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Benefits by Gender: Determinants of Welfare Accessibility for Migrant Women in Western Europe

By Kathryn Vojack

*"I'm just a girl, all pretty and petite,
So don't let me have any rights,
Oh.... I've had it up to here!"
-Excerpt from Just a Girl by No Doubt*

According to statistical data, there are dissimilarities between the ease of welfare accessibility for migrant men and migrant women within European nations. Research proposes the following to be linked with welfare access: percent GDP spent on welfare, size of immigrant population, percent of Roman Catholic Church identification, relative leftism of country, percent of women in the workforce, and public attitudes of immigrant population, welfare system and feminism. Analyses of these variables indicate that welfare accessibility for migrant women is primarily explained by attitudes towards gender roles and the status of women in society rather than the size of the immigrant population or the nation's welfare resources.

Introduction

European countries accommodate, on average, one thousand to two thousand immigrants¹ per year (OECD, 1998; OECD, 1996). Since immigration is a continuous occurrence within Europe, regulations regarding immigrant rights and privileges have been introduced. The European Union has developed legislation such as Council Regulation 1612/68 on Free Movement of Workers and the Maastricht Treaty to ensure equal access, establishment, and employment for incoming persons regardless of their natural place of origin and equalize available benefits for migrants between member states (Papademetriou, 1996; Cousins, 1999). In theory, this allows migrants within EU countries to receive the same uniform social benefits as national citizens (Sales & Gregory, 1996; European Economic Council, 1968). Despite these "equal opportunity" guidelines, however, female migrants² experience difficulty accessing benefits in some EU countries³ (Cochrane, 1993; Ackers, 1996; Knocke, 1995; Lichter, 1983; Ruggie, 1989; O'Connor, 1993; Pedraza, 1991; OECD, 1996; Social Statistics, 1995). Why are some

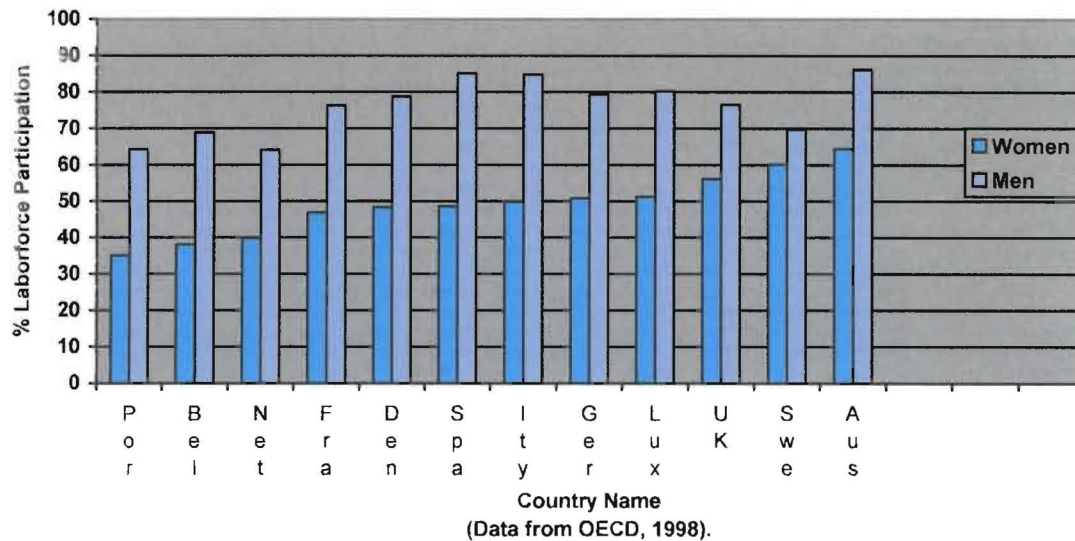
¹ Immigrants, although definitions vary, are being defined in this study as incoming foreigners planning to settle, either temporarily or permanently, within a country different from their place of origin.

² Of the immigrant population, women constitute approximately one-half (Pedraza, 1991; Ackers, 1996).

³ This is in comparison to both naturalized citizens and migrant males where difficulties in benefit accessibility are not quite as dramatic.

Figure 1: Migrant Participation Rates

Vojack 2



countries more generous to migrant women than others? Specifically what are the determinants of accessibility to social welfare benefits to migrant women?

Discussion of the Problem

Immigration statistics reveal inequalities of rights and privileges between male and female migrants. According to OECD data, labor force participation rates among migrant women are generally lower than among migrant men, with most employment opportunities for migrant women limited to part-time jobs within domestic service or laborer sectors (Knocke, 1995; OECD, 1998; Siaroff, 1994; Boyd, 1995). As a result, on average, migrant men are paid more than migrant women (O'Connor, 1993). Though migrant women throughout the EU appear to be uniformly disadvantaged, the degree of gender discrimination varies considerably between member states. See Figure 1. Similar employment variation occurs with overall female populations: employment-population ratios for women in Sweden, Finland, and Denmark range from 68% to 76%, whereas in Italy, Ireland, and Spain, the employment percentages range from 27% to 35% (Siaroff, 1994). In addition to employment discrimination, research reveals migrant women often face discriminatory immigration and social policies (O'Connor, 1993; Pedraza, 1991; Knocke, 1995; Siaroff, 1994; Boyd, 1995; Bechtold & Dziewiecka-Bokun, 1999).

Migrant women entering certain EU states, such as Germany, have no immediate rights of their own: there is a mandatory grace period before these women are considered eligible to obtain legal rights and privileges (Sales & Gregory, 1996). Grace periods allowing a migrant woman's accessibility to work

permits, living visa, and citizenship rights are dependent upon the status of her spouse. If a spouse can prove himself financially capable of providing for his family and, in some cases, has evidence of permanent residence, the migrant wife may legally enter the particular country as a temporary citizen. If granted permission to migrate, the woman must then demonstrate her own financial independence via evidence of permanent employment before a state may grant permanent legal citizenship status (Knocke, 1995; Sales & Gregory, 1996; Ackers, 1996; Lichter, 1983). The lengths of grace periods vary, ranging from eighteen months to three years in Greece and Spain⁴ to a minimum of three years in Germany. On the other hand, countries such as Sweden and Denmark⁵ have no grace periods-immediate legal status is allowed for all migrants (Knocke, 1995). The absence, or varying duration, of grace periods again demonstrates how discrimination for female migrants varies considerably between EU member states.

Immigration policy, such as grace periods, tends to be directed towards married migrant women (Ackers, 1996; Boyd, 1995). According to a source from the EU the "existing legislation on migrants has been drafted on the assumption that, generally, migrant workers are men, and tends to see migrant women as dependent spouses" (ECC, 1988; Knocke, 1995). Research, however, indicates only 17% of migrant women claim to be married and/or planning to rejoin a spouse in a host state; the majority of the female migrant population classifies as single, divorced, or widowed (Eurostat, 1992; Ackers, 1996; Litcher, 1983). Furthermore, disregarding marital status, migrant women report to be (or become upon arrival) the main wage earner of the family: most women migrants, like their male counterparts, plan to work within their host-state. Although intentions of both male and female migrants are identical, men receive full rights and privileges whereas women may receive "derived" rights--privileges that are entitled to them through the spouse (Pedraza, 1991; Knocke, 1995; Morokvasic, 1983; Lichter, 1983; OECD, 1998; Boyd, 1995). In this light, variation of welfare and employment access for migrant women within the EU becomes important. If men and women migrants report seeking employment at equal rates, both genders should be entitled to equal access of rights and benefits as outlined by EU/EC guidelines. EU guidelines

⁴ Grace periods in both Spain and Greece were recently abolished. The recent prohibition still demonstrates women migrants are subject to additional standards.

entitle all migrants to the same social benefits as national workers in addition to equal access to social benefits (European Economic Council, 1968; European Economic Council, 1975). Since the overarching EU policy is the same, other factors must explain differences in the welfare "gender gap" among EU member states.

Theories Behind Welfare Accessibility

Welfare accessibility, when discussed in terms of immigration, can be linked to citizenship classification. T.H. Marshall (1964) gives a concrete definition of citizenship as "bestowed upon those who are full members of the community." The definition of "full community" from country to country, however, varies--it may apply to those who work, to those who pay taxes, and/or to those who presently reside in a country (Sales & Gregory, 1996; Faist, 1995; O'Connor, 1993). Because definition varies, naturalization processes and right entitlements for citizens vary by country as well. Similarly, the ease or rigidity of benefit access depends upon how each country views its immigrant population.

Several bodies of research have identified factors that correlate with welfare accessibility. Each variable can be placed into one of three explanatory categories: the state of immigration, the state of welfare, and the state of feminism. These three explanatory schools explore all possible avenues to reveal indicators of welfare accessibility for migrant women. Literature has assisted the identification of each explanatory school. Furthermore, independent variables have been assigned to each school in order to measure the affect of each explanatory school on the dependent variable of welfare accessibility. The immigration school is measured by the following independent variables: size of immigration population and public opinion of immigration population. The welfare school is measured by the following independent variables: percent GDP spent on welfare, public opinion of welfare system, percent Roman Catholic identification, percent union membership, and average gross per capita income. Finally, the feminism school is measured by the following independent variables: percent women in the workforce and public opinion of feminism.

⁵ Until 1992, Denmark had an open door policy for all immigrants -- now open door policy only applies to EU/EC citizens (Knocke, 1995).

The State of Immigration

The literature suggests the greater the immigrant population, the greater the public fear of cultural imbalance. A large proportion of immigrants within a country may lead the non-migrant population to feel their country's culture and ethnic balance to be threatened. As a result, studies show that higher immigration populations are often associated with tight border control and strict citizenship requirements (Golini, Bonifazi & Righi, 1993; Schram, Nitz & Krueger, 1998). This suggests the first hypothesis, *that the larger the immigrant population in a country, the lower the access to welfare benefits for migrant women.*

Furthermore, the association of strict policies towards immigrant populations with public distrust of incoming foreigners implies public opinion can have a direct influence on public policy. If the public tends to feel hostility towards the immigrant population in their country and expects strict immigration policy, then it is unlikely the country will have generous policies for the rights and privileges of immigrants (Golini, et al., 1993; Brochmann, 1993). In this light, the second hypothesis can be made, *that the larger the percentages of citizens that hold negative views towards immigrating populations, the lower the accessibility to welfare benefits for migrant women.*

The State of Welfare

Explanations that emphasize the state of welfare examine both the structural and opinion-based aspects of welfare. Welfare can be defined as a system that eases social distress to maintain a basic standard of living (Pringle, 1998; Esping-Andersen, 1990). The literature reveals three variables to that may explain welfare generosity: percent GDP spent on welfare, percent Catholic denomination, and degree of leftism.

Research suggests the more a state allocates to welfare spending (as percent of GDP), the wider the distribution of public goods and services (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Rose, 1995; Schram, et al., 1998; Brochmann, 1993; Gough, Bradshaw, Ditch, Eardley & Whiteford, 1997). If greater public goods are available, more benefits would be potentially available to migrants. Research suggests the greater total

welfare available for distribution, the fewer restrictions placed on recipients: hence welfare can be more easily distributed to both nationals and migrants (Schram, et al., 1998; Brochmann, 1993). This suggests the third hypothesis, *that the greater the percent of GDP spent on welfare, the greater the access to welfare benefits for migrant women.*

The attitude of citizens toward their country's welfare system also has implications on welfare accessibility. If the population of a country generally feels welfare is a valuable asset to their country's public policy, then it can be deduced that the country will have a more accessible and widely available social benefits system. Similarly, a country in which the population opposes the welfare system, or holds negative views towards the welfare system, it can be implied that welfare may not be as widely available (George & Wilding, 1976; Taylor-Gooby, 1985; Leibfried & Pierson, 1995; Pereira & Van Ryzin, 1998). Thus, the fourth hypothesis, *the higher the percentage of citizens that hold positive attitudes towards their country's welfare system, the greater the access to welfare for migrant women.*

A fifth determinant of welfare accessibility for migrant women is percent Roman Catholic Church identification. Literature suggests that the greater the degree of Catholic Church identification within a state, the less total availability of social welfare benefits. This is associated with the Catholic Church's emphasis on the privatization of social services (McLaughlin, 1993; Esping-Andersen, 1990). The Catholic Church defines welfare as voluntary charity--the Church supervises the distribution of monetary gifts from family and/or community to the needy. In addition, the Catholic Church provides further social services to those in need with volunteer help from members of the community. Participation in welfare is then regulated by the social order instead of the government; those who "have" give to those who "have not" (McLaughlin, 1993). Moreover, strong levels of Catholic Church participation are associated with conservative welfare regimes. A conservative welfare regime gives central government a small role in welfare distribution. Because historically the Catholic Church believes welfare distribution is based upon social order (i.e. keeping the "rich" wealthy and the "indigent" poor), governments of strong Catholic countries would not participate in the regulation of economic equality (Esping-Andersen, 1990; McLaughlin, 1993). If welfare benefits via government are decreased, it is probable that welfare will be

less available for immigrants as welfare distribution would be primarily based on voluntary contributions (which may not be a consistent donation). Furthermore, the Catholic Church tends to associate the family structure with patriarchy: men are considered the "breadwinners" of the family unit (McLaughlin, 1993; Manning, 1997). Hence, in strongly Catholic countries, benefits tend to be granted to men. This suggests the fifth hypothesis, *that the greater the Catholic Church membership, the lesser the access to welfare benefits for migrant women.*

Ideology of a country is another important aspect to consider as an indicator of welfare accessibility, since leftist countries tend to be liberal in welfare policy and distribution (Esping-Andersen, 1990; George & Wilding, 1976). According to scholars, there are various concrete ways to measure leftism. The first, the degree of unionization within a country, measures leftism under the argument that ideology blends with industrial democracy. For example, unions can increase economic income for both the country and individuals. Additionally, unions create further public access to welfare and benefit programs. Since unions produce further opportunities for public access to employment, better income, and benefit programs, countries with a large number of labor unions tend to have greater public access to welfare (OECD, 1996; Jenkins, 1973). Hence the sixth hypothesis, *the more unionized a society, the greater the access to welfare benefits for migrant women.*

Individual per capita income is also a determinant of welfare accessibility. Literature proposes that the greater the individual income, the more liberal-minded the country. Prosperous countries tend to have the resources to focus more on post-material values instead of survival. Economic growth also coincides with increases in public awareness of quality of life issues: these results indicate to scholars that societies of individuals with higher levels of income tend to be leftist (Inglehart, 1990; Inglehart, 1977). Leftism also tends to coincide with liberal welfare policies. In other words, the more leftist a country, the more likely that country to have a liberal welfare policy--greater benefits are accessible to a wide range of persons. Furthermore, it is logical to deduce countries with larger incomes would have larger base to extract welfare funding; again, more funding would be accessible for benefit recipients (Schram, et al.,

1998). Hence the seventh hypothesis, *that the higher the individual per capita income of a country, the higher the level of welfare accessibility for migrant women.*

The State of Feminism

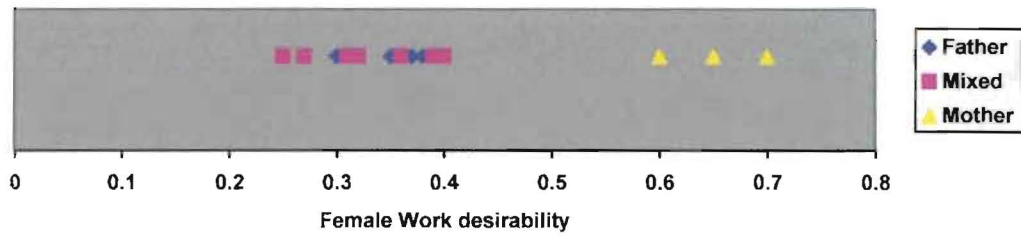
Finally, explanations that focus on the state of feminism emphasize the relationship between women and their perceived role in society. Women can be viewed as financially dependent, self-reliant, mothers, wives, or workers. Depending on the perceived role, women gain or lose welfare accessibility. If perceived primarily as mothers and wives, women may be excluded from benefits. If women are perceived as workers, accessibility may increase (Pringle, 1998; Taylor-Gooby, 1985; Boyd, 1995). This suggests the eighth hypothesis, *that the greater number of citizens that hold traditional views towards women's societal roles, the lesser the welfare accessibility for migrant women.*

The literature further indicates that the greater the participation of women within a country's workforce, the more likely the citizens of that country to support feminist ideals. A larger proportion of working women assists the movement of a society from traditional to less traditional ideals as high employment rates of women appear to correlate with an increase in the perception of women as independent and self-reliant entities (Banaszak & Plutzer, 1993; Plutzer, 1988; Klein, 1987; Social Statistics, 1995). As theory suggests, a large population of women in the work force is highly correlated with an increase in women's overall economic resources, which in turn increases women's power within the family structure and society (Banaszak & Plutzer, 1993; Klein, 1987; Norris, 1987; Gerson, 1987). Countries with high percentages of women workers tend to distribute family benefits to mothers as opposed to fathers. Thus, in countries with a high desirability for female work, the more likely women are to receive welfare benefits. Figure 2 illustrates⁶ the distribution of female work desirability⁷ to family welfare orientation within EU states in the above direction: the greater the female work desirability in a country, the more likely that country is to give family welfare benefits to the female of the household

⁶ The Legend indicates who is the recipient of welfare benefits. Each symbol within the graph stands for a selected OECD country -- the importance of this graph is not to show which country grants welfare benefits to which gender, but that with the increase of female work desirability, there is also an increase of benefits granted to the mother.

(Siaroff, 1994). Hence the ninth hypothesis, *that the greater percentage of women participating in the workforce, the greater the access to social welfare benefits for migrant women.*

Figure 2: Work and welfare incentives for women



Research Design

Because EU regulations apply to all EU member states, it is important to include all current EU countries to determine which variables explain welfare accessibility for migrant women. EU countries include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and UK. Using a most similar system comparative approach is appropriate, as all 15 countries are very comparable to each other (all countries included are subject to the same EU regulation standards involving immigration and welfare). They differ, however, in the de facto level of welfare accessibility for migrant women.

Operationalization of the Dependent Variable

Because a standard scale of welfare accessibility for migrant women, or an actual monetary account of welfare granted to migrant women, could not be found, the dependent variable must be created. The created dependent variable is a scale of welfare accessibility for migrant women. Measured in a positive direction, the scale ranks countries with a high score as high welfare accessibility for migrant women whereas countries with low scores would indicate low welfare accessibility. This scale consists of

⁷ Female work desirability is measured on a scale from 0 (no work desirability for women) to 1 (high work desirability for women). The author calculated several factors together, such as percentage of female work participation and availability of jobs

five equal components: immigration regulations, equal rights regulations, degree of welfare benefits, eligibility regulations, and restrictions or disincentives for migrant women (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

Each category was scored by a system of positive points.

Immigration regulations consist of mandates such as work permits, resident permits, language or residential requirements, or citizenship requirements (Esping-Andersen, 1990; United Nations, 1995; Cousins, 1999; Pringle, 1998). A score of zero was given to countries labeled as having very strict immigration regulations -- these countries would have at least two restrictive clauses of either language requirement, work permit, residence permit, age provision, or marital status provision. A score of one was given to countries that only had one restrictive clause. Finally, a score of two was given to countries that had no restrictive clauses for immigration.

Equal rights regulations consist of two separate aspects; one, whether gender discrimination is prohibited by law and two, if gender discrimination can be tried in a court of law (United Nations, 1995). A score of zero was given if a country had neither a government document prohibiting gender discrimination nor legal action available for gender discrimination. A score of one was allocated if a country had one of the above legal clauses. Lastly, a score of two was given if a country had both governmental prohibition and legal action for gender discrimination.

Degree of benefits included all benefit options pertinent to migrant women such as family benefits, unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, and disability benefits (United Nations, 1995). Pension benefits were omitted because these involve a long-term allowance and this study measures the access to immediate benefits. A score of zero was given to countries that did not have any of the above basic benefits. A score of one was assigned if a country only offered the above basic benefits. If a country offered extra benefits that would further assist migrant women, such as emergency relief, housing, living allowance, child rearing, or geriatric care allowance, the country was allocated two points. Extra benefits are viewed as favorable in that more opportunities to receive welfare can increase migrant women's accessibility.

Eligibility requirements are the various stipulations for each welfare benefit category (Synder, 1992). A score of zero was given if a country had a time limit (i.e. have to work "x" number of days or have to be sick "x" number of days) to qualify for access to benefits, and if there was a "group" requirement (i.e. benefits only applicable to specific groups such as men, permanent residents, or married individuals). A score of one was given if a country had one of the above restrictions. Finally, a score of two was given if a country had neither of these restrictions.

Disincentives are short welfare pay periods or reduced benefit pay after a specific time period, as well as preferential treatment to specific groups⁸ (Synder, 1992). A score of zero was given to country with short pay periods that provided for less than 365 days and had a "group" preference. A score of one was given to a country if it had one of the above limitations. Lastly, a score of two was allocated if a country had neither of the above restrictions.

Welfare benefits for Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg, France, and the Netherlands all ranked as highly accessible, with scores ranging from 7 to 9. The middle category ranges in score from 5 to 6. Finally the low accessibility countries, Greece, Italy, Ireland, had scores of 3 to 4. Table 1 illustrates the breakdown of the scored welfare accessibility index. Table 2 illustrates the ranked order of countries from high accessibility to low accessibility. These results are consistent with general welfare accessibility rankings reported in the literature (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

⁸ Full benefits are given only to specific groups and partial benefits are given to non-preferential groups. For example manual workers receive less sick pay than non-manual workers.

Table 1: Scored Breakdown of the Dependent Variable Scale⁹

Country	Immigration Regulations	Equal Rights Regulations	Degree of Benefits	Eligibility Requirements	Restrictions	TOTAL
Finland	1	2	2	2	2	9
Sweden	1	2	2	2	2	9
Luxembourg	2	1	2	2	1	8
France	2	2	1	1	1	7
Netherlands	2	1	1	1	2	7
Denmark	1	2	1	1	1	6
Germany	0	1	1	2	2	6
United Kingdom	2	1	1	1	1	6
Austria	0	1	2	0	2	5
Belgium	1	1	1	2	0	5
Portugal	1	2	1	1	0	5
Spain	0	2	1	0	2	5
Italy	2	0	1	0	1	4
Greece	2	0	1	0	1	4
Ireland	1	0	1	0	1	3

Table 2: Rankings of Welfare Accessibility

COUNTRY	RANKED WELFARE ACCESSIBILITY SCORE
Finland	9 High Accessibility
Sweden	9 High Accessibility
Luxembourg	8 High Accessibility
France	7 High Accessibility
Netherlands	7 High Accessibility
Denmark	6 Average Accessibility
Germany	6 Average Accessibility
UK	6 Average Accessibility
Austria	5 Average Accessibility
Belgium	5 Average Accessibility
Portugal	5 Average Accessibility
Spain	5 Average Accessibility
Italy	4 Low Accessibility
Greece	4 Low Accessibility
Ireland	3 Low Accessibility

Operationalization of Independent Variables

Based on the literature, independent variables in this study will be size of immigration population, percent of GDP used on welfare spending, size of Catholic population, union membership, gross personal

⁹ Breakdown of scoring provides an example of variation in each of the different areas between each country.

per capita income, percent of women in the workforce, and public attitudes towards welfare, immigration and feminism. Data sources include: OECD Trends in International Migration, The European Women's Almanac, Government Finance Statistics, "Social Assistance in OECD Countries" Journal of European Social Policy, European Marketing Data and Statistics 1999 and 1998, United Nation's Statistical Yearbook, Eurostat Demographic Statistics, ILO World Labor Report 1997-1998, World Values Survey 30, and Eurobarometer 30. Welfare spending is defined as "total social assistance"¹⁰ and is recorded from country statistics (Gough, et al., 1997). Percent Catholic denomination is based on self-reported statistics. Union membership, gross personal per capita income, and percentage of women in the workforce was recorded for each case from country statistics (ILO, 1998; World Values Study Group, 1994; Euromonitor, 1999; Euromonitor, 1998; Synder, 1992; OECD, 1998).

Public opinion variables include survey responses to one question for each attitude area within the explanatory schools of immigration, welfare, and feminism. Table 3 provides the relevant information.

Table 3: Public Opinion Survey Questions

Public Attitudes Towards:	Source	Question
Immigration	Eurobarometer 30	Send all (Out-Group), who were not born in (Country), back to their own country.
Welfare	Eurobarometer 30	Which are the great causes that nowadays are worth taking sacrifices for? ...Fight against poverty.
Women's Proper Role in Society	World Values Survey	A job is all right but what most women want is a home and children.

Findings

In this study, results are derived from both cross-tabs and bivariate correlation analyses. It is important to consider this study involves statistical measurements with a small-N case selection; inherently, this situation poses difficulties in data analysis. Bivariate correlations provide information on the relative strength and direction of the relationship between the dependent variable and each independent variable. Data results are given in Table 3. All collected data are illustrated in Table 4 and Table 5.

¹⁰ This includes general, group, cash, housing, and other assistance and excludes pension.

Table 3: Data Results

Data Results		
IV	Pearson R Correlation Coefficient	Statistical Significance (One-tailed test).
Immigration Population	.314	.128
Public Attitude Towards Immigrant Population	.431	.081
% GDP Spent on Welfare	-.304	.135
Public Attitude Towards Welfare System	.005	.494
Percent Catholic Denomination	-.428	.056
Union Membership	-.095	.369
Gross Personal Per Capita Income	.382	.080
Public Attitude towards Women's Proper Role in Society	-.698	.004
Percent Women in Workforce	.611	.008

N = 15

Table 4: Overall Results by Country

Country	DV	% Immigrant Population	% GDP Spent on Welfare	% Catholic Denomination	Union Membership	Gross Personal Per Capita Income (US\$)	% Women in the Workforce
Finland	9	1.4	.4	0	1377	20635	72.5
Sweden	9	6	1.5	1	3180	25699	85
Luxembourg	8	34.1	.50	95	85	17811	34.1
France	7	6.3	2	94	1758	24309	46
Netherlands	7	4.4	2.2	38	1540	23944	59.4
Denmark	6	4.7	1.4	1	1808	26725	59.9
Germany	6	8.9	2	57	9300	26130	42.1
UK	6	3.4	4.1	17	7280	20005	67.4
Austria	5	9	1.2	91	1287	21539	62.9
Belgium	5	9	.70	96	1585	26835	35.7
Portugal	5	1.7	.4	98	800	10346	61.4
Spain	5	1.3	1.1	98	1606	13395	45.3
Greece	4	5.6	.10	2	500	12119	35.1
Ireland	4	3.2	5.1	93	437	15141	33.7
Italy	3	2	3.3	90	6392	21278	34.6

Table 5: Public Opinion Variables

Country	DV	Public Attitudes Towards Immigrant Population (% Tends to Agree)	Public Attitudes Towards Welfare System (% tends to Agree)	Public Attitudes Towards Women's Proper Role in Society (% Tends to Agree)
Finland	9	--	--	37.4
Sweden	9	--	--	0.0
Luxembourg	8	0	70	--
France	7	15	71	61.4
Netherlands	7	5	47	36.0
Denmark	6	0	37	23.2
Germany	6	16	44	41.7
UK	6	11	57	44.3
Austria	5	--	--	54.1
Belgium	5	0	68	54.0
Portugal	5	0	80	63.4
Spain	5	0	63	47.8
Greece	4	0	49	--
Ireland	4	0	69	56.0
Italy	3	0	55	61.8

-- Data were unavailable.

Although most data resulted in relative insignificance, two variables emerge as important indicators: public attitudes towards the proper role of women in society and percent women in the workforce. With strong, significant variables of $-.698$ at $.004$ and $.611$ at $.008$ respectively, these indicators demonstrate a relationship between gender roles and the dependent variable. Furthermore, these variables resulted in the expected direction. Hence the data support hypothesis eight (that the greater number of citizens that hold traditional views towards the role of women in society, the lesser the welfare accessibility for migrant women) and hypothesis nine (that the greater percentage of women participating in the workforce, the greater the access to welfare benefits for migrant women). It is also important to note that the percent Catholic Church denomination variable is very close to being significant. Additionally, this variable resulted in the expected direction that the higher the Catholic Church membership, the lesser the accessibility to welfare benefits for migrant women.

Conclusions

Welfare accessibility for migrant women has the strongest link to public opinion towards women's proper role in society and percent women in the workforce. Although the other variables do not

appear to be indicators of welfare accessibility for migrant women, it would be illogical to assume size of immigration population, percent GDP spent on welfare, percent Catholic denomination, union membership, gross personal per capita income, and public attitudes towards immigration and welfare system have no impact. The insignificance of these variables indicates welfare accessibility for migrant women has a lesser correlation with structural issues, such as immigration and the wealth of a particular nation.

It is important to note that gross personal per capita income and public opinion of the immigration population were close to being significant. Certainly, this demonstrates how the explanatory schools of immigration, welfare, and feminism are inherently intertwined and each have implications on welfare accessibility as a whole. These variables should not be discounted, since many factors contribute to public shaping of attitudes towards gender roles, as well as welfare accessibility. However, since the feminism cluster was the strongest explanatory indicator, it will be the focus of this study.

The discovery that welfare accessibility has a stronger link to the societal view of proper gender roles has various implications. One, in countries such as Greece and Italy where women are viewed in a more traditional light, welfare discrimination towards migrant women is more likely to occur. In contrast, countries such as Sweden and Finland hold pro-feminist attitudes and welfare discrimination is less likely to occur. Secondly, high percentages of women in the workforce correlate with the public attitude that women are self-reliant. Hence, in countries with large populations of working women, society views the female population as having more authority within the family and society. Thus, in these countries, welfare accessibility for migrant women is more likely to occur. Moreover, the literature and data support the notion that the greater the percentage of women in the workforce, the more likely women are to be the recipients of benefits (Pringle, 1985; Taylor-Gooby, 1985; Banaszak & Plutzer, 1993; Plutzer, 1988; Klein, 1987; Social Statistics, 1995; Norris, 1987; Gerson, 1987; Siaroff, 1987).

The affect of gender stereotypes on welfare accessibility for migrant women is additionally reinforced by the direction of the percent Catholic Church identification variable. As discussed, countries with a history of Catholicism tend to hold more traditional views of women's roles in society. The case

selections further illustrate this notion. For example, countries such as Finland and Sweden that rank as highly accessible to welfare have a small Roman Catholic population. Lower ranked countries such as Italy and Ireland have very large Roman Catholic populations. Furthermore, strongly Catholic countries are associated with the tendency to view family life as a patriarchy--men are seen the breadwinners. In this cultural framework, men would most often be the recipients of welfare, since women are not viewed to have a role in the financial support of the family. These correlations suggest history of Catholicism is related to the shaping of societal gender roles.

Overall, gender roles appear to have the most significant relationship to level of welfare accessibility. This supports the notion that gender stereotypes of a country has an impact on welfare accessibility for migrant women. The perceived role of a woman in society has a correlation to the level of welfare accessibility--attitudes towards gender assist the enhancement or reduction of accessibility to welfare benefits.

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