

## **The Impact of Gender Quotas: A Research Agenda**

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## **Abstract**

Political parties and national legislatures in more than 100 countries have established quotas for the selection of female candidates to political office, almost all within the last 15 years. To date, most research analyzes these electoral reforms by documenting the forms they take, reasons for their passage, and variations in their effects on the absolute numbers of women elected. Yet, campaigns do not simply seek to increase women's numbers. They also suggest that the adoption of quotas will increase diversity among the types of women elected, raise attention to women's issues in policy-making processes, change public attitudes about women and politics, and inspire female voters to get more politically involved. As such, this paper goes beyond the existing literature to ask three new questions: What kinds of women are elected through quotas? Does the adoption of quotas lead to greater attention to 'women's interests' in policy-making? Do quotas result in more favorable attitudes towards women in politics or the increased political engagement of female constituents? Linking these debates to research on three facets of political representation – descriptive, substantive, and symbolic – this paper theorizes the wider impact of quotas, drawing on evidence from around the world. The aim is to explore how these measures affect existing political dynamics, as well as what they might mean for women as a group.

The past two decades have witnessed unprecedented gains in women's access to elected office. This trend has occurred across all major regions of the world, leading to dramatic increases in the percentage of women in parliament in countries as diverse as Rwanda, Sweden, Argentina, and Nepal. A major reason for these shifts has been the adoption of gender quota policies aimed at increasing the proportion of female candidates to political office. While they take diverse forms, such measures now exist in more than 100 countries, with the overwhelming majority appearing in just the last 15 years. The recent and global nature of these developments has sparked both scholarly and popular interest in the origins and effects of quota policies. To explain why quotas have been adopted in countries that are otherwise quite diverse, scholars point to the mobilization of women's groups, the strategic incentives of political elites, the role of reigning norms of equality and representation, the priorities of international organizations, and the exchange of information across national borders. To understand why some quotas have produced increases, and others stagnation and even decreases in the numbers of women elected, researchers point to factors like policy design, institutional context, and political will (Krook 2009). Given that quotas constitute the widest reaching electoral reforms of recent years, questions regarding their design, adoption, and implementation remain crucially important.

Yet, even a cursory look at quota campaigns reveals that these measures are not simply linked to concerns to increase the numbers of women in elected office. Arguing their case for gender quotas, advocates around the world have suggested that such measures will increase diversity among the types of women elected, raise attention to women's issues in policy-making processes, change the gendered nature of the public sphere, and inspire female voters to get more politically involved. At the same time, opponents have expressed concerns that quotas will facilitate access for elite or 'unqualified' women, bring women to office with little interest in promoting women's concerns, reinforce stereotypes about women's inferiority as political actors, and deter ordinary women's political participation. Expectations such as these indicate that gender quotas may have a host of positive and negative effects, above and beyond their effects on the numbers of women elected. Despite their prevalence in quota debates, however, the empirical validity of these claims has not yet been systematically addressed. Although a growing number of scholars have signaled the need to go 'beyond numbers' (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008; Sacchet 2008; Zetterberg forthcoming), most of their work has involved single case studies that use a range of different theories and measures to evaluate the impact of gender quota policies.

To gain greater leverage on these questions, this volume engages in a theory-building exercise that develops common concepts for analyzing quota impact, developed and illustrated through a series of in-depth case studies from four regions of the world: Western Europe, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia and the Middle East. The goal of the book is to distill trends, raise additional questions, and derive hypotheses for future research, with the aim of assessing whether and how quotas achieve a range of objectives. Connecting these dynamics to existing frameworks in political science, the book organizes these effects in relation to three major facets of political representation: *descriptive representation*, or the basic attributes of those elected; *substantive representation*, or attention to group interests in policy-making; and *symbolic representation*, or the cultural meanings and ramifications of the representative process (cf. Pitkin 1967; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). Closer examination of how quotas interact with or inform patterns of political representation can help assess whether or not quotas achieve the ends anticipated by their advocates – or feared by their opponents. At the same time, it provides an opportunity to link a series of otherwise disparate literatures in political science by considering how electoral reform may affect candidate recruitment and preparedness, dynamics of policy-making, and public opinion and mass mobilization.

There is a large literature on how gender dynamics play out in relation to these three facets of representation, which can serve as a basis for theorizing how the increased presence of women may alter existing patterns. However, a key starting point in this book is the possibility that quotas may interfere with the dynamics that normally operate in this regard. In other words, the authors consider whether the *means* by which women enter politics may influence *how, why, and to what extent* their presence affects different types of representative processes. On the one hand, the public debates and controversies surrounding quota adoption may shape expectations about who ‘quota women’ are and what they will do once they reach political office. By extension, the content of such discussions is likely to influence how their performance is evaluated by the public in general and by female citizens in particular. On the other hand, the varied design of quota policies and rates of quota implementation suggest that these measures are likely to have diverse effects on the composition of political elites. These patterns, in turn, may have an impact on the capacities of ‘quota women’ to pursue legislative change, as well as the broader meaning of their presence for democratic legitimacy and for women’s political empowerment. The contributions in this volume explore these possibilities, but also recognize that their findings do not necessarily reflect a

uniform set of dynamics at work across all cases, offering some initial insights into the conditions under which various scenarios are likely to occur.

To set out this collective theory-building enterprise, this chapter begins by presenting an overview of quota policies around the world, noting broad similarities and differences in the design of quota policies, paths to quota adoption, and trends in quota implementation. Situating the study in relation to the existing literature on gender and politics, the second section outlines major theories and findings regarding women's descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation. The third section then puts these two topics together by turning to the effects of quotas on these three dimensions of political representation. It reviews the preliminary evidence garnered from individual case studies in terms of how quotas influence the attributes of the women elected, the policy actions and achievements of female legislators, and constituent responses to female newcomers. Building on this work, the fourth section establishes shared definitions for theorizing and operationalizing the ways in which quotas may affect dynamics of descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation.

It argues that to move the research agenda beyond numbers scholars should focus on how quotas influence: (1) the *kinds of women* elected, in terms of how features like their age, education, occupation, degree of political experience, and family connections differ from men and women elected without the help of quotas; (2) the *form* and *content* of policy-making, with regard to how the introduction of quotas alters the types of policies proposed and passed, paying special attention to the behavior and priorities of women elected through quotas; and (3) *public attitudes* towards women in politics and trends in the *political engagement* of female constituents, with an eye to examining how quotas break down traditional associations between men and the public sphere. Illustrating how these questions might be analyzed with empirical data, the section presents an overview of the various case studies in the volume, noting how they operationalize these questions, as well as how they relate and 'speak' to one another. It also lays out the ambitions of the final chapter, which is to build on these case studies to generate a shared framework and set of hypotheses for further investigation, including the potential links across types of representation. The goal of the volume is to facilitate cumulative research on these questions, informed by comparisons among case studies conducted in countries in diverse regions around the world. Individually, the chapters point to numerous possibilities for theoretical and empirical elaboration. Taken together, however, they

suggest a rich and wide-ranging scholarly and political agenda, focused on ensuring that quotas combat, rather than perpetuate, existing patterns of domination and inequality.

### **Gender Quotas: Global Patterns**

The diffusion of gender quotas to diverse contexts around the globe has met with intense interest among feminist scholars, leading the literature on these measures to become one of the fastest-growing areas of research on women and politics. This work has generated a variety of typologies for classifying quotas, but most scholars recognize three basic kinds: reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas (Krook 2009; Norris 2004). Some exclude reserved seats, however, on the grounds that these provisions do not influence candidate nomination processes, but rather make specific guarantees as to who may accede to political office (Dahlerup 2006a). Others divide party quotas into two additional types: aspirant quotas, which affect pre-selection processes by establishing that only women may be considered as nominees, and candidate quotas, which require that parties select a particular proportion of women among their final lists of candidates (Matland 2006). Still others draw distinctions between various kinds of legislative quotas, separating out those quotas instituted through changes to the electoral law from those secured through constitutional reforms (Dahlerup 2007). While distinctions among sub-types are important, in this book the term “quotas” refers broadly to reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas, on the grounds that these policies, irrespective of their mode of intervention or legal status, share the same goal of increasing the number of women elected to political office.

#### *Quota Policies*

Quotas vary in terms of the countries in which they appear, the timing of their adoption, and the ways in which they attempt to alter candidate selection processes. *Reserved seats* appear in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East (Krook 2004). They first emerged in the 1930s and were the main type of quota adopted through the 1970s. Since the year 2000, however, they have appeared increasingly in countries with otherwise low numbers of women in politics. Reserved seats are typically established through constitutional reforms, and occasionally changes to electoral laws, which create special electoral rolls for women, designate separate districts for female candidates, or distribute seats for women to parties based on their proportion of the popular vote. While they mandate a minimum number of female legislators,

reserved seats often provide for low levels of female representation, usually between 1 percent and 10 percent of all elected representatives. However, since 2000, several countries have instituted much larger provisions of 30 percent. In some cases, reserved seats apply to single-member districts in which only women may run for election (Nanivadekar 2006). In others, they are allocated in multi-member districts to the designated number of women that win the most votes (Norris 2007). In yet others, women are selected to these seats weeks after the general elections by an electoral college (Tripp 2006).

*Party quotas* are the most common type of quota. They were first adopted in the early 1970s by a small number of socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, however, they began to appear in a diverse array of political parties in all regions of the world. In some countries, they preceded – and now coexist with – legislative quotas (Meier 2004; Araújo and García Quesada 2006). At their most basic, party quotas are measures adopted voluntarily by individual parties that commit the party to aim for a certain proportion of women among its candidates to political office, usually between 25 percent and 50 percent. However, the particular phrasing of this requirement varies: some policies identify women as the group to be promoted by the quota (Durrieu 1999; Goetz and Hassim 2003; Valiente 2005), while others set out a more gender-neutral formulation, referring to a maximum or minimum percentage of candidates of one sex (Freidenvall, Dahlerup, and Skjeie 2006; Guadagnini 2005). In countries with proportional representation electoral systems, party quotas govern the composition of party lists; in countries with majoritarian arrangements, they are directed at a collection of single-member districts (Opello 2006; Russell 2005).

*Legislative quotas*, finally, tend to be found in developing countries, especially Latin America, and post-conflict societies, primarily in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeastern Europe. This pattern can be explained in part by the fact that legislative quotas are the newest kind of quota policy, appearing first only in the 1990s, when the issue of women's representation reached the agenda of many international and non-governmental organizations (Krook 2006b). Enacted through reforms to electoral laws and sometimes constitutions, legislative quotas are mandatory provisions that apply to all parties. They generally call for women to form between 25 percent and 50 percent of all candidates. In most instances, the language is gender-neutral. Yet, these measures vary in terms of how strictly their goals are articulated: some speak vaguely about 'facilitating access' (Giraud and Jensen 2001), while others offer concrete guidelines regarding the selection and placement of female candidates (Jones 2004; Meier

2005). Like party quotas, legislative quotas are implemented in different ways depending on the electoral system, applying to party lists (Meier 2004) or a group of single-member districts (Murray 2004). However, given their status as law, a distinctive and important feature of these measures is that they may contain sanctions for non-compliance and be subject to oversight from external bodies (Baldez 2004; Jones 1998).

### *Quota Adoption*

The adoption of quotas is puzzling on a number of grounds, but especially from a lens focused on political elites. Because the percentage of women identified in these policies is often significantly higher than the existing proportion of women in political office, implementing these policies to their fullest extent requires, by definition, a reduction in the number of men. As such, many of the same men voting for these reforms would lose their positions as a result. Scholars have offered four main explanations as to why elites have passed quota provisions, often quickly and with substantial margins of support. The first is that women mobilize for quotas, usually when women's groups come to realize that quotas are an effective, and perhaps the only, means for increasing women's representation. They include women's organizations inside political parties, women's movements in civil society, women's groups in other countries, and even individual women close to powerful men (Bruhn 2003; Kittilson 2006). In these instances, women pursue quotas for both normative and pragmatic reasons. They believe that there should be more women in politics in order to achieve justice, promote women's interests, and make use of women's resources for the good of society (Phillips 1995). However, absent any 'natural' trend towards change, these women acknowledge that these goals are likely to be achieved only through specific, targeted actions to promote female candidates (cf. Krook 2006a).

A second account is that political elites adopt quotas for strategic reasons, generally related to competition with other parties. Various case studies suggest, for example, that party elites often adopt quotas when rival parties adopt or support them (Caul 2001; Meier 2004). This concern may be heightened if a party is seeking to overcome a long period in opposition or a dramatic decrease in popularity. In other contexts, elites view quotas as a way to demonstrate a degree of commitment to women but without actually intending to alter existing patterns of inequality (Htun and Jones 2002; Mossuz-Lavau 1998). In many Latin American cases, for instance, 30 percent quota laws were adopted

but resulted in a wide range of outcomes, including a *decrease* in the numbers of women elected to the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies. Alternatively, elites treat quotas as a means to promote other ends, like maintaining control over rivals within or outside the party. In Bangladesh, reserved seats have been used in the bargaining processes following elections as a means to secure coalition partners (Chowdhury 2002). Where these motives prevail, the adoption of quotas may be less about empowering women in politics and more about how quotas fit in, perhaps serendipitously, with various other struggles among political elites.

A third possibility is that quotas are adopted when they mesh with existing or emerging notions of equality and representation. For example, left-wing parties are generally more open to measures such as quotas because these match with their more general goals of social equality (Hassim 2002; Opello 2006). In other countries, gender quotas may be viewed as an extension of guarantees given to other groups based on linguistic, religious, racial, and other cleavages (cf. Inhetveen 1999). In Belgium, for example, quotas for women have followed the adoption of reserved seats for linguistic groups (Meier 2000). Finally, many quotas emerge during periods of democratic transition. Democratization creates demands for participation, inclusion, and fairness, opening space for organized women to put gender equality on the public agenda. In this context, quotas may be viewed as a way to establish the legitimacy of the new political system, as has also been the case in many post-conflict societies (Bauer and Britton 2006). As such, quotas may ‘fit’ with or enhance features of the political context, rather than reflect principled concerns to empower women or pragmatic strategies to win or maintain power.

A fourth explanation is that quotas are supported by international norms and spread through transnational sharing. Over the last ten years, a variety of international organizations – including the United Nations, the Socialist International, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the Organization of American States – have issued declarations recommending that all member-states aim for 30 percent women in all political bodies. In some cases, international actors are directly involved in quota adoption, either by directly applying quotas or by compelling national leaders to do so themselves (Corrin 2001; Norris 2007). In others, international events provide new sources of leverage in national debates, shifting the balance in favor of local and transnational actors pressing for quota adoption (Araújo and García Quesada 2006; Bauer and Britton 2006). In still others, women’s groups and transnational non-

governmental organizations share information on quota strategies across national borders (Lubertino Beltrán 1992; Russell 2005; cf. Krook 2006b).

In practice, components of these four explanations tend to combine in individual cases of quota reform (Krook 2009). For example, women may mobilize at the grassroots in an effort to influence elite decision-making (Kittilson 2006), in some cases inspired by lessons from other countries (Russell 2005). Alternatively, increased international pressure in the context of democratization may lead elites to pass quota provisions, contributing in turn to the strength of international norms regarding women and political decision-making (Bauer and Britton 2006; Htun and Jones 2002). These various possibilities indicate that there may be multiple paths to quota adoption, affecting both the timing and coalitions behind quota reform (Bruhn 2003; Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005). Yet, how quotas reach the political agenda – in particular, whether they are the result of extended grassroots mobilization, unilateral elite imposition, or strong pressure from outside actors – may have important implications for their perceived legitimacy as well as their potential to alter existing dynamics of political representation.

### *Quota Implementation*

As a result of these various processes, quotas have now been adopted in all major regions and have a broad range of institutional, social, economic, and cultural characteristics. Yet, the mere advent of gender quotas has not resulted in uniform increases in the percentage of women in parliament worldwide. Rather, some countries have witnessed dramatic increases following the adoption of new quota regulations (Bauer and Britton 2006; Kittilson 2006; Nanivadekar 2006), while others have seen more modest changes (Murray 2004; Siregar 2006) or even setbacks (Htun 2002; Verge 2008) in the numbers of women elected. Pinpointing why some quotas are more effective than others is a complicated task: cross-national variations are the combined result of quotas and other factors that at work before and after quotas are established. As a result, quotas do not simply lead to numerical gains proportional to the quota policy, but also interact in various ways with features of the broader political context (Krook 2009).

Three broad reasons have been offered to untangle these disparate effects. The first links cross-national variations to the details of individual quota measures. Reserved seats have traditionally produced small changes in the numbers of women elected, although in recent years the proportion of seats set aside for women has increased to as much as one-third. In debating the relative merits of party and legislative

provisions, some claim that party quotas are more effective because they are voluntary measures; though elites may be motivated by strategic considerations, they are likely to implement measures that they willingly adopt. Others insist that legislative quotas have more force because they bind all parties, not simply those who choose to adopt quotas, and are enforced by state bureaucracies and the courts, rather than party leaders (Jones 1998; Norris 2007). Yet, the impact of particular policies also stem from their wording (Htun 2002), requirements (Chama 2001; Meier 2004), sanctions (Murray 2004; Schmidt and Saunders 2004), and perceived legitimacy (Yoon 2001), all of which may have intended and unintended effects. In France, for instance, financial penalties associated with the 50 percent quota law create distinct incentives for parties of different sizes: larger parties tend to ignore the requirements, while smaller parties are more likely to comply, for the simple reason that the latter are under greater pressure than the former to maximize the amount of state funding they receive (Murray 2007).

A second explanation relates to the 'fit' between quota measures and other political institutions. For example, quotas often have the greatest impact in countries with proportional representation (PR) electoral systems, particularly when combined with closed party lists and high district magnitudes (Caul 1999; Htun and Jones 2002). In Sweden, for example, multiple seats are available in each constituency and candidates are elected from lists put forward by political parties. In contrast, it is more difficult to apply quotas where only one seat is available per district, unless the quota entails reserved seats, as in Tanzania. Quotas also tend to improve women's representation in countries where several parties co-exist and larger parties respond to policy innovations initiated by smaller parties. Dynamics of electoral competition may lead established parties to fear losing votes to smaller parties, and in parties with left-wing ideologies, the leadership may be better able to enforce party or national regulations (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Kittilson 2006). Further, quotas are often more successful in countries where the political culture emphasizes sexual difference and group representation, and less successful where it stresses sexual equality and individual representation (Inhetveen 1999; Meier 2000). Indeed, in some countries quotas have been challenged as a violation of constitutional principles of equality, as was the case in Italy and the UK in the 1990s and Mexico and Spain in the 2000s.

A third account points to the role of various actors vis-à-vis quota implementation. Party elites, who are often overwhelmingly male, are the group most directly responsible for variations in quota impact, since the effective application of quotas largely hinges around elites' willingness to recruit female

candidates. In a large number of cases, elites take various steps to mitigate quota impact, ranging from passive refusal to enforce quotas to more active measures – including large-scale electoral fraud – to subvert their intended effects (Araújo 2003; Costa Benavides 2003). Elites in Bolivia, for example, went so far as to change male names into female ones as a means to circumvent the 30 percent quota law. However, other actors may play a direct or indirect role in enforcing quota provisions, including women’s organizations inside and outside political parties (Durrieu 1999; Sainsbury 1993), national and international courts (Chama 2001; Jones 2004), and ordinary citizens (Baldez 2004; Kolinsky 1991), all of whom may monitor party compliance with quota measures in ways that lead elites to ignore or honor, and possibly even exceed, quota requirements.

Similar to explanations for quota adoption, these three components – while analytically distinct – often work together, shaping the implementation process through various combinations of quota details, institutional contexts, and actor support. Importantly, these elements may work at cross-purposes to a certain degree, causing otherwise ‘favorable’ contextual factors like specific policy requirements, the presence of closed-list PR, and strong support from central actors to result in low numbers of women elected (Jones 1996; Meier 2004), depending upon how they interact with other factors at work in the same case. At the same time, vague policy details, open-list PR or majoritarian electoral arrangements, and fierce opposition from party elites, taken individually, may not necessarily block effective quota implementation (Schmidt forthcoming; Tripp, Konaté, and Lowe-Morna). The mechanisms by which quotas are translated into practice, consequently, play a crucial role in determining the numbers of women elected. By the same token, however, they also shape the conditions of women’s increased nomination, with ramifications for the types of women who gain election through quotas, and thus the degree to which their presence may or may not transform ‘politics as usual.’

### **Women and Representation: Concepts and Trends**

Questions of political representation are a core focus of research on gender and politics. This literature explores why there are so few women elected to political office, whether women in politics represent ‘women’ as a group, and how the presence or absence of women in politics affects voter perceptions and opinions. The first topic has received by far the most attention in comparative work on

women's political representation, stemming at least in part from the fact that it is relatively straightforward to count the numbers of women in national legislatures and then to compare these percentages across countries. However, the second has been the focus of a large body of single case studies and a growing number of comparative analyses. The fact that most studies focus on single countries is not surprising: monitoring the effects of women's presence requires in-depth study of the dynamics behind policy-making processes, and scholars need specialized knowledge in order to gauge how women might be able to intervene, as well as whether or not they do, to promote women's concerns in the formulation of public policies. Comparative studies of the third topic, in contrast, are much less common, due partially to the fact that scholars disagree in their definitions and symbolic effects are the least tangible of all three aspects of political representation.

### *Descriptive Representation*

Empirical studies of women's descriptive representation have primarily focused on the overall numbers of women holding elected office, with most scholars seeking to account for cross-national variations in the extent of women's access to political office. To this end, researchers have explored the impact of three categories of variables: institutional or "demand-side" factors, such as electoral rules and candidate selection procedures; structural factors affecting the "supply" of female candidates, such as the proportion of women in the workforce and women's educational achievements; and cultural or ideational factors, such as beliefs about equality or the suitability of women for leadership roles, which influence the likelihood that voters will support female candidates. The findings of large-*n* statistical studies and small-*n* case studies, while sometimes mixed, signal the importance of dynamic and even reciprocal relationships among these three sets of factors.

In terms of institutional variables, scholars find that the percentage of women in national parliaments tends to be higher in countries with PR electoral systems than those with majoritarian electoral arrangements (McAllister and Studlar 2002; Rule 1987). In the latter, candidate selection can be viewed a zero-sum game in which women and men must compete for a single nomination (Welch and Studlar 1990). PR systems, in contrast, are organized around multi-member districts. As district magnitude increases, parties can perceive a need to present lists that more accurately "mirror" the population, increasing the likelihood that women will be included on party lists. Opportunities for women

to be elected are often enhanced when closed lists are used, as party leaders can place women in electable positions, in contrast to open lists where voters select individual names (Caul 1999). These dynamics interact with institutions of candidate recruitment. Nomination procedures may be patronage-based or follow a bureaucratic logic (Norris 1997) and may involve decision-making by party leaders or local constituency organizations (Matland 2004). In general, women tend to fare better in systems with clear and centralized rules (Lovenduski and Norris 1993).

Turning to structural factors, many studies observe strong correlations between women's descriptive representation and women's overall rates of education and labor force participation (McDonagh 2002; Rosenbluth, Salmond, and Thies 2006), as well as levels of national development (Matland 1998). Modernization processes bring women into higher social and economic roles, thus creating a greater "supply" of women to enter electoral politics. Finally, in terms of ideational variables, research uncovers close connections with cultural attitudes towards equality. The number of women in politics is typically higher in Protestant countries (Kaiser 2001) and in countries where citizens are more open to women in leadership positions (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). These patterns suggest that changing ideas about gender roles are closely associated with the increased access of women to elected office.

Despite the general nature of these conclusions, however, closer examination reveals that most of these results derive from studies of advanced Western democracies. Although some work confirms these findings in non-Western cases (Paxton 1997; Yoon 2004), other studies discover that many of these factors play little or no role in developing countries (Matland 1998). Offering a more dynamic view of developments over time, single and comparative case studies help nuance these findings and explain these correlations. Some scholars, for example, emphasize the importance of women's strategies in interaction with features of the electoral system, noting that women's descriptive representation has increased in some cases without a change electoral system (Sainsbury 1993), while it has remained relatively stable in others even as the electoral system has undergone reform (Beckwith 1992), depending on whether women or not mobilize and elites respond by changing their recruitment practices. Addressing other variables, case studies often confirm links between the numbers of women in elected office and various indicators of women's social and economic status (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994), but challenge findings regarding national development, noting that many developed countries have low numbers of women in parliament,

while some developing countries have seen dramatic increases in recent years (Goetz and Hassim 2003). Similarly, while egalitarian political cultures do appear to favor women's access to political office (Bystydzienski 1995), women have assumed prominent political positions in countries with strongly patriarchal religious and cultural norms, usually as a result of family connections or as a form of political patronage by powerful male leaders (Jalalzai 2008). These patterns suggest that the political context may mediate the impact of institutional, structural, and cultural factors in ways that promote or undermine the election of women.

### *Substantive Representation*

Research on women's substantive representation aims to understand the degree to which women seek, and are able, to promote women's issues once they are elected to political office. A key concern in this work is to determine whether or not women 'make a difference,' following normative arguments for women's increased presence which put forth expectations that women will pursue alternative political objectives than those favored by men (Phillips 1995; Young 2000). Demonstrating these effects, however, is much less straightforward. While scholars often detect distinct policy priorities among male and female legislators (Barrett 1995; Thomas 1991), they also find that these differences do not always translate into policy gains for women as a group. The empirical literature on these questions has focused on three types of factors that may account for these findings: the proportion of women elected, such as the achievement of a "critical mass" of female legislators; individual factors that may affect the propensity of women to act for women, such as party membership and "feminist" attitudes; and institutional and contextual factors, such as the strength of party discipline, the presence of a left party in government, and support from civil society in the form of a strong feminist movement or sympathetic public opinion.

Literature on the importance of proportions assumes that as the number of women approximates a "critical mass," attention to women's policy concerns will grow (Childs and Krook 2008). The rationale is that as women become more numerous in legislative chambers, they will be increasingly able to form strategic coalitions with one another in order to promote legislation related to women's interests (Thomas 1994). However, four other scenarios are also possible: a rise in the number of women may influence men's behavior in a feminist direction, causing both male and female legislators to pay more attention to women's issues (Bratton 2005); the increased presence of women may provoke a backlash among male

legislators, who may employ a range of tactics to obstruct women's policy initiatives (Hawkesworth 2003); a lower proportion of women may be more effective than a higher number, because female legislators may be able to specialize in women's concerns without appearing to undermine male domination (Ayata and Tütüncü 2008; Crowley 2004); and a rise in the number of women may result in the election of an increasingly more diverse group who may or may not be interested in pursuing women's issues (Carroll 2001). The diverse range of outcomes associated with women's increased presence has led to calls to move beyond attention to mere percentages to account for whether, how, and to what effect women act for women as a group (Beckwith 2007; Childs and Krook 2009).

To explain these patterns, scholars identify factors that might limit or enhance opportunities for women to translate policy preferences into legislative initiatives on behalf of women as a group. Some point to individual-level variables, such as party affiliation and feminist orientation, finding that legislators in left parties and those with feminist attitudes are more likely to prioritize women-friendly policy initiatives (Htun and Power 2006; Tremblay and Pelletier 2000; Vega and Firestone 1995). While this leads some to argue that party matters more than sex in understanding women's legislative priorities, others note that women in conservative parties are often more progressive on gender issues than their male counterparts, even if they do not consciously self-identify as "feminist" (Carroll 2001). In countries with more weakly institutionalized parties, party ideology may be less coherent but party affiliation may remain important because it permits access to political patronage (Goetz and Hassim 2003).

In addition to individual-based determinants, a range of institutional and contextual factors may also influence opportunities for women seeking to translate policy preferences into legislative initiatives on behalf of women as a group. Many researchers, for example, point to parliamentary rules and practices that compel women to conform to existing masculine legislative norms in ways that may undermine their ability to integrate women's perspectives into public policy-making (Lovenduski 2005). Others investigate the impact of party discipline, women's seniority in the legislature, the presence of women's caucuses, and the influence of women's movements and public opinion on the potential for women to develop and insert a gendered lens into public policy (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Dodson 2006; Reingold 2000; Swers 2002). This work acknowledges that achieving gains for women depends closely on features of the policy-making process, which influence how and when women's issues reach the legislative agenda, as well as their prospects for being passed into law (Dodson 2006;

Franceschet 2008). These factors are important, as research finds that female legislators tend to differ most from men when it comes to setting the legislative agenda and proposing new bills that address issues of concern to women (Childs 2004; Franceschet and Piscopo 2008), even though male legislators often later vote for these bills at similar rates (Tamerius 1995).

### *Symbolic Representation*

Attempts to discern the shape and effects of women's symbolic representation are less common in the literature on women and politics. Scholars have approached the question of how women's presence affects constituent perceptions and opinions in two main ways. One approach examines how women's presence affects the perceived legitimacy of elected bodies (Childs 2004; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005), while another explores how it alters voters' beliefs about the nature of politics as a 'male' domain (High-Pippert and Comer 1998). Both sets of effects have been analyzed in terms of their impact on citizens as a whole, as well as in relation to women's attitudes and behavior more specifically. The findings thus far have been mixed, as research has sought to define and measure these more diffuse cultural meanings of political representation.

Addressing questions of legitimacy, studies on citizens as a whole find that both male and female respondents believe that government is more democratic when more women are present (Karp and Banducci 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). In contrast, others focused on women exclusively report that women represented by women were generally more positive about their representatives, but this did not lead them to be more positive about politics in general (Lawless 2004). In terms of beliefs among politics as a 'male' domain, several scholars explore the symbolic role or importance of female legislators for women's political behavior. They argue that women's increased presence sends important signals to female citizens that lead them to become more politically involved or feel more politically efficacious (Atkeson 2003; Atkeson and Carrillo 2007; High-Pippert and Comer 1998). Others find, however, that the election of women appears to have only weak effects on trends in women's political engagement (Karp and Banducci 2008). A difficulty in generalizing from this work is that the research questions and methods vary significantly across analyses. Some use large-scale surveys that compare male and female attitudes and behaviors in relation to the women elected to political office (Karp and Banducci

2008), while others are based on interviews with female legislators, who are asked what they think is the symbolic significance of their presence for their constituents (Carroll 20002; Childs 2004).

### **Quotas and Representation: Initial Evidence**

This rich and varied literature provides a starting point for exploring how quotas may affect women's political representation. However, sustained controversies over gender quotas in many countries suggest that a direct application of insights generated by non-quota cases may be misguided. More specifically, the need to find a greater number of women may lead to the election of women with profiles distinct from those of male representatives, as well as from those of women elected prior to the quota policy. While quotas may facilitate political renewal, and thereby improve the caliber of candidates, beliefs that they undermine merit as a criteria of candidate selection lead to the expectation that the women who benefit from quotas may be less 'qualified' than their non-quota counterparts. Similarly, being elected through quotas may have contradictory effects on the perceived need among 'quota women' to represent women's interests in policy-making: women elected under quotas may feel a particular obligation to speak on behalf of women as a group, or may seek to avoid the stigma of quotas by disavowing women's issues entirely. The use of quotas, finally, may signal greater inclusion in the polity by legitimizing women's political presence, thereby challenging traditional stereotypes regarding women's roles. On the other hand, however, negative media attention towards quota women may undermine evaluations of their performance, as well as dissuade other women from coming forward as candidates. While all of these claims are subject to empirical investigation, these possibilities indicate that quotas alter the stakes of women's political presence, with a range of implications for women's representation.

### *Quotas and Descriptive Representation*

The first wave of research on gender quotas offers numerous insights on the effects of quotas on women's descriptive representation. The vast majority, however, relate exclusively to their impact on the absolute numbers of women elected. In addition to the mixed findings of case studies, large-*n* analyses of quota impact produce variable results: while some find that quotas are not statistically significant (Tremblay 2007), others observe that quotas – together with the electoral system – are among the most important factors explaining why some countries elect more women to office than others (Tripp and Kang

2008; Yoon 2004). These changing results may stem from the fact that many new quota policies involve efforts to 'fast track' women's representation, leading to overnight changes in the proportions of women elected (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

While a focus on numbers is important, it does not exhaust the category of descriptive representation. Because this can include attributes other than sex, analyzing the kinds of women elected via quotas is crucial for evaluating how effective quotas are in promoting a diverse array of women. A common objection to quotas, on the part of feminists and non-feminists alike, is that they will lead to the election of elite women (Dahlerup 2006a; Nanivadekar 2006), or those who serve as proxies and tokens and therefore are likely to reinforce the status quo by not taking feminist policy positions) (Abou-Zeid 2006; Krook 2008; Rodriguez 2003). Despite this oft-voiced concern, there has been little research on exactly what kinds of women benefit from quotas (Catalano and Baldez 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo 2009; Vincent 2004).

Some studies suggest that quotas primarily lead to the recruitment of women with ties to powerful men (Bird 2003; Chowdhury 2002; Pupavac 2005; Rai, Bari, Mahtab, and Mohanty 2006), high levels of education (Sater 2007; Srivastava 2000), and close loyalties to their political parties (Cowley and Childs 2003; Tripp 2006). However, others find that quotas promote women from marginalized groups (Mehta 2002), those with low levels of education (Schwartz 2004), those with lower status occupations (Bird 2003; Catalano and Baldez 2008), and those who are relatively young (Britton 2005; Burness 2000; Marx, Borner, and Caminotti 2007; Murray 2008). Evidence also suggests that women who accede to office via quotas tend to have less political experience – and in some cases, different kinds of political experience – when compared with men and non-quota women (Kolinsky 1991; Murray 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo 2009).

These varied patterns may be explained in part with reference to the need to find women to fill quotas in contexts where women had largely been absent from the political sphere. Without a large number of women in the 'pipeline,' elites recruited women who were previously known to them – including their wives and daughters, in some cases – and women with little professional formation or with little of the political experience typically favored by party selectors. Whether these altered recruitment patterns mean that these women are less 'qualified,' however, remains an open question. Evaluating female politicians' backgrounds and preparations according to norms established by men's longstanding

participation in politics runs the risk of ignoring or discounting the types of qualifications women do bring to politics, including extensive backgrounds in grassroots or community organizing. There may be important gender differences that shape men and women's educational, social, and political backgrounds, differences that are consequential for descriptive representation.

### *Quotas and Substantive Representation*

Although still a new topic, a growing number of studies address the effects of quotas on women's substantive representation, seeking to establish whether the introduction of quotas increases the number of policies proposed, debated, and passed on behalf of women as a group. Until recently, few studies tackled this question in a direct way. Rather, scholarship on women's legislative behavior in quota countries has tended to frame its contribution in relation to work on substantive representation, observing simply that quotas serve as a the means by which more women may achieve elected office (Chaney 2006; Childs 2004; Opello 2007; Rai 2007; Thomas 2004). Yet, in addition to facilitating the entrance of more female bodies, the introduction of quotas may change the very expectations surrounding what these women do.

In most countries, campaigns for quotas make assertions as to how politics will change as a result of women's increased inclusion, although these arguments vary. Advocates in some countries offer justice-based arguments, contending that women's equal presence is simply an issue of fairness, and as such, do not necessarily anticipate policy change (Bird 2008). Elsewhere, however, the case for quotas relies on consequentialist logic, suggesting that women would behave differently in terms of their priorities and policy styles (Skjeie 1991), at the same time that their presence would foster democratic legitimacy and good governance (cf. Phillips 1995). Claims such as these produce contradictory expectations. On the one hand, they can create a "mandate effect," leading citizens, as well as legislators, to anticipate that the women elected through quotas will promote women's concerns, perhaps to an even greater degree than women elected before quotas. On the other hand, concerns about "quota women" can generate a "label effect" that stigmatizes female legislators, thereby undermining their efforts at substantive representation (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008).

Initial work, while sparse, lends some support to both effects. Women elected through quotas have reported feeling obligated to act for women as a group (Schwartz 2004; Skjeie 1991), inspiring them

to bring new issues to the table (Kudva 2003; Thomas 2004). However, others have sought to disassociate themselves with the quota and women's issues in an attempt to demonstrate that they are 'serious' politicians (Childs 2004). At the same time, many have been accused of acting only as proxies for men (Nanivadekar 2006) and of being more loyal to party leaders than men and women who win open seats (Cowley and Childs 2003; Tripp 2006). In part, this is because quota policies are often not rooted in processes of constituency formation (Burnet 2008; Hassim 2008; Pupavac 2005), which prevents quota women from gaining political skills that would make them less vulnerable to manipulation (Chowdhury 2002; Cornwall and Goetz 2005). In other cases, the situation is even more complex: quota women may support women's rights legislation but tread carefully in response to harassment, intimidation, or general security concerns (Longman 2006; Tamale 2000; Wordsworth 2007).

Lastly, in cases where women are expected to represent women's issues, an unfortunate – and somewhat perverse outcome – of the mandate effect may be that women elected under quotas who are seen to fail to undertake substantive representation are more harshly criticized than female politicians who ignore women's issues but were not elected under quotas. These various patterns lead some scholars to suggest that women might be more effective in non-quota environments (Archenti and Johnson 2006; Walsh 2008). Others view these dynamics, however, as problems faced by women in parliament more generally, not related specifically to quota provisions (Zetterberg 2008). Disaggregating the policy process, however, reveals a more nuanced picture: quotas have been associated with a sharp rise in women-friendly policy proposals, even if they have rarely altered policy outcomes (Devlin and Elgie 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo 2008).

### *Quotas and Symbolic Representation*

Given the many normative controversies surrounding quotas (Bacchi 2006; Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires forthcoming), questions of symbolic representation are central to understanding their broader impact on public attitudes and women's political empowerment. Although gender quotas involve symbolic change in both of these respects, there are a small number of studies that address these effects, using different sample populations and analyzing a variety of short-, medium-, and long-term effects. On the one hand, quotas may alter traditional gendered views of politics, legitimizing women as political

actors. On the other, the election of more women through quotas may signal greater inclusiveness of the political system, inspiring ordinary women to get more politically involved.

In terms of how quotas shape public attitudes, some scholars suggest that quotas may pose a radical challenge to politics-as-usual because they involve a fundamental renegotiation of the gendered nature of the public sphere (Sgier 2004). Some evidence supports this claim by showing that exposure to female leaders as a result of quotas can weaken stereotypes about gender roles, as well as eliminate negative bias in how the performance of female leaders is perceived among male constituents (Beaman et al 2008). Other work reveals, however, that outward acceptance of the legitimacy of quotas often masks continued resistance at the micro-level. This is especially true among male elites, many of whom continue to attribute women's under-representation to choices made by individual women, rather than to structural patterns of discrimination (Meier 2008; cf. Holli, Luhtakallio, and Raevaara 2006).

Turning to trends in women's political engagement, various case studies indicate that the introduction of quotas appears to increase the rate at which female voters contact their political representatives (Childs 2004; Kudva 2003). Others find, further, that the adoption of quotas has the effect of encouraging women to begin a political career, acquire political skills, and develop sustained political ambitions (Geissel and Hust 2005). At the same time, it may also help build support for women's movement organizing (Sacchet 2008). In contrast, a number of other studies conclude that quotas have little or no effect on women's political activities, such as their willingness to sign petitions or participate in protests (Zetterberg forthcoming). Even more troubling, other scholars suggest that the presence of quotas may in fact be associated with the decreased strength (Britton 2005) and increased repression of women's groups (Hassim forthcoming; Longman 2006). These conflicting findings suggest that quotas' effects on attitudes and engagement are not necessarily positive and linear.

### **Analyzing Quota Impact: A Conceptual Framework**

Putting these elements together, it becomes clear that – based on current theories and evidence – quotas may have positive, mixed, and sometimes even perverse effects on women's descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation. The literature on these questions, however, is still in its early stages, with scholars employing a range of different definitions and measures of quota impact. To enable research on quota impact to develop in a more cumulative fashion, this section defines each dimension of

representation and identifies a range of indicators that might be employed in an empirical analysis of quota effects. The goal is to reduce the many complexities signaled above to a focus on how quotas influence (1) descriptive representation, delineated as the numbers and kinds of women elected; (2) substantive representation, conceptualized as the form and content of policy-making; and (3) symbolic representation, theorized as public attitudes towards women in politics and trends in the political engagement of female constituents. Each discussion is then followed by an overview of possible measures and research strategies.

### *Descriptive Representation*

Studying the effects of quotas on descriptive representation has tended, as noted above, to focus almost exclusively on *how many* women are elected. However, exploring *what kinds* of women benefit from quotas presents an opportunity to answer questions about the diversity and qualifications of women elected under these measures. Parsing out the effects of quotas versus gender alone, however, requires that scholars collect information on the profiles of male and female office-holders, distinguishing as far as possible between women elected with and without the quota. Where reserved seats are used, analysts might compare the types of women who are elected to these as opposed to open seats, assuming that any women fall in the latter category. In countries with party or legislative quotas, the contrast might be made between women elected before and after the quota is introduced. Alternatively, in cases where party quotas are not employed by all parties the analysis might focus on the characteristics of female candidates put forward by those with and without quota policies.

Depending on the information available, profiles might be coded in relation to each individual's age, ethnicity, marital status, education, occupation, degree of political experience, and family connections, to list but a few possibilities. This kind of data can often be found in parliamentary handbooks or websites associated with parliaments, individuals, or their parties. Questions along these lines can also be included in interviews with politicians and political parties. Mapping these patterns contributes to a better understanding of how quotas disrupt, or are undermined by, traditional practices of candidate selection, offering new insights for revising reigning models of political recruitment. A closer look at the attributes and pathways to office of 'quota women,' further, may inform questions about 'representativity' more generally. In the course of providing a fuller explanation of how quotas shape

trends in descriptive representation, this kind of study may also offer new leverage for analyzing patterns of substantive and symbolic representation, whose effects may depend to a large degree on ‘who’ representatives are in this fuller sense.

Expanding the concept of descriptive representation to include attributes beyond sex offers at least three advantages. First, it contributes to a better understanding of how quotas disrupt, or are undermined by, traditional practices of candidate selection, offering new insights for revising reigning models of political recruitment. Second, a closer look at the attributes and pathways to office of ‘quota women’ presents an opportunity to inform questions about ‘representativity’ more generally. In particular, quotas may affect the overall diversity of legislatures, depending on how the profiles of ‘quota women’ compare to their non-quota counterparts, both female and male, in terms of their age, ethnicity, marital status, education, occupation, degree of political experience, and family connections, to list but a few possibilities. Third, in the course of providing a fuller explanation of how quotas shape trends in descriptive representation, this kind of study may offer new leverage for analyzing patterns of substantive and symbolic representation, whose effects may depend to a large degree on ‘who’ representatives are in this fuller sense.

### *Substantive Representation*

Investigating the impact of quotas on the substantive representation of women involves attending to trends in both the form and content of the policy-making process. Empirical work on this topic permits insights into how the contradictory expectations that often arise in the course of quota debates actually play out in practice. On the one hand, differences across campaigns, which may use largely justice-based or consequentialist arguments, may lead to distinct demands on “quota women” to represent women. On the other hand, however, there may also be conflicts and tensions faced by individual “quota women” as they confront the opposing pull of mandate and label effects. The diversity in these anticipated outcomes complicates how scholars might frame and evaluate their findings. To ensure the greatest clarity, therefore, it is crucial that efforts to analyze the impact of quotas in this respect be as specific as possible in terms of how they define *form* and *content* of policymaking.

As noted above, a variety of activities may ‘count’ as mechanisms of substantive representation, including policy priorities, proposals, sponsorships, and behind-the-scenes mobilization, as well as the

more public acts of debating, voting, and enacting legislation. Research on this question might therefore focus, in terms of form, on the behavior of ‘quota women’ versus their non-quota counterparts at a single point of the policy-making process. They might also explore several interconnected moments, tracing whether the use of quotas has a clear impact on one aspect of legislative activity but not another. Decisions with regard to content are similarly vital, as these may influence the policies identified as ‘women’s issues’ and how the direction of these policies is defined and evaluated. Findings are likely to vary, depending on whether scholars opt for a feminist or non-feminist interpretation. They may also differ when the analysis focuses on individual parties, whose ideologies may inform content, or different countries, where salient issues may vary. Taken together, this discussion highlights the need for scholars to outline and justify their judgments on the form and content of substantive representation. Further, to provide a meaningful contribution to research on policy-making, it is crucial to consider how form and content may be affected more generally by political institutions and institutional constraints.

One possible research design would be to information on policy proposals, debates, and outcomes in the parliamentary sessions before and after quotas were adopted. The sex, party, and seniority of the bills’ sponsors could be coded to get a sense of the role of quota versus non-quota women in these activities. However, to ensure that quota women’s participation is not under- or over-estimated, the research should take into account variations in legislative processes across cases. In some countries, for example, bills are initiated by presidents, while in others they are introduced by governing parties and/or individual legislators. Using the same measure of impact for all cases may therefore create distortions in the research findings, which may not accurately reflect the participation of quota women.

The reception of these bills could then be examined using transcripts of parliamentary debates. These might be analyzed with reference to the arguments made for and against each bill, as well as the sex, party, and seniority of each participant. The aim is to capture the respective roles of male and female MPs, as a means to determine how quotas shift the balance – or not – in the passage of bills on women’s concerns. Using the data collected in the previous step, these discussions could be compared with the content of the bills that do not reach the floor, because they are either blocked by a legislative committee or introduced too late in the parliamentary session. This data might be supplemented with questions on these various bills in interviews with MPs and political parties, as a means to gain a better sense of the dynamics at work ‘behind the scenes’ to promote or block particular policy initiatives. Lastly, information

could be assembled on the bills that pass and do not pass at the end of this process. These bills could be coded with respect to their content, which should be compared to their initial wording and goals, and the balance of votes for and against them, which should be broken down in terms of the party and sex of their advocates and opponents. Although this is only one possible research strategy, using it as an example highlights the need for scholars to outline and justify their judgments on the form and content of substantive representation.

### *Symbolic Representation*

Gauging the impact of quotas on symbolic representation is complicated, given that these outcomes are the least tangible in terms of their effects. One set relates to what quotas symbolize for *all citizens*, as measured by trends and changes in public attitudes. On the one hand, quotas may alter gendered ideas about the public sphere, which have traditionally associated men with politics and women with the realm of home and the family. By electing more women, quotas may raise awareness of what women can achieve and legitimate women as political actors, unraveling at least to some degree previously accepted gender roles. On the other hand, quotas may change how citizens feel about government more generally. The increased presence of women may lead them to judge democratic institutions as more just and legitimate. In addition, citizens may view these institutions as qualitatively improved, stemming from stereotypical expectations that women will be less corrupt and more oriented toward the general welfare of society. Together, these various arguments suggest that quotas may affect public attitudes by eroding resistance to women in politics and linking women's presence to democratic legitimacy and 'good governance.'

A second set of effects concerns what quotas symbolize for *female citizens* more specifically, as observed through increased patterns of political engagement. On the one hand, quotas may – in the course of undermining traditional gendered notions of the public sphere – encourage women to become more politically involved as voters, activists, and candidates. On the other hand, the greater inclusion of women as a result of quotas may enhance the legitimacy of the polity in the eyes of women, who may thereby feel more connected to the political process. These possibilities indicate that quotas may have a different 'meaning' for women as compared to the population at large. Viewed alongside one another, they

reveal that there may be attitudinal, behavioral, and/or cultural shifts resulting from the introduction of quotas, offering new insights into research on topics like public opinion and mass mobilization.

There are several options available for analyzing these effects, although a multi-method approach is likely to offer the greatest leverage on these questions. Original mass surveys are an option for those researchers with suitable training and financial resources. However, a research strategy that ‘triangulates’ several distinct sources of information may in fact be more robust, at the same time that it involves fewer resources. To explore mass opinion, a first step should be to consult existing datasets, like the World Values Survey, Eurobarometer, Latinobarometer, and Afrobarometer, which all include questions on attitudes towards gender equality and women in politics. This data can be supplemented with national electoral studies in countries where these have been carried out.

A second step might be to analyze public discussions on quotas and the degree to which they are framed as legitimate and central to the quality of democracy or as problematic and a threat to democratic values. This data may be found in articles and editorials in national newspapers, debates in parliament and party congresses, and court actions and decisions on the legality and application of gender quotas. Such sources can often be accessed in national and party archives, as well as transcripts and published decisions of the courts. A third step might entail a set of original surveys of MPs and political parties. In contrast to the two previous methods, which involve collecting data – as far as this is possible – from periods before and after quotas are introduced, this analysis should focus on the present but include questions on elite opinion before quota adoption. The aim should be to assess elite views and support for gender quotas, as well as their relation to ideas about democracy, disaggregated according to sex, party, and seniority. The logic of this comparison should be to see whether quotas are associated with a broader shift in values regarding the need for more women in politics, or if they remain controversial, especially among male politicians.

To determine how quotas shape political engagement, a similar array of methods might be used. The first step should be to revisit the large datasets on public opinion to see if they include data on women’s participation and representation. The Latinobarometer, for example, contains information on women’s degree of political activity in a number of different areas, like petition signing and protests. To the extent possible, this data should be analyzed for the periods before and after quota adoption to examine how quotas might shape – or not affect – patterns in women’s political engagement. The second

step might be to scan articles and editorials in national newspapers, debates in parliament and party congresses, and court actions and decisions, for information on the range of interventions made by women and women's groups in these debates. These should be coded in terms of their content and the degree to which they refer to changes in women's connection to political processes. Special attention should be paid to evidence offered in support of these claims, for example with reference to voter turnout, protest activities, and propensity to run for political office. The third step might involve a series of focus groups with women's groups in each country. These should be conducted, where possible, in both urban and rural areas. While not necessarily representative of all women, members of these groups are likely to be the most attuned to dynamics 'on the ground' in terms of women's political engagement following the introduction of gender quotas. The advantage of focus groups over interviews is that a collective forum may prompt recollections and foster the sharing of ideas as to why quotas have – or have not – changed ordinary women's relationships to politics.

### **Final Thoughts**

Research on the broader impact of gender quotas is the logic next step in the growing literature on gender quota policies. In addition to research on quota impact in relation to each facet of political representation, there are three additional questions that merit investigation in future research. First, trends in quota design, adoption, and implementation may be crucial for explaining the effects of quota policies. As various scholars have noted, reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas entail distinct types and degrees of change to candidate selection processes (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg 2008; Krook 2009; Matland 2006). How these measures are translated into practice may therefore affect who is elected through quotas, the constraints imposed on actors in policy-making, and the perceived effects of 'quota women' on mass attitudes and women's mobilization. Similarly, the circumstances of quota adoption may also have an impact, depending on whether they were the result of sustained grassroots mobilization or were simply imposed by a single leader or resulted from pressure from international actors. Trends in quota implementation, finally, affect the rate and extent of change in the numbers of women elected, with potential implications for patterns in descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation.

Second, the case studies that have been conducted on the question of quota impact implicitly suggest, but rarely theorize in any explicit manner, how the broader political, social, economic, and cultural context might influence the dynamics of quota impact. Yet, factors like the degree of democracy, the level of development, and various types of religious traditions – to name but a few factors – may both facilitate and constrain the broader ambitions of quota policies to elect a diverse array of women, increase attention to women’s issues in policy-making, change public attitudes about women and politics, and inspire female voters to get more politically involved. Third, in addition to the impact of quotas on individual facets of representation, how quotas affect one aspect may also have implications for how they influence patterns with regard to another. For example, how quotas alter patterns of descriptive representation may influence their substantive effects in several ways. If women differ from men in terms of other characteristics, they may be more ‘representative’ of women and the broader body of citizens overall. However, some of these characteristics – most notably, less political experience – may also render them less effective politically, such that they are not able to represent women in substantive terms, at least when it comes to passing legislation effectively. Similarly, the symbolic effects of diversity among ‘quota women’ may not occur merely because there are more female representatives, but it could also be due to these women’s other attributes, like their race or class, which could affect trends in opinion and political activities among both women and the public at large. Beginning a ‘second generation’ of research on gender quotas thus raises a host of new questions. Moving this work ahead in a systematic way requires that scholars frame their studies such that they can be used in a cumulative manner, building on a range of case study data.

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