WHAT LEADS AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

by

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WHAT LEADS AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the causes and processes that impact the offering of women's rights in authoritarian regimes. These relationships have been explored in previous literature that examined either the broad causation for this dynamic or specific cases of demographics in certain countries. This research uses a mixed-methods approach to observe what factors contribute to this diversion from the norm, through logistical regression and two case studies: Hungary and Taiwan. While the statistical methodology was found to be insignificant, the case studies illuminate potential factors and causes for women's rights that are afforded in countries we might not expect. Along with the exploration of unique cases, this research also presents a framework for understanding why different kinds of rights may divert expectations in various countries. Ultimately, the research reveals that while each case is unique, certain factors relating to the regime itself, global norms, and other components may cause women's rights to be better protected than average human rights in authoritarian regimes.

Introduction

Authoritarian regimes are notoriously stringent in affording basic human rights to their citizens. However, literature and case studies reveal that when it comes to women's rights, not all authoritarian regimes are as uncompromising as one might expect. This research project is directed toward explaining the variation and understanding the factors that lead to the advancement of women's rights within authoritarian regimes. Under what conditions do authoritarian regimes grant the advancement of women's rights? In search of the answer to this question, I explore the factors that would lead a government that otherwise does not widely grant freedoms to give rights to women. My research centers around the relationships between the stability of a regime and the authoritarian subtype with its likeliness to promote women's rights.

The outcome of this research is valuable in the pursuit of understanding authoritarian regimes and the state of human rights around the world. Women's rights as defined in this study correlate with the greater concern for human rights in countries with few freedoms. This research will ultimately support a greater initiative that allows the international community to see human rights abuses more clearly and understand the patterns in which they develop. It will broadly help contextualize how human rights values are incentivized for countries that otherwise would not promote women's rights. There are also philosophical implications as to how rights are commoditized as international organizations, governmental agencies, or non-governmental organizations seek to understand how to most effectively advocate for the rights of women around the world. More specifically, a greater understanding of the use of signaling in authoritarian regimes can allow countries to identify human rights issues and look past the signaling or manipulation that regimes are putting forward. If we can understand more about the contexts in which authoritarian regimes offer rights for women, we may also be able to obtain

information about the stability of the government as my hypothesis will later propose. The policy implications of the relationship between authoritarian regimes and women's rights are vast as it helps intergovernmental organizations see past the actions of a state and further understand the motivations of the acting government. This knowledge would also inform the United Nations in terms of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine that requires countries to get involved when a government fails to protect the rights of their citizens. Just because a government passes new legislation or creates more opportunities for women may not mean they are seeking to improve the human rights granted to their people. However, a better understanding of the relationship between authoritarian regimes and women's rights could lead to opportunities to seek improvements for other demographics such as children or disabled populations. Widespread human rights and democratic processes may not always be accessible, but this research area could aid specified human rights strategies in certain countries. Aid programs could be improved as this information would inform what the true needs of citizens in another country may be. Strands of literature related to this topic examine the effectiveness of aid programs in authoritarian regimes and propose solutions for how programs could be improved based on the carefully observed actions of the government. Similarly, this area of research would inform how programs can be fashioned to have the most growth for the legitimate rights of women living in that country.

This paper will outline the current literature regarding this topic, and the research that led to the question at hand. I present the methods and hypothesis which outline the variables with which I am evaluating the data. The research format is a mixed-methods approach, drawing on quantitative findings along with two case studies. I will then discuss the implications of those findings.

Literature Review

Women's rights are a subset of human rights that the United Nations expects each government to afford its people. Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all individuals have access to the rights outlined in the document, regardless of their sex. It goes on to say that "no distinction shall be made on the basis of the status of the country or territory to which a person belongs."[1] Yet, since the passage of the UDHR in 1948, human rights are still denied throughout the world. Despite how widespread human rights abuses are, the status of human rights in any given country is often correlated with the country's level of democracy.[2]

It has long been assumed that democracies inherently provide a wider range of human rights for their citizens. Organizations such as Freedom House and Human Rights Watch provide freedom grades for countries that are heavily based on the rights granted to citizens living in those countries. However, Clark's research shows that democracy and human rights are not tightly correlated, as the democratic level of countries increased on average between 1981 and 2010, yet human rights levels have worsened.[3] His research is just one of many critical analyses of the assumed relationship between democracies and human rights, extending to assumptions about the inverse of authoritarian regimes and human rights. However, Beeson presents an argument for how democracy and human rights can be recoupled through the possibility of inter-governmental organizations.[4]

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[1] United Nations. 1948. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.
[2] Besson, Samantha. "Human Rights and Democracy in a Global Context: Decoupling and Recoupling." Ethics and Global Politics 4, no. 1 (2011): 19-50.
[3] Clark, Rob. "A Tale of Two Trends: Democracy and Human Rights, 1981-2010." Journal of Human Rights 13, no. 4 (October 2014): 395-413.
[4] Besson, Samantha. "Human Rights and Democracy in a Global Context: Decoupling and Recoupling." Ethics and Global Politics 4, no. 1 (2011): 19-50.

As an extension of the correlation between democracy and human rights (whether well-founded or not), women's rights have also been included in the narrative of democracy. Whether or not democracy and women's rights are inherently connected, this connection provides the context for the research question of this project. If women's rights are associated with freedom and autonomy within a state, why would authoritarian regimes promote women's rights? The literature surrounding the relationship between authoritarian regimes and women's rights can be separated into two categories based on their scope: the broad study of the behavior of authoritarian regimes or the analysis of specific factors and demographics.

Several scholars have analyzed this relationship specifically. Previous literature has explored many possible variables that contribute to the decision by authoritarian regimes to promote women's rights. Many of the variables relate to the relationship between the authoritarian state and the world, such as foreign aid dependence or international NGO shaming. Donno, Fox, and Kaasik claim that the threat of retracting foreign aid because of women's rights abuse or the exposure by NGOs of abusive practices within a state will incentivize the government to offer more rights to women.[5] This suggests that the power to influence the government's behavior when it comes to women's rights is external. Similarly, other scholars explore how authoritarian regimes often use the promotion of women's rights within their countries to signal legitimacy to the international community regarding their degree of democracy, state capacity, and international vulnerability.[6] Htun and Weldon looked specifically at these factors and found that they require an effective state to be in place. These variables still place the influential power externally; however, women's rights are a direct result of cooperation

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[5] Donno, Daniela, Sara Fox, and Joshua Kaasik. "International Incentives for Women's Rights in Dictatorships." *Comparative Political Studies* 55, no. 3 (March 2022): 451–92.

[6] Htun, Mala & Weldon, S.. "When Do Governments Promote Women's Rights? A Framework for the Analysis of Sex Equality Policy." *Perspectives on Politics*, no. 8. (2010): 207 - 216.

from the home government. There is another branch of literature that looks at how authoritarian states internalize external claims about human rights abuses within their country. Because media control and the nature of state media are so influential in authoritarian regimes, they are able to manipulate the media while suppressing their human rights.[7] Donno and Kreft explored multi-party regimes that in turn offer more rights for women as they seek their party loyalty. They claim that the driving motive for these regimes is stability.[8] Bjarnegard and Zetterberg look at this motivation and title it "gender-washing." They define gender-washing as "gender equality with ulterior motives," as has been seen in a number of autocratic regimes since the cold war, as they seek to signal democracy.[9] Gilly observes the phenomenon of "democratic enclaves" that exist within the political system of the state. Allowing a democratic enclave to exist within the political culture of the state presents obvious risks for an authoritarian regime, yet it appears to be a fairly common phenomenon.[10] Some scholars look specifically at the subversive politically internal phenomenon that frequently occurs in authoritarian states that promote women's rights. "Gender-washing" and "democratic enclaves" are both examples of this kind of study. These analyses present a broad range of variables that may contribute to the likelihood of a regime promoting women's rights.

There has also been considerable research regarding specific demographics or regime variables that impact certain states or regions. While these are to be taken in the context for which they were created, these studies solidify many of the arguments made in the first category

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[7] Gruffydd-Jones, Jamie J. "Citizens and Condemnation: Strategic Uses of International Human Rights Pressure in Authoritarian States." *Comparative Political Studies* 52, no. 4 (March 2019): 579–612.

[8] Donno, Daniela, and Anne-Kathrin Kreft. "Authoritarian Institutions and Women's Rights." *Comparative Political Studies* 52, no. 5 (April 2019): 720–53.

[9] Bjarnegård, Elin, and Pär Zetterberg. "How Autocrats Weaponize Women's Rights." *Journal of Democracy* 33, no. 2 (2022): 60-75.

[10] Gilley, Bruce. "Democratic Enclaves in Authoritarian Regimes." *Democratization,* no. 17:3, (2010): 389-415.

of research. One of the strengths of this body of literature is the wide range of topics that have

been explored. Scholars have studied internal governmental factors in certain categories or

regions, such as countries that are majority Muslim or Latin American countries.[11] Another topic

with a strong research foundation is women's mobilization efforts within countries with

restrictive governments. For example, Sidewell, Hafen, and Evans examined how women's

movements formed in the midst of suppressive authoritarian rule in case studies of Brazil,

Argentina, and Chile.[12] There are also consistencies in when women mobilize and protest within

authoritarian regimes. Murdie and Peksen used quantitative analysis to find that women are more

likely to protest in countries with more women's rights groups and higher overall GDP.[13] Chubin

examined how identity politics among activist groups in authoritarian regimes differ from

democratic activist movements.[14] Others study how external forces such as INGOs or grassroots

movements can impact the political environment surrounding the possibility of expanding

opportunities available to women.[15] Ghashia and Murdie observed a negative relationship

between these movements in countries with oppressive governments and progress in

opportunities for women. Literature of this focus often finds that the unique value frameworks

within countries often contribute to their approach to women's rights. For example, Dogangun

found that the value of neo-traditionalism in gender norms influenced the development of

[11] Cherif, Feryal M. "Culture, Rights, and Norms: Women's Rights Reform in Muslim Countries." *The Journal of Politics* 72, no. 4 (2010): 1144–60.
[12] Sidewell, Anne, Eric Hafen, and Laurie Evans. "The Emergence of Women's Social Movements Under Authoritarian Regimes: Studies of Brazil, Argentina, and Chile." *Sigma: Journal of Political and International Studies* 24, no. 5 (2006).
[13] Murdie, Amanda, and Dursun Peksen. "Women and Contentious Politics: A Global Event-Data Approach to Understanding Women's Protest." *Political Research Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (March 2015): 180–92.
[14] Chubin, Fae. "From Empowerment to Advocacy: Innominate Identity Politics as Feminist Advocacy in Iran." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 33, no. 10. (2020).
[15] Ghashia, Kiyani and Murdie Amanda. "Unintended Restrictions: Women's Rights INGOs and Women's Civil Society Restrictions." *Human Rights Review* 21, no. 4 (12, 2020): 349-372.

gendered policies in Turkey and Russia.[16] Cherif explored how family and national law that is highly influenced by religion impacts women's citizenship rights within Muslim countries.[17]

Ultimately, both categories of research suggest that authoritarian regimes promote rights within the agenda of the state, not for the good of their people. This reality also suggests that authoritarian regimes who promote women's rights are often doing so for the international audience rather than to appease domestic requests. This consensus has led scholars to explore the specific incentives listed above that motivate authoritarian governments to mobilize on issues related to women.

Another theme that is prevalent in research on the relationship between authoritarian regimes and women's rights is the analysis of the connection between democracy and women's rights. Some scholars argue that the connection between the two is why authoritarian regimes promote women's rights: to signal democratic progress to the rest of the international system. In one of Donno's current working papers, she and her collaborators argue that women's rights are an area in which authoritarian regimes signal democratic progress without assuming much political risk.[18] This marks another consensus in the literature: promoting women's rights is a fairly low-risk effort for authoritarian regimes.

While the literature on this topic provides many reasonable explanations for the incentives authoritarian regimes find to promote women's rights, it should be taken a step further. The literature has identified many reasons an authoritarian government may choose to promote women's rights that the literature has identified. Through this project, I seek to

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[16] Doğangün, Gokten. "Gender Climate in Authoritarian Politics: A Comparative Study of Russia and Turkey." *Politics & Gender* 16, no. 1 (March 2020): 258-284.

[17] Cherif, Feryal M. "Culture, Rights, and Norms: Women's Rights Reform in Muslim Countries." *The Journal of Politics* 72, no. 4 (2010): 1144–60.

[18] Donno, Daniela, Sarah Bush, and Pär Zetterberg. "Rewarding Women's Rights in Dictatorships" (Abstract)

contribute to this area of literature by researching the conditions that incentivize a government to promote women's rights. The question for this project began as "under what conditions do authoritarian regimes promote the advancement of women's rights?" After taking into consideration the literature related to that question, I am looking at the deeper relationship between the stability of a regime and the impact of that stability on women's rights afforded.

A number of scholars have argued that authoritarian regimes are complex and varied, with the differences having significant complications for the behavior and performance of authoritarian regimes on various women's rights. Cheibub, Ghandi, and Vreeland formulated a categorization in their research to identify the authoritarian subtypes of monarchies, military regimes, and civilian regimes. They suggest that these different structures establish inherently differing "incentives and constraints" that in turn produce different "decisions and performance" based on regime subtype.[19] Other scholars have explored the relationship between authoritarian regimes and their performance on various policy fronts. For example, Eichhorn and Linhart asked how the authoritarian regime subtype relates to the environmental performance of the regime.[20] They used the same "Democracy-Dictatorship "dataset that is used in this study. Their results suggest that the performance of subtypes varied immensely, and the political stability of the country and regime may have a larger influence on their efforts for environmental protection. The regime subtypes may deeply influence the relationship between a regime and its citizens, consequently impacting protections for women's rights. Guriev and Treisman explored the variables which determine public opinion of authoritarian leaders.[21] As women's rights are a

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[19] Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143, no. 2-1, 67-101, 2010.

[20] Eichhorn, Kristin, and Eric Linhart. "Autocratic Heterogeneity in the Provision of Environmental Protection" Z Vgt Polit Wiss 16, (March 2022): 5-30

[21] Guriev, Sergei, and Daniel Treisman. "The Popularity of Authoritarian Leaders: A Cross-National Investigation." *World Politics* 72, no. 4 (2020): 601–38.

means of legitimizing a government both internationally and with the citizens of the authoritarian country, the protection of these rights may both be an indicator of public opinion and a point of leverage.

Argument

The efficacy of authoritarian regimes rests on the power and authority of the government which is formed by the combination of regime subtype, stability, and the type of right in question for citizens. Additionally, the authoritarian subtype of the regime will determine the power dynamic between the leadership and the people, directly influencing the level of rights which are granted to citizens. Building on these foundations, I argue that variation in authoritarian regime performance on women's rights depends on three key factors: stability, regime subtype, and women's rights subtypes.

STABILITY

Political stability is a very important quality for authoritarian regimes to attain and maintain. The avenues to reach stability may vary greatly depending on internal and external factors that the government is facing. A stronger government may view stability as winning favor or at least acceptance from the people. A government that is threatened, however, will seek to gain stability through force and restrictions. The response of a threatened authoritarian government is frequently paired with human rights abuses, as seen throughout history and into modern times.[22]

A modern example of this line of thinking comes from the current situation of human rights in Russia. Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine has brought more elongated military resistance than it appears Russia expected. The Russian government also initially faced more

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[22] Promoting Accountability for Human Rights Abuses Perpetrated by the Governments of Russia and Belarus - United States Department of State." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, March 15, 2022.

internal resistance than had been seen in recent times. Amnesty International has been reporting on this situation, especially following the invasion of Ukraine as repression of dissent increased. Not only are opposing political figures sought after by the government, but any citizens openly opposing the Russian invasion are targeted as well. In response to both internal and external threats, the government has imposed greater restrictions on media access, political mobilization, and rhetoric against the government. The status of human rights within Russia has eroded considerably since the invasion of Ukraine. The United States State Department released a statement regarding this situation in March 2022 which named the human rights abuses listed above.[23] Would this pattern extend to the status of women's rights as well?

Many aspects contribute to the stability of an authoritarian regime. Gerschewski suggests that the stability of an authoritarian regime rests on its legitimation, repression, and co-optation.[24] This provides an interesting correlation to the literature on women's rights and repressive governments because signaling legitimacy was one of the most frequently cited incentives for promoting women's rights. To align these two ideas, legitimacy can be won through the promotion of women's rights, but stability must precede the legitimizing. Two other legs of stability for authoritarian regimes are repression and co-optation. These goals seem to oppose the promotion of freedoms or rights among the population. For this reason, I argue there must be a certain amount of stability within a government before they would consider advancing rights.

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[23] "Promoting Accountability for Human Rights Abuses Perpetrated by the Governments of Russia and Belarus - United States Department of State." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, March 15, 2022.
[24] Gerschewski, Johannes. "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-optation in Autocratic Regimes." *Democratization* 20, no. 1 (2013): 13-38.

Likelihood of Protecting Women's Rights Based on Stability		Level of Protest	
		Low	**High**
Regime Duration	**Long**	Most likely	Less likely
	Short	Less likely	Least likely

Table 1

REGIME SUBTYPES

Another influential variable in the promotion of women's rights is the type of authoritarian regime at play. The three categorizations used in this research are from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorships" differentiation between militant, monarchy, and civilian regimes.[25] The initial probing research for this topic supported the notion that the stability of a regime may influence the granting of rights to women. The categorization used in this research essentially creates 6 authoritarian subtypes for each rights categorization. The categories are as follows: stable monarchy, unstable monarchy, stable militant regime, unstable militant regime, stable civilian regime, and unstable civilian regime. I hypothesize that the more stable an authoritarian regime is, the more likely it is to promote women's rights. This hypothesis is modeled by the illustration below, showing the implied predictions of this hypothesis on the likelihood of a government choosing to protect women's rights. This hypothesis also extends to regime type and the corresponding provision of women's rights. The three authoritarian categories used in this research are civilian regimes, monarchic regimes, and militaristic regimes. As a general rule, I hypothesize that civilian regimes will perform better in the provision of

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[25] Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143, no. 2-1, 67-101, 2010.

women's rights, monarchy regimes will fluctuate in the middle, while militaristic regimes consistently promote women's rights the least out of the three categories.

Political stability and regime subtypes are often correlated as a regime is established and sustained.[26] As stated in the lit review, there has been a negative relationship between movements among INGOs/civil protest and new opportunities for women provided by the government.[27] This would suggest that the model below accurately depicts the response of authoritarian regimes to protest. Previous literature supports the notion that women's rights are fairly low-risk for the government to provide. However, for a political system that is based on authority and control, even low-risk freedom will not be implemented when a regime is unstable or threatened. Htun and Weldon noted in their work that "in places where political institutions are so incapacitated, they are almost stateless, governments are completely unable to implement, let alone enforce, some types of policies."[28] Similarly, Gilly pointed out that democratic enclaves will only exist in authoritarian regimes when the degree of autonomy and "normative separation" is high enough that the regime would reap the potential payoffs of the democratic enclave's existence. While women's rights are independent of democratic enclaves, this research is related as they both oppose the predicted policy directions of authoritarian regimes. A government that relies on authority has to be stable enough to allow the opposition to exist. The chart below describes the basic relationship between the regime subtype and women's rights before the other variables are accounted for.

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[26] Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143, no. 2-1, 67-101, 2010.
[27] Ghashia and Murdie."Unintended Restrictions"
[28] Htun and Weldon, 211

Women's Rights in Authoritarian Regimes	Subtype		
	Militaristic	**Monarchy**	**Civilian**
Likelihood of Protecting Women's Rights	Low	Medium	High

Table 2

TYPES OF RIGHTS

It is important at this point of the paper to delineate the various kinds of women's rights. The CIRIGHTS dataset provides an updated distinction of women's rights from its previous iterations. This dataset has four separate values for evaluating the status of women's rights: women's economic rights, women's political rights, women's social rights in law, and women's social rights in practice. Women's economic rights include various rights related to economic access for women to work in the same capacities as men. Women's political rights refer to the level of involvement that women are allowed in the political process and makeup of the country. Women's social rights are yet another distinct category that involves rights related to the mobility and freedom of women in society. These rights extend to marriage, children, and movement throughout the country and the world. Previously, the CIRI dataset only categorized these three variables, however; in the most recent dataset, they separate women's social rights in law and women's social rights in practice. This differentiation is intended to acknowledge the differences between protections for social rights in legal frameworks and the government's actual tolerance regarding violations of women's rights.
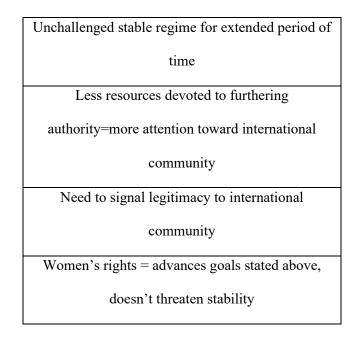
It should also be noted that in the CIRIGHTS codebook, each category of women's rights is in the general category of "Empowerment Rights and Freedoms." These kinds of human rights pose an especially tenuous position in the context of an authoritarian regime, potentially yielding

different correlations than a less 'threatening" rights category. Other variables in this category include freedom of movement, speech, and press.[29] Further research could evaluate the performance of various authoritarian regimes in different subtypes of human rights categories such as empowerment rights and freedoms, physical integrity, occupational/workers' rights, and justice rights.

If there are incentives for the promotion of women's rights, what can we deduce about authoritarian regimes that take advantage of these incentives? Is there a correlation between the strength of an authoritarian regime and whether or not they promote women's rights? Several variables may influence the likelihood of an authoritarian regime's promotion of women's rights. One of these variables is the type of right.

My hypothesis for the causal mechanism surrounding this relationship follows a series of events. I predict that a government with a lasting regime that has not faced consistent uprisings from its people will be more willing to concede certain rights such as women's rights. As fewer resources and time are given to the establishment of internal stabilization, the regime begins to look to outward relationships on the international stage. Stable regimes are more likely to begin looking outward toward their international standing, rather than focusing on gaining internal control as an unstable regime would have to. However, they realize that they need to bring something to the table to signal the legitimacy of their regime. Social women's rights are an opportunity for this kind of signaling, without threatening the stability of the regime as other political or economic rights might. Because the regime's authority has been established and has not faced substantive opposition, the social rights of women are seen as less of a threat to the

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[29] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version 1.22.25.11

overall stability and control of the government. For this reason, the promotion of women's social

rights would carry incentives to signal legitimacy to other countries.

Causal Mechanism Process

Unchallenged stable regime for extended period of time
Less resources devoted to furthering authority=more attention toward international community
Need to signal legitimacy to international community
Women's rights = advances goals stated above, doesn't threaten stability

Table 3

My hypothesis for the trends between stability, regime type, and women's rights is that in

each category, a stable regime will be more amenable to women's rights than an unstable one.

However, there is likely to be some variation between the benefit of the stability of some regimes

in comparison to the instability of others. For example, an unstable civilian regime is consistently

predicted to have more rights for women than a stable militaristic regime. Women's social rights

are predicted to be best protected in a stable civilian regime. Since civilian regimes are often

more deeply connected with the priorities of citizens than the regimes of long-lasting monarchies

or military regimes, they are most likely to promote women's social rights in law and practice.

As a civilian leader, there may be a greater incentive or expectation for these regimes to protect

the rights of citizens. Civilian dictators do not have the security of a military at their disposal or a

tradition of inherited monarchic power, and their success relies more on sustained public

approval. This is also where the dynamic of the dictator's dilemma comes into play as they must maintain power and control, yet also obtain respect from the people. Because of this civilian dynamic, women's social rights are predicted to be better represented in practice as the leadership may face more pressure to institute social rights in practice. However, the graph shows that a stable monarchy is more likely to promote women's social rights in law than an unstable civilian regime. This diversion is attributed to the incentive that a regime has to put women's social rights into law. Per the broad stability hypothesis stated above, instability will result in the backsliding of women's rights in law and practice. The comparison between women's social rights in law and practice brings up the question as to whether laws or practice backslide first. I argue that the practice of protecting women's rights will backslide before the law changes as a regime struggles to maintain a positive image amid growing instability. The tables below outline the comparison of various regime types and their promotion of women's rights. The first regime type listed has the highest support for women's rights while the last type listed has the lowest support. While the outcomes of women's social rights are similar, the differences are explained by the different incentives for different regimes to institute law or practice based on their type.

Political rights for women also vary depending on the regime type and stability. The CIRIGHTS dataset examines the quality of laws protecting internationally recognized political rights and the level of effectiveness at which the government enforces laws about the political involvement of women.[30] This predicted categorization proposes that within a regime type, a stable regime will always perform better than an unstable one. This table also demonstrates the prediction that regime type consistently determines the protection of women's political rights.

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[30] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version 1.22.25.11

Civilian regimes will protect the most, followed by a monarchy, with militant regimes last. The final variable in rights is women's economic rights. The state of an economy and the approval rating of a regime are highly correlated. When economic instability arises and a regime's ability to provide is questioned, it is likely to assert dominance in other areas to once again gain control and submission. Due to this reality, a stable monarchy regime is expected to protect women's economic rights more effectively than an unstable civilian regime.

Women's Social Rights in Law
Civilian Stable
Monarchy Stable
Civilian Unstable
Monarchy Unstable
Militant Stable
Militant Unstable

Table 4

Women's Social Rights in Practice
Civilian Stable
Civilian Unstable
Monarchy Stable
Militant Stable
Monarchy Unstable
Militant Unstable

Table 5

Women's Political Rights
Civilian Stable
Civilian Unstable
Monarchy Stable
Monarchy Unstable
Militant Stable
Militant Unstable

Table 6

Women's Economic Rights
Civilian Stable
Monarchy Stable
Civilian Unstable
Monarchy Unstable
Militant Stable
Militant Unstable

Table 7

Hypothesis A: Stable Civilian regimes will grant the highest protection for women's social rights in law, as unstable militant regimes will grant the lowest.

Hypothesis B: Stable Civilian regimes will grant the highest protection for women's social rights in practice, as unstable militant regimes will grant the lowest.

Hypothesis C: Stable Civilian regimes will grant the highest protection for women's political rights, as unstable militant regimes will grant the lowest.

Hypothesis D: Stable Civilian regimes will grant the highest protection for women's economic rights, as unstable militant regimes will grant the lowest.

Research Design

This is a multi-method study with a quantitative overview through difference of means tests, followed by a small n comparative case study for the purpose of illustrating the relationships found in the first tests. In order to evaluate the connection between regime sub-type, stability, and correlative women's rights, I will be using statistical analysis with datasets for each variable ranging from the years 1981 to present. I initially conducted a deductive and qualitative case-study approach to do a probing analysis of the correlation between authoritarian regime stability and the promotion of women's rights by that government. The cases were chosen through "typical" case selection, which will be further discussed below. This probing study showed the basis for a promising connection between those factors, worthy of further study. The expanded research now includes the added variables of the authoritarian regime subtype and four different areas of specific women's rights.

Quantitative Methodology

The method of research is a difference of means tests on outcome variables looking for statistically significant correlations between variables. Through statistical analysis, I will evaluate the correlative combinations between these variables and provide explanatory case studies that demonstrate how these correlations unfold. The independent variables are the regime subtype, the stability of the regime, and the type of women's rights being granted. The stability of a regime will be calculated with two variables: protests and duration. Protests will be calculated specifically by the average number of protests two years prior. Duration is simply the length of regime power. Calculating both variables will serve as a differentiation of stability

types. Each of these variables will influence the dependent variable of the status of women's rights in that country. The CIRIGHTS dataset will support the categorization of this information as it provides the values for the types of women's rights in each country given a certain year. The Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland dataset on authoritarian regime type will provide the country categorization for that variable. According to the codebook, the value "3" for regime value correlates with a civilian dictatorship, "4" indicates a military dictatorship, and "5" is a royal dictatorship, each located on a 6-regime type scale with democratic subtypes filling out the first three values.[31]

The stability of each regime will be calculated using the calculated formula taken from two variables: the longevity of a regime and the number of protests per year from the Mass Mobilization data set. The longevity of a regime is calculated by the variable "agereg" from the Chiebub dataset. This variable records the age of the regime in power for the correlating year of data. Quantitative analysis will provide the overall foundation for identifying statistical significance and the correlative factors that lead to women's rights in authoritarian regimes. The final independent variable is the type of women's rights to be protected. As I have mentioned, the division of women's rights is derived from the CIRIGHTS dataset. Each is codified on a scale of 0 to 3 based on the equality of women in that country in that certain year. Women's political rights as categorized by CIRIGHTS are based on internationally recognized rights such as voting, running for political office, holding political positions, and involvement in political parties. The index is described as follows:

> (0) None of women's political rights are guaranteed by law. There are laws that completely restrict the participation of women in the political process. (1) Political equality is guaranteed by law. However, there are significant limitations in practice. Women hold

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[31] Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Raymond Vreeland. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143, no. 2-1, 67-101, 2010.

less than five percent of seats in the national legislature and in
other high-ranking government positions. (2) Political equality is
guaranteed by law. Women hold more than five percent but less
than thirty percent of seats in the national legislature and/or in
other high-ranking government positions. (3) Political equality is
guaranteed by law and in practice. Women hold more than thirty
percent of seats in the national legislature and/or in other high-
ranking government positions.[32]

Social Rights are defined in this dataset as including the right to equal inheritance, to

enter into marriage on a basis of equality with men, to travel abroad, to obtain a passport, to

initiate a divorce, to own and manage property brought into marriage, to participate in social and

cultural activities, to obtain an education, to choose a residence, and the right of freedom from

genital mutilation and forced sterilization.[33] The differentiation between law and practice in this

dataset is intended to acknowledge the fact that harmful practices towards women can occur in a

country with legal protections against those practices. The law variable is coded as:

(0) There are no social rights for women under law and/or
systematic discrimination based on sex may be built into the law.
(1) There are some social rights for women by law.
(2) Nearly all social rights for women are guaranteed by law. (3)
All women's social rights are guaranteed by law.[34]

The protections in practice variable is coded as:

(0) The government tolerates a *high level* of discrimination against
women. (1) In practice, the government DOES NOT enforce laws
effectively or enforcement of laws is weak. The government
tolerates a *moderate level* of discrimination against women.
(2) In practice, the government DOES enforce these laws
effectively. However, the government still tolerates a *low level* of
discrimination against women. (3) In practice, the government

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[32] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version
1.22.25.11
[33] Cingranelli, David L., David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay. "The CIRI Human Rights Dataset."
[34] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version
1.22.25.11

fully and vigorously enforces these laws. The government tolerates
none of almost no discrimination against women. [35]

Women's economic rights include the right to equal pay for equal work, freedom from sexual

harassment in the workplace, equality in hiring and promotion practices, the right to free choice,

and gainful employment without consent from a husband or male relative. This variable is coded

as:

> (0) There are no economic rights for women under law and
> systematic discrimination based on sex may be built into the law.
> The government tolerates a high level of discrimination against
> women. (1) There are some economic rights for women under law.
> However, in practice, the government DOES NOT enforce the
> laws effectively or enforcement of laws is weak. The government
> tolerates a moderate level of discrimination against women.
> (2) There are some economic rights for women under law. In
> practice, the government DOES enforce these laws effectively.
> However, the government still tolerates a low level of
> discrimination against women.
> (3) All or nearly all of women's economic rights are guaranteed by
> law. In practice, the government fully and vigorously enforces
> these laws. The government tolerates none or almost no
> discrimination against women. [36]

The dependent variable in these cases is the status of women's rights in a given country.

"Women's Rights" is a broad term that can cover many rights and opportunities granted to

women. Based on the access to rights in different countries, women's rights can refer to different

things. In countries where women's rights are widely given, citizens may call for further

equality. In countries where women's rights are restricted, citizens may think of women's rights

as the ability for women to obtain a driver's license or travel freely within the country. For these

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[35] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version 1.22.25.11

[36] Mark, Brendan Skip, David L. Cingranelli, and Mikhail Filippov. "CIRIGHTS Data Project." (2022). Version 1.22.25.11

reasons, it is important to have a specific definition of what women's rights are being analyzed and how they are defined.

Case Study Methodology:

I am taking a mixed-methods approach to explore the causal mechanisms identified above. The goal is to understand the combination of factors that lead to the promotion of women's rights within an authoritarian state and what consistencies exist between states that have chosen to do so. For the qualitative portion of the research, I use case studies to examine the various complex relationships within the puzzle and have a structured method of relating the cases to one another to form a conclusion. The case selection process comes from the CIRI index.

The independent variable in these tests is the stability of the regime. As it is in the statistical analysis, stability in the cases is quantified by the combination of the longevity of the regime and the number of domestic protests they endure.

For the sake of specificity and research examination, I am utilizing data from the CIRI study and specifically looking at the variable representing women's social rights (WOSOC). The actual case studies consist of process tracing and analyzing the full range of causal mechanisms surrounding the circumstance of promoting women's rights. This tracing stems from and includes the history and longevity of the regime, one of the main factors contributing to a regime's stability. Longevity is telling in indicating the stability of the regime because simply remaining in power and exerting authority for an extended period of time requires a certain amount of stability. There is inherent credibility to the legitimacy of a regime that has exerted its power for a long duration. It also includes the political state of the country in terms of unrest and protest. The reason that domestic protest is related to stability is that this activity ultimately presents a challenge to the government's authority, making the government less likely to concede

and more likely to assert itself through more restrictions. Throughout this analysis process, I will be tracing the sequence of events in each case that resulted in the promotion of women's rights. Longevity is measured by the number of years that the regime has been in power uninterrupted. The datasets were compared and structured as mentioned above, measuring protest numbers and exploring the connection between protests and rights granted to women. The process of choosing cases is based on the scores given by the CIRI index. The cases are chosen by comparing two related yet distinct variables given by the dataset. The women's social rights score is rated on a scale from 0 to 3. These ratings are given based on the status of legislation and enforcement of policies that protect women's social rights.

The empowerment rights index is rated on a scale from 0 (no government respect for these rights) to 14 (full government respect for these rights). The rights evaluated in this index are combined from scores in foreign movement, domestic movement, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association, workers' rights, electoral self-determination, and freedom of religion indicators. The cases that I have chosen for the individual case studies demonstrate a unique relationship between the WOSOC score and the NEW_EMPINX score. I chose cases that were a 2 or 3 in WOSOC and below an 8 in NEW_EMPINX. No cases that were a 3 in women's rights received a score below 5 in overall rights, alluding to the correlation between women's rights and human rights. However, multiple cases scored a 2 in WOSOC and were 0 or 1 in NEW_EMPINX. These scores provide the framework for choosing cases where the provision of women's rights is a diversion from the nature of human rights in the country as a whole. While there are a number of countries that have very low women's social rights and very low human rights overall, this is not my focus. I am specifically looking at cases where human rights are not widely granted but the government has chosen to promote women's rights. The theory of rational

actors suggests that there would be reasoning and incentive behind this decision, as the literature on this topic also supports.

Once I have the countries selected for the case studies, I will be able to calculate their stability scores. The variation in stability will help me analyze how stability is related to the women's rights outcome. My hypotheses suggest that countries with higher stability scores will be more likely to have higher women's social rights scores in the CIRI data. The inverse of these hypotheses is that countries with lower stability scores will have lower women's social rights scores in the CIRI data. To explore the validity of my hypotheses, I will analyze the correlation between a country's stability score calculated by my proposed equation and the CIRI women's social rights score. Once I identify the relationship between those two variables, I will use process tracing to explore the consistent components that may cause the relationship that exists, whether it be positive or negative.

There are a few scenarios that could infiltrate the data and skew the results regarding the hypothesis. One scenario is a new government that quickly rose to power and granted rights to women as one of its first actions. Statistically, this country would have little longevity and a high amount of unrest, yet high scores for women's rights. Explaining situations such as this one is why the thorough case study approach will provide the best framework for examining the causal mechanisms in place.

The two cases that I have chosen to examine are Hungary in 1986 and Taiwan in 1984. While there are similarities between the two, as I will elaborate on, I consider these to be diverse cases based on the criteria of UN membership. UN membership is an interesting variable in this study because of the potential influence and impact of the UN's Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). A common thread among the cases I examined that

met the criteria for this research was signing on to the CEDAW. One hypothesis in response to my research question could be that involvement in the UN incentivizes countries to promote women's rights, as demonstrated by the consistencies of the CEDAW. However, Taiwan is not a member state of the UN and therefore did not sign on to this convention. I am studying Hungary and Taiwan to explore that variation and what other conditions could have led these different countries to have the same outcome. These two cases share some similarities as they are in similar time periods, have a score of 3 on the CIRI index, and have a history of involvement by a world power (the Soviet Union for Hungary and China for Taiwan). The cases also share a positive trajectory for overall human rights following the initial score of 3 in women's social rights. Other cases that met the criteria for CIRI scoring had either a negative trajectory or remained the same.[37] It is important to note that these cases are looking at the state of countries in the 1980s, and influential factors for authoritarian regimes to promote women's rights at that time may vary from influential factors in modern cases. Future research should explore more recent cases to understand this phenomenon further.

The structure of the cases will open with an introduction to the country and its government. This information includes regime-type and party system. The next section will review the overall status of human rights, expounding upon the score given by the CIRI dataset. The stability of the regime will be calculated given the values of the relevant variables. Then the focus will turn to women's rights issues specifically with a timeline of the progression of rights granted to women within that country. This will include as much information as possible given the time and access restraints for the project. I will then evaluate the case studies in regard to their support of the

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[37] Using the criteria mentioned in the methods section, there were two other cases that I used for initial analysis (Bosnia Herzegovenia and Cambodia). Future work would include a more comprehensive comparison between cases.

causal mechanism presented in my hypothesis. Therefore, my hypothesis will be supported if the cases present the trend that I predict given the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Additionally, the hypothesis will be supported if the process from stability to better protection of women's rights as shown in Table 2 is present in the case studies.

Specifically, cases that have a "strong" stability score and are scored a 3 by the CIRI data in women's social rights do not nullify the hypothesis. Since both cases are representative of a stable regime that obtained a score of 3 in women's social rights, the mechanisms by which this came about are very important in the evaluation of my hypotheses. Despite different datasets used for the case studies, if the hypotheses is supported, there will be consistent trends among the stability scores and the processes presented in the case studies. Three components will be crucial to the support of the hypotheses: stability of the regime, evidence of interest in international standing, and women's social rights connecting the two.

Quantitative Data

Using the data categorized above, I tested multiple statistical models. Due to the limitations on available data that overlapped between the datasets, the majority of the models were focused on data between the years 1990 and 2008. Unfortunately, the variables for women's social rights in law and practice were only available beginning a few years after 2008, leaving those two variables untested. Evaluation of those variables would require the use of different datasets that evaluate more recent years. Only regimes that scored at least a 3 in regime type at some point in the range from 1990-2008 were evaluated. A score of 3, and the subsequential 4, and 5 indicated an authoritarian regime.

Initially, there were no findings of statistical significance. I then rearranged the data to control for the years that the authoritarian regimes fluctuated to democracy. When looking only at the years that a given regime was labeled authoritarian, the models yielded significant relationships. The model evaluating regime subtype categorized each regime as a dummy variable. For example, it tests whether a regime was a civilian dictatorship or not, rather than a civilian regime, monarchy regime, or a military regime. The regime subtype coefficients presented in the graph below demonstrate the findings based on this dummy variable regression. The variables for the age of the regime and the number of protests are included in all models along with regime subtype.

The main takeaway from this segment of the data was that for women's political rights, the direction of the relationship between the number of protests and the promotion of women's rights was positive. This is contrary to the hypothesis and suggests that when it comes to political rights, more protests were connected with more protection for women's rights. The political rights findings also show that monarchy regimes were worse at promoting women's rights than the other categories. This is aligned with the hypothesis regarding the influence of regime subtype on the promotion of women's rights.

The economic regression model was conducted in the same way, yet with different findings. The age of the regime had a significant and positive relationship with women's economic rights across the three regime types. This reveals that there must be some aspect of economic rights that correlate them with age and perhaps stability of the regime. Below are the tables showing the regression results for political and economic rights, tested for each variable.

Women's Political Rights

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Civilian	Monarchy	Military
Regime Subtype	0.411	-0.982***	-0.012
	(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.042)
Protest Number 2 Years Prior		0.007*	0.014***
	0.008**		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Age of Regime		0.005***	-0.004***
	-0.003***		
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)

Table 8 *Standard error in parentheses*, *p<0.1, **p<0.01, ***p<0.01

Women's Economic Rights

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Civilian	Monarchy	Military
Regime Subtype	0.074**	-0.108*	-0.035
	(0.036)	(0.056)	(0.039)
Protest Number 2 Years Prior		-0.002	-0.001
	-0.002		
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Age of Regime		0.003***	0.002*
	0.002**		
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)

Table 9 *Standard error in parentheses, *p<0.1, **p<0.01, ***p<0.01

In summary, there were a few significant lessons from the quantitative side of research. Women's political rights are sometimes afforded in authoritarian regimes where protests occur at higher rates. Monarchy regimes are less likely to promote women's rights than non-monarchy authoritarian regimes. Additionally, women's economic rights are more likely to be protected in regimes with more longevity. While not every relationship was significant, nor in the expected direction, the clear distinctions between the types of rights tell us that authoritarian regimes may see different rights as different kinds of tools for signaling legitimacy.

Case Studies

My initial probing interest in the research was the cases of authoritarian countries that scored a higher women's rights score than the country's human rights score. I found eleven cases between 1980 and 2007 where this was the case. These countries were Belarus, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burma, Cambodia, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam. The paper now turns to a more in-depth analysis of two of these countries: Hungary and Taiwan.

Hungary Case Study

Hungary in the 1980s was a communist country and had been heavily influenced by the Soviet Union for decades. Since the Hungarian revolution that took place in 1956, the government minimized threats to its control. This created a rigid, one-party system that seemed to securely assert its governance; however, it softened in its assertiveness in the 70s and 80s, making it one of the less restrictive governments connected with the Soviet Union.[38] The movement from the 1980s to the 1990s also marked the transition of governance in Hungary from communism to a more democratic system. Along with this transition came improvements in many common measures of human rights. For example, major enactments by Parliament in 1989 established elections, a constitutional court, freedom of movement, and the freedom of conscience and religion along with many other rights.[39] It is evident that this marked a great transition for Hungary as they transitioned towards democracy and opened themselves up to more of the world. Similarly, the human rights status in Hungary continued to improve from this

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[38] Kiss, Yudit. "System Changes, Export-Oriented Growth and Women in Hungary." *Europe-Asia Studies* 55, no. 1 (2003): 3–37.

[39] CEDAW, "Consideration of Reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: 3rd periodic reports of States parties: Hungary." CEDAW/C/HUN/3, 14 June 1991.

point forward. However, the specific score of 3 in women's social rights came in the middle of

the 1980s. This was before the clear transition that began with legislative action in 1989. In terms

of stability, Hungary had a fairly stable regime, likely due in part to the presence of Soviet

occupation. To calculate the stability score for Hungary, I used the CISER data set containing

European Protest and Coercion data. I used the specific set for Hungary from 1980 to 1995 to

look at the years 1981-1986. This data, as shown in Table 2, reveals that Hungary's stability

score is 37.2 for this time period. In future research, this number would be contextualized in a

greater data collection of stability scores. The CISER data is very expansive and notes various

kinds of activity. I did not include every criterion listed in the dataset because I wanted to look

specifically at actions of protest toward the government. The relevant categories to Hungary's

data that I used were rallies, arrests, and demonstrations.[40] This data outlined daily activity

regarding protests and interactions between the state and citizens.

Hungary was among the first wave of countries that signed the CEDAW, signing just

months after the convention opened in March 1980. Because of this timing, it is unlikely that this

was a result of the legislative and diplomatic transition towards democratization that was seen at

the end of the decade.[41] The question that arises is "what incentives would drive Hungary to

promote women's rights?" Heather Smith Cannoy found that transitioning governments

experiencing debt crises in Central and Eastern Europe were statistically more inclined to make

cheap commitments to women's rights.[42] An amendment was introduced to the constitution of

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[40] Francisco, Ronald A. "European Protest and Coercion Data: 1980-1995." *Cornell University Center for Social Sciences*, no. 2820 (August 2019).

[41] Smith-Cannoy, Heather. "Hungary and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women." In *Insincere Commitments: Human Rights Treaties, Abusive States, and Citizen Activism*, 116–38. Georgetown University Press, 2012.

[42] Smith-Cannoy, Heather. "Hungary and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women."

Hungary that outlined more concrete terms for women's equality: "in respect of all rights, civil and political as well as economic, social, and cultural."[43] Women's access to education came quickly after World War II and by the 1960s and 1970s, the education rate of women increased rapidly over that of boys.[44] Because of the delayed benefits of education throughout one's life, it is possible that some of the improvements in women's rights in the 1980s were a result of decades of education. Access to education may have opened the doors for new careers with higher salaries and further opportunities for women that became tangible in the 1980s.

Cultural norms within Hungary must be taken into account when examining the background of women's rights within the country. There were not any women's movements of note during the communist government that would have challenged this. Smith-Cannoy examined the cultural attitudes towards women that she attributes to the communist legacy of the country. She examined the patriarchal views that impacted the social status of women, paired with policies that appeared progressive providing more opportunities for education and employment. Without real power in the communist party, Smith-Cannoy presents the argument that the government was focused on democratic transition, not promoting women's rights specifically.[45] She says in the context of Hungary's action surrounding the CEDAW in 2000 that the "commitment to the optional protocol of the CEDAW is best situated as one of many cheap ways to signal a new commitment to women's rights to European observers." This supports the

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[43] CEDAW, "Consideration of Reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: 3rd periodic reports of States parties: Hungary." CEDAW/C/HUN/3, 14 June 1991.

[44] Judit Kádár-Fülöp. "Women's Education in Hungary." *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift Für Erziehungswissenschaft / Revue Internationale de l'Education* 19, no. 1 (1973): 109–15.

[45] Smith-Cannoy, Heather. "Hungary and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women."

theory presented in much of the literature saying that authoritarian regimes promoting women's

rights is a way of signaling legitimacy and democratic progress to the rest of the world.

The question still remains, what changes took place in Hungarian society that brought a

score of 3 in women's social rights in 1986? It should be noted that the data in years preceding

1986 is missing in the dataset. The last defined entry was a score of 1 in 1981. Therefore, while

there is missing data, something shifted in those years that furthered the rights granted to women.

Hungary Case Study Conclusion

This case exemplifies the factors at play within the hypothesis that I proposed at the

beginning of the project. Using the predicted causal process as a model, the case study of

Hungary supports the hypothesis that more stable regimes will be more likely to offer social

rights for women. First in this process, a regime must be stable for an extended period of time.

In the case of Hungary, the regime has a high stability score with a history of strong control. The

case however demonstrates that the government did not initially have this authority. Following

the Hungarian Revolution, the government tightened its control over the people, diminishing

uprisings for decades following. The literature on this topic mentioned that in the late 70s and

early 80s, life in Hungary allowed for more freedom than many Soviet-influenced states.[46] This

supports the process of tight restrictions to obtain power followed by a more stabilized state. The

fact that Hungary was part of the UN and one of the first countries to sign on to the CEDAW

shows that it had international involvement and interest. With this level of involvement in the

international community comes the need to signal progressiveness and support for international

initiatives. As the hypothesized process would suggest, women's rights offer a "low-risk"

concession of control in turn for a show of legitimacy. Hungary made changes to promote the

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[46] Kiss, Yudit. "System Changes, Export-Oriented Growth and Women in Hungary." *Europe-Asia Studies* 55, no. 1 (2003): 3–37.

rights of women, as demonstrated by the CIRI data score. One of the changes of note was the change to wording in the constitution. These words included broader protections for women, marking a significant change in theory but not necessarily in the practice of human rights overall. This is a classic example of legitimacy signaling through low-cost concessions of power. It should also be noted that this change took place before the drastic democratic transition. At the time of the implementation of these protections, Hungary was still a stable authoritarian regime granting women's social rights.

Taiwan Case Study

Taiwan's governance was marked by "hard authoritarianism" from the 1940s-1970s, with martial law in place for much of that time.[47] The CIRI dataset found Taiwan at a score of 3 in women's social rights in 1984. That year was marked by a number of signals that Taiwan would transition to a more democratic government. For example, in 1984, representation within government advanced as the leaders stated goals to advance constitutional democracy. The human rights status of the country improved with an increase in government tolerance of opposition magazines, although they were banned again not long afterward.[48] Martial law continued in Taiwan until 1989, which limited the human rights score it could receive in the CIRI data. Taiwan also saw access to universal schooling begin in the 1950s. This could have had a similar effect to what I described in Hungary as over time, more access to schooling formed more opportunities for women in the workforce. I was not able to use CISER data for Taiwan's case study as it had only created data for select European countries. Instead, I utilized

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[47] Clark, Evelyn A., Phyllis Mei-lien Lu, and Cal Clark. "The Puzzle of Why the Status of Women Is Higher in Taiwan than Chile." *Asian Affairs* 41, no. 1 (2014): 1–20.

[48] Hsiung, James C. "Taiwan in 1984: Festivity, New Hope, and Caution." *Asian Survey* 25, no. 1 (1985): 90–96. https://doi.org/10.2307/2644059.

the information from the NAVCO 2.1 Dataset.[49] This dataset codes the Nonviolent and Violent

Campaigns and Outcomes by looking at different social movements for regime change, anti-

occupation, and secession from 1945 to 2013. It provided less detailed information, analyzing

annually rather than day-by-day as the CISER data did. According to this dataset, each year from

1979-1984 in Taiwan saw pro-democracy protests. The data shows that Taiwan's stability score

is a 34. Another relevant process occurring around this time was the transition of the US

relationship with Taiwan and China in the 1970s. In the process of the US and China officially

re-establishing diplomatic relations in 1979 (in place of diplomacy with Taiwan's political

party), the US also officially recognized Taiwan and China as one. However, the US also

recognized its relationship with Taiwan in the Taiwan Relations Act in order to maintain

ambiguous ties but declare security alliances in the Western Pacific.[50] This transition put

increasing attention on Taiwan's relationship with the rest of the world.

Just as in Hungary, there were many cultural factors contributing to the lower status of

women. The authoritarian government stressed traditional roles and duties for women that were

also retained by a patriarchal social structure. There were organizations that women could be a

part of but they were closely tied to government-affiliated organizations that intended to retain

the status quo.[51] There was a Central Women's Department that was specifically tasked with the

reinforcement of these subservient roles for women.[52] However, in the 1970s, a feminist

movement began that faced significant government opposition and forced women to remain

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[49] Chenoweth, Erica, Christopher Wiley Shay. "NAVCO 2.1 Dataset.," *Harvard Dataverse*, V2. (2019).
[50] Clark, Cal. "The Taiwan Relations Act and the U.S. Balancing Role in Cross-Strait Relations." *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 17, no. 1 (2010): 3–18.
[51] Clark, Evelyn A., Phyllis Mei-lien Lu, and Cal Clark. "The Puzzle of Why the Status of Women Is Higher in Taiwan than Chile."
[52] Ku, Yenlin. "The Changing Status of Women in Taiwan: A Conscious and Collective Struggle Toward Equality." *Women's Studies Int. Forum* 11, no. 3 (1988): 179-186.

fairly neutral. While the feminist movement struggled in the face of an authoritarian government, moderate feminists explored ways to use the existing legislative framework in Taiwan to change gender-based family laws and penal codes.[53] One significant change in 1984 that contributed to Taiwan's score of 3 was an abortion bill that was passed due to signatures and petitions that circulated among feminist activists. Many organizations created to provide services to women started in the mid-80s.[54] 1984 was the start of legislative changes that led the government to legalize abortion, revise the civil code to protect women's rights, establish prevention tools against the trafficking of children and teens, prohibit different forms of violence against women, and further employment opportunities.[55]

Taiwan Case Study Conclusion

The case study of Taiwan began with the introduction of martial law and strong authoritarian rule. This followed political division and uprisings between parties in China and the developing political landscape of Taiwan. These years of intense control stabilized Taiwan internally, soon followed by its pursuit of international legitimacy. In terms of the hypothesized causal process for women's rights, there was an "unchallenged stable regime for an extended period of time." Taiwan had an especially poignant motivation to seek legitimacy as it sought to differentiate its sovereignty from that of China, while maintaining tact in the international scene. The predicted process of granting women's rights also mentions a transition in the government's focus from internal stability to external relationships with other powers. Taiwan's unique historical relationship with China made the decision for the kind of signaling that it would use

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[53] Chang, Doris T. "Conclusion." In *Women's Movements in Twentieth-Century Taiwan*, 157–66. University of Illinois Press, 2009.
[54] Clark, Evelyn A., Phyllis Mei-lien Lu, and Cal Clark. "The Puzzle of Why the Status of Women Is Higher in Taiwan than Chile."
[55] Clark, Evelyn A., Phyllis Mei-lien Lu, and Cal Clark. "The Puzzle of Why the Status of Women Is Higher in Taiwan than Chile."

even more crucial. These are clear incentives for signaling legitimacy to the international community that were followed by enacting protections for women's rights. There are clear legislative changes that promoted the rights of women. While correlation does not equal causation, the pieces of the process that I predicted are present in the case study of Taiwan. Additionally, it is important to differentiate this process from the Hungarian case as these legislative changes took place concurrently with democratization as a whole. This case supports the exploration of the relationship between the democratization of authoritarian regimes and the status of women's rights. Yet, the components of the process from stability to protection for women's rights is present once again in this case study.

Discussion

Ultimately, the two cases presented in this project support the hypothesis. The table summarizes the comparison between the case studies of Hungary and Taiwan. It also provides the quantitative criteria that my hypothesis specifically analyzes. Future research could expand this chart with many other cases, expanding the analysis of the theory as well. The cases represented below are very similar quantitatively. This table demonstrates that both cases have similar characteristics. The case studies demonstrate that the cases also follow similar patterns and timeline of the promotion of women's rights and democratization of the country as a whole.

	# of Protests	Average # of Protests Per Year	Longevity of Regime	Stability Score
Hungary (1981-1986)	9	1.8	39	37.2
Taiwan (1979-1984)	5	1	35	34

Table 10

The previous sections outlined the context in which these countries promoted women's rights. Both cases find themselves in a period of transitioning government from authoritarianism to democracy. While both cases made it clear how rights granted to women and opportunities given to them changed at the turn of the decade from 1989 to 1990, ambiguity remains about the scores they received. This may be due in part to the fact that legislation at this point was predominantly in the realm of economic and social rights. As was stated in the research design section, a score of 3 indicates that nearly all of the women's social rights listed by the CIRI data were fully enforced by the government.[56] Perhaps women's social rights frequently precede political and economic rights, especially in a government's transition towards democracy. If true, this may have implications for reasons authoritarian regimes will offer women's rights. In both case studies, the government quickly transitioned to democracy after the status of women's social rights improved. This may allude to a connection between women's rights and a government's transition to democracy. There could be a number of different reasons for this, but this relationship is worthy of note in a further study examining this topic.

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[56] Cingranelli, David L., David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay. "The CIRI Human Rights Dataset." (2014) version 2014.04.14

Also of note is the fact that both cases share the motivation to engage with the international community in order to have some differentiation from the powerful country influencing them. Hungary was overshadowed by the Soviet Union during the decades of this study. Taiwan was also in the process of defining its relationship with China. Whether or not these relationships impact the promotion of women's rights is yet to be seen in future study.

Overall, these cases lend strong support to the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the stability and promotion of women's rights facilitated by the regime's desire to gain attention and recognition internationally. Both Hungary and Taiwan appear to have seen allowing for women's rights as a low-cost way to signal legitimacy. This line of reasoning also supports the causal mechanisms behind the process of stabilizing a regime and eventually offering social rights for women. It is important to note that in order to gain a score of 3 in the CIRI index for women's social rights, there must be extensive social protections for women that are also "vigorously enforced."[57] This requires a high level of engagement with policies benefitting women that would be intentionally prioritized by the government.

Conclusion

While many authoritarian regimes may restrict women's rights in general, the quantitative and qualitative analysis reveals that there are exceptions to typical actions of authoritarian regimes and their provision of women's rights, and those exceptions are worthy of study. The timestamp of these case studies and the history that followed suggest that the provision of women's rights could be related to the coming of the democratic transition in some way. Perhaps the protection of rights for women is one of the first policy shifts as a country begins to transition to a democracy.

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[57] Cingranelli, David L., David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay. "The CIRI Human Rights Dataset." (2014) version 2014.04.14

This research journey began with a question exploring a pattern of deviation from what was thought to be common behavior: that authoritarian regimes are particularly stringent on women's rights. What the CIRI datasets originally showed was that there are some examples of countries that have higher women's rights than overall human rights. This project explored why that deviation may be.

The question inspiring this research project is "why do some authoritarian regimes promote women's rights when that seems to be a deviation from their typical approach to human rights?" Rather than looking specifically at the incentives for the promotion of women's rights, I chose to explore the causal mechanism behind that outcome. My hypothesis was that regimes that were stable would be more likely to promote women's rights than relatively unstable regimes. Stability is defined by a combination of the longevity of the regime and the number of protests within the country within the time period of 5 years before the change in the status of women's rights. Stability also was given a quantitative value, that may be used in research going forward.

Future research related to the relationship between authoritarian regimes and women's rights could include a more rigorous case selection with standardized data for the stability calculations for each country. There is also potential for additional quantitative analysis, utilizing the analytical framework of the stability calculations. This expanded analysis would allow for comparisons between different countries on a variety of variables, allowing patterns in the data to be more easily and broadly recognized and allow a greater evaluation of the hypothesis. Not only are there a number of methods to explore this relationship, but there are also many other questions to be asked as well. The relationships and progression of women's rights in the categories of social, economic, and political could provide valuable insight into the mechanisms

in place in authoritarian regimes promoting women's rights. Those relationships could also illuminate incentives for governments. For example, social rights for women may be a greater incentive for governments if they are a "low-cost" concession in the pursuit of international legitimacy. Whereas political rights may pose more of a threat to the government, only being granted when the government is closer to transitioning to democracy, social rights may be granted because they are deemed less costly. Both case studies also pointed to women's rights as being an early signal of transitioning within the government, suggesting a potential connection between women's rights and democratic transition in authoritarian regimes. Taiwan and Hungary were on the cusp of democratization at the time of the human rights scores used in this case study, and perhaps specific circumstances coincide with democratization and the provision of women's rights.

The insights gleaned from this research have implications for how we understand the function of human rights within authoritarian regimes. While not many, some authoritarian regimes do respect women's rights, as demonstrated by the case studies and quantitative analysis. This diversion might not be explained by patterns proven statistically, but the reality of these regimes demonstrates that human rights can be used as a signal of legitimacy or to facilitate a transition towards more democratic policies. The fact that women's rights scores outweigh human rights scores in these case studies also demonstrates that there may be a unique nature of women's rights that seems to signal a specific kind of legitimacy or display the expanding recognition of various demographics. Additionally, further research as to the impact of different kinds of women's rights (legal, social, and economic) may illuminate the functional nature of those rights, both domestically and internationally.

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