues, societal and political attitudes and expectations surrounding gender roles heavily affect women’s ability to influence the outcomes and putting issues into the substance of an agreement (Paffenholz, 2018). In cases where women do not have a recognised role as mediators or negotiators and where women’s rights are contentious issues, female participants in the peace process have to endure threats, sexual harassments and assaults (Paffenholz, 2018:187). When putting issues into the substance of the agreement interviewees

expressed feeling limited by being questioned as negotiators, as well as being harassed by individuals working within the same field.

“Inside the armed forces, they judge and criticize a lot. “Why that old woman and not me?”, for example. They questioned it a lot, what had I done to get to go to Havana. And here generally, they will not think: she studied, she prepared, or she has been working on this for 6 years. They will think: because you slept with someone or you are someone's lover, that's the only reason why you're there. Almost no one thinks that you deserve it.”(B2)

The experience of being criticized, questioned and seen as someone who does not deserve the spot at the negotiation table, correlates with Paffenholz saying that in cases where the women do not have a recognised role as mediators or negotiators, female participants have to endure sexual harassments. This quote suggests that women did not have a recognised role as mediators or negotiators, which lead to them being questioned due to being a woman. Additionally, one interviewee expresses feeling judged and criticized from within the military force, even by other women within the force. The resistance from other women when working with gender related issues is also experienced as substantial. The interviewee also points out the view that women who do take part at the negotiation table should represent the ‘interest of women’. The resistance female internal mediators feel from other women is identified as depending on the macho culture which affects both men and women, resulting in women not supporting each other. Interviewee F:

“It is not only the machismo of men, but also the machismo that women carry. And many times you do not see one supported by the partners, by the women. And that has been a disadvantage” (F1)

Additionally, participating as a woman within political decision-making is expressed as a struggle since only men figures within this sphere.

“The disadvantage is that, as I understand, women are building peace from the bottom up. But the political decisions are still taken by men. So, the women, we are, in the struggle to build peace in the social fabric. There we are. But in the proper political decisions that touch upon the structural, there are mainly the men, not the women.” (A2)

Interviewees also express experiences with men getting together and leaving women out:

"The majority are always men and they are the ones that if we vote for example and the majority are men, they are the ones who get together and they vote and you are left alone. Like that, one has to have an effective proposal and everything. In this sense it is a disadvantage [being a woman]." (C1)

The interviewee express a disadvantage being a woman due to men excluding women when voting. These homosocial networks are seen as limiting for women's work and possibilities to influence. This view aligns with Svedberg's (2018) argument that male networks dominating international peace negotiation hinder greater diversity and participation of women at high-level appointments.

The interviewees also expressed views on factors enabling them to put issues into the substance of the agreement. Women's networks are highlighted as an enabling factor, due to the efficiency they bring in finding possible strategies for including issues.

"The gender space was very effective, we quickly started to do strategies together with the FARC women. Which in the other area, in ceasefire, was very difficult." ... "The different way that we approached certain systems was very effective to make the inclusion of the gender focus, for example. And I think that would not have been possible if we were not women. If, in that place there would have been men, it would have taken them much longer time to reach those kind of strategies." (B3)

Women working together on issues was experienced as effective and would not have been as effective if men would have participated, due to allegedly different ways of approaching certain systems. For instance, in other areas such as ceasefire it was more difficult to design strategies for negotiation. Interviewees also claimed that women's networks enable women to use their own language within the agreements.

"Our work as a summit in that collective space of the eight platforms, the eight networks, meant that we could develop documents, develop proposals and do influential work so that it would remain within the agreement. Through alliances, through direct lobbying, let's say in many ways so that we could participate with our language in the drafting of the agreements." (E4)

Alliances and networks, in which they feel that their own language could be used, facilitate developing documents, developing proposals and to be able to be influential. Hence, within these networks a common language is used, referring to using 'our' language. Additionally, the support within the network is seen as important, due to the experience of women being better at and more effective in giving support and establishing friendships.

“There are certain skills and abilities that are easier for women than for men. Let's say, men do not have that opportunity to relate. It's a labor issue. But I, after a month I already knew who your mom was, your dad, if you had kids, if you had a boyfriend, everything. Men do not have that opportunity to make relationships as friendship, as a team. They never did that and that is why we have always been more effective than them in those spaces and to look for a support network.”... “Everything was like a great network of women who supported each other. Men never function like that because they never needed to. They already have everything guaranteed.” (B4)

Women are clearly perceived as better at some skills since they had to develop these skills in order to be effective.

6.3. Taking part in the implementation of an agreement

The implementation phase of the peace agreement between FARC-EP and the Colombian government had been in progress for two years when the interviews took place. After the agreement was signed in 2016, a commission was created in order to implement and verify the agreement. The commission and various international organisations, such as the European Union, the Red Cross, UN Women, amongst many, have been most influential in the implementation process. Compared with other peace agreement implementation processes, the process in Colombia is moving ahead steadily (KROC, 2018:68). That said, the persistence of homicides against human rights defenders and social leaders is one of the most serious threats to the viability of the entire peace process (KROC, 2018:7). discussing participation in the implementation phase, interviewees expressed difficulties accessing and participating in public space.

“It has been very difficult. It has been a lot of struggle. The meetings we are going to, more men are going. And when, for example, in the meeting of the restitution of crops the majority

are men and one is left alone talking and does not have support, because other women are not adapted to gain the space of the public.” (C2)

The feeling of being left without support in combination with men dominating the meetings, is viewed as limiting ability to participate in public space. This perception correlates with Aharoni’s argument that women are being excluded from political decisions related to war, due to the division between ‘public’ and ‘private’ (2018:197). The gendered division of labour and the division between areas in which women are able to participate also expresses itself when women feel limited to take part within some fields due to being a woman.

“What happen is that there are times, although I believe that I have two capacities that are almost equal; ceasefire negotiation design issues and gender issues. In gender issues, it is easier to have the gender space than in the other because it is very occupied by men. So “Ah yes, its gender, let her go”. But in the other chair one still has to fight a lot even though I am the person who knows the most about the issue. There, it is still hard that they give me my place.” (B5)

As experienced by the interviewee, it is much harder to gain a spot within ceasefire issues in comparison within gender issues. Moreover, interviewees experienced limitations within the implementation of the agreement due to not being listened to and having a hard time gaining recognition.

“I’ve never really felt the advantages of being a woman, I think we do not have them. It is much harder for us to be recognized, for us to be listened to, even listen to each other, that in the events they give us participation. Many times the women have to get angry so that they will let them speak. So, I think there is no advantage of being a woman in the participation.” (F2)

The interviewee points to actors not listening to each other, as well as the need for women to get angry in order to speak. The resistance from within the sector manifests when a woman tries to gain recognition.

“One magazine asked me to do an interview, an article. The first time people did not like that, the people of my force did not like it. And then, on Facebook, a lot of ugly things: “What is she doing sitting there?”, “You are a traitor”, “If I see her, I hit her”, things like that. So then, I said, I will not write anything again. But mainly from people from my institution, militaries who didn’t like it very much.” (B6)

The attempt to gain recognition by taking part in the interview resulted in resistance and various threats and insults, mainly from within the sector. As pointed out by previous researchers, insecurity and personal threats against women limit their participation and influence within peace processes (Bell, 2003; Coomaraswamy, 2015; Reimann, 2014; Operation 1325). Additionally, threats from outside of the sector or the organisation are experienced as events with the purpose of getting the woman to leave the job:

“Some officials of the investigation of the police here tried to intimidate me, to frightened me so I would leave my work, and said that if I went to an interview I was responsible for if such or such thing would happen.” (F3)

In this case, threats from the police aim to obstruct the mediator in carrying out her job.

In contrast to views expressed on gendered limitations in the implementation process, the interviewees also identified factors that increased their influence. One interviewee stressed the fact that being woman has favoured her in order to take part in the implementation:

“In my case it has favored me, because not many people know the subject [of gender].”...“In that sense it was more like an advantage than a disadvantage [to be a woman].” (B7)

This suggests that due to her knowledge on gender issues, she has been provided space within the implementation. Another interviewee stated that her participation in the implementation was bound to subjects related to gender:

“Most of all the part on gender. Everything that has to do with women we have worked on to implement.” (C3)

These statements align with Paffenholz argument that prior commitments to gender sensitivity and women’s inclusion is crucial in order for women to participate in the implementation (2018:188). The exclusion of women itself is furthermore viewed as promoting recognition.

“The fact of being the only military woman in all negotiations that has been in the two commissions, it is one of the reasons why you are here, and like ten thesis, and invitations, and such. If there had been 15 women, then there would have been no news. That exclusion and that particularity that the subject was so new and they made nice things there. Well, it has led to that today, many doors have been opened for me as a positive effect of that.” (B8)

The general exclusion of women in peace processes is paradoxically seen as something which enables for recognition. The recognition one gains during the earlier phases in the peace process is experienced as important during the following phases in the peace process. Hence, the particularity of the novelty of the gender subject and the exclusion of women brought recognition to the women who did participate, which enables them to have influence in the implementation phase.

6.4. Demanding negotiations to begin, to resume, or for an agreement to be signed

When demanding for the start, the continuation and the ending of negotiations, various factors were identified as barriers. The interviewees had little to do with the start of negotiations, since they were often excluded from the pre-negotiation phase. Interviewee B:

“I did not have much to do with it because I entered in the public phase of the process, one year already looking for the negotiation. So no, a process was already routed.” (B9)

In pushing for negotiations to resume and for an agreement to be signed, it appeared that threats and personal insecurity affect the internal mediator's work significantly.

“It has been very difficult for us all to implement, and to be able to socialize. Well, it is because we have a very big disadvantage that is insecurity. Here we do not have security, guarantee of security for human rights defenders. So we are facing many risks. This organization already has two women murdered, and another woman missing. We have women threatened. However, in the middle of this war we continue to face it, but sometimes what we should do is to get out.” (C4)

The many risks the internal mediator faces, especially those working with human rights, function as obstacles for socializing and in turn result in desire to get out of peace implementation work altogether. The threats against women are furthermore perceived by some interviewees as different in comparison with the ones men face.

“Everyone has had a moment where their life has been at risk, their own life or the family. I think that a very delicate thing for women is that they threaten their families so that the practise will change. And that has happened to me and to many of the women. There was a time when I needed bodyguards, a time when I had to take my daughter out of the country, etc.” (E5)

For women, threats against the family is perceived as more common. This in order to change the work the individual do. This interviewee specifically points out threats against her daughter as one of these events when members of the family, and not the actor herself, are threatened. Additionally, threats limit the movements of the actors. Interviewee D:

“We can’t go to some areas, we can’t go out to the media to say what we feel, we have to take care of ourselves, with whom we speak, under what conditions. We have to decide when we enter accompanied or not accompanied.” (D1)

Furthermore, visible recognition is perceived as a problem.

“It has not helped me at all, it has brought me problems because everyone believes that I am super prepared. That I am the most prepared woman on the planet, and they have threatened me”...“That visibility made everyone believe that I am multimillionaire.” (D2)

Paffenholz (2016:8) emphasizes that by sharing grievances and formulating joint positions on key issues, women’s coalitions manage to exercise much more influence. The interviewees point out difficulties in formulating join positions, however. Strong internal debates within the networks sometimes limit the work.

“I believe that we are very few organizations that are mixed with men and women and call ourselves feminists. So, well, that contributes to very strong internal debates, because we are also an expression of that patriarchal culture because we ourselves carry it inside of us. So then of course, from the discourse to the practice in these spaces this is not easy.” (E6)

The criticism and resistance from within the networks is experienced as difficult when bringing issues from discourse to practice.

As Paffenholz point out; in cases where women’s groups have been active and well organized before the peace process, women are able to utilize experience and resources to push for their

meaningful participation, and facilitate the start of peace negotiation (2018:186). In the interviews, women's networks with a recognized history are seen as of great importance.

“If you are not a recognized movement, if you do not have a history, it is very difficult for a particular actor to be taken into account in any issue that has to do with processes of policies and agreements. So, a vital factor that I consider to be a key factor is that the women's movement is a historical movement in Colombia. It is not a movement that appears from the agreements.”...”So, a key factor is that we already had a story made, a history of claims. There was a recognition of our role as a social movement.” ...“We were very recognized and very prominent in peace issues.” (E7)

It becomes clear that the network's recognition itself is seen as an enabling factor for influence. On the next page, in Table 3, a summary of the results in this study is presented in the analytical framework.

Table 3: Summary of results

	<i>Limiting factors</i>	<i>Enabling factors</i>
<i>Bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda</i>	Seen as victims and not as active political subjects, resulting in not being taken into consideration, not valued, not listened to and not taken seriously (especially on security issues), limiting when trying to make alliances, and limiting when having to influence the agenda after it has already been agreed upon.	Seen as victims, resulting in participation in the peace process within specific, “gender appropriate” areas or spaces.
<i>Putting issues into the substance of the agreement</i>	Being exposed to harassment, being questioned as negotiators (wherein the resistance is mainly expressed from within the sector and from other women), and being excluded in political decision-making since men tend to gather together and leave the women out resulting in women being forced to build peace ‘from the bottom up’.	Access to women’s networks, resulting in women finding joint strategies, based upon the perception that women are better at making relationships than men. The structure of the negotiations putting women in disadvantage, resulting in women utilizing this disadvantage by building relationships and doing an effective work.
<i>Taking part in the implementation of an agreement</i>	Majority of actors in the public space being men, resulting in leaving women without support. Having a hard time gaining recognition, specifically within areas not touching upon gender issues. Threats and resistance from within the sector or organisation, resulting in not wanting to gain further recognition.	Gender-related issues included in the peace agreement, resulting in being able to participate. The exclusion of women and the particularity of gender as a new subject within peace negotiation, resulting in recognition.
<i>The demand for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed</i>	Threats and personal insecurity targeting themselves and family members, resulting in limitations to socialize, implement, and expressing themselves in the media. Resistance from within women’s networks, resulting in internal debates about who is invited to participate and discuss gender issues.	Access to women’s networks, resulting in being taken into consideration and having a recognized role as prominent advocates for peace issues. The existence of women’s movements prior to the beginning of the peace negotiations views as crucial in order to do an influential work.

7. Conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to investigate how female internal mediators in Colombia view gender as limiting or enabling their influence in peace negotiation. When bringing **issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda**, the findings in this study point to female internal mediators viewing gender as limiting because they are seen as victims, claiming that they are not being taken into consideration and not taken seriously, especially on security issues. Furthermore, it limits them when trying to make alliances, they argue, as well as having to influence the agenda after it has already been agreed upon. On the other hand, female internal mediators also claim that being seen as victims, they get to participate in the peace process within specific, “gender appropriate” areas or spaces. When **putting issues into the substance of the agreement**, female internal mediators are exposed to harassment as well as questioned as negotiators mainly from within the sector, commonly from other women. They also express feeling limited due to being excluded in political decision-making since men tend to gather together and leave the women out. Conversely, the results point to female internal mediators viewing gender as enabling when finding joint strategies, based upon the perception that women are better at making relationships than men. The structure of the negotiations putting women in disadvantage, resulted in women utilizing this disadvantage by building relationships and thus, doing an effective and influential work.

When taking part **in the implementation of the agreement**, female internal mediators feel limited due to the majority of actors being men, leaving women without support, and due to having a hard time gaining recognition within areas not touching upon gender issues. Moreover, threats were identified as limiting, resulting in not wanting to gain further recognition. On the other hand, due to being a woman, they experience opportunities for influence since the agreement itself contains various gender-related issues, resulting in them being able to participate. Furthermore, the exclusion of women and the particularity of gender as a new subject within peace negotiation was experienced as enabling influence during the implementation phase. Lastly, when demanding for **negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for the agreement to be signed**, female internal mediators pointed out that threats and personal insecurity limit the possibility to socialize, implement, and express

themselves in the media. Hence, the threats limit their possibilities of gaining recognition. Moreover, resistance from within the women's networks create internal debates about who is invited to participate and discuss gender issues. The women's networks are though also seen as enabling influence since they facilitate for being taken into consideration and having a recognized role as prominent advocates for peace issues. However, in order to gain recognition the history of women's movement and their existence prior to the beginning of the peace negotiations was put forward as crucial.

As the results show, the view of women's role, visible recognition and various networks all limit as well as enable internal mediators influence in peace negotiation. Hence, stereotypical gender roles and the gendered division of labour, recognition, and networks all work as both limiting as well as enabling factors for influence. The results in this study points to women's networks as both limiting and enabling internal mediators' influence in peace negotiation, although previous research has pointed out that the role of women's groups and networks affect women's participation and influence positively at all levels in peace negotiations (Paffenholz, 2016). Here, female internal mediators express women's networks also limit influence due to strong internal debates on who is invited to participate and discuss gender issues, and due to resistance from within the networks. The tendency for women choosing women, leaving men out of work touching upon gender issues, is noticeable. As argued by the female internal mediators taking part within this study, it has been easier to assert influence on gender issues, due to the fact of being a woman. How women have been included in the peace process in Colombia might have reinforced gendered division of labour, since women tended to participate within fields regarding gender.

Additionally, as the results demonstrate, personal threats are put forward as an obstacle that hinders striving for recognition. The discussion in previous research on recognition as enabling influence is here challenged, since findings in this study show that female internal mediators on the one hand realize the need for having recognition in order to get appointments and assert influence, but on the other hand express it being limiting and not wanting it due to threats and internal resistance. Lack of recognition could in this sense enable female internal

mediators to carry out their work, avoiding threats and insecurity against themselves or family members, which questions previous research stating that the lack of recognition limits women's influence in international peace negotiation (Aharoni, 2011). Due to the internal mediator living in the context of the conflict, recognition as a factor affecting influence might work differently compared to external third party mediators not bound to live with the consequences of the peace agreement. The need for having recognition in order to be appointed and assert influence seems to be crucial for both internal mediators as well as for external third party mediators. But since the internal mediator live in the context of the conflict, threats and personal insecurity seem to affect them differently, and thus affect their possibilities to assert influence differently.

The internal mediators exposure to threats and personal insecurity in relation to the importance of recognition is in need of further investigation, focusing on how recognition and lack of recognition are understood as enabling internal mediators' influence in peace negotiation. Additionally, how threats and personal insecurity affect female internal mediators' influence, and how these threats are gendered, could be investigated more in detail and in other contexts. In general, more single case studies focusing on female internal mediators as a separate group in other contexts, within other peace negotiations, investigating recognition as limiting or enabling for influence are desirable. Furthermore, more in-depth single case studies in other contexts are called for in order to track down additional factors affecting female internal mediators' influence in peace negotiation.

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Appendix I: Ethical considerations

When selecting interviewees and conducting the interviews, several ethical considerations were taken into account. The fact that this study might put the interviewee at risk, as well as put myself at risk, resulted in having to take several security measures into account when contacting interviewees and when carrying out the study. As mentioned in the methods chapter, the selection of interview subjects was made by using snowball sampling, whereas the interviewees suggest new interview subjects. This method was proven important in order to establish contact with the interviewees and gaining trust by being introduced and presented by a third person already known by the interview subject. Due to the interviewees being exposed to threats and personal insecurity, being introduced by, for instance, the Swedish Embassy in Bogotá or by a former interview subject, was crucial.

When contacting interview subjects, it was of great importance to be clear on my intentions with conducting the study as well as offering the option of anonymity for the interviewees beforehand. Though, regardless of the interviewees not feeling the need to be anonymous, the names of the interviewees are not included in this thesis. Furthermore, when conducting the interviews, the place where the interview took place was the choice of the interviewee. As expressed in the methods chapter, several interviews were though conducted via video calls due to the current instability in the region. This meaning that I, based upon a risk analysis, had to make decisions on where in Colombia I could go or not. However, since this study implies the need of interviewing female internal mediators in various parts of Colombia, including areas heavily affected by armed conflict, video calls were crucial in order to conduct interviews. In Colombia, rural areas have been more affected than metropolitan areas and some parts, such as Chocó and the northern parts of the country, are areas still affected by ongoing violence. Moreover, female internal mediators working with human rights are specifically exposed and vulnerable for threats. During the first four months of 2019 a record high of a total of 51 human right defenders and activists have been allegedly killed in Colombia (UN, 2019). Women right defenders are pointed out as being extra vulnerable. This meaning that every safety measure carried out have been most important. Additionally, the recorded interviews were kept in a safe place and transcribed and deleted as soon as possible after the interview. The main consideration carrying out this study has been weather the personal safety risk it might bring to interview subjects outweigh the importance of this study.

Appendix I: Interview guide in English

Initial questions:

- Do you wish to be anonymous in this interview?
- Could you start by presenting yourself with your name, age, where you are from and previous education?
- What is your current occupation?
- What different roles have you had in peace negotiation?
- Which kind of negotiations have you participated in?
 - In what places or regions?

Influence - Bringing issues onto the agenda:

- How has it been like pushing for issues being brought up within negotiations?
 - Have you experienced any advantages as a woman when pushing for issues being brought up?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
 - What kind of issues have been easy to push for?
 - How has various networks been helpful?
 - Has your recognition been helpful?
 - If yes: In which ways?
 - If no: In which ways is recognition an obstacle?
 - Have you experienced any disadvantages as a woman when pushing for issues being brought up?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
 - What kind of issues have been hard to push for?
 - How has it been getting in contact with important people and networks?
 - How has it been getting access to important information?
 - Have you experienced any personal threats?
 - What kind of threats?
 - Have you felt questioned as a negotiator?
 - In which ways?
 - Have you felt like you had to struggle for recognition?
 - In which ways?

Influence - Putting issues into the substance of the agreement:

- How has it been like pushing for issues being included in agreements?

- Have you experienced any advantages as a woman when pushing for issues being included in agreements?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
- What kind of issues have been easy to include?
- Have you experienced any disadvantages as a woman when pushing for issues being included in agreements?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
- What kind of issues have been hard to include?

Influence - Taking part in the implementation:

- Have you been taking part of the implementation of agreements?
 - If yes:
 - In which parts of implementation have you participated?
 - Have you experienced any advantages as a woman when taking part in the implementation?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
 - Have you experienced any disadvantages as a woman when taking part in the implementation?
 - Could you describe a situation when you experienced this?
 - If no:
 - What has been the reason for you not taking part in the implementation?

Influence - Demanding for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed:

- How has it been like requiring for negotiations to start?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you succeeded in this?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you did not succeed in this?
 - How did you feel limited?
- How has it been like requiring for negotiations to resume?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you succeeded in this?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you did not succeed in this?
 - How did you feel limited?
- How has it been like requiring for an agreement to be reached?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you succeeded in this?
 - Could you tell me about an occasion when you did not succeed in this?
 - How did you feel limited?

Closing question:

- Do you wish to add something that you have not already had the time to share?

Appendix II: Guía de entrevista en Español

Preguntas iniciales:

- ¿Desea ser anónimo en esta entrevista?
- ¿Para empezar, podría presentarse con su nombre, edad, de donde es y su formación previa?
- ¿Á que se dedica actualmente?
- ¿Cuáles roles ha tenido en las negociaciones de paz?
- ¿En qué tipo de negociaciones ha participado?
 - ¿En qué lugares y regiones?

Influencia - Incorporar los asuntos en la agenda:

- ¿Cómo fue la experiencia de luchar por los asuntos que debían ser resueltos en el transcurso de las negociaciones?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas ventajas de ser mujer cuando le tocó a luchar para sacar el asunto a discusión?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - ¿Cuáles son los asuntos por los cuales ha sido fácil luchar?
 - ¿De qué manera varias redes y comunidades han sido útiles?
 - ¿Su reconocimiento le ha servido?
 - Si es que sí: ¿de qué manera?
 - Si es que no: ¿de qué manera su reconocimiento fue un obstáculo?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas desventajas de ser mujer cuando le tocó luchar por los asuntos que tenía que sacar a discusión?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - ¿Cuáles son los asuntos por los cuales fue difícil luchar?
 - ¿Cómo fue su experiencia de ponerse en contacto con las personas y redes importantes?
 - ¿Cómo fue su experiencia de conseguir acceso a la información importante?
 - ¿Vinieron algunas amenazas personales?
 - ¿Qué tipo de amenazas?
 - ¿Ha sido cuestionado o debatido su trabajo de negociadora?
 - ¿De que manera?
 - ¿Ha sentido que hubiera que luchar por su reconocimiento?
 - ¿De que manera?

Influencia - Incluir los asuntos en el acuerdo:

- ¿Cómo fue su experiencia de luchar para que los asuntos se incluyeran en el acuerdo?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas ventajas de ser mujer cuando luchaba para que los asuntos se incluyeran en el acuerdo?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - ¿Cuáles son los asuntos que resultaron fáciles para incluir?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas desventajas de ser mujer en su lucha para que los asuntos se incluyeran en el asunto?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - ¿Cuáles son los asuntos que fueron difíciles para incluir?

Influencia - Participación en las implementaciones:

- ¿Ha participado en la implementación de los acuerdos?
 - Si es que sí:
 - ¿En cuáles partes de la implementación ha participado?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas ventajas de ser mujer cuando participaba en la implementación del acuerdo?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - ¿Ha sentido algunas desventajas como mujer cuando participaba en la implementación del acuerdo?
 - ¿Nos podría detallar alguna situación cuando lo sentía?
 - Si es que no:
 - ¿Cuáles fueron las razones para no participar en la implementación?

Influencia - Exigir que las negociaciones empiecen, se reanuden o que se alcance un acuerdo:

- ¿Cómo ha sido exigir que empiecen las negociaciones?
 - ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual tuvo éxito en esto?
 - ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual no tuvo éxito en esto?
 - ¿De que manera se sentía limitada?
- ¿Cómo ha sido exigir que (se) reanuden las negociaciones?
 - ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual tuvo éxito con esto?
 - ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual no tuvo éxito con esto?
 - ¿De que manera se sentía limitada?
- ¿Cómo ha sido exigir que se alcance un acuerdo?

- ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual tuvo éxito en esto?
- ¿Podría usted compartir con nosotros alguna ocasión en la cual no tuvo éxito en esto?
 - ¿De que manera se sentía limitada?

Preguntas finales:

- ¿Le gustaría compartir algo más con nosotros que todavía no ha sido mencionado?