

BARRIERS TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FOR WOMEN IN INDIA



Ajay kumar

M.Phil., Roll No.: 141911 Session-2014-15

Department of Sociology, B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, India.

E-mail: ajaykumarmathara01@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The concept of development may also be used to refer to an action. This is due to the fact that any activity that contributes to growth must involve some kind of action; without action, development cannot take place. The word "development," on the other hand, can be understood in a number of different ways by a number of different people depending on the context in which it is used. For instance, the requirements for a populace that is starving must be very different from those of a population that receives an adequate amount of nutrients. It is important to point out that "economic growth as measured solely in terms of annual increases in pre-capita income or gross national product, regardless of its distribution and the degree to which people's participation in effective growth" is not the same thing as "development," despite the fact that the two concepts are frequently confused with one another (Mahmoud, 1991). Regarding this topic, we might also consider the viewpoint presented by Pearson (1992). His understanding of development is that it entails "An improvement qualitative, quantitative, or both - in the utilisation of existing resources.

Keywords: Barriers, Political, Participation, Women

INTRODUCTION

In addition to this, he maintains that the term "development" does not relate to any particular viewpoint towards the improvement of social, political, or economic conditions. Instead, it is a composite phrase that refers to a variety of approaches that have been taken in order to shift from the existing socio-economic and environmental states to the states that are wanted. (Pearson, 1992). Prof. Amartya Sen, the creator of the "capability approach" and the definition of development as a tool that enables people to reach the highest level of their ability, through the granting of freedom of action, i.e., freedom of economic, social, and family actions, etc., amongst other things, should also be considered.

We should also refer to the views of Prof. Sen. In point of fact, traditional welfare economics had focused on incomes as the main measure of wellbeing until his ground-breaking work in the 1980s which showed that poverty involved a wider range of deprivations in health, education, and living standards which were not captured by income alone. His work demonstrated that poverty involved a wider range of deprivations in health, education, and living standards than could be captured by income alone. His "capabilities approach" paved the way for the development of the United Nations Human Development Index and, later, the Multidimensional Poverty Index, both of which try to measure different aspects of poverty.

The word "political engagement" can refer to a variety of different activities. It is connected not only to the concept of the "Right to Vote," but also to the involvement in such things as the decision-making process, political action, political consciousness, and so on. More women than males in India are registered to vote, and more women are also running for public office and joining political parties at lesser levels. The two most important aspects of women's engagement in the political process are political action and voting. The government of India has implemented quota systems for seats in local governments in order to address the gender gap that exists in political institutions.

In India's legislative general elections, the participation rate for women was 65.63%, while the participation rate for males was 67.09%. In terms of the representation of women in Parliament, India is ranked twenty places from the very bottom. In India, women have served as both the president and the prime minister, in addition to holding the position of chief minister in a number of different states. Since the beginning of the 20th century, citizens of India have elected women to various state legislative assemblies as well as the national parliament.

EVIDENCE OF DISPARITIES FACED BY WOMEN IN POLITICS

Women's representation in parliament, political parties, and their involvement in the election process, both as candidates and as members of constituencies, are some of the factors that may be used to evaluate women's level of engagement in formal politics. The examination of these indicators reveals that, historically, women have been excluded from politics and political parties, as well as other formal institutions, which have not validated their participation. In addition, the analysis demonstrates that women have not been allowed to hold public office.

Participation of women in the Parliament – Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha

At higher levels of leadership, there is a lack of female representation. Even when looking back over the course of history, it has been noticed that the proportion of women holding positions of authority in either house of Parliament has never exceeded 15% of the total number of seats. The following table provides information on the representation of women in both chambers of Parliament.

EVIDENCE OF DISCRIMINATION:(CAUSES AND BARRIERS)

Following is a list of the primary categories that have been recognised and presented as the obstacles experienced by women that led to their low levels of political participation: Law and Governmental Policies

Because of the high percentage of illiteracy and poor levels of education among women, they are deprived of knowledge. One of the main reasons for this is access to information. The right of women to vote, compete in elections, and join political parties and social networks is hindered when they do not have equal access to information, which also makes it more difficult for women to exercise these rights.

2. Access to Economic Resources: Women are overrepresented in the informal economy, often known as the subsistence sector. In this sector, many women are involved in work that is either poorly paid or unpaid, and has a low level of skill or no skill at all. Therefore, the expenditure that is required for political participation, such as election campaign expenditure or resources that are required to attend meetings, visit, and interact with government officials, becomes an additional burden that women can ill-afford, thus impeding their full participation in politics. Examples of such expenditures include election campaign

expenditure or resources that are required to attend meetings, visit, and interact with government officials.

3. Access to Decision-Making Arenas: It has been observed that women have very low voting percentages in the formal political arena, and their representation in local, state, and national governments and political parties is not proportional to their population. This is a problem because women make up a significant portion of the population.

The low participation of women in political parties creates barriers for women to advance to positions of leadership within those organisations.

4. Access to organisational membership: A research of the backgrounds of political leaders indicated that the majority of male political leaders have had previous experiences as leaders in labour unions, co-operatives, and societies. These organisations have served as a breeding ground for future political leaders by providing men with the necessary skills and experience. Trade unions and cooperative organisations have historically been led by males, and the involvement of women in these movements has been virtually nonexistent.

5. Freedom of movement: The strong institutions of family, caste, and religion are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these cultural standards. Timings need to be adjusted to accommodate the fact that women often juggle careers with responsibilities at home. Lack of the ability to quantify growth in this more expansive sense. In the year 1999, Professor Sen once again changed the goalposts with his thesis that freedoms comprise not just the means but also the objectives in the process of progress. This time, he did it deliberately. It is important to emphasise that development is not only about the interactions between human groups; it also involves the natural environment, access to transportation, threats to physical security, restrictions on movement, and has a negative impact on the participation of women in political processes as voters, contestants, and elected representatives.

6. Lack of Information and Awareness of Elections and Electoral Procedures A major obstacle to women's participation in elections is the lack of knowledge and awareness of elections and electoral processes.

Their lack of knowledge of financial resources and information makes them easy targets for corrupt officials and politicians who take advantage of their ignorance. 7. Awareness of Electoral Processes Their lack of awareness of financial resources and information makes them easy targets. Therefore, it makes it more difficult to appreciate and exercise one's right to participate in democratic processes.

8. On a personal and familial level: The major arena in which subordination occurs is the family, as this is the setting in which patriarchal norms are upheld and gender-based discrimination in all facets of their life is the norm. This is evident in the alarmingly high rates of domestic violence against women, including female feticide, infanticide, malnourishment, school dropouts, neglect and deprivation due to restricted access to resources, dowry violence and torture, and other forms of abuse.

9. A History of Family Involvement in Politics Despite this, some individuals continued to attempt to discredit her by stating that she was unable to take for her own house and was thus unable to look after the community.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kaur and Dindsa (2014) conducted research in which they investigated the political empowerment of women inside the Panchayati Raj system. Their investigation was based on data obtained from three districts in the Indian state of Punjab. According to the findings of this study, female sarpanches have a low level of understanding of the Panchayati Raj institution. The participation of women in the decision-making process is not at the point where it can be considered satisfactory. Politics in more remote areas are typically dominated by men. It brought to light the fact that some of the factors that determine women's political engagement include things like education, caste, experience, and the economic standing of their families.

Borooah, V., and Tagat, A. (2015) attempt to evaluate the level of political engagement of rural women in 18 of India's states. According to the findings of this survey, the vast majority of married women allow their spouses to influence their voting decisions. There are a number of factors that influence a woman's degree of political engagement, including her gender, age, marital status, education level, and employment. There was a significant gender gap in terms of the number of males and females who took part in the debates at the Gram Sabha.

Women's political engagement is negatively impacted when their levels of education and economic position are low.

Kaur, A. (2019), in her paper, attempts to investigate the function of female lawmakers as well as the numerous challenges that they encounter in their respective constituencies. According to the findings of this study, the traditional worldview that prevails in Punjabi culture presents a barrier to the participation of women in political activities. The weight of family responsibilities, a lack of financial means, and a lack of collaboration from administration and political parties are the key impediments to female political involvement in the province of Punjab.

Dahlerup,(2005) Political parties have the ability to set their own voluntary party quotas, with the goal of fielding an election with a certain percentage of female candidates (Tajali & Hoodfar, 2011, pp. 46-47; Tripp & Kang, 2008, p. 339). It has been discovered that in the 1970s, several socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe were among the first to utilise party quotas. This was followed by the formation of a small number of green and conservative parties throughout Europe in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as to a lesser extent in certain other areas. Countries in the industrialised Western world such as Australia, Canada, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are examples of nations that commonly use voluntary party quotas (Tajali & Hoodfar, 2011, page 47).;

Krook, (2009) The stipulation to keep a particular percentage of the total candidates on the electoral lists reserved for women is included in the candidate quota that is mandated by the legislation. This is the most up-to-date version of the quota system, which first appeared in the 1990s in developing countries, particularly in post-conflict Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Fardaus Ara (2017) Around the world, women hold a disproportionately low number of seats in parliamentary bodies. The poor representation of women is the outcome of a complicated interaction between several socioeconomic, political, and cultural forces. Although the degree to which each component is present in each country's environment differs, these variables are worldwide prevalent in nature. The purpose of this study is to determine, from a worldwide point of view and based on secondary scholarships, the obstacles that prevent women from participating politically.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to reduce the scope of my investigation, I have decided to concentrate just on the female MPs that serve in parliament. This tactic is often used in the social sciences, where the majority of research on the participation of women in politics centre their attention on legislative bodies that are accountable for national decision-making (Thanikodi and Sugirtha 2007). I focus my research on female members of parliament in Kazakhstan and Belarus, two nations that emerged from the Soviet Union. According to the Constitution of Kazakhstan, Parliament is the highest representative organ that is responsible for carrying out legislative responsibilities (Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2015). In the same way, the situation is the same in Belarus, where parliament is charged with legislative and representational duties, and it either supports or opposes the operations of the executive branch (The Parliament of the Republic of Belarus 2015).

MACRO-LEVEL FACTORS: QUALITATIVE TWO-COUNTRY COMPARISON I FOLLOW

Using a strategy based on two case studies to investigate the larger-scale issues that influence the engagement of women in politics. According to Yin (2003), this methodology gives the researcher the ability to methodically evaluate two situations in depth and, as a result of this comparison, to construct compelling arguments. His explanation is as follows: "Analytic conclusions that independently arise from two examples, as with two experiments, will be more strong than those that come from a single case (or single experiment) alone" (p.53). I could have just looked at the situation in Kazakhstan, but then I wouldn't have had anything to compare it to and I wouldn't have been able to make any accurate predictions or hypotheses. As a result, I investigate the situation in Kazakhstan by contrasting it with that in Belarus. The qualitative research approach is the one that is going to prove to be the most useful for this study. This approach is distinct from others used in research due to the fact that it encompasses the whole breadth of conceivable procedures. These techniques enable us to comprehend human behaviour in a variety of social circumstances as well as examine the individual's experience, history, and views.

MACRO-LEVEL: OPERATIONALIZATION OF CONCEPTS AND DATA

Sources An explanation of the dependent and independent variables that will be utilised in my comparison of the two countries is provided below. Participation in politics by women serves as the dependent variable here. In order to put this idea into practise, I take a look at

the number of women serving in each chamber of parliament and calculate the proportion of women serving in office throughout each parliamentary session. In the same way that I draw my hypotheses from the theoretical literature, I also derive my independent variables.

MICRO-LEVEL FACTORS: IN-DEPTH CASE STUDY OF KAZAKHSTAN

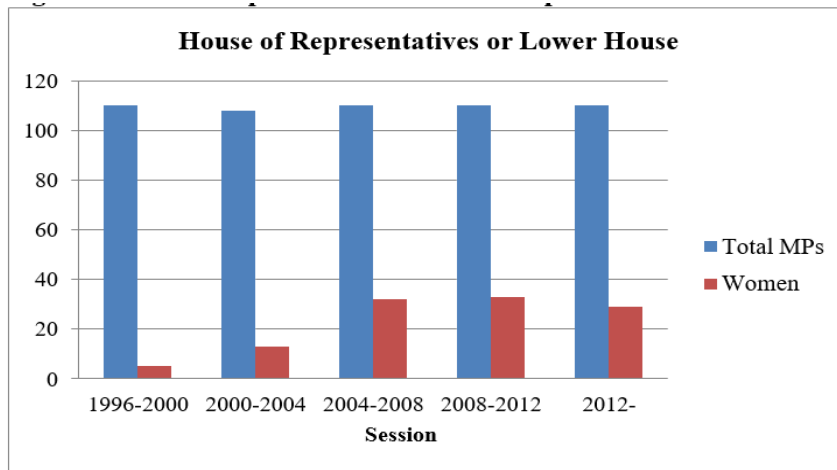
When compared to the other qualitative research techniques such as grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative, and ethnography, the case study method of qualitative research is considered to be the most appropriate. Case studies are one of the types of qualitative research methods. Case study provides answers to a collection of questions that, when combined, contribute to an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon that is being investigated. Comparing several examples, which is an important component of case study, is, in point of fact, the best way to do an in-depth investigation of a single instance. It is specific to each case and does not have a certain strategy; it is applicable to each case, because Kazakhstan is a unique case by itself, and furthermore, women from parliament essentially have their own personal stories and political styles. In general, case study provides this research with a great opportunity to ask questions and investigate promoting factors and barriers that we cannot control or change. In addition, case study provides this research with a great opportunity to ask questions and investigate promoting factors and barriers that we cannot control or change. Case study doesn't have limits or bounds when it comes to completing investigations, thus it takes all of these considerations into account.

DATA ANALYSIS

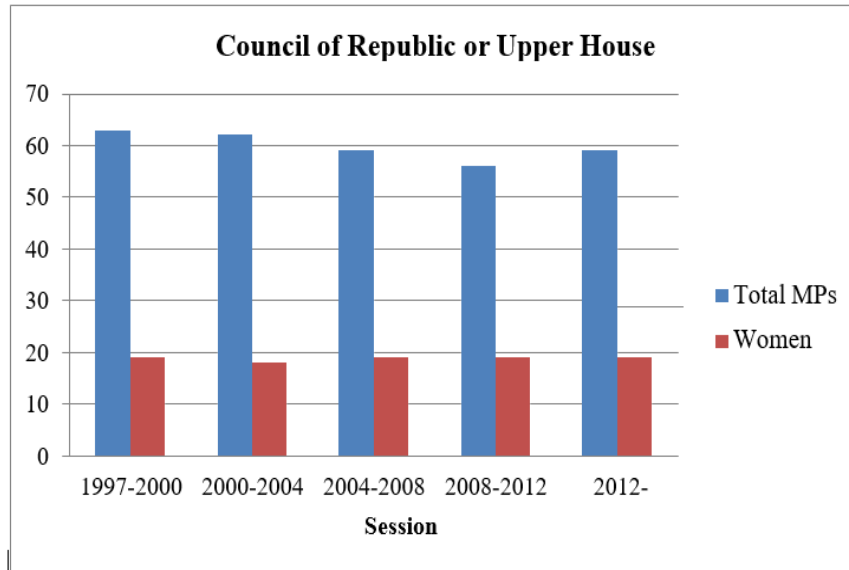
I will study the participation of women in politics by comparing the number of women in the parliamentary bodies of two different nations. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the parliaments of Belarus and Kazakhstan each have held five sessions, also known as convocations or *sozyvy*, which began in 1996. These sessions have lasted for approximately the same amount of time each time. The percentage of women serving in the Belarusian Parliament has been reasonably constant throughout the course of all sessions (averaging 25%), but the index has never been higher than 30%. (Table 4.1). Since the inaugural session, the percentage of female representatives in the House of Representatives has climbed to 22%, while the percentage of female representatives in the Council of Republic has stayed between 29% and 31% during all of these sessions. (Figure , 4.1).

Number of Female Deputies in Both Houses of Parliament of Belarus

	Total MPs	Women	%	Total MPs	Women	%
1996-2000	110	5	4.5	63	19	30.1
2000-2004	108	13	12	62	18	29
2004-2008	110	32	29	59	19	32.2
2008-2012	110	33	30	56	19	34
2012-	110	29	26.3	59	19	32.2



Female Deputies in the House of Representatives of Belarus



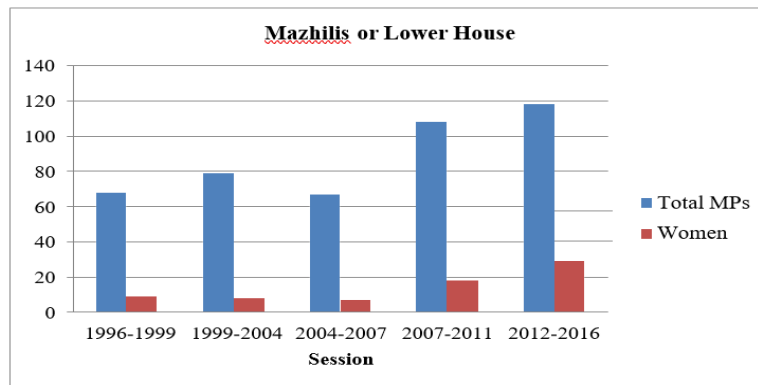
Female Deputies in the Council of Republic of Belarus

In contrast to the trend seen in Belarus, the proportion of female lawmakers in Kazakhstan's parliament has fluctuated since the inaugural session. It wasn't until later in the third session that there was an abrupt increase in the number of women serving in the lower house, the Mazhilis. This was caused by the transition to the party list system in 2004, which took place in the previous year. As a consequence of this, there were purposefully more women featured on the party lists. The percentage of women serving as deputies in the Mazhilis has not yet reached 24 percent, which is the greatest level reached throughout all sessions (Table 4.2). However, in each succeeding session, there were fewer and fewer women elected to either the House of Representatives or the Senate. Surprisingly, there were more women in the Senate of Kazakhstan during the first session (10.4%), but in each subsequent session, the number of women delegates has significantly declined while the number of male deputies has significantly grown. (Figure 4.3).

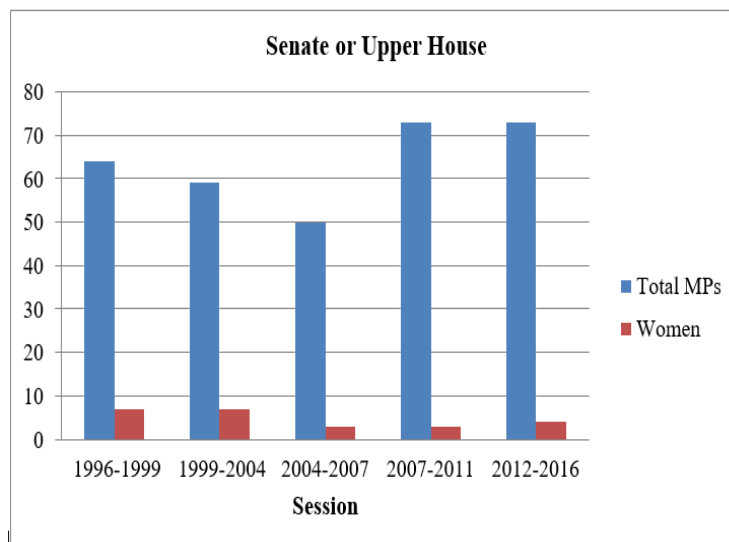
Number of Female Deputies in Both Houses of Parliament of Kazakhstan

	Total MPs	Women	%	Total MPs	Women	%
1996-1999	68	9	13.2	64	7	10.4
1999-2004	79	8	10.1	59	7	11.9

2004-2007	67	7	10.4	50	3	6
2007-2011	108	18	16.6	73	3	4.1
2012-2016	118	29	24.5	73	4	5.4



Female Deputies in the Mazhilis of Kazakhstan



Female deputies in the Senate of Kazakhstan

CONCLUSION

The findings of previous studies serve as the basis for my investigation into the elements that influence the political engagement of women. In the first place, there are the macro-level factors that influence female political engagement in Belarus and Kazakhstan. These include economic development and income, the ratification of CEDAW, the kind of government, and the political orientation. Second, there are elements on a micro-level, such as the personal histories and political ideologies of Kazakhstan's women, which have a role in determining

whether or not women participate in politics in certain countries. There is a significant gender gap in both countries' legislative bodies, despite the fact that many aspects of the two nations are comparable to one another. As a result, I propose that even if there are common characteristics that we might expect to lead to similar outcomes, there may also be certain different factors that will cause outcomes that are unexpected. This is because of the fact that I suggest that even if there are common features that we might expect to lead to similar outcomes. Because of this paradox, we are compelled to investigate each instance in more depth from a variety of economic, political, and social points of view in order to solve the issue.

REFERENCE

- a. gosudarstva-nursultan-nazarbaev-prinyal-uchastie-v-rabote-sezda-z_1348722934 (March 1, 2016).
2. Alexander, Amy C., and Christian Welzel. 2007. “Empowering Women: Four Theories on Four Different Aspects of Gender Equality.” Presented at the Annual Graduate Student Conference for the Center for the Study of Democracy.
3. Steinberg, Blema. 2001. “The Making of Female Presidents and Prime Ministers: The Impact of Birth Order, Sex, of Siblings, and Father-Daughter Dynamics.” *Political Psychology* 22(1): 89-110.
4. Bush, Sarah Sunn, and Amaney A. Jamal. 2015. “Anti-Americanism, Authoritarian Politics, and Attitudes about Women’s Representation: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Jordan.” *International Studies Quarterly* 59(1): 34-45.
5. Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, Principles of the Constitutional System, Section 1, Article 1. 1994.
6. Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, General Provisions, Section 1, Article 1
7. Convention on the Political Rights of Women. 1999. On accession of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women - "Adilet" ILS. Retrieved 1 March 2016, from http://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z990000018_(March 1, 2016).
8. Costantini, Edmond. 1990. “Political Women and Political Ambition: Closing the Gender Gap.” *American Journal of Political Science* 34(3): 741-770.
9. Danilovich, Natalia. 2010. “Growing Inequalities and Reproductive Health in Transitional Countries: Kazakhstan and Belarus.” *Journal of Public Health Policy* 31(1): 30-50.

- a. Das, Sandhya Rani, and Ananta Basudev Sahu, 2007. “Women Empowerment through Self Help Groups: A Case Study.” Presented at the Seminar on Gender Issues and Empowerment of Women. <http://www.isical.ac.in/~mano/GenderConference.pdf> (March 1, 2016).
- b. Democracy Index, World Rankings. 2014. <http://knoema.ru/GDI2015JAN/democracy-index-2014?country=1001440-kazakhstan>
10. Djerbal, Dalila, and Louisa Ait Hamou. 1992. “Women and Democracy in Algeria.” *Review of African Political Economy* 19(54): 106-111.
11. GDP per capita (current US\$) | Data | Table. 2016. [Data.worldbank.org](http://data.worldbank.org). Retrieved 28 April 2016, from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>
12. Fallon, Kathleen, Liam Swiss, and Jocelyn Viterna. 2012. “Resolving the Democracy Paradox: Democratization and Women's Legislative Representation in Developing Nations, 1975 to 2009.” *American Sociological Review* 77(3): 380-408.
13. Haerpfer, Christian. 2008. “Support for Democracy and Autocracy in Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, 1992-2002.” *International Political Science Review* 29(4): 411-431.
14. Hunt, Swanee. 2007. “Let Women Rule.” *Foreign Affairs* 86(3): 109-120. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2007-05-01/let-women-rule> (March 1, 2016).
15. Inform.kz. 2016. “Women’s Leadership in Kazakhstan: The Higher the Level of Decision- Making the Lower Representation of Women. <http://www.inform.kz/eng/article/2457463> (March 1, 2016).
16. Inglehart, Ronald, Pippa Norris, and Christian Welzel. 2002. “Gender Equality and Democracy.” *Comparative Sociology* 1(3): 321-345.
17. Economist Intelligence Unit. 2015. Country, Industry and Risk Analysis. <http://www.eiu.com/default.aspx> (April 28, 2016).
- a. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. 2015. *Women in Politics: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm: IDEA. <http://archive.idea.int/women/parl/ch2d.htm> (April 28, 2016).
18. Jalalzai, Farida, and Mona Lena Krook. 2010. “Beyond Hillary and Benazir: Women's Political Leadership Worldwide.” *International Political Science Review* 31(1):5-21.