

Good example of research paper on the history of the israeli defence forces

[Government](#), [Army](#)



Israel has a very turbulent history, with the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Romans, and the Arabs seizing the lands and subjugating Jews who proved unable to withstand the onset of foes for want of a strong army. In the 20th century, when the Ottoman Empire was on its last legs, it was the high time Israel rose from the ashes. The British authorities took control over Palestine in 1917 and went on to have diaspora Jews immigrate to their historical homeland in a series of what is known as Aliyah. Granted a mandate by the UN, the British Crown boosted further waves of immigration to the displeasure of Palestinians who dominated the Arabic Middle East at the time. A hostile takeover, the influx of Jewish immigrants, or the combination of both sent conservative Arabs into indignation, which rationalized their armed resistance they had to offer to Israelis. The country had not built a self-sufficient army until the 20th century. Palestinian resistance became the catalyst of the process of army formation while its major warfare landmarks became litmus papers that have demonstrated that Israel has built arguably the single most dominant army in the known world. The IDF is the military organization that played a crucial role in unifying the Jewish state declared on 14 May 1948. It helped expand its boundaries well beyond the limits traced by the Partition Plan drafted by the United Nations (Kumaraswamy 2006, 119-120). According to USA Today. com (2001), after UN partitioning Palestine into the Arab and Jewish states, the war between the two erupted. Neighboring Arab states, such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, and Egypt provided support for Palestine (USA Today. com 2001). Obviously, the IDF were the forces that helped Israel establish statehood in the face of overwhelming odds.

Sheffer and Barak (2010, 338) stated that the IDF played a critical role in within Israeli society by determining national identity during the conflict between two states. The defence forces became the tool of separation between two nations (Sheffer and Barak 2010, 339). The educational activities of the defence forces included the solidification of national consciousness of recruits and indoctrination, which means the organization helped immigrants assimilate into the new society (Sadeh 1994, 74). What better way to unite the entire nation before the enemy than to have the army become a unifying force. There is no better way of overcoming an enemy than by arousing or building national identity. Hence, the role the IDF played in the Arab-Israeli War was immense, to say the least.

The presence of a good army was the only viable option for Israel in the late second half of the 1940s. In 1946, the British Empire all but went bankrupt since the superpower found itself economically disarranged during the post-war period. Besides, the Crown was as close as could be to losing its overseas colonies. Hence, Israel had no patrons to rely on, which means the country would probably be nonexistent these days if it had not reformed its military forces in the mid-20th century. Kumaraswamy (2006, 120) proceeded to note that the IDF has relied on conscription throughout its history. As of now, both men and women are liable for military service at the age of 18 to serve for 3 and 2 years respectively and subject to the yearly reserve duty until the age of 45 and 24 respectively. While mandatory for Druze citizens, military service is different for the Israelis of the Arab descent who are exempt from the army service unless they are willing to serve. The defence forces are said to play an essential role in new immigrants'

absorption. The operative responsibility of the defence forces intensified exponentially following a series of military victories and subsequent seizures of Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights. It was Israeli military forces that took control of the regions; hence, their role in expanding the boundaries of Israel was immense, to put it mildly.

According to USA Today. com (2001), was a part of Suez Crisis of 1956, the Six-Day War of 1967, Yom Kippur War of 1973, Israeli Invasion of Lebanon, and a number of Arabic Intifadas. In the course of the Six-Day War of 1967, the IDF effectiveness enables the country to plan preemptive strikes against such mobilized states as Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan, while moving troops to the canal region and the Sinai Peninsula. The IDF managed to retaliate against Jordan's attack in Jerusalem, capturing the West Bank and the entire Eastern Jerusalem during a three-day period. The defence forces also drove the Syrians from the Golan Heights. In claiming Gaza, the Sinai, West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Golan, the country gained a buffer zone to keep the Arab neighbors off the nation (USA Today. com 2001). Hence, the Israel Defence Forces played a crucial role in extending the boundaries of the country and keeping it sovereign.

The way military government treated the Palestinians who inhabited the Occupied Territories brought the government into significant differences with the IDF, which eventually evoked international criticism as well as producing the Intifada in the period between 1987 and 1993 and al-Aqsa Intifada in the timeframe between 2000 and 2005. Both events were Arabic insurrections bent on demolishing Israel and establishing the Arabic state of Palestine.

Aman is the intelligence arm of the Israel Defence Forces, which plays an

arch-essential role in the national strategic tenet and security. Its attempt of accurately reading the intelligence met with failure, for which the army paid its price in the course of the October War of 1973 (Kumaraswamy 2006, 120). According to Professor Austin Bay (2013), the 1973 was the year that Israel as good as lost in the Arab-Israeli War thanks to intelligence miscalculations of Aman, one of the principal divisions of the IDF.

At first, the country failed at detecting the scope and the size of enemy military preparations. While the intelligence service agents did notice tanks concentrating on the side of the Golan Heights that belonged to Syria, they failed to unravel the strategic intents of Egypt and Syria. There occurred another intelligence mishap shortly after Egyptian military forces' crossing the Suez Canal on the 6 October 1973. The national command authority proved unable to act decisively. Contrary to spies' confirmation of the alignment and accumulation of enemy forces, the IDF never carried out the preemptive attack it should have conducted. Just as Egypt's political and military stratagem deceived Israel into not attacking, so too did the military adroitness of Syria help the country trick Israeli spies (Bay 2013).

The involvement of the defence forces in Lebanon in the wake of the 1982 Operation Peace for Galilee also turned out painful, which ended in a one-sided Lebanese withdrawal completed in 2000. Jacobs (1995, 18) suggested that the IDF conducted the invasion of Lebanon back in 1982 with consummate skills. It was the combination of meticulous planning and the compliance with operational principles of offensive, mass, and economy of force, simplicity, and maneuver. Excellent coordination between combat services and arms and aggressive precision were also characteristic of the

military operation. Though not having enough infantry units, the IDF beat the opposing forces as well as moving 75 kilometers forward across difficult terrains over a three-day period. Still, not even the excellence of operational performance could make up for all flaws that transpired in the process. While still in the capacity of defence minister, Ariel Sharon would replace his personal military agenda for the strategy and policy endorsed by the president multiple times, which paved way for a definitive strategic failure. In neglecting the ingrained desire of Palestinians for homeland and the depth of Lebanese factionalism, the Israel Defence Forces started the military operation in hopes that they would be able to restore peace in Lebanon via military tools and address the security dilemma of Israel.

Three years of occupation over, the country found 600 soldiers dead and 4000 wounded, to say nothing of Defence Minister Ariel Sharon dismissal and the eventual collapse of the government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The IDF no more brought peace to war-ridden Lebanon than they ousted the Palestine Liberation Organization. Not only did the country loose favor it had previously found with Lebanese Shi'as, but also it had image and foreign relations with the USA and other world countries suffer significantly. With all money and blood toll, little did Israel gain in that war due to IDF top command mistakes. That Sharon opportunistically manipulated war operations for supporting his personal objectives in lieu of the national political policy, polarizing military and political ends, was what made the conflict an eventual strategic failure. Attempting to hide the differing aims, the minister made decisions as to the conduct of military operations, breaching the principle of offense, on which the operational plan rested.

More importantly than that, equivocal war aims nurtured the lack of commitment among the IDF grassroots and confusion since the war was going past reasonable and advertised objectives (Jacobs 1995, 18-19). Though planned as low-cost, decisive, and rapid, the operation grew extended, bloody, and failed. Besides the issue of policy-strategy incompatibility, the IDF showed the signs of having the wrong gravity center. An excessive focus on opposing military forces kept them from perceiving the political nature of the warfare with the Palestinians. The IDF repeated a traditional mistake made before by other countries since military triumph is usually insufficient for terminating a conflict. To fit their military forces, the country turned the collision into a traditional struggle, which made it impossible for them to succeed. Apart from surviving, the Palestine Liberation Organization came to gain autonomy over the Gaza Strip and Jericho. The final blunder was Israel not being able to discern the culminating point of victory, with Sharon pushing war beyond its limits, means, and soldiers' willingness (Jacobs 1995, 19-20).

The IDF played their unique role Suez Crisis of 1956, the Six-Day War of 1967, Yom Kippur War of 1973, Israeli Invasion of Lebanon, and a number of Arabic Intifadas, which were Arabic revolts aimed at restoring the state of Palestine in its former boundaries and demolishing that of Israel. Thanks to the military forces, the country claimed Gaza, the Sinai, West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Golan, which created a comfortable buffer zone to keep the Arabic neighbors from assaulting and encroaching upon Israeli sovereignty. However, the IDF also played a negative role in the Arab-Israeli conflict since the country all but lost the October War of 1973 due to miscalculations made

by Aman, the intelligence arm of the IDF that failed miserably at revealing the military preparations of Egyptian and Syrian armies. The same can be said of the 1982 Operation Peace for Galilee with the difference that the then Defence Minister Ariel Sharon mixed political and his own motives and caused troops to push the war beyond its expected limits. A tarnished international reputation as well as death and money toll was the culmination of the conflict. Overall, despite occasional failures, the IDF has enjoyed the period of tremendous effectiveness over the past six-plus decades, which makes it one of the most formidable military forces in the world.

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