GENDER EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY,
THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND THE STATE:
EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY,
THE POLITICAL ORDER, AND WOMEN’S STATUS

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ABSTRACT

There are large inequalities between men and women throughout the world. Past research has attempted to explain differences of income between countries via certain well-established theories. However, early theories tended to ignore gendered differences and only focused upon a narrow view of inequality. This dissertation advances recent attempts to incorporate women into research on global inequality by broadening the focus of influential factors to the political order.

Theories of global inequality include modernization, dependency, and world system. The latter theories critiqued modernization theory, but neglected to consider the gendered nature of development and inequality. The women in development, and gender and development theories responded to this theoretical need by incorporating women into analysis on global inequality. Still, research to date has tended to neglect the political realm in favor of economic explanations, and to define inequality by a single, narrow indicator.

In this dissertation, I utilize country-level data drawn from 127 countries, including measures of economic dependency and development, culture, and politics. These variables are analyzed via multivariate regression analysis with full information maximum likelihood. This method allows researchers to include cases that have missing data that would otherwise be excluded. I estimate the effect of these factors upon
women’s status cross-nationally by the gender empowerment measure and gender inequality, both derived from the United Nations. The analysis includes descriptives, correlations, and multivariate regression.

The results indicate that dependency factors do not predict women’s status in accordance with the dependency/world system framework. The political order variables are significant predictors of women’s status, even when controlling for economic and cultural factors. Specifically, government size and women’s rights are significant predictors of gender empowerment, and democracy is a significant predictor of gender inequality. These findings contribute to the research literature on global gender inequality in two principle ways. First, the dissertation considers well-established factors as well as under-considered variables like political characteristics of states. Second, the statistical method employed for multivariate regression allows for the incorporation of more countries that are often excluded from research due to missing data.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

“Women do two-thirds of the world’s work, receive ten percent of the world’s income and own one percent of the means of production” (Robbins 1999: 354). In addition to economic inequality and exploitation, scholars have also noted that women hold less political power (Paxton and Hughes 2007), and have lower levels of education (Hepburn and Simon 2006). The reasons for these incredible disparities have been a frequent topic of study. These forms of inequality are not distributed uniformly across the globe. Thus, women in different countries face varying degrees and types of inequality. This dissertation broadly determines the important factors explaining cross-national differences in women’s status.

Though there has been ample research on global inequality and a fair amount of research on women’s status, there are a number of strengths of this dissertation, both theoretical and methodological. Researchers who study women’s status cross-nationally have often used economic dependency theory. Yet, to focus explicitly on economic dependency—and ignore other important factors—is reductionist. To do so diminishes the potential accuracy of such models. I argue in this dissertation for more-fully specifying these models to include important explanatory factors previously omitted, namely the political order. To my knowledge, no research to date has yet to consider the
many characteristics of the political order and its effect upon women’s status, as well as economic dependency. I argue that political factors such as the amount of government spending, the character of the polity, and the existence and enforcement of women’s rights are all important predictors of women’s status—and thus deserve our attention.

I also consider women’s status to have a multi-dimensional quality. Most research focuses only on one dimension of women’s status, often economic in nature (i.e. occupational segregation or income inequality). This dissertation goes beyond this narrow conception of women’s status. I use two measures of women’s status developed by the United Nations: the gender empowerment measure (GEM) and gender inequality (GI)\textsuperscript{1}. With the use of these measures, this study captures several dimensions of women’s status including economic, political, educational, and health aspects. The use of two dependent variables allows for the comparison of both measurements of women’s status.

In addition to theoretical contributions, this dissertation also has methodological strengths which improve upon past research. Primarily, I utilize a novel statistical technique that allows for the inclusion of a large number of countries in my models. Previous research tended to include only countries with complete data for all variables; consequently, many countries—especially countries with limited recording capacities—have generally been excluded from analysis. This dissertation’s analysis includes many of these previously ignored countries, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

The following introduction describes the main elements of this dissertation. First, I introduce the important scholarly literature on cross-national inequality, particularly

\textsuperscript{1} This measure is derived from two UN measures: the Human Development Index and the Gender-Related Development Index. I will further explain how this variable is constructed in Chapter 3.
gender inequality. Second, I discuss the data and methods I use in this dissertation. Next, I describe some of the central findings of this research. Finally, the major theoretical contributions are introduced.

In Chapter 2, I first explore the major research literatures on international economic development and inequality. There is a significant literature on international development; although early research utilized modernization theory, much contemporary research uses a dependency/world system framework to study between- and within-country income inequality, finding that dependency increases income inequality. I then detail how researchers of gender inequality have used this research literature and theory to better understand the status of women—via the women in development and gender and development theories. Feminist dependency/world system researchers have argued that economic dependency also increases gender inequality (Ward 1984). Their research has furthered our understanding of how the global economy impacts the status of women. For example, countries whose economies are focused on exports (Akhter 2006; Ward 1984), countries with exports concentrated in one area (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991; Pampel and Tanaka 1986), and countries with a extensive foreign debt and aid tend to have higher rates of gender inequality (Afshar and Dennis 1992).

The cross-national research on women’s status has tended to focus, for the most part, on the effect of economic dependency. No research has yet to consider the combined influence of culture, and the political order upon women’s status. I describe how an understanding of culture and politics can deepen our understanding of women’s status. The impact of culture has mainly been explored through examining the impact of religion and region on women’s status. For example, researchers have found that Islamic and
Latin American countries have higher levels of gender inequality. I also explore the impact of the political order on women’s status, by examining three influential aspects of the political order. First, I examine the relationship of government size (e.g. government spending) on women’s status. Second, the degree of a polity’s democracy can impact women’s status. Finally, some scholars have argued that the enumeration and enforcement of women’s rights by states will influence women’s status. These important factors deserve consideration in any serious, comprehensive study of women’s status.

In Chapter 3, I detail the data and methods used in this dissertation. In addition to describing data and their sources, I also focus upon the important methodological advances this dissertation introduces. Since all of the data for this dissertation are country-level data and because of the well known missing data problems with cross-national research, I employ a method that allows for the inclusion of cases with missing data. Because of missing data, regression often results in very small sample sizes. Consequently, many countries are excluded from analyses and because of small sample sizes researchers are limited in the number of independent variables that can be included in each equation. In this dissertation, I use an innovative method that overcomes this major statistical problem with cross-national research: multiple linear regression with full information maximum likelihood (FIML). This method allows me to retain those cases (countries) that would be dropped in a regression analysis (due to the listwise deletion of missing data). FIML does not impute missing data, but uses existing data to provide a “full information” estimate of parameters, thus allowing the analysis to include all cases with data on some, but not necessarily all variables. The use of FIML in this area of research permits the inclusion of countries with partial data that are regularly dropped
from cross-national analyses. The results of this analysis are thus more generalizable to actual patterns of women’s status throughout the world. Finally, at the end of Chapter 3, I explicate the hypotheses for this dissertation and explain how they will be tested.

I report the results of my analyses in Chapter 4. Contrary to my hypotheses and some prior research, I did not find the expected relationships between economic dependency, and gender empowerment or gender inequality. World system position was a significant predictor of women’s status for only half of the models. However, political characteristics had significant positive effects on women’s status. For example, government size predicted higher levels of gender empowerment, a democratic regime was associated with lower gender inequality, and some evidence existed for a positive relationship between women’s rights and gender empowerment.

Thus, these findings indicate that economic dependency does not seem to have the same negative consequences for women’s status as others have found for income inequality generally. These results suggest that economic dependency either does not affect women’s status or it has positive consequences for women. Also, this study supports the argument that particular state characteristics may benefit their female populace. Consequently, researchers should theorize about how these elements of the polity help women, a theoretical area that is thus far in its infancy. Chapter 5 interprets the dissertation’s major findings in light of economic dependency/world systems and political theories about inequality.

Chapter 5 also discusses the limitations and weaknesses of this dissertation, notably issues of missing data and the conceptual weaknesses of some variables. But, there are additional shortcomings inherent in the level of analysis used: country-level data
aggregates individuals together and cannot thus differentiate between groups of people within countries (for example, class and race differences). I then summarize the important contributions of this dissertation to the research literature on women’s status. The dissertation points to a number of interesting directions for future research that could build on the important work I have begun here. Finally, because of the relevancy of this research for the real lives of women throughout the world, Chapter 5 includes policy recommendations implicit in this dissertation’s findings.
CHAPTER II

RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY, CULTURE, AND THE STATE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss several theories of development related to inequality and the status of women. First I review literature on economic explanations of inequality, focusing on the theories of modernization, dependency, and world system. These theories mainly explore the impact of the global economy on inequality. For each of these theories I present the feminist theoretical response, including the women in development and gender and development approaches. Second, I discuss the literature on the impact of culture on the status of women. Finally, I review the literature on political explanations for inequality, with attention to the relationship between the state, the global economy, and gender inequality.

Theories of Development and Inequality

Three theories have been used by global economy and development theorists to explain the differing levels of development and inequality between countries: modernization, dependency, and world system theory. In this section, I review each of these in turn. The original conceptions of modernization, dependency, and world system
theory have all neglected to incorporate gender into an analysis of international
development and global inequality. This omission has resulted in theories and policies
that ignored the gendered outcomes of development processes and the policies meant to
increase economic development. Many feminist theorists and researchers have attempted
to integrate women into these theories of development. Women in development theory
responded to modernization theory’s neglect of women, and gender and development
theory responded to dependency/world system theory’s failure to integrate gender in their
analysis. These feminist theorists argued that we need to understand women’s role in
development in order to design policies that not only successfully foster development, but
also policies that are not detrimental to the lives of women.

Modernization Theory

Modernization theory developed out of mainstream United States economics and
sociology in the 1950s-60s (Fernandez-Kelly 1989). Modernization theorists proposed
that economic development\(^2\) is linear and all countries progress through similar processes.
These theorists believe all countries will “naturally” develop and that poorer countries
would follow paths similar to Western countries such as the United States and the United
Kingdom (Rostow 1960). Rostow calls this process “essentially biological.” His book,
The Stages of Economic Growth, focuses on the economic system and the “five stages of
growth”: 1) the preconditions for take-off, 2) the take-off, 3) the drive to maturity, 4) the
age of mass consumption, and 5) beyond consumption. In order for less developed

\(^2\) It should be noted that “development” can arguably also include political, cultural, and
social development.
countries to progress, they must emulate the model of already-developed countries (Burkett and Hart-Landsberg 2003).

According to modernization theorists, internal problems within a country explained why some poorer countries lagged behind in economic development compared to wealthier countries (Inkeles 1974; Lerner 1958; McClelland 1961). Lagging development was explained by deficient or absent norms, morals, or cultural values. Countries that were not developed were often termed “backward,” or considered to be morally or culturally inferior (Burkett and Hart-Landsberg 2003; Eschle 2004). The “traditional” values or social ties of these countries were believed to impede what was viewed as the natural process of development (Crowly, Rauch, Seagrave, and Smith 1998). In fact, Rostow’s (1960) first stage of economic growth, the preconditions for take-off, are cultural preconditions.

The solution proposed for countries that lagged behind was to adopt economic, political, and cultural guidelines from industrialized, Western countries, which would lead to economic growth (Roxborough 1986). Rostow (1960) argued that development depended upon the acceptance of science and innovation, lower fertility rates, and investment in economic expansion. In a critique of these ideas, Burkett and Hart-Landsberg (2003) argued that these “catch-up” theories limit development to the types of capitalist development that have already occurred in the past. According to modernization, there is no room left for alternative development views of an anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist nature. Nor does it account for obstacles to late development by early developing countries. Even now, the hypotheses put forth by modernization theorists are
still used by organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to formulate development policies for poorer countries (Scott 1995).

Modernization theory posited that there is a curvilinear relationship between inequality and economic development. When comparing agrarian and industrialized societies, research has found that there has been a middle level of inequality in agrarian countries, the highest level of inequality in transitional countries, and the lowest level of inequality in industrialized countries (Bornschier and Ballmer-Cao 1979; Kuznets 1955; Paukert 1973). This is often referred to as the “Kuznets curve” and has been used as evidence to support modernization theory (e.g. Lenski 1966; Rostow 1960; Smelser 1967).

Modernization theorists do not see economic development as the only goal. Development itself is considered to have positive outcomes independent of economics. According to these theorists, economic development is also good because it is seen as having social benefits for countries. Therefore poorer countries that can develop – often measured by an increase in GDP – benefit from higher standards of living, lower mortality, lower fertility rates (Shen and Williamson 2001), as well as lower rates of poverty (Falkingham 2005). Modernization theorists have not considered gender when theorizing about development and have treated development and income inequality as a gender-neutral phenomena. There has been a feminist response to the omission of women in modernization theory, which I describe next.
Until the 1970s, the role of women in economic development was completely ignored. This is not surprising since the areas of study within sociology, as well as the study of international development (Moghadam 1999; Ong 1994) have been largely determined by hegemonic male interests (Collins 1992; Smith 1987). Feminist researchers critiqued modernization theory as biased due to the omission of women and began exploring the relationship between gender inequality and international development (Boserup 1970; Boulding 1976). In her book *The Underside of History*, Boulding (1976) argued that women have always been important actors in history, but that their major activities were made invisible by their disproportionate seclusion within the family household.

The first development theory that included gender was dubbed “women in development” (WID), which was an extension of the modernization approach. In her influential book, *Women's Role in Economic Development*, Boserup (1970) considered how international economic development, as a gendered process, affected women differently than it affected men. According to Boserup, women had been left out of the traditional development process and had not benefited from development efforts that had targeted Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Boserup theorized that women's subordination and ensuing exploitation in poor countries was the result of their exclusion from waged labor. She argued that women needed to be *included* in the economic development process and, in particular that women need to be brought into the formal economic sector in order to reap the full rewards of development. Like the Kuznets (1955) curvilinear relationship of development and inequality, Boserup argued that the process of gender
inequality and development was an “inverted u-shaped” curve. In the initial stages of the economic development process, gender inequality increases before it starts to decrease in later stages.

WID theorists, including Boserup (1970), argued that gender inequalities were likely to decline as a country developed because of an increase in economic opportunities and firm competition. Like modernization theorists, WID theorists also believed that competition drives out discrimination (Becker 1985; O'Neill and Polacheck 1993). Competition was expected to eliminate gender inequalities in employment, education, finance, training, and overall discrimination. WID argued in favor of women’s access to education, jobs, and capital to achieve gender equality.

One form of economic globalization, openness to trade, may have positive benefits for women. It is claimed that trade policies like, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), have created long-term employment opportunities for women (United Nations Development Fund for Women 2000). This form of economic development, openness to trade, has been found to increase income (Frankel and Romer 1999) and countries with liberal trade policies are also often those countries with high human development (as measured by the UN’s human development indicator) (Mandle 2001).

As a result of WID’s dissemination amongst economists and development theorists, gender equality began to be seen as a development goal in its own right and has been recognized in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), now signed and ratified by a majority of poor countries (Abu-Ghaida and Klasen 2004). The WID framework was promptly adopted by many
aid agencies and international organizations including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Moser 1993). These organizations have recognized that, in accordance with the WID perspective, women’s incorporation into development policies was an untapped resource which can contribute economically to development (Moser 1993). In other words, women’s inclusion in the labor market or economic productivity can aid in the development of poor countries. Therefore, women are not only seen as benefiting from the development process, but also countries undergoing development would benefit from the inclusion of women.

Since the 1970s, increasing numbers of women in poor countries have been entering the formal workforce (Moghadam 1999). However, the majority of women who entered the formal workforce in poor countries received low pay in unstable jobs, often in export-processing factories (Jayasinghe 2001). Women's increased labor force participation has also been a result of additional factors: rising education attainment of women, economic need and household survival strategies, and demand for relatively cheap female labor from industries and services. The result of the rising participation of women in low-wage, formal labor is often labeled as the “feminization of poverty” (Marchand 1996). Contradicting Boserup’s prediction, neither women's labor force participation nor higher levels of education have completely eliminated differences in status or income between men and women (Fernandez-Kelly 1989). Others have argued that the relative small wages that women receive in export-oriented sectors is better than not having access to any income. These researchers see women’s income as enabling women to be self-assured, assertive, and to escape familial supervision (Acker 2004; Acosta-Belen and Bose 1990; Bhagwati 2004; Deo 2006).
Women have been gaining an increased share of many kinds of jobs, but this has not been accompanied by a redistribution of domestic, household, and child-care responsibilities (Moghadam 2000; Moghadam 1998). Women are responsible for what Boulding called the roles of “breeder-feeder-producer” (1977, 55). She observed that women have had a triple role of reproduction (breeding), taking care of others (feeding), and engaging in productive work (producing). The first two roles of breeder and feeder have been exclusively assigned to women in most societies. Boserup’s suggestion of integrating women into the existing frameworks of development did not require a critique of this sex-based division of household labor. Moreover, she was not critical of the process of development itself and did not see it as inherently problematic.

A central critique lobbied against the WID perspective has been that it does not challenge the patriarchal and hegemonic capitalist systems. It has been suggested that, WID theorists failed to identify women’s exploitation as part of the larger global system of capital accumulation (Beneria and Sen 1987; Mies 1986). WID theorists did not question why women had not fared as well as men, or explore the structure of women’s subordination and oppression. WID focused on how women could have greater participation and how they could be integrated into existing systems and programs (Rathgeber 1990). Often, WID assumed that access to income would improve women’s status generally. To my knowledge, no studies have found evidence of this relationship. In many contexts, women lack decision making authority. Therefore as their income increases, they may still not have the power to decide how that income is spent. The WID perspective ignored the influence of class, race, and culture, and treated women as a homogenous group (Nijeholt 1987). These theorists did not recognize that women from
privileged positions have been affected by development differently than poor women of racial or ethnic minority groups. Finally, WID has also been criticized for its top-down, structural approach that ignores women’s agency (Moghadam 1999). Some of these critiques have been influence by other theories of development, which are also critical of modernization theory.

*Dependency/World System Theory*

In contrast to modernization theory, which is criticized for being ahistorical and not considering larger global processes and policies outside of poor countries (i.e. Frank 1967; Frank 1969), dependency theory developed out of the Marxist tradition with an explicit focus on exploitation. According to dependency theorists, the lagging development of poor countries is the effect of long-standing “unequal exchanges” between poor and rich countries (Sen 1987). The unequal exchanges between these countries have resulted in a handful of rich, economically-developed countries and a larger number of poor countries that have not benefited from the global economic system. The title of this theory alludes to the dependent relationship between rich and poor countries (Roxborough 1986). Poor countries are “dependent” on wealthy countries; poor countries exchange raw materials for jobs and capital from wealthy countries. Thus, dependency theory stressed the “power relationships between countries” (Kentor 1998, 1043). Dependency theory contains three main types of dependency that I explain below.

Wallerstein (1974) argued that dependency research brought to light the need for a new unit of analysis; it was not enough to examine an individual country to understand why it has or has not “developed.” The study of development processes requires an
understanding of the world economy and the political nature of inter-country relationships. So, these theorists examine the pattern of trade relationships between countries. The appropriate unit of analysis, according to Wallerstein, was not the country, but the world system.

Within Wallerstein’s (1974) world system, countries are economically positioned as core, periphery, or semi-periphery; these positions are the result of uneven development rooted in colonialism. Core countries are those countries which exploit the periphery, and to some extent, the semi-periphery. Core countries are highly industrialized and possess a large amount of the world’s wealth. They have large economic, military, and political resources that enable them to limit threats to their economic stability. The United States, Germany, and Japan are examples of core countries. Periphery countries are those that are disadvantaged in relation to core countries (Kick, Davis, Lehtinen, and Burns 2000). Periphery countries are often former colonies of the core and, as a result, suffer from weak domestic economies. Zimbabwe, Bolivia and Indonesia are examples of periphery countries. Semi-periphery or “middlemen” countries are developmentally between the core and periphery, and are often regional economic powers. Semi-periphery countries are major exporters of minerals and agricultural goods, and are often the political and economic buffers between core and periphery countries. Argentina, Spain, and South Africa are examples of semi-periphery countries (Kick, Davis, Lehtinen, and Burns 2000).

The location of countries in the world economic system is by no means fixed. A small handful of countries have shifted from being in one category to another. In all these cases, countries have moved in and out of the semi-periphery. For example, Spain, once a
A powerful core country is now a semi-periphery country. The economic relations between core and periphery countries, both now and during colonization, have tended to operate against the overall interests of the periphery countries, which has increased their exposure to external events and pressures (Sen 1987).

The world system has facilitated three main types of dependency within periphery countries: classical, investment, and debt dependency. The first type, classical or trade dependency, asserts that periphery nations are dependent because of a “vertical trade pattern” (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007). Periphery countries trade raw materials for processed goods, creating an unequal relationship (Bunker 1984). This trade pattern creates reliance by peripheral countries on foreign capital that is invested in the exportation of raw materials and then peripheral countries import manufactured goods from the core (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985; Frank 1967; Frank 1969; Frank 1972). Corporations in core countries develop relationships with elite groups in periphery countries which Frank (1967) called the “Lumpenbourgeoisie.” The peripheral countries then become dependent on foreign capital.

Another variation of classical trade dependency is commodity concentration. Countries with high levels of commodity concentration obtain most of their export revenue from just a few commodities (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007). Commodity concentration is often measured as the percentage of a country’s largest export. High commodity concentration is believed to increase income inequality. For example, in 1985, 62 percent of Ethiopia’s exports were coffee. This concentration puts Ethiopia’s economy at risk to variations in the international price of coffee.
The second type of dependency described by world system theory, investment dependency, refers to the role of foreign investment in creating dependency between poor and rich countries (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985; Bornschier, Chase-Dunn, and Rubinson 1978). Researchers have argued that since the 1960s investment dependency has become a more important type of dependency (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985; London and Williams 1988) and that international flows of capital are better indicators of dependency than trade measures (Beer and Boswell 2002; Chan 1989) due to the changing nature of international economic relationships between core and periphery countries. Investment dependency is characterized by an alliance between foreign capital, local capital, and the periphery state. With foreign investment comes rapid economic growth, often in manufacturing, that tends to result in growing inequality within the country. Within the periphery, foreign investment produces a highly paid elite that benefits from corporate profits and a large group of marginalized workers (Evans and Timberlake 1980; Ward 1984). Galtung (1971) characterized this type of within-country inequality as existing between the “center” and the “periphery” in a given country. Therefore, some groups within the periphery benefit from dependence or the peripheral status of states. One could argue that this process is currently occurring in China. As more multinational corporations invest in China, the Chinese economy is growing, benefiting a small elite and middle-class, while large numbers of poor and rural people do not benefit and may even face detrimental consequences of investment.

The third type of dependency, debt dependency, refers to the dependent relationships that result from capital being borrowed by periphery countries from core countries or international organizations controlled by the core. When loans cannot be
paid back, indebted countries are often forced to take out new loans to refinance old debt (Glasberg and Ward 1993; Green 1987). Poor countries then begin a cycle of continuous borrowing and most of their revenue from exports is used to pay back old loans instead of develop their economy or social programs (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985; Chase-Dunn 1998). This cycle has become an increasing problem for countries since the 1970s and is often referred to as the “debt crisis” (Shen and Williamson 1997). The resources of the country then cannot be used to improve the population’s standard of living. For example, the World Bank forced Zimbabwe to undergo a “structural adjustment” of their economy when a debt crisis hit. This “adjustment” was harmful to the poorest members of the population, especially women (Osirim 2003). I will discuss structural adjustment programs and their effects later. Imbalanced debt relationships can also change over time and this shift may indicate the changing status of countries. For example, China’s recent economic boom has also entailed large loans to the United States, indicating that China may be increasing its position in the world system. As the originator of loans, China is in a position of economic strength over the US.

All three of these types of dependency tend to prevent economic growth in poor countries and inhibit them from redistributing their wealth in order to decrease inequality (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985; Bornschier, Chase-Dunn, and Rubinson 1978; Ward 1984). In fact, Bornschier and Chase-Dunn (1985) argued that there may be short term, positive effects on economic growth, but that in the long run growth is inhibited and inequality increases. As stated earlier, inequality increases because elites in peripheral countries sometimes benefit from dependency relationships.
Empirical studies have been based on the above dependency and world systems perspectives. Some of these studies have focused on the importance of international trade (Milanovic 2005), thus analyzing the influence of classical dependency. Dependency theorists frame trade as a mechanism through which periphery countries are structurally dependent on core countries (Crowly, Rauch, Seagrave, and Smith 1998). International trade is argued to weaken periphery countries’ economies through their vulnerability to world-wide price fluctuations and the concentration on export industries. Poor countries are often highly vulnerable because they tend to concentrate their exports on one or two products such as textiles, agricultural products, or electronics (Akhter 2006). Milanovic (2005) found that openness to trade in poor countries was related to growing income inequality.

Other development researchers have focused on foreign and domestic investment (Alderson 2004; Alderson and Nielsen 1999; Kuznets 1955), known as investment dependency. For poor countries, foreign direct investment (FDI) is the most important form of external development finance (Alderson 2004). FDI is investment in a country by a corporation chartered elsewhere. This type of investment has spurred the growth of international production since the 1970s and is believed to have negative effects on economic development by altering the economic climate—weakening relations between domestic industries, depressing domestic investment, and exploiting the resources of underdeveloped/periphery countries (Crowly, Rauch, Seagrave, and Smith 1998). Comparative research on domestic and foreign investment has found that foreign investment slows the rate of development when compared to domestic investment (Alderson 1999; Firebaugh 1996). Moreover, foreign investment tends to increase
inequality (Alderson and Nielsen 1999). Bornschier and Chase-Dunn (1985) suggest that investment dependence has been more important than trade dependence since the mid-1960s because of the increasing influence of corporations and international financial agencies. They propose that investment dependence is now the main form of core-periphery domination.

Debt is another component of the global economy that affects development. Dependency theorists have found that foreign debt (as a proxy for dependence) has negative effects on economic growth (Glasberg and Ward 1993). Though prior studies had found a positive relationship between debt and growth, Glasberg and Ward demonstrated that debt has long term negative effects on growth. These researchers analyzed data from 1973 to 1985 and showed that debt became detrimental to growth in the 1980s. They argued that this makes sense because of the lagged effects of the global economy on poor countries.

Aid is associated with official development assistance given to a government. Aid can include capital gifts for a wide range of activities and resources including development projects, food, or technical assistance. Foreign aid, as opposed to investment, has not demonstrably lead to development, as Feeny (2005) found in the case of Papua New Guinea.

Though the dependency/world system perspective has been a more critical framework than modernization theory, it too initially ignored issues related to gender and treated development as a gender-neutral process. Feminists have also expanded upon dependency/world system theory and incorporated gender. These feminist researchers have taken WID’s concern for women and then incorporated critical perspectives on
gender and patriarchy by use of dependency/world system theory, but also provided a critique of WID’s overall acceptance of the development process.

*Gender and Development*

The scholarly framework called “gender and development” (GAD) emerged in the 1980s, as a critique of the WID perspective. GAD researchers focused on why women have been systematically positioned in inferior and/or secondary roles. Moreover, the community of GAD scholars began to question the meaning of development and the goal of integrating women into the *economic* development process. Similar to dependency/world system, GAD began to challenge the “system” of development and its very goals. Some GAD theorists questioned whether it was desirable for every country to “develop” in the same ways as countries like the United States, since the level of development in the United States is, arguably, not sustainable (Giele 2001; Mies 1986).

GAD theorists recognized the need to understand the impact of historical colonialism on the present world economic system. A country’s world system position is not only a major determinant of a country’s level of economic inequality, but also a predictor cross-national gender inequality. Most core-sponsored development programs have focused on men as economic actors, ignoring the productive role of women in society. As a result of their gender and location in the periphery, women are often doubly disadvantaged by the world system (Ward 1988). For example, peripheral women are disadvantaged compared to people in the core, but also in relation to peripheral men. The arrival of the world capitalist system and commodity production resulted in an external realm of control that enabled men to obtain dominance over valued economic resources...
in the periphery. Sanday (1981) argued that when changes were introduced by external
forces such as war and colonial officials, men in the periphery obtained control over
resources. Patriarchal relations in the periphery enabled men to retain control over the
distribution of these new economic resources (Ward 1988).

Unlike the WID perspective, GAD called past and present social, economic, and
political structures into question. The theoretical roots of GAD are in socialist-feminism
(Rathgeber 1990), which links the relations of production to the relations of reproduction
and the system of capitalism to patriarchy. Patriarchy is present at the global level and
interacts with the economic sphere through state policies and corporations taking
advantage of gender ideologies and norms (Mies 1986).

The systems of patriarchy and capitalism are seen as dually creating the inequality
that women experience during development (Mies 1986; Marchand 1996; Moghadam
1999; Ward et al. 2004). Therefore, socialist-feminist scholars argue that changes in the
economic domain alone cannot eliminate inequality because the patriarchal domain
would still exist. Instead, a solution to the matrix of development inequality should target
both capitalism and patriarchy (Mies 1986). Scholars argue that in order to empower
women, research on development needs to challenge existing power relations between
men and women (Elson 1995; Elson and Pearson 1981). The weakness of the GAD
perspective is that it is not easily incorporated into current development and aid programs.
GAD requires a commitment from international organizations as well as governments to
make large scale changes to long-established institutions and organizations.

GAD theorists have integrated intersectionality by acknowledging that women
can be affected differently by policies depending on their class, racial, and ethnic position
within poor countries (Marchand 1996). Often men and women of elite classes and dominant races benefit from policies that are harmful to poor minority women and men. As described earlier, dependency/world system theorists who study inequality refer to this intra-country inequality has the difference between the “core” (or “center”) of a country and the “periphery” of a country (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985).

GAD scholars have attempted to portray and analyze women not only as victims, but also as agents in the process of development. Much of the past traditional development and even WID research framed women as ‘a vulnerable group’ and portrayed them as passive, ignorant, and voiceless (Marchand 1996). Though women have frequently been framed as victims, women often actively resist exploitation by capitalism and patriarchy (Moghadam 1998). Thus, the GAD perspective recognizes not only women’s victimization, but also their agency. Recently, scholars have begun to reframe the issues of women’s relationship to the global economy from a focus on gender inequality to women’s empowerment and activism (Moghadam and Senftova 2005). In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the “Beijing Platform for Action” called for the empowerment of women and not just gender equality.

Based on the theoretical ideas of dependency/world system theory and the GAD perspective, scholars have attempted to empirically understand the actual impact of particular types of economic dependency on women. For example, Ward (1984) found that commodity concentration has a negative effect on women’s labor force participation. Thus, countries with export economies focused on a smaller number of commodities tended to have a lower percentage of women participating in the formal labor force. Several other studies have confirmed these findings (Akhter 2006; Clark, Ramsbey, and
Adler 1991; Pampel and Tanaka 1986). Akhter (2006) found that another measure of classical dependency, the size of the export economy, actually had a positive effect on women’s empowerment, using a United Nations’ measure. This measure includes (1) economic participation and decision-making, (2) political participation and decision-making, and (3) power over economic resources. Akhter’s finding may be partially explained by the fact that the size of the export economy is positively associated with the high percentage of females in the service sector. In her cross-national study, Meyer (2003) also found that the effects of economic globalization can be positive for women. She observed that countries with large export economies and high commodity concentration had lower levels of occupational gender segregation. Others have noted that women’s access to jobs in the export sector tends to narrow the gap between men and women’s wages (Cheng 1999; Ghosh 2001).

In research on Barbados, Denis (2003) found that foreign investment, while having a positive effects on women’s employment opportunities, also resulted in a period of high unemployment for women. In Barbados, foreign capital was invested in manufacturing and service sectors which resulted in the growth of factory jobs. This “footloose capital,” as Denis described it, was quickly withdrawn when tax holidays ended for export-oriented industries and when better investment opportunities were found in other countries, such as Mexico. Akhter (2006) also found in her cross-national research of over 40 countries that FDI lowered women’s empowerment.

In contrast, some studies find a positive relationship between foreign investment and women’s status (Gray, Kittilson, and Sandholtz 2006; Richards and Gelleny 2007; Villarreal and Yu 2007). Adler (1994) argues that transnational firms hire more female
managers because they see the value of hiring talented women in a very competitive global economy. Villarreal and Yu’s (2007) research on Mexico found that foreign direct investment does not lower women’s employment and that women are more likely to be employed in foreign as opposed to domestic owned firms. Additionally, they found that women employed in foreign-owned firms were less likely to be discriminated against in terms of pay. For example, they conclude that the global economic integration of Mexico has created employment opportunities for women. Richards and Gelleny (2007) confirmed these findings in a cross-national context. They found that FDI increased women’s status as measured by the two UN measures of women’s status: the gender empowerment measure and the gender-related development index.

There is a large body of literature on the impacts of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) on gender inequality. SAPs have been used by the World Bank and the IMF as a way to restructure economies of poor countries that are unable to repay past debts to lenders in core countries. SAPs compel countries to direct more money toward debt repayment. These programs often require indebted countries to open up their economies to core multinational corporations, lower tariffs, and cut subsidies and social programs. Moreover, countries are encouraged to devalue their currency by attaching it to the US dollar and to privatize public industries. This privatization is often most detrimental to women (Denis 2003). The public sector often employs a larger proportion of women than the private sector and the gender wage gap in the public sector tends to be much lower than in the private sector. Thus, as women move from public to private sector work, the gender wage gap increases (Hemmati and Gardiner 2002). Feminist researchers have documented the now well-established links between SAPs and negative
outcomes such as lower female school enrollment, higher unemployment for both men and women, women’s loss of control over resources, and an overall increase in gender inequality (Afshar and Dennis 1992; Babb 2005; Cagatay and Ozler 1995).

A growing body of literature suggests that gender equality encourages economic growth (Abu-Ghaida and Klasen 2004; Bruno, Squire, and Ravallion 1996; Tzannatos 1999). Abu-Ghaida and Klasen estimated that by 2005 countries that have not met the United Nations Millennium Development goals for gender equality will have a per capita GDP between 0.1 and 0.3 lower than other countries with higher gender equality. The third development goal, the one which includes gender inequality issues, is to promote gender equality and to empower women, evaluated by the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education (United Nations 2008b). The target date for this goal was 2005. When some countries miss important targets like this, some scholars suggest that this reflects deep-seated cultural patterns that have historically disadvantaged women, a concern I turn to next.

Women’s Status and Culture

While much of the research on the status of women has focused on the importance of economics (Blumberg 1987; Boserup 1970; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000; Nash and Fernandez-Kelly 1983), some research has pointed to the significance of culture (Ortner and Whitehead 1981; Rosaldo 1974; Schlegel 1990). For the purposes of this dissertation, culture “refers to religious, political, or other highly valued commitments that distinguish one set of nations from another, most specifically through the definition of the appropriate gender-role behavior” (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991: 48). Culture
can provide the ideological justification for the lower status of women, or conversely women’s equality with men. In this dissertation, I focus on two somewhat overlapping aspects of culture, religion and region.

Most religions have patriarchal origins (Peach 2002). These religions present men’s power and authority as appropriate. Men are in hierarchical positions as both God (male) and clergy. Anthropological scholars contend that religion reflects, supports, and perpetuates patterns of social organization (Brettell and Sargent 2005). According to Daly (1973), the hierarchal nature of religion makes it more difficult to see the patriarchal system as unjust. Hierarchal religion influences patriarchy within politics, the family, and gender relations. For example, the hierarchical relationship between God (male) and humans is seen reflected in the hierarchical relationship between men (powerful) and women (submissive). Although most religions are patriarchal in character much recent research has focused on Islamic culture.

Islamic countries tend to have greater gender inequality than non-Islamic countries (Fish 2002; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). Islamic countries have been shown to have lower levels of gender empowerment and higher levels of gender inequality³ (Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). For example, much concern over closing the gender gap in education is focused on Muslim girls because of the high illiteracy rates of girls and women in Arab countries (Agnaou 2004; Brand 1998). Additionally, Islamic countries have lower rates of female labor force participation than non-Islamic countries

³ Gender inequality includes measures of income, life expectancy, and education. Gender empowerment includes measures of occupation, life expectancy, and political participation.
(Haghighat 2005). Moreover, the majority of Islamic countries have not signed the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Moghadam 1991; United Nations 2008a). Gender inequality is particularly drastic in the Middle East. In a study of Iran, Moghadam (1991) argued that Muslim beliefs were the root of gender inequality and were used to legitimize the subordination of women. Islam is often seen, by many scholars, as the major determining factor of the status of Muslim women (Bernal 1994).

Though much research has found a connection between Islamic countries and women’s status, others point out that the Islamic religion is not inherently patriarchal. These scholars note that the Qu’ran (Koran) promotes egalitarianism and demonstrates that Islam is not sexist (Barlas 2002; Rizzo, Abdel-Latif, and Meyer 2007). For example, in the Qu’ran is written, “Their Lord responded to them: ‘I never fail to reward any worker among you for any work you do, be you male or female -- you are equal to one another…” [3:195] (Dawood 1974). An egalitarian Islam is often seen as the “ideal” Islam. The aforementioned authors argue that “traditional” or “practiced” Islam is often the variant of Islam that believes in the inferiority of women. This type of Islam is influenced by conservative cultural positions. Barlas (2002) argues that the practiced Islam reflects an exegesis of the Qu’ran by patriarchal societies, although she argues that the teachings of the Qu’ran are incompatible with the beliefs and practice of privileging

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4 This author found that this relationship was due to the role of the gender more than Islamic ideology. This research is important to consider for this dissertation because of the author’s conclusions regarding the role of the state, a factor which I consider shortly.

5 The CEDAW is described as an international bill of rights for women defines discrimination and sets an agenda to end it.
men over women. However, Moghadam (1991) argues that there is wide variation within
the Muslim world. For example, women are not able to run for parliament in Kuwait
(which is Arab), but women in Turkey (a non-Arab country) make up 9.1% of their
parliament. Rizzo et al. (2007) found that non-Arabic countries have significantly higher
levels of support for women’s rights than Arabic countries. These scholars instead argue
that Arabic culture is the true root of these patriarchal practices, not necessarily Islam
itself.

Others have claimed that religion is not necessarily the main cause of gender
inequality in Islamic countries, but that political regime type should be examined. Some
scholars point to the lack of democratic regimes in Islamic countries. In a cross-national
study, Fish (2002) found that for countries with Islamic traditions both women’s access to
resources and women’s participation in the labor force is lower than non-Islamic
countries irrespective of the economic growth of countries. He explained this finding by
pointing out that most governments of Islamic countries tend not to be democratic. In
democratic countries women presumably have more rights.6

Some research has explored the attitudes of those in the Islamic world toward
women’s rights and democracy. Inglehart and Norris (Inglehart and Norris 2003a; 2003b;
Norris and Inglehart 2002) argue that the central disagreement between the Islamic world
and the West is not orientations toward democracy, but about gender equality and sexual
liberation. They found, when analyzing the World Values Survey, those in Islamic
countries are significantly less likely to support equal rights and opportunities for women
(Norris and Inglehart 2002). Rizzo et al. (2007) argued that the relationship between

6 The effects of regime type on women’s status will be discussed later in this chapter.
attitudes about women’s rights (measured as attitudes toward polygamy, equality in work, politics, and the family) and democracy in Islam are due to cultural differences. They found that those who supported women’s rights in Arab Muslim countries also supported authoritarian regimes. The authors explained that this finding may indicate that the support of authoritarian regimes could protect supporters of women’s rights from being seen as “pro-Western.” In contrast, those who supported women’s rights in non-Arabic Muslim countries also supported democratic regimes.

In addition to Muslim and Arab culture, other research has explored the relationship between the state, gender equality, and culture in Latin American countries. In Latin American countries, with large Catholic populations, ideological support for male dominance was provided by colonial powers and reinforced by post-colonial Spanish Catholicism which created fewer opportunities for women in a market-oriented economy. These countries’ Catholicism differs from predominantly Catholic European countries in terms of their historical development, including the impacts of colonialism. As a result, women in Latin America are less likely to participate in the paid labor force compared to non-Latin American countries (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991). The Latin American gender ideal associates women with the home and men as breadwinners (Craske 1999). Therefore, when women cross the ideological “public-private divide” into paid work (whether in economics or politics) they are transgressing upon a domain thought to be male. In traditional Latin American culture, men are expected to live up to the standards of “machismo,” while women are expected to remain in the home and be “good women” (“marianismo”). Machismo entails ultra-masculine behaviors on the part of men, including aggressiveness, domestic violence, excessive drinking, and virility.
(evidenced by large families). Marianismo reinforces machismo by expecting women to prioritize their roles as mothers, like the Virgin Mary. As such, women must remain virtuous, but also be mothers (Craske 1999). Stevens (1973) argues that this unattainable ideal for women existed in pre-colonial times, but persists today.

Donno and Russett (2004) found some evidence that the above ideologies split the labor force along gender lines. Women had less access to the labor force, but did have equal access to education and political activities, in countries with large Catholic populations. Women tended to gain more access to resources and rights in Catholic countries (including many Latin American countries) when democracy replaced autocratic or monarchical regimes (Donno and Russett 2004).

Das (2003) studied the relationship of both Islamic and Latin countries on gender inequality in the workforce. She defined Islamic countries as those with 50 percent of their population Muslim and Latin as countries located within Latin America. Both Islamic and Latin countries were found to have higher rates of women participating in informal labor than non-Islamic and non-Latin countries. This study found culture to be an important predictive factor while controlling for economic development and type of governance as measured by political instability, freedom of expression, government effectiveness, rule of law, and graft (political corruption). To my knowledge, this is the only study that has included economic, cultural, and political measures when predicting a measure of gender inequality. Next, I discuss this third component—the political order—and its effects on women’s status.
Impact of the State

Though a dependent relationship can increase inequality within countries, developmental state theorists argue that this relationship can be, at least partially, buffered by the state (Moon and Dixon 1985; Rubinson 1976). Evidence for the important role of the state can be seen in the rapid economic growth of many Asian countries that have avoided increasing rates of inequality (Evans 1987). The logic of this relationship is that state strength—or the degree to which the state is involved in the economy—has the potential to facilitate greater income redistribution (Krahn and Gartrell 1985). The state has the capability of redistributing surpluses and creating progressive legislation. Generally, this is done through progressive taxes and need-based welfare expenditures (Hewitt 1977; Moon and Dixon 1985). Additionally, the state can influence income inequality through land reform, education, and laws regarding labor-management and landowner-peasant relationships.

The importance of considering the question of the state has been expressed by Walby (2002; 2005) who argued that government policies can buffer the effects of economic globalization on gender inequality. This dissertation seeks to follow Walby’s challenge and interrogate the role that the state plays through examining the influence of government size (government spending), democracy, and women’s rights have on the status of women.

In a recent article, Lee, Alderson, and Nielsen (2007) explored the relationship of dependency measures on income inequality while controlling for the role of the state. The authors found that a state’s strength—measured as the percentage of the national economy that is attributed to government expenditures—can moderate the effects of
dependency on a country’s Gini index (a measure of income inequality). Furthermore, the authors showed that state strength can explain the inverted U-shaped relationship between foreign direct investment and income inequality that was found by Alderson and Nielsen (1999). They (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007) found that the effects of FDI on inequality are positive at lower levels of government size, but negative at higher levels of government size.

Greater state strength, such as higher government revenue or spending, is an indication that the state has the capability to carry out policies that create more equality (but does not indicate whether or not the state actually does directly carry out such policies). Such strength is a precondition for the ability to redistribute income. Therefore, the question becomes, would governments use revenue to redistribute resources?

There are a few theorists who expect states to act to decrease inequality (Moon and Dixon 1985). For example, Weber viewed the state as a bureaucracy (Gerth and Mills 1946). In Weber’s managerial conception, the state is insulated and separate from class conflict in economics and politics. Therefore, the state acts in the common interest, albeit as a bureaucracy. Others have noted the state’s likelihood to act in the interest of general equality is in part explained by the presence of democracy. Democratic states are those where power is theoretically in the hands of the populace and not in the hands of elites (Moon and Dixon 1985). Unlike the managerial conception, this is a pluralist notion of the state. Various interest groups can pressure the state for access to resources. Therefore, the enfranchisement of citizens is one indication of more egalitarian policies enacted by the state. “The more effective the democracy the more likely it is, over the long haul, that
government policy and expenditures will reflect the needs of the majority” (UNICEF 1995: 47).

In representative democratic states the electorate does not usually vote directly for policies, but for people or parties with particular ideologies. The poor can benefit from a state run by people or parties that have ideologies oriented toward protection of their interests (Moon and Dixon 1985). This can be argued as more important than the power obtained in the ability to vote in a democratic country. Different groups have unequal access to resources and this can result in the ability of small, powerful groups to influence the will of the populace.

Countries do not need to be democratic to do a good job of providing welfare provisions for the populace—for example, many authoritarian communist countries are seen as providing good welfare provisions (Miliband 1969). Cuba, for instance, has a comprehensive health care system that has resulted in Cubans having some of the world’s best health indicators despite its low GDP per capita (De Vos 2005). Other non-democratic countries may enforce inequality. For example, in a comparison of fascist and non-fascist countries, Bock (1991) discovered that fascist countries created policies that disadvantaged women by focusing their policies on men and fathers.

Many democratic countries have very different policies toward the redistribution of resources. For example, in a cross-country analysis of a 116 countries, Moon and Dixon (1985) found that state strength, ideology, and democracy all impact the provision of basic needs. Countries with larger state expenditures were found to have populations with higher physical well-being (as measured by the Physical Quality of Life Index)

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7 This is not always the case with authoritarian regimes.
which includes measures of infant mortality, life expectancy, and literacy). Countries with leftist ideologies and democratic states also had higher rates of physical well-being. Richards and Gelleny’s (2007) cross-national study of women’s status included an analysis of democracy. They found that democratic countries had higher levels of women’s status as measured by the gender-related development index. They also found that democratic countries are more likely to have and enforce women’s rights.

The size of the state is argued to have an impact on gender inequality in pay. When the size of the state is large and employs more workers, this can be beneficial for women. An increased demand for women’s employment has been associated with growth in the public sector (Gornick and Jacobs 1998). Female employees are less likely to experience discrimination in pay in the public sector because it theoretically functions through egalitarian and formal bureaucratic measures (Kraus 2002; Lewin-Epstein and Stier 1987; Yaish and Kraus 2003) For example, Yaish and Kraus (2003) found, in their study of Israel, that the gap in pay between men and women was lowest in the public sector as opposed to the private sector. The above studies examined gender inequality in industrialized countries. Others have argued that the relationship between state strength and inequality is based on the narrower experience of industrialized countries.

There is evidence that state strength may actually lead to increased income inequality in less developed countries (Furtado 1970). This relationship may be the result of military spending (Baran 1958) or government spending on industrial expansions that do not benefit the poor (Serra 1973). For example, Dyches (1994) found that one dimension of military spending (spending on equipment) was negatively associated with a country’s health status. Moreover, Bornschier and Chase-Dunn (1985) contend that one
characteristic of periphery countries is often a weak state. Others have found no significant relationship for either more or less developed countries between state strength and income inequality (Krahn and Gartrell 1985).

Much of the academic literature addressing the interplay between the state and inequality has referred to what is often labeled the “welfare state.” The welfare state can be defined as a “state committed to modifying the play of social or market forces in order to achieve greater equality” (Ruggie 1984: 11) or “interventions by the state in civil society to alter social forces” (Orloff 1996: 52). It should be noted that the latter definition does not assume that interventions are intended or do produce greater equality.

Esping-Andersen (1990) has created a widely-known typology of welfare states: liberal, conservative-corporatist, and social-democratic. Because of the wide-ranging influence of Esping-Andersen’s work, I describe his welfare regime typology below and discuss some of its weaknesses in light of my dissertation. Liberal states (i.e. the United States) rely mainly on the market for provisions and those who cannot provide for themselves in the marketplace (such as women and children) are extended benefits. Able-bodied people, such as adult men, are expected to work or received stigmatized relief due to their “failures” in the marketplace. The reliance on the market results in replicating market inequalities in liberal states. Benefits in conservative-corporatist states (i.e. Germany) are tied to one’s relationship to the labor market. Conservative-corporatist states tend to preserve class and status differences between people. Social-democratic states (i.e. Sweden) created universalistic welfare programs that benefit the entire population, regardless of payment into programs. This results in the most egalitarian outcomes of the three regime types. Esping-Andersen’s typology is based on western-
industrialized countries and does not include developing, poor countries. Moreover, Esping-Andersen has been criticized for gender-blindness (Orloff 1996). He neglected to consider the effect of states on gender inequality, though he does address gender in his discussion of welfare states and their affect on women’s employment.

Though Esping-Andersen’s typology was originally used to examine the impact of welfare regimes on class inequality, many researchers have since used Esping-Andersen’s typology to explore the impact of the welfare state on the status of women (Gustafsson 1994; McLanahan, Casper, and Sørenson 1995; Sainsbury 1993). When comparing countries with different welfare states, many researchers have found that women fare best in social-democratic states such as Sweden.8 Others have argued that states need to be evaluated based on whether they use a “breadwinner model” or “individual model.” Benefits in the latter are targeted to the individual, not the familial head (Orloff 1996). Thus, all individuals receive assistance, not just one designated individual in the family. Care work is paid and provided for publicly which allows women, who do much of the care work, to enter the paid workforce. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, no research has extended the welfare state perspective to poorer, periphery countries.

Some feminist researchers have tried to categorize countries based on gender-related issues. Wernet (2008) identifies states that have a positive impact on women’s status as “pro-woman” states. According to Wernet, pro-woman states are those with high female life expectancy, low fertility rates, high female education levels, legal abortion, a

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8 There is often a large variation within the each type. For example, the US and UK are both liberal states, but they vary greatly in their welfare policies (Orloff 1996).
high percentage of women in public life, high female labor force participation, and generous family leave policies. She uses these indicators to create a pro-woman state index for 39 countries.

The state can influence inequality yet another way, through the rights that are granted to women (Wernet 2008). Some cross-country research on gender inequality concludes by recommending that changes to the legal status of women will improve gender equality. Others claim that the state can actually challenge patriarchy and contribute to the improvement of women’s status (Kusterer 1990; Moghadam 1992). Kusterer argued that patriarchy is rooted in the modes of production which he calls the “patriarchal mode of production” (i.e. household production) (1990: 241). States can break the cycle of patriarchal production within the household by creating policies that allow women to earn income outside the household. Moghadam contends that classical patriarchy is being broken down through state policies of economic and social development such as the right to education, which leads to an improvement in the status of women. Safa (1995) found this right to education has benefited women in Puerto Rico. Deliberate state policies that aimed at upgrading the labor force and lowering fertility were beneficial to Puerto Rican women. Ramsaran (1999), in a study of Trinidad and Tobago, attributed lower fertility rates, increased women’s life expectancy, and lower infant mortality rates to state policy. Additionally, he found more people had access to healthcare and education—two important economic rights—than before the implementation of state policy. Many NGOs and policy planners emphasize the passage of women’s rights legislation as a means to gender equality (i.e. Rao and Kelleher 2003).
While some researchers see the state as a mechanism for increasing women’s status, others view the state as a patriarchal institution (Ramsaran 1999). Ramamurthy argued that “the state is a site for the systematic concentration of man’s power; it codifies, institutionalizes, and legitimates patriarchy… [States] carry distinct gender ideologies through time which guide resource allocation decisions in ways that mold material realities” (1991: 6). For example, Quadagno (1995) argued that the Job Corp program in the United States reinforced gender inequality by training women for low skilled “domestic” work and men for highly skilled, better paid jobs. In a study of indigenous women in Mexico, Matthews (1985) argues that the lower status of women is a result of state intervention that gave men access to political positions. In her ethnographic study, she found that the indigenous religion of Oaxaca traditionally gave women prestigious roles, but state policies did not enable these women to hold civil service jobs. She argues that women did not hold powerful positions in “extracommunity institutions” or those imposed by the state but that women in these communities held power within “community” based institutions. Therefore, a cursory examination of politics-based gender inequality would not reveal women’s more traditional powerful roles within a community.

Some scholars have even asserted that the state is no longer an important site for the analysis of international inequality. For example, Sassen (2006), a leading scholar on globalization, argues that countries are currently in a process of “denationalization.” She argues that the emergence of a world of nation states or “assembling the national” came about after the Middle Ages and lasted into the mid 20th century. Then, she argues that
the world began a process of “denationalization” during the Bretton-Woods\(^9\) era (1944-1971). For Sassen, the “tipping point” was in the 1980s when there was a stronger flow of information, financial instruments, and people between countries. At this time there began a new assemblage of territory, authority and rights in which the variation on these variables within countries was increasing. Though she observes this denationalization she also acknowledges that globalization still happens through national institutions such as the state. In this dissertation, I consider some independent variables measured during time periods prior to Sassen’s “tipping point”; therefore, it can be argued that denationalization had not begun and the state is still an important site of analysis.

Conclusion

The above literature review highlights the theoretical and empirical research related to economic dependency, inequality, and women’s status. I have also explored the literature on culture and women’s status that argues that Islamic and Latin American religious traditions negatively affect women’s status. The economic dependency research on women’s status has neglected the impact of political measures. The state can impact the status of women through government spending, through a democratic government, and guaranteeing women’s rights.

Theories and research reviewed in this chapter lead to particular expectations for this dissertation’s cross-national research on women’s status. According to dependency theory, dependent relationships between poor and rich countries create inequality.

\(^9\) Bretton Woods refers to an international agreement between nations which regulated commercial and financial institutions. The Bretton Woods era began after World War II and continued until the US took the dollar off the gold standard.
Therefore, I expect that measures of dependency—including a high percentage of an
economy focused on exports, high commodity concentration, and high levels of foreign
investment—will be detrimental to women’s status. According to world system theory
peripheral countries face negative consequences because of their position in the world
system. Therefore, I expect that women in peripheral countries will have lower status
than women in the core and semi-periphery. Modernization and WID theory would
suggest that economic development lowers inequality. Therefore, I expect that economic
development, including GDP and economic growth will increase women’s status.
Additionally, general income inequality will decrease women’s status. I have reviewed
the literature on culture and women’s status. Some societies’ cultures, those that are
patriarchal, can be unfavorable to women’s status. Research on Islamic and Latin
American countries suggest that in these countries women’s status will be lower. Finally,
research on the impact of the political order suggests that it is important to consider when
examining cross-national inequality. Pluralist notions of the state suggest that the state
can have positive impacts on equality. Therefore, measures of the state—the size of the
government, democratic regimes, and the presence and enforcement of women’s rights—
should increase women’s status.

In light of the above literature, I explore the relationship between the global
economy, and women’s status, as measured by gender empowerment and gender
inequality while controlling for culture. These results are presented in Chapter 4 and
discussed in Chapter 5. My contribution to the gender and development literature is an
examination of the impact of the global economy on gender empowerment and inequality
while controlling for political variables, specifically the impact of government size,
democracy, and women’s rights. In the next chapter, I describe the data and methods and my hypotheses that are based on the above literature review.
CHAPTER III
DATA AND METHODS

Introduction

In this dissertation I explore how measures of economic dependency, economic development, culture, and the political order impact women’s status. The following figures (3.1 and 3.2) illustrate the expected relationships between these various measures. In this chapter, I describe the methods for this dissertation that are used to explore these relationships. I first describe the characteristics of the sample of countries included in this research. Next I describe the data sources for the variables used and define the constructs and describe how they were measured. This is followed by a list of the hypotheses derived from the theories and literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Finally, I discuss the analytical techniques used to test the hypotheses.
Figure 3.1 Expected Relationships between Independent Variables and Gender Empowerment
Figure 3.2 Expected Relationships between Independent Variables and Gender Inequality
Data Sources and Sample

As noted in Chapter 1, this study includes two dependent variables: Gender Empowerment (GEM) and Gender Inequality (GI). Both of these variables are drawn from United Nations data; data on these variables are not complete. That is, the GEM data are available for 72 countries and GI data are available for 132 countries with data available for GEM and GI for 65 countries. The sample size for the dissertation is 127 countries\(^\text{10}\), enumerated in Table 3.1.

I obtained data from many different sources (see Appendix A for a listing of the study variables and their data source). Data for GEM and GI (composed of the variables gender-related development index and the human development index) were both obtained from the United Nations *Human Development Report*. The first *Human Development Report*, published by the UN in 1990, provided statistics on human development. This publication compiled statistics that allowed researchers to examine a broad range of inequalities. The *Human Development Report* includes measures of life expectancy, education, political participation, and employment. It is complied by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

\(^{10}\) Eight countries were removed from the dataset because they were missing values for more than 50% of the variables. Issues of missing data are discussed below.
Table 3.1 Countries with United Nations data on Gender Empowerment and Gender Inequality

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<td>Denmark</td>
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* Only GI
† Only GEM

The majority of the economic dependency variables, the economic development variables, and one of my political variables, government size, were drawn from the World Bank World Development Indicators. Dependency variables derived from this dataset include: export dependency and foreign direct investment. Economic development variables from this dataset include: gross domestic product and economic growth. The World Bank World Development Indicators database has been maintained since 1960.
Though this database includes annual data on every country in the world, many countries are missing data for various variables because the World Bank relies on countries to gather and submit their own data.

One measure of economic dependency, commodity concentration, was collected from two sources: *International Statistics Yearbook* (Department of International Economic and Social Affairs 1987) and the United Nation’s Commodity Statistics Database (COMTRADE) (UNSD 2001). Values that were missing in the former dataset were supplemented by data available from the latter allowing better coverage on this measure. The *International Statistics Yearbook* compiles data from many different sources including: the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund, and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

A measure of income inequality, the Gini coefficient, was gathered from The World Income Inequality Database. This database is compiled by the United Nations University’s World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-Wider). The measure of democracy is derived from the Polity IV Project (Marshall and Jaggers 2005). This dataset includes codes for countries based on various political regime characteristics. Finally, measures of women’s rights (comprised from the variables women’s political, economic, and social rights) were obtained from the CIRI Human Rights Database. This database contains data on thirteen types of widely recognized human rights and government practices regarding those rights.

For many of these datasets, the various collecting agencies require each country to collect data and keep careful records (such as the World Bank). Therefore, datasets used
for cross-national comparisons, like the ones used for this study, are often over-representative of countries that have more resources and better record keeping systems. For sources such as the Polity IV and CIRI, the data is compiled by academics and features stronger inter-coder reliability.

Variables

In this section I present the dependent and independent variables and describe how each construct is measured.

Dependent Variables

The notion of women’s status has been conceptualized in two ways (Sudarkasa 1986). The first frames women’s status as a collection of rights and duties. The second refers to women’s status in comparison to men; therefore, men’s status is used as a reference point. I have used the later conception of women’s rights as formulated in measures created by the United Nations. Two composite indices of women’s status are often used in gender and development research. These measures are the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) and the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI). Both the GEM and GDI are measures of gender inequality, and are intended to capture “human capabilities,” as well as gendered political and economic participation and decision making. The use of standard measures, though they may be imperfect, is important when comparing research findings. Moreover, because these measures are familiar to policy planners, they are useful to researchers who want their findings to be applied in the planning process. These measures have some flaws, which I will discuss shortly, but they
are an improvement on past measures of inequality. Before these measures were available, researchers often used single measures of women’s status such as women’s share of the labor force or women’s share in particular economic sectors (Ward 1988). The measures I use in this study capture a more nuanced understanding of women’s status; therefore are an improvement of one individual measure of women’s status. These measures include dimensions of economic, occupational, political, and health differences between men and women.

The *Gender Empowerment Measure* was created by the United Nations as one of its human development indicators. These measures were created after the UN’s decade for women (1975-1985) that helped to shed light on women’s status across the globe. The GEM is composed of three dimensions of empowerment, the first, economic participation and decision-making, is measured by two indicators: (a) women’s percentage share of positions as legislators, senior officials, and managers, and (b) women’s percentage share of professional and technical positions. The second dimension, political participation and decision-making, is measured as women’s share of parliamentary seats. Finally, the third dimension, power over economic resources, is measured as the ratio between women’s and men’s estimated earned income (PPP US$)\(^{11}\).

Though the GEM is problematic, it is used by many non-governmental organizations and policy planning organizations (Walby 2005). One problem with the operationalization of women’s status with GEM is that it does not include data on women at the more local level. For example, political participation does not measure women’s involvement in local political bodies. This omission is largely due to lack of data. Some

\(^{11}\) PPP or purchasing power parity is used to standardize currency rates across countries.
researchers have argued that women are more commonly active in a local context than nationally; thus the GEM underestimates the role that women play in politics (Paxton and Hughes 2007). Values can theoretically range from 0 (no empowerment) to 1.00 (full empowerment), in my data set, GEM values range from low empowerment, 0.129 (Yemen) to high empowerment, 0.910 (Norway and Sweden).

Using two standard indices, the Human Development Index and the Gender-related Development Index, I calculated a measure for gender inequality (GI) created by Bardhan and Klasen (1999). Below I describe the HDI and the GDI, and then I explain how the GI is derived from those two indices. First, the Human Development Index (HDI) was created by the United Nations and is a standard measure of well-being (United Nations 2007). Three dimensions are used to calculate the HDI: (1) life expectancy, (2) literacy and education, and (3) standard of living. Life expectancy is measured as life expectancy at birth. The measurement of education includes both adult literacy rates and the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schooling. The HDI is the average of the three standardized components, resulting in a measure that ranges from 0 (the lowest human development) to 1 (the highest high human development).

Second, the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) was constructed by the United Nations as an indicator of women’s status (United Nations 2007). Like the HDI, the GDI includes the three different dimensions that are used to calculate the GDI: women’s life expectancy, education (measured as the adult literacy rate and the combined
primary to tertiary gross enrollment ratio), and estimated earned income. Unlike the HDI, the GDI focuses on the lives of women\textsuperscript{12}.

Researchers have critiqued the GDI, arguing that it does not gauge true gender inequality since it does not compare women’s position relative to men’s (Bardhan and Klasen 1999; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). Therefore, based on Forsythe, Korzeniewicz, and Durrant (2000) I calculated a measure of gender inequality (GI):

\[ GI = \frac{\text{HDI} - \text{GDI}}{\text{HDI}}. \]

Thus, \textit{gender inequality} is the weight of the gap between a country’s GDI and HDI. This creates a Gini-like measure for multiple indicators of gender inequality. A GI value of 0 would indicate that women in any given country hold parity with men in terms of education, income, and life expectancy. In my dataset, gender inequality values range from more gender equality, -0.004 (Maldives) to more gender inequality 0.051 (Yemen).

\textit{Independent Variables}

The variables I used to measure a country’s economic position in the global economy were derived from the framework developed by Ward (1985) and then later expanded by Akhtar (2006). This framework includes classical, investment, and debt dependency along with several control variables. Since all core countries in this study have no \textit{reported} debt or aid values according to the World Bank, I do not analyze the

\textsuperscript{12} For a detailed account, including equations of how GEM, HDI, and GDI are calculated see McGillivray and Pillarisetti. These authors acknowledge that the two measures of women’s status, GEM and GDI, reveal different patterns of human development than the human development index (HDI).

\textsuperscript{13} This calculated measure of gender inequality has also been recommended by the UN in the 1995 Human Development Report (79).
impact of debt dependency. Obviously core countries do incur debt, but if it they do not report debt, I cannot analyze debt as a type of dependency. Debt and aid are omitted because my method of analysis is premised upon not having patterns in missing data.

Classical Dependency. Export dependency is the export of goods and services as a percentage of the GDP. Higher values indicate more of an “export-oriented” economy. Many poorer countries have concentrated their economies on exports because of the implementation of structural adjustment policies (World Bank 2007). In my dataset, the natural log of export values range from 4.598 (Bahrain) to 1.642 percent of the GDP (Bangladesh).

Commodity concentration is the value of the most important export commodity divided by the value of the total foreign trade (Taylor and Jodice 1983). A value of 1 indicates that 100 percent of a country’s exports are from only one commodity, while the closer to 0, the more diversified the export economy. Data for this variable comes from two sources: International Statistics Yearbook (Department of International Economic and Social Affairs 1987) and the United Nation’s Commodity Statistics Database (COMTRADE) (UNSD 2001). Values that were missing in the former dataset were supplemented by data available from the latter. Use of these two datasets allowed me to gather more complete non-missing data. In my dataset, commodity concentration values range from 0.030 (Greece) to 0.960 (Nigeria).

Investment Dependency. Much of the dependency/inequality research literature uses foreign direct investment (FDI) to calculate investment dependency (World Bank 2007). This measure captures the extent to which a given country’s economy is controlled by foreign firms. FDI is calculated as the net inflows of investment to attain a lasting
management interest (more than 10 percent) in a company in an economy other than that of the investor (World Bank 2007). The net inflows of foreign investment is then divided by the GDP. Therefore, FDI is a measure of the percentage of the economy (GDP) that is controlled by foreigners. Since FDI is skewed, I calculate the natural log of FDI for my analyses. In my dataset, foreign direct investment values range from 2.260 (Algeria) to 3.040 (Singapore).

*World System Position.* A country’s location in the world system is based upon the classification developed by Snyder and Kick (1979) and then later elaborated on by Bergesen and Bata (2002). Periphery countries are dummy-coded as 1, and semi-periphery and core as 0\(^4\). In this dataset 74 countries are periphery and 41 countries are non-periphery. Marxist and former Marxist countries have been excluded from my dataset. Data in my study were collected from 1987 and 2007 a time period in which some countries were Marxist, such as, North Vietnam. These countries were not part of the same global economic system as non-Marxist countries. Because their incorporation into the world economic system has been fundamentally different than countries prior to the Soviet Union’s formation, I have not included them in my dataset.

*Economic Development.* Gross domestic product (GDP) is a measure of the output of a country’s economy and can be considered a measure of a country’s income. GDP is the total value of goods and services within a particular year. GDP is used to control for the level of economic development and it is included in almost all research on the effects of the global economy on income inequality (Gini) and gender inequality. GDP is

\(^{14}\) I chose to compare periphery countries to all others because in preliminary analysis I found significant differences between periphery countries and all others. I found no significant difference between semi-periphery and core countries.
obtained from the World Bank’s *World Development Indicators* and is measured as GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity. Data are in constant 2000 dollars. Because of the skewed distribution of this measure I have use the natural log in my analyses. GDP values range from 6.388 in Malawi (low) to 10.550 in the United States (high).

Economic growth rate is measured as the annual percentage growth rate (of one year) of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. In other words, it is the percentage rate increase in the GDP. Economic growth rates reflect how fast economies are expanding or (when they are negative) contracting. Aggregates are based on constant 2000 U.S. dollars (World Bank 2007). In my dataset, economic growth values range from -2.238 (Zimbabwe) to 14 (Azerbaijan).

Within-country income inequality is measured using the *Gini* coefficient. The Gini measures the extent to which the distribution of income among persons or within households differs from a perfectly equal distribution. A value of 0 represents complete equality while a value of 100 represents complete inequality (United Nations University 2005). The World Income Inequality Database V 2.0a provides Gini coefficients that have varying degrees of quality and are compiled from different sources. When making decisions on which coefficient to use, I first chose the one with the highest quality\(^\text{15}\). If more than one coefficient had high quality, I took the mean of the remaining coefficients. Additionally, whenever possible, I included Gini coefficients that survey all of the population. However, some measures of the Gini only consider inequality in an urban area and not the rural areas—these measures are only used in the absence of whole

\(^{15}\) The World Income Inequality Database provides quality values for each measure of Gini.
country Gini coefficients. In my dataset, Gini values range from 24.70 (Denmark) to 63.20 (Namibia and Lesotho).

**Culture.** To measure the importance of culture on women’s status I have used two measures of religion and region. Past research has found that these measures of culture are related to gender inequality (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). Islamic and Latin American countries have a high level of gender inequality because of a prevalence of institutional patriarchal arrangements rooted in religious beliefs.

Islamic nations are defined as being composed of at least a 50 percent Muslim population (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991). Data to categorize countries as Islamic or non-Islamic were derived from Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler (1991). For missing data, I supplemented data from the CIA Factbook (CentralIntelligenceAgency 2008). Following the research of Forsythe and Korzeniewicz (2000) I have dummy-coded a variable for countries in Latin America. This includes countries in the Caribbean, Central and South America. Most Latin American countries are predominantly Catholic. Two dummy variables were constructed: Islamic = 1 and 0 = non-Islamic, and 1 = Latin American and 0 = non-Latin American. In the dataset for this dissertation, 34 countries are coded as Islamic and 93 as non-Islamic. Twenty three countries are coded as Latin American and 104 as non-Latin.

**The Political Order.** To capture the importance of the political order on women’s status, I have gathered data on three measures. These include government size, democracy, and women’s rights.
Government size is measured as the size of the public sector, here measured as total government revenue or expenditure divided by the GDP (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007; Shen and Williamson 1997). For this study I use the World Bank’s measure of general government final consumption expenditure. This is a measure of all current government expenditures for purchases of goods and services (including compensation of employees) as a percent of GDP. Thus, government size is the percentage of the economy that is government spending. The measure of government size excludes government military expenditures (Huang and Marshall 1996). These variables are gathered from the latest year available which is 2007. In my dataset, government size values range from 2.990 (Equatorial Guinea) to 31.134 (Guyana).

I use this expenditure measure of the public sector for two reasons. First, expenditure has been found to have a stronger effect on inequality than revenue (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007). This may be because an expenditure measure of public sector size reflects the government’s targeted social policies that reduce inequality. Second, this measure allows for the inclusion of more cases. If a government revenue measure were used the sample size would be greatly reduced due to the large number of missing cases.

The Polity IV Program provides a dataset with values for countries on their level of institutionalized democracy (Marshall and Jaggers 2005). Level of democracy is measured as countries with (1) the presence of institutions or procedures through which citizens can articulate political preferences (2) the presence of institutionalized executive

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16 In Huang and Marshall’s study of the differing effects of state strength on the economic growth of semi-peripheral and peripheral countries, the state strength variable was not lagged. I therefore do not lag this variable.
constraint; and (3) the provision of civil liberties to all citizens. Values for democracy can range from 0 to 10 with 10 being the most democratic. In my dataset, democracy values range from 0 (e.g., Iran) to 10 (e.g., Norway).

I use three variables to create a scale called women’s rights. This variable reflects women’s rights in a country (1) that are guaranteed by law and (2) the level of their enforcement. To create the scale, women’s rights, I added together the values for each country for women’s political, economic, and social rights. Cronbach’s alpha test for reliability for this measure was .704, indicating a highly reliable scale. These three rights variables are compiled by the CIRI Human Rights Database (Cingranelli and Richards 2004). The range for this variable was 0 (Saudi Arabia) to 9 (Canada and Belgium) and the mean was 4.342. The three variables used to construct the measure of women’s rights are explained below.

Women’s political rights includes several rights: the right to vote, the right to run for political office, the right to hold elected and appointed government positions, the right to join political parties, and the right to petition government officials. This variable is coded from 0 to 3: 0 = women’s rights are not guaranteed by law and laws completely restrict the political participation of women; 1 = political participation is guaranteed by law, but women hold less than 5 percent of high ranking government positions; 2 = political participation is guaranteed by law, but women hold more than 5 percent but less than 30 percent of high ranking government positions and; 3 = political participation is

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17 Nine countries were missing values for women’s social rights and therefore were not given a value on this variable. These included Iceland, Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Sweden, Greece, New Zealand, and St. Lucia. Djibouti was missing data on all three measures of women’s rights including political, economic, and social.
guaranteed by law and in practice, and women hold more than 30 percent of high ranking government positions.

Women’s economic rights also includes several rights: equal pay for equal work, free choice of profession or employment without the need to obtain a husband or male relative's consent, the right to gainful employment without the need to obtain a husband or male relative's consent, equality in hiring and promotion practices, job security (maternity leave, unemployment benefits, no arbitrary firing or layoffs), non-discrimination by employers, the right to be free from sexual harassment in the workplace, the right to work at night, the right to work in occupations classified as dangerous, and the right to work in the military and the police force. This variable is also coded from 0 to 3: 0 = economic rights are not guaranteed by law and the law reinforces sex discrimination and there is high tolerance by the government for discrimination; 1 = some economic rights for women are guaranteed by law, but the law enforcement is weak and the government tolerates a moderate level of discrimination; 2 = some economic rights for women are guaranteed by law, but the government does not enforce the laws effectively and the government tolerates a low level of discrimination and; 3 = all or almost all of women’s economic rights are guaranteed by law, and the government enforces the law and tolerates no discrimination.

Finally, women’s social rights includes several rights: the right to equal inheritance, the right to enter into marriage on a basis of equality with men, the right to travel abroad, the right to obtain a passport, the right to confer citizenship to children or a husband, the right to initiate a divorce, the right to own, acquire, manage, and retain property brought into marriage, the right to participate in social, cultural, and community
activities, the right to an education, the freedom to choose a residence/domicile, freedom from non-consensual female genital mutilation (FGM), and freedom from forced sterilization. This variable is coded from 0 to 3: 0 = social rights are not guaranteed by law and the law reinforces sex discrimination and there is high tolerance by the government for discrimination; 1 = some social rights for women are guaranteed by law, but the government does not enforce the laws effectively and the government tolerates a moderate level of discrimination; 2 = some social rights for women are guaranteed by law, but the government does not enforce the laws effectively and the government tolerates a low level of discrimination and; 3 = all or almost all of women’s social rights are guaranteed by law, and the government enforces the law and tolerates no discrimination.

In this dissertation, most data is from 2007 but dependency theorists contend that some data should to be lagged. All dependency variables (export, commodity concentration, and foreign direct investment) data have been lagged 20 years and are therefore from 1987. Twenty years is an appropriate lag time that is used by dependency researchers (e.g. Clark 1991; Oakes, Peterson, and Greenwood 1995). Dependency variables are lagged 20 years because the negative social and economic consequences of dependence are believed to take some time to take effect and this effect may strengthen over time (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985).

Hypotheses

Based on theory and empirical literature presented in Chapter 2, I propose the following hypotheses. The first set of hypotheses predicts that measures of economic dependency will negatively affect women’s status. As per the findings of Akhter (2006)
and Ward (1984), I expect export dependency to decrease gender empowerment (H1a) and to increase gender inequality (H1b). Past research (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991; Miller 1999; Pampel and Tanaka 1986; Ward 1984) has indicated that commodity concentration affects the status of women; therefore, I expect that commodity concentration will decrease gender empowerment (H2a) and increase gender inequality (H2b). Alderson (1999), Clark (1991), and Ward (1984) have found that women’s status is impacted by levels of foreign direct investment. Thus, I predict that foreign direct investment will decrease gender empowerment (H3a) and increase gender inequality (H3b). World systems theory suggests (e.g. Ward 1984) that periphery (compared to core and semi-periphery) countries will have lower gender empowerment (H4a) and higher gender empowerment (H4b).

Three measures of economic development have been found to influence women’s status. For example, past research has found that higher gross domestic product is related to higher women’s status (Akhter 2006; Clark 1991). Therefore, I predict that GDP will increase gender empowerment (H5a) and decrease gender inequality. Research that has controlled for economic growth has found that growth increases women’s status (Akhter 2006; O'Neill and Polacheck 1993; Shen and Williamson 1997; Ward 1984). Thus, I expect that economic growth will increase gender empowerment (H6a) and decrease gender inequality (H6b). Other researchers that have controlled for the Gini coefficient found that higher income inequality harmed women’s status (Akhter 2006; London 1988; Ward 1984). So, I predict that the larger the Gini coefficient the smaller gender empowerment (H7a) and the larger the Gini coefficient the higher gender inequality (H7b).
I also hypothesize the effect of two measures of culture on women’s status. Women’s status in countries with large Islamic populations has been worse than in non-Islamic countries (Bernal 1994; Das 2003; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000; Norris and Inglehart 2002); therefore, I hypothesize that Islamic countries have lower gender empowerment (H8a) and have higher gender inequality (H8b). Latin American countries have also tended to possess poorer women’s status (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991; Das 2003; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). In this dissertation, I predict that Latin American countries will have lower gender empowerment (H9a) and higher gender inequality (H9b).

Finally, the last set of hypotheses deals with the effect of the political order upon women’s status. Previous research (Lee, Nielsen, and Alderson 2007) found that government spending can decrease inequality. Thus, in this study, I hypothesize that government size will increase gender empowerment (H10a) and decrease gender inequality (H10b). Other research (Moon and Dixon 1985) showed that citizens of democracies have better well being. Likewise, I expect that this relationship will be similar for women’s status. Consequently, higher levels of democracy should increase gender empowerment (H11a) and decrease gender inequality (H11b). These hypotheses are premised upon a pluralist notion of the state. Lastly, the rights and enforcement of rights have been shown to impact women’s status (Ramsaran 1999). For this dissertation, I predict that women’s rights will increase gender empowerment (H12a) and decrease gender inequality (H12b). Figures 3.1 and 3.2, which were presented earlier, provide a model of the expected relationships that are described in the above hypotheses.
I also expect that the position in the world system will alter how the above political variables will affect women’s status. Therefore, I hypothesize that in peripheral countries the effect of government size on gender empowerment (H13a) and gender inequality (H13b) will be greater than in semi-peripheral and core countries. Additionally, I predict that in peripheral countries the effect of democracy on gender empowerment (H14a) and gender inequality (H14b) will be greater than in semi-peripheral and core countries. Lastly, I expect that in peripheral countries the effect of women’s rights on gender empowerment (H15a) and gender inequality (H15b) will be greater than in semi-peripheral countries.

To test these hypotheses and the relationships described in the conceptual models in the figures 3.1 and 3.2, I used the following MLR equations.\(^{18}\)

1. \(\text{Gender empowerment} = \text{Exports} + \text{CC} + \text{FDI} + \text{Periphery} + \text{GDP} + \text{Growth} + \text{Islamic} + \text{Latin} + \text{Govt Size} + \text{Democracy} + \text{Women’s Rights}\)
2. \(\text{Gender empowerment} = \text{Exports} + \text{CC} + \text{FDI} + \text{Periphery} + \text{Gini} + \text{Islamic} + \text{Latin} + \text{Govt Size} + \text{Democracy} + \text{Women’s Rights}\)
3. \(\text{Gender inequality} = \text{Exports} + \text{CC} + \text{FDI} + \text{Periphery} + \text{GDP} + \text{Growth} + \text{Islamic} + \text{Latin} + \text{Govt Size} + \text{Democracy} + \text{Women’s Rights}\)
4. \(\text{Gender inequality} = \text{Exports} + \text{CC} + \text{FDI} + \text{Periphery} + \text{Gini} + \text{Islamic} + \text{Latin} + \text{Govt Size} + \text{Democracy} + \text{Women’s Rights}\)

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\(^{18}\) To test hypotheses H13 through H15, I will include interactions between periphery and significant measures of the political order (government size, democracy, or women’s status). This is only appropriate in models in which periphery and a particular measure of the political order’s main effects are significant.
These MLR regression models were constructed and run to determine the predictive ability of my independent variables (see conceptual model) on the two outcomes of gender empowerment and gender inequality. Two regression equations for each dependent variable were constructed because of issues of multicollinearity. I could not include the variable Gini with either Growth or GDP. The first model (for each outcome) includes both GDP and Growth measures, but NOT the Gini coefficient measure; the second model (for each outcome) includes only the Gini coefficient measure (leaving out the GDP and Growth measures).

I anticipated problems with the dependency variables regarding multicollinearity because of findings from previous research (Akhter 2006). However, I did not find unacceptable levels of multicollinearity for these variables and so included all dependency measures together in the models. For each of the models above, variance inflation factor tests were conducted. None of the models had variance inflation factors over 2. A variance inflation factor over 10 would indicate multicollinearity problems (Myers 1986).

Data Limitations

A major problem with cross-national research results from the small number of countries in the world. For example, the United Nations recognizes only 192 countries, a relatively small number for multivariate analysis. A dataset with a small number of cases results in problems with degrees of freedom and reduces statistical power (and the consequent risk of committing a Type II error—failing to reject the null hypothesis when in fact there is an effect/relationship between the independent variable and the
independent variable. Therefore, researchers are limited as to the number of independent variables that can be included in such analyses (c.f. Seguino 2000).

Cross-national research often is also plagued with problems of missing data. Both my dependent and independent variables have missing data. For example, the United Nations only reports the gender empowerment measure (one of my dependent variables) for 92 countries. One reason for this is that GEM is a composite measure of many other variables. Therefore, whenever a country does not report one item, then the entire measure cannot be calculated. For example, many countries do not have a GEM measure because of the difficulty in calculating women’s share of professional and technical positions (one item of the GEM).

Traditional approaches to missing data can be problematic. For example, researchers often only include cases with complete data. This listwise deletion is not ideal because deletion can introduce substantial bias in the sample when data is not missing completely at random (Little and Rubin 1987). Additionally, listwise deletion results in sample size reduction. Most country-level data sources have data that are not missing completely at random. Countries in the periphery, for example are less likely to report economic data to the World Bank and the UN given their reduced resources to gather such data. Listwise deletion is problematic for country-level data because of the already small sample size, which I have discussed above. In order to include the greatest number cases and to avoid greater bias in my sample, I used the full information maximum likelihood approach (FIML) to missing data using the Mplus statistical analysis program. The FIML method implements the algorithm developed by Little and Rubin (Acock 2005). It uses all the available information to provide maximum likelihood estimation
and does not impute missing values. FIML provides an unbiased maximum likelihood estimate for all cases using the information contained in the variables with available data. FIML assumes data are missing at random, but not missing completely at random. The Mplus program for statistical analysis (e.g. Muthen and Muthen 2000) offers the FIML option: however, Mplus will not produce estimates when the majority of independent variables for a particular case are missing. Thus, I have excluded eight countries (Brunei Darussalam, Djibouti, Eritrea, Lebanon, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principle, St. Lucia, and Suriname) where more than 50 percent of the variables were missing. Though my data is not missing completely at random, FIML is a robust approach and is the best available estimation procedure given the characteristics of my dataset (Acock 2005).

Determining whether my data is missing at random is important for analysis. To be missing at random means that missingness is not related to any independent variable (Howell 2008). To determine whether my data was missing at random I employed selection models or “Heckman-like” models. This technique explores the impact of missingness. To employ a selection model, for the variable in question, I created a new variable for whether it is missing or not (0=not missing, 1=missing). Then, I regressed all the other independent variables upon the new missing variable (with logistic regression) and saved the predicted probabilities in a new variable. Finally, I regressed all those independent variables and the new predicted probabilities variable upon the original variable. If the predicted probabilities variable is a significant predictor of the original variable, then I have non-random missing data. The Heckman indicator was not significant for any of the variables in my models, indicating a higher probability that the
variables are missing at random. Therefore, according to these selection models, the missingness is not problematic with respect to my estimation.

Country level data can also be problematic because of issues of outliers, non-normality, and non-linear relationships. Some of the measures included outliers which may contribute to biased estimates. To address these outliers I used the technique of Winsorizing. Winsorization is a method for dealing with skewed distributions and “tucking in” the outliers (Kokic and Bell 1994). Cases that were more than three standard deviations from the mean were then winsorized by changing their values to that of the closest case within three standard deviations from the mean. Additionally, some variables were non-normally distributed; to address these distributional problems I used the natural log transformation.

Analysis

The dataset created for this dissertation is cross-sectional with some of the variables lagged (economic dependency variables). Using MLR regression allowed me to study the relationships between multiple variables while controlling for some independent variables. Due to the small sample size (and consequent lack of power to reject the null hypothesis), I interpreted a confidence level of $p < .10$ as a significant result.

Because I am examining these relationships (except for the lagged dependency variables) at one point in time, causality can only be inferred based on theoretical explanations. Some dependency research on inequality has utilized panel design to reduce the problem of reciprocal causality (c.f. London 1988). Panel design employs the
use of autoregressive model in which the dependent variable is regressed on itself. A twenty-year time lag is often used between the dependent and independent variables. My data are limited in that 1995 was the earliest year that the GEM and the GDI were reported. London (1988) argued that one needs to use a lagged time period that is long, such as twenty years. Additionally, using a lagged model would increase the amount of missing data in my models. Therefore I chose not to include a baseline measure of my dependent variables in the analyses.

Conclusion

In summary, this dissertation will contribute to the literature on gender and the global economy. I used data from several different sources—including the United Nations and the World Bank. Unlike past research, I used multiple linear regression that uses a full information likelihood estimates (FIML) that increased the number of countries in the total sample (N=127) to examine the effects of dependency, culture, and the political order on gender empowerment and gender inequality. I hypothesized that countries with higher dependency are expected to have lower levels of gender empowerment and higher levels of gender inequality. I hypothesized that Islamic and Latin American countries will have lower levels of gender empowerment and higher levels of gender inequality. Finally, I hypothesized that political measures government size, democracy and women’s rights will all be positively related to gender empowerment and negatively related to gender inequality. In the following chapter, I report the findings of the data analyses.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

Introduction

In the previous chapter I outlined the methods used in this dissertation to study the relationship between the global economy, culture, and the political order on women’s status as measured in two ways: gender empowerment measure (GEM) and gender inequality (GI). This chapter presents the results in three sections. First, I present descriptive statistics of the dependent as well as independent variables. Second, I present a bivariate (zero-order) correlation matrix of the variables in the analyses. Finally, I present regression models for each of the dependent variables. Two tables are presented for each dependent variable, GEM and GI\(^{19}\).

Descriptive Results

Table 4.1 presents descriptive statistics for each variable used in this study including the sample size, minimum value, maximum value, mean, and standard deviation (S.D.). The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) was available for 71 countries. Of all the variables used in this study, this variable had the lowest level of data

\(^{19}\) An additional model for GEM is presented to test an interaction between government size and periphery. Also, an additional model for GI is presented to test an interaction between democracy and periphery.
coverage. The values range between 0.129 (Yemen) and 0.910 (Norway and Sweden).

The mean for the 71 countries is 0.589.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export (natural log)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1.642</td>
<td>4.598</td>
<td>3.228</td>
<td>0.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commodity Concentration</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.960</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI (natural log)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>2.260</td>
<td>3.040</td>
<td>2.485</td>
<td>0.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>0.481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP (natural log)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>6.388</td>
<td>10.550</td>
<td>8.587</td>
<td>1.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>-2.238</td>
<td>14.000</td>
<td>5.080</td>
<td>2.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>24.700</td>
<td>63.200</td>
<td>42.330</td>
<td>10.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.936</td>
<td>3.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.342</td>
<td>1.789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GEM=gender empowerment
GI=gender inequality
FDI=foreign direct investment
GDP=gross domestic product

Data on Gender Inequality (GI) was available for almost twice as many countries as the GEM with coverage for 124 countries. The values for these countries range from -0.004 (Maldives) and 0.051 (Yemen) and the average is 0.014. The next four variables in Table 4.1 measure dependency and world system position. The variable, Exports was available for 118 countries. The values ranged from 1.642 (Bangladesh) to 4.598 (Bahrain). The mean is 3.228. Commodity Concentration was available for 91 countries. The values for these countries range from 0.030 (Greece) to 0.960 (Nigeria). The mean is 0.309. Foreign direct investment (FDI) was available for 113 countries. The range is
2.260 (Algeria) to 3.040 (Singapore). The mean is 2.485. The variable periphery was available for 115 countries. Sixty-four percent of the 115 countries were periphery countries.

The next three variables in the table measure economic development. Gross domestic product (GDP) was available for 120 countries. The range is from 6.388 (Malawi) to 10.550 (United States). The mean is 8.587. Economic growth was available for 123 countries. The values for these countries range from -2.238 (Zimbabwe) to 14 (Azerbaijan). The mean economic growth is 5.080. Income Inequality (Gini) is available for 96 countries. The range is between 24.7 (Denmark) and 63.2 (Namibia and Lesotho). The mean is 42.33. This data largely reflects the distribution of Gini for all countries in the world for which data is available.

The next two variables capture measures of culture. Data indicating whether a country’s population is 50 percent or more Islamic was available for 127 countries. Thirty-four of 127 countries were 50% or more Islamic. Location of countries in Latin America was available for 127 countries and 33 countries are located in Latin America.

The final three variables are political variables. Government size was available for 104 countries. The values range from 2.99 (Equatorial Guinea) and 31.134 (Guyana), which is the government expenditure as a percentage of GDP. The mean is 14.818. Democracy was available for 110 countries. The range is between 0 (e.g. Belarus) and 10 (e.g. Uruguay). The mean is 5.936. Women’s right was available for 120 countries. The range is between 0 (Saudi Arabia) and 9 (Canada and Belgium) with a mean of 4.342.
Correlation Results

Table 4.2 presents Pearson’s correlations coefficients among all the variables that were used in this study. The correlations in column one show bivariate relationships among independent variables and gender empowerment (GEM). As expected GEM was significantly \( (p<.001) \) and negatively correlated with GI \( (r=-.555) \).

*Gender Empowerment Correlations*

Of the economic dependency variables only commodity concentration \( (p< .05) \) was significant showing a negative correlation \( (r= -0.318) \); countries with a larger percentage of their GDP from one export had lower GEM.

A peripheral world system position was negatively correlated \( (r= -0.435; \ p< .001) \) with GEM. Periphery countries had lower GEM than semi-periphery and core countries. GDP was positively correlated \( (r= 0.727; \ p< .001) \); therefore countries with larger economies had higher GEM. Growth \( (r= -0.254; \ p< .05) \) and Gini \( (r= -.0360; \ p< .01) \) were negatively correlated with GEM. Countries with economies that had higher growth and countries that had higher rates of income inequality had lower GEM levels. Finally, one cultural variable, Islamic, was negatively correlated with GEM \( (r= -0.619; \ p< .001) \), meaning that, Islamic countries had lower GEM than non-Islamic countries.

All the political variables, including government size \( (r= 0.495; \ p< .001) \), democracy \( (r= 0.684; \ p< .001) \), and women’s rights \( (r= 0.705; \ p< .001) \) were positively correlated with GEM. Countries with higher government revenues, more democratic regimes, and more women’s rights had higher GEM.
Table 4.2 Pearson Correlation Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>GEM</th>
<th>GI</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>CC</th>
<th>FDI</th>
<th>Periphery</th>
<th>GDP</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Gini</th>
<th>Islamic</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Govt Size</th>
<th>Democracy</th>
<th>Women's Rights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GI</td>
<td>-0.555***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>-0.220*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.318*</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.029</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>-0.014</td>
<td>0.340***</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>-0.435***</td>
<td>0.304**</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.490***</td>
<td>0.011</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>0.727***</td>
<td>-0.498***</td>
<td>0.353***</td>
<td>-0.431***</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>-0.603***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>-0.254*</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>-0.125</td>
<td>0.218*</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>-0.058</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini</td>
<td>-0.360**</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.408***</td>
<td>0.345**</td>
<td>0.389***</td>
<td>-0.377***</td>
<td>0.110</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>-0.619***</td>
<td>0.460***</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>0.223*</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>-0.290***</td>
<td>0.272**</td>
<td>-0.106</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>-0.232*</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>0.237*</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>0.191*</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.462***</td>
<td>-0.284***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.495***</td>
<td>-0.167+</td>
<td>0.318**</td>
<td>-0.105</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>-0.227*</td>
<td>0.287**</td>
<td>-0.454***</td>
<td>-0.207+</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>-0.216*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.684***</td>
<td>-0.517***</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>-0.454***</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>-0.358***</td>
<td>0.485***</td>
<td>-0.134</td>
<td>-0.149</td>
<td>-0.574***</td>
<td>0.282**</td>
<td>0.173+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>0.705***</td>
<td>-0.472***</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>-0.270*</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>-0.281**</td>
<td>0.478***</td>
<td>-0.130</td>
<td>-0.201+</td>
<td>-0.536***</td>
<td>0.287**</td>
<td>0.181+</td>
<td>0.598***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p > .001, ** p > .01, * p > .05, + p > .10

GEM = gender empowerment
GI = gender inequality
CC = commodity concentration
FDI = foreign direct investment
GDP = gross domestic product
The above correlation matrix provided some support for my hypotheses regarding gender empowerment. These results reveal mixed support for the hypotheses that dependency is negatively related to GEM. Commodity concentration and periphery were both negatively correlated with GEM. Exports and FDI were not significantly correlated with GEM. The three measures of economic development were all significant. GDP and Gini were in the expected directions, but growth was in the opposite direction from what was hypothesized. Growth was negatively correlated with GEM. One of the measures of culture, Islamic, was significantly correlated with GEM. Finally, all three of the political variables, government size, democracy, and women’s rights were significantly and positively correlated, which was the expected direction. Since all three of these variables were significantly related to GEM, this supports the notion that political variables are important to consider when studying women’s status.

**Gender Inequality Correlations**

The coefficients in column two present the bivariate relationships among the independent variables and gender inequality. Of the economic dependency variables only exports was significantly correlated ($r = -0.220; p < .05$) with GI. Countries with a larger percentage of their GDP from exports had lower GI. A peripheral position in the world system was positively correlated ($r = 0.304; p < .01$) with gender inequality. Therefore, periphery countries had higher gender inequality than semi-periphery and core countries. GDP was negatively correlated ($r = -0.498; p < .001$), meaning countries with larger economies had lower GI. The cultural variables, Islamic ($r = 0.460; p < .001$) and Latin ($r = -0.232; p < .05$) were both significantly correlated with GI. Islamic countries had
higher GI than non-Islamic countries. Unexpectedly, countries in Latin America were found to have lower rates of GI than countries outside of Latin America. The political variables, government size ($r = -0.167; p < .10$), democracy ($r = -0.517; p < .001$) and women’s rights ($r = -0.472; p < .001$) were negatively correlated with GI. Thus, countries with more democratic regimes and more women’s rights had lower GI.

The above correlation matrix results provide some support for my hypotheses regarding gender inequality. Correlation results did not support my hypotheses that dependency variables would increase gender inequality. In fact, countries with a higher percentage of their economies based in exports had lower levels of GI. I hypothesized the opposite. As expected, periphery countries had higher levels of GI. This correlation indicates that Wallerstein’s categorization of countries position in the world economy was significantly related to gender inequality. Both measures of culture were found to be related to GI. Contrary to my hypothesis, Latin American was negatively related to GI. Finally, all three of the measures of politics were significantly associated with GI. Countries who had large government spending, and those with regimes that were more democratic had lower levels of GI. Moreover, countries that had and enforced women’s rights had lower levels of GI. These findings indicate that it is important, as I am arguing in this dissertation, to consider political variables when explaining GI.
Regression Results

In this section I present the results of multiple linear regression. Four tables are shown below; two feature the dependent variable gender empowerment (4.3 and 4.4)\textsuperscript{20} and two feature gender inequality (4.6 and 4.7)\textsuperscript{21}. It was necessary to have two models for each dependent variable in order to avoid issues of multicollinearity. The independent variable Gini is not included in models with growth or GDP to avoid multicollinearity. Thus, the following tables present models in which Tables 4.3 and 4.6 control for GDP and growth, while Tables 4.4 and 4.7 control for Gini. Appendices C and D present models with independent variables stepped in theoretical groupings. These models allow the reader to see how the effects of independent variables change as additional independent variables are added.

In my discussion of the MLR results I first present the models predicting gender empowerment and then the models predicting gender inequality. The results are organized in the order of the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3, the data methods chapter.

Gender Empowerment

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 show the results of regression results predicting gender empowerment.

Economic Dependency. Neither exports nor commodity concentration was significant in predicting gender empowerment, and therefore do not contribute anything to these models. Consequently, I found no support for hypotheses 1a or 2a.

\textsuperscript{20} Table 4.5 is the same as Table 4.4 with the addition of an interaction term.

\textsuperscript{21} Table 4.8 is the same as Table 4.7 with the addition of an interaction term.
Table 4.3 MLR Regression model predicting Gender Empowerment controlling for GDP and Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.455</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>-2.505</td>
<td>-1.491</td>
<td>0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>0.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>-0.280</td>
<td>0.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>1.121</td>
<td>0.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>-0.117</td>
<td>-1.476</td>
<td>0.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.361</td>
<td>2.093</td>
<td>0.036 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>2.030</td>
<td>0.042 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>-0.275</td>
<td>-1.624</td>
<td>0.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>0.788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>2.792</td>
<td>0.005 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>0.779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>2.466</td>
<td>0.014 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.772

+ p < .10  * p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001

CC=commodity concentration
FDI=foreign direct investment

Table 4.4 MLR Regression model predicting Gender Empowerment controlling for Gini

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.698</td>
<td>0.288</td>
<td>-3.755</td>
<td>-2.421</td>
<td>0.015 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>-0.017</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>-0.062</td>
<td>-0.834</td>
<td>0.404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>-0.030</td>
<td>-0.278</td>
<td>0.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>4.495</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
<td>-2.715</td>
<td>0.007 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.499</td>
<td>-4.699</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>-0.127</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>-0.303</td>
<td>-2.582</td>
<td>0.010 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td>3.698</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.325</td>
<td>4.911</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>1.514</td>
<td>0.130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.838

+ p < .10  * p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001

CC=commodity concentration
FDI=foreign direct investment
Hypothesis 3a predicted that foreign direct investment negatively influences GEM. I found no support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.4 when controlling for Gini significant effects were found for foreign direct investment ($b = .614; p = .000$). For every one unit increase in FDI, the GEM increased by 0.614 units. This relationship was not in the direction that was expected. Countries with higher levels of foreign direct investment had higher levels of GEM. Foreign direct investment was not significant in Table 4.3 when controlling for GDP and growth. Therefore FDI did not contribute anything to this model.

Hypothesis 4a predicted that periphery countries will have lower GEM. I found some support for this hypothesis. Periphery position in the world system was significant in Table 4.4 when controlling for Gini ($b = -.073; p = .007$). Therefore, net of all other variables, periphery countries had lower levels of GEM than semi-periphery and core countries. Periphery position in the world system was not significant in Table 4.3 when controlling for GDP and growth. Therefore it did not contribute anything to this model.

I found no support for any of the hypotheses concerning dependency except in relation to position in the world system. In one model, foreign direct investment was significant, though in the opposite direction from what was hypothesized. Additionally, periphery was significant in one model, indicating that periphery countries had lower rates of GEM. I discuss the importance of these findings further in Chapter 5.

*Economic Development.* Hypothesis 5a predicted that GDP increases GEM. I found support for this hypothesis. Table 4.3 shows significant positive effects for GDP on GEM ($b = .053; p = .036$). Net of other variables, countries with higher GDP tended to have higher levels of GEM.
Hypothesis 6a predicted that economic growth increases GEM. I found support for this hypothesis. Table 4.3 presents a model that controls for economic growth. Economic growth was a significant predictor of GEM ($b = .011; p = .042$). Net of other variables, countries with higher levels of economic growth tended to have higher levels of GEM.

Hypothesis 7a predicted that a higher Gini coefficient decreases GEM. I also found support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.4 a model is presented that controls for the Gini coefficient. Gini was a significant predictor of GEM ($b = -.009; p = .000$). Therefore, net of all other variables, countries with higher levels of income inequality had lower levels of GEM.

Culture. Hypothesis 8a predicted that Islamic countries will have lower empowerment. I found support for this hypothesis in Table 4.4. When controlling for Gini Islamic was significant ($b = -.127; p = .010$). Therefore, net of other variables, Islamic countries had lower levels of GEM. In Table 4.3, when controlling for GDP and growth, Islamic is not significant and therefore did not contribute anything to this model.

Hypothesis 9a predicted that Latin American countries will have lower GEM. I found no support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.4 Latin was positively related to GEM when controlling for Gini ($b = .167; p = .000$). In Table 4.3, when controlling for GDP and growth, Latin is not significant and therefore did not contribute anything to this model.

I found that cultural variables are important in explaining gender empowerment. In one model, countries that were fifty percent or more Islamic had lower gender empowerment and Latin American countries actually had higher levels of GEM.
Therefore, countries in Latin America had higher rates of gender empowerment than non-Latin countries. I discuss these findings further in Chapter 5.

**The Political Order.** Hypothesis 10a predicted that government size would increase gender empowerment. I found strong support for this hypothesis. In Tables 4.3 and 4.4, significant effects were found for the effects of government size on GEM. In table 4.3, when controlling for GDP and growth, government size was positively associated with GEM (b = .009; \( p = .005 \)). In Table 4.4, when controlling for Gini, government size was still positively associated with GEM (b = .010; \( p = .000 \)). Therefore, net of other variables, countries that had higher levels of government expenditure as a percentage of their GDP had higher levels of GEM.

For each of the significant relationships between measures of the political order and women’s status, I present scatterplots. These figures visually illustrate the patterns between two variables by country. These scatterplots allow a reader to observe where specific countries lie in relation to others. Figure 4.1 presents a scatterplot of the bivariate relationship between government size and gender empowerment\(^{22}\). This figure clearly shows the linear relationship between these variables. Countries with a larger government size tended to have higher levels of gender empowerment (refer to Appendix B for a complete list of country codes and the corresponding country). For example, Sweden (SWE) has a large government size (27.22) and also a high level of gender empowerment (0.91). In fact, all of the countries with high levels of both of these variables were

\(^{22}\) In the following three scatterplots not all countries in the study are labeled. Some are represented only by dots. These labels are omitted for clarity in the scatterplot. This figure is designed to visually describe the general relationship between the two variables, not to be a comprehensive description.
western-European countries. The majority of countries with both a small government size and low levels of gender empowerment were Islamic countries such as Egypt (EGY), Turkey (TUR), and Bangladesh (BGD). The non-Islamic countries with small government size and low levels of gender empowerment were Nepal (NPL) and Paraguay (PRY).
Hypothesis 11a predicted that democracy would increase GEM. I found no support for this hypothesis. Democracy was not a significant predictor of GEM in Tables 4.3 or 4.4. Democracy therefore did not contribute anything to these models.
Hypothesis 12a predicted that women’s rights would increase gender empowerment. I found some support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.3 women’s rights significantly predicted GEM ($b = .023; \ p = .014$) when controlling for GDP and economic growth. However, when controlling for Gini, in Table 4.4, women’s rights was not a significant predictor of GEM. Therefore, when controlling for GDP, economic growth and other variables, countries with greater women’s rights (that are also enforced) had higher levels of GEM.

Figure 4.2 displays the bivariate relationship between women’s rights and gender empowerment. Countries to the top right of the figure are those with both high levels of women’s rights and gender empowerment. These countries include Belgium (BEL), Finland (FIN), Norway (NOR), Netherlands (NLD), Canada (CAN), and Australia (AUS). These countries are all industrialized western countries. Those that have low levels of both women’s rights and gender empowerment include: Yemen (YEM), Saudi Arabia (SAU), Egypt (EGY), Qatar (QAT), Iran (IRN), Turkey (TUR), and Pakistan (PAK). The majority of the population in all of these countries is Muslim.
Hypotheses 13a-15a predicted that interactions between periphery and each of the political variables (government size, democracy and women’s rights) would be significantly related to GEM. In Table 4.5, I present the model that includes an interaction between government size by periphery (world system position).
Table 4.5 MLR Regression model predicting Gender Empowerment controlling for Gini and interaction between Government Size and Periphery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.660</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>-3.691</td>
<td>-2.150</td>
<td>0.032*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>-0.288</td>
<td>0.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>-0.299</td>
<td>0.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>3.757</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>3.757</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.472</td>
<td>-4.151</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>-0.294</td>
<td>-2.337</td>
<td>0.019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.358</td>
<td>3.699</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>4.573</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>-0.182</td>
<td>0.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>1.646</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size*Periphery</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.404</td>
<td>-2.059</td>
<td>0.039*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² 0.832

+ p < .10  * p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001

CC=commodity concentration
FDI=foreign direct investment

When controlling for Gini, the interaction effect of government size and periphery was a significant predictor of GEM (b = -.009; p = .039). Therefore, I found support for hypothesis 13a. This indicates that the effect of government size on gender empowerment is stronger for periphery countries than for semi-periphery and core countries. The hypothesized interaction effect between women’s rights and periphery was not estimated because in Table 4.3 when women’s rights was significant, periphery was not. Therefore, I found no support for hypotheses 14a and 15a.

I found strong evidence that political variables are important for predicting GEM. Government size and women’s rights were significant predictors of gender empowerment. Government size was significant in both models, indicating that governments with large expenditures (as a percentage of their GDP) had higher levels of GEM. Moreover,
governments that have and enforce women’s rights have higher rates of gender empowerment. Still not all political variables were significant: democracy was not an important variable for predicting gender empowerment. These findings indicate that democracy is less important than what a given regime does—such as government spending and enforcing women’s rights—in predicting GEM. I discuss these findings further in Chapter 5.

Gender Inequality

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 present the results of regression models predicting gender inequality.

Economic Dependency. Hypothesis 1b predicts that countries with more export-oriented economies will have higher gender inequality. In both of these tables, exports was not significant and therefore did not contribute anything to these models. Consequently, I found no support for hypothesis 1b.
Table 4.6 MLR Regression model predicting Gender Inequality controlling for GDP and Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>15.132</td>
<td>2.682</td>
<td>0.007 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.067</td>
<td>-1.718</td>
<td>0.086 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>-0.180</td>
<td>0.1402</td>
<td>0.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.3018</td>
<td>0.003 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.638</td>
<td>0.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>-0.046</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>-4.448</td>
<td>-3.139</td>
<td>0.002 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP Squared</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>4.248</td>
<td>3.018</td>
<td>0.003 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>-1.473</td>
<td>0.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.281</td>
<td>2.962</td>
<td>0.003 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>1.336</td>
<td>0.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.094</td>
<td>-0.931</td>
<td>0.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.291</td>
<td>-2.430</td>
<td>0.015 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.145</td>
<td>-1.431</td>
<td>0.153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.511

+ p < .10  * p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001
CC=commodity concentration
FDI=foreign direct investment

Hypothesis 2b predicted that commodity concentration positively influences gender inequality. I found no support for this hypothesis. In both models I found a
significant *negative* relationship between commodity concentration and GI. In Table 4.6, when controlling for GDP and growth, commodity concentration negatively affects GI ($b = -.010; p = .086$). In Table 4.7, when controlling for Gini, commodity concentration negatively affects GI ($b = -.013; p = .050$). Therefore countries with higher commodity concentration lowers gender inequality. These findings were not evident until the models controlled for political variables (see Appendix D). These findings were the opposite of what was expected.

Hypothesis 3b predicted that foreign direct investment positively influences gender inequality. I found no support for this hypothesis. In neither model was foreign direct investment significant. Therefore it does not contribute anything to these models.

Hypothesis 4b predicted that periphery countries will have higher levels of GI than semi-periphery and core countries. I found some support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.7 significant effects were found for periphery ($b = .006; p = .013$) when controlling for Gini. Therefore, net of other variables, periphery countries had higher rates of GI in this model. In Table 4.6, when controlling for GDP and growth periphery was not significant. Therefore, periphery position did not contribute anything to this model.

As with predicting gender empowerment, I found almost no support for hypotheses predicting that economic dependency significantly predicted gender inequality. In fact, commodity concentration significantly predicted *lower* gender inequality in contradiction to my hypothesis. Periphery was found to be a significant predictor in only one model. I discuss these findings in more detail in Chapter 5.
Economic Development. Hypothesis 5b predicted that higher GDP decreases GI. I found support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.6 significant effects were found for GDP squared ($b = .003; p = .003$). This indicates that the relationship between GDP and GI was curvilinear; that is countries with smaller GDP tend to have higher gender inequality, countries with moderate levels of GDP have lower gender inequality, and countries with higher GDP have higher gender inequality.

Hypothesis 6b predicted that economic growth decreases GI. I found no support for Hypothesis 8b. In Table 4.6, the model controls for economic growth. Economic growth was not significant and therefore did not contribute anything to this model.

Hypothesis 7b predicted that Gini increases gender inequality. I found no support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.7 a model is presented that controls for the Gini coefficient. Gini was not significant and therefore did not contribute anything to this model.

Culture. Hypothesis 8b predicted that Islamic countries will have higher GI. I found support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.6, when controlling for GDP and growth, Islamic was significant ($b = .008; p = .003$). Also, in Table 4.7, when controlling for Gini, Islamic is significant ($b = .006; p = .076$). Therefore, net of other variables, countries with populations that are more than 50 percent Islamic have higher levels of gender inequality.

Hypothesis 9b predicted that Latin American countries will have higher gender inequality. I did not find support for this hypothesis. Latin American was not significant in either model and therefore did not contribute anything to either model.

The Political Order. Hypothesis 10b predicted that government size would decrease gender inequality. I found no support for this hypothesis. Government size was
not significant in Table 4.6 or Table 4.7 and therefore did not contribute anything to either model.

Hypothesis 11b predicted that greater democracy would decrease GI. I found support for this hypothesis. In Table 4.6 when controlling for GDP and growth democracy was significant ($b = -.001; p = .015$). In Table 4.7, when controlling for Gini, democracy was significant ($b = -.001; p = .025$). Therefore, net of some variables, countries with higher levels of democracy had lower levels of gender inequality.

Figure 4.3 is a visual description of the bivariate relationship between democracy and gender inequality. The countries to the top left of this figure are those that have high levels of institutionalized democracy and low levels of gender inequality. Unlike the above scatterplot of government size and gender empowerment, these countries are not all western-European. For example, Sweden (SWE), Hungary (HUN), Uruguay (URY), and the Netherlands (NLD) all have high levels of institutionalized democracy and low levels of gender inequality. Countries with low levels of institutionalized democracy and high levels of gender inequality are Guinea-Bissau (GNB), Pakistan (PAK), Sudan (SDN), Yemen (YEM), and Chad (TCD).
Figure 4.3 Scatterplot of the Relationship between Gender Inequality and Democracy

Hypothesis 12b predicted that greater women's rights would decrease GI. I found no support for this hypothesis. Women's rights was not a significant predictor of GI in Table 4.6 or Table 4.7 and therefore did not contribute anything to either model.
Hypotheses 13b through 15b predicted that interaction effects between periphery (world system position) and each of the political variables (government size, democracy, and women’s rights) would significantly predict gender inequality. In Table 4.8, I present the model that includes an interaction between democracy by periphery (world system position). When controlling for Gini, the interaction effect of democracy and periphery was a significant predictor of GEM (b = -.002; p = .030). Therefore, I found support for hypothesis 14b. This indicates that the effect of democracy on gender inequality is stronger in periphery countries than in semi-periphery and core countries. The other hypothesized interaction effects upon gender inequality were not estimated because women’s rights and government size did not significantly predict gender inequality. Therefore, I found no support for hypotheses 13b and 15b.

Table 4.8 MLR Regression model predicting Gender Inequality controlling for Gini and interaction between Democracy and Periphery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-0.020</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>-1.581</td>
<td>-0.651</td>
<td>0.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.146</td>
<td>-1.535</td>
<td>0.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>-0.229</td>
<td>-2.165</td>
<td>0.030 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>1.278</td>
<td>0.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>2.526</td>
<td>0.012 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.257</td>
<td>2.183</td>
<td>0.029 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Size</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.066</td>
<td>-0.770</td>
<td>0.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Rights</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
<td>-2.052</td>
<td>0.040 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy*Periphery</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.566</td>
<td>-2.170</td>
<td>0.030 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = 0.458

* p < .10  ** p < .05  *** p < .01  **** p < .001

CC=commodity concentration
FDI=foreign direct investment
I found less support for the political hypotheses when predicting gender inequality than I did for GEM. Democracy was the only variable that significantly predicted gender inequality. According to these findings, government size and women’s rights were not predictors of gender inequality. Interestingly, these were the variables that significantly predicted GEM. I discuss these findings in more detail in Chapter 5. A summary of findings based on the hypotheses is presented in Table 4.9.
Table 4.9 Hypotheses and a Summary of Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV</th>
<th>DV</th>
<th>Correlation Results</th>
<th>Regression Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a Exports</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b Exports</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a CC</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b CC</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a FDI</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b FDI</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a Periphery</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>somewhat supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b Periphery</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>somewhat supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a GDP</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b GDP</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6a Growth</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6b Growth</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7a Gini</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7b Gini</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8a Islamic</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>somewhat supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8b Islamic</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9a Latin</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9b Latin</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>not supported*</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10a Govt Size</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10b Govt Size</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11a Democracy</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11b Democracy</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>somewhat supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12a Women's rights</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>somewhat supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12b Women's rights</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>supported</td>
<td>not supported†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13a Govt Size*Periphery</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td></td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13b Govt Size*Periphery</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td></td>
<td>not supported ‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14a Democracy*Periphery</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td></td>
<td>not supported ‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14b Democracy*Periphery</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td></td>
<td>supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15a Women's rights*Periphery</td>
<td>GEM</td>
<td></td>
<td>not supported ‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15b Women's rights*Periphery</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td></td>
<td>not supported ‡</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Results were significant and in the opposite direction than hypothesized.
† Results were not significant.
‡ Not estimated because at least one of the main effects of the IV was not significant.

CC=Commodity Concentration
FDI=Foreign Direct Investment
GDP=Gross Domestic Product
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This dissertation explored the applicability of world system/dependency theory for understanding women’s status as measured with gender empowerment and gender inequality. While dependency theory focuses on the impact of economic dependency, I also included the impact of the political order on gender empowerment and gender inequality. In this dissertation, I proposed that world system/dependency variables and political variables would have an effect on GEM and GI.

Most dependency research explores women’s status by using either case studies or cross-national comparison with simple regression. Understanding the effect of world system/dependency on GEM and GI was furthered in this dissertation through the use of FIML which allowed for the inclusion of more countries in the analysis. The current research provides evidence that political variables do influence women’s status, but that the variables of importance depend on how women’s status is measured (GEM or GI).

In this chapter I will first discuss the major results of this dissertation and whether they supported the hypotheses. I subsequently detail the contributions that my study has for the literature on economic development and women’s status. The limitations and weaknesses of this study are then discussed. I will explore the policy implications for the
findings in my study. Finally, I describe what future research is suggested by the findings of this dissertation.

Discussion of Major Results

In this section I will discuss the major results of this dissertation. This dissertation did not support the research literature on economic dependency and women’s status, and I explore possible reasons for these findings. I discuss some explanations for findings that culture impacts women’s status. Finally, the political order was an important predictor of women’s status and I explore potential reasons for this relationship.

Economic Dependency

I found little support for the hypotheses that predicted that economic dependency would be negatively related to gender empowerment or gender inequality. Most of the measures of economic dependency were not significantly related to either measure of women’s status. In fact, two measures of economic dependency, exports (H1b) and commodity concentration (H2b), significantly predicted gender inequality. One measure predicted gender empowerment, foreign direct investment (H3a). All of these relationships were in the opposite direction than predicted. Periphery (H4a and H4b), a measure of world system position, was found in one model to negatively affect gender empowerment and in another to positively affect gender inequality. Except for the significant effects of periphery, these findings suggest that the integration of the global economy can have positive outcomes for women’s status. Later in this chapter I speculate as to the reasons for the found relationships between dependency and women’s status.
Periphery status was significant in two of the four main regression models. Periphery significantly predicted gender empowerment and gender inequality when controlling for Gini. Periphery was not significant in the models which controlled for GDP and growth instead of Gini. When periphery was significant it was in the expected direction; it supported the hypotheses that periphery countries had lower gender empowerment (H4a) and higher gender inequality (H4b). In both models that include GDP and growth the standardized coefficients for GDP were the largest of any significant independent variables. This indicates that GDP explained a large portion of the variance and maybe decreased the importance of periphery. Likewise periphery and GDP were highly correlated in this sample (see Table 4.2). The finding that peripheral status significantly predicts women’s status reinforces previous research and theory (Akhter 2006; Meyer 2003; Meyer 2006; Ward 1988).

The amount of foreign direct investment increased gender empowerment. This finding was opposite the expectation of hypothesis H3a. Instead this result supports the research of Villarreal and Yu (2007) who found that foreign firms in Mexico were more likely to employ women and pay them more equally compared to men. Though the dependent variable is not measured in the same way as Villarreal and Yu’s measure of gender inequality, the two outcome variables are highly compatible. For example, part of my measure of gender empowerment includes the percentage of women in positions as managers, professionals, and in technical positions. Also, the GEM measure includes gender income inequality. Therefore, my findings are comparable to Villarreal and Yu’s research and validates their findings in a cross-national context.
What could explain these results? As opposed to domestic firms, foreign firms might not have the same cultural expectations for women (Adler 1994), expectations that may keep domestic firms from hiring women. Moreover, firms from industrialized, core countries may simply be self-interested. As others have noted, women are considered to be more, flexible, cheaper, and docile than men and better at performing intricate repetitive tasks (Fernandez-Kelly 1983; Freeman 2000; Hale 1996; Marchand and Runyan 2000; Salzinger 2003; Ward 1990). Therefore, foreign firms may see hiring women as beneficial to their profitability. As a result, the presence of foreign investment would increase gender empowerment, as measured by the percentage of women in the workforce and greater income.

Yet, for the purposes of understanding women’s status, does this actually mean that women are empowered? For example, having gender equality in income is an important goal, but do women actually have control over the money that they earn? The measure of the GEM does not distinguish between women actually being empowered and able to control their income as opposed to just having income, yet not able to control it (and thereby be “empowered”). The former type of empowerment has been noted by others as being important for the family because women tend to spend more income on their children than men do (Islam 2007). Therefore, women controlling their own income can be beneficial not only for themselves, but also future generations. This argument is often advanced by those working in NGOs focused on human development, such as microcredit programs that give loans to women as opposed to men.

Another example that demonstrates the detrimental consequences of foreign direct investment “improving” women’s empowerment can be seen in the case of women
working along the US-Mexican border in factories involved in producing goods for export called “maquiladoras.” Since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed in 1994, Mexico has had an influx of American factories, thereby increasing foreign investment in Mexico and consequently employing large number of Mexican women. This has arguably empowered women by giving them a greater income, but could also have other detrimental effects upon their “empowerment.” For example, hundreds of women who work at maquiladoras on the US-Mexican border have been murdered since NAFTA (Rodríguez 2007). The GEM measure does not consider women’s physical safety or freedom from attack. A woman’s ability to control her body, including her right to live, is arguably the epitome of “empowerment,” yet the GEM does not consider these important dimensions.

The two measures of economic dependency that were significantly related to gender inequality were exports and commodity concentration. H1b predicted that exports would be positively related to gender inequality and H2b predicted that commodity concentration would be positively related to gender inequality, yet I found that both were negatively related to gender inequality.

Exports was negatively and significantly related to GI at the bivariate level and the multivariate level. This indicates that countries with economies that were concentrated in exports had lower levels of gender inequality (income, life expectancy, and education). According to dependency theory, exports, as a measure of economic dependency, should be associated with inequality. But, this finding does not support dependency theory and instead suggests that openness to trade may benefit countries through increasing gender equality. This finding may seem to support the modernization
theory’s argument that participation in the global marketplace will lead to economic growth that will ultimately create equality. However, I suggest this finding might be better explained statistically. As evidence, when GDP was controlled for in Table 4.6, exports was not significant and GDP squared had the greatest effect ($\beta = 4.037$) on GI. Because GDP was correlated with exports ($r = .260$), the significant finding of exports in Table 4.7 might have been because GDP was not controlled for. Therefore, the relationship between exports and GI may be spurious—as GDP is the “true” predictor of GI. Other factors (e.g. GDP) need to be considered when evaluating gender inequality, not just exports.

Commodity concentration was positively correlated with GI at the bivariate level, although the relationship was not significant. At the multivariate level, however, this relationship has inverted. This indicates that suppression could be occurring in the models from Tables 4.6 and 4.7. One explanation for this contradictory finding could be similar to the reason that foreign investments had positive effects. If exports are controlled by core based corporations they might impose core values regarding gender equality. Another explanation might be that men lost income, as opposed to women gaining income (thus greater gender equality). This is what narrowed the gap between men’s and women’s incomes in the United States; between 1979 – 1993. Fifty nine percent of the narrowing of the income gap can be explained by the decline in men’s wages (Hartmann and Whittaker 1998). Since an increase in inequality (as evidenced by a higher Gini) is bound to affect the disproportionately male labor force more, men’s wages will decrease in respect to women’s (thus increasing gender equality). Though this represents more equality, it is problematic because the equality is a result of lower
standards of living. Therefore, a truly positive narrowing of the income gap between men and women would be if women’s wages would increase.

**Culture**

Islamic was a consistent predictor (significant in three models) of women’s status. Countries that had populations that were 50 percent or more Muslim had lower levels of gender empowerment and higher levels of gender inequality. This finding supports other research that finds that Islam has a negative effect on women’s status (Fish 2002; Forsythe and Korzeniewicz 2000). In order to better understand this finding I performed two post hoc analyses. First, I compared the levels of women’s status for Islamic countries that were Arabic or non-Arabic using a t-test. I found no significant difference between Arabic and non-Arabic countries on their levels of GEM or GI. Second, Islamic countries may vary by region. I also performed an analysis of variance for Islamic countries by region\(^{23}\). I found no difference on GEM or GI levels of Islamic countries by region, therefore indicating Islamic countries had similar GEM and GI levels regardless of region.

Latin American was significant in one model, though not in the expected direction. Latin American countries had higher levels of GEM then non-Latin countries. In a post hoc analysis I found that the average GEM score for Latin American (0.5653) countries was higher than African (0.5170) and Asian (0.4402) countries, but not higher than

\(^{23}\) I compared countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe.
European (0.8290) countries. An ANOVA test indicated that there was a significant difference between Asian and Latin American countries by GEM. This indicates that Latin American countries may have high levels of women in parliament, more women in certain job positions or there may be more parity between men and women’s incomes.

Two possible explanations for the high GEM levels in Latin America may be women’s positions in parliament or women’s positions in occupations. The recent increase in women as heads of state in Latin America may be evidence that these countries are more accepting of women holding positions of power. For example, there have been six female heads of state in Latin American countries in the last two decades. Moreover, the average percentage of women in parliament in Latin American countries was 17.9 in 2007 compared to Non-Latin American countries (15.9%). While Latin American countries have a higher percentage of females in parliament, t-test results indicate that this difference is not significant. Another possible explanation for higher GEM levels in Latin America may reflect women’s high employment levels. Since structural adjustment policies were implemented in Latin American countries in the 1980s, women have increasingly been in paid employment (Hite and Viterna 2004). Though many of these women are in low wage jobs, scholars suggest that men have concurrently experienced a decrease in their occupation status (Pearson 1998). Therefore, this may have resulted in less occupational segregation by gender.

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24 Using a post-hoc Tukey test.
The Political Order

This research illustrates the value of exploring the relationship between the political order and women’s status. In this dissertation all three political measures—government size, democracy, and women’s rights—were significant in at least one regression model.

Government size was a significant predictor of gender empowerment in Tables 4.3 and 4.4. Countries with governments that had larger expenditures (as a percent of GDP) had higher rates of gender empowerment, providing support for H10a. Thus, the greater percentage of a country’s economy that is government-spending (i.e. the public sector, minus military), the more women tend to be empowered. Two of the components of GEM were a measure of gender income equality and the percentage of women in prestigious employment positions. Where governments control a larger percentage of a country’s economy, the public sector is larger, therefore employing women at higher levels than in the private sector. Additionally, I found that the interaction between government size and periphery was significant. Therefore, in government size had a stronger effect on gender empowerment in periphery countries than in semi-periphery and core countries. This may indicate that for women in poorer countries it is very important to allow states to spend money on their populations.

Democracy was an important predictor of gender inequality, thus supporting hypothesis H11b. Countries with high rates of institutionalized democracy had lower levels of gender inequality. Highly democratic countries tended to have a smaller gap between the life expectancy, income, and educational attainment of women and men (the components of the GI measure). Additionally, I found that the interaction between
democracy and periphery was a significant predictor of gender inequality. Therefore the effect of democracy on gender inequality was stronger in periphery countries than in semi-periphery and core countries. This indicates that if one hopes to increase equality in periphery countries, it is very important to enable democracy in these states.

My findings support the pluralist conception of the state in democratic countries. Citizens in democratic states are able to articulate political preferences and constrain the executive. This political pluralism can permit people to pressure the state for access to resources (that could benefit women). This pressure can then lead to positive outcomes for those who otherwise do not have power, namely women.

When controlling for GDP and growth, women’s rights significantly and positively affected gender empowerment. Therefore, countries that have greater women’s rights and enforce those rights have higher rates of gender empowerment in the model from Table 4.3 This finding provides some support for H12a (women’s rights did not predict gender empowerment when controlling for Gini). This could be explained in a number of ways. First, the measurement of women’s rights includes the enforcement of women’s rights—the rights not only indicate legislation, but also indicate that these rights are being acknowledged and observed by the government. If there is wider acceptance of women having these rights, this could snowball into positive outcomes reflected in the GEM, such as women taking prominent positions in society. Second, women having greater political rights (one facet of women’s rights) logically results in greater women’s empowerment. If women are legally permitted to vote, run for office, and hold government positions, then women will tend to hold more political positions in national parliaments. Third, greater economic rights—such as “equal pay for equal work,” having
control over one’s own employment, nondiscrimination by employers—will also lead to
greater income parity between men and women (i.e. lower income inequality). With
greater economic rights, women will have a larger share of managerial, professional, and
technical positions in the paid labor force. Finally, there could be a reciprocal relationship
between women’s rights and GEM (not estimated here). Having a higher percentage of
women in these prominent positions in society might permit such women to be advocates
for and enforcers of these rights in society. Therefore, well-placed women in the
economic and political bureaucracies may facilitate increased women’s rights (c.f. Paxton
and Hughes 2007). \(^{25}\)

Contributions

This dissertation has contributed to the research literature on gender and
international development in several ways—both methodologically and theoretically.
Methodologically, the inclusion of more data, the choice of analytical method, and the
multiple outcome variables provides a more robust model of how various factors predict
women’s status. First, I included a large number of countries in my study. Past research
in this area has frequently only analyzed dozens of countries; for example, Ahktar (2006)
only considered a range between 35 and 74 countries in her study. The analysis for this
dissertation included 127 countries (the UN recognizes 192 countries), thus greatly
expanding the generalizability of this study. The countries included represent over two-

\(^{25}\) No post hoc analysis of women’s rights on GEM, by world system position,
(interaction) was done because world system position was not significant in this model.
thirds\textsuperscript{26} of the world’s population, a vast improvement over past research efforts. Second, this was, in part, accomplished by the use of a full information maximum likelihood (FIML) method. Most other research uses listwise deletion, which simply deletes cases if they are missing even one value of a variable. Given the patchy-nature of international data and problems with acquiring figures from individual governments, this method is an excellent alternative to listwise deletion that results in many countries being dropped from a sample. FIML allowed for many countries to be included in the analysis, countries that are often excluded from research because of a lack of data. Incidentally, the countries often dropped from analyses are more likely to be countries from the periphery. Since much international economic development is focused on these peripheral countries, their inclusion is of principle importance.

As a result of measuring women’s status by GEM and GI, I have methodologically advanced prior models and theoretically diversified our understanding about how women’s status is measured. Clearly from the findings in Chapter 4, one can see that the same variables do not predict both GEM and GI—GI is not simply the inverse of GEM. This indicates that “women’s status” is not a monolithic idea. Thus, the measurement of women’s status is important, and to generalize women’s status as either one measure or the other is to ignore important nuance within the concept of “women’s status.”

I have also expanded the theoretical understanding of how international development affects women’s status by the inclusion of political variables. Much research on income inequality or gender inequality has focused on the influence of

\textsuperscript{26} This was computed using 2008 data from the CIA Factbook.
economic measures. This dissertation has argued that elements of the political order are potentially as important; thus I have included political variables, while controlling for economic dependency and other variables. I have shown that these political variables clearly impact women’s status. Despite controlling for periphery political variables were significant in each model. Thus, the political order does have an important influence upon the status of women in the world.

The women’s rights variable, in particular, is an advantageous addition because it includes not only the rights that women have within a country, but also if those rights are enforced. In the past, scholars have critiqued the strategic importance of women’s rights, because they have recognized that there is often a chasm between those rights on paper and the realities that women experience (Cornwall and Molyneux 2006). In other words, the creation of legislation or even constitutions that guarantee women’s rights are not useful if those rights are not enforced. Therefore, my dissertation shows that the presence and enforcement of women’s rights are important for women’s empowerment.

Limitations

Though this study has made important contributions to this research, it is not without limitations. Below, I discuss three principle areas of weakness. First, even though I have been able to include more countries than past research, issues of missing data are still present. My dependent variables come from United Nations measures of women’s status: GEM and GI (from the HDI and GDI). The UN does not conduct interviews or administer surveys. The UN restricts itself to data that is available from each individual
country. Because of the lack of data some countries were not included in this study. These omissions lead to an incomplete picture of how the world system affects women.

Second, as mentioned above, the GEM only considers women’s political participation at the \textit{country-level}. Arguably, political participation does not only happen at the country-level, but also the state- or province-level, and the local-level. The GEM measure could be strengthened if the UN would gather data on women’s political participation at a more local level. Consequently, this dissertation could not capture the full extent to which women participate in politics.

Finally, this dissertation has not been able to analyze individual level data. All data for this dissertation are measured at the country-level. Undoubtedly, there is wide variation \textit{within} countries, too. Evidence of this variation can be seen by the Gini coefficient, which illustrates the gap in income internal to each country. A proper accounting of differences between women and men would have to incorporate within-country diversity. For example, the independent variables of world economic system, culture, and the political order can have differing effects on a woman’s status depending on an individual’s race, class, age, religion, sexuality, or ethnicity. Some from the dependency/world system tradition, have also argued that there is variation within countries (Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985). They acknowledge that there is a “core” and “periphery” \textit{within} countries. Thus, the elite of a periphery country (who make up the “core” in that country) may benefit from economic dependency, while the majority of the population (the “periphery”) does not. My study, however, could not differentiate between the effects of dependency or political variables on women’s status for women who have different race, class, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. For a poor woman, of a
racial or ethnic minority, or a religious minority living in the periphery may be more detrimental to her status than privileged women in the same country. Ideally, if individual-level/within-country data were available it could add to a more in-depth understanding of how women’s positions can affect their statuses within the world system.

Policy Implications

There are many policy implications of my research based on the results using the political variables. The findings give support to social democratic and liberal welfare arguments that the state can intervene in the economy on behalf of disadvantaged groups—in this case women. Civil society, including NGOs, social movements, and concerned citizens could be—and likely are—successful by targeting the state.

Women’s rights were a significant predictor of GEM, thus bolstering the argument that policy should focus on creating legislation that declares and protects women’s rights. After women’s rights have been implemented, governments should be held accountable for enforcing those rights. However, policy-makers in affluent countries who want to make positive change in women’s lives in poor countries should pursue this agenda with caution.

Cornwall and Molyneux (2006) asserted that international development agencies, NGOs, and governments since the 1990s engaged in “rights-based” policy and practice. The use of a rights-based agenda can be problematic, though, for some countries of the international community. This agenda can be used to impose Western “moral authority” to advocate a particular rights-based agenda in the “backward” third world. Serious problems can arise with this argument. Sometimes, the Western advocacy of greater
women’s rights has been used to justify violence. For example, the US invasion of Afghanistan was *post-hoc* justified by the executive branch as bringing “democracy” and “gender equality” to that country, as Roy (2002) stated in a speech: “We’re being asked to believe that the U.S. Marines are actually on a feminist mission.” A rights-based approach is often used to legitimize development interventions that often greatly benefit powerful countries at the expense of the poor in the developing world.

Using a women’s rights approach needs to include women from the target country. Local women are in the best position to understand the circumstances of women in their own country. As Scott (1998) argued, states (and arguably international organizations) must incorporate local knowledge in any project or that project is doomed to failure due to misspecification of the problem, solution, and outcome. Additionally, women from different class backgrounds and ethnic/racial groups can add their own experiential knowledge. Such an approach would be in-line with the “gender and development” framework that insists women should be the main actors involved in designing development projects that would aid them in their own empowerment. This sort of approach is akin to that advocated by the transnational feminist network Developing Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). This network is composed of feminists from the global south that work together with other networks and NGOs to share knowledge and develop policies (Sen 1987).

The most consistent political predictor of GEM was government size, which was significant in both models. This finding supports the research of Yaish and Kraus (2003) which found that the public sector is more likely than the private sector to hire women and pay them more equally with men. If policy makers are concerned with women’s
status, these findings caution against privatization efforts. Thus, privatization used by development organizations like the World Bank intended to further development may actually be harmful to women.

Democracy was the only political predictor of GI. Thus, it is in the interests of policy planners concerned with women’s status to promote democracy. Of course, this democracy must begin with localities generating their own consensus about priorities and cannot be a “democracy” imposed by external actors or elites. Since the democratic polity measure used here includes the ability to articulate political preferences by citizens and their civil liberties, the democracy must be authentic. This is a very challenging goal and it evades easy solutions.

Future Research

In future research I would like to expand upon the findings of this dissertation. In this section I will describe a number of fruitful directions that future research could take. First, I would like to take the measure of GEM and analyze each component. For example, I would like to determine which GEM component is increased by FDI. Does greater investment increase (1) women’s percentage of legislators, senior officials, and managers, (2) women’s percentage of professional and technical positions (3) women’s percentage of parliamentary seats or (4) women’s income? As an index, it includes a variety of components, of which only a few or one may be of primary importance.

Given the aforementioned weaknesses in the GEM, I would like to construct a more holistic measure of “gender empowerment” that accounts for other factors. For example, women’s political participation at the local level is not included in the GEM.
Currently, the average percentage of women in parliamentary seats is 17 percent, however, women have more access to politics at the local or community level (Paxton and Hughes 2007; Raman 2002). A “truer” GEM would include local political participation, as well as other factors, like violence against women, control over income, membership in organizations and access to social networks, and accessible birth control. The creation of such a GEM would more accurately reflect the notion of “empowerment” as it pertains to the experiences and lives of women across the globe.

Future research should also explore the differences between rights and realities. Thus, what are the differences between states that merely have women’s rights “on the books” and states that go one step further and actively enforce those rights? Which types of states tend to enforce women’s rights? For example, are periphery countries not able to enforce women’s rights because of their position within the world system or does a country’s electoral system influence this enforcement? Gideon’s (2006) research has shown that countries undergoing neo-liberal reforms (e.g. Chile) are often required to decrease labor and health rights. Such development plans could affect women’s rights thereby impacting their status in society. Women’s rights could be treated as a dependent variable, with dependency, culture, and political variables predicting those rights.

Future research should also explore how these development and political processes affect women differently with in each country. My research was not able to explore how economic dependency and political variables affected women who have varied social characteristics within each country differently. To incorporate women in this way, it is imperative that data be gathered on individual women’s class, age, race and ethnicity (including language, religion, rural/urban and indigenous). This sort of future
research could explore whether, for example, government size affects poor and rich women differently. It may be that middle-class and upper-class women benefit more from increased state spending than working-class women (or the opposite). Maybe such a finding would support the argument that certain policies, such as affirmative action, have tends to benefit middle-class and White women more than poorer women of color (c.f. Sowell 2004). Conceptually, this could be a multi-level modeling problem.

Conclusion

What impact does the world system and dependency have on women’s status? This dissertation found no support for any of the hypotheses regarding dependency. What impact does the political order have on women’s status? All of the political variables in this study were found to be significant in at least one model. Politics matter and they matter for the status of women. This study contributes to the research literature on women’s status through a better understanding of the impact of politics. Moreover, the study’s use of a new method allows for the inclusion of more countries, offering a more representative understanding of women’s status cross-nationally. As with most research on inequality, this dissertation leads to specific policy implications. I have argued that due to the importance of the political order, those interested in changing and improving women’s lives should work to pressure the state for policy changes such as increasing women’s rights, government spending through creating public sector jobs, and encouraging democratic regimes.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
## APPENDIX A

### VARIABLE MEASUREMENT AND SOURCES

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<th><strong>Dependent Variables</strong></th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)</td>
<td>Economic participation -women and men’s % share of positions as legislators, senior officials, and managers -women’s and men’s % shares of professional &amp; technical positions Political participation -women’s share of parliamentary seats Power over Economic Resources -ratio between women’s and men’s estimated earned income</td>
<td>Human Development Indicators, UN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Gender Inequality (GI)** | Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender-related Development Index (GDI) GI = (HDI-GDI)/HDI | Human Development Indicators, UN |

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<tr>
<th><strong>Independent Variables</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Classical dependency</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exports</td>
<td>Exports of goods and services as a % of GDP</td>
<td>World Bank 2007</td>
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| Commodity Concentration | the value of the most important export commodity divided by the value of the total foreign trade | International Statistics Yearbook & Commodity Statistics Database, UN |

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<th><strong>Investment Dependence</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign direct investment</td>
<td>Foreign direct investment, net inflows as a % of GDP</td>
<td>World Bank 2007</td>
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| Nation-state’s location in | Periphery or non-Periphery (Core or | Snyder and Kick |

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<th>World System</th>
<th>Semi-Periphery</th>
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<td><strong>Economic Development</strong></td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product per capita by purchasing power parity</td>
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<td>Growth</td>
<td>Annual % of economic growth rate of GDP</td>
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<td>Gini</td>
<td>Gini coefficient</td>
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<td><strong>Political Measures</strong></td>
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<td>Government size</td>
<td>government current expenditures for purchases of goods and services (including compensation of employees) as a % of GDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>(1) the presence of institutions or procedures through which citizens can articulate political preferences (2) the presence of institutionalized executive constraint (3) civil liberties to all citizens</td>
<td>Polity IV</td>
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<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>Women’s Political Rights (1) the right to vote (2) the right to run for public office (3) the right to hold elected and appointed government positions (4) the right to join political parties (5) the right to petition officials Women’s Economic Rights (1) equal pay for equal work (2) free choice of profession or employment without the need to obtain a husband or male relative’s consent (3) right to gainful employment without obtaining a husband or male relative’s consent (4) equality in hiring and promotion practices (5) job security (6) non-discrimination by employers (7) the right to be free from sexual harassment in the workplace (8) the right to work at night (9) the right to work in occupations classified as dangerous</td>
<td>CIRI 2004</td>
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</table>
-the right to work in military or police force

Women’s Social Rights
-right to equal inheritance
-right to enter into marriage on a basis of equality with men
-right to travel abroad
-right to obtain a passport
-right to confer citizenship to children or a husband
-right to initiate a divorce
-right to own, acquire, manage, and retain property brought into marriage
-right to participate in social, cultural, and community activities
-right to an education
-the freedom to choose a residence/domicile
-freedom from female genital mutilation
-freedom from forced sterilization

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<th>1 = Islamic (50% or more of the population is Muslim)</th>
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<td>Latin</td>
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# APPENDIX B

## COUNTRY CODES AND COUNTRIES

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### APPENDIX C

MLR REGRESSION MODELS PREDICTING GENDER EMPOWERMENT

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<td>Intercept</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.190)</td>
<td>(0.306)</td>
<td>(0.305)</td>
<td>(0.079)</td>
<td>(0.315)</td>
<td>(0.288)</td>
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<td>0.091 ***</td>
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R²  0.698  0.730  0.772  0.622  0.783  0.838  0.832

+ p < .10  * p < .05  ** p < .01  *** p < .001

Note: standard errors are in parentheses.

GDP=Gross Domestic Product
CC=Commodity Concentration
FDI=Foreign Direct Investment
## APPENDIX D

### MLR REGRESSION MODELS PREDICTING GENDER INEQUALITY

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R²: 0.412 0.440 0.511 0.289 0.356 0.420 0.458

* p < .10  ** p < .05  *** p < .01  **** p < .001

Note: standard errors are in parentheses.

GDP=Gross Domestic Product
CC=Commodity Concentration
FDI=Foreign Direct Investment