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## Power and Participation: Women's Participation in the Arab Spring and its Impact on Women's Empowerment

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Honors Thesis

POWER AND PARTICIPATION: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ARAB SPRING  
AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

by  
Mary Harris

Submitted to Brigham Young University in partial fulfillment  
of graduation requirements for University Honors

Political Science Department  
Brigham Young University  
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Advisor: Joshua Gubler

Reader: Spencer Scoville

Honors Coordinator: Darin Self



## ABSTRACT

### POWER AND PARTICIPATION: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ARAB SPRING AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Mary Harris

Political Science Department

Bachelor of Arts

Middle Eastern governments typically score at or near the bottom of indices measuring women's rights and political participation. The Middle East also contains a large percentile of authoritarian regimes. The Arab Spring challenged these regimes' gender structures as they included vast female participation, but there is little existing research to understand the Spring's impact on opinions of women's participation and empowerment in the region. This study aims to add to existing research on this topic by analyzing Arab Barometer data from 4 questions dealing with opinions of women's participation in society gathered before, during, and after the Arab Spring. I employ difference in difference t-tests to highlight statistical differences in change of opinions before and during the Arab Spring. Additionally, I draw on twenty semi-structured interviews (conducted in Jordan in 2022) to supplement this quantitative analysis to identify causation between the Arab Spring and changes in public opinion towards increased women's empowerment. The quantitative analysis illustrates a correlation between the Arab Spring and opinions of women's empowerment, but the shifts of opinions are both negative and positive. The data suggests

that the negative impact is connected with the second half of the Arab Spring when the governments were subject to more instability. The interview results suggest a complicated relationship in the minds of Jordanians between the Arab Spring and public opinion of women's empowerment.



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## **Introduction**

In 2010 Mohamed Bouazizi burned himself protesting police brutality. His burning initiated a revolution in Tunisia. These original protests encouraged massive citizen uprisings which engulfed the Middle East, creating what scholars now call the “Arab Spring.” Citizens demanded “karamah,” or dignity from the government and, for the first time, entire populations united in pushing for it, spreading protests in their local cities and virtually. The uprisings were initially inclusive and pluralistic in nature, as the protests pulled from participants of different genders, religious beliefs, and economic stations. They united people against their perceived threat: the abusive government and laws (Lynch 2014). The Arab Spring led to many governmental changes, and increased instability in the region. Perhaps just as importantly, the Arab Spring opened doors for changes in the treatment of minorities and other disadvantaged groups in the region, doors that are still partially open in some countries today. This paper assesses the effects of the Arab Spring on one such group: women in the Middle East.

Despite the different political, social and cultural contexts in each country in the region, I hypothesize that the participation of women in each country improved public opinion towards women’s empowerment throughout the Middle East and specifically during the Arab Spring because of the role that women played in the protests. I first provide a brief historical background on the Arab Spring in the Middle East and the different levels of participation in different countries. Then I expand on the culture of the Middle East around women and women’s empowerment, and then review their participation in the Arab Spring. Afterwards, I outline a theory suggesting why the Arab Spring might lead to greater women’s empowerment. To further support the theory, I provide examples from other countries where this pattern has occurred. I evaluate the theory, first, through quantitative analysis of panel data relating to women’s empowerment asked in Arab Barometer surveys, then through qualitative analysis of 20 semi-structured interviews completed

in Jordan. The quantitative data comes from surveys run both before, during, and after the Arab Spring. This allows for identification of any correlation between the Arab Spring and women's empowerment. The 20 semi-structured interviews enable a closer look at causation.

### **Understanding the Arab Spring**

At the start of the Arab Spring, people in the Middle East saw the Arab Spring as an opportunity for democracy to sprout and values like women's empowerment to grow. In many cases the Arab Spring ultimately fell short, leading to greater harm to citizens, societies, and economies, but in other countries, the Arab Spring opened doors for improved governance. In places like Tunisia and Egypt, there was a complete turnover of leaders because of the uprisings. Prior to the Arab Spring Tunisia, Egypt and Libya were ruled by one leader for years. Additionally, these countries suffered economically from the beginning of the century. Tunisia exploded into protests and uprisings the same day that Mohamad Bouzazi committed suicide. These uprisings led to the retirement of President Ben Ali, who had ruled Tunisia for 23 years. Seemingly *all* of Tunisia rose in protest. A similar change in government structure spread to Egypt. The uprising in Egypt led to the forced retirement of their leader Mubarak who had ruled the country for 29 years—eventually leading to Egypt's first election. This alteration of government structures allowed for citizens' voices to be heard and led to changes in laws that are still in effect today. However, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya all suffer from the massive instability that infiltrated their countries after these structural changes (Lynch 2014). While most countries did not experience structural change to the same degree, majority of countries had large street protests that led to the adaptation of some governmental policies.

Countries like Iraq, Algeria, Lebanon, and Jordan all had similar substantial street demonstrations, however, prior to the Arab Spring these countries had differing political situations

and circumstances. Iraq was primarily ruled by one president until 2003, when the US replaced the ruling structure with an interim government until 2010. All the while, Iraq hosted a strong divide between Sunni and Shia groups. In Algeria, prior to the Arab Spring, the Bouteflika regime came to power, despite public opposition. Additionally, natural disasters and poverty crippled Algeria through the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Lebanon was a country strongly divided between Christians and Sunni and Shia Muslims. This republic that has faced internal corruption, and regional violence, and as a result often falls out of the normal patterns that other Middle East countries follow. Finally, Jordan is a Monarchy that has been ruled under the Hashemite family since its independence. While it does have a parliament, their power is limited because of the King. Understanding these countries prior to the Arab Spring offers contextual understanding for the events in the Arab Spring.

The street protests throughout Iraq, Algeria, Lebanon and Jordan impacted society, and some government policies but were not as reformatory as Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. The protests spread to Iraq in 2011, where Sunni and Shia groups united against the government—crossing a strong societal division to achieve a similar goal. These protests continued for the next four years. During this time, the Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki left office. During the Arab Spring, street protests spread throughout Algeria, covering all regions of Algeria for the first time. As a result, the government lowered the food prices, which helped calm the uprisings to a degree. Lebanese street riots began around the same time. The protests led to the retirement of several governmental leaders and reform; however, this reform was not comparable to the massive changes witnessed in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. These escalating protests increased instability and violence in the regions as the governments responded with punishment, injury, and death for the participants. This also led to instability within the governments as corrupt leaders were pushed out, and governments

struggled to replace them and initiate new election laws. Most countries throughout the Middle East suffered instability from street protests.

Several nations (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Palestine) did not face the same citizens' movements as Jordan, Algeria, Iraq, and the others just mentioned here. However, they were still heavily impacted by the regional wave of unrest. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are currently ruled by monarchs and have been for decades. During the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait increased funding to their citizens to demotivate unrest. Some smaller-scale protests still occurred, leading to the adoption of some new policies (Abouzzohour 2021). In contrast, Palestine is primarily ruled under one group (the PLO) and has suffered an abundance of illegitimacy issues since the 1900s. It is possible that the fragility of the state demotivated participants to revolt because they are fighting for state independence in the region.

### **Women in the Middle East and Arab Spring**

To fully comprehend the influence of the protests on women, an understanding of Middle Eastern culture surrounding women is vital. Men in the Middle East hold most political and social power. Their dominance permeates homes and communities as well as to the official seats in government. This pattern of male power has led to the dangerous treatment of women, including elevated sexual violence and discrimination; however, most women in this region feel that western ideals of feminism fail to appropriately counteract patriarchal dominance because they attack their beliefs and cultures (Claire 2020; Fox 2016). Women in this region have thus most often fought for their rights while also fighting for the preservation of their culture, creating a unique Islamic/Muslim Feminism which seeks for women's equality guided by ideas of Islam (Kharazmi Motahari and Kharazmi 2020). While these ideals of Islamic feminism predated the start of the Arab Spring, some argue that the pluralistic nature of these protests allowed for increased support

for Muslim feminism (Doaa Al-Dajani and Nikolaos 2022; Fox 2016; Kharazmi Motahari and Kharazmi 2020).

Women participated actively in the mass protests and uprisings throughout the Middle East. They were necessary during the Arab Spring as they fulfilled the roles of “individual protestors, organizers, supporters and followers of demonstrations, strategists and the reporters of events,” increasing the participants of these protests by thousands (Akman 2015). Women demanded freedom, equality, and social justice for all—including equal justice for themselves. Their involvement was “visible and vocal” as they involved themselves in Tahrir Square in Egypt, Change Square in Yemen, and Pearl Square in Bahrain (Cundiff 2017). During these protests and demonstrations, it seemed to many that women were able to “transcend the physical and social barriers between men and women in the public sphere;” the uprisings gave them a voice because they placed women in public roles previously denied to them (Cundiff 2017).

Tawakkul Karman was an active organizer and participant in the Arab Spring. Karman was a Yemeni journalist who began to organize protests during the Arab Spring. She called for democracy within Yemen and the Middle East, founding an organization called “Women Journalists without Chains.” Her local and virtual work furthered the efforts of the protests, and the voice of Arab women. Despite being imprisoned, she continued to unite groups towards democracy. She increased support for Muslim Feminism, believing that, “Islam is not an obstacle to the full acceptance of women in every sphere of society” (Khamis 2011; Fox 2016; The Nobel Peace Prize 2011). Her efforts were eventually recognized internationally, leading to her reception of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011.

Nawara Negm was an Egyptian female leader during the Arab Spring. She kept a record of events through her blogs which reached an international audience, garnering greater support for

the protests. She also aided in local Egyptian protests, becoming a prominent influence and irreplaceable leader (Khamis 2011). These are just two examples of women's participation in the Arab Spring and how such participation transcended traditional gender roles in the region.

However, women faced many setbacks due to the repercussions of their efforts during the Arab Spring. In March 2011 Nawal Al Saadawi, a prominent leader and well-known Egyptian feminist, organized a women's march in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt. She emphasized a need for women's rights, relying on the protests that had taken place in the previous weeks; however, some people perceived her efforts as an inappropriate time to advocate for women's rights as the nation was still in disarray. The march was projected and prepared to attract millions, but only around 500 marched in the square (Khamis 2011). Additionally, women faced higher levels of sexual assault. In Egypt, the regime desired to shame women by sexually harassing them and forcing them to take virginity tests.

State-condoned harassment of women was also evident in a religious festival in Egypt the next year (2012), where a significant number of women were sexually assaulted (Anderson 2011; Khamas 2011). The state and police did nothing to stop this assault and afterwards denied that sexual assault occurred; however, women used virtual methods to virtually share their truth. In Tunisia, women became victims of security forces. The government attempted to use violence against women to dissuade participation in the protests. In Libya, hundreds of women were raped and kidnapped. These women were attacked to lower participation. The state and local actors used violence against women to humiliate them (Cundiff 2017). Despite this violence, "Muslim Feminism" continued to gain support, but the wave of support was not strong enough to tear down all barriers for women.



As such, significant barriers to women still exist in the Middle East post Arab Spring. In Lebanon, there is still a prominent problem with marital rape (Clair 2020; Nassar 2019). In Palestine, there is still a lack of women's representation in local councils. Just over 20% of candidates are female, only 17% of the judges are female, and in the civil sector, general managers are just 11% female. Additionally, 61% of women in Palestine still report experiencing domestic violence (Women Convention - State of Palestine Initial Periodic Report to CEDAW - Question of Palestine 2017; Gender Quotas Database | International Idea). In Algeria, women suffer from financial and emotional abuse within their own homes and are struggling to participate politically (McAllister 2013; Sinha 2012). Jordanian and Algerian women cannot pass their nationality to their children; this right is only given to the male citizens of their countries (Asma 2017; Cundiff 2017). Women all throughout the region still struggle to participate economically. Entrepreneurship and employment are significantly lower in the Middle East compared to the rest of the world (Patel 2019). Women face barriers in the workforce because of societal norms and a lack of government backing. Women still suffer from sexual assault, which is especially dangerous within the walls of marriage. Child marriages still exist, escalating the difficulty of protecting women against this domestic violence (Patel 2019).

However, evidence also suggests some positive policy changes for women because of the Arab Spring. For example, the Lebanese parliament passed a domestic violence law in 2014. This law includes allowing for restraining orders and other policing and court reforms. In 2014, Palestine ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (Women Convention - State of Palestine Initial Periodic Report to CEDAW - Question of Palestine 2017). In Palestine, women also now have the legal right to own land and property and have equal inheritance rights (UNESCO 2019; Richter-Devroe 2011; WCLAC 2020; Baseline Study, etc.

2013). In 2013 there was an advocacy/support campaign run for women to create equality in inheritance. The gender quota database shows that in Jordan, the lower house has 15 out of 45 seats reserved for women and 30% of the municipal council seats (2020). The Egyptian constitution in 2012 was the first to explicitly state “equal opportunities for all citizens, men, and women” (McLarney 2016). While significant challenges remain, a number of organizations formed during the Arab Spring that continue to fight against such challenges (Baseline study, etc 2013). The adaptations of laws, policies and formal documents were a result of local and international pressures.

International pressure was hailed by local actors but inevitably led to hollow legal shifts within countries: the creation of laws and regulations that *appear* to give women more rights but lack reliable enforcement, leading to little societal change for women. For example, authoritarian regimes often use quotas in response to international pressure. The governments set a quota for women, but the quota has a minimal requirement for female seats and women still cannot obtain leadership positions in government. Additionally, quotas are absent from parties. In Palestine, women have the legal right to own property; however, the populace rarely enacts these laws because it is too expensive to involve the court, and cultural barriers still exist, demotivating women to take action (UNESCO 2019; Richter-Devroe 2011; WCLAC 2020; Baseline Study etc. 2013). International pressure created changes in official settings, but lacked the ability to change local opinions and barriers to women.

In summary, massive protests erupted in the Middle East, resulting in the Arab Spring. During these protests, women played vital roles and fought for their equal rights as citizens. While there were several changes to local laws and regulations, the results of these changes are difficult to measure. To understand the impact of changes on a population we must look at their perceptions

of women's empowerment. Understanding perceptions allows us to understand the shift in society mindset rather than outward policies. To understand these public perceptions I analyze public opinion surveys. This allows greater understanding of public perceptions from a random sample. Additionally, it allows the analysis of similar questions over several years enabling the degree of influence from the Arab Spring in shaping these opinions. This is the focus of the paper.

## **Theory**

I expect that the Arab Spring led to opinion shifts in favor of women's rights and participation throughout the region. This expectation rests on insights from social constructionism and on historical events similar to the Arab Spring which occurred in other regions and led to changed attitudes towards women in those societies.

People often follow established social norms; however, revolutions and uprisings shift society disrupting normal schedules leading people to reevaluate their societal. Such large-scale events generate new experiences which reshape individuals' attitudes and emotions. Social constructionists show how such new experiences can construct and reconstruct new attitudes within a specific community due to different experiences (Barrett 2013; Galbin 2014). Such a theory leads to the conclusion that revolutions and uprisings that actively generate new and positive experiences with marginalized groups such as women, will reconstruct attitudes towards these groups. As women actively participate, they expand their roles, filling places where men usually dominate (organizers, workers, journalists). Individuals' experiences with women in these new roles should shape their attitudes. I theorize that this attitude change will be positive toward women's adapted roles because people perceive that the active participation of women increases the functionality of society (Allen 1968; Allen 1956; Asch 1951; Brehmer 1988; Zald 1987).

The American Revolution provides evidence of this process at work. To ensure the success of the revolution, women had to participate in ways that expanded their societal roles. Women made clothes with symbols of the revolution, helped enable boycotts, aided the wounded, and acted as spies. They provided a pivotal and functioning role in society. After the American Revolution, women fought for the freedoms that they had in the revolution. Thus, Abigail Adams told her husband to “remember the ladies” when writing the new constitution (Ellet 2020; Martin 1976; Wani 2014). After individuals became more comfortable with the different roles that women played in the revolution, more women entered the workforce, and several prominent women started a feminist movement in America: Judith Sargent Murray and Abigail Adams (Murray 1995). The participation of women impacted the growth of the feminist movement and subsequently began to affect opinions on women’s empowerment (Ellet 2020; Wani 2014).

A similar expansion of women’s rights occurred in the US after World War I. WWI expanded women’s work because the economic positions held by men needed more workers. After women’s experiences in WWI, they began to demand more rights. More importantly for purposes of my theory, men began to change their attitudes as a result of women’s war-time participation and the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote, was passed (Boehnke 2022). A decade later, women increased participation in the workforce because of the strain from World War II. This evolution of women’s work was necessary for the rise of civil rights in the 1960s, which resulted in further change in governmental policies and public opinions around women's empowerment (Goldin 1989; Goldin 1989; Rose 2018; Lazerson 1998). It was the original opinion shift after the growth of positive experiences that led to societal changes and policy changes like the 19th Amendment. Thus, at all these various points in US history, as large-scale social events enabled greater participation for women in public life, attitudes and policies changed as a result.

In the Mexican revolution, women participated actively as well. Women of the rural and urban lower classes were involved in the military, heading into battles and aiding military campaigns. Maria del Refugio Garcia was a leader that made several public speeches against the dictator Diaz. Her influence persuaded many to join the cause and helped support increased women's empowerment. This increase in women's empowerment was evident in a change in public opinion and an adaptation of larger platforms for women and more work opportunities (Macias 1980; Fisher 1942).

We see similar participation trends for women during the Arab Spring, leading me to expect similar types of attitudinal changes. Demeritt notes that women participated in mass protests and, “were the real power behind the start of the revolution, (and) an essential component in it” (2014; 2016). Hweio writes that women had, “A strong presence ... in the Arab revolutions...(which) shifted the understanding of women's traditional role in those societies to another dimension” (2016). Evidence suggests that citizens demanded more rights from their governments, and the expansion of women's participation altered experiences with women and added to the population's consciousness. I expect that as a result, individuals in the region perceived the positive impact of women's participation in the Arab Spring and concluded that expanding women's roles would improve society (Allen 1968; Allen 1956; Asch 1951).

According to social constructionism, opinions are adapted when there are more positive experiences. The Arab Spring makes new experiences possible, however, participation was not universal across countries throughout the Middle East. An observable implication of this is variation in the opinions of countries based on differing experiences from the Arab Spring. To evaluate results across similar levels of participation, I divide countries into Moderate Participation and High Participation. I expect that countries that had higher participation had more places for

women to expand their roles, generating new and positive experiences, and thus enabling a positive attitude shift towards women. Moderate Participation had less extensive participation in the Arab Spring. I identify High Participation as Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen, with Moderate Participation countries as Jordan, Palestine, Morocco, Iraq, Lebanon, and Algeria.

The type of experiences are also important. Positive experiences lead to positive attitude shifts, and negative experiences create negative attitude shifts. After the Arab Spring, several countries were unstable leading to negative perceptions towards the Arab Spring and those involved in it. Additionally, the instability created harsher judgment for things that had changed during the Arab Spring, like gender roles. I predict that in the countries where negative climate ensued, there will still be growth in women's empowerment, but at a slower rate compared to other countries. I thus hypothesize that a country having more stability post-Spring should facilitate a climate for more positive perceptions of Spring participants, and thus more positive perceptions of women. I then further divide the Moderate Participation countries into those that were highly stable post-Spring, and those that were not. High Stability consists of Jordan, Palestine, and Morocco because the Arab Spring affected these countries, but they remained relatively stable post-Spring. Algeria, Iraq, and Lebanon are classified as having low stability following the Arab Spring. The stability division was not done within the High Participation countries because there are only three countries in this classification. Further dividing the countries would have made analysis more difficult.

	Moderate Participation	High Participation
Low Stability	Iraq Lebanon Algeria	Egypt Tunisia Yemen
High Stability	Morocco Palestine	

	Jordan	
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Thus, I expect that the Arab Spring changed the population's experiences with women because women participated in a different manner. I theorize that as people's interactions shifted, so did their opinions of women, improving the public opinion of women actively participating in society. The participation shifted depending on the country. As such, countries that participated more will show a stronger attitude change towards women. However, the social climate of a country post-Spring should also impact these attitudes. This paper will test the following hypothesis:

**H1:** Women's participation in the Arab Spring improved public opinion towards women's empowerment in the region. It will have the greatest effect in countries with High Participation, then countries with Moderate Participation and High Stability and finally countries with Moderate Participation and Low Stability.

## Methodology

To understand the correlation between the Arab Spring and opinions towards women's empowerment, I analyze responses to a series of questions, all on 4-point Likert scales, from the Arab Barometer. These questions ask the level of support for the following positions:

- *A woman can become president or prime minister of a Muslim country;*
- *In general men are better at political leadership than women;*
- *University education for males is more important than university education for females;*
- *It is permissible for women to travel abroad by herself.*

In a series of figures, I plot average support for the particular opinion questions according to country and year, connecting these with lines to highlight slope changes from one survey to the next. To explore whether the change in attitudes pre-Arab Spring is statistically different from the change in attitudes post-Arab Spring, I conducted difference of means tests. To do so, I first calculated the rate of change from 2006-10 (pre-Arab Spring) and then did the same for 2010-16 (during Arab Spring). While the first commemorating act of the Arab Spring was in 2011 the attitude shifts during that time were initiated before. This led me to measure the Arab Spring from 2010-2016. There were still remaining effects and events until the year 2016, which led me to evaluate these years. Additionally, public opinion surveys were only given during these years. I then calculated the difference of means (a difference in difference) between these two rates. The right-side panel of each figure shows the results of these tests. In this panel, if the difference is on the positive side of the graph, the Arab Spring correlates with a positive change in opinions towards women above the rate of change pre-Spring. If the point falls on the negative side, then the Arab Spring correlated with a decrease in positive opinions towards women.

These figures visualize the correlation of the Arab Spring with women's empowerment in these countries but do not provide evidence for causation behind this correlation. To evaluate whether these changes in slopes were *caused* by the Arab Spring, I conducted 20 semi-structured interviews in Jordan. Jordan was chosen as a case study for several reasons. First, it's clear that the Arab Spring in Jordan had female participation. During the Arab Spring, there were a number of street protests and opposition in which women participated. Additionally, after the Arab Spring, there were several policy changes specific to women (including the increasing quotas in parliament). Second, Jordan is a Moderate Participation country that was relatively stable post-Spring. This case allows me to check the assumptions behind the general causation model because



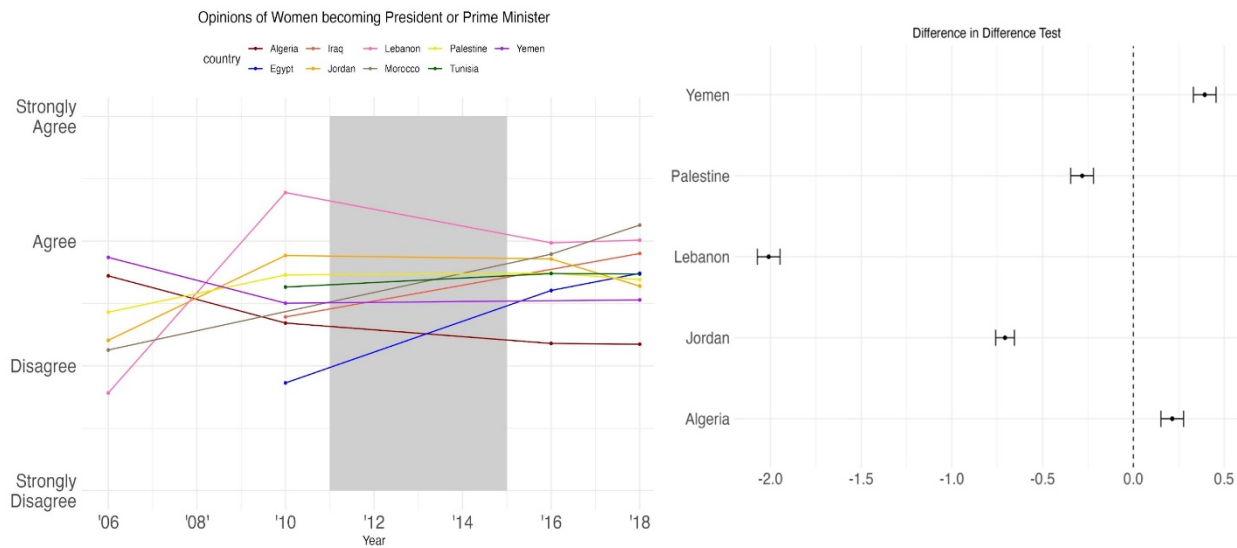
of its similar status to other cases in the study (Seawright and Gerring 2008). In the 20 interviews I conducted, the questions evaluated the participants' understanding of the Arab Spring, its impact on society, and participants' general opinions of women's empowerment. The interviews provide a closer look at the culture, allowing for a wider and more accurate analysis of the opinions surveys in the quantitative analysis. The semi-structured questions, original transcripts, and translations were all completed by me and are all included in the appendix.

## Results

*“A woman can become president or prime minister of a Muslim country”*

Figure 1 presents results measuring support for the statement “A woman can become president or prime minister of a Muslim country” before and during the Arab Spring. The left panel of this figure (and following figures) shows the average response by country and by year, which is connected to show change by year. The right panel shows the difference of means test.

My theory suggests we should see different patterns of results based on the intensity of citizen participation in the Arab Spring. I will thus discuss the three categories (High Participation, Moderate Participation and High Stability, Moderate Participation and Low Stability countries) separately. First, I begin with the High Participation countries. I hypothesized these three countries are where the Arab Spring should cause the most positive shift in attitudes toward women, but this is not supported by the data from Figure 1. Prior to the Arab Spring Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen all had different trajectories in attitudes towards women. Egypt showed an increase in positive opinion, Tunisia had no or little change, and Yemen had a negative trajectory. During the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Yemen had similar trajectories, illustrating little change in opinions of women being president in society, while Egyptian support continued to increase.



**Figure 1, Women becoming President or Prime Minister:** Support for a woman as president. The left panel shows average support per country, per year. The right panel shows the difference in difference plot between the change in opinion before and during the Arab Spring with 95% confidence intervals.

Moderate Participation, High Stability countries also do not support the hypothesis regarding the question about women becoming president or prime minister. Prior to the Arab Spring, Morocco, Palestine, and Jordan showed an increase in support for women to become president. In Morocco, this trend continued during the Arab Spring (2010-2016), and while the slope of change was still positive in Palestine and Jordan, it slowed during this time. The right panel of Figure 1 illustrates this trend, showing a negative rate of change for Palestine and Jordan during the Arab Spring compared to the rate prior to the Spring. There is no data available for Morocco during 2010, so the impact of the Arab Spring is ambiguous.

As expected, results differ for the Moderate Participation, Low Stability countries. Pre-Arab Spring, Iraq and Lebanon showed a growth in support for this question, while Algeria showed decreasing support. During the Arab Spring, Lebanon and Algeria both decreased in support for the question at a similar rate (Algeria's negative slope slowing), but Iraq continued to increase in

support for the question. The right panel illustrates the positive impact of the Arab Spring on Algeria and a negative impact on Lebanon. Despite having similar trends during the Arab Spring (relating to similar levels of violence and instability), the second figure includes data from pre-Arab Spring, and hence the results are opposite on the difference in difference plot.

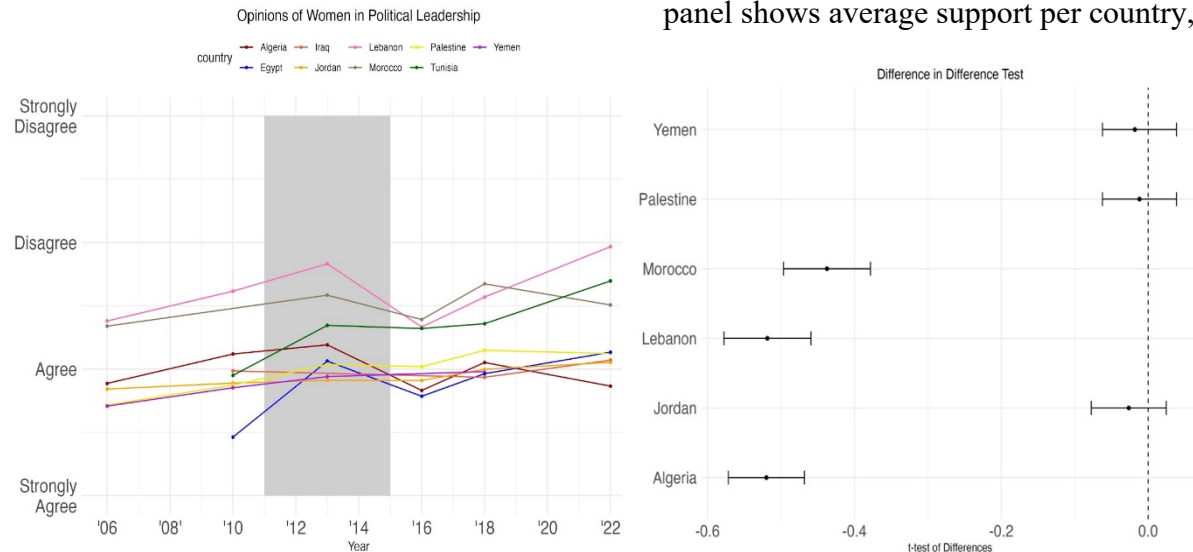
The hypothesis is not supported by the data in Figure 1 because Algeria and Iraq showed the most positive correlation with the Arab Spring but belong to the Low Stability group (hypothesized to have the lowest correlation). Additionally, the Low Stability countries of Palestine and Lebanon illustrate a negative correlation with the Arab Spring and in the High Participation group, only Egypt showed a positive growth correlating with the Arab Spring.

*“In general, men are better at political leadership than women”*

Figure 2 presents results measuring support for the statement “In general, men are better at political leadership than women” before and during the Arab Spring. Here again, I discuss the results using the three country categories discussed earlier. In High Participation countries there is evidence for a positive correlation with the Arab Spring, but it is not strong. At the beginning of the Arab Spring, Egypt and Tunisia had an increase in positive opinions, but this changed in 2013. The trajectory in Tunisia's support for the question slowed, and Egyptian support decreased. For the second half of the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Yemen had similar trends of little change. Yemen

had little change before the Arab Spring as well, which the right panel in figure two illustrated in the centered bar graph.

**Figure 2, Women in Political Leadership:** Support for a woman in political leadership. The left panel shows average support per country, per



year. The right panel shows the difference in difference plot between the change in opinion before and during the Arab Spring with 95% confidence intervals. This figure also includes a data point in 2013.

Moderate Participation, High Stability countries had a null or negative correlation with the Arab Spring. This was primarily due to the change of behavior from the second half of the Arab Spring. Before the Arab Spring, Morocco showed a drastic increase in support for the question while Palestine and Jordan had little change in support. During the first half of the Arab Spring (2010-13), all three countries followed a similar path with small increases in support for the question, but Morocco showed a decrease in positive opinion for the second half of the Arab Spring (2013-16). The right panel for Figure 2 shows that Jordan and Palestine exhibit little effect from the Arab Spring, but Morocco has a negative correlation with the Arab Spring. This particular data does not support the hypothesis' claim that Arab attitudes will have more support for women in political leadership during the Arab Spring in stable countries.

In Moderate Participation, Low Stability countries, the patterns again do not support the hypothesis in Figure 2. Before and during the first half of the Arab Spring (2006-2013), Lebanon and Algeria illustrated an increase in support for women's empowerment in relation to this question, but in 2013 their support for the question decreased. In 2016 the trajectory changed and the support began to increase. The fourth figure shows a negative correlation between the Arab Spring and Lebanon and Algeria. Between 2006-16, Iraq had little change in support for the question on political leadership, but similar to the other two it increased in opinions later (2018).

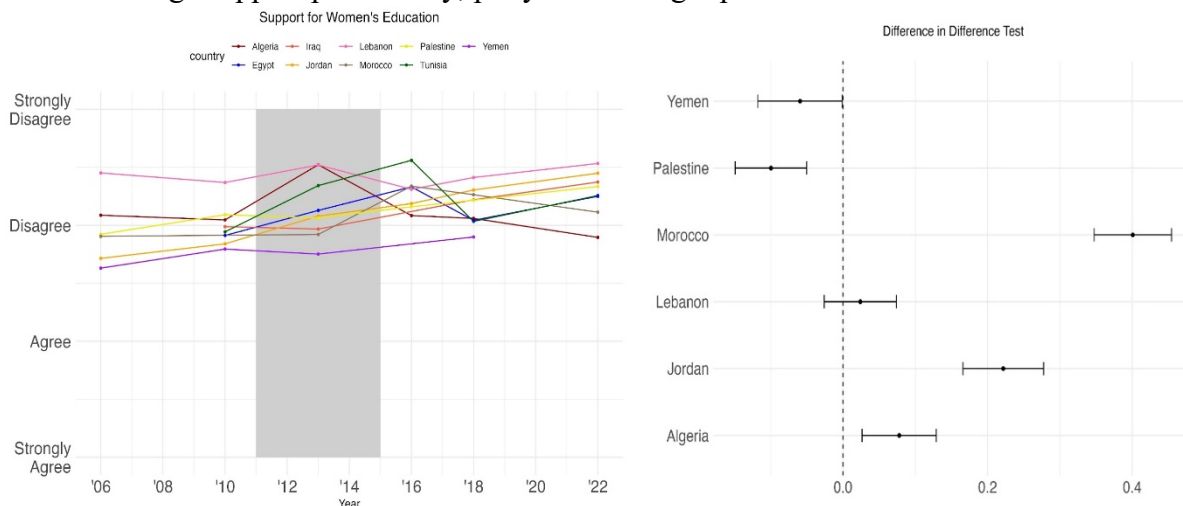
As the foregoing results suggest, the High Participation countries in Figure 2 originally showed positive support, but this changed halfway through the Arab Spring. This is mirrored by Morocco, but the other high-stability countries (Jordan and Palestine) have a more positive trend—supporting the hypothesis. The countries that have the most negative correlation were Low Stability, which supports the hypothesis—specifically, Lebanon and Algeria.

*“University education for males is more important than university education for females”*

Figure 3 presents results measuring support for the statement “University education for males is more important than university education for females,” before and during the Arab Spring. I will first discuss results for the High Participation countries. Tunisia and Egypt both show an increase in support, but after 2016 both countries showed a decline in support for the question. Yemen illustrated an increase in support until 2010, where it decreased until 2013 and then increased again. The result in the right panel of Figure 3, is a negative correlation between the Arab Spring and support of women's empowerment in Yemen.

Moderate Participation, High Stability countries show some support for the hypothesis. Prior to the Arab Spring, Palestine and Jordan both increased in support for women's education. During the Arab Spring, Palestine, and Morocco showed slight decreases in support, but the positive trend reversed during 2013 to increase in support. This change was much more dramatic for Morocco. Jordan had a relatively stable increase in support before, during, and after the Arab Spring. In Figure 3, Morocco and Jordan have an increase in support for opinions of women's education that correlates with the Arab Spring. Palestine and Morocco had similar trends during the Arab Spring, but because Morocco had a negative slope leading up to the Arab Spring, the left panel of Figure 3 shows a positive correlation with the Spring. This same plot shows a negative correlation between Palestinian support and the Arab Spring.

**Figure 3, Support for Women's Education:** Support for a woman's education. The left panel shows average support per country, per year. The right panel shows the difference in difference



plot between the change in opinion before and during the Arab Spring with 95% confidence intervals. This figure also includes a data point in 2013.

Moderate Participation, Low Stability countries followed similar trends. Prior to the Arab Spring Iraq, Lebanon, and Algeria all decreased in support. Between 2010-2013, Algeria and Lebanon both increased in support, but after 2013 support again decreased. Iraq increased in support after 2013. The left panel of Figure 3 shows a positive correlation between the increase

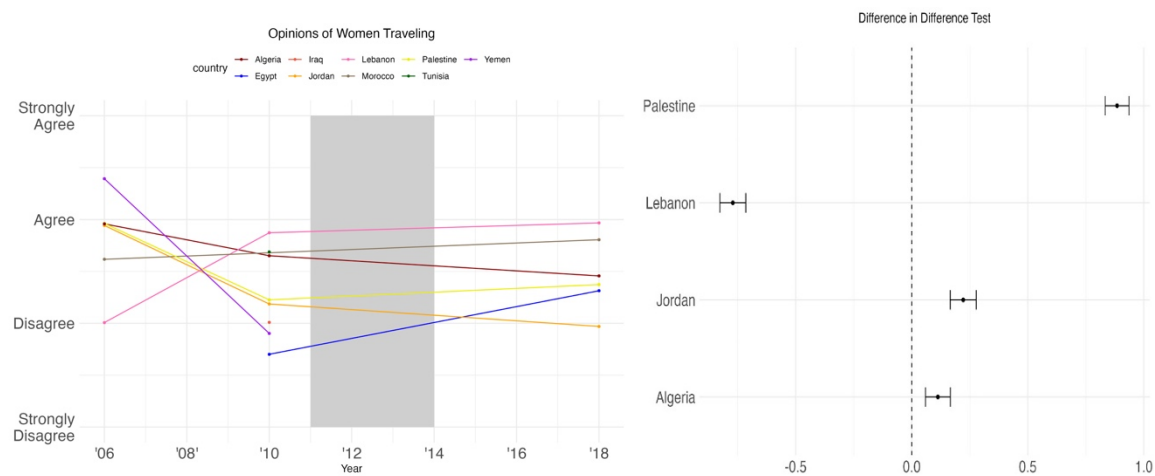
for support in Algeria during the Arab Spring. Despite Lebanon following similar trends as Algeria, there was no evidential correlation illustrated in the left panel because the trends evident in Algeria were more severe.

Overall, my hypothesis finds general support in this question. Most of the High Participation countries see a higher growth in support during the Arab Spring than before. In the High Stability countries, Jordan and Morocco also show increased support for women correlating with the Arab Spring, as measured by this question, but Palestine does not. The Low Stability countries have an increase in support between 2010 to 2013. However, after 2013 the positive opinions decreased, but at a lower rate. Only Algeria has a positive correlation with the Arab Spring. This question follows the predicted trend between High Participation, High Stability and Low Stability, but the hypothesis predicts complete positive correlation, which is not the trend for Yemen, Palestine, and Lebanon.

*“It is permissible for women to travel abroad by themselves”*

Finally, Figure 4 measures support for the statement “It is permissible for women to travel abroad by themselves,” before and during the Arab Spring. Again, the analysis starts with High Participation countries. Yemen only has data before the Arab Spring, which shows a steep decrease

in support for women traveling alone. Tunisia only has one point so it cannot be compared. Egypt shows an increase in support during the Arab Spring, similar to Morocco and Lebanon.



**Figure 4, Women Traveling:** Support for women traveling alone. The left panel shows average support per country, per year. The right panel shows the difference in difference plot between the change in opinion before and during the Arab Spring with 95% confidence intervals. This figure also includes a data point in 2013. There is a large difference in the number of years between these two values because of a lack of data, however this measurement still captures what we want in the graph and as such, is included in the paper.

Most Moderate Participation, High Stability countries had an increase of support correlating with the Arab Spring, except for Lebanon—as evident in the left panel of Figure 4. Prior to the Arab Spring, Morocco had a slight increase in positive opinions of women traveling alone; however, Palestine and Jordan both decreased support during this time. After the start of the Arab Spring, Palestine and Morocco had similar trajectories of an increase in opinions of women’s empowerment. Jordan continued to decrease in positive opinions of women’s empowerment. Figure 8 shows that Jordan and Palestine both had a positive correlation with the Arab Spring and support for women traveling alone.

The Moderate Participation, Low Stability Analysis could not be completed because Iraq did not have data to compare for this question. Lebanon and Algeria had opposite trends for this question. Prior to the Arab Spring, Algeria decreased in positive opinions of women’s



empowerment, and this trend continued but at a slower rate during the Arab Spring. Lebanon had an increase in support that continued to increase after the start of the Arab Spring but slowed from the pre-Arab Spring data. These trends are visible in the left panel of Figure 4, where Lebanon had a negative correlation with the Arab Spring, and Algeria had a positive correlation.

The previous results provide little evidence to support the increase of support in High Participation countries except for Egypt. There was much more positive correlation in High Stability countries, excluding Morocco. Additionally, Low Stability is divided between a positive correlation in Algeria and negative correlation in Lebanon.

### **General Observations**

Most of the countries had an increase in support which correlated with the Arab Spring, but some countries had a decrease in support. High Participation countries were divided between increase and decrease of support correlating with the Arab Spring, providing weak support for the hypothesis. Yemen has increased in support for the question about women becoming president, no statistical difference in support for the women in leadership and a decrease in support correlating with the Arab Spring for women's participation in education. Egypt and Tunisia did not have enough pre-Arab Spring data to run a difference in difference test, however Egypt had a positive result of women in president and education and traveling. Egypt had a decrease in support for women in leadership, but this was due to the second half of the Arab Spring. Tunisia had few changes in support for women becoming president between 2010 and 2016, but had an increase in support correlating with the Spring for women in leadership and education. Tunisia along with other countries decreased support for the questions between 2013-2016.

Moderate Participation, High Stability countries had an increase in attitudes of women's empowerment (the combination of all four questions). However, the Arab Spring had a negative

impact on support for women becoming president and little change in support for women becoming leaders. Regarding women achieving higher education, Jordan and Morocco had positive influences from the Arab Spring and Palestine correlated with a negative influence—primarily from the years leading up to the Arab Spring. On the question of women traveling unaccompanied the Arab Spring had a positive correlation with opinion in Palestine and Jordan and had no correlation in Morocco.

Moderate Participation & Low Stability countries were divided. Algeria had a positive correlation to the Arab Spring and Lebanon had a relatively negative correlation with the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring did affect Lebanon and Algeria in similar ways, but because they were not similar before the Arab Spring, the correlation of the effects with the Arab Spring are much different. Iraq had relatively positive trends, but there was not enough data to see if this was statistically different during the Arab Spring.

Taken together these results suggest that the outcomes are much more complex than the hypothesis predicted. Contrary to the hypothesis, countries in all three groups showed both positive *and* negative trends in attitudes towards women during the Arab Spring. Additionally, because of the lack of data pre-Arab Spring, the High Participation countries are difficult to compare, but most of the changes were positive, except during the second half of the Arab Spring in Figure 2 and 3. During the second half of the Arab Spring, Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen all showed a decrease in support for women's empowerment. The data from this time period shows that events in these countries (possibly relating to instability or government repression) impacted the opinions of women's empowerment negatively. High Stability countries were primarily consistent with the hypothesis, except for Palestine. Finally, Low Stability had an increase in support correlated with the Arab Spring with Algeria and Iraq but little change in support for Lebanon. The difference

between country groupings is not exceptionally different. There is some data showing more positive results for High Participation and High Stability, but this correlation is not strong.

### **Interviews in Jordan\_**

As previously noted, I designed and conducted interviews in Jordan to understand if the correlation in the figures were *caused* by the Arab Spring. To explore the effect of the Arab Spring on participants' attitudes, I conducted semi-structured interviews in Arabic, asking participants about women's participation in the Arab Spring and how this participation affected general opinions towards women. I gathered interviews evenly between men and women and attempted to gather responses among old, young, and middle-aged individuals. I also mixed the responses between married and unmarried individuals. However, these interviews are not completely representative of all the population because I relied primarily on social connections and location to collect these interviews. Many of these interviews were tied to my social connections to an English teaching institute. The people here were quite knowledgeable about western cultures and often were well educated. Additionally, most of these respondents were born and grew up in Jordan. People who would feel uncomfortable talking to me were not part of the sample (religious single men usually fall into this category). The twenty interviews often came from people who were more comfortable and sympathetic with the west and felt comfortable talking with a westerner. As such I predict that people would be more sympathetic to women's empowerment and freedom of expression—which are evident in much western culture.

### *Perceptions of Women's Participation in the Arab Spring*

I asked participants about their understanding of the Arab Spring, and their perception of the participation of women in the Spring. I hypothesized that people would understand both of

these concepts, however, when using the phrase "Arab Spring," only eight participants understood the term. The responses showed that the term "Arab Spring" is not widely known or used across Arab countries. After I explained the term (widespread protests in the MENA region in 2011 that started in Tunisia and spread, largely impacting places like Egypt), only three additional participants understood the term. From the group that understood what the Arab Spring was, all 11 referred to the protests in Jordan as "small", "weak," or uneventful. One participant said, "There was an attempt for Jordan to have Arab Spring, but of course, they were unsuccessful, and the government was able to contain all these, you know, attempts, I think they were contained and finally fizzled" (Interview 9). Participants did not think that the Arab Spring was very impactful in Jordan. Additionally, ten respondents were *glad* that the Arab Spring was small in Jordan. These respondents compared peaceful Jordan with the "violence" and "instability" of other states that had large protests during the Arab Spring. One respondent said, "There was not violence not like Syria or Egypt or others" (Interview 4). Another respondent suggested the small size of the protests showed that that Jordan was more 'secure' than the other countries and suggested in fact that, "they [migrants] came here (to Jordan) from Syria and Egypt from Iraq Tunisia and Libya" (interview 15) because of the instability of their own state during the Arab Spring. I hypothesized that participants would understand the Arab Spring and its impact, but just over half of the respondents knew what it was. Additionally, most respondents did not see a large impact from the Arab Spring.

My theory also suggests that opinions would adapt because the Arab Spring would open a way for women to participate. All of the participants that were aware of the Arab Spring (11 total) agreed that women had a role. One participant stated that, "... women's participation in the Arab Spring was close to the participation of men. They were out on the streets, hand in hand with men, also in all the things on the Internet" (interview 4) and another participant stated "I think in many

countries which experienced the Arab Spring the women were extremely effective” (Interview 9). These participants often reminded me that the Arab Spring was “weak” or “nonexistent” in Jordan, but they were aware of female participation. Of the 11 participants that understood what the Arab Spring was, however, only one directly mentioned the impact it had on life after the Arab Spring. This participant directly mentions adoption of policies which had a longer term impact on women, stating “maybe there were some policy changes in the Arab Spring and the governments changed in the Arab Spring because many youth in this time” (Interview 16). The participant does connect the Arab Spring with societal changes, supporting the hypothesis, but it is a weak connection. Also, this participant is connecting the Arab Spring with policy changes which can be an indication of attitude changes but is not the focus of the study. Specifically in Jordan, the lack of causational statements from the Arab Spring to attitude changes shows that people were aware of women in the Arab Spring but did not think the Arab Spring had any large impact.

The foregoing data shows that nearly half of the participants did not understand the term ‘Arab Spring’ even after explanation. From the group that understood what the Arab Spring was, all of them talked about the lack of a strong ‘Arab Spring’ in Jordan, or a lack of public participation in protests, and ten out of eleven believed this to be a good thing because it made Jordan more stable. Additionally, all eleven of these participants stated that women were actively involved in the Arab Spring.

#### *Did the Arab Spring change attitudes towards women’s empowerment?*

The Jordanians I interviewed were generally positive towards women but did not connect these thoughts with the Arab Spring. A majority (fourteen) of the participants agreed that women participating in society was a positive thing, and they were optimistic about the direction of women’s empowerment in the future. For example, one participant stated, “Women did not reach

an advanced degree in education (talking about the past) ... (but) the situation has become better, I mean in Jordan progress has been made, and women have completed their access to university and work” (Interview 9). These participants were often positive about the advances made for women and hopeful that these would continue. From the population that understood what the Arab Spring was, eight of them shared thoughts of women’s empowerment. The other six were positive towards women’s empowerment and did not know what the Arab Spring was. This shows some correlation between people knowing what the Arab Spring is and being positive about women’s participation; however, most of this group (twelve) did not explicitly say anything connecting the Arab Spring to women’s empowerment. This evidence shows little support for the hypothesis.

The other six participants did not state that women participating in society was positive. These participants did not share positive thoughts about increased female participation but were not explicitly negative. This group was split in half between the people that understood what the Arab Spring was and participants that did not. The even split shows no correlation with knowing about the Arab Spring and being negative about women’s empowerment. Again, the responses do not draw lines from the Arab Spring to women’s empowerment.

This qualitative analysis allows us to see the cultural context and evaluate if the correlation found in the data is supported by interpersonal links to the Arab Spring. From the participants that were positive about female involvement in the society, only three connected these dots to the Arab Spring (these three who were also from the group that knew what the Arab Spring was). Most participants did not see a connection between Jordan and the Arab Spring in general because according to all the participants, the Arab Spring in Jordan was small. The original hypothesis is only supported by these three participants. The other 17 show little connection between the Arab Spring and an increase of women’s participation.

## Discussion

My hypothesis predicted that the largest change in attitudes towards women's empowerment would occur in the High Participation countries, followed by Moderate Participation, High Stability countries and finally, Moderate Participation, Low Stability countries. The results loosely follow this trend, but there are more exceptions than predicted. The results for Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen (High Participation) are difficult to compare because most of the data for Egypt and Tunisia before the Arab Spring is missing, however, positive trends are evident in Tunisia, Egypt and sometimes in Yemen when data is available. The Moderate Participation, High Stability countries are mostly positive, with the exception of Palestine. The Low Stability countries are similar to the High Stability countries, with a split between positive effects (Algeria) and negative effects (Lebanon). The High Stability countries have slightly more positive results than the Low Stability countries, and the High Participation countries show more positive slopes than the low participation, High Stability countries, but these differences are difficult to compare because of the lack of data before the Arab Spring in some of the countries.

The results often differed question to question. The impact of the Arab Spring on opinions of women becoming president or prime minister (Figure 1) was mostly positive; however, the trend reverses in Figure 2 (women in political leadership), where the results are primarily negative or null. This is interesting because both questions deal with women in leadership. My sense is that this difference is best explained as a difference in the perceived role of women in these questions. The first question asks about women's roles as president or prime minister and is more pointed and direct than the second question, which asks about women in leadership more generally. The stronger question correlates with polarized responses. Figure 3 shows a mostly positive result of supporting women in education, but Yemen and Palestine are still negative. The results in Figure

4 are primarily positive, but the correlation is relatively weak because fewer countries, and fewer years are graphed. The individual questions differ showing that the opinions of the participants changed from different subjects. The hypothesis predicts that positive opinions should increase across all four questions to show support for a wider breadth of female participation, but the difference in responses from question to question show the importance of particular subjects to the participants. For example, support for women in political leadership was much lower than the other three questions.

Figures 2 and 3 have an additional data point during 2013, illustrating more nuances in the results. The figures show a common trend of an increase in support for women at the beginning of the Arab Spring (before 2013) and a decrease during the second half of the Arab Spring. This trend is evident in countries Morocco, Palestine, Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Tunisia. The decline during the second half of the Arab Spring could exist in the other two figures, but a lack of data prevents us from seeing this trend. Either way the second half of the Arab Spring was much more detrimental for attitudes towards women in political leadership and women in education than expected.

The semi-structured interviews, conducted in Jordan, aimed to make a connection between the influence of the Arab Spring and changed opinions of women's empowerment. However, perceptions of the impact of the Arab Spring on women were weaker than expected. Just over half (eleven) of the participants were able to understand the term "Arab Spring," and all these participants stated that the Spring was weak in Jordan. In fact, most of these participants were proud of the fact that the Arab Spring did not have an effect in Jordan. The participants compared Jordan to Egypt and Syria, hinting that the Arab Spring led to more negative consequences because of instability and economic depression. The participants are glad that there was stability in Jordan



and see stability as a cause of little participation in the Arab Spring. When asking the participants to connect the Arab Spring with women's empowerment, only three were able to make this connection, and their statements were relatively weak. The lack of evidence does not support the hypothesis.

## **Conclusion**

The quantitative and qualitative analysis just presented sheds light on the source and growth of opinions of women's empowerment in the Middle East, specifically in Jordan. The quantitative data measured correlations between the Arab Spring and public opinion. The hypothesis predicted that these correlations would generally be positive, however, they were not all positive. Additionally, when analyzing the interviews, I found little evidence of causation between the Arab Spring and public opinions, which again does not support the hypothesis.

This study aimed to make an exhaustive analysis of the effect of the Arab Spring on women's empowerment, however, there were some weaknesses in the study. First, a lack of data. The questions had limited years and countries, and across these years, the four questions explored here were the only four constantly asked regarding women's empowerment. These questions were only asked for the years available on the graphs. While some patterns would be better explained with more years, unfortunately this data is not available. Additionally, some data was missing, especially before the Arab Spring.

Pairing quantitative and qualitative data together makes a study more comprehensive and can fill some of the gaps in data. However, there are limitations to the qualitative data as well. For example, the interviews were conducted by an American (me). People in Jordan have stereotypes about America that often lead them to illustrate their country in a better light to a foreigner. This bias certainly affected some of the responses.

This study provides interesting findings on the Middle East and opinions in Jordan, but to create a comprehensive understanding, more research is needed. Further qualitative research in countries like Egypt and Tunisia would be interesting, because the population is well aware of the effect of the Arab Spring. It would also be interesting to run qualitative analysis in places like Lebanon and Palestine, where there was a relatively negative correlation with the Arab Spring and increase in positive opinions. These studies would enable researchers to understand the impact of the Arab Spring in a more inclusive manner.

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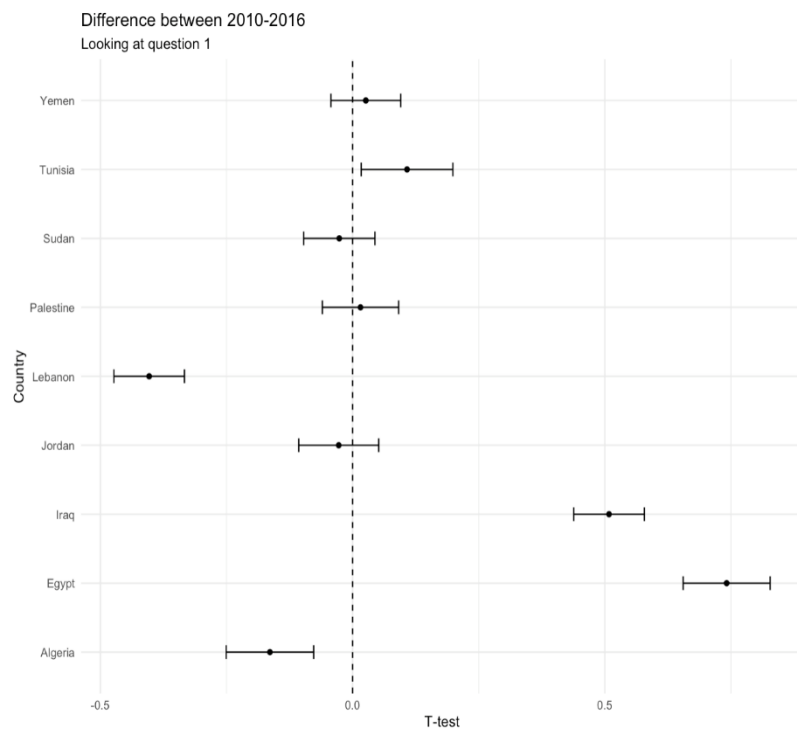
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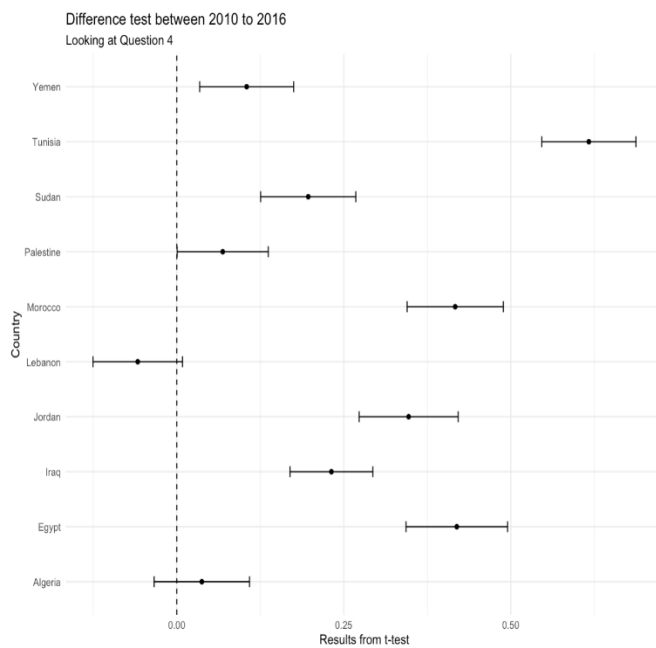
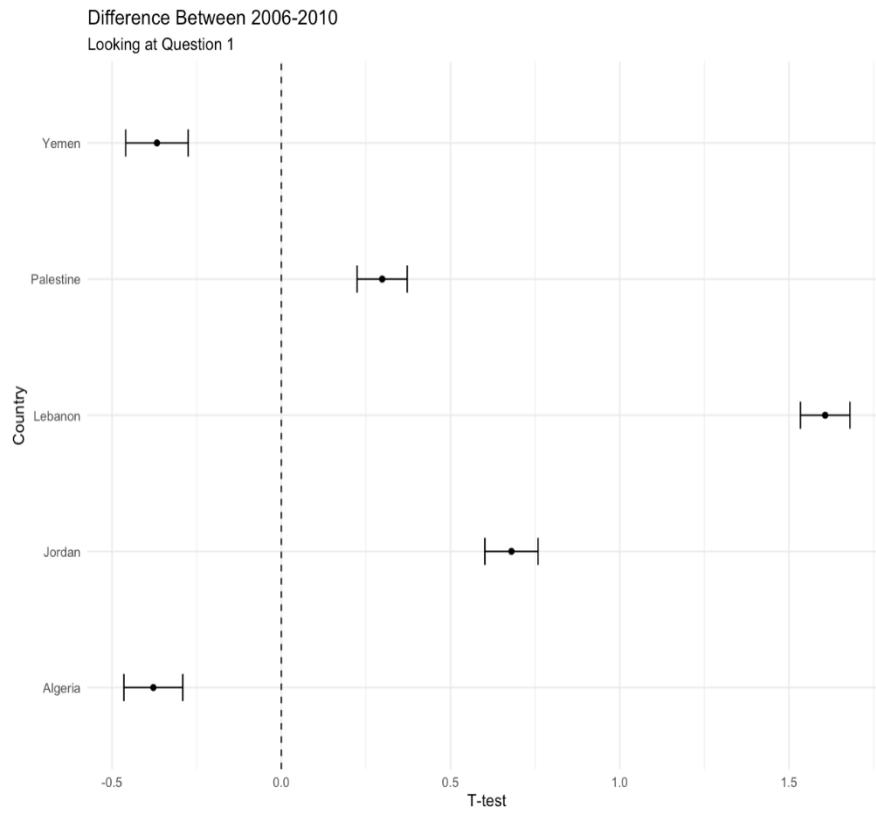
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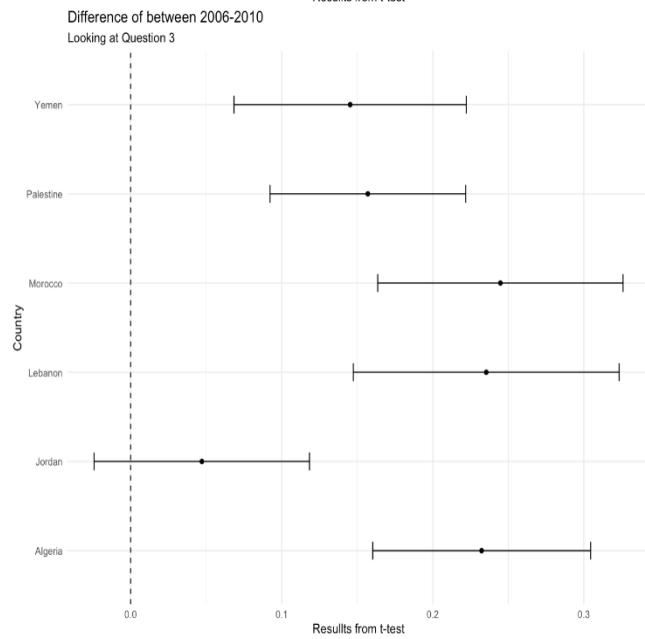
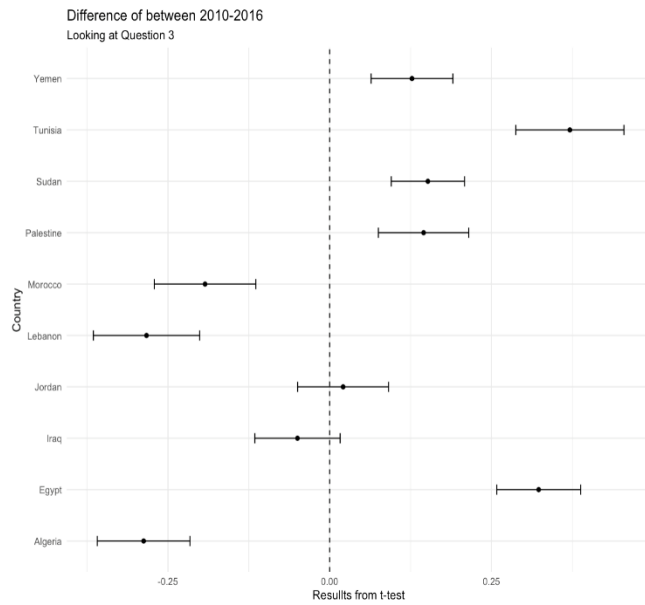
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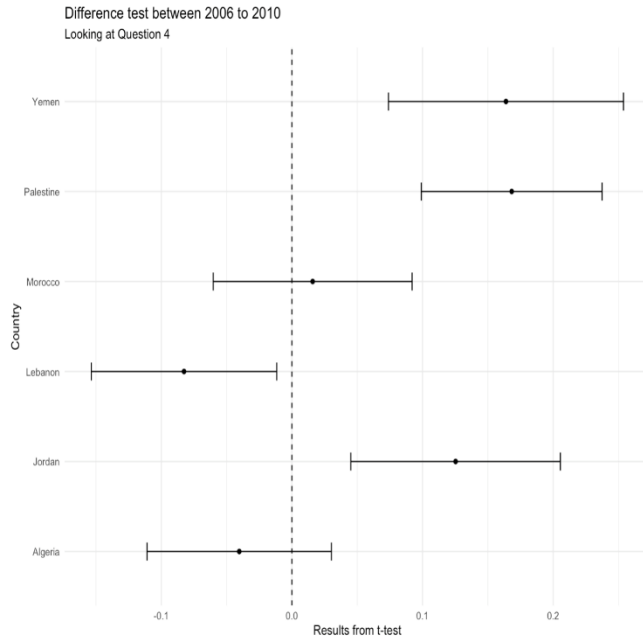
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Functionalism

## Appendix









### SAMPLE: Verbal Consent Script

Hello, my name is Mary Harris from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Joshua Gubler is the researcher in charge of this study.

مرحباً! أنا اسمي ماري هارس من جامعة بريغام يونج في مدينة بروفو في ولاية يوتا  
جوشوع جوبلر هو الباحث المسؤول عن هذا البحث.

I'd like to ask you to participate in a research study about opinions of women's empowerment.  
أحب أن أطلب منك أن تشارك في بحث عن آراء بتمكين المرأة.

If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to answer some questions about your experience in Jordan. The study will take about 20 minutes to complete. We will keep all of your information confidential.



إذا وافقت على المساهمة في هذا بحث، فسأطلب منك الإجابة على بعض أسئلة عن تجاربك في الأردن. البحث سيستغرق حوالي عشرين دقيقة. سنحافظ على سرية معلوماتك.

Being in this study is optional, and you can tell me if you want to stop being in the study at any time.

المساهمة في هذا البحث اختيارية ومن الممكن أن توقف المساهمة فيه في أي وقت.

Do you have any questions about the study?

عندك أي أسئلة عن البحث؟

Would you like to participate?

تحب أن تشارك؟

If you have questions about this study in the future, you can contact me at +1 3078717042. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can call BYU Human Research Protection Program at +1 801-422-1461 or email [BYU.HRPP@byu.edu](mailto:BYU.HRPP@byu.edu).

إذا لديك أي أسئلة يمكنك الاتصال بي على الرقم التالي: +1 3078717042. إذا لديك أي أسئلة أو استفسارات عن حقوقك كمشارك في البحث يمكنك الاتصال برنامج حماية البحوث البشرية على هذا الرقم: +1 801-422-1461 أو على هذا الإيميل: [BYU.HRPP@byu.edu](mailto:BYU.HRPP@byu.edu)

## Semi-Structured Interview Questions

*Generic demographic (these will not be recorded with the interview to assure that I have no identifying information for participants)*

- How old are you?

كم عمرك؟

- Where are you from?

انت من وين؟ وشو اصلك؟

- How long have you lived here?

كم سنة تسكن هنا؟

- What do you do for a living?

وين بتشتغل؟

- Are you married?

انت متزوج؟

*Participation in arab spring (independent variable)*

- Tell me how women participated in the Arab Spring? How did this change perceptions of women thereafter?

اخبرني عن مشاركة النساء في الربيع العربي. كيف أدى ذلك إلى تغيير تصور المرأة؟

#### *How participation affected*

- *Are there any organizations in the community that advocate for women's empowerment? Were these present before the Arab spring?*

هل هناك أي منظمات في المجتمع تؤيد تمكين المرأة؟ هل أنشئت هذه المنظمات قبل الربيع العربي؟

- *What do you think about the changes to gender quotas that happened after Arab Spring*  
ما رأيك بتغيرات الحصص النسبية في الحكومة التي حدثت بعد الربيع العربي؟
- *What are your thoughts around women's autonomy?*

ماذا تعتقد عن استقلال المرأة؟

#### Transcribed Interviews:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/16Y5e8pI6JgHAoYZzI4GrxhdAYzFPKIUjPVbuZtgqiEc/edit?usp=sharing>

#### Translated Interviews:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Otm7g6zTsSJyOT72BqcpQKgu5BdOYXyh7rxj03uQJd0/edit?usp=sharing>

\*some of these were coded directly from the audio because of the length\*

If there are any questions or concerns about the interviews please contact Mary Harris at [moh2001@byu.edu](mailto:moh2001@byu.edu)

#### Questions:

--From reading through the responses, I can see that a good chunk of your interviews were completed at PTI. More information about the background of the individuals. The relationship between their connection to PTI and their opinions/their socioeconomic (education) level and knowledge of the Arab Spring.

--Comparative context: what about other moments? Palestine in 1936? Egypt in 1952? Russia in 1915? 1917?

--Correlation between positive responses to the questions you ask and optimism about your country's political system/future.

--What about one more 'diff in diff' point further away from the Arab Spring—is this in line with general trends over longer periods of time?

--Trick part of working with 'opinions'—you need to code the information they give you to describe their opinion. When they talk about 'changes in policy' use other parts of their response to glean what their opinion is.