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QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT AS THE MISSING LINK BETWEEN POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT AND DURABLE PEACE?

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Abstract

In 2000, United Nations Security Council passed resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which recognised the different roles women play during and after an armed conflict had ended. This recognition led to a dramatic increase in academic work on the field, and during the same time, another field emerged. This field identified a correlation between a large number of women in parliaments and decreased level of corruption, and thereby government quality. This thesis aims to combine the research on women's political empowerment and quality of government to test whether the interaction can affect intrastate armed conflict relapse. The research question is the following: *Is the effect of women's political empowerment on durable peace conditional on the quality of government?*

There are two theoretical motivations provided for, namely through government spending priorities and that women's political empowerment strengthens government quality, which decreases the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse. I use a binary time-series cross-section method analysing the fixed-effect on 53 countries from 1984-2014. The results show a statistically significant correlation between the interaction of women's political empowerment and quality of government on intrastate armed conflict relapse. This means that the effect a high level of women's political empowerment can have on the likelihood of a durable peace after an intrastate armed conflict is dependent on a high level of quality of government.

Abbreviations

BTSCS = Binary time-series cross-section

ICRG = International Country Risk Group

QoG = Quality of Government

UCDP = Uppsala Conflict Data Program

UN = United Nations

UNSCR 1325 = United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

V-dem = Varieties of democracy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

"Sustainable peace and security would not be achieved without the full and equal participation of women" (United Nations. 2002). This citation was part of the opening statement by the United Nation's Secretary-General Kofi Annan when the Security Council had a debate on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) that was adopted two years earlier. The resolution acknowledged the connection between women, peace and security. It had been the result of decades of women's organisations worldwide and their tireless efforts in advocating and lobbying to recognise women's role in armed conflicts (Klein. 2012: 282-283).

UNSCR 1325 was an important landmark, but the progress even within the Security Council has been slow, with only 15% of the resolutions making references to women, peace and security the first years after adoption. Still, between the years 2017-2019, over 70% of the resolutions made references to the resolution. (United Nations Security Council. 2020). Additionally, during the years 1992-2019, only an average of 13% of the negotiators, 6% of the mediators and 6% of the major signatories in the most crucial peace processes were women, which shows that there is a long way to go before gender equality is a natural part of the peace process (UN Women. 2021).

Furthermore, as Gizelis (2018) noted when she attended the Annual Meeting of Peace Science Society in 1997, the scholarly field was almost exclusively shaped by 'founding fathers' who overlooked the connection between women, peace and security. Nevertheless, after the UNSCR 1325, "the systematic study of gender, conflict, and peace emerged as one of the most significant research frontiers" (2018: 1) within peace research (see Caprioli and Boyer. 2001; Goldstein. 2001; Melander. 2005; Sjöberg and Gentry. 2007; Harders. 2011; Hudson et al. 2012; Cockburn. 2013; Karim and Beardsley. 2016; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood. 2017; Dahlum and Wig. 2018; Ekvall. 2019). The scholars found evidence for the connection between increased levels of gender equality and decreased risk for conflict onset and relapse.

Parallel to the adoption of UNSCR 1325, another scholarly field emerged from two cross-sectional papers (Swamy et al. 2001; Dollar, Fisman and Gatti. 2001). These two papers found a correlation between an increasing number of women in parliament and a decrease in levels of corruption. Ever since, several scholars have confirmed this correlation and developed the theory on why this occurs (Goetz. 2007; Alexander and Ravlik. 2015; Brollo and Troiano. 2016; Lust and Benstead. 2018; Bauhr, Charron and Wängnerud. 2019).

However, as the literature review and theory will present further, very few researchers have combined the two concepts of gender equality and corruption in explaining reoccurring intrastate armed conflicts. To my knowledge, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) is the only paper that attempts to make this connection, thus identifying a research gap. In this thesis, I take this one step further and develop the terms used. The aim is to identify the common theoretical arguments of women's political empowerment and quality of government and test whether they interact in their effect on intrastate armed conflict relapse. Therefore, the research question for this thesis is the following:

- Is the effect of women's political empowerment on durable peace conditional on the quality of government?

In order to answer the abovementioned research question, I will use a binary-time series cross-section analysis with fixed effects models to detect whether the levels of women's political empowerment and quality of government within a country affect the risk of conflict relapse. The sample for the analysis contains 53 countries that have all experienced at least one intrastate armed conflict during the years 1984-2014. In the section below, I will present in more detail how the thesis is structured.

1.2 Structure of the thesis

Up until now, this thesis has presented the introduction, which included the research aim and question. The following section presents the definitions relevant throughout the thesis. Several of the terms do not have a universal definition. Therefore, there is a need to clarify how I define the concepts before moving on to the literature review. The concepts defined are intrastate armed conflict, durable peace, women's political empowerment and quality of government. Chapter 2 presents the literature review, which consists of two parts. The first section shows

the previous research on women's political empowerment and durable peace from four different angles, making women visible in conflicts, sexual violence in conflict, women in the peace process and gender inequality as a cause for war. This last theme is the one most relevant for the research question. The second part of the literature review will build on two theoretical arguments presented by Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) on how increasing the political empowerment of women help prolong peace through the quality of government. Chapter 2 ends by presenting the research gap. Chapter 3 further develops the theoretical arguments presented in the literature review and forms three hypotheses that guide the analysis.

The following chapter 4 focuses on presenting the method used to test the hypothesis and further presents the operationalisation of the variables used in the analysis and offers a more specific research design. Chapter 5 presents the results illustrated in both tables and graphs with analysis below each figure. This chapter is followed by chapter 6, which discusses the hypotheses presented in chapter three and if they can be rejected or confirmed. Furthermore, there is a discussion on what the results mean for previous research and the world beyond academia. Chapter 7 concludes the findings and answers the research question from the introduction. The last two chapters contain the references used for this thesis and finally an appendix including additional materials, such as my do-file.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Intrastate armed conflict

To begin with, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program define an armed conflict as:

"a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar-year" (Kreutz. 2010:2).

Furthermore, the definition of an intrastate armed conflict follows the same criteria above mentioned. However, the conflict more occurs explicitly "between the government of a state and one or more internal opposition group(s)" (2010:6). This definition is used because I am interested in reoccurring armed conflicts and minor conflicts are, according to Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017), more likely to relapse.

1.3.2 Durable peace

The concept 'durable peace' used in the research question relates to the definition of intrastate armed conflict. Several scholars use the concept of durable peace (Bell and O'Rourke. 2010; Mason et al. 2011; Ohmura. 2011; Nilsson. 2012; Cammett and Malesky. 2012). Mason et al. refer to this as "(...) the duration of the peace after civil wars (...)" (2011:171). Thus, the acronym of this concept would be the reoccurrence of intrastate armed conflicts (Ohmura. 2011). Nevertheless, there is no definition of how long the peace should last before becoming 'durable', but for the clarity of this thesis, the definition of durable peace is the occurrence of a state only experiencing one conflict in the dataset. The opposite of a durable peace would be an 'on and off' conflict with some years of active conflicts, some peace years and then back to active conflict.

1.3.3 Women's political empowerment

The second term that needs to be defined is women's political empowerment. This concept is related to women's empowerment more broadly, which refers to strengthening women's economic, political, and social situation (Alexander, Bolzendahl and Jalalzai. 2016). Still, I will use the definition provided by Sundström et al., who explain women's political empowerment more specifically as: "a process of increasing capacity for women, leading to greater choice, agency, and participation in societal decision-making" (2017:322). Compared to gender equality, this definition does not say anything about the final goal but focuses on an ongoing process where women gain more political influence through different channels.

Besides, as will be more apparent after the literature review, women's political empowerment includes more than the percentage of women in parliament. It also includes the extents of rights about making self-determination and independence, and participation in civil society (Sundström et al. 2017). As stated above, this thesis aims to analyse how women's political empowerment and the quality of the government can determine the likelihood of durable peace. Thus, as the focus lies in the government's efforts to prevent a relapse of an intrastate armed conflict, the political dimension of empowering women is the most important in terms of the research question. Therefore, women's political empowerment rather than women's empowerment more broadly is used in this thesis.

1.3.4 Quality of government

The final concept to define before proceeding is the quality of government. This concept does not have a universal definition, but it is related to corruption, which Rothstein define as "the abuse of public power for private gain" (2011:6). With this definition of corruption, there is an underlying understanding of a normative standard for a government, where corruption does not occur. This normative standard leads us to the concept of 'good governance', which the World Bank use in their governance indicator. The World Bank defines governance as "(...) the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised" (Kaufmann, Kray and Mastruzzi. 2009:5). However, other scholars have criticised the concept of 'good governance' for being too broad and too normative in understanding what 'good' governance is (Rothstein and Teorell. 2008; Agnafors. 2013).

Rothstein (2011) develops this concept further and uses the term 'quality of government' (QoG) rather than 'good governance'. He defines QoG as 'impartiality' and "the closer to the ideal of the impartial exercise of public power, the higher the QoG" (Agnafors. 2013: 435). More specifically, impartiality in the exercise of public power means that the recipient of the public power is treated equally and without bias. Thus, the quality of government is closely related to corruption, but it is more than that. The term 'quality of government' as impartiality focuses on the output side of politics as and it "is first and foremost an attribute of the actions taken by civil servants, professional bodies in public service, law enforcement personnel, and the like" (Rothstein. 2011: 13). In this sense, fighting corruption might be a way to increase government quality, but ensuring a resilient public sector and creating a forceful rule of law will contribute to the increase in the quality of government. The following chapter provides the relevant previous literature on women's political empowerment, durable peace and quality of government.

2. Literature review

This literature review presents what previous researchers have done on the three main concepts of this thesis, namely women's political empowerment, durable peace and corruption. Section 2.1 introduces the research on women's political empowerment and durable peace, which is the main focus of this thesis. This part consists of four themes: early feminist research on conflict studies, sexual violence in conflict, women in peace processes, and the field closest to my research aim: how women's political empowerment can cause durable peace.

Section 2.2 present the literature on the connection between women's political influence and corruption. The following section focuses on the literature on why corruption and poor institutions will increase the likelihood of a conflict. Section 2.4 follows one of the mechanisms presented by Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) in why women's political empowerment leads to more durable peace. Namely, why prioritising welfare spending over military spending aids in prolonging the peace after a conflict and what part women share in this. This chapter ends by presenting the gap in the research identified and how this thesis will help narrow this gap.

2.1. Women's political empowerment and durable peace

2.1.1 Making women visible in conflicts

One of the earlier aims of feminist studies on gender and security, and the first step towards gender mainstreaming in conflict resolution, is to make women visible (Pankhurst and Pearce, 1997). Both Enloe (1983) and Nordström (1997) criticise the one-sided narrative of war, seen through the eyes of men. The scholars both focus on the diversified roles and sometimes conflicting roles women play in conflicts. Goldstein (2001) reasons that fighting does not come naturally for men, and thus this needs to be constructed culturally through stereotypical gender roles to create strong soldiers. Cockburn (2013) refers to this as 'militarised masculinity, where 'being a man' is interlinked with 'being a good soldier'. Militarised masculinity results in the patriarchal structures of women as the submissive victim and men as the protector/perpetrator, which leads us to the following theme, namely sexual violence in conflict.

2.1.2 Sexual violence in conflict

The adoption of UNSCR 1325 put gender-based violence on the agenda, and in the literature, there is a consensus that sexual violence is used systematically as a weapon of war (Skjelsbæk. 2001). Skjelsbæk argues that the concept of social constructionist and military masculinity can explain sexual violence in conflict against both sexes (2001). In other words, this social construction uses sexual violence to induce the idea of the perpetrator as masculine and powerful, whereas the victim is feminine and weak (Karim and Beardsley. 2016; Ferrales, Nyseth Brehm and Mcrelath. 2016). Furthermore, Cohen and Nordås (2014:464) develop the 'combat socialisation theory', which means that when there is a forceful recruiting of soldiers, the military uses sexual violence against women as a tool to build social cohesion among the soldiers.

In Afghanistan, Ahmad and Anctil-Avoine (2018) find that the violence against women did not decrease in the post-conflict situation but changed from systematic violence in conflict to a dramatic increase in domestic violence. By looking at sexual violence from another angle, Agerberg and Kreft (2020) discover that states with cases of sexual violence in conflict would sooner adopt gender quotas and thereby increase women's empowerment post-conflict. The reason is that the state has pressures from the international community and local women's organisations in the peace negotiations to make a change, which leads us to the next section on women in peace processes.

2.1.3 Women in the peace processes

An essential notion in the UNSCR 1325 was that women must participate on equal terms in the peace process to reach a sustainable peace (Mannergren Selimovic et. al:2012). Bell and O'Rourke (2010) assess peace agreements in their attempt to implement UNSCR 1325 and find that the implementation is, at best, inconsistent and shallow. A reason could be that most conflict management follows the realist theory, which is a state-centric approach, where civil society and other actors are left out (Harders. 2011). The belief is that including too many actors in the negotiations will unnecessarily complicate the peace process, which will prolong the conflict. (Paffenholz. 2014).

Still, in the 1990s, Burton introduced the conflict transformation concept, which focused on the conflict from the people's perspective rather than working with the formal diplomatic channels (Harders. 2011:134). Burton applied what he called the needs theory, where conflicts were seen through the eyes of the people's satisfaction of needs, such as security, development and identity (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall. 2016:51). This theory resulted in that conflicts previously seen as intractable, such as in Northern Ireland or Jerusalem, were seen in a new light where a possibility for resolution could be identified (ibid). The concept of conflict transformation showed the importance of including the people's voice to solve a conflict. Supporting this concept, Nilsson (2012) find that the likelihood of a durable peace increased when civil society played an essential role in the peace process.

Besides, the results of Webster, Chen and Beardsley (2019) show that women's political empowerment increases in the post-conflict period, both short-term and medium-term (2019:273). They reason that a post-conflict society can be a window of opportunity if women are included in the peace process, resulting in significant reforms improving the situation for women. For example, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, women's organisation on both sides of the conflict realised that they could not be free from patriarchal oppression unless they cooperate (Sharoni. 1994:105). Subsequently, a new and fragile alliance appeared between women activists on both sides cooperating in joint protests and conferences (ibid). Sharoni states that "Palestinian and Israeli women, who despite fundamental differences separating them, have begun (...) to seriously challenge the primacy of national identities (...) and link their struggles for women's liberation with their broader political struggles" (1994:108). In other words, this alliance shows how women's liberation can be a tool to provide alliances previously impossible and pave a path for conflict resolution. Still, this alliance was fragile, and the conflict is still ongoing.

Another example, during the peace negotiations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2002, only 40 of the 340 delegates were women (Paffenholz. 2014:79). Despite the low numbers, women from different civil society organisations came together in a joint declaration, which leads to the completion of the peace negotiations (Mannergren Selimovic et al. 2012). However, the conflict broke out again shortly, and a reason was that the transition government failed to address the issues women's organisation had raised during negotiations (Whitman.

2006). This leads to the next part on how gender inequality and the lack of women's political empowerment can cause conflicts.

2.1.4 Gender inequality as a cause for war

Within the gender equality and conflict literature, there are two competing theories on why gender equality leads to fewer and less deadly conflicts. The first theory is called 'biological determinism', reasoning that women are biologically more peaceful than men and will naturally oppose war to a more considerable extent than men (Caprioli. 2000:55). A competing theory called 'social constructivism' suggests that women are not naturally peaceful but rather a society with strong gender equality norms are (ibid). Tessler and Warriner (1997) test the two theories in attitudes towards conflicts in four Middle East countries. They find support for the social constructivism theory because it was not women respondents per se, but rather respondents with a positive attitude towards gender equality that had a more peaceful response. Providing further evidence for the social constructivist theory, Caprioli (2000) discovers that domestic gender equality, whether it is political, social or economic, will lead to less international militarism (2000:65). Caprioli and Boyer (2001) also support these findings.

Melander (2005) uses three different measures of gender equality, namely female leader, percentage of women in parliament and higher education attainment ratio, to test whether this affects the likelihood of intrastate conflict. He does not find evidence for the impact of female leaders on intrastate conflict likelihood, but the latter two measurements of gender equality decrease the presence of intrastate conflict. Sjöberg and Gentry (2006) have another angle as they present case studies of women as perpetrators of violent actions, such as genocide, rape and suicidal bombing worldwide. The authors argued that violent women are not exceptions to the ideal of women but rather clear evidence that the view of women as naturally peaceful is indeed flawed. Dahlum and Wig (2018) use another independent variable, namely the 'Women's political empowerment index' that broadens the concept of gender equality beyond the percentage of women in parliament (2018:11). They demonstrate that states are less likely to experience civil conflicts if there is a high level of women's political empowerment. Further, their result shows that both the mechanism of gender-equal norms and women's participation were significant. Hudson et al. (2012) measure the physical security of women and hypothesise

that this will affect the overall national security. They find that this variable "explains more of the variance in the same three measures of state security [compared to democracy, Islamic civilisation and wealth] in both bivariate and multivariate analysis" (Hudson et al. 2012: 114). Ekvall (2019) builds on this research and expands the research to include attitudes towards gender equality and reaches a similar conclusion.

As this literature review has shown, several scholars have found a correlation between women's political empowerment and conflict duration. However, there is not much research on the mechanisms explaining this correlation. Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) present two mechanisms to explain why increasing the percentage of women in parliament leads to a more durable peace. Firstly, women in parliament are more likely than men to prioritise welfare spending over military spending in a post-conflict, which decreases the risk of conflict relapse. Secondly, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) argue that female politicians are perceived as less corrupt than men. This enhances the perception of a trustworthy and strong government, which reduces the risk of conflict reoccurrence.

The following section will present the previous research on why women's political influence leads to lower levels of corruption, followed by a section on why corruption and a poor quality of government can explain conflict onset and reoccurrence. Section 2.4 will connect the three themes in the research on prioritising welfare spending over military spending.

2.2 Women as political cleaners?

At the beginning of the millennium shift, a new literature field emerged from two cross-sectional papers that found evidence that increasing the number of women in parliament will lower corruption levels (Swamy et al. 2001; Dollar, Fisman and Gatti. 2001). These two scholars inspired other scholars to investigate further how and under what conditions increasing women's political influence leads to lower levels of corruption. Some researchers have used experimental studies and find that women are less likely than men to engage in corruption (Torgler and Valev. 2010; Brollo. 2015. Bauhr, Charron and Wängnerud. 2019) and are more likely to punish corrupt behaviour (Olofsdotter Stensöta, Wängnerud and Agerberg, 2015). Furthermore, the perception of women being naturally less corrupt than men seems to be of great importance to women's political influence. In a survey study on Jordanian and Tunisian

elections, the respondents were more likely to vote for a female candidate if they perceived women as less corrupt than men (Lust and Benstead: 2018). Still, Goetz (2007) offers another explanation for why women are less corrupt than men. She argues that a female politician who has just entered the political arena has not had the opportunity to engage in corruption as the patronage networks are mostly male-exclusive. Thus, women are perceived as political cleaner since they could offer a new culture of more honest politicians not rooted in corrupt networks.

An example of this is in the post-conflict years of Cambodia in the late 1980s, where the society was still fragile, with a strong military presence and high levels of corruption (McGrew, Frieson and Chan. 2004:11). Still, the newly founded United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia created an opportunity for the civil society to establish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) where women were encouraged to participate. Thus, through NGOs, women and women's organisations stood on the front step towards a change in the country as they were not welcomed in the more traditional political arena (a.a: 14). Consequently, among the respondents in Cambodia, women were perceived as less corrupt than men (2004:15). A reason was that several newly elected female politicians came from civil society with the ambition of creating a new, fairer and more just society (ibid). This case marks an important example of how women and the empowerment of civil society can become crucial actors in creating a good quality of government and thus help create a stable post-conflict situation.

Another example of women and other civil society organisations fighting corruption is in the case of Yemen (Karman. 2018). Karman (2018) reasons that civil society played an essential part in the revolution of February 11th, 2011, against the corrupt regime. Moreover, after the revolution, women's organisation played an important part in drafting a new constitution, including gender quotas, human rights, and a new, more stable state structure (a.a: 218). Nevertheless, the transitioning government had to postpone the approval of the new constitution due to the Houthi rebellion. Still, even though Yemen has an ongoing conflict today, it shows how women through civil society can play a crucial role in the combat against corruption and, in the long run, possibly create a more stable and fair society. The following section describes the connection between corruption and conflict and why a good quality of government can provide durable peace.

2.3 Why corruption and poor institutions can be an explanation for conflict onset

Similar to the conclusion of the abovementioned case studies of Cambodia and Yemen, several scholars argue that the level of corruption can significantly affect the likelihood of an armed conflict. For example, Fearon and Laitin (2003) show that the best predictors of violent conflicts were those with beneficial conditions for an insurgency, such as low state capacity, political instability and poverty. Correspondingly, Fjelde (2009) and Fearon (2011) both find that the reason for conflict relapse in low-income countries is due to corruption, weak institutions and poor governance. Thus, the stability of the society might be dependent on combatting corruption. Shifting the focus from corruption to bureaucratic quality, Öberg and Melander (2010) conclude that autocratic states with a low level of bureaucracy quality tend to have a higher likelihood of intrastate conflict onset as an independent bureaucracy is more responsive to its citizens and the issues raised.

This finding leads to the literature on the broader concept of quality of government and good governance. Hegre and Nygård (2016) use seven indicators of good governance, which they define as "(...) the extent to which policymaking and implementation benefit the population at large (...)" (2016:984). The findings show that good governance decreases the risk of conflict relapse. The most efficient remedy was a combination of good formal and informal institutions after a conflict (2016:1009). Building on this, Fjelde, Nygård and Knutsen (2021) make a distinction between those institutions created to keep leaders accountable (vertical constraints) and institutions that protect the rights of the people (horizontal constraints) and test whether these affect conflict relapse. The result shows that both types of institutions help prevent an armed conflict relapse, and the most substantial effect was when they interacted. Thus, they come to a similar conclusion to Hegre and Nygård (2016) and Cammett and Malesky (2012).

The following section will connect the previous research on women's political empowerment, quality of government and durable peace through the mechanism of government spending priorities.

2.4 Prioritising welfare spending over military spending in a post-conflict society

Collier and Hoeffler (2006) find that states prioritising high military spending in post-conflict societies have a higher tendency to relapse into conflict compared to those who lowered their

military spending, which is also the conclusion drawn by Fjelde and De Soysa (2009). Likewise, Taydas and Peksen (2012) discover that politicians gain public loyalty by investing in social welfare policies, decreasing the likelihood of citizens rebelling and, therefore, the likelihood of conflicts. Furthermore, the research of Cammett and Malesky (2012) measure 'good governance' as the ability of governments to provide public goods. They find that government effectiveness and state capacity are associated with closed-list proportional representation. Closed-list proportional representation, in turn, results in a more durable peace after a signed peace agreement. The researchers state that "at a minimum when citizens believe their governments deliver basic services more effectively less likely to favour a return to arms" (2012:1009).

Related to this, Cockburn (2013) reasons that there is a pattern that governments who have a large military budget do so at the expense of resources aimed at the welfare sector. This redistribution affects women negatively in society as they are the ones that traditionally have to stay at home taking care of the children and the elderly when the government cannot (2013:436). Moreover, Wängnerud (2009) states that female politicians are an essential factor in lifting the politics of the so-called 'women's interest'. This concept refers to the idea that women have particular political interests because of their experiences as women, such as reproductive rights, education and health care (Wängnerud. 2009:53). Similarly, in a study by Alexander and Ravlik (2015), they find that "as women's political empowerment increases the representation of women's interests, the quality of government increases, because poor government outcomes, like corruption, often undermine women's interests in myriad ways" (2015: 21). Thus, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) argue that increasing women in parliament will lead to women's interest being put higher on the agenda, such as health care and education. This new budget spending priority will lead to a better provision of public goods, which helps a country recovering from an armed conflict.

2.5 Research gap

The literature review above presented what previous scholars have found in terms of the three concepts of women's political empowerment, durable peace and quality of government. The first part dealt with the literature on gender equality and conflict and how it has developed from

making women visible in conflict to assessing how the level of gender equality can have an impact on a durable peace. The second part presented the research closest to my thesis, namely the paper by Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017). They explain the correlation between the abovementioned concepts by introducing two additional concepts: perception of government quality and corruption.

As presented in the literature review, three different scholarly fields deal with firstly women's role in combatting corruption, secondly women's role in creating sustainable peace and thirdly, how the quality of government can prevent a conflict relapse. Still, to my knowledge, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) is the only paper that has combined the research on gender equality and corruption in their effect on conflict relapse. They present evidence that women's political influence and perception of a good quality of government can affect the likelihood of conflict relapse. Hence, the quality of government might be the missing piece in the effect of women's political empowerment on durable peace.

Nevertheless, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) use the percentage of women in parliament to measure gender equality. This operationalisation is limited as it misses the impact civil society can have on improving women's political empowerment, as Dahlum and Wig (2018) argue. Moreover, Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) use the perception of corruption, accountability and effectiveness as measurements for the perception of government quality. I will, on the other hand, use a measurement of actual levels of quality of government to detect whether this alters the correlation. With this reasoning in mind, this thesis contributes to the research on conflict relapse by developing arguments by Shair-Rosenfield and Wood on whether the effect of women's political empowerment on internal armed conflict relapse is dependent on the quality of government.

The subsequent chapter gives a more thorough explanation of the theoretical reasoning and provides the hypotheses used. In addition, this chapter includes a figure more graphically illustrating how I hypothesise that the relationship between women's political empowerment, quality of government and durable peace works.

3. Theory and hypotheses

As noted in the previous section, I have identified a research gap from the fact that there have been separate strands of literature between women's political empowerment and intrastate armed conflict on the one hand and the quality of government and conflict on the other. Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) made the first attempt to address these three concepts together. However, as noted above, I am taking this one step further by focusing on women's political empowerment rather than the percentage of women in parliament. Arguably, the literature review showed that women's participation through civil society in the post process could help create a durable peace by focusing on conflict transformation and understanding the root cause of the conflict. Furthermore, the research also showed that a country with more gender-equal norms tended to decrease the risk of conflict onset and relapse. Thus, the first hypothesis is the following:

- *A higher level of women's political empowerment will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse.*

Moreover, as presented in the literature review, increasing the quality of government by creating independent institutions in a post-conflict situation could help decrease the risk of conflict relapse. One reason is that increased public spending over military spending helps rebuild a society, but corruption and poor institutions hinder this. Another reason is that an impartial bureaucratic structure is more responsive to its citizens and the problems they raise. As the case of Yemen showed, a third is that corruption can be a reason for the people to rebel against the government in the first place. This leads to the second hypothesis, which is the following:

- *A higher level of quality of government will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse.*

Interestingly, the government is always on one side in intrastate conflicts and the rebellious group on the other side. This puts pressure on the government to keep the population from rebelling. The literature review showed a similar argument for why both an increase in women's political empowerment and the quality of government will lead to a durable peace. More specifically, the theory is that politically empowering women in a post-conflict society will lead

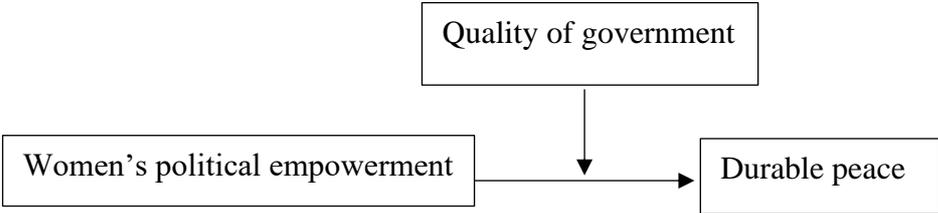
to a change in public spending priorities and create a new clean, peaceful beginning for the government. Furthermore, increasing women's political influence could help combat corruption. When corruption is low, the citizens will be able to take advantage of the public spending priorities and be less likely to oppose the government.

Another reason is that it is vital to restore the public institutions and infrastructure after years of violent conflicts to create a stable society. Nonetheless, high levels of corruption might hinder this, and a new conflict might break out. In other words, women and civil society can help control corruption and give peacebuilding a fair chance. Thus, these two concepts may interact in their effect on durable peace. For example, if there is a high level of women's political empowerment in a post-conflict, this would increase welfare spending. However, if there are poor institutions and high levels of corruption, the outcome will still be inferior, and a conflict could soon relapse. Therefore, the third central hypothesis most closely related to the research question is the following:

- *Quality of government moderates the effect of women's political empowerment on the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse, where a low quality of government will weaken the effect an increase in women's political empowerment will have on the risk of conflict relapse.*

The figure below illustrates my hypotheses in how the variables will interact.

Figure 1. Illustration of the third hypothesis



4. Method and operationalisation

As previously stated, my central hypothesis for this thesis is that quality of government conditions the effect women's political empowerment can have on internal armed conflict relapse. Thus, the interest does not lie in looking at specific countries and their post-conflict society but rather to compare countries to identify general trends in countries experiencing intrastate conflicts. However, an alternative method could have been to qualitatively compare two countries that both have experienced several conflicts but differ in women's political empowerment to test the effect. A possibility could have been to interview people involved in the peace process, such as mediators, women's organisation advocates and government officials, in their opinion about the importance of quality of government and women's political empowerment. This method would have provided an opportunity to understand the reasoning behind the mechanisms behind the correlation to detect causation better.

Still, as the aim is to compare why some countries relapsed into new conflicts and some did not over a longer time, quantitative analysis suits the aim better. Furthermore, as I want to analyse conflict relapse over a more considerable amount of time, it would have been insufficient to, for example, gather data through interviews during one time. Thus, as the time frame for this thesis is only five months, this would not contribute to understanding the development of peace over time. However, this is possible in quantitative studies because researchers had already gathered the data.

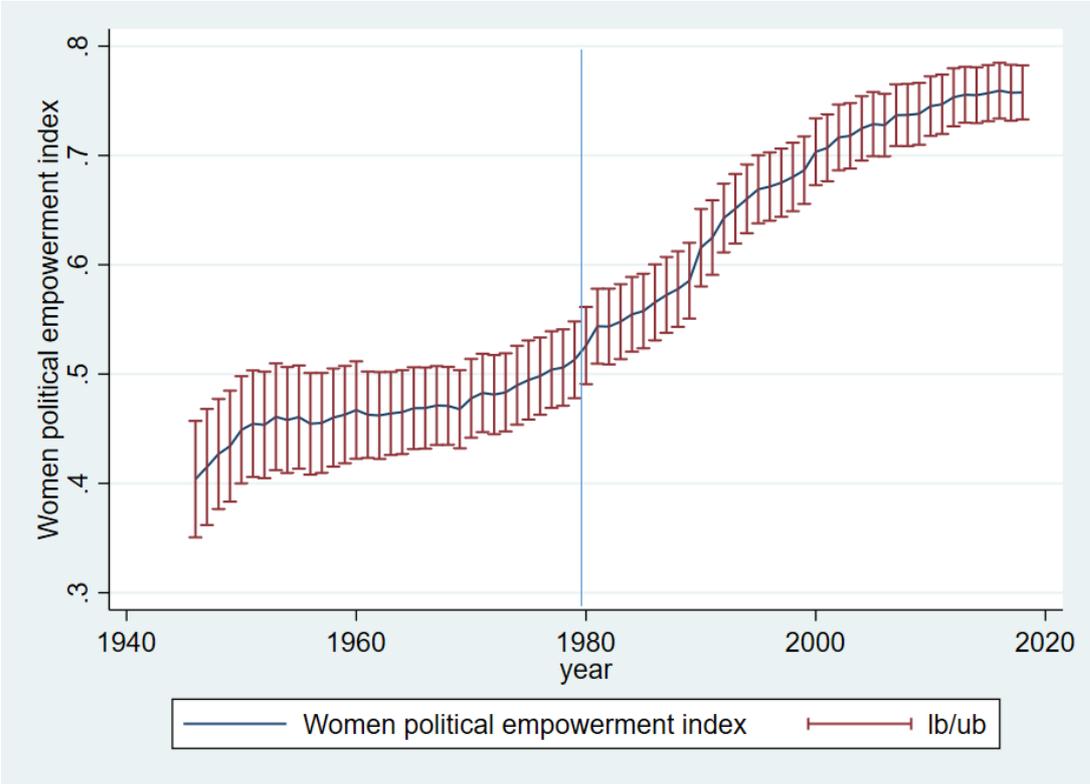
4.1 Data sources

The first thing to mention is that I used the statistical software Stata version 16.1 for the analysis. My do-file presenting exactly the commands I used for the analysis can be found in the appendix. The primary dataset used is the Quality of government (QoG) standard dataset from 2020 (Teorell et al. 2020). This dataset contains over 2000 variables, and the standard version of the dataset includes both time-series variables and cross-section (ibid). "One aim of the QoG Institute is to make comparative data on QoG, and its correlates publicly available" (Teorell et al. 2020:1), which sums up why it suits this analysis very well. The unit of analysis is country-year, such as 'Afghanistan 1999' 'Nigeria 2004' and so forth. I chose this dataset

because it includes the most proper variables of both the quality of government and women's political empowerment and the variables used for control.

Furthermore, I used the UCDP Conflict Termination Dataset v.2 – 2015 (Kreutz. 2010) for the dependent variable internal armed conflict relapse. This dataset included all intrastate conflicts between 1946-2014, which I will explain more below. Still, the unit of analysis for this dataset is *ConflictID*, which is the unique identification of the conflict in question, thus a different one than QoG. To solve this issue, I created a new dependent variable, described in detail below, to merge the two datasets. Moreover, as I am interested in how women's political empowerment and quality of government affects conflict relapse, a further limitation is that I could not use the entire time-series of the conflict termination dataset due to the limitation of the latter mentioned variable. Still, this does not change the result significantly as women's political empowerment did not have any dramatic changes before the 1980s, as you can see in the distribution graph below.

Figure 2. Graph showing the mean distribution of women's political empowerment from 1946-2018.



Furthermore, the research aims to understand the link between women's political empowerment and conflict duration, but how the quality of government affects this correlation. The analysis is thus dependent on accurate data for all three variables. The operationalisation of the moderating variable below will tell you that it did not have the same temporal scope as the other variables but start in 1984. Still, this does not dramatically affect the result as several of the papers reviewed in the literature review start their analysis in the 1980s or later (Bell and O'Rourke. 2010; Nilsson. 2012; Cohen and Nordås. 2014; Agerberg and Kreft. 2020). Bearing this in mind, the dataset for this thesis includes 53 countries, all having experienced at least one intrastate armed conflict over 1984-2014.

4.2 Operationalisation of the dependent variable – Durable peace

To measure the dependent variable, durable peace, one must go back to defining the concept presented earlier in this thesis. I chose to define durable peace as the phenomena of lasting peace after an armed conflict that does not relapse into a new conflict. Thus, for this analysis, durable peace occurs for those countries experiencing one conflict during the time in focus. Furthermore, I hypothesise that governments that can provide good quality of government and high political empowerment for women are less likely to experience a conflict relapse. Thus, as mentioned earlier, this thesis is restricted to countries experiencing at least one-armed conflict during the time. More specifically, the variable chosen is *conflict onset* from the UCDP/PRIO's dataset on conflict termination (Kreutz. 2010). As mentioned in the chapter about definitions, I will use the UCDP/PRIO definition of an intrastate armed conflict, with a lower threshold of 25 battle-related deaths. The reason is that low-intensity conflicts tend to relapse more frequently (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood. 2017:1001). Still, I am aware of the limitation that a country with 25 battle-related deaths one year and 24 the next would be coded as one conflict year and not two.

Moreover, as I am interested only in armed conflicts within a country, so-called internal armed conflicts, I created a dummy called *intraconflict* using the UCDP/PRIO termination dataset (Kreutz. 2010). The reason for creating a variable is that UCDP/PRIO use *ConflictID* as their identification variable. Nonetheless, to merge this dataset with QoG, I needed to create a variable where the unit of analysis is country-year. I did this using the variable *location* in the

UCDP/PRIO dataset, as this is the geographical location where the conflict occurs. For internal armed conflicts, this is always the government side of the conflict, and it is therefore compatible with country-year in the QoG dataset. By creating this variable, I could identify whether, for example, Egypt had an active conflict in 2002 or not and so forth. The variable is coded as '1' if the UCDP/PRIO identified an internal conflict or an internationalised conflict for that year and location, or a '0' if there were no active conflict. The difference between the internal and internationalised internal conflict is that the latter have interference from other states, whereas the former does not. Noteworthy is that some countries do not have data for the whole period due to missing data or that the country did not exist before that year. Additionally, as I am interested in durable peace, I have excluded countries with an active conflict during the entire 31 years as they have not had any years of peace. The table below shows the tabulation of the countries included in the dataset and the number of years they have had an active conflict.

Table 1. Tabulation of number of years with intrastate conflicts by country

Country Name	Years of no intrastate conflict	Years of intrastate conflict	Total
Algeria	7	24	31
Angola	9	22	31
Azerbaijan	12	4	16
Bangladesh	21	10	31
Burkina Faso	29	1	30
China	30	1	31
Congo	25	5	30
Congo, Democratic Republic	19	12	31
Cote d'Ivoire	27	4	31
Egypt	24	7	31
El Salvador	23	8	31
Guatemala	19	12	31
Guinea	29	2	31
Guinea-Bissau	27	2	29
Haiti	28	3	31
Indonesia	14	17	31
Iran	11	20	31
Iraq	7	24	31
Israel	1	30	31
Lebanon	25	6	31
Liberia	25	6	31
Libya	29	2	31
Malaysia	30	1	31
Mali	23	8	31
Mexico	29	2	31
Morocco	25	6	31
Mozambique	21	9	30
Nicaragua	24	7	31

Niger	23	7	30
Nigeria	25	6	31
Pakistan	17	14	31
Panama	30	1	31
Papua New Guinea	25	6	31
Paraguay	30	1	31
Peru	11	20	31
Romania	30	1	31
Senegal	21	10	31
Sierra Leone	19	11	30
Somalia	8	22	30
South Africa	26	5	31
Spain	27	4	31
Sri Lanka	7	24	31
Suriname	28	1	29
Syria	27	4	31
Thailand	19	12	31
Togo	30	1	31
Trinidad and Tobago	30	1	31
Turkey	1	30	31
Uganda	2	29	31
Ukraine	16	1	17
United Kingdom	22	9	31
United States	17	14	31
Venezuela	30	1	31
Total	1114	490	1604

4.3 Measuring the independent variable – Women's political empowerment

Moving on to the operationalisation of women's political empowerment, as presented in the literature review, many scholars use the *percentage of women in parliaments* as their independent variable. As argued earlier, this is somewhat limited as the concept of empowerment goes far beyond seats in parliament but covers a broader concept of the position of women. Hence, the Varieties of Democracy (V-dem) institute has created a variable called *women's political empowerment index* (Sundström et al. 2017). Worth noting is that this index is created based on the definition of women's political empowerment initially.

More specifically, this index covers three concepts of the term, namely choice, agency and participation. The first concept, 'choice,' is operationalised using the *women's civil liberties index* that measures the extent to which women have the freedom to make their own decision about crucial parts of their lives (a.a: 325). Further, the operationalisation of 'agency' is *women's civil society participation index*, which measures "(...) women's ability to engage in public debate freely" (ibid). Finally, Sundström et al. (2017) operationalise the third concept,

'participation', using *women's political participation index*. This index measures to what extent there is a substantial representation of women in parliament (a.a: 326). Thus, the variable goes beyond the percentage of women in parliament to measure a broader sense of women's position in public life, such as participation through civil society and their level of independence. The variable ranges from 0 to 1, where a higher value means higher political empowerment for women.

4.4 Operationalisation of the moderating variable – The quality of government

To operationalise the moderating variable, the quality of government, one must go back to the definition stated earlier. I chose to define a high quality of government as a government with strong impartial bureaucratic institutions. Thus, one aspect of this concept is corruption, which Transparency International has measured in the *Corruption Perception Index* (Teorell et al. 2020:366). Still, this variable only has available data for 2012-2019, making the time too short (a.a: 581; Fearon. 2011). Another alternative could have been the *Bayesian corruption index*, which also measures corruption perception but over a considerable time frame, namely 1984-2017 (a.a:115).

However, the level of perceived corruption in a country does not fully cover the quality of government. This concept, as described earlier, includes corruption but goes further to detect how well functioning the government is on several fronts, such as the rule of law and bureaucratic quality. Bearing this reasoning in mind, for this analysis, I will use the *ICRG indicator of quality of government* (Teorell et al. 2020:366). The PRS Group is a company that gathers data in the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), which predicts the economic, financial and political risk of a country aimed towards foreign investors using several components (PRS Group. 2019). "The ICRG staff collects political information and financial and economic data, converting these into risk points for each risk component based on a consistent pattern of evaluation" (The PRS Group. 2019:2). Thus, this is a very subjective measure as experts assess. However, as Fjelde argues, these expert surveys tend to be highly correlated with citizens perception of corruption, and one can argue that that is an equally subjective measurement (2009: 205).

The variable *ICRG indicator of quality of government* is more specifically an index that captures the risk for corruption, the level of law and order and bureaucracy quality (Teorell et al. 2020:366). The first subcomponent measures corruption in the political system and includes both petty and grand corruption (ibid). Law and order, on the other hand, consist of "(...) an assessment of the strength and impartiality of the legal system (...) [and] of popular observance of the law" (a.a: 367). The last component is bureaucracy quality, which evaluates the extent of the strength and quality of the bureaucratic system to provide public goods (ibid). By adding these three components, they have created an index ranging from 0-1, where a higher number means a higher quality of the government. Hence, this measurement includes the level of corruption combined with the rule of law and bureaucracy quality, which follows my definition of quality of government stated earlier.

4.5 Measuring the control variables – Democracy, economic wealth and ethnic diversity

In order to control for spuriousness in the focal relationship, the multivariate analysis includes three control variables that might affect the correlation. Firstly, women's political empowerment and quality of government could reflect two dimensions of the extent of democracy in the country (Sung, 2003; Esarey and Churillo, 2013; Nistotskaya and Olofsdotter Stensöta, 2018; Dahlum and Wig, 2018). Thus, the analysis will include a measurement of democracy, specifically the *Electoral democracy index* that consists of freedom of association and expression, suffrage, clean elections, elected executive (Teorell et al. 2020: 608). The index ranges from 0 to 1, where a higher value means more democratic.

As a second control variable, I include economic wealth as a general increase in income could affect the level of women's political empowerment and conflict relapse (Fearon, 2011; Dahlum and Wig, 2018; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood, 2017). I operationalised economic wealth by *GDP per capita (constant 2010 US dollar)*, which measures the gross domestic product averaged yearly by the country's population in constant 2010 US dollar (a.a: 647). Worth noting is that this variable is highly skewed, which might affect the result, and thus this variable is log-transformed with the new name *logGDPpc*. Lastly, the third control variable is ethnic diversity, as this might be an alternative explanation to conflict outbreak (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Mason et al. 2011; Fjelde, Knutsen and Nygård, 2020). To operationalise ethnic diversity, I used the

time-invariant variable *ethnic fractionalisation* in this analysis. This variable measures the probability that two randomly selected people from the same country have a different ethnic background (Teorell et al. 2020: 275). The variable ranges from 0 to 1, where 1 means a highly fragmented country (ibid).

4.6 Research design

The method used in this thesis is binary time-series cross-section analysis (BTSCS). Binary indicates that the dependent variable only can take two values, usually '0' and '1' (Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen. 2017: 261). The advantage of this kind of method is that you can include an analysis with a binary dependent variable on both a large number of cases and a more extended time. Further, using BTSCS has been more and more common in International Relations and especially when either conflict relapse or onset is the focus of the analysis, as in this case (Beck. Katz and Tucker. 1998).

Nonetheless, a problem when using logistic regression analysis with BTSCS is that it assumes temporal independence, which is unrealistic in this model as the likelihood of a conflict one year is affected by the occurrence of a conflict the year before (Beck. Katz and Tucker. 1998:1263). Thus, many analysts ignore this issue and overestimate their results or use a hazard event model, such as Cox regression (a.a:1264). Hence, an alternative method for this thesis could have been to use Cox regression analysis and investigating all the world's countries and how women's political empowerment and corruption affect the likelihood of an internal armed conflict.

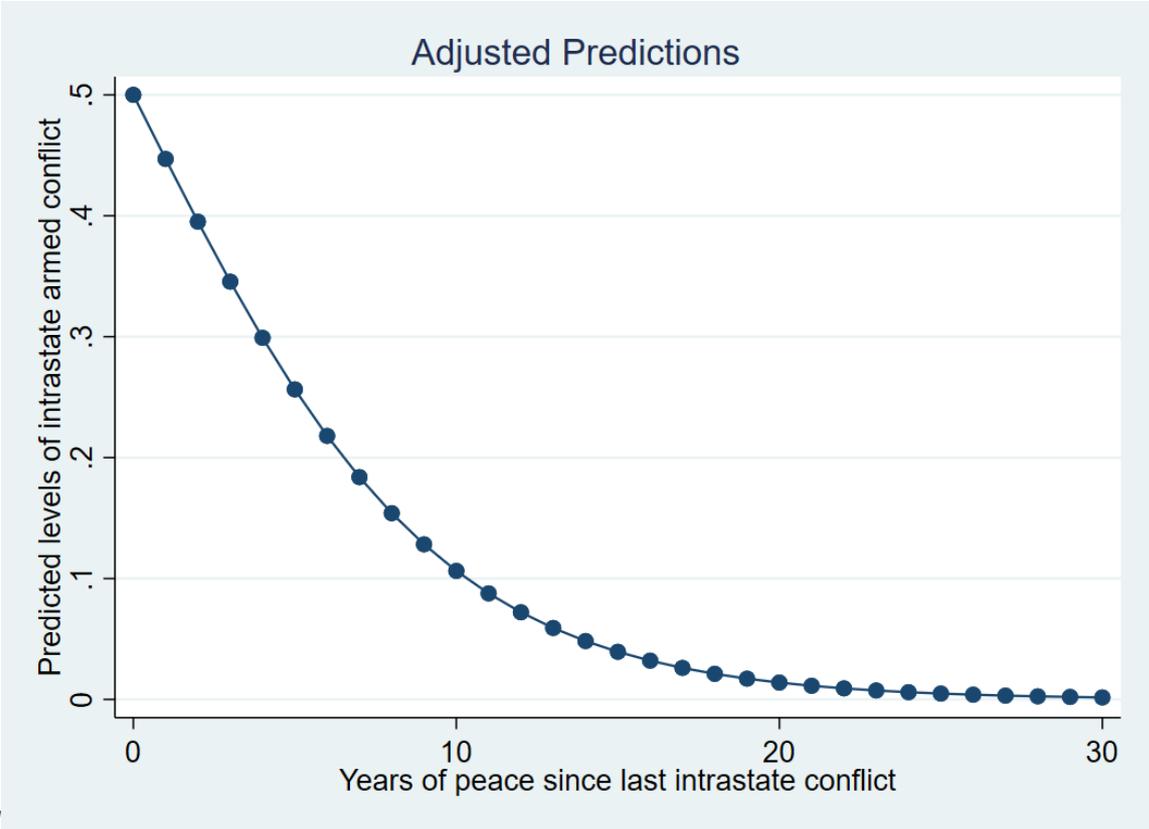
Though, a problem with Cox regression is that it is inappropriate to use for repeated events (a.a: 1271), which is the case for my thesis. Besides, Beck, Katz and Tucker reason that binary time-series cross-section analysis is identical to grouped duration (a.a:1265), so the temporal dependence can be easily solved using time dummies or splines without having to change the method. Thus, in terms of the research question and hypotheses with reoccurring internal armed conflicts, it is more appropriate to use BTSCS. Additionally, the analysis will include both bivariate analysis and multivariate analysis using logistic regression testing both the effect of the focal relationship, the interaction term and what happens when adding the control variable, combined with the variables used to account for temporal dependence.

More specifically, I conducted a Hausman test that "(...) checks a more consistent model (fixed effects) against a more efficient model (random effects) to make sure the more efficient model also gives consistent results" (Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen. 2017:240-241). Subsequently, as this test was statistically significant at the 95% level, a fixed-effects model is more appropriate to use than a random-effects model (a.a:241). An advantage with fixed effects is that we can get a purer relationship between the variables in our analysis as the model can control all time-invariant variables (a.a:248).

The biggest drawback with random effects is that you cannot be sure what you precisely measure as the analysis includes both within and between variance (a.a:252). Thus, for fixed effects, I can measure how variables that vary over time effects the "(...) switched status on the dependent variable" (a.a:249). In other words, I can measure the level of the independent variables within a country against that country's likelihood of intrastate armed conflict relapse. Worth noting is that the fixed effects model excludes all groups that do not change status on the dependent variable (from 0 to 1 or vice versa), but this is not a problem for me as the change of status on the dependent variable over time is the focus of this thesis. Still, with fixed effects, I cannot make any conclusions about the effect between countries as I would with random effects, but this is not relevant for my research question focusing on the time-variant variables and their effect.

In addition, to account for temporal dependence, table 5 in the next chapter includes a variable called *peaceyears*, which measures the years of peace since the last conflict ended. This variable measures the years since the country had below 25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year. This variable ranges from 0 to 29 and starts again from 0 as soon as a new conflict emerges. Furthermore, Beck, Katz and Tucker (1998) point out that it is not reasonable to assume that years of peace have a linear effect on the dependent variable, but rather that the risk of a new conflict decreases as the years of peace increases. I demonstrate this by the graph on the following page, which shows that the likelihood of a conflict decreases dramatically during the first ten years of peace, but it is not linear motion. Bearing this in mind, I follow the practice by Carter and Signorino (2010) (see also Fjelde, Knutsen and Nygård. 2020) and include years of peace, the squared and cubic form to account for the possibility of curvilinearity.

Figure 3. Marginsplot illustrating the effect of years of peace on the prediction of an intrastate armed conflict



Furthermore, there are three problems besides temporal dependence regarding regression diagnostics that I need to address in binary time-series cross-section analysis. These are heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation and non-stationarity (Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen. 2017: 252). Therefore, the analysis includes clustered standard errors grouped around countries (a.a: 235, 259). Further, to determine whether I need to lag any of my time-variant independent variables to control for autocorrelation, I used the command "corrgram" in Stata. This test showed that a one-year lag on the time-variant independent variables and control variables were the most accurate (a.a: 259). Before moving on, I want to take a moment to address the issues of validity and reliability. As noted earlier, I have tried to be transparent in how I have operationalised the different variables. On request, I can provide my dataset to control the validity. Further, the appendix includes my do-file for other researchers to replicate the results. The subsequent chapter presents the results of this thesis before discussing the result and its connection to the hypotheses.

5. Results

Shifting the focus back to the introduction, my research question for this thesis is the following: *Is the effect of women's political empowerment on durable peace conditional on government quality?* In the theory section, in order to test the research question, I presented the following three hypotheses:

1. *A higher level of women's political empowerment will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse.*
2. *A higher level of quality of government will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse.*
3. *Quality of government moderates the effect of women's political empowerment on the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse, where a low quality of government will weaken the effect that an increase in women's political empowerment will have on the risk of conflict relapse.*

This chapter presents the empirical results in terms of the hypotheses and the analysis of the result. The following chapter will discuss the result in terms of the hypotheses and whether they can be rejected or confirmed. The table presented on the next page shows the descriptive statistics of the variables included in the analysis.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables included in the analysis

Variable	Mean	Variance	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Observations
Intrastate armed conflict	0.305	Overall	0.461	0	1	N = 1604
		Between	0.275	0.032	0.968	n = 53
		Within	0.370	-0.662	1.273	T-bar = 30.264
Women's political Empowerment	0.628	Overall	0.188	0.129	0.965	N = 1604
		Between	0.161	0.266	0.921	n = 53
		Within	0.100	0.218	0.933	T-bar = 30.264
ICRG Quality of government	0.431	Overall	0.185	0.042	0.981	N = 1604
		Between	0.158	0.125	0.902	n = 53
		Within	0.096	0.144	0.752	T-bar = 30.264
Electoral democracy	0.431	Overall	0.233	0.072	0.948	N = 1595
		Between	0.197	0.103	0.875	n = 53
		Within	0.124	-0.124	0.855	T-bar = 30.094
Log GDP per capita	7.794	Overall	1.290	4.898	10.840	N = 1531
		Between	1.270	5.566	10.638	n = 52
		Within	0.249	6.536	9.077	T-bar = 29.442
Ethnic fractionalization	0.569	Overall	0.244	0.095	1	N = 1575
		Between	0.247	0.095	1	n = 52
		Within	0	0.569	0.569	T-bar 30.288

This table of the descriptive statistics points out that several variables have both variances between countries and within countries over time. The "N" shows how many observations each variable has, and the "n" presents how many countries this analysis includes. The "T-bar" presents the average time per variable. The following table will present a correlation matrix on how the variables correlate with each other, which might affect the result.

Table 3. Correlation matrix

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Intrastate conflict	1.000					
(2) Women's political Empowerment	-0.152	1.000				
(3) Quality of government	-0.030	0.392	1.000			
(4) Log GDP per capita	0.044	0.325	0.623	1.000		
(5) Electoral democracy	-0.067	0.760	0.440	0.493	1.000	
(6) Ethnic fractionalization	0.020	-0.058	-0.144	-0.311	-0.071	1.000

The strongest correlation with intrastate conflict is women's political empowerment with a negative value of 0.151. Further, women's political empowerment and level of democracy correlate strongly with a coefficient of 0.760 and ICRG Quality of government and Log GDP per capita is also strongly correlated with 0.623. The high correlation between the previously mentioned variables could cause multicollinearity, namely that another independent variable cannot perfectly explain another independent variable. Consequently, I did a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test that measures multicollinearity in the model (Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen. 2017:147). According to these results, I do not have a problem with multicollinearity as the value was within the range accepted to proceed without removing any variables (ibid). Thus, I continue with the following table that will show the result from the conditional fixed-effect logistic regression analysis with the dependent variable, the primary independent variable, and the moderating variable. This table gives us a first hint of whether I can reject or confirm my hypotheses.

Table 4. Conditional fixed-effects logistic regression between intrastate conflict, women's political empowerment and quality of government

	Model 1 Intrastate conflict	Model 2 Intrastate conflict	Model 3 Intrastate conflict	Model 4 Intrastate conflict
Women’s political empowerment	-4.531** (1.803)		-4.406** (1.8)	3.117 (3.827)
Quality of Government		-4.173** (1.785)	-3.934** (1.582)	6.132 (4.266)
Interaction term				-20.525** (8.422)
Observations	1551	1551	1551	1551
Countries	53	53	53	53
Pseudo R2	.037	.029	.063	.086
The independent variables are lagged with one year Standard errors clustered around countries are in parentheses The interaction term is between women's political empowerment and quality of government *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1				

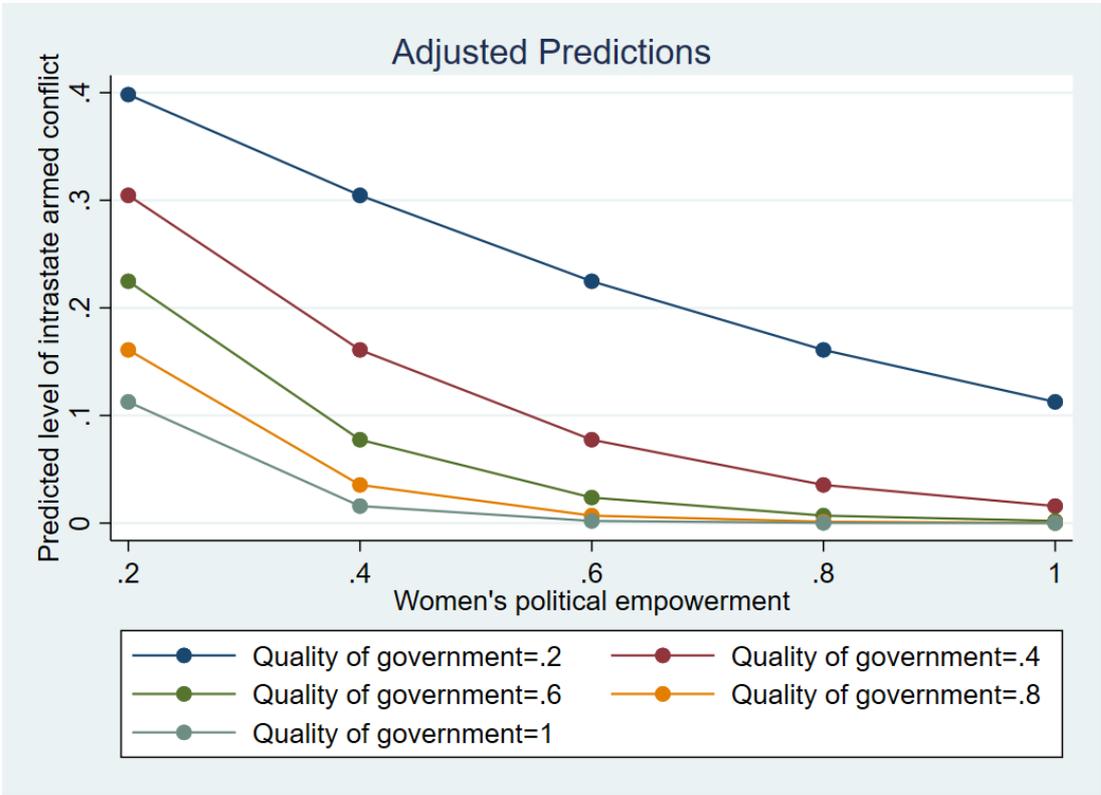
Analysis of table 4

The first model illustrates the focal relationship between women's political empowerment and intrastate armed conflict. The coefficient displayed is both statistically significant at the 95 % level and negative, meaning that as women's political empowerment increases over time, the risk of a new conflict decreases within a country. Moving on to the second model, this includes the quality of government variable, which is significant at the 95% level. The coefficient for this variable is also negative, indicating a negative correlation between the quality of government and the risk of intrastate armed conflict.

The third model includes both women's political empowerment and quality of government. Noteworthy is that both variables reach statistical significance at the 95% level, and both coefficients are negative. Finally, in the fourth model, the interaction term between women's political empowerment and quality of government is introduced, which is negative and statistically significant at the 95% level. Consequently, both women's political empowerment and quality of government are now positive and insignificant, meaning that the interaction

explains the form of the relationship between the two variables. In other words, this means that the effect of women's political empowerment and intrastate armed conflict is conditional on the level of quality of government in a country. To illustrate this relationship more graphically, the figure below illustrates the adjusted predictions for the likelihood of an intrastate armed conflict over different levels of the focal independent and the moderating variable.

Figure 3. Margins plot illustrating the adjusted predictions for the occurrence of an intrastate armed conflict over different levels of women's political empowerment and quality of government.



Analysis of figure 3

This figure shows the adjusted predictions of an intrastate conflict over different levels of women's political empowerment and quality of government. The figure tells us that the higher value for women's political empowerment, the less likely an intrastate armed conflict is, and the same goes for the quality of government. Thus, as the table described, the lowest odds of a

new intrastate armed conflict can be found in those countries with both high levels of women's political empowerment and high levels of quality of government.

Additionally, as the lines do not have the same angle over different government quality levels, this says the same thing as the table above. Explicitly, the effect of women's political empowerment on conflict relapse depends on the level of quality of government. Still, both variables impact the dependent variable on their own as, for example, the blue line shows. Even though the quality of government is low, the likelihood of a conflict decreases as women's political empowerment increases and vice versa. Nevertheless, the question is whether this correlation still holds statistical significance when adding the control variables presented in the previous chapter and accounting for temporal dependence, which the table displays below.

Table 5. Conditional fixed effects multivariate logistic regression with peace years.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Intrastate conflicts					
Years of peace since the last conflict	-.904*** (.115)	-.878*** (.112)	-.858*** (.11)	-.877*** (.124)	-.883*** (.124)	-.87*** (.122)
Years of peace since the last conflict (squared)	.067*** (.014)	.065*** (.013)	.063*** (.013)	.066*** (.016)	.067*** (.015)	.067*** (.015)
Years of peace since the last conflict (cubic)	-.001*** (0)	-.001*** (0)	-.001*** (0)	-.001** (.001)	-.001*** (0)	-.001*** (0)
Women's political empowerment	-2.695* (1.406)	-2.646* (1.428)	2.451 (2.744)		-3.967* (2.137)	.342 (3.415)
Quality of government		-1.555 (.962)	5.213* (3.07)	-2.148* (1.191)	-2.404** (1.187)	3.715 (3.446)
Interaction term			-13.999** (6.051)			-12.501* (6.621)
Log GDP per capita				-.284 (.556)	-.111 (.588)	-.031 (.563)
Electoral democracy				-.838 (.813)	1.403 (.968)	1.659* (.984)
Observations	1551	1551	1551	1388	1388	1388
Countries	53	53	53	49	49	49
Pseudo R ²	.255	.258	.266	.253	.261	.267
Standard errors clustered around countries are in parentheses						
Ethnic fractionalisation is omitted due to time-invariance						
All independent variables are lagged with one year						
The interaction term is between women's political empowerment and quality of government						
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1						

Analysis of table 5

Beginning with the variable used to account for temporal dependence, namely years of peace since the last conflict and its square and cubic. All three variables are statistically significant at the 99.9% level and while the coefficient for the squared peace years is positive, peace years and cubic peace years are both negative. The coefficient displayed in model 1 shows that women's political empowerment is negative and significant at the 90% level. This means that as women's political empowerment increases over time within a country, the likelihood of a conflict decreases. In the second model, both women's political empowerment and quality of government are negative, but only the former is statistically significant.

This changes in the third model when the interaction term is negative and statistically significant. The coefficient of quality of government has changed the sign to a positive, and women's political empowerment has done the same but is no longer significant. In the fourth model, the quality of government is back to negative and GDP per capita and democracy, but only the quality of government is significant. The fifth model does not change the sign of the coefficient or the significance of quality of government and women's political empowerment, as in the first and second model are both negative and significant at the 90% level.

When including women's political empowerment in the model, the sign of electoral democracy turns positive, but still not significant. Nevertheless, this coefficient changes to be significant at the 90%-level in the sixth model when incorporating the interaction term. GDP per capita has a negative sign but is not significant. Neither is women's political empowerment or government quality, even though they now have a positive sign. The interaction term is negative and statistically significant, which means that quality of government moderates the effect women's political empowerment has on intrastate armed conflict within a country over time.

Lastly, a comment on the pseudo- R^2 , which similar to a likelihood ratio test, measures whether the model improves an empty model. Thus, if the pseudo- R^2 is higher in one model and the models have the same number of observations, a higher value means a higher likelihood that the model is a better fit than an empty one. The value is highest in the third and sixth model, which includes the interaction term. Therefore, one can state that the interaction between women's political empowerment and quality of government significantly affects the likelihood

of an intrastate armed conflict. The next chapter will discuss the findings regarding the hypotheses presented in chapter three before discussing the overall results.

6. Discussion

This chapter now turns to a discussion of the results. The first section discusses the three hypotheses first separately and then jointly by giving policy recommendations based on the results. Next, I will present the limitations of this study and highlight areas for future research before concluding the thesis.

6.1 Discussion of the results

The first hypothesis presented in chapter three was that *a higher level of women's political empowerment will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse*. The results showed that an increase in women's political empowerment correlated with a decrease in the likelihood of an intrastate armed conflict over time within a country. This correlation holds even after controlling for wealth, democracy, ethnic fractionalisation, and temporal dependence. I cannot say anything about causation without further analysis, but I can relate my findings to previous researchers.

By comparing my results to scholars such as Caprioli (2000), Melander (2005), Hudson et al. (2012), Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) and Dahlum and Wig (2018), I come to a similar conclusion. Women with political influence did affect the likelihood of both conflict relapse and onset more convincingly than, for example, democracy levels and economic wealth. The women's interest mechanism most convincingly explains the theoretical motivation. This mechanism means that women with political influence will prioritise welfare spending over military spending in a post-conflict society, which helps prolong the peace. Moreover, another reasoning from the previous literature is that the peace process might be a way for women to increase their political empowerment through civil society participation in a post-conflict situation. As noted in the literature review, civil society organisations, where women often play essential roles, are crucial actors in acknowledging the root cause of conflict and contribute to a more durable peace.

The second hypothesis stated that *a higher level of quality of government will lead to a lower risk for intrastate conflict relapse*. I cannot reject this hypothesis as the quality of government had a negative and statistically significant correlation with the likelihood of an intrastate armed conflict, even when controlling for temporal dependence, economic wealth, democracy, and ethnic fractionalisation. The result, therefore, confirms what previous researchers, such as Fjelde (2009), Fearon (2011) and Hegre and Nygård (2016) have found. The theoretical argument is that a country with low quality of institutions and a high level of corruption can create an incitement for the people to rebel against the government in the first place, as with Yemen. Furthermore, the fragility of the state in a post-conflict situation could lead to a new conflict break-out if the government cannot provide basic public goods and create stability in the country.

The third hypothesis was that: *quality of government moderates the effect of women's political empowerment on the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse, where a low level of quality of government will weaken the effect an increase in women's political empowerment will have on the risk of conflict relapse*. This hypothesis is the most important one as this interaction between quality of government and women's political empowerment had not previously been tested. Table 5 presented that the interaction term was negative and statistically significant even after controlling for temporal dependence and the control variables. More graphically, figure 3 illustrated this interaction where the quality of government altered the effect women's political empowerment had on durable peace. Thus, this hypothesis can be confirmed, even though I cannot determine causation.

Relatedly, I had two theoretical arguments explaining this, which firstly is spending priorities. According to this argument, countries that continue prioritising military spending even after a conflict has ended are more likely to have a conflict relapse (Collier and Hoeffler. 2006; Fjelde and De Soysa. 2009; Cammett and Malesky. 2012). Researchers have also found that women in politics tend to prioritise welfare spending over military spending (Cockburn.2013; Wängnerud. 2009). Thus, by following the results, an increase in women's political empowerment decreases the risk of conflict relapse by focusing on the welfare sector rather than the military in a post-conflict situation.

The other theoretical argument was that scholars have found that politically empowered women decrease the level of corruption, perceiving women as naturally less corrupt (Swamy et al. 2001; Dollar, Fisman and Gatti. 2001; Brollo. 2015; Lust and Benstead. 2018; Bauhr, Charron and Wängnerud. 2019). Another scholarly field found that the level of corruption and the quality of the government affected the conflict relapse (Fjelde. 2009; Fearon. 2011; Öberg and Melander. 2010; Fjelde, Nygård and Knutsen. 2021). Correspondingly, the other argument was that women's political empowerment affects the quality of government, which affects conflict relapse.

To summarise the results, I cannot reject either of my hypotheses because the result showed statistically significant coefficients for both women's political empowerment and quality of government separately and when combined in an interaction. Still, what does this mean for both the research field and the world? Arguably, one of the significant findings is that reforms, such as strengthening civil society, restoring hospitals, adopting gender quotas in parliament, and combatting corruption, go hand in hand in conflict resolution. You cannot do one without the other.

In terms of policy recommendations, I would argue that one of the essential things do to in a peace process is to follow and implement UNSCR 1325 and include women and civil society in negotiations. The mediators need to listen to what they have to say in order to understand the conflict entirely. As previously noted, the violence and problems do not end with a ceasefire, but this is a continuing process that can take years to make sustainable. Bearing the fragility of a conflict-torn state in mind, I would recommend the UN Peace missions to shift the focus from the ceasefire to peacebuilding and conflict transformation to restore a peaceful society. In addition, in terms of preventing violent conflicts in the first place, I recommend states to focus on politically empowering women and strengthening the quality of government and the public sector simultaneously. Still, bringing the attention back to the thesis, I am aware that it is not without limitations, and the gap in the literature that I am trying to fill is one attempt, but there is without doubt more further research can do. Therefore, the following section will highlight the most important limitations and make suggestions for further research before concluding Chapter 7.

6.2 Limitations and further research

One limitation of my thesis is that I have a relatively short time of 31 years due to the available data for the quality of government variable. The other variables, women's political empowerment and intrastate conflict, had data from 1945, so by including the ICRG quality of government variable, I lost 39 years of data. Therefore, further research is needed to collect data for the quality of government spanning over a more extended time. In addition, further research could also include a variable more closely related to spending priorities to come closer to explaining causality. Regarding the variable women's political empowerment index, it would also be interesting for further research to determine more precisely which components of the index that affect the correlation most significantly. Moreover, the result shows that the interaction term is significant at 90%, which is lower than the most commonly used standard of 95%. Hence, the actual impact of the results needs to be examined further in order to fully detect whether it is of statistical significance.

Another limitation of this study is that the correlation of the focal relationship might be spurious as other variables not included in the analysis might affect the relationship. I am aware of this, but it is impossible to control everything. The approach for this thesis was to use the control variables most often included by following the arguments by previous research. Therefore, future research should use other control variables in the multivariate analysis to confirm whether the correlation still holds statistical significance. Moreover, this thesis identifies patterns between 53 countries over 31 years and does not include any local considerations relevant to why that specific conflict relapse happened in that country. Therefore, another suggestion for further research is to closer studies on post-conflict situations to determine how and under what conditions women's political empowerment and quality of government help sustain the peace in that specific contest. Possibly there are other mechanisms than the ones presented here that interplay in the relation.

The subsequent chapter focuses on the research question and aim stated in the introduction and concludes what this thesis has discovered to answer the research question.

7. Conclusion

This master's thesis identified a research gap combining the research on women's political empowerment and quality of government and their effect on durable peace. The aim was to examine this link's theoretical framework and test the effect of this interaction on durable peace using binary time-series cross-section analysis with a fixed-effects model on 53 countries over 31 years. The result showed a statistically significant and negative correlation between the interaction of women's political empowerment and quality of government and the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse. This correlation still held after controlling for temporal dependence, democracy, economic wealth and ethnic diversity. Therefore, as my research question was:

- *Is the effect of women's political empowerment on durable peace conditional on the quality of government?*

The answer to the abovementioned question is yes, women's political empowerment is dependent on the high quality of government in its effect on durable peace. Firstly, the two theoretical motivations presented were that women's political empowerment affects the quality of the government, which in turn decreases the risk of conflict relapse. Secondly, when women gain political influence, they tend to shift the government spending focus from the military to the welfare sector in a post-conflict society, which decrease the risk of conflict relapse.

Consequently, as presented in the introduction, the UNSCR 1325 has had slow progress, but the tides are changing for recognising the role of women in conflicts. Additionally, the scholarly field of recognising women's role in conflicts and fighting corruption has grown tremendously. Nevertheless, there is still much that we do not know regarding the mechanisms playing a part in the interplay of the three variables in focus. Hence, to conclude, this thesis found that the interaction between women's political empowerment and quality of government is negatively correlated with the risk of intrastate armed conflict relapse. Still, I leave it to further research to develop the theoretical framework and better understand how and under what conditions quality of government act as the missing link between women's political empowerment and durable peace.

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9. Appendix

A1. Do-file for master's thesis

*****Dofile for master's thesis*****

*Hypothesis 1: Higher levels of women political empowerment leads to less conflict recurrence

*Hypothesis 2: Higher levels of quality of government leads to less conflict recurrence

*Hypothesis 3: The focal relationship is moderated by levels of corruption. Meaning that in a country with high levels of corruption, higher political empowerment does not lead to less conflict recurrence

*Population: All countries with intrastate or internationalized intrastate conflicts in the period 1984-2014

*Time: 1984-2014

*Dependent variable: My own dummy from UCDP/PRIO Termination Conflict dataset (intraconflict 1=conflict 0=no conflict)

*Independent variable: Women's political empowerment index (vdem_gender - ranges from low empowerment to high)

*Moderating variable: ICRG - Quality of government index (icrg_qog) - ranges from low qog to high qog.

*Control variables: GDP per capita (logGDPp), Ethnic fractionalization (fe_etfra), (vdem_polyarchy)

IMPORT AND MERGE DATA

```
import excel "C:\Users\hanbe\OneDrive - Göteborgs Universitet\AG2500 - Master's thesis\Method\Dataset and codebooks\UCDP dataset 1984-2014 conflictset.xlsx", sheet("Sheet1") firstrow clear
```

```
merge 1:1 ccode year using "C:\Users\hanbe\OneDrive - Göteborgs Universitet\AG2500 -  
Master's thesis\Method\Dataset and codebooks\QoG standard dataset 2020 timeseries.dta"
```

```
xtset ccode year
```

```
*Code for figure 2*
```

```
xtgraph vdem_gender
```

```
graph export "vdemdist.png"
```

```
****Create a common sample? Include intraconflict vdem_gender and icrg_qog****
```

```
gen sample=1 if intraconflict!=. & vdem_gender!=. & icrg_qog!=.
```

```
bys sample ccode (year): gen firstobs = _n if sample==1
```

```
keep if sample==1
```

```
tab cname intraconflict
```

```
*Only eight observations for Ethiopia, delete that due to unbalanced sample*
```

```
drop if cname=="Ethiopia (-1992)"
```

```
*Also, delete those countries who have had an active conflict all through the sample*
```

```
drop if cname=="Colombia"
```

```
drop if cname=="Croatia"
```

```
drop if cname=="India"
```

```
drop if cname=="Moldova"
```

```
drop if cname=="Myanmar"
```

```
drop if cname=="Philippines"
```

```
drop if cname=="Sudan (-2011)"
```

I also need to drop cameroon because it has only had a conflict in 1984

```
drop if cname=="Cameroon"
```

```
xtset ccode year
```

```
asdoc tab cname intraconflict
```

Summarizing sample

```
xtset ccode year
```

```
xtdescribe
```

53 countries over 31 years

Create log variable of GDP per capita

```
gen logGDPpc = log(wdi_gdpcapcon2010)
```

```
sum logGDPpc, detail
```

*Create lagged variable

How many years?

```
corrgram intraconflict if ccode==12, lags (10)
```

```
corrgram vdem_gender if ccode==792, lags (10)
```

```
corrgram icrg_qog if ccode==324, lags (10)
```

```
corrgram vdem_polyarchy if ccode==768, lags(10)
```

```
corrgram logGDPpc if ccode==792, lags (10)
```

*For all variables, the strongest effect can be found in 1 year lag and this seems to solve the strongest autocorrelation.

```
xtset ccode year
```

*Generate new lagged variables

gen lvdem_gender =L.vdem_gender

gen llogGDPpc =L.logGDPpc

gen licrg_qog =L.icrg_qog

gen lvdem_polyarchy =L.vdem_polyarchy

*****DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS*****

* draw line plots

xtline intraconflict,overlay legend (off)

Does not make sense for intraconflict because it is a dummy...

xtline vdem_gender, overlay legend(off)

Looks like it is a tendency that this increases over time? Dramatic changes - quotas??

xtline icrg_qog, overlay legend(off)

*No clear trend.

xtline vdem_polyarchy, overlay legend(off)

*No clear trend

Distribution of intrastate conflicts for table 1

asdoc tab cname intraconflict

Descriptive statistics for table 2

asdoc xtsum intraconflict vdem_gender icrg_qog vdem_polyarchy logGDPpc fe_etfra,
replace

Correlation matrix for table 3

```
asdoc corr intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra
```

```
*****
```

```
*****REGRESSION DIAGNOSTICS*****
```

```
*****
```

```
***HAUSMAN TEST***
```

Significant = FE not significant = RE

```
xtlogit intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, fe
```

```
estimates store fe
```

```
xtlogit intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, re
```

```
estimates store re
```

```
hausman fe re
```

Test is significant at 0.003 so I should use FE

Model specification

```
quietly logit intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra
```

```
linktest, nolog
```

Hat is significant and hatsq is not

Check for autocorrelation

*Woolridge test for autocorrelation

```
xtserial intraconflict vdem_gender icrg_qog vdem_polyarchy fe_etfra logGDPpc
```

*This test is highly significant

****Tolerance value vif****

```
regress intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra llogGDPpc
```

```
estat vif
```

Mean VIF 2.04 and 0.6 1/VIF

*****Conditional bivariate fixed effects analysis with interaction term and clustered standard errors using fixed effects for table 4*****

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict lvdem_gender, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) nest replace
```

*With qog

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict licrg_qog, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

With both

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

interaction term

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict c.lvdem_gender##c.licrg_qog, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

Illustrating the correlation for the model four with a Marginsplot (Figure 3) *

```
xtlogit intraconflict c.lvdem_gender#c.licrg_qog, fe
```

```
margins, at (lvdem_gender = (0.2(0.2)1) licrg_qog = (0.2(0.2)1))
```

```
marginsplot, noci ytitle("Predicted level of intrastate armed conflict") xtitle ("Women's political empowerment")
```

```

graph export "marginsplotinteraction.png"

*****

*****Temporal dependence*****

*****

***I used the BTSCS ado-file from Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen (2017), found at Sage
Publishing (2020) ***

**With peaceyears**

btscs intraconflict year ccode, generate(peaceyears)

*Create squared and cubic peaceyears

gen peaceyears2 = peaceyears*peaceyears

gen peaceyears3 = peaceyears*peaceyears2

***Marginsplot for figure 3***

xtlogit intraconflict peaceyears, fe

margins, at (peaceyears= (0(1)30))

marginsplot, noci ytitle("Predicted levels of intrastate armed conflict") xtitle ("Years of peace
since last intrastate conflict")

graph export "marginsplotpeaceyears.png"

**Testing for temporal dependence **

xtlogit intraconflict lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, fe

est store l1

xtlogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 lvdem_gender licrg_qog llogGDPpc
lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, fe

```

est store l2

lrtest l1 l2

*This test is significant meaning that we do have temporal dependence

****Conditional Fixed effects multivariate logistic regression with peaceyears and clustered standard errors for table 5*****

with vdem_gender

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 lvdem_gender, group(ccode)
vce (cluster ccode) nest replace
```

*With both vdem and qog

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 lvdem_gender licrg_qog,
group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

with interaction

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 c.lvdem_gender##c.licrg_qog,
group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

with control and not vdem

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 licrg_qog llogGDPpc
lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

with vdem

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 lvdem_gender licrg_qog
llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```

*With interaction term

```
asdoc clogit intraconflict peaceyears peaceyears2 peaceyears3 c.lvdem_gender##c.licrg_qog
llogGDPpc lvdem_polyarchy fe_etfra, group(ccode) vce (cluster ccode) append nest
```