



The influence of development on women's participation in cabinet

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Introduction

In this study our focus was to find out if a country's level of development has any influence over its proportion of female members of cabinet. This was done in order to try and bring new factors into this subject and add to the already existing theories. Overall, we can distinguish three broad theories that would explain the increase or lack of female ministers, as it is set out in the work of Krook and O'Brien (2012, 843-844): the "Institutional" hypothesis, the "Political Elite" hypothesis and the "Gender Equality" hypothesis.

- The first hypothesis finds in the government structure and its institutions the means to either empower or weaken women's pretention to access to high posts in the executive branch.

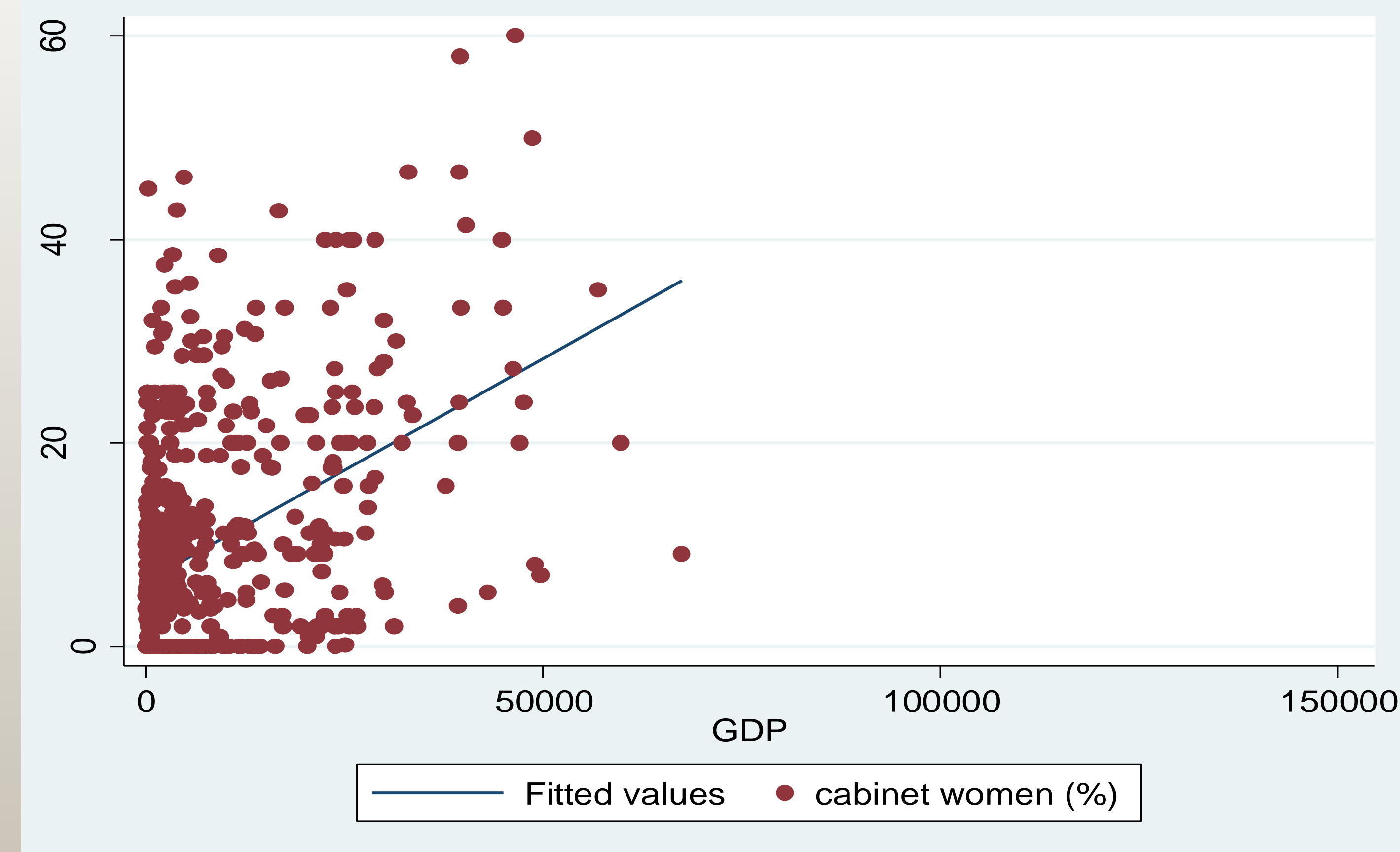
- The second argues that it is mainly in the presence of a higher amount of competent female candidates being available that a reason for appointments to government appears.

- The third insists on the importance of the "gender equality" factor, by that we mean all forms of social pressure within a society that would end up promoting women participation in cabinet positions.

Hypothesis

We believe that a higher amount of development in a country increases the chances of a more equalitarian distribution of seats in cabinet, following the logic of the second theory.

Results



Source	SS	df	MS			
Model	14338.4215	1	14338.4215	Number of obs =	707	
Residual	61700.8879	705	87.5189899	F(1, 705) =	163.83	
Total	76039.3094	706	107.704404	Prob > F =	0.0000	
				R-squared =	0.1886	
				Adj. R-squared =	0.1874	
				Root MSE =	9.3552	

cabinetwomen	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interva]
gdp	.0004377	.0000342	12.80	0.000	.0003706 .0005049
_cons	6.397805	.4208894	15.20	0.000	5.571458 7.224152

Our research, combined with the database that the professor had already collected, helped us analyze the data through a dispersion graph that allowed us to measure the direct influence of a country's development on the percentage of women ministers by comparing the average percentage of women ministers by country with that country's GDP, as this index is the most indicative for development measurement. We can observe that it seems that the higher a country's GDP is, the higher is the percentage of women in cabinet positions in that country.

Through the use of an algorithm, we were able to obtain the following table, which show us that, on average, for a 10000 dollar increase in GDP, women's representation in cabinet will increase by 4 points of percentage.

Conclusion

Our results are enlightening: they indicate that our hypothesis seems to be correct, and that countries with a higher level of development have a stronger representation of women in cabinets. While it may seem an obvious conclusion to some, we must remember that, out of the three aforementioned theories, only the "Political Elites" theory supports these results, as it would take for granted that a defining trait in developed countries is the higher level of education, which increases the chances of competent candidates being available for selection amongst women.

It must be noted that our research only serves the purpose of showing the incidence of a single parameter. As our dispersion graphic shows, there are many disparate cases that stray from the average line, and that we can only assume are touched by other parameters, most likely ones whose explanation we could find within the other two theories.

Discussion and future directions

As the literature suggests, some exceptions are to be found within the high number of women's representation in "third wave" developing democracies and, on the other hand, on the low number of representation until more recent times in developed countries such as Japan.

These future studies should, however, be done with a focus on a less broad and more regional/selective approach to the countries for the study.

Methodology

Our research was done by amassing data on a sample of over 180 countries within a certain span of years. We checked the percentage for every year and noted it down if it was available, keeping in mind that many times these numbers were simply non-existent. Despite having many holes in the database, we found much more information on this subject than what was expected, as this subject hasn't really been on the spotlight of investigation on women's participation in politics despite its importance

References, acknowledgements and contact info

I would like to thank Dr. Stockemer for guiding me through the whole research, for letting me use his database and for giving me access to the literature that only made this whole study even more interesting. I would also like to thank my colleague Élodie Camberlain Poulain for sharing the task of collecting the data. I also thank all the researchers that, through their work, made this project possible by giving me a literature to work on:

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Year	Country	Percentage
1947	Sweden	6.3
1948	Sweden	6.3
1949	Sweden	6.3
1950	Sweden	6.3
1951	Sweden	6.3
1952	Sweden	6.3
1953	Sweden	6.3
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