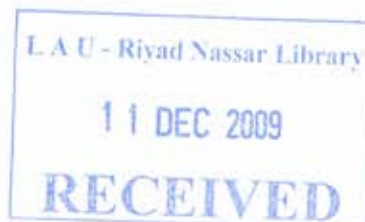# LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN POLITICS OF ARAB GULF STATES

by

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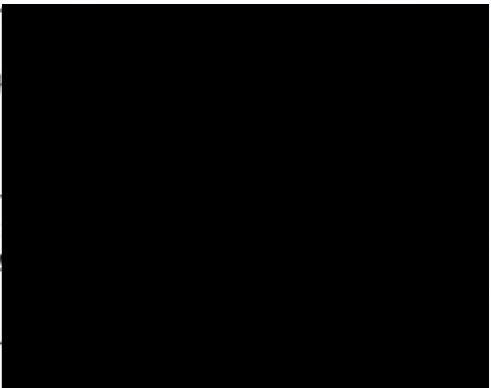
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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the feasibility of the gender political mainstreaming programs in the Arab Gulf States. It sheds light on the current literary debate regarding mainstreaming and the strategies that aim to provide support to advance women rights in traditional Arab societies. It investigates the prospect of Arab Gulf women achieving political mainstreaming. It adopts a survey research methodology through semi-structured interviews with twenty nine young leaders from four Arab Gulf States namely: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman. The data gathered on the status of women in the Gulf reveals primary cultural and religious challenges confronting gender political mainstreaming. These challenges are analyzed on both country and regional levels; areas of differences and similarities have been noted. It also studies the challenges regarding the mainstreaming approaches and the impact of such challenges on job and decision making opportunities. The paper examines the feasibility of particular policy reforms and pilot projects as to jumpstart an overall strategy and policy vision of gender political mainstreaming in the Gulf. Finally, it provides recommendations for mainstreaming approaches and policy reforms taking into consideration traditional and cultural peculiarities.

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List of Abbreviations

AMIDEAST	America – Mideast Educational and Training Services
ARHDR	Arab Human Development Report
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
EC	European Commission
ETF	The European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
GAD	Gender and Development
ILO	International Labor organization
IPU	Inter- Parliamentary Union
LAU	The Lebanese American University
MDGs	The Millennium Development Goals
OSAGI	The Office of the Advisor of on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDP-POGAR	The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region
WEF	World Economic Forum
WID	Women in Development
WMO	The World Meteorological Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction

The term gender mainstreaming was coined by the United Nations through the various international conferences held over the years. The term can be deconstructed into gender and mainstreaming. Gender refers to both male and female while mainstreaming, from a gender perspective, refers to "the decision-making policy arena, that is, all the decisions on policies to be adopted in a particular sector such as education, transport and health" (United Nations (UN), 2008, p.3). According to the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2008), gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality (Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affairs (OSAGI), 2008). While gender equality is the goal, "mainstreaming is an approach to achieve the goal" (OSAGI, 2008, p.3). This entails strategies such as "policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programs and projects" (OSAGI, 2008)[1].

This paper examines the gender political mainstreaming approach and evaluates the existing challenges and opportunities for political mainstreaming programs in the Arab Gulf States. It begins by reviewing the current debate regarding mainstreaming and strategies dealing with women rights in traditional societies. More specifically, it focuses on the literary discussions regarding the prospect of Arab Gulf women achieving political mainstreaming. Then, the paper surveys pressing needs required for political

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[1] The Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) is part of the department of economic and social affairs. It provides a detailed analysis of gender documents, gender programs committed to the advancement of women. Its main objective is to promote and strengthen effective implementation of the Millennium Declaration, Beijing Declaration and platform for action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995.

mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf States. It assesses the extent to which integration of gender mainstreaming into politics can be accepted and institutionalized in the Arab Gulf states. Accordingly, it recommends mainstreaming strategies.

In this thesis, we implement a survey research approach with selected women rights activists and leaders from Arab Gulf States. The survey serves as a baseline for a comparative country research and assessment. The research proceeds by examining the Gulf women leaders' response towards political gender mainstreaming and provides propositions for a mainstreaming policy strategy in the Gulf States. This thesis sheds light on potential openings for policy reforms and sustainable mainstreaming programs in the Gulf. It further assesses the extent of such policies and programs becoming sustainable under the social and cultural circumstances.

In addition to gender mainstreaming being a strategy, it encompasses gender-based perspectives toward the facilitation and promotion of gender equality. This paper examines gender political mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf States taking four representative countries as case studies, namely: Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first provides the background to the issue of political gender mainstreaming. It reviews the definition of gender mainstreaming adopted by the UN Office of the Social Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI) and examines the status of women in the Arab Gulf States. Accordingly, it highlights the main challenges facing the integration of gender mainstreaming into the politics of the Arab Gulf States. The second is a review of the literature on gender mainstreaming and discusses evaluation methodologies as the one adopted by the European Commission. It examines the suitability of this survey in the evaluation of mainstreaming needs and strategies in the Arab Gulf states and proposes means of adaption according to the social, cultural, and political circumstances. The third chapter examines the choice for a survey methodology and sample selection strategy. It sheds light on the survey instrument designed and data collection strategy implemented. The fourth chapter analyzes the data and measures the significant relationship between the independent

variables and political gender mainstreaming. The final and fifth chapter presents the conclusions and policy recommendations. It concludes by identifying suitable programs toward the achievement of political gender mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf States.

1.3 Mainstreaming as a Comprehensive Development Strategy

Gender relations were not analyzed or seen as a priority in society. Male dominated opinions and experiences were considered relevant, while women were restricted to certain traditional roles. Nowadays, the male/ female dichotomy is slowly but persistently being stripped apart. Different thematic and systematic approaches are being created in order to incorporate the 'gender' value globally and the different environments that are being accustomed to the issue. The desire for gender equality and equal participation in government, economy and socio cultural mobilization has resulted in the construction of gender policies. Gendered globalization can be seen in UN acts and NGOs among other institutions which have altered their orientation toward any subservient female attitude.

In the effort to obtain gender equality, the concept of gender mainstreaming was introduced. "Gender mainstreaming entails bringing the perception, experience, knowledge and interests of women as well as men to bear on policy making, planning and decision making" [The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)].[2] Mainstreaming can reveal a need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from development processes (WMO).[3] The Beijing Platform for Action has highlighted the fact that there are problematic gender differences and opportunities. There are similar features across

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[2] The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) policy on gender mainstreaming provides an overview of the concept of gender mainstreaming. It highlights the background of the approach and what is required to implement it. http://www.wmo.ch/pages/themes/gender/gender_policy_en.html
[3] The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) policy on gender mainstreaming provides an overview of the concept of gender mainstreaming. It highlights the background of the approach and what is required to implement it. http://www.wmo.ch/pages/themes/gender/gender_policy_en.html

the globe which in turn have allowed globalization to highlight this feature and to push it forward. Cultures contribute to either facilitating or obstructing the recognition of gender mainstreaming.

A social identity construct has its roots deeply embedded in historical perspectives and analytical interpretations of social acts. The general representation of society and state mainly depends on the identity formation of groups. These groups may have similar or contradictory approaches and therefore the need to take into account political and social factors becomes a prerequisite in advancing the successful interpretation of gender mainstreaming policies.

More to the point, downplaying the status and role of women in societies is facilitated by utilizing religious and political arguments. The action plans and programs that are mostly introduced for the political empowerment of women shed light primarily on the constraints of disparity and unemployment that women are subjected to.

The Beijing Platform for Action was adopted by the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing (China) in 1995. It highlighted the need for organizations to initiate a commitment related to gender mainstreaming and to pursue an effective support for gender equality on all levels. It also established gender issues as a global need. However, OSAGI (2008) stressed the need to "complement the gender mainstreaming strategy with targeted interventions" because a strategy cannot work by itself; it needs to be analyzed through a micro lens to effectively work.

Among the main challenges of gender mainstreaming strategies is the achievement of gender equality while taking societal diversities and cultural aspects into consideration. From this perspective, gender equality implies that diversity of groups is recognized and that the needs and priorities of both men and women are considered accordingly. "Gender equality is not a woman issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women" (OSAGI, 2008, para1). Moreover, when it comes to sustainable development, gender equality pushes the need for a people centered development since it is part of a socio-cultural context.

This development strategy covers a broad range of issues as well as sub issues. For example, violence against women is considered an issue and spousal abuse as the

sub issue. The strategy also requires long term commitment and a persistent follow up so as to fully reach long term objectives (OSAGI concepts and definitions, 2008).[4]

In OSAGI's conceptualization, the term gender refers to "the social attributes and opportunities associated with being a male or female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men" (OSAGI concepts and definitions,2008). The definition provided by OSAGI shows that gender is not limited to the idea of a female as is misinterpreted in general. Instead, it delves deep into the socialization processes between the individuals at all ages that result in a social construct that forms attributes, opportunities and relationships between women and men. An important factor that needs to be stressed is the time-specific and changeable attributes, that if the mainstreaming strategy is put into a specific context it can determine different expectations and values of relationship between men and women. This stresses the fact that the strategy or approach alone does not suffice. What is needed is simultaneous implementation along with awareness programs. For example, the people centered development strategy would establish gender support offices and design gender-based policy development strategies while at the same time advocate and campaign for socio-cultural assimilation across class, race and ethnic groups (OSAGI concepts and definitions, 2008).

1.4 Mainstreaming in the Arab World

According to a comparative survey in the Arab Human Development report (ARHDR) in 2003, Arab attitudes towards gender were mostly ambiguous while the factors such as knowledge and good governance had a huge priority in attitudes (ARHDR, 2003, p.36). Moreover, the Arabs favored democracy as the suitable form of government in polar opposition to an authoritarian rule (Jamal & Tessler, 2008,pp. 97-110). As for women empowerment; the Arabs had different attitudes towards the role of women in education and employment. Both men and women had a right to education;

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[4] The Office of the Advisor of on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women Department of Economic and Social Affairs (OSAGI) website has a concepts and definitions page that defines and elaborates on terms such as Gender Mainstreaming, gender and gender equality.

however there was a clear bias towards men in the employment sector. According to the report, such results show that the "Arabs expressed support for building the human capabilities of women but not utilizing them." (ARHDR, 2003, p.36)

Women empowerment in Arab counties has faced serious challenges while trying to maintain a stepping hold in governments. One Arab country rejected a proposal to allow women to exercise their political rights. In Bahrain, women attempted to practice their voting rights and the right to run for election. But, they failed to succeed in elections due to "a seemingly societal reasons" (ARHDR, 2003, p.48). In the case of women in Bahrain, constitutional rights were not enough to assure electoral victory. Affirmative actions were seen across Arab countries such as the allocation of quotas on national lists for women to enter parliament in Morocco and Iraq. Other examples of affirmative actions included allocating quotas for women on legislative councils in Djibouti and Jordan. Also, women in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were allowed to engage in political activities. This move towards women empowerment in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was made possible when the ruler of the UAE affirmed women rights to political activism. In 2003, a Qatari woman was appointed minister of education while the Kuwaiti government drafted a law allowing women to enter the security forces. Moreover, a woman entered the Yemeni parliament in 2003 and another was appointed a cabinet minister for Human Rights. In the Sultanate of Oman, women have been given the right to drive taxis that carried different sexes (ARHDR, 2003, pp.48-49).

The international human rights conventions have been signed by most Arab states.[5] Yet, these agreements have not been "integrated into the legal culture nor have they been incorporated into the substantive legislation" (ARHDR, 2003,p.161). At most, they have achieved a nominal status while failing to be implemented. According to the Arab Human Development Report (2003), political emancipation of women in the Arab countries still had a long way to go. However, there is evidence of receptivity for the issue of women empowerment as progress was made on the executive levels of government and state institutions.

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[5] Most Gulf States have not yet signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights or the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

As for the legal aspect, Arab laws suffer from structural deficits .The 2003 Arab Human Development Report (ARHDR, 2003) emphasized that the laws are too abstract and that the gap between the nominal status of laws and its implementation is very wide. This highlights a duality in the progress of Arab countries. A legal system that implements laws when necessary is coupled with a society that reproduces 'respectable' values in accordance to its notions.

The 2004 Arab Human Development Report (ARHDR, 2004) addressed the empowerment of women in Arab societies. The progress made since the 2003 ARHDR report was uneven. With regards to the empowerment of women, advancement in Morocco was achieved as a new family law was implemented to protect women's rights. Women in the Arab countries occupied senior executive positions and there was "a steadily broader scope for the participation by women in legislative assemblies" (ARHDR, 2004, p.4). Unfortunately, a key finding of the report was that there was limited progress of women despite the laudable efforts. Women still suffered from discrimination and inequality in both laws and in practice (ARHDR, 2004, p.6).

In 2005, the focus of the Arab Human Development report was the rise of women in the Arab world. The report laid out a crucial question to the indispensability of women to the advancement of Arab states. There are various obstacles preventing women from taking an active role and fully realizing their potential in different areas. The report highlighted the fact that women are at the center of political development in the region and have accomplished great advancements. However, there are still impediments and challenges that women continuously face in the Arab states (ARHDR, 2005, p.2).

Women have managed to achieve economical, societal and political strides despite the attempt to marginalize them. Their status in the region is both "a result and a contribution to a number of cultural, social, economic and political factors" (ARHDR, 2005, p.7). The 2005 report was based on a field survey that examined the issue of political participation of women and their presence in the highest executive offices in the Arab countries. The results were that the presence of Arab women in the political arena was highly endorsed. Although noticeable changes have occurred throughout the past years, women participation in all governments does not reflect women political

empowerment.[6] Most women that are present in power positions are due to elite male considerations or family ties. Political disempowerment of women can be directly related to poverty. Low income females living in poverty stricken neighborhoods are "disenfranchised in the areas of parliamentary participation, professional and technical employment, and control of economic resources" (AHDR, 2005, p.10).

According to the inter- parliamentary union (IPU) (2009), the worldwide percentage of women in parliaments in 2009 was 18.4%.[7] The number of women in a single or lower house was 18.5%, whereas, the percentage of women in upper house or senate was 17.6%. On the regional level, the Arab states have 3.7% of women in a single or lower house, in all existing parliaments, and 7.0% of women in an upper house or senate. As a result, both houses combined offered 9.1% of women participating in politics. This poor showing of women in politics is in stark contradiction to the Nordic countries where 41.4 % of women occupy seats in the lower house. Moreover, the European states, those that are OSCE member countries excluding Nordic countries, have a percentage of 19.3% of women participating in both cabinets combined.

The presence of women in national parliaments is a key goal of gender mainstreaming in politics. In 2006, the Bahrain elections for lower house resulted in obtaining one seat for women out of 40 seats (2.5%). However, the second elections for the upper house resulted in women obtaining 10 seats out of 40 (25%). In the Yemeni case, the 2003 elections for the lower house resulted in women obtaining one seat out of 301 seats (0.3%). This shows a gradual setback from the 2001 elections for the upper house where women succeeded in obtaining two seats out of 111 seats (1.8%). In the case of Oman, the 2007 elections of the lower house resulted in zero seats for women out of 84 seats (0%). However, the 2007 elections for the upper house resulted in 14 seats for women out of 70 seats (20%). In the case of Saudi Arabia, the 2005 elections for the single house resulted in zero seats for women out of 150 seats (0%). However in 2009, one woman was appointed to the government's reshuffling as the minister of education (Inter- Parliamentary Union women in parliaments world classification, 2009).

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[6] The Arab Human Development Report was written in 2005. The first appointed female minister in Saudi Arabia took place in 2008.

[7] The inter- parliamentary union database compiled the data on the basis of information provided by national parliaments as of September 2006. It lists the number of women in the governments per country, number of women in the lower house and the upper house.

The political status of women in parliaments reflects the variations among the Arab society. The required strategies to strengthen the political role of women and to increase the commitment to women's rights need to be analyzed through different stages in order to compare the level of development throughout the years. This thesis examines political-based gender mainstreaming with respect to the current political status of women in the Gulf States and the various social, religious, cultural and political constraints. The Gulf States have been chosen because of the ambiguous relationship between political and cultural constrains that are largely held responsible for female political disenfranchisement. Four countries are selected for examinations that encompass mainstreaming challenges in the Gulf: Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. The study aims to identify the needed political mainstreaming strategies in the short and long term within community-centered development framework. Ultimately, it proposes policy reforms needed to mainstream the political status of women in the Gulf.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

This chapter discusses the literature on gender mainstreaming policies and the political status of women in the Arab Gulf States. The gender mainstreaming approach is a relatively new field of research; as a result, there is a lack in the amount of books and studies that cover this particular area. In addition, there are a number of studies that cover the integration of gender mainstreaming policies into several areas of employment, education, security but a relatively small amount of information on integrating gender mainstreaming into politics exists. Thus, what this chapter attempts to achieve is to cover the literature that deals with gender political mainstreaming in the Gulf by highlighting how integrating gender mainstreaming into the political process of the Arab Gulf states is affected by process, cultural, and institutional elements. Furthermore, it identifies how women enter the field of politics and whether it is based on appointment or election process.

2.1 The Gender Mainstreaming Approach

The gender question has historical roots but its applicability nowadays entails preset frameworks. According to the European Training Foundation (ETF) report (2006), the failure of gender mainstreaming in some sectors, such as education, is related to an existing preliminary status, unclear strategy definition, and poor data. Factors such as political will, adequate resources, gender disaggregated statistics, training for civil servants, and the development of an infrastructure such as focal points, representation of women in decision making processes and an openness or transparency in policy making processes are needed to create a proper implementation of strategies (ETF, 2006, p. 10).

Furthermore the impact of culture and globalization have long been researched and debated among scholars. It is imperative not to overlap culture with religion. In light

of this issue, the West versus Islam box overshadows the institutional configurations that are trying to adapt to the new-found female social movements. Society is maneuvered through direct and indirect means by cultural interpretations. But again as Pasha (2002) argues it is important to differentiate between the constitutive element of religion and the aspect of cultural divide. The variance of cultural aspects makes it difficult for globalization to predict reactions. Globalization creates a level of uncertainty that prevents cultures from an all-out acceptance sweep of what it brings about. The dominance of religion might not allow a formal identity to women and this is a setback to the advancement of structural gender formulation.

Many global strategies may not be suitable to be fully integrated among traditional societies and may result in negative reactions. Thus, despite the abundance of studies and evaluation of globalization political and economic impacts, research examining globalization and mainstreaming strategies in traditional societies remains limited. This is despite the fact that globalization goes hand in hand with shifting gender relations paradigm. Such a relation accentuates the need for awareness new gender oriented approaches (Pettman, 2001)

Sweetman (2008) emphasizes that the continuing social mistrust and skepticism of women in leadership is a major setback in the promotion of women leaders. She stresses the need to 'move beyond numbers' and to advocate for ways that ensure the effectiveness of elected women. She also points out the importance of supporting women in civil society and the importance of influencing policy-making from outside formal politics (Sweetman, 2008, p.435). Sweetman also emphasized the particular challenges facing women while playing the dual role of a household keeper and leader. She introduced male bias in the institutional culture to portray the misconceived substantive day job of the male in politics as opposed to the substantial caring responsibilities of women which are usually considered a practical barrier to a political career.

In her book, *Politics of the Possible*, Mukhop Adhyay presents a compelling description of the global experience in promoting gender equality in organizations and programs. She observes the fact that gender mainstreaming is a culmination of two interrelated changes prior to the Beijing Conference; "the conceptual 'shifts" from

Women in Development (WID) to gender and development (GAD) and from integrating women to mainstreaming gender"(Adhyay, 2006,p. 10). The implementation process was a key variable to the success or failure of these initiatives. There were key factors to be taken into consideration such as the nature of women's relational subordination and the unequal gender power relations that would help in the inclusion of women in development. More to the point, as Adhyay emphasizes, 'institutionalization' and 'mainstreaming' are often used interchangeably but " 'mainstreaming' seems to be a broader term that implies a process of institutionalization or making the promotion of gender equality routine"(Adhyay, 2006,p.12).

Adhyay is joined by Rai who examines the link between mainstreaming gender and democratization. In *Mainstreaming gender, democratizing the state?* Rai introduces institutional mechanisms as a focal point to ensure the integration of the gender issue in order to promote the status of women. Rai draws lessons from the various women conferences ranging from the World Conference on the International Women's Year held in Mexico City in 1975 up to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 that stressed the role of national machineries in the advancement of women. These conferences focused on the institutional promotion of women to leadership positions by various strategies such as: providing access to modern communication technology, fostering networking activities with NGOs and with the UN system. The Beijing Conference noted a shift from the local to global institutionalism. It encompassed broader globalized issues as 'supporting government- wide mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective in all policy area' (Rai, 2003, p. 2).

One of the main challenges to the gender initiative remained centered around the means that would change the traditional role of women in both the home and the workplace. Society's gender misconception plays a major role in restricting the efforts of women to shift into a more interactive and productive role in society. The powerful presence of the overarching traditional role of women as a child bearer and restricted low-wage positions restricts the advancement of women (United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2003). Therefore, the problem remained that women must carry the burden of work duality enforced by traditions. A burden is being manifested by those resisting change and emphasizing religious and traditional stereotypes and by those who

are committed to implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of advocating women's rights and empowerment in the Gulf States.

According to Sweetman (2008), "the principle that women should lead and participate equally in decision-making flouts traditions and customs almost everywhere in the world." She offers a mini comparative aspect on how the context of women and women leadership has changed over the years. After the Beijing conference in 1995, governments and development organizations did not undertake the call of the platform for action as it is. Five years after Beijing, in the year 2000, they were still in the process of developing their response to support women leadership (Sweetman, 2008). Furthermore, the 50th Commission on the Status of Women in 2006 reiterated the need to commit to the Beijing platform's of promoting "equal participation for women and men in decision-making" (Sweetman, 2008, p.433).

Yet, the scale of women's exclusion in politics in all three sectors – legislature, executive and judiciary – emphasizes the continuous male preference and deepening marginalization of women. This phenomenon is occurring despite the mobilizations on the national and global levels. The UN Atlas *of Women in Politics* (1999) clearly showed that women occupy 13.4 percent of MPs as a whole (Rai, 2003, p.19).

However, according to the 2008 UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report (2008), women now occupy at least 30 percent of parliamentary seats in 20 countries, although none in Asia. More importantly, the 2007 parliamentary renewals in Oman and Qatar did not conserve women presence. By comparison, the Nordic states had women constituting 38.8 per cent of members of both houses of parliament. The disparity in the level of political participation in the Nordic states and the Arab states shows that women are still viewed as subordinate elements in the political arena.

However, Sweetman (2008) states that there has been progress in this area. According to the Inter–Parliamentary Union 2008, the average number of women in parliament globally has increased from 11.8 per cent in 1998 to 17.7 percent in 2008. To be more specific, the promotion of women participation in most states has come as a result of constitutional and legislative reforms, as well as, electoral reforms. Some countries have established quota reforms that have been part of positive actions to regulate the selection or election of women into political office (Sweetman, 2008,

p.434). But Sweetman clearly argues that women leaders 'tend to be mostly found in positions traditionally associated with their gendered responsibility for domestic life and caring" (Sweetman, 2008, p.434).

Some Muslim societies offer women choices and opportunities; however, they do not absorb the chance to become leaders. According to Tahir (1997), there are several reasons for those choices. Some regard women's rights as a feminist concept that is aligned with negative connotations. Therefore, culture and tradition contribute to the labeling and level of support for women in leadership. There is a correlation between the devaluation of young girls and women in any Muslim society and the contribution of tradition and culture. Moreover, this leads to a lack of resources which ultimately affects the empowerment of women. The discriminatory priorities that are faced by young women both at the family and the governmental level contribute to the lack of resources to advance women empowerment. The resources available are very scarce; however even if the young women assume leadership roles they are not given a chance to exercise their potential skills and self development.

Rai poses a very important question which deals with the ability of state institutions to promote women's interests and their effectiveness in creating results. She highlights the fact that there is an "embedded nature of these machineries in structures of inequality" (Rai, 2003: 18), which makes it difficult to initiate a tangible interaction between civil society and the gender status quo. She argues for a need to have a position that would make mobilization of women's interests possible within civil society framework. But how effective would civil society be in a process of the policy making machinery of the state? Rai indulges in the notion that this engagement with the machinery of the state can be "brought about by these mobilizations" that would create political shifts. The "in and against", that Rai coined (Rai, 1996), refers to state position in terms of national machinery for women can critically evaluate the progress of mainstreaming gender. However, as for the international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and several NGOs the strategies that were being used were seen as either contributing to gender inequality or co-opting the gender agenda within state policy. The state is an arena where gender justice is shaped. But this effectiveness in advancing women's interests can be applicable under certain conditions including issues of

locations and resources and most importantly democratic movements which would ensure to hold these bodies accountable. (Rai, 2003, p. 17)

Tahir (1997) points out that both men and women have to challenge existing realities in order to increase the participation of women in decision making. Also, they need to challenge "social and political structures and policies that discriminate against women" (Tahir, 1997, p.87). Therefore, the author highlights intervention strategies that are needed to enhance women's leadership and decision-making skills. The strategies range from leadership training workshops, mentorship programs to dialogue and networking. In parallel to the strategies, effective advocacy is required to raise awareness and change perceptions and attitudes of the family and decision makers in the political and social domain. Also, these strategies have to be developed in "as non confrontational and cooperative a way as possible so as not to alienate religious and traditional segments of the society and their leaders" (Tahir, 1997, p.92). In addition, there should be an institutionalization of successful interventions in order to be sustained within the public and private institutions and private institutions. This is essential because it aims to keep these interventions as a part of the budgets and policies and to help keep away the risk of the interventions becoming disconnected.

According to the United Nations (UN) (1999), women's issues in development discourse and policies in the region have reached the periphery. As a general outlook on the role of Arab women, they "have been guardians of family well-being and the managers of family budgets" (UN, 1999, p.12). Furthermore, they have succeeded in following survival strategies that allowed them to survive with the available resources.

Furthermore, there are major shortcomings to the advancement of women. Women and girls are facing neglect and bias in their efforts to obtain education and proper income. There has been considerable improvement in the area of women self employment and rights to lands and other assets. This improvement contributes to the countries' economic development. In addition to that, it also focuses on the dire need for women to achieve equality with men. The key to reaching gender equality in decision making remains an essential factor for economic and political power (The Millennium Development Goals Report (MDG), 2008).

2.2 Women Political Status and Advancements in the Arab Gulf States

According to the UNDP-POGAR[8], the year 2000 marked the year when the upper house of Bahrain's bicameral legislature was open to women. As a result, the King "appointed 6 women to the 40 member council."[9] Moreover, 10 women were appointed to the new consultative council in 2006 after the legislative elections in the country. Women were not only appointed by the King but they were allowed to run for office and vote. This was due to the year 2000's political changes in the country. However, in the year 2002, none of the 34 women out of 320 candidates, who ran for municipal elections; as well, as the eight women out of the 174 candidates, who ran in the parliamentary elections, won any seats. The disparity was clearly seen again in the 2006 elections where "19 women out of the 206 candidates contested the elections".[10] As a result, one female candidate won uncontested parliamentary seats. Ms. Latifa Al Qood became the first Bahraini woman to be elected as a Bahraini female deputy. The appointment of women continued in 2004 where a Bahraini woman was appointed as the Minister of Health and another woman was appointed as minister of social affairs. Also, the first female judge was appointed in 2006.[11]

The series of female appointments on ministerial, legislative and judiciary levels culminated as the Bahrain Supreme Council for women adopted the "national strategy for the advancement of Bahraini women" in 2005. More to the point, strategies and

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[8] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (UNDP-POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It includes country comparisons between Arab Gulf countries related to gender status and legislature status. It can be found at http://pogar.org/countries/compare.asp.

[9] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (UNDP-POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It states the gender reforms found in each country through country comparisons. It can be found at http://pogar.org/countries/compare.asp.

[10] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (UNDP-POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It states the gender reforms found in each country through country comparisons. It can be found at http://pogar.org/countries/compare.asp.

[11] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (UNDP-POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It states the gender reforms found in each country through country comparisons. It can be found at http://pogar.org/countries/compare.asp.

activities to promote gender and enhance the role of women in society were put forth by several women association, the ministers of health, education, labour and social affairs. The plans for the advancement of women were further enforced by the Supreme council's national strategy that aimed at "achieving full participation of women in the work force and enabling them to reach top decision making in both the public and private sector." The focus of the Supreme Council is to change the stereotypical view of women and further enhance their role and contribution to society. (The Bahrain Supreme Council, 2003, p.3).

Women participation in Oman comes by appointment by Sultan Qaboos. The first female ambassador was appointed in 1999. Also, a female minister of education was appointed as a first in Oman's history. Moreover, eight women are currently in the council of state. Their position was also appointed by Sultan Qaboos. However, there are a few Omani women occupying top-decision making positions in politics .According to UNDP-POGAR[12], 20% of civil servants are women with 13% occupying senior management positions.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - a hereditary monarchy currently ruled by King Abdullah – the king issued the Basic Law of government, statues governing the already existing Council of Ministers and the Consultative Council.[13] More to the point, the recent 2003 measure that the King approved allowed for the election of half of the representatives of the usually appointed Consultative Council.

According to the UNDP Riyadh country office (UNDP Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), 2009, para 1), several initiatives were introduced to align the kingdom with the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and human development. Therefore, a gender mainstreaming approach was adopted in the kingdom where women development has been a key issue over the last few years "without contradicting the Islamic laws and values" (UNDP KSA, 2009, para2). Women empowerment and capacity building projects were initiated by the UNDP country office such as the first

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[12] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It states the gender reforms found in Oman through country comparisons. It can be found at http://pogar.org/countries/compare.asp.

[13]UNDP-POGAR country comparison page provides the elections and legislature status of Saudi Arabia.

"Women and MDGs Forum and Workshops", the "Job Preparedness Workshop" and the "Young Women Leaders Workshops". These three projects aimed at building the capacities of the participants and broadening their knowledge. Moreover, a "gender mainstreaming initiative" project was undertaken and is currently being implemented. (UNDP KSA, 2009, para 2).

According to the UNDP-POGAR[14], women in the south were better exposed to the voting and election process before the unification of Yemen. Women are able to vote as well as run for elections. However, in the 2001 elections, one independent woman candidate was able to win a seat in the legislative elections. According to the gender gap report (2008), the gender gap in Yemen is increasing and the status of gender equality at work is on the decline where Yemen obtained the last place in the country status report.

2.3 Assessing Mainstreaming In The Arab Gulf States Based on European Commission Questionnaire

This thesis assesses the current status of women mainstreaming in the Gulf and how this might shape the current and future policy reforms. It provides a gateway into understanding the setting of gender mainstreaming in politics to effectively pin point and prioritize the challenges affecting political gender mainstreaming.

In order to do this, the thesis adopts and adapts the European Commission on Social Affairs questionnaire as an instrument to help understand the hows, and the extent to which gender mainstreaming in the politics of the Gulf States is achievable. The study evaluated the needed political mainstreaming strategies in the short and long term. The questions were directed to evaluate the crucial mainstreaming variables. The variables identified in this thesis are divided into three categories. The first is PROCESS. Gender roles are not static, there have been recent advancements in political mainstreaming, but

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[14] The United Nations Development Programme on Governance in the Arab region (POGAR) was launched in 2000. POGAR is dedicated to the promotion and development of good governance practices and related reforms in the Arab states. It states the gender reforms and current status of women in Yemen. It can be found at http://www.pogar.org/countries/theme.aspx?t=4&cid=22#sub0.

the policy reforms are not reforming in nature. The government decides what to take and disregards elements of the gender mainstreaming policy. Therefore, it is imperative to study the impact of the process variable in the production and implementation of gender mainstreaming into politics. The second variable is CULTURE. Religious discourse and social constraints impact the formulation of cultural attitudes. This is a challenge to the acceptance of gender mainstreaming approach. The misconceptions that are being utilized to advanced policies and disregard the others need to be identified. The repercussions of misconceptions can alter a society's perceptions and create friction with the different trends and groups. Religion is emphasized because it is used to create political arguments. The religious variable refers to religious discourse to identify the formulation of social attitudes and governmental policies. The third variable is INSTITUTION. The political and legal constraints in the Arab Gulf states are slowly changing towards women empowerment. The study, through utilizing the European Commission Questionnaire with significant adaptations, examines these explanatory variables in primarily four Arab Gulf states: Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain and Yemen. The thesis examines the number of women who ran for candidacy and how the political parties and executive branches of governments accommodate the political participation of women. More to the point, it highlights two particular questions: if women were to succeed in politics, would they reach a top decision making position or would they only occupy administrative roles? And as a result, to what extent can women political mainstreaming be achieved in these countries?

Chapter 3
Methodology and Research Design

3.1 Research Design

This chapter examines the research design implemented in this paper. It provides reasons this research followed a semi structured phone interview and utilized email based surveys. The main component of this chapter is an overview of the structural framework of the questionnaire and rationale for its adoption. Thus, it highlights the importance of each theme of the questionnaire and how it relates to political gender mainstreaming. More specifically, the questionnaire attempts to gather data relating to the identified challenges; process, cultural and institutional in the Arab Gulf States.

The research design is based on a semi-structural phone interview and email surveys. The sample of participants includes twenty nine selected women rights advocates from the Arab Gulf States. The semi-structural interview provides the interviewer with a deeper rapport with the interviewee and leads to a deeper analysis of the factors that the study probes for. Furthermore, it acts as an informatics base to extract the applicability of current policy reforms, as well as, identifying potential policy reforms initiatives.

3.1.1 Choosing and Developing the Instrument

The issue of political gender mainstreaming is a recent advancement. The reports and studies conducted only show the results of mainstreaming in politics over the years in the Gulf States. To obtain this information, the researcher consulted the Arab Human Development reports published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2003 (UNDP, 2003), 2004 (UNDP, 2004), 2005 (UNDP, 2005) and 2008 (UNDP, 2008). In addition, she analyzed the 2008 Millennium Development Goals Report to outline the political status of women empowerment in the Arab region as a whole and in specific the Arab Gulf States (UN, 2008). The Global Gender Gap reports of the World

Economic Forum (WEF) of 2006 (WEF, 2006), 2007 (WEF, 2007) and 2008 (WEF, 2008) helped put the preliminary scale of regression or improvement of women in parliament in the Arab Gulf States. Yet, in order to obtain a tangible and in depth analysis of the acceptability, the progress and the challenges to the implementation of gender mainstreaming into politics, a questionnaire was developed

As mentioned in chapter two, under the sub title of "The adoption of the European Commission Questionnaire", the study that was carried out as part of this paper was adopted from the questionnaire on integrating gender mainstreaming into employment policies by OPTEM with its permanent partners in the various Member States in the European Union (EU) (OPTEM, 2002, p.4). This was conducted under the framework contract for qualitative studies managed by the Directorate-General for Press and Communication (Unit B 1: Opinion Polls, Press Reviews, Europe Direct) in 2002. The study was conducted at the request of the European Commission –Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs. (OPTEM, 2002, p.4)

3.1.2 Importance of European Commission Questionnaire

This report was chosen because it probed for similar aspects of gender mainstreaming tools and requisites. Thus, the questions were designed in a clear and strategic method to maintain the flow of the general theme of the report (see Appendix 1). The report is a preset framework that shall be utilized to advance the notions of gender mainstreaming and explore the areas of implementing political gender mainstreaming into the Arab Gulf political sphere. Although the questionnaire was designed for the European Union, it meets several points of intersection with the Arab Gulf States. Both regions have common denominators present in the implementation process of gender mainstreaming policies. These common denominators are:

1. Preparation, formulation and implementation of gender mainstreaming policies;
2. The different personal definitions of gender mainstreaming of the targeted interviewees;
3. The level of importance in formulating gender mainstreaming policies in governmental bodies;

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4. The parallel causes of inequality in either employment policies or politics;

5. The importance of positive action in achieving equality;

6. The importance of gender mainstreaming in achieving equality; and

7. The overall challenges to gender mainstreaming.

3.1.3 The Process of Adapting the Questions

This paper adapted the questions to fit the framework of integrating gender mainstreaming into the political process of the Arab Gulf States. This was done by highlighting the themes, moving from an employment orientation to political. The themes and the questions were transformed into a political perspective by tackling the voting and elections status of women in the Arab Gulf politics.

3.2 Instrument

This study is part of the broad assessment of the factors related to political mainstreaming and of how they are affecting this process. The main purpose is to identify the cultural, process and institutional reasons that are affecting the advancement of political gender mainstreaming. It also sheds light on possible formulation of policies that support the advancement of the approach to gender mainstreaming. Through this study, I aim to provide an extremely situation-related input to the current status and the challenges that women face, through utilizing the formulated questions of the survey.

The questionnaire probes for the following information:

1. The on going women mainstreaming challenges and responses;

2. The social /cultural interventions required and expectations; and

3. The institutional reforms needed and expectations.

The study also considered:

1. The opinions of the persons interviewed on the reasons for inequalities between women and men —both with regards to the

political participation rate and to the inequalities of treatment in the political arena;

2. Personal attitudes to the approach to gender mainstreaming and the importance they attach to it;

3. A perspective on the specific aims pursued through that approach in their respective countries;

4. The true importance attached to it in national action plans, the current state of progress, and the barriers to progress; and

5. Opinions on community action on gender mainstreaming, its legitimacy and usefulness.

Throughout constructing the questionnaire, it was evident that there was a need to adapt the mainstreaming questions that were posed in the survey to the field of politics. Therefore, the next step was to highlight some questions that would be suitable for the study. More emphasis was put on the questions that covered the subjects of culture, status of women, perception of gender mainstreaming itself, and the goals and the evaluation of political gender mainstreaming in the Gulf. Therefore, the outcome was to reformulate the questions to target the three previously mentioned variables – process, cultural and institutional. The European Commission for Social and Economic Affairs study initially tackled the current status and challenges to gender mainstreaming policies in the field of employment in the European Union states.

The first theme of the questionnaire offered a detailed history of the interview candidate. It identified the various job positions held by the interviewees, the situation of the interviewees in the hierarchy of the position and the different responsibilities and tasks.

The second theme dealt with the personal perceptions of the concept of gender mainstreaming. The concept is not always understood in the right connotative meaning thus it results in the misinterpretation of gender mainstreaming.

The third theme of the questionnaire probed into the level of political mainstreaming in national action plans. This was a key factor in identifying the level of awareness of the interviewees regarding gender mainstreaming action plans in their own

country as well as in other neighboring Gulf countries and the level of progress of gender mainstreaming. It also evaluated whether the objectives of the strategies are well defined and whether mainstreaming strategies are adequately prepared and implemented. Moreover, this reflected on whether political equality between men and women is a goal, a means to serve a goal or both, "Is political equality between women and men regarded as a goal in itself, or as a means serving other goals, (or both)?" (see appendix 1).

The survey basically aimed to tackle the institutional aspect and to assess the short and long term implementation of the mainstreaming policies in the third theme 'goals pursued and importance given to political gender mainstreaming in national action plans'. This study perused the preparation, evaluation and monitoring of the mainstreaming strategies.

Also, the fourth theme evaluated – 'causes of inequalities between women and men in the field of politics'. The questions were directed towards evaluating the causes that resulted in inequalities by evaluating the main reasons. Thus; they were directed to examine the status of women in the voting and election processes. The main question of the fourth theme was: "regarding inequalities between female and male participation in the voting and election process, (what are these causes, and how do they play)?" (see Appendix 1). It targeted the root causes of inequalities in the interviewee's own country by identifying the nature of different causes, whether they are social, religious or rigid to change. Moreover, there is a profound analysis into the collective mentality and the social model of the countries to emphasize causes for the inequalities in the voting and election process. It also tried to measure the impact of religion and/ or society on the advancement of the approach- "How has religion impeded or advanced the role of women in the political space?" (see Appendix 1)

The fifth theme was crucial because it probed for the success and sustainability of mainstreaming policy implementations and measured the echo it resonated in the national and regional levels respectively. It dealt with the approaches for promoting equality between men and women and emphasized the differences between gender mainstreaming approaches and approaches based on positive actions. The latter fights against the inequalities and corrects them while the former tries to act 'upstream' on the causes of inequalities. The main question of the fifth theme was "What do you think of

the usefulness and effectiveness of each kind of approach?" (see Appendix 1) This built on the definitions of these approaches to identify how the sample responds to their usefulness and effectiveness while identifying the level of improvement in female participation in the political process as well as reducing the inequalities in the election process. Furthermore, it shed light on the importance of gender mainstreaming in politics. For example, there was an attempt to explain the effectiveness of a gender mainstreaming reform in politics "how was that achieved and through what mechanisms?" (see Appendix 1). In specific, the importance of mechanisms built and the effectiveness of the reforms in practice were weighed.

The interview guide that was used in the study was available in both English and Arabic. (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) The Arabic questionnaire was translated according to the technical terms provided by the United Nations. It was imperative to use the gender-sensitive terminologies to accurately extract answers and to have the interviewees feeling comfortable in providing their understanding of the concept and to give in country examples of success and challenges.

3.3 Sample

The research sample of Arab Gulf women leaders was constructed through the use of the Lebanese American University (LAU) database. This database of 400 active young women leaders in the Arab states was utilized in addition to contacts acquired from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) list of women partners in the Gulf, from a comprehensive list of active contact persons of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and experts in the field of women issues. Also, the database includes academic contacts from universities throughout Gulf. This list was compiled after contacting organizations such as ESCWA's center for women, The International Labor Organization (ILO), AMIDEAST, and the Arab Women Organization. The ESCWA provided their contacts in the Gulf in addition to a list of trainers and specialists in the field of gender mainstreaming. The ILO, AMIDEAST, and Arab Women Organization offered their contact lists related to gender issues and the

advancement of women in the region. Moreover, the database included the contact persons for the ministries of social affairs in each of the Gulf States.

In order to assess mainstreaming needs and programmatic elements on the three levels - process, cultural, and institutional – the methodology included carrying out a qualitative phone and email based survey research with selected participants from the compiled list of women rights advocates. The sample included twenty emerging women leaders from Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Yemen who attended the Leadership program that was held at the Lebanese American University of Beirut (LAU). These women are active in issues related to women empowerment and women status as well as having a desire to create more opportunities for women in the different sectors of their respective countries. The other selected fourteen women were from Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Yemen. This sample was also chosen from the ESCWA Center for Women database because of their leadership status at their work and active participation in the field of women's advancement in the political, economic and educational affairs.

The survey assessed the responses of twenty nine emerging women leaders. The main limitation is that it assessed the view and attitudes of elite women leaders and experts in the selected Arab Gulf states. The women had experience in attending leadership workshops as well as women empowerment sessions. They all occupy high decision-making positions. Thus; the sample is not representative of the general population.

3.4 Data Collection

In the data collection, two methods for filling out the questionnaire were followed. The twenty nine respondents were divided into two groups. Fifteen candidates out of the twenty Young Women Leaders participants at LAU filled out the questionnaire (English or Arabic version) via email. Any questions that were not clear were explained via examples. The other fourteen interview candidates went through open, in-depth interviews, forty minutes long on average, carried out by the researcher. The reason behind the two kinds of interviews was the availability of some of the

candidates: some were not reachable by phone while others were only reachable by phone and not by email. The data analysis and findings will help devise short and long-term gender mainstreaming programmatic strategies in the Gulf.

3.5 Research Analysis Plan

Not only did the questionnaire highlight gender mainstreaming areas but also asked for the interviewees' own evaluation of their in-country programs. The data helped form a comparative aspect between Arab Gulf States and allowed me to evaluate the different responses of candidates regarding their own evaluations of in-country gender mainstreaming strategies. It was very important to measure each candidate's own evaluation of the success or failure of the strategy. The tangible fact of the questionnaire was the relative awareness of the candidates' perception of gender mainstreaming program taking into consideration their active role in the social, political and economic fabric of their country.

Applying the questionnaire to the different women candidates in the Arab Gulf states offered an opportunity to adequately evaluate the actual implementation of the application of gender mainstreaming in politics. Each theme collected data for the main questions that this thesis poses. The six themes contained direct questions that probe for sub-topics like collective mentality, key factors of effectiveness, personal definitions and causes of inequalities in the political sphere. These topics are evaluated in each country through the personal responses and definitions that were provided by the interview candidates, and each variable on its own is measured in each country. Then, the data collected measures each country's status on political gender mainstreaming. The questionnaire produces an evaluation of the importance of gender mainstreaming in national action plans, causes of inequalities, role of religion, legal obstacles and the advancement/impediment of the situation.

This evaluation is based on each country's assessment of the political approach from a gender mainstreaming perspective. Therefore, by comparing the outcomes of each country's evaluation of political gender mainstreaming approach along with the

three factors that affect the approach, a common denominator can be revealed. Such a denominator may show the needed strategies and can highlight the areas that need improvement. The aim is to extract a common denominator that can fit in an optimal way across the Arab Gulf states.

The data is analyzed on country and regional levels after being codified in a database. Political gender mainstreaming is then assessed according to a general survey of attitudes identifying the positive indicator of the advancement of gender mainstreaming in the political environment of the Arab Gulf States.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Research Findings

This chapter examines the findings of the data collection and provides an analysis of how gender mainstreaming is progressing in the region as well as in the respective countries. The main questions focus on analyzing the process factors, religious impact and the role of institutions in supporting the integration of women into politics. There was an attempt to weigh the impact of the challenges on the political gender mainstreaming approach in the Arab Gulf countries. Moreover, the chapter is divided into sub categories for each main factor to provide an overall assessment of the primary and secondary factors that affect political gender mainstreaming. The qualitative and quantitative data findings were highlighted and summarized and each topic was analyzed in relation to its impact on political gender mainstreaming.

4.1 Data Analysis

4.1.1 Conceptualization and Status of Gender Mainstreaming

The study aimed to assess the interviewee's definition of gender mainstreaming both as a concept by itself and its role in politics. It is important to extract the practical interpretation of the approach to compare the gaps between the conceptual definition and the practical definition in reality.

4.1.2 On a regional level

The concept of gender mainstreaming is not always understood in the same way.

- Depending on the nature of the work held by the interviewee. Persons with similar backgrounds working with women associations and gender departments understand the concept of gender mainstreaming and the paradigm it entails. However, women working in the business field have a vague definition of the

concept. They can not list its main objectives or explain how it helps in pursuing them.

- Depending on the country: women who defined gender mainstreaming were able to because their country had gender mainstreaming centers and had government support. While, most of the countries had overlapped definitions of gender with gender mainstreaming which clearly reflected the poor welcoming and lack of support in the countries.

4.1.3 On a Country Level

- Oman does not require a necessary application because women have been granted equal rights in all aspects by Sultan Qaboos. There is a constant support from the high level decision makers who have advocated for women to be integrated in all aspects including the voting and election process.
- Saudi Arabia needs the gradual implementation of gender mainstreaming. According to the Saudi participants, women are more competent than men, wiser in some areas. "Women represent the other half of the society".
- Yemen the need is great because according to the Yemeni participants it contributes to achieving social justice and allocates human resources. Women have responsibilities in society and through implementing gender mainstreaming in the education system in Yemen it fosters the proper nurturing of the concept of gender mainstreaming.
- Bahrain is related to the necessity of mainstreaming gender in society and politics. "National policies (private and public) should incorporate the political presence of women and an update of legislation is required." There is a need to fully incorporate gender mainstreaming internally and not just because of external pressures. Mainstreaming can be achieved "through equal rights and responsibilities in the country". CEDAW has to be properly implemented in order to for gender mainstreaming to succeed.

Generally speaking, there is a vague interpretation of the concept of gender mainstreaming. The terminology is linked to the concept of gender and most of the

candidates do not differentiate between the details of the gender mainstreaming approach and the term gender

Therefore, efforts should be made to highlight what gender mainstreaming means in a single definition and how it is related to gender. There is a need to tell people the objectives, the short term goals and the long term goals of the approach so they would understand the benefits of the approach.

4.2 Attitudes toward Gender Mainstreaming

There are different attitudes related to understanding and accepting the gender mainstreaming approach.

4.2.1 On a regional level

- It is highly perceived because it offers women a chance to explore all possibilities and to offer their input in politics and society.
- It is an awareness raising tool that can reach out to all women in the rich, moderate and poor areas.
- However, it is going to be a slow progressive approach in a patriarchal region since this is a long-term approach to make the conceptual Gulf framework sustainable.

4.2.2 On a country level

- In Bahrain it is highly regarded and pushed forward by the Bahrain Supreme Women council to have a faster integration pace.
- In Oman it is not that well understood and its necessity is not perceived as essential. According to an Omani interviewee, "being a woman has never been an obstacle to achieve my target either professionally or socially."
- In Yemen, it is highly regarded and seen as essential to promote the role of women. "This is a participation that is a success."

– In Saudi Arabia, the characteristics of women should be taken into consideration in the gender balance. There are differences in the characters of women which should be evaluated.

There is a substantial lack of consensus or coherent attitudes toward gender mainstreaming or its implications.

Only three participants had an agreement over what approaches are essential in gender mainstreaming; whereas most of the interviewees spoke about gender in general. They had minimal knowledge of the term gender mainstreaming as well as the approach. Almost all participants associated with mainstreaming positive action which is seen as immediate and necessary. The outcomes of a positive action work best in the environment of the Arab Gulf States.

Both gender mainstreaming and positive action are seen as necessary and complementary. The impact of both the gender mainstreaming approach and the impact of a positive action are equally necessary.

4.3 Institutionalization of Gender Mainstreaming

The integration of gender mainstreaming into national action plans measures the time frame the region needs to fully accommodate it and helps in devising strategies to fasten the process.

4.3.1 On a regional level
– The governments are gradually incorporating the gender mainstreaming approach into national action plans. Strategies that focus on the advancement of women are being created and slowly implemented.
– Women hardly contribute to the creation and implementation of action plans.
– The national action plans do not serve the empowerment of women in politics.

4.3.2 On a country level

- In Bahrain, there has been considerable improvement after CEDAW .The national action plans resulted in the creation of the Supreme Council for women that focuses on empowering women through initiatives. But, there is no specific action plan that emphasized the role of women in politics. "The strategies are built on data collected from studies."

- In Yemen, there are national strategies that incorporate gender mainstreaming in education and employment. There is a focus on integrating gender mainstreaming in all education levels and higher education. "There are specialized standing committees dealing with the women issue. There is a national committee which acts as an umbrella for the civil society and governmental associations."

- In Oman, Sultan Qaboos encourages the advancement of the role of women in all areas including politics. But, there is no specific gender mainstreaming approach in national action plans. When asked about gender mainstreaming in national action plans there was no reference to a specific gender mainstreaming approach. Instead in Oman, there is Majlis Al Shoura (elected), Majlis Al Doula (appointed), Majlis Oman (Majlis Al Shora + Majlis Al Doula + Ambassadors + high ranking state officials)". It is worth noting that there is a considerable presence of women in these Majalis.

- In Saudi Arabia, there are no action plans that directly integrate the gender mainstreaming approach. According to a Saudi interviewee, "There are policies for integrating gender mainstreaming but they are not enough or scientifically sufficient because the majority which alters the decisions and strategies are men."

4.4 Perceptions of Aims of Gender Mainstreaming

It is important to evaluate the perceptions of the goals of gender mainstreaming. Thus, it helps in assessing the rate of success or failure of its impact on politics, society and education.

4.4.1 On a regional level

– Most interview candidates answered that gender mainstreaming is both a goal by itself and a means to an end.

– There was a separation between the interview candidates. Some said that gender mainstreaming was both a means to serve an end and a goal by itself. "Political equality is a crucial in obtaining overall equality" while others said that it is always a means to an end. That equality between men and women in all areas including politics should cover all aspects of equality, "it is a means to achieve other goals such as giving the women the right for an education, etc..."

4.4.2 On a country level

– In Oman, four interview candidates regarded the gender mainstreaming approach as both a goal by itself and a means to an end while three interview candidates answered that it serves other goals

– In Saudi Arabia, gender mainstreaming approach is seen as a means to serve other goals, "It should not be regarded as a goal by itself".

– In Bahrain, the approach to gender mainstreaming was distributed along it being seen as both as a goal by itself and as means to serve an end, as a means to achieve women empowerment, and that equality is an end by itself and that it should not be used for a political purpose.

– In Yemen, gender mainstreaming approach is seen as a means to achieve other goals by three interviewees while only two interviewees regarded gender mainstreaming as both a goal by itself and as a means to serve an end.

4.5 Implementation and Attitudes of Governmental Bodies Towards Gender Mainstreaming:

The gender mainstreaming approach can not fully work unless it has support from governmental bodies. The lack or increase of welcoming attitudes as well as a faster implementation rate can help in the accelerating the integration pace on a regional scale.

4.5.1 On a regional level

- In most of the four Arab Gulf states, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia, the governmental bodies showed no genuine interest in advocating a gender mainstreaming strategy.
- Most of the governmental bodies have slowly interacted with civil society to collaborate on the gender mainstreaming approach.

4.5.2 On a country level

- In Oman, the start of the implementation increases the diversity of ideas. Government policies are clear but according to the interviewees, "progress is very slow as there are only 4 Ministers/Representatives in the Cabinet as opposed to 25-30 male representatives".
- In Saudi Arabia, there is still the concept that there could be only one gender that "understands his/her kind in term for governmental service and needs."
- In Bahrain, implementation is important as "religious figures have a negative disposition towards the concept of gender."
- In Yemen, there is a gradual acceptance of the issue although it faced "a few reservations from religious authorities". According to a Yemeni interviewee, the role of women is a " mainstreaming mission so there are obstacles such as social acceptance of women participation."

It is important to note that in Bahrain, there is still a tribal effect on the system. According to a prominent Bahraini interviewee, "The system favors the tribes who favor the system".

4.6 Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming Policies

The interviewed candidates could not list more that one example at the most pertaining to gender mainstreaming in the country.

4.6.1   On a regional level

– There is a lack of effective gender mainstreaming policies. It has not been integrated into mechanisms set up to deal with the approach.

4.6.2   On a country level

– In Oman, the ministry of affairs has several initiatives but the impact of these initiatives is not effective or seen. It is "relatively new."

– In Saudi Arabia, there are a lot of individual efforts to promote a role for women, but "this does not work what is needed is a collaborative unity." There is no implementation of a gender mainstreaming approach.

– In Bahrain, it is a relatively new experience. Although the government has granted the women their rights but "there is no actual implementation". Programs are being created by civil society to integrate women into politics. According to a Bahraini interviewee, "there is limited success".

– In Yemen, there are many gender mainstreaming strategies but they are not implemented effectively; the outlet for allowing women into politics are the internal elections within parties. However, there are centers for promoting gender advancement in many universities.

4.7 Regional Findings

The graphs below represent the findings of each theme in the region. Moreover, the regional findings are analyzed to show the role of each factor in political gender mainstreaming on a regional level. It offers an understanding of the challenges facing gender equality in the politics of the Arab Gulf.
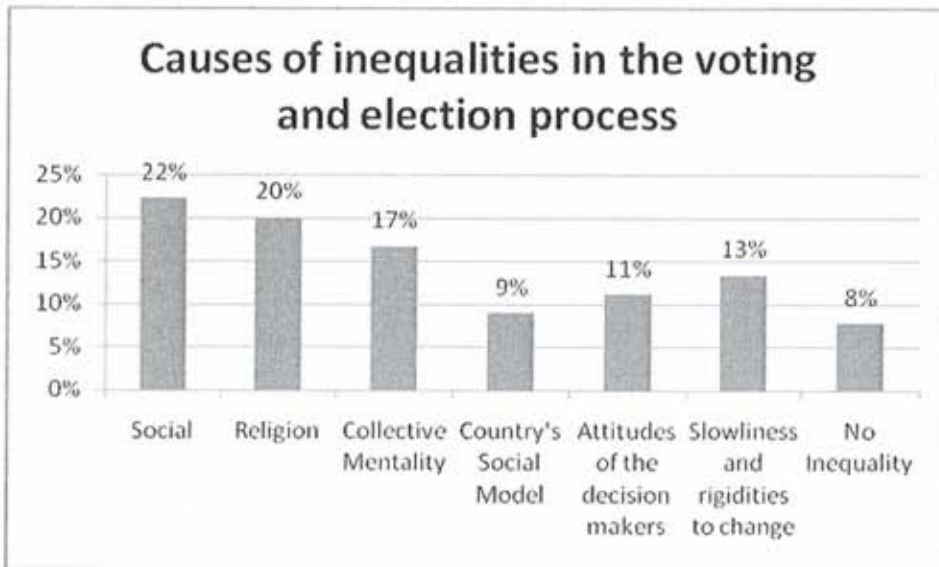
Causes of inequalities in the voting and election process

Category	Percentage
Social	22%
Religion	20%
Collective Mentality	17%
Country's Social Model	9%
Attitudes of the decision makers	11%
Slowliness and rigidities to change	13%
No Inequality	8%

Figure 1 Regional Challenges in the Voting and Election Process

The main causes for inequalities in the Arab Gulf region are:

- Social reasons and pressure (22%)

- The use of religion, religious doctrines and interpretations (20%)

- The power of collective mentality, the common way of thought and interpretation within a group (17%)

- The country's social model that cannot encompass the concept of gender mainstreaming (9%)

- The attitudes of decision makers that contribute to the lack of change (11%)

- The slow pace and rigidity to change from both the government (decision makers) and religious figures (13%)

- Only 8% stated that there is no inequality between men and women in the voting and election process

<u>Analysis</u>

Currently, the main cause for the inequalities in the voting and election process is social. Gulf Society plays an impeding role in accepting the role of women as equals in casting their votes and running for election. The second main reason is the religious factor. The study emphasizes the different interpretation of religion as a

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powerful and a decisive factor in delaying the active empowerment of women. The impact of the various interpretations of religious texts obstructs and delays the process of integrating women into politics. According to the graph, the two major reasons, social and religion, directly contribute to the difficulty in applying gender mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf region. The role of the collective mentality, reluctance to change as well as the attitudes of decision makers are also directly related to obstructing the role of women in the voting and election process but as secondary causes. In contrast, 7% stated that there is no inequality and that the women enjoy equal rights in both the election and voting processes. Regardless, the two highest percentages stress the cultural challenge that faces women in the Arab Gulf Region.
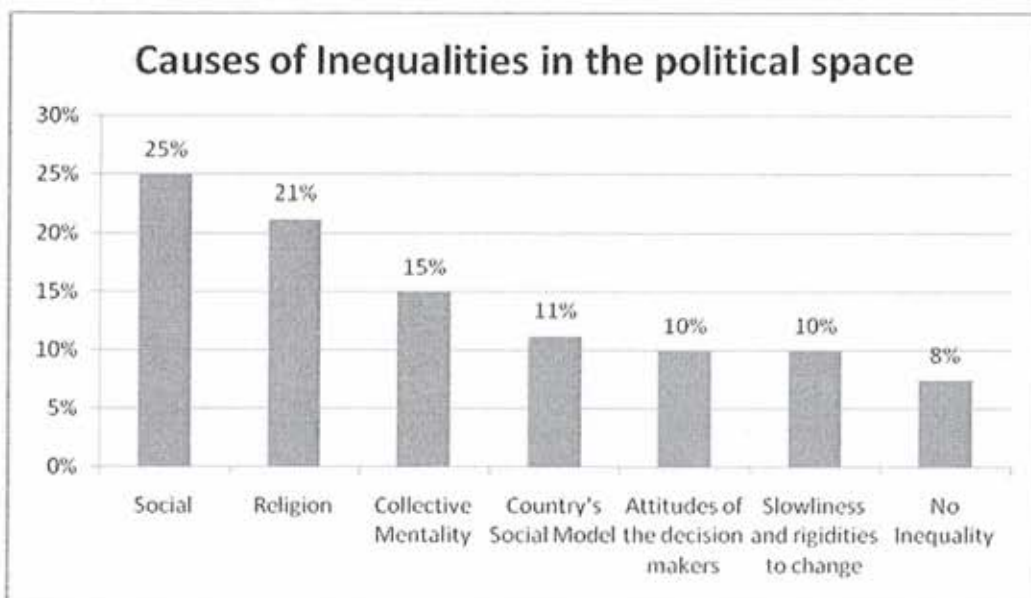

Figure 2 Regional Challenges in the Political Space

The main causes for inequalities in the Arab Gulf region are:

- Social reasons and pressure (25%)
- The use of religion, religious doctrines and interpretations (21%)
- The power of collective mentality, the common way of thought and interpretation within a group (15%)

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- The country's social model that cannot encompass the concept of gender mainstreaming (11%)
- The slowliness and reluctance to change from both the government (decision makers) and religious figures (10%)
- The attitudes of decision makers that contribute to the lack of change (10%)
- Only 8% stated that there is no inequality between men and women in the voting and election process

Analysis

The unequal treatment of women in the political area faces two major impeding causes.According to the graph, social reasons and religious interpretations directly contribute to the unequal political treatmnet of women.Thus, the two highest perentages clearly show that the cultural reason is a constraint.Also, the process of gender roles is directly related to the country's social model. Thus, the ability of the social model to adjust to empowered gender roles is an important contributing factor in integrating women into politics but the graph shows that process(gender roles) are a third constraint to empowering women. The social model is not accepting the new gender role and thus is restricting any change in that perspective.
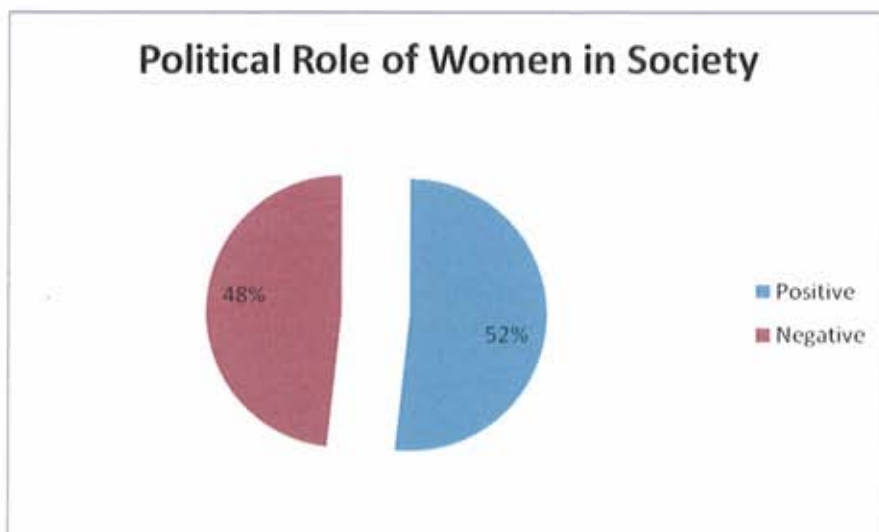

Political Role of Women in Society

48%

52%

- Positive
- Negative

Figure 3 Regional Social Acceptance of Women in Politics

Findings

- Society plays a positive role for women in politics (52%)
- Society plays a negative role for women in politics (48%)

Analysis

The role that society plays in advancing or impeding the role of women is very important in maintaining gender equality. Thus, it presents a great leverage in the process of weighing the beneficial process of incorporating gender meanistreaming in the Arab Gulf states.The graphs shows close percentages between a supportive and an impeding role of society in supporting women integration into politics. Thus, this close proximity shows that society can contradict itself, it is either black or white.The incorpotation of gender mainstreaming in the Gulf society can have contrdictory results which can result in an unstable environment for the approach.
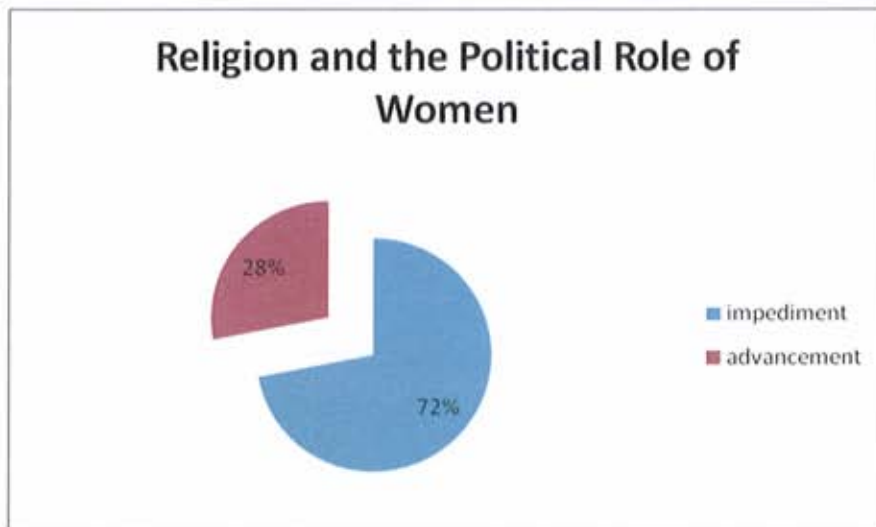

Figure 4 Regional Impact of Religion of Women in Politics

Findings

- Religion impedes women in politics (72%)
- Religion advances women in politics (28%)

In the above graph,religion was viewed by 72% as an impediment to women achieving a decision making role in society and politics while the 28% regarded religion as an advancement to gender equality in politics and society. It is important to clarify the definition of religion in the question " how does releigion impede or advance the role of women in society and especially in politics." Religion does not mean the original scriptures but it identifies the role of the current various interpretation of the religious scriptures.The women who identified religion as an advancment in their political role based their answers on the original Islam religion . They stated that Islam always advances the role of women. Howwever,the 72% who identified religion as an impediment noted that the current interpretations have been used to hinder the role of women and to advance certain ideologies contradictory to the original Script of Islam. Thus, it has been used as a political pawn to strengthen different ideologies.Also, this clearly shows the leading role religion plays in allowing women to take a role in politics.Religion is considered one of the main reasons that affects the integration of gender mainstreaming approach in the Arab Gulf region.
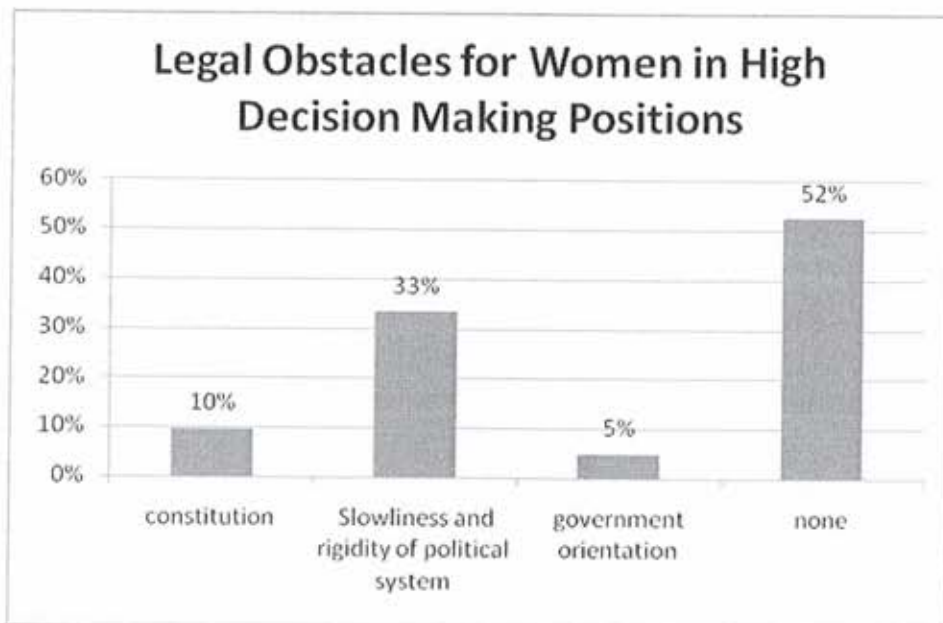

Figure 5 Regional Legal Obstacles Facing Gender Mainstreaming in Politics

<u>Findings</u>

- There are no legal obstacles (52%)
- There is slowliness and rigidity of political system (33%)
- The government orientation is a legal obstacle (5%)
- The constituion is a legal obstacle (10%)

<u>Analysis</u>

The above graph shows that there are no major legal obstacles to the advancement of women in politics but there is the presence of slowliness and rigitidity of the political system (32%). Thus, this finding highlights the inability of the political sytem to accommodate the emerging presence of women in politics. Furthermore, both the constitution and government orientation (10%) limit the advancement of women which is a serious setback because these percentages stress the inflexibility and the low level of acceptance of the poltical system of the Arab Gulf states.
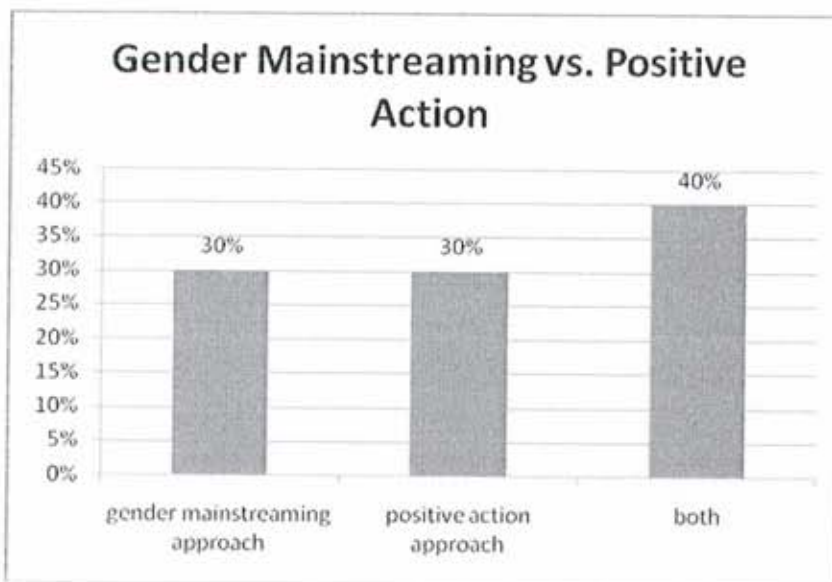

Figure 6 Regional Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming in Politics

Findings

- Usefulness of gender mainstreaming approach (30%)
- Usefulness of positive action (30%)
- Usefulness of both the approaches (40%)

Analysis

The findings of the graph show the usefulness of both approaches, gender mainstreaming and positive action. The gender mainstreaming approach (30%) is not well known in the region; it is still a vague approach, the different areas it encompasses and the short term and long term goals are not clearly understood. When asked about the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming approach in advancing the role of women, it was clear that it has not had an appropriate introduction into the region and is viewed by the majority as a foreign notion which limits its success. While the postive action approach (30%) was a familiar notion that has had previous results with the different parliaments in the Arab Gulf society. However, the graph shows that although the second approach is familiar it also had its limitations.It did not lead to suceesful results throughout the region and was only able to acheive few successes because of unsupportive factors such as collective mentality , society and religion. The important breakthrough finding is that both approaches together were seen as the most useful in advancing the role of women in politics. The graph highlights that the combination of the gender mainstreaming approach combined with the positive action approach is needed to offer short and long term solutions to acheive gender equality in all areas especially in Gulf politics.
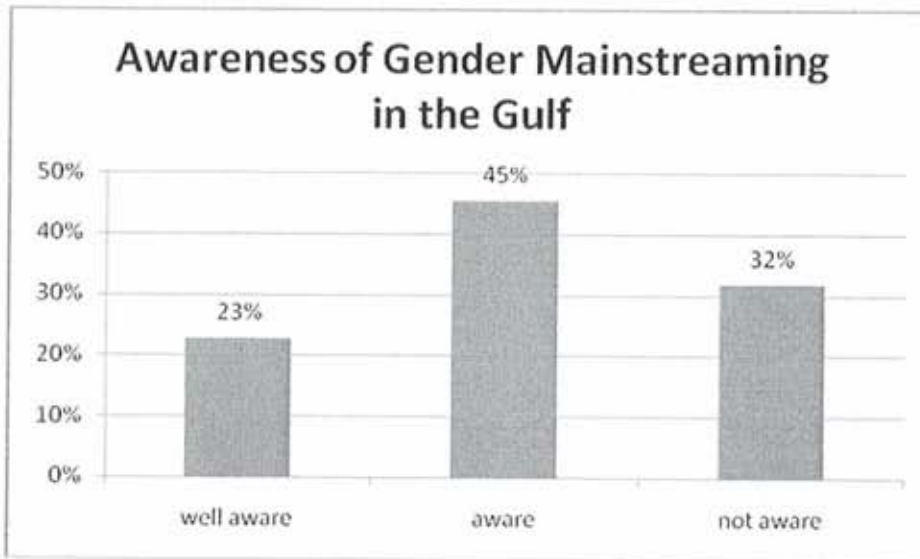
Figure 7 Regional Level of Awareness of Gender Mainstreaming

Findings

- The level of well awareness of gender mainstreaming approach(23%)
- The level of awareness of gender mainstreaming approach(45%)
- The level of unawareness of gender mainstreaming approach(32%)

Analysis

The graph above represents the level of awareness of gender mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf region. The level of well awareness (23%) of the gender mainstreaming shows that women do not have an important first hand knowledge of several programs and initiatives. Moreover, the level of awareness (45%) throughout the Gulf region reflected that the women interviewed have a knowledge of very basic examples or activities that promoted the role of women and gender equality. This shows that there is not enough awareness throughout the region to actively support the integration of the gender mainstreaming approach. Moreover, the level of unawareness (32%) adds to the difficulty in accepting and applying the approach in different segments of the region especially in politics .The minimal awareness of the concept is a limiting factor that does not help in achieving gender equality in politics

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and clearly emphasizes the need to evaluate the methods needed to effectively spread awareness of the meaning and outcomes of the approach.
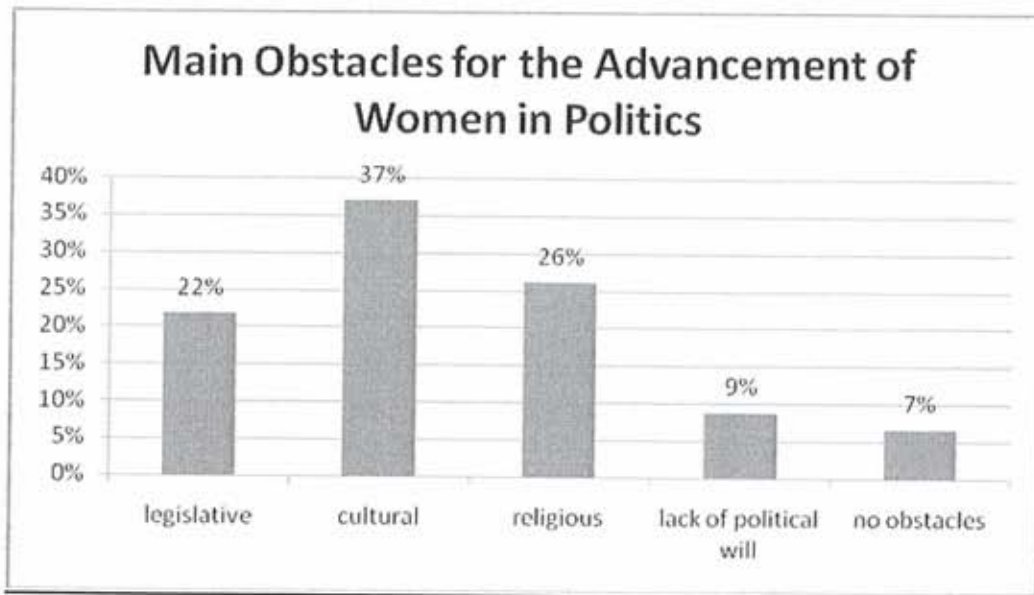
Figure 8 Regional Obstacles Facing Women in Politics

Findings

- The main obstacle is cultural (37%)
- The second main obstacle is religious (26%)
- The third main obstacle is legislative (22%)
- The fourth main obstacle is the lack of political will (9%)
- There are no obstacles (7%)

Analysis

The above graph represents the overall main obstacles of gender mainstreaming in the Arab Gulf region. According to the graph, the main obstacle is the cultural reason that prevents the implementation of gender mainstreaming and restricts the integration of women into politics. The second obstacle is religion. This second reason stresses the volatilty of religious interpretations in impeding the progress of gender equality. Moreover, the legislative obstacle (22%) and the lack of political will (8%) empasizes the institutional reason that hinders the implementation of

gender mainstreamin in all areas especially in politics. The three main reasons; process, religious and institutional, are the main obstacles that should be overcome or minimized by inititiatives to allow for the creation, implementation and feedback of the main goal of political gender mainstreaming-gender equality in politics.
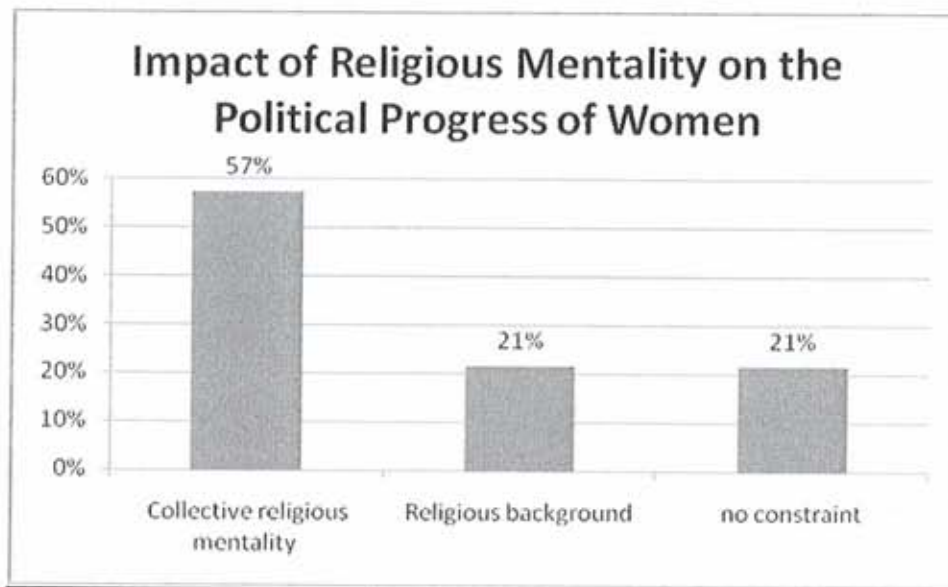
Figure 9 Regional Impact of Religious Mentality on Women in Politics

Findings

- The impact of collective religious mentality (57%)
- The impact of religious background (21%)
- There is no constraint of religious mentality (21%)

Analysis

The above graph represents the impact of the religious mentality on the progress of women in politics.It is important to note that collective religious mentality refers to the common religious thought and interpretation within a group. The religious background refers to the religious teachings and upbringing. According to the graph above, the collective religious mentality (57%) in the Arab Gulf region has a negative impact on the integration of women into politics which has created an enormous barrier for gender mainstreaming to overcome. The power of the

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collective religious mentality in the region has a strong hold and is a decisive factor in allowing on the short or the long term emergence of the concept of gender mainstreaming into Gulf politics. Moreover, the religious background (21%) has a limited negative effect on integrating women into politics when compared to the overall powerful effect of the collective mentality. Only 21% found that religious mentality has no impact on affecting the role of women in the region. It does not portray a negative role in impeding the progress which emphasizes the role of suppression in politics and the weak role of opposition in a Gulf society.
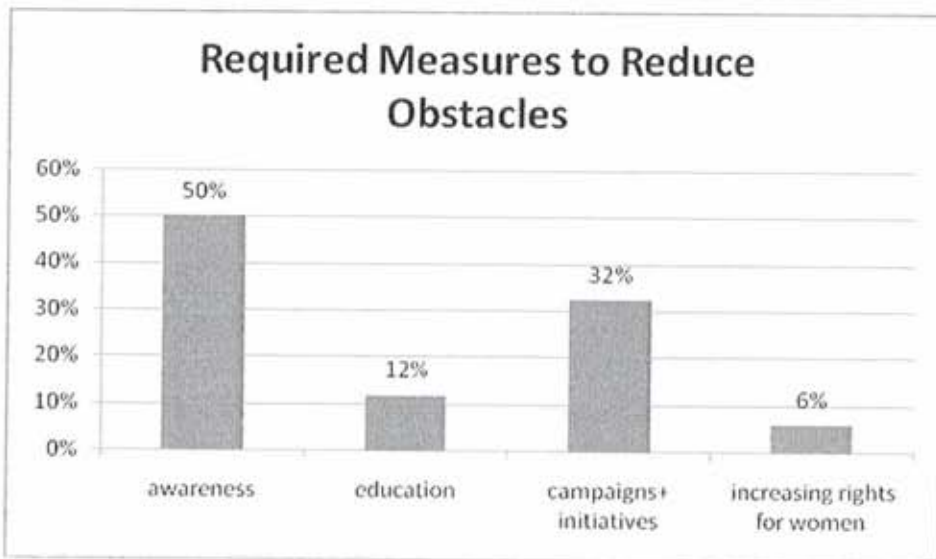
Figure 10 Regional Measures to Advance Political Gender Mainstreaming

Findings

  – The first needed measure is to increase awareness (50%)
  – The second needed measure is to advocate for campaigns and intititives (32%)
  – The third needed measure is to spread education (12%)
  – The fourth needed measure is to increase the rights for women (6%)

Analysis

The above graph represents the needed measures to reduce the obstacles facing political gender mainstreaming. The results show that there are two main measures

that can effectively integrate gender mainstreaming into the Gulf region and into Gulf politics. Spreading awareness (50%) is the most effective technique to highlight the efficiency of gender maintreaming and to allow women to comprehend their given rights in both the religion and the constitution. Moreover, what is also needed is the introduction of more effective campaigns and intitiatives (32%) that advocate for the integration of the role of women in politics and society. Both awareness and campaigns can not really result in an efficient result unless there is also an acceptance of society in respecting the ability of women in high decision making positions. Also, spreading education in remote areas and allowing women to receive a proper educational level increases the support from women in introducing campaigns. By reducing the obstacles that prevent women from fully expressing their opinions, campaigns, intitiatives and demand for increasing women's rights will mobilize region-wide support. Overall, these measures will help integrate political gender mainstreamng in the Arab Gulf region by tackling the cultural, religious and legislative reasons. It is important to note that the obstacles are interrelated and in order to apply political gender mainstreaming the measures identified have to be implemented simultaneuosly at a gradual pace.

4.8 Country Findings

The graphs below represent the findings of each theme on a country basis. Moreover, the country findings are analyzed to show the role of each factor in political gender mainstreaming according to each country. Thus, this allows for a comparative aspect that highlights how each country is similarly or differently affected in the advancement of women in politics.

Causes of inequalities in the voting and election process by Country

Legend: Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen

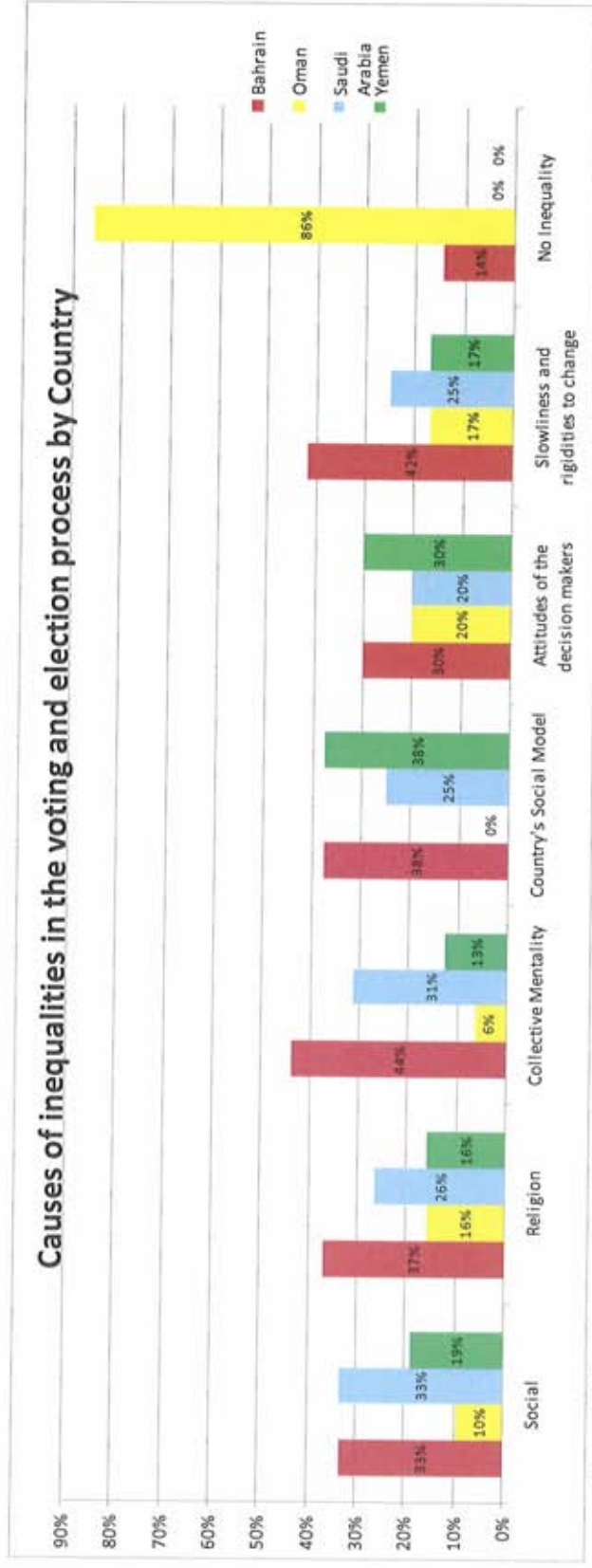| Category	Bahrain	Oman	Saudi	Yemen
Social	33%	10%	33%	19%
Religion	37%	16%	26%	16%
Collective Mentality	44%	6%	31%	13%
Country's Social Model	38%	0%	25%	38%
Attitudes of the decision makers	30%	20%	20%	30%
Slowliness and rigidities to change	42%	17%	25%	17%
No Inequality	14%	86%	0%	0%

Figure 11 Per Country Challenges in the Voting and Election Process

<u>Findings of the Causes</u>

The Social cause

– Bahrain (33%), Oman (10%), Saudi Arabia (33%), Yemen (19%),
Religion

– Bahrain (37%), Oman (16%), Saudi Arabia (26%), Yemen (16%),
Collective mentality

– Bahrain (44%), Oman (6%),Saudi Arabia (31%), Yemen (13%),
Country's social model

– Bahrain (38%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (25%), Yemen (38%)
Attitudes of the decision makers

– Bahrain (30%), Oman (20%), Saudi Arabia (20%), Yemen (30%)
Slowliness and Rigidities to change

– Bahrain (42%), Oman (17%), Saudi Arabia (25%), Yemen (17%)
No inequality

– Bahrain (14%), Oman (86%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (0%)

<u>Analysis</u>

The above graph shows that both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are the countries mostly preoccupied with concerns toward social and religious attitudes of decision makers, country's social model and rigidities and slowliness to change. Both countries face these challenges that obstruct short term improvement in the status of women and diminish the level of integration of women into politics. Moreover, Yemen shares these main obstacles with the two leading countries (Bahrain and Saudi Arabia) but the severe attitudes of decision makers and the county's social model are dominant in the country which shows that the obstacles are interwoven into the country's makeup. This compounds the difficulty of accepting the notion of women in politics as well as stresses the factors that need to be tackled in order for a smooth implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach. In the above graph, the findings show that each country in the region is subject to the religious and process variables at approximately the same impact per country emphasizing the similarities between their attributes and the need to adequately implement the gender

mainstreaming in accordance to all of the factors. Furthermore, the process of political gender mainstreaming is challenged by attitudes of decision makers and slowliness and rigidities to change that slow the integration process in each country. Contrary to the three countries, Oman represents the high level of equality that women enjoy. More to the point, this highlights Oman as the country with a minor role of social, collective mentality, country's social model in the integration of women into politics.

Causes of Inequalities in the political space per Country

Legend: Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen

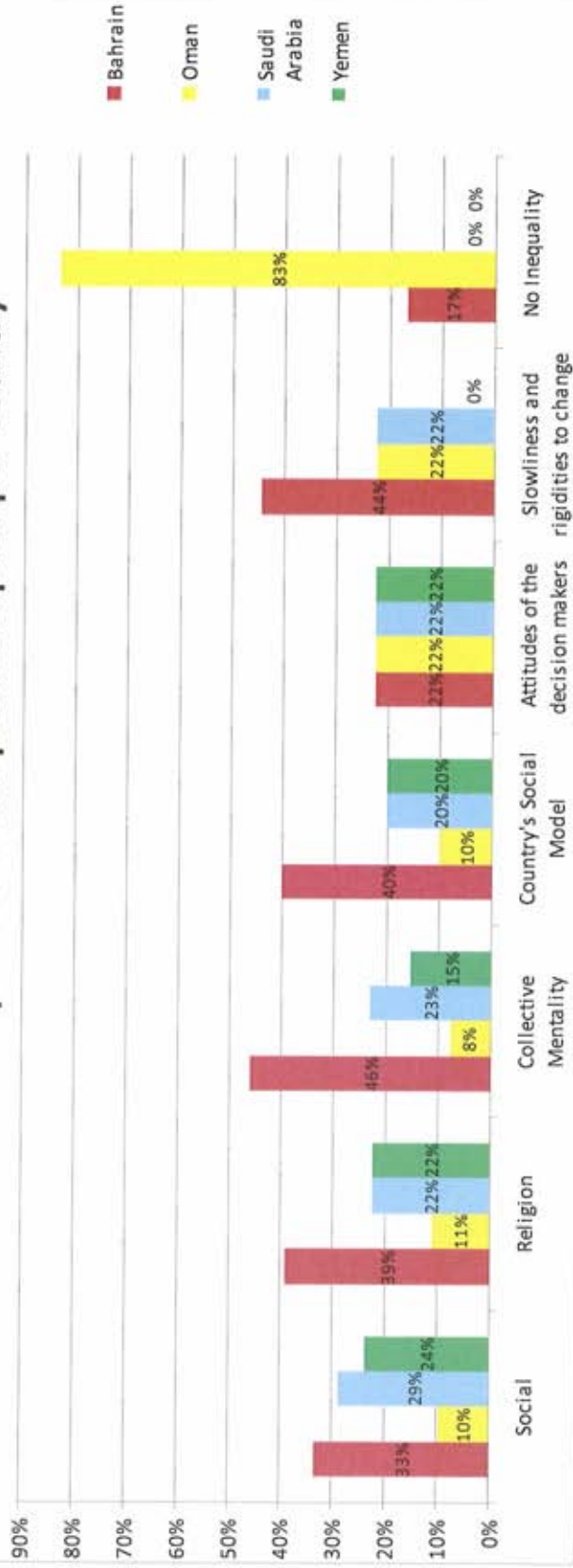| Category	Bahrain	Oman	Saudi Arabia	Yemen
No Inequality	17%	83%	0%	0%
Slowliness and rigidities to change	44%	22%	22%	0%
Attitudes of the decision makers	22%	22%	22%	22%
Country's Social Model	40%	10%	20%	20%
Collective Mentality	46%	8%	23%	15%
Religion	39%	11%	22%	22%
Social	33%	10%	29%	24%

Figure 12 Per Country Challenges in the Political Space

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<u>Findings of the Causes</u>

The Social cause

 – Bahrain (33%),), Oman (10%), Saudi Arabia(29%), Yemen (24%)

Religion

 – Bahrain (39%), Oman (11%), Saudi Arabia (22%), Yemen (22%),

Collective mentality

 – Bahrain (46%), Oman (8%), Saudi Arabia (23%), Yemen (15%),

Country's social model

 – Bahrain (40%), Oman (10%), Saudi Arabia (20%), Yemen (20%)

Attitudes of the decision makers

 – Bahrain (22%), Oman (22%), Saudi Arabia (22%), Yemen (22%)

Slowliness and Rigidities to change

 – Bahrain (44%), Oman (22%), Saudi Arabia (22%), Yemen (0%),

No inequality

 – Bahrain (17%), Oman (83%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (0%)

<u>Analysis</u>

The above graph shows that Bahrain and Saudi Arabia and Yemen are the countries most affected by social, religious, attitudes of decision makers, country's social model and rigidities and slowliness to change. The three countries face these challenges that obstruct short term improvement in the how women are perceived in the political space diminish the level of integration of women into politics. Moreover, the collective mentality plays a dominant role in molding how women are treated in the political arena in each country but it is predominantly found in Bahrain. This creates a difficult barrier for gender mainstreaming as the core foundations of each country do not favor a role for women in the political sphere. Contrary to the three countries, Oman represents the only country that emphasized the absence of inequalities despite challenges including the unfavorable attitudes of decision makers, slowliness in change and the collective mentality of the country.
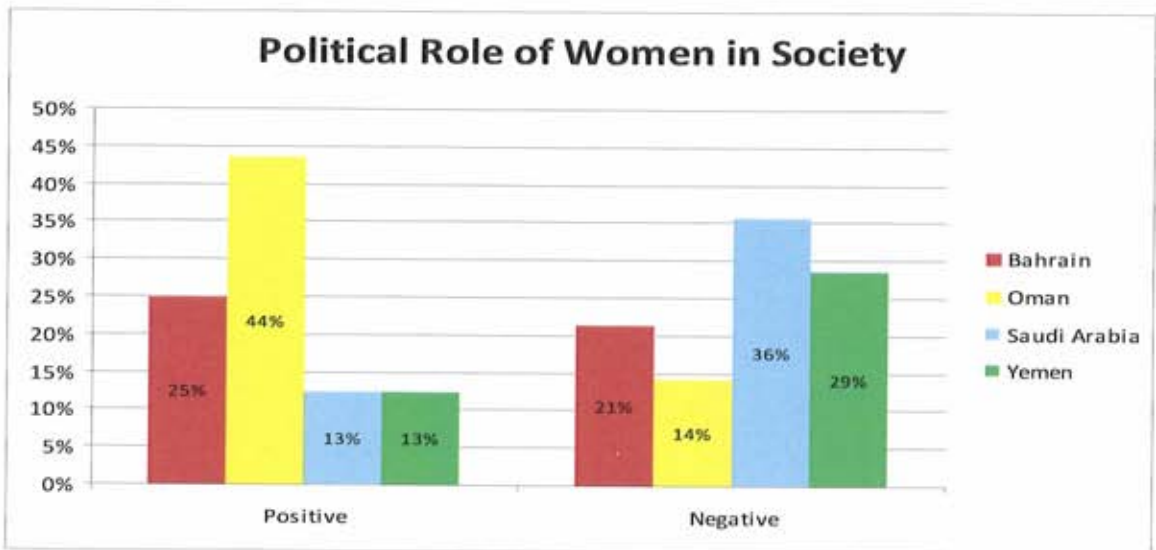
Figure 13 Per Country Social Acceptance of Women in Politics

Findings

Positive role for Women

– Bahrain (25%), Oman (44%), Saudi Arabia (13%), Yemen (13%)

Negative role for Women

– Bahrain (21%), Oman (14%), Saudi Arabia (36%), Yemen (29%)

Analysis

The above graph represents how society perceives the role of women in politics. The country with the most positive and supporting role for women is Oman followed by Bahrain. While both Saudi Arabia and Yemen identified a minimal level of societal support for the political role of women. The high level found in the Omani society is in deep contrast with the negative role of Saudi Arabian society to the role of women. Also, there is almost an equal percentage between the Bahraini particpants where society is seen as both a supportive and impediment to the role of women in politics .Thus, society is affected by several factors such as tribal, religious and external pressure which makes the factor of social acceptance a liability. Moreover, the society in Yemen plays more of a negative role than a positive one highlighting the internal friction of political ,religious and economic variables that exert pressure according to the country's state of play.
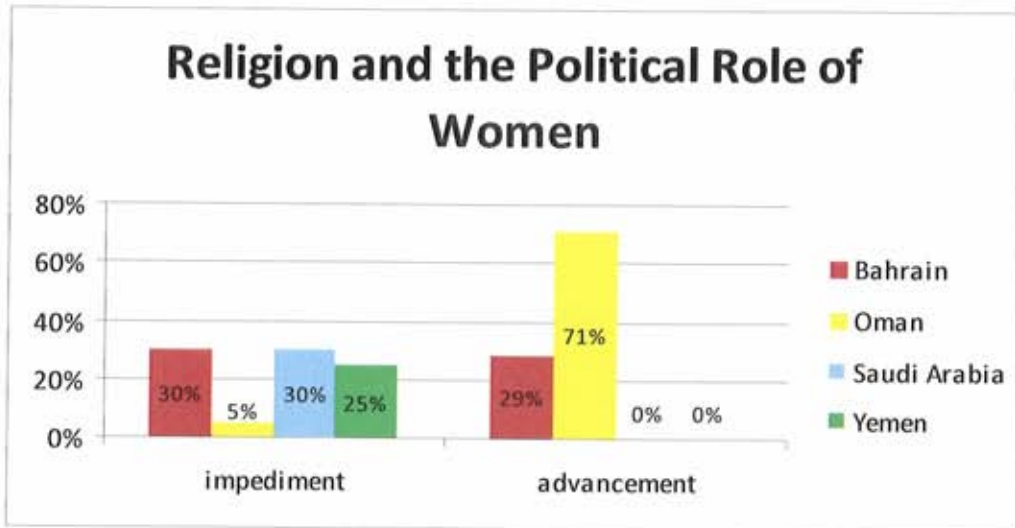
54

Figure 14 Per Country Impact of Religion of Women in Politics

Findings

Religion as an Impediment for Women

- Bahrain (30%), Oman (5%), Saudi Arabia (30%), Yemen (25%),

Religion as an Advancement for Women

- Bahrain (29%), Oman (71%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (0%)

Analysis

The graph above represents the impact of religion on the integration of women into politics. All of the six countries highlight the negative role of religion in the process of political mainstreaming. The misinterpretations of religion and the mechanisms that implement them act as a severe impediment to the acceptance and integration of women into politics and high decision making positions. Also, there is almost an equal feedback from the Bahraini particpants where religion acts as both an impediment and an advancement to the integration of women into politics.Thus, this emphasizes the currents within the country that are leading to a turbulent effect that extends the time frame to fully accept and implement the process of gender mainstreaming . Both Saudi Arabia and Yemen are severly affected by this factor which leads to the negative impact of the extremely decisive factor -religion. Morover, it is incoprated into the collective mentality, attitudes and cultural

constraints which means that it accomodates the obstacles that are facing political gender mainstreamng. However, the only country that listed religion as an advancemnet was Oman which highlights the use of religion in its original setting rather than it being used to achieve a political and religious goal.However, it also posits the case that Oman is perfecting its international appeal instead of concentrating on solving internal issues.
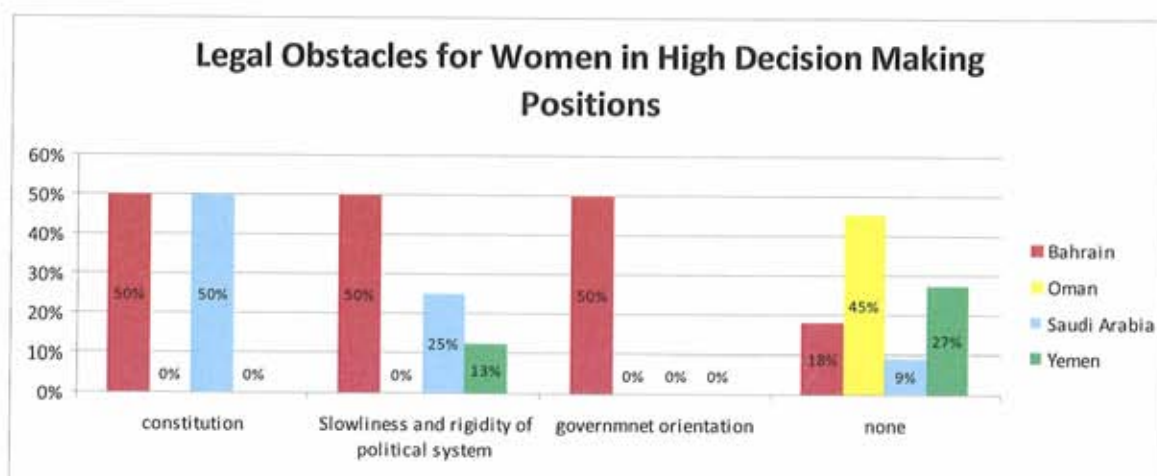
Figure 15 Per Country Legal Obstacles Facing Gender Mainstreaming in Politics

Findings of the Legal Obstacles

The Constitution

- Bahrain (50%) , Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (50%), Yemen (0%),

Slowliness and rigidity to change

- Bahrain (50%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (25%), Yemen(13%)

Government Orientation

- Bahrain (50%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (0%)

No legal obstacles

- Bahrain (18%), Oman (45%), Saudi Arabia (9%), Yemen (27%)

Analysis

The above graph shows the level of legal obstacles in each country. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia both suffer the most from the obstacles- constituion and rigidity to change. These two main obstacles limit the integration of women into politics because they are internal in nature. Thus, there is an augmentation of a political constraint that might lead to political severance of the integration of gender mainstreaming into politics and highlights the institutional constraint of gender minstreaming. It is clear from the data that the legal obstacles contribute to the ineffectiveness of the instuitonal factor in delaying political gender mainstereaming in the region. Therefore, the governent orientation in Bahrain shows that there is an absence of mechanisms in the government that facilitate the integration of concepts such as gender and gender mainstreaming and intiate its diffusion into the different area of politics and society renders it ineffective. However, the data portrays that gender mainstreaming in Oman does not face any legal obstacles , women share equal rights with men.
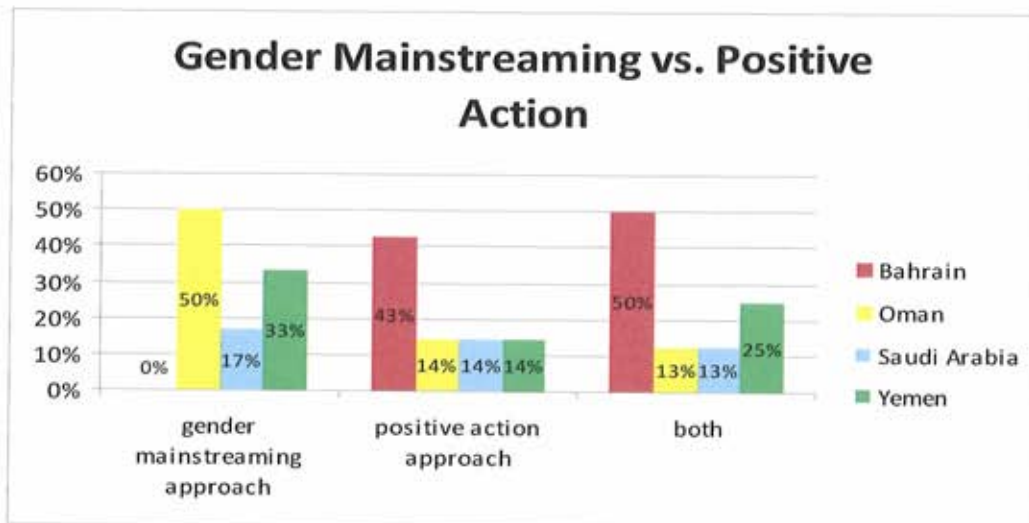

Figure 16 Per Country Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming in Politics

<u>Findings</u>

Gendermainstreaming Approach

– Bahrain (0%), Oman (50%), Saudi Arabia (17%), Yemen (33%)

Positive Action Approach

– Bahrain (43%), Oman (14%), Saudi Arabia (14%), Yemen (14%)

Both Approaches

– Bahrain (50%), Oman (13%), Saudi Arabia (13%), Yemen (25%)

<u>Analysis</u>

The above graph shows the effectiveness of each kind of approach to promote the integration of women into politics. The effectiveness of gender mainstreaming is highly advanced in Oman and Yemen which means that the process focuses on early learning and integration of concepts into the social, education and employment framework.Bahrain focuses on the effectiveness of positive action in allowing women to be integrated into politics ; thus this short term approach can lead to better results in the political space. Yet, despite the asessment of each approach seperately, each country emphasizes the power of the combination of both approaches. To that extent, it increases the possibility of better integration and sustainability of the presence of women in politics.
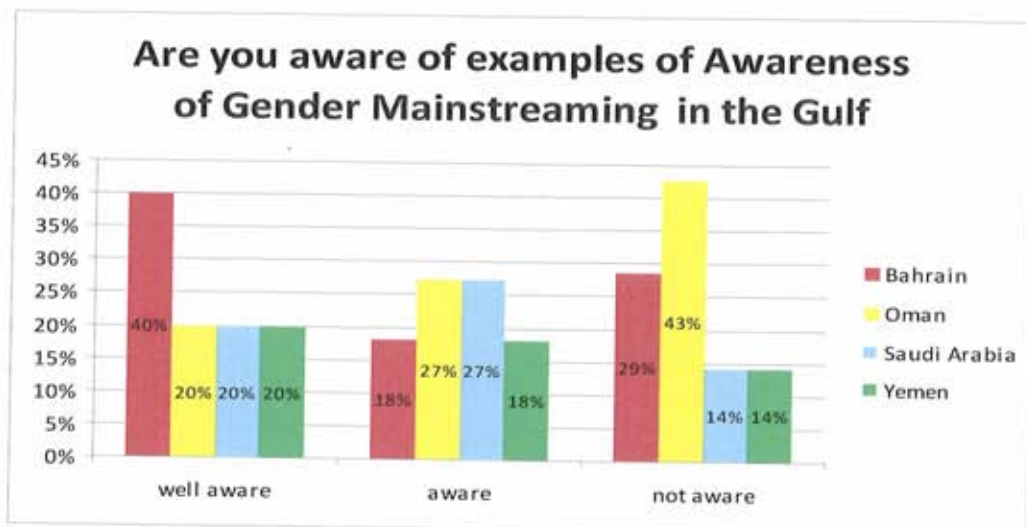
Figure 17 Per Country Level of Awareness of Gender Mainstreaming

Findings

Well Aware

    –   Bahrain (40%), Oman (20%), Saudi Arabia (20%), Yemen (20%)

Aware

    –   Bahrain (18%), Oman (27%), Saudi Arabia (27%), Yemen (18%)

Not Aware

    –   Bahrain (29%), Oman (43%), Saudi Arabia (14%), Yemen (14%)

<u>Analysis</u>

The above graph represents the level of awareness of gender mainstreaming in the countries of the Arab Gulf region. The country that is well aware of gender mainstreaming approach through projects, programs and activities is Bahrain while Saudi Arabia and Yemen are modertely aware of basic examples and have a minimal knowledge of the approach and the objectives it pursues. Moreover, Oman has no knowledge of the gender mainstreaming approach which means that there is still no in country projects and activities that define gender mainstreaming. Thus, there is no measurable attempt at spreading the impact of the approach through highlighting its objectives and showcasing its positive results.

Main Obstacles for the Advancement of Women in Politics

	legislative	cultural	religious	lack of political will	no obstacles
Bahrain	36%	17%	31%	25%	
Oman	0%	22%	8%	0%	100%
Saudi Arabia	9%	33%	23%	25%	0%
Yemen	36%	17%	23%	50%	0%

Figure 18 Per Country Obstacles Facing Women in Politics

Findings

    Legislative obsatcle

    –   Bahrain (36%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (9%), Yemen (36%)

    Cultural obstacle

    –   Bahrain (17%), Oman (22%), Saudi Arabia (33%), Yemen (17%)

    Religious obstacle

    –   Bahrain (31%), Oman (8%), Saudi Arabia (23%), Yemen (23%)

    Lack of political will

    –   Bahrain (25%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (25%), Yemen (50%)

    No obstacles

    –   Bahrain (0%), Oman (100%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (0%)

Analysis

The above graph shows the main obstacles of political gender mainsstreaming in each country.Both Bahrain and Yemen suffer from legislative obstacles that emphasize the institutional constraint found in each country.The lack of accelerating in legislative and institutional mechanisms contribute to the failure of correctly implementing the objectives of political gender mainstreaming.In addition, the cultural obstacle is present in every country which shows that it is integral to the fabric of each country and as a result gender mainstreaming can not be applied without tailoring it to the cultural outlook to gain the community level acceptance.As for the religious obstacle, its impact is also found in all of the countries with the exception of Oman. Similarly, the powerful religious infrastructure of each country has to be evaluated when introducing and implementing the objectives and goals of political gender mainstreaming.Thus, it is a powerful constraint that has the ability to alienate the positive impact of integrating women into politics.More to the point, the data shows that there is a considerable percentage of women with a lack of political will to advance any tangible progress in the field of politics. The absence of this will means that despite initiatives and mechanisms set in motion there will be no advancemnet in women obtaining high decion making positions.In stark contrast, only Oman emphasizes the smooth progress and the almost lack of obstacles that

prevent progress and deny women accessability to express and obtain their goals and objectives.
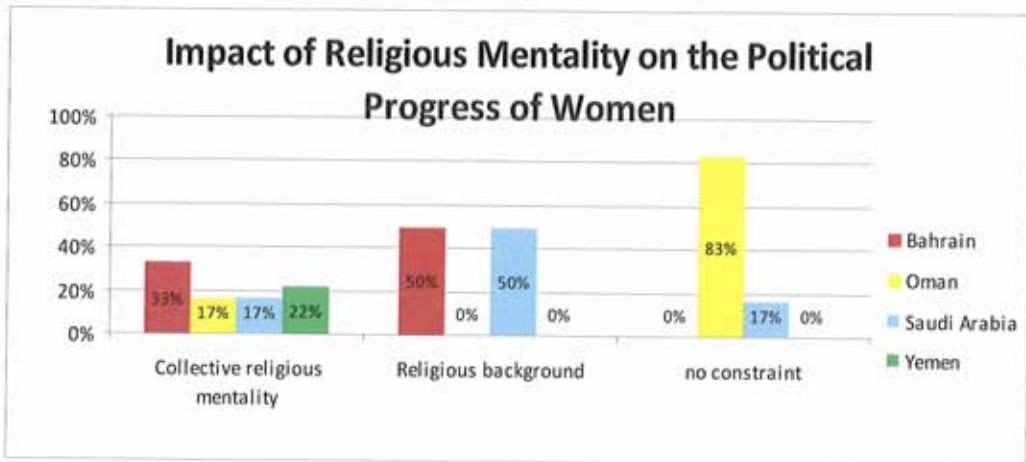
Figure 19 Per Country Impact of Religious Mentality on Women in Politics

Findings

Collective Religious mentality

– Bahrain (33%), Oman (17%), Saudi Arabia (17%), Yemen (22%)

Reliigous Backgroung

– Bahrain (50%), Oman (0%), Qatar(0%), Saudi Arabia (50%), Yemen (0%)

No Religious constriant

– Bahrain (0%), Oman (83%), Saudi Arabia (17%), Yemen (0%)

Analysis

The above graph measures the constraint of religious mentality on the implemntation of political gender mainstreaming. The impact of the collective religious mentality is clearly observed in each country especially in Bahrain and Yemen as the two major countries. Therefore, what is important to note is the influential and decisive role that the collective religious mentality plays in the direction of each country.Any introdcution of political gender mainstreaming will

have to absorb the collective religious mentality of the country in order not to clash with it. Moreover, the data shows that the religious mentality is a core factor in assesing the mainstreaming approach threfore the formulation and implementation should be sensitive to each country's collective religious mentality. The religious background palys a role in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia highlighting the overarching role of religion in each country in addition to the role of religious collective mentality. Therefore, in both countries the level of religious augmentation should be prioritiezed for an optimal integration of women into poltiocs. Only Oman has no religious constraints that impede the progress emphasizing the smooth contemprorary religious framework of the country.
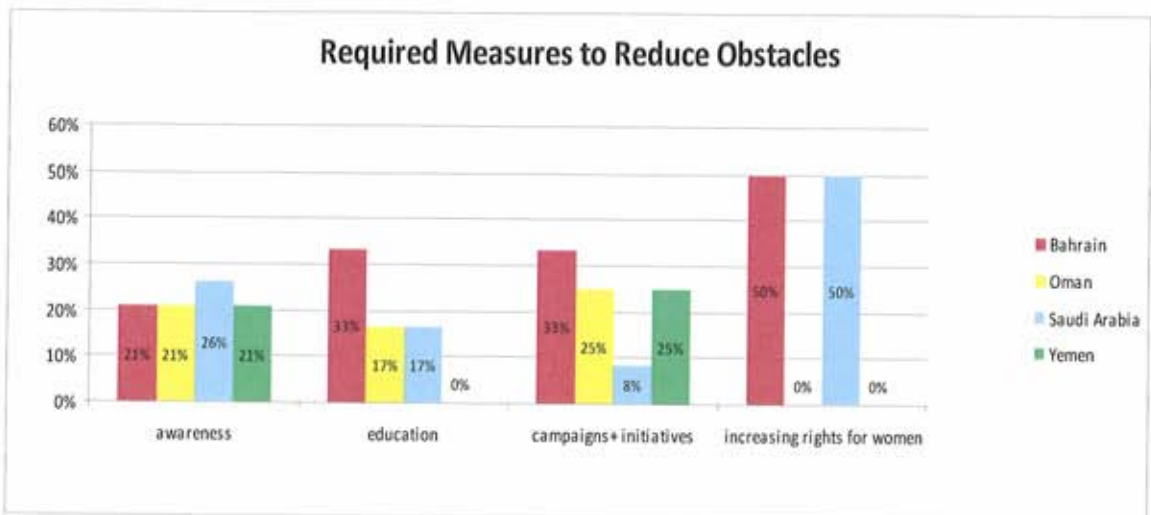

Figure 20 Per Country Needed Measures to Advance Political Gender Mainstreaming

Findings

Awareness

    —   Bahrain (21%), Oman (21%), Saudi Arabia (26%), Yemen (21%)

Education

    —   Bahrain (33%), Oman (17%), Saudi Arabia (17%), Yemen (0%)

Campaigns and intiatives

    —   Bahrain (33%), Oman (25%), Saudi Arabia (8%), Yemen (25%)

Increasing rights for women

- Bahrain (50%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (50%), Yemen (0%)

Analysis

The above graph shows the needed iniatives in each country to optimize the progress of political gender mainstreaming. The scope of the intiatives aim at developing the areas such as education, awareness, advocacy, and legislation.These needed measures limit the scope of cultural, process and institutional constraints. Awareness of gender mainstreaming is needed in every country to arm women and men with the proper tools to effectively make a decision and support change through cultural acceptance, awareness of the scope of religion and legislative rights. Education is also an important tool to implement with an emphasis on Bahrain because it allows the society to make educated choices rather than choices resulting from tribal or group orientation.Thus, it paves the way for a wider variance in choosing decision makers and new legislation. Moreover, there is a need to advocate for campaigns and initiatives in Bahrain, Oman, and Yemen to help raise awareness of political gender mainstreeaming and to advocate through national level campaigns and community activities.It is extremely important to emphasize that only Bahrain and Saudi Arabia focused on increasing the rights for women as an importanmt measure in the process.Thus, women are not retaining their actual rights due to societal and religious reasons preventing them from being politically active and reducing their human resource input in the political progress of the country.
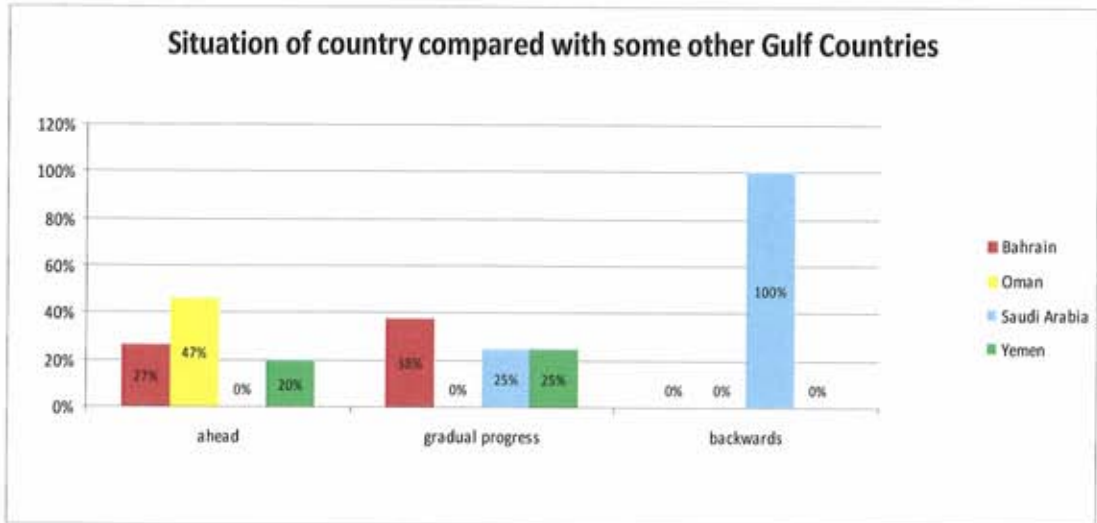
Figure 21 Gender Mainstreaming Progress in each Country

Findings

Ahead

– Bahrain (27%), Oman (47%), Saudi Arabia (0%), Yemen (20%)

Gradual Progress

– Bahrain (38%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (25%), Yemen (25%)

Backwards

– Bahrain (0%), Oman (0%), Saudi Arabia (100%), Yemen (0%)

Analysis

The above graph shows the level of the process of political gender mainstreaming in each of the 4 countries in the Arab Gulf region. Based on the compiled answers of the participants, Oman clearly is seen as ahead of many Gulf countries with regards to the implementation process of political gender mainstreaming. While the graph shows that Bahrain and Yemen are in a gradual progress towards a positive political gender mainstreaming accomplishment. Yet, the country that is not ready to integrate is Saudi Arabia. The data result shows that the country is going backwards and this highlights that the overall reasons cultural, institutional and religious still need to be formatted and geared towards opening up and emphasizing the role of women in all areas especially politics.

4.9   Findings

Overall, the data shows that political gender mainstreaming is susceptible to the powerful impact of several factors that impede its progress in each country. It is important to highlight that each factor has an important weight in the sum of obstacles facing this issue. Moreover, it is not important how political gender mainstreaming is perceived but it is how its internal structure presents itself to the region. The results show that both in the region and each country there are three main factors:

1. Process: gender roles are affected by decisive factors; society's acceptance, collective religious mentality, and legislative obstacles. Thus, it is a viable factor that is obstructed at high percentages in each country's community emphasizing the rate of difficulty for the integration of gender mainstreaming into the Gulf politics. The way society portrays the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the approach should be emphasized while advocating the concept as it impacts the entrance of women into politics and the role she plays. Also, society should be identified as a primary stakeholder in assessing the objectives and benefits of the integration of women into high decision making positions in the government. There is a positive role for society in advocating the political role of women but it is always challenged by negative constrains directly driven by the cultural factor.

2. Cultural: The volatility of religion in the region is manifested by two important factors; collective religious mentality and religious background. The data gathered clearly highlights the nearly absolute role religion plays in decision making, government orientation and setting political agendas. Moreover, the difficulty that is facing political gender mainstreaming lies in the region's religious impact. The perception of religious mentality to political gender mainstreaming as a destabilizing threat to preconceived modified abstract notions both on an internal and external level does not support the integration of the approach. Moreover, this will result in suppressive methods unless political

gender mainstreaming is adapted to the environment it is being implemented within.

3. Institutional: The institutional obstacles facing political gender mainstreaming are constitutional, reluctance and rigidity to change, legislative and government orientation. The majority of these limiting factors are present in every country except Oman and they contribute to the absence of state institutions that can adapt and integrate the gender mainstreaming approach. Although, most of the countries have voiced their willingness to eliminate discrimination against women, the institutional limitation prevents any perceivable progress in the field. Thus, the position of the current decision makers in most of the countries portrays a negative outlook to the adaptation of political gender mainstreaming. The institutional is directly related to the negative collective religious mentality and supported by the limited role of society in advocating a larger stake for women in politics.

As for the needed measurements to overcome these main obstacles on a regional and country level the data has identified measures that tackle the three limiting factors together because gender mainstreaming approach cannot exist alone, in fact it has a symbiotic relationship with its environment. Therefore, spreading awareness to reach remote areas, raising the awareness level of illiterate and literate women and men and allowing women an educational opportunity will increase the awareness level and allow women to express their opinion and thoughts. This can be done through the implementation of campaigns and initiatives that focus on gender equality in politics and all areas of society. Moreover, the advocacy programs that promote an initiation role for women in politics strengthen the ability of women to implement nationwide campaigns and advocate for new legislation that support a more mainstream role for women.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper attempted to evaluate the achievability of gender mainstreaming approach in integrating women into high levels of political decision making. It resulted in an informatics base that attempted successfully to evaluate the applicability of current policy reforms as well as offered potential policy reforms initiatives to advocate political gender mainstreaming.

The term gender mainstreaming is often mistaken for the term gender. According to the survey of this paper; there is an overlap between the definition of gender and gender mainstreaming approach. This shows a deficiency in providing appropriate information to shed light on the objectives and aims of the approach. In order for the approach to effectively portray a difference in obtaining gender equality and sufficient interpretations through initiatives such as policy studies and educational programs should be created and administered. The negative connotation of the term gender was clearly seen in Saudi Arabia where the term gender is not favorably used; instead it is often replaced by the term empowerment. However, the findings in this paper showed that there is relative progress in applying gender mainstreaming objectives over the past years shedding light on the continuous advancement despite the major cultural, religious and legislative setbacks. This advancement can be seen in Oman, Bahrain and Yemen where the participants identified a relative progress in their country to improve the role of women in the politics of the Arab Gulf region. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia was the only country identified as drifting away from the rest the region into a backward encroachment. Women currently face difficulty in the voting process and running for candidacy in the lection process. According to our survey with the women leaders, only 8% of women do not face any form of inequality in the Arab Gulf region while social discrimination is at 23%, religious discrimination is at 20% and the negative collective mentality of the region received 17% as responsible for discrimination that diminishes women's ability to actively participate in the political process. Women are on the receiving end of social practices, cultural norms and religious interpretations. This has

been seen over decades but recently the introduction of the new United Nations policy of gender mainstreaming that aimed to fortify gender equality focused on overcoming these obstacles. The integration of gender mainstreaming in the traditional society of the Gulf requires a challenging time frame. It is a long process that deals with practices imbedded in cultural, religious and legislative constrains. However, it is a relatively new process as shown in the 30% lack of awareness of gender mainstreaming examples in politics. This negatively affects the time frame needed for integration.

In order to avoid negative cultural and religious flashback, the integration should not be adopted instead it should be integrated into early levels as to maintain a certain effectiveness and show results on a yearly basis. The results have clearly highlighted that religion impeded the acceptability (27%) by creating an intellectual barrier that spills over to the attitudes of decision makers and voters in the country.

5.1   Mainstreaming Program Recommendations

Women in the Gulf region have always been active strugglers to get their voices heard and rights achieved. The gender mainstreaming approach aims at reaching gender equality thus the various tools can be acquired according to the features of the region. There is a regional need to integrate the use of gender mainstreaming measured (29%) to increase the rights of women and to support the overall acceptability of women obtaining high decision making positions. However, it is also important to stress that the collaborative effort of gender mainstreaming and positive action is seen as extremely useful (38%) in advancing women in politics. The use of both approaches is ideal to advocate for women into higher decision making positions in the government and sustaining their presence to solidify the notion of gender equality into the attitudes of the decision makers and religious figures.

5.1.1   Gender Mainstreaming in the Gulf

The process of gender mainstreaming is achievable in the Arab Gulf but it requires internal amendments as well as external cooperation to facilitate the integration

process. The benefits of gender mainstreaming can benefit the region as a whole and fortify the political role of women in each country. However, it is continuously challenged by social-religious-cultural-political constraints that require long term reforms to accept the modification in gender roles that is geared towards accepting women as equal partners in all areas especially in politics. The social constraints as well as the religious constraints are the core constraints that could either facilitate the acceptance or accelerate the refusal of the policy. Currently, the social constraint is declining in favor of positive attitude toward political gender mainstreaming in Gulf societies. Yet, the main restriction remains religious factor as reported by 74% of our survey participants, which is impeding the progress and promoting a negative collective mentality towards the policy. Moreover, the results emphasize the lack of appropriate institutional mechanisms that can limit the cultural and religious constraint by actively promoting a role for high decision making positions for women in politics as well as integrating gender mainstreaming objectives into the different standing committees in the government in each country. The results show that the current lack of mechanisms stresses the need to incorporate the concept and the related strategies and to integrate them into the political national framework.

A breakthrough finding in this paper shows that Oman, as reported by the survey participants, has made substantial progress toward the achievement of political gender mainstreaming, which can also be seen through the country's current political advancement and the support women receive from the government.

5.2   Political Mainstreaming Strategies

There are urgent needs for strategies to collectively advance women political mainstreaming in the region. Such strategies must create social acceptance of a more assertive public role for women in politics. More to the point, the strategies need to be implemented continuously to constantly raise awareness and maintain the applicability and the rate of success of the policy. This paper suggests potential short-term awareness campaigns as well as long-term mainstreaming advocacy strategies.

5.2.1 The short term awareness campaigns

- Designing awareness programs to disseminate regarding the status of women in rural areas;
- Distributing pamphlets and manuals defining political mainstreaming strategy and approach;
- Holding regular town hall meetings to advocate for the strategy;
- Advocating the right of women for an education;
- Identifying objectives and aims that can be implemented in parallel to cultural and religious constraints; and
- Identifying the difference between the concept of gender and gender mainstreaming.

5.2.2 The long term strategies include:

- Integrating gender mainstreaming into all the levels of education;
- Establishing ad-hoc committees in the governments to integrate gender mainstreaming into politics;
- Lobbying for women to gain more political rights;
- Establishing programs that focus on the benefits of political gender mainstreaming; and
- Emphasizing the importance of achieving gender quality through applying the mainstreaming approach.

5.3 Needed Policy Reforms

Policy reforms in the Arab Gulf region are needed to adapt to the flexible external pressure and the internal reforms. The effects of political gender mainstreaming need to show results on a yearly basis as to emphasize gradual policy reforms.

The following are some recommendations to integrate gender mainstreaming into the Arab Gulf region:

5.3.1 Regional level strategies

- The formulation of the approach to gender mainstreaming should consider the regional attributes;
- The countries in the region share similar characteristics but each has a distinguished feature that creates a different integration process. Therefore, the application of the policies should be individualized to enhance the chances for effective policy integration;
- The process of introducing the gender mainstreaming policy should consider cultural and religious barriers as it is being introduced to a region that has rich historical traditions and close group bonds;
- The regional integration of the policy should be gradually implemented in order to avoid cultural and religious back lash. The process should consider policy evaluations to set an appropriate time frame for the region;
- Throughout the integration process, the policy executers may identify the needed institutional mechanisms in the government to facilitate the introduction of political gender mainstreaming. Research should be conducted on a country level to appropriately evaluate the rate of integration into each country; and
- The social support mobilization should precede policy reform, as to make mainstreaming an indigenous achievement.

5.3.2 Country level strategies

- The country should advocate the integration through primary, secondary and higher educational programs;
- The country should collaborate and coordinate with the offices responsible for gender mainstreaming integration to maintain efficiency and effectiveness within a set time frame;
- The approach within each country should not conform to traditional society instead it should promote a society that accepts change and new roles for women; and

- The approach should highlight the similarities of gender mainstreaming approach and original religious attributes concerning the rights for women.

The applicability of the gender mainstreaming approach benefits from the short and long term strategies. Since it is a comprehensive mainstreaming strategy, its progress is influenced by domestic factors that outweigh international pressures. Therefore, successful advancements in politics, as well as, business in countries like Oman, Bahrain and Yemen should be replicated and best practices should be upgraded constantly. This stresses the importance of grass root initiatives to create potential strategies for integrating the concept of gender into politics. Moreover, political gender mainstreaming should be aligned with economic improvement to strip the tribal gridlock that maintains traditional behavioral thought. The integration of gender mainstreaming into politics is a long term project that requires coordination on all levels with equipped institutions in the Arab Gulf states. Thus, the process requires acceptance within cultural, religious and institution factors coupled with an economic cooperation platform… Only then will we reach our ultimate goals successfully.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire Guide

Hello my name is Mona Hamade. I am conducting a survey for my graduate thesis at the Lebanese American University.

I would like to interview you briefly to learn more about your understanding of how, and to what extent is gender mainstreaming in the politics of the Gulf States achievable. The study also evaluates the needed political mainstreaming strategies on the short and long term.

It takes into account the current status of women in the Gulf and how they are affected by the current and future policy reforms. Your responses are absolutely confidential and will be strictly used for academic purposes.

Feel free to answer the questions, skip any question you wish not to answer, or stop the entire interview at any time you wish.

Would you be willing to answer some questions and participate in this study right now?

THEME I. RESPONDENT'S PROFILE AND FUNCTION
I.I May I ask you what your functions are and what are your responsibilities?
- Probe :
  - ➤ Job Title.
  - ➤ Situation in the interviewee's organization's structure and hierarchy.
  - ➤ Exact nature of tasks and responsibilities.

I.2 Can you tell me how long have you been in this position and how have you arrived at this job, and how have your functions possibly changed since you began?
- Probe:
  - ➤ Number of years in your present job position.
  - ➤ Previous functions.
  - ➤ How did the respondent arrive to the present job position?
  - ➤ Changes in present functions.

I.3 [Respondent profile]
❑Marital Status
❑Age (approximate)
❑General profile

THEME II. PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

I would like to know how you perceive the question of political gender mainstreaming, how you would define it, and in what way it is, or is it not, an important concept in your own view.

- Probe :
  - ➢ Respondent's personal definition of the concept.
  - ➢ Respondent's own perception of the importance of gender mainstreaming in politics.

THEME III. GOALS PURSUED AND IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO POLITICAL GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

III.1. Could we please talk about the importance given to these questions in the action plans of the different government bodies and political associations. What would you say, generally speaking?

- Probe :
  - ➢ How are objectives defined and adjusted at the national level?
  - ➢ Is political equality between women and men regarded as a goal in itself, or as a means serving other goals, (or both)?
  - ➢ What does that imply with regards to the preparation, the implementation, and the evaluation of mainstreaming strategies?
  - ➢ How important (or not) is gender mainstreaming really considered by the different governmental bodies concerned and by the different people in charge? (Probe into differences of attitudes between different governmental bodies and between religious bodies)

THEME IV. CAUSES OF INEQUALITIES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN THE FIELD OF POLITICS

I would like to discuss the deep causes of inequalities between women and men in your country, in the different areas that can have an impact on politics.

IV.1. First, regarding inequalities between female and male participation in the voting and election process, (what are these causes, and how do they play)?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Nature of the different causes (social, religion).
  - ➢ Collective mentality of the society-religious society.

- ➤ Causes inherent to the country's own social model.
- ➤ Attitudes of the decision makers that are concerned (public authorities as well as religious authorities) do they really want to act?
- ➤ Slowliness and rigidities to change.
- ➤ Any other causes.
- ➤ What is the impact of each cause?
- ➤ Are there any perceivable changes? Which ones?

IV.2. Secondly, regarding the issue of equal treatment of women and men in the political space, what are the causes of the existing inequalities, and how do they play?
- • Probe :
  - ➤ Nature of the different causes.
  - ➤ Collective mentality of the society-religious society.
  - ➤ Causes inherent to the country's own social model.
  - ➤ Attitudes of decision makers in the different types of organizations concerned (public authorities and religious bodies); do they really want to act?
  - ➤ Slowliness and rigidities to change.
  - ➤ Any other causes?
  - ➤ How does each cause play?
  - ➤ Are there any perceivable changes? Which ones?

IV.2 (a) How does your society regard the role of women in general, in politics?

IV.2 (b) How has religion impeded or advanced the role of women in the political space?

IV.3 What are the most obvious legal obstacles, in your opinion, for women to obtain a high decision making position in politics?
- • Probe
  - ➤ Nature of legal obstacles.
  - ➤ Slowliness and rigidity of political system.
  - ➤ Are there any perceivable changes? Which ones?

THEME V. APPROACHES FOR EFFECTIVELY PROMOTING EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN POLITICS

V.1. There are roughly speaking two kinds of approaches to move towards the achievement of equality between women and men in the field of politics.
Gender mainstreaming approaches, trying to act "upstream" on the causes of inequalities.
Approaches based on positive actions to fight against the inequalities and to correct them.

What do you think of the usefulness and effectiveness of each kind of approach?
a. On the one hand, to improve female participation in the political process.

b. On the other hand, to reduce inequalities between women and men in election process.
 i.e. will the political constraints on women running for a ministerial or parliamentary position be effectively reduced?

- Probe :
  - Judgments on each kind of approach respectively for a and for b.

V.2. However relevant an approach may be in theory, its effectiveness depends on the way and the conditions in which it is designed and implemented.

With regards to gender mainstreaming in politics, could you think of at least one concrete example of reform which you regard as (potentially) effective in your country?
 I would then like to examine who are the "actors" involved, how they act, and what makes the reform effective?

- Probe, for in the example :
  - Ask respondent to describe and explain the governmental or non governmental body and the mechanisms set up to deal with the gender mainstreaming issue in national and regional public bodies/organizations/in social partner organizations(including general orientations, but also practical rules and procedures).
  - How does that work in practice (how do the different actors especially in politics actually behave with the established organisation, orientations, rules and procedures)?
  - What about the interaction between the different actors (notably the different government departments/agencies involved)?
  - Key factors of effectiveness.

V.3. On the other hand, could we discuss in the same way at least one concrete example of gender mainstreaming reform to politics in your country which you regard as (potentially) not or slightly effective.

- Probe for in the example :
  - ➢ Ask respondent to describe and explain the governmental or non governmental body and the mechanisms set up to deal with the gender mainstreaming issue in national and regional public bodies/organisations / in social partner organizations (including general orientations, but also practical rules and procedures).
  - ➢ How does that work in practice (how do the different actors especially in politics actually behave with the established organisation, orientations, rules and procedures)?
  - ➢ What about the interaction between the different actors (notably the different government departments/agencies involved)?
  - ➢ Key factors of effectiveness.

V.4. Are you aware of examples of effective gender mainstreaming approaches in other Gulf Countries which might be a source of inspiration? Which ones and what makes them effective?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Degree of knowledge of the approaches and of interest for examples from abroad.
  - ➢ Summary description of a few concrete examples, and identification of effectiveness factors.

THEME VI. OBSTACLES TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING
VI.1. Now, regarding the obstacles for the advancement of women in the political process – from a gender mainstreaming perspective.
You mentioned some of them in our discussion: but what are the overall main obstacles in your opinion, and in what way precisely do they impede progress?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Nature of major obstacles (legislative, sociological, linked to the under-representation of women in higher government positions, lack of concepts and "tools", etc.).
  - ➢ Importance of each one.

VI.2. To what extent is religious mentality a constraint to the progress of women in politics?

- Probe:
  - ➢ Collective religious mentality.
  - ➢ Religious background.

VI.3. What could or should be done concretely to overcome these obstacles?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Measures needed to reduce each of the identified obstacles.
  - ➢ Possible trigger factors.

THEME VII. OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE SITUATION

VII.1. Overall, how do you evaluate the way in which gender mainstreaming is taken into account in your country's political process?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Is gender advancement in politics done through elections or assignment?

VII.2. How do you consider the situation in your country compared to some other Gulf Countries that you may know about in this respect?

- Probe :
  - ➢ Own country ahead or backward compared with other Gulf Countries (which ones)?
  - ➢ Any qualitative differences.

IDENTITY OF RESPONDENT

❑Name of respondent
❑Name of organisation
❑Department and job title
❑Full address
❑Telephone
❑Fax
❑Email

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Guide in Arabic

مرحباً اسمي منى حمادة، أنا طالبة في جامعة LAU. إنني أقوم بدراسة لمشروع تخرجي.
أرغب بأن أجري معك مقابلة قصيرة لمعرفة المزيد عن أرائك حول امكانية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي في
السياسات في دول الخليج العربي . و كذلك تهدف الدراسة الى تقييم الاستراتيجيات السياسية المطلوبة لادماج
مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي اللازمة على المستويين القريب و البعيد.
وهي تأخذ في الاعتبار الوضع الحالي للمرأة في الخليج وكيف تتأثر من الإصلاحات السياسية الحالية والمستقبلية.
أجوبتك تبقى سرية و سوف تستعمل لأغراض أكاديمية لا غير.

يمكنك بكل حرية الرد على الأسئلة أو عدم الرد أو حتى إيقاف المقابلة في أي وقتٍ تريد.

هل أنت مستعدة للإجابة عن الأسئلة والمشاركة في هذه الدراسة الآن؟

المحور الأول: نبذة عن المجيبة ووظيفتها
1.أ هل لي أن أطلب منك ما هي مهامك ومسؤولياتك ؟
التعمق بالسؤال:
- الوظيفة.
- وضع المستجوبة في هيكل المنظمة والتسلسل الهرمي.
- ما هي بالضبط طبيعة المهام والمسؤوليات؟

1.ب هل يمكنك أن تقولي لي منذ متى تشغلين منصبك الحالي وكيف وصلت إلى هذا المنصب ، و هل تغيرت
مهامك منذ توليك هذا المنصب؟
التعمق بالسؤال:
- عدد سنوات العمل في هذا المنصب الخاص بك.
- الوظائف السابقة.
- كيف وصلت الى الوظيفة؟
- التغيرات التي طرأت على المهام الحالية.

[لمحة عن خلفية المجيبة]
- الحالة الاجتماعية
- العمر (تقريبي)
- لمحة عامة

المحور الثاني: المفهوم الشخصي لادماج النوع الاجتماعي.
أود أن أعرف كيف تنظرين إلى مفهوم ادماج النوع الاجتماعي في السياسة ، كيف يمكن أن تعرّفي الموضوع ،
برأيك، هل تعتبرين هذا المفهوم مهماً او غير مهم؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
- تعريف المجيبة لمفهوم النوع الاجتماعي.

- إدراك المجيبة لأهمية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي في السياسة.

المحور الثالث: الأهداف المرجوة و اهمية مفهوم ادماج النوع الاجتماعي في السياسة في خطط العمل الوطنية.

3ـ هل يمكننا الحديث عن الأهمية المعطاة لهذه المسائل في خطط العمل من قبل مختلف الهيئات الحكومية والجمعيات الأهلية.و ما الذي تقوله ، بصفة عامة؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
- كيف يتم تحديد الأهداف وتعديلها على المستوى الوطني؟
- هل المساواة في السياسة بين المرأة والرجل تعتبر هدفا في حد ذاته ، أو كوسيلة لخدمة أهداف أخرى ، (أو كليهما)؟
- ماذا يعني ذلك ضمنا لجهة إعداد وتنفيذ وتقييم استراتيجيات ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي ؟
- ما اهمية او عدم اهمية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي لدى مختلف الهيئات الحكومية المعنية ، و ما هي مواقف مختلف الهيئات الحكومية و الهيئات الدينية.

المحور الرابع: أسباب الفروقات بين النساء والرجال في السياسة

4ـأ أود أن أناقش الأسباب الكامنة لعدم المساواة بين المرأة والرجل في بلدكم ، في مختلف المجالات التي يمكن أن يكون لها تأثير في السياسة.

أولا ، بشأن عدم المساواة بين الذكور والإناث في المشاركة في عملية التصويت والانتخابات ، (ما هي هذه الأسباب ، وما هو دورها؟)

التعمق بالسؤال:
- طبيعة الأسباب المختلفة (الاجتماعية ، والدينية).
- الذهنية السائدة\العامة.
- الأسباب الكامنة في النظام الاجتماعي للبلد.
- مواقف اصحاب القرار التي تتعلق في السياسة (السلطات العامة ، فضلا عن السلطات الدينية) هل تريد ان تؤدي عملا ما؟
- بطىء عملية التغيير والمواقف المتصلبة تجاه التغيير.
- ماهو الدور الذي تلعبه كل هذه الأسباب؟
- كيف تلعب كل قضية؟
- هل هناك أي تغييرات متوقعة؟ وما هي؟

وثانيا ، فيما يتعلق بمسألة المساواة في المعاملة بين الرجل والمرأة في المجال السياسي ، فما هي أسباب عدم المساواة القائمة ،(وما هي دورها)؟

التعمق بالسؤال: :
- طبيعة الأسباب المختلفة (الاجتماعية ، والدينية).
- الذهنية السائدة\العامة.
- الأسباب الكامنة في النظام الاجتماعي للبلد.
- مواقف اصحاب القرار التي تتعلق في السياسة (السلطات العامة ، فضلا عن السلطات الدينية) هل تريد ان تؤدي عملا ما؟
- بطىء عملية التغيير والمواقف المتصلبة تجاه التغيير.
- ماهو الدور الذي تلعبه كل هذه الأسباب؟
- كيف تلعب كل قضية؟
- هل هناك أي تغييرات متوقعة؟ وما هي؟

4-ب كيف ينظر مجتمعكم الى دور المرأة بشكل عام ،(في السياسة)؟

4-ج هل يلعب الدين دور معيق او محفز تجاه دور المرأة في المجال السياسي؟

4-د ما هي أبرز العقبات القانونية ، في رأيك ، لحصول المرأة على موقع صنع القرار في السياسة؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
− طبيعة العقبات القانونية .
− بطيء وجمود النظام السياسي.
− هل هناك أي تغييرات متوقعة؟وما هي ؟

المحور الخامس: المقاربات المطلوبة لتعزيز المساواة بفعالية بين المرأة و الرجل في السياسة

5-أ هناك ما يقارب من نوعين من المقاربات للدفع تجاه تحقيق المساواة بين المرأة والرجل في المجال السياسي.
مقاربة ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي، من خلال مواجهة و معالجة الاسباب الكامنة وراء عدم المساواة.
المقاربة القائمة على أخذ إجراءات إيجابية لمكافحة عدم المساواة وتصحيحها.

ما رأيك في مستوى كفاءة وفعالية كل نوع من المقاربتين؟
أ. تحسين مشاركة المرأة في العملية السياسية.

ب. الحد من عدم المساواة بين المرأة والرجل في العملية الانتخابية.
هل ستنخفض القيود السياسية الموضوعة على ترشيح النساء لمنصب وزاري أو برلماني ؟
التعمق بالسؤال:
− تقييمك لكل من المقاربتين أ وب.

5-ب بغض النظر عن ملائمة المقاربة على المستوى النظري، فان فعاليتها تعتمد على الطريقة و الظروف المحيطة التي يتم بها وضع هذه المقاربة و تنفيذها.
فيما يخص ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي في السياسة ، هل يمكن أن تفكري في نموذج ملموس و فعال حول الإصلاح في هذا الصدد ؟ وأود دراسة "الجهات المعنية" التي ينطوي عليها ، وما الذي يجعل الإصلاح فعالاً؟
التعمق بالسؤال :
− جعل المجيبة تقوم بوصف و شرح للآليات الحالية في الهيئات الحكومية و غير الحكومية حول التعامل مع ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي على المستوى الوطني و الاقليمي .
− كيف تتصرف مختلف الأطراف الفاعلة في الحياة السياسية في الممارسة العملية؟ (كيف تتصرف مع التوجهات والقواعد والإجراءات؟)
− وماذا عن التفاعل بين مختلف الفاعلين لا سيما مختلف الإدارات الحكومية والوكالات المعنية؟
− العوامل الرئيسية المؤثرة للفعالية.

5-ج على العكس من ذلك، هل يمكن أن تفكري في نموذج ملموس في الإصلاح لا يعتبرفعالا في بلدك؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
− الطلب من المجيبة ان تقوم بوصف و شرح للآليات الحالية في الهيئات الحكومية و غير الحكومية حول التعامل مع ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي على المستوى الوطني و الاقليمي .

– كيف تتصرف مختلف الأطراف الفاعلة في الحياة السياسية في الممارسة العملية؟ (كيف تتصرف مع التوجهات والقواعد والإجراءات؟)
– وماذا عن التفاعل بين مختلف الفاعلين لا سيما مختلف الإدارات الحكومية والوكالات المعنية؟
– العوامل الرئيسية المؤثرة للفعالية.

5ـد هل تعرفين أمثلة الأخرى التي قد تكون مصدرا للإلهام؟على فعالية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي في دول الخليج والتي منها ما يجعلها فعالة؟
التعمق بالسؤال::
– درجة المعرفة والاهتمام لأمثلة من الخارج.
– وصف موجز لبضعة أمثلة ملموسة ، وتحديد فعالية العوامل.

المحور السادس. موانع تحول دون ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي
6ـأ الآن ، وفيما يتعلق بالعقبات للنهوض بالمرأة في العملية السياسية من منظور امكانية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي .
ذكرت بعض منها في مناقشتنا و كيف تعيق التقدم؟ ما هي العقبات الرئيسية التي تعترض عموما في رأيك ؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
– طبيعة العقبات الرئيسية لنقص تمثيل المرأة في أعلى المناصب الحكومية (التشريعية والاجتماعية).
– أهمية كل واحدة.

6ـب إلى أي مدى تشكل العوامل الدينية السائدة عائقا أمام تقدم المرأة في السياسة؟
التعمق بالسؤال:

– الذهنية الدينية السائدة .
– الخلفية الدينية .
– أهمية كل واحدة.

6-ج و ما يمكن وينبغي أن يتم بشكل ملموس لتخطي هذه العقبات؟
التعمق بالسؤال:
– التدابير اللازمة للحد من كل واحدة من العقبات التي تم تحديدها.
– العوامل التي تؤدي الى العقبات .

المحور السابع. التقييم الشامل للحالة

7ـأ وعموما ، ما هو تقييمك لامكانية ادماج مفهوم النوع الاجتماعي في العملية السياسية في بلدك؟
التعمق بالسؤال:
– هل تقدم النوع الاجتماعي في مجال السياسة من خلال الانتخابات او التعيين؟

7-ب كيف تنظرين الى الوضع في بلدك وبالمقارنة مع بعض دول الخليج العربي الأخرى التي قد تعرف في هذا الصدد؟

التعمق بالسؤال:
- بلدك في مسار التقدم او التخلف بالمقارنة مع غيرها من دول الخليج العربي؟
- أي اختلافات نوعية.

هوية الشخصية

- ⮞ اسم المجيبة
- ⮞ اسم المنظمة
- ⮞ اسم الوظيفة
- ⮞ العنوان الكامل
- ⮞ الهاتف
- ⮞ فاكس
- ⮞ البريد الإلكتروني