WOMEN’S RIGHTS AS A KEY TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION
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RESEARCH QUESTION
Is the global advancement of women’s rights a critical factor in mitigating the detrimental impacts of climate change?

INTRODUCTION

- The impacts of climate change will fall unevenly along the lines of gender, class, and race.
- Gender related studies of climate change have revealed the higher vulnerability of women in the developing world who already make up a severely marginalized portion of the population (Denton 2002; Sultana 2014).
- The number of women in parliament has a strong correlation with lower time till ratification of significant international environmental treaties (e.g. the Paris Agreement) regarding climate change.
  
  Hypothesis: Countries with higher levels of women’s empowerment will strongly correlate with lower time till ratification of significant environmental treaties (e.g. the Paris Agreement) regarding climate change.

Independent Variable: Women’s empowerment measured by ratification of CEDAW and state compliance to treaty principles regarding the social, economic, and political rights of women.

- **CEDAW Scale**: This scale ranks the degree to which the nation has committed itself to The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- **Representation Scale**: Ordinal Ranking of the Degree of Representation by Women in National Government. Examines primarily the national legislature and cabinet positions as in GP DATA 1; information on the judiciary was not included because so little is available.
- **Law/Discrepancy Scale**: This scale has three sub-clusters: Right to Physical Security/Bodily Integrity, Right to Education, and Rights within the Family.

Dependent Variable: Environmental outcomes and state efforts to curb the impacts of climate change measured by time till ratification of significant environmental treaties.

MODELING: Survival analysis based on time till ratification of Paris Treaty Agreement

THEORY

- **Ecofeminism**: Ties gender discrimination and environmental degradation to a patriarchal social structure that devalues both women and the environment.

- **Feminist Political Ecology**: Gender plays a role in individual access to and dependency on natural resources, knowledge of environmental threats and impacts, and ability to create change.

- **World Polity Theory**: Focus on cultural impacts and the forces of “modernity” on interactions between nation-states.

- **World Systems Theory**: Focus on macro-level economic variables such as GDP, national debt, foreign direct investment, and trade networks.

FINDINGS

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<th>Summarized Results of Models Predicting (Days) Until Ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement</th>
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<td>Independent Variables</td>
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<td>GDP (per capita) (logged)</td>
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<td>CO2 (per capita) (logged)</td>
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<td>Population Growth</td>
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<td>Time until CEDAW ratification</td>
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<td>Environmental NGO (logged)</td>
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- **CO2 per capita increased the likelihood of ratification and shortened the time until ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement**
- **CO2 emissions per capita and population growth decreased the likelihood and increased the time until ratification.**
- We did not find support for our key hypothesis that the indicators of women’s status, which we tested, had a significant effect on time to ratification of the Paris Climate Agreement.
- We found robust findings for the variable of population growth which is, however, related to women’s status.
- Population growth relates to woman, fertility, and family planning. Supporting the theory that women’s reproductive rights may have a positive impact on climate change mitigation. These findings also support the theoretical perspectives of ecofeminism and feminist political ecology.

CONCLUSIONS

- Our next steps will include a longitudinal analysis of the data to test the influence of women’s status on CO2 emissions

REFERENCES


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