Group Gender Composition and Perceptions of Legitimacy*

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Abstract

How does the gender composition of deliberative committees affect citizens' evaluations of their decision-making processes? Do citizens perceive decisions made by gender-balanced, legislative bodies as more legitimate than those made by all-male bodies? Extant work on the link between women's descriptive representation and perceptions of democratic legitimacy in advanced democracies finds the equal presence of women legitimizes decision-making processes. However, this relationship has not been tested in more patriarchal, less democratic settings. We employ survey experiments in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia to investigate how citizens respond to gender representation in committees. We find that women's presence promotes citizens' perceptions of the legitimacy of committee processes and outcomes, and moreover, that pro-women decisions are associated with higher levels of perceived legitimacy. Thus, this study demonstrates remarkable robustness of findings from the West regarding gender representation and contributes to the burgeoning literature on women's descriptive representation, and women and politics in gender conservative settings.

*This project was pre-registered on aspredicted.org. We include an anonymized copy of our pre-registration materials in the end of the Appendix. The authors are grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for funding this work.

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1 Introduction

The past two decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the presence of women in decision-making bodies. Existing evidence from established democracies demonstrates that such representation increases citizens' perceptions of legitimacy in state institutions (Mansbridge 1999; Scherer and Curry 2010) and political outcomes (Banducci, Donovan and Karp 2004), thereby promoting institutional trust (Gay 2002; Ulbig 2007). Descriptive representation may even legitimize decisions which adversely affect women, an effect mainly driven by male responses to female representation (Clayton, O'Brien and Piscopo 2019). However, descriptive representation may not have uniform effects across different settings (Lee, Solberg and Waltenburg 2021). Increased women's representation in decision-making bodies may engender backlash, especially in settings with highly conservative gender norms (Biroli and Caminotti 2020; Yildirim, Kocapınar and Ecevit 2021).

We test whether recent findings on the link between women's descriptive representation and democratic legitimacy extend from established democracies with higher levels of gender progressive norms to less democratic, gender conservative contexts. To do so, we employ a survey experiment that varies two main treatment dimensions: the committee's gender composition and the committee's decision (expanding or limiting protections of women's rights).[1] We implement the experiment in three Middle East and North African (MENA) countries: Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, which have more gender conservative societies and less democratic regimes than the sites of most previous studies on this topic.

Contrary to expectations, we find Jordanians, Moroccans, and Tunisians view equal inclusion of women in the decision-making process much the same as citizens in the West. Women's inclusion in decision-making increased respondents' perceptions of the legitimacy of processes and outcomes. Moreover, while we find no relationship between equal gender representation on committees and public acceptance of decisions, we uncover a strong, positive relationship between pro-women decisions and respondents' expectations that the public will accept the committee's decision. A second important - and somewhat surprising - conclusion from the study is that respondents generally support pro-women decisions.

2 Group Gender Composition and Legitimacy

Descriptive representation, where representatives' demographic characteristics mirror the population from which they are drawn, is often conceptualized as "the politics of presence" (Mansbridge 1999). The argument for descriptive representation is based on the premise that elected officials are more likely to 'act for' those with whom they share personal characteristics (Pitkin 1967; Lovenduski and Norris 2003). Descriptive representation should lead to fairer outcomes (Easton 1965; Gay 2002) and serve to cushion unfavorable decisions (Arnesen and Peters 2018). Thus, descriptive representation can improve the quality of policies, particularly regarding women and other marginalized groups (Banducci, Donovan and Karp 2004), and bolster the legitimacy of legislative

[1] The survey experiment is inspired by one designed by Clayton, O'Brien and Piscopo (2019). We modified the design and mode of the study to make it appropriate for the contexts we study.

bodies.[2]

Studies exploring the link between women's descriptive representation and democratic legitimacy have proliferated over the past decade (Atkeson and Carrillo 2007; Clayton, O'Brien and Piscopo 2019; Lee, Solberg and Waltenburg 2021). Research on the symbolic representation of women in politics (i.e., the attitudinal and behavioral effects of women's representation (Lawless 2004)) has found that women's numerical presence in decision-making bodies improves citizens' evaluations of both decisions (i.e., substantive legitimacy) and the decision-making process (Clayton, O'Brien and Piscopo 2019). Yet, other studies have shown that increased women's representation may lead to backlash against women (Krook 2015). Women's increased presence in previously male-dominated spaces may trigger "renewed determination by patriarchal forces to maintain and increase the subordination of women" (Walby 1993), particularly when men view women's presence as coming at the expense of their own political influence (Lee, Solberg and Waltenburg 2021). Backlash may manifest as violence against female politicians, be directed to women outside politics whose demands challenge the existing gender hierarchy (Berry, Bouka and Kamuru 2020), or, we maintain, be expressed in attempts to delegitimize gender-balanced committees.

Importantly, most studies to date have been conducted in contexts with more liberal gender norms, leaving open questions about how well findings travel to more conservative settings. We expect backlash effects to be more pronounced in gender conservative societies, such as in the MENA region, where patriarchal norms and discriminatory laws marginalize women within decision-making processes. Notably, most gender reforms across the MENA were introduced from the top to improve regimes' domestic and international reputations (Tripp 2019), and with little effort to transform deep-rooted gender inequalities within the society and/or the economy. We anticipate backlash effects will be more pronounced in these settings given the lack of transformative strategies to improve women's status overall (Ahmed 2017).

Because backlash against increased female representation is more likely to occur when women are increasingly visible as political actors (Krook 2015; Berry, Bouka and Kamuru 2020), we posit that the equal presence of women in legislative bodies in the MENA should have a negative impact on citizens' perceptions of their substantive and procedural legitimacy. We anticipate this will be true even in less democratic regimes. Legislative assemblies in authoritarian regimes are often sites of co-optation, information-signaling, and contestation over policy outcomes (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Schuler and Malesky 2014). Autocratic legislatures may have more limited powers than those in more democratic settings, but MPs still study, discuss, and approve or reject legislation (Shalaby and Elimam 2020).[3]

Thus, we propose the following pre-registered hypotheses:

H1: Citizens will be less likely to agree that the committee made the right decision when the committee is gender balanced (i.e., substantive legitimacy).

H2: Citizens will be more likely to report negative attitudes regarding the committee's decision-making process when the committee is gender balanced (i.e., procedural legitimacy).

H3: Citizens will be less likely to believe that the general public will accept a decision made by a gender balanced committee.

[2]We rely on Easton (1975)'s conceptualization of democratic legitimacy as the "reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed" (444).

[3]Note that we did not pre-register hypotheses specifically related to less democratic regimes.

H4: Committee decisions supporting women will further increase the negative effect of balanced committees for all outcomes in H1-3.

3 Gender Conservative Societies, Non-Democratic Legislatures, and Domestic Violence

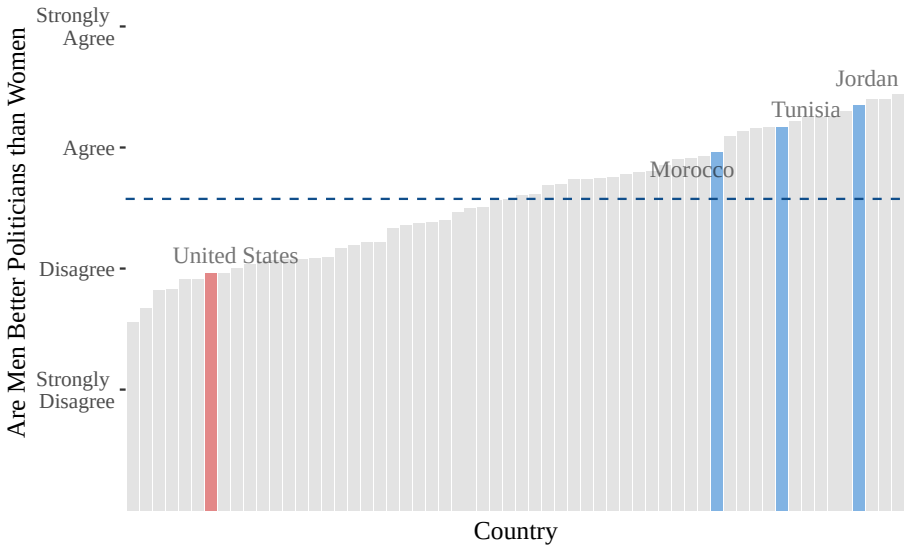
We test our hypotheses in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, focusing on deliberation over domestic violence penalties. This is a gendered issue that is relevant and represents an important substantive issue across our cases,[4] with a majority of Arab Barometer Wave IV-Part 1 participants reporting in 2020 that it had increased since the start of the Coronavirus outbreak (Arab Barometer N.d.). Thus, examining this topic at this point in time lends additional value to this study. In other studies, about one third of female respondents in Jordan reported experiencing domestic violence, despite the highly sensitive nature of this question (Clark et al. 2009). Around half of Moroccan (Kasraoui 2019) and Tunisian (Veen, Jrad and Galand 2017) women report suffering from some sort of violence in their lifetime.

Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia have gender-conservative societies. As shown in Figure 1a, respondents in the three countries are more likely than Americans to agree with the statement that men make better political leaders than women. Conservative gender norms are also evident in the controversies over legislation regarding domestic violence, the focus of our study. For instance, some prominent Jordanians publicly opposed amendments that would strengthen laws against domestic violence (Watkins 2020); some prominent members of Morocco's former ruling Justice and Development Party opposed strengthening of laws against domestic violence (Etezadi 2016); and members of Tunisia's Ennadha party initially opposed the country's 2017 domestic violence law on the grounds that the phrase "gender-based violence" could threaten "family unity" (Abdo-Katsipis 2017; Khamis 2017). Yet, while all three countries have passed legislation outlawing domestic violence, others still find the legislation insufficient.[5] Our survey also finds evidence that this issue is contested: about 1 in 5 Jordanians, 1 in 4 Moroccans, and 1 in 3 Tunisians disagreed that domestic violence penalties should be raised.

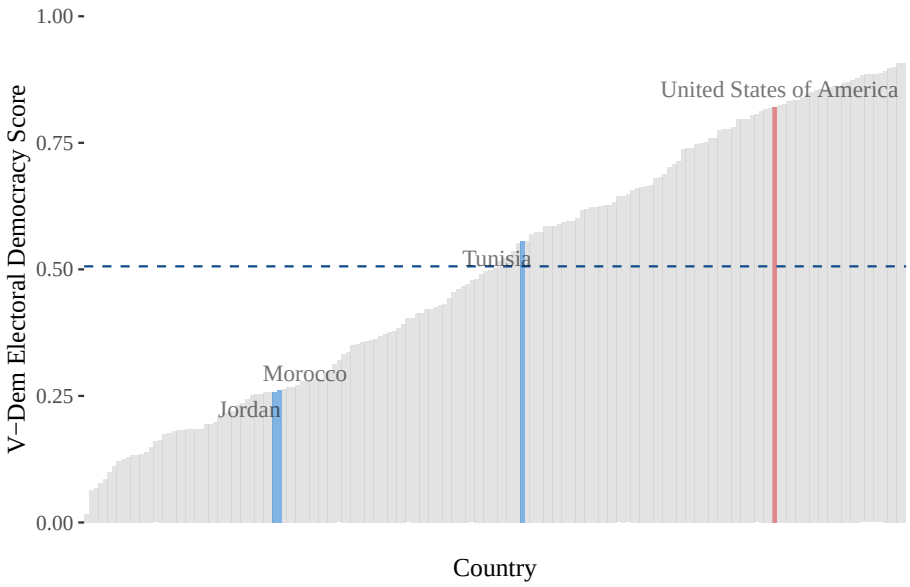
These countries also have varying degrees of authoritarian institutions (as shown in Figure 1b), but ones in which women's representation in deliberation over domestic violence penalties is realistic. Majorities of our respondents in all countries viewed the scenario as realistic (see Figure A4 in our Appendix). Jordan and Morocco are longstanding monarchies with elected legislatures, which Freedom House deemed not free and partly free, respectively, in 2021. Tunisia's revolution in 2011 transformed it from an autocracy to a fledgling democracy. It had been the most democratic country in the region until the disbandment of parliament just prior to fielding of the experiment. In 2021, Freedom House rated it as free. At the time of running the experiment, women parliamentarians made up about 12% of the elected legislature in Jordan, 24% in Morocco, and 26% in Tunisia.

[4] In a pilot study of 257 respondents, majorities in each country agreed that domestic violence was the most important issue among three gendered issues. See Appendix A.3 for details.

[5] Regarding criticisms against Jordan's Law No. 6/2008 against domestic violence, see Nasrawin (2017); Tunisia's Law No. 2017-58, see Human Rights Watch (2022); and Morocco's 2018 Law No. 103-13, see Human Rights Watch (2020) and Kanso (2018).



(a) Cross-Country Variation in Gender Political Norms (WVS).



(b) Cross-Country Variation in democratic strength (V-Dem).

Figure 1: **Experimental Sites in a Cross-National Perspective.** Figure a reports average levels of agreement with the statement that men make better politicians than women. Data come from the sixth wave of the World Values Survey (World Values Survey Association and others N.d.). Figure b reports 2021 electoral democracy scores per country collected by V-dem (Coppedge et al. 2021)

Studying group gender composition in decision-making bodies regarding gendered issues in Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia is advantageous for several reasons. These cases offer variation in gender conservatism and democratic institutions, allowing us to examine findings from established liberal democracies in different settings that are understudied regarding this topic.[6] Importantly though, they are countries in which it is feasible that committees with different degrees of women representation would deliberate over domestic violence penalties and would permit public surveys on such topics to be run. Finally, these are contexts in which the outcomes of deliberations over domestic violence legislation are contested and are important to the public.

4 Research Design

We implemented a phone-based survey experiment between November 2021 and March 2022 in Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia.[7] We asked 4,754 respondents a series of pre-treatment questions and then presented them with our experimental vignette: an excerpt from a mock radio show describing a legislative committee that decided whether to raise penalties on domestic violence.[8] In our main experiment, we randomized the committee's gender composition (all male / gender-balanced) and its decision (aligned with or opposed to female interests), resulting in a fully crossed 2x2 experimental design.[9]

Following the vignette, respondents answered manipulation checks and questions related to our key outcomes. We identify the effects of gender balance on (H1) the evaluation of the committee's decision (a 3-item index measuring belief that the committee made the right decision for all citizens, men and women. $\alpha = .804$); (H2) attitudes towards the committee procedure (a 2-item index measuring trust in committee and belief in committee fairness. $\alpha = .668$); and (H3) perceptions that the general public will accept the committee's decision (a single-item measure).

We estimate the following pre-registered OLS regression, estimating the average treatment effect (ATE) of committee gender balance across all countries:

$$y_{ic} = \beta_{balance} + \delta_{decision} + \psi_{\mathbf{i}} + \varepsilon_{ic} \tag{1}$$

Our main parameter of interest is $\beta_{balance}$, representing the gender balance ATE on a given outcome of interest (y_{ic}). To increase the precision of our estimate, we further control for our second treatment ($\delta_{decision}$), as well as respondents' country, gender, age, and education (represented by $\psi_{\mathbf{i}}$). We supplement our main analysis with similar, country-specific OLS regressions.[10]

[6] Our goal is to estimate differences by country to test if our outcomes are generalizable across different settings. With just three cases, our study is unable to explain cross-country differences.

[7] These surveys are not nationally representative. Please see Appendix B for descriptive statistics of our sample and key measures.

[8] A translated version of the vignette and an overview of survey methodology and measurement are provided in Appendix A. In our vignette the committee is not named, but recent examinations of abstraction in survey experiments suggest that adapting an unnamed committee should not substantially impact main inferences drawn (Brutger et al. 2020).

[9] Our overall sample size is distributed as follows: $Jordan = 1,654$, $Morocco = 1,464$, $Tunisia = 1,436$, and excludes 1,550 Jordanian subjects assigned to a vignette focusing on a non-gendered issue. We discuss those results in Appendix C.8.

[10] We also check robustness of our results to enumerator-respondent gender congruence in the Appendix (see Section D.3 and Figure A16).

5 Results

In this section we present the ATEs of our gender balance and committee decision treatments. Figure 2 depicts the effects of our treatments on respondents' evaluation of the committee's decision (H1). The left side of Figure 2 shows that, in aggregate, gender balance modestly improved respondents' evaluation of the committee's decision by 7% of a SD. The Jordan sample largely drives this effect, and it is the only sample in which the gender balance treatment is precisely estimated at conventional levels of statistical significance. The pro-women decision treatment also improved respondents' evaluations of the committee's decision. Indeed, the decision appears to be a more important factor than the committee gender balance in shaping respondents' evaluations of substantive legitimacy. In the aggregate, the effect of the pro-women decision treatment is almost 8.5 times larger than the effects of the gender balance treatment, and it is significant at the p=0.01 level in all countries. Thus, the results in Figure 2 stand is stark contrast to our pre-registered expectations. Instead of backlash, we find that gender balance and pro-women decisions increase evaluations of legislative committee's decisions.

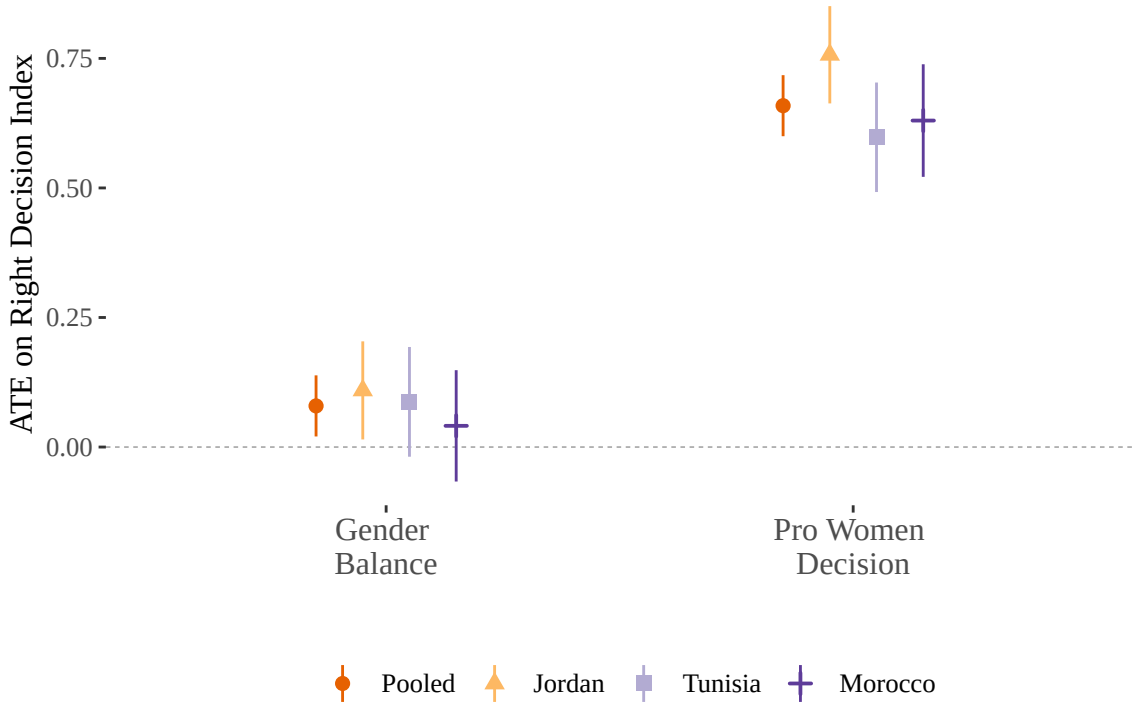


Figure 2: **ATEs on Agreement that Committee Made the Right Decision.** This figure reports the ATE of gender balance and committee decision treatments on a scale measuring respondents' belief that the committee made the right decision. See Appendix C.1 for full model.

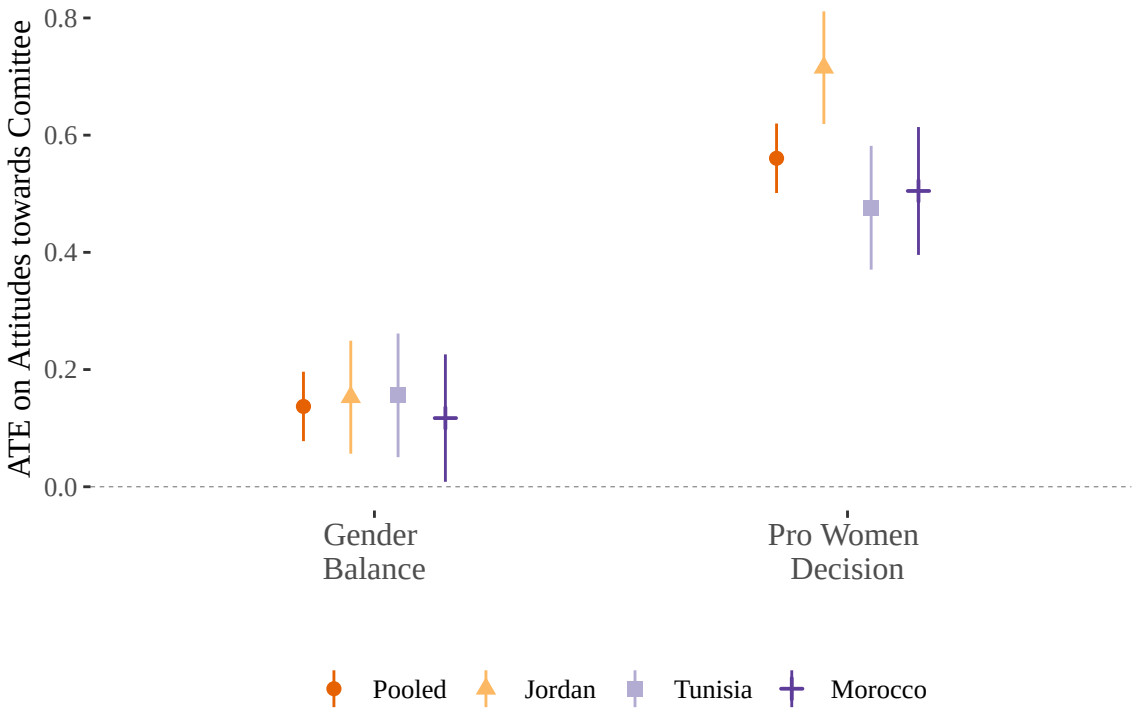


Figure 3: **ATEs on Attitudes towards the Committee.** This figure reports the ATE of our gender balance and committee decision treatments on a scale measuring respondents' attitudes towards the committee. See Appendix C.2 for full model.

In Figure 3 we report the effects of our treatments on respondents' attitudes towards the committee procedure (H2). We find that gender balance increases respondents' positive attitudes towards the committee by over 13% of a SD, and this effect is consistent across all countries. Pro-women decisions also increase positive attitudes towards the committee, and they are about four times larger than the effect of the gender balance treatment. Again, these results stand in contrast to our pre-registered hypothesis, and they suggest that gender balance and pro-women decisions could increase procedural legitimacy in the MENA's gender conservative societies.

In Figure 4 we consider the extent to which our treatments shape respondents' expectations regarding public acceptance of the committee's decision. Our results suggest that gender balance does not have a precisely estimated effect on this outcome, but pro-women decisions do increase respondents' expectation that the public will accept the committee's decision. In line with the findings reported in Figures 2-3, these stand in contrast to our pre-registered expectations.

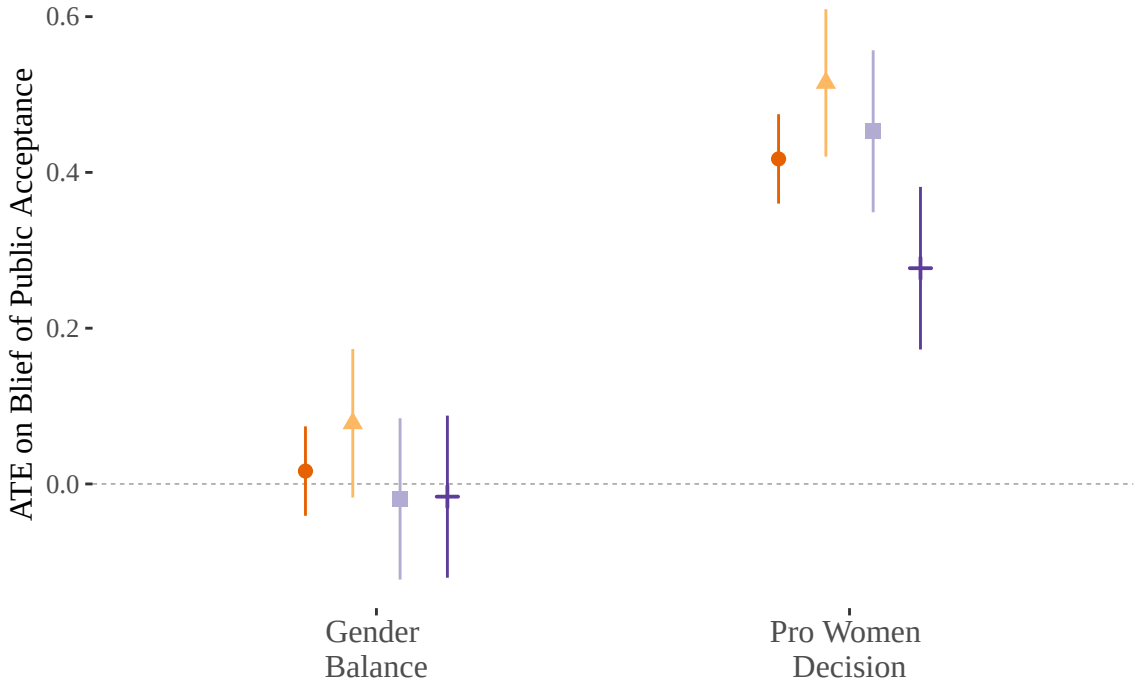


Figure 4: **ATEs on Belief that the Public will Accept the Committee's Decision.** This figure reports the ATE of our gender balance and committee decision treatments on a single outcome measuring respondents' belief that the public will accept the committee's decision. See Appendix C.3 for full model.

Our Appendix includes several additional analyses. First, we show that the committee's decision does not moderate the average treatment effect of gender balance on our key outcomes (C.4). Second, we show that individual-level measures of sexism and perceptions of gender nroms do note moderate our key treatments (C.5-C.6). Third, we consider the moderating effect of respondents' gender on our key results, and find that respondents gender does note moderate the gender balance-treatment effects, but does moderate the decision treatment effects on our key outcomes. Indeed, female respondents react more positively in response to the decision treatment (C.7). In Appendices C.8-C.9 we show that our key results hold in non-gendered issue areas, and that respondents' attitudes towards the regime do not moderate our key results. Finally, in Appendix D we consider several diagnostics and robustness checks relating to attrition, treatment recall, enumerator effects, and pre-treatment attitudes regarding domestic violence.

6 Discussion

The results are surprising, and thus call us to consider why we do not find the backlash against gender representation that we anticipated. We consider five plausible explanations.

The first explanation is that respondents conceal their responses to public policy decisions, even if they express discriminatory personal beliefs. This may be particularly true in authoritarian regimes that seek to expand women's rights (as described in section 3). To examine this possibility, we analyze whether respondents who state they support the regime (due either to conviction or fear) are more likely to respond favorably to pro-women decisions and gender-balanced committees than those who state they do not support the regime. We find little support for the notion that attitudes toward the regime moderate the gender balance treatment effects (see Appendix A22).

A second explanation may be that the results are driven by the issue area: domestic violence penalties. We leverage a second issue area treatment fielded in Jordan, on penalties for littering, and find that issue area does not moderate our main effects of our gender balance treatment. The decision treatment has a larger effect when the issue area is littering, likely reflecting the overall greater support for increasing penalties in this area (see Appendix C.8). However, there is no difference in the effect of committee gender composition on the outcomes.

A third possibility is that there are significant heterogeneous effects, running in roughly equal and opposite directions, which lead to the appearance of small and statistically insignificant aggregate effects. We test whether respondent's gender (Appendix C.7), attitudes toward sexism (Appendix C.5), or perceptions of gender norms (Appendix C.6) moderates the effects of the treatments on perceptions of substantive or procedural legitimacy. We find only evidence that gender moderates the effect of the decision treatment on both outcomes: pro-women decisions have a greater influence on women's perceptions of the committee's substantive and procedural legitimacy than they do on men. For both men and women, however, the effects are positive.

A fourth potential explanation is that the results reflect social desirability bias, or respondents' beliefs that it is socially unacceptable to express opposition to positions that improve women's rights. This may be particularly problematic in this study, as some have found telephone surveys elicit greater social desirability bias than face-to-face surveys (Jäckle, Roberts and Lynn 2006; Holbrook, Green and Krosnick 2003). Yet, in line with recent studies (Blair, Coppock and Moor 2020), we also have reason to doubt that social desirability bias explains our results. Respondents express sexist attitudes in direct questions, and that sexism is particularly prevalent in Jordan, the country in which gender balance had a positive and significant effect on substantive legitimacy.

Finally, we consider other study design issues that might explain the results. We test whether differential attrition rates (see Appendix D.1), information retention rates (Appendix D.2), enumerator effects affect our results (Appendix D.3), or respondents' pre-treatment attitudes on domestic violence (Appendix D.4). However, there is little evidence that these issues are prevalent or significantly affect our results.

We are left to conclude that there may simply be less variation in attitudes toward women's representation than many expect. Issues of domestic violence and gender representation have become globalized, with domestic leaders and international stakeholders pressing for changes in policies and practices around these issues. There may still be differences in opinions over what constitutes 'domestic violence' or the roles of women, generally, but there may be popular convergence in attitudes when it comes to some of the globally promoted policies that seek to improve

women's welfare. This is especially true in less democratic regimes where autocrats continue to adopt less controversial gender reforms to polish their image, and garner popular and international support.

7 Conclusion

Our results suggest that concerns about backlash to women's descriptive representation in patriarchal settings may be overstated. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the causal relationship between the presence of women in decision-making processes and citizens' perceptions of substantive and procedural legitimacy in such settings, and there is much more work to be done. Nevertheless, the results are both surprising and important. Women's representation appears to have positive effects on the legitimacy of decision-making bodies and their outcomes. Indeed, the effects of women's descriptive representation are remarkably similar to those found in studies from more gender liberal societies in Western democracies.

The study advances the literature on representation and bridges an important gap in our understanding on the intersection of gender and politics. Our experimental design allows us to test causal relationships between increased female representation and legitimacy, and in doing so, goes beyond much of the important extant work on gender representation which explores correlations in observational data. Our focus on less democratic, more patriarchal societies in the MENA extends the conventional focus on Western contexts.

In doing so, our study prompts scholars to delve deeper into understanding the impact of descriptive gender representation on substantive and procedural legitimacy. It calls for scholars to develop a more nuanced understanding of when backlash effects are likely to surface. Our study is unable to disentangle effects of less democratic regimes and patriarchal social norms, but it suggests that - at least taken together - they have less impact on the link between descriptive and substantive representation than one might expect. This should be robustly tested employing cross-national comparisons across a larger sample of cases varying on these two factors. Furthermore, scholars should investigate the extent to which other contextual factors moderate these relationships. What issues and processes are more likely to activate gender conservative norms, and potential backlash? What are the sources of potential variation within apparently conservative societies?

This study also has important implications for policymakers. It suggests that gender equality promoting policies may enhance the legitimacy of institutions and policy outcomes, even in less democratic, gender conservative contexts. Yet, it also raises questions about the relationship between gender representation, legitimacy of institutions in non-democratic contexts, and human rights and development. Does increasing gender representation in such institutions help to stabilize authoritarian regimes, thwarting efforts at democratization or improved human rights? Or does increased legitimacy of such institutions strengthen potential loci of democratization? More research should be done to examine implications of gender balanced decision-making bodies in real-world contexts and across varying levels of power. Only by further exploring these outcomes can we fully understand how gender quotas, campaign support, and other programs aimed at increased women representation affect political institutions and outcomes.

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Group Gender Composition and Perceptions of Legitimacy

Supplementary Information

A Survey Description

A.1 Sampling Procedure

To test the hypotheses above, we implemented a series of phone survey experiments between November - December 2021 in Tunisia and Morocco and January - March 2022 in Jordan. Local survey providers hired and trained enumerators; our research team members prepared training materials, checked recordings for quality, participated virtually in the training, maintained constant contact with team leaders, and monitored the incoming data daily.

We implemented gender quotas in our surveys so that there would be an even number of male and female enumerator-led interviews across genders. In Jordan, however, our local survey provider could not find enough competent male enumerators to accomplish the job. We thus had to allow a higher number of female enumerators in Jordan, an issue which is discussed in further detail below.

A.2 Pre-Treatment Measures

After consent, participants were asked their gender and citizenship. They were then asked about their positions regarding domestic violence penalties. These questions were followed by two batteries of questions in random order on benevolent and hostile sexism adapted for the most part from (Glick et al. 2004) as well as gender norms in the society. Finally, we asked respondents about their views of the government, the importance of democracy, and their religiosity.

Do you think that the penalties for domestic violence should be raised? (Yes, No)
(For those in Jordan only) Do you think that the penalties for littering should be raised? (Yes, No)

Different people hold different opinions regarding roles of men and women. I am going to read out some statements. For each one, can you tell me if you agree or disagree with it? (Agree, Disagree)

- Women should be cherished and protected by men.
- Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.
- Women are too easily offended.
- A wife should not be significantly more successful in her career than her husband.

In different communities men and women also behave in different ways. Is it acceptable for women in your circle of friends and family: (Yes, No)

- To gather with men in the same space at weddings
- To publicly disagree with a man's opinion
- To travel out of town alone

How satisfied are you with the current government's performance overall? (Completely dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Satisfied, Completely satisfied)

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? (Not at all important, Not important, Important, Very important)

In general, would you describe yourself as very religious, religious, not religious, not at all religious?

A.3 Pretest to Determine Issue Area

During our piloting phase, we asked 257 respondents across our cases which of three different types of gendered issues was most salient in their society at the time of the survey: 1) increasing penalties for domestic violence; 2) giving mothers the same rights as fathers over decision regarding their children's education, travel and general welfare; and 3) ensuring women earn the same pay as men for performing equal jobs. Among these three topics, majorities considered domestic violence to be the most important issue to address in their society currently.

Below, we provide the text of our experimental stimuli which was read by a local. (For respondents in Jordan, randomization of topic also occurred where the words "domestic violence" were replaced with "littering in public spaces" in the text below.)

Vignette (Radio Broadcast)

In today's news, a committee of [**8 male / 4 male and 4 female**] legislators from varying parties and areas of the country [**supported/rejected**] a proposal to increase penalties for domestic violence.

Over the past month, the [**all-male/gender-balanced**] parliamentary committee thoroughly reviewed a law to increase the penalties for domestic violence. The committee of [**8 male / 4 male and 4 female**] legislators met weekly to hear opinions from citizens, experts, and bureaucrats, to learn about the issue, and to examine the potential costs and benefits of increasing the penalties.

Earlier today, one of our journalists visited the committee's meeting and recorded their debates. Here is a brief excerpt:

(Recording of committee deliberation plays, randomize order of statement 1 and 2 and for the gender-balanced committees randomize if male or female comes first (both are male voices for the all-male committees))

[Statement 1]: We thank our team for their work researching policy options relating to penalties for domestic violence. Clearly our team did important work that demonstrates the importance of the questions we are debating and the consequences of our decisions.

[Statement 2]: I am grateful for the important discussions in our committee, which has gone a long way to develop policies which will address our community's needs.

[Back to Radio discussion]

At the end of this meeting, our reporter learned that the committee, composed of [**8 men / 4 men and 4 women**] has decided to [**support/reject**] the proposed law on penalties for domestic violence. The committee stated that prevention of domestic violence is an important cause

[**and they are glad they determined appropriate measures to support this cause/ but, in the end, the committee decided that the current penalties are enough and so, they will remain unchanged**]. All committee members had equal say in deciding this matter.

A.4 Quality Checks

After the recording played, we checked if the respondent could hear it clearly. We had enumerators play it again if they could not, up to three times. If the respondent could not hear the recording after the third time, we terminated the interview.

- Could you hear the recording clearly or do you want me to play it again? (I could hear it fine, I need you to replay the recording please, Respondent could not hear the recording for the third time)

A.5 Post-Treatment Measures

After listening to the brief radio expert, study participants were asked a series of manipulation questions. Then they responded to several questions related to outcome measures: Evaluation of the committees decision (in general and in terms of female interests), trust in the committee, perceived fairness of the decision making process, and the expectation regarding public attitudes towards the committee's decision.

Manipulation Checks

In the radio story that you heard, was the entire committee men, women, or was it half-half?

What issue was the committee discussing? (Women's shelters, Domestic violence, Littering, Equality in pay for work, Don't know/Refuse to answer)

What was the committee's decision regarding the penalties/budget proposal? (Support, Reject, Don't Know/Refuse to Answer)

Outcomes

Now I am going to ask you some questions about how you feel about the committee. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree...

- The committee made the right decision for all citizens?
- The committee made the right decision for women?
- The committee made the right decision for men?
- The committee can be trusted to make future decisions that are right for all citizens?

- Still thinking about the radio story you just heard, how fair was the decision making process? (Very unfair, Somewhat unfair, Somewhat fair, Very fair)

- How likely is the general public to accept the committee's decision to (support/reject) raising penalties for (domestic violence/littering)? (Not at all likely, Not likely, Likely, Very likely,

Don't Know/Refuse to Answer)

Additional Checks

-Could you imagine a real legislative committee in (country name) considering raising penalties for (domestic violence/littering)? (Yes, No)

- What do you think this survey is about? (Law making/legislative processes, Differences between men and women, Environmental politics, Women's rights, Government service provision/spending, Other, Don't Know/Refuse to Answer)

A.6 Ethics

We obtained ethical clearance for this study from the Institutional Review Board at XX. We also included a consent form before beginning the survey to ensure the respondent understood what they were agreeing to and their rights regarding the storage and use of their data. Finally, we confirmed that the respondent was above the age of 18 before continuing with the survey. The text read as follows:

Hello, my name is (enumerator name). I am calling you from (organization) to participate in a survey of about 20 minutes or less. Participation is voluntary and there is no penalty for refusing to participate. We are implementing this survey as part of a broad research project on governance in the Middle East and North Africa. First, just to confirm, how old are you?

By agreeing to take this survey, you are giving us the right to transfer the information you provide to our research partners at the XX. All the answers you are providing will be fully anonymous. We will not ask your name, and no identifying information will be collected. The data will be analyzed in XX. and when the results of this research are published, we will report general results which cannot be used to identify individual participants. We will never use a participant's name or personal information, so please feel free to tell us what you think. We would like your opinion with the knowledge that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions and that you may ask for clarification or stop the survey at any time. You are also free to skip questions you consider personal or invasive without penalty. If you would like to receive an overview of the final results of the study, if you have any questions about the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to withdraw your consent at a later time, please contact us via the email XX

We also randomly recorded the reading of the consent form by our enumerators and conducted checks of these recordings to ensure that it was being read clearly and in full. These recordings were of our enumerators only to ensure consents were being read carefully and clearly; they did not allow us to listen in on the participant.

B Descriptive Statistics

We present descriptive statistics in Table A1. This table reports the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum of key variables in our data. The table reports aggregate statistics for respondents from all countries, a total of 6,304 respondents.

We further plot the distribution of our key outcomes by country in Figures A1-A3. Our first outcome is an index measuring the extent to which a respondent believes that the committee

described in the vignette made the right decision. To create this index, we combine three questions, answered on four-point Likert scales, asking respondents whether the committee made the right decision for i) all citizens, ii) men, and iii) women. As reported in Figure A1, the α Cornbach for these items is 0.804, suggesting that they are highly correlated and suitable to be included in an additive index, as we specified in our pre-analysis plan.

Our second index measures respondents' general attitudes towards the committee mentioned in the vignette. This index is comprised of two questions, answered on four-point Likert scales that ask respondents whether (1) the committee can be trusted and (2) the decision making process was fair. As reported in Figure A2, the α Cornbach for this pre-registered index is slightly lower ($\alpha = 0.668$), likely as a result of the fact that the index includes only two measures. However, given that these measures are associated, and our theoretical pre-registered motivation was to index these measures together, we use this index as one of our key outcomes in the analyses. In Section C, we report additional analyses, demonstrating that our results are similar when considering the index and its components. In Figure A3 we report our third outcome. This outcome is a single item measure, eliciting survey respondents' belief that the general public will accept the decision made by the committee described in the experimental vignette. Finally, in Figure A4 we demonstrate that a majority of survey respondents in all countries perceive the scenarios reported in our vignette's as rather realistic.

We report balance tests in Tables A2-A3. As expected, respondents assigned to different values of our gender balance and committee decision are indistinguishable in terms of their demographics variables and pre-treatment attitudes relating to sexism an perceptions of gender norms in their locality.

C Additional Analyses

In this section, we report table format results for our main findings reported in Figures 2-4. We further report results from additional pre-registered hypotheses and exploratory analyses.

C.1 Hypothesis 1

In Table A4, we report the main result presented in Figure 2, by which both our gender balance and decision treatments increased respondents perceptions that the committee made the right decision. Following our pre-registration, in Tables A5-A6, we report additional models, focusing on two components of our index, belief that the committee made the right decision for i) women, and ii) men. Though we did not pre-register this analysis, we further consider the effect of our treatment on the final component of our index—belief that the committee made the right decision for all citizens— in Table A7. Taken together, we interpret the results in Tables A5-A7 to suggest that our main result reported in the paper (Figure 2), and in Table A4, is driven by citizens belief that gender balance committees make suitable decisions mainly for women and all citizens.

C.2 Hypothesis 2

In this Section, we report Table format results for Hypothesis 2, considering the effects of our treatment on respondents' attitudes towards the committee. First, in Table A8, we report results

plotted in Figure 3 of the main text. After doing so, we further consider the effects of our treatment on the individual components of our main index: i) respondents belief that the committee can be trusted to make the right decision, and ii) respondents belief that the committees decision making process was fair. An examination of Tables A8-A10 emphasizes that results of models considering our index and individual survey items yield similar substantive interpretation.

C.3 Hypothesis 3

In Table A11, we further report Table format results of our test for Hypothesis 3 regarding the effects of our treatments on respondents' belief that the general public will accept the committee's decision. These results, are identical to the results we visualize in Figure 4 of the main text.

C.4 Hypothesis 4 – Moderating Effect of Decision on Gender Balance

In this section, we report results of additional pre-registered tests, in which we examine whether the committee decision treatment, and specifically the committee's decision in favor of women, moderated the effects of our gender balance treatment on our key outcomes from hypotheses 1-3. To do so, we regress a given outcome over our two treatments, and their interaction. Our main parameter of interest is the interaction `Balance*Pro`, representing the moderating effect of pro-women decision treatment on the gender balance treatment. We report results of this analysis in Figure A5 (see Table A12 for similar results in Table format), and find no evidence that pro-women decision moderate the effects of gender balance.

C.5 Hypothesis 5a – Moderating Effect of Sexism

In our pre-analysis plan, we further registered analyses in which we consider whether individual level attributes, and specifically respondents' level of sexism might moderate the effect of our gender balance treatment. We test this expectation in Figures A6 by interacting a sexism index comprised of four measures of hostile and benevolent sexism. In Figures A6-A8, we show that are overall measure of sexism, and dis-aggregated measures of hostile or benevolent sexism do not consistently moderate the gender balance ATE, on our three key outcomes. We further show in Figure A9 that when employing a binary measure of sexism, taking a value of 1 for respondents with above average levels of overall sexism ($\mu > 0.629$) results remain substantively similar — our measure of sexism does not moderate the effects of the gender balance treatment.

C.6 Hypothesis 5b – Moderating Effect of Gender Norms

In this section, we consider another pre-registered hypothesis regarding gender norms. Specifically, we test whether respondents who perceive the gender norms of the community as more conservative, react differently to treatment. To do so, we create an index measuring individual level perceptions of gender norms, based on three survey items asking people whether in their community it is common women to: i) disagree publicly with men, ii) travel alone, and iii) gather in public spaces with men. We interact our gender norm index with our key gender balance treatment, in order to test how perceptions of gender norms moderate the average treatment effect of

gender balance on our key outcomes from H1-H3. As reported in Figure A10, we do not find evidence that gender norms moderate our main gender balance treatment.

C.7 Moderating Effect of Gender on ATEs

In this section, we further consider the moderating effect of gender on our main gender balance treatment. To do so, we interact an indicator taking the value of 1, if a subject identifies as male (0 otherwise), with our gender balance treatment, as well as our pro-women descision. As reported in Figure A11, we do not find that gender moderates the effects of the gender balance treatment. However, in Figure A20 we show that gender does moderate the effects of the pro-women decision. Specifically, it appears that for our key outcomes the treatment effects of the pro-women decision are larger for women, when compared with men as further shown in Figure A21.

C.8 Moderating Effect of Issue Area on Main ATEs

Our main analyses consider the effects of the committee's composition and decision, and focus on a committee which is discussing a gender salient topic — penalties for offenders of domestic violence. However, one may wonder whether similar effects would be identified when considering a committee discussing a topic unrelated to gender. As we describe in Section A.3, to address this question, in our Jordan experiment we further randomized the issue area discussed by the committee. Specifically, we assigned subject to learn about a committee discussing fines for domestic violence or littering. This design choice allows us to test whether the effects of gender balance and committee decisions vary across issue areas.

In Table A13, we focus on our Jordanian sample (where we randomized issue area in addition to our main treatments), and consider our key outcomes from H1-3. We do not find evidence that the effects of gender balance are moderated by the issue area discussed by the legislative committee (see small and imprecise point estimates for `Balance*DV Issue`). However, we do find some moderation with regards to our decision treatment, by which penalties for domestic violence are viewed as less favorable than penalties for littering, and committee's making pro-women decisions are viewed as less favorable than committees making decisions to reduce littering (see columns 2 and 4, for the `Decision*DV Issue` estimate).

C.9 Moderating Effect of Attitudes towards Regime on Main ATEs

Finally, in Figure A22 we consider whether respondents with varying levels of regime support react differently to our gender balance treatment. To do so, we interact a 4 point measure of satisfaction from the regime with our key gender balance treatment. The results reported in Figure A22 provide little support for the notion that attitudes towards the regime moderate our main gender balance treatment effects.

C.10 An Overview of Heterogeneous Treatment Effects

In Sections C.4-C.8, we consider a range of pre-registered and non-pre-registered heterogeneous treatment effects. Specifically, we focus on the extent to which theoretically motivated moderators including: respondents' level of sexism, perceptions of norms relating to gender, attitudes toward

government, and gender, moderate the effects of our main pre-registered treatment – committee gender balance. Though it is very plausible that these variables which we consider as moderators correlate with support for gendered policies, and though we demonstrate in Figure A24 that many of these moderators correlate with pre-treatment measures of support for increasing penalties on perpetrators of domestic violence, we do not find strong evidence that these variables moderate our main treatment effects. Interestingly, in additional non-pre-registered analyses, we find strong patterns of variation in gendered responses to the pro-women decision treatment. Indeed, Figures A20-A21 suggest that while the effects of pro-women decisions on our key outcomes are positive for both women and men, these effects are substantively larger for women. We interpret this finding to suggest that in the realm of gendered policy, women are likely more responsive to the substance of committee decisions, when compared with men. However, we emphasize that our results imply that both men and women still appear to prefer pro-women decision.

D Robustness Checks

D.1 Attrition

In our surveys we provided respondents' with an ability to report a "do not know" answer, or to refuse to answer any question. Consequentially, we have minor missingness in our key outcomes of interest. In Table A14 we consider whether our treatments increase the probability of not responding to our main outcomes, in the pooled and country specific samples. In most models reported in Table A14, we do not precisely estimate treatment effects on non-response to outcomes. However, since in some models we find a statistically significant relationship between our treatment and non-response to outcomes.

To address concerns regarding attrition, we follow Gomila and Clark (2020) and estimate additional models with inverse probability weights. In practice, we create weights that use observable and treatments to account for attrition in our key outcomes. We report weighted and non-weighted models for our main result in Figure A16. The additional analyses suggest that accounting for attrition with inverse probability weights does not substantively change our estimate.

D.2 Treatment Recall

In this section, we analyze responses to our main treatment manipulation check. In Figure A13, we demonstrate that almost 83% of our full sample correctly recalled whether the legislative committee was comprised of 8 men, or 4 men and 4 women. Compliance with treatment was highest in Jordan and lowest in Tunisia, but overall quite high.

In Figure A16 we demonstrate that correct treatment recall was lower for our decision treatment. Indeed, in the overall sample, 65% of subjects across all countries correctly recalled the committee's decision, and this lower percentage is largely driven by Tunisian respondents.

It is important to note that failure to correctly recall treatment amongst respondents would likely introduce downwards bias, leading us to identify conservative point estimates. Regardless, in order to address this issue, In Table A15 we descriptively examine potential correlates of manipulation check failure for both our treatments. To do so, we regress a variable taking a value of 1 if a respondent correctly recalled their treatment (0 otherwise) over our treatment indicators and

several demographics. We show that gender and education are predictors of failure to pass manipulation checks, and that respondents assigned to gender balanced committees and pro-women decisions were more likely to recall their treatment status.

Though not causally identified, in Figure A16 we report our main models, employing respondents' response to the manipulation check instead of actual treatment status as independent variables. The results reported in Figure A15 suggest that using perceived gender balance and committee decisions instead of respondents actual treatment status yields similar results. Moreover, we show that lower compliance with the decision treatment is unlikely the reason for our null result in H4 (moderating effect of decision on the gender balance effect). As reported in Figure A16, in line with the results reported in Figure A5 where pro-women decisions do not moderate the average treatment effect of gender balance, perceived pro-women decisions do not appear to moderate the original effects of gender balance. These additional analyses emphasize that failure in manipulation checks, and more generally incomplete compliance with treatment, likely pose a downward bias on our main estimates reported in the paper.

D.3 Enumerator Effects

Since our survey was implemented via phone, one might worry that the identity of enumerators might shape respondents answers and reaction to our experimental treatments. To address this concern, we set up our implementation to ensure that overall, our enumerators interviewed even proportions of respondents of the same/opposite sex. Unfortunately though, in Jordan significant proportions of respondents refused to speak to male enumerators so we had to relax this requirement in that case. To reduce concerns regarding the consequences of enumerator identity for our main results, we report additional models controlling for enumerator identity. Specifically, we crated a variable taking a value of 1 if an enumerator's gender identity is similar to a respondents' gender identity (0 otherwise). In Figure A17 we report our main results further controlling for this enumerator-respondent congruence measure. In Figure A18 we also run additional analyses where we control for respondent gender, enumerator gender, and the interaction of the two indicators. Across the difference specifications reported in Figures A17-A18, our results remain consistent with the main results reported in the paper.

D.4 Pre-Treatment Attitudes on Domestic Violence

In Figure A23 we report our main analyses, controlling for respondents pre-treatment self-reported support for increasing penalties for domestic violence. Since treatment was randomly assigned, this measure unlikely confounds our main estimates. As expected controlling for this measure does not substantively change our main findings.

graphicx

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics – Overall

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Male	6,104	0.502	0.500	0	1
Female	6,104	0.498	0.500	0	1
Age	6,102	42.556	14.249	18.000	90.000
Moroccan	6,104	0.240	0.427	0	1
Jordanian	6,104	0.525	0.499	0	1
Tunisian	6,104	0.235	0.424	0	1
Education	6,093	1.485	1.272	0.000	4.000
Income	6,048	1.895	0.999	0.000	3.000
Married	6,104	0.703	0.457	0	1
Sexism Index	6,104	0.624	0.204	0.000	1.000
Norms Index	6,104	0.468	0.370	0	1

Table A2: Covariate Balance (Gender Treatment)

	adj.diff	z
x_male	0.00	0.15
x_female	-0.00	-0.15
x_age	0.04	0.12
Education	-0.01	-0.20
Income	-0.02	-0.69
Married	-0.01	-0.65
m_sexism_ix	-0.00	-0.13
m_norms_ix	-0.02	-1.61

Table A3: Covariate Balance (Decision Treatment)

	adj.diff	z
x_male	-0.01	-0.44
x_female	0.01	0.44
x_age	-0.09	-0.24
Education	0.00	0.08
Income	-0.03	-1.19
Married	-0.01	-0.57
m_sexism_ix	0.00	0.23
m_norms_ix	0.00	0.01

Table A4: ATE on Decision Evaluation (H1)

	Committee Made Right Decision			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.08^{**}	0.11^{*}	0.09	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Decision	0.66^{***}	0.76^{***}	0.60^{***}	0.63^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Age	-0.00^{*}	-0.00^{*}	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.13^{*}	-0.08	-0.03	-0.24^{*}
	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.10)
BA	-0.20^{***}	-0.17^{*}	-0.24^{**}	-0.21^{**}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.27^{***}	-0.15	-0.40^{***}	-0.27^{*}
	(0.07)	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.11)
NA Edu	-0.40^{***}			-0.41^{*}
	(0.12)			(0.20)
Male	-0.07^{*}	-0.17^{***}	-0.03	0.03
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)
Num. obs.	3881	1460	1230	1191

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A5: ATE on Decision Evaluation for Women (H1a)

	Committee Made Right Decision for Women			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.07^{*}	0.14^{**}	0.07	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Decision	0.66^{***}	0.79^{***}	0.61^{***}	0.60^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	-0.00	-0.00^{*}	0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.13^{*}	-0.06	-0.10	-0.24^{**}
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.09)
BA	-0.23^{***}	-0.22^{**}	-0.21^{**}	-0.29^{***}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.30^{***}	-0.22	-0.36^{***}	-0.33^{**}
	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)
NA Edu	0.02			0.07
	(0.13)			(0.13)
Male	-0.09^{**}	-0.18^{***}	-0.04	-0.05
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Num. obs.	4173	1509	1328	1336

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A6: ATE on Decision Evaluation for Men (H1b)

	Committee Made Right Decision for Men			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.02	0.07	0.03	-0.03
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Decision	0.34^{***}	0.43^{***}	0.34^{***}	0.25^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Age	-0.00^{**}	-0.00^{*}	-0.00	-0.00^{*}
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.06	0.01	0.04	-0.18
	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.15)	(0.09)
BA	-0.11^{*}	-0.06	-0.17^{*}	-0.10
	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.14^{*}	0.08	-0.34^{**}	-0.12
	(0.07)	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.12)
NA Edu	-0.45			-0.53
	(0.30)			(0.37)
Male	-0.02	-0.13^{*}	-0.02	0.11
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Num. obs.	4069	1496	1300	1273

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A7: ATE on Decision Evaluation for All Citizens

	Committee Made Right Decision for All Citizens			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.06^{*}	0.07	0.06	0.06
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Decision	0.60^{***}	0.71^{***}	0.53^{***}	0.58^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	-0.00	-0.00^{*}	-0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.15^{**}	-0.15	0.14	-0.26^{**}
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.09)
BA	-0.20^{***}	-0.17^{*}	-0.25^{**}	-0.22^{**}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.31^{***}	-0.24	-0.34^{**}	-0.36^{***}
	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)
NA Edu	-0.37^{***}		-0.51^{***}	-0.33
	(0.11)		(0.07)	(0.20)
Male	-0.05	-0.14^{**}	-0.03	0.02
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Num. obs.	4202	1549	1327	1326

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A8: ATE on Evaluation of Committee (H2)

	Evaluation of Committee (Index)			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.14^{***}	0.15^{**}	0.16^{**}	0.12^{*}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Decision	0.56^{***}	0.72^{***}	0.48^{***}	0.50^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Age	0.00	-0.00^{*}	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.35^{***}	-0.35^{***}	-0.18	-0.39^{***}
	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.09)
BA	-0.40^{***}	-0.27^{***}	-0.49^{***}	-0.47^{***}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.58^{***}	-0.37^{**}	-0.76^{***}	-0.61^{***}
	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)
NA Edu	-0.90^{*}		-0.26^{***}	-1.44^{***}
	(0.36)		(0.07)	(0.34)
Male	-0.05	-0.16^{***}	-0.01	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Num. obs.	3818	1412	1233	1173

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A9: ATE on Trust in Committee (H2a)

	Trust in Committee			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.09^{**}	0.18^{***}	0.07	0.12^{*}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Decision	0.37^{***}	0.50^{***}	0.31^{***}	0.50^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Age	0.00^{*}	-0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.39^{***}	-0.36^{***}	-0.26	-0.39^{***}
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.09)
BA	-0.41^{***}	-0.28^{***}	-0.57^{***}	-0.47^{***}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.58^{***}	-0.32^{*}	-0.77^{***}	-0.61^{***}
	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)
NA Edu	-0.76^{*}		0.22^{***}	-1.44^{***}
	(0.35)		(0.07)	(0.34)
Male	-0.07^{*}	-0.24^{***}	-0.01	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Num. obs.	4088	1467	1321	1173

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A10: ATE on Perceptions of Committee Fairness (H2b)

	Committee is Fair			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.14^{***}	0.10^{*}	0.18^{***}	0.16^{**}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Decision	0.59^{***}	0.74^{***}	0.51^{***}	0.48^{***}
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	-0.00^{*}	-0.00^{*}	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	-0.20^{***}	-0.25^{**}	0.03	-0.23^{*}
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.15)	(0.10)
BA	-0.28^{***}	-0.20^{**}	-0.27^{***}	-0.37^{***}
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	-0.43^{***}	-0.29^{*}	-0.55^{***}	-0.44^{***}
	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)
NA Edu	-0.71^{**}		-0.66^{***}	-0.86^{*}
	(0.26)		(0.07)	(0.37)
Male	-0.00	-0.03	-0.01	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Num. obs.	4112	1543	1301	1268

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A11: ATE on Perceptions of Public Accepting Decision (H3)

	Will Public Accept Decision			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.02	0.08	−0.02	−0.02
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Decision	0.42***	0.51***	0.45***	0.28***
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	−0.00*	−0.00	−0.00	−0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	−0.08	0.01	0.03	−0.30***
	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.09)
BA	−0.07	−0.05	0.11	−0.28***
	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	−0.10	−0.07	−0.11	−0.13
	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)
NA Edu	−0.61		0.62***	−1.06
	(0.44)		(0.07)	(0.55)
Male	−0.08**	−0.07	−0.02	−0.14**
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Num. obs.	4322	1595	1355	1372

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

Table A12: Moderating Effect of Decision on Gender Balance (H4)

	Committee Made Right Decision				Attitudes towards Committee				Public Accept Decision			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.04	0.02	0.09	0.03	0.09	0.10	0.14	0.02	−0.01	0.09	−0.05	−0.10
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Decision	0.62***	0.66***	0.60***	0.62***	0.51***	0.66***	0.46***	0.41***	0.39***	0.53***	0.43***	0.20**
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Age	−0.00*	−0.00*	−0.00	−0.00	0.00	−0.00*	0.00	0.00	−0.00*	−0.00	−0.00	−0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	−0.13*	−0.08	−0.03	−0.24*	−0.35***	−0.35***	−0.18	−0.39***	−0.07	0.01	0.03	−0.29***
	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.09)
BA	−0.20***	−0.17*	−0.24**	−0.21**	−0.40***	−0.27***	−0.49***	−0.46***	−0.07	−0.05	0.11	−0.28***
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
MA/PHD	−0.27***	−0.15	−0.40***	−0.27*	−0.58***	−0.38**	−0.75***	−0.61***	−0.09	−0.07	−0.11	−0.12
	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)
NA Edu	−0.42**			−0.42*	−0.91*		−0.26***	−1.47***	−0.61		0.64***	−1.06
	(0.14)			(0.20)	(0.37)		(0.07)	(0.34)	(0.44)		(0.08)	(0.55)
Male	−0.07*	−0.18***	−0.03	0.03	−0.05	−0.17***	−0.01	0.01	−0.08**	−0.07	−0.02	−0.14**
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Balance*Decision	0.08	0.18	0.00	0.02	0.10	0.12	0.02	0.18	0.04	−0.03	0.05	0.16
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Num. obs.	3881	1460	1230	1191	3818	1412	1233	1173	4322	1595	1355	1372

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

Table A13: Moderating Effect of Issue Area on Main Treatments (Jordan)

	Right Decision		Attitudes towards Committee		Public Accept Decision	
	Jordan	Jordan	Jordan	Jordan	Jordan	Jordan
Gender Balance	0.09	0.10**	0.12*	0.14***	0.04	0.06
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)
Decision (Support Proposal)	0.91***	1.04***	0.82***	0.92***	0.55***	0.54***
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)
Domestic Violence Issue	−0.07	0.06	−0.16**	−0.05	−0.07	−0.06
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Balance*DV Issue	0.01		0.04		0.05	
	(0.07)		(0.07)		(0.08)	
Decision*DV Issue		−0.26***		−0.19**		0.02
		(0.07)		(0.07)		(0.08)
Num. obs.	2803	2803	2744	2744	3093	3093

All models control for age, education, and gender.

Table A14: Attrition By Country – Treatment Effects on Non-Response

	Overall Attrition				Right Decision				Attitudes				Public Accept			
	Pool	JRD	TNS	MRC	Pool	JRD	TNS	MRC	Pool	JRD	TNS	MRC	Pool	JRD	TNS	MRC
Gender Balance	−0.02	−0.02	−0.01	−0.04	−0.02*	−0.01	−0.01	−0.04	−0.01	−0.00	−0.01	−0.02	−0.01	−0.00	−0.01	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Decision	−0.00	0.03	0.03	−0.06**	0.00	0.03*	0.02	−0.04	−0.00	−0.00	0.03	−0.03	−0.01	0.00	0.01	−0.03*
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age	0.00***	0.00	0.00***	0.00***	0.00**	0.00	0.00	0.00*	0.00***	0.00	0.00***	0.00***	0.00**	0.00	0.00*	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vocational Diploma	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.02	−0.01	0.00	−0.05	−0.01	−0.02	−0.03	−0.05	0.01	0.00	−0.02	0.13*	−0.01
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.06)	(0.02)
BA	−0.05**	−0.06*	−0.04	−0.07	−0.08***	−0.09***	−0.06*	−0.09**	−0.03	−0.04	−0.00	−0.04	−0.02	−0.01	0.00	−0.04*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
MA/PHD	−0.04	−0.08	−0.01	−0.04	−0.05*	−0.08*	−0.06	−0.04	−0.02	−0.09*	0.03	−0.02	−0.00	−0.04*	0.01	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
NA Edu	0.53***	0.79***	0.75***	0.47***	0.51***	0.86***	0.84***	0.43*	0.52***	0.85***	−0.14***	0.56***	0.34*	0.96***	−0.04**	0.31
	(0.12)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.17)
Male	−0.01	−0.01	−0.03	0.01	−0.01	−0.02	−0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	−0.00	0.00	−0.00	−0.01
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Num. obs.	4552	1654	1436	1462	4552	1654	1436	1462	4552	1654	1436	1462	4552	1654	1436	1462

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table A15: Correlates of Correct Response

	Recall Gender Balance?				Recall Decision			
	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco	Pooled	Jordan	Tunisia	Morocco
Gender Balance	0.17***	0.04**	0.33***	0.14***	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Decision (Pro)	0.00	−0.04*	0.05*	−0.01	0.23***	0.30***	0.06*	0.30***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Age	−0.00	0.00	−0.00	0.00	0.00**	0.00	0.00*	0.00*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
High School	0.06***	0.07***	0.05	0.05	0.11***	0.08**	0.17***	0.08*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Vocational Diploma	0.08***	0.02	0.09	0.14***	0.13***	0.06	0.23**	0.16***
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.04)
BA	0.08***	0.07**	0.05	0.12***	0.21***	0.15***	0.33***	0.17***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
MA	0.10***	0.12***	0.04	0.14***	0.22***	0.21***	0.38***	0.11**
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)
NA Edu	−0.12	−0.85***	0.19***	−0.03	−0.17	−0.82***	−0.29***	−0.12
	(0.14)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.18)
Male	−0.04***	−0.00	−0.06**	−0.05**	−0.02	0.03	−0.05	−0.05*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Num. obs.	4552	1654	1436	1462	4552	1654	1436	1462

The outcome variable in these regression takes a value of 1 if respondent correctly answers manipulation check.

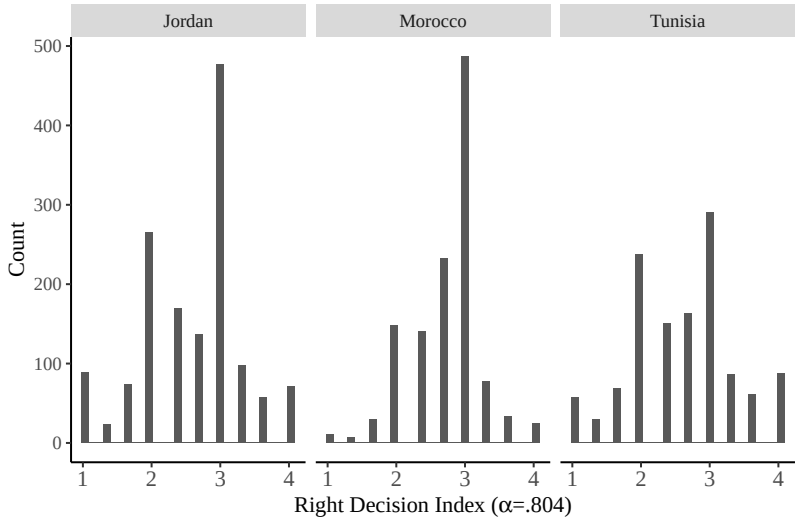

Figure A1: **Distribution of Right Decision Index by Country.**

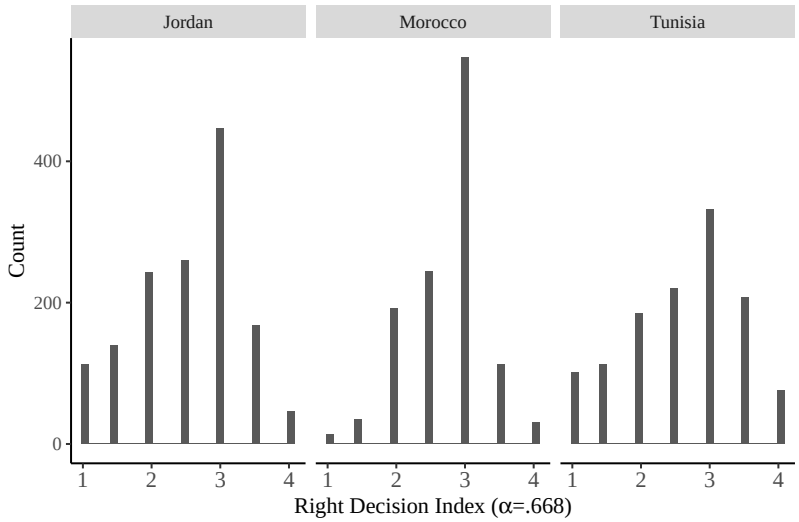

Figure A2: **Distribution of Attitudes towards Committee Index by Country.**

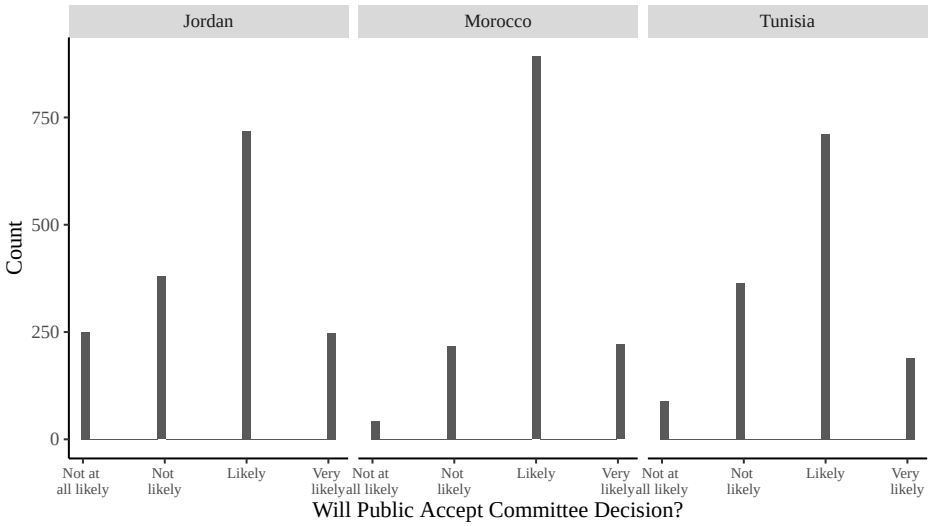

Figure A3: **Distribution of Beliefs that the Public will Accept the Committee's Decision**

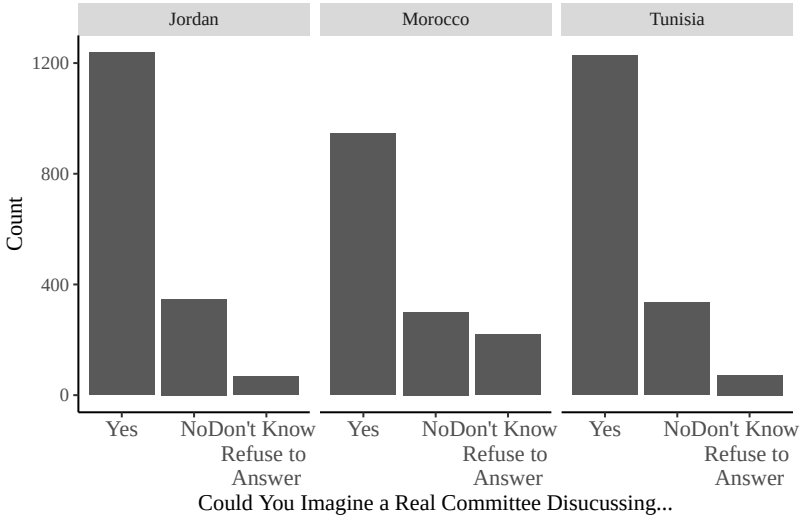

Figure A4: **Distribution of Respondent Perceptions regarding the Possibility that the Scenario Described in their Experimental Vignette is Realistic.**

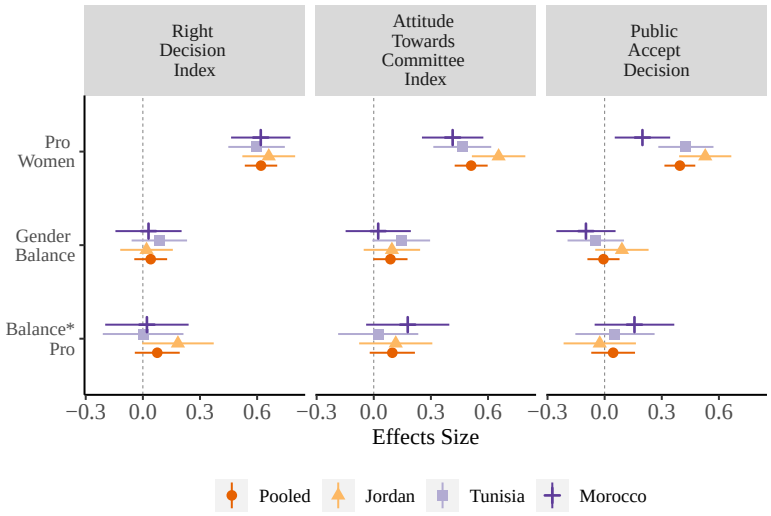

Figure A5: **Effect of Gender Balance Conditional on Committee Decision.** These plots consider the interaction effect of both our treatments on our three main outcomes.

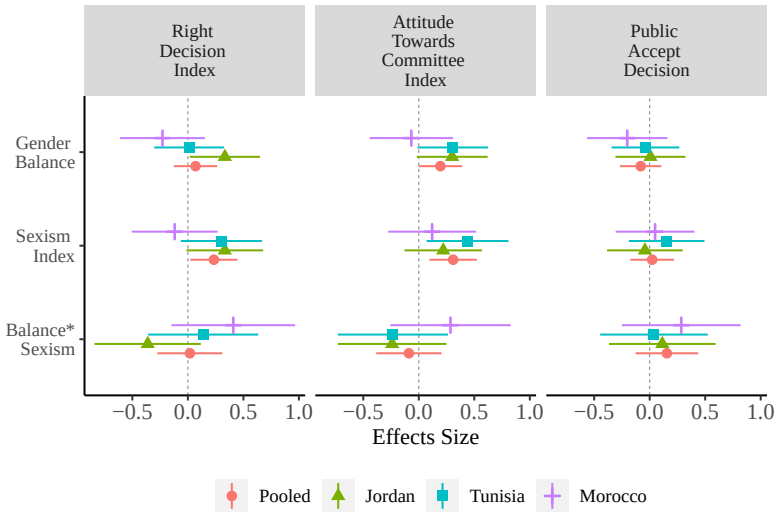

Figure A6: **Moderating Effect of Overall Sexism Index on Gender Balance.**

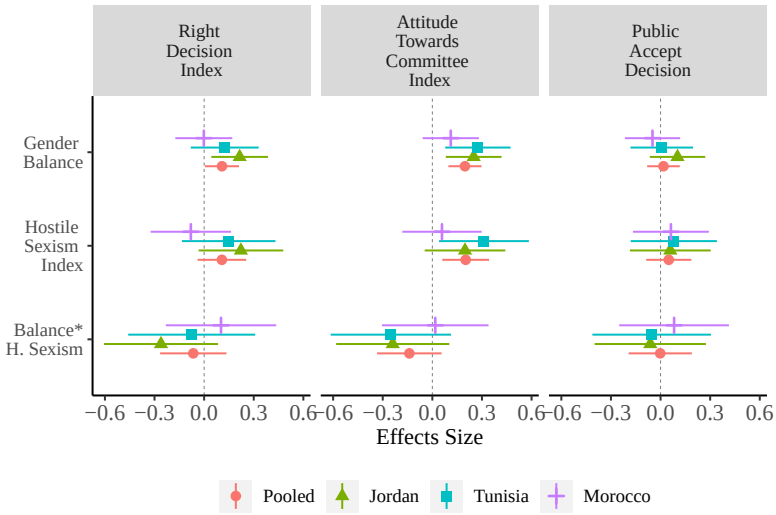

Figure A7: **Moderating Effect of Hostile Sexism on Gender Balance.**

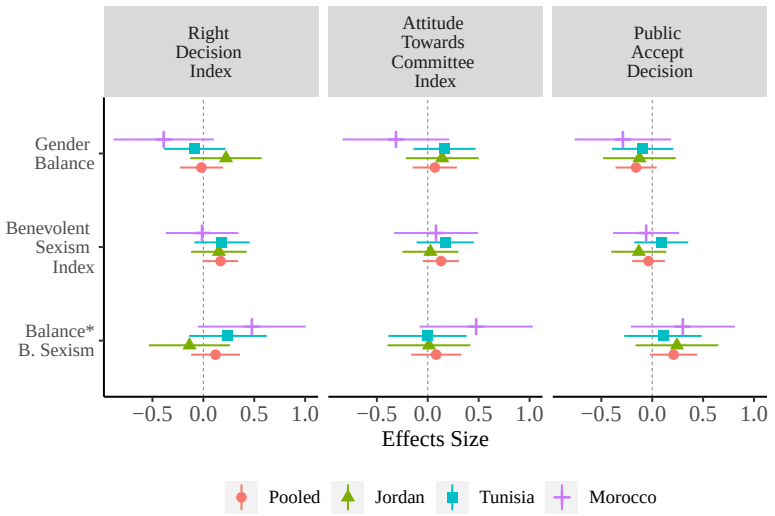

Figure A8: **Moderating Effect of Benevolent Sexism on Gender Balance.**

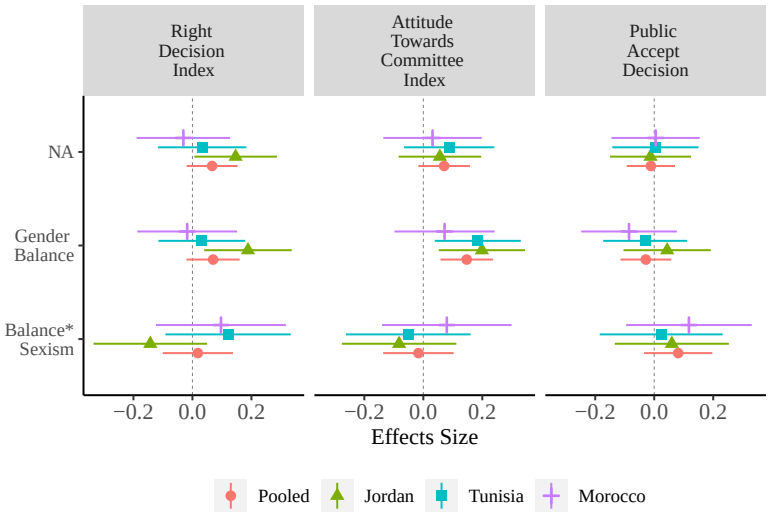

Figure A9: **Moderating Effect of Sexism on Gender Balance using a Binary Indicator.** This plot reports the interaction of our gender balance treatment with a binary indicator taking a value of 1 for respondents with above average ($\mu = .629$) levels of sexism on the general sexism index.

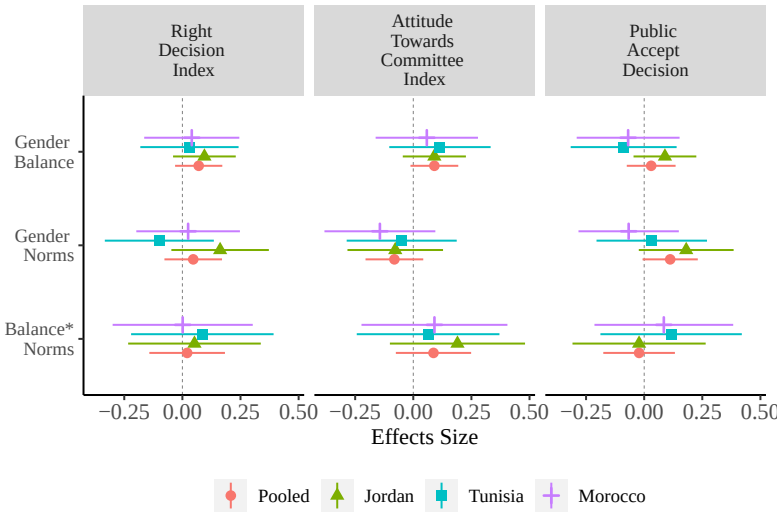

Figure A10: **Moderating Effect of Perceptions of Gender Norms on Gender Balance.**

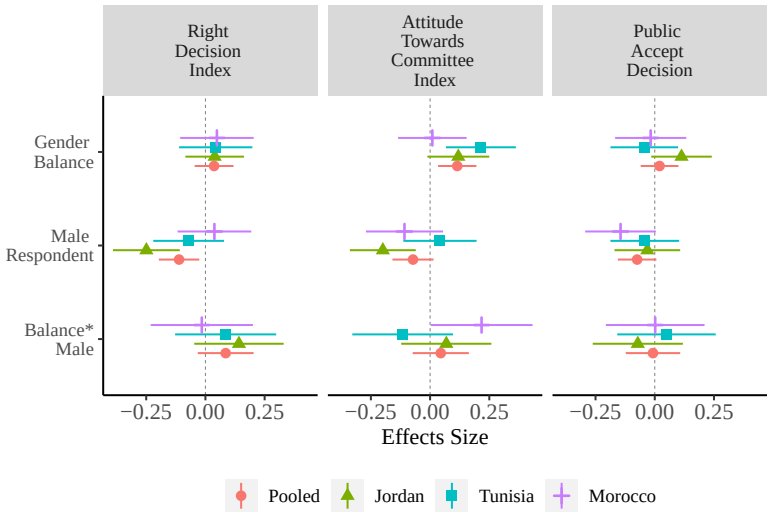

Figure A11: **Moderating Effect of Gender on Gender Balance Treatment.**

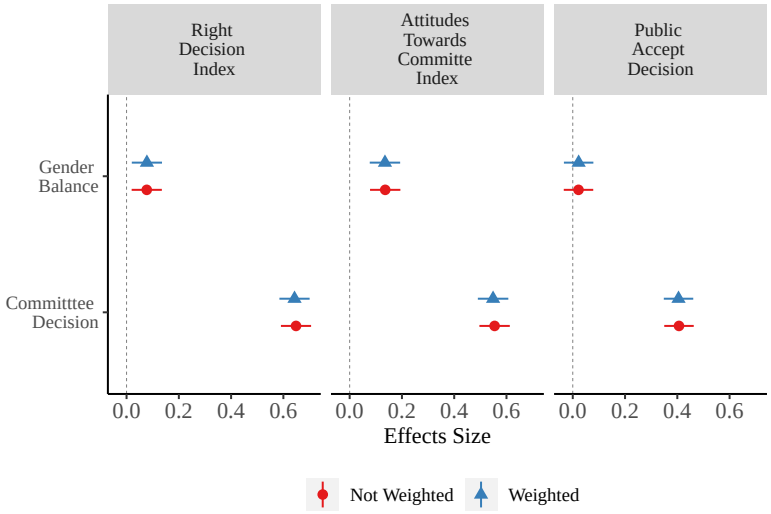

Figure A12: **Inverse Probability Models.** This figure presents weighted models accounting for the mild attrition in our main outcomes of interest. We benchmark weighted models with original models reported in the main text.

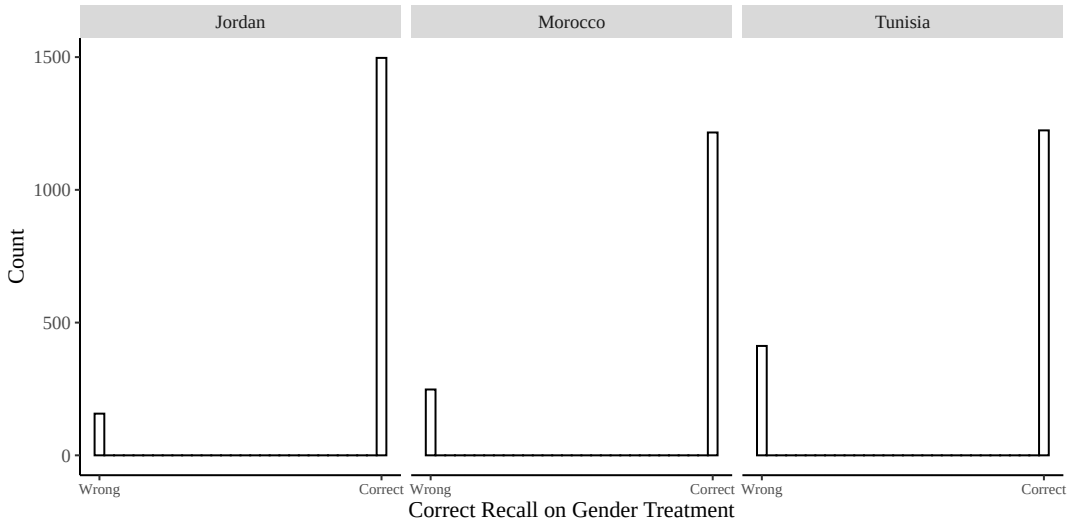

Figure A13: **Distribution of Correct Gender Balance Treatment Recall by Country.**

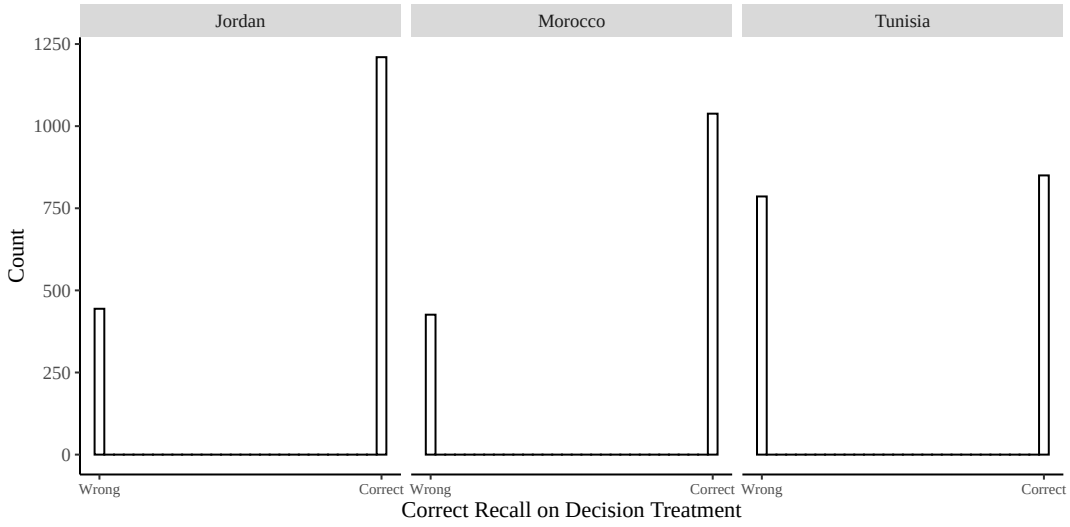

Figure A14: **Distribution of Correct Decision Treatment Recall by Country.**

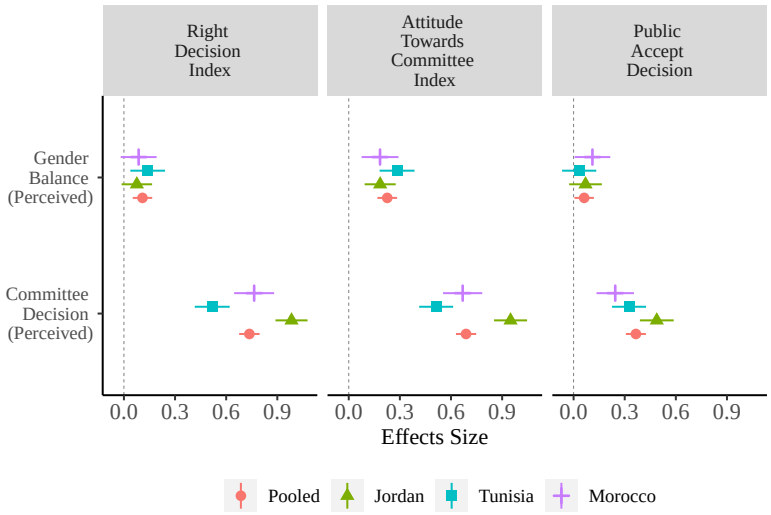

Figure A15: **Correlation of Perceived Gender Balance and Committee Decision (i.e. Manipulation Check Answers) with Key Outcomes.**

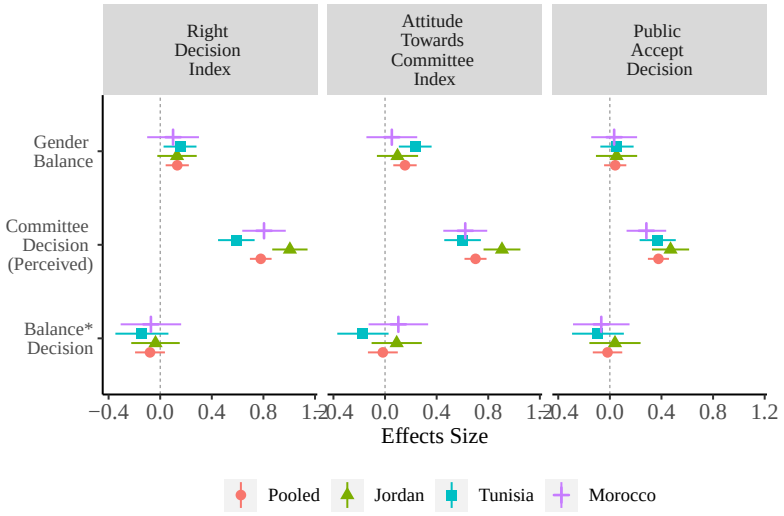

Figure A16: **Moderating Effect of Perceived Committee Support on Gender Balance Treatment.**

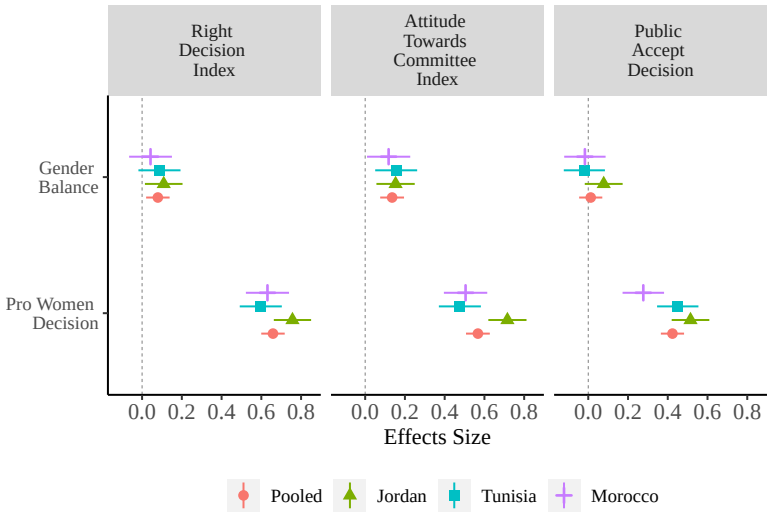

Figure A17: **Main Results Controlling for Enumerator-Respondent Gender Congruence.**

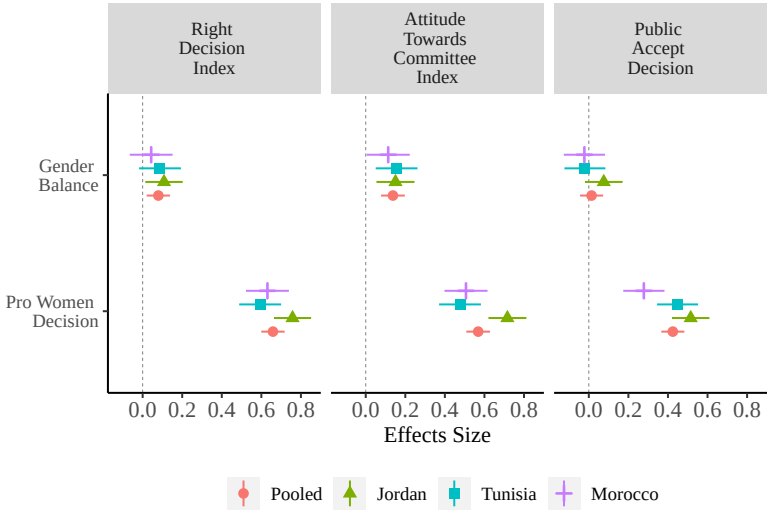

Figure A18: **Main Results Controlling for Enumerator Gender, Respondent Gender, and the Interaction of both Indicators.**

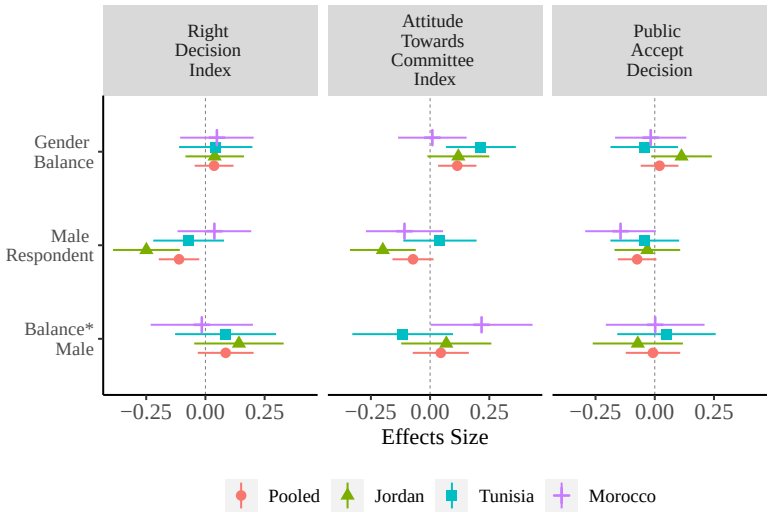

Figure A19: **Moderating Effect of Respondents' Gender Identity on the Gender Balance Treatment.** This Figure demonstrates that respondents' gender identity does not moderate the main effects of our gender balance treatment.

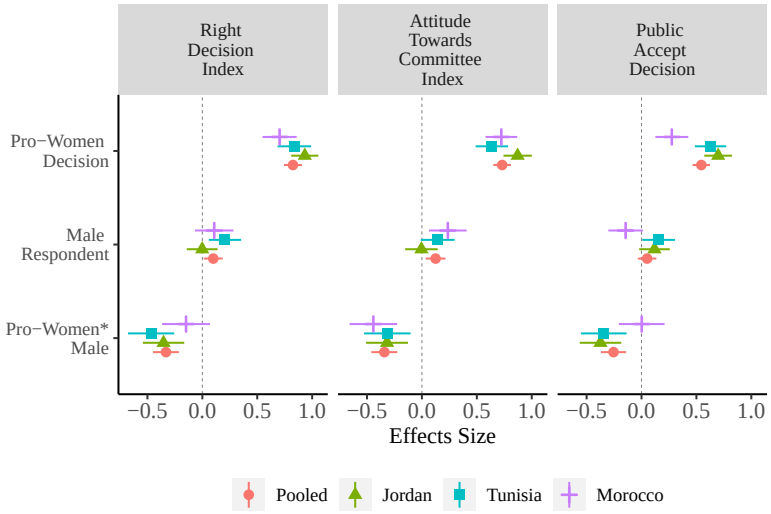

Figure A20: **Moderating Effect of Respondents' Gender Identity on the Pro-Women Decision Treatment.** This Figure demonstrates that respondents' male identity has a negative moderating effect on treatment.

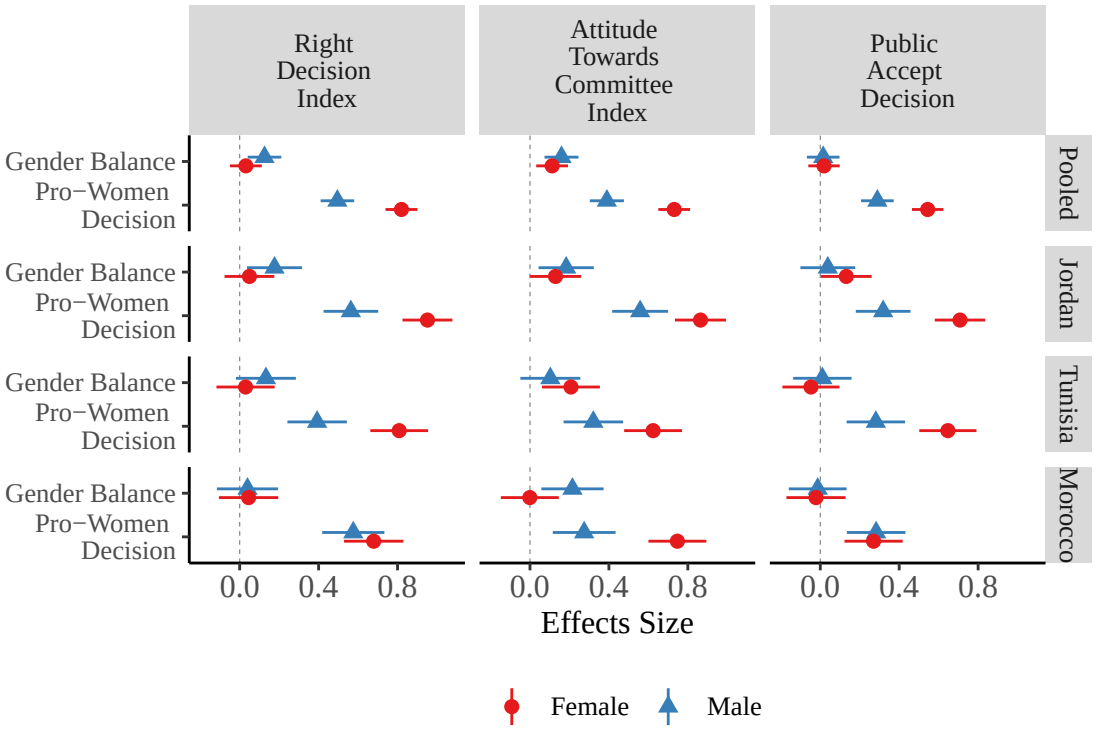

Figure A21: **Effects of Gender Balance and Decision Treatment by gender.** This Figure reports the main experimental effects on sub-samples of female and male respondents for our pooled and country specific samples.

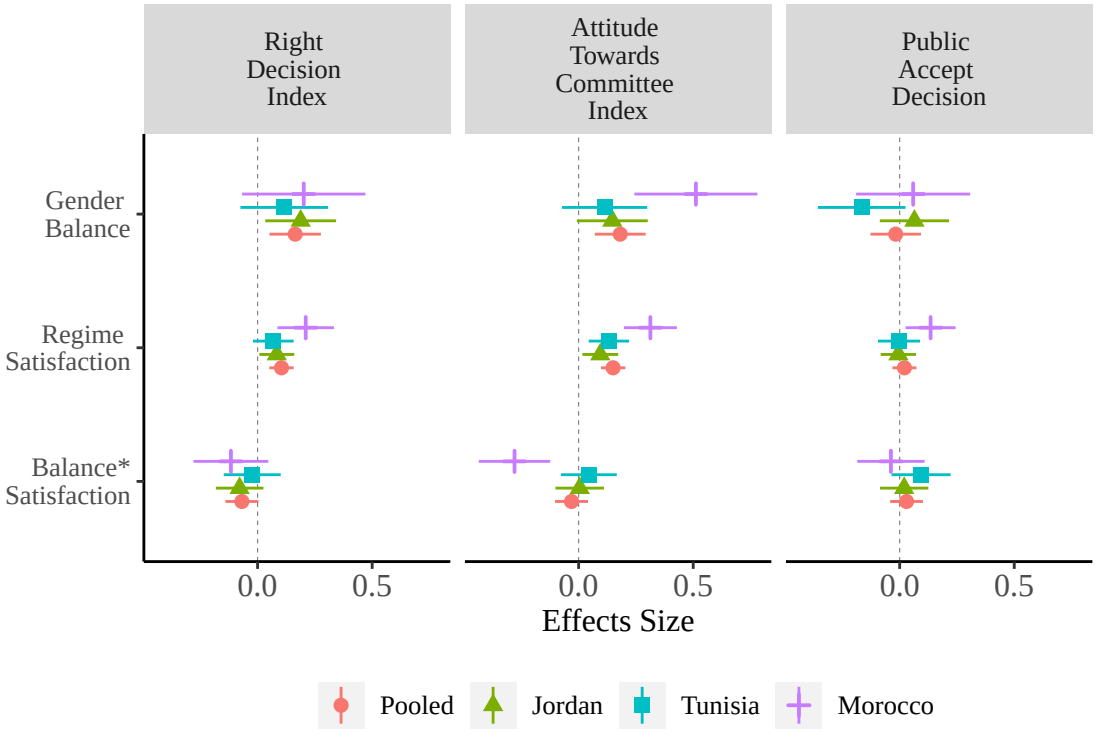

Figure A22: **Regime Satisfaction does not Consistently Moderate the Effects of Gender Balance.** This Figure reports the moderating effects of respondents' pre-treatment regime satisfaction on our primary gender balance treatment.

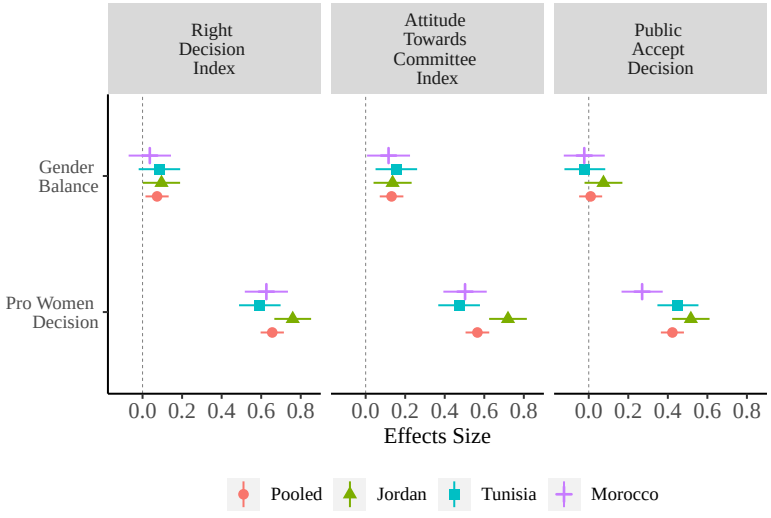

Figure A23: **Main Results Controlling for Respondents' Pre-Treatment Attitudes Regarding Increasing Penalties for Domestic Violence.**

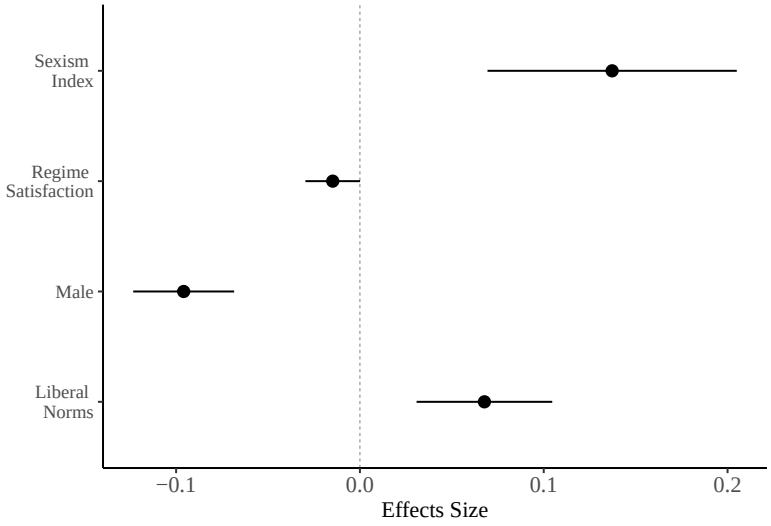

Figure A24: **Correlation of Key Moderators with Pre-Treatment Support for Increasing Penalties on Domestic Violence Perpetrators.**