

# Improving Women's Representation in Politics Through Gender Quotas

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## Abstract

Gender quotas for women in local government bodies can improve women's representation in politics, increase provision of public services, and improve perceptions of women as leaders. Gender quotas are one policy tool designed to increase women's representation in politics. Women hold fewer than 25 percent of parliamentary seats worldwide, and just 12 percent of the world's heads of state and government are women. In many countries this imbalance extends to local governments. Countries are taking action. In 2013, 118 countries were implementing a form of gender quotas for an elected office. Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. One way to implement gender quotas is by reserving a certain number of leadership positions for women. A review of eleven randomized evaluations in India, Lesotho, and across 28 states in India found that reservation quotas influenced women's political participation and policy outcomes and increased the provision of public goods aligned with female voters' preferences. Further, quotas improved men's perceptions of women as leaders, increased the aspirations of girls, and helped women get elected even after quotas were removed. Most of the rigorous research drawn on in this insight comes from India comparative conclusions should be drawn cautiously. This evidence largely suggests that governments seeking to improve women's representation in politics should consider reservation quotas for local leadership positions.

overview of the three main types of quota policies reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas. These are found in all major world regions in countries with a broad range of institutional, social, economic, and cultural characteristics. At the same time, the mere advent of gender quotas has not resulted in uniform increases in the percentage of women in parliament worldwide some countries have witnessed dramatic increases, while others have seen more modest changes or even setbacks in the number of women elected to national assemblies.

Despite the rapid international diffusion of these measures, most research has focused on single countries or, at most, the presence of quotas within one world region. Consequently, explanations for the adoption and impact of gender quotas derived from one study often contradict.

**Keywords:** Genderquotas, electoral quotas, legislative quotas Political Representation, Electoral Systems, Legislative Quotas, Comparative Politics, Women's Political Empowerment.

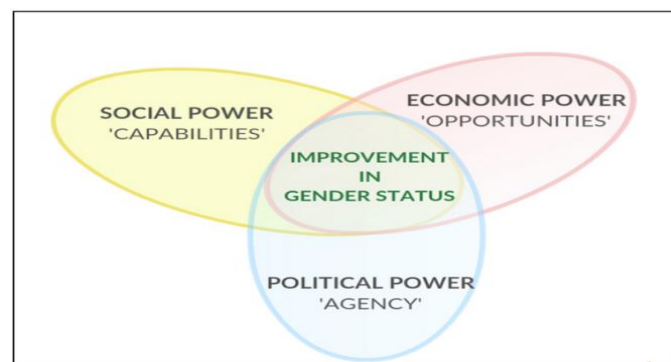
## 1. Introduction

A stronger correlation between quotas and women's increased representation in parliaments. Drawing on these bodies of important previous literature, we develop testable hypotheses on the conditional effect of

quotas on representation in different systems. In the next section, we briefly review past studies on gender quotas efficacy. Following that section, we develop different explanations that lead to competing expectations on the conditional effects of programmatic vs. candidate-oriented system differences. Though women make up half the population, on average around the world women hold only 25% of legislative seats. In other words, only one in four seats are held by a woman in national legislatures. Is it in electoral systems that produce greater platform-oriented commitment of voters? Or, in contrast, in systems that center on individual candidates' personal qualities.

Programmatically-oriented systems are electoral systems that place a high value on the candidate's loyalty to the party platform, and voters focus more on the party platform than on an individual candidate's idiosyncrasies. In candidate-oriented systems, on the other hand, the emphasis is on the individual candidate's identity, and voters tend to focus on candidate personality to greater extent than party platform. In such systems,

There is more importance given to seniority, uninterrupted careers, and experience. Historically, reserved seats have for long been used to guarantee a certain representation of national minorities, yet, more recently, the system has been applied to women as a group in need of representation in the form of specific public elections based on competition between women candidates only, however, with variation in degree of attachment to political parties the concept of sustainable representation of women in politics, which we define as a durable, substantial numerical political representation of women, freed of the risk of immediate major backlash. The idea is to reintroduce a broader perspective in quota implementation research. Can gender quotas lead to Durable changes In women's descriptive representation and under. The ultimate test is of course, if the gains will remain, even if the quota regulations were to be removed in the future.<sup>1</sup> This focus is especially interesting for the many recent examples of so-called fast-track change countries, i.e. countries with a sudden increase or leap in women's political representation, usually as an effect of quota adoption. In contrast to the typical incremental track change of the old democracies, fast track changes in this field are not based on previous, longitudinal and robust changes in women's position in education, on the labor market and in civil society in general .



The implementation of the quota provisions. Ideally, along term perspective of say 20–30 years would have been preferable, and consequently, this article's ten year perspective can only look at certain indicators of sustainability. Firstly, did the Moroccan reserved seat system result in a substantial and durable numerical representation of women? Special emphasis will be placed on the link between women being elected on the reserved seats and on the regular district seats open to both sexes. Thus, secondly, the article scrutinizes whether the reserved seat system has become a port of entry for women into the regular district seats, the process of consolidation of the original fragile quota regulation into a

statutory mandate system is also studied under the perspective of sustainability. The role of the King, the political parties and women's mobilizations for change are discussed.

## 2. A Revolution in Local Politics

The changing landscape of women's political representation, and its intersections with caste, property rights, and patriarchy. The Paradox of Gender Equality Laws in India “documents her exploration of the links between political representation and economic empowerment.” political representation of women ensures enforcement of their economic rights, but also leads to backlash. Caste continues to play a role in these negotiations, and “greater resistance to women's reservations” in the near future, “unless something changes.” I analysed data from the Rural Economic and Demographic Survey , conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research .

But these are also the groups that see the strongest backlash, as social constraints on women's mobility tend to bind even more keenly for women from upper castes. When gender-equal property rights are introduced in addition to having a woman elected leader, we see a decline of somewhere between 21 and 24 percentage points in the probability that We see backlash when representation is used as a channel to claim property and inheritance rights across caste lines. That's a really robust statistical relationship, and we see something similar but slightly less strong statistically for other backward castes. However, we see something different with To summarise, we see backlash when representation is used as a channel to claim property and inheritance rights across caste lines. But statistically, it's the strongest amongst the forward castes. on women in state legislatures, she found that amongst women legislators, women coming from scheduled caste and scheduled tribe backgrounds were much more likely to promote legislation that favours women.

They are strong proponents of the amendments to the Hindu Succession Act, and to similar kinds of gender progressive laws. We don't see that kind of relationship or support among forward caste women. Without equality in one domain, it's almost impossible to achieve equality in the other domain. It does seem that traditionally dispossessed women are the ones who are the strongest advocates for radically progressive change. I found something similar in my research. So, caste matters. We could, therefore, do more to advance the voices and the influence of the most disadvantaged women for everyone's benefit.



There are more women in elected office in India than anywhere else in the world, probably more than the rest of the world combined. So, we have a longer time period to look at how reforms are working in the South, but we do see evidence of women's access to inheritance when they have equal property

rights across the country. This isn't just a story about what's happening in the South, I would say it's a question to keep returning to. It will take one or two Generations to have a clear sense of the net impact of these reforms. With the 73rd and 74th Amendments, India mandated that one-third of those elected at local level political bodies will be women. The first Minister of Panchayati Raj, Mani Shankar Aiyar, told me during a conversation for my book, "It's important to remember that there are more women in elected office in India than anywhere else in the world, and in fact, probably more than the rest of the world combined."

The popular discourse has been that women don't make effective leaders since their male family members take over as proxy rulers in their names. But when you look at what's happening on the ground, you realise it is not true. Many women are doing remarkable work as leaders. For example, during the course of my research, I met Padmawathi, the sarpanch of Kanchikacherla Mandal village in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, who came to office determined to help women overcome the many challenges they face in their everyday lives. One of her innovations was to intervene in marriage negotiations, nudging parents to give daughters a share in land inheritance instead of monetary dowry. In doing so,

And the place where we see this resistance being even more dramatic is women's entry into the labour force. The female labour force is actually declining across the country despite the fact that in terms of education, women either have parity with men, or in some cases have even better levels of education than men. So, this really is about the exit of excellent women from the labour force and from the political spectrum as a result of the resistance to a systemic altering of power relations. So, Ideally, what we need is more work to collectively mobilise not just women, but also men in support of greater equality. If I were to look outside of India, I think Scandinavia presents the most hopeful case. There, if we go back 100 years, we saw radical activism jump-started by women but with great support from men as well. What we need is more work to collectively mobilise not just women, but also men in support of greater equality. They started early on, from giving women access to paid maternity leave, introducing paternity leave, and getting men to take paternity leave basically changing relationships within the household. And that requires putting money into families, not just into individuals who can scale the corporate ladder. I think it's a different way of investing in egalitarian social systems that can lead to more egalitarian politics.

When we try to think of how we can create incremental change, one possible way is to see. We can create small-scale networks that allow women within them to flourish, as we find in entrepreneurship, which can help them to actually start moving up the ladder of politics. They can really bring meaningful agendas for change into the policy world as they go. As we explicate below, there are reasons to expect that either system orientation can condition the effect of quotas to better represent women. Empirical evidence, however, is either mixed or lacking on the factors that facilitate a stronger correlation between quotas and women's increased representation in parliaments. Drawing on these bodies of important previous literature, we develop testable hypotheses on the conditional effect of quotas on representation in different systems. In the next section, we briefly review past studies on gender quotas efficacy. Following that section, we develop different explanations that lead to competing expectations on the conditional effects of programmatic vs. candidate-oriented system differences.

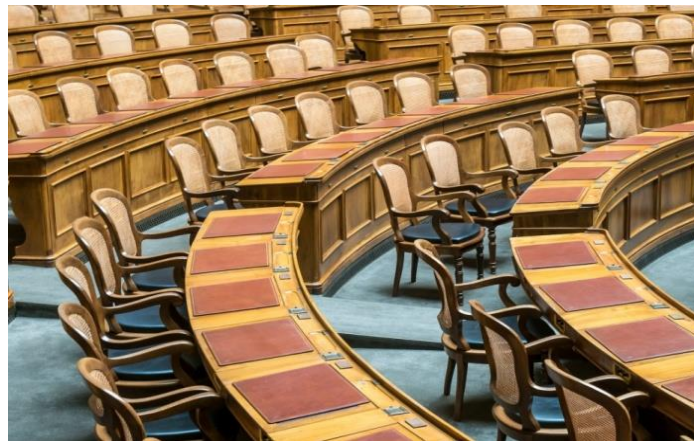
### 3. Electoral Gender Quotas

Gender quotas are a significant factor in how women become representatives . mandatory gender quotas



exist at the federal level in 73 countries, constituting 37% of the world's nations . While first adopted in the 1970s by individual political parties in Western Europe, they are common today in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe . Both developed and developing countries, in short, adopted quotas.

Quotas take three main forms: reserved seats, legislative quotas, and political party quotas. In a reserved seat system, a certain number of places in the legislature are designated for women, regulating the number of women elected. This type of reform is often constitutional or written into electoral law. Legal candidate or legislative quotas are the newest type of quota and require parties to nominate a certain percentage of women on their electoral slate. Voluntary party quotas, the most popular type, aim to increase the proportion of women on a party list. Unlike other quota policies, party quotas are adopted on a voluntary basis by individual parties. They can exist simultaneously with other types of quotas . The research conducted on quotas to date has focused mainly on the adoption process and on factors contributing to quota efficacy. There are four main explanations for why quotas are adopted



Women's mobilization, political elites adopting quotas for strategic reasons, as a result of emerging local notions of equality, and international and transnational influences and policy diffusion. Within the category of party quotas, parties are more likely to adopt quotas in systems where there is a prototype quota policy at the system level, where there is a greater number of women in the upper echelons of the party, and where the party holds leftist positions .

Gender quotas are contingent on electoral system mechanisms, and differences in the electoral system can determine the efficacy of gender quotas. Party list type, district magnitude, and electoral system all influence quota efficacy. On the other hand, quota legislation has been found to increase the number of female representatives regardless of the type of party list .

#### **4. Structure of gender quotas and their general impacts.**

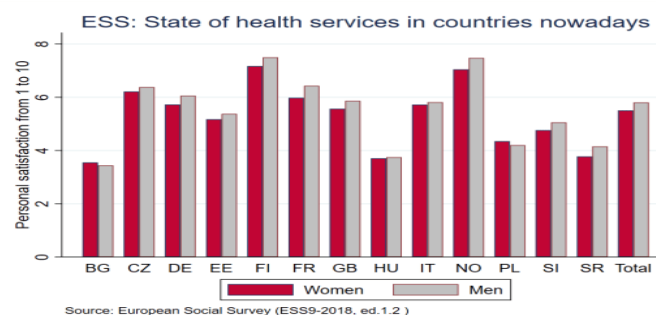
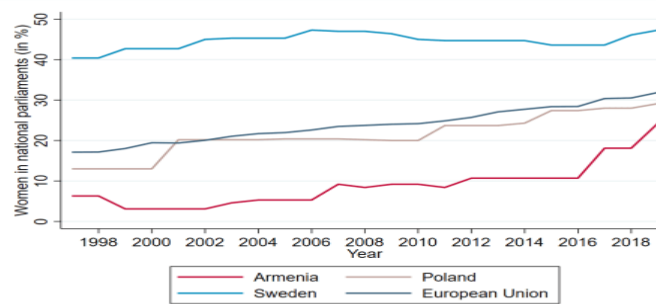
Gender quotas play a varied and complex role in political life; every country maintains its own reason for their implementation and experiences unique outcomes from their existence. This article aims not to present a definitive case for or against gender quotas. Rather, it explores two very different manifestations of gender quotas and how they concretely impact the political atmosphere of India and India. In 1992, India passed its 73rd amendment, establishing its Gram Panchayats (GPs) the lowest official authority in India. There are around 250 thousand GPs, which consist of residents in anywhere from 5 to 15 contiguous villages. Parties nominate GP representatives and people elect them through a proportional representation (PR) system. Each GP has one chief, called the Pradhan. GPs manage the public infrastructure of villages, giving them a large role in people's day-to-day lives; for example,

they oversee the provision of water and sanitation.

### Women’s Representation in Politics

All over the world, politics remains one of the most male-dominated spheres in society, in spite of the substantial progress made in achieving more gender balance in the last decades. A large number of countries worldwide have adopted some form of electoral gender quotas to accelerate this progress, but the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of such policy tools is mixed. The popularity of gender quotas is, however, not uniformly distributed across the globe. For example, while political gender representation is far from equal in most countries of FREE network region, out of these countries only Armenia, Poland and India dispose of electoral gender quotas. In spite of their popularity among policy-makers worldwide, the merits of quotas are still largely debated. Opponents of gender quotas are often concerned about their effects on the meritocratic selection of politicians. Another common criticism is that nominating more female candidates may not automatically translate into more women in powerful positions. For instance, the shares of women in the Armenian and the Polish Parliament are 24 and 29% respectively, well below the national legislated candidate quota.

**Fig. Share of women in national parliaments (in %)**



A natural question to ask in spring 2020 is whether a world with more women among political leaders would have had health systems better equipped to face a pandemic but only when they are binding and appropriately enforced. Yet, when quotas are limited to the composition of electoral lists, the strategic positioning of female candidates in “not-winning” positions tends to undermine the quota effect on the election of women. The evidence on the spill-over of quotas to higher positions is mixed. Two studies find that candidate quotas in Italy and India increased the probability that women reach leadership positions, above and beyond the quota mandate that seat reservation in India improved male voters’ perception of female leaders, as well as women’s probability of being elected once the reservation was removed. Conversely,

## 5. Discussion

Gender quotas are a popular policy tool used to close existing gender gaps in political empowerment, which are large in many countries in the Free Network. A growing economics literature on the impacts of gender quotas helps assessing what objectives policy-makers may be pursuing when they adopt them, and under which conditions these objectives can be achieved. There is a number of lessons to be learned from this literature.

First, the design of the quota is crucial for it to achieve its primary objective, which is to increase women's presence in the targeted political positions. Placement mandates, for instance, are particularly important in the design of candidate quotas to avoid that women are strategically placed at the end of the ballot. Second, policy-makers need to take the local context into account. Whether a candidate quota can generate spill-overs to higher-level positions likely depends on the degree of centralization of political parties for instance; where party leaders are very powerful, we may be less likely to see an increase in the share of female leaders following the adoption of a candidate quota. Third, the question when gender quotas successfully bring about policy change needs additional investigation. Different factors likely play a role,

The case for adopting and testing different forms of gender quotas, perhaps in combination with additional measures, is therefore relatively strong. Overall, our assessment is that quotas will have to remain in policy-makers' toolbox for some time if the worldwide effort to close the persisting gender gaps in political empowerment is to continue.

With this in mind, it is unclear whether quotas net benefit women. However, with quotas unlikely to disappear anytime soon, and many governments seeing them as the best solution to gender inequality, academics, activists, and policy-makers must counteract government complacency by remaining vigilant: quotas present one way to include more women in government, but by no means function as the end-all-be-all solution.

**Women leaders invested in policies** Quotas are important because women may have different preferences about public goods than men. Communities in India with gender quotas for local village leaders had more public goods overall than communities without quotas, and female leaders invested more than male leaders in public goods linked to women's concerns. Female leaders' policy preferences not only differed from men, but also differed from one another based on geographic location and caste background.

**improved human development and women's entrepreneurship** Quotas in India led to heightened police responsiveness to crimes against women, improvements in children's nutrition and educational outcomes, and increased women's entrepreneurship. Also in India, both men and women in communities with quotas were more willing to contribute money to public good provision. In Lesotho, both men and women believed that female leaders elected under quotas performed just as well, and in some cases significantly better, than their counterparts in communities without quotas.

**Gains were not always clearly perceived** Although public goods provision increased in India and female leaders performed well in Lesotho, citizens in both India and Lesotho were less likely to be satisfied with female leaders compared to male leaders. The satisfaction gap in India improved after subsequent elections, highlighting the importance of sustained exposure to female leaders.

**Elected women made independent choices** One risk of gender quotas is that reserving political seats for women may not effect genuine change. For example, husbands of elected female leaders may maintain power by controlling the actions of their wives. In India, women elected under quotas were

more likely than their male counterparts to state that their spouses encouraged them to stand for election and helped them do their jobs . However, differences in public goods provision and policy preferences between female and male leaders demonstrate that women were able to make their own governing decisions .

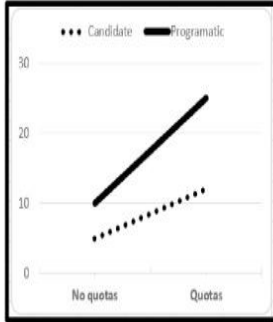
**women participated in community governance** In India, gender quotas in village development councils led to increased women’s participation in village governance, community life, and economic activities . In Indian communities with quotas, women were more likely to speak in community meetings .although women in quota communities reported being less interested in politics than women in non-quota communities, they had similar levels of participation in community meetings.

**women Continued to be elected to office** In Mumbai, female candidates for city council were five times more likely to be elected in districts that had been reserved for women in the previous election but were not currently reserved . The duration of quotas seems to matter. In communities in the Indian state of West Bengal that had quotas for two election cycles, voters were more likely to elect women in the third, non-quota election cycle than in communities that never had quotas .

**Exposure to female politicians attitudes** In India, men in communities with gender quotas were more likely to associate women with leadership and more likely to consider female leaders to be effective. These impacts were stronger after two election cycles and lasted even after women left office . In India, when quotas there were no broader changes in attitudes toward the general role of women in society, possibly because the quotas were applied in a narrowly defined program. However, these quotas increased support for women’s participation in community decision-making .

**Quotas under Different electoral systems**

Electoral system scholars distinguish between systems with a programmatic orientation and those with a candidate orientation. Programmatically-oriented systems are electoral systems that place a high value on a candidate’s loyalty to the party platform, and voters focus more on party platform than on the individual candidate’s persona..compared to candidate-oriented ones.As we explicate below, certain features of programmatic systems facilitate quota efficacy, and certain criticisms of quotas in general are even more relevant in candidate-oriented systems. We discuss them and summarize them in below.

Programmatic systems: <i>more</i> effective quotas?	Candidate systems: <i>less</i> effective quotas?	⇒ Expect this <i>contingent</i> effect of quotas on women representation in parliament									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideological commitment</li> <li>• Pressures on parties to maximize relevance by diversifying gender</li> <li>• Contagion/"peer pressure" to imitate other parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essentialism of gender</li> <li>• Labeling and avoiding feminized issues</li> <li>• Perceived as state intervention in candidate selection</li> </ul>	 <table border="1" style="display: none;"> <caption>Data from the graph: Effect of quotas on women representation</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>System Type</th> <th>No quotas (%)</th> <th>Quotas (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Candidate (Dotted line)</td> <td>~5</td> <td>~12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Programmatic (Solid line)</td> <td>~10</td> <td>~25</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	System Type	No quotas (%)	Quotas (%)	Candidate (Dotted line)	~5	~12	Programmatic (Solid line)	~10	~25
System Type	No quotas (%)	Quotas (%)									
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**programmatically oriented systems**

The first reason that quotas might correlate with a greater increase in representation in programmatically oriented systems is that these systems have certain characteristics that facilitate women’s political representation, which also lower the cost of compliance with quota policy, and perhaps even raise the



cost of noncompliance. Three, in particular: issue-based focus, pressures to diversify, and modeling other parties, are characteristics of programmatically oriented systems.

The first feature of programmatic systems that could support quota efficacy is the emphasis these systems place on list and issue-based platform over candidate persona. In that context, women and minorities do not stand out as being nontraditional candidates as much in lists, making it less of a risk for parties to include them. A second feature of programmatic-oriented systems that could support quota efficacy is that parties in programmatic systems have more pressure to diversify lists. Parties need to maximize their relevance, and the exclusion of any sector could signal discrimination and hurt general appeal. This encourages parties to make diverse lists that will attract a variety of demographics. Common criticisms of quotas imply that they would be less effective in candidate-oriented systems. Quotas may contain “dangers of essentialism”. This danger is based on the conviction that the individuals represented through quotas have some essential traits that define them and render them unable to be represented adequately by those without such traits. If only women can represent women, Second, quotas could also create either a “mandate effect” or a “labeling effect.” A mandate effect would occur when female legislators elected through quotas feel an obligation to act on behalf of women. Quotas though could have a “labeling effect” in which women elected through quotas are perceived as less experienced and less autonomous. Third, within democratic contexts, quotas can also be perceived as blatant state intervention, a violation of individual freedom and democratic principles, and a violation of principles of equal opportunity.

## 6. Results

Descriptive statistics suggests a system-quota contingent effect. Indeed, countries without quotas had, on average, 15.7% women in parliament, while countries with quotas had an average of 24.7% women in parliament. In programmatic systems, where those without quotas had an average of 25.2% women in parliament. Countries with quotas had an average of 27.2% women in parliament. In candidate-oriented countries, there was an average of 9% more women in parliament in the presence of quotas. Put differently, having quotas affect the rate of representation more dramatically in candidate-oriented countries.

Regressing women’s representation on several explanations. In all but one model, the system orientation was found to be significant. The average coefficient size for personalism throughout these four models was -1.76, implying that for every 1-point increase in the pers\_rank scale, there was a 1.76% decrease in female parliamentarians. The results were replicated in models five and six which used the dichotomous variable for system-orientation. These two models had an average coefficient of 12.19 for the dichotomous variable, implying that countries coded as candidate-oriented are predicted to have 12.19% fewer women in parliament than programmatically oriented countries.

### Comparative Politics

This separation encourages attempts to overlook gender when it becomes “inconvenient” and makes it simple for those who still marginalize it to do so. A gender and comparative politics strategy that isolates gender research from other research fields impedes the flow of ideas and methodological advancements between research fields. Few people recognize that gender issues affect practically all comparative politics study. This overlap makes it easy to overlook significant theoretical and empirical advances in gender research that could be helpful to scholars studying institutional or comparative political economy, for the non-gender-specific literature that could support their investigations into the role of gender in the

field.

### **Mapping Women's Political Representation**

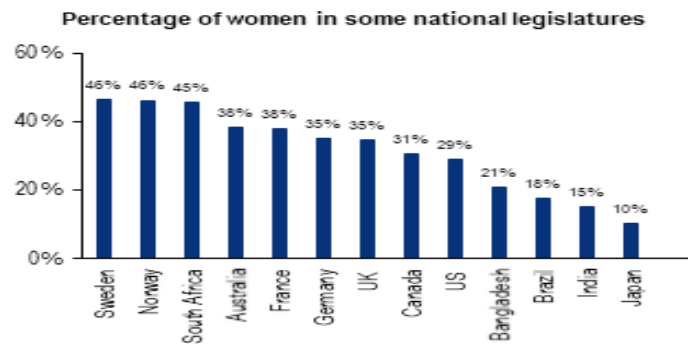
A common measure of women's standing in society. They are still underrepresented in national legislatures and high positions in the government, nonetheless. India's new gender quota law is a win for women. A historic bill was enacted by the Indian legislature mandating that one-third of the seats in the country's state legislative assemblies, the Delhi Legislative Assembly, and the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, be reserved for women. The reform opens the way for many more women to enter national politics and marks a substantial change in a nation that now ranks 141 out of 185 countries in the world with regard to women's political representation. As political institutions, organizations, and the dominant norms that control public areas are shaped by the innate patriarchal bias, it becomes more difficult to represent women in politics. Gendered outcomes in institutions, programs, and policies occur from the replication of these patriarchal norms and prejudices in political attitudes and actions.

The new law won't take effect prior to the elections of the following year. It says that the gender quotas won't start until delimitation, or redistricting as it's called in India, is finished and based on data from the first census conducted following the act's enactment. Gender reservation may not be enforced until the general elections of 2029 since India's decadal census, which was supposed to take place in 2021, has been postponed indefinitely. The reservation will guarantee a notable rise in women's political representation once it is put into effect. Only 15.2 percent of seats in the Lok Sabha and 13.9 percent of seats in the Rajya Sabha, the upper chamber, are held by women as of 2023 however,

The low number of Indian women seeking office is one aspect of the issue. Less than 10% of candidates in 2019 were female. Traditional gender conventions that restrict women's duties, mobility, and influence outside the house are some of the barriers. Other barriers include limited political literacy, safety concerns, sexism and discrimination within political parties, and concerns about safety. Even if most Indians are in favor of women in politics, it might be difficult for them to rise in their parties without the assistance of strong male leaders. There is a purpose behind the new gender reservation bill's timing. Prior to the crucial elections in India in 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the government The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is keen to win over women, who for the first time ever cast ballots in equal numbers with men in 2019. Future elections in India are happening in the midst of a decline in democracy, which has encouraged attacks on minority rights and an increase in extralegal violence, is the foundation of these antidemocratic trends. Nonetheless, Modi is still a highly regarded leader, especially with women. During his term, he has consistently emphasized women's empowerment as a means of strengthening his legitimacy. The BJP became the party with the most female voters in 2019, fielded more female candidates than any other party, and increased its outreach to rural and lower-class women. Additionally, the party has supported social welfare programs like the distribution of gas cylinders at a family that are subsidized and mostly help women.

### **Parliament and State Assemblies**

The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 2023. The Bill seeks to reserve one-third of all seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. A similar Bill had been introduced in Rajya Sabha in 2008, and was passed by the House two years later. It lapsed after the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha in 2014. This note takes a look at participation of women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies. Women representation in Lok Sabha has increased from 5% in the first Lok Sabha to 15% in the current Lok Sabha.



Scandinavian countries such as India and Norway, and South Africa have more than 45% women Representation in their national legislatures. Japan at 10%, lags behind India. Participation of women marginally less than men in the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha Both men and women have more than 75% attendance in Lok Sabha. Attendance and participation in Lok Sabha ensure that members are performing their legislative duties.

## 7. Conclusion

In this study, we tested an expectation derived from the scholarly literature, that programmatic systems will show a stronger correlation between quotas and representation. Empirical findings we presented show that, contrary to expectations, gender quotas have a larger impact on women’s representation in candidate-oriented systems. Both separate and pooled models showed the relative contribution of quotas, after different competing explanations, such as human development, district magnitude, or women’s labor force participation, were taken into account. That said, our findings do not provide an unequivocal answer. One possible reason that in candidate-oriented systems, the competitive and candidate-focused characteristics of these systems may give quotas more latitude to influence representation, compared to systems that are already “female-friendly.” Women might be already at a distinct disadvantage in candidate-oriented systems,. Policy to advance women will have a more significant impact compared to other systems because there will be more room to influence and create change than in a system that already accommodates female representation.

It could be argued that these differences in the systems could also be attributed to the fact that programmatically-oriented systems tend to be proportional representation systems. Therefore, the hospitable environment for women politicians might be explained by the type of system, rather than its orientation. If this were true, we would expect that system orientation would not correlate with representation, once proportionality was in the estimated model. A second reason that candidate-oriented systems might be more sensitive to the effects of quotas is that women’s difficulty in gaining elected positions in candidate-oriented systems might largely be because of their difficulty in getting nominated for candidacy ..

Third, because of the emphasis placed on individual candidates in candidate-oriented systems, gender quotas and increased female representation may be significant in terms of symbolic representation and result in a greater impact, that of increased female representation. Female role models, in politics and in other fields, can inspire other women to follow a Given path .

Fourth, candidate-oriented systems are generally more competitive than programmatically-oriented systems. This is due to a variety of reasons, including smaller district magnitudes, more focus on long-term careers, and more expensive campaigning for the individual candidate.

On average quotas had a greater impact in candidate-oriented systems and the interaction term in our

models with the pers rank index implied that quota significance increases as the system becomes more candidate oriented, tests of significance of difference showed insignificant differences. In all of our tests that compared between coefficients for the quota variable in candidate and programmatically oriented countries, there was no significant difference. In a test of difference of means for the mean coefficient size between the two groups, there was also no significant difference. That said, this test depended on an extremely small number of degrees of freedom. We therefore have some reservations in using such a test to disregard any alternative findings.

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