

**The Impact of Returnee Migrant Women on the Social and Political  
Involvement of Women in Post-conflict Countries**

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**Abstract**

This paper attempts to quantitatively find an answer for the puzzle: why an increase in the number of returnee migrant/refugee women increases women's social and political involvement in some post-conflict countries, but not in others? I contend that returnee migrant women in post-conflict countries cause an increase in women's social and political involvement. I argue this is because of women's cultural assimilation to the host country where they migrate to and their active involvement and their interaction with other women after return to the country of origin. To test the hypothesis, I use data on percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments in order to measure political involvement of women. Also, female labor force participation rate, and more specifically the percentage of female employees in industry, and percentage of female teachers in tertiary education are used to gauge social involvement of women. In addition, to measure the impact of returnee migrant women, I have used the total number of returnee refugees. This paper will analyze the relationship between the number of returnee refugees and social and political involvement of women in their country of origin to see if an increase in number of returnee refugees has an impact on social and political involvement of women in post-conflict countries or not.

**Introduction**

An article on "Women's Civil and Political Participation" defines social and political involvement of women as equality between men and women in terms of women's ability to take part in all aspects of public and political life and decision-making. Thus, women's social and political involvement is an important factor for ensuring gender equality because it allows women to participate in decision making that impact every aspect of their lives. However, historically women have been under-represented in the public arena, specifically in the social and

political spheres. Therefore, scholars have tried to find out what can lead to an increase in women's social and political involvement. Some authors argue that national policies such as quotas can lead to a greater social and political involvement of women (Caul 2001, Shvedova). Some other scholars argue that variables such as insecurity and traditional culture are barriers to women's social and political involvement (Beath, Christia, & Enikolopov, 2012). Thus, insecurity and traditional culture have a negative impact on social and political involvement of women.

In the presence of conflict in a country, people have no option but to escape the country; hence, they migrate to other countries. However, they return home after the conflict. The statistics show that between 1965 and 1990, the number of female migrants has grown faster than male migrants in both industrialized and developing countries. Migrant women today comprise half of the international migrants ("Female Face of Migration"). I believe post-conflict countries face a large amount of returnee migrants or refugees because refugees, especially the illegal refugees, might not be allowed to live in the country of destination; thus, they have to return to their country of origin. For example, after the collapse of Taliban regime in 2001, a lot of Afghans who lived in Iran returned to Afghanistan because the government of Iran wanted repatriation of Afghan refugees (Majidi, 2008). Thus, as there is a flow of returnee refugees in post-conflict countries the returnee migrants or refugees might have an impact on the social and political involvement of women. Therefore, this paper tests whether returnee migrant women have any effect on social and political involvement of women in post-conflict countries. Thus, the puzzle that I address is why an increase in the number of returnee migrant/refugee women increases the social and political involvement of women in some post-conflict countries, but not

in others? In the rest of the paper, I will try to answer this puzzle from both the point of view of other scholars and the results of my own research, theory, and data analysis.

I have observed in Afghanistan that after the fall of Taliban regime in 2001 a lot of refugees returned to Afghanistan mainly from Pakistan and Iran. I think many of these returnee migrant women came to involve in social and political activities. For instance, many of female teachers in our school were women migrants who returned from Pakistan or Iran. Thus, I thought that these returnee migrant women have an impact on the social and political involvement of women; thus, I wanted to study this phenomenon.

My study is different from previous studies because I focus on the impact of returnee migrant on the women's social and political involvement in their country of origin. Returnee migrant women have a broader experience because of their exposure to a new culture than their own. Many scholars examine the variables that lead to an increase in the social and political involvement of women. They have found out that laws and national policies such as quotas, stable security, role models, and civil society formation with their gender friendly policies can encourage women's social and political involvements (Gaul 2001, Beath et al 2012, and Scott & Davis 2005). Moreover, scholars on migration have focused on what happens to the migrants in their host countries and the articles explain the economic condition of returnees and the benefit of economic remittance in the migrant's country of origin. Yet, very few articles focus on returnee migrant women and their impact on the social and political involvement of women. Also, there are studies on the impact of migrant's economic remittance, but there are fewer studies on the migrants' social impacts on people in their country of origin. Thus, scholars have overlooked the impact of returnee migrant women that lead to more social and political involvement of women. Hence, I wanted to know if returnee migrant or refugee women have an

impact to increase the social and political participation of women in their country of origin in post-conflict countries. To study this, I used quantitative research method. In this paper, firstly I will discuss other scholars' studies on the social and political involvement of women, and on migration. After the literature review I will discuss my own theory and explanation of how returnee migrant women can drive the social and political involvement of women. Then, I will explain my research methodology of this study and my data collection including, my dependent and independent variables. Finally, I will discuss the results of my study.

Accordingly, in the next section of this paper I will discuss what other scholars have found out about the social and political involvement of women. As I have mentioned earlier, scholars have attempted to study what are the drivers of social and political involvement of women because social and political involvement of women is an important aspect of women's rights and in general a human rights issue.

## **Literature Review**

### *Literature on Social and Political Involvement of Women*

Quotas included in national policies are one of the variables that lead to an increase on the social and political involvement of women. Shevedova and Miki Caul (2001) argue that because of the inclusion of quotas in policies of many nations have led to an increasing trend of women's social and political representation. To explain the importance of quotas, it is said that even though conflicts have harmed people in the conflicted countries, the women in post-conflict countries have gained more of their rights in four countries (Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)) because the new constitutions in most of the post-conflict countries contain provisions which incorporate at least 30% quotas for female representation to participate in decision-making institutions (Mihigo, 2012). Furthermore,

Mihigo says that in spite of the overwhelming nature of conflicts which have affected people in the four countries; the conflicts have brought flexibility to their traditional social order, which has promoted expression and political action, from which women have benefited to some extent (Mihigo, 2012). Conflicts have played a considerable role in the emergence of a women's movement that has led to overcome ethnic and political divisions in order to promote women's political, economic and social rights (Mihigo, 2012). To use an example, Nisha Varia (2005) says that in Afghanistan the new constitution clearly outlines women's political rights; according to which both men and women have equal rights. Accordingly, a quarter of the seats in the lower house of parliament, and one-sixth of the upper house are reserved for women in Afghanistan (Varia, 2005). However, others such as Leslie Schwindt Bayer (2009) argues that quotas are not that effective because of how they are implemented, as they do not guarantee winning of women in the 30% seats. Even though some articles have argued that quotas lead to an increase in the social and political involvement of women, others argue that quotas are not as effective as they are supposed to be.

According to previous studies, insecurity can negatively impact the social and political participation of women. For example, Beath and others (2012) say that insecurity imposes immense constraints on female mobility. Because of insecurity women have remained uneducated and have gone through various physical and mental sufferings. Therefore, it is unlikely that we witness political participation of women in an insecure situation of a country (Report on Women Political Participation in Afghanistan, 2005). In addition, Nisha Varia (2005) states that even though quotas have helped to increase women's involvement in politics, in practice there are flaws. For example, Afghan women candidates face violent retaliation if they advocate justice and women's right in their campaign and women still face challenges to



participate in the evolving political institutions of Afghanistan. This has something to do with power, not just social expectations or the conservatism of Afghan society (Varia, 2005).

Accordingly, literature points to the power competition between men and women, and unstable security in a conflicted country hampers women's social and political involvements.

Culture is another variable that can play a role in social and political involvement of women. Beath and others (2012) articulate that promoting gender equality and increasing the social and political involvement of women face challenges because of long-standing cultural traditions that expect women to only do house chores. In some countries cultural views prevent women from participating in economic, social, and political activities (Beath, Christia, & Enikolopov, 2012). In some countries, legislative actions that have taken steps to empower women is often constrained by social attitudes and the social division of gender roles (Beath, Christia, & Enikolopov, 2012). Hence, cultural barrier is a variable that plays a negative role in women's political and social involvement. Besides, as women move between two different spaces during migration, women must negotiate two cultures in which gender is constructed differently (Beath, Christia, & Enikolopov, 2012). This is challenging for women migrants while helping women become aware of gender role's social constructions. Although gender inequality exists in most of the countries around the world, it differs from one culture to another. Migration broadens people's views regarding culture, which is a barrier to women's involvement in public arena.

Moreover, civil society is another variable that can help increase the public activity of women. Because of women' civil organizations, women can actively participate in policy making and peace building process. These organizations are helpful for the promotion of "gender-friendly" policies; the organizations are also helpful to promote women's political

participation (Falch, 2010). The non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly women's organizations that are growing in strength, are a driving force for change. Additionally, Ashild Falch says that NGOs have played a significant role to advocate in bringing progress in legislation or mechanisms in order to ensure promotion of women (Falch, 2010). In the last few years women are more active in the NGO sector, and women also head many NGOs. Thus, this indicates that organizations and civil society can help to increase the participation of women in public. According to Lilia Grygorovytch (2002), the agenda of many international and local organizations give priority to the eradication of all forms of sex based discriminations. For the international and local organizations political, economic, social and cultural life, at the regional, national and international levels participation of women are very crucial to promote international peace and cooperation. The international organizations consider equal participation of women in public spheres as a human rights issue that should be achieved (Grygorovytch, 2002). Therefore, I think that organizations that try to promote women's rights can play a vital role to increase the social and political involvement of women. At minimum, they can let women know of their rights.

Access to better education, health care facilities and employment are other variables that can lead to an increase on women's social and political involvement. For example, one of the UN reports says that Afghan women could not play any role in the political process because during the Taliban, women were severely restricted in their access to education, health care facilities and employment (UN report, 2002). Absence of education that hampers the skill and capacity of women is one of the reasons that we have less women's participation in various aspects of social and political life (Report on Women Political Participation in Afghanistan, 2005). Thus, education of women is another variable that impact the social and political activity of women.

Women who are politically or socially active can become role models for other women. According to Scott and Davis (2005), women are more likely to become engaged in politics if they see more women candidates in their areas and that visible women in politics can become role models for other women. Accordingly, I think the idea of role models can be applied in case of those returnee women migrants who are skilled and active in the society as other women in their traditional society might think that they can also be an active member in their society. I believe that role models can break the traditional culture view of women. Active women will encourage their fellows to be active as well. Active politician women can be role models and inspire other women to start political activity (Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007). If women see other women in the positions of legislators, cabinet members, prime ministers, and presidents, they will be encouraged to think of them as capable for these posts. Wolbrecht & Campbell (2007) also state that women being in these positions helps compensate for past and present injustice that women have faced. Hence, I think that returnee women migrant can act as role models for non-migrant of post-conflict countries which leads to an increase in social and political involvement of women.

#### *Literature on Migration*

Firstly, we should know the definition of migration in general and then the definition of migrant and refugees in particular. Migration is the movement of a person or people from one country to another country which happens across an international border or within the border of a state which is called internally displaced people (IDPs). To define migrant and refugees, migrant is defined as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for at least one year or more without consideration of what is the cause, is it voluntary or not, is it regular or irregular. Refugees in turn are defined as any person who is compelled to flee his/her country of origin

because their life, security and freedom is threatened as a result of generalized violence, aggression of foreign countries, civil wars, facing violation of human rights (Key Migration Terms, 2011). By refugees scholars mean those who flee their country because of war, but by migrants they mean that those who go to other countries because of their individual motivation. Thus, a refugee is more specific than migrant. My intention was to study migrants in all post-conflict countries, which can include refugees and everyone else who stay at least one year in another state than their state of origin. However, in this paper I will use the word migrant and refugees alternatively because I was only able to find data on refugees but not migrants, so I did my study on returnee refugees.

Migration is caused by many variables combined such as economic, political and social factors: either in a migrant's country of origin (push factors) or in the country of destination (pull factors). Oppression of a specific culture, and less freedom are example of a political push factors, unemployment and environment are economic push factors. So, there are so many push and pull factors that cause migration. Pull factors is what brings people from somewhere such as personal freedom, social equality, political pull factors such as stability (Ambrosini, Mayr, & Radu, 2012). Historically, the relative economic prosperity and political stability of the EU are thought to be a considerable pull factor of immigrants ("Migration and migrant population statistics"). In order to understand whether returnee migrant women lead to a greater social and political involvement in their country of origin or not, it is important to know what others have said.

There have been studies on emigration, economic remittances, and their economic impact on the country of origin, but there have been few studies on the impact of returnee migrant women on social and political involvement of women. Traditionally, people have regarded

emigration of highly skilled as harm the poor countries. However, migrants themselves see migration as an opportunity to achieve a better living standard. For example, it is shown that migrants from Latin America, India, and from Eastern Europe earn on average two to four times more in their country of destination than their country of origin (Ambrosini, Mayr, & Radu, 2012). In addition, there is the idea that skilled emigration has a positive effect in terms of encouraging their friends and relatives in their country of origin to get education. It is also shown that migrants tend to return and bring with themselves skills that can have a good impact in their country of origin (Ambrosini, Mayr, & Radu, 2012). Migration for migrants causes better economic opportunity and better standard of life. Thus, migration does not always have negative impact.

Scholarly articles discuss the experience of the refugee migrants to their host country. For example, Ayesha Khan (2002) states, after 1979, many of Afghan refugees who fled to Iran and Pakistan were women and children. Until there is no political stability and economic opportunity in Afghanistan, most refugees are unlikely to repatriate to Afghanistan (Khan, 2002). This implies that these refugees see Pakistan better than Afghanistan in terms of stability and economic opportunity.

*Literature on how returnee migrant leads to the social and political involvement of women*

Scholars such as Petra Dannecker (2007) state the migrants keep their diasporic practices and identity even after return to their own country, and their identity has become hybrid because their exile has influenced their behavior, ideas and values as a result of assimilation. Their hybridity can be explained by the combinations of various cultural practices that they did not practice before their exile (Dannecker, 2007). Moreover, Zakaria Siddiqui and Gabriela Tejada argue that these returnees influence people around them by transferring their knowledge and

skills that they have learned abroad and considering themselves as those who bring development and change in their communities.

Some scholarly articles on migration talk about the idea of social remittance. These articles define social remittance as ideas, behaviors, and practices that migrants adopt and carry to others in their country of origin. They state that when migrant come to visit or settle back in their home countries or when non-migrants come to destination country to visit their relatives and friends or through having long-distance interactions for example through phone, internet (Markley, 2011). Moreover, scholars state that social remittances like economic remittances are an important aspect of immigration. Based on Eliza Markley's (2011) view, social remittances exchanges happen when migrants return to live in or visit their own countries and their own communities of origin, when non-migrants visit their relatives or friends in the receiving country, or through exchanges of letters, videos, cassettes, e-mails, and telephone calls (Markley, 2011). Eliza Markley mentions four types of social remittances that are transferred from migrants to their home countries: norms, practices, identities and social capital. Social remittances can be diffused by migrants as well as by refugees. Akkoyunlu also talks about social remittances as affecting family relations, economic and social well-being, gender roles, class, and race identity. Thus, according to Akkoyunlu social remittance has a substantial impact on political, social, cultural, economic and religious spheres of migrants and their fellows in their country of origin. According to Akkoyunlu, women migrants can challenge the society's beliefs. Akkoyunlu says that migration from 1960-2011 has helped Turkish women's empowerment. Akkoyunlu has chosen the number of women in the Turkish parliament as a measurement of women's empowerment and has explained it by the emigration rate, the relative education of women to men, and by a measure of democracy. Hence, she concludes that migration to countries with

higher political empowerment for women significantly increases the share of women in parliament in the home country (Akkoyunlu 2013) and that returnee migration and social remittance is an important factor in development. Thus, migration has a positive impact on women's perspectives.

The impact of returnee migrant women also depends on which country of destination they have gone to. For example, migration of women from Turkey to European countries had a different impact in comparison to migration of women from Turkey to Arab countries. Şule Akkoyunlu (2013) states that Turkish women migrated to Arab countries have to follow religious obligation. Akkoyunlu further explains that in terms of effect of emigration on women's empowerment, the destination plays an important role. According to Akkoyunlu Turkish emigration to the West lead to an encouragement of women's empowerment in Turkey; Akkoyunlu even brings statistics that 1% increase in migration to EU and OECD countries can lead to a 7% increases in the share of women in the parliament of Turkey. Akkoyunlu explains that emigration from Turkey to the west communicates values, norms, and practices to non-migrants in Turkey that contribute to women's empowerment. The contribution of Turkish women's exposure to the west leads to empowerment of women as much as the education of women leads to their empowerment. In contrast, emigration to Arab and others did not have a significant increase to the number of women in parliament of Turkey; it is because migrants to Arab countries are more supportive of their ideologies in Turkey (Akkoyunlu, 2013). So, to analyze the impact of returnee migrant women, the social, political and economic condition of the destination country also matters.

### **Theoretical Refinement**

Scholarly articles have proposed different variables that increase the social and political participation of women in post-conflict countries. Many scholars argue that laws and national policies such as quotas, stable security, and formation of civil society can help increase social and political involvement of women. Furthermore, there are many articles that discuss causes of migration. Many of them mention conflict and civil war as causes of migration that force refugees to leave their countries. They also mention economic motivation as a cause of migration because migrants hope for better job opportunities in their country of destination. Furthermore, the scholars talk about the benefits of economic remittances for migrants. Most of the scholars discuss the life of migrants and work in their country of destination. However, there are fewer articles that discuss the return of migrants in their country of origin. They focus on what returnee migrants face in terms of their social and economic status. I think women migrants have more opportunities in the country of destination, they are better off in the country of destination than being in their country of origin. Thus, after return they will have a significant impact in their country of origin.

In this paper by social and political involvement, I mean that women are able to willingly work in the public arena and are paid for their work such as being a parliament member, a teacher, officers, employee and employers of companies. I believe such paid works help women gain more decision making power in both their family and society. Also, social and political involvement of women gives women more decision making power because they get to interact with other people who have different views and characteristics in the society. A woman working in the public arena gains confidence and the power to express herself and demand her rights. As I have observed, traditionally women are working at home doing tasks such as sewing clothes or



carpet weaving, which did not help them to develop their decision making process because they do not get to interact with others in their society. Traditional societies condemn the activity of women outside of house, but I believe working outside of the house and being in connection with other people with different background help them broaden their view and analyze their decisions in all aspects of their life more critically. Thus, when women migrate to other countries, they get to interact with people in a broader environment with different backgrounds which makes them to be more aware of gender roles social construction.

Returnee migrant women and their contagious effect lead to an increase in social and political involvement of women. Migrants who are going to other countries and acquire new skills and knowledge and gain broader experience; when they return to their home country they can influence others around them who have not experienced going to other countries. Women who migrate to another country, they are exposed to a different culture, environment and people; by the passage of time they adopt some cultural elements of the destination country. Exposition to two different cultures: their own culture and the culture of their destination country, broaden women's view about the role of women in the family, and society. Widening their view might lead them to question the traditional role of gender back in their country of origin. Traditional role of gender makes women do house chores which hinders decision making power and developing leadership skills. In this case, women who migrate have a better educational opportunity in the destination country than their country of origin which makes them realize and challenge the traditional role of gender by engaging more in decision making and practicing leadership.

In post-conflict countries, when these migrant women return to their country of origin, they might deliberately or unintentionally impact the women in their country of origin. They

might deliberately try to convince other women to challenge the traditional role of gender by participating more in the public arena and decision making related to matters of their life.

Returnee migrant women might impact women's attitudes towards their involvement in the public arena unintentionally in the sense that they might just practice leadership and decision making on their own; other women might observe them and get encouraged to do so. As historically women were kept far from the social and political arena, this might have limited women's mindset, making women believe that the public arena is not suitable for women rather women should do household responsibilities. When migrant women observe in the country of destination that women are involved in public arena, they try to do so in their country of origin after their return. This way the returnee challenge the embedded idea that working in the public arena is not suitable for women. Thus, other women observe that migrant women are able to do well in public arena as well, so they might get encourage and try to follow the socially and politically active women.

Şule Akkoyunlu has pointed out that migration of Turkish women to European Union countries has a significant impact on women's empowerment in Turkey than the migration of Turkish women to Middle East. Accordingly, I think it is important to know when women migrate to other countries what kinds of atmosphere women are exposed to. It has been said that migration has had south-north trend, but now south-south trend has increase as well. The south-south migration is defined as to what extent the migration happens between developing countries rather than between developing to developed (Migrants by origin and destination..., 2012). I think no matter if migration happens from developing to developed world or from developing to developing world; it broadens the view of women and give them more awareness about their rights. For example, in one hand if a woman migrates from a developing country with more

traditional beliefs to a developed country, she will be exposed to the idea of women's rights that makes her more aware of her rights. On the other hand if a woman migrates from a developing country to another developing country with more traditional beliefs, then it will still broaden her view. For example, if a woman migrates from an Asian Islamic developing country to an African Islamic developing country where gender mutilation is practiced; here, the woman will question such social construction that why gender mutilation in the name of Islam has occurred in this country but not mine. Then, she might analyze that gender roles are just social construction.

Social interactions lead to the impact of returnee migrant women on attitudes of women. Returnee migrant women who are more skilled will participate in the public arena which shows a rise in social and political involvement of women in their country of origin. Moreover, as they are educated, and they participate in the public arena (social and political) in this way they pave the way for other women in the country of origin. In some cultures women's rights might be less undermined than some other. Thus, migration of women from country to another country exposes them to different cultural views about women which might make them to deconstruct the constructed gender roles that cause gender inequalities. Only doing house chores and never experiencing work in the public arena might make women's mindset limited. Thus, I think social and political involvement of women is an important aspect of women's rights because it makes them aware of incidents related to their life other than only doing house chores.

In addition, I have already mentioned about the importance of a stable security for better involvement of women in the public arena. As some of the push factors of migration are unemployment, poverty, and insecurity, there is the likelihood that migration occurs from a non-stable country in terms of economy and security to a comparatively more stable country. Thus, because of better security in the country of destination women might be more involved in public

arena. Therefore, if women migrate to such a country they are exposed to an environment where women are involved in the public arena and their exposure to such an environment encourage them to get more involved in public arena in their country of origin. Furthermore, if there are many returnee refugee women in the public arena when they return to their country of origin after conflict, it shows that they challenge the perception of people that women are suitable for household not public arena. This way they change the perception of non-migrant women as well and encourage them to participate in the public arena. This way the returnee refugees increase social and political involvement of women.

As I discussed in the literature review about explanations of scholars regarding the idea of social remittance, they argue that social remittance is as important as economic remittance. They define social remittance as ideas, values, cultural practices that migrant adopt as a result of assimilation in their country of destination. They also state that migrants after their return to their country of origin carry those values and spread among their relatives around them. In the literature review I also discussed the idea of role models; that is social and political active women can act as role models by paving the way for other women and encouraging other women to involve in the social and political arena. In addition, most of the literatures bring up so many variables that lead to increase in social and political involvement of women, but there are no literatures that see migrant women's involvement and their contagious effect on non-migrant women of their country of origin that leads to an increase in social and political involvement of women in post-conflict countries. It is because most of the literatures focus on what migrant women face in the receiving country, they have not drawn attention on their effect returnee migrant women on the non-migrant women in the country of origin.

As social remittance is explained in the literature review, the idea of social remittance is an evidence for returnee migrant women changing after experiencing living in a different culture. Hence, after migration when they come back to their own country, they try to actively participate and act as “role models” for other women. This way they increase social and political involvement of women in their country of origin. Also, the literature review shows that except the Akkoyunlu’s study in Turkey little attention has been paid to the impact of returnee migrant women on the social and political involvement of women in their country of origin. However, this paper argues that Akkoyunlu’s study is not enough. Firstly, she studies women’s empowerment only by measuring women in the parliament only, and secondly, her studies cover only Turkey. However, this paper studies women’s social and political involvement and measures political involvement of women by women in parliament which is similar to her. Additionally, this paper also studies social involvement of women by measuring it in terms of female labor force rate of participation and more specifically percentage of women in industry and female teacher in tertiary education. Also, this paper does not study only one country, but it studies all post-conflict countries. Hence, this paper aims to fill this gap by studying many of the countries than only one country. This study will examine if the returnee migrant women’s social and political involvement can influence the social and political involvement of women in all post-conflict countries.

In the next section I will explain the methodology that I used to test my hypotheses:

**H1:** An increase in the number of returnee refugee women leads to more social and political involvement of women in post-conflict countries.

**H0:** An increase in the numbers of returnee refugee women has no impact on women’s social and political involvement in post-conflict countries.

## Research Design

This paper quantitatively tests the hypothesis that an increase in the number of returnee refugee women has an impact on the social and political involvement of women in their country of origin. Accordingly, I can say that social and political involvement of women is a function of returnee migrant women. I mainly used data from World Bank for measuring my dependent and control variables and UNHCR data for my main independent variable. The data for measuring all of my dependent variables and measuring my control variables from World Bank covers from 1980 to 2012; however, the data for returnee refugees is taken from the UNHCR covers from 1998 to 2010. I could not find data on migrant women having both country of origin and country of destination. However, I could find data on the total number of refugees having their country of origin and country of destination; Hence, I could draw data on the total number of refugees by country and year of returnee refugees from the data on the number of refugees having both country of origin and country of destination by first-differencing. The data I got from the World Bank covers 249 countries and data from UNHCR covers over 60 countries. To run regression, I used OLS regression model and the unit of analysis for this study is post-conflict country year and I chose 15 years onward from the end year of the conflict, in post-conflict countries.

Furthermore, to distinguish the post-conflict countries, I used the dataset from PRIO website. There were four types of conflicts; I dropped the inter-state conflicts and conflicts that occurred to gain territory during the colonial time (PRIO, 2014). We know that inter-state war and war to gain territory are not very common today. However, I kept the civil war or intra-state war, and internal war that happen as a result of support of international states to two the opposition or the government (PRIO, 2014). Also, the intra-state war and internal war by

intervention of international states is common today especially since cold war; thus, post-conflict in this paper means 15 years onward from the end of these two types of war.

### **Dependent Variable**

In order to operationalize my dependent variable, I divided my dependent variable in two parts. The first part is political involvement, which I measured political involvement of women in terms of percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments. The second part is social involvement of women, for measurement of which I used the female labor force participation rate as an indicator which measures women in labor force. More specifically, I used percentage of women employed in industry and percentage of female teacher on tertiary education.

### **Independent Variable**

In order to measure my independent variable I used the data on returnee refugees. Since, there were no data on returnee refugees; I derived the number of returnee refugees from the data available on refugees given the country or origin and destination, but not the number of returnee women refugees. In addition, I thought security is a variable that has an effect on social and political involvement of women, so I chose military expenditure as one of my control variables which measures the impact of security. Moreover, I chose public spending on education as percentage of GDP as my second control variable because I wanted to control for the effect of education on social and political involvement of women in post conflict countries.

### **Findings/Results**

Due to data missing for my independent variable (returnee migrant women), my regression results varied when I used my independent variable (total number of returnee refugees) together with the two of my control variables (Military expenditure as % of GDP, Public Spending on education as % of GDP). Therefore, to find the relationship between my

independent variable and all four dependent variables, once I used the independent variable with one of the control variables only, and once with two of my control variables together. Since, the data I used to measure for my primary independent variable is the data for total number of returnee refugees not number of returnee migrants also the data for total number of refugees does not measure only female refugees. Therefore, I have found my results for the relationship between the total numbers of returnee refugees and all my four dependent variables, not returnee migrant women.

### Result of Running Regression

Rows = IV Columns=DV	Seats held in national parliament (% Female)	Female labor force participation rate	Employees in Industry (% Female)	Teachers in Tertiary Education (% Female)
Number of returnee refugees	(.0000406*) “.0000153”	(.0001258*) “.0000555”	( -.00003*) “.000011”	(-7.31e-06 ) “.0000774”
Military expenditure(%GDP)	(.7138642) “-.4473809”	(-.631808) “.9463426”	(-.4995808) “-.4995808”	( -.6158121) “1.228489”
Public Spending on education (%GDP)	(.7770599) “.6679692”	(-.5742188) “1.353161)	(.8837678) “.9732229”	( -.5822231) “1.467441”

I ran an OLS regular regression model as all of my dependent variables are in percentages. In the columns are my dependent variables and in the rows are my independent variable and control variables. The coefficients are in the parentheses, coefficients with asterisk are the statistically significant coefficients. The standard errors are inside the quotation marks.

To explain the above table, I will discuss each of my four dependent variables separately. As the table above shows, my four dependent variables are: percentage of seats held by women



in national parliaments, female labor force participation rate. More specifically, I used the percentage of female employees in the industry, percentage of female teachers in tertiary education.

The p-value for percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments is equal to 0.010 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, p-value for the effect of total number of returnee refugees on the percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments is significant. Also, it has a positive coefficient of .0000406 which means as the number of refugees goes up, the percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments also goes up. This is what I wanted to find out, so I can accept my hypothesis. However, unfortunately there is an exception here, when running the regression between percentages of seats held by women in national parliaments and number of returnee refugees, I could use only one of my control variables, percentage of military expenditure, but not Public Spending on education (%GDP). If I were to use both of my control variables it would not show significant result, because the number of observations for the percentage of public spending on education is very small compared to other variables. Hence, I ran two regressions: one for percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments, number of returnee refugees, military expenditure only, and one for percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments, number of returnee refugees, military expenditure, and Public Spending on education (%GDP) as the result is shown in the table. Overall, I accept my hypothesis that an increase in the total number of returnee refugees leads to an increase in percentage of seats held by women in national parliament.

In order to discuss the relationship between number of returnee refugees and Female labor force participation rate; as the p-value is 0.028 which is significant and the coefficient is .0001258 which shows that they are positively correlated. Thus, I accept my hypothesis that an

increase in the number of returnee refugees leads to more percentage of female in labor force in post-conflict countries.

To discuss the effect of total number of returnee refugees on my dependent variable: percentage of female employees in industry, we can see that p-value is 0.010 which shows significance. Thus, it supports my hypothesis that the number of returnee refugees lead to more percentage of female in the industry. However, it is surprising that coefficient is negative (- .00003\*) which shows a negative relationship between the two variables which does not support the positive relationship of my hypothesis. In addition, it is similar to what I explained in the explanation of my first dependent variable: percentage of seats held by women in national parliament. As to run regression for percentage of female employees in industry I did once for percentage of female employees in industry, number of returnee refugees, military expenditure only, and once for percentage of female employees in industry, number of returnee refugees, military expenditure, and Public Spending on education (%GDP) and finally I pasted the result in this table. Yet, because of the negative relationship I have to reject my hypothesis and accept my null hypothesis because there is relationship between the total number of refugees and percentage of female employees in industry because the p-value is significant, but the relationship is negative which I expected to be positive.

To explain the relationship between the total number of returnee refugees and my last dependent variable which is percentage of female teachers in tertiary education; unfortunately I have to reject my hypothesis because p-value is 0.925 and coefficient is (-7.31e-06 ). Thus, it is both insignificant and negative relationship. Thus, I have to reject my hypothesis that there is no relationship between the number of returnee refugees and percentage of female teachers in tertiary education of post-conflict countries. There is a contradiction as percentage of female

teachers in tertiary education is part of labor force participation rate, but one shows an insignificant result the other shows a significant result. However, because the impact of total number of returnee refugees and three of dependent variables are statistically significant except one of my dependent variables (% of female teacher in tertiary education), I accept my hypothesis that an increase in the total number of returnee refugees lead to an increase in women's social and political involvement in post-conflict countries.

### **Conclusion**

To answer the puzzle: why an increase in the number of returnee migrant/refugee women leads to an increase in the social and political involvement of women in some post-conflict countries, but not in others? Scholars have discussed so many variables that lead to women's social and political involvement. According to scholars, national policies such as quotas, stable security, women role models, and civil society formation lead to an increase in women's social and political involvement. However, my hypothesis is that an increase in the number of returnee refugee women leads to more women representation in the public arena. In this paper I used data from World Bank and UNHCR and I determined that the number of returnee refugees has an impact on women's social and involvement in post-conflict countries. I found that the relationship between numbers of returnee refugees *to some extent* has a significant relationship with the social and political involvement of women. I chose to use *to some extend* for my finding because I see some contradiction; as the female labor force rate of participation, and percentage of female employees in industry shows significant answers, however percentage female teachers in education shows insignificance even though these two later variables are part of labor force rate of participation.

In general, as the result of relationship between the total number of returnee refugees and percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments is significant. Thus, I accept my hypothesis that increase in number of returnee refugees leads to increase in percentage of seats held by women in national parliament, labor force participation rate, and percentage of female employees in Industry in post-conflict countries because of its significant p-value. However, surprisingly the p-value for the percentage of female teachers in tertiary education is not significant. Thus, I reject my hypothesis that an increase in the number of returnee refugees lead to more percentage of female teachers in tertiary education. Also, in case of female labor force rate of participation even though there is contradiction as I explained earlier that female labor force participation rate shows a significant result, but the percentage of women teachers in tertiary education is insignificant even though it is part of women's labor force participation rate. I accept my hypothesis that as the number of returnee refugees increase the female labor force participation rate also increase. Therefore, I conclude my finding by saying that an increase in the total number of returnee migrant/refugees leads to an increase in women's social and political involvement in post-conflict countries.

One of the limitations specific to my study is that through my case study, I would be able to analyze my theoretical frame work much better than now. However, because of time constrain which is only one semester study and due to urgency matter of no electricity in Afghanistan I was not able to conduct my case study which was a survey from Afghan women to find out the impact of returnee migrant. Hence, I think if I would do my case study I would be able to study this more in dept. Still, I am thinking of adding my case studies if I will not face any challenge in conducting my survey in summer 2015.

There are other limitations as well to this analysis. For example, I measured my dependent variable in terms of considering data on exclusively women; however, for my main independent variable which is the number of returnee refugee women, I used the data on total returnee refugees rather than returnee refugee women. Besides, I intended to study migrant than refugees because refugees is part of migrant. As migrant is anyone who lives in other countries for more than one year without considering causes or motivation behind migration. For example, a student studying abroad for more than one year can be included in migrant. However, refugees are those migrant, who are forced to leave their own country as a result of war, insecurity and threats for their lives. The other limitation is that we calculated the returnee refugees out of the data available on the total number of refugees with distinction to their country of origin and destination. Hence, here I am not really sure that all refugee return back to home or they move to other countries even though the possibility might be less. Therefore, data unavailability is a significant limitation to this study. However, I believe that this study should trigger the famous databases such as World Bank, UN to collect and store data on returnee migrants as well as returnee refugees because I believe to study the impact of both returnee migrants and returnee refugees is important.

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