

A **Harvard University** Report



John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138
(857) 445 9105
www.pippanorris.com

**Cracking the Marble Ceiling:
Cultural barriers facing women leaders**

*Pippa Norris, Harvard University
Ronald Inglehart, University of Michigan*

Date January 13, 2008



Executive Summary

Notable breakthroughs for women leaders have happened in countries as diverse as Germany, Chile and Liberia, while events suggest important parallel shifts may be occurring in American politics with the election of Nancy Pelosi as Speaker and Hillary Clinton's race to gain the Democratic nomination. Nevertheless multiple structural, institutional and cultural barriers continue to form an obstacle to achieving gender equality in public life around the globe.

This study focuses upon two issues: How far do mass attitudes towards women leaders represent a significant obstacle to women's representation in elected office in countries worldwide? And how far does exposure to the news media contribute towards these cultural patterns?

Evidence is drawn from more than 80 societies worldwide by pooling the last three waves of the World Values Survey (1995-2005). Public opinion concerning the role of women and men as political leaders is compared across many diverse states, cultures, and types of societies, controlling for social structural and institutional contexts. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and considers their implication for women's empowerment.

Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Introduction	4
I: Contemporary challenges to gender equality in public life.....	5
II: Theoretical framework	7
III: Evidence and design	11
IV: Cultural attitudes and women in elected office.....	12
V: The news media and cultural attitudes	14
Conclusions	15
Figure 1: Trends in women’s legislative representation 1985-2006, worldwide	16
Figure 2: Attitudes towards women and men as political leaders	17
Figure 3: Support for women in politics and the proportion of women in the lower house, 2005.....	18
Table 1: Women prime ministers or elected presidents currently in office (*)	19
Table 2: Regional patterns of women’s empowerment	20
Table 3. Factors explaining indicators of women’s empowerment	21
Table 4: The impact of exposure to the news media on attitudes towards gender equality in political leadership.....	22
Appendix A: “Men make better leaders than women do.”	23

Introduction

Contemporary news headlines have highlighted notable breakthroughs for women leaders in countries as diverse as Germany, Chile and Liberia, while events suggest important parallel shifts may be happening in American politics, indicated by the election of Nancy Pelosi as Speaker and by Hillary Clinton's popularity among registered Democratic voters, as reported in the series of pre-primary nation-wide opinion polls. Nevertheless despite the headlines surrounding these high profile cases, around the globe multiple structural, institutional and cultural barriers continue to hinder the achievement of gender equality in public life. Most parliaments and governments worldwide fail to reflect the proportion of women in the electorate and this pattern persists even in many established democracies and affluent nations where women have had full citizenship rights for almost a century. Hence women are only 15.2% of the US House of Representatives, 12.2% of the French Chamber of Deputies, and 9.0% of the Japanese House of Councillors, despite the transformation of women and men's roles in the home, family, school, and work-force which have occurred in these societies during the twentieth century. And even today, no women sit in the national parliaments in Kyrgyzstan, Saudi Arabia, or Bahrain.

This situation persists despite the fact that world leaders have pledged to establish gender equality and to achieve women's rights in the public sphere, for example 181 states have now ratified the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).¹ A decade ago, the *UN Beijing Platform for Action* expressed commitment to the empowerment of women based on the conviction that: "*Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace.*"² The 1995 UN Platform for Action aimed to establish a 50-50 gender balance in all areas of society, placing full participation in decision-making in the foremost role. The persistent under-representation of women is a matter of concern because this may have important consequences for the public policy agenda and for the articulation of women's concerns, as well as for the democratic legitimacy of elected bodies, for human rights, and for public confidence in government.³

[\(Table 1 about here\)](#)

To explore these issues, Part I reviews the contemporary position of women in executive and legislative office. In Part II, this study then develops the theoretical framework and focuses upon two questions: How far do cultural attitudes towards women leaders remain a significant obstacle to women's representation in elected office in countries worldwide? And what is the role of news media in contributing towards this phenomenon? Part III describes the evidence and research design. Data is

drawn from more than 80 societies worldwide by pooling the last three waves of the World Values Survey (1995-2005). Part IV compares attitudes towards the role of women and men as political leaders across many diverse states, cultures, and types of societies, controlling for social structural and institutional contexts. Part V considers the role of the news media in this process. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and considers their implication for women's empowerment.

I: Contemporary challenges to gender equality in public life

The challenges facing women seeking to gain elected office are evident at both executive and legislative levels. The last two decades have registered some notable gains for some women leaders, shattering the marble ceiling at the highest levels of state (see Table 1).⁴ We can compare elected or indirectly elected presidents, Chancellors, and prime ministers governing independent nation-states, excluding hereditary monarchs, leaders of dependent territories, and appointed Governor Generals. In 1965, Sri Lanka was the only state in the world with a female head of government (Sirimavo Bandaranaike). By 1985, women headed half a dozen states. Today, that number has more than doubled.⁵

Women presidents and prime ministers hold the reins of power in countries as diverse as *New Zealand* (Premier Hon. Helen Clark), *Latvia* (President Vaira Vike-Freiberga), *Finland* (President Tarja Halonen), *Ireland* (President Mary McAleese), *Bangladesh* (Premier Begum Khaleda Zia), the *Philippines* (President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo), *São Tomé e Príncipe* (Maria do Carmo Silveira) and *Mozambique* (Premier Luisa Dias Diogo). In *Germany*, after a very close contest, in November 2005 Angela Merkel became the first woman Chancellor, heading a coalition of the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. In January 2006, Michele Bachelet became president in *Chile*, the first woman elected to this position in Latin America without first becoming known through her husband's prominence. In war-torn *Liberia*, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became executive president in February 2006, Africa's first elected woman head of state. In the Caribbean, *Jamaica* has their first woman prime minister in Mrs Portia Simpson Miller, leader of the governing People's National Party. President Pratibha Patil was elected president of *India* in July 2007. Meanwhile, in *Argentina*, in October 2007, Cristina E. Fernández Wilhelm de Kirchner was elected as President. In the *United States*, Nancy Pelosi was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in the 110th Congress while Hillary Clinton is one of the front-runners among Democratic candidates in early caucus and primary state.⁶ In short, significant breakthroughs have occurred in many places but despite the important gains, only sixteen independent nation-states worldwide (7.7%) are currently headed by a women president or premier.

[\[Figure 1 about here\]](#)

Heads of state have achieved the most powerful positions in government, and it might be expected that it would take some time for women leaders to gain sufficient legislative and ministerial experience before they can move up the ladder into these

positions. Has more substantial progress occurred at lower levels, including in ministerial office and the proportion of women elected to national parliaments, as well as in broader aspects of political and economic decision-making? The Inter-Parliamentary Union estimates that in October 2007, in total 6,380 women sit in the lower houses of parliament worldwide, representing 17.5% of all members.⁷ This figure has risen little by little during recent years, up from 12.0% in 1985, but progress has been at a glacial pace and it has been far from continuous and linear (see Figure 1). If the increase in the proportion of women in elected office is maintained at the level evident since 1985 (0.20% per annum), without any policy intervention, a simple linear projection estimates that it would take more than a century and a half for women parliamentarians to achieve parity with men. We are still far from the 50:50 pledge made by the UN Beijing Platform more than a decade ago.

In practice, multiple barriers – structural, cultural and institutional - continue to restrict the rapid advancement of women in elected office but there are contrasting trends around the world. Hence women are less than one in ten members of national parliaments in some sixty nations worldwide, but elsewhere women have progressed much faster. Figures on the gender composition of national legislatures collected by the Inter-Parliamentary Union illustrate striking contrasts among regions such as Central and South America, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia (see Table 2), as well as disparities among similar societies within regions, such as between EU states in Nordic and Mediterranean Europe. The overall growth in the proportion of women in parliament worldwide remains modest during the last two decades, including the dip registered in the 1990s, although there is some evidence that trends may be accelerating; for example in general elections held during 2005, women were one fifth of all members (20.5%) elected to the lower house of parliament.⁸ In parliamentary democracies, legislative office is commonly the first step on the ladder to entering cabinet, hence not surprisingly the proportion of women in ministerial office usually reflects their representation in the legislature (see Table 2).

[\[Table 2 about here\]](#)

The aspects of political representation represent one important dimension of women's empowerment but these cannot capture the fuller issue of participation in economic and political decision-making. The Gender Empowerment Measure developed by the UNDP attempts to provide such a composite index, combining female and male shares of parliamentary seats with similar sex ratios in professional and technical positions, in positions as legislative, senior officials and managers, and in earned income.⁹ The index is available for a more restricted range of nations than the representation of women in parliament but nevertheless the results of the comparisons by major world regions illustrated in Table 2 confirm the familiar disparities we have already observed, with substantial contrasts evident between patterns of gender equality in Scandinavia and the Middle East, and with other regions ranged between these poles.

II: Theoretical framework

The extensive literature seeking to explain these persistent forms of gender inequality in executive and legislative office has focused attention on three sets of factors, emphasizing the impact of *political culture*, including the persistence of traditional attitudes towards women in decision-making leadership roles and the impact of the media; the role of *structural barriers*, such as gender inequalities in the home and family, education achievements, employment tracks, and social networks, all of which can affect the routes which typically lead towards elected office; and the importance of *political institutions*, exemplified by the use of proportional representation electoral systems as well as 'fast-track' gender quotas in candidate recruitment.¹⁰ Building upon this body of research, the key questions raised by this study focus upon new evidence concerning the role of cultural attitudes towards women leaders, and in particular how far traditional attitudes remain a significant obstacle to women's representation in elected office in countries worldwide. Our earlier work examined the situation in 1995-2000, drawing upon the third and fourth waves of the World Values Study. Here we extend this research by reviewing whether cultural trends in the same countries have shifted in a more egalitarian direction during the last decade (1995-2005), as well as comparing a wider range of nation-states included in the 5th wave of the World Values survey conducted in 2005. Moreover, as well as demonstrating that cultural attitudes towards women as leaders are important, this paper also starts to explore what shapes these attitudes, and in particular examining the role of exposure to the news media in shaping traditional or egalitarian cultural attitudes towards female political leaders.

Cultural Barriers

Ever since the seminal comparative study on women and politics by Maurice Duverger, published by UNESCO in the mid-1950s, it has often been assumed that traditional attitudes towards gender equality influence women's advancement in elected office.¹¹ Theories of socialization have long emphasized the enduring division of sex roles within a society -- especially the existence of egalitarian or traditional attitudes towards women in the private and public spheres. Socialization theories emphasize that these attitudes are acquired early in life through formative agencies, including the existence of traditional sex role learnt in the home and family, local community, and in schools and the workplace. In cultures with traditional values concerning the role of women in the home and family, many women may be reluctant to run and, if they seek the office, they may fail to attract sufficient party and electoral support to win. A study by the Inter-parliamentary Union found that female politicians in many countries nominated hostile attitudes towards women's political participation as one of the most important barrier to running for parliament.¹² Cultural explanations provide a plausible reason why women have made such striking advances in parliaments within the Nordic region compared with other comparable European societies like Switzerland, Italy or Belgium, all similar affluent post-industrial welfare states and established parliamentary democracies with proportional representation electoral systems. Karvonen and Selle suggest that in Scandinavia a long tradition of government intervention to promote

social equality may have made the public more receptive to the idea of positive action, like gender quotas, designed to achieve equality for women in public life.¹³ Abu-Zayd suggests that culture is an important reason why many nations with a strict Islamic background have often ranked at the bottom of the list in terms of women in parliament, despite notable exceptions in Islamic societies in top leadership positions¹⁴. Studies of the process of political recruitment in established democracies like Britain, Finland and the Netherlands have found that social attitudes influence both whether women are prepared come forward as candidates for office (the *supply*-side of the equation), as well as the criteria used by gate-keepers like party members and leaders, the news media, financial supporters or the electorate when evaluating suitable candidates (the *demand*-side).¹⁵

Traditional attitudes towards gender equality have therefore commonly been suspected to be an important determinant of women's entry into elected office, yet to date little systematic cross-national evidence has demonstrated this thesis. Most comparative studies have been forced to adopt proxy indicators of culture, such as the historical prevalence of Catholicism within West European societies, understood as representing more traditional attitudes towards women and the family than Protestant religions.¹⁶ An early comparison by Margaret Inglehart found that women's political activism was lower in the Catholic than Protestant countries of Western Europe, and it was suggest that this was because the Catholic Church was associated with a culture that was more hierarchical and authoritarian in nature.¹⁷ A more recent worldwide comparison of women in politics in 180 nation states by Reynolds found that the greatest contrasts were between dominant Christian countries (whether Protestant or Catholic) and all other religions including Islamic, Buddhist, Judaic, Confucian and Hindu, all of which had lower proportions of women in legislative and Cabinet office.¹⁸ An alternative approach has compared attitudes in Western Europe towards the women's movement, feminism, and sex role equality in the home and workplace.¹⁹ This approach provides insights into support for feminism within Western Europe but it is difficult to know how far we can generalize from these general attitudes towards egalitarian support for women in positions of political leadership, still less whether comparable results would be evident in a broader range of societies. In previous work we demonstrated that attitudes towards gender equality were a significant indicator of the proportion of women in legislative office, and here we can replicate and update this finding to see whether this generalization holds in a broader range of countries, contexts, and time periods.²⁰

Structural Barriers

The relative importance of political culture needs to be analyzed controlling for structural and institutional factors which have also often been emphasized as critical for women's empowerment. Early sociological accounts commonly regarded the social system as playing a vital role in determining the eligibility pool for elected office, including the occupational, educational and socioeconomic status of women. In developing societies, women may find it difficult to break into electoral office where

they are generally disadvantaged due to poor childcare, low literacy, inadequate health care, and poverty. Reynolds found that levels of gender-related development were significantly related to the proportion of women parliamentarians worldwide.²¹ Comparative studies of established democracies have long emphasized the importance of the pool of women in the professional, administrative and managerial occupations that commonly lead to political careers.²² Careers in the law and journalism commonly provide the flexibility, financial resources, experience, and social networks that facilitate running for elected office. In recent decades in many postindustrial societies women have forged ahead in management and the professions in the private and public sectors, as well as in growing enrollment in higher education.

Yet there are many reasons why structural explanations provide only part of the answer to the barriers facing women seeking elected office. These accounts fail to explain major disparities in the proportion of women in national parliaments among relatively similar types of societies, such as the contrasts between Canada (where women are 19.9% of parliamentarians) and the neighboring U.S. (12.9%), or within Europe between Italy (11.1%) and the Netherlands (36%), or between South Africa (29.8%) and Niger (1.2%). A ranked comparison of the proportion of women elected to the lower house of parliament in the most recent election worldwide confirms that high levels of socioeconomic development are not necessary conditions for women's success; for example, female representation is far greater today among some poorer societies like Mozambique (ranking 9th worldwide), South Africa (10th), and Venezuela (11th), than in some of the most affluent such as the United States (50th), France (59th) and Japan (94th). In many postindustrial societies despite the transformation in women and men's lifestyles, electoral success has continued to elude women. This pattern is exemplified in the United States where almost a third of all lawyers (29%) are now female, a figure likely to increase further since the proportion of women graduating from law school has shot up eightfold, from 5.4% in 1970 to 44% in 1996.²³ Law remains the most common training ground for legislative office in America, yet despite the rise of women lawyers, only nine out of 100 US Senators are female. This suggests that while improvements in women's educational and professional status serve as *facilitating* conditions for women's empowerment, structural change alone may be insufficient to win elected office, and something more than the eligibility pool is at work here. The impact of socioeconomic development on the election of women parliamentarians can be analyzed by using the *UN index of gender-related development*, combining indicators of women's literacy, longevity, education, and real GDP per capita.²⁴

Institutional Barriers

An alternative perspective is provided by *institutional* accounts emphasizing the importance of the political system, like the use of Proportional Representation elections and the adoption of gender quotas. This approach has become increasingly popular, indeed probably accepted as the mainstream perspective in the literature today. Institutional accounts suggest that the

can help to explain systematic differences in women's representation among relatively similar types of society, as well as being the most important factor that can alter women's political activism by policy reforms.²⁵

Among institutional factors, the *level of democratization* provides the most general context. In general, the transition and consolidation of democratic societies can be expected to promote widespread political and civil liberties, including women's rights to vote and to stand for elected office, as well as strengthening parties and institutionalizing the channels of political recruitment into parliament and government. To monitor democratization we can include the standard measure using the Freedom House 7-point scale of political rights and civil liberties. Yet the role of democracy in promoting substantial numbers of women in public life remains under dispute, since Reynolds found no significant relationship between levels of democratization and women's parliamentary representation worldwide.²⁶ If there is a weak relationship this may be due to the continued use of affirmative action strategies for women's representation in Communist systems like Cuba and China, as well as the decline in the proportion of women in parliaments in Central and Eastern Europe once these quotas were abandoned in the transition to democratic elections. Since Duverger, the type of *electoral system* has long been regarded as an important facilitating condition; many studies have demonstrated that far more women are commonly elected under proportional party lists than via majoritarian single-member constituencies.²⁷ The use of positive action strategies has also been widely discussed, particularly reserved seats which are set aside for women members of parliament in some countries, as well as the adoption of constitutional or legal quotas for women candidates, and the use of voluntary party quotas adopted in party rule books and recruitment processes.²⁸ Models can therefore be used to test whether the proportion of women in parliaments is significantly related to the *level of democratization*, the type of *electoral system* (classified simply into the main categories of majoritarian, mixed, and proportional), the use of *reserved seats* for women, *legal quotas* for women candidates, and the use of *voluntary party quotas* for women candidates.

Institutional accounts may therefore provide many important insights into why women leaders have moved ahead further and faster in some countries rather than others but puzzles remain about why apparently similar institutional reforms may turn out to have unanticipated consequences, even among relatively similar political and social systems. Why should national list PR have a very different impact on women's election in, say, Israel and the Netherlands? Why should the use of gender quotas for candidacies seem to work better in, say, Argentina rather than Ecuador? Rather like the failure of Westminster-style parliaments in many African states in the 1960s, uprooted institutions do not necessarily flourish in alien environments. Therefore models exploring the impact of culture on the proportion of women in elected office need to control for these institutional factors, as well as for structural conditions which could also affect the results.

III: Evidence and design

Evidence for attitudes and values in many different societies is available in the World Values Survey, a global investigation of socio-cultural and political change. This project has carried out representative national surveys of the basic values and beliefs of the publics in more than 90 independent nation-states, containing in total almost 5.5 billion people or over 88% of the world's population and it covers all six inhabited continents. It builds on the European Values Surveys, first carried out in 22 countries in 1981. A second wave of surveys, in 41 countries, was completed in 1990-1991. The third wave was carried out in 55 nations in 1995-1996. The fourth wave, with 59 nation-states, took place in 1999-2001. The fifth wave took place in over forty nation-states in 2005-6.²⁹

The WVS survey includes some of the most affluent market economies in the world, such as the U.S., Japan and Switzerland, with per capita annual incomes as high as \$40,000; together with middle-level industrializing countries including Taiwan, Brazil, and Turkey, as well as poorer agrarian societies, exemplified by Uganda, Nigeria, and Viet Nam, with per capita annual incomes of \$300 or less. Some smaller nations have populations below one million, such as Malta, Luxembourg and Iceland, while at the other extreme almost one billion people live in India and over one billion live in China. The survey contains older democracies such as Australia, India and the Netherlands, newer democracies including El Salvador, Estonia and Taiwan, and autocracies such as China, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, and Egypt. The transition process also varies markedly: some nations have experienced a rapid consolidation of democracy during the 1990s; today the Czech Republic, Latvia and Argentina currently rank as high on political rights and civil liberties as Belgium, the United States, and the Netherlands, which have a long tradition of democracy.³⁰ The survey also includes some of the first systematic data on public opinion in many Muslim states, including Arab countries such as Jordan, Iran, Egypt, and Morocco, as well as in Indonesia, Iran, Turkey, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The most comprehensive coverage of countries in the surveys is available in Western Europe, North America and Scandinavia, where public opinion surveys have the longest tradition, but countries are included from all world regions, including some Sub Saharan African nations. Since the battery of items monitoring media use were only included in the 5th wave, this study draws primarily upon the latest survey when examining media effects. This covers more than forty societies, although others items such as cultural attitudes towards men and women leaders are carried in successive waves and the results can be compared in a wider range of states.

The World Values survey contains many items measuring attitudes towards sex role equality in the home and family, labor force and public sphere, as well as confidence in the women's movement. The basic indicator measuring support for gender equality in political leadership is a 4-point scale asking respondents how far they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: *"People talk about the changing roles of men and women today. For each of the following statements I read out, can you tell me how much you agree with each? Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly?"*

... *On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.*" (See Appendix A for details)

[\[Figure 2 about here\]](#)

The comparison of the mean responses to this question, presented in Figure 2, illustrate substantial contrasts worldwide. Scandinavian nations, including Norway and Sweden, are among the most egalitarian societies, which is little surprise, for example in the latest survey 92% of Swedes disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement that men make better political leaders. Similar egalitarian attitudes are some affluent post-industrial societies such as France, Canada, and Spain, and some developing nations (especially in the Caribbean and Latin America) such as Trinidad and Tobago, Guatemala and Peru also demonstrate above average positive support for women in politics. Although falling below Scandinavia, the United States is relatively egalitarian in attitudes towards women in politics, with three quarters of all Americans expressing disagreement with the statement. By contrast, countries which display the most traditional attitudes by having strong preferences for male leaders include many Middle Eastern societies, such as Iraq, Jordan and Egypt, as well as developing societies in North and West Africa, such as Morocco, Mali and Nigeria. In the most recent survey in Iraq, for example, 90% agreed that men are better leaders while 87% agreed with this statement in Jordan. While not as traditional, nevertheless Central European post-communist states also demonstrated relatively little enthusiasm for gender equality in political leadership.

IV: Cultural attitudes and women in elected office

Do these cultural patterns matter in practice? In particular, do more egalitarian attitudes towards women leaders influence the proportion of women who are actually elected to office? We have already discussed the substantial differences worldwide in the proportion of women in the lower houses of parliament, ranging from about 49% in Rwanda down to less than 5% on average in Arab States. Figure 3 compares attitudes towards women political leaders in each society, as measured by the World Values Survey 1995-2005, with the proportion of women elected to the lower house of the national parliament in 2005.

[\[Figure 3 about here\]](#)

The results demonstrate the significant and moderately strong relationship between attitudes towards gender equality and the actual proportion of women in the lower house of parliament ($R=0.439$ Sig. $P=01$). Countries with an egalitarian culture usually have more women in office, with the Scandinavian countries at the forefront on both indicators in the top right-hand corner of the scatter gram. By contrast, at the bottom corner can be found the Arab states of Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, as well as Algeria, Morocco and Iran. Yet there are some striking outliers to the overall pattern that also deserve attention. Some established democracies -- including France, Italy and

the United States -- display more egalitarian attitudes than might be expected given in the actual proportion of women elected to parliament. In these countries, public opinion seems to have run ahead of the structural barriers that women face when pursuing public office. On the other hand, Rwanda, Iraq, and Belarus all have more women parliamentarians than would be expected from their cultural attitudes alone, suggesting that in these societies positive action strategies adopted to boost women's leadership, like the use of gender quotas in Rwanda and Iraq, are ahead of public opinion.

Of course the pattern of causation cannot be determined from any simple correlation, and we cannot rule out an interaction effect. It could well be that the experience of having many women involved in political life could shift public opinion in a more egalitarian direction, dispelling traditional stereotypes about men making better political leaders than women. Nevertheless it seems equally plausible to assume that the causal direction flows primarily from political culture towards the success of women in elected office, since more egalitarian attitudes could persuade more women that they should seek opportunities for elected office and could simultaneously influence the selector's and electors evaluations about suitable candidates. One way that this can be tested further is by examining the relationship between the proportion of women in parliament and a broader scale of traditional or egalitarian attitudes towards gender equality, developed by the authors in earlier work, based on attitudes towards sex roles in the home and family, schools, and workplace.³¹ The results of the analysis shows a strong and significant correlation between these factors ($R=.408$, Sig. $P=.004$). Since these broader values should not be directly affected by women's leadership, this pattern strongly suggests that culture drives the success of women in elected office, rather than vice versa.

A more systematic and comprehensive analysis requires a multivariate model which examines the impact of cultural attitudes on the proportion of women in parliament controlling for the institutional and structural differences which are often associated with women's representation, as discussed earlier. Table 3 presents the results of models which examine the aggregate-level impact of attitudes towards women as political leaders on three separate indicators of women's empowerment (the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament, the proportion of women ministers in government, and the UNDP's Gender Empowerment Index), controlling for levels of gender-related development, democratization, the electoral system and the use of reserved seats and quotas. The results confirm quite strikingly how far cultural attitudes are strongly and significantly related to each of these indicators of women's empowerment, while by contrast none of the other factors emerge as consistently significant. The impact of egalitarian attitudes proved strongest on the broader indicator of Gender Empowerment, monitoring political and economic decision-making, but it was also a good predictor of the proportion of female ministers and the election of women to legislative office.

V: The news media and cultural attitudes

If traditional or egalitarian cultural attitudes towards women in public office are important for the success of elected women leaders, what helps to explain these orientations? The long-term imprint of predominant religious cultures has often been regarded as important for shaping attitudes towards sex roles, as for example emphasized by Reynolds.³² But another potential factor which could plausibly be affecting attitudes, which has not been extensively demonstrated from cross-national survey research, concerns the impact of news coverage of women politicians conveyed on television and radio, in newspapers, and via the Internet. A growing literature from communications, cultural studies, sociology and political science has documented the contents of the mass media in the United States when covering women as candidates, politicians, first ladies, and leaders, as well as reporting on feminism and the women's movement, and how, in turn, media coverage has shaped attitudes towards women in politics.³³ Nevertheless it is not clear how far we can generalize from the American context to other cultures elsewhere, and little cross-national research has sought to examine patterns of coverage of women politicians in the media, nor the general impact of exposure to the news media on public opinion towards women in politics.

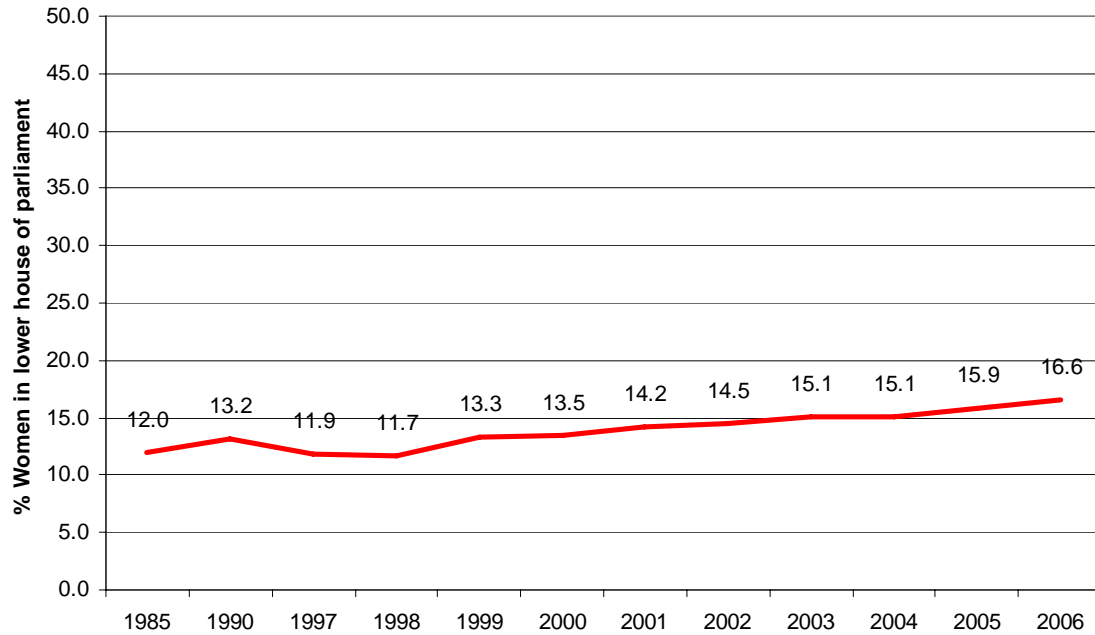
Without detailed content analysis of the news coverage of women leaders provided in different outlets and countries, it is difficult to predict the direction of any impact of reporting. If reporting conveys masculine stereotypes about public affairs, then watching or listening to the news media should reinforce traditional perspectives about the appropriate division of sex roles. On the other hand, if the headlines and stories emphasize positive coverage, such as highlighting the path-breaking role of the 'first' woman leader in different offices, this could challenge conventional images of women's roles in the home and family. We can investigate whether regular exposure to the news media is usually associated with more egalitarian attitudes towards women in public life or alternatively if news about politics usually reinforces traditional attitudes, by conveying a masculine image of public affairs. Table 3 examines individual-level attitudes towards the role of women and men as political leaders, including the impact of exposure to information from the news media (from newspapers, television and radio, and the internet) controlling for other social factors including age, income, gender and education which could be expected to influence both attitudes and patterns of media use. The models are analyzed separately for post-industrial, industrial and agrarian societies, to control for overall levels of human development. The results demonstrate that exposure to the news media has a significant positive impact on attitudes in each type of society, so that greater exposure to information from the news media is associated with more egalitarian attitudes towards women as leaders. The other controls behaved as expected, with more egalitarian attitudes also found among the younger generation, among women, and among the better educated. Without any direct evidence about the contents of the coverage, we should be cautious about drawing any strong conclusions from these results, but they certainly suggest that the role of the news media may function more positively towards women as political leaders

than is often assumed.

Conclusions

Progress towards a more inclusive politics, where women and men are represented more equally in elected office, remains an elusive goal in nearly all societies. Many barriers continue to form an obstacle to achieving gender equality in public life. This study used survey evidence to compare how far cultural attitudes are systematically related to the advancement of women in elected office in a wide range of countries, controlling for both structural and institutional contexts. The study focused upon two related propositions, namely that traditional attitudes towards gender equality in political leadership remain a major barrier to the election of women to legislative office, even with the introduction of prior structural and institutional controls; and moreover that exposure to the news media helps to shape these cultural attitudes. The evidence presented here provides support for both of these propositions, suggesting that although fast-track solutions such as gender quotas and reserved seats may act as a short-cut towards the advancement of women, nevertheless traditional attitudes prevail in many parts of the world. The next steps in this research would be to consider the role of the news media in the wider process of cultural change in more detail, in particular whether the positive indications which have been documented here are also evident across a broader range of social attitudes and values. If so, then the news media may have the capacity to function as an important accelerant of cultural change, eroding social stereotypes and traditional values.

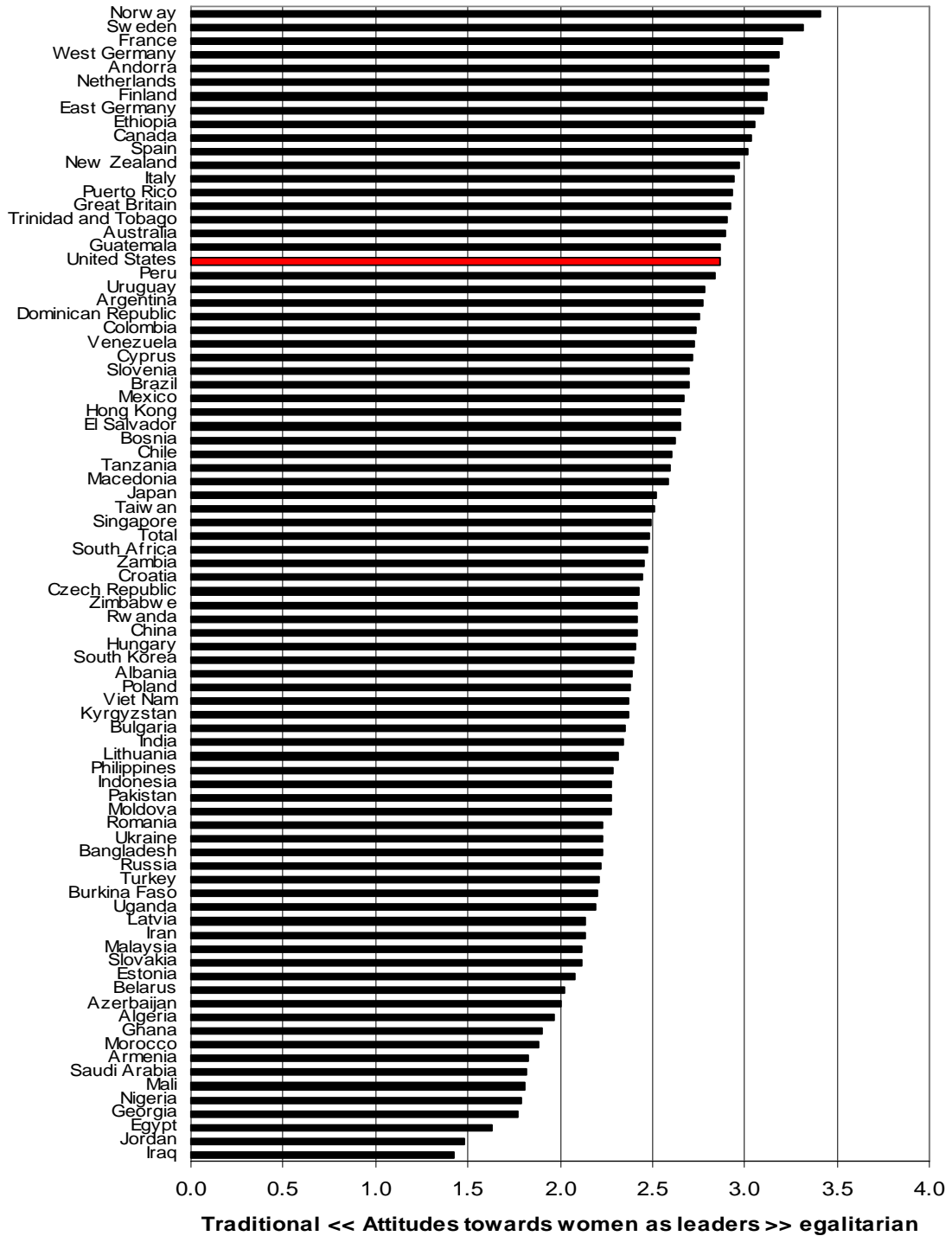
Figure 1: Trends in women's legislative representation 1985-2006, worldwide



Note: The proportion of women elected to the single or lower house of national parliaments in 191 contemporary nations worldwide. Data calculated from the Inter-Parliamentary Union database. The figures are from 31st January per annum.

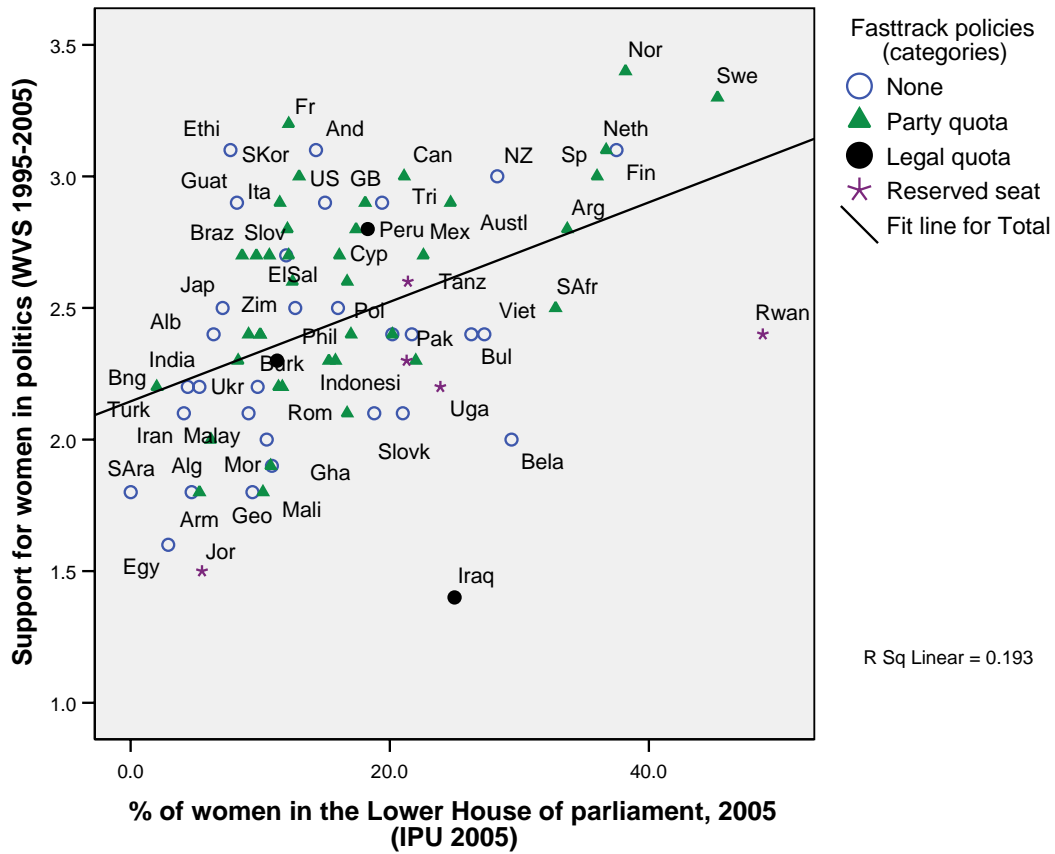
Source: *Women in National Parliaments*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

Figure 2: Attitudes towards women and men as political leaders



Note: Q61. "On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do." Strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4). **Source:** The World Values Survey, 1995-2005

Figure 3: Support for women in politics and the proportion of women in the lower house, 2005



Note: Support for women in politics: Q61. "On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do." Strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4). **Source:** The World Values Survey, 1995-2005.

Table 1: Women prime ministers or elected presidents currently in office ()*

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Date from</i>
Presidents		
Ireland	Mary McAleese	November 1997
Latvia	Vaira Vike-Freiberga	June 1999
Finland	Tarja Halonen	March 2000
Philippines	Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	January 2001
Liberia	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	January 2006
Chile	Michele Bachelet	January 2006
Switzerland	Micheline Calmy-Rey	January 2007
India	Pratibha Patil	July 2007
Argentina	Cristina E. Fernández Wilhelm de Kirchner,	October 2007
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Borjana Kristo	October 2007
Prime ministers		
New Zealand	Helen Clark	December 1999
Bangladesh	Begum Khaleda Zia	October 2001
Mozambique	Luisa Dias Diogo	February 2004
Sao Tome and Principe	Maria do Carmo Silveira	June 2005
Germany	Angela Merkel	November 2005
Jamaica	Portia Simpson Miller	March 2006

Note: (*) As at November 2007. The list excludes hereditary monarchs, appointed Governor Generals, and leaders of dependent territories.

Source: www.guide2womenleaders.com

Table 2: Regional patterns of women's empowerment

	Percentage of women in lower house of parliament, 1990	Percentage of women in the Lower House of parliament, 2005	Percentage of women in the Lower House of parliament: Change 1990-2005	Women in government at ministerial level (as % of total ministers) 2001	Gender empowerment measure (GEM) Value 2002	N. of nations
Scandinavia	31.6	37.6	+6.0	44.0	0.85	5
N. America	10.7	19.6	+8.9	22.4	0.71	3
W. Europe	9.6	21.1	+11.5	22.9	0.68	19
Africa	9.1	13.7	+4.6	14.8	0.54	47
C & E Europe	25.9	15.4	-10.4	15.8	0.53	26
S. America	10.2	16.2	+6.0	14.6	0.52	32
Asia-Pacific	8.9	9.2	+0.3	10.5	0.48	35
Middle East	5.1	6.3	+1.2	4.6	0.32	17
Total	11.0	14.3	3.3	15.4	0.55	184
Sources:	UNDP 2004	IPU 2005	Calculated	UNDP 2004	UNDP 2004	

Sources: Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women in Parliament. 2005.* www.ipu.org; UNDP. 2004. *Human Development Report 2004.* UNDP/Oxford University Press.

Table 3. Factors explaining indicators of women's empowerment

	% of women in parliament, 2005				% of female government ministers, 2001				Gender Empowerment Index, 2004			
	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.	B	SE	Beta	Sig.
SOCIAL STRUCTURE:												
Gender-related development index	4.21	8.77	.07	N/s	-3.60	13.0	-.047	N/s	.549	.199	.36	**
POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS:												
Level of democratization	-.018	.063	-.04	N/s	.163	.094	.28	N/s	.002	.001	.25	N/s
Majoritarian electoral system	-3.67	2.63	-.16	N/s	4.44	3.84	.15	N/s	.034	.034	.09	N/s
Combined electoral system	-5.95	2.96	-.23	*	-3.59	4.60	-.10	N/s	-.024	.033	-.06	N/s
Reserved seats for women or gender quotas	1.44	2.50	.07	N/s	-.626	3.53	-.022	N/s	-.037	.035	-.11	N/s
CULTURAL ATTITUDES:												
Attitudes towards women as political leaders	11.19	3.14	.45	***	11.92	4.50	.38	**	.170	.048	.41	***
Constant	-11.52				21.17				-.451			
N. nations	70				56				45			
Adjusted R ²	.236				.204				.710			

Notes and sources: The models represent unstandardized beta coefficients, the standard error, the standardized beta coefficients and the significance, derived from OLS regression analysis models. The dependent variables in the models are the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament, the proportion of women ministers, and the Gender Empowerment Index. Significance *p.05 ** p.01 ***p.001 *Level of gender-related development: Human Development Index.* UNDP. 2005. *United National Development Report, 2005.* NY: UNDP/Oxford. <http://www.undp.org> *Level of Democratization: Freedom House.* 2005. *Annual Survey of Freedom.* <http://www.freedomhouse.org> *Classification of electoral systems: See Pippa Norris.* 2005. *Electoral Engineering.* CUP. The proportional representation (party list) system is the default reference category and therefore excluded from the model. Proportion of women in Parliament: *Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2005. Women in National Parliaments.* www.ipu.org *Use of reserved seats and quotas: University of Stockholm/International IDEA* www.quotasproject.org *Attitudes towards women as political leaders: Q61."On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do."* Strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4). The World Values Survey, 1995-2005.

Table 4: The impact of exposure to the news media on attitudes towards gender equality in political leadership.

		B	SE	Beta	t	Sig
Postindustrial	(Constant)	2.983	.039		76.144	.000
	Age (years)	-.003	.000	-.062	-6.384	.000
	Income decile	-.002	.001	-.020	-2.121	.034
	Gender (male)	-.239	.015	-.154	-16.146	.000
	Education (3-cat)	.084	.011	.077	7.695	.000
	Media use scale (newspapers, TV/Radio, Internet)	.041	.010	.040	3.974	.000
	Adj. R ²	.037				
Industrial	(Constant)	2.796	.027		104.888	.000
	Age (years)	-.004	.000	-.071	-10.175	.000
	Income decile	.000	.000	-.008	-1.239	.215
	Gender (male)	-.312	.012	-.184	-27.129	.000
	Education (3-cat)	.020	.009	.017	2.195	.028
	Media use scale (newspapers, TV/Radio, Internet)	.050	.008	.048	6.382	.000
	Adj. R ²	.041				
Agrarian	(Constant)	2.345	.034		68.980	.000
	Age (years)	-.002	.001	-.034	-3.803	.000
	Income decile	-.006	.003	-.017	-1.949	.051
	Gender (male)	-.248	.016	-.139	-15.870	.000
	Education (3-cat)	.098	.013	.074	7.330	.000
	Media use scale (newspapers, TV/Radio, Internet)	.050	.010	.049	5.003	.000
	Adj. R ²	.030				

Note: The results of OLS regression models where the dependent variable is the 4-point scale 'gender: men better political leaders', and where a positive coefficient represents a more egalitarian response. Media use is monitored as follows: "People use different sources to learn what is going on in their country and the world. For each of the following sources, please indicate whether you used it last week or did not use it last week to obtain information. Radio/TV" The media use scale combines use of newspapers, TV/Radio and the Internet).

Source: World Values Survey 2005

Appendix A: "Men make better leaders than women do."

	<i>"Men make better political leaders than women do."</i>				Total
	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Albania 1998	36	17	27	20	100
Albania 2002	18	34	32	16	100
Algeria 2002	44	25	20	10	100
Andorra 2005	1	9	66	24	100
Azerbaijan 1996	33	39	24	5	100
Argentina 1995	7	30	48	15	100
Argentina 1999	7	25	49	18	100
Argentina 2006	5	27	49	19	100
Australia 1995	3	21	59	17	100
Australia 2005	4	21	58	18	100
Bangladesh 1996	23	34	34	9	100
Bangladesh 2002	25	43	25	8	100
Armenia 1997	36	47	14	2	100
Bosnia 1998	26	29	21	23	100
Bosnia 2001	10	23	48	19	100
Brazil 1997	29	18	19	34	100
Brazil 2006	6	25	54	15	100
Bulgaria 1997	27	34	31	8	100
Bulgaria 2006	14	34	40	12	100
Belarus 1996	33	37	25	5	100
Canada 2000	4	16	51	29	100
Canada 2006	3	15	58	25	100
Chile 1996	14	28	41	16	100
Chile 2000	17	22	35	26	100
Chile 2006	18	32	34	16	100
China 1995	12	41	40	6	100
China 2001	7	43	46	4	100
China 2007	10	44	43	3	100
Taiwan 1994	9	40	48	3	100
Taiwan 2006	7	36	53	4	100
Colombia 1998	8	25	55	12	100
Colombia 2006	6	23	59	11	100
Croatia 1995	23	32	25	21	100
Cyprus 2006	12	24	45	19	100
Czech 1998	16	34	40	10	100
Domin. Rep. 1996	16	25	26	33	100
El Salvador 2000	16	21	45	18	100
Ethiopia 2006	8	15	41	36	100
Estonia 1996	29	40	25	6	100
Finland 1996	8	13	30	49	100
Finland 2006	4	15	55	26	100
France 2006	4	17	34	45	100
Georgia 1996	45	35	18	2	100
Ghana 2007	37	42	17	5	100
Guatemala 2004	11	21	38	30	100

Date January 13, 2008

	<i>"Men make better political leaders than women do."</i>				Total
	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Hong Kong 2005	3	34	57	6	100
Hungary 1998	27	25	27	21	100
India 1995	15	34	40	12	100
India 2001	23	35	28	13	100
India 2006	21	42	30	7	100
Indonesia 2001	13	47	33	6	100
Indonesia 2006	17	44	35	4	100
Iran 2003	31	35	23	11	100
Iraq 2004	71	19	7	3	100
Italy 2006	4	19	56	21	100
Japan 1995	10	47	38	5	100
Japan 2000	5	38	48	9	100
Japan 2006	6	37	49	7	100
Jordan 2001	69	18	9	4	100
SKorea 1996	16	47	32	5	100
SKorea 2001	15	33	35	17	100
SKorea 2006	11	47	32	10	100
Kyrgyz 2003	19	39	30	13	100
Latvia 1996	23	43	32	2	100
Lithuania 1996	17	39	40	4	100
Malaysia 2006	23	45	28	4	100
Mali 2006	43	36	17	4	100
Mexico 1995	13	30	44	12	100
Mexico 2000	18	23	27	32	100
Mexico 2006	5	23	59	13	100
Moldova 1996	25	43	30	3	100
Moldova 2002	15	46	32	7	100
Moldova 2006	16	36	40	8	100
Morocco 2001	49	24	17	10	100
Netherlands 2006	3	14	49	33	100
New Zealand 1998	5	13	65	17	100
New Zealand 2006	5	11	63	20	100
Nigeria 1995	46	27	19	7	100
Nigeria 2000	55	24	14	6	100
Norway 1996	5	11	23	61	100
Pakistan 1997	56	10	19	15	100
Pakistan 2001	25	25	36	14	100
Peru 1996	7	22	60	10	100
Peru 2001	4	20	56	20	100
Philippines 1996	17	40	31	11	100
Philippines 2001	25	38	28	9	100
Poland 1997	25	37	32	7	100
Poland 2006	10	33	47	10	100
Puerto Rico 1995	10	20	49	21	100
Puerto Rico 2001	9	9	42	39	100
Romania 1998	52	15	29	4	100
Romania 2006	15	40	26	19	100

	<i>"Men make better political leaders than women do."</i>				Total
	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Russia 1995	21	39	36	4	100
Russia 2006	24	37	32	6	100
Rwanda 2006	13	38	42	7	100
Saudi Arabia 2003	51	23	17	8	100
Singapore 2002	6	45	45	5	100
Slovakia 1998	27	41	26	7	100
Vietnam 2001	16	41	40	4	100
Vietnam 2006	12	44	34	10	100
Slovenia 1995	9	36	44	11	100
Slovenia 2006	8	23	50	20	100
South Africa 1996	27	28	31	15	100
South Africa 2001	17	27	34	21	100
Zimbabwe 2001	16	36	37	10	100
Spain 1995	5	21	54	20	100
Spain 2000	4	14	45	36	100
Sweden 1996	6	12	25	57	100
Sweden 1999	4	15	28	53	100
Sweden 2006	2	7	51	41	100
Trinidad 2006	5	21	51	22	100
Turkey 1996	31	34	25	9	100
Turkey 2001	24	38	25	13	100
Uganda 2001	23	45	22	10	100
Ukraine 1996	24	40	31	5	100
Ukraine 2006	19	35	37	8	100
Macedonia 1997	21	25	38	16	100
Macedonia 2001	17	24	34	25	100
Egypt 2000	55	30	13	2	100
Britain 2006	4	15	64	17	100
Tanzania 2001	23	20	29	27	100
U.S. 1995	6	25	53	17	100
U.S. 2000	5	18	57	20	100
U.S. 2006	5	21	55	20	100
Burkina Faso 2006	24	38	31	6	100
Uruguay 1996	10	28	53	10	100
Uruguay 2006	2	18	62	18	100
Venezuela 1996	23	18	27	32	100
Venezuela 2000	22	18	22	38	100
Zambia 2007	18	32	37	13	100
West Germany 1997	2	12	49	38	100
West Germany 2006	4	16	43	37	100
East Germany 1997	4	14	57	25	100
East Germany 2006	4	15	41	40	100

Source: World Values Surveys

¹ United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women.
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/states.htm>

² United Nations. 1995. *Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration*. New York, United Nations.

³ There is a growing and substantial literature on this topic. See, for example, Manon Tremblay. 1998. 'Do female MPs substantively represent women?' *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 31(3): 435-465; Manon Tremblay and R. Pelletier. 2000. 'More feminists or more women? Descriptive and substantive representations of women in the 1997 Canadian federal elections.' *International Political Science Review*. 21(4): 381-405; Michele Swers. 2001. 'Understanding the policy impact of electing women: Evidence from research on congress and state legislatures,' *PS: Political Science and Society*. 34(2): 217-220; Michele Swers. 1998. 'Are women more likely to vote for women's issue bills than their male colleagues?' *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 23(3): 435-448; Beth Reingold. 2000. *Representing Women: Sex, Gender, and Legislative Behavior in Arizona and California*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; Lauri Karvonen and Per Selle. 1995 *Women in Nordic Politics*. Aldershot: Dartmouth; J. Dolan. 1997. 'Support for women's interests in the 103rd Congress: The distinct impact of congressional women.' *Women & Politics*. 18(4): 81-94; Georgina Duerst-Lahti and Rita May Kelly (Eds.) 1995. *Gender, Power, Leadership and Governance*, University of Michigan Press; Susan Carroll. 2001. Ed. *The Impact of Women in Public Office*. Indiana: University of Indiana Press; Leslie A Schwindt-Bayer and William Mishler. 2005. 'An integrated model of women's representation.' *Journal of Politics* 67 (2): 407-428.

⁴ Andrew Reynolds. 1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4): 547-572; Lane Kenworthy and Melissa Malami. 1999.

'Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis.' *Social Forces* 78(1): 235-269; Alan Siaroff. 2000. 'Women's representation in legislatures and cabinets in industrial democracies.' *International Political Science Review*. 21(2): 197-215.

⁵ The latest observation is in November 2007. This comparison includes both appointed and directly elected presidents and prime ministers but it excludes queens or Governor Generals. See *Worldwide Guide to Women in Leadership*.

www.guide2womenleaders.com; Inter-Parliamentary Union. Dataset #4: *A Chronology of women Heads of State or Government 1945-02/2006*. www.ipu.org

⁶ See, various surveys, *The Polling Report*. November 2007. www.pollingreport.com.

⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union. November 2007.

Women in National Parliaments.

<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>; Inter-Parliamentary Union. 1995. *Women in Parliaments, 1945-1995*. IPU: Geneva.

⁸ Inter-Parliamentary Union. 2006. *Women in parliament in 2005: the year in perspective*.

www.ipu.org

⁹ UNDP. 2007. *Human Development Report 2007-8 Technical Note 1. Calculating the Human Development Indices*.

http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_tech_note_1.pdf

¹⁰ For overviews of the literature see, Azza Karam. Ed. 1998. *Women in Politics Beyond Numbers*. IDEA: Stockholm. <http://www.int-idea.se/women/>; Andrew Reynolds. 1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4): 547-572; Lane Kenworthy and Melissa Malami. 1999. 'Gender Inequality in Political Representation: A Worldwide Comparative Analysis.' *Social Forces* 78(1): 235-269; Alan Siaroff. 2000. 'Women's representation in legislatures and cabinets in industrial democracies.' *International Political Science Review*. 21(2): 197-215; Pamela Paxton and Melanie Hughes. 2007. *Women, Politics, and Power: A Global Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

¹¹ Maurice Duverger. 1955. *The Political Role of Women*. UNESCO: Paris.

¹² Inter-parliamentary Union. 2000. *Politics: Women's Insight*. IPU Reports and Documents No. 36. Geneva: IPU

Date January 13, 2008

- ¹³ Lauri Karvonen, and Per Selle. 1995. *Women in Nordic Politics*. Aldershot: Dartmouth. See also Paxton, Pamela and Sheri Kunovich. 2003. 'Women's Political Representation: The Importance of Ideology.' *Social Forces* 82:87-114.
- ¹⁴ This patterns holds despite including the election as Prime Minister of Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, Tansu Ciller in Turkey, and Begum Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina Wajed in Bangladesh Abu-Zayd, Gehan. 1998. 'In Search of Political Power: Women in Parliament in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.' In *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers* edited by Azza Karam. IDEA: Stockholm.
- ¹⁵ See chapters in Pippa Norris. 1998. Ed. *Passages to Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Pippa Norris, and Joni Lovenduski. 1995. *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ¹⁶ Wilma Rule. 1987. 'Electoral systems, contextual factors and women's opportunities for parliament in 23 democracies.' *Western Political Quarterly*. 40: 477-98.
- ¹⁷ Margaret Inglehart. 1979. 'Political Interest in West European Women.' *West European Politics*.
- ¹⁸ Andrew Reynolds. 1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4): 547-572.
- ¹⁹ Lawrence Mayer and Roland E. Smith. 1985. 'Feminism and Religiosity: Female Electoral Behavior in Western Europe'. In Sylvia Bashevkin *Women and Politics in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass; Clyde Wilcox. 1991. 'The Causes and Consequences of Feminist Consciousness among Western European Women'. *Comparative Political Studies*. 23(4): 519-545.
- ²⁰ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- ²¹ Reynolds measured socioeconomic development by the UN gender-related development index. Andrew Reynolds.

1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4).

²² Wilma Rule. 1987. 'Electoral systems, contextual factors and women's opportunities for parliament in 23 democracies.' *Western Political Quarterly*. 40: 477-98; Wilma Rule. 1988. "Why women don't run: The critical contextual factors in women's legislative recruitment." *Western Political Quarterly* 34: 60-77; Pippa Norris. 1985 'Women in European Legislative Elites.' *West European Politics* 8(4): 90-101; Pippa Norris. 1987. *Politics and Sexual Equality*. Boulder, Co: Rienner; Robert Darcy, Susan Welsh and Janet Clark. 1994. *Women, Elections and Representation*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

²³ United States Census Bureau. 2000. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1999*.

www.census.gov.

²⁴ UNDP. 2007. *Human Development Report 2007-8 Technical Note 1. Calculating the Human Development Indices*.

http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_tech_note_1.pdf

²⁵ See, for example, the discussion in Azza Karam. Ed. 1998. *Women in Politics Beyond Numbers*. IDEA: Stockholm. <http://www.int-idea.se/women/>

²⁶ Andrew Reynolds. 1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4): 547-572.

²⁷ Pippa Norris. 2000. 'Women's Representation and Electoral Systems.' In *The International Encyclopedia of Elections*. Edited By Richard Rose. Washington, DC: CQ Press. Pp. 348-351; Richard E Matland. 1993. 'Institutional Variables Affecting Female Representation in National Legislatures: The Case of Norway.' *Journal of Politics* 55(3): 737-55;

²⁸ Drude Dahlerup. Ed. 2006. *Women, Quotas and Politics*. London: Routledge; www.quotasproject.org

²⁹ Full methodological details about the World Values Surveys, including the questionnaires, sampling procedures, fieldwork procedures, principle investigators, and organization can be found at: <http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/wvs-samp.html>.

³⁰ These countries are ranked as equally 'free' according to the 2007 Freedom House assessments of political rights and civil liberties Freedom House. 2007. *Freedom in the World 2000-2001*. www.freedomhouse.org.

³¹ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

³² Andrew Reynolds. 1999. 'Women in the Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling.' *World Politics* 51(4): 547-572.

³³ For a review of the literature, Stephanie Greco Larson. 2001. 'American women and politics in the media: A review essay.' *PS Political Science and Politics* 34(2): 227-230. For an overview, see Pippa Norris. Ed. 1997. *Women, Media and Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.