GATEKEEPERS TO POWER: 
PARTY-LEVEL INFLUENCES ON WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN LATIN AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

As the main gatekeepers to power, political parties play a central role in determining the number of women in Congress given their role in recruiting and selecting candidates for decision-making positions. While political parties are powerful institutions that influence the composition of Congress, parties are also constrained and shaped by the institutional context in which they operate. Borrowing elements from the new institutionalist approach, this dissertation addresses how gender interacts with institutions to shape and influence political outcomes. It asks not only how parties shape political outcomes (i.e., the number of women in elected positions) but also, how the institutional context shapes party behavior toward women’s political participation. Finally, it also examines the role women’s agency plays in influencing party behavior.

The analysis draws on data from 92 political parties in Latin America with the highest levels of representation in Congress to develop a causal model that seeks to explain the share of women in elected office. Three OLS models are developed and linked in a chain of causality to explain variation in the proportion of women: i) in decision-making bodies within the party; ii) fielded as candidates; and iii) elected to public office. The main findings include: i) women’s underrepresentation in elected office is a direct result of their underrepresentation in candidate lists; ii) national quota laws with effective sanctions trump party characteristics in determining the share of female legislative
candidates fielded by parties; iii) national quota laws increase women’s representation through their direct effect on both the share of women nominated and women elected; and iv) women within party structures play a limited role in determining the share of women candidates fielded by parties or elected to public office.
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CHAPTER 1

WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN LATIN AMERICA

With the return of democracy to Latin America in the 1980s, women’s political participation as empowered voters, elected leaders and grassroots organizers has flourished. In 2010, Laura Chinchilla became the first female president of Costa Rica. In 2007, Chile and Argentina had a democratically elected female president and Jamaica had a woman prime minister. At the ministerial level, Chile became the third country in the world, alongside Spain and Sweden, to have equal numbers of female and male ministers. Moreover, between 1998 and 2008, the number of women cabinet ministers in Latin America more than doubled compared to the previous decade (Luna, Roza and Vega, 2008). At the legislative level, the number of women elected to office rose over the last decade more than tripled, on average, from 5 percent in 1990 to 20 percent in 2010 (IPU).

Despite these significant gains, the figures mask important inter and intra-country variations. In Argentina, for example, women hold 40 percent of the legislative seats, whereas in Chile, women hold only 11 percent. In addition, the growth in the number of women in power is skewed within the population itself, with indigenous and afro-descendant women remaining woefully underrepresented at all levels of government, even in countries with a high indigenous and afro-descendant population. Finally,
progress has been volatile, as gains achieved in one electoral period have been suddenly lost in the next.

What explains the important variations between countries in the number of women elected to Parliament? Previous studies that have analyzed women’s representation in congress have focused on national-level patterns. Over the last decade, scholars have turned their attention to examining political parties and women’s political participation issues. These studies specifically on gender and political parties, however, have focused on developed countries or individual case studies of specific parties or national party systems (O’Neill and Stewart 2009; Hinojosa 2005, 2009; Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006; Macaulay 2006; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Kunovich and Paxton 2005). Moreover, most studies of political parties do not integrate a gender perspective in their analysis. In fact, Macaulay (2006: 3) points to the “notable absence of a gender perspective in the literature on parties [in Latin America]….which contrasts with the growing and sophisticated academic output in the countries of the North.”

This project’s main objective is to study party-level structures and characteristics that help explain the variation in the number of women in Latin America’s parliaments. The main question this dissertation asks is: What explains why political parties differ so radically in the number of women they send to Parliament? And, additionally, what party-level factors determine the number of women representing each party in Parliament? At a broader level, how do parties shape political outcomes (i.e., the number of women in elected positions) and how is party behavior toward women’s representation shaped by the institutional context in which parties operate.
This study builds on Mikki Caul’s (1999) “Women's Representation in Parliament: The Role of Political Parties,” in which she analyzes how party characteristics affect women's representation in the parliamentary parties of 12 advanced industrial nations. By focusing on 18 countries in Latin America, this study will seek to refine Caul’s causal model by testing additional political system and party-level variables that have been found in more recent studies to have an effect on women’s political representation. In particular, it will examine the effects of the gendered composition of candidate lists on the number of women elected, which other studies have found to be significant (Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Setzler 2005). This study will borrow elements from the new institutionalist approach\(^1\) in order to understand how institutional variables help determine the number of women in power and how party characteristics and structures shape a party’s decisions to support women’s representation.

This study aims to further current knowledge regarding the factors that contribute to women’s political representation and to the academic debate on gender and party politics. In particular, it seeks to understand the variations across parties that determine the number of women elected to Parliament. As parties differ in the number of women they send to Parliament, a party-level analysis contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the factors that explain women’s changing representation in Parliament.

By grounding the analysis in the new institutionalist approach, the study will contribute to current scholarship that seeks to understand how gender interacts with institutions to shape and influence political outcomes.

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\(^1\) New institutionalists examine the role of political institutions in influencing political outcomes. March and Olsen (1984: 747) observe that New Institutionalism is “neither a theory nor a coherent critique of one. It is simply an argument that the organization of political life makes a difference.” New institutionalists examine how institutions (i.e., formal and informal rules and procedures) structure behavior and shape outcomes (Hall and Taylor 1996).
At a prescriptive level, the findings can help inform concrete, practical recommendations for parties and activists seeking to promote women’s representation. Understanding how party rules and procedures influence the number of women elected can shed light on the mechanisms that exclude women from political institutions. In addition, other underrepresented groups in Latin America, such as indigenous peoples and afro-descendants, can draw on the findings and devise strategies to increase their own political representation.

**Why Are Political Parties Important For Understanding Women’s Political Representation?**

Much of the empirical research that explains cross-country variations in the number of women in parliament has utilized national-level indicators and focused heavily on industrialized countries. The explanatory variables consistently used in the studies have focused on political-institutional, socioeconomic and cultural factors. It is postulated that political factors influence the openness of the political system to women, socioeconomic factors influence the pool of available and eligible women and cultural factors determine public opinion and attitudes toward women leaders. Depending upon the specification of the model, many of the statistical studies have yielded inconclusive and contradictory results. Some, for example, have found only political factors important, while others have found both socioeconomic and political factors significant.

Some of the conclusions that have been drawn from cross-national statistical analyses include: proportional representation systems elect more women than majoritarian systems (Rule 1987, 1994; Norris 1985; Kenworthy and Malami 1990; Paxton 1997); higher district magnitudes and multimember districts favor women
legislative quotas have a significant positive effect on the number of women elected (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006; Jones 1998, 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2003, 2009; Krook 2005); parties on the left of the ideological spectrum send more women to Parliament (Norris 1987, 1997; Reynolds 1999; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006); and traditional attitudes operate as a barrier to women’s election (Norris and Inglehart 2000).

Perhaps, the best established generalization about the factors that impact women’s presence in power is the electoral system. Proportional representation systems and multi-member district systems elect more women to power than majoritarian or single-member district systems (Rule, 1987, 1994; Norris 1985; Kenworthy and Malami, 1990; Paxton 1997). Studies of established democracies indicate that women have always had a slight advantage in proportional representation systems, with the gap widening dramatically beginning in the 1970s (Matland 1998a; Matland 2005). In European countries where both systems are used in simultaneous elections, women fare far better in party-list systems (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). In fact, in 2008 the top twenty countries with the most women parliamentarians used proportional representation systems (Ballington 2008). Party-list systems, however, are not sufficient. There are many countries with

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2 In PR systems, the overall votes for a party are translated into a corresponding proportion of legislative seats. All PR systems use multi-member districts. In plurality/majority systems the winner is the candidate or party with most votes, and in general, there is only a single victor in each district (see Matland 2005).

3 PR systems are said to favor women because they consistently have higher district magnitudes (number of seats per district), which lead to higher party magnitudes (number of seats a party wins in a district). High district magnitude is advantageous because with more seats to win, parties will have an incentive to present a “balanced ticket” by including female candidates. In contrast, almost all majoritarian systems have a district magnitude of one, producing a zero-sum games and no chance for the party to balance its ticket (Matland 1998a; Matland 2005; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). The literature, however,
proportional representation systems that have an underrepresentation of women in Parliament.

Other efforts to understand variations in women’s political participation have focused on supply and demand factors. Supply-side explanations focus on a candidate’s willingness to pursue elected office based on their motivation and resources. Demand-side explanations focus on the gaterkeeper’s (i.e., voters, party members or political leaders) selection of candidates from the pool of aspirants (Norris 1997). Norris and Lovenduski (1995) describe the recruitment of candidates for election in terms of winnowing stages. In any given country, there will be a pool of “eligibles” that fulfill all the legal and formal requirements to become legislators. Of those eligible, only a small group of “aspirants” will decide to present themselves as possible candidates. An even smaller group will secure their party’s nomination and become an official “candidate.” Finally, a precious few will be elected to public office by the voters. In Latin America, evidence suggests that the bottlenecks to women’s political representation are neither in the supply of eligible women nor in the demand on the part of the electorate.

On the demand side, public opinion surveys indicate there is solid support for women in office. In a Gallup survey carried out in six cities in Latin America in 2000, 57 percent of respondents opined that their country would be better off with more women leaders. A majority of those polled also believed women have a greater capacity for effective leadership in the areas of education, environmental protection, reduction of poverty and corruption and women’s issues (IAD 2001).
Voter behavior in Latin America also indicates strong support for women candidates. The Costa Rican, Chilean and Argentine electorate recently voted three female presidents into power (Laura Chinchilla, Michelle Bachelet and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, respectively). In Peru, Lourdes Flores Nano finished third (out of 20 candidates) in Peru’s 2006 presidential elections, winning 23.8 percent of the vote and trailing the second place winner by a mere 0.5 percent. In Argentina, Elisa Carrio finished second in Argentina’s 2007 presidential election, also obtaining 23 percent of the vote. In the 2005 elections, Honduras for the first time elected their congress members through open-lists, and, of all the candidates, a woman received the most votes (Taylor-Robinson 2006). Similarly, in Peru, which uses an open-list system, the 2006 general elections witnessed not only an increased use of preferential voting compared to the 2001 elections, but a greater propensity to allocate preferential votes to women (Dador and Llanos 2008). In the 2001 elections in Peru, a woman headed the list of the top five congressional candidates that received the most votes in absolute numbers, followed by two more women in the third and fourth positions (Yanez 2001).

Studies in the US indicate that women win elections at rates comparable to men (Seltzer et al. 1997; Fox and Oxley 2003). Similarly, in Latin America, a study of Brazilian municipal elections shows that women are just as competitive as men in winning over voters and gaining legislative seats when they are conferred unimpeded access to the candidate party lists in an open-list proportional representation system (Setzler 2005). In Chile’s municipal elections, Hinojosa (2005) found that, after

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4 In Peru, parties may vote for a party’s list of candidates in the order presented by the party, or vote for individual candidates within the list (preferential voting). Open and closed-list systems are described in greater detail in Chapter 2.
controlling for incumbency and major party, the difference between women and men’s capacity to be elected is minimal.

On the supply side, a unique feature in Latin America is the significant growth of the eligibility pool over the last two decades, as measured by the progress women have achieved in education and the labor market. Compared to the rest of the developing world, Latin America has closed the gender gap in education, with girls outperforming boys, measured by enrollment rates, at all levels of schooling. In a few cases, women now attain higher mean levels of schooling than men (Piras 2004). Women are also increasingly majoring in the traditional fields that politicians tend to be drawn from (law, economics, political science and other social science disciplines). In Mexico, women represented half of all social science majors in 1990 (Camp 1998) and, in Chile, women represented 44 percent of law students in 1998 (Hinojosa 2005). In addition, women are now entering the workforce at similar rates as their male counterparts (Duryea et al. 2004). Increased access to education and participation in the labor force enables women to acquire the capabilities to lead and the necessary financial resources, thereby significantly enlarging the eligibility pool (Rule 1994).

Even though the eligibility pool has grown, to get elected to public office women must first select themselves to stand for elections. A recent cross-national survey of parliamentarians shows that the top three deterrents women face in entering politics include domestic responsibilities, prevailing cultural attitudes regarding women’s roles in society and lack of support from family (Ballington 2008). Men’s greatest deterrents, on the other hand, include lack of support from the electorate, lack of finances and lack of support from political parties. According to Ballington (2008), this suggests that,
globally, traditional gender roles and cultural attitudes continue to make politics a largely inaccessible profession for many women.

Research on developed countries has found that the key factors that influence a candidate’s decision to aspire to office include ambition, resources and the opportunities that present themselves within the political system (Matland 2005). In the United States, scholars have examined the motivations and political ambitions of women and men and have found that, in seeking elected office, women are not as politically ambitious as men because they are less likely than men to be recruited as candidates and to think they are qualified to run for office (Fox and Lawless 2004; Lawless and Fox 2005; Costantini 1990). In other words, women are less likely than men to surface from the eligibility pool and seek elected office (Fox and Lawless 2004). Furthermore, in the US men are more politically engaged than women in terms of political interest and discussion (Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997). Similarly, European studies have noted a persistent yet diminishing gender gap in political interest and discussion (Klingemann and Fuchs 1995 cited in Norris 1997).

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5 Carroll (1985) finds no difference in ambition among women officeholders at the State legislative, county and local level in the US, but finds that among convention delegates and party activists women are less ambitious than men. Interestingly, she states that given that there is no lack of ambition among women officeholders, we should expect to see women moving into the highest levels of office. She suggests that “if it does not, the findings presented here suggest that the ambitions of women officeholders … are not at fault. Rather political scientists must begin to look…to possible patterns of discrimination and limitation in the structure of political opportunity in order to account for the paucity of women at the highest levels of office holding” (Carroll 1985: 1242). Similar to other studies, (Costantini 1990) finds that the gender gap in political ambition is relatively small when it comes to being appointed to office, a less contentious activity than elective office. A study of candidates running for the European Parliament finds that women were slightly more ambitious than men, although the differences were not statistically significant (Norris 1997).
In Latin America, no recent study of political ambition has been carried out. Evidence points to inconclusive results. On the one hand, public opinion surveys indicate that women are not as interested as men in politics. The 1999-04 World Values Survey data demonstrate that in the five Latin American countries surveyed, men (34.3 percent) are more interested in politics than women (27.5 percent). In addition, slightly more men than women have engaged in some type of political action, be it attending lawful demonstrations, signing petitions, or joining in boycotts and unofficial strikes. Public opinion surveys carried out in the Dominican Republic between 1994-2004 indicate that the traditional gender gap in political interest remains, although it has narrowed over time, with women’s interest growing by 20 percent and men’s remaining fairly static (Morgan, Espinal and Hartlyn 2008).

Voter turnout rates and membership and activism in political parties, on the other hand, indicate that women are just as or more interested than men in politics. In several countries in Latin America, voter turnout rates indicate that more women than men turn out to vote (IDEA 2008). In addition, women have increasingly joined political parties. On average, women comprise between 40 to 50 percent of party members, and in some cases, women’s membership exceeds that of men. In Mexico, for example, women make up 53.2 percent of the PRD’s registered party membership (Llanos and Sample 2008).

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6 In the late 1960s, Chaney (1979) interviewed 167 women politicians in Chile and Peru and found that 104 showed no interest in continuing or advancing their political careers. Thirty-four had political ambition while 29 did not know if they wanted to advance. Chaney argued that many women were unwilling or unable to serve long years because of family responsibilities.

7 The five Latin American countries surveyed include: Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

8 Camp (1998) argues that in Mexico differences in interest levels can be attributed to family environments, where initial interest in politics tends to be stimulated by a family member. In Mexico, “kinship... is a crucial variable in the determination of political linkages and success in public life” (Camp 1998: 173).
Women have also played a critical role in pushing for the adoption of gender quotas at the national and party-level (Crocker 2005; Krook 2005; Macauy 2006).

When aspiring to public office, however, political ambition is not enough. Another factor that influences an individual’s decision to seek public office includes their political capital, in the forms of incumbency, prior political experience, available time, occupational background, age and educational qualifications (Norris 1997). A survey of 272 male and female parliamentarians representing 110 countries shows that, on average, the majority of parliamentarians tend to be over 50 years old and married, nearly half have a postgraduate university degree, the most common occupational background is the education profession and about a third have dependents (Ballington 2008). Women parliamentarians are more than twice as likely to be single, divorced, widowed or separated, and it is far more common for women to have no dependents (28 percent as opposed to 6 percent of men). Hinojosa (2005) found that education level, career, personal connections and socioeconomic status influenced a candidate’s success of making it on the ballot for municipal elections in Chile and Mexico. Similarly, Norris (1997) found in Europe that incumbency status, time resources and motivation were significantly related to gaining winnable seats for both men and women.

Incumbency provides an incumbent officeholder an advantage over his or her challengers in seeking reelection because of the greater media exposure and ability to raise more campaign funds. Research on the US and Australia indicates that

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9 Similarly, in the US, studies indicate that women in office tend to be older, have no children, or have fewer children than their male counterparts (Carroll 1998 cited in Matland 1999).

10 Likewise, Alvarenga (2004) found in a small sample of local elected leaders in El Salvador that women tended to have higher education levels, be older and have careers. She also found that the two main channels for women’s involvement in politics included the support of their party and participation in women’s organizations.
incumbency has a negative effect on women’s election, i.e., as a majority of incumbents are men, incumbency hinders the election of women (Carroll 1985; Studlar and McAllister 1991). A study of 33 countries (9 in Latin America) also shows that incumbency has a statistically significant negative effect on women’s election to Parliament (Schwindt-Bayer 2005). In Central America, in particular, the effects of incumbency are unclear. With the exception of Costa Rica, high party turnover rates have often voided the incumbency advantage of elected legislators (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008: 83).

An individual’s decision to run for office is influenced not only by their ambition and political capital, but also by the support they receive from party leaders and the recruitment process adopted by political parties (Norris 1997; Fox and Lawless 2004; Studlar and McAllister 1991). In fact, Matland (1998a) argues that of the three hurdles women must overcome to be elected to public office (willingness to stand for election; nomination by party; and election by voters) nomination by party is the most critical in proportional representation systems. Lawless and Fox (2005) hold that candidate recruitment processes are crucial for increasing women’s levels of representation given that recruitment plays a larger role in shaping women’s decision to run than men (see also Fox and Lawless 2004). This suggests that an important bottleneck for getting more women in public office must lie somewhere within the parties, which are responsible for turning aspirants into candidates and candidates into elected leaders (see Hinojosa 2005; Rule 1981).

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11 Research on Australia’s elections finds that parties play a key role in explaining the number of women in parliament. Studlar and McAllister 1991: 481 observe that, “The hurdles for women to get elected to legislative positions in Australia are mainly those of the ‘secret garden of politics’ (Gallagher and Marsh 1998), party selection committees and party hierarchies, who tolerate the continuing advantages of incumbency for males and the residual effects of the masculine candidate model in party nominations.”
Political parties play a central role in determining the number of women in power as they are responsible for the recruitment and selection of candidates to decision-making positions (Norris 1997; Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Hinojosa 2005, 2009; Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006). Parties control who reaches office because they have power both over who is included in the candidate lists and the order in which the candidates are listed. They are considered the main “gatekeepers” to women’s advancement to power. In addition, parties also play the fundamental role of articulating, aggregating and legitimizing interests in government. They formulate strategies, goals and policies and promote the interests of their constituency. As such, they play an important role in addressing and representing women’s concerns and priorities.

Political parties are powerful institutions that influence the composition of parliament but at the same time, parties are also constrained and shaped by the institutional context in which they operate. Parties are influenced by the formal and informal rules, norms and procedures that make up the political system as well as by their own internal rules and procedures. A gender-sensitive analysis of political parties is crucial if we are to understand the role parties play in determining the number of women elected. As Macaulay (2006: 4) states:

if we accept that political institutions are socially embedded, and both reflect and construct social values and behaviors, then we must conclude that a gender- ignorant analysis is an impoverished one as gender relations permeate political structures and processes at both the macro sociological and the macro institutional level.

Thus, to understand the party-level factors that determine the number of women elected to power, we need to understand how party behavior is shaped by the formal and informal rules and procedures that make up the institutional context.
Understanding the relationship between the role of political parties in Latin America and the number of women in power has gained increasing importance and attention because of the crisis of traditional parties and the reforms adopted to revive the parties. Traditional political parties in Latin America are in a state of crisis, leading to increased public support for political outsiders (Dominguez 1997; Mainwaring 2006a; Mainwaring 1999). According to Latinobarometro, an annual public opinion poll carried out in 18 Latin American countries, confidence levels in political parties have declined from a high of 28 percent in 1997 to 21 percent in 2008. Of all the institutions included in the poll, political parties rank at the bottom in confidence levels, below the Church, president, military, government, police, justice system and Congress. As a result of parties having lost much of their support and credibility, women’s and other citizen movements have entered the gap left by the leadership vacuum in traditional parties. There is an increased appeal for alternative parties, and women are spearheading their creation. In the last two decades, women have founded eight new parties/alliances in the region. Voters have responded positively to these parties, viewing them as viable alternatives and granting them representation in Congress. For example, the *Afirmacion para una Republica Igualitaria* (ARI) party in Argentina, founded by Elisa Carrió in 2001, won 7.2 percent of the seats in the Lower House in the 2005 elections, the third with the highest representation in Congress.

Public disaffection with political parties has led to a series of reforms aimed at strengthening their image and credibility. Such reforms have impacted or have the potential to affect the election of women to public office. One set of reforms has to with the adoption of primaries. Over the last decade eight of 18 countries have used primaries
to select some or all of their legislative candidates, including Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela (Barreda 2004 cited in Baldez 2003). Some scholars argue that the process of internal democratization of political parties “has potential to enhance [their] legitimacy, make leadership more diverse, fluid and responsive to members” (Payne et al. 2002: 274). More inclusive candidate selection processes also are said to attract new members to the party and to encourage the party to mobilize in support of previously unrepresented social interests (Freidenberg 2003).

Other reforms adopted at the national and party-level have directly addressed women’s underrepresentation in public office by integrating measures to increase women’s political participation. Twelve countries in Latin America have adopted gender quota laws stipulating that women must constitute a minimum number of candidates or percentage of representatives of a body. The quota laws are either mandated by the constitution or by the electoral law. The adoption of quota laws has led, on average, to a 10 percent increase in the number of women in parliament in countries with quotas. Quotas have worked well in countries with mandatory legislation, placement mandates in closed-list electoral systems, sanctions for non-compliance and large electoral districts (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2009). In some countries, however, the quota law has proven ineffectual. As a result, legislatures have approved electoral reforms aimed at addressing weaknesses in the original law. The reforms have mandated the placement of women in party lists, increased the minimum number of candidates that must be

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12 For example, in 2002, Mexico reformed its 1996 quota law mandating that no more than 70 percent of single-member district candidates be of the same sex and that women must hold at least one of every three slots in the proportional representation lists (see Baldez 2003). It also adopted strict sanctions for non-compliance. Other countries that have reformed their quota laws to make them more effective include Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico and Peru.
included in lists and/or issued stricter sanctions for non-compliance. Many political parties have also voluntarily adopted quotas for electoral lists as well as for their internal party structure. The parties that have adopted quotas represent the full range of the ideological spectrum and their implementation has varied widely.

Also, over the last decade, women’s branches within political parties have increasingly mobilized to push their demands within their parties, strengthening their participation in decision-making positions within the party and as elected leaders. In the past, women’s branches served to mobilize the electorate and support the fundraising efforts of male candidates, as well as to provide a space to discuss traditional women’s issues. Today, many women’s branches have been replaced with technical departments serving as vehicles for women to collectively push for the adoption of gender policies (Macaulay 2006; Htun 2005; Sachett 2005). For example, the women’s wing of Mexico’s *Partido de Accion Nacional* (PAN) became a staunch advocate and lobbyist for women’s inclusion in party lists. Consequently, in 2003 the PAN had a higher number of female candidates on their lists than the other two major parties (*Partido de la Revolucion Democratica* - PRD and *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* -PRI), despite the PAN being a right-wing party (Htun 2005).

Finally, the increasing weight of women voters, the proven electability of female candidates and the favorable public opinion towards women leaders have drawn the attention of political parties, voters, the media, pollsters and academicians alike. As the international community and the women’s movement continue to pressure governments and political parties to increase the number of women in power and the representation of
women’s issues, parties will increasingly look for strategies to attract female candidates and support them during their electoral campaigns.

**WHY IS WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IMPORTANT?**

At a fundamental level, a democracy should “represent” the interests of the voters. In her seminal book, *The Concept of Representation*, Pitkin (1967) distinguishes between descriptive representation (how the legislator looks) and substantive representation (how the legislator acts), concluding that it is the activities and responsiveness of the legislator rather than the physical characteristics that matter more. If representing means “acting in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them,” Pitkin (1967: 209) argued that the quality of representation would depend on the mechanisms to hold representatives accountable.

In *The Politics of Presence*, Anne Phillips (1995) challenges Pitkin’s conclusion. Phillips argues that current debate over democracy centers on demands for political inclusion from groups that have been previously excluded or marginalized based on their race, sex or ethnicity. The physical exclusion of discriminated groups from political decision-making increases the probability that their specific interests and needs will not be represented. According to Phillips, what matters is that the representatives share not only the ideas of the represented but their experiences as well. She contends that a fairer system of representation must be centered on the relationship between substantive (what she called politics of ideas) and descriptive representation (politics of presence). The link between the two, according to Phillips, is based on women’s life experiences. Women’s life experience makes it more likely that female representatives will address women’s interests and needs and take an active role in defending them. Stated simply,
“‘being one of us’ is assumed to promote loyalty to ‘our interest’” (Mansbridge 1999: 629). Phillips notes that male representatives can support and represent women’s interests, but they are not as likely as women to defend women’s interests with the same level of commitment and fervor as female representatives. In short, she argued that women must be present if their views, interests and needs are to take shape and transform the political debate.

Numerous scholars have empirically examined the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation and found that the political presence of previously excluded groups affects the agenda and policy outputs. Specifically, they have found that gender makes a difference in a legislator’s policy priorities, the committees in which they sit and their views regarding constituency service.

A growing body of evidence around the globe indicates that descriptive representation translates into substantive representation. In the US, several studies have found that gender has a significant effect on the nature of the legislative priorities of legislative leaders (Swers 2002; O’Regan 2000; Carroll 2001; Little, Dunn and Deen 2001; Reingold 2000).13 Several studies have found that female officeholders exhibit more concern about issues pertaining to women, children and families, such as education, the Equal Rights Amendment, abortion rights, child support enforcement, and harsher penalties for sexual assault and violence against women. Compared to their male counterparts, women are more likely to: initiate and propose such policies, express interest in them and take active leadership roles in securing their passage and

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13 Other studies have also found differences by sex in the issues covered by candidates. For example, in a study of political advertisements of male and female candidates for the US senate between 1984 and 1986, Reingold (2000) found that women spent more time talking about “social issues” (abortion, women’s rights, civil rights, gay rights and the environment), while men were more likely to discuss economic issues, such as taxes and the federal budget.
implementation (Thomas 1991; Tamerius 1995; Carroll 2001). In the US Congress, Swers (2002) found that women were more active than their male counterparts in sponsoring bills related to feminist issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence and affirmative action, and men were equally active on traditional issues of concern to women, such as welfare and education. However, women were more active on the traditional women’s issues when they were in the majority party.

Research in other parts of the world also shows similar policy-related gender differences. In Honduras and Argentina, studies have found that while women differed from men in their bill introduction (in the areas of women’s rights, children and families), no significant priority differences were observed for any of the other categories identified as being of traditional interest to women (health care/public health; education; welfare/social security; environment) (Jones 1997; Taylor-Robinson and Heath 2002). Schwindt-Bayer (2003) finds that in Argentina, Colombia and Costa Rica the legislator’s sex has a significant and positive effect on the introduction of bills related to women’s rights, children and family, education, health and public welfare bills (no effect for environment). In a 2002 survey of Congressional Women’s Caucus members in Brazil, 88 percent of those surveyed stated that women’s rights were among their priorities; and of the 88 percent, 20 percent listed women’s rights as their “top” priority (Htun 2003).

Studies carried out in Finland, Britain and Norway also demonstrate that women are more likely to push agendas which are of interest to women (Henig 2001). In Norway, where women represent close to half of the Parliament, they “still bear the sole responsibility for placing ‘women’s issues’ on the political agenda” (Karvonen and Selle 1995: 21). Similarly, a study in West Bengal shows that mandated representation of
women as leaders of village councils has significant effects on policy decisions, with women elected as leaders under the reservation or quota policy investing more in public goods that are directly relevant to the needs of rural women (drinking water, fuel and road construction). The same study also shows that women are more likely to participate in the policy-making process if the leader of their village council is a woman (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2001). The results of such investigations in different countries suggest that women do indeed make a difference in issues pertaining to the welfare of women and children and that this is most clear in their distinctive policy priorities.\footnote{Differences in policy priorities also surface when race is taken into consideration. Button and Hedge (1996) found that African-American legislators appear to be more concerned with the redistribution of wealth, including social welfare, civil rights and liberties, and issues with overt racial components. White legislators representing areas with significant black constituencies also tend to respond to these issues, but not to the extent of black officials. Similarly, Bratton and Haynie (1999) found that race exerted a powerful influence on the introduction of black interest bills in the lower houses of State Legislatures. Black legislators introduce more black interest bills than do other legislators. Taken together these findings provide strong support for the argument that a legislator’s race do in fact influence policy priorities.}

Women are also more likely to sit in committees that deal with issues of traditional interest to women. Research carried out in Argentina, Colombia and Costa Rica show that women were significantly over-represented on most committees of traditional interest to women (women’s rights, children and family issues, education, public health (Schwindt-Bayer 2003) Norwegian women too are over-represented in Parliamentary committees pertaining to social services, education, church, and consumer and administrative affairs, while men are over-represented in committees concerning finance, transport, agriculture and foreign affairs (Rauum 1995 cited in Karvonen and Selle 1995). Interestingly, Rauum points out that women are the majority in the policy
areas responsible for the largest share of public expenditure, including education, health and social services.

Gender differences also extend to legislator’s views regarding constituency service. In Argentina, Colombia and Costa Rica, female legislators were more likely than male legislators to view women and women’s groups as more important (Schwindt-Bayer 2003). A British survey found that women prioritized constituency work more than men and devoted a larger amount of their time helping individual constituents with problems. Men spent more time in meetings and committees (Henig 2001). Thomas (1992) found that black council members and female council members in the US spend more time than whites and males performing constituency service and held different perceptions about the importance of various subgroups in their constituencies.

While women’s presence increases the possibility for the representation of women’s interests, it does not guarantee it (Phillips 1995). In other words, just because a woman is elected does not necessarily mean she will promote a woman’s agenda. In Latin America, the term “feminism” is rife with complexities and is cautiously used by politicians. In general, women politicians rarely tout a feminist identity (Htun 1998). According to Htun, “the label ‘feminist’ carries a negative social stigma, because it is associated with a rejection of sex differences, a devalorization of men and even an assertion of female superiority” (Htun 1998:14). In a 15-year long study of female legislators in Central America, few respondents ever answered a clear “yes” or “no” to the question, “Are you a Feminist?” (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008: 260). Most were more ambivalent, answering either “yes and no,” or, “no, but…” For example, Mireya Guevara in 1989 stated: “….No [I am not a feminist, but] I would say that I have
struggled for women and I think that women have the same rights as men” (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008: 261).

Craske (1999) suggests that women know that a strong pro-women stance will limit their chances of being chosen as a candidate. Elisa Carrio, an Argentine Congresswoman and former presidential candidate remarked, “men have convinced women that talking about women’s issues is of little importance. Women, in order to be important, can’t talk about gender issues” (Htun and Jones 2002: 49). Htun (1998) further finds that although women politicians do not generally champion women’s issues during their campaigns, many turn into vocal advocates of women’s rights and participate actively in women’s caucuses after they are elected. Nevertheless, many other women carry out their mandate without ever becoming involved in women’s issues. In fact, in Argentina, Jones (1997) found that 58 percent of female legislators did not introduce any bills in the area of women’s rights between 1993 and 1994.

In addition to the negative social stigma associated with the label “feminist,” party loyalty is an overriding factor over gender identity in political life (Htun and Jones 2002). In a study of Mexican women, Rodriguez (1998: 8) found that:

Women’s political loyalties, first and foremost, rest with the political party or organizations to which they belong. Gender loyalty, for all practical purposes, comes in (a distant) second. Even among women of the same party, it is noticeable that their solidarity and loyalty rest with policies and programs, political patrons and mentors, career plans and ambitions – not with the other women in the party.

In essence, legislators have greater incentives to remain loyal to the party. In Mexico, Alatorre (1999 cited in Htun and Jones 2002: 49) found that it is less likely that legislation will be enacted when gender-related policies (such as supporting women’s labor or reproductive rights) contradict party interests.
In conclusion, women do make distinct policy contributions in areas related to women’s issues. Such contributions are important for the quality of democracy and representation of varied interests in society. As the main gatekeepers to power, political parties play a key role in determining which interests gain representation. Therefore, expanding our understanding of why parties differ in the number of women they send to congress becomes relevant if we wish to contribute to strengthening democratic processes and institutions.

**A WORD ON METHODOLOGY**

This study seeks to understand variations in women’s parliamentary representation by examining the relationship between the characteristics of 92 political parties and women’s descriptive representation in 18 Latin American countries. Using the party as our unit of analysis, this study builds on the typological theory developed by Caul (1999), based on her examination of 12 industrialized countries, and expands the model by including additional intervening links in the causal process. More specifically, it examines the path to power as a process that requires an aspirant to first be nominated as a candidate and then be elected to public office. In addition, it explores the effect of additional explanatory variables, such as the effective number of political parties, district magnitude, presence of women’s sections and existence of gender quotas for the composition of the national executive committee, among others. The results of the analysis provide a useful test of the robustness of earlier findings and allow us to examine

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15 A typological theory is defined as “a theory that specifies independent variables, delineates them into categories for which the researcher will measure the cases and their outcomes, and provides not only hypotheses on how these variables operate individually, but also contingent generalizations on how and under what conditions they behave in specified conjunctions or configurations to produce effects on specified dependent variables” (George and Bennet 2005: 235).
previously unexplored variables. The findings also enable us to develop a new causal model.

To this end, three main tasks were undertaken. First, a new causal model was developed comprised of three distinct explanatory models linked in a chain of causality. Testable hypotheses were defined for each explanatory variable. Second, a questionnaire was designed and implemented to build the dataset. Third, to test the hypothesized causal model, a statistical analysis was conducted with data from 92 political parties in 18 Latin American countries. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the statistical analysis and an assessment of secondary information provided by the parties (such as party by-laws, electoral lists, etc.).

Data was obtained from the “Gender and Political Parties in Latin America” (GEPPAL) database (forthcoming), representing 92 parties in 18 countries in Latin America. Data correspond to the five parties with the highest electoral representation in the lower house/unicameral parliament and with at least 5 percent of representation. In countries where fewer than 5 parties received 5 percent of the vote, the necessary number of parties where included in descending order of representation until the goal of 5 parties was reached. In general, these parties are relevant given their electoral weight and the territorial extension of their organizational structure (Mainwaring and Scully 1995).

**Organization of Study**

This cross-national study seeks to understand variation in women’s representation in elected office in Latin America by studying how the institutional context, party-level structures and women’s agency influence the probability that parties will send more women to power.
The present chapter situated the research question within the existing knowledge and scholarship about the factors that explain variation in women’s political representation. It made the case that previous research on women’s political representation, which has focused on national-level factors as well as demand and supply-side explanations, has provided partial or inconclusive explanations for the variation in the number of women in power. It argued that political parties play a fundamental role in determining the composition of parliament, and are therefore, a critical piece of the puzzle that merits analysis. Few studies, however, have explored how party institutions in Latin America shape women’s political participation. This chapter also made the case for why the issue of women’s participation is important for democracy and the representation of women’s interests.

The second chapter explores how the formal and informal rules and norms of the political system and internal party organization constrain and influence parties’ behavior, opportunities and decisions to support women’s representation in elected office. As parties are permeable and responsive to demands, the role of women’s political agency in advancing women’s representation is also examined. The variables that comprise Caul’s causal model are examined using the new institutionalist lens, examining how structure constrains choices and influences outcomes. Additional political system and party-level variables that have been found to have an effect on women’s political representation are also examined. In particular, it argues that the share of female candidates should be an important determinant of the number of women elected.

The third chapter analyzes women’s integration into political parties from a historical perspective. Borrowing elements from the new institutionalist approach, the
historical review explores how the terms and conditions under which women were initially integrated into political life had long-term consequences for women’s political participation. It argues that overtime, exclusionary practices and behaviors have become embedded and help explain the resistance or slowness of some parties to advance women’s political representation. In addition, this chapter also explores how a series of international and national processes and factors converged at particular points in time enabling women to advance their political participation within parties and as elected officials.

The fourth chapter characterizes the research design and methodology. Building on Caul’s (1999) original theory and new scholarly findings, a causal model is developed. The case is made for the inclusion of additional intervening variables in the chain of causality, namely the share of female candidates fielded by parties. A hypothesis is developed for each variable based on a review of current scholarship. A description of the survey instruments and models to be tested in the statistical analyses is also described.

The fifth chapter presents the results of the descriptive and multivariate analyses. Based on the results of the descriptive analysis and statistical tests, three models are developed to explain variation in the proportion of women: i) in decision-making bodies within the party; ii) fielded as candidates; and iii) elected to public office. The results of the three statistical models are discussed and implications for the proposed causal model are explored.

The sixth chapter brings together the various findings and connects them to the larger theoretical implications. Areas of future research are also discussed as well as recommendations for advancing women’s participation.
CHAPTER 2

SYSTEMS, PARTY STRUCTURE AND AGENCY: FRAMEWORK FOR A GENDERED ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties play a central role in shaping how democracies function (Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 2). They are considered the main gatekeepers to power. As the main players in electoral politics, they hold a virtual monopoly on elected office by controlling access to government (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Parties are responsible for the recruitment and selection of candidates and therefore control who is included in candidate lists (Gallagher 1988). Moreover, in closed-list proportional representation systems, they determine the order in which candidates are listed on the party ballot. As a result, parties play a vital role in determining the composition of Parliament.

In addition, parties also play the fundamental role of articulating, aggregating and legitimizing interests in government. They formulate strategies, goals and policies and promote the interests of their constituency. Therefore, they shape the political agenda by voicing or silencing certain interests and conflicts (Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 3). As such, they play an important role in addressing and representing women’s concerns and priorities.

Political parties not only “shape the political system” (Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 3) but at the same time, “are equally shaped by the institutional context” in which they operate (Maucauly 2006: 4). In other words, parties function within an institutional
context that can be broadly understood as “the formal and informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy” (Hall and Taylor 1996: 938). These rules and procedures impose certain opportunities and constraints that shape party behavior and contribute to determining political outcomes (Hall and Taylor 1996, March and Olsen 1984). These rules and procedures structure behavior and attitudes in predictable ways (Norris 1997: 9).

The rules and norms of the political system at large influence party behavior by establishing the general context in which parties compete and select candidates. This includes the type of electoral system, number of parties contesting and winning elections and the presence of gender quota rules, among others. At the same time, the party context, i.e., the internal rules, norms, procedures and organizational practices of parties, constrain choice and influence the candidate recruitment and selection process (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Macaulay 2006; Norris 1997). These factors include a party’s degree of centralization and institutionalization, ideology and presence of internal party candidate rules.

While the institutional context structures party behavior, “parties retain agency to react to demands for change made from outside or inside the party” (Macaulay 2006: 9). Parties are permeable structures and have responded to demands for women’s greater inclusion and representation (Caul Kittilson 2006; Macaulay 2006). Women have played central roles in pressuring parties to adopt quotas, policies and other measures to promote gender equality (Krook 2005, 2008; Araujo and Garcia 2006; Caul 2001). The presence of women in the party’s national executive committee and the existence of an effective women’s section and a strong female base of support increases the probability that a party
will respond to women’s demands for change (Macaulay 2006; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006).

This chapter will explore how the political system, party context and women’s political agency shape party behavior and attitudes towards women’s representation. The first section will focus on the political system which creates incentives and constraints for the integration of women in electoral lists and their election to public office. The political system includes the type of electoral system, type of ballot, presence of quota rules and level of party fragmentation. The second section centers on party-level structures and characteristics that influence a party’s decision to support women candidates and their bid for public office. These include a party’s ideology, recruitment and candidate selection processes, and presence of rules and mechanisms to advance women’s representation. The third section examines the role women party members can play in influencing a party’s decision to promote more women to power.

**POLITICAL SYSTEM**

**Electoral Context**

The rules and procedures of political systems structure the behavior of political parties (Norris 1997; Caul Kittilson 2006; Macaulay 2006). More specifically, the electoral system sets the general context in which parties compete and select candidates. It shapes political parties’ behavior by creating incentives and constraints for the integration of women in electoral lists. Scholars agree that the electoral system plays a decisive role in determining the number of women that get elected to public office (Rule 1987, 1994; Norris 1985, 1995; Kenworthy and Malami 1990; Paxton 1997). In Proportional Representation (PR) systems, the overall votes for a party are translated into
a corresponding proportion of legislative seats. Parties present lists of candidates to voters and electors vote for the entire party list or several individual candidates within a party. In contrast, in plurality/majority systems the winner is the candidate or party with most votes, and in general, there is only a single victor in each district (see Matland 2005). In plurality/majority systems the incentives are different and parties nominate individuals with the highest probability of winning.

Proportional Representation systems and multi-member district systems elect more women to power than majoritarian or single-member district systems (Rule 1987, 1994; Norris 1985; Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Kenworthy and Malami 1990; Paxton 1997). Studies of established democracies indicate that women have always had a slight advantage in PR systems with the gap widening dramatically beginning in the 1970s (Matland 1998a; Matland 2005). List Proportional Representation systems are thought to favor women because, as they are typically used in large multi-member districts, there are many members to be elected from each district, maximizing proportionality and enabling the representation of small minorities (Matland 1998a). Parties have an incentive to “balance” their tickets and include candidates that represent different factions and sectors of the electorate in order to attract voters and gain more seats (Norris and Lovenduski 1995: 195).

While Caul (1999) used the type of electoral system in her model, there are other variables that interact with the electoral system that have been shown to have an effect on the number of women elected. The district magnitude, defined as the number of seats available in a district, is expected to influence a party’s decisions regarding the composition of their electoral lists. As the number of seats per district increases, the
proportion of women fielded as candidates and elected to public office is also expected to increase (Rule 1987; Matland 1993). With a longer list of candidates to fill, a party has a greater ability to accommodate varied interests (Matland and Taylor 1997).

District magnitude, however, should be mediated by the number of seats a party can realistically expect to win (Matland and Taylor 1997). Matland and Taylor (1997) explain that even if district magnitude is high, parties may not have an incentive to include women in electable positions in the lists if the number of seats they expect to win in a district is small. Indeed, several scholars have found a positive effect for the number of seats a party expects to win in a district (party magnitude) on the number of women elected (Jones 1996, 2009; Matland 1993, 1995; Matland and Taylor 1997).

The number of seats a party expects to win is closely related to the number of parties competing. In general, multi-party systems provide women with more opportunities to become a candidate and have been found to have a greater proportion of female candidates compared to systems with few parties (Norris 1993; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). However, if there are too many parties competing one is essentially reducing the number of seats a party expects to win, thereby creating an effect similar to the presence of small district magnitudes (Paskevicute 2004). In contrast, larger districts (seven or more seats in size) and a relatively small number of parties competing should increase party magnitude (Ace Electoral Knowledge Network).

Scholars also contend that an influential political factor affecting women’s opportunity to get elected is the type of ballot list used for elections (Htun and Jones

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16 The number of parties in a system also influences the spectrum of ideologies represented. Systems with few parties tend to produce “catch-all” centrist parties. Systems with many parties tend to have more ideologically diverse systems (Norris 1993: 317). In general, left-of-center parties are expected to have more egalitarian principles and thereby be more responsive to women’s claims.
List PR systems which are predominantly used in Latin America can be “open” or “closed.” In an open-list system, voters can select individual candidates, add names to the ballot or alter the order of party lists. Conversely, in a closed-list system, the electorate votes for a single party list that has been rank ordered by the parties. Thus, electors select the entire list of candidates.

Matland (1998a) states that the crucial question that differentiates the two ballot systems is whether it’s easier to convince the voters to elect women or to persuade party elites to include women candidates in electable positions within the lists. In an open-list system, voters choose the candidates presented by the party and voters could disproportionately select more men, independent of the number of women on the list. Some scholars, however, argue that open-list systems are more favorable for women given that voters can influence the party list through their vote and ensure women’s election in cases where party leaders have not placed women in electable positions (Rule 1994; Norris 1985). Others argue that in closed-list systems parties can be held responsible for the final outcome, whereas open-list systems “let the parties ‘off the hook’” as the final outcome ultimately rest with the individual voters (Matland 2005:105). In a closed-list system, the responsibility for ensuring equitable representation lies directly with the party. Yet others have found slight or no significant differences in the number of women elected between Latin American countries that use open or closed-list systems (Schmidt 2004; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006).

Scholars contend that when combined with quota rules the effects of open versus closed-list systems varies significantly by country. Quotas can be legally mandated (as is
the case for twelve countries in Latin America) or voluntarily adopted by political parties to increase women in internal and elected decision-making positions. Quotas mandate that a certain minimum percentage of women be included in the party’s list for legislative elections. The candidate quotas are almost exclusively used in multi-member district electoral systems, typically PR systems, and are occasionally adopted in mixed systems (Matland 2006).

By adopting gender quota rules, parties can significantly increase the number of women in party leadership roles and in elected office (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006; Jones 1998; Schwindt-Bayer 2003; Krook 2005; Baldez 2004). Jones (2009) found that when combined with quotas, closed-list systems elect a greater percentage of women than open-list systems with quotas in Latin America. Furthermore, open-list systems with well-designed quota laws that ensure their implementation are better than systems with lax quota laws or no quotas at all. In fact, open-list systems with quotas have not been found to disadvantage women, particularly in the case of Peru’s national and municipal elections (Schmidt 2004; Schmidt and Saunders 2004; Dador and Llanos 2008).

The existence of a quota law does not automatically guarantee that the quota will be effective. Quota laws interact with the electoral system, party ideology and recruitment and selection rules, influencing the opportunities for women to be included in party lists. According to Matland (2006), legal candidate quotas tend to be more effective when several conditions are met, which should be considered sufficient but not necessary. First, quotas are more effective in electoral systems with a high party magnitude (number of seats in the party’s district delegation). Second, closed-list PR
systems are more favorable for women’s election than open-list PR systems. Third, a placement mandate that legally requires parties to include women in electable positions within the party list renders quotas more effective. This prevents parties from placing women at the bottom of lists where they have no chance of getting elected (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2004). In fact, several studies have found that closed-list systems when combined with quota laws that include a placement mandate are more conducive to women’s success in elections (Jones 2009; Htun 2005; Htun and Jones 2002; Htun 2003). Finally, sanctions that penalize parties for not abiding by the quota law also have proven effective in ensuring compliance by political parties (Jones 2009; Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2004; Schwindt-Bayer 2009).

**Party Context**

The party context sets the general framework in which parties recruit and select candidates. For the purposes of this study, the party context is comprised of the party’s ideology, commitment to gender equality and candidate recruitment and selection processes.

**Party Ideology and Commitment to Gender Equality**

A party’s ideology has been identified as a major factor that affects women’s entry into elected office. Statistical studies have shown that the partisan composition of the legislature has a significant effect on women’s share of legislative seats (Reynolds 1999; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Norris 1987; Jones 2009; Caul 1999; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006). In general, the assumption is that left parties are more likely to promote women’s candidacies than right parties given their tendency to
embrace egalitarian principles. Left-wing parties tend to be more open than conservative or centrist parties to new ideas expressed by challengers and can therefore serve as important allies for groups seeking greater representation (Tarrow 1998 cited in Van Cott 2005: 37). In addition, ideology also affects the adoption and implementation of strategies to promote women in leadership. Left-wing parties are more likely to adopt quotas while parties of the right and center are more likely to rely on rhetoric and specific programs aimed at encouraging women to run (training, special conferences, financial assistance, etc.) (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Left-leaning parties are also more likely to have higher share of women in decision-making position within the party (O’Neill and Stewart 2009; Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006)

In addition to their ideology, parties may also express their commitment to gender equality through their rhetoric and adoption of strategies and policies to promote women’s participation and representation. These policies and strategies should guide party behavior and reflect their commitment to gender issues. Lovenduski (1993) explains that parties can adopt rhetorical commitments (which she considers the least effective in increasing women’s representation); programs and targets to support and encourage women’s participation (such as training programs and financial assistance); and/or quotas to increase women’s representation in the party’s internal organizational structure or electoral lists. According to Lovenduski (1993), parties that adopt quotas are the most committed to advancing women’s participation and representation.

Throughout Latin America parties have adopted specific measures to support women’s political participation. Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama have passed laws requiring parties to allocate part of their public funding to training of female party
members. For example, Panama’s 2002 electoral reform code established that 25 percent of public and electoral funding should be allocated for training of party members and 10 percent specifically for training women. In 2007, Mexico mandated that all parties allocate 2 percent of their public funding received to activities that promote women’s participation. In addition, several parties in other countries that receive public funding for training of party members have voluntarily committed the party to providing training to female party members such as the Afirmacion para una Republica Igualitaria (ARI) in Argentina and the Partido de la Social Democracia Brasilena in Brazil (Llanos and Sample 2008).

Candidate Recruitment and Selection Processes

The level of institutionalization and distribution of power within the party influences candidate selection processes and hence women’s access to power (Norris 1996). Decisions by party leaders to recruit and nominate women are constrained both by the degree of party institutionalization and the rules and norms that determine the candidate selection process (Norris 1997).

Party institutionalization refers to the degree of formality or informality of the rules and procedures that guide the recruitment process. In a highly institutionalized process, the application process for candidates is defined by internal party rules that are “detailed, explicit, standardized, implemented by party officials and authorized in party documents” (Lovenduski and Norris 1993: 322). Such a process is believed to be more

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17 Macaulay (2006) finds that horizontally institutionalized parties (characterized by strong but democratic relations with civil society) are more propitious for the entry of women leaders at the base. However, vertically institutionalized parties (i.e., parties with an effective bureaucracy and central authority structure), once they have adopted quotas, are eventually more conducive to women achieving long-term influence on the party’s gender policies.
favorable for women for several reasons. First, a rule-oriented selection process enables outsiders to understand how the process works and what will be expected from them (Czudnowski 1975 cited in Caul 1999). Second, when selection procedures are clear and explicit, women can hold their parties accountable, ensuring decisions are made according to the rules. Third, more institutionalized parties discuss and debate the rules frequently, providing women with the opportunity to develop strategies intended to take advantage of the rules (Matland 2004). Finally, affirmative action measures, such as quotas, are most effective in bureaucratic and rule-bound systems given that they are more likely to be taken seriously and implemented (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Moreover, institutionalized parties that have adopted quotas are more conducive to women achieving a more effective and long-term influence on their party’s gender policies (Macaulay 2006). However, more institutionalized parties may have gender stereotypes that are more difficult to change (Htun 2002).

Less institutionalized parties, on the other hand, have less formal bureaucratic application processes; these are generally known to participants but never made explicit. As a result, the process becomes more open to personal patronage and nominations can be biased towards those with personal connections or access to “old boys’ networks.” Compared to men, women as newcomers tend not to have the political capital or access to these networks. On the other hand, one advantage of a clientelist or patronage-oriented system is its informal and flexible nature. If party leaders wish to promote gender equality, they can move forward quickly and deliberately, placing women in or improving their position within party lists or adopting measures to promote women.
However, without institutional safeguards, the gains may be volatile and easily reversed in the next election period (Lovenduski and Norris 1995).

Decisions by party leaders to nominate female candidates are also constrained by the candidate selection process. The candidate selection process can be measured according to the distribution of power and control over the selection of internal party leaders and electoral candidates. It can be measured by the level of centralization of the process and the extensiveness of participation (Gallagher 1988). The level of centralization focuses on whether the candidate selection process is controlled at the local, regional or national level. Along this continuum decisions can be made by national faction leaders, regional organizations or party members in the constituency (Gallagher 1988). The extensiveness of participation lies on an exclusive/inclusive continuum whereby the degree of exclusivity depends on the number of individuals participating in the selection process. In an exclusive process, a small number of individuals select the candidates, such as national party leaders or the national executive. In an inclusive process, regional party leaders, a subset of constituency party members or all registered party members select candidates, such as in primaries.

The candidate selection process has important consequences for the composition of legislatures (Gallagher 1988). It not only determines the choices presented to the electorate and the partisan composition of Congress, but also influences the likelihood of certain interests being represented and of particular policies and laws being adopted (Hazan 2002: 110). Scholars have argued that exclusive selection processes favor women. Matland and Studlar (1996) argue that when selection processes are exclusive,

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18 Caul (1999) used the term “centralized” to refer to the exclusivity/inclusivity continuum and “level of nomination” to refer to the geographic location (local, regional, national).
party leaders may respond to pressures for greater representation by broadening the diversity of legislative leaders. If decisions are centralized, party leaders will have a larger number of lists to consider, making it easier for women to be included (Matland 2004). Decisions by party heads can also be taken quickly and applied across the board (Matland and Studlar 1996; Lovenduski and Norris 1993). In addition, women can focus their pressure on party heads to incorporate more women as opposed to individually pressuring each locality.

Other scholars contend that decentralized selection processes with decisions taken at the local level are more favorable for women. Arguments in favor of localized nomination processes are based on the assumption that women have more political experience at the local level, working as grassroots organizers, community activists and barrio advocates.¹⁹ This experience not only prepares them for public office but provides them with access to networks and the necessary visibility among local party leaders and members (Matland 2004). Norris and Lovenduski (1995) argue that informal-localized systems are beneficial to women because it provides women with the opportunity for self-recruitment.

**WOMEN’S POLITICAL AGENCY**

Institutions play a significant role in shaping the actions of individuals but institutions themselves are also affected by collective and individual choices (Koelbe

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¹⁹ Interestingly, if the local level is considered more women-friendly, one would expect to see an increased numbers of women elected to local government. In Latin America, however, women’s representation at the local level remains low and static, with women holding only 6 percent of mayoral positions. Their representation is higher at the Council level, where women hold around 25 percent of Council member positions (Massolo 2005). Studies in the US suggest that there is greater acceptance of women in local and legislative as opposed to executive roles because of gender stereotypes. Men are viewed as more assertive and self-confident, characteristics associated with national and executive office, while women are identified as more compassionate and willing to compromise, characteristics associated with local or legislative office (Fox and Oxley 2003).
Parties are permeable structures and overtime have shown a capacity to change (Caul Kittilson 2006; Macaulay 2006). Scholars have found that the participation of women in executive decision-making positions within the party structure, as well the active engagement of female party members has contributed to changes in party rules and behavior (Caul 1999; Sachet 2005; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Macaulay 2006).

Several studies have found that a greater share of women in decision-making positions within the party is associated with increased numbers of women in elected office. In a cross-national study, Kunovich and Paxton (2005) found that a greater presence of female party elites leads to gains for women as candidates in PR systems and increases the probability that women candidates will be elected in non-PR systems. Caul Kittilson (2006) also finds that pressure from organized women’s groups and women in top party leadership positions both worked together to generate party efforts to promote women candidates in 10 Western European democracies.

Similarly, other studies have also found that parties most likely to respond to women’s demands have been those where women have mobilized and coordinated efforts to collectively define their interests and objectives within the party (Sacchet 2005). For example, in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, where women are well organized within the major political parties that consistently win the majority of seats, women have been more successful at ensuring their names are placed in electable positions in their party’s list (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008). Lovenduski (1997) also finds that in Germany and Britain, the role organized women played from within the political parties had important positive effects on the number of women elected. Similarly, in a study of party response to demands from the women’s movement for state resources and political voice in Brazil
and Chile, Macaulay (2006) finds that the proportion of women among the party’s founders and the role played by party activists and voters conditions party behavior and their response towards women’s demands.\textsuperscript{20} Finally, several scholars have also found that women have played critical roles in pressing for the adoption of quotas (Caul 2001; Caul Kittilson 2006; Krook 2005, 2009).\textsuperscript{21}

In most cases, women have mobilized through women’s sections or branches, which in more recent times have been charged with channeling women’s demands and promoting gender equality. The active participation of women within parties enables them to gain valuable lobbying and leadership experience thereby expanding the pool of electable women. In addition, women can play an important role in mobilizing for policies such as quotas, holding parties accountable for the implementation of quotas and influencing rules and norms.

Despite the important role that women’s sections can potentially play, women’s sections throughout Latin America vary in their functions, legitimacy, power and effectiveness. In some cases, women’s branches have been criticized by their members for contributing to women’s marginalization within the party (Aguilar 2004). Some

\textsuperscript{20} Macaulay (2006: 9) argues that a party’s attitude towards women’s demands depends upon a series of originating factors such as the proportion of women among the party’s founders and the strength of the party’s base in which women play an important role as voters and activists. Macaulay identifies these factors as the \textit{gendered political habitus} which determine the environment in which parties operate, which in turn conditions and structures a party’s behavior and response to women’s demands.

\textsuperscript{21} Krook (2009) identifies four main explanations that account for the adoption of quotas. In the first account, women’s movements within civil society, women within political parties or individual women with close links to powerful men mobilize in favor of quotas (Krook 2005). A second explanation is that political parties adopt quotas for strategic purposes, usually following the adoption of quotas by a rival party. A third account is that parties adopt quotas when they coincide with existing or emerging notions of equality. Left-wing parties, for example, are more likely to adopt quotas as they reflect their own egalitarian values (Caul 2001). Finally, quotas are more likely to be adopted when international norms and transnational actors encourage states to adopt measures to increase women’s representation. Krook (2009) explains that these elements are not simultaneously present in all cases, but rather different elements of these accounts are present in individual cases.
women see women’s sections as a ghetto for women, used to placate and contain women so they would not place excessive demands on the party (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008). As we will see in the next chapter, women’s sections have historically been granted no real voice or power within the internal decision-making structures of the party.

The above sections have explored how the rules and norms of political systems influence party behavior and electoral calculations. They also examined how party context, i.e., internal party rules and procedures, influence candidate selection processes. Furthermore, they illustrated the argument that while rules and norms may influence party behavior, parties retain agency and react to demands for change for greater inclusion and representation of women.

CONCLUSION

Latin America offers a fascinating terrain in which to explore the factors that predict the number of women elected given the many paradoxes the region presents. While institutionalized parties 22 and bureaucratic norms are said to favor women, several countries in Latin America defy this notion (Htun 2002). Uruguay and Chile have some of the lowest numbers of women in power (12 and 15 percent, respectively) despite having well-institutionalized parties. On the other hand, in countries where parties tend to be more patronage-oriented and less institutionalized, women’s presence in congress varies from 29 percent in Peru to 16 percent in Ecuador.

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22 According to Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 4), “Institutionalization refers to a process by which a practice or organization becomes well established and widely known, if not universally accepted.” They explain that institutionalized party systems: provide stability in the rules and nature of inter-party competition, have stable roots in society, respect electoral rules and acquire status and value that is independent of their leaders or movements that created them.
Another interesting puzzle is found in the claim that leftist parties are more likely to have more women in power. In Latin America, many conservative parties, even in countries with no nationally mandated quotas, either outperform or have similar numbers of women in power compared to the average percent of women in Congress (Aguilar 2004; Htun 2005; Hinojosa 2009). Such is the case of the Renovacion Nacional (RN, Chile); Partido de Accion Nacional (PAN, Mexico); Partido Popular Cristiano (Peru); Frente Independiente Moralizador (FIM, Peru) and Partido de Frente Liberal (PFL, Brasil). The Partido Popular Cristiano in Peru, in fact, has a female president.

Latin America also provides for an interesting study of primaries. Primaries tend to be praised because of their inclusive and democratic nature. In fact, Mexico’s Beatriz Paredes credits the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) use of internal primaries for her landslide victory in the PRI’s internal presidential elections in 2007. In contrast, other scholars argue that primaries hinder women’s participation in the candidate selection process because they make quota rules more difficult to enforce and provide male candidates with an advantage given their better access to more financial resources (Baldez 2003; Htun 2005). In fact, in a study of municipal level candidate selection processes in Chile, Hinojosa (2005a) finds that primaries pose an obstacle to women’s representation because they do not allow potential candidates to avoid the problem of self-nomination nor do they avoid the influence of local power monopolies.

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24 Hinojosa (2005, 2005a) argues that primaries do not favor the nomination of female candidates because women are less likely to nominate themselves and have less access to local power monopolies.
Given the large number of countries and parties that have adopted quotas, Latin America also presents a fertile ground for exploring the effects of quotas on women’s participation within parties. Despite women representing 40-50 percent of party members, women’s representation in the party’s executive decision-making structures stands at an average of 19 percent. Their representation ranges from 44 percent in Bolivia to 13 percent in Chile and Panama (GEPPAL forthcoming). In Peru, women represent between 42 and 51 percent of party members in the 12 parties with electoral representation, yet, women occupy on average only 26 percent of party leadership positions (Daddor and Llanos 2008).

This study will explore these central issues. What role do political parties play in determining the number of women elected to office? Why do some parties put more women in power than others? Are parties of the Right more likely to send more women to congress? What effect do the parties’ institutionalization levels have on women’s opportunities to run for office? Are democratic candidate selection processes less favorable for women? What effect does the presence of women in decision-making positions within the party have on the number of women representing the party in Congress?

By analyzing party-level characteristics this study aims to shed more light on how the institutional context in which parties are embedded shape and influence the number of women elected to office. It also seeks to understand how women’s political agency interacts with the institutional context to affect outcomes.

While institutions and women’s agency constrains, structures and influences party behavior, political parties are also influenced by outside pressures for change. Such
forces have contributed to women’s gains within party structures and in elected office over the last decade. Nevertheless, many political parties have also proven resistant to change. To understand women’s gains in politics and the obstacles they still face, it is important to analyze institutions within their historical context. This will be the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

GENDER AND POLITICAL PARTIES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In order to gain a fuller understanding of women’s current levels of parliamentary representation in Latin America it is important to contextualize, from a historical perspective, women’s participation and representation in political parties. Borrowing elements from the historical institutionalist\(^{25}\) approach, the analysis will allow us to explore: 1) resistance or slowness of some parties to advance women’s political gains due to the terms and conditions under which women were initially integrated into political life; and 2) current gains in women’s political representation in Latin America as the product of the convergence of a number of international and national level factors.

The integration of women into political parties in Latin America defies any simple explanation as there is significant regional variation in the terms and conditions under which women were integrated into national political life and into political parties, more specifically. Nevertheless, the history of women’s integration into political parties in Latin America can generally be divided into two periods. The first section of this chapter will cover the first half of the twentieth century when women gained the right to vote and parties integrated women into their ranks for the first time. During this period, parties did not integrate women because of an inherent belief in women’s political rights or a desire

\(^{25}\) This chapter will not engage in a strict historical institutionalist analysis as this would require structured comparison and historical process tracing. As Waylen (2009: 249) notes, “tracing complex patterns over time does not easily lend itself to large-scale quantitative studies.” Therefore, this chapter will borrow certain elements of the approach to help us understand the gains women have achieved in elected office and the resistance of some parties to fully support women’s participation.
to represent their gender-specific interests. Instead, they were integrated as part of their electoral calculations and to increase their political support base. By using a discourse based on women’s traditional roles as mothers and wives to justify their integration, parties fostered feminine stereotypes and replicated those stereotypes in the roles and functions they assigned to women. Relegated to women’s sections, female party members, in general, had little or no power or voice within party structures. The terms and conditions under which women were initially integrated into political parties had long-term consequences for their (re)integration into political parties in the 1980s.

The second section of the chapter will cover the second historical period beginning with the transitions to democracy in the late 1970s. The terms and conditions under which women were (re)incorporated into political parties did not significantly change from the first historical period. Parties mobilized women based on electoral calculations, relegated women to women’s sections, granted women no real power or voice and co-opted gender issues for electoral purposes with no real commitment to change. However, party institutions are not the sole determinants of outcomes. Although history seemed to repeat itself, this time women’s integration into political parties took place in a new international and national context. In the 1980s and 90s, a series of factors converged creating an enabling environment for women to push for changes in political parties and advance their political participation.

The third section reviews some of the current-day obstacles to women’s political participation. It examines how exclusionary practices and behaviors have become embedded in political parties and have proven difficult to change. Consequently, despite
women’s growing agency and gains in political representation, parties continue to represent an obstacle to women’ political participation.

**WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES:**
**THE EARLY YEARS 1920-1969**

Throughout Latin America, the incorporation of women into political parties coincided with women’s struggle for the vote and their subsequent enfranchisement.  

Beginning with Ecuador in 1929 and ending with Paraguay in 1961, all Latin American countries granted women the right to vote. During this period, parties began to recognize women as a potentially significant political force and started to enlist women’s support by incorporating them into existing political parties (Miller 1991).

This section will review two main findings from this historical period. First, women’s integration into political parties was informed by prevailing assumptions about women’s traditional roles in society. Such assumptions fostered dominant female stereotypes about women’s roles and responsibilities in politics and within party structures. As a result, women were often relegated into women’s sections and tasked with responsibilities that mirrored their traditional domestic roles. Women’s integration into political parties reinforced gender inequalities and stereotypes and led to a replication of traditional gender power imbalances within party structures.

Second, women’s integration into political parties and parties’ support of women’s issues, defies any prediction along the left-right ideological spectrum. In general, parties

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26 The influence of the women’s movement and the timing of women’s enfranchisement varied across countries. In fact, there is no direct relationship between the strength of the women’s suffrage movement and enfranchisement (IRELA 1997). For example, in 1929, Ecuador was the first Latin American country to grant women the right to vote, despite the absence of a suffrage movement. In Brazil and Uruguay, women’s suffrage was introduced at a relatively early date. However, women were enfranchised for electoral purposes rather than in response to pressure from the women’s movement.
at both ends of the spectrum courted women because of the perceived electoral pay-off not because of an intrinsic belief in women’s political rights.

**Recruitment and Integration: Institutionalizing Gender Inequality**

In the first half of the twentieth century, the more “socially acceptable” brand of reform feminism predominated, which “argued for women’s rights on the basis of women’s traditional roles in society” (Alvarez 1986: 95). In general, most women were not seeking to transform the relationships between women and men but to work within the existing political space, legitimizing their political activism as doing what women had always done: mothering; and by extension, serving the nation as “mothers” (Chaney 1979; Lavrin 1995: 358).27 Women’s political activity in the community and nation were seen as an extension of the caretaking and domestic roles traditionally associated with motherhood (Chaney 1979). Women defined themselves “as a kind of ‘supermadre,’ tending the needs of her big family in the larger casa of the municipality or even the nation” (Chaney 1979:21).

Women themselves drew on the images of women as mothers to frame their goals (Franceschet 2005; Miller 1993; Chaney 1979).28 For example, in the Dominican Republic, even though women would not gain the right to vote until 1942, Lara Fernandez founded the Dominican Feminist Action Party in 1931. In her fight for

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27 By the 1920s, the reform-oriented feminists (versus the radical feminists) dominated Latin American political society. Reform groups were comprised of middle and upper class women and sought legal reforms to attain civil and political rights, mainly suffrage, and equal access to education (as opposed to the structural changes sought by the radical feminists that sought women’s emancipation). They argued for women’s rights on the basis of women’s traditional roles in society (Avelar 1986).

28 Women’s identities were closely tied to their roles as mothers which were seen as sacrificial and altruistic (see Franceschet 2005). Chaney (1979: 47) argues that “the characterization of women as sacrificial mothers sums up what Latin Americans consider the most positive aspect of the image of women.”
women’s suffrage, Fernandez argued that “the vote would bring the ‘moral fiber’ of women in the public sphere, in support of the state” (Miller 1991: 114). She framed the party’s purpose around highly traditional values: “Women must be prepared to sustain the moral and material equilibrium of the home. We must not forget that the equilibrium of the home means the equilibrium of the nation” (Miller 1991: 114). Similarly, in Chile, many feminists and women activists used their moral authority as “mothers” to advocate for change and justified their demands based on their traditional roles in society (Franceschet 2005; Lavrin 1995).29

Such characterization of women’s demands for political inclusion, framed within prevailing gender roles and ideologies, appeased men and became politically and socially acceptable (Alvarez 1986; Lavrin 1995). Alvarez (1986: 100) explains that “since politics had been predefined as an exclusively male realm of activity…, then the only way women could be ‘allowed in’ was by claiming that female participation would merely involve an extension of women’s roles in the private realm into the realm of politics.” Motherhood, thus, became a malleable concept, manipulated both by feminists and traditionalists to empower women or to serve their moral or political purposes (Lavrin 1995).

Parties also mobilized women politically around their social roles as mothers (Franceschet 2005; Rodriguez 2000; Chaney 1979; Lavrin 1995; Miller 1991), using

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29 In some cases, women-only parties that fought for women’s rights framed their discourse based on women’s traditional roles and women’s moral superiority. For example, in 1922, Ester La Rivera de Sanuheza founded the Chilean Partido Cívico Femenino which fought for women’s suffrage, equal pay for equal work, child care in industries employing women, credit unions for workers, sex education and the protection of women’s lower and middle class labor. The party sought change by lobbying politicians with messages based on socially acceptable roles for women as mothers and social workers. The party argued that family interests had become social interests and women should collaborate in drafting legislation pertaining to women and children as part of their moral social vision (Lavrin 1995).
themes related to home, family and the enforcement of public morality. They did not mobilize women because of an inherent belief in women’s rights or desire to improve women’s status. Instead, most parties integrated women based on political and electoral calculations. For example, in Colombia, women were integrated into the Conservative and Liberal parties as a means of legitimizing the National Front Agreement (Harkess and Pinzon 1975). In Nicaragua, former President Luiz Anastasio Somoza created a women’s branch of the ruling party in 1956 with the aim of mobilizing women’s electoral support for the Somocista regime in the wake of his father’s assassination (Alvarez 1986). Similarly, in Mexico, the Partido Nacional Revolucionario’s (PNR) presidential candidate created the National Women’s Committee of the PNR to integrate women into his political campaign (Ramos 1998; Camp 1979). Likewise in Chile, the Radical (1934) and Socialist Party (1933) created women’s sections to mobilize women and involve them in supporting activities (Franceschet 2005). Chile’s Conservative Party, on the other hand, created a women’s wing in 1941 to support women’s charity work with the poor (Chaney 1979 cited in Franceschet 2005: 42).

In other countries, parties recognized the political value of women’s support for revolutionary causes. In Bolivia, the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR)

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30 For example, in Costa Rica, the Partido Reformista integrated women into their party in the 1920s to lend greater legitimacy to their movement and expand their influence. The party considered women a key element to dignify and inspire politics as they were seen as bulwarks of morality and social justice (Rodriguez 2000: 187).

31 The National Front (1958-1974) was a period in Colombia’s history in which the two main political parties (Liberal and Conservative Party) agreed to alternate power, allowing each party to govern for a period of four years.

32 This followed previous efforts by Lazaro Cardenas who five years earlier had begun a campaign to attract women as a means of building links with the masses and securing their control. Although Cardenas did express support for women’s enfranchisement and even presented a law before congress to this end, he feared that enfranchised women would vote for the conservative parties (Ramos 1998: 98; Camp 1979).
founded a women’s section in 1941 known as the “Female Command” (Miller 1991). Between 1946 and 1952 when the MNR came to power, women played a critical role during the revolution serving as clandestine messengers, sheltering political refugees and staging street demonstrations. In 1952, women gained the right to vote under the MNR led government. In 1954, faced with weakening political support, the MNR called upon the “Female Command” to rally the women’s vote. In 1956, the MNR won the elections, the first in which women voted (Miller 1991). Lydia Gueiler Tejada, the only female commander of the MNR armed militias, criticized the MNR for its manipulation of women without regard for their situation and their rights.

Political parties from across the political spectrum integrated women through the creation of “women’s sections” within the party (Miller 1991, Alvarez 1986). Women’s integration into political parties and the functions assigned to women’s sections defies prediction along the left-right ideological spectrum (Alvarez 1986). Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that, although women gained the right to vote under both the political left and the right, it was the conservative parties that tended to be champions of women’s suffrage because of the assumption that women would vote for conservatives (Chaney 1979; Alvarez 1986). Both the political left and right tended to view women as highly conservative and easily influenced by the Catholic Church (Miller 1991; Franceschet 2005). As a result, many progressive parties actively opposed women’s enfranchisement under the assumption that women would vote for conservative parties.

Women’s sections within political parties were often tasked with functions considered appropriate for women and were granted no decision-making power in policy-making processes (Chaney 1979; Alvarez 1986). In some cases, parties incorporated
women into their decision-making structures but maintained them in subordinate positions and did not give them much voice in party policy (Miller 1991; Chaney 1979).

In Peru, Magda Portal, a founding member and first secretary general of the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA), described her participation in the party’s executive council in a 1946 novel in which she portrays herself as the character Maria de la Luz:

[Maria de la Luz] holds an important post in the High Command. But meetings devoted to high policy always take place without her. How could one have confidence in feminine discretion?…Maria is not subservient…She has intellectual prejudices. She doesn’t get on with the leaders’ wives because she thinks herself better than they. She doesn’t get on with the party leaders because the presence of a woman among so many men shocks them. Moreover, she always sits in judgment. When she makes an appearance in the High Command, they only take up formal business. She stands alone. Often she leaves the room as a sign of protest, and then all breathe easier (Boger 1965 cited in Chaney 1979: 95).

Chaney (1979: 95) found in her study of women political leaders in Chile and Peru in the 1960s, that the “segregation of women [in women’s sections] tended to lessen the potential influence women might have had on party policy.” She found that many female activists resented that women’s political activity be organized apart from men’s but most believed, nevertheless, that a separate organization was still necessary because of custom and the need to educate women about politics. A party leader in Peru declared: “Women feel closer to other women, they have problems in common. It is necessary to have a feminine section because here the woman isn’t accustomed to take part in politics” (Chaney 1979: 94).
In Search of Change: Political Parties Founded by Women

By the 1920’s and 30’s women in several countries throughout Latin America had created their own political parties, founding over a dozen during the first half of the twentieth century (see Table 1). Few of the parties founded by women in the 1930s, however, gained enough political strength to have their candidates elected without the support of traditional male parties (Lavrin1995). In Uruguay, for example, the Partido Independiente Democratico Feminista was created to mobilize the female electorate in 1933 after women gained the right to vote, but it did not succeed in getting a candidate elected in the 1938 national election (Lavrin 1995). In Chile, were women sought autonomy from traditional parties by creating their own, Franceschet (2005) argues that these women-only parties ultimately failed because in framing their motivations as “morally pure” women were putting themselves above politics. Nevertheless, the women-only parties enabled women to organize and mobilize in order to lobby for political rights and other causes. It made it possible for them to formulate their own objectives and provided them the opportunity to train in politics (Lavrin 1995).

Perhaps the best known and most successful women’s party in Latin America during this period was the Argentine Partido Feminista founded in 1949 by Eva Peron, wife of former President Juan Domingo Peron. The party functioned as a branch of her husband’s Partido Peronista and its main goal was to recruit new members, win votes and transmit the Peronist ideology. Evita had no interest in women’s rights and expressed contempt for feminists as “women who did not know how to be women.” (Miller 1991: 123). The Peron’s emphasized motherhood and families and women’s subordination to Juan Peron. Eva stated: “The first objective of the feminine movement
which wants to do good for women, which doesn’t aspire to change them into men, must be the home” (Bianchi quoted in Craske 1999: 81).

Despite the lack of a gender equality discourse, the Partido Peronista was the first party in Latin America to adopt quotas for female legislators (Tula 2002). In the first elections in which women could run for office in 1951, twenty-four women from the Partido Peronista were elected to the Chamber of Deputies (representing 15.5 percent of Deputies) (FLACSO 1995). The Partido Feminista was also extremely successful in churning out the female vote. In the 1951 presidential elections, 63 percent of the female electorate voted for Peron (Miller 1991).

**Table 1.**

**PARTIES FOUNDED BY WOMEN: 1900-1970**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Founder</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Partido Feminista Femenino</td>
<td>Eva Peron</td>
<td>1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Partido Feminista Nacional</td>
<td>Julieta Lanteri</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Partido Humanista</td>
<td>Adelia de Carlo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brasil</td>
<td>Partido Republicano Femenino</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brasil</td>
<td>Partido Liberal Femenino</td>
<td>Julieta Monteiro Soares da Gama</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Partido Progresista Nacional</td>
<td>Sofia de Ferrari Rojas</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Partido Cívico Femenino</td>
<td>Ester La Rivera de Sanhueza,</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Partido Demócrata Femenino</td>
<td>Celinda Arergui</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Partido Femenino Chileno</td>
<td>Maria de la Cruz</td>
<td>1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Partido Progresista Femenino</td>
<td>Nery Hamuy</td>
<td>1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican</td>
<td>Dominican Feminist Action Party</td>
<td>Lara Fernandez</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Partido Femenino Radical</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Partido Femenino Revolucionario</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Partido Nacional Cívico Femenino</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>Partido de Mujeres</td>
<td>Clara Gonzalez de Berhinger</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>Partido Independiente Democratico Femenino</td>
<td>Sara Rey Alvarez</td>
<td>1933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though most women-only parties were unsuccessful at the ballot box, some parties did represent women’s interests, serving as a platform for voicing and channeling women’s demands. According to Alvarez (1986), the likelihood of partisan support for women’s issues was greater in countries with a strong women’s movement and more competitive party systems, such as in Argentina and Chile, where women were more likely to compete for partisan support of their issues. Parties that were seeking to broaden their electoral base also were more likely to support women’s issues. This was the case of the new populist and reform-oriented parties that emerged in the 1920 and 1930s and targeted women for political support. This in turn created opportunities for feminists to articulate their gender-based demands in national policy arenas (Alvarez 1986).

Communist and Socialist parties, in particular, actively courted women and advocated women’s suffrage, protective labor legislation, social welfare, civil rights and other policy issues of interest to women (Alvarez 1986; Lavrin 1995). In other cases, Communist and Socialist parties in Latin America adopted women’s issues as part of their agenda but such matters were generally subsumed within the broader class-based priorities and ideology of the party. Such was the case of Costa Rica’s Communist Party

33 Interestingly, the response of parties to women’s demands to incorporate gender-specific issues in their party platforms defies any predictable pattern along the left-right axis. According to Alvarez (1986), women’s sections in both conservative and liberal parties have played important roles in pressuring the party leadership to adopt gender-specific issues.

34 In Argentina, the Socialist party consistently supported women’s issues, in part because of the critical role played by feminists. Alicia Moreau de Justo, one of the country’s most prominent feminists, was a leading figure in the Argentine Socialist Party, along with her husband and party founder, Juan Bautista Justo (Miller 1991). Alicia became a member of the Executive Committee and the first Argentine woman to hold an official position in politics. Along with other feminists and women’s organizations, she promoted feminist reforms within party policy-making arenas and persuaded party elites to support their gender-specific agenda (Alvarez 1986). Alicia blended the issues of home and motherhood into her social reform agenda, as did many other feminists during this period (Lavrin 1995).
which adopted women’s issues and was the first party to include women’s suffrage in its program (Rodriguez 2000: 189).

In summary, during the first half of the twentieth century, the terms of women’s inclusion in party politics were defined by male dominated parties who relegated women to women’s sections, granted women roles that closely resembled their domestic responsibilities and limited their power and voice in party structures. Despite the limitations produced by the terms of women’s inclusion in party politics, scholars point to the important gains women achieved during this period. Women’s sections, irrespective of their ideological affiliation, played important roles in pressuring the party leadership to adopt gender-specific issues. In addition, the co-optation of women and women’s issues by the parties also led to important political gains for women as “parties lent legitimacy to gender-specific political claims and introduced women’s issues into national political dialogues and policy debates” (Alvarez 1986: 131). During this period, issues such as divorce, health, and child care became “political” (Lavrin 1995: 360). Women’s mobilization created a new gender consciousness that redefined motherhood beyond the home. In fact, social reformers and feminists of the early 20th century left us with the “understanding of citizenship as cosubstantial with the experience of nurturing and mothering” (Lavrin 1995: 361).

WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTIES: PERIOD OF DEMOCRATIZATION AND BEYOND (1970-PRESENT)


Beginning in the late 1970s until 1990, Latin America began to transition towards democratic forms of government. Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Peru led the
way in the late 1970s, culminating around 1990 with the transitions by Panama, Chile, Nicaragua and Paraguay (Payne et al. 2002). The resurgence of democracy in Latin America in the 1980s represents a critical juncture that paved the way for women’s participation in politics and created an enabling environment to push for new gender related political claims that emerged as a result of the United Nations Decade for Women.

In the 1970s a new feminist movement began to take shape around the activities related to the UN Decade for Women. In 1975, the UN observed the International Women’s Year and held the first world conference for women in Mexico City. The Decade for Women (1976-1985), an outcome of the world conference, focused on improved education, employment opportunities, equality in social and political participation and increased health and welfare services. The concept of “gender,” which entails equal opportunities for men and women, was introduced and paved the way for women’s incorporation into politics (IRELA 1997). In short, the International Women’s Year and the Decade for Women granted a new sense of legitimacy to women’s issues (Miller 1991).

At the same time, during the 1970s women began to mobilize in Latin America as part of social and human rights movements. The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina are perhaps the best known example of women who became politically active for the first time, developing new forms of protest that not only politicized women’s identities as mothers but also were effective against the military’s claim to power (Jaquette 1994). Women, particularly from the urban areas and lower-classes (mujeres
populares), also mobilized to demand minimum resources and basic services from the state (Leon 1994; Jaquette 1994).

In the 1980s, feminists from all over Latin America held a series of *encuentros* (gatherings) to debate feminist theories and practices. During these *encuentros* conflicts emerged between women party members and feminists. Feminists wanted autonomy from mainstream politics, arguing that feminism had to be separated from the debates that fragmented parties and the Marxist Left (Jaquette 1994). Party activists, on the other hand, argued that feminist goals could not be separated from “the struggle to end class oppression” (Saporta 1992 cited in Jaquette 1994: 5). Villanueva (1990 cited in Vargas 1994) states:

> And in this struggle, many times we would forget to seek consensus, to find female party members who did not define themselves as feminists but who did accept that feminism was a political movement that questioned power relations, oppression, exploitation and the domination of some people over others or of one human being over another. *(Own translation.)*

In practice, a strategy of “double militancy” emerged whereby women simultaneously participated in traditional political parties and in the autonomous feminist movement (Vargas 1994; Chuchryk 1994) By 1990, feminists from the autonomous women’s movement and female party activists finally came together to design joint strategies for political parties (Vargas 1994), thereby creating new opportunities to collectively articulate and push gender-specific demands within political parties (Franceschets 2005).

During the transitions to democracy, political parties began to resurrect women's branches and to court women as part of their electoral strategy. For example, in Argentina in the 1980s, parties saw the potential voting power of women and not only created women's sections to integrate them, but also raised gender issues during electoral
campaigns. Feijoo and Nari (1994: 116) explain, however, that "at the party level, the positive response to feminist issues was not a disinterested act of long overdue justice but an effort to win the women's vote in a close electoral race." Although women's issues were raised during the campaign by the candidates, the politicians did not move beyond rhetoric once elected.

Similarly, in Peru, as women increasingly identified themselves as feminists and the women’s movement became politically active, parties responded by integrating women into their ranks. Virginia Vargas, a prominent feminist in Latin America notes that:

> A few organizations at first, then others began to create women’s commissions. The intent was supposedly to neutralize or co-opt the feminists; nevertheless, we had succeeded in each one of the parties in opening a very important space for women who are working from within, with an increasingly clear feminist position (cited in Miller 1991: 204).

In some cases, political parties turned, once again, to the use of traditional gender roles to attract female voters. During the transition to democracy in Chile, for example, political parties, independent of their ideological bent, appealed to the female electorate on the basis of their traditional roles as mothers, wives and guardians of the home (Chuckryk 1994).

Despite women’s reintegration into political parties, the immediate period following the return to democracy did not bring significant changes in women’s participation in elected office. In fact, “ironically, the immediate effect of the return to ‘democratic’ politics was a fall in women’s political activity as male dominated political parties and trade unions moved into communities, neighborhoods and areas in which women had traditionally worked” (Fisher 1993 cited in Foweraker 1998: 75). By 1985,
women held only 6 percent of the legislative seats in the lower house or unicameral parliaments compared to 5 percent in 1975. (PROLEAD 2010)

Even though women did not experience significant numeric gains in their political representation in the 1980s, the women’s movement gained strength through women’s increasing participation in regional encuentros and national and international conferences as well through the proliferation of local level organizations, NGOs and networks dedicated to women’s rights (Valdes 2000). By the end of the 1980s, a “second wave” of feminism had emerged throughout the region as feminists raised issues concerning women’s subordination in the workplace and political arena, seeking this time to transform gender relations and reorganize the political space to include women (Craske 1999:133).

Even though parties did not incorporate women or women’s issues in their platforms out of ideological conviction but as part of their electoral calculation, such a strategy had the positive effect of politicizing women’s issues and providing needed visibility. The UN Decade for Women further contributed to raising the visibility and legitimacy of women’s issues. Miller (1991: 188) notes that “perhaps the most important legacy of the UN Decade for Women is that political parties and governments seeking legitimacy and claiming to speak for all of the people have found it politically advantageous to address women’s issues.” During this period, women’s concerns became relevant and major parties adopted issues such as abortion, violence against women and increased penalties for rapists in their platforms (Ramos 1994). In short, the effects of the women’s movement, adoption of gender issues by political parties and
international advocacy efforts all contributed to putting women’s issues on the political agenda.

**Explaining Women’s Increased Political Participation: 1990s**

In the 1990s, women began to increase their numeric representation in elected positions and win important political victories that would further consolidate their integration into political life. Between 1980 and 2000, women doubled their representation in the lower house or unicameral parliaments from 5.6 percent to 12.5 percent. By 2000, women in elected positions had achieved significant progress in countries such as Argentina, Costa Rica and Mexico where they represented 26, 19 and 16 percent, respectively, of parliamentarians in the lower house/unicameral bodies. In other countries such as in Brazil and Guatemala, however, women remained considerably underrepresented holding, respectively, only 6 and 7 percent of lower house/unicameral seats. Women also began founding their own parties and becoming presidents of some of the most influential parties in their countries.

By the 1990s, the combined effect of new institutions and international and national processes contributed to changes in women’s numeric representation. Women experienced significant changes in the basic conditions, that - when combined with facilitating factors - helped advance their political participation (Buvinic and Roza 2004). The three changes in basic conditions include: i) women’s increased access to education, through its direct effect on employment, wages, improved health and lower fertility, enabled women to acquire the capabilities to lead, thereby enlarging the eligibility pool; ii) the new democratic period ushered in the 1980s provided women with the opportunity to vote, run for office and be elected; and iii) cultural changes, fostered
by the revival of the international women’s movement, women’s increased activism and
the effects of globalization and the communications revolution, opened spaces for women
to participate in all facets of public life. In particular, the UN Fourth World Conference
on Women in Beijing held in 1995 legitimated demands for gender-specific policies and
for increasing women’s representation in politics through the use of quotas.

These changes in basic conditions when combined with the following two
facilitating factors further contributed to women’s increased political participation. First,
the adoption of international treaties and conventions, as well as domestic legislation
regarding women’s rights, supported women’s ability to participate and remain in
politics. The second facilitating factor was the adoption of quotas by twelve countries in
Latin America, mandating a minimum level of representation for women in party lists for
legislative elections. In 1991 Argentina became the first country in the Western
Hemisphere to adopt quotas. Eleven countries have since followed suit. All countries
have legislated quotas through their electoral laws, with the exception of Argentina
whose quotas are mandated through the Constitution. Political parties have also
voluntarily adopted quotas for their executive positions or party lists.  

At the same time that women experienced changes in their basic conditions and
the facilitating factors took effect the region’s young democracies spiraled into a crisis of

35 Before the adoption of nationally mandate quota laws, several political parties voluntarily
adopted quotas in the late 80s. For example, in Chile, the Partido por la Democracia and the Partido
Socialista adopted a quota of 20 percent for decision-making positions within the party in 1989. In
Paraguay, the Partido Colorado adopted a quota of 20 percent for electoral party lists and decision-making
positions within the party in 1991. The same year, the Brazilian Partido de los Trabajadores adopted a
gender quota of 30 percent for decision-making positions. In Mexico, the Partido de la Revolucion
Democratica (PRD) passed a 20 percent quota rule for its candidates in 1990, and a year later increased it
to 30 percent and expanded it to the party’s national executive committee (Baldez 2004). The Partido
Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) followed in 1996 adopting the same quota for its candidates and later
increasing it to 40 percent in 2001. In Costa Rica, the Partido Liberacion Nacional adopted a quota of 50
percent for internal party elections in 1992 (Valdes 2000). Today several more parties have voluntarily
adopted party-level quotas even in countries where affirmative action measures are not mandated by
national legislation.
representation that created new opportunities for women to participate in politics (Saint-Germain and Chavez Metoyer 2008). The crisis provided women with an opportunity to present fresh political alternatives to frustrated voters and to create new political parties. The crisis, therefore, contributed to women’s greater representation as voters turned to new actors in search of change.

Democracy in crisis

During the 1980s, political parties took center stage as they filled the spaces left by military or civilian governments. However, by the 1990s, political party systems in Latin America began to "exhibit severe stress and decomposition" (Van Cott 2005:1). Countries throughout Latin America, particularly those in the Andean region, began to experience a "crisis of democratic representation," defined by Mainwaring (2006b: 15) as the pervasive perception by citizens that they are not being adequately represented.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, according to Latinobarometro, an annual public opinion poll carried out in 18 Latin American countries, confidence levels in political parties has declined from a high of 28 percent in 1997 to 21 percent in 2008. Between 1996 and 2008, political parties have consistently shown the lowest levels of trust of all institutions surveyed, below legislative, executive and judicial branches, public administration, the military and the Church. This average, however, masks important

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36 The crisis of representation affected all Latin American countries but was most acute in the Andean countries (Mainwaring 2006a, 2006b; Alcantara 2004).

37 Interestingly, confidence levels increased from 18% in 2005 to 22% in 2006. This increase mirrors similar increases in confidence levels in other institutions such as television, the president, military, government and the judicial system. According to Latinobarometro, this across the board increase has to do with the 11 elections that took place in 2005 and 2006. The act of voting, being informed about the elections and having lived through an election period increases peoples direct experience with democracy (what they term "experiential democracy"), leading to an increased sense of confidence in institutions in general.
variations among countries. In a handful of countries in 2008, trust in political parties was low such as in Peru (11%), Bolivia (12%), Argentina (14%) and Ecuador (15%); whereas in other countries, parties showed moderate levels of trust, such as as in El Salvador (39%), Uruguay (36%) and Venezuela (32%) (Latinobarometro 2008).

A survey of 231 leading political figures in Latin America interviewed in 2002 and 2003 provides further evidence of the “crisis of politics” (UNDP 2004). Fifty-nine percent of those surveyed believed that parties are not fulfilling their functions properly. The most common reasons cited for this discontent include personalistic leadership and the absence of internal democracy. Interviewees also cited the:

- use of clientelistic practices to manage the electorate,
- the abandonment of party political platforms (the lack of ideological differences and the absence of programs),
- the creation of schisms along personal (not ideological) lines,
- the connections between the parties and de facto power bases,
- and the building of alliances in which political identities become unclear (UNDP 2004: 157).

Academics link the crisis of political parties to institutional deficits in each country (Mainwaring 2006a; 2006b). In the Andean region, Mainwaring (2006b: 296) finds that lack of confidence in democratic representation is attributable in part to state deficiencies because the state failed to ensure its citizens’ personal security and legal rights. Not only do citizens feel that their civil rights, free speech and freedom to organize politically are not guaranteed (Zovatto 2005), but many countries have performed poorly in indicators measuring crime and corruption (Mainwaring 2006b).

Other scholars attribute the crisis to problems associated with how the representational system operates in some countries; the balance of forces represented in the national legislature; and the selection mechanisms for candidates within and outside parties (UNDP 2004).
Zovatto (2005) attributes the crisis to the growing fragmentation of the party system. During the 1980s and 90s, the political party system experienced increased fragmentation (as measured by the effective number of political parties -ENPP), particularly in the Andean countries (Mainwaring 2006b; Alcantara 2004). In many countries, two-party systems present in the early 1980s gave way to two-and-a-half or three-party systems, while others had between five and seven parties typically obtaining a significant share of the legislative seats (Payne et al. 2002). This increased fragmentation can be attributed to: i) a result of the natural representation of diverse ideological tendencies in the political party system and creation of new parties during the period of democratization; ii) the incorporation of new actors (guerrilla, indigenous, paramilitary, social movements) that had been previously excluded from politics; and iii) use of parties as personal vehicles and as vehicles to resolve internal party conflicts (Alcantara 2004; Payne et al. 2002).

The socioeconomic context undoubtedly contributed to the public’s discontent with democratic institutions (Lagos 2003; Zovatto 2005; IDB 2006; Latinobarometro 2008). In response to the economic crisis of the 1980s (also known as the "lost decade"), Latin American governments adopted neoliberal policies that demanded austerity measures and a reduction in the role of the state in the economy. In the short run, such measures exacerbated the economic hardships, particularly for middle and poor sectors of society, intensifying social tensions. As a result, in the 1990s, many countries suffered increased poverty, unemployment and social inequality (UNDP 2004). Governments and democratic institutions inevitably absorbed the brunt of public discontent.
As parties failed to effectively channel and represent the interests and demands of citizens, new parties and movements arose. The crisis of representation led citizens to look for "outsiders" whose connections with traditional parties were weak or inexistent (Zovatto 2005; Van Cott 2005; UNDP 2004). This growing disaffection led social movements, such as the indigenous peoples' movement, to increase their political mobilization and, in some cases, form their own political parties (Van Cott 2005; Zovatto 2005).

Voters also started turning to women as a viable alternative. As traditional politicians failed to resolve problems of violence, poverty and unemployment, and high levels of corruption plagued the region’s government, women were perceived to bring a refreshing, new voice to the political system (Htun 2001). In fact, a public opinion poll carried out by the Gallup Organization in 2000 shows that in six cities of Latin America the public perceived women to be more honest and less corrupt than men38 and more capable than men in many political tasks, including combating corruption, managing the economy, improving education, reducing poverty and protecting the environment (IAD and IDB 2000).39 Hence, women’s historic exclusion from public office became an asset. Jaquette (1997: 34) explains that “women's status as outsiders and their perceived ‘purity,’ once considered political weaknesses, were now seen as strengths.” Stated

38 Interestingly, this perception also holds true in the US where numerous “polls have shown that women politicians are considered to be more honest and to possess more integrity than men in politics” (Reingold 2000: 19).

39 In order to advance their political goals and to fight corruption, public officials and political candidates have capitalized on the perception that women are more honest and less corrupt. In Peru, Lourdes Flores Nano drew on her reputation for integrity in her bid to become the country’s first female president in the 2001 elections. Among her poster slogans: “Unimpeachable”. Elvia Soto, one of Flores’ supporters, stated, “A woman president makes good sense for the same reason that the men leave us to administer the home – they know we won’t defraud our own family, we’re more honest and we work harder” (LaFranchi 2001).
differently, “by not being part of the problem, women come across as part of the solution” (Reingold 2000: 19).

**Parties Founded by Women**

The crisis of representation led voters to look for outsiders and generated an opportunity for women to create their own parties. Between 1998 and 2008, women founded at least eight parties in Latin America. As opposed to the parties founded by women in the first half of the twentieth century, half of the modern-day parties created by women have gained electoral representation in Congress. The four parties or alliances formed by women that gained representation in Congress include: *Unidad Nacional* in Peru, *Partido Socialdemocrata* in Mexico, *Afirmacion para una Republica de Iguales* in Argentina and *Si Colombia* in Colombia.

In Peru, Lourdes Flores, president of the right of center *Partido Popular Cristiano*, founded the social Christian centrist alliance *Unidad Nacional* in 2000. In the 2001 elections, Flores won 24 percent of the presidential votes and the party won 14 percent (17 of 120) of the congressional seats. In the 2006 presidential elections, Flores came in third and the party again won 17 of 120 seats. Lourdes does not identify herself as a feminist but has included gender issues in her campaigns and party platform. During the last presidential campaign, Lourdes claimed she would name a parity cabinet if elected. Peruvian feminists, in general, do not support Lourdes as she is identified with a conservative party, linked to the Opus Dei, holds pro-life and pro-business ideas and is viewed as the “candidate of the rich.”

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40The *Alianza Electoral Unidad Nacional* is a loose alliance of other political parties. Its members were initially the *Partido Popular Cristiano, Solidaridad Nacional, Renovación Nacional* and *Cambio Radical*.
In 2005, Mexican feminist Patricia Mercado was one of the founders of the leftist party \textit{Partido Socialdemocrata}. The party's platform includes such issues as legalization of abortion, marijuana, same sex marriage and assisted suicide, gender equality, universal pensions, worker's rights, etc.\footnote{http://www.alternativa.org.mx/propone_psd.html} She was the party’s presidential candidate during the 2006 elections, and obtained 2.7 percent of the popular vote, which was enough to secure the party's national registration. In the 2006 legislative elections, the party won 4 out of 500 seats (0.8 percent) in the Chamber of Deputies but no Senate seats. Patricia Mercado also briefly headed the party \textit{Mexico Posible}. The party took part in the 2003 midterm elections but lost its national registration under the Federal Electoral Institute after not achieving 2 percent of the national vote.

In Argentina, Elisa Carrio founded in 2001 the \textit{Afirmacion para una Republica de Iguales} (ARI), a social liberal party (center-left). A dissident of the \textit{Union Cívica Radical} and an ardent Catholic, Elisa was best known for her anti-corruption crusades. While in office she chaired the Chamber of Deputies commission that investigated cases of alleged corruption during the government of Carlos Menem (Valente 2001). The party created by Elisa presented itself as a front against corruption and in support of progressive ideas. Although Elisa would eventually abandon the party and create a new coalition (\textit{Coalicion Civica}), the party was successful in gaining electoral representation. In the 2001 election, ARI won 17 of the 257 seats (6.6 percent) in the Chamber of Deputies and one seat in the Senate. In the 2005 elections, ARI won eight seats, and in the 2007 elections, it won the governorship of the Province of Tierra del Fuego in the South. Fabiana Rios became the first female governor in the history of Argentina. It also won four Senate seats (2 in the
City of Buenos Aires and 2 in Tierra del Fuego) and a considerable number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. In the 2007 elections, Carrio’s newly formed Coalicion Civica also won additional seats. Carrio has also fared well as a two-time presidential candidate.42

In Colombia, Noemi Sanin, a dissident of the Conservative Party, founded the centrist movement, Si Colombia. Noemi sought to distance herself from traditional parties and conventional modes of participation by creating a movement as opposed to a party. She criticized traditional parties for using the State to promote their interests, and charged them with clientelism and corruption. In the 2002 presidential elections, Noemi won 5.8 percent of the vote, and the party won one senate seat.43 In the 2006 elections, the party did not win any seats in either chamber. Noemi ran again in the 2010 presidential elections, this time under the Conservative Party, and won only 6 percent of the votes.

Women have also founded other, less relevant, parties in Latin America for which there is very little information available. The Partido Femenino Guatemalteco, created in 1989, claimed not to be feminist and nominated a man for the 1991 elections (FLACSO 1995). In Bolivia, the Partido Femenino Nacional founded in 1980 was considered an instrument of the right (Valdes 2000). In Colombia, Maria Margarita Londono Velez founded the Movimiento Huella Ciudadana and Angela Cuevas de Dolmetsch founded Mujeres para la democracia in 1991.

42 In the 2003 presidential elections, she received 14.1 percent of the share of the vote. In the 2007 presidential elections, Carrió came second, heading the Civic Coalition with Ruben Giustiniani. She obtained about 23 percent of the vote, coming in second behind Cristina Fernandes de Kirchner. Carrio won the majority vote in two of the three largest cities of Argentina: Buenos Aires and Rosario, but she suffered a larger defeat in the Province of Buenos Aires, the most populated district, and could not force a run-off election.

As the above discussion illustrates, women have founded parties that represent the gamut of the ideological spectrum. On one end, Lourdes Flores in Peru founded *Union Nacional*, a center-right social Christian alliance. On the other end, Patricia Mercado in Mexico founded the *Partido Socialdemocrata*, a leftist party that advocates same-sex marriage, abortion rights and worker’s rights. With the exception of Patricia Mercado, a self-labeled feminist, none of the new female founded parties represents an explicit feminist agenda, although they do advocate gender equality and equality before the law.

**Participation of Women in Party Structures**

In addition to founding their own parties, a growing number of women have become presidents of some of the most influential parties in their countries. Beginning in the 1990s, an increasing number of parties, irrespective of their ideological leaning, began placing women in top-level positions. As a result, women have headed parties to the right and left of the ideological spectrum and in a few cases, even some of the most traditional parties in Latin America. In Mexico, Beatriz Paredes served as president of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), a center-right party which until 2000 dominated Mexican national politics. In Peru, Martha Chavez presided over the right-wing party *Nueva Mayoria*; Lourdes Flores has served as president of the centrist party *Partido Popular Cristiano*; and Susana Villaran has headed the center-left party *Partido por la Democracia Social*. Epsy Campbell, an African-descendant woman served as the president of the center-left party in Costa Rica, *Partido Acción Ciudadana* (PAC) from 2005 to February 2009.

Despite women’s increased role as founders and heads of parties, their representation in decision-making positions within parties compared to their share as
party members remains very low. Women’s presence in decision-making positions within parties varies considerably across and within countries. In the late 1990s, women held between 3 and 50 percent of the high-level positions within parties (an average of 20 percent) (CEPAL 1999). A decade later, the share of women in the national executive committee has grown to 24 percent.\footnote{For comparison purposes, the average share of female NEC members for 1999 and 2009 is based on an unweighted average. If we take the weighted average for the region in 2009, the share of women in the national executive committee stands at 19 percent for 18 Latin American countries (GEPPAL forthcoming).} Thus, while women’s participation in decision-making bodies within the party has grown over the last decade, the increase, on average, has been small.

**POLITICAL PARTIES: OBSTACLES TO WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION?**

Throughout history, women have been denied the right to vote, to be elected and to actively participate in their country’s political life. Historically, government institutions and political parties in Latin America have distributed political power among men. When political parties incorporated women into their ranks, they reflected or reproduced the dominant patterns of power. Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995: 20) explain that “men’s position atop social institutions has enabled them to structure institutions, create laws, legitimize particular knowledge, establish moral codes and shape culture in ways that perpetuate power over women.” As such, men maintained their monopoly on power and women were relegated to powerless positions and tasked with functions that reinforced their subordinate roles. Overtime, these “inequalities of power, perhaps modest initially, are reinforced and can become deeply embedded in organizations, institutions and dominant modes of political understanding” (Pierson and Skopcol 2002: 700). These inequalities that become embedded in the organizational structure and
culture of political parties manifest themselves in exclusionary practices and behaviors. Once embedded, exclusionary practices and behaviors resist change. This helps us understand the resistance or slowness of some parties to advance women’s political representation (Maucualy 2006; Alvarez 1986).

Even though women have achieved significant gains over the last two decades, and parties have proven to be responsive to gender-related political claims, political parties maintain exclusionary practices and behaviors that prevent women from accessing positions of power. First, many political parties throughout the region have resisted the implementation of candidate gender quotas, whether legislated or voluntarily adopted by parties. It has been a common practice for parties to manipulate the quota law by placing women at the bottom of the lists instead of at the top where they would have a real chance of being elected (Htun and Jones 2002). To fulfill the quota and guarantee loyalty, party leaders have also placed their own wives, sisters and other family members in party lists. In some cases women have been forced by the party to renounce their position after being elected in order to allow male substitutes to assume power (Archenti and Tula 2008). In other cases, the manipulation has been less discreet. In Bolivia, in the municipal elections in 1999, a scandal broke out involving "transvestite candidates". In order to simulate the implementation of the quota law, parties doctored the names of male candidates to sound like female candidate names (Llanos and Sample 2008).

A second type of barrier women face is related to the Latin American political culture where patriarchal views of women’s place in the public arena predominate (Franceschet 2005). Cultural norms place different expectations on women and men’s roles based on the traditional sexual division of labour. Women’s political participation
is viewed within this context and women’s traditional reproductive and domestic roles are transposed to the political arena. Consequently, the division of labor within parties mirrors the traditional sexual division of labor in the domestic sphere. In many cases, women who are placed in decision-making positions within the party structure are assigned to traditional committees, such as education and social welfare, typically associated with women’s traditional interests and roles as mothers and caretakers (Del Aguila 2003). Such committees tend to be less powerful compared to the finance, electoral or public relations committee.

In other cases, women placed in decision-making positions are not granted real power and are relegated to performing traditional domestic tasks. According to a study of political parties in the municipality of El Alto in Bolivia, it is very common for women to formally hold a decision-making position without exercising any real power and to assume functions related to the domestic sphere, such as serving tea and preparing the meeting room where men are the main decision-makers (Monasterios and Tapia 2001). Maria Isabel Urrutia Ocoro, an afro-descendant congress member from the Alianza Social Afrocolombiana in Colombia agrees, stating that very commonly women party members play the role of domestic servants, preparing food for meetings and sweeping floors, instead of playing an active role as decision-makers in party meetings.45

The functions assigned to women’s sections have traditionally conformed to a traditional gender division of labor. However, more recently, the profile of women’s sections is changing, from the traditional conception that assigned women’s sections functions that mirrored their roles in the private sphere to sections charged with

promoting gender equality and equal opportunities (Llanos and Sample 2008). Newly created women’s sections are charged with such tasks as promoting debate and discussion about gender specific issues in the party’s agenda, or holding the party accountable to its commitment to include women under equal conditions (Llanos and Sample 2008). Nevertheless, the power of women’s sections to bring about change varies across parties. An in-depth study of political parties in Colombia, for example, found that women’s branches lack specific strategies and programs to promote women’s participation and instead have become electoral machines used to turn out the vote during electoral periods (with exception of Partido Liberal and Si Colombia) (Munoz et. al. 2005). The few parties that have implemented programs to promote women’s issues, such the Partido Liberal, have very little information to evaluate the impact of their actions.

A third obstacle women party members’ face is a lack of support from the party itself. Women lack access to the “old boy networks” where decisions are made and to the traditional support networks that provide funding for electoral campaigns (Shvedova 2002). In general, women tend to have less of their own personal financial resources and lack connections to the private sector (Velasquez 2004). In Chile, Franceschet (2005) found that female candidates lack access to support networks that are typically tapped into by men, particularly for financing electoral campaigns. She also found that independent of their ideological leaning, political parties in general failed to provide financial support to female candidates. Similarly, a study carried out in Colombia found, for example, that the few women who have reached high-level positions or have run for president, appear to have done so more out of their own individual effort rather than due to the clear support of their party (Munoz 2005).
CONCLUSION

A historical review of women’s integration into political parties indicates that political parties reinforced and perpetuated gender inequality by replicating and institutionalizing existing gender power imbalances within party structures. During roughly the first half of the twentieth century, women were relegated to women’s sections and assigned functions that closely resembled women’s domestic roles. Parties excluded women from decision-making positions within the party and elected office, thereby limiting their ability to influence political outcomes. As Alvarez (1986: 122) notes, “the very admission of women in to party organizations…served to perpetuate the ideological and institutional barriers which had previously excluded women from formal political participation.”

The unequal terms and conditions under which women were initially integrated into political parties had long-term consequences for women’s political participation. Once established, the patterns of inequality became institutionalized in the organizational structure and culture of political parties. Thus, the exclusionary practices and behaviors that have become embedded overtime, contribute to many of the present day obstacles women face in accessing power within political parties and in Parliament.

However, institutions do not alone determine outcomes. In Latin America, the democratization processes interacted and converged with a series of national and international level factors, providing a new and enabling environment for women to press for changes within political party organizations. As a result, political parties have undergone important transformations over the last decade or two, such as adopting specific gender policies in their party platforms and/or mechanisms to support women
candidates. As parties adapt and to respond to women’s demands, women’s opportunities to effectively participate in party politics increases.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY: TOWARD A NEW CAUSAL MODEL

This study seeks to understand the impact of party-level characteristics on the number of women elected to public office. To this end, a causal model will be developed and tested using political system and party-level variables. The causal model will build on Caul’s (1999) findings and explore how the institutional context, party-level structures and women’s agency influence the probability that parties will send more women to power.

This chapter will first briefly explain Caul’s causal model and describe the new model to be tested in this study. In particular, it will make the case for including the share of female candidates fielded by parties as an important link in the chain of causality. The second section will describe the sample of parties available in the database, define the hypotheses to be tested and explicate the research methodology to be applied.

CAUSAL MODEL

This section will summarize Caul’s (1999) main findings and make the case for developing a causal model that integrates the share of female candidates as an intervening variable, thereby enabling us to examine the election of congress members as a process. (See Annex I for a more detailed description of Caul’s causal model, methodology and findings.)
In an effort to understand the impact of political parties on women’s representation, Caul (1999) undertook the first cross-national statistical analysis of party-level variations in developed countries. Caul finds that there is no single party-level indicator that predicts women’s representation. Instead she argues that the “combined impact [of party characteristics] on women’s representation may not be simultaneous, but rather linked in a chain of favorable influences” (Caul 1999: 91). The model proceeds from the general and indirect influences of the electoral system (which affect all parties) to the more direct influences of party context (which influence the promotion of women by particular political parties).

Caul runs three different models. In the first model, she seeks to predict the level of women in the national executive. She finds that the strongest predictor is a party’s New Left orientation. The second model predicts the presence of gender quotas for legislative candidates. She finds that the presence of gender quotas for legislative candidates is more likely to be present in parties with: i) New left values; ii) low levels of institutionalization; and iii) high levels of women in the party’s national executive body. Contrary to her expectations, parties with low levels of institutionalization tended to have quotas. She hypothesized that rule-oriented parties might be less flexible and more reluctant to adopt measures to support women’s representation. The third model predicts the proportion of women parliamentarians. She finds that the strongest and only

46 As opposed to the old lines of conflict between parties based on class and social cleavages, Caul (1999) argues that conflicts over new issues, such as environmental quality, alternative lifestyles and minority rights and participation add a new dimension to the conceptualization of ideology. She creates separate measures of Old Politics and New Politics ideology to capture this new type of cleavage.

47 This study will not replicate Caul’s second model. In Latin America, quota laws are mandated by national laws and only five parties in our sample have voluntarily adopted quotas. Therefore, this small sample of parties with voluntary quotas limits our ability to run statistical tests.
statistically significant predictors are proportional representation systems and high levels of women in the national executive committee.

Taking her three models together, Caul posits that party characteristics do not simultaneously interact to influence the number of women in power. Instead, she argues that they are linked in a chain of causality. Parties with a New Left orientation are more likely to have more women in the party’s national executive body. A higher presence of women in the executive, in turn, triggers the adoption of gender quotas for legislative candidates and an increased number of women in power. A proportional representation system also has a direct positive impact on the number of women in power. Surprisingly, she found an insignificant effect for quotas on the number of women elected, but argues that, as she used data from 1989, quotas may have a lagged effect and their impact may not be seen until the 1990s.

Caul’s model is missing an important link in the chain of causality, specifically the share of female candidates. If the election of women is seen as a process, i.e., that women must first be selected by the party and then be selected by the electorate (Gallagher 1988; Matland 1998a; Norris 1996, 1997), we must explore the factors that influence the share of female candidates and how well those female candidates perform at the polls (Kunovich and Paxton 2005). Studies have found that female candidacy rates are an important determinant of how well women fare at the ballot box (Setzler 2005; Kunovich and Paxton 2005). Stated simply, the percentage of women elected should depend partly on the percentage of women who run for office.
Three models will be tested. The first model will predict the representation of women in the party’s national executive committee (NEC). The second model will examine the factors that explain the share of female candidates fielded by party. Finally, the third model will analyze the variables that account for the proportion of women elected to parliament by party. The three models should be linked in a chain of causality (see Figure 1). Women in the NEC should positively influence the share of female candidates. The presence of women in the NEC and the share of female candidates in turn should both influence the proportion of women elected to congress.

Party-level characteristics are expected to influence the percentage of women in the national executive committee of each party. Based on the hypotheses developed in the next section of this chapter, we would expect that parties that select their NEC members based on formal and explicit rules, apply gender quotas for the NEC and use exclusive selection processes will have a higher share of women in the NEC. In addition, left-leaning parties with a women’s unit and gender equality principles in their bylaws are also expected to have a higher proportion of women in the NEC.

Moving through the causal process, the presence of women in the NEC should positively influence the percentage of female candidates fielded by a party. In addition, political system and party-level characteristics should also affect a party’s calculations and decision-making process regarding the composition of candidate lists. At the

\footnote{Kunovich and Paxton (2005) develop a theoretical model of women in politics that analyzes the integration of women in politics as a process with three sequential outcomes: the percentage of women in leadership positions within the party; percentage of female candidates and percentage of women in national legislatures. In contrast to Culp’s (1999) model, they add the intervening variable, female candidacy rates, and combine country-level and party-level influences across 74 countries. However, party-level data is aggregated at the country-level. The only party-level data included is the percentage of women in leadership positions within the party and percentage of female party bureau members. National level factors included in their analysis are: percentage of women economically active; percentage of tertiary students who are women; type of electoral system; level of democracy; use of reserved seats and quotas; ratio of effective parties; and ideology.}
At the political system level, proportional representation systems, a moderate number of parties winning seats and nationally mandated gender quotas should favor the number of women fielded as candidates. At the party-level, parties with formal rules for the candidate selection process, exclusive/national candidate nomination processes, a left-wing ideology, the existence of a women’s unit and the inclusion of gender equality principles in the party’s bylaws should also contribute to a greater number of women candidates fielded by parties.

Finally, the number of women elected to congress should be influenced by the share of both female candidates and female NEC members. In addition, political system and party-level characteristics should also affect the outcome. At the political system
level, proportional representation systems, a moderate number of parties winning seats and the presence of quota laws with sanctions for non-compliance and placement mandates should affect how well women fare at the ballot box. In addition, party-level characteristics, such as the existence of a women’s unit, the inclusion of gender equality principles in the bylaws and a party’s ideology, should play a positive and influential role.

**Research Methodology**

To test the causal model developed above, descriptive and statistical analyses will be conducted. This section will describe the research methodology employed. First, it will describe the sample of parties available in the database. Second, explanatory variables will be identified and testable hypotheses will be defined for each variable based on a review of existing literature. (In Chapter 2, these variables were grouped into three categories [political system, party context and women’s political agency], and a more thorough explanation was provided regarding their expected effect on party behavior and women’s representation.) Third, the research methodology used to build the dataset will be explained.

**Sample Description**

The analysis in this study draws from data available in the GEPPAL database. The sample includes 92 parties in Latin America that won a minimum of 5 percent of the seats in the lower chamber/unicameral bodies in the last elections (through May 2009). However, in countries where fewer than 5 parties meet this minimum, the necessary number of parties was included in descending order of representation until the goal of 5
parties was reached. If the party won between 4.5 and 4.9 percent of the seats, the number was rounded off to 5 percent and included in the sample.

On average, the total number of parties per country included in the sample is 5.1. In some cases, such as in Brazil and Uruguay, eight parties were included in the sample as they won 5 percent or more of the seats. Conversely, in other cases, such as in Nicaragua, only four parties were included as they represent the total number of parties with representation in the lower house/unicameral bodies of Congress.\(^{49}\)

Of the 92 parties in the sample, more than 50 percent formed an alliance with one or more parties for the legislative elections. In the case of Argentina, Nicaragua, Peru and a few more parties in other countries, the data on the proportion of women elected to Congress by party was available only at the alliance level. In other words, the electoral tribunals reported the official election results for the alliance as a whole and not for the individual parties that comprised the coalition. A total of 20 parties have election results available only for the alliance and not at the individual party-level. Considering that the parties included in the sample are the major party in the alliance, we would expect that, on average, their candidates would dominate the candidate lists and therefore, win the majority of seats. In the remaining countries in which most or all parties formed coalitions, such as in Chile, Panama and Mexico, the data on the proportion of women elected is disaggregated at the individual party-level.

\(^{49}\) Of the total number of parties included in the sample, six parties did not grant an interview. Nevertheless, they were included in the sample as data was collected from each party based on information available from the electoral tribunals, party by-laws and official party website. The parties that did not grant an interview are: Partido Socialista Brasileiro (Brazil), Union Demócrata Independiente and Partido Renovacion National (Chile), Partido de Conciliacion Nacional (El Salvador), Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (Nicaragua), and Partido Patria para Todos (Venezuela). In addition, data was not received in time to include the Fuerza Nacional Progresista in the Dominican Republic and Movimiento Sin Miedo in Bolivia.
TABLE 2.

SHARE OF WOMEN ELECTED TO THE LOWER HOUSE/UNICAMERAL CHAMBERS OF CONGRESS. WEIGHTED AVERAGE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Election year</th>
<th>Women elected by party (%)</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29-50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13-43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0-22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0-24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0-14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17-41</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14-24</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0-46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0-31</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0-18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17-53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8-32</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0-25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7-100</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru*</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22-39</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0-25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela**</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0-25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>0-100</td>
<td>Total: 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GEPPAL (forthcoming).

*In the case of Peru, two parties (Union por el Peru and Partido Nacionalista del Peru) ran under the same alliance, and data was not available to identify elected officials by party. As using both cases would lead to double counting, only the data for one party was computed.

**In Venezuela, the Movimiento Primero Justica ran in the 2005 elections but withdrew shortly before the elections.

The sample of parties is fairly representative of the composition of Latin American legislatures. The parties/alliances in the sample hold over 90 percent of the seats in the lower house/unicameral parliaments of Latin America. In our sample, the average proportion of women elected by party/alliance stands at 19 percent (see Table 2).
(According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union,\textsuperscript{50} the average share of women elected to the lower chamber/unicameral parliament in Latin America is 19 percent in 2010.)

**Dependent variables**

Three multivariate models will be tested. The first model predicts the share of women in the national executive committee (NEC) by party. The second model predicts the proportion of women fielded as candidates by party. The third model predicts the percent of women elected by party to the lower house/unicameral Parliaments in 18 Latin American countries.

**Model 1: Dependent variable – Proportion of women in party leadership**

The surveys collected data from each party regarding the representation of women in the NEC. The proportion of women in the NEC is calculated by dividing the total number of female NEC members in each party by the total number of male and female NEC members in each party. In our sample, women hold only 19 percent of executive positions (weighted average based on 83 observations), with a range of 0 to 60 percent by party. (See Table 5 in Chapter 5.)

**Model 2: Dependent variable – Share of female legislative candidates**

Data for the composition of candidate lists was collected from electoral tribunals and political parties.\textsuperscript{51} The share of female candidates is calculated by dividing the total number of female candidates fielded by each party/alliance divided by the total number

\textsuperscript{50} Inter-Parliamentary Union.  \url{www.ipu.org}

\textsuperscript{51} Data for legislative candidates is not available for the Dominican Republic. It was available for only one party in Honduras (data provided by party).
of male and female candidates fielded by each party/alliance to the lower house/unicameral parliaments. In the last electoral period of each country, women represented, on average, 24 percent of the total number of candidates presented in the electoral lists of 79 parties/alliances in our sample (weighted average). Across the 18 countries, the share of female candidates ranges from 12 percent (Brazil and Panama) to 48 percent (Ecuador). (See Table 19, Chapter 5, Annex II.)

Model 3: Dependent variable – Proportion of women elected to Congress by party

Data for elected officials was collected from electoral tribunals.\(^{52}\) The dependent variable is the percent of women elected from each party to the lower house/unicameral body of Congress in the last elections (as of May 2009) in 18 Latin American countries. It is calculated by dividing the total number of women elected from each party/alliance by the total number of seats won by each party/alliance. Data for the dependent variable is available for 90 parties.\(^{53}\) The weighted mean is 19 percent and the proportion of women elected to Congress by party/alliance ranges from 0 percent to 100 percent. The share of elected women by party at the country level varies from 8 percent in Brazil and Panama to 38 percent in Costa Rica. (See Table 2)

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\(^{52}\) In the case of the Dominican Republic, the electoral tribunal sent a letter indicating that the data was not available. In the case of Venezuela, the official results were never published. In these cases, information was computed based on the composition of the legislature after the last elections.

\(^{53}\) Movimiento Primero Justicia (MPJ), an opposition party in Venezuela, ran in the 2005 elections but withdrew shortly before the elections. MPJ lacked confidence in the electoral tribunal’s capacity to guarantee a secret ballot. In addition, the Partido Nacionalista in Peru (PNP) was not included. PNP ran as part of a broader alliance that also included the party Unión por el Peru. In the 2006 elections, it had not yet been granted its official party status and therefore ran as part of the alliance. Together Unión por el Peru and Partido Nacionalista won a total of 45 seats (women won 15 of the seats). As using both cases would lead to double counting, only the data for one party was included.
Definition of Explanatory Hypotheses

Political System

See Table 3 for a summary of the characteristics of each country’s political system (only lower chamber/unicameral parliaments listed).

**TABLE 3.**

**ELECTORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LATIN AMERICAN LEGISLATURES.**

**LOWER HOUSE/UNICAMERAL CONGRESSES.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Electoral system</th>
<th>Legislative Body</th>
<th>Type of list</th>
<th>Election year</th>
<th>Size of legislative body</th>
<th>Effective number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>257**</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>PR/ SMPD</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Open/Closed</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>PR/ SMPD</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama*</td>
<td>PR/ SMPD</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Lower Chamber</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>PR/PL SMPD</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PR: Proportional Representation; SMPD: Single-member Plurality District; PR/PL: PR districts with a few multimember plurality districts.

* Although some scholars consider Panama a PR system, Panama is coded as a mixed system. Sonnleitner (2010) explains that Panama has a hybrid electoral system which combines small district magnitudes with a unique system of assigning seats for the election of candidates, lending it a clear majoritarian bias. **In the 2007 elections, only 130 seats were renewed. Source for type of electoral system and type of list: Jones (2009). Source for ENPP: Gallagher and Mitchell (2008) and own calculations.
Electoral System

Proportional Representation (PR) systems tend to elect more women to legislative office than plurality/majority systems (Rule 1987, 1994; Norris 1985; Kenworthy and Malami 1990; Paxton 1997). Caul (1999) found a statistically significant effect for PR systems on the number of women elected. Kunovich and Paxton (2005) found that PR systems do not significantly affect the proportion of women elected to congress, but once they control for female candidates, PR systems yield a higher share of female candidates than other systems. In the sample of 18 Latin American countries, all use some type of PR system, with the exception of four countries (Bolivia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) that use a combination of PR and single-member districts.

Hypothesis 1. List PR systems will field a greater share of female candidates and elect more women to Congress than mixed systems

Ballot Type and Quotas for Women

Scholars contend that an influential political-level factor affecting women’s opportunity to get elected is the type of ballot list used during elections. In an open-list system, voters are able to add names to the ballot and alter the order of party lists. Conversely, in a closed-list system, parties rank-order the candidates and the voter is unable to alter the ordered list.

Studies of Latin America have found slight or statistically insignificant differences between countries with open versus closed-list systems (Schmidt 2004; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006). Scholars, however, contend that when combined with quotas the effects of open versus closed-list systems vary significantly by country. Studies have found that closed-list systems when combined with quota laws that
include a placement mandate are more conducive to women’s elections (Htun 2005; Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2009; Htun 2003). Jones (2009) found that when combined with quotas, closed-list systems elect a greater percentage of women than open-list quota systems in Latin America.

In fact, Jones (2009) finds that, irrespective of the type of list, well-designed quota systems (that include sanctions for non-compliance and a placement mandate) yield a greater number of elected women than systems that have poorly designed quota laws or no quota legislation at all. Open-list systems with well-designed quota laws that ensure their implementation are also better than systems with lax quota laws or no quotas at all (Jones 2009). In fact, open-list systems with quotas have not been found to be a disadvantage for women, particularly in the case of Peru’s national and municipal elections (Schmidt 2004; Schmidt and Saunders 2004; Dador and Llanos 2008). Recent scholarship points to the importance of well-designed quota rules with strict enforcement mechanisms and placement mandates (Jones 2008, 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009).

While twelve countries in our sample have adopted quotas at the national level mandating a certain percentage of women in electoral lists, only eight countries have adopted a quota law for internal decision-making positions in the party. They include: Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and most recently, Uruguay. In addition, political parties have also adopted quotas to increase women’s representation in decision-making positions in party structures. Gender quotas for internal decision-making positions should increase women’s representation within the party (Caul Kittilson 2006).

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54 In 2009, Uruguay adopted a quota law establishing a minimum requirement for the composition of candidate lists. However, it will not go into effect until the 2014 elections.
**Hypothesis 2:** Nationally mandated gender quota rules for legislative candidates will yield a higher share of female candidates and women elected than systems with no quotas.

**Hypothesis 2a:** Closed-list quota systems will yield a higher share of women elected than open-list quota systems.

**Hypothesis 2b:** Well-designed quotas (that include sanctions for non-compliance and a placement mandate) will field a higher share of female candidate and elect more women than poorly designed quotas or no quotas. (In Latin America, all well-designed quota systems use closed-lists.)

**Hypothesis 2c:** Nationally mandated gender quota rules for internal decision-making positions in parties will yield a higher share of women in the national executive committee than systems with no quotas.

**Hypothesis 2d:** Parties that have adopted quotas for women’s participation in internal party structures will yield a higher share of female NEC members than parties that have not adopted quotas.

**District and Party Magnitude**

District magnitude refers to the number of available seats in any given district. In a single-member district, only the strongest individual will be nominated as the party’s candidates compete in a zero-sum game. In multi-member districts, the party nominates several candidates in a district and has greater ability to “balance” the ticket and accommodate varied interests in order to attract more voters (Matland and Taylor 1997; 192). Several studies have found that as the number of seats per district increases, the
proportion of women elected increases (Rule 1987; Matland 1993). In contrast, some studies have found that district magnitude has no direct effect (Darcy et al. 1994).

Matland and Taylor (1997) argue that district magnitude matters because of its effect on party magnitude (i.e., the number of seats a party can expect to win in a district). In fact, several studies have found that party magnitude has a positive effect on the share of women elected in Argentina (Jones 1996), Norway (Matland 1993, 1995) and Costa Rica (Matland and Taylor 1997). Matland and Taylor explain that even if district magnitude is high, parties may not have an incentive to include women in electable positions in the lists if the number of seats they expect to win in a district is small.

Hypothesis 3: A higher district magnitude should lead to a greater number of female candidates nominated and women elected but its effect will be mediated by a party’s calculation regarding how many seats it expects to win. (The number of seats a party expects to win will be measured with the proxy variable effective number of political parties, to which we turn to next.)

Party system fragmentation

Party system fragmentation refers to the number of parties that obtain a significant share of the vote and seats in the legislature. It is most often measured using the index of effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) developed by Laakso-Taagepera (1979). The ENPP measures how many parties are in the party system, weighed according to size. It is calculated by squaring each party’s share of seats, adding all of these squares, and dividing 1 by this number. To illustrate, if every party holds the same number of seats, then the ENPP equals the number of parties with seats. If a large
majority of the seats are equally controlled by two parties and a third party holds fewer seats, then the ENPP is equal to some number between 2 and 3, reflecting the domination of the two largest parties and the existence of a third small party (Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 29). In our sample, the average effective number of parties is 4.2, with a range of 2.4 in Bolivia, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Paraguay to 9.3 in Brazil, one of the highest figures in the world.

While Caul’s (1999) model did not include party system fragmentation, studies indicate that this variable may have some explanatory power when analyzing the factors that influence the number of women in power. Party system fragmentation should affect a party’s electoral calculations and decisions regarding which candidates to include in the ballot given that high and low levels of fragmentation reduce the number of seats a party expects to win (party magnitude). In an analysis of 25 advanced democratic countries, Paskevicute (2004) finds that moderate levels of party system fragmentation are associated with a higher number of women in power. Paskevicute (2004) argues that a quadratic and inverse relationship exists between the proportion of women elected and ENPP. When the ENPP is very low, only a small number of parties have a realistic chance of winning seats. This favors incumbents and creates fewer opportunities for new parties to break into the system. A very low ENPP is also correlated with a low district magnitude. With fewer seats to win, parties have less of an incentive to balance their ticket.

55 Parties can be divided into three groups: 1. Low two-party systems with 2 or 2.5 parties; 2. Moderate multi-party systems with 3-5 parties; and 3. Extreme multi-party systems with more than 5 parties (Alcantara 2004: 35).

56 In our sample, ENPP and district magnitude have a statistically significant and positive relationship: r(92)=.53; p<.001.
However, as the ENPP increases, more parties compete and the district magnitude increases. Smaller parties will also have an incentive to compete and to strategically differentiate themselves from catch-all parties, which could favor women (Downs cited in Setzler 2005: 6). As a result, women have more opportunities to be included in party lists. However, once the tipping point is reached, the greater the number of parties competing, the fewer number of seats a party can expect to win. This produces an effect similar to small district magnitudes, which the literature has established is detrimental to the inclusion of women and other minority or ethnic groups. Expecting to win less seats, parties don’t have an incentive to balance their ticket. Thus, as the ENPP increases beyond a certain threshold, the percent of women placed in electoral lists diminishes. Jones (2009) also found a curvilinear inverse relationship between the proportion of women elected in Latin America and party magnitude (the number of seats won by each party in a district), with the percentage of women elected greatest for a party magnitude of 2 compared to all other party magnitudes.

Other studies that have not controlled for a non-linear relationship have found that as the ENPP increases, the proportion of women elected decreases. Reynolds (1999) found a negative effect for ENPP on the number of women elected to national office in a study of 180 countries. Kunovich and Paxton (2005) found that as the ratio of effective number of parties increases the percentage of female candidates decreases. Similarly, a statistical study of 18 Latin American countries, found that the ENPP had a significant negative effect on the number of women in power, however, the effect was eliminated after controlling for the presence of gender quotas (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006). An analysis of Central American national legislatures found a
statistically significant relationship between the number of seats won by a political party and the number of women elected from that party (effective party magnitude) (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008).\footnote{Setzler (2005), on the other hand, found that a higher number of parties competing in municipal elections in Brazil led to an increase in the share of female candidates fielded. However, when more parties are competing, each party wins fewer seats, which ultimately was a disadvantage to female candidates. Brazil, nevertheless, presents a unique case as parties can field up to 1.5 times the number of candidates.} Based on these findings, I expect that:

*Hypothesis 4:* High and low levels of party system fragmentation will have a lower share of female candidates and women in the legislature compared to systems with moderate levels (3-5).

**Party Context**

**Party Ideology**

Statistical studies have shown that the partisan composition of the legislature has a significant effect on women’s share of legislative seats. In general, the assumption is that left parties are more likely to promote women’s candidacies than right parties given their tendency to embrace egalitarian principles. The results, however, have been mixed. Some large-N statistical studies have found that the larger the number of seats held by leftist parties, the greater the number of women legislators (Norris 1987; Reynolds 1999; Kenworthy and Malami 1999). In a study of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, Saint-Germain (1994) argues that the presence of leftist parties was a fundamental factor for getting women elected to the legislature. In fact, left-wing parties were the first to adopt quotas and policies in support of women in Latin America (Sacchet 2005). In a study of 19 Latin America countries, Jones (2009) found that leftist parties were significantly and positively associated with higher numbers of women in elected office.
In contrast, a study carried out in 18 Latin American countries found a small, yet positive effect between the number of right-wing parties and the number of women in the legislature (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006). Htun (2005) notes that while conservative parties may not be as likely to adopt quotas, they may have more measures to promote women. In addition, contagion effects are possible whereby parties with similar ideologies follow suit if an initial party increases the number of female candidates or adopts quotas (Caul 2001; Krook 2005; Matland and Studlar 1996). Hinojosa (2005) suggests that parties of the right may place more women as candidates, not because of their commitment to the issue, but because women in these parties may be more educated and have greater time and resources available to participate in politics. Other studies, on the other hand, have found no effect for party composition (Matland 1998). A study of Central American national legislatures finds that, with the exception of Nicaragua, the impact of leftist parties on women’s representation is unclear (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008: 90). The authors argue that left-leaning parties competing in elections are helpful but not sufficient to ensure women’s election.

Given their tendency to embrace egalitarian principles, we would also expect to find that left-wing parties are more likely than right-wing parties to have a higher share of women in decision-making positions within the party. In fact, Caul (1999) found a statistically significant effect for ideology on the share of female party elites but no effect on the proportion of women elected to office. She posits that “new left values are important in elevating women within the party’s internal hierarchy. Then, women use

58 Variable “Percent seats held by right parties” becomes insignificant when Argentina is deleted from the model. The PJ is coded as a right party because of the economic policies adopted by former President Menem.
their new power to push for candidate gender rules and to promote women MPs.” (Caul 1999: 93).

Despite the mixed findings, I expect that:

*Hypothesis 5:* Parties to the left of the ideological spectrum are more likely to:

- have a greater percentage of women in the NEC;
- field more female candidates;
- and send more women to congress.

**Party Organization**

a. **Candidate selection process**

The candidate selection process can be measured according to the distribution of power and control over the selection of internal party leaders and electoral candidates.\(^{59}\)

It can be measured by the level of centralization of the process and the extensiveness of participation (Gallagher 1988). The level of centralization focuses on whether the candidate selection process is controlled at the local, regional or national level. Along this continuum decisions can be made by national faction leaders, regional organizations or party members in the constituency (Gallagher 1988). The extensiveness of participation lies on an exclusive/inclusive continuum whereby the degree of exclusivity depends on the number of individuals participating in the selection process. In an exclusive process, a small number of individuals select the candidates, such as national party leaders or the national executive. In an inclusive process, a subset of constituency party members or all registered party members select candidates, such as in primaries.

Scholars have argued that exclusive selection processes favor women (Matland 2004; Matland and Studlar 1996; Lovenduski and Norris 1993). In her bivariate analysis,

\(^{59}\) Caul (1999) used the term “centralized” to refer to the exclusivity/inclusivity continuum and “level of nomination” to refer to the geographic location (local, regional, national).
Caul (1999) finds that parties with exclusive selection processes are slightly more likely to elect more women to office. Similarly, in a study examining the relationship between women’s representation and candidate selection processes at the municipal level in Chile and Mexico, Hinojosa (2005) concludes that more exclusive processes lead to greater numbers of women in power because local power monopolies are neutralized and self-nomination is avoided.

Some scholars also argue that localized nomination processes favor women. This is based on the assumption that women have more political experience at the local level, working as grassroots organizers and community activists. This experience not only prepares them for public office but provides them with access to networks and the necessary visibility among local party leaders and members (Matland 2004). Norris and Lovenduski (1995) argue that informal-localized systems are beneficial to women because it provides women with the opportunity for self-recruitment. Caul (1999) finds in her bivariate analysis that nominations at the local level are associated with an increased number of women in power.

Other scholars argue that if decisions are centralized at the national level, party leaders will have a larger number of lists to consider, making it easier for women to be included (Matland 2004). Decisions by party heads can also be taken quickly and applied across the board (Matland and Studlar 1996; Lovenduski and Norris 1993). In addition, women can focus their pressure on party heads to incorporate more women as opposed to individually pressuring each locality. Hinojosa (2005b) finds that centralized selection processes eliminate the power of local monopolies, making it more conducive to women’s selection. Given these findings, I also expect that:
Hypothesis 6: Parties with exclusive/centralized selection processes will elect more female NEC members and send more women to Parliament.

b. Party institutionalization

Party institutionalization refers to the degree of formality or informality of the rules and procedures that guide the recruitment process. In a highly institutionalized process, the application process for candidates is defined by internal party rules that are “detailed, explicit, standardized, implemented by party officials and authorized in party documents” (Lovenduski and Norris 1993: 322). Less institutionalized parties, on the other hand, have less bureaucratic application processes which are known to participants but never made explicit.

Caul (1999) finds a small yet positive correlation between the level of institutionalization and number of women in office at each time point examined. In Latin America, I expect that if the rules of the game are clear and explicit, women will not have to rely on their limited access to old boys’ networks or informal networks to participate in the party’s recruitment process for legislative candidates or decision-making positions within the party. Therefore, I expect that:

Hypothesis 7: Rule-oriented parties will select a higher proportion of women NEC members and field a higher share of female candidates.

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60 In her multivariate analysis, Caul (1999) unexpectedly finds that low levels of institutionalization, New left politics and the number of women in the national executive are positively associated with the presence of gender quotas for legislative candidates. She posits that if candidate gender rules are a function of the presence of women in the national executive and their efforts to pressure their parties, then less rule-oriented parties will be more flexible and open to the adoption of measures to promote women.
By adopting gender policies and rules, parties can significantly increase the number of women in party leadership roles and in elected office. While Caul (1999) focuses on only two aspects of party rules (explicit quotas and targets), this study will include other factors that will allow for a more nuanced analysis of the different types of strategies and policies that parties have adopted to promote women’s participation and representation. Lovenduski (1993) differentiates between three types of party strategies for increasing women in decision-making positions and places them on a continuum indicating a party’s commitment level to gender issues:

1. “Rhetorical strategies”: Under this type of strategy, party representatives make public their commitment to gender equality and incorporate it in their campaign platforms. Lovenduski (1993) argues that of the three strategies, rhetorical commitments are the least effective in increasing women’s representation. As a proxy, this study will examine whether parties have gender policies in their constitution or bylaws. In an analysis of party bylaws in Peru, Del Aguila (2004) finds that even though most parties make reference to gender issues, the declarations are not followed through with concrete actions. Therefore, I expect that:

Hypothesis 8: Parties that only mention gender equality principles and policies in their constitutions or bylaws will not necessarily have more women NEC members, female candidates or women in elected office.

2. “Positive or affirmative action”: This strategy refers to programs and targets adopted by the party to support and encourage women’s participation, such as
training, financial assistance, etc. Training and financial assistance for women are considered important measures to increase women’s participation given their lack of access to funding and experience in the political sphere. In a study of political parties in Peru, training workshops offered by the party were perceived by the majority of party leaders and members to be a key measure to improve women’s political participation (Del Aguila 2004). Therefore, I expect that:

**Hypothesis 9:** Parties with programs to support women’s participation will have more women fielded as candidates and elected to public office.

3. “Positive discrimination”: Lovenduski (1993) refers to quotas adopted to increase women’s representation in the party’s internal organizational structure or electoral lists as positive discrimination measures. Parties that adopt quotas are considered by Lovenduski (1993) to be the most committed to advancing women’s participation and representation. (See Hypothesis 2 in this chapter.)

**Women’s Political Agency**

The participation of women in executive and mid-level decision-making positions within the party structure, as well the active engagement of female members should increase women’s power and ability to push forth their agenda (Caul 1999; Sachet 2005; Macaulay 2006). Lovenduski (1997) finds that in Germany and Britain, the role organized women played from within the political parties had important positive effects on the number of women elected.
Caul (1999) finds that an increased number of women in the party’s national executive body triggers the implementation of gender quotas for legislative candidate and an increased number of women Parliamentarians. Kunovich and Paxton (2005) also find that a greater presence of female party elites leads to gains for women as candidates in PR systems and increases the probability that women candidates will be elected in non-PR systems. I also expect that:

*Hypothesis 10:* A higher share of women in decision-making positions within the party will contribute to an increased number of female candidates and women elected.

Women’s branches have been criticized by their members for contributing to women’s marginalization within the party (Aguilar 2004; Chaney 1979). Caul Kittilson (2006) found no effect for the presence of a women’s unit on the number of women in leadership positions within party or elected to public office. However, parties most likely to respond to women’s demands have been those where women have mobilized and coordinated efforts to collectively define their interests and objectives within the party (Sacchet 2005). Given the increasing activism of women’s branches in the region and their shift toward more technical committees tasked with promoting gender issues (Macualay 2006; Del Aguila 2004; Htun 2005; Sacchet 2005, 2007), I expect that:

*Hypothesis 11:* Parties with women’s branches are more likely to have more women selected to the NEC, fielded as legislative candidates and elected to legislative office.
Survey Instrument

In collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), a survey was designed to gather data for the variables identified in the previous section of this chapter. Individual consultants were hired in each of the 18 countries to administer the survey to the parties to ensure a high response rate. Data was collected between January 15, 2009 and October 15, 2009. The consultants also collected additional documentation from electoral tribunals and documents and propaganda from the parties (such as bylaws, Declarations, Party Programs, and gender actions plans) for corroboration and further analysis of information.

Three questionnaire instruments were prepared. The first questionnaire sought to gather country-level data regarding the specific elements of the electoral and party system as well as information on the national quotas laws, when applicable. This first questionnaire was filled out by the consultant based on the country’s electoral laws and election results.

The second questionnaire sought to gather party-level data available through electoral tribunals and party documents. The consultant filled out this questionnaire to the extent possible. Information that was not publicly available was requested during the formal interview process conducted by the consultant.

The third questionnaire sought to gather party-level data through face-to-face interviews with party representatives. The interviewees requested a meeting with the head of the party or the head of the women’s section. The respondents represented a range of positions within the party, from President or Secretary-General to head of the
Women’s Unit or Director of Capacity Building. Many of the respondents were the heads of Women’s Units.

Given that parties do not necessarily follow their own formal rules and procedures, information for a few variables was collected from two sources: party bylaws and interviews. These variables include the existence of a women’s unit and the type of selection process used for the selection of national executive committee members and legislative candidates. As we will see in the next chapter, in several cases, the information in the bylaw conflicts with the response provided by the interviewee.

Descriptive and Statistical Analysis

The first level of analysis will provide a descriptive analysis of the state of women’s participation and representation in Latin America based on data from 92 political parties. It will also carry out bivariate correlations and statistical tests, when necessary, to examine the expected relationships established in the hypotheses. The results of this analysis will be used to build the three statistical models to be tested.

The second level of analysis will provide a multivariate statistical test of three models. As discussed, the first model will examine the factors that predict the number of women in the national executive committee by party. The second model will analyze the variables that explain the variation in the share of female candidacy rates by party. The third model will assess the determinants of the number of women in Latin America’s legislatures by party. These multivariate analyses will test both political system and party-level determinants. In addition to the questionnaire responses, secondary information provided by the parties will also be analyzed, such as party bylaws and electoral lists.
CONCLUSION

This chapter described the causal model that will be tested in this study. More specifically, it described the three main models that are expected to be linked in a chain of causality. In addition, it described the sample of parties available in the database and any relevant methodological considerations. It also defined the hypotheses to be tested based on the findings of extant literature. Finally, it described the survey instrument and the methodology used to test the proposed causal model. The next chapter will provide the results of the descriptive and statistical analyses.
DESCRIPTION OF CAUL’S (1999) CAUSAL MODEL

Caul analyzed 68 parties in 12 advanced industrial democracies (West European countries and the United States) at three points in time: 1975, 1985 and 1989. She examined four general party characteristics. These included: i) a party’s organizational structure, measured by centralization, institutionalization and location of candidate nomination; ii) party ideology, operationalized by placing parties on the left or right of the ideological spectrum, placing parties on a New or Old Politics dimension, and the year a party enters the political system; iii) women’s activism, measured by the percentage of women in national executive committees, among middle-level elites and local party activists; and iv) party rules, which includes explicit quotas and targets.

Given the widespread agreement that the electoral system influences women’s representation in national legislatures, Caul also included the type of electoral system. Caul develops a causal model that hypothesizes the manner in which party characteristics might work together to influence the number of women in parliament. The model proceeds from the general and indirect influences of the electoral system (which affect all parties) to the more direct influences of party context (which influence the promotion of women by particular political parties). At a broader level, parties are embedded in the electoral system which is linked to ideologies and affects party

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61 As opposed to the old lines of conflict between parties based on class and social cleavages, Caul argues that conflicts over new issues, such as environmental quality, alternative lifestyles and minority rights and participation add a new dimension to the conceptualization of ideology. She creates separate measures of Old Politics and New Politics ideology to capture this new type of cleavage.
organization. The electoral system also combines with quotas to affect the outcome. Candidate quotas are more likely to be adopted in proportional representation systems as opposed to majority systems.

Moving through the causal process, a party’s ideology will influence the number of women in leadership positions within the party and the adoption of quotas by the party. In addition, more institutionalized parties may nominate more women to high-level positions and implement quotas more rigorously. Candidate nomination levels should also influence the implementation of quotas. Finally, the two most direct influences include the number of women in high-level positions within parties and the presence of quotas. These have a reciprocal relationship whereby parties may adopt gender quotas for the party’s internal decision-making bodies, and the increased pressure from women in the party’s top leadership can then lead to the adoption and implementation of candidate gender quotas. Quotas and women in executive positions within the party, in turn, may have a direct effect on the number of women in Parliament.

Caul first explored the bivariate relationships between the measures of party characteristics and the proportion of women elected for each point in time. Caul finds a positive relationship for more highly centralized and institutionalized parties as well as candidate selection processes at the local level. Regarding party ideology, she confirms her hypothesis that parties to the left of the ideological spectrum and parties labeled New Left send more women to parliament than parties to the right or parties labeled as Old Politics. For the women activist variables, she finds a strong relationship between the

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62 The electoral system influences the number of parties competing for votes, which affect the spectrum of ideologies represented by the parties. Systems with few parties tend to produce “catch all” centrist parties. Systems with many parties tend to have more ideologically polarized systems. Women appear to have more opportunities in multi-party systems (Norris 1993).
number of women in the national executive, middle-level elites and local activists. She finds a lagged effect for the number of women in the national executive. In parties where there is a higher proportion of women on the national executive in one year, there is a higher percentage of women in parliament by the next point in time. Similarly, Caul finds a lagged effect for quotas. Finally, she also finds a positive relationship between proportional representation systems and the number of women in parliament.

To avoid multicollinearity, Caul used the strongest independent variables from each of the five categories and ran multivariate regression models. From the party organization variables, she selected the index of institutionalization and level of candidate nominations. From the party ideology variables, she selected the New Politics index. From the women activist indicators, she included the percentage of women on the executive. From the party rules, quotas were selected. Finally, the type of electoral system was also included.

Caul tests her hypotheses with data from 1989. She also ran the same model using data from the other points in time and found similar results. Caul runs three different models. In the first model, she seeks to predict the level of women activists on the national executive. She finds that the strongest predictor is a party’s New Left orientation. The second model predicts the presence of candidate gender rules and finds that the index of institutionalization, index of New Politics and number of women in the national executive committee are statistically significant. However, she find that the latter variable has the strongest effect. Contrary to her expectations, parties with low levels of institutionalization tended to have quotas. She hypothesized that rule-oriented
parties might be less flexible and more reluctant to adopt measures to support women’s representation.

The third model predicts the proportion of women parliamentarians. She finds that the strongest predictors are proportional representation systems and high levels of women in the national executive committee. The remaining variables are either statistically insignificant or have very little explanatory value.

Taking her three models together, Caul posits that party characteristics do not simultaneously interact to influence the number of women in power. Instead, she argues that they are linked in a chain of causality. She finds that the electoral system has a direct effect on the number of women elected. A high level of women in the national executive has an effect both on the implementation of quotas and the number of women parliamentarians. The New Left variable is mediated by women in the national executive. New left values are associated with an increased number of women in the national executive committee and once in power, these women push for candidate gender rules and promote women parliamentarians. Caul found an insignificant effect for quotas but argues that quotas may have a lagged effect and their impact may not be seen until the 1990s.
Chapter 5

Political System and Party-level Effects on Women’s Participation

This cross-national study seeks to understand variations in women’s participation in elected office in Latin America by analyzing how the institutional context, party-level structures and women’s agency influence the probability that parties will promote women’s political careers. This chapter will test the causal model and corresponding hypotheses developed in Chapter 4.

The first section provides a descriptive analysis of the state of women’s participation in Latin American politics based on the parties sampled. Bivariate correlations and statistical tests are presented where appropriate. The section focuses on women’s representation within the organizational structure of political parties and mechanisms in place, such as quotas, to advance women’s interests. It also evaluates women’s performance in the last electoral period of each country (as of May 2009), looking at the effect of political and party system variables.

Based on the descriptive analysis and statistical tests, several multivariate models are developed and tested in the second section. These models seek to explain variation in the proportion of women: i) in decision-making bodies within the party; ii) fielded as candidates; and iii) elected to public office. The third section discusses the results of the three statistical models and explores their implications for the proposed causal model.
THE STATE OF WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Women’s Participation within the Organizational Structure of Political Parties

Few of the political parties and electoral tribunals and commissions in Latin America disaggregate data on party membership by sex. In fact, only one-third (31/92) of the political parties in our sample disaggregate their membership roster. Based on the available data, women represent, on average, around 50 percent of party members. Their proportion ranges, on average, from a low of 36 percent in Guatemala to a high of 55 percent in Argentina (see Table 4).

Table 4.

PARTY MEMBERSHIP DISAGGREGATED BY SEX. WEIGHTED AVERAGE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Female Affiliates</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th># of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51-53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44-53</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28-42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47-57</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44-48</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36-52</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44-50</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>51.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>28-57</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total: 29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Total number of party members.
Source: GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

One might expect that an increased number of female party members would be associated with increased numbers of women leaders within the party’s internal ranks and in elected office. A large cadre of female party members would not only provide a pool of potential electoral and party leader candidates, but also a critical mass of women
pushing for the adoption of gender policies. Nevertheless, while women have historically represented between 40 to 50 percent of party members, this has not necessarily translated into increased political representation (Flacso 1995). In our small sample, the proportion of female party members had no statistically significant relationship with the share of women in the national executive committee or fielded as candidates. However, it did produce a moderate relationship that approaches statistical significance with the proportion of women elected to public office.\textsuperscript{63} This suggests that female party members may play a role in supporting female candidates and promoting their election. However, this simple correlation does not prove causation. It is likely that women’s membership in a party, by itself, is not enough to promote their advancement in the party. As Lovenduski (1997) argues, women must be actively pushing their parties to promote and support women’s participation, and this is likely to be done more effectively when they are organized into women’s branches or have gained decision-making power in the internal structures.

Women represent almost half of party members; yet hold, on average, only 19 percent of positions in the national executive body of political parties. At the party-level, the proportion of women in the equivalent of a national executive committee (NEC)\textsuperscript{64} ranges from 0 (Renovacion Nacional in Chile and Partido Cambio Radical in Colombia) to 60 percent (Movimiento al Socialismo in Bolivia). At the country-level, Chile and Panama have, on average, the lowest (13 percent) and Bolivia the highest (42 percent) share of female NEC members. Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and Peru have over 30

\textsuperscript{63} r(27):0.33; p<.10.

\textsuperscript{64} Parties have adopted different names for the equivalent of a national executive committee (NEC), such as: Ejecutivo Nacional, Junta Promotora, Comision Politica, Directorio Nacional, etc. They all represent the highest administrative authority of the party.
percent women in the NEC, while Chile, Panama and the Dominican Republic have less than 15 percent. (See Table 5.)

Table 5.

PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.
Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Women in NEC (%)</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12-44</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25-60</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8-33</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0-39</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25-50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7-50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23-27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9-25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31-46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12-50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14-22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7-20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13-26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25-43</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0-39</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11-32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>0-60</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total: 83</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Total number of men and women in NEC.
Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

Representation in the national executive committee is critical for ensuring compliance with gender quota rules for legislative candidates and any other gender equality commitment adopted by parties. In general, the NEC represents the highest administrative authority of a party, responsible for the implementation of agreements and resolutions adopted by the party’s National Assembly. This body is also responsible for
ensuring compliance with party bylaws and national electoral laws. Thus, a higher share of women in the NEC should contribute to increasing women’s representation (Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006; Kunovich and Paxton 2005). As expected, the percent of women in the NEC has a moderately positive and statistically significant association with the percent of women elected\(^{65}\) and share of female candidates\(^{66}\).

Women’s capacity to push forth a gender equality agenda is not only constrained by their lack of a critical mass within the NEC but also by their relegation to less powerful positions within this decision-making body. As discussed in Chapter 3, the division of labor within parties has historically mirrored the traditional sexual division of labor in the domestic sphere. Women who are placed in decision-making positions within the party structure have generally been assigned to traditional committees, such as education and social welfare, typically associated with women’s traditional interests and roles as mothers and caretakers (Del Aguila 2003; Caul Kittilson 2006). Such committees tend to be less powerful compared to the finance, electoral or public relations committees.

A rough analysis of the positions women hold within the NEC based on the parties sampled, suggests that women are indeed relegated to less powerful positions. Eighty-one parties provided information on the composition of the NEC by title and name of individual. (In some cases, not all the position titles were available.) In 2009, only 7 parties in our sample had a female president heading the national executive committee. Moreover, a mere 13 women held the second-in-command position within

\(65\) \(r(81): 0.33; p<.01\)

\(66\) \(r(72): 0.36; p<.01\)
the NEC (either as first vice-president, secretary-general or adjunct secretary-general). Only the Partido Liberal de Honduras had both a female president and female vice-president.

Women are also underrepresented within the most influential committees of the NEC. The majority of women within the NEC participate as either vocals or members. Only 2 women spearhead the economic committee of their party. About a third of parties include in their NEC representatives of the women’s units. A surprising number of parties (11) also have designated women to head the international relations committee. In the remaining cases, women are generally represented throughout most of the committees within the NEC, in areas such as proceedings, oversight, racial equality, indigenous peoples, education, communication, youth, culture, environment, and capacity building, among others. In short, while women are not entirely absent from high-level positions with the NEC, men, in general, tend to hold the highest or more powerful positions (such as President, Secretary-General, Economic Secretary, Secretary of Party Programming, etc). Women, on the other hand, tend to hold less influential positions (such as Secretary of Proceedings and Archives, Director of Training or Director of Culture).

In general, women have achieved greater representation within the NEC of political parties than in top leadership positions. In our sample, women make-up only 11 percent of the total number of political party presidents (8/75). In addition, only 4 parties have a female secretary-general. In total, a paltry 16 percent (12 out of 76) of the parties have either a female president or female secretary-general (no party has both a female

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67 Although the terminology varies by country and party, the position immediately following the President or Secretary-General was considered. The title names include: Adjunct Secretary-General, Adjunct Secretary-General #1, Secretary-General, Vice President, First-Vice President.
president and female secretary-general). No statistically significant relationship was found between women in top leadership positions within a party and the proportion of women NEC members, fielded as candidates or elected to public office by party.

The participation of women in the founding of a party is also expected to produce a more gender friendly environment (Macaulay 2006). In our sample, women have participated in the founding of only five parties. Elisa Carrio in Argentina is the only female to have independently launched her own party. The remaining four have formed part of a larger group of founding members.  

A Pearson’s correlation did not yield any statistically significant association between the presence of a female founder and the share of women in the NEC, female candidates or women elected to office by party. This could be due to the small sample size.

To address women’s underrepresentation in internal decision-making positions, eight countries have adopted quotas for internal decision-making positions. They include: Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and most recently, Uruguay in 2009. The share of women in the NEC in countries that have adopted quotas for internal decision-making positions before 2009 is 22 percent compared to 18 percent in countries with no quotas. Although the difference in means is 

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68 Only 5 parties specifically claim a woman among their founders. However, we are not able to account for women who might have formed part of a large group of founding members. In eight cases, the party was founded either by members of an organization/movement or a group of individuals, and therefore, the names of each individual founder were not included in the database. For example, the PartidoDemocrata Cristiano was founded by the Federacion Social Cristiana. The Movimiento Popular Democratico in Ecuador and Partido Social Cristiano claim various founders with no specific reference to any individuals. The Frente Republicano Guatemalteco claims 62 founding members. Honduras’ Partido Unificacion Democratica claims four political movements among its founders. Mexico’s Partido Verde was founded by members of the Alianza Ecologista Nacional. Paraguay’s Partido Progresista refers to a founding group. Uruguay’s Movimiento Participacion Popular was founded by leaders of the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros (MLN).
not statistically significant, a multivariate analysis will enable us to determine the effect of quotas after controlling for other factors. (See Table 6.)

An additional 19 parties have voluntarily adopted quotas in countries where no national quota law exists for internal decision-making positions (see Table 6). On average, women represented 19 percent of NEC members in parties with voluntary quotas compared to 18 percent in parties without voluntary quotas. This suggests that voluntary quotas for internal decision-making positions do not have a significant impact and depend on good-faith compliance by political parties.

**TABLE 6.**

**SHARE OF WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN COUNTRIES WITH NATIONALLY MANDATED QUOTA RULES FOR WOMEN IN INTERNAL DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS. WEIGHTED AVERAGE.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender quotas in the NEC</th>
<th>Women in the NEC (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional average</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quota law</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No national quota law</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary quota*</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No voluntary quota</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In 4 cases, the existence of voluntary quotas could not be verified given that bylaws were not available for all parties.

Weight: Total number of men and women in NEC.

Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

Another way of analyzing the effect of quotas for internal decision-making positions is by exploring their effect specifically in parties that have reflected a quota provision in their bylaws, irrespective of whether a national quota law exists. (See Table 7.) In our sample, 47 percent (41/88) of the political parties have embraced quotas for
women in the NEC and reflected the provision in their bylaws.\textsuperscript{69} The gender quota for the NEC ranges from 9 to 50 percent.\textsuperscript{70} Parties that adopted quotas for women in the NEC have a higher share of female NEC members (21 percent) compared to parties with no quotas (18 percent). The difference in means is not statistically significant.

Nevertheless, the effective implementation of quotas depends upon the good will of political parties (Htun and Jones 2002). In our sample, only thirty percent (11/37) of the parties complied with their own gender quota rule for the NEC. On average, parties that did apply the quota elected a higher share of female NEC members (40 percent) compared with parties that did not comply with the quota rule (18 percent). The difference in means is statistically significant. These findings suggest that quotas exert a significant influence on the number of women elected to the NEC; however, their effectiveness clearly depends upon their implementation.

Parties may also adopt enforcement mechanisms to ensure the implementation of internal quotas. In our sample, the share of women in the NEC is higher for parties with sanctions versus parties without sanctions for non-compliance. On average, women comprise 26 percent of NEC members in the 6 parties in our sample with sanctions for non-compliance.\textsuperscript{71} In contrast, women represent 20 percent of NEC members in parties with quotas without sanctions for non-compliance. The difference in means is not statistically significant, and suggests that sanctions do not significantly affect the share of

\textsuperscript{69} By law, political parties in Costa Rica must reflect the quota provision in their bylaws.

\textsuperscript{70} The \textit{Partido Social de Unidad Nacional} in Colombia is the only party with such an unusually low quota (9 percent). This is because they have reserved one seat out of 11 for a representative of the women’s unit. The remaining parties have quotas that range from 20 to 50 percent for women in the NEC.

\textsuperscript{71} Parties with sanctions for non-compliance of internal quotas include: \textit{Partido de los Trabajadores} (Brazil); \textit{Partido Democrata Cristiano} and \textit{Partido Socialista} (Chile); \textit{Accion Ciudadana} and \textit{Unidad Social Cristiana} (Costa Rica) and \textit{Partido Democratico Progresista} (Paraguay).
women in NECs. In fact, of the 11 parties that fulfilled their quota mandate, none adopted sanctions for non-compliance. On the other hand, parties with sanctions failed to fulfill their own minimum quota requirement. This suggests that parties with sanctions do not have proper internal enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. Moreover, as outside monitoring bodies do not generally oversee internal selection processes, parties have more freedom to ignore their own formal rules.

**Table 7.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender quotas in NEC</th>
<th>Women in NEC (%)</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quota provision in bylaw</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7-60</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No quota provision in bylaw</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotas with sanctions for non-compliance</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10-33</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotas without sanctions for non-compliance</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7-60</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties that applied quota</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14-60</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties that did not apply quota rule</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7-46</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: While 41 parties have reflected a gender quota in their bylaws, NEC membership data was available for only 37 parties.
Weight: Total number of male and female NEC members.
Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

In addition to internal quotas, parties with formal and explicit rules regarding selection processes for NEC members should also positively influence the gendered composition of the NEC (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 2004; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Practically all parties (96 percent) have explicit rules regarding the
selection process for members of the national executive office. A weak but statistically significant association was found between the proportion of women in the NEC and the existence of formal and explicit selection rules for NEC members.\footnote{r(80): 0.22; p=.05}

Another factor affecting the share of female NEC members is the type of selection process adopted. Parties may choose to provide formal and explicit rules for selection processes. However, as Norris and Lovenduski (1995: 9) note in their discussion of recruitment processes, “…formal rules may have little bearing on informal practices.” Gallagher (1988) also makes this same observation and further notes that it is often not clear that the selection process is controlled by anyone. Instead, he notes that “the outcomes of the selection process often reflect the results of a complex set of interactions between many actors within the party (and perhaps some outside it), in which different actors have different degrees of influence but none has complete control” (Gallagher 1988: 5).

To address these challenges, information on each party’s selection process was collected from two sources: information available in the party bylaws and responses provided by party leaders during the interview process. As expected, the answers conflicted in a few cases, i.e., the process described in the party bylaws differs from the answer provided by the respondent. When a clear conflict existed between the process identified in the bylaws and the process identified by the interviewee, the latter answer was utilized. In some instances, party bylaws do not specify which selection process to apply but rather present a range of options from which party leaders can pick. In such instances, the answer provided during the interview was used for the analysis. In the 6 cases where an interview was not granted, information in the party bylaws was used.
The selection process of NEC members ranges from inclusive (whereby registered party members or all eligible voters select NEC candidates) to exclusive (whereby a smaller number of individuals, such as national party leaders or the national assembly, select the candidates). It is important to note that our measure of inclusiveness/exclusiveness is imperfect as we do not know the number of people that are participating in the selection process at the regional level or the number of individuals that comprise the highest decision-making body of the party. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that primaries have a much larger number of individuals participating in the selection process compared to the number of individuals that comprise the highest decision-making body of the party, our two main variables of interest. In our sample, close to 60 percent elect their NEC members at the regional level through an assembly or congress composed of regional and/or local level representatives. Twenty-five percent of the parties use either open or closed primaries. Only 13 percent of parties use an exclusive selection process. The remaining 3 percent use some kind of combination of exclusive and inclusive selection processes (for example, NEC candidates are selected through primaries but the final selection must be ratified by the President).

With the exception of mixed selection process, women vying for positions within the NEC perform relatively the same under primaries, regional and national selection processes. The representation of women NEC members according to type of selection process adopted is as follows: open and closed primaries (19 percent); regional assemblies (20 percent) and exclusive selection processes at the national level (17 percent). Parties that use a combination of inclusive and exclusive selection processes produce the lowest proportion of women NEC members (12 percent). (See Table 8.) Not
controlling for other factors, and using mixed selection processes as our benchmark, national, regional and primaries do not yield a statistically significant higher share of female NEC members. This suggests that women perform relatively the same independent of the type of selection process employed to select NEC members. (In a forthcoming section below, an OLS regression controlling for other factors will help to corroborate this finding.)

Table 8.

Percent women NEC members according to selection process for NEC members. Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of selection process</th>
<th>Women in NEC (%)</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open primaries (all eligible voters can vote)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed primaries (only party members can vote)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0-39</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By agreement/vote reached within an assembly/congress composed of delegates representing different territorial branches of the party (regional and/or local level representatives)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0-60</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By agreement/vote of the highest decision-making body of the party</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0-25</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By designation of the President or Secretary-General</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13-22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10-17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Total number of male and female NEC members.
Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

73 Weighted OLS regression (weight=total number of male and female NEC members).

74 It is important to note that our measure of inclusive/exclusiveness is imperfect as we do not know the number of people that are participating in the selection process at the regional level or the number of individuals that comprise the highest decision-making body of the party. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that primaries have a much larger number of individuals participating in the selection process compared to a regional congress or the highest decision-making body of the party.
Women’s Units and other Mechanisms to Promote Women

When women mobilize and coordinate efforts to define their objectives, parties are more likely to respond to their demands (Sacchet 2005; Lovenduski 1997). Women’s units have the potential of serving as effective vehicles for channeling women’s claims. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the mere presence of a women’s unit is not an indication of a party’s support for gender equality or the strength of women activists within the party. A party may have a women’s unit but may lack political support or the resources, whether financial, technical or human, to effectively push a gender equality agenda.

The existence of a women’s unit has a statistically insignificant relationship with the proportion of female NEC members selected, candidates nominated and officials elected. It is important to note that most of the parties sampled (88 percent) have a women’s unit (80/91). Information regarding the existence of a women’s unit was gathered from two sources: party bylaws and interviews. In about a dozen cases, the information collected was inconsistent. For example, the party bylaw does not call for the creation of a women’s unit yet the respondent indicated that a women’s unit did exist. In a few cases, this can be explained by the fact that some bylaws indicate that a women’s unit could potentially be established upon agreement by party members. In other cases, even though the bylaws do not establish a women’s unit, the women’s units are sufficiently active to allow for a verification of their existence. In only one case did the party bylaw called for the creation of a women’s unit but the respondent indicated that a women’s unit did not in fact exist. In general, however, the information available did not permit for an accurate and systematic verification of the existence of a women’s unit.
With the goal of capturing information that may not be written down in party documents, responses collected during the interview process regarding the existence of a women’s unit was used. In the 6 cases where parties did not grant an interview, information available in the party bylaws was used. Given the lack of validity of our measurement, the effects of this variable should be analyzed with caution.

It is difficult to evaluate the characteristics that would make a women’s unit effective in promoting gender equality, as a majority of the parties’ sampled claim to have adopted many of the measures generally associated with greater support for women. For example, most of the parties (91 percent) (73/80) have an assigned or elected person heading the women’s unit. Close to ninety percent (72/80) of the women’s units participate in the drafting of party government plans. A majority (64 percent) (48/75) have a program or action plan aimed at promoting gender equality. Two-thirds (53/79) have an assigned budget. This homogeneity in measures to support gender equality could be due to politically correct answers from the respondents. It is also plausible that even though parties have adopted these measures to promote women they are ineffective or not fully implemented. Case studies of women’s units might generate better data with which to analyze the characteristics associated with effective women’s units.

Another measure of a party’s commitment to advancing gender equality can be found in party bylaws. Twenty-seven percent (24/90) of the parties sampled explicitly stated in their by-laws a commitment to fostering equal opportunities for women and men.

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75 About a quarter to over a half of the parties have additional measures that grant the women’s units special access to decision-making bodies or arenas within the party. According to information gathered from the interviews, 25 percent of the parties grant women’s unit a special vote in budgetary matters (17/67). Sixty percent of the women’s units have direct representation in the NEC (39/66). Thirty-four percent of the women’s units participate in the creation of candidate lists (23/67). While this information was available for some 66 parties in the sample, no statistically significant relationships were found between these variables and our three outcomes of interest.
and gender equality. Lovenduski (1993) argues that rhetorical commitments, such as those found in party by-laws, are the least effective in increasing women’s representation. Yet, in our sample, a weak but statistically significant correlation was found between the inclusion of equality principles in party bylaws and our three outcomes of interest (women NEC members, female candidates and women elected).76 The coding system was strict. Only those parties that explicitly mention a commitment to gender equality, the protection of women’s rights and/or fostering equal opportunities for women and men in their objectives or principles were deemed to have strong rhetorical commitments to gender equality.77

Parties can also foster gender equality through a series of mechanisms and actions aimed at building women’s skills and preparing them to run for office. These mechanisms can range from training to economic incentives to mentoring opportunities for female party members and candidates.78 Training is the most common mechanism adopted by parties to support women. In fact, 77 percent of the parties sampled (63/82 parties) provide their female members and upper management with training workshops. In the last election period, 65 percent of parties offered training specifically for women (55/84). Furthermore, over a quarter of the parties allocate a certain percentage of their budget to activities aimed at training women (20/75). None of the variables showed a

76 Women in NEC r(81):0.28; p<.01; Female candidates r(77):0.26; p<.05; Women Elected r(88):0.22; p<.05

77 Parties that mentioned principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities without explicit mention of women were coded a 0. In addition, parties that only specified rules for the implementation of quota laws and/or that only call for the creation of a gender or women’s unit were also coded a 0. In our multivariate analysis, another variable will control for the presence of quotas and a women’s unit.

78 Of the 34 parties that responded, 5 offer economic incentives for women candidates. Of the 44 parties that responded, 17 offer mentoring opportunities.
statistically significant correlation with the number of women elected, female candidates
fielded or women NEC members elected.  

WOMEN’S PERFORMANCE IN THE LAST ELECTIONS (AS OF MAY 2009)

Gendered Composition of Candidate Lists

In the last election period (previous to data collection), women represented, on
average, 24 percent of the total number of candidates presented by parties and alliances in
the electoral lists of the 79 parties in our sample.  (See Table 19, Annex II.)  The
proportion of women fielded as candidates by party across 18 countries ranges from 0 to
51 percent.  The average for Latin America compares quite favorably with a study of 460
political parties in 76 countries which found that, on average, women comprised 15
percent of candidates in electoral lists (Kunovich and Paxton 2005).  In addition, a strong
and statistically significant relationship exists between the number of women elected and
the number of female candidates.  

Looking only at parties for which the available data are consistent at both the
party and alliance level, we find that, while women represented on average 22 percent

79 Many parties state that the underrepresentation of women in candidate lists results from their
inability to recruit women interested in running for office.  To address this issue, some parties have
developed a database of potential women candidates that can be utilized to develop their list of candidates
during electoral periods.  An impressive 68 percent of the parties indicated that they maintain a database of
potential women candidates (56/82).  This number seems unexpectedly high.  Respondents might either
have provided a politically correct answer or considered that a general database of female and male
candidates also serves the same purpose.  A Pearson’s correlation yielded no statistically significant
association between the existence of a database and both the proportion of women elected and proportion
of female candidates.

r(78):0.68; p=.000

81 These figures were calculated by eliminating all parties with inconsistent data between the
percent of women elected and percent of female candidates at the alliance or individual party-level.  As
explained in chapter 4, over 50 percent of the parties sampled ran in the elections as part of a coalition.  In
some cases, data was available for female candidates at the alliance level but at the individual party-level
for women elected.  As a result, parties with this inconsistent data were deleted.  If the information was
available at the alliance level for both candidate lists and elected women, it was included in the calculation.
Parties deleted include all parties in Mexico and Venezuela as well as the PNP in Peru as it ran as part of an
of the total number of candidates in electoral lists, they won on average 17 percent of the seats (see Table 9). To examine the yield of women elected from female candidates, a ratio is calculated dividing the weighted average of women elected by party to the lower house/unicameral congress (as a percentage of total elected) by the weighted average of female candidates nominated by party (as a percentage of total candidates) (see Kunovich and Paxton 2005). A ratio of 1.0 indicates a one-to-one relationship between the share of women candidates and women elected. The ratio of congresswomen elected by party to female candidates fielded by party is 0.76, indicating that, on average, for every 10 percent female candidates, 7.6 percent of women are elected to Congress. The ratio ranges from a low of 0.42 in Paraguay to a high of 1.03 in Chile. Only in Chile do women perform slightly better than men at the ballot box, with a ratio of 1.03 for women compared to .996 for men. This is a surprising result given that Chile is considered the most conservative country in the region, uses an open-list system and has not adopted quotas for legislative candidates. Women in Argentina and Bolivia also are highly electable with ratios of .94 and .88, respectively. However, both have quota laws with placement mandates and strong sanctions. Paraguay and Uruguay are the worst performers, with ratios under 0.50 of women elected to women candidates.

Compared to men, the ratio of congressmen elected by party to male candidates fielded by party is 1.1, indicating that, on average, for every 10 percent of male candidates, 11 percent are elected to Congress. Thus, men perform better than women at the ballot box but the difference, on average, is not considerably large.

alliance with UPP and the data was not available by party. Data was not available for candidates in the Dominican Republic and Honduras.
Table 9.

**Ratio of Representatives Elected by Party to Candidates Fielded by Party, Disaggregated by Sex.**

* Lower House/Unicameral Congress.

Weighted averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent female candidates</th>
<th>Percent women elected</th>
<th>Ratio women elected to female candidates</th>
<th>Ratio of men elected to male candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>.76</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See footnote 81 for explanation of which parties were included.

**Honduras** - Data for the share of female candidates is available for only one party and was therefore not included.

+Data was available at the alliance level for candidates and at the party level for officials elected, and was therefore, not included.

Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database.

It is also interesting to examine the number of women elected as a percent of the number of female candidates. In other words, what percentage of female candidates get elected? The figures are calculated by dividing the total number of women elected by the
total number of women candidates presented by all the parties in the sample. This calculation is not as complex as the ratio calculated in Table 9, and becomes meaningful when the same calculation is performed for both men and women and the difference compared. The results provide us with some interesting insights about women’s electability. On average, 16 percent of the women that run for office are elected. In comparison, 22 percent of male candidates are elected. Chile is clearly an outlier, where 53 percent of female candidates were elected and women outperformed men by one percentage point. In the remaining countries, men outperform women. Female candidates in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and El Salvador perform relatively well, where the difference in percentage points between the share of women elected as a percent of all female candidates and share of men elected is below the regional average of 6 percentage points (see Table 10). Women performed worst in Paraguay with a 16 percentage point difference between the share of women elected and share of men elected. In short, the data suggests that, on average, men have higher electability rates compared to women but the difference is not very significant. As we will see in the following sections, other factors, such as quota laws, ballot types and electoral systems, help to explain women’s performance in elections.
**Table 10.**

**Elected Officials as a percentage of Legislative Candidates Disaggregated by Sex. Lower House/Unicameral Congress. Weighted Average.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Women elected as a percent of female candidates</th>
<th>Men elected as a percent of male candidates</th>
<th>Difference between percentage of women and men elected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>-6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See footnote 81 for explanation of which parties were included.

**Honduras** - Data for the share of female candidates is available for only one party and was therefore not included.

+Data was available at the alliance level for candidates and at the party level for officials elected, and was therefore, not included.

Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL (forthcoming).

One important factor that helps explain why more female candidates are not elected lies in the composition of candidate lists. It is a well known fact that parties tend to place women in the lower half of the list where they have little chance of winning (Jones 2004; Htun and Jones 2002). To test this assertion, we can analyze the
distribution of women candidates in closed-list systems without quotas in the largest multi-member district of each country (typically the capital city).\textsuperscript{82} A pyramidal pattern emerges where more women are placed in the bottom two-thirds instead of the top-third where their chances of being elected are greater. We find that, in the largest multi-member district of each country for which data is available, of the total number of female candidates included in the lists, parties/alliances placed 30 percent women in the top-third; 33 percent in the second-third, and 37 percent in the bottom-third.\textsuperscript{83} The difference in means between the top third and bottom third is statistically significant. Clearly, in closed-list PR systems, a candidate’s placement on the party list is essential for determining outcome. If parties continue to place women in non-electable positions in party lists, women will continue to be underrepresented in elected office.

**Candidate Selection Processes**

Selection processes for legislative candidates follow the same methodology and categorization as that used for the selection of NEC members. The selection process for legislative candidates ranges from inclusive (whereby registered party members or all eligible voters select candidates) to exclusive (whereby a small number of individuals select the candidates, such as national party leaders or the national assembly). In our sample, 34 percent of parties elect their legislative candidates at the sub-national level through an assembly or congress composed of regional and/or local level representatives. Close to 30 percent of the parties use either open or closed primaries. Twenty-one percent

\textsuperscript{82} In the case of open-lists, placement is irrelevant as voters can select an individual candidate from a list.

\textsuperscript{83} Calculation is based on weighted average of all parties that fall under closed-list systems without nationally mandated gender quotas. It is measured by dividing the total number of female candidates placed in the first, second or third tier of a party list divided by the total number of female candidates in the list. Countries included are: El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Venezuela.
use some kind of combination of exclusive and inclusive selection processes.\textsuperscript{84} An additional 17 percent of parties use an exclusive selection process in which candidates are nominated by the party’s highest decision-making body or leader. (See Table 11.)

Parties that apply a combination of inclusive and exclusive selection processes field the highest proportion of female candidates (28 percent). More female candidates (25 percent) are elected through primaries (open and closed) than through assemblies by regional or local party leaders (22 percent) or exclusive selection processes at the national level (17 percent). (See Table 11). Not controlling for other factors and using mixed selection processes as our benchmark, exclusive selection processes yield a statistically significant lower share of female candidates (11 percent).\textsuperscript{85} Compared to mixed selection processes, primaries and regional processes are not statistically different. Thus, these findings suggest that exclusive candidate selection processes are not more favorable to women but rather it is a combination of both inclusive and exclusive processes that yields the highest share of female candidates. Upon closer examination of the parties that use mixed selection processes, over half are located in countries where a quota mandate for legislative candidates is in effect. Thus, women’s better performance under mixed selection processes may result from the use of quotas and not necessarily because mixed selection processes favor women’s inclusion in candidate lists. In a forthcoming section,\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{84} Some parties use a combination of selection processes. In some cases, parties select a certain percentage of their candidates using one method and the remaining percentage using a different method. For example, the Partido Sociedad Patriotica (PSP) in Ecuador selects national level candidates through an assembly whereas the provincial candidates are selected by the maximum executive organ. Similarly, the Partido Aprista Peruano (APRA), Union por el Peru (UPP) and Partido Nacionalista del Peru (PNP) in Peru select 4/5 of their candidates through primaries and 1/5 are designated by the national committee. In other cases, candidates are selected using one method but the final list must be approved by the party’s national committee. For example, the Partido Social Cristiano (PSC) in Ecuador elects candidates at the sub- national level by a congress or assembly but the final list must be ratified by the party’s maximum decision-making body.

\textsuperscript{85} Weighted OLS regression (weight=total number of male and female candidates).
an OLS regression controlling for quotas will enable us to determine how much of this effect is due to quotas.

**Table 11.**

Percent female candidates by party and women elected by party according to candidate selection process. Lower House/Unicameral Congress. Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of selection process</th>
<th>Women candidates (%)</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primaries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open primaries (all eligible voters can vote)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed primaries (only party members can vote)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3-51</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By agreement/vote reached within an assembly/congress composed of delegates representing different territorial branches of the party (regional and/or local level representatives)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8-49</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By agreement/vote of the highest decision-making body of the party</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9-38</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By designation of the President or Secretary General</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11-49</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Total number of male and female candidates.
Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

---

86 It is important to note that our measure of inclusive/exclusiveness is imperfect as we do not know the number of people that are participating in the selection process at the regional level or the number of individuals that comprise the highest decision-making body of the party. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that primaries have a much larger number of individuals participating in the selection process compared to a regional congress or the highest decision-making body of the party.
The Effect of Quotas

Numerous studies have found quotas to exert significant influence on women’s representation (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2006; Jones 2009, 1998; Krook 2005; Baldez 2004; Htun and Jones 2002; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Quotas can either be mandated by national law or voluntarily adopted by political parties. Twelve countries have nationally mandated quota laws for the composition of legislative electoral lists (see Table 12). 87

Parties in countries with nationally mandated quota laws field more female candidates (25 percent) and send more women to congress (20 percent) than parties in countries with no quota law (where women make-up 19 percent of candidates by party and 14 percent of elected officials by party). (See Table 13.) The difference in means between parties under quota law systems and those without quota laws is statistically significant for both the share of female candidates and women elected by party.

Despite the overall positive impact of quotas on the share of female candidates and women elected, the lack of sanctions for non-compliance and placement mandates can render quota laws ineffective (Jones 2009, 2004; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Htun and Jones 2002; Baldez 2004). In Latin America, the impact of quota systems varies according to their design. Jones (2008; 2009) divides quota systems according to their effectiveness. The most effective quotas are well-designed with sanctions for non-compliance and a placement mandate. They have strong enforcement mechanisms whereby electoral authorities reject the lists presented by political parties that do not abide by the quota (Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Placement mandates also ensure that women receive equitable

87 In our sample, 53 parties fall under the mandate of a national quota law. Parties in Uruguay are not included among the 53 parties, as the data in this study corresponds to the 2004 elections and the quota law was adopted in 2009.
representation throughout the list. When combined with closed-lists, quotas with sanctions and a placement mandate ensure a minimum representation of women.

Countries with well-designed quota systems include the lower house/unicameral chambers of Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Mexico (Jones 2009).

**Table 12.**

**National quota laws for legislative candidates.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year Adopted</th>
<th>Legislative Body</th>
<th>Quota (%)</th>
<th>Well-designed: Closed lists, Sanctions and Placement Mandate</th>
<th>Effective sanctions: Sanctions only or sanctions &amp; placement mandate w/ open-lists</th>
<th>Weak sanctions/ poor design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia*</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica*</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>1997-2001</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico*</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Chamber Senate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay+</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Information corresponds to laws in place during the election year under consideration in this study. Recent reforms include: In 2009, Costa Rica increased the minimum quota to 50 percent. In 2008, Mexico increased the minimum quota to 40 percent. In 2010, Bolivia increased the minimum quota to 50 percent.

+Uruguay adopted a quota law in 2009 which will go into effect in 2014. It was not included in the analysis as the data in this study correspond to the 2004 elections.

Source: Jones 2009.
Another set of quota systems incorporate only sanctions for non-compliance. Strict enforcement mechanisms ensure that parties abide by the quota rule and nominate a minimum number of female candidates. Countries that fall under this category include Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Peru. Ecuador and the Dominican Republic are coded as countries that have adopted only sanctions even though they have a placement mandate. Both countries use open-list systems which are incompatible with placement mandates (Candelario 2005; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Jones 2009). If voters can select individual candidates, a woman’s placement on a list is irrelevant.88

Brazil, Panama and Paraguay have the least effective quota systems (Jones 2009). They either have weak enforcement mechanisms or are otherwise poorly designed. Brazil’s quota law has several loopholes that enable parties to circumvent it. According to the law, each party may field a number of candidates equal to 1.5 times the number of available seats in a given district (Araujo 2008; Setzler 2005); thus, in principle, a party may comply with the quota law (which mandates a minimum of 30 percent women) by presenting an all-male list of candidates as long as it does not represent more than 70 percent of the total number of candidates (Jones 2009). Parties that do not meet the quota’s minimum requirement must leave open the positions earmarked for women, and therefore, can choose not to enlist a single female candidate (Schwindt-Bayer 2009).

Similarly, in Panama and Paraguay, the quota law is ineffective as it applies to primaries. In Panama, women must represent a minimum of 30 percent of candidates in primaries; however, there are weak enforcement mechanisms as parties can receive an

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88 In principle, a women’s placement on an open-list should be irrelevant as the voter selects any individual candidate from a list. Nevertheless, being first in a list has a strong symbolic effect. In a study of the 2006 Peruvian elections where open-lists were used, female candidates received more votes when they were included at the top of the list (Gallo 2008).
exemption if not enough women register as candidates (Jones 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Paraguay, on the other hand, has a strong enforcement mechanism since party lists that do not comply with the quota law may not enroll for the electoral competition (Araujo and García 2006; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). In addition, the law includes a placement mandate requiring that a minimum of one of every five candidates be a woman. However, the quota applies only to the composition of lists for primary elections (Araujo and García 2006). Therefore, the law is considered relatively ineffective as the final national lists result in less than 20 percent female candidates. In fact, in the 2008 elections, the two largest parties (Partido Colorado and Partido Liberal) fielded less than 20 percent female candidates, below the minimum required by the quota law.

Parties that fall under either nationally mandated quota rules with sanctions for non-compliance or quota rules with placement mandates and sanctions send more women to congress (26 percent and 25 percent, respectively) than those that have poorly designed quotas (9 percent). (See Table 13.) The difference in means between quota rules with placement mandates and sanctions and poorly designed quotas is statistically significant, as is the difference in means between quotas with sanctions only and poorly designed quotas. Thus, the data suggest that quotas with sanctions and a placement mandate or quotas with sanctions alone yield a higher share of female elected officials than quotas with weak sanctions or a poor design.

An important step in analyzing the effectiveness of quotas is to explore how quotas affect different steps in the process of becoming an elected official (Matland 2006). Quotas with strong sanctions for non-compliance should exert a significant effect on the number of female candidates fielded by political parties. Quotas with sanctions
and a placement mandate, on the other hand, should be relatively irrelevant for the composition of candidate lists and, instead, should influence the share of women elected.

Quotas with effective sanctions (independent of whether they have a placement mandate) yield a higher share of female candidates (36 percent) than quotas with weak sanctions/poor design (14 percent) or no quotas (19 percent). The difference in means between quotas with effective sanctions and quotas with weak sanctions/poor design is statistically significant as is the difference between quotas with effective sanctions and no quotas. This suggests that quotas with effective sanctions are an effective mechanism for getting women on candidate lists compared to quotas that are poorly designed or no quotas.

Finally, quotas with sanctions and placement mandates yield an unexpectedly similar share of women elected (25 percent) compared to sanctions alone (26 percent). Although this small difference in means is not statistically significant, the data suggest that effective sanctions alone are critical for getting a significant number of women on the ballot (in this case 42 percent) and, with a higher share of female candidates, women then increase their probability of being elected. However, quotas with sanctions and a placement mandate should be more “efficient” in ensuring women’s election as they guarantee that women are placed in electable positions. Our data supports this assertion. Parties that fall under the mandate of a quota law with sanctions and placement mandates fielded only 33 percent female candidates’ which resulted in the election of 25 percent women (ratio of .76). Parties that fall under the mandate of a national quota law with sanctions alone fielded 42 percent female candidates which resulted in the election of 26 percent women (ratio of 0.62). (See Table 13.) Thus, even though both types of quota
systems produced relatively the same outcome (25 and 26 percent women elected), the quota systems with sanctions required a higher share of female candidates to produce the same result as quota systems with sanctions and a placement mandate. In short, the data suggest that both effective sanctions alone as well as sanctions with placement mandates are important for getting women elected, but placement mandates may be more “efficient” in ensuring women a minimum level of representation.

It is also interesting to consider whether a party’s voluntary adoption of quotas might increase the likelihood that parties will implement them. Jones (1998) argues that in contrast to nationally mandated quotas, party quotas are not as effective. They are voluntary in nature and the party leadership is responsible for their enforcement (whereas national level quotas are enforced by judiciaries or bureaucracies) (Jones 1998; Htun 2002; Sacchet 2007).

Of the 53 parties that fall under a national quota law, 24 have reflected the quota mandate in their by-laws. An additional five parties in our sample have voluntarily adopted gender quotas for the composition of their candidate lists for legislative elections, even though there is no national mandate. Parties that voluntarily adopted quotas, even though no national quota law exists, fielded more female candidates by party (29 percent) and elected more women (25 percent) than parties with no voluntary

89 One might also expect that parties that reflect the national quota law in their bylaws might be more supportive of gender equality than parties that do not reflect the quota law in their bylaws even though the quota is mandated by law. Parties that reflect the national quota law in their by-laws field more female candidates (28 percent) and elect more women (22 percent) than parties that fall under a national quota law but do not reflect the quota law in their bylaws (23 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

90 In our sample, the five parties that have voluntarily adopted quotas in countries with no nationally mandated quota legislation include: i) Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion in El Salvador, ii) Cambio Democratico in El Salvador, iii) Partido Liberal Constitucionalista in Nicaragua, iv) Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional in Nicaragua and v) Partido Socialista in Uruguay. The Partido Popular Democratico in Chile and the Vertiente Artiguista of the Frente Amplio in Uruguay adopted quotas for legislative candidates in 2008. As the election data corresponds to 2005 and 2004, respectively, these parties were not coded as having voluntary quotas.
quotas (19 and 13 percent, respectively). (See Table 13.) The difference in means is statistically significant for candidates and the share of women elected. This suggests that, compared to parties that do not adopt voluntary quotas, the adoption of voluntary quotas favors the nomination of women candidates, which translates into gains for women at the ballot box.

A closer look at the five parties that voluntarily adopted quotas in countries with no nationally mandated quota law corroborates Htun and Jones’ (2002) argument that good-faith compliance by parties is essential for ensuring the effective implementation of quotas. Of the five parties with voluntary quotas, two did not implement their voluntary quota (Partido Liberal Constitucionalista in Nicaragua and Cambio Democratico in El Salvador). Although the number of parties with voluntary quotas is small, the results suggest that in countries with no nationally mandated quota rules, voluntary quotas are better than no quotas, but clearly they rely on good-faith compliance by political parties.

In summary, although parties with national quotas field more female candidates and send more women to Congress than parties with no quotas, to be truly effective, quotas must be well-designed (Jones 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Htun and Jones 2002). Well-designed quotas with measures that ensure women’s inclusion and electability through any combination of sanctions and placement mandates yield a higher proportion of female candidates and women elected than quotas alone. Well-designed quotas are those where a minimum percentage of women must be included in candidate lists and in electable positions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Share of female candidates</th>
<th></th>
<th>Share of women elected</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean (%)*</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Number of parties</td>
<td>Mean (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quota law</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3-51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No national quota law</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0-37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quotas with</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16-49</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sanctions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quotas w/sanctions and placement mandate</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16-49</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quotas w/ sanctions and no placement mandate</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31-49</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quotas w/weak sanctions or poorly designed</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3-51</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary quota (no national quota law)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20-37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No voluntary quota, no national quota law</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0-37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Share of female candidates: Total number of male and female candidates. Share of women elected: Total number of male and female officials elected to Congress. *Data for the share of female candidates is not available for the Dominican Republic and for four parties in Honduras. Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

The results of our analysis also suggest that effective sanctions for non-compliance are important for getting women on candidate lists; whereas both sanctions alone and sanctions combined with placement mandates are important for getting women elected. However, sanctions combined with placement mandates appear to be more
“efficient” in ensuring women’s election by requiring a lower number of female candidates compared to sanctions alone. In addition, parties that have voluntarily adopted quotas, even when no national mandate exists, nominate more female candidates than parties with no voluntary quotas. However the effectiveness of voluntary quotas clearly depends on good-faith compliance by political parties.

The Effect of Ballot Type on Women’s Participation

Extant literature has evaluated whether the type of ballot, open or closed, influences the electoral outcome for legislative candidates (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2008, 2009; Schmidt and Saunders 2004). As discussed in Chapter 4, although closed-list systems have commonly been considered superior for getting women elected (Htun & Jones 2002; Krook 2005; Norris 2004), more recent research has challenged this finding and suggests that open-list systems also favor women’s elections (Schmidt 2004). In theory, closed-lists may elect more women because they do not depend on preferential voting for individual candidates, and thereby, circumvent any possible voter bias against women (Htun and Jones 2002). Open-lists, on the other hand, may not favor women because women tend to have less access to campaign funds needed to successfully compete against their male counterparts (Htun and Jones 2002).

Based on our sample, more women are elected to Congress by party under closed-lists (21 percent) compared to open-lists (17 percent) or combined systems (9 percent) (see Table 14). However, the difference in means in the number of women elected under

---

91 As explained in Chapter 3, there are two types of list systems used in Latin America: open and closed-lists. In the open-list system, voters vote either for the list as published or vote for an individual candidate, wherever that candidate appears on the party’s list. In the closed-list system, voters must select the entire list of candidates as presented by the party with no ability to express a preference for a particular candidate.
closed and open-list systems is not statistically significant. In addition, no statistically significant relationship was found between the type of list (open or closed) and the proportion of women elected.

Jones (2009) found that the combination of closed-list systems with quotas produced a higher percentage of women elected compared to open-list systems with quotas. Without controlling for any other influence, our sample corroborates this finding. Closed-lists with quotas elect more women to congress (24 percent) than open-lists with quotas (17 percent). The difference in means is statistically significant. In addition, the combination of closed-lists with quotas results in a higher share of women elected by party (24 percent) compared to closed-lists with no quotas (15 percent). The difference in means between closed-list systems with quotas and closed-list systems without quotas is statistically significant. The superiority of closed-lists with quotas results in part from the fact that four of the five countries with closed-list quotas also have effective quota legislation, i.e., sanctions and a placement mandate.

When combined with quotas, open-lists also elect more female candidates. Open-list systems with quotas elect more women to congress by party (17 percent) than open-list systems without quotas (15 percent) and closed-list systems without quotas (15 percent). However, the difference in means between open-list systems with quotas and open-list systems without quotas is not statistically significant.

When we take into consideration the quality of quota design, open and closed-list systems with well-designed quotas (i.e., quotas with a placement mandate and sanctions or quotas with sanctions alone) produce the highest share of women elected compared to all other list types and quota combinations. Open and closed-lists result in the election of
the highest share of women by party (26 percent and 25 percent, respectively) when well
designed quota laws are in effect compared to: closed and open-lists with weak sanctions
or a poor design (11 and 8 percent, respectively); closed and open-lists with quotas (24
and 17 percent, respectively) and closed and open-lists with no quotas (15 percent in both
cases). This suggests that closed-lists are more effective when combined with quota laws
that include placement mandates and sanctions, and open-lists are most effective when
combined with quota laws that include sanctions for non-compliance. Such sanctions
ensure that parties field a minimum percent of women candidates, and in turn, a higher
share of female candidates translates into a higher share of women elected. (Again, as
open-list systems are incompatible with placement mandates, quota laws under open-lists
can only ensure that women are placed in candidate lists but cannot ensure that women
are placed in electable positions.)

In short, closed-list systems with quotas outperform open-lists with quotas.
However, when the effectiveness of the quota law is taken into account, women perform
relatively the same under open and closed-list systems. In fact, the combined effect of
open and closed-lists with well-designed quotas produces the highest share of women
elected compared to all other quota and list-type combinations. This suggests that
irrespective of list type, well-designed quotas play a determining role in the election of
female candidates. It also supports a growing body of evidence that open-list systems
with quotas may not necessarily disadvantage women (Schmidt 2004; Schmidt and
Saunders 2004; Dador and Llanos 2008), particularly when quotas are well-designed
(Jones 2009).
Table 14.

Effect of list type and quota law on the proportion of women elected to lower house/unicameral congress. Weighted average.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Share of women elected to congress by party (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quotas &amp; no quotas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-list</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-list</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weight: Total number of male and female officials elected to Congress. Source: Own calculations based on data from GEPPAL database (forthcoming) *Summary statistics available in Annex II.

Results of Multivariate Analysis

What explains the proportion of women in the National Executive Committee?

A robust OLS regression was used to predict the factors that determine the number of women in the NEC. 92 (See Table 15.) Two models were run. In the first model, we control for the effect of nationally mandated quota laws for women in decision-making positions within the party. The second model controls for the effect of quotas adopted by parties and reflected in their bylaws. This model also controls for whether the parties complied with their own quota rule.

92 No outliers were detected. Diagnostic tests for influence and leverage were conducted. The Movimiento al Socialismo in Bolivia with the highest percent of women in the NEC exerts some slight influence. In addition, two additional parties exert some leverage (Partido Liberación Dominicana in the Dominican Republic and PC-Foro Batillista in Uruguay). Given the small sample size, a robust regression was run.
The results of the first model indicate that a national quota law mandating a minimum percentage of women in decision-making positions within the party has a statistically significant effect on the share of female NEC members. The proportion of women in the NEC is predicted to be 7 percent higher in parties that fall under the mandate of a national quota law compared to parties that do not fall under a quota rule.

The explicit inclusion of gender equality principles in the party’s objectives or principles, as reflected in the bylaws, has a positive and statistically significant effect on women’s representation in the NEC. The share of female NEC members is predicted to be 6 percent higher in parties that incorporate gender equality principles in their bylaws compared to parties that do not. Based on my original hypothesis, I did not expect this variable to have a statistically significant effect. However, the findings suggest that if gender equality principles form an integral part of the party’s ideology and objective, parties are more likely to apply these principles within their organizational structure.93

In addition, a party’s ideology also affects the proportion of women in the NEC.94 As expected, more left-leaning parties elect more female NEC members. For every unit

93 As left-leaning parties tend to hold more egalitarian principles, one would expect a strong association between left-leaning parties and the inclusion of gender equality principles in the by-laws. Interestingly, the correlation indicates that left leaning parties are more likely to integrate gender equality principles in their bylaws but the relationship is very weak and statistically insignificant. r(89) = -.014; p > .10. This suggests that, independent of their ideology, parties to the left and to the right are just as likely to reflect gender equality principles in the party’s objective or principles.

94 Parties ranked themselves on an ideological scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the left and 10 the right. The regional average is 4.8. Generally, the ideological score is calculated by taking the average of 5 to 25 responses provided by legislators and/or party leaders. In our database, the score is based on a single respondent. To ensure the validity of the ideological scores, the responses were compared to the ideological scores available in the database of Parliamentary Elites in Latin America (PELA). (See http://americo.usal.es/oir/elites/bases_de_datos.htm.) In 9 cases, the responses varied by more than 2 points on the ideological scale. In such cases, the response provided in the PELA database was used. In addition, the data in the PELA database was used for the six parties that did not grant an interview. Unfortunately, the PELA database does not have the data available for 36 parties in our sample, and therefore, could not be used for all parties.
increase in conservatism, there is a 2 percent decrease in the proportion of women in the NEC.

The remaining variables did not produce any statistically significant effects. The regression tested for each type of selection process. The benchmark for comparison is primaries (both open and closed).\(^95\) Compared to primaries, regional, national and mixed selection processes do not yield statistically significant differences. In addition, the existence of a women’s unit or adoption of explicit rules regarding the selection process for NEC members produces no statistically significant effect. Finally, the years since a party’s founding also yields a statistically insignificant result.\(^96\)

The results of the second model indicate that the implementation of quotas for women in the NEC is one of the strongest determinants of the share of female NEC members. The proportion of women in the NEC is predicted to be 22 percent higher in parties that have applied a gender quota for NEC members compared to parties that do not apply the quota or that do not have a quota rule. Based on our previous findings that not all parties with quotas implemented them, the model controlled for parties that did in fact apply the quota as dictated in their bylaws. As explained earlier, only 30 percent of parties with a quota mandate for women in the NEC applied them during the last

\(^95\) See Annex I for description of coding of selection processes.

\(^96\) Caul (1999) explains that newer parties may hold more progressive ideals or may be more inclusive of women’s demands as part of a broader strategy to garner support from women and the electorate. By having more women on their lists, newer parties may be able to differentiate themselves from more centrist parties. Most of the parties in our sample have been in existence for an average of 37 years (ranging from 1 to 160 years) with a median of 21 years.
Thus, the implementation of quotas for women in the NEC has the strongest effect on women’s representation in a key decision-making body within the party.

Mirroring the results of our first model, the explicit inclusion of gender equality principles in the party’s objectives or principles, as reflected in the by-laws, has a positive and statistically significant effect on women’s representation in the NEC. The share of female NEC members is predicted to be 7 percent higher in parties that incorporate gender equality principles in the bylaws compared to parties that do not. In addition, more left--leaning parties elect more female NEC members. For every unit increase in conservatism, there is a 2 percent decrease in the proportion of women in the NEC.

The remaining variables did not produce any statistically significant effects. These include the type of selection process applied, the existence of a women’s unit, adoption of explicit rules regarding the selection process for NEC member or the years since a party’s founding.

To test for the influence of women in the party’s top leadership, a robust regression was run (not shown here) controlling for the presence of a female president or secretary-general. The variable was statistically insignificant, and all variables in the original regression maintained their statistical significance. This suggests that the presence of women in top leadership positions does not increase the share of female NEC members.

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97 The same model was run controlling for the effect of parties that have adopted (per their bylaws) quota rules for women in the NEC, independent of whether they complied. The ideology and bylaw variables maintain their statistical significance. The new quota rule variable is also statistically significant. Nevertheless, as expected, the effect of the quota rule is much smaller (with a coefficient of 7) compared to the effect of parties that did apply the quota rule (coefficient of 22). While the mere presence of a gender quota for the composition of the NEC appears to influence the number of women in the NEC, the actual implementation of the quota law produces a statistically stronger and more accurate effect.
Predicting the proportion of female NEC members.

OLS robust regression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Characteristics</th>
<th>Model 1 Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Model 2 Unstandardized Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National selection process</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>-.87</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-national selection process</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primaries selection process</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed selection process</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule-oriented selection process</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong></td>
<td><strong>-2.2</strong>*</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td><strong>-1.7</strong></td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaws</td>
<td>6.0*</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.9**</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quota law</td>
<td>7.0**</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party quota applied</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td><strong>21.7</strong>*</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party quota not applied</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No party quota</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of party</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Women’s Unit</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

Note: Sample size differs as compliance with quota law could not be verified for one party.

What Explains the Percentage of Female Candidates?

Two OLS regressions with clustered standard errors were run to determine the factors that affect the proportion of female candidates that are nominated to run in each of the party’s electoral lists. To lessen the problem of multicollinearity, the models

---

98 The political system variables violate some independence assumptions as they are identical for all the parties in a country. Therefore, the regression clusters the standard errors on countries. In addition, parties that met the following two conditions were excluded: a) parties that ran as part of an alliance with another party included in the database, and b) their data for the share of female candidates is available only at the alliance level.
exclude district magnitude (as district magnitude is correlated with ENPP).\textsuperscript{99} Table 16 presents the results of the OLS regression.

The first model controls for quota laws irrespective of whether they are well or poorly designed. When controlling for quota rules, both political and party-level variables influence the share of female candidates. At the political system level, three variables predict the proportion of female candidates. First, proportional representation (PR) systems have a considerable and statistically significant effect on the proportion of female candidates compared to countries that use a combination of PR and single-member districts. Controlling for all other factors, PR systems have 15 percent more female candidates fielded by party than mixed systems.

Second, the number of seats a party wins also predicts female candidacy rates. The effective number of political parties (ENPP) is used, which is a measure of the number of parties obtaining seats weighted by the proportion of seats they obtain. Based

\textsuperscript{99} District magnitude and ENPP are moderately correlated: r(92):0.53; p<.001. Of the two variables, only ENPP has a statistically significant correlation with the share of female candidates. Once district magnitude is included in the first model, multicollinearity is present but all variables have acceptable variance inflation factor (VIF) scores under 10. The mean VIF score is 2.6. To test for the effect of district magnitude a robust regression was run including this variable (model not shown). Compared to the first model, the same variables maintain their statistical significance with the exception of the mixed selection process variable (which loses statistical significance). Contrary to my expectation, district magnitude has a small, yet statistically significant positive effect on the share of female candidates fielded. A one unit increase in district magnitude leads to a 0.8 percent increase in female candidates. A second regression was run to test for the effect of district magnitude in the second model (model not shown). Once district magnitude is included in the second model, multicollinearity is present but all variables have acceptable VIF scores under 10. The mean VIF score is 2.8. Compared to the second model, the same variables maintain their statistical significance with the exception of the quadratic form of ENPP (which takes on statistical significance). District magnitude also has a small (coefficient of .76) yet statistically significant effect on the share of female candidates fielded. Based on my hypothesis, the effect of district magnitude was expected to be mediated by the ENPP. This is based on the assumption that a high district magnitude, which is expected to increase women’s representation, will harm women if many parties win just a few seats. If a party expects to win one or two seats in a district, then nominations for those seats become highly competitive and assume the characteristics of single-member district systems (Matland 1997). These findings suggest that while district magnitude does play a role in the decision-making process of political parties, its effect is relatively small. However, given the presence of high multicollinearity and its effects on the estimates of individual predictors in the model, these findings regarding district magnitude should be interpreted with caution.
on the hypothesis described in Chapter 4, a non-linear relationship was included for the ENPP variable.\textsuperscript{100} To lessen the effect of structural multicollinearity, the ENPP variable was centered. The linear form of ENPP is not statistically significant, whereas the quadratic form of ENPP does have a statistically significant effect on the number of female candidates. At the mean of ENPP (4.2), the percent of women fielded as candidates’ decreases 1 percent for every additional increase in ENPP. The results suggest that once the ENPP reaches a moderate level (a value of 4 to 5 as established in the literature), we can expect the share of female candidates fielded to decline. Thus, high party system fragmentation (i.e., systems with a high ENPP) adversely impacts women’s inclusion in candidate lists. Nevertheless, as explained in Chapter 4, ENPP is a very rough proxy as a measure of party magnitude and as such, we should not make too strong of an inference based on this result.

Finally, the adoption of quotas yields a strong and statistically significant effect on the proportion of female candidates. Ceteris paribus, parties with nationally mandated quota rules result in 17 percent more female candidates than parties without quotas.

Continuing with our first model, two party-level variables exert a statistically significant influence on the proportion of women nominated as candidates. First, the type of candidate selection process influences the share of female candidates nominated. Compared to primaries, mixed, regional and national selection processes result in the

\footnote{\textsuperscript{100} A visual inspection of scatter graphs plotting the residuals of ENPP and proportion of female candidates indicates a clear departure from linearity. Based on the hypothesis and the visual inspection of the graphs, a quadratic function was used for ENPP. Following our initial hypotheses, ENPP was squared. As expected, ENPP and ENPP squared exhibit a practically perfect correlation. Therefore, both ENPP and ENPP squared were centered by subtracting the mean from each observation. This reduced the correlation from 0.99 (p=.000) to 0.80 (p=.000).}
nomination of more women candidates (10, 8 and 7 percent, respectively). Thus, the most inclusive of all selection processes (primaries) strongly disadvantages women.

Second, the existence of formal rules (i.e., explicit rules written down regarding the selection process) strongly influences the share of female candidates. However, contrary to my hypothesis, the model produced a negative effect on the inclusion of women in candidate lists. Rule-oriented parties result in 7 percent fewer female candidates than parties that are not rule-oriented.

The remaining party-level variables did not exert a statistically significant effect. These include the presence of a women’s unit, the inclusion of explicit language in the bylaws regarding gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women, a party’s ideology and the share of women NEC members. Concerning the share of female party leaders, Kunovich and Paxton (2005) also found that the proportion of women leaders in the party bureau produced no effect on the proportion of female candidates or legislators. However, through an interaction effect they found that female party leaders are able to produce more female candidates in PR systems. To test for this effect, a model was run with an interaction effect for proportion of female NEC members and PR systems but this resulted in no statistically significant effect (model not shown).

In the second model, quota laws were substituted with well-designed quota rules, i.e., quotas with effective sanctions. In other words, instead of controlling for all parties with nationally mandated quota rules, the second model controls for parties that fall under nationally mandated quota rules with strict enforcement mechanisms. Compared to the first model, only the PR systems and effective sanctions variables maintain statistical significance at the political system level. PR systems have
11 percent more female candidates fielded by party than mixed systems. In addition, the adoption of quotas with effective sanctions for non-compliance yields the strongest effect on the proportion of female candidates. With a difference in means of 18 percent, quotas with strict enforcement mechanisms result in a higher proportion of female candidates compared to quotas with weak sanctions/poor design or no quotas. The ENPP variable loses statistical significance once we control for the effect of quotas with effective sanctions.

In addition, once we control for quota laws with effective sanctions, all party-level characteristics lose their statistical significance. Compared to primaries, none of the candidate selection processes maintained their statistical significance. Moreover, the presence of formal rules regarding the candidate selection process, party ideology, the presence of women in the NEC and a women’s unit and the inclusion of gender equality principles in the party’s by-laws did not yield a statistically significant result.
TABLE 16.

PREDICTING THE GENDERED COMPOSITION OF LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE LISTS.
OLS robust standard errors clustered on country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political System</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unstandardized coefficient</td>
<td>Robust SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system</td>
<td>15.5****</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPP</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPP Squared</td>
<td>-1.0****</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quota law</td>
<td>17.5****</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National quota law with effective sanctions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party characteristics</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National selection process</td>
<td>6.7*</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnational selection process</td>
<td>7.7***</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primaries selection process</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed selection process</td>
<td>9.9**</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule-oriented selection process</td>
<td>-7.3***</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of women in NEC</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaw</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Women’s Unit</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01 ****p<.001

What Explains the Share of Women Elected?

To predict the proportion of women elected, six OLS regressions with clustered standard errors using political and party system variables were run. The political system variables violate some independence assumptions as they are identical for all the parties in a country. Therefore, the regression clusters the standard errors on the countries. In addition, given the limited sample size, the parties with data available for candidates at the alliance level and for elected officials at the party level were included (see footnote 81 for a more detailed explanation). If we run models 5 and 6 without these observations and compare them to the results presented in Table 14, the statistical analysis yields the following findings: 1. Model 5: closed list with quotas and share of women candidates maintain their statistical significance. The PR systems variable approaches statistical significance.
present the results of the regressions. The first four models were run to address the presence of an endogenous variable in models five and six. (The share of female candidates is an endogenous variable within the causal model as its value is influenced by several of the independent variables.)

By running several models that separate political and party-level variables we come closer to determining if the impact of a variable is via its impact on the percent of women candidates or on the share of women elected or both. Finally, to avoid multicollinearity, the models exclude district magnitude (as district magnitude is correlated with ENPP).

In the first model, we assess the impact of the share of women candidates fielded on the share of women elected without controlling for other factors. The share of female candidates produces a small, yet statistically significant effect on the share of women elected.

In the second and third models, we control for political system variables and the share of women candidates. In model two, we control for the combined influence of parties that fall under the mandate of a national quota rule for female candidates and closed-list systems. As previously discussed, the combination of closed-lists and quota rules should exert a more significant influence than closed-lists and quota rules alone. The share of female candidates and presence of closed-lists with quota laws yield significance with a p value of .09 and a coefficient of -7.8. The rest of the variables remain statistically insignificant. 2. Model 6: the statistical significance of all the variables remains unchanged (compared to results presented in Table 15).

To address the presence of endogeneity in the model, a two-step least square regression would have been the preferred model but I was unable to identify an appropriate instrumental variable.

To determine the type of relationship between ENPP and the proportion of women elected, various scatter graphs were examined and the relationship appears to be linear. Given the small sample size, we may not have enough data to determine the correct functional form. If more observations were available, the ENPP may take on a quadratic relationship with the share of women elected. Nevertheless, given the linear relationship in our data, the linear form of ENPP was applied.
statistically significant results. The remaining variables are not statistically significant (PR systems and ENPP). In model three, we control for the effect of well-designed quota laws, i.e., quotas with sanctions for non-compliance and a placement mandate. The results indicate that the only statistically significant predictor of the proportion of women elected is the proportion of women candidates. PR systems and ENPP yield statistically insignificant results.

In the fourth model, we control for party-level effects and the share of female candidates. The proportion of women candidates is the only statistically significant predictor of the share of women elected. The remaining variables are not statistically significant (share of women in the NEC, ideology, women’s unit and gender equality principles in bylaws).

In the fifth model, we control for both political system and party-level effects. At the political system level, we control specifically for the combined influence of parties that fall under the mandate of a national quota rule for female candidates and closed-list systems. The results indicate that the only statistically significant predictors of the proportion of women elected are the share of women candidates and the combined use of closed-lists in countries with national quota laws. Closed-list quota systems yield 10 percent more women elected than all other type of list and quota combinations.

Furthermore, a 10 percent increase in female candidates produces an 8 percent increase in the predicted number of female legislators elected by party. In a cross-national study,

\[\text{\textsuperscript{104}}\text{A regression was run replicating the variables in model 5 but controlling for closed-lists and quota laws separately. The only two statistically significant predictors of the share of women elected were the presence of quota laws and the share of female candidates. In addition, another regression was run, this time, replicating model 1 in Table 16 which predicts the share of female candidates and controlling for the effect of closed-list systems. The variables in the original model maintained their statistical significance and closed-list systems did not yield a statistically significant effect. Therefore, the presence of closed-lists, ceteris paribus, is not significantly related to the share of female candidates.}\]
Kunovich and Paxton (2005) found a smaller return for female candidates. They found that a 10 percent increase in female candidates yields only a 4.4 percent increase in female legislators.

None of the remaining political system variables produced a statistically significant result. These include the type of electoral system and ENPP. Moreover, none of the party-level variables produced a statistically significant result. The share of women in the NEC, the party’s ideology, the presence of a women’s unit and the inclusion of gender equality principles in party bylaws did not significantly affect the number of women elected.

In the sixth model, we control again for both political system and party-level effects. At the political system level, we specifically control for the effect of well-designed quota laws, i.e., quotas with sanctions for non-compliance and a placement mandate. The results indicate that the only statistically significant predictor of the proportion of women elected is the proportion of women candidates. With a coefficient of .90, the “return” of female candidates is small. A 10 percent increase in female candidates produces a 9 percent increase in the predicted number of female legislators elected by party. None of the remaining variables produced a statistically significant result. These include type of electoral system, ENPP, share of women in the NEC, the party’s ideology, the presence of a women’s unit and the inclusion of gender equality principles in party bylaws.

Taken together, the six models suggest that the number of women elected is a direct result of the number of women included in party lists. It also suggests that quotas function at two levels. As shown in the previous model predicting the share of female
candidates, quota laws are important for getting women on the ballot. Once women are placed on the list, the combined effect of quota laws with closed-list systems ensure that a minimum number of women are elected. This combination of ballot type and quota law appears to have a stronger effect on the share of women elected than quota laws with placement mandates or closed-list systems and quota laws alone.


**Table 17.**

Predicting the share of women elected.
OLS regression with robust standard errors clustered on country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political System Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPP</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-list quota systems</td>
<td>8.7**</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-designed quotas (sanctions + placement mandate)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party-level Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share women in NEC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of female candidates</td>
<td>.87***</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.83***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of women’s Unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  **p<.01  ***p<.001
### Table 18.

**Predicting the Share of Women Elected.**

OLS regression with robust standard errors clustered on country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 5 Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Robust SE</th>
<th>Model 6 Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Robust SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political System Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPP</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed list quota systems</td>
<td><strong>10.3</strong>*</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-designed quotas</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party-level Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of women in NEC</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of women in candidate lists</td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.86**</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>-.78</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-.60</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Women’s Unit</td>
<td>-.96</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaw</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td></td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

### Discussion

Parties function within an institutional context comprised of formal and informal procedures, routines and norms. These rules and procedures impose certain opportunities and constraints that shape party behavior and contribute to determining political outcomes. The various models tested in the previous section indicate that the institutional context influences the behavior of political parties and hence their representation in Congress. More specifically, parties are influenced by the formal and
informal rules, norms and procedures that make up the political system as well as by their own internal rules and procedures. The results of the statistical analyses provide evidence of both political system and party-level effects on women’s representation.

At the beginning of our causal sequence, party-level characteristics play an important role in determining women’s representation within party structures. Women are more likely to gain representation in executive decision-making bodies of left-leaning parties that have adopted quotas and gender equality principles in their bylaws. The implementation of gender quotas for the election of NEC members exerts the strongest effect on the gendered composition of the NEC. In addition, parties that incorporate concepts of equal opportunities for women and men and/or gender equality as an integral part of their founding principles or objectives translates into greater support for women within the organizational structure of the party. The inclusion of such language in the bylaws may enable women activists to draw upon these founding principles, validating their claims for greater inclusion and participation. Finally, ideology also plays a role suggesting that parties to the left of the ideological spectrum may have more egalitarian principles and thereby elect or appoint more women NEC members.

Moving along the chain of causality, the proportion of women NEC members was expected to positively influence the composition of candidate lists. Based on the theoretical causal model developed in Chapter 4, an important link in the chain of causality was the expectation that the presence of women in decision-making positions within party structures would play an important role in determining the proportion of female candidates. The expectation was based on the assumption that female party elites may use their position to influence or advocate for the inclusion of women candidates in
party lists (Caul 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006; Kunovich and Paxton 2005). Moreover, a higher percentage of women in the NEC may also provide a larger pool of eligible women. However, in our model, the proportion of female NEC members or the presence of women in top leadership positions within the party did not produce a statistically significant effect on the share of female candidates.

Although unexpected, this outcome is not completely unreasonable if we delve into the types of positions women hold within the NEC. Our sample suggests that the division of labor within parties follows the traditional sexual division of labor in the domestic sphere. While men, in general, hold the highest or more powerful positions within the NEC (such as President, Secretary-General, Economic Secretary, Secretary of Party Programming, Treasurer, etc), women tend to hold less influential positions (such as Secretary of Minutes and Archives, Director of Training or Director of Culture). Thus, women may lack the influence and power within the NEC to sway the composition of candidate lists.

It is also unclear what role gender quotas may play in determining the positions women are granted within the party. Parties may comply with the quota for women in the NEC yet decide to place women in the lowest ranking and least powerful positions. Hence, quotas may guarantee women a place in the NEC but they do not ensure equal voice in the decision-making process. In fact, evidence indicates that parties have concocted strategies to elude such laws in other regions of the world. Dahlreup (2002) explains that in response to a 40 percent quota for internal decision-making positions within parties, Denmark’s Social-Democratic Party created new high-level positions so
the number of men in power would not diminish. (The party created a second vice-presidency, to which a woman was appointed.)

The lack of influence female party leaders exert on the composition of candidate lists could also result from the lack of a critical mass of women in the NEC. In Latin America, women hold, on average, 19 percent of NEC positions. The critical mass theory posits that a qualitative shift will occur when women exceed a proportion of about 30 or 35 percent in an organization (Kanter 1977; Dahlerup 1988). Without sufficient numbers, minorities may be unable to influence the dominant culture of an organization.105 Focusing on politics as a workplace, Dahlerup (2006) posits that women politicians who want to pursue a feminist agenda will face a tougher political life if they also have to fight for their basic rights as parliamentarians. In this vein, one could argue that as a minority in the decision-making bodies of parties, women may face an institutional environment where they may potentially feel excluded, discriminated against or stigmatized as a result of their “token” status. Over time, if a sufficient number of women gained representation in the NEC, they could change the organizational culture and increase their capacity to effectively influence party decisions. Also, as women expand their representation within the NEC and gain access to key powerful positions, their ability to affect the composition of candidate lists may also increase.

While women in the NEC may not exert sufficient influence on the share of female candidates fielded by their party, other political system and party-level variables

105 Recently, scholars have questioned whether a critical mass of elected women advances policymaking opportunities and legislation favorable to women (Dahlerup 2006). Extant literature has also not conclusively established the tipping point (or percentage) of women in a legislature necessary to produce substantive changes in women-friendly policy and outcomes. Dahlerup (2006: 519) argues that when analyzing the importance of the number of women we must make a distinction between policy outcomes and politics as workplace. Thus, while scholars have questioned the theory of a critical mass in relation to women’s effectiveness in parliament, here we focus on the effects of organizational life on women’s ability to make a difference.
exert a significant influence on the gendered composition of candidate lists. At the political system level, nationally mandated quota rules for legislative candidates produce a strong effect on the share of female candidates. Quota rules in general and quota rules with effective sanctions both yield 18 percent more female candidates than no quota rules or poorly designed quotas. Thus, quota laws are an effective mechanism for ensuring a minimum representation of women on candidate lists.

PR systems also favor the selection of female candidates. Our results indicate that compared to mixed systems, PR systems have a significant effect on the share of female candidates. However, PR systems also tend produce fragmentation within party systems. Our model tested for an inverse relationship between ENPP and the share of female candidates. The assumption is that when the ENPP is very low, only a small number of parties have a realistic chance of winning seats. This favors incumbents and creates fewer opportunities for new parties to break into the system. A very low ENPP is also correlated with a low district magnitude. With fewer seats to win, parties have less of an incentive to balance their ticket. As ENPP increases, district magnitude also increases and more parties have an incentive to compete and strategically pursue women’s vote. As a result, women have more opportunities to be included in party lists. However, once the tipping point is reached, the greater the number of parties competing, the fewer number of seats a party can expect to win. Expecting to win fewer seats, parties don’t have an incentive to balance their ticket. Thus, as the ENPP increases beyond a certain threshold, the percent of women placed in electoral lists diminishes. When controlling for quota laws, the results suggest that once the ENPP reaches the mean of 4.2

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106 In our sample, ENPP and district magnitude have a statistically significant and positive relationship (r(92):0.53; p<.001.)
(considered a moderate level of party fragmentation), we can expect the share of female candidates fielded to decline. Thus, high party system fragmentation (i.e., systems with a high ENPP) adversely impacts women’s inclusion in candidate lists. However, ENPP has a small effect on the share of female candidates fielded and once we control for the impact of quotas with effective sanctions, ENPP loses statistical significance.

When controlling for quota laws only, several party-level variables exert a significant influence on the share of female candidates. First, the candidate selection process has important consequences for the composition of candidate lists. Our findings indicate that women fare worse in primaries, both open and closed, compared to all other type of selection processes. This corroborates previous research which has found that the democratization of candidate selection processes can decrease the number of women included in electoral lists (Hazan 2002; Hinojosa 2005, 2009; Baldez 2004). Primaries disadvantage women because they lack the financial, personal and political resources necessary to win over a large number of the selectorate (Hinojosa 2005; Jones 2004). Candidates must run two campaigns, one to be nominated by the party and a second one to be elected, thereby increasing the costs of running for office. Voters may also be more likely to emphasize a candidate’s sex during primaries and discriminate against women as political party is no longer significant (compared to general elections) (Matland and King 2002, cited in Hinojosa 2005). Primaries may also mitigate the effect of quotas (Baldez 2004). In the case of Mexico, the electoral law allows parties to circumvent the quota law if candidates are selected through primaries. In Panama, parties can receive an exemption to the quota law if not enough women register as candidates during primaries.
The findings confirm the hypothesis that exclusive (national) selection processes result in the selection of more female candidates than primaries. Exclusive selection processes may favor women for two reasons. First, party elites are better positioned to more easily respond to pressures for greater representation by broadening the diversity of legislative leaders (Matland and Studlar 1996). If decisions are centralized, party leaders will have a larger number of lists to consider, making it easier to “balance” the ticket (Matland 2004). Decisions by party heads can also be taken quickly and applied across the board (Matland and Studlar 1996; Lovenduski and Norris 1993). Second, women can directly pressure party leaders to incorporate more women as opposed to individuallypressuring each locality (Matland 1993). In other words, if only party elites need to be convinced, women can more easily target their efforts and ensure that parties adopt equal representation principles.

Compared to primaries, women candidates also fare better in regional selection processes. Why might regional selection processes yield more opportunities for women? This may be because regional selection processes combine some of the favorable elements of exclusive selection process with the advantages women have at the local level. Similar to exclusive selection processes, women may be able to hold local and regional party leaders more accountable, thereby ensuring parties meet their demands for greater representation. In addition, women do not need the resources necessary to reach a mass constituency, as they would under primaries, and instead, can target their efforts on party leaders. Moreover, as women tend to have more political experience at the local level, this experience not only prepares them for public office but provides them with access to networks and the necessary visibility among local and regional party leaders.
(Matland 2004; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Thus women’s activism at the local level might set them apart when local or regional party leaders recruit candidates. Women’s greater activism at the local level may also create a larger pool of candidates from which to draw.

Compared to primaries, women fare best in selection processes that combine inclusive and exclusive processes. To develop a coherent explanation of this phenomenon, we would have to analyze the individual parties that used mixed selection processes and delve more deeply into their candidate lists. For example, the Partido Social Cristiano in Ecuador elects candidates through a regional assembly but the final list must be ratified by the party’s maximum decision-making body. One could surmise that this provides party leaders the opportunity to “balance” what might have been an otherwise “unbalanced” ticket. However, without an analysis of the original list produced by the primaries, our explanation remains speculative.

Second, when controlling for quota laws, another influential party-level characteristic is the existence of formal rules that define the candidate selection process. Our results indicate that such rules negatively influence the share of female candidates. In theory, however, rule-oriented parties should be more favorable to women (Norris and Lovenduski 1993). Women should have more opportunities to participate if candidate nomination and selection rules are explicit and clear. Such an unexpected finding suggests that women may have fewer opportunities to participate and negotiate when the rules are written down. In addition, in rule-oriented parties, formal rules and processes may constrain a party’s capacity to take action and quickly respond to women’s demands for greater representation. Less rule-oriented parties, on the other hand, may have more
opportunities to adapt and respond to women’s demands (Htun 2002). Thus, less rule-oriented parties may be more flexible and provide women with more opportunities to negotiate their candidacies.\footnote{Interestingly, Caul (1999) found a negative relationship between the rule-oriented parties and the adoption of quotas. Caul (1999: 93) hypothesized that this could be because “rule-oriented parties are less flexible and more focused upon the party’s program and thus reluctant to adopt measures to promote women.”}

In the presence of quota laws, both political and party-level variables matter. However, once we control for quota rules with effective sanctions for non-compliance, all party-level characteristics lose statistical significance. Stated differently, sanctions designed to enforce compliance with the quota law exert such a potent influence on the composition of party lists that party-level characteristics become less influential. A party’s lack of influence in the face of quota laws with sanctions for non-compliance holds important implications for the relevance of political parties and the role they play in selecting candidates. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Moving along the chain of causality, the percent of women elected by party to Congress is determined by the number of women placed on candidate lists. The share of women in candidate lists has a small yet positive effect on the predicted number of female legislators. This suggests that women’s underrepresentation in Congress is a direct result of the dearth of female candidates. This finding corroborates existing research which finds that the share of women elected is determined by the share of female candidates (Hinojosa 2009; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Setzler 2005).

The share of women elected is also influenced by the combined effect of quotas and the type of ballot. Our results suggest that quotas play a determining role in guaranteeing women a minimum level of representation in candidate lists. Once women
are placed on the ballot, the combined effect of closed-list systems with quota laws ensures women a minimum level of representation in Congress.

Contrary to our expectations, ideology did not produce a significant effect on the share of female candidates fielded or women elected. While left-leaning parties have a higher share of female NEC members, they do not field more female candidates or elect more women than right-leaning parties. In fact, in Latin America, more conservative parties in countries such as Chile have been known to send more women to power than left-wing parties. Hinojosa (2005) suggests that parties of the right may place more women as candidates, not because of their commitment to gender equality, but because women in these parties may be more educated and have greater time and resources available to participate in politics. In addition, contagion effects are possible whereby parties with similar ideologies follow suit if an initial party increases the share of female candidates (Caul 2001; Krook 2005; Matland and Studlar 1996). Thus, while ideology influences women’s representation within internal decision-making structures, other political and party-level variables play a stronger role in determining the likelihood of being placed on candidate lists or being elected to office.

To summarize our causal model, the most powerful predictors of the number of women elected are the share of female candidates fielded by political parties and the combined effect of quota laws and closed-list systems. The share of female candidates fielded by parties, in turn, is determined by the rules of the political system at large which influence party behavior by establishing the general context in which parties compete and select candidates. A party’s expectation of the share of seats it expects to win (measured by the ENPP proxy), the opportunities available in a PR system to “balance” a ticket, and
the presence of well-designed quotas with sanctions for non-compliance exert the most significant impact.

In addition, party context, i.e., the internal rules, norms, procedures and organizational practices of parties, constrain choice and influence the candidate selection process (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Macaulay 2006; Norris 1997). Rule-oriented parties are constrained by their formal processes, and are therefore, less responsive and adaptable to women’s demands for inclusion. The type of candidate selection process adopted by a party also influences women’s inclusion in candidate lists. Primaries, in particular, negatively impact women’s chances of getting on the ballot. However, once we control for quota laws with effective sanctions, party-level rules and norms become less influential as a party’s decision-making process is severely constrained by the presence of strong enforcement mechanisms designed to ensure that parties field a minimum number of female candidates.

Surprisingly, the presence of women within the higher echelons of power does not translate into the expected increase in the number of women candidates or elected officials. Until a sufficient number of women in the NEC gain representation in key decision-making positions within the party or reach the critical mass necessary to change the organizational culture of parties, their capacity to influence the composition of candidate lists and the number of women elected may remain limited. In addition, until we find a better way of measuring the effect of women’s units, we will not know the true impact of women’s participation within party structures. Over time, we might discover that women may be able to more effectively support women’s participation when they are organized in women’s branches than from the higher echelons of power. For now, we
know that parties are permeable to women’s demands as evinced by the number of parties that have adopted voluntary quotas for internal decision-making positions and legislative candidates, the inclusion of gender equality language in their by-laws and the channeling of resources for training of women candidates, among other efforts.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter explored how party behavior is shaped by the formal and informal rules and procedures that make up the institutional and party-level context. It also examined how women’s agency influences party behavior. It tested various OLS models to explain the variation in the proportion of women: i) in decision-making bodies within the party; ii) fielded as candidates; and iii) elected to public office. Different factors influence each step of the process of getting elected to public office.

The results indicate that the most powerful predictors of women’s representation in Congress by party are the number of female candidates fielded by political parties and the combined effect of quota laws with closed-list systems. As political parties hold a virtual monopoly over the composition of candidate lists, they determine the choices of candidates available to voters and thus play a central role in determining women’s representation in Congress. A party’s decision regarding the composition of candidate lists is constrained and influenced by political and party-level rules and procedures as well as by formal and informal practices. Our findings also suggest that institutions alone do not determine outcomes as parties are permeable and responsive to women’s demands.

The final chapter turns to a more general discussion of the findings and their theoretical implications for women’s participation and representation in political parties.
in Latin America. It will provide policy recommendations aimed at increasing women’s representation in elected office and suggest areas for future research.
Annex I

**CODING**

Unless otherwise noted, all data is from GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

**MODEL 1: PREDICTING SHARE OF FEMALE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) MEMBERS**

**Dependent variable**

| Percent of women in NEC by party | Total number of female NEC members by party divided by total number of male and female NEC members by party. |

**Independent variables**

<p>| Applied gender quotas for NEC members | 1= Applied quotas for NEC members 0= Did not apply quotas, no quotas |
| Did not apply gender quotas for NEC members | 1= Did not apply quota 0= Applied quota; no quota |
| No quotas for NEC members | 1= No quotas 0= Applied quota; did not apply quota |
| Rule-oriented selection process for NEC members | 1= Rules for selection process of NEC members appear in party bylaws 0= Rules not written down in party bylaws |
| National NEC member selection process | 1= Selection by agreement of the highest decision making body or by designation of the President or Secretary-General 0= Regional, open primaries, closed primaries and mixed selection processes |
| Subnational/Regional selection process for NEC members | 1= Selection by agreement/vote reached within an assembly of delegates representing different territorial branches of the party 0= National, open primaries, closed primaries and mixed selection processes |
| Primaries selection process for NEC members | 1= Open and closed primaries 0= National, regional and mixed selection processes |
| Mixed selection process for NEC members | 1= Combination of national, regional and/or primaries selection processes |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaws</td>
<td>1= Parties with explicit reference to gender equality in principles or objectives&lt;br&gt;0= Parties with no reference to gender equality or non-discrimination; parties with only a reference to quota mandate or creation of a women’s unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Scale measuring ideology from 1 to 10, with 1 being on the left and 10 on the right. Based on self-identification by each party&lt;br&gt;Source: GEPPAL and PELA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Women’s Units</td>
<td>1= Exists (according to interviewee)&lt;br&gt;0= Does not exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of party</td>
<td>Number of years since a party’s founding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Model 2: Predicting Share of Female Candidates

**Dependent variable**

| Percent female candidates by party | Total number of female candidates by party/ alliance divided by total number of male and female candidates by party/ alliance |

**Independent variables**

| PR system | 1= Proportional Representation system  
0= Mixed (Bolivia, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of electoral seats available in a district.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of parties in the party system, weighed according to size. It is calculated by squaring each party’s share of seats, adding all of these squares, and dividing 1 by this number.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Gallagher (2008) and own calculations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Number of parties in the party system, weighed according to size. | 1= Quota mandated by national law  
0= No quota |
| Number of parties in the party system, weighed according to size. | 1= Quotas with effective sanctions, i.e., with a strict enforcement mechanism  
0= Quotas with weak sanctions or poorly designed; no quotas |
| Total number of female NEC members by party divided by total number of male and female NEC members by party | 1= Selection by agreement of the highest decision-making body or by designation of the President or Secretary-General  
0= Regional, open primaries, closed primaries and mixed selection processes |
| Total number of female NEC members by party divided by total number of male and female NEC members by party | 1= Selection by agreement/vote reached within an assembly of delegates representing different territorial branches of the party  
0= National, open primaries, closed primaries and mixed selection processes |
| Total number of female NEC members by party divided by total number of male and female NEC members by party | 1= Open and closed primaries  
0= National, regional and mixed selection |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed candidate selection process</strong></td>
<td>1= Combination of national, regional and/or primaries selection processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= National, open and closed primaries and regional selection processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule-oriented candidate selection process</strong></td>
<td>1= Explicit rules for selection of legislative candidates written down in party bylaws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Rules not written down in party bylaws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender equality in by-laws</strong></td>
<td>1= Parties with explicit reference to gender equality in principles or objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Parties with no reference to gender equality or non-discrimination; parties with only a reference to quota mandate or creation of a women’s unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong></td>
<td>Scale measuring ideology from 1 to 10, with 1 being on the left and 10 on the right. Based on self-identification by each party. Source: GEPPAL and PELA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Existence of Women’s Units</strong></td>
<td>1= Exists (according to interviewee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Does not exist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MODEL 3: PREDICTING THE SHARE OF WOMEN ELECTED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Total number of women elected by party/alliance divided by total number of women and men elected by party/alliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system</td>
<td>1= Proportional Representation systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Mixed (Bolivia, Mexico, Panama, Venezuela)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENPP (effective number of political parties)</td>
<td>Number of parties in the party system, weighed according to size. It is calculated by squaring each party’s share of seats, adding all of these squares, and dividing 1 by this number. Source: Gallagher (2008) and own calculations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-designed quotas</td>
<td>1= Nationally mandated quota law, with sanctions for non-compliance and placement mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Nationally mandated quota law without placement mandate and sanctions for non-compliance; no quotas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-list quota systems</td>
<td>1= Closed-lists with national quota laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Open-lists with national quota laws; closed and open-lists without national quota laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Scale measuring ideology from 1 to 10, with 1 being on the left and 10 on the right. Based on self-identification by each party. Source: GEPPAL and PELA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Women in NEC</td>
<td>Total number of female NEC members divided by total number of male and female NEC members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality in bylaws</td>
<td>1= Parties with explicit reference to gender equality in principles or objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Parties with no reference to gender equality or non-discrimination; parties with only a reference to quota mandate or creation of a women’s unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of Women’s Units</td>
<td>1= Exists (according to interviewee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0= Does not exist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Annex II

#### SUMMARY STATISTICS

**Table 19.**

**Share of female candidates. Lower House/Unicameral Congress. 2009. Weighted average.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>Range (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>38-44</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>16-26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>0-29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>9-17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>42-49</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>46-49</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>15-37</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>13-32</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>28-33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>20-37</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>3-20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>16-51</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>36-43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep Dom</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>13-31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13-17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>0-51</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total: 79</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on data available in GEPPAL database (forthcoming).
Table 20.

Share of women elected to Lower House/Unicameral Congress by party based on ballot type. Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot type</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-list</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-list</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on data available in GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

Table 21.

Share of women elected to Lower House/Unicameral Congress by party based on ballot type and presence of national quota law. Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot type with quota law</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-list with quota</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-list with quota</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on data available in GEPPAL database (forthcoming).

Table 22.

Share of women elected to Congress by party based on ballot type and no national quota law. Weighted average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot type without quota law</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open list w/out quota</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed list w/out quota</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination w/out quota</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on data available in GEPPAL database (forthcoming).
**Table 23.**  
**Share of Women Elected to Congress by Party Based on Design of Quota Law. Weighted Average.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quota law</th>
<th>Ballot type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Number of parties</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quota law w/sanctions &amp; placement mandate</td>
<td>Closed-list</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota law w/effective sanctions</td>
<td>Open-list</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota law w/weak sanctions/poorly designed</td>
<td>Open-list</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota law w/weak sanctions/poorly designed</td>
<td>Closed-list</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on data available in GEPPAL database (forthcoming).
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS

The inclusion of underrepresented groups in decision-making forums enhances the quality of democracy. Numerous studies have shown that women make a unique contribution by representing women’s interests in the legislative agenda; thereby enriching the public debate and strengthening the representativeness of public institutions (Swers 2002; Schwindt-Bayer 2003; Jones 1997; Taylor-Robinson and Heath 2002; Carroll 2001; Reingold 2000).

In Latin America, while women have experienced impressive electoral gains over the last two decades, they remain underrepresented in political party and legislative structures. As political parties play a key role in determining which interests gain representation, this study sought to understand why parties differ in the number of women they send to Congress. More specifically, it asked how parties shape political outcomes (i.e., the number of women in elected positions) and, in turn, how the institutional context shapes party behavior toward women’s representation. It also examined the role women’s agency plays in influencing party behavior.

The first chapter argued that political parties play a fundamental role in determining the composition of parliament, and are therefore, critical pieces of the puzzle that merit analysis. It also established that few cross-national studies have explored how party institutions in Latin America shape women’s participation. Based on extant literature,
the second chapter explored how the formal and informal rules and norms of both the political system and internal party organization structures constrain and influence parties’ behavior, opportunities and decisions to support women’s representation.

The third chapter examined women’s integration in political parties from a historical perspective and found that periods of crisis and critical junctures paved the way for women’s participation in politics and created an enabling environment to push for new gender related political claims. It also argued that, while institutions are adaptable, overtime, exclusionary practices and behaviors become embedded which explains the slowness or resistance of some parties to change.

The fourth chapter characterized the research design and methodology of our study, and explicated three models and their hypothesized links in a chain of causality. Each of the three models sought to explain the share of women, respectively: in decision-making positions within parties, fielded as legislative candidates, and elected to public office. These three main outcomes of interest were linked in a chain of causality where the share of women in the national executive committee (NEC) of parties was expected to influence the proportion of women fielded as candidates and elected to public office. Both the share of women in the NEC and female candidates was expected, in turn, to affect the proportion of women elected.

This analysis drew on data from 92 political parties in Latin America with the highest levels of representation in Congress. As such, this is the first statistical study that examines all major parties in Latin America from a gender perspective. It draws on data provided by party leaders, electoral tribunals, and party documents to develop a causal model that seeks to explain women’s representation in elected office. By delving into
party-level characteristics, this study allowed for a more nuanced exploration of how the institutional context and women’s agency contributes to women’s participation within party structures and electoral processes.

The fifth chapter presented the results of the descriptive analysis and multivariate models. The main findings include: i) women within party structures play a limited role in determining the share of women candidates fielded by parties or elected to public office, which could be due to the lack of a critical mass of women in leadership positions as well as their placement in less powerful positions within decision-making bodies; ii) national quota laws with effective sanctions trump party characteristics in determining the share of female legislative candidates fielded by parties; iii) national quota laws increase women’s representation through their direct effect on both the share of women nominated and women elected; and iv) women’s underrepresentation in elected office is a direct result of their underrepresentation in candidate lists.

The current chapter will bring together the various findings and assess their theoretical implications. It will draw on the findings of the descriptive and statistical analyses to discuss the causal model and main arguments of this study. The discussion will begin at the end of our causal model, examining the principal factors that influence the number of women elected and their implications for a party’s electoral performance. Moving along the chain of causality, the second section will explore the effects of institutional factors on the share of female candidates. Focusing on the constraints posed by national quota laws, it will examine the extent to which parties determine the gendered composition of candidate lists. The third section will address what kind of parties and systems might be better suited to electing women in the absence of well-designed quota
laws. Given that this study found no statistical effect for women’s agency in our causal model, the fourth section will discuss data limitations and suggest areas for future research. It will conclude with a discussion of why parties remain resistant to change, and which party characteristics influence women’s opportunities to transform political parties. Possible areas of future research will also be highlighted throughout the various sections. This chapter will conclude with a series of recommendations for advancing women’s representation.

**WOMEN CANDIDATES: THE KEY TO WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN CONGRESS**

**The Electability of Female Candidates**

Political parties play a fundamental role in determining the gendered composition of Congress. Parties control who reaches office because they are responsible for the recruitment and selection of candidates. They have power both over who is included in candidate lists and the order in which the candidates are listed. The results of the statistical analysis suggest that the number of women elected is a direct result of the number of women fielded as candidates. Parties, therefore, are the main gatekeepers to women’s advancement in politics. Unless parties field a greater share of female candidates, women will continue to be underrepresented in public office. These results corroborate the findings of a growing body of literature which finds that the gendered composition of candidate lists determines the gendered composition of Congress (Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Setzler 2005; Hinojosa 2009). Thus, the key to increasing the number of women in elected office is increasing the share of female candidates fielded by parties.
If one of the main objectives of parties is to win elections and gain power, party leaders will be rightfully concerned about the electability of their candidates. Our results indicate that in some countries women are just as successful as men in winning elections. This corroborates existing research suggesting that the public is willing to elect women when they are nominated as candidates (Rios and Villar 2006; Dador and Llanos 2008; Setzler 2005; Hinojosa 2005; Welch and Studlar 1986; Kunovich and Paxton 2005). Our findings indicate that, on average, for every 10 percent female candidates, 8 percent of women are elected to Congress. This is at least comparable to men, where for every 10 percent male candidates, 11 percent of men are elected. Looked at differently, when comparing the percentage of candidates that get elected by sex, we find that, on average, 16 percent of the women that run for office are elected while 22 percent of male candidates are elected.

Chile serves as a good example of a country were women remain underrepresented in candidate lists, despite their high electability levels. In the 2005 elections, while women represented only 14 percent of all candidates in our sample, women outperformed men at the ballot box (the same holds true for the 2001 national legislative elections). How can we explain women’s superior performance in Chile, a generally conservative country with no quota rules and an open-list system? Rios and Villar (2006) propose three possible explanations. First, in the 2005 elections, 9 of the 19 female candidates ran as incumbents. Thus, incumbency could have provided female candidates an advantage over their challengers in seeking reelection. Second, once nominated, parties may confer upon women privileged treatment thereby providing them with an added advantage during the campaign. Finally, they posit that such results could be the reflection of voter
preferences for women, particularly when we take into account that women represent over 50 percent of the electorate.

In fact, in several countries throughout the region, voter behavior does not seem to indicate a bias against women. When women are provided access to candidate lists and are placed in electable positions in closed-lists, they win elections at rates comparable to men, such as in Argentina and Bolivia. Women also perform relatively well in Costa Rica and El Salvador. Even in open-list systems with well-designed quotas, where voters individually select candidates, women perform relatively well in some countries. For example, in Peru, which uses an open-list system, the 2006 general elections witnessed a greater propensity to allocate preferential votes to women (Dador and Llanos 2008). Similarly, in the 2005 Honduran elections, voters elected for the first time their congress members through open-lists, and, of all the candidates, a woman received the most votes (Taylor-Robinson 2006). Moreover, in our descriptive analysis, more women are elected under open-list systems with well designed quota laws that ensure their implementation than through poorly designed quota laws or no quotas at all. By ensuring a minimum share of female candidates on party lists, well-designed quotas ensure a minimum number of women elected. This supports a growing body of evidence that open-list systems, when combined with effective quotas may not necessarily disadvantage women.

In addition, public opinion surveys indicate there is solid support for women in office. In a Gallup survey carried out in six cities in Latin America in 2008, 52 percent of respondents opined that their country would be better off with more women leaders (IDB 2008). Respondents also indicated that women would be better than men in the areas of education, environmental protection, poverty reduction and gender issues. Thus,
over time, as parties recognize that voter behavior in Latin America generally points to a modernizing trend in public opinion and strong support for women candidates, we should expect parties to increasingly nominate more female candidates.

**Effects of Electoral Systems and Quota Laws on Share of Women Candidates**

As political parties hold a virtual monopoly over the composition of candidate lists, they determine the choices of candidates available to voters, and thus, play a central role in determining women’s representation in Congress. Political parties, nevertheless, are not completely free to decide the composition of candidate lists. Instead, their decisions and behavior are constrained and shaped by the institutional context in which they operate.

The rules and procedures of political systems structure the behavior of political parties by creating incentives and constraints for the integration of women in electoral lists (Norris 1997: 9; Caul Kittilson 2006; Macaulay 2006). More specifically, the electoral system sets the general context in which parties compete and select candidates. In Latin America, our findings indicate that Proportional Representation (PR) systems favor the nomination of female candidates. As there are many members to be elected from each district, PR systems maximize proportionality and enable the representation of small minorities (Matland 1998a). Parties have an incentive to “balance” their tickets and include candidates that represent different factions and sectors of the electorate in order to attract voters and gain more seats (Norris 1995: 195). In contrast, plurality/majority systems disadvantage women where the winner is the candidate or party with most votes, and in general, there is only a single victor in each district (see Matland 2005).
In addition, the effective number of political parties (ENPP) influences a party’s calculations regarding the composition of candidate lists. In general, low and high levels of party fragmentation (measured by the ENPP) reduce the probability that women will be fielded as candidates. When the ENPP is very low, only a small number of parties have a realistic chance of winning seats. This favors incumbents and creates fewer opportunities for new parties to break into the system. With fewer seats to win, parties have less of an incentive to balance their ticket. On the other hand, if too many parties compete, parties can expect to win a fewer number of seats, and therefore, do not have an incentive to balance their ticket. However, if a moderate number of parties compete (4-5), smaller parties will have an incentive to run in the elections and to differentiate themselves from other parties, which could favor women. In addition, having large political parties that persist over numerous election cycles can be an advantage to women who successfully climb up party ranks (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008).

The results of our analysis confirm our hypothesis that high levels of party fragmentation negatively impacts the inclusion of women in party lists. This is particularly relevant for the case of Brazil. While the breakdown of traditional parties has led to a massive expansion of small parties contesting elections throughout Latin America, Brazil is often cited as a leading example of party breakdown (Mainwaring 1999 cited in Setzler 2005). In the 2006 Brazilian elections, thirty parties contested the elections but only eight were nationally competitive, winning more than 5 percent of the vote. Brazil has the highest ENPP in the region (9.3) and the second lowest share of congresswomen (9 percent). While there are many factors that explain women’s
underrepresentation in Brazil, the proliferation of political parties clearly contributes to this outcome.

In addition to the electoral arrangement and number of parties in the system, the presence of nationally mandated quota rules strongly influences a party’s calculations regarding the composition of candidate lists. Our findings indicate that nationally mandated quota rules are an effective mechanism for increasing women’s descriptive representation through their direct effect both on the share of women candidates fielded by parties and the share of women elected. In particular, strong enforcement mechanisms that obligate parties to comply with the minimum quota requirement ensure women a minimum level of representation in party lists. Forcing parties to field a minimum share of female candidates through sanctions severely constrains a party’s decision-making capacity and produces the strongest effect on the share of female candidates fielded by party. In our model, once quotas with effective sanctions are taken into consideration, all other political system and party-level variables, with the exception of Proportional Representation systems, lose statistical significance.

This finding might call into question the relevance of party-level characteristics in determining the share of female legislative candidates. If parties, by law, must field a minimum number of female candidates, then the role that parties will play in determining the gendered composition of candidate lists becomes inconsequential. In other words, if parties must abide by the quota, their ideology, type of candidate selection process or the presence of a women’s unit, will not influence the share of female candidates fielded by parties. One might be tempted to conclude that by circumventing parties, quota laws with
sanctions are an effective and perhaps the only mechanism necessary to increase women’s representation.

However, the Latin American experience indicates that while national quota laws with sanctions may be an effective mechanism, they alone are not sufficient to advance women’s descriptive representation. Goodwill compliance by political parties is essential for ensuring the effectiveness of quota laws. Experience demonstrates that parties have resisted the implementation of the quota rule through manipulative practices. Party leaders have been known to fulfill the quota by placing their own wives, sisters and other family members in party lists (Archenti and Tula 2008). In Bolivia’s 1999 municipal elections, parties doctored the names of male candidates to sound like female candidate names, thereby complying with the quota law (Llanos and Sample 2008: 21). In the Dominican Republic, after the electoral tribunal approved the candidate lists, parties created new alliances and eliminated several female candidates. The parties informed the electoral tribunal that the women had renounced their candidacy, and therefore, their position was ceded to a male candidate in order to fulfill their commitments to other parties (Bueno 2007).

Women have also been forced by the party to renounce their position after being elected in order to allow male substitutes to assume power (Archenti and Tula 2008). Most recently, in Mexico, the case of “las juanitas” has garnered international attention. As of January 2010, some six female deputies have been granted a leave of absence, ceding their positions over to their male substitutes (which in some cases have been a family member). Two more cases are currently pending. By requesting a leave of
absence instead of renouncing their positions, parties avoid a penalty for violating the quota law.

The effectiveness of quotas depends not only on the goodwill of political parties, but also on their design. As discussed in the previous chapter, quota laws with sanctions for non-compliance are highly conducive to increasing the share of female candidates. However, if the laws are not well-designed, they become less effective, as can be seen in the case of quota laws applied in primaries. For example, the quota law in Paraguay includes strong enforcement mechanisms since party lists that do not comply with the quota law may not enroll for the electoral competition (Araujo and Garcia 2006; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). In addition, the law includes a placement mandate requiring that a minimum of one of every five candidates be a woman. However, the quota rule applies to the list of candidates for primary elections, not to the list of legislative candidates presented to the electorate (Araujo and Garcia 2006). Therefore, the law is considered relatively ineffective. Similarly, in Panama and Mexico, parties receive exemptions to the quota law if their candidates are chosen through primaries (Jones 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Baldez 2004). Such loopholes point to the importance of designing quotas that ensure compliance with the law, independent of the type of selection process utilized by the party. (See Jones 2009 for a detailed description of how to make quotas compatible with primaries.)

While quota laws with effective sanctions trump party characteristics, party characteristics may be important in influencing whether parties apply the bare minimum required by the quota or if they go above and beyond the minimum requirement. For example, national quota laws, on average, set a minimum quota requirement of 30
percent female candidates. However, parties that have left-leaning views, a higher share of women in the NEC or a greater commitment to gender equality principles in general, may be more likely to go beyond the minimum required by law and field a higher share of female candidates. This represents an interesting area of future research.

The results of our statistical analysis indicate that quotas with effective sanctions are instrumental for getting women on the ballot, and once a sufficient number of women are placed on the ballot, the combination of closed-list systems with quota laws (irrespective of the quality of the quota design), determines the share of women elected. In other words, the quality of the quota design appears to be more important for ensuring women’s placement on candidate lists than for ensuring women’s election. Getting on the ballot is vital, and once on the ballot, whether the quota law has a placement mandate appears not to be as influential in determining the share of women elected. Instead, our results indicate that the share of women elected is determined by the number of women placed on candidate lists as well as by the presence of closed-list quota systems. Thus, when combined with quotas, closed-list systems significantly affect women’s access to elected office.

Opportunities for Increasing Women’s Representation in the Absence of Well-Designed Quota Laws

While quota laws with sanctions for non-compliance have proven to be an effective mechanism for increasing women’s descriptive representation, what kinds of parties and systems might be better suited to electing women in the absence of such a quota law? The following discussion reveals three party characteristics that may play a
role (according to the statistical models presented in the previous chapter) as candidate selection processes, institutionalization of selection rules, and voluntary quotas.

i) Candidate selection processes

In the absence of quota laws with effective sanctions, candidate selection processes have important consequences for the gendered composition of candidate lists. In the region, there has been a general trend toward the internal democratization of political parties as a result of the “crisis of representation.” Although proponents contend that more inclusive selection processes have the potential to enhance a party’s legitimacy and make leadership more diverse and responsive to their members (Payne et al. 2002; Freidenberg 2003), our findings suggest that women fare worse in primaries compared to all other types of selection processes. This corroborates previous research which has found that more democratic selection processes disadvantage women (Hazan 2002: 120; Hinojosa 2005, 2009; Baldez 2004). As previously discussed, women often lack the financial, personal and political resources necessary to win over a large number of the selectorate (Hinojosa 2005; Jones 2004). Women must raise enough funds to run two campaigns – one for the primaries and a second one for elected office. Moreover, as already discussed, primaries may also mitigate the effect of quotas (as in the case of Paraguay, Panama and Mexico). These findings do not suggest that primaries should be eliminated but rather that strategies should be devised to help women overcome some of the barriers posed by primaries. (The Recommendations section at the end of this chapter will propose some strategies.)

Exclusive selection processes (whereby members of the highest decision-making body of a party or the head of the party select candidates), on the other hand, appear to
favor women’s nomination as candidates possibly because of the greater capacity of party elites to respond to pressures for greater representation (Matland and Studlar 1996). In addition, women can more easily target their efforts and ensure that parties adopt equal representation principles if only party elites need to be convinced (Matland 1993). The Union Democrata Independiente (UDI), a conservative party in Chile serves as an interesting example of a party where the candidate selection process has played an important role in providing women access to power. Hinojosa (2009) finds that the UDI, despite not having an explicit commitment or quota mechanism to increase women’s representation, has nominated and elected more women to local office compared to all other major parties in Chile.\textsuperscript{108} She credits women’s success to the candidate selection process utilized by the UDI, characterized by its centralized (where decisions are taken at the national level) and exclusive (where decisions are taken by a small number of selectors) nature. Hinojosa argues that this combination of centralized and exclusive selection process circumvents both local power monopolies (to which women have limited access) and the need for self-nomination (as women are less likely to promote their own candidacies). Such findings suggest that in the absence of quotas, exclusive and centralized candidate selection processes can play an important role in increasing women’s access to power.

Women candidates also fare better in regional selection processes than in primaries. Regional congresses where regional and/or local level representatives select candidates may hold some of the same advantages as those of exclusive selection processes. Women may be able to hold local and regional party leaders or

\textsuperscript{108} Based on our data for the 2005 Chilean elections, the UDI had the highest share of women elected as a percent of the number of women candidates. While it only presented five women candidates, four of them were elected.
representatives more accountable, thereby ensuring parties meet their demands for greater representation. In addition, women do not need the resources necessary to reach a mass constituency, as they would under primaries, and instead, can target their efforts on regional or local party leaders. Moreover, as women tend to have more political experience at the local level, this experience not only prepares them for public office but provides them with access to networks and the necessary visibility among local and regional party leaders (Matland 2004). Thus, women’s activism at the local level might set them apart when local or regional party leaders recruit candidates. Women’s greater activism at the local level may also create a larger pool of candidates from which to choose.

Finally, compared to primaries, women fare best in selection processes that combine inclusive and exclusive processes. As already discussed in the previous chapter, to develop a coherent explanation of this phenomenon, we would have to analyze the individual parties that used mixed selection processes and delve more deeply into their candidate lists. This represents an interesting area of future research.

ii) Institutionalization of selection rules

In the absence of quota laws with sanctions, the institutionalized nature of the selection process also becomes influential. In particular, decisions by party leaders to recruit and nominate women are constrained both by the degree of formality of the recruitment rules and the rules and norms that determine the candidate selection process. Contrary to our expectation, the existence of formal rules regarding the candidate selection process negatively influences the number of women nominated. A rule-oriented selection process is expected to favor women’s nominations because when procedures are
clear and explicit, women have the necessary information to understand how the process works and to hold their parties accountable, ensuring decisions are made according to the rules. Less rule-oriented parties, on the other hand, have less formal bureaucratic application processes. As a result, the process becomes more open to personal patronage and nominations can be biased towards those with personal connections or access to “old boys’ networks.” However, one advantage of a clientelist or patronage-oriented system is its informal and flexible nature. If party leaders wish to promote gender equality, they can move forward quickly and deliberately, placing women in or improving their position within party lists or adopting measures to promote women. Women may also have more opportunities to participate and negotiate when the rules are not written down. In addition, more institutionalized parties may have gender stereotypes that are more difficult to change (Htun 2002). In short, less rule-oriented parties may have more opportunities to adapt and respond to women’s demands.109

iii) Voluntary Quotas

In the absence of a national quota law, voluntary quotas play an influential role in determining the share of female candidates fielded. Our findings indicate that more women are nominated and elected in parties that have voluntarily adopted quotas compared to parties with no such provision. What motivates a party to voluntarily adopt quotas? Previous research has found that the adoption of quotas may be motivated by: pressure from the women’s movement or women within political parties; strategic electoral calculations; support from non-elective branches of government, such as rulings from Supreme Courts; contagion effects following the adoption of quotas by a rival party;

109 Lovenduski and Norris (1995) note that without institutional safeguards, the gains may be volatile and easily reversed in the next election period.
existing or emerging notions of equality; and pressure from transnational actors pushing for the implementation of international norms calling for women’s great representation (Krook 2009, 2005; Baldez 2004). In a study of 71 parties across 11 developed countries, Caul (2001) finds that parties most likely to adopt quotas have a higher share of women in the highest ranks of the party, follow the lead of another party in the system that has previously adopted quotas, and have a left-leaning ideology. In Mexico, Baldez (2004) finds that before the adoption of the national quota law, the voluntary adoption of a quota provision by individual parties can be explained by several factors, including pressure from women within the party, the context of electoral competition and contagion effects.

In our sample, we found that the parties that voluntarily adopted quotas had a higher share of women fielded as candidates and elected to public office compared to parties that did not voluntarily adopt quotas. However, the small number of parties (seven) that have voluntarily adopted quotas for the lower house/unicameral congress limits the possibilities for a statistical analysis of the factors that explain which parties are more likely to adopt or implement quotas.110 Nevertheless, we find that 6 of the 7 parties in our sample are to the left of the ideological spectrum. In addition, with the exception of Chile where only the Partido Popular Democratico has voluntarily adopted quotas for legislative candidates, the remaining cases have at least two parties in each country that have adopted quotas, suggesting that a contagion effect may have occurred.111

110 The seven that have voluntarily adopted quotas in our sample have done so in countries with no nationally mandate quota law.

111 Another important factor influencing the statistical likelihood that a party will adopt quotas is the share of women in the national executive committee (Caul Kittilson 2006). In the seven parties considered here, the share of women in the NEC ranges from a low of 20 percent to a high of 39 percent. These figures, however, cannot be used to analyze our outcome of interest given that we do not have these same figures for the period prior to the adoption of the quota.
together, these findings from our rough analysis might suggest that left-leaning parties are more likely to voluntarily adopt quotas, particularly if other parties have taken the lead. In addition, this suggests that parties, whether due to electoral calculations or pressure from its membership, are adaptable and do in fact respond to women’s demands.

It is also important to note that the voluntary adoption of quota provisions by parties may produce contagion effects leading to the adoption of national quota laws. Baldez (2004) describes a process of contagion in Mexico whereby the adoption of voluntary quotas by a small leftist-party subsequently led to the adoption of quotas by other parties in the system and ultimately, to the adoption of a national quota law. This bodes well for countries such as Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua, where individual parties have voluntarily adopted quotas.  

**Women’s Agency: Limitations and Potentialities**

Parties with women in top leadership positions should, in principle, contribute to women’s increased access to power (Caul Kittilson 2006, Caul 1999; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Macaulay 2006). In our study, the share of female NEC members was expected to influence both the gendered composition of candidate lists and the number of women elected. Surprisingly, our findings indicate that the presence of women in the national executive committee does not exert a statistically significant influence on women’s participation. The presence of women as founding members of a party or in top leadership positions also did not yield any statistically significant results. As discussed

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112 It is interesting to consider prior to the adoption of a national quota law in 2009 in Uruguay, two parties had voluntarily adopted quotas. According to the news coverage, the bicameral women’s caucus, a multi-party bloc lobbied for the quota law, in collaboration with representatives of the women’s movement and civil society. The quota law will go into effect in the 2014 parliamentary elections, at which time Congress will reassess whether the quota law will be extended to the following electoral period.
in Chapter 5, this could be the result of women not having reached a critical mass in decision-making positions, the lack of women holding influential positions within the NEC or even the lack of a “critical” person to spearhead efforts to promote women’s participation.

Although this study did not find an effect for the presence of women in decision-making positions within parties, it is important to understand the role and impact of women’s participation and representation within the NEC. Three areas in particular merit further analysis. First, research could focus on analyzing the degree of influence female NEC members could potentially exert by further examining the gendered distribution of decision-making positions with the NEC. Examining the positions held by women within the NEC can help establish gaps and provide a roadmap for where women should aim to gain greater participation. Second, case studies could evaluate whether the presence of women in decision-making bodies within a party makes a difference on party policies. Finally, longitudinal statistical studies could examine the critical mass theory, analyzing the evolving effect of women NEC members on the composition of candidate lists and the number of women elected.

It is also interesting to consider that in this study we did not find a statistically significant effect for the presence of a women’s unit on our three main outcomes of interest (share of women in NEC; female candidates; women elected). While most parties indicate that they have a women’s unit, research indicates that the power of women’s units to bring about change varies greatly across parties (Sachet 2007; Llanos and Sample 2008). Many parties continue to use women’s units as electoral machines to turn out the vote during electoral periods (Munoz et. al. 2005). Echoing criticisms from
the past, female party members and feminists argue that parties continue to relegate women to women’s sections, granting them no real power or voice. Others continue to argue that women’s sections lead to the “ghettoization” of women’s issues. As a result, women’s issues are not mainstreamed into the parties’ decision-making arenas. Others further contend that women’s sections are used to placate and contain women so they will not place excessive demands on the party (Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008).

Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the profile of many women’s units throughout the region is changing, from the traditional conception that assigned women’s sections functions that mirrored their roles in the private sphere to sections charged with promoting gender equality and equal opportunities (Llanos and Sample 2008). Indeed, many parties across the region have responded to women’s demands by adopting specific mechanisms to support women’s participation, such as training courses, economic incentives and tutoring opportunities.

Unfortunately, no comparative study exists that evaluates the impact of women’s units or their specific strategies and programs to promote women’s participation and the adoption of gender equality mechanisms. Without such a comparative study, we cannot objectively determine why the presence of a women’s unit is not influential in our model and to what extent these criticisms are valid. As previously discussed, our analysis is limited by our inability to independently verify which parties in fact have a women’s unit, and to identify the mechanisms of action through which women’s units could potentially be influencing the share of female candidates fielded by a party. Such mechanisms could include: serving as a pressure group that channels women’s claims for greater inclusion in party lists; holding parties accountable to the quota law; serving as a
pool of eligible candidates; providing women with training and support to come forward as a candidate; or mobilizing female party members to attend regional or national nominating conventions (see also Saint-Germain and Chavez 2008).

In light of the dearth of information regarding the impact of women’s units, two types of analysis would be helpful. At one level, impact evaluations should be carried out of specific strategies and programs used by women’s units to advance gender equality. In collaboration with non-governmental organizations, lessons learned and best practices of effective strategies could be documented for replication by other parties. At another level, it calls for comparative case studies analyzing the factors that explain variation in the effectiveness of women’s units across parties.

Having found no effect for the role of women’s units and women in the NEC on women’s representation does not mean that women are not having an impact within their parties. In fact, many studies have documented the critical role that women have played individually and collectively in bringing about change within their own parties (Baldez 2004; Townsend 2008; Macaulay 2006; Alvarez 1986; Caul 1999, 2001; Caul Kittilson 2006). This reminds us that change is a complex process. As discussed in chapter 3, the changes achieved within political parties are the result of a series of external and internal factors converging at different points in time and providing opportunities for different actors to more effectively channel and mobilize their gender related political claims.113

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113 As discussed in chapter 3, various international and national level factors converged over the last two decades, creating an enabling environment for women to push for changes in political parties. The period of democratization in the 1980s, the crisis of representation and the collective action of the international and national women’s movement converged at different points in time, pressuring parties to change or risk losing the support of their constituency. Such critical junctures offered opportunities for change. In addition, parties have been susceptible to contagion effects whereby parties with similar ideologies followed suit if an initial party increased their share of female candidates or adopted quotas (Caul 2001; Krook 2005; Matland and Studlar 1996).
Resistance and Obstacles to Change

Our findings suggest that while the rules of the game provide incentives and constrain behavior, political parties have proven to be responsive and adaptable entities. Over the last two decades, parties have adopted various commitments and mechanisms to advance women’s political participation and representation. Women have also gained greater access to decision-making positions within the party. Nevertheless, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making bodies of parties and national parliaments.

Given the presence of a strong women’s movement in Latin America and women’s high levels of education, growing labor force participation rates and high membership levels within parties, why have so few women gained access to key decision-making positions within the party and in candidate lists? Part of the answer lies in the fact that institutions are a product of their past, and over time, exclusionary practices and behaviors have become embedded and proven difficult to change.

In general, the terms and conditions under which parties initially integrated women into their ranks reflected or reproduced the dominant patterns of power in society. Historically, men have maintained a monopoly on power while women have been relegated to less powerful positions within the party and tasked with functions that reinforced their subordinate roles. Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995: 20) observe that “men’s position atop social institutions has enabled them to structure institutions, create laws, legitimize particular knowledge, establish moral codes and shape culture in ways that perpetuate power over women.” As Pierson and Skopcol (2002: 700) note, these inequalities of power are reinforced overtime and become embedded in the organizational
structure and culture of institutions. Once embedded, these inequalities manifest themselves in exclusionary practices and behaviors which are resistant to change. This helps us understand the resistance or slowness of some parties to advance women’s political representation.

Exclusionary practices and behaviors continue to impede women’s full access to decision-making positions (Bueno 2007; Macaulay 2006; Alvarez 1986). As previously discussed, parties have been slow to grant women equal voice in party structures. In many cases, the division of labor within parties continues to mirror the traditional sexual division of labor in the domestic sphere. In addition, women in decision-making positions within the party structure are assigned to traditional and less influential committees, such as education and social welfare, typically associated with women’s traditional interests and roles as mothers and caretakers.

In addition, parties have not been given women equal opportunities at the ballot box. Not only do women represent a paltry 24 percent of all candidates, but parties continue to place women at the bottom of party lists instead of at the top where they would have a real chance of being elected (in closed-list systems). In our analysis, a pyramid pattern emerges where parties place more female candidates in the bottom third instead of the top-third of closed-lists. Moreover, parties have also resisted the implementation of candidate gender quotas, as previously discussed.

Cultural change in organizations is difficult to achieve, and requires a considerable amount of time. The formal inclusion of women in party ranks does not guarantee that women will have equal voice at the decision-making table or equal opportunities to participate in the electoral process. Moreover, being a woman does not
necessarily translate into having a commitment to gender equality or promoting such principles within the party. In fact, women themselves may also be reproducing the stereotypes and exclusionary practices that keep women out of politics. Thus, the cultural transformations must take place not only within individual men but also within many of the individual women within the parties.

Creating a critical mass of women in decision-making positions within parties is one strategy that can contribute to cultural change within party organizations. Drawing on Kanter’s (1977) seminal work, Dahelprup (2006) argues that the relative number of women within a political institution has important consequences for their ability to effectively perform their work as politicians. With a sufficient number of women in leadership positions, women are free to more effectively pursue their agenda instead of having to overcome obstacles related to their token status (such as exclusion, stigmatization, discrimination, isolation, etc).

A party’s institutional characteristics and ideology shape women’s opportunities to gain a critical mass in the organization’s structures. Our findings indicate that parties more likely to have a higher share of women in the NEC include those with left-leaning ideologies, strong gender equality principles in their bylaws and gender quotas for internal decision-making positions. A party with left-leaning views is more likely to be guided by egalitarian principles. Similarly, a party’s commitment and reflection of its commitment to gender equality principles in its founding documents may not only reflect a commitment to equality but also may provide legitimacy to women’s claims for greater inclusion and participation. Finally, parties that have adopted formal mechanisms such as
quotas for internal decision-making positions will also be more likely to have a higher share of women in the NEC.

While certain party characteristics appear to be more conducive to creating a critical mass of women in decision-making positions within parties, it is important to keep in mind the obstacles women face once they have achieved representation within their parties. Therefore, to devise effective strategies to increase women’s agency and capacity to bring about change, the role of women within party structures must receive greater attention from academics and activists alike. As it stands, the role of women inside political parties is understudied in the field of women in politics.

**CONCLUSION**

Building on Caul’s (1999) causal model, this study expanded our understanding of the factors that impact women’s representation in 18 Latin American countries. It identified a missing intervening variable in the causal model, which is the share of female candidates fielded by political parties. Integrating this variable into the model provided a more direct and precise measure of the factors that influence the variation in the number of women elected. The findings suggest that women’s underrepresentation in congress is a direct result of their underrepresentation in candidate lists, further highlighting the fundamental role parties play as the gatekeepers to power.

Summarizing our causal model, we found that the most powerful predictors of the number of women elected are the share of female candidates fielded by political parties and the combined effect of quota laws and closed-list systems. The share of female candidates fielded by parties, in turn, is determined by the opportunities available in a PR system to “balance” a ticket, and the presence of well-designed quotas with sanctions for
non-compliance. In the presence of well-designed quotas with sanctions for non-compliance, quotas trump party characteristics by ensuring that parties nominate a minimum share of female candidates.

Party context, i.e., the internal rules, norms, procedures and organizational practices of parties, only becomes relevant when we control for quotas (regardless of the quality of their design). In this case, our findings suggest that rule-oriented parties are constrained by their formal processes, and are therefore, less responsive and adaptable to women’s demands for inclusion. Primaries also negatively impact women’s chances of getting on the ballot, compared to national/exclusive selection processes.

Surprisingly, the presence of women within the higher echelons of power does not translate into the expected increase in the number of women candidates or elected officials. Until a sufficient number of women in the NEC gain representation in key decision-making positions within the party or reach the critical mass necessary to change the organizational culture of parties, their capacity to influence the composition of candidate lists and the number of women elected may remain limited. Nevertheless, parties with left-leaning ideologies, strong gender equality principles in their bylaws and gender quotas for internal decision-making positions may be more likely to promote a greater share of women in the NEC compared to parties without these characteristics.

Taken together, these finding suggest that decisions by parties are influenced and constrained not only by the rules of the political system but also by their own formal rules and informal practices. However, while rules and procedures influence party behavior, institutions alone do not determine outcomes. Parties retain agency and are capable of
adapting and responding to demands for greater inclusion and participation from underrepresented groups.

In short, the results of this study highlight the importance of political parties in explaining women’s underrepresentation in office. As the main gatekeepers, parties determine the composition of candidate lists, and therefore, the choices available to voters. As the share of women elected is determined by the share of female candidates, parties shape the gendered composition of Congress. By controlling women’s access to the ballot box, parties hold the key to increasing women’s participation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overcoming resistance to change requires the use of varying tactics. Political system factors that influence women’s representation, however, cannot be easily changed. These include the type of electoral system, the number of political parties competing, district magnitude and ballot type, among others. Therefore, the recommendations in this section will focus on party-level strategies that could be adopted to enhance both women’s representation within party structures and their opportunities to participate in electoral processes. The strategies address barriers that discourage women’s full participation, and are premised on the idea that parties should create an enabling environment for women to participate in politics by developing and implementing strategic plans to recruit, train and support women candidates. The recommendations presuppose that parties will want to increase women’s descriptive and substantive representation within parties and in public office. As such, what follows is a series of suggestions and recommendations for parties to improve women’s political participation and representation.
Recruitment: Parties should directly recruit women to run for public office. As Hinojosa (2005; 2009) argues, this eliminates the problem of self-nomination, as women are more likely to respond favorably to a direct request and encouragement from the party.

Financing: Parties should commit financial support to women candidates. For example, parties could voluntarily allocate a certain percentage of their training budget to the training of female party members and candidates (following the example of Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama, who have passed national laws requiring parties to allocate part of their public funding to training of female party members).

In addition, as women have limited financial resources to run campaigns during primary season, they should also consider creating a funding mechanism similar to Emily’s List or the Susan B. Anthony List in the United States. Founded in 1985, Emily’s List raises funds to help elect pro-choice women from the Democratic Party. They recruit and fund women candidates; help them build and run effective campaigns and mobilize the female electorate. Since its founding, it has helped elected 80 women to the House of Representatives.114 Alternatively, the Susan B. Anthony List raises funds to help elect pro-life women. They train pro-life candidates in how to run successful political campaigns; mobilize women voters to vote pro-life and support women’s election through a Candidate Fund.115

Awareness building within the party: The “business case” should be made that attracting women candidates and supporting gender equality can improve a party’s credibility and electoral success. Parties should be made aware that, despite the growing

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114 For more information, visit: www.emilyslist.org

115 For more information, visit: www.sba-list.org
electability of women candidates, women’s underrepresentation in elected office is a direct result of their underrepresentation as candidates. Party leaders should also be conscious of current trends in public opinion, which indicate strong and growing support for women leaders and gender equality issues. In addition, women represent half of the population, and in several countries in Latin America, the female electorate outnumbers the male electorate, representing an important opportunity for garnering votes.

Making the “business case” for increasing women’s access to power can be an effective strategy; however, we should not lose sight of the fact that women’s political participation should also be framed within the context of rights. It is a woman’s inherent right to participate in politics.

**Voluntary quota provisions:** Parties should consider mechanisms to increase women’s participation within parties as well as the share of women candidates they nominate, including placing women in electable positions on party lists. For example, women could encourage parties to voluntarily adopt gender quotas for candidate lists and internal decision-making positions in countries where no nationally mandated quota law exists. Such quotas should be designed in such a way to ensure their implementation. For example, the women’s unit or the party’s electoral commission, in cases where such an entity exists, could be tasked with ensuring compliance with the quota rule. In the case of systems with closed-lists, the quota law should include a provision mandating women’s placement in electable positions.

**Women’s representation within party structures:** Parties should develop plans and establish mechanisms to promote women’s greater representation in party structures. Parties could voluntarily establish a target of at least 30 percent to ensure a minimum
number of women are placed in leadership positions in the party. In addition, parties should ensure a more balanced distribution of women and men throughout their national, regional and local decision-making committees, ensuring women’s placement in meaningful leadership positions.

Alliances: Women should build alliances with men within the party that share similar views and convictions. Having men as advocates of change is an essential part of the process of transforming an organization’s culture. Party activists should also build strategic alliances with the women’s movement, civil society organizations and transnational actors. In addition, inter-party networks comprised of gender activists from different parties should be created and supported in order to provide women an opportunity to exchange experiences, good practices and lessons learned. Such networks are already in existence in Panama, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic. For example, the Foro Nacional de Mujeres de Partidos Políticos de la República Dominicana, founded in 1999 as a non-governmental organization, brings together women politicians from 22 political parties in the Dominican Republic. The Foro aims to advance women’s participation and representation in politics by engaging in awareness building, training, research, and advocacy efforts.

Women’s Units: Women’s units should redefine their role within the party, focusing on the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities for women. Specifically, women’s sections should develop a gender action plan focused on: increasing women’s participation in internal party structures; holding the party accountable to its commitment to include women under equal conditions; promoting debate and discussion about gender specific issues in the party’s agenda; organizing
training courses, economic incentives and mentoring opportunities for women; and advocating for the inclusion of gender equality principles in the party’s campaign platform and in party documents, including government plans and policies.

In partnership with civil society organizations, women’s sections should also carry out an evaluation of their strategies, mechanisms and programs to measure their effectiveness and impact. These evaluations could provide important inputs for the design of training courses, mentoring programs or advocacy strategies to advance women’s representation.

Women’s units should also be prepared to take advantage of critical junctures or windows of opportunity for increasing women’s representation. Periods of crisis and transitions have provided women with important opportunities for advancing their agenda and demands for greater representation. Women’s units should take advantage of these opportunities to promote change and reform within their parties.

Finally, to strengthen the role of women’s units and enable them to carry out their functions, parties should provide them with financial support. More specifically, women’s sections should have an assigned budget as opposed to receiving piecemeal funding for specific activities. (In our survey, we found that most parties provide women’s sections with funds for specific activities. Only 15 percent provided women’s sections with a regular budget.) Having an assigned budget is necessary for the implementation of a gender action plan or strategy and for long-term planning in general.

Rhetorical commitments: Female party activists should also ensure that party documents, such as bylaws and declarations of principles, reflect gender equality principles. These principles should be linked to the ideological platform of the party.
Even though these are rhetorical commitments, women can draw upon these principles when arguing their case for greater inclusion and participation. In addition, party activists should also draw upon international agreements and recommendations because they can provide greater legitimacy to women’s claims for greater participation.

**Support programs:** Parties should adopt programs and initiatives aimed at building the confidence, skills and capacity of women within parties. For example, mentoring or shadowing programs have been used successfully to support women during their electoral campaigns or upon assuming office (when learning about formal and informal parliamentary practices is essential for ensuring the effectiveness of the elected official). In addition, parties should organize training workshops for women in areas such public speaking, policy development, debating techniques, fundraising, media strategies and confidence-building. Finally, most parties organize gender-neutral training workshops as part of their socialization process for party members and politicians. Such material should be revised to include a gender perspective.

**Data collection:** Parties should improve their data collections systems, beginning with the disaggregation of their membership roster by sex. In addition, parties should create a database of potential female candidates that they could turn to and directly recruit during electoral periods.


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