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The Military as a Constabulary Force the Effectiveness of the Military in Counter-terrorism Strategies

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Abstract

This research paper seeks to analyze the role of the military in counter-terrorism strategies. Using the theory of Morris Janowitz about "the military as a constabulary force" and the "counter-terrorism models", this paper tried to investigate the effectiveness and sufficiency of the military as a counter-terrorism tool. Some scholars tried to reveal both the effectiveness and sufficiency of the military as a counter-terrorism tool, while others focused on the negative consequences of employing such a tool. The dominant trend in the academic literature believed that the role of the military in counter-terrorism was effective but insufficient, as other non-military tactics of counter-terrorism should be used. This was the dominant trend among both civilian academics and military officers. The findings of this paper emphasize the increasing importance of the constabulary function of the military in order to deal with critical issues such as counter-terrorism. However, future researchers should pay attention to the problems related to this which include insufficiency (i.e. the need to employ other non-military tactics) and bias (i.e. choosing which tactics to adopt when dealing with different enemies).

المخلص

تسعى هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تحليل دور الجيش في استراتيجيات مكافحة الإرهاب، وهي تتبنى نظرية موريس جانوفيتز "الجيش كقوة شرطية" وكذلك "نماذج مكافحة الإرهاب"، في محاولة لاستكشاف مدى فعالية وكفاية الجيش كأداة لمكافحة الإرهاب. حاول بعض الدراسين إثبات كل من فعالية وكفاية الجيش كأداة لمكافحة الإرهاب، بينما ركز آخرون على النتائج السلبية المترتبة على استخدام هذه الأداة. يرجح الاتجاه السائد في الأدبيات أن دور العسكريين في مكافحة الإرهاب فعال لكنه غير كاف، حيث يجب أيضاً استخدام أساليب غير عسكرية لمكافحة الإرهاب. كان هذا هو الاتجاه السائد في الأدبيات التي قام بتأليفها كل من الأكاديميين المدنيين والضباط العسكريين. تؤكد نتائج هذه الورقة البحثية على الأهمية المتزايدة للوظيفة الشرطية للجيش من أجل تعزيز القدرة على مكافحة الإرهاب. ومع ذلك،

يجب على الباحثين في المستقبل أن يهتموا بدراسة المشكلات المتعلقة بهذا الدور والتي تشمل عدم الكفاية (أي الحاجة إلى توظيف أساليب أخرى غير عسكرية) والتحيز (أي اختيار الأسلوب المتبع وفقاً للعدو الذي تتم مواجهته).

Introduction

This research paper seeks to analyze an unconventional role of the military which was referred to by Janowitz as the “constabulary force.” The mission of the military is defending the nation against enemies and engaging in wars. However, the prominent civil-military relations theorist Morris Janowitz realized the increasing importance of resorting to the military to carry out tasks that resembled those of the police forces. This was why Janowitz started to explain how the military could be a constabulary force.

One of the most pressing issues that reveal how the military can be needed to act hand in hand with the police forces and carry out a task that is closer to that of the police is taking part in combating terrorism. Therefore, this research paper chooses counter-terrorism efforts by the military as a case study that shows how effective the military can be when it joins efforts with the police forces and acts as a constabulary force. The main research question that this paper seeks to answer is: How effective and sufficient the military can be when it performs the role of a constabulary force in the case of implementing a counter-terrorism strategy?

This research paper is divided into four sections. The first presents the theoretical framework, and the second examines some analytical trends about the effectiveness and sufficiency of the military as a constabulary force that participates in combating terrorism. The third section analyzes the major trends among civilian analysts and military officers concerning the effectiveness and sufficiency of the military in counter-terrorism strategies. Then the fourth section is the discussion of the evidence and information

presented and the paper ends with the conclusion and prospects for future research.

• Theoretical Framework

The Military as a Constabulary Force in Theory

One of the major theorists who contributed to laying out the main foundations of the field of civil-military relations was Morris Janowitz whose book “The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait” was a groundbreaking contribution to the field. In this book, he coined the concept of the military as a “constabulary” force. *(Janowitz, 1974, p. 473)* Then he wrote a number of articles to analyze some major political developments using this theoretical contribution.

To start with, Janowitz perceives a constabulary military as one that “is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations rather than victory because it has incorporated a protective military posture”. Accordingly, the military officer becomes a constabulary when “the professional sees himself to be a civil servant subject to political control by the organs of civilian government.” *(Janowitz, 1965, p.231)*

The origin of the idea was clear in Janowitz’s book when he claimed that Western militaries were witnessing constabularization. He meant that the Western militaries started to employ “limited force to reestablish stability quickly in small-scale conflicts, thus creating military forces resembling police forces in order to avoid total nuclear war.” Janowitz realized the importance of embracing both functions on the international level, and this was proved in real life. Various scholars then acknowledged the importance of the role of the military in combating criminal acts such as terrorism. *(Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020, p.3)* Janowitz traced the international political developments

and their impact on the role of the military. The main international earth-shattering development was World War Two. This critical development forced the military into some political dimensions as the military then had the task of confronting the enemy (Soviet Union). That's why after these developments and the possession of nuclear weapons, Janowitz realized the relevance of the military acting as a constabulary force in the sense that it can "act, committed to minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations, rather than victory." (Taylor, 1998, p.38, 39, 42)

However, Janowitz realized the problematic situation of assuming the task of the constabulary force for different categories of military officers. Some officers wouldn't be satisfied with being part of a constabulary force, because they focused on war and the means of destruction. Other military officers would oppose this constabulary function, too, as they always opted for achieving victory in large scale military operations and this was the source of their satisfaction. This uneasy situation led Janowitz to introduce the term: "the military managers" who realized that they could be involved in the political as well as the military realms. In modern times, soldiers should learn from civilian managers and know how to carry out different roles and tasks effectively. (Nuciani, 2006, p. 68, 73)

Commentators who analyzed the ideas of Janowitz acknowledged that he was not exaggerating when he assumed that this new mission would be less favorable to the military, because it made the role of the military close to that of the police forces, while in fact, the military always saw their role as being far more important than that of the police. (Easton & Moelker, 2010) Francke was one of the analysts who realized that the military self-esteem would reject this constabulary mission. So, he assumed that the dilemma was about two identities: the military identity and the identity of the policemen (which Francke chose to label "peacekeepers"). In order to eliminate this conflict, he suggested the presence of a "super-identity." According to him, this

super-identity “amalgamates the ‘warrior identity’ and the ‘peacekeeper identity’.” This would not be difficult to achieve if the military officers were trained to do this. Francke believed that this super-identity would create harmony between both identities, so the military officer would not underestimate participating in peace missions and would perceive these missions to be as important as engaging in war. *(Easton & Moelker, 2010, p. 12)*

Models of Counter-Terrorism:

In addition to the military as a constabulary force theory by Janowitz, this paper needs to adopt the theoretical explanation of the main models of counter-terrorism.

The first model was named “The War Model” which referred to employing the military or “hard force”. Rogers explained that this model was based on what happened after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 when the states realized that they should make the citizens feel safe, so the military force would help get rid of terrorists. Duyvesteyn clarified how the military could be employed through various ways. The first of which was close to the constabulary meaning i.e. helping civilian authorities in the combat of terrorism. Moreover, the military could carry out pre-emptive strikes against terrorists. In addition, the military could play the role of deterrence of terrorists who might think of future attacks. Also, the military could achieve the task of retaliation, and it could get rid of the leader of the terrorist group. In extreme cases, the military could engage in wars. *(Lindahl, 2017, p. 48, 49)*

The other helpful model could be called the “criminal justice model” which viewed “terrorism as crime.” Actually, this description was widely accepted, which was clear in the EU counter-terrorism strategy: “terrorism is criminal and unjustifiable under any circumstances.” The main advantage of such a perception would be to falsify any claims by terrorists that they had noble objectives.

The third model that explained counter-terrorism efforts was the “non-violent responses”. Some authors believed that the first step of the fight against terrorism would depend on employing force, and then states could think of some non-violent strategies. International organizations encouraged different states to pay attention to non-violence as a part of their efforts to combat terrorism. To be more specific, non-violence included political tactics such as diplomacy, and economic tactics such as economic sanctions on countries or groups that sponsored terrorism. In some cases, these responses could include dialogue with these terrorist groups in addition to offering them suitable solutions that would encourage them to quit terrorism. A prominent example in this regard would be the states’ efforts to adopt “counter-radicalisation programmes” in order to restructure the ideas of these terrorists and help them become active actors in the political life. That’s why some scholars like Cortright and Lopez recommended focusing on strategies that helped eliminate the conditions that resulted in spreading political extremism as the main weapon to defeat terrorism. *(Lindahl, 2017, p. 60, 62, 63)*

- **The Use of Violence to Combat Terrorism between Supporters and Opponents**

This section analyzes different opinions regarding the effectiveness and sufficiency of using violence (the military as a constabulary force and the police) in counter-terrorism strategies.

Violent strategies are effective and sufficient to defeat terrorism

The results of some studies gave the impression that violence would be effective and sufficient to eliminate the danger of terrorist groups as these studies did not pay attention to other non-military tactics. Price (2012) conducted a research in which he analyzed “decapitated terrorist groups” when the leader was killed or arrested and proved that these groups were

highly mortal, but the destruction or elimination of the terrorist group might not happen very soon. He advised states to get rid of the leaders of terrorist groups with no delay, because if the group were there for twenty years, decapitation would not be an efficient strategy and the necessity of employing other counter-terrorism tactics would prevail. *(Price, 2012, P.43, 44)*

Violence can be disastrous and can cause negative consequences

Contrary to those who believed that employing violence in counter-terrorism was effective and sufficient, some scholars highlighted the negative consequences of such an endeavor. Dear (2013) was one of the scholars who analyzed the effectiveness of what he called targeted killings against the insurgents or the terrorists. He noticed that we could not assume the existence of a negative relationship between employing targeted killing and the power of insurgents. In order to explain the reasons, he highlighted the dangerous possibility of radicalization, which referred to acts of retaliation from the groups in addition to forging alliances with other radical groups. This might be beneficial, as more radical groups would target innocent people so people would need the help of the government in addition to pushing the leaders who fled the country to rethink their options and realize their dual loss of legitimacy and control. Dear recommended that this tactic should be used only when really needed, as it could lead to extremely radical and violent consequences if it failed. *(Dear, 2013)*

Asthappan (2009) was another scholar who highlighted the negative consequences of employing military force to combat terrorism as he discovered that “military force shares a complex relationship with terrorism.” He reached the surprising conclusion that enhancing the military power of a country would increase terrorist attacks. That’s why Asthappan advised states to pay attention when deciding to rely more on having a strong military in

order to defeat terrorists, as this could probably result in negative outcomes.

(Asthappan, 2009, p.159, 160)

Moreover, in his Master's thesis, Raven Nicole Korte (2005) evaluated the terrorist attacks of Northern Ireland and concluded the inability to prove the negative correlation between harshly punishing terrorists and the reduction of terrorist attacks. On the contrary, there was a probability that terrorist attacks would continue. "These results indicate that retaliating against terrorists with military force is counter-productive, and should be avoided." *(Korte, 2005, p.51)*

Concerning the efforts of the Nigerian government to get rid of the danger of Boko Haram, some scholars detected the negative impact of employing military force and believed that it was not wise to ignore the importance of resorting to other non-military means. They applauded the non-military strategy of "deradicalization" which would gain particular importance in dealing with terrorist groups that defended a particular religion or ideology. Although the Nigerian experience of deradicalizing Boko Haram had its shortcomings and needed to be strengthened, it could be adopted more effectively. In a complementary effort to the "deradicalization" programs, the study encouraged governments to care more about the societal reintegration of ex-terrorists. *(Onapajo & Ozden, 2020, p.476, 489)*

The negative effect of using the military power in counter-terrorism strategies was repeated in various studies that focused on the American case in its continuous efforts to employ the military force to combat terrorism in other countries and how this would cause a blowback against Americans.

In a warning to the USA and other countries in general that believed in the importance of improving the military capabilities in different countries in order to get rid of terrorism, Huntsman (2008) studied the relationship between military capacity and domestic terrorism. He was able to prove that

“states with increased heavy weapons experience domestic terrorism more frequently, contingent on controlling for economic development.” According to him, those who opposed the regime would realize the increased ability of the state so they perceived terrorism as a strategy that wouldn’t cost them that much. Therefore, he warned countries of what he called “unintended consequences”, stating that enhancing the military capabilities could have negative outcomes as this could provoke some violent attacks. (*Huntsman, 2018, P.iv, 52*)

- **The Military (as a Constabulary Force) in addition to other tactics in the counter-terrorism strategy**

The theme that appeared most of the time in many research papers was that the military option was effective but not sufficient. Admittedly, it would be useful to use the military force in combating terrorism; however, this should be one component among other components in the counter-terrorism strategy. Interestingly, this opinion was repeated over and over again in the writings of both civilian academics and military officers.

The View of Civilian Intellectuals

Some scholars analyzed the changes in the American strategy to combat terrorism in the world, as it turned into a strategy that devoted much care to the military and other socio-economic and political dimensions and they chose to provide American policy makers with the necessary information about the experience of other countries. The experience of the Malay region in fighting extremists was important in this regard, as it formulated an effective strategy to win over the local Muslim communities. Typically, their strategy had a component related to security forces; however, they acknowledged the importance of soft power as well. Devoting time and

energy to deal with the problems of Muslims that led them to adopt violence was a priority in their strategy. *(Tan, 2011)*

Also, the struggle against Boko Haram led Ayima (2019) to stress the importance of the ideological component in the counter-terrorism strategy as being complementary to the military efforts in order to alleviate the prevailing violence in Northeast Nigeria. *(Ayima, 2019)*

Nigeria was not the only country that led researchers to recommend devoting more resources to non-military tactics. This same impression was repeated in analyzing the case of the United Kingdom as it faced the conflict in Northern Ireland. Ramraj (2006) had a message to countries that were seeking to combat terrorism that the short-term security measures were not enough, and that other tactics that got rid of minority grievances and helped the society live peacefully while it included different cultures should gain more importance. Additionally, Ramraj revealed that although the coercive measures were needed, however, exaggerating the coercive strategies could be very harmful. *(Ramraj, 2006)*

An interesting study by Zhang (2016) did not only reveal that the military should be just one tactic of fighting terrorists, but it even drew our attention to other institutions of the state that could determine whether the country would be able to effectively fight terrorism or not. Zhang decided to conduct a comparative study between Algeria and Yemen in their efforts to combat terrorism and in employing the carrot and stick tactic. He proved that success would not be determined only by the efforts of the military and initiatives by the parliament, but also through various institutions in addition to the capabilities of the country such as the economic capabilities. This showed why Yemen achieved little success compared to Algeria in spite of applying the same tactics. *(Zhang, 2016)*

Some scholars traced the American strategy, in particular, in its war against terrorism and criticized the focus on the military dimension. A study revealed to us that the USA paid particular attention to the military aspect to the extent that the agency responsible for the development assistance became concerned with enhancing the USA security and empowering Africa's police in the mission of combating terrorists. During the Bush administration, the USAID was described as "a quasi-security agency." (Hills, 2006, P.642)

The conclusions of a significant report published by the Strategic Studies Institute would be important in this regard. To start with, the report did not reject the principle of using the military capacity; however, it should be adopted as one ingredient of a complete strategy. It also stated the various criteria upon which the military could be called to interfere in the fight against terrorism like the nature of the threat, the capabilities of the civilian authorities, the public opinion and the international context.

In spite of admitting that sometimes the military could be enough in the combat, the report acknowledged that the war on terror launched by the USA and its allies focused on the military dimension alone and neglected other important political and strategic elements. Democratic countries should pay attention to economic, diplomatic, legal and other resources. The report confirmed the need for armed forces and asked the intellectuals and citizens to try to understand that this was important and that democracies were forced to do this. However, the report clearly stressed the fact that countries needed to formulate a whole strategy in which the military power would be one of the ingredients and hopefully countries would think first of employing non-military measures and keep in mind that in case the military force was needed it would be used in a way that did not jeopardize the principles of liberal democracies. (Hughes, 2011)

Finally, it is noteworthy that these opinions are consistent with the findings of a major academic work published in 2009. In her influential book “How Terrorism Ends?”, Audrey Cronin (2009) wrote about counter-terrorism strategies that depended on the military in addition to the police forces and analyzed the impact of repression. This book did not deny that repression could be beneficial especially when “it mobilizes the rightful forces of the state effectively against the violent perpetrators (and their supporters) within a community, without either catalyzing a larger countermobilization by that community or a demobilization of the government’s own support.” However, repression would not be easily applied in democracies where governments cared about their legitimacy and hated to harm innocent civilians. Accordingly, the war on terror launched by the USA was a wrong strategy, because wars entailed the use of force and resulted in extreme destruction. *(Cronin, 2009, P.141, 143, 144, 198)* Actually terrorist attacks encouraged governments and authorities to use the utmost force “either domestically with police and security forces or externally with military force.” However, she believed that this could have negative consequences if the major theme became the “militarization”, without trying to deny the presence of coercion as an aspect of any plan that aimed to defeat terrorism. Various researchers were optimistic as they revealed that states learned from the mistake of using utmost force and they adopted more appropriate tactics *(Cronin, 2009, p. 204)*.

Actually, one could emphasize the indispensability of using the military force when one read the conclusions of Cronin concerning another counter-terrorism tactic such as negotiations; as it was proved that negotiations were not enough to combat terrorists, but they could help when adopted in addition to other counter-terrorism measures *(Cronin, 2009)*.

The Military Perception

In such an endeavor to evaluate the effectiveness of the military as a counter-terrorism instrument, it is significant to stop and listen to the opinions of (current and retired) military officers who had practical experience and could evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of using the military force as a main instrument of counter-terrorism strategies.

It is noteworthy that the Indian Inspector-general Sankar Sen wrote in 1991 about this idea of Janowitz and tried to explain the role of the military in the combat of terrorism and he used an important term. He called the interference of the armed forces to help the police or the civil power: “Military Aid to Civil Power.” (*Sen, 1991, p.58*) According to Oxford Reference Website, this term adopted by Sen can be defined as: “The use of military personnel and equipment to support the forces of law and order, particularly in operations aimed at preventing and combating terrorism, e.g. guarding airports or resolving sieges. The military can also assist in other criminal situations where criminals have military type weapons. It also includes Explosive Ordnance Disposal (bomb disposal) of war time weapons or terrorist devices.” (*Oxford Reference*)

Then many current and retired military officers wrote research papers in order to analyze the significance of the military force as a tactic of counter-terrorism. Examples include Colonel Sonsalla who wrote to emphasize the significance of using military force, but he called for employing non-lethal weapons in order to help hostages or to engage terrorists and at the same time to avoid harming civilians. Sonsalla thought of defeating terrorists using the non-lethal weapons that are not likely to kill or seriously wound a person. (*Sonsalla, 2017*).

Sonsalla was a rare example of military officers who wrote to tackle the military tactic without caring to refer to other non-military strategies. Actually, many military officers who conducted academic research declared the importance of using tools other than the military tool. Although Lieutenant Farrow (2016) wrote to

highlight the importance of using drones to weaken terrorist groups, he concluded that “drones, however, should not be the only form of pressure that the target nations employ to combat terrorism-counterterrorism strategy needs to be a multilateral approach with varying sources of pressure.” Farrow drew the attention to the importance of the non-military component of any counterterrorism strategy. He referred to economic and political tools, such as propaganda, foreign aid... etc. (Farrow, 2016, p. 10).

Lieutenant Colonel Brooks (2013) admired the role of the USA army in the fight against terrorism; however, he recommended the collaboration between the military and the agencies in charge of civilian law enforcement in the United States. (Brooks, 2013).

Moreover, a research paper that was written by a military officer and a civilian academic: Sergeant Munoz and Dr. Crosston (2015) criticized the perception of many people that the relations with countries should rest on the military capabilities. They opposed this opinion and suggested that deterring terrorists required making use of various types and tactics of power.

They referred to “complementary power” and highlighted the importance of diplomacy. They did not try to underestimate the importance of military power especially after what happened in 9/11, but according to them this was not enough, and it might generate the negative consequences of the determination of terrorist organizations to persist in addition to helping them gain the acceptance of the people. (Munoz & Crosston, 2015, P.16) They warned the USA of the negative outcomes related to the American security if the USA decided to focus on the military capabilities only. The authors emphasized that for the counterterrorism strategy to defeat terrorists, it should rest more on respecting law, empowering civil society, realizing the importance of media, enhancing security and the role of intelligence and less on military power. (Munoz & Crosston, 2015)

- **Discussion:**

The aim of this research paper was to investigate the effectiveness of the military when it adopted a new role traditionally played by the police forces alone. Will it be effective and sufficient to perform this function (beside the police forces)? In other words, will violence be sufficient and effective in the pursuit of defeating terrorists?

In order to answer this question, the theoretical framework was mainly composed of the theory of the military as a constabulary force by Janowitz and it had another component i.e., the models of counter-terrorism, the most important of which were the war model, the criminal justice model and the non-violent responses.

Using these theories, this research paper started to delve into the topic of using the military force in combating terrorism. On a continuum that starts from non-effective and non-sufficient and ends at effective and sufficient, this paper examined the contributions of various researchers. It was noted that many scholars agreed about the effectiveness but not the sufficiency of the military as a tactic in the counter-terrorism strategies of countries. This proves the importance of what different models on counter-terrorism suggested as they implied the importance of employing various tactics.

This principle is actually among the teachings of the theorists of terrorism who teach students that how we perceive terrorism actually determines which of the several methods available can be employed to combat it. If a nation perceives the terrorist actions as crimes, then the major response will be repression. Recognizing terrorists as enemies in a war means that retaliation needs to be employed. The ingredient which suits counter-terrorism policies in general is related to the role of the intelligence agencies. However, if a nation recognizes terrorists as sick people who suffer from a

disease, then major responses will be “concessions, reforms and negotiations.” The bottom line of the theory is that “no one technique is a ‘magic bullet’ that will always work to deal with every terrorist situation.” So, the counter-terrorism strategies vary depending on the prevailing conditions. *(Lutz & Lutz, 2011, p. 114, 115)*

Theorists referred to the change in circumstances as the pretext for changing the counter-terrorism strategy. However, real world experience poses another problematic dilemma which is formulating counter-terrorism strategies according to policy considerations and biased positions. Carter (2017) is a researcher who examined the relevance of the counter-terrorism model based on criminal justice and the model based on the military power applied to the USA strategy. The researcher reached very interesting findings among which was that the USA would choose to act according to the dictates of the criminal justice model if terrorists belonged to countries that had close relations with the USA or the west in general, but the choice was different when the USA responded to Muslims as it usually resorted to military power, even in the case of American Muslims. The researcher concluded “that military action alone may not be enough to combat terrorism.” Actually, according to him, “military activity is associated with increases in future supplies of terrorism.” *(Carter, 2017, p.iii, 135)*

From the above analysis, a major trend based on the experience of academics and the military officers dominates which entails that the military proved their competence when assigned the task of a constabulary force in counter-terrorism, but this task is surrounded by several problems such as bias and insufficiency.

Conclusion

This paper adopted Janowitz's significant contribution to the theory of civil-military relations as he did what hardworking theorists do; when he closely watched the international arena and the changes that came across the role of the military. He knew that the military would need, beside the main task of defense, to go hand in hand with the police forces when military technology was needed to perform the functions that were normally performed by the police forces. Hence, his concept "constabulary force" was coined to describe another function that should be performed by the military. One of the main activities of the military in today's world is their efforts to combat terrorism in which they cooperate with the police forces. This was a clear manifestation of the military as a constabulary force.

Examining the contributions of various scholars revealed the dominance of the trend that the military force is really needed to perform the constabulary function and it is effective in such missions; however, it will not save the day by itself. The impact of repression and violence is clear, but the military is not sufficient and the need to employ both military and non-military tactics was emphasized over and over again. The problem of insufficiency was combined with a problem of bias, as in the case of the USA in deciding which counter-terrorism tool to employ in different situations.

This research paper was able to prove the importance of what Morris Janowitz drew the attention of the world to in the 1960s which is the constabulary function of the military. Actually, it gained more importance in the meantime with the persistent problems of terrorism and organized crime. Yes, the military turned out to be an effective constabulary force in its efforts to combat terrorism; however, this task witnessed two major problems that

would face the policymakers who designed counter-terrorism strategies: insufficiency and bias.

Future Research:

Future researchers who are interested in the role of the military in counter-terrorism strategies should focus on the problems of insufficiency and bias. Also, future researchers who are interested in the concept of the constabulary force can tackle the role of the military in issues such as: peacekeeping, combating organized crime and illegal immigration.

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