

How Peace Operations Work: Power, Legitimacy, and Effectiveness

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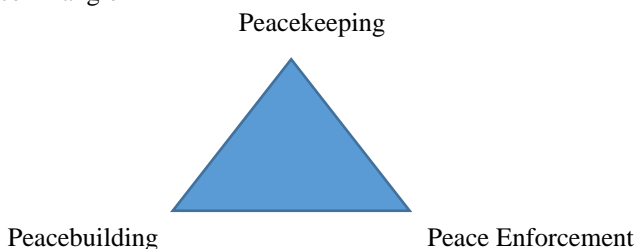
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This book is excellent research work and provides an in-depth view of how peace operations vis-à-vis their power, legitimacy, and effectiveness. The author builds upon her thesis that peace operations achieve their objectives by influencing the behavior of local actors. The book begins by addressing the moral debate surrounding power and legitimacy, reflecting on their interplay and raising pertinent questions. The author reflects on the subject by offering a multitude of academic debates on the dogma of international interventions, particularly in the context of rising casualties and the ethical dilemmas posed by such actions. The author's naiveties the instrument to facilitate peace implementation as propounded by Michel Aoye and Nicolas Sambanis's paradox of sovereignty is thoughtfully explored, referencing Dominik Zaum's discussions on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and Robert Jackson's contributions to understanding international engagement in wartime contexts.

The book also contains substantial views on the norms and politics of international state-building, including a review of Roland Paris's 'At War's Ends: Building Peace After Civil Conflict' and how sustainable dispute management can prevent violent conflicts. Brahimi's report is aptly referenced as a cornerstone in the 'peace triangle' as shown in the figure below, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics of peace operations.

Figure 1. Peace Triangle



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The book effectively examines peace operations through the lens of complex deployments, portraying them as ‘agents of change.’ It focuses on critical awareness of power dynamics, particularly the ‘compulsory power of peace operations.’ As the discussion flows through the benchmarks of realist and neo-liberal approaches, the time-honored anxiety of concession is considered the currency of reward, i.e., cash for guns (disarmament incentives). A significant section deals with the riddle of authority overlaps because the power of legitimacy entails moral reasoning. One chapter offers a particularly thorough exploration of legitimacy and its implications for peace operations. It has identified gaps in peace operations literature and why people comply with authorities. The narration of ‘Lex & Rex,’ Latin for the law is king, the right to rule, or rightness of rule, is well articulated.

Some of the book’s significant highlights include its clear definition of peace operations, its goals and mandates. It emphasizes the importance of social psychology in the context of peace operations, shedding light on how human behavior influences their effectiveness. The book also explores the paradox between local and international aspects of peacekeeping, examining the tensions and synergies that arise. Additionally, it identifies four critical factors essential to successful peace operations: participation, consultation, accountability, and neutrality.

Moreover, the book examines the causes behind the failure of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to achieve key objectives such as cease-fire, disarmament, and mobilization. The chapter on UNTAC is very well-researched, offering a detailed analysis of its weaknesses and limited successes. It provides insights into how treaties and agreements were undermined, how UNTAC initially became a ‘toothless’ entity, and how it eventually turned the tide through the dynamic leadership and strategic wisdom of international players. Furthermore, the author applies the newly developed power–legitimacy framework to analyze both UNTAC and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), offering a fresh perspective on their operations and outcomes.

In conclusion, the book explores the practical implications of this new approach, presenting a set of policy reforms to enhance the effectiveness of peace operations. By focusing on the interplay of power, legitimacy, and effectiveness, the author provides valuable insights into how peace operations can be strengthened.

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