

**Gender, Islamism and Ethnicity:  
Testing an Intersectional Theory of Electoral Politics in Jordan**

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## **Abstract**

Voting behavior literature focuses on how single traits—e.g., religion, gender, or ethnicity—affect candidate electability. Yet, voters weigh multiple factors. Drawing on an original 2014 survey experiment conducted among 1,499 Jordanians, we test an intersectional theory which draws on social identification, power relations, and role congruity theories to explain candidate electability across voter groups. Respondents receive statements about male or females candidate who are Muslim Brotherhood members or coethnics and rate the likelihood of voting for them. We find that electability is intersectional, not additive. Consistent with gender role congruity and power relations theories, candidates from the dominant group (i.e., non-Islamist males) are most successful, while minority candidates (i.e., females and Islamists) draw support from their social in-groups. Women can leverage Islamism or co-ethnicity to be equally electable as similar men. Our model is sufficiently general to explain electability across a range of identities and western and non-western contexts.

**Keywords:** Electoral politics; Islam; gender; ethnicity; Jordan; Middle East and North Africa.

How do voters evaluate candidates with multiple, intersecting identities? Existing literature on voting behavior in western and non-western contexts focuses on single identities, including gender (Rosenwasser and Seale, 1988; Koch, 2000; Lawless, 2004; McDermott, 1997; Dolan, 2010), race and ethnicity (McConaughy, White, Leal, and Casellas, 2010; Collingwood, Barreto, & Garcia-Rios, 2014; Sigelman, Sigelman, Walkosz, & Nitz, 1995; McDermott, 1998), religion (McDermott, 2007), party (Conover & Feldman, 1982; Rahn 1993), and incumbency (McDermott, 1998), showing how these traits, in isolation, shape electability. Yet, rarely does this literature examine comparative contexts or consider the impact of multiple candidate attributes on candidates' chances at the polls.<sup>1</sup>

In reality, voters weigh multiple factors when selecting candidates and sometimes make difficult choices between identities they desire and others they find less appealing—or outright oppose. This is particularly true in low information settings, where voters rely on informational shortcuts to evaluate candidates (Popkin, 1994; Chandra, 2004; Posner, 2005; McDermott, 1998; Bassi, Morton, & Williams, 2011). In Jordan, a semi-competitive electoral context like many others worldwide, several politically salient identities signal what a candidate, if elected, is likely to do, and these traits operate intersectionally in ways that are not well understood. Voters are confronted with an array of choices—male versus female, members of the same or a different tribe, and pro-regime versus Islamist politicians. The choice may not be a simple one. Voters may not wish to vote for a female candidate, but believe that she would better represent them than male candidates from a different tribe or political position, such as party or opposition ideology.

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<sup>1</sup> Some studies examine two candidate traits (Calfano & Djupe, 2011; McDermott, 1998; Benstead, Jamal, & Lust, 2015; Benstead & Lust, 2016).

In this paper, we argue that, much more than is appreciated in existing studies, electoral and identity politics are intersectional, not additive (Hughes, 2013). Candidates with intersecting identities are perceived by voters in complex ways that are not easily reducible to gender, ethnicity, or ideology.

Intersectional theory argues that when an individual belongs to two or more minority identity groups, each elemental identity is inextricably linked to the other, producing effects on outcomes like electability that differ from that of the component parts of that identity in isolation from one another (King, 1988).<sup>2</sup> Women from an ethnic minority may encounter a different social environment from other women, and also experience being an ethnic minority differently than males of their minority group (Browne & Misra, 2003; McCall, 2005). Yet, despite growing realization of this basic principle in electoral politics research broadly—and the existence of some disparate literatures on gender, religion, or ethnicity that do engage an intersectional approach (e.g., Benstead, Jamal, & Lust, 2015), there is a “paucity of empirical work in intersectionality” (Hancock, 2007, 66). And, no unified theory exists that can explain intersectional identity politics cross-regionally.

Drawing on an original survey experiment conducted among 1,499 Jordanians in 2014, this paper develops an intersectional theory of electoral politics, culling insights from gender role congruity, power relations, and social identification theory (SIT), which we see as complementary, not competing.<sup>3</sup> Briefly, gender role congruity theory posits that women

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<sup>2</sup> King (1988) termed intersectional identities, “multiple jeopardy,” for which “the modifier “multiple” refers not only to several, simultaneous oppressions but to the multiplicative relationships among them as well.

<sup>3</sup> Jordanian Post-Election Survey implemented by the Program on Governance and Local

will be less electable than men because they lack the stereotyped qualities associated with leaders (Eagly, 1987). SIT argues that voters prefer members of their social in-groups, such as co-ethics and co-religionists (Tajfel et al., 1971). Power relations theory argues that members of marginalized groups like the political opposition and women will be stereotyped as having less power (Tannen, 1990; Kane and Macaulay, 1993) and thus be seen as less able to provide services (Bjarnegård, 2013; Benstead, 2015). These three theories, we argue, are needed in tandem to explain the electability of candidates with even three intersecting traits.

To test our theory, we use an original experiment in which respondents are randomly assigned to hear statements about a male or a female candidate who is: (1) a member of the Muslim Brotherhood's political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF, the country's main Islamist group); (2) a coethnic (a member of the respondent's tribe);<sup>4</sup> or, (3) lacking other identifying information.<sup>5</sup> Respondents are then asked to rate how likely they would be to vote for the candidate. This allows us to examine the impact of three candidate traits—gender, ethnicity, and Islamist ideology—on electability across different voter groups.

For instance, using traits that signal candidates' ability to provide selective and programmatic benefits in a wide variety of settings, respondents might be asked how likely

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Development (GLD) at the University of Gothenburg and Yale University (Benstead, Kao, & Lust, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Tribes are ethno-political groups defined by a real or imagined link of common kinship, following seminal works on ethnicity (Weber, 1968, p. 369; Smith, 1971, p. 180; Horowitz, 1985, p. 53).

<sup>5</sup> When we refer to male or female candidates in relation to the experiment, we mean the candidates that have just these identifying attributes and lack other identifying information.

they would be to vote for “an educated woman” and “an educated man who is a member of their tribe (*asheera*),” or vice versa, since the statements were also presented in random order. Or, they may be asked how likely they would be to vote for “an educated woman who is a member of their tribe (*asheera*)” and “an educated man who is a member of the IAF.” So too, they may be asked about “an educated woman who is a member of the IAF” and “an educated man.” This allows us to explore electability while minimizing social desirability and conformity bias (Blaydes & Gillum, 2013; Benstead, 2014a, b).

Some of our findings are unexpected and allow us to make two unique contributions in particular to two literature on electoral politics, writ large. First, our findings clarify the relationship between gender role congruity and social identification theories, showing that they are complementary, not competing, as some previous work suggests.<sup>6</sup> Consistent with gender role congruity (Eagly & Karau, 2002) and power relations theories, candidates who stereotyped as having the psychological traits and competencies desired in a political leader—i.e., male candidates—are more electable than candidates from groups who are marginalized from power—such as female and Islamist candidates.

Second, we show that the impact of candidates’ traits on electability is intersectional, not additive, and in some unexpected ways. Islamist women are not doubly disadvantaged—as an additive discrimination theory employed in much of the extant literature on identity politics would suggest<sup>7</sup>—but rather that they have their own identity and do better than male

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<sup>6</sup> Previous work frames these theories to some extent as competing (Benstead, Jamal, & Lust 2015), but we argue that they are inter-related and equally needed to explain voter behavior in even a minimally complex low information experiment with three identities.

<sup>7</sup> Most studies do not explicitly articulate their theory in terms of additive identities, but ‘it is

Islamists. Minority women are in classes of their own. In line with intersectionality research in other realms (Mcguire & Reskin, 1993; Kilbourne, England & Beron, 1994; Greenman & Xie, 2008)<sup>8</sup> we find that while female candidates are disadvantaged relative to male candidates, they can improve their chances relative to similar men who share their group identity by leveraging an intersecting trait—co-ethnicity or Islamism. That is, female Islamists are as likely (or unlikely) to be elected as male Islamists among the general population, and they are actually more electable for members of their own social group (other Islamists). Likewise, female tribal members are just as likely as male tribal members to be elected among the general population, and they are equally preferred by members of their in-group. This goes against conventional wisdom on the subject and offers important insights for activists working to promote women’s equality in different settings.

Additionally, this work fills in some gaps in the extant literature. First, it considers intersectionality theory in relation to three other prominent theories of electoral behavior: role congruity theory, power relations theory, and social identity theory. Second, rarely has intersectional theory been tested in non-Western settings.<sup>9</sup> Finally, few studies examine three intersecting identities.

Our theoretical framework that is sufficiently general to explain candidate electability

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invoked implicitly whenever researchers draw inferences about “the race gap” or “the gender gap” from studies that focus on only one or the other’ (Greenman & Xie, 2008, p. 1218).

<sup>8</sup> These studies find that minority women do better than minority men in terms of pay, demonstrating that these women do not suffer an additive effect of their dual minority status.

<sup>9</sup> Although Benstead, Jamal, & Lust (2015) consider intersectional theory for two identities—religion and gender—in Tunisia.

across a broad range of intersecting identities—such as religiosity and race—and western and non-western contexts. While it is true that voters look for different mixes of clientelistic and programmatic benefits across political contexts, their perceptions about what candidates are likely to do depends on the extent to which the candidate's group is seen as having the stereotyped psychological traits (i.e., gender role congruity theory) and competencies (i.e., power relations theory) associated with effective leadership, and how likely he or she is to deliver based on shared identity with the voter (i.e., SIT). Yet, we are unable to directly test these theories. Thus, in developing a theory, this work is a starting point for a research agenda on the role of intersectionality theory in electoral politics.

Our work nevertheless succeeds in extending electoral and identity politics literature and sub-areas including gender politics and Islamist parties, by showing that candidate traits shape their electability intersectionality, not additively (Hughes, 2013; Kurzman & Naqvi, 2010; Mugge & Erzeel, 2016). It has implications for policymakers seeking to empower women and minorities by suggesting the need for programs that are tailored to women from different backgrounds and underscores how other categories of exclusion (e.g., being from the opposition party) disadvantage candidates.

### **Explaining Voter Perceptions: An Intersectional Theory**

Next, we examine three theories in greater detail needed to explain the electability of candidates with three intersecting identities: gender, Islamism, and ethnicity.

#### **Social Identity Theory**

Social identity theory (SIT) was developed by sociologists to explain group dynamics, particularly as they relate to prejudice and inter-group conflict, and has been applied in identity and electoral politics research (Posner, 2005; McConnaughy, White, Leal, & Casellas, 2010). Research participants in a variety of experimental situations place

themselves and others in in-groups and out-groups and tend to hold more positive stereotypes about and prefer members of their social in-group (Turner, 1982; Tajfel et al., 1971). The strength of in-group preference and prejudice depends on the degree of inter-group competition or conflict. When there is little competition or shared interests, in-group bias may be limited. Where conflict is pronounced and interests are threatened, in-group preference is strong.<sup>10</sup> Applied to electoral politics, SIT suggests that voters will use identity to gain more information about candidates and will favor candidates from their in-groups. Whether this in-group bias actually results more from positive perceptions associated with members of one's own group or from negative perceptions of members from out-groups is not often explicitly tested in the literature.

SIT has been shown to have explanatory power across a wide variety of democratic and authoritarian political contexts. Studies of religiosity show that observers hold relatively negative attitudes towards members of their religious out-group, believing that they will violate the participant's own religious values (Johnson, Rowatt, & LaBouff, 2012; Altemeyer, 2003). Applied to electoral politics and representation, studies of race and gender in the US, for instance, show that respondents stereotype women and black candidates as more liberal than white male candidates. Black candidates are seen as more interested in

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<sup>10</sup> Individuals also perceive varying levels of social distance from others based on these categorizations. Social distance is perceived similarities or differences between two or more individuals in different groups, stemming from social stereotypes arising from individuals' group identities (Butler & Tavits, forthcoming). Social distance theory developed in relation to social identification theory when it was applied to studying race-of-interviewer effects (Webster, 1996; Williams, 1964; Blaydes & Gillum, 2013; Benstead, 2014a, b).

minority rights than whites, while female candidates are seen as more committed to clean government than males (McDermott, 1998). In an experiment on city council elections, McConnaughy, White, Leal, & Casellas (2010) argue that in-group preferences for Latino candidates arises from the ways candidate ethnicity primes ethnically-linked fate. Research across a wide variety of contexts also shows that women parliamentarians tend to advocate more for women's interests than men (Reitan, 1997; Bratton & Ray, 2002).

Yet, because candidates also favor others from the same, marginalized group, racial, ethnic, or gender identity can also signal the likelihood of favoring a voter's group in terms of policy for selective benefits. Research on race in the US finds black state legislators are more likely to respond to letters from black constituents, even those living outside their district, suggesting an intrinsic motivation to serve members of one's own, marginalized group (Broockman 2013). So too, female Moroccan and Algerian parliamentarians provide more services to female constituent than did male parliamentarians, and the difference was greatest for quota-elected women (Benstead, 2015). In-group preference has also been shown to be strong in societies with tribal elements around the world including throughout the Middle East (e.g., Lust, 2006; Gengler, 2015; Shockley & Gengler, 2016) and Africa (Posner, 2005; Habyamairwa et al., 2009; Carlson, 2015; Kramon & Posner, 2016), where voting along ethnic lines is seen as a strategy for attractive personal benefits or goods for one's family or area.

Existing literature that draws on SIT offers insights about individual traits, but fails to fully examine their impact when identities intersect in more complex and realistic ways. More specifically, social identification and ethnic voting theories argue that voters will prefer co-ethics (McConnaughy, White, Leal, & Casellas, 2010; Collingwood, Barreto, & Garcia-Rios, 2014; Sigelman, Sigelman, Walkosz, & Nitz, 1995; McDermott, 1998), but do not

theorize about how voters choose between candidates with multiple identities, some of which are shared and others than are not. Tajfel and Turner (1979, p. 35) also highlight that the status of different groups in society may play a role in determining how social identities are perceived, in line with power relations theory, but they do not explicitly test this notion.

### **Power Relations Theory**

SIT predicts that candidates and voters will favor their in-group with policies and services, but says nothing about how and why structural power relations affect their ability (or perceived ability) to do so. To better suss out how and why power structures shape electability, we draw on and extend power relations theory.

Originally developed by social psychologists, theorists posited that, due to their structurally dominant position in the labor force and politics, men are stereotyped as having more status than women. These perceptions stem from—and are reinforced by—behavioral differences across genders which stem from gender roles; men may control topics and interrupt to exert their status, while women build consensus and adapt to interlocutors (Anderson & Leaper, 1998; Carli, 2001; Kane & Macaulay, 1993; Tannen, 1990).

Applied to electoral politics, power relations theory posits that voters will be more willing to support candidates they see as able to deliver on policies and services. Members of socio-economically advantaged groups will be more likely to be stereotyped as having higher status and as more capable at attracting resources to provide individual and district services in clientelistic settings.

In most Arab countries, including in Jordan, Islamists are marginalized by electoral laws designed to favor regime incumbents over opposition parties (Lust, 2006; Lust, 2009; Kao, 2015). As opposition members, Islamists are often barred from accessing state resources for the provision of clientelistic benefits. In an interview conducted by the author

in 2007, a parliamentarian from the Islamist Party of Justice and Development (PJD) in Morocco stated, “I do not provide services because I spoke out. I can’t help citizens.”<sup>11</sup> Although Muslim Brotherhood candidates had established robust social service networks through its charity, and have been shown to be responsive to middle class constituents (Clark, 2004; Masoud, 2014), the group has been attacked by the regime having lost its official registration status as a charity organization and having its headquarters in Amman shut down. This affects their perceived ability to be able to provide services and may therefore make them less electable.

Even in democratic settings, however, incumbency advantage is driven by candidates’ demonstrated ability to provide services (Londregan & Romer, 1993), which discourages voters from considering candidates from groups outside of power, who may not be able to provide and discourages such candidates from running (Palmer & Simon, 2001; Cox & Katz, 1996; Gelman & King, 1990). Candidates in developing democracies spend considerable effort during campaigns showing that they have the connections and capacity to provide for their constituents (Kramon & Posner, 2016). Members of structurally advantaged ethnic or parties are also stereotyped as better service providers, who are better able to tap into networks to access state resources for redistribution to constituents.

Moreover, across a variety of settings in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, female candidates are excluded from clientelistic networks, which affects their ability to provide services (Bjarnegård, 2013; Goetz, 2002; Tripp, 2001). These structural cues may not be explicitly recognized by voters, but they likely shape how voters perceive candidates. For

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<sup>11</sup> Interview of male parliamentarian, Party of Justice and Development (PJD), Rabat, Morocco, 2007. Benstead.

instance, in Jordan, 38% saw males as more capable of providing services, compared to 11% seeing female parliamentarians as better at service provision, while 48% did not see the two as different (Benstead, Kao, & Lust, 2014). Figures are similar in Tunisia, where 19% of respondents in a nationally-representative survey saw male deputies as better at providing wasta, compared to 7% who saw women as better, while 73.9% believed there was no difference.<sup>12</sup> In Libya, 28% believed a man would be more effective at service provision, compared to 11% for women members, while 61% said there was no difference (Benstead, Jamal, & Lust, 2015).<sup>13</sup>

So too, the expectation that a candidate from a powerful tribe best provide wasta is pertinent in Jordan, where the electoral system is engineered to effectively encourage voters to select someone they know personally (often a member of their tribe) to serve as a wasta, over other candidates who are affiliated with broad-based political parties. Most of Jordan's successful parliamentary candidates since 1993 have been male members of powerful tribes and have not belonged to Islamist parties (Kao, 2015). But, tribes are not equal in size, and candidates from smaller tribes and those who do not belong to a tribe, will be seen as less able to deliver services.

### **Gender Role Congruity Theory**

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<sup>12</sup> 2016 survey of 1200 Tunisians conducted by United Nations Democracy Fund and Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis. Lindsay Benstead, Ellen Lust, Dhafer Malouche, and JMW Consulting. Transitional Governance Project (2017).

<sup>13</sup> 2013 National Democratic Institute poll of 1200 Libyans. Diwan Research, Lindsay Benstead, Ellen Lust, and JMW Consulting. TGP (2017). Women are no more likely than men to see females as good sources of wasta.

Stereotyped traits also shape voters' perceptions of candidates. Building on the "women are wonderful" effect (Eagly, 1987), role congruity theory argues that women are seen as extremely capable in traditional arenas, and in fact, often viewed as superior to men with regards to traits such as honesty and kindness, they were not seen as having psychological traits associated with effective leadership (e.g., decisiveness, strength). On the contrary, men are seen as being more ambitious, forceful, and independent—qualities that are also associated with good leaders because leaders of the past have been male (Eagly, 1987; Glick & Fiske, 2001; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Konad & Cannings, 1997; Ritter & Yoder, 2004).<sup>14</sup> Voters will be less willing to vote for women, to the extent that they attribute traits to women that are consistent with female gender roles (e.g., niceness) but inconsistent with traits of leaders of the past, who are usually men.

Gender role congruity theory is an extension of earlier work by Rosenwasser and Seale (1988), who found that male and female candidates were considered more competent in different realms: male candidates rated higher on "masculine" tasks and females on "feminine" tasks, such as dealing with terrorism or a military crisis versus solving problems in the education system and ensuring the rights of minorities; "masculine" tasks were rated as being more important for holding the position of president (Lawless, 2004; Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). These stereotypes are grounded both in the roles that men and women currently fulfill within a society—that is, what social psychologists refer to as descriptive stereotypes—as well as what that society believes that men and women ought to do—or prescriptive stereotypes (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 2008).

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<sup>14</sup> A distinguishing feature of gender role congruity theory is that it posits that gender-based biases are associated with positive stereotypes about women.

Gender role congruity theory argues that prejudice against women as leaders stems from the lack of overlap between the stereotyped traits of women and those expected of leaders, which is often associated with leaders of the past (i.e., men). Thus, it is not just that voters prefer members of their in-groups. Both males and females are expected to perceive these positive characteristics in female candidates, but that their prejudices of what makes a good political leader do not align with these positive features of women.

### **An Intersectional Theory**

We argue that these three theories, which emphasize traits, competencies, and policy signals, are needed in tandem to explain candidate electability (Table 1). In the next section, we motivate our choice of three candidate identities—gender, ethnicity (i.e., tribal identity), and ideology (i.e., pro-regime or Islamist)—which are politically salient traits and often present in intersecting ways in Jordanian elections.

**Table 1. Summary of theoretical mechanisms**

Theoretical mechanism	Nature of stereotyping	Identities mechanism applies to	
Social identification theory: In-group preference	Voters implicitly locate candidates into social in-groups and out-groups and favor their in-group, positively stereotyping members of their in-group and negatively stereotyping members of their out-group. The strength of in-group preference will depend on the degree of inter-group competition or conflict. When there is little competition or when groups share interests, in-group bias may be small. Where conflict is pronounced and interests are threatened, in-group preference will be strong. Voters assess how likely the candidate is to respond to a member of their own in-group (e.g., women more responsive to women, tribalists favor members of their own tribe and their political allies, and Islamists and non-Islamists favor those who see religion the way they do and party members). In addition, voters implicitly or explicitly stereotype candidates as supporting policies or groups based on their identity (“policy stereotypes”).	A close fit for policy signal stereotypes, as well as general identity politics (in-group preference). In a clientelistic system, policy signals can include individualistic and programmatic benefits.	All social identities: Gender; race or ethnicity; religion, religious ideology, or sect
Power relations theory: Stereotyped competencies	Voters not only locate candidates in social groups, but their perceptions of candidates from these groups also depends on social and economic hierarchies. Members of socio-economically advantaged groups—that is politically dominant groups—are more likely to be stereotyped as having higher status and as more capable at attracting resources to provide individual and district services in clientelistic settings. Men are stereotyped as having more status and power than women and more likely to be seen as more competent at attracting resources for services. Members of structurally advantaged ethnic or ideological groups are also stereotyped as better service providers, who must attract resources for the state to distribute to constituents. In most Arab countries, Islamists are marginalized by unfair electoral laws designed to favor regime incumbents over opposition, but dispose of greater non-state social services networks. These structural cues may not be explicitly recognized by voters, but they likely shape how voters perceive candidates.	A close fit for competency stereotypes	All social groups: Gender; race or ethnicity; religion, religious ideology, or sect
Role congruity theory: Social roles and expectations	Not only are candidates placed in social groups, but they are also stereotyped as having traits associated with the social roles of those groups. Due to sex differentiation in the labor force, which shapes behavior and gender roles, women are stereotyped as nice, emotional, and caring, while men are seen as objective, decisive, and tough. Women are less electable because they are seen as lacking the traits needed for effective leadership, which is based on leaders of the past (i.e., in most instances, men). Gender-based bias is unlike out-group bias for other groups, in that it is often associated with positive stereotyping (e.g., nice, uncorrupt). Thus, it is an important component of assessments of female versus male candidates. Role congruity theory can also theoretically play a role in shaping perceptions across other group identities (e.g., ethnicity and religious ideology), but the extent to which this is the case remains a matter of debate and must be tested. When women and Islamists hold more congruent views, this is likely due to in-group preference (social identification theory).	A close fit for trait stereotypes	Gender. Theoretically other identities possible (especially religion/ideology), but not likely. Applies only if trait is associated with positive stereotyping

## **Tribalism, Islamism and Gender in Jordanian Elections**

Before outlining our hypotheses, we briefly discuss the features of the Jordanian context that make it useful for testing our intersectional theory of elections. Like many authoritarian and democratizing states cross-regionally, Jordan's highly controlled elections limit the parliament's policymaking role.<sup>15</sup> Jordan is a monarchy with a bicameral legislature, the lower house of which is popularly elected. Parliamentary candidates compete largely over the opportunity to access state resources that they can then distribute to members of their network (Lust, 2006, 2009). In the Middle East, *wasta* (i.e. a personal connection or use of connections to achieve something an individual needs) is often necessary to gain access to government services.<sup>16</sup> Voters have come to expect these personal benefits from parliamentarians, as well as other private or public individuals, and see them as all they can expect from elections in Jordan's institutionalized clientelistic system.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> As of 2015, Jordan has scored a -3 according to Polity IV and was rated “Not Free” by Freedom House.

<sup>16</sup> Clientelism is an, “informal relationship between two actors of asymmetrical socioeconomic power where the patron...controls...resources...clients pursue but often cannot receive otherwise” (Manzetti & Wilson, 2007, p. 953). In the Arab world, parliamentary clientelism is a form of personalized exchange or *wasta* (i.e., “intermediary,” “use of connections”—a social, economic, and political practice through which loyalty to family, tribe, religion, and sect is used to achieve mutually beneficial exchanges of interests (Kilani & Sakijha, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> When asked what they parliamentarians should spend the majority of their time doing, two-thirds focus on personal assistance and welfare while only one-third focus on more

## **Tribe and Ethnicity**

Tribalism is deeply embedded in roots of Jordan's founding as a nation-state. As a British protectorate, the Hashemites were financed to payoff local tribal leaders in exchange for loyalty, a system that has been reinforced by state policies ever since Jordan gained independence in 1946 (Alon, 2007, p. 16). Today, Jordan's highly institutional system of clientelism is financed through US and the Arabian Gulf.

In Jordan, social divisions—including ethnic differences—are reinforced not only through patronage but also through electoral institutions, which serve to increase the King's importance as the final arbitrator between the competing tribes and interests (Richards and Waterbury, 1996; Jamal & Lust-Okar, 2002). Tribes exist throughout the Arab world and competitive monarchies like Jordan or Kuwait have learned over time how to engineer electoral systems to reinforce tribal allegiances (Kao, 2016; Penn, 2008). Jordanian parliaments since 1993 have been occupied mostly by independent tribalists (Ryan, 1998; Kao, 2015). Tribal favoritism in these elections is blamed on the regime's decision to switch from a multiple-vote to a single-vote system after the 1989 elections, forcing voters to choose between their tribal candidate and the Islamist candidate, favoring the former (Baaklini, Denoeux, & Springborg, 1999; Lust-Okar 2008; Lust-Okar 2009).

In Jordan, tribalism extends beyond family ties, constituting “a cognitive way of looking at the world: an ideology of believing oneself to be part of a tribe, submitting to the social norms, informal rules and formal laws governing that tribe, and relating oneself to the rest of the world through the lens of that tribe” (Kao, 2015). Seventy-six percent of Jordanians identify as being a member of a tribe (Benstead, Kao, and Lust, 2014). Thus it is

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programmatic concerns such as legislation (Benstead, Kao, Lust, 2014).

expected that candidates' ethnic identity—whether that of the survey respondent or not—will play a strong role in shaping the electability of candidates, just as it does in many settings cross-regionally.

### **Pro-Regime and Islamist Opposition**

Although about 4% of the population is Christian (Fleishman, 2009), Islam is deeply woven into the fabric of society and the political system and shapes the ideology of the major opposition group in the country. The king descends from the Prophet Mohammed and this imbues the royal family with religious legitimacy. As in many other Muslim majority countries, the Jordanian constitution respects Islam<sup>18</sup> and the ruling regime supports many policies that are consistent with Islam, for instance, the family code.

Political Islam emerged as an oppositional force in Jordan in the 1970s and 1980s, just as it did elsewhere in the Arab region. The main Islamist group in the country, the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the IAF, seeks to reestablish the Islamic way of life in the kingdom. It gained status as a registered charity organization since 1957, which burgeoned into a multi-millionaire dollar enterprise including numerous hospitals, schools, and community centers by the mid-1990s (Clark, 2004; Wiktorowicz, 1999). The Brotherhood captured 22 of the 80 seats in the 1989 parliament, allying with 12 other independent Islamist parliamentarians. While not a majority, this bloc proved to be an effective source of power. For instance, the Islamist bloc secured a commitment from the Prime Minister to pursue a 14-point Islamist agenda in exchange for their support during the

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<sup>18</sup> Article 2 of the Constitution ensures that Islam remains the religion of the state a source of legislation.

parliamentary vote of confidence (Kao 2015).<sup>19</sup> Thus, the Muslim Brotherhood was able to capitalize on its electoral victory in 1989, creating a powerful parliamentary bloc that brought the regime to the negotiating table. While its goal is not to stage a violent overthrow of the monarchy, the Brotherhood remains one of its staunchest critics and often stands in opposition to regime initiatives.

At the same time, this success intensified the Brotherhood's marginalization. Rifts between the regime and the Brotherhood deepened, as the regime dissolved the board of directors of the Brotherhood's charity, prompting the Brotherhood to boycott the 2010 and 2013 elections and withdraw from the National Dialogue Committee set up for reforms during the Arab Spring (Naimat, 2014). The regime suspended many of the major activities of the Brotherhood charity organization after refusing to renew its license under the new political parties law adopted in 2014 and closing down the movement's Amman headquarters in 2016 (Magid, 2016; Köprülü, 2017).

Despite being marginalized from power—or perhaps because of it—Islamist candidates are still favored by many voters in Arab countries, including in Jordan. In the latest elections in 2016, the list the Brotherhood and its allies ran on secured about 12% of the seats, with other Islamists taking another 7%.<sup>20</sup> Although these wins were modest, the IAF currently leads the biggest bloc in parliament. Thus, it is expected that perceptions of the

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<sup>19</sup> The Islamist bloc also threatened to pass a law to segregate men and women in public institutions and garnered enough votes within the Lower House to pass a ban on the production, sale, and distribution of alcohol in Jordan. These initiatives were never legalized.

<sup>20</sup> For the purposes of this paper, Islamists are voters who specifically prefer that a candidate or party have a desire to mix Islam and politics.

extent to which the IAF can provide services will play a role in shaping their electability.

## **Women and Gender**

While women have historically played a limited role in Jordanian politics—not unlike a majority of countries worldwide—the recent implementation of an electoral gender quota is slowly increasing their participation in Jordan. In Arab cultures, politics (and the public sphere) is the domain of men, while women are expected to operate in private space (Sidiqi, 2008). Women have low labor force participation rates (16%, World Bank 2016) and lack financial independence, which limits their ability to run for office.

Women gained the right to vote only in 1989.<sup>21</sup> Small, but significant steps toward reducing women's marginalization from politics has taken place in recent years, beginning with the implementation in 2003 of 6 reserved quota seats for females in parliament. The quota was increased to 12 seats in 2010 and 15 seats in 2013—about 10% of the parliament in both years. In 2013, 3 women won seats off the quota, while 5 did so in 2016, bringing the percentage of women in parliament to the highest level (15%) yet seen in Jordanian politics. At the same time, Jordanians do not widely associate women with effective political leadership. In the most recent wave of the World Values Survey (2017), 81% of Jordanians agree or strongly agree that men make better political leaders than women do.<sup>22</sup>

## **Hypotheses**

Thus, as Jordanian voters consider their choices at the polls, they may well be faced

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<sup>21</sup> Women's suffrage was granted in 1974, but the parliament was suspended until 1989.

<sup>22</sup> This statistic is not strongly differentiated by gender with women coming in at 79%, men at 82%.

with candidates which have some features they desire to vote for, but others they dislike. For example, many tribes were reticent to nominate female candidates in the early years of the quota as it is against societal norms to promote a female leader. But eventually smaller tribes realized how women's quota seats could benefit them in particular, due to their lack of an ability to elect a member of their tribe to the regular, non-quota seats (Bush and Gao, 2017) and the fact that the system employed for the women's quota favors women from smaller electoral districts (Kao, 2015, p. 68-69). Observers of Jordan's electoral system, which they claim is designed to force voters to choose between a candidate they know—for instance a member of their tribe—and a member of the Islamist opposition—whom they may support on ideological grounds or see as a good service provider generally in their community (Baaklini, Denouex and Springborg, 1999, p. 150-151; Lust-Okar, 2008; Lust-Okar, 2009), fail to empirically test the conditions under which voters from different groups select between multiple candidates with these different baskets of traits.

Accordingly, we develop hypotheses drawn from social identification, power relations, and gender role congruity theories, which we argue are needed in tandem to understand electoral politics. Although we recognize that some of the hypotheses are empirically equivalent, we develop a framework that can be tested in further research in order to fully distinguish the precise contribution of each mechanism.

### **Social Identification Theory**

Social identification theory offers several predictions for Jordan, where we expect voters to prefer members of their tribal group, due to the high level of competition for resources across tribal lines that is created by the electoral system. So, too, we expect women to see female candidates and Islamist voters to see Islamist candidates as more likely to act in their interests. We hypothesize that voters will prefer candidates from their social group:

Women will prefer women (H1a); Islamists and non-Islamists will prefer those with similar ideology (H1c); and, tribalists will prefer members of their own tribe (H1c). We also anticipate that voter and candidate traits will operate intersectionally and interactively in ways that have not been developed in exist literature.

*Social Identification Theory Hypotheses (In-group preferences):*

Individual voters will prefer candidates from their social group such that:

H1a: Women will prefer female candidates and men will prefer male candidates.

H1b: Islamists will prefer Islamist candidates and non-Islamists will prefer non-Islamist candidates.

H1c: Tribalists will prefer members of their own tribe.

## **Power Relations Theory**

In addition, following power relations theory, we hypothesize that voters as a whole will prefer candidates who are perceived as more powerful and favored by the regime; that is, male candidates over female, tribal over non-tribal, and pro-regime over non-Islamist. Yet, as indicated above, existing theory has little to say about how citizens will perceive and compare candidates with different intersecting identities, some of which may be associated with increased ability to provide services due to their close proximity the regime, while others may not, based on the expectations of power relations theory. This is particularly true since voters also must weigh how likely a candidate who is able to deliver goods, will target these goods to them specifically, in line with the predictions of social identification theory, which also operates simultaneously.

*Power Relations Theory Hypotheses:*

H2a: Overall, male candidates will be preferred over female candidates.

H2b: Overall, non-Islamist candidates will be preferred over Islamists.

H2c: Overall, coethnic tribal members will be preferred over non-tribal candidates.

**Role Congruity Theory**

In Jordan, most parliamentarians have been men. Thus, we expect female candidates to be seen as lacking the traits associated with effective leadership and male gender roles, and thus be less electable than male candidates in Jordan.

In addition, Eagly and Karau (2002, p. 598) suggest that men may hold stronger prejudices against women than women do. And, many studies from western and non-western contexts find that women hold more egalitarian views that are more accepting of women as political leaders (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Alexander & Welzel, 2011). One reason for this may be that when women are exposed to discrimination, it increases the salience of gender-based inequality and fosters a feminist identity (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Rhodebeck, 1996). Thus, we expect female candidates will be more electable among female than male voters (H3b). At the same time, we do not expect this gender gap to be large. The GLD 2014 survey finds that 69% of Jordanian males believe men make better political leaders than women do, compared to 65% of Jordanian females. While the difference is not large, it is statistically significant.

*Gender Role Congruity Hypotheses:*

H3a: Overall, female candidates will be less electable than male candidates.

H3b: Female candidates will be more electable among female than male voters.

We also acknowledge that hypotheses H2a and H3a lead to similar empirical outcomes and that this necessitates further research on the conditions under which trait and competency stereotypes shape gender bias at the polls. But hypotheses H2a (power relations) and H3b (gender role congruity theory) differentiate the expected outcomes from H1a (social identification theory) somewhat. On its own, social identification theory predicts that women would be highly supportive of other women. But gender role congruity and to a greater extent power relations theories suggest why women will not always vote for other women. Like male voters, they may see women as lacking the traits and competencies that they associate with effective leadership. Thus, we rely on this differentiation to better understand which theory is most useful.

### **Survey Experiment**

To test these hypotheses, we employ a low information survey experiment embedded in the 2014 GLD Jordanian Post-Election Survey,<sup>23</sup> a household survey of 1,499 Jordanians conducted April 2014.<sup>24</sup> (For more details on survey design, see Appendix 2). The survey was administered face-to-face by a local team of about 40 interviewers using tablet computers. It covered a range of political topics and took about 45 minutes to complete.

Randomization was done at the individual level and respondents were randomly

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<sup>23</sup> Program on Governance and Local Development (2014), Yale University, poll conducted 2014 among 1,499 Jordanians by Lindsay Benstead, Kristen Kao, and Ellen Lust.

<sup>24</sup> Random assignment of respondents to conditions was effective, as indicated by insignificant chi-square tests of independence between the condition and the primary sampling unit (PSU, electoral district) and between the conditions and all independent variables in the analysis (See Appendix 1).

assigned to one of six conditions, each one comprising of a different statement about a candidate (Table 2). Respondents saw a total of two candidate statements, presented in randomized order to eliminate bias from priming, contamination, or attrition. (See Appendix 1 for checks showing effective randomization).

**Table 2. Experimental conditions and question wording for the dependent variable**

Question stem	On a scale from 1 to 10 degrees, how likely would you be to vote in the future for [insert randomized statement here] where number 1 means you would definitely not vote for this candidate and number 10 means that you would definitely vote for this candidate: (Insert statements below)
Female	An educated woman.
Male tribal member	An educated man who is a member of your tribe ( <i>asheera</i> ).
Female tribal member	An educated woman who is a member of your tribe ( <i>asheera</i> ).
Male Islamist	An educated man who is a member of the IAF.
Female Islamist	An educated woman who is a member of the IAF.
Male	An educated man.

We included the term, “educated” in all of the statements. By doing this and by separating the two candidates received by participants with 4 unrelated questions, we hoped to reduce the extent to which it would be obvious to the respondent the study’s purpose. We also included this description in order to avoid floor effects, which we expected might occur for candidates with traits, such as gender or Islamism, that might make them undesirable to some voter groups.<sup>25</sup> We refer to “an educated man/woman” as the candidate that is lacking other

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<sup>25</sup> We also ran analyses with controls for interviewer gender to reduce the possibility of

information, and we usually say simply male or female candidates.

We realize that our experiment, like other profile-based and conjoint research designs hold constant all but the treatment and thus can be viewed as violating the exclusion restriction. When the respondent hears, ‘an educated woman’ or ‘an educated man,’ there are many things that change in the respondent’s understanding of the hypothetical candidates. For instance, ‘an educated women’ connotes stereotypes and judgements about her traits and competencies than does ‘an educated man.’ We cannot manipulate gender *ceteris paribus*, due to the same social and structural mechanisms we also believe explain our outcome (i.e., electability). While we acknowledge this limitation, we argue that we are interested in the effect of gender variation and all the concomitant variation.

To ensure that the experimental treatments simulate experiences that could actually occur in the real world, which is necessary for a survey experiment to be of merit (Gaines et al. 2007, 10), we designed the questions and the study design to reflect realistic candidate types. We have already noted how the electoral system in Jordan is structured to favor candidates who rely on their tribal affiliation to win their seat. In the current parliament, 16% are Islamists and 15% are women. The coalition associated with the IAF ran 20 female candidates (Younes, 2016). Moreover, tribes (particularly those that are small) are major beneficiaries of the

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social desirability or conformity bias stemming from the gender of the interviewer, which has been shown to affect questions about a range of religiously (Benstead, 2014b; Blaydes & Gillum, 2013) and gender-sensitive questions (Benstead, 2014a). We did not find a significant effect of interviewer gender on the results. Since the interviewers did not vary in terms of religious dress (that is, all female interviewers wore a headscarf), we did not control for interviewer religious dress.

women's quota and use it to run women, even if male members of their tribe would not easily win seats in the regular districts (Bush & Gao, 2017).

### **Respondent Characteristics**

We use three measures to identify respondent in-groups by gender, political identity, and ethnicity. Gender identity is a simple dichotomous measure of the respondent's sex. We operationalize tribalist identity as the tendency to favor one's own putative kinship group over others and is measured as a response to the statement: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it to you that your tribe (asheerah) elects a representative to the parliament where a 1 is not at all important and a 10 is very important?" For ease of interpretation, we dichotomized this scale so that an answer of a 5 and below indicates non-tribalist tendencies and an answer of 6 and above indicates tribalist tendencies of the respondent.<sup>26</sup> About one-third of the population say that electing a tribal representative is not important, while two-thirds say it is important. We expect the more a respondent believes it is important to elect a member of his or her tribe, the larger the tendency to prefer tribal over non-tribal candidates. For the purposes of this research, we see people who favor their own tribe over others in elections as "tribalists".

To tap into Islamism, we use responses to the following question: "On a scale of 1 to 10, please state your personal preferences on the positions below...1 means you prefer a candidate or list without any Islamist tendency; 10 means you prefer a candidate or list with

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<sup>26</sup> We also ran a trichotomous division of this scale to ensure the findings are robust to other cuts of the data where an answer of 1 to 3 indicates a non-tribalist respondent, 4 to 7 indicates a person in the middle, and 8 to 10 indicates a tribalist respondent. The results are robust to this alternative measure.

an Islamist tendency.” Among the population, the split was just about even at 49.9 percent saying they prefer no Islamist tendency and 50.1 percent saying they prefer a party or candidate with an Islamist tendency.<sup>27</sup> We expect the more important a respondent believes Islamist tendency within a candidate is important, the more likely she will support an IAF candidate versus a non-IAF candidate, which we term Islamists for the purposes of this research.

### **Results and Discussion**

We first present average treatment effects, which allow us to test the homogenous hypotheses: that female and Islamist candidates will be less electable overall than male and non-Islamist candidates and that mentioning that the candidate is from one’s tribe will increase his or her electability over not mentioning this feature of the candidate (H2a, H2b, H2c, and H3a). In the next section, we test the heterogeneous treatment effects.

To do so, we use ordered logit regression with a dependent variable that ranges from one to ten. However, because the predicted probabilities for each of the ten numbers on the scale is unwieldy, we also dichotomize the dependent variable into a “candidate preferred” group (6-10 on the 10-point scale) and a candidate “not preferred” group (1-5 on the 10-point scale). We then present a binary logit analysis alongside the ordinal logit analysis in Table 3.<sup>28</sup> (For robustness checks showing the ordinal logistic regression results, see Appendix 3).

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<sup>27</sup> We ran analyses using both a dichotomized and trichotomized scale similar to those we created to measure tribalist tendencies. All results are robust to this alternative measure.

<sup>28</sup> We also considered running a continuous regression model, as others have done with 10-point scales in experiments (Kramon, 2016). However, this model provided more inefficient estimators of preference for the candidate. The results remain robust to this analysis

Models 1 and 4 in Table 4 present the experiment without any controls, whereas models 2 and 4 include controls for respondent gender, age, and self-identified socio-economic status.<sup>29</sup>

### Average Treatments Effects

Table 3 shows the results of both the binary (Models 1 and 2) and ordinal logistic regressions (Models 3 and 4). Collapsing the ten-point scale into a dichotomous measure of preference for candidates yields similar results to the ordinal logit regression analysis, thus, we interpret the results of the more streamlined binary model below but all results are robust to both models. (See Appendix 3 for robustness checks).

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regardless. (See Appendix 3).

<sup>29</sup> We checked for effects of education levels and self-reported class and found no significant results.

**Table 3. Determinants of preference for candidate characteristics**

	Binary Logit <sup>1</sup> <b>1</b>	Binary Logit <sup>1</sup> <b>2</b>	Ordinal Logit <sup>1</sup> <b>3</b>	Ordinal Logit <sup>1</sup> <b>4</b>
Male Tribal Member	0.343* (0.134)	0.036* (0.128)	0.375** (0.120)	0.389** (0.116)
Female Tribal Member	0.178 (0.131)	0.177 (0.137)	0.061 (0.138)	0.0522 (0.148)
Male Islamist	-0.515** (0.135)	-0.517** (0.133)	-0.525*** (0.105)	-0.538*** (0.108)
Female Islamist	-0.306* (0.121)	-0.332* (0.122)	-0.326** (0.099)	-0.346** (0.096)
Male	0.562*** (0.118)	0.558*** (0.120)	0.471** (0.118)	0.464** (0.126)
Gender of Respondent		-0.441** (0.112)		-0.323** (0.093)
Age		-0.001 (0.003)		-0.002 (0.003)
Socio-Economic Status 2		0.155 (0.010)		0.119 (0.091)
Socio-Economic Status 3		0.115 (0.140)		-0.008 (0.105)
Constant <sup>2</sup>	0.034**	0.526*		
Observations	2,887	2,813	2,887	2,813

<sup>1</sup>Female candidate is base case. Standard errors in parentheses; <sup>†</sup>p<0.10 \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001.<sup>2</sup> The ten cut-points for the ordinal logit models are provided in the appendix.

Candidates follow the same order ranking according to predicted probabilities of preference for the candidate as those in ordinal logit analysis.<sup>30</sup> The male candidate with no other information is most electable, followed by the male tribal member, the female tribal

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<sup>30</sup> As highlighted in Table 2, all candidate types included a statement of the candidate being educated.

member and then female without other information, then female Islamist and finally male Islamist (see Table 4 and Figure 1).

**Table 4. Predicted probability of preference for candidate, Binary Logit Analysis**

Candidate Type	Probability of Preference for the Candidate (%)	Candidate Preference Rank
Male	72	1
Male Tribal Member	67	2
Female Tribal Member	62	3
Female	59	4
Female Islamist	51	5
Male Islamist	46	6

**Figure 1. Predicted probability of preference for candidate**

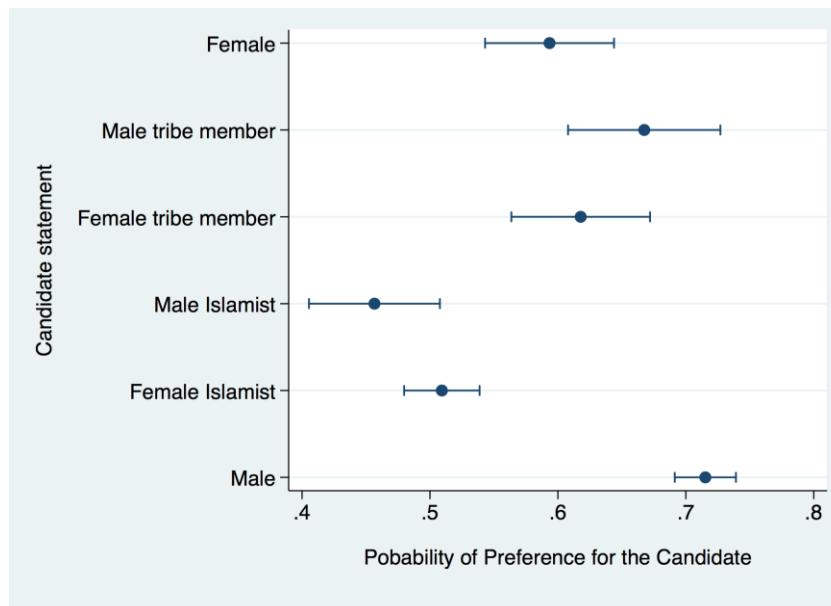


Figure 1 shows that the male candidate is significantly more preferred than the female candidate ( $p<0.001$ ), female tribe member ( $p<0.01$ ), the female Islamist ( $p<0.001$ ), and the male Islamist ( $p<0.001$ ). He is not more significantly more preferred than the male tribal member.

The male candidate without other information is preferred to the female candidate (lacking other information,  $p<0.001$ ), as well as to the female tribe member ( $p<0.01$ ), female Islamist ( $p<0.001$ ), and male Islamist ( $p<0.001$ ). He is not preferred to the male tribal member. The model predicts the overall probability of a female candidate being preferred to be a full 13 percentage points lower than the male candidate. The findings suggest that when voters are presented with a male candidate, he is not noticeably different from the norm and thus is able to pull support widely from different types of voters. Although the two theories are empirically equivalent, given the overall popularity of the male candidate without other information, we find strong support for power relations theory (H2a) and gender role congruity theory (H3a) for candidates about whom no information is given (i.e., the male versus the female candidate) in this sense.

However, the female candidate can improve her electability by leveraging an intersecting identity—coethnicity and Islamism—in order to improve her chances vis-à-vis male candidates with similar identities to her. Even though the female tribal member is 10 percentage points behind the male candidate without other information in terms of voter preferences, she is not significantly differentiated from a male tribal member, contradicting H2a and H3a, once intersecting identities are taken into consideration. This finding suggests that both gender role congruity theory and power relations theory are insufficient to explain women's electability. The same finding applies for female Islamists, who are not significantly differentiated from male Islamists. These findings support an intersectional understanding of identities; discrimination against a minority woman is not an additive process leading to double discrimination, but rather it seems that women occupy a whole new social space when they are also members of an intersecting identity group (King 1988).

Furthermore, what is clear is that the intersecting identity of being an Islamist hurts

candidates of both genders. The findings support the homogenous hypothesis relating to Islamism: Islamist candidates are likely seen as less proximate to the center of power (the regime) and are therefore likely less able to provide services than non-Islamists, particularly in recent years with the government crackdown on the offices of the IAF, as predicted by power relations theory H2b. The male Islamist is 26 percentage points behind the male candidate ( $p<0.001$ ) and 21 percentage points behind the male coethnic candidate ( $p<0.001$ ); the female Islamist is 8 percentage points less preferred than the female candidate ( $p<0.05$ ) and 11 percentage points behind the female coethnic candidate ( $p<0.05$ ). Across both models, and using the male Islamist candidate (the weakest candidate) as the baseline comparison, all other candidates are significantly more likely to be preferred at the  $p<0.001$  level, except the female Islamist.

To sum up , homogeneous treatment effects reveal that male candidates lacking other information do best, but once intersectional identities are attached to candidates, females do no worse than males. Moreover, Islamists of both genders do worse than all other candidates. These findings suggest once again that the three mechanisms are at play to explain the circumstances that advantage the male candidates in Jordanian elections, and that social identification, power relations, and gender role congruity theories are not competing, but rather complementary mechanisms, all of which come into play to explain the electability of any one candidate type once more than one intersecting trait is taken into account.

### **Heterogeneous Effects**

Our analysis of homogenous treatment effects from the experiment does not allow us to completely differentiate between the theories, or to test social identification theory. To gain leverage on which of these theories is at work, we run tests for heterogeneous effects across respondents by gender, Islamism, and tribalism.

As shown in Figure 2, we find strong support for social identification theory, in the form of higher support for female candidates among female voters (H1a). As predicted, women respondents are significantly more likely than male respondents to prefer female candidates for all three candidate comparisons ( $p<0.05$ ). This finding holds across both binary and ordinal logit models, but is easier to visualize using binary logit analysis with an interaction between gender and statement. A female respondent is 13 percentage points more likely to prefer a female candidate without other information than a male respondent. She is also 15 percentage points more likely to prefer a female tribal member candidate as well as a female Islamist than a male respondent.

While we are unable to fully distinguish between power relations theory and gender role congruity theory in this analysis, we find evidence that refutes both of these theories. Power relations theory holds that *overall* male candidates are preferred over female candidates (H2a), and thus, male and female respondents should not differentiate to a significant degree in their preferences. While the homogeneous results supported power relations theory, breakdown by gender of the respondent shows that there are significant differences in perceptions of candidates by respondent gender, contradicting the notion that candidates from dominant groups within the society are perceived as being more capable leaders. Gender role congruity theory is contradicted in this analysis as well as female voters view all the female candidates in a more positive light than male voters to a significant degree (H3b), suggesting that stereotypes about women's leadership traits does not hold across the entire population of voters and is dependent on intersectional identities.

**Figure 2. Interaction between gender and candidate Statement**

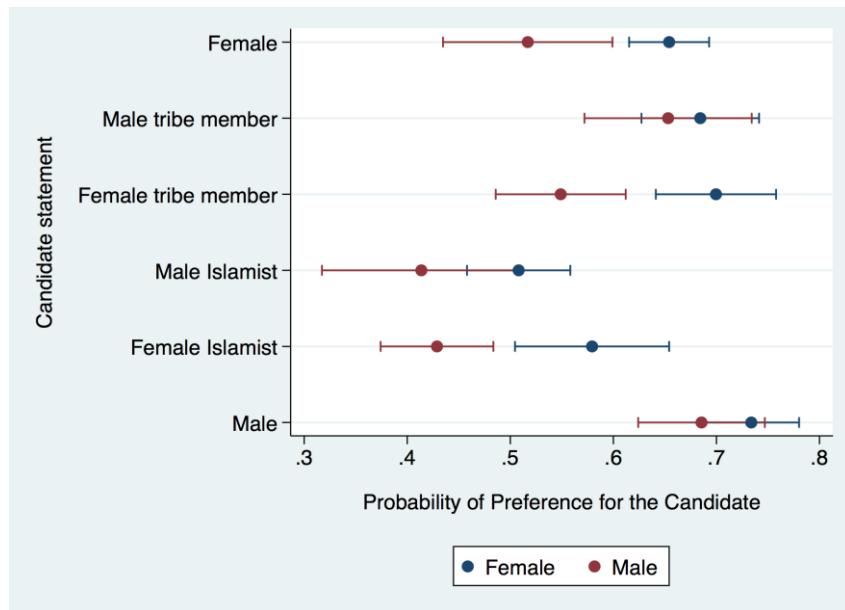


Figure 2 shows that female citizens are significantly more likely to favor female candidates, female tribe members, female Islamists in elections than males.

Second, the results show that, as predicted by social identification theory (H1b), being an Islamist sympathizer significantly increases the probability of support for the Islamist candidates, both male and female (See Figure 4). An Islamist respondent is 22 and 23 percentage points more likely to prefer a male Islamist and a female Islamist candidate, respectively, compared to a non-Islamist respondent. Looking at just the blue dots reveals that in reality, this result is driven by the out-group bias against Islamists among respondents who do not prefer candidates with Islamist tendencies. Islamists also maintain a strong preference for male candidates when other information is lacking. The difference between an Islamist and non-Islamist in this aspect of the analysis is 17 percentage points. This outcome is suggestive of either power relations theory or role congruity theory at work in low-information settings, but we are unable to separate out which since we lack the proper follow-up questions to differentiate between these two theories in this instance.

Unexpectedly, the population does not differentiate between male and female Islamists to a significant level.

These findings contradict conventional wisdom about Islamist ideology with regards to women in political life. While Islamists overall do worse than other candidates, that there is no difference in the electability of male and female Islamist candidates in Figure 1 (among the entire sample) or Figure 3 (among just Islamists) is perhaps, on the surface, surprising given the discourse of this group that relegates women's primary role in society to the home (e.g., Taraki 1996). However, Benstead, Jamal, and Lust (2015) also find male and female Islamists are equally electable overall and argue that this is because Islamist parties have discipline and predictable programs which they will seek to implement, regardless of their gender and is in line with previous research findings. This finding, in addition to the fact that there is no difference between Islamist and non-Islamists in terms of support for the female or the female tribal candidates, suggests that theories that explain gender bias in the Arab world as a result of religion (e.g., modernization theory) or political Islam are not supported, as was also the case in Tunisia (Benstead, Jamal, and Lust, 2015).

**Figure 3. Interaction between Islamist tendency and candidate statement**

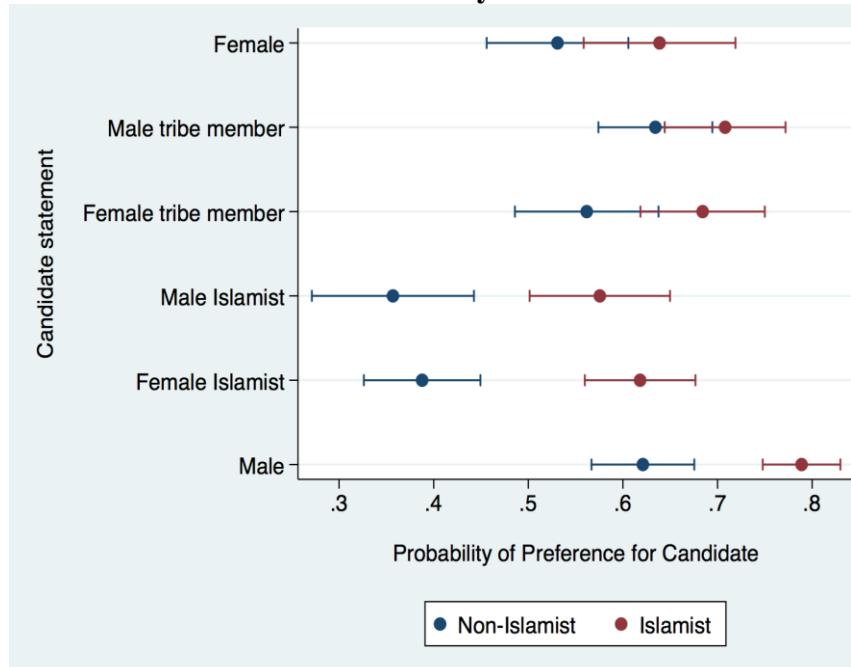


Figure 3 shows that islamists are significantly more likely to favor Islamist candidates and males than non-Islamists.

When included in the logit regression and run as an interaction with the statements, the results reveal that being a tribalist sympathizer is significantly related to support for all candidates except for male Islamists when compared to non-tribalists. (See Figure 4). Social identification theory (H1c) predicts that tribalists will support coethnics more than non-tribalists, and they do so by 27 and 26 percentage points for male and female tribal candidates, respectively. In the cases of the male and female candidates lacking other information, tribalists may be filling in that they are coethnics. The differences between these candidates and those who are specifically labeled as coethnics are not significantly different from one another.

However, that tribalists prefer every candidate—with the exception of the male Islamist—more than non-tribalists, demonstrates that social identity theory fails to fully

account for voting patterns in this case. While tribalists are more 24 percentage points more likely to prefer a male candidate and 17 percentage points more likely to prefer a female candidate, tribalists are also 18 percentage points more likely to prefer a female Islamist than non-tribalists. There is clearly a deep distrust of male Islamist candidates among tribalists. This finding also highlights that theories of candidate electability should not forget to take into account the institutionalized power structure of elections within a society. That tribalists are so supportive of all candidates, except the male Islamist, may reflect the fact that tribal populations within Jordan are the most likely to benefit from the elections (Lust 2009; Kao 2015).

**Figure 4. Interaction between tribalist tendency and candidate statement**

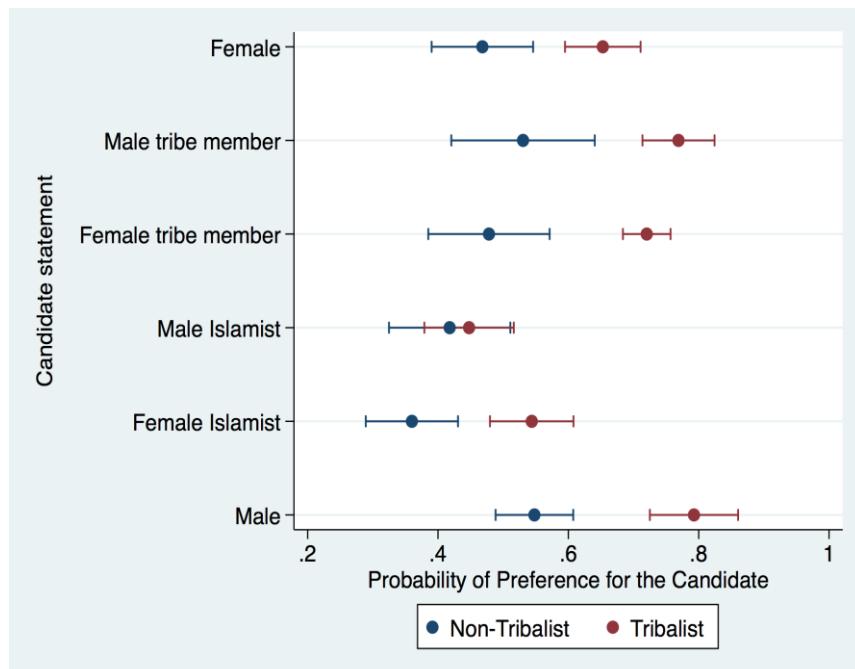


Figure 4 shows that tribalists are significantly more likely to favor tribal male and female candidates, male and female candidates, as well as female Islamists than non-tribalists.

It is also telling that tribalists do not have a preference for male tribal members over female members of their tribe. This is in line with Bush and Gao (2017), which suggests that

tribes benefit from running women candidates for quota seats because women can be effective sources of *wasta* and thus it is strategic to do so even if tribes are patriarchal and not particularly supportive of women's leadership. Tribalists will support female tribal candidates significantly more than non-tribalists ( $p<0.001$ ) because they are expected to be a reliable source of services based on a secondary shared trait—coethnicity.

### **Conclusion: Towards an Intersectional Theory of Voter Behavior**

Our results have two major implications for theories of electoral and identity politics worldwide, and also speak to debates in gender, ethnic, and Islamist politics literature. First, thinking globally, our results show the need for a truly *intersectional* theory of electoral and identity politics that takes into account complex combinations of advantage and disadvantage within social and institutional contexts when seeking to explain candidates' electoral chances. How candidates fare at the polls is not simply an additive function of their group memberships (King, 1988; Crenshaw, 1991; Hughes, 2013). Rather, candidates with intersectional identities which differ from the male, such as Islamist males, Islamist females, or females, who can leverage an ethnic tie with voters must be considered distinct identity categories.

Moreover, this challenges the assumption that, when it comes to Islamist identity, women are doubly disadvantaged or suffer from "double jeopardy," as an additive identity theory suggests (Beale, 1970; Berdahl and Moore, 2006). Like Benstead, Jamal, and Lust (2015) in Tunisia, we find that the Islamist male is the least electable candidate in Jordan. This is striking given that transitional Tunisia (in which Islamists were repressed under Ben Ali, but at the time of the survey were in power) and Jordan (where Islamists are marginalized), religious or Islamist females are as or more able to draw voter support than male Islamists. This may simply be because women are (perhaps wrongly) perceived as less

able to implement an Islamist political agenda. On the flip side, female Islamists may be as likely to signal that they are able to deliver on ideology as male Islamists and thus are equally electable for members of their social group. Further research is needed to test these propositions.

Related to this point, our findings also complement the burgeoning literature on gender and tribal politics within a broader comparative electoral and identity politics literature. While female candidates are disadvantaged relative to male candidates, they can improve their chances relative to similarly situated men by leveraging an intersecting trait associated with their advantage—co-ethnicity. This suggests that female coethnics are seen as equally able to deliver on services as male coethnics and are thus equally preferred by members of their in-group. While consistent with the limited literature on gender and ethnicity in the Arab world (Bush and Gao, 2017; Benstead, 2015), it illustrates just how important it is to conceptualize identity as intersectional and expect identities to play in complex and unexpected ways at the polls, depending on the social and institutional context.

Second, we extend electoral and identity politics by establishing the relationship between gender role congruity and social identification theories, which have been improperly described as competing (Benstead, Jamal, and Lust, 2015).<sup>31</sup> We argue instead that gender role congruity, power relations, and social identification theory are complementary and

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<sup>31</sup> Previous work frames these theories to some extent as competing, but we argue that they are interrelated and equally needed to explain voter behavior in even a minimally complex low information experiment with three identities. Benstead, Jamal, and Lust (2015) achieve the same empirical finding, but do not see social identification theory and gender role congruity theory as complementary.

needed in tandem to explain the electability of candidates with different complex, intersecting identities. The extent to which respondents desire to vote for candidates depends on those candidates' gender, ethnicity, and ideology, with the male candidates from dominant ethnicities doing best, followed by females from dominant ethnicities. Opposition candidates do worst. We argue this is because candidates who look most like those of the past can draw support equally from all social groups—consistently with role congruity theory—while minority candidates, due to their visibility—a key aspect of tokenism (Kanter, 1977)—activate stereotypes about the extent to which they have the traits, competencies, and policy positions the voter desires. This argument has not been articulated in any of the extant literature on identity politics but is critical to our understanding of electoral politics and identity in leadership in Jordan and elsewhere.

Our theoretical framework is sufficiently general to apply to other contexts as well. While the extent to which women are marginalized from politics varies across countries, and the extent to which political institutions marginalize the political opposition or favor some ethnicities also varies, our intersectional theory and the insights of gender role congruity, power relations, and social identification theory travel well beyond any one region. Gender is universally salient and so we expect to find male candidates to be more electable in many societies, western and non-western (e.g., Eagly and Karau, 2002; Alexander and Welzel, 2015). Ethnicity is also a prominent feature of many societies (e.g., Baldwin, 2015; Horowitz, 1985), as is party identification in democracies (e.g., Bartels, 2000) and opposition tendencies in authoritarian countries (e.g., Lust-Okar, 2005). The specific situation of Islamist and other opposition groups also varies cross-nationally, but is a constant feature of authoritarian politics worldwide. At the same time, while the specific contours of electoral politics may vary from place to place, our findings uncover some unexpected findings that

may well also replicate in very different contexts. For instance, might black and Latina women in the US to be preferred to otherwise similar black and Latino men?

Our findings thus have implications for policymakers seeking to empower women and minorities by suggesting the need for programs that are tailored to women from different backgrounds, underscoring how intersectionalities with other identities (such as being from the opposition) may advantage or disadvantage candidates depending on the targeted voter pool. At the same time, while these results offer tips for women to improve their electability, these candidates will still be disadvantaged relative to males. And, women from some groups (e.g., tribes) will have advantages that other women, such as non-members of a tribe or Islamists, will not have.

In this paper, we have clarified the relationship between gender role congruity, power relations, and social identification theory, showing how they work tandem. We have argued that minority candidates are less popular because their visibility triggers stereotypes that makes them less electable among members of their out-group, while male candidates are less susceptible to traits, competency, and policy signal stereotypes and thus can draw support more widely from members of their social in- and out-groups. But, we have not shown the relative contribution of these three mechanisms. Future research should, for instance, test whether female candidates are less electable because they are seen as lacking the traits, competencies, such as providing *wasta*, or support for the voters' policy positions that voters desire. Disentangling the role of different stereotypes will also help us test whether ideology or services drive voters' preferences Islamist candidates. This will inform debates in Islam and politics concerning which factors, whether services, ideology, or traits like incorruptibility, drive voters to support Islamist candidates (Masoud, 2014).

We also have not theorized about how candidates are perceived by voters with

different intersecting traits (e.g., how a female Islamist voter perceived a female non-Islamist candidates, for instance. How do voters perceive coethnic candidates who hold different political ideologies or have other identities the voter does not seek in a representative? How will voters react to an Islamist candidate they like, but who is from a different tribe? Through a more comprehensive study designed to test questions like these and other extensions of our research, we will be better placed to understand the complex dynamics and controversies underlying voter behavior in Jordan and beyond.

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## Appendix 1: Randomization

1,499 Jordanian respondents provided 3,376 candidate evaluations for this study. Table A1 shows that the six experimental conditions were randomly distributed across the districts (the primary sampling units, PSUs).

**Table A1. Randomized block design: Assignment of respondents to experimental conditions**

	Female treatment	Male tribal member treatment	Female tribal member treatment	Male Islamist treatment	Female Islamist treatment	Male treatment	Total
Amman 1	47(8.4%)	49(8.6%)	36(6.9%)	35(6.7%)	51(8.5%)	49(8.2%)	267(7.9%)
Amman 4	51(9.1%)	53(9.3%)	52(10.0%)	52(10.0%)	49(8.2%)	49(8.2%)	306(9.0%)
Balqa 2	39(7.0%)	41(7.1%)	48(9.2%)	47(9.0%)	57(9.5%)	58(9.7%)	290(8.6%)
Zarqa 3	53(9.5%)	53(9.3%)	58(11.1%)	57(11.0%)	48(8.0%)	47(7.9%)	316(9.4%)
Irbid 1	42(7.5%)	43(7.5%)	52(10.0%)	52(10.0%)	48(8.0%)	49(8.2%)	286(8.5%)
Irbid 8	45(8.0%)	45(7.9%)	42(8.0%)	41(7.9%)	53(8.9%)	52(8.7%)	278(8.3%)
Jerash	51(9.1%)	52(9.1%)	39(7.5%)	41(7.9%)	47(7.9%)	46(7.7%)	276(8.2%)
Ajloun 2	52(9.3%)	53(9.3%)	33(6.3%)	32(6.2%)	54(9.0%)	54(9.0%)	278(8.3%)
Tafileh 1	47(8.4%)	47(8.2%)	47(9.0%)	48(9.3%)	54(9.0%)	57(9.5%)	300(8.9%)
Tafileh 2	34(6.0%)	37(6.5%)	33(6.3%)	33(6.4%)	50(8.4%)	49(8.2%)	236(7.0%)
Ma'an 2	52(9.3%)	52(9.1%)	36(6.9%)	36(6.9%)	42(7.0%)	44(7.4%)	262(7.8%)
Ma'an 3	46(8.2%)	46(8.0%)	45(8.6%)	45(8.7%)	45(7.5%)	45(7.5%)	272(8.0%)
Total	559(100%)	571(100%)	521(100%)	519(100%)	598(100%)	599(100%)	3,376(100%)

Two-tailed  $\chi^2$  test show treatments are randomly distributed across groups.

Table A2 shows that the conditions were randomly distributed across the independent variables, as shown by insignificant chi-square tests.

**Table A2. Randomization of treatment and independent variable**

	Female treatment	Male tribal member treatment	Female tribal member treatment	Male Islamist treatment	Female Islamist treatment	Male treatment	Total
Respondent sex							
Female	254(50.9%)	260(50.9%)	236(50.9%)	237(51.2%)	271(51.2%)	272(51.3%)	1530(51.1%)
Male	245(49.1%)	251(49.1%)	228(49.1%)	226(48.8%)	258(48.8%)	258(48.7%)	1466(48.9%)
$(N=2996/ Mean=.51/Sd=.50)$ $\chi^2(5)=.0423(p<1.000)$							
Islamist tendency <sup>1</sup>							
Not Islamist	182(41.2%)	184(40.7%)	166(42.4%)	165(42.4%)	187(40.0%)	188(40.2%)	1072(41.1%)
Islamist	260(58.8%)	268(59.3%)	226(57.6%)	224(57.6%)	280(60.0%)	280(59.8%)	1538(58.9%)
$(N=2610/ Mean=.51/Sd=.50)$ $\chi^2(5)=.9419(p<.967)$							
Tribalist <sup>2</sup>							
Not tribalist	123(33.9%)	127(34.4%)	105(29.0%)	103(28.7%)	135(34.0%)	135(33.9%)	728(32.4%)
Triablist	240(66.1%)	242(65.6%)	257(71.0%)	256(71.3%)	262(66.0%)	263(66.1%)	1520(67.6%)
$(N=2248/ Mean=.51/Sd=.50)$ $\chi^2(5)=6.0981(p<.297)$							

Two-tailed  $\chi^2$  test show treatments are randomly distributed across administrative districts ( $p < .941$ ).

<sup>1</sup>Tribalist: “On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it to you that your tribe (asheerah) elects a representative to the parliament where a 1 is not at all important and a 10 is very important?”

<sup>2</sup>Islamist: “On a scale of 1 to 10, please state your personal preferences on the positions below...1 means you prefer a candidate or list without any Islamist tendency; 10 means you prefer a candidate or list with an Islamist tendency.”

## **Appendix 2: Survey Design**

The 2014 Jordanian Post-Election Survey followed the country's 2013 parliamentary elections and was developed through collaboration between Professor Ellen Lust (University of Gothenburg), Professor Lindsay Benstead (Portland State University), and post-doctoral Research Fellow Kristen Kao (University of Gothenburg). Local partnership with an experienced and highly reputable survey implementation firm, Middle East Marketing Consultants lead by Tony Sabbagh, facilitated the translation of the questionnaire into the local Arabic dialect, the creation of a complex sample design suitable for the needs of the study, the recruitment and training of a total of fifty enumerators and supervisors, and the swift and careful implementation of the survey in the field. Data collection was carried out from April 21, 2014 to April 28, 2014 employing tablet computers in face-to-face household interviews. The enumerators and supervisors<sup>32</sup> were trained for two days prior to the implementation of the survey, after which they were sent out into the field in teams of five (four enumerators to each supervisor). Every attempt was made to have data uploaded to the main database in Amman every evening over Internet, and Kristen Kao analyzed the results each evening to check for errors or inconsistencies.

The purpose of the study was to assess political attitudes and behaviors following parliamentary elections in 2013 among the target population of Jordanian citizens of voting age (18) or older. To ensure sampling of adequate numbers of respondents eligible to vote in either multimember or single-member electoral districts as well as adequate representation of

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<sup>32</sup> In the dataset, the first ten surveyors (variable svyr) are actually supervisors whose tablets were only employed for practice or in times of emergency should another tablet fail in the field.

rural,<sup>33</sup> tribal populations under-counted in conventional probability-proportional-to-size sampling, a purposive multistage stratified sampling design was used with electoral district as the primary sampling unit. Jordan's 45 electoral districts were stratified by region (north, central, and south),<sup>34</sup> size (small and large), and district type (multimember single non-transferable vote or single member plurality).<sup>35</sup> Twelve districts were selected, within which 25 households were randomly selected from blocks enumerated in the 2004 census.

Once in the field, interviewers were instructed to stratify selection of respondents to

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<sup>33</sup> Defining the terms “rural” versus “urban” is a subjective process. Population density statistics at the electoral district level for Jordan were unobtainable, so two measures were constructed from available eligible voter data try to capture the differences between urban and rural electoral districts.

<sup>34</sup> Some scholars note that the culture in the south of Jordan is more akin to that of the Arab Gulf region, while the culture in the north is more akin to that of the rest of the Levantine region. In some instances, this means that tribes might be either more or less sedentary and/or reliant on agriculture versus livestock for their livelihoods. In the modern era, this distinction should not greatly affect the results of this survey or conclusions drawn from it concerning the current state of politics in Jordan. There are other notable differences between the different areas of Jordan. The sample is stratified by region to make sure that these differences are represented.

<sup>35</sup> The variable “Sntv” captures the dividing line between multi-member versus single member districts, the former of which are run under a single non-transferable vote electoral system (coded as a “1” in the data) versus the latter, which are run under a single-member district plurality system (coded as a “0” in the data).

obtain approximately equal numbers of male and female respondents, and to select newer buildings in all replacement interviews in an attempt to gain representation of respondents who live in buildings constructed after the 2004 census. Kish tables were used to select one eligible individual within each household at random. Due to the sampling design, results are likely to show clustering in responses. Attempting to weight the data based on inferences implying national representativeness are not recommended given the purposive sampling design, however data analyses should take stratification variables into account.

Interviewers recorded detailed sampling and refusal information on coversheets completed for up to two visits to each residence. Incomplete surveys in the dataset are the result of a variety of issues. Refusals, in which either the person answering the door or the participant selected by the Kish table refused to participate, make up one type of incomplete survey in the dataset. A survey in which the participant decided to stop participating halfway through the questionnaire constitutes another example of an incomplete interview. Towards the end of fielding, it became apparent that some of the surveys took 20 minutes or less for enumerators to complete. The researchers conducting the project and the local partner concluded that these surveys were too short to be considered to be realistic, thus part of the final two days of the survey was spent replacing these surveys.<sup>36</sup>

A response rate of 79.8% is based on a total of 1,879 residences visited and 1,499 completed interviews. Among these visits, 7.3% interviews are incomplete due to empty, closed, or non-residential units; ineligible respondents; or other reasons. Another 13.6% are

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<sup>36</sup> If the interview took less than 20 minutes, it is marked as incomplete under the variable “complete”. Analyses of this dataset should be carried out keeping these issues in mind, dropping these surveys from analyses where appropriate.

incomplete because respondents refused to participate in the survey. Finally, 12% of the interviews were marked incomplete because they fell short of the 20-minute threshold established to verify that the interviewer did not rush through the interview, so as to call the validity of the interview into question.

### **Appendix 3: Robustness Checks**

We ran an ordinal logit analysis as noted in the text. In the sample as a whole, as shown in Table A3, according to ordinal logit analysis, the male candidate without any other information is most electable, followed by the male tribal candidate, the female tribal candidate, the female candidate without other information, and finally the female Islamist candidate does slightly better than the male Islamist. This is the same outcome as we found with binary logit regression analysis.

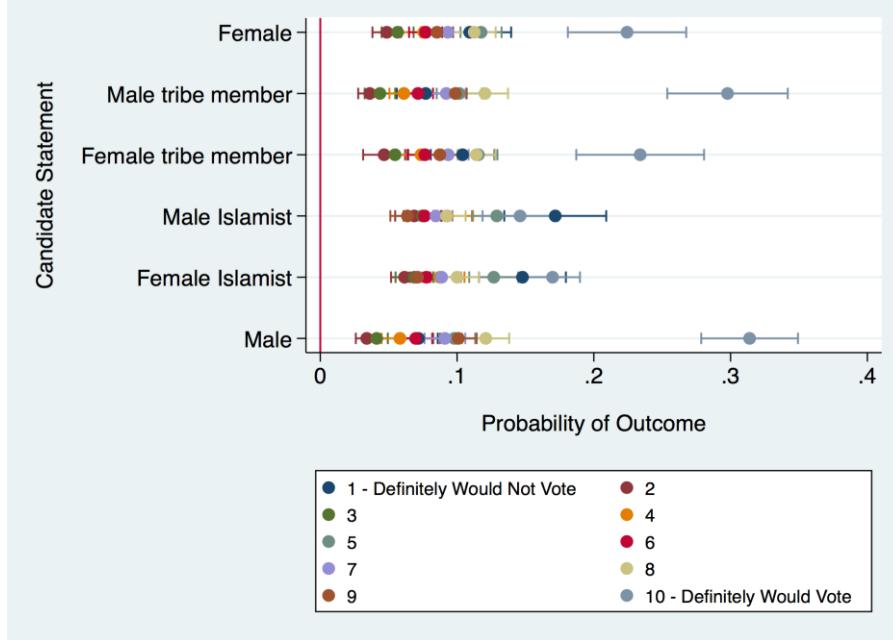
**Table A3. Predicted probability of preference for candidate (Ordinal logistic analysis)**

Candidate Type	Probability of 10 (%)	Probability of 1 (%)	Rank Ordinal Logit Analysis
Male	31	7	1
Male Tribal Member	30	8	2
Female Tribal Member	22	12	3
Female	22	10	4
Female Islamist	18	16	5
Male Islamist	15	19	6

If we use an ordinal logit regression analysis, we see in a visual representation of the predicted probabilities of outcomes that male candidates, male tribe members, female tribe members, and female candidates all are significantly more likely to receive a score of 10, the

respondent would definitely vote for the candidate, than other categories (Figure A1). For the male Islamist candidate, the outcome of 1, the respondent would definitely not vote for the candidate, is most likely whereas for the female an outcome of 1 is second likely.

**Figure A1. Predicted probability of preference for the candidate (Ordered logistic regression)**



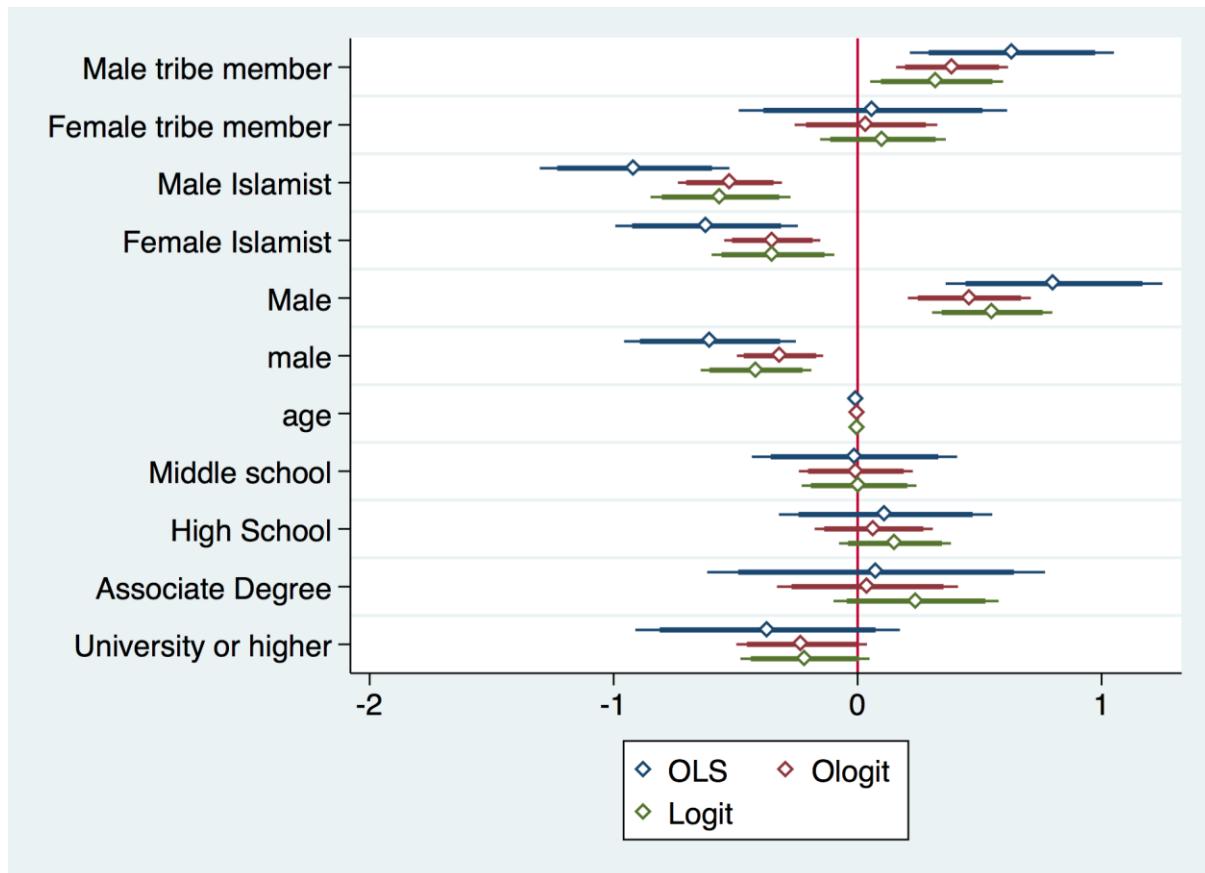
According to OLS the male candidate with no other information does best and then the male tribal member, followed by female tribal member and then female without other information, then female Islamist and finally Male Islamist, as shown in Table A4. (All candidate types included a statement of being educated).

**Table A4. OLS analysis**

Candidate Type	Point Estimate	Rank OLS
Male	7.12	1
Male Tribe	6.9	2
Female Tribe	6.4	3
Female	6.31	4
Female Islamist	5.7	5
Male Islamist	5.4	6

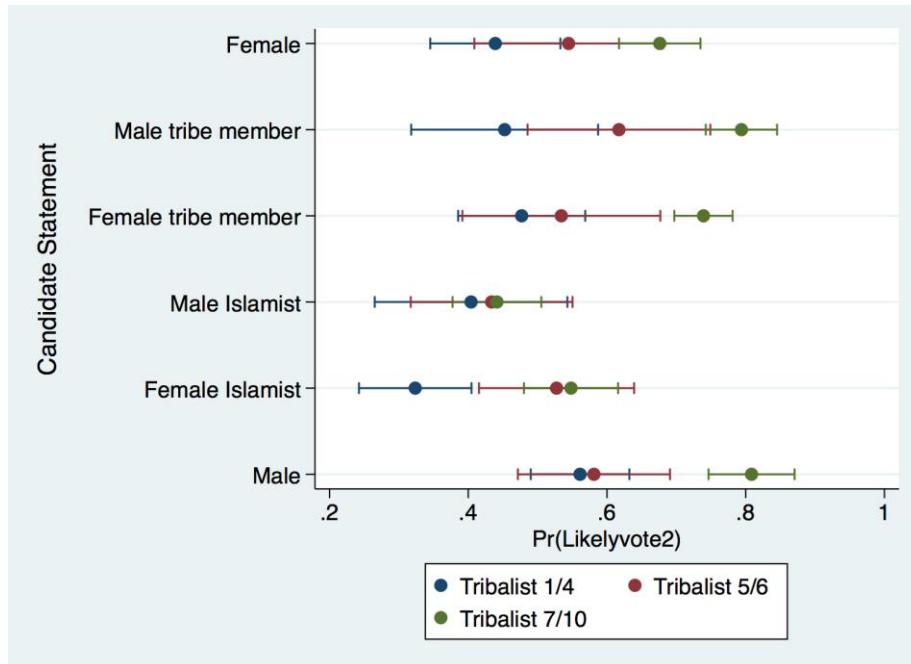
Here is a graph of the different marginal outputs of the three models that shows how OLS is giving more a wider confidence interval on the estimates (Figure A2). However, this graph also shows that the logit estimates (in green) are still slightly off from the ologit ones (in red):

**Figure A2. Marginal plots**



In response to a concern that middling categories of preference for a tribal or Islamist candidate or list may be driving our results, we re-ran the analysis separating out this category of respondent. We find that tribalists are still statistically significantly more likely to prefer tribal candidates than non-tribalist. They are also just as likely to prefer female tribalists at about the same level they prefer male co-ethnic tribal candidates.

**Figure A3. Cutting Tribalist and Islamist into three categories (1)**



We also find that Islamists are still statistically significantly more likely to prefer Islamist candidates than non-Islamists. They are also just as likely to prefer female Islamists at about the same level they prefer male Islamist candidates.

**Figure A4. Cutting Tribalist and Islamist into three categories (2)**

