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Female Parliamentary Representation in Islamic Countries

Abstract

Islamic heritage is one of the cultural factors cited in the literature as being detrimental to women's political participation. Having a Muslim population does not affect women's participation in national parliaments equally, however. Across countries with predominately Muslim citizenries, the percentage of women in the national legislature varies considerably. The literature on women's political participation identifies three main determinants of the percentage of women in parliament: structural, institutional, and cultural factors. This paper examines the role of these three determinants on the percentage of women in national legislatures of Islamic countries. This study expands on the literature with an additional hypothesis, that the use of Islamic law by a country in its legal system will negatively affect the percentage of women members of parliament.

Keywords

Muslim women

Female Parliamentary Representation in Islamic Countries

Sherri Haas

Islamic heritage is one of the cultural factors cited in the literature as being detrimental to women's political participation. Having a Muslim population does not affect women's participation in national parliaments equally, however. Across countries with predominately Muslim citizenries, the percentage of women in the national legislature varies considerably. The literature on women's political participation identifies three main determinants of the percentage of women in parliament: structural, institutional, and cultural factors. This paper examines the role of these three determinants on the percentage of women in national legislatures of Islamic countries. This study expands on the literature with an additional hypothesis, that the use of Islamic law by a country in its legal system will negatively affect the percentage of women members of parliament.

Introduction

“Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.” *Beijing Platform for Action*, Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995

The political power of women varies greatly across countries, but nowhere does it reach parity and in many nations it is limited at best. The lack of access to power by women in upper levels of government is an issue that has been commented upon widely in the literature. It is important to have women in upper government for substantive as well as symbolic reasons. Zimmerman concludes that “the lack of women and members of minority groups on governing bodies may mean that important issues receive little or no consideration during the policy-making process” (Rule and Zimmerman 3).

According to Mandel, women's participation in parliament is important for two reasons; one, women are better able to

represent the interests of women, and two, having women in the political system makes it more open to the citizenry and to including more women in public life (426). Several studies have concluded that women legislators are substantively different from male members of parliament. Tremblay found that female members of the Canadian House of Commons were more involved in women's issues than male members (463). Norris and Luvenduski concluded that women candidates for parliament in Britain tend to be more sympathetic to liberal concerns, and Lijphart found that higher proportions of women in parliament led to more laws enacted which benefit children.

Three main factors play important roles in determining women's political representation in parliaments: structural, institutional and cultural. Religion of the population is one of the significant components of the cultural factor. Islam is often seen as a particular hindrance to women's equality. As Inglehart and Norris conclude from their cross-national study, "Attitudes towards women vary among adherents of different religious sects and denominations; in particular, an Islamic religious heritage is one of the most powerful barriers to the rising tide of gender equality" (71). The previous literature does not, however, explain why there is significant variation among Islamic states.

This study uses a comparative framework controlling for religion by including only countries with predominately Muslim populations. It aims to explain why there is such variation in women's political power (as measured by the percent of seats in parliament held by women) across Islamic countries. Islamic heritage alone does not explain why the percentage of women in parliament ranges from zero in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, to around or over 20 in Guinea, Pakistan, Senegal, and Tunisia and reaches 31 in Iraq; other factors must play a part in creating this variance.

This study tests several variables shown in the literature to play a part in determining the percentage of women in national parliaments as well as two which are specific to this paper; the use of Islamic law (*sharia*) as a base for the legal system, and whether Arab heritage may explain some of the difference in women's representation. Data on 33 countries is used, with seventy percent

Muslim as the determinant for whether or not a country is included in the study. The cases included are located not only in the Middle East, which is often the area referred to when discussing Islamic countries, but also in Africa and Southwestern, Central, and Southeast Asia.

Literature Review

The three main determinants of the percentage of women in national parliaments are structural, cultural, and institutional factors (Inglehart and Norris; Matland and Montgomery; Reynolds; Rule and Zimmerman).

Structural

Structural, or socioeconomic, factors prohibit women's entry into politics through lack of equal opportunities throughout life. Inglehart and Norris use the gender-related development index (GDI) of the UNDP Human Development Report as a measure of structural barriers. This index combines several factors comparing differences between men and women in life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rates, combined gross school enrollment, and estimated earned income. Also including the GDI as a measure of female socioeconomic development, Reynolds finds that it is one of the most significant predictors of women in the lower or single house of parliament (567).

Views on the roles of women and men differ by level of economic development. Agrarian societies have the most traditional beliefs, and the postindustrial countries demonstrate more egalitarian views (Inglehart and Norris 47). This suggests that with the countries under study, those with higher levels of development are more likely to have greater degrees of gender equality.

Institutional

Institutional factors are also very important in determining women's political participation in the upper levels of government. Rule concludes that variation in the percentage of women in parliament (specifically referencing established democracies) is a result "primarily [of] the electoral arrangements by which

legislators are chosen and, secondarily, the political, economic, and social context” (689).

The most important institutional factor in the literature is the country’s choice of electoral system. A proportional representation system is generally seen to be more “women-friendly” than a single-member district (SMD) electoral system (Matland and Montgomery; Paxton and Kunovich; Reynolds; Rule, 1987). The main reason that proportional representation systems are more advantageous for women is that they usually produce higher party magnitudes, which changes party strategy in choosing candidates (Matland and Montgomery, 27). Parties submit a list of candidates which they are able to balance with a variety of candidates in an attempt to receive more votes. In contrast, with a SMD system, only one person can win per district, and party leaders are more likely to support a male candidate than a female one.

Matland, however, finds in a comparison study of developing and developed countries that the electoral system does not affect the percentage of women in parliament in the developing countries, while it is significant in the developed ones (119). Matland suggests that a minimum level of development may be necessary for the electoral system to play a role (120). Since the majority of the countries included in this study classify as Low Income (\$765 gross national income per capita or less) or Lower Middle Income (\$766-3,035) according to the World Bank, Matland’s findings may also be applicable.

The implementation of a formal quota system has, logically, been shown to positively relate to the percent of seats filled by women in national legislatures (Reynolds 559). The relatively large number of seats available in the legislative body is another institutional factor suggested to positively influence the number of women in parliament (Matland and Montgomery, 334). Antic finds in a study of the Slovenian parliament that one of the main problems for potential female candidates is that there are “too many parties chasing too few seats” (278). The main reason behind this is that when only a small number of seats are available to a party, the party leaders will be nominated for them. According to Jaquette, women “still account for only a small proportion of the

higher echelons that provide a springboard to higher political office” (31).

The degree of democratization of a country has also been suggested as an important factor in women’s political participation and is examined in this study. Reynolds, however, does not find the level of democratization to be statistically significant in his global study of women members of parliament (567).

Cultural

Culture can affect both the demand and supply sides of the market for female candidates for parliament. It influences both individual women’s decisions to seek office, and the electorate’s willingness to vote for them as well the likelihood that parties will seek women out and support them (Paxton and Kunovich 103). Inglehart and Norris found in their study of over 55 countries that cultural factors were more important in explaining the percentage of women in lower parliaments than either institutional or structural factors. As their independent variable for cultural values pertaining to women in parliament, Inglehart and Norris used the response to the World Values Survey opinion question on whether men make better political leaders than women do.

Paxton and Kunovich published a similar study the same year (2003) and also found that differences in ideological beliefs was the strongest predictor of the percentage of women in national legislatures (102). The authors used a combination of survey responses to several World Values Survey questions about women’s role in politics, education, and the work force as their measure of ideology.

Reynolds finds that the length of time women in a country have had the right to vote and stand for election is positively related to the percent of women in the legislature (567). This is included as a cultural variable in that its measuring societies’ comfortableness with electing women based on its familiarity with women participating in the political sphere.

Strength of religiosity of a country’s people may also factor significantly into the status of women within the countries. However, data on this for the nations included in this study are difficult to come by. The World Values Survey asks questions

which can be used to approximate this variable. Unfortunately, only about one-fourth of the countries in this study were included in the WVS.

Sharia

In addition to these determinants which have been prominent in the literature, I am interested in how the presence of Islamic law affects women's political power. The literature assigns a general negative influence of Islam on women's political participation, but does not explain why some Islamic countries have significantly higher percentages of women in parliament than others. This paper suggests that the influence of Islam on women's participation may be stronger in some countries than others, specifically, in countries which assign a role to *sharia* in their legal systems. Although Islamic feminists are calling for more rights for women based on their interpretation of the Qur'an, the laws prescribed by the religion have traditionally been interpreted by men. These interpretations, which often assign unequal status to women, are then written into the laws of the country. Kandiyoti finds that "studies on women in Muslim societies have not always acknowledged the extent to which aspects of state practice define and mediate the place of Islam itself" (10). This paper attempts to address that concern by examining the impact of *sharia* on women's political participation when the religion is specifically used in the country's legal system.

Sharia promotes an image of women that is unequal to that of men. In accordance with Islamic beliefs, women and men should live in predominately separate spheres; women in the private and men in the public (Smith as cited in Freeman 436). According to the Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion, "No matter what rights and powers a woman may possess in the private domain of Islamic law, her status in the public cultural domain is virtually that of nonentity" (513). Although there are widely varying interpretations of *sharia*, Mayer found in her examination of different approaches to women's rights that "there is an absence of any willingness to recognize women as fully equal human beings who deserve the same rights and freedoms as men" (123).

Kandiyoti also finds that although countries may grant women equal citizenship rights in their constitutions, these rights are circumscribed by laws which grant men greater privileges than women, particularly in areas of family law (10). According to Doumato and Posusney some countries in the Middle East “continue to enforce sex segregation in schools and in other public facilities, which results in inequalities in educational and work opportunities, and in access to community resources” (11). Sharma, in reference to the Qur’anic text, concludes that it “does state, along with the stipulation that women can inherit only half of what men inherit, that the witness (in the court of law) of one man is equal to that of two women” (247).

Hypotheses

Based on the literature discussed above, this study will test six hypotheses. The following section (Research Design) explains the measures used to test the hypotheses in detail.

Two hypotheses are proposed to test the importance of structural factors:

H1: The greater the socioeconomic development of women, the greater the percent of women in parliament.

H2: Gross national income per capita will be positively correlated with the percentage of women in parliament.

The literature on women in parliament places great emphasis on the importance of institutional factors in determining the level of female representation. This study includes the following hypotheses in regards to the role of institutions:

H3: The more women-friendly, according to the literature, a state’s electoral system is, the greater the percent of women legislators.

H4: The greater the number of seats available in the legislature, the greater the percent of women members of parliament (MPs).

The literature also suggests that countries which apply a quota system for female representation will have a higher

percentage of women MPs. Since only one of the countries under study, Iraq, has a quota system in place and four others have varying numbers of seats “reserved” for women, quota system is not included as a variable but will be discussed separately in the results section.

As this study examines only countries with Muslim majorities, culture, in regards to religious heritage, is partially controlled for. The following hypothesis has shown to be significant in previous research:

H5: The earlier women received the right to vote, the greater the percentage of women in parliament.

In the literature, Middle East & North Africa, Islamic countries, and Arab countries are somewhat interchangeably used as factors which decrease the chance of women’s political representation. The terms, however, are not one and the same. It is apparent when examining the list of countries included in this study that not all fall into each of these categories. Whether or not the population is predominately Arab is also included as an independent variable. Although Arabic-speaking countries tend to have lower representation of women when comparing globally, it may not be significant when comparing across Islamic populations.

Lastly, the additional hypothesis which has not yet been tested in the literature:

H6: *Sharia* as a basis of the legal system will be negatively correlated to women’s participation in the national legislature.

Research Design

The unit of analysis for the study is the country, and the cases included are all states in which a majority of the population is Muslim. Countries to be included were determined by the percentage of the population that is Muslim, as given in *The World Fact Book* published by the Central Intelligence Agency. This source has been used in previous studies for classifying the predominant religions practiced in states (Inglehart and Norris 70). In order to provide myself with a sufficiently large number of

cases and make sure that the percent of the population is large enough to be considered an Islamic country, I use 70 percent Muslim as the minimum for inclusion in the study. This provides the study with 33 countries: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. Qatar meets the percent requirement but will not be included as it does not have a national parliament. Western Sahara has almost an entirely Muslim population; it does not have a parliament however, and is under the de facto control of Morocco. The United Arab Emirates have, as of yet, held no elections.

A number of independent variables are included which are consistent with the existing literature on women's political participation. The data for the independent variables were compiled from several sources and are listed in Table I. The influence of structural factors is measured with the gender-related development index from the U.N. Human Development Report. This index incorporates several important features including life expectancy, literacy rates, school enrollment, and earned income estimates. Gross National Income per capita is also included as a measure of general economic development.

In regards to institutional factors, two variables are included; a ranking of electoral system rules and the number of seats in each country's parliament. Only one country has a quota in place, and a small number of countries have reserved seats for women. These two institutional factors will therefore be discussed separately and not included as independent variables.

A scale, based on the literature, was created to rank the "women-friendliness" of each country's electoral system. The scale takes into account the way in which the election occurs, i.e. proportional representation versus single-member districts. A completely proportional representation-based system is given the highest ranking of five; an entirely single member district-based system is designated as zero. A one designates either a mixed system with more seats allocated through single-member districts

or a SMD system which reserves some seats for women. A multi-seat constituency system, which provides more opportunities for women to get nominated but not as many as a PR system, is coded as two. A mixed SMD and PR system is ranked at three, while a mixed system with more PR-allocated seats is a four.

It must be noted, however, that in most of the countries under study, the electoral system will not play as great a role as seen in European and other more established democracies because the elections can often not be considered free and fair. The Freedom House ranks almost all of the countries examined as either partly free or not free, which must be taken into consideration when discussing the effectiveness of the electoral systems. With so little variation in rank of democratization level, statistical analysis would not produce significant results. Therefore, the Freedom House ranking of the countries will not be included in the analysis.

One of the cultural factors often considered to be important, religion, is controlled for in this study by examining only predominately Islamic nations. It would be ideal to include a measure of degree of religiosity within the countries; however, data on this for the given countries is incomplete. The year in which women received the right to vote (obtained from the UNDP Human Development Report) is included and expected to relate positively to the percentage of women in parliament. For all but two of the countries, the right of women to stand for election was granted the same year as the right to vote.

Whether or not the country is predominately Arab is included as a dummy variable (with Arab coded as 1), but a specific relationship to the dependent variable is not predicted. Which countries are classified as Arab is determined by the predominant ethnicity as reported in the CIA World Factbook. Sudan is also classified as Arab, although 51 percent of the population is black, because the government has a program of "Arabization" in progress. The final variable, and the one unique to this study, is *sharia* as a basis for the country's legal system. A country receives a coding of 1 for this variable if the CIA World Fact Book country lists Islamic law as a base for the legal system.

The study relies on Ordinary Least Squares regression in analyzing the data. The data will first be analyzed with bivariate correlations to determine whether the variables are independent of one another and able to be included in a regression model. The dependent variable is women's political power within a country, as measured by the percentage of seats held by women in the lower or single house of parliament. This data comes from the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Women in National Parliaments data source. Table 2 lists a short description of the variables included as well as the expected direction of their relationship to the dependent variable. Table 3 reports the basic descriptive statistics of the variables.

Table 2: Variable Descriptions and Predicted Relationships

| Variable | Description | Expected Relationship |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Dependent | | |
| Percent Women | Percent of women in national lower or single house | |
| Independent | | |
| Islam as Source | Dummy variable equaling 1 if Islam is listed as a base for the legal system | - |
| GNI per Capita | Gross national income for the most recent year available (2003 or 2004) | + |
| GDI | UNDP's Gender-related Development Index, scale of 0 to 1, higher numbers indicating greater development | + |
| Year Vote Received | The year in which women of the country were enfranchised | - |
| Seats in Parliament | Total number of seats in the national legislature | + |
| Electoral Rank | Created ranking of 0 to 5, higher score indicates a more "woman-friendly" system | + |
| Arab | Dummy variable equaling 1 if the country is predominately Arab | no sign predicted |

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------------|----|---------|----------|---------|----------------|
| Percent Women | 32 | 0 | 22.80 | 9.08 | 6.75 |
| Islam as Source | 32 | 0 | 1.00 | 0.63 | 0.49 |
| GNI per Capita Arab | 32 | 230 | 17970.00 | 2598.75 | 4042.44 |
| GDI | 32 | 0 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.51 |
| Year Vote Received | 28 | 0.271 | 0.84 | 0.62 | 0.15 |
| Seats in Parliament | 32 | 1918 | 2005.00 | 1955.63 | 21.39 |
| Electoral Rank | 32 | 33 | 760.00 | 209.50 | 181.14 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 32 | 0 | 5.00 | 1.47 | 1.72 |

Results

The results of the bivariate correlation analysis (Table 4) show significant correlation between a large number of the variables. Due to this intercorrelation as well as the relatively small number of cases in the study (although all but three countries meeting the percent Muslim threshold were included) and the large number of variables, a multivariable regression analysis becomes over-determined and does not provide statistically significant results. The Pearson's bivariate correlation results are used to analyze the importance and significance of each variable. A modified OLS regression is run using a limited number of variables.

The results of the Pearson's bivariate correlation are displayed in Table 4. The Pearson value range from -1 to 1, and the closer the value is to either end, the stronger the correlation. A value greater than zero indicates that the variables are positively related; as one increases so does the other. A value less than zero indicates a negative relationship; as one variable increases the other decreases. The asterisks show values which are statistically significant at either the 0.01 or 0.05 levels. The first column is the

values for each variable in regards to the percent of women in the legislature.

The results do not support the literature in regards to the importance of the electoral system in determining the percentage of women in the government. The relationship between the electoral rules ranking and the percentage of women is not at all significant. Possible reasons for this result include the difficulty of ranking countries which have missing information or the incorrect placement of countries on the scale. It could also simply be that for these countries, institutional factors really do not have much effect on the level of women's representation. It is important to reiterate here the fact that the Freedom House ranks almost all of the countries under study as either Partially Free or Not Free, therefore, if the elections are not free and fair, the electoral system may not matter much. This may also be the reason why the number of seats available in parliament does not prove to be significant. While these results cannot necessarily be interpreted to refute the importance of institutional factors, they do not seem to play a role in the countries under study.

Other institutional factors often considered important in determining the percentage of women in national parliaments are the size of the legislative body and any rules such as quotas or reserved seats. The small number of countries implementing one of these rules makes it best to discuss them individually. Iraq, due to great internal and external pressure, created a proportional representation electoral system in which one in every three names on party lists must be of women. It also has a stated goal of at least 25 percent women in parliament written into the transitional constitution. This resulted in a higher percentage of female parliamentarians in its transitional national assembly (31%) than almost all Western nations.

Jordan, Pakistan, Morocco, and Sudan each have rules by which a certain number of seats are reserved for women. While this may at first appear to be entirely positive for women's representation, it may actually serve almost as much as a cap as it does a floor for the number of women members of parliament. For example, 6 of 110 seats (5.5%) in Jordan's lower house are reserved for women, and exactly 6 women were elected in June of

2003. The number of women in parliament also exactly equals the number of reserved seats in Sudan, while it's slightly higher for Morocco and Pakistan.

The relationship between the Gender-related Development Index and the percent of women in parliament is also not statistically significant. In this instance, the data do not seem to support structural factors as significant to determining the percentage of women in government. Further research using other measures of socioeconomic development would be warranted as perhaps the GDI, or one of the factors composing it, is not fully measuring the differences in men and women's socioeconomic status.

The independent variable which this study proposed, Islam as a source of law, does not prove to be technically statistically significant. It is, however, close enough to the 0.05 level (at 0.06) that the correlation value can be discussed. The Pearson value of -0.336 supports the hypothesis of a negative relationship between use of *sharia* for the legal system and the percentage of women in parliament.

The relationship between gross national income per capita and the dependent variable, while statistically significant, is not in the direction predicted by the literature. Higher income per capita is negatively related to the percentage of women in parliament. The reason for this unexpected correlation becomes apparent when examining the dataset (Table 1). The countries with the highest incomes per capita are the oil-rich nations of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. GNI per capita is a structural variable which is predicted to be positively related to the dependent because high GNI is usually an indicator of high development in general. However, the countries with high GNI per capita level in this case are not also considered highly developed in the more inclusive sense of the word.

Arab, included without a predicted relationship, is shown to have a relatively large and negative correlation with the percentage of women in parliament. Although Arab has been cited as a negative factor for women's rights in comparisons across the world, it was not clear whether it would prove to be significant when narrowing the comparison to only Islamic countries. This variable

will be discussed in greater detail in regards to the intercorrelations between the independent variables. Finally, the year in which women were enfranchised is significantly related in the predicted direction to the percentage of women in parliament. The more recently women were given the right to vote, the smaller the number of women in parliament.

The bivariate correlations table is particularly useful in examining the relationships between the variables in addition to their relationships to the dependent. It is apparent that Arab is significantly correlated with several other variables and may in fact be serving as a type of “container variable” for them. It is very highly correlated with Islam as a source of law, meaning that *sharia* as a source of law is more likely to be found in Arab countries. It is also significantly related to the year women received the right to vote and GNI per capita. Islam as a source of law and the year women received the vote are also highly correlated, which is also apparent in looking at the data set. The nations which do not use *sharia* gave women the right to vote much earlier. Seventy-five percent of countries not using *sharia* enfranchised women before 1950, while only 19 percent of the countries using Islamic law had done so by that year.

Based on these results, a regression analysis is conducted using Arab and GNI per capita as the independent variables. The results are reported in Table 5. Both variables are negatively related to the percentage of women in parliament, and have significance levels close to those that would be considered statistically significant. The R Square value of 0.303 indicates that 30 percent of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the two independents.

Table 5: Regression Analysis Results

| | Coefficient | Significance |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| (Constant) | 12.68 | |
| Arab | -4.34 | 0.064 |
| GNI per Capita | -5.52E-04 | 0.061 |
| R Square = .303 | | |
| N = 31 | | |

Conclusion

The data provide cautionary support for the hypothesis that *sharia* as a source of law is negatively related to the percentage of women in national parliament. Across Islamic countries, of the three main categories proposed in the literature, cultural factors appear to play the largest role. Several variables, including Islam as a source of law, are highly interrelated and seem to be contained in the Arab variable. An underlying cultural factor shared between countries which use *sharia* and which have lower levels of women in parliament may be creating the correlation between the two. Although this may be the case, it is reasonable to suspect that having *sharia* used in law institutionalizes barriers to gender equality.

The results of the study do not support the literature emphasizing the importance of institutional factors in determining the percentage of women legislators. Rule's conclusion that; "... unfavorable contextual conditions – including cultural biases and discriminatory practices – can be overcome to a great extent by alternate electoral systems" does not hold true for the countries included in this study. The study also fails to support the literature on the importance of structural factors as seen in the lack of a relationship between the dependent variable and the Gender-related Development Index..

Further research on the subject that would expand upon this study could examine the importance of differences in sects of Islam. According to Mayer "... generalizations about where 'Islam' stands on questions of women's status can be misleading, since even within the law schools of Sunni Islam one often encounters diverging rules" (97). Further research could also create a scale to rank the importance of *sharia* in the laws of the countries. For the purposes of this research, only a dummy variable was used. It would also be very useful to include a measure of religiosity and of the general attitude of the populations towards women participating in politics. This would provide a means for determining if *sharia* law is more a proxy for cultural values than an independent variable in itself. Unfortunately, as of yet, this type of information is not available for many of the countries under study.

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Table 1: Dataset

| Country | % Women in Lower or Single House | Islam as source of law | 2003 or 2004 National GNI Per Capita | Year vote received |
|--------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Algeria | 6.2 | 1 | 2280 | 1962 |
| Azerbaijan | 10.5 | 0 | 950 | 1921 |
| Bahrain | 0 | 1 | 12410 | 1973 |
| Bangladesh | 2 | 0 | 440 | 1972 |
| Comoros | 3 | 1 | 530 | 1956 |
| Djibouti | 10.8 | 1 | 1030 | 1946 |
| Egypt | 2.9 | 1 | 1310 | 1956 |
| Gambia | 13.2 | 1 | 290 | 1960 |
| Guinea | 19.3 | 0 | 430 | 1958 |
| Indonesia | 11.3 | 0 | 1140 | 1945 |
| Iran | 4.1 | 1 | 2300 | 1963 |
| Iraq | 31.5 | 1 | ... | 1959 |
| Jordan | 5.5 | 1 | 2140 | 1974 |
| Kuwait | 1.5 | 1 | 17970 | 2005 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 3.2 | 0 | 340 | 1918 |
| Libya | 4.7 | 1 | 4450 | 1964 |
| Maldives | 12 | 1 | 2350 | 1932 |
| Mali | 10.2 | 0 | 360 | 1956 |
| Mauritania | 3.7 | 1 | 420 | 1961 |
| Morocco | 10.8 | 1 | 1520 | 1963 |
| Niger | 12.4 | 0 | 230 | 1948 |
| Oman | 2.4 | 1 | 7890 | 1994 |
| Pakistan | 21.3 | 1 | 600 | 1947 |
| Saudi Arabia | 0 | 1 | 10430 | -- |
| Senegal | 19.2 | 0 | 670 | 1945 |
| Sudan | 9.7 | 1 | 460 | 1964 |
| Syria | 12 | 1 | 1190 | 1949 |
| Tajikistan | 17.5 | 0 | 280 | 1924 |
| Tunisia | 22.8 | 1 | 2630 | 1957 |
| Turkey | 4.4 | 0 | 3750 | 1930 |
| Turkmenistan | 16 | 0 | 1340 | 1927 |
| Uzbekistan | 17.5 | 0 | 460 | 1938 |
| Yemen | 0.3 | 1 | 570 | 1967 |

| Arab | Freedom House Rank | Gender-Related Development Index | Size of Legislature | Electoral Rules Rank |
|------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | NF | 0.706 | 389 | 5 |
| 0 | NF | 0.725 | 124 | 1 |
| 1 | PF | 0.837 | 40 | 0 |
| 0 | PF | 0.514 | 300 | 0 |
| 1 | PF | 0.541 | 33 | 0 |
| 1 | PF | ... | 65 | 0 |
| 1 | NF | 0.634 | 454 | 4 |
| 0 | PF | 0.464 | 53 | 0 |
| 0 | NF | ... | 114 | 4 |
| 0 | PF | 0.691 | 550 | 5 |
| 0 | NF | 0.719 | 290 | 3 |
| 1 | NF | ... | 273 | 5 |
| 1 | PF | 0.74 | 110 | 1 |
| 1 | PF | 0.843 | 65 | 2 |
| 0 | NF | 0.7 | 63 | 1 |
| 1 | NF | ... | 760 | 0 |
| 0 | NF | ... | 50 | 0 |
| 0 | F | 0.323 | 147 | 0 |
| 1 | NF | 0.471 | 81 | 2 |
| 1 | PF | 0.616 | 325 | 2 |
| 0 | PF | 0.271 | 113 | 0 |
| 1 | NF | 0.759 | 83 | 1 |
| 0 | NF | 0.508 | 342 | 0 |
| 1 | NF | 0.749 | 150 | 2 |
| 0 | F | 0.449 | 120 | 1 |
| 1 | NF | 0.495 | 360 | 0 |
| 1 | NF | 0.702 | 250 | 0 |
| 0 | NF | 0.65 | 63 | 2 |
| 1 | NF | 0.743 | 189 | 4 |
| 0 | PF | 0.742 | 550 | 2 |
| 0 | NF | 0.748 | 50 | 0 |
| 0 | NF | 0.692 | 120 | 0 |
| 1 | PF | 0.448 | 301 | 0 |

Table 4: Bivariate Correlations

| | | Percent Women | Islam as Source | GNI per Capita |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Percent Women | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -0.336 | -0.462** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | 0.060 | 0.008 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Islam as Source | Pearson Correlation | -0.336 | 1 | 0.337 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.060 | . | 0.059 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| GNI per Capita | Pearson Correlation | -0.462** | 0.337 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.008 | 0.059 | . |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Arab | Pearson Correlation | -0.460** | 0.775** | 0.403* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.008 | 0.000 | 0.022 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| GDI | Pearson Correlation | -0.209 | 0.180 | 0.582** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.286 | 0.360 | 0.001 |
| | N | 28 | 28 | 28 |
| Year Vote Received | Pearson Correlation | -0.503** | 0.569** | 0.660** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.003 | 0.001 | 0.000 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Seats in Parliament | Pearson Correlation | -0.138 | 0.072 | -0.105 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.453 | 0.694 | 0.568 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Electoral Rank | Pearson Correlation | 0.066 | -0.167 | -0.128 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.721 | 0.362 | 0.486 |
| | N | 32 | 32 | 32 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

| Arab | GDI | Year Vote Received | Seats in Parliament | Electoral Rank |
|----------|---------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| -0.460** | -0.209 | -0.503** | -0.138 | 0.066 |
| 0.008 | 0.286 | 0.003 | 0.453 | 0.721 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| 0.775** | 0.180 | 0.569** | 0.072 | -0.167 |
| 0.000 | 0.360 | 0.001 | 0.694 | 0.362 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| 0.403* | 0.582** | 0.660** | -0.105 | -0.128 |
| 0.022 | 0.001 | 0.000 | 0.568 | 0.486 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| 1 | 0.264 | 0.612** | 0.106 | -0.092 |
| . | 0.175 | 0.000 | 0.563 | 0.616 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| 0.264 | 1 | 0.134 | 0.002 | 0.250 |
| 0.175 | . | 0.495 | 0.991 | 0.200 |
| 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 |
| 0.612** | 0.134 | 1 | 0.017 | -0.112 |
| 0.000 | 0.495 | . | 0.928 | 0.543 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| 0.106 | 0.002 | 0.017 | 1 | 0.425* |
| 0.563 | 0.991 | 0.928 | . | 0.015 |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| -0.092 | 0.250 | -0.112 | 0.425* | 1 |
| 0.616 | 0.200 | 0.543 | 0.015 | . |
| 32 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 32 |