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Women's Rights And Public Confidence: The Connection Between International Human Rights Norms And Public Confidence In Women's Organizations

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN WOMEN'S

ORGANIZATIONS

A Thesis
Presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
For the degree of Masters of Arts
In the Department of Political Science
The University of Mississippi

By

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ABSTRACT

Since the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1949, human rights have been a constant concern. Women, in particular, are particular objects of distress in that they still face the most inequality globally. Despite the need for better women's rights, public confidence in women's organizations is varied widely. This paper explains the variations in public confidence of women's organizations. I argue that the variation in confidence is a function of the state's level of internalization of international norms of basic women's rights. This paper uses the Convention to End Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as the foundation for international women's rights. For the empirical analysis, I utilize CIRI data that operationalizes CEDAW through aspects of women's political and economic rights and measures of public confidence in women's organizations featured in the World Values Survey. This paper hopes to find a strong correlation between CEDAW scales of human rights and levels of confidence in women's organizations.

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to everyone who helped me complete this project. Thank you.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

UN   United Nations

UNDHR   United Nations Declarations of Human rights

CEDAW   Convention to End Discrimination Against Women

IGO   Intergovernmental Organization

NGO   Nongovernmental Organization

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Although most data trends show positive improvements in the world's levels of

democracy, health measures, and economic security, human rights violations have risen 70%

according to the 2014 Human Rights Risk Atlas Report. Human rights and the need for

organizations that help to increase economic and political status are still pressing concerns for

most of the global population, particularly for at risk groups such as women and minority

populations. Despite this need for better human rights, public confidence in women's

organizations is widely varied. This paper hopes to answer the variation in public opinion on

women's organizations.

In the last ten years, women's rights have become one of the primary focuses of human

rights work. To combat the rising violations in women's rights, modern women's organizations

operate in varying arenas to increase overall levels of reporting, monitoring and involvement.

Both intergovernmental (IGO) and nongovernmental (NGO) organizations play important roles

in the push for global women's rights. While there are not any IGOs that focus solely on women,

both the United Nations and the World Bank have large, dedicated bodies that focus on women's

rights. These organizations work through The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and through the World Bank Women in Development

group.

UN Women was founded in July 2010 with the purpose of "formulating policies, global

standards and norms, providing suitable technical and financial support, and regular monitoring

of system-wide progress" (UN Women, 2017). The UN's role in creating landmark declarations of human rights and women's rights has been crucial in the campaign for increasing the status of women around the world. "Naming and shaming" is one of the primary roles of a larger IGO like the United Nations. While the overall effect of naming and shaming practices is still hotly debated within the international community (see Hafner-Burton, 2008), it is clear that naming and shaming countries with women's rights violations allows aid organizations to better select their targets.

Where the UN focuses primarily on reporting women's rights violations, The World Bank works through local organizations to give women access to funding for entrepreneurial pursuits, and empowerment practices. The intergovernmental women's organizations function on an advisory and reporting level, with an emphasis on creating global norms of women's rights. Organizations like UN Women and the World Bank work in tandem with nongovernmental organizations to provide services, education and funding to countries with lower levels of human rights.

If the larger IGOs function primarily as both reporting and advisory bodies, NGOs work more on a grassroots level as the main bodies for providing the education, funding, and services that are proscribed by the IGOs. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR), the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Equality Now, International Women's Heath Coalition, and Women for Women International (WWI) are just a few of the hundreds of organizations that focus solely on increasing women's status around the world. These organizations work on the ground in countries with poor women's rights by providing free health education courses, small loans for women-run business, disaster aid, and domestic violence support.

The interplay between IGO and IGO women's organizations is important as their outcomes influence public attitudes on women's rights and organizations. Even with hundreds of women's organizations in operation, there is still variance in public opinion about women's organization. This paper works to fill that gap in our understanding of public confidence and women's organizations. I argue that the variation in confidence is a function of the state's level of internalization of international norms of basic women's rights. This paper starts with a review of the literature on public support for women's issues. After that, a detailed discussion of public opinion/women's issues literature and human rights institutions is necessary to better understand where our conception of human rights began and how institutions play a role in humanitarian work.

I then use normative theories to help explain public confidence through an in-depth look at the Convention to End Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), GDP and other possible factors. For empirical analysis, this paper uses CEDAW as the foundation for international women's rights and norm entrepreneur. I utilize CIRI data that operationalizes CEDAW through aspects of women's political and economic rights and measures of public confidence in women's organizations featured in the World Values Survey. This paper hopes to find a strong correlation between CEDAW scales of human rights and levels of confidence in women's organizations.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

This study explores the influence of international institutions norms on public confidence in women's organizations. I argue that the variation in public support of women's rights institutions can be understood through norm spreading by human rights institutions. The dependent variable of this study is public confidence in women's organizations. Although human rights have been an important research focus since the 1960s, there is not systematic research on public confidence (opinion) support for women's organizations. Surprisingly, scholars have never studied what influences public support for specific women's organizations (both IGO's and NGO's). This paper is novel in that it adds understanding to women's organizations research gap with the addition of an international norms perspective. To combat this lack of scholarship on public support for women's organizations, I use existing knowledge on public opinion on women's issues to help structure my argument.

Although no specific literature of the public support for women's organizations exists, there is a large body of research on public support for women's issues. Women's rights have come a long way in the past century; from not having the right to vote to nearly electing the first female president of the United States in 2016, public opinion on women's equality has changed rapidly. What is the overlying reason for these changes in public opinion about women? Bolzendahl and Myers (2004) explain the increase of women in the workforce, shifting demographics of the nuclear family and "more open laws and norms" regarding women's equality issues have all contributed to a dramatic and widespread liberalization of traditional

gender roles. Bolzendahl and Myers, in particular, give a good portrait of public opinion on women's issues. They extend the General Social Survey from 1986 to include over 25 years of survey data on feminist attitudes. The authors argue the rapid liberalization of feminist attitudes in public opinion comes from exposure to feminist issues, labor-force participation, higher proportion of income, higher rates of divorce/single motherhood, higher education, and more liberal political views all have an extreme positive effect on public opinion on women's issues.

Men are especially affected by high rates of issue exposure and division of household responses. Greenstein (1998) shows when men take larger shares of the household labor, they are more likely to acknowledge gender inequalities both in the home and in society. Issue exposure in this study seems to be one of the most important influencers of public opinion and changing feminist attitudes. Exposure of women's issues is not only appropriated through education and the existence of social discourse; in fact, women in positions of political power are a large influence in changing public opinion about women's organizations. Women in positions of power help to bring the issues of inequality to light, which works to positively influence shifts in public opinion (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers, 2007; Valenzuela and Correa, 2009). Issue exposure also works in political campaigns to help close gender political knowledge gaps—thus working against political inequalities (Ondercin et al. 2011).

Issue exposure's effect on public opinion and women's issues is not just a western-centric explanation; in fact, most of the issue exposure literature focuses on countries in Africa and the Middle East. A 2013 study shows the importance of issue exposure in influencing public opinion (Arab Women's Leadership Institute, 2013). The report focus on three of the worst woman rights violators in the world: Yemen, Tunisia, and Libya. The authors find that through education and increasing public knowledge about issues of household labor, maternal health, and political

participation, a country could positively influence public opinion on women's rights. Most of the participants were unemployed males between the ages of 18-35 with lower education levels. These participants believed strongly that the change to a more democratic country from a tribal society would help to secure women's rights. It is inherent in this article that the changing norms and traditions heavily influence public opinion of women.

As seen in the previous studies, issue exposure is crucial in shifting public opinion. What else is responsible in spreading these new norms of gender equality? Many scholars believe social movements are crucial in spreading new norms and ideas about gender equality. Interestingly, some believe that there is a major endogeneity problem with social movements and public opinion. Public opinion has shown to call for social movements to change existing issues, while social movements have influenced public opinion about a certain topic (Guigni 2004). A newer study shows that events (movements) are more positively correlated with changing attitudes (public opinion) (Banaszak and Ondercin, 2007).

Soule and Olzak (2004) show, though, that the social movement and public opinion literature is more complicated. The authors argue social movements do influence public opinion, but have a greater effect when elite and legislators face low electoral competition. Another example of the influence of legislative bodies and social movements on public opinion is the influence of the U.S. Congress during the Women's Movement of 1950-1986. Costain and Majstorovic (1994) show that the interaction between the actions of Congress and the Women's movement both shaped and were shaped by public opinion. They outline three possibilities about the interaction between legislation and public opinion on women's issues (listed below).

"Public Opinion as an Intervening Variable"
Outside Events→ Public Opinion→ Legislative Action

"Elite Behavior Interpretation"
Legislative Elite→ Public Opinion

"Social Movement Interpretation"
Social Movement→
Public Opinion→   Legislative Action
Media Coverage→
(Model derived from Costain and Majstorovic, 1994)

The authors find that the relationship between Congress and social movements actually had an interactive relationship in influencing public opinion. This shows that the political environment of a country can definitely shift public opinion on women's issues. If elites and legislatures support social movements, the effects are more substantial, but these elites only participate if they do not fear losing power. Further global social movements studies show the presence of social movements positively influence future generation's opinions on women's issues (Everitt, 1998). A study in South Africa shows that the negative effects of an overriding and patriarchal social system on public opinion of gender equality can be reversed by education, women in the workplace and social movements (Julien and Majake, 2005).

Overall, the literature on public confidence/support for women's issues is both dynamic and complex. Two of the largest explanations for the recent changes in public opinion on women's issues are:

1. "Issue Exposure" through larger percentages of work-force participation and political participation, changes in the division of household labor/family structure, education, and access to health care.

2. "Social Movements" through research that shows public opinion on women's issues is altered by the presence of social movements, and legislative action.

These two explanations are crucial in understanding the influence of public support for women's issues. This paper is novel in that it both extends the public opinion literature to now incorporate research on women's organizations and includes international institutions through norm spreading as the primarily explanatory variable. The previous literature on public opinion does not cover why the public would support women's organizations. Although I use international norms and women's organizations in my study, the similarities between the existing literature and my argument are clear. Issue exposure and social movements help to increase public knowledge about women's rights, even acting to spread norms about women's rights through the public. The argument presented here is essentially the same, but with the addition of the international institutions as a vehicle for norm spread for a larger public (all countries). I build on the previous "issue exposure" to both include women's organization and create an argument that can be applied to all countries.

I argue the crucial and explanatory aspect of increasing public support for women's organizations is the influence of international institutions and norm spreading. In the way that institutions serve as the "entrepreneurs" of norms of women's rights, I argue that crucial issue exposure comes from the internationalization of international norms of women's rights. This internalization of women's rights can be measured by public confidence in women's organizations. In this study, I use institutions spreading norms as a proxy for "issue exposure" while women's organization is just an extension of the previous public opinion scholarship's focus on women's issue.

This study is important in that it posits that the driving force of public confidence in women's organizations is the internalization of norms spread by the international institutions and declarations like the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention to End Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In the next sections, this paper outlines a brief history of international institutions, and the normative theories that will help to explain the variation of public confidence in women's organizations.

NORMS AND INSTITUTIONS

In the context of international institutions and human rights, norms are usually regarded as "principles establishing behavioral 'oughts' that are widely accepted by states (Hawkins, 2004). These standards of behavior are usually morally based, and hold particular meaning for disadvantaged groups. This paper follows Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) model of the norm life cycle to argue that international human rights norms emerge at the institutional level and then diffuse into state laws and finally influencing public perception. The amount in which the state and public accepts and internalizes these norms will accurately predict confidence levels in women's rights organizations. If the public has internalized the norms of international articles like CEDAW, they should then have full confidence and support in women's rights organizations.

Normative theory seeks to explain world events through a socio-political and historical lens, and focuses on morality. Morality and what the world "ought to be" is at the heart of normative theory. Normative theory has become more popular in political science research, particularly in human rights literature. Experiments using the normative framework are used to show that appealing to the different portions of a person's psyche based on normative arguments

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is useful in creating effective human rights campaigns (McEntire, Leiby, and Krain, 2015). There has been a resurgence of culture-based explanations of human rights in the recent decade. More and more scholars are rejecting the idea that human rights can be solely explained with an analysis of purely state actors.

The term "normative" can be described as the shared values or institutions that prescribe behavior and social activity as a function of how the world ought to be (Cialdini, Kallgren, Reno, 1991). Building on this concept, normative theory relates to the idea that norms are created and then spread through our political system. This spreading of norms allows societies to change for the moral "better" in response to the pressure of changing social behaviors and attitudes. Normative theory holds a special place in the international relations literature; IR scholarship focuses on how international institutions interact with other global actors, so normative theory hopes to shine light on those interactions. Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink's works on norms, while not credited with the beginning of normative theory in political science, are foundational to the understanding of this theory in political practice.

While their work is crucial for better understanding norms in general, they are most recognized for their model on the norm "life cycle": emergence, cascade and internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). The authors explain that norms emergence begins with "norm entrepreneurs" that create new norm-based behaviors that are formed on moral and altruistic goals for society. In the cascade stage, these norms are then imitated by norms leaders hoping to encourage states to conform. While the reasons why states choose to collapse under the pressure of the norms leaders is not specified, the importance is that the behavior is eventually internalized. In this last stage, norms are regarded as a "taken-for-granted quality" in that all levels of the global community (international organizations, states, and public) widely exhibit the

norms. This norms life cycle is crucial to this paper's argument. The norms life cycle is apparent in our current human rights institutions, as the institutions serve as the major "norm entrepreneurs".
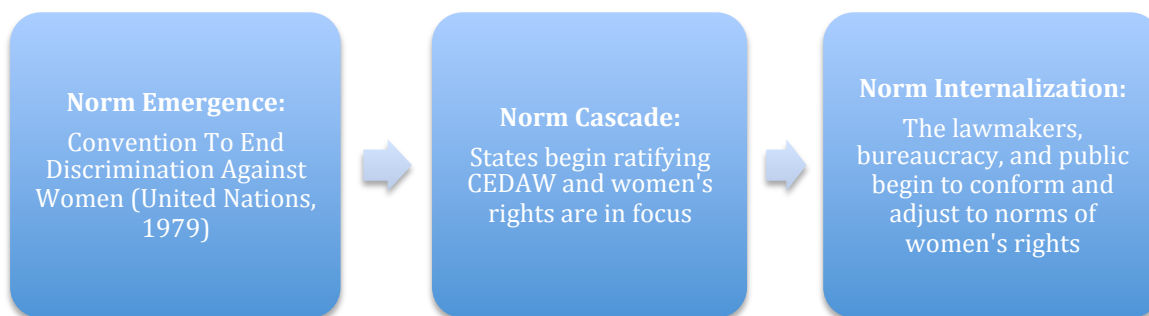
The United Nations is often seen as the pillar of the institutionalization of human rights norms; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1949) is the zenith of both human and institutional commitment to the betterment of the fellow man. The charter was one of the first and most widely accepted sets of collective values that ensured that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (United Nations, 1949). While the framers of this declaration had high hopes for its success, none could have imagined the social, political, and economic significance for the conversation on human rights. Today, constitutions, domestic policies, declarations and general political frameworks are all based on this landmark document. Perhaps one of the best measurements of success for this institutionally made human rights declaration would be its influence on court systems. For example, the European Convention on Human Rights is a direct result of the guidance of the Declaration of Human rights; influence is also seen within international courts such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Hannum, 1998).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an example of an institution's more general approach to human rights. Institutions also play more specific roles in human rights discourse with treaties, articles and policies that target specialized human rights abuses. While the UNDHR is important for understanding the influence of international institutions on human rights, the primary focus for this study is the internalization of women's rights through public confidence in women's organizations. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has the success of being one of the most largely

supported and ratified treaties among the United Nations members. Unfortunately, even with sizeable support from many countries around the world, scholarship on the issue of women's rights and development show that the world still has much to learn in this area. Just taking into consideration women's inequality in economic situations in the United States, scholarship shows that women still earn less money than their male counterparts at every level of education, paternity leave is rarely a salient issue, and the painfully visible disparities between the career "choices" of men and women adversely affect employment for women (Ramdas and Janus, 2011). Even with the current rampant women's rights violations, CEDAW serves as the landmark norm entrepreneur of women's rights.

Life Cycle of Women's Rights Norms
Figure 1
Model adapted from Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998

Norm Emergence:
Convention To End Discrimination Against Women (United Nations, 1979)

Norm Cascade:
States begin ratifying CEDAW and women's rights are in focus

Norm Internalization:
The lawmakers, bureaucracy, and public begin to conform and adjust to norms of women's rights

The legalization of international treaties like CEDAW and the UNDHR was important as it provided both the stability and credibility that human rights institutions needed in order to proscribe norms about women's rights (see Simmons, 2000; Leeds, 1999; Abbot and Snidal, 2000). As we work through path of norm diffusal, the legalization of international treaties for human rights is the first step in the formalization of specific women's rights norms. In this way, the legalized treaties are the "norm entrepreneurs". The normative pathway of human rights then leads to issues of state compliance with international treaties. Specifically when we look at

women's human rights issues, there have always been the few norm entrepreneurs (CEDAW) that seek to change the current status quo and help to create international law to reflect that ideal.

This purpose of this paper is to understand why there is public variation in the confidence in women's organizations. I argue that this variation is a function of how well the public has internalized the norms of human rights documents like CEDAW. My argument maps well with Finnemore and Sikkink's norms life cycle to justify how the norms spread through the global community to affect confidence levels in women's organizations.

As shown in Figure 1 above, public confidence in women's organizations can be explained through an analysis of normative theories of human rights. This variation in confidence is a combination of the public's understanding and value of women's rights organizations. If the states has indeed fully accepted the international norms of women's rights as laid out in CEDAW, then the country should have high respect and perceptions of value towards women's organizations. More simply, this paper argues that international human rights norms emerge at the institutional level and then diffuse into state and then public perception. The amount in which the state and public accepts and internalizes these norms will accurately predict confidence levels in women's rights organizations. If the public has internalized the norms of international articles like CEDAW, they should then have full confidence and support in women's rights organizations. This leads to my hypothesis:

H1: The public confidence in women's organizations will increase as the internalization of human rights norms increases.

I use normative theory to show how the morality of human rights is the driving measure in instituting better human rights practices. Both alternative explanations leave out the driving force of human rights policies. Why end slavery or give women the right to vote? One could say

that the power and monetary gains of keeping antiquated practices like slavery and opposing suffrage could outweigh the benefits of increasing human rights. Only in the normative structure do we see an explanation for the thousands of scholars, activists and leaders who pursue human rights without regard to self-interest.

Normative theory is extremely important when discussing human rights; normative theory gives us that explanation of why nations choose to help even it is against their self-interest. This paper argues that the variation in confidence is a function of the state's willingness to comply with international norms of basic women's and human rights.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study hopes to understand the variation in public confidence of women's organizations. The research design of this analysis will test the influence of international norms through women's economic status, women's political status, GDP (logged), and polity on public confidence in women's organizations. The unit of analysis for this study is country-year and the sample is comprised of the full set of 900 observations for countries from 1990-2009. The dataset is the combination of the World Values Survey time wave data from 1990-2009 (World Values Survey Waves 2-5), CIRI Human Rights Database (The CIRI Human Rights Dataset, 2016), World Bank Data on GDP (World Bank, 2016), and the Polity Project dataset (INSCR, 2014). The set of countries was taken directly from the CIRI dataset and reduced down to 1990-2009 to fit the World Values Survey Dataset. Unfortunately the World Values Survey dataset missed a significant number of observations in the years 1990-2009 due to inconsistent data. The 900 observations come from all observations available in that dataset within that time period. The World Values Survey Dataset was the primary component of this study as the set includes reports of measures of public confidence in regards to many different aspects of human values. It is currently the most inclusive and substantial databases on the global levels of public confidence in women's organizations. The dependent variable is coded as "confidence", and the independent variables are coded "wosoc", "wopol" "polity", and "loggdp".

Descriptive statistics for each variable are detailed below.

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Confidence in Women's Organizations (confidence)	900	21.77181	2.337	13.975	25

Variables	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Women's Economic Position (wosoc)	1555	1.378	.696	0	3
Women's Political Position (wopol)	1559	1.955	.537	0	3

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is confidence in women's organizations. I operationalize this variable as "confidence" in the study and take the information directly from the World Value Survey dataset. While the dataset is comprised of many different questions designed to gauge public perception on different issues, I only use variables containing information about confidence in women's organizations. The question asked to the participants was, "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? Women's organizations….?" This is an accurate measurement of this variable for many reasons. The World Values Survey dataset is complied and regularly used in studies about global public opinion. It is one of the only datasets that regularly compiles a uniform set of questions about values concerning different social, political and economic issues. The authors expertise and knowledge has led to an extensive database compiled from the polling of citizens from many different countries.

Independent Variables

The key independent variable is the internalization of international human rights norms. This paper grounds the human rights norm argument within CEDAW. I operationalized this through women's political status and women's economic status. I will test each to show their positive relationship with levels of public confidence in women's organizations. I operationalize women's economic status through the CIRI measure of economic status. This variable is based directly from the CIRI Human Rights Dataset 1990-2016. I operationalize women's political status through the CIRI measure of political status within countries. This variable is also taken directly from the CIRI Human Rights Dataset 1990-2016. The CIRI gauge of economic status is measured on a 0-3 scale: "0" meaning no economic rights, "1" meaning some economic rights, but little government enforcement, "2" meaning some rights and the government enforces those, and "3" meaning all or nearly all of economic rights are guaranteed by the government. The CIRI measure of political status is also on a 0-3 scale: "0" no political rights are guaranteed by law, "1" political equality is guaranteed by law, but there are significant limitations in practice, "2" political equality is guaranteed by law and 5% of seats in government are filled by women, "3" political equality is guaranteed in law and practice with 30% or more seats in government are filled by women.

I believe this to be an accurate measurement of the internalizing of international human rights norms because of how closely related CIRI measures of economic/political status and CEDAW are. The articles in CEDAW are directly related to economic and political gains. CEDAW is a perfect gauge for international human rights norms. CEDAW was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly in hopes to comprehensively increase women's rights within political, social, and economic sectors. Interestingly only 19 states have yet to ratify this convention, one of them being the United States (Koh, 2002). The United Nations was one of the

first organizations in 1949 to publish and fight for the equality of all human beings. Even in 1979, the majority of the world did not hold the idea that women could hold the same political and economic status as men. It is easy to believe the values that we are hold to be obvious fact are in some part due to the work of the United Nations and CEDAW. This paper hopes to show how the internalization of human rights norms influences public confidence in women's organizations. Both are just functions of norm diffusion through the international organization, the state, and then the public.

My main control variables for the analysis are GDP and polity. The World Bank has called GDP "the main criterion for classifying economies". It has been consistently used as the benchmark of successful public policy initiatives and global economic institutions. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, under-secretary-general and executive director of UN Women, stated that "our [studies] will benefit from understanding the correlation between GDP per capita and human rights" (UN Women, 2016).

There have been many human rights indicators that have begun to examine the relationship between GDP per capita and human rights. GDP per capita is also important because empowering women also proves to empower the economy, which leads to the better quality of life the human rights indicators are studying. UN Women shows that when there are more women who work, economies will indeed expand. An increase in female labor force participation not only reduces the gender gap in labor participation but also results in faster economic growth (UN Women, 2016). I operationalize GDP through World Bank. World Bank contains databases that report on relative levels of income and productivity on many countries spanning from 1950 to present. While the dataset contains multiple measures of economic development like real GDP, development accounting, and growth accounting, this study will

only use one measure of real GDP per capita in this analysis. I also will be logging GDP in order

for better comparison. I believe this to be the best indicator for this project as I only need one

GDP indicator for each country as a control. While more scholarship could arise from the

addition of more in-depth indicators of economic development, this study is only interested in

the relationship between the real GDP per as a control on variations of public confidence in

women's organizations.

Regime type is also included as a control variable in this analysis. Further scholarship

shows that internal structures of human rights development can influence the way that a country

commits human rights violations abroad (Tomz & Weeks, 2013). A multitude of work has shown

that democracies are more likely to join in human rights institutions and charters. In this case,

regime type should have an effect on human rights violations, but it may not always have the

effect one would expect. Conrad (2014) shows that being a democratic country does not always

ensure an improvement in human rights issues. Human rights violations are more difficult to

solve through the highly transparent nature of the courts that push executives to "hide" human

rights violations. I use this as a control because the presence of a democracy may explain the
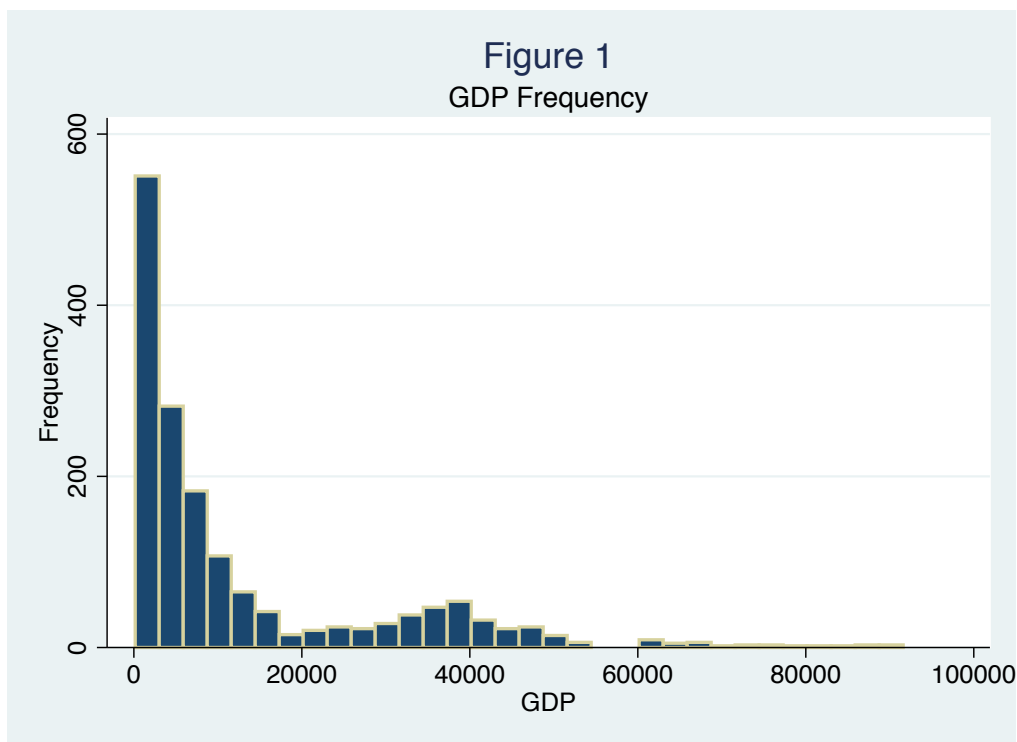
relationship I'm trying to find.

Polity score is important in understanding the atmosphere in countries where the norms

of women's rights are internalized because of levels of women's representation and participation.

It is well known that being in a democracy increases one's ability to be represented and

participate (Eremenko, 2014). I operationalize regime type through a polity score, and this

variable is coded as "polity" in this study. Polity score is part of the Polity Project supported by

Political Instability Task Force and has been continuously measured since 1960. While the

dataset contains multiple measures of regime type and spans the years 1800-2013, I will only use

the scaled variable, -10 (total autocracy) to 10 (total democracy). Both GDP and regime type are

heavily correlated within human rights literature.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

After running multiple tests, I found partial support for my hypothesis. H1 asserted

confidence in women's organizations increases as the internalization of human rights norms

increases. As we see in Table 1, Model 1, I discovered a positive and significant relationship

between confidence in women's organizations and women's economic positions. The constant

was significant at 23.53 and fell under p values of .01. The coefficient

![Figure 1 — a histogram titled "Figure 1, GDP Frequency" with GDP on the x-axis (0 to 100000) and Frequency on the y-axis (0 to 600), showing a right-skewed distribution.]

was .114 and was

significant at the .05 level. This provides robust support for my first hypothesis. It is interesting

to find that without any economic position, confidence in women's organizations is 23.53. On

my scale of 13-25, a confidence level of 23.53 is fairly high. This shows that at base level

confidence in women's organizations is high among the countries. The coefficient shows us that women's economic status is indeed important in increasing confidence in women's organizations. For every one unit increase on the 1-3 scale of CIRI's women' economic status, confidence in women's organizations increases by .114.

GDP and Polity are also tested within Model 1. In regards to GDP, I found a positive and highly significant relationship between confidence in women's organizations and GDP. The constant was significant at 23.53 and fell under p values of .01. The coefficient was .208 and was significant at the .01 level. GDP was actually the most significant influencer in both of my models.

Figure 2
Polity Frequency
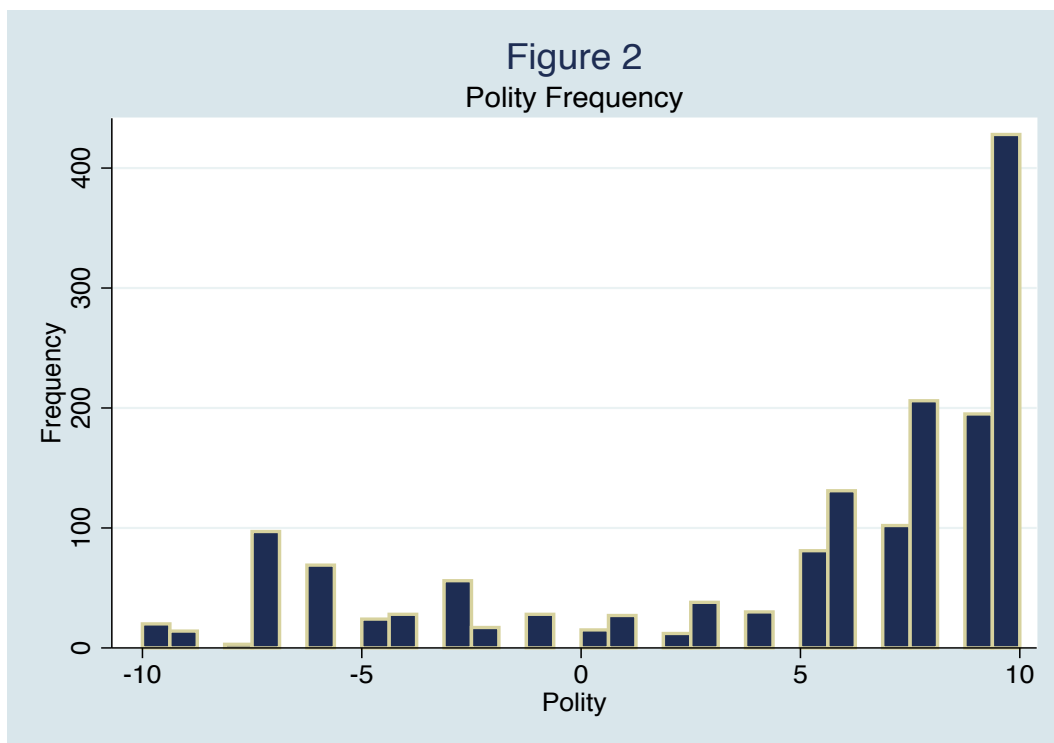
For every dollar increase in GDP, confidence in women's organizations increased by .208. This finding was not included within my hypothesis. It was interesting to find that GDP was actually more influential than both of my independent variables.

Polity was the last control variable in Model 1. In regards to polity, I found a negative and marginally significant between confidence in women's organizations and polity. The constant was significant at 23.53 and fell under p values of .01. The coefficient was marginally significant at -.0994 at the .1 level. For every 1 point increase in polity, confidence in women's organizations decreased by .0301. This shows that while a 1-point increase in polity is substantial in increasing democracy levels within a country, decreasing public opinion by .0301 is not really substantial.

Table 1 VARIABLES	(Model 1) Confidence in Women's Organizations	(Model 2) Confidence in Women's Organizations
Women's Economic Position (CEDAW)	0.114** (0.154)	
Women's Political Position (CEDAW)		-0.0423 (0.146)
GDP (logged)	.208** (0.0761)	.299** (0.0697)
Polity	-0.0994* (0.0166)	-0.0659* (0.0163)
Constant	23.54***	21.63***
Observations	900	900
R-squared	0.184	0.261

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

After running the second set of tests to establish the relationship of women's political status and confidence in women's organizations, I found that there was no relationship between

the two variables. As shown in Table 1, Model 2, there is an insignificant negative relationship between women's political status and confidence in women's organizations. The constant was measured at 21.63 and was significant at the .01 level. The coefficient was -.0423 and was not significant on any level. This analysis, unfortunately, does not support my hypothesis.

GDP and Polity are also tested within Model 2. In regards to GDP, I found a positive and highly significant relationship between confidence in women's organizations and GDP. The constant was significant at 21.63 and fell under p values of .01. The coefficient was .299 and was significant at the .01 level. GDP was actually the most significant influencer in both of my models. For every dollar increase in GDP, confidence in women's organizations increased by .299. This finding was not included within my hypothesis. It was interesting to find that GDP was actually more influential than both of my independent variables.

Polity was the last control variable in Model 2. In regards to polity, I found a negative and marginally significant relationship between confidence in women's organizations and polity. The constant was significant at 21.63 and fell under p values of .01. The coefficient was marginally significant at -.0659 at the .1 level. Polity actually had a much smaller influence in this model as compared to Model 2. For every 1 point increase in polity, confidence in women's organizations decreased by .0659.

Although I found mixed results for my hypothesis, I think polity and GDP turned out to be the most interesting variables in this study. Both were significant in varying degrees, but each told a different story. GDP and polity are often connected within human rights literature. Studies show that higher polity scores correlate with higher GDP. It is interesting in this study that I find varying conclusions on this fact. Polity here showed to have a negative effect on confidence in women's rights organizations. This stands in direct contrast of the GDP finding. This means that

the more democratic countries are less likely to have confidence in women's organizations. Is this because these countries do not have as much use for women's rights organizations as the less free countries? In the section below, ideas for further research on these insights are discussed in order to help understand why women's right norms, GDP and polity worked so differently in this study about confidence in women's organizations.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

After running tests to determine the relationship between international human rights norms and public confidence in women's organizations, the results give mixed opinions about this study. While this study is novel in its operationalization of norm internationalization, there are many ways that this study could be improved. One of the major roadblocks for normative research is the endogeneity issue. Do confidence in women's organizations create rights or do rights create confidence in women's organizations? Throughout this paper, I try to show examples of the latter. Confidence in women's organizations increases when the internalization of women's rights norms is at its peak. My test, however, did not produce the overwhelming evidence I believed it would. What caused this to happen?

I think there are many things I could do to improve this study. First, I think that there are different ways to capture norm diffusal/internalization. One method would be to capture the regional and neighborhood perspectives on women's rights norms. Many studies show the importance of analyzing neighbors human rights norms. Chad Clay's work on international border agreement and human rights sanction focuses on how signaling from regional neighbors will increase the spread of human rights norms (Clay, 2016). By adding a variable that captures regional norm diffusal, this study could provide more insights into human rights work.

Another solution would be to add variables that directly number and manage IGO's/NGO's in a country. Membership in those particular organizations could stand to sway the

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public's opinion on women's rights issues. For example, the US and Saudi Arabia could have the same confidence in women's rights organizations score, but the reasons why would widely vary. The US public could view IGO's as corrupt or not worth the cost, while the public of Saudi Arabia doesn't see women's rights as an issue. If the scores are the same, but the reasons why are different, more explanatory variables are needed. In further research, I hope to look more closely at regional and membership perspectives as the main variables in women's rights norms diffusion.

The endogeneity issue is a big problem in many political science studies. Normative research has recently been thrust into the spotlight in the quantitative human rights field, which shows its flaws. Human rights preferences, opinions, and perspectives are exceedingly hard to capture even in the best quantitative study. Adding more variables that help to capture the regional and neighborhood's norm internalization and a more specific focus on a country's membership in pertinent IGO/NGO would improve this and other studies that analyzes human rights norms.

CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this project, I hoped to show how international human rights norms emerge and then diffuse through the global community. Using, World Values Survey, CIRI, Polity Project, and World Bank data, I was able to test how salient women's rights issues were in different countries over a 20 year period. I wanted to better explain the variance of public confidence in women's organizations.

I only found partial support for my hypothesis. CEDAW's measure of economic rights within a country showed a strong and positive relationship with confidence in women's

organizations. With a coefficient of .114 and significance on a .05 level, we can see the relationship between economic rights and public confidence. All of this data is viewed through the norm literature, as CEDAW is the pinnacle for norms of women's rights. On the other hand, the second model showed no support and (surprisingly) a negative coefficient of -.0423. This contradicts both my hypothesis and theory that greater acceptance of the human rights norms laid out in CEDAW would increase public confidence for women's organizations.

What exactly does this mean for the normative literature on public confidence in women's organization? While I do believe that there is some insight to gain from the economic vs. political rights coefficients, I think that there are alternative explanations for better understanding this puzzle. For further research, I think there would have to be other ways to measure and operationalize public confidence in women's rights. (as mentioned in the above section). More study and data collection are needed in order to better understand norm diffusion. Other theoretical alternatives may prove to be useful as well.

I think that the fact that economic rights were a better predictor of public confidence is significant. Economic rights include better access to jobs historically dominated by men, closing the gender pay gap, and access to microloans and other helpful business startup opportunities. Interestingly, most women's organizations are focused on economic development. According to the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report on Gender Equality, "Greater gender equality can enhance economic productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions and policies more representative." This shows that economic development is the first step in empowerment. In a world where women still hold less than 23% of global parliament positions (UN Women, 2016), women's organizations have to do much more than microloans or business education to change ancient political institutions and ideas

about women in leadership positions. Sadly, economic development is just more of a reality in comparison to full political participation. The gains from women in empowered economic positions are much more visible to others in power (particularly men) than women in global leadership roles. This idea that all women's rights are not equal in importance in the eyes of the state and public is interesting and one that I hope to explore more.

Particularly in a time where women's both economic and political rights are continually being contested in countries, I believe that we have an obligation to understand what increases public confidence in organizations that focus on empowering women. This study showed that the increased acceptance of human rights norms through CEDAW's economic rights articles increases public confidence in women's organizations. By utilizing this knowledge and insights from further research, we could help to continue to empower women both economically and politically.

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