

COMPASSION, RESPECT AND GOVERNANCE:
HOW LEGISLATIVE GENDER QUOTAS INFLUENCE PHYSICAL INTEGRITY
RIGHTS

BY

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ABSTRACT

Legislative gender quotas have been increasingly utilized within electoral structures to increase the proportion of women that possess policymaking authority within governments. The increased involvement of women in roles of political leadership has been shown to influence multiple foreign and domestic policy outcomes within states. Generally, the existing scholarship on the influence of women upon public policy has suggested that women are expected to behave in a more compassionate manner and policies that result from their leadership will reflect this tendency. This research is intended to address the influence of women upon the governmental respect for various forms of physical integrity rights that are observed within a state that utilizes various forms of legislative gender quotas. It is expected that stronger forms of legislative gender quotas will result in the placement of greater numbers of women within positions of governmental leadership, and that greater respect for all forms of human rights will be observed as a result.

Introduction

Within the domains of politics and policy studies, the issue of political representation based upon personal identity has emerged as an especially salient area of study. Legitimacy of government, and the policies that are produced through it, have been contrasted against the representative composition of governmental assemblies. This is especially true with respect to women due to their unique experiences and perspectives which they use in the process of governance and policy construction. The topic of representation is not merely a normative issue with little influence upon the political status quo outside of the gender, race, or other individual personal features of those who occupy political positions within a government. Rather, increased representation of women should result in observable changes to the political status quo toward an orientation that is more intimately aligned with the general preference that are associated with women.

Past empirical research has shown that women have increased their descriptive representation within legislatures, and that the proportion of women in these assemblies has significantly increased.^{1 2} Despite substantial increases in the number of women in political office, women still have not been elected to political positions in proportions that reflect the societies in which they reside. One of the primary methods of rectifying the proportion of women is through the adoption and implementation of a legislative gender quota. These policies have been widely shown to further increase the numerical representation of women within government, no matter how the quota policy is constructed.³ Research regarding the substantive impact of policy under quota conditions is an emerging line of study, but initial inquiries into the subject have shown that quotas can influence specific policy areas and outcomes through the increased access to political power for women that they provide.^{4 5}

The purpose of this research is to assess the influence upon human rights outcomes that are observed within a state through the increased descriptive representation of women within positions of policymaking power within their governments, specifically within legislative assemblies. Women, as an identity group, have been shown to have definable and recognizable policy interests that are built upon their unique worldview. These policy interests are attributed to largely be a product of the social history of women that include confinement to the domestic sphere, stereotypes of feminine weakness and their unique roles as mothers and caregivers within

1. Aksel Sundstrom, Pamela Paxton, Yi-Ting Wang, and Staffan I. Lindberg, "Women's Political Empowerment: A New Global Index, 1900-2012," *World Development*. 94 (June 2017).

2. Daniel Partin, "Status Quota: The Representational Efficacy of Legislative Gender Quotas upon Public Policy" (PhD diss., Liberty University, 2021).

3. Partin 2021.

4. Ibid.

5. Ana Catalano Weeks, "Quotas and Party Priorities: Direct and Indirect Effects of Quota Laws," *Political Research Quarterly*, 77.4 (2019).

their families.^{6 7 8 9} Based upon this understanding of women's identity, it should be expected that as the prominence of women in legislatures is increased that the policies of the state will reflect a more compassionate stance, thereby promoting more state respect for the human rights of those within the control of the government. By contrast, a major aspect of women's political history and identity has been of exclusion and rampant stereotyping.^{10 11} The need of female leaders to deal with negative stereotypes and societal suspicion could also lead to adverse human rights outcomes because women are forced to act more aggressively in order to maintain political power and to establish political credibility.

Quotas and Policy

Women are now critical political actors, and their ability to engage with the policymaking domain has evolved tremendously over the past century.¹² Despite tremendous political gains, women have remained underrepresented within many legislative bodies across the world.¹³ Electoral quotas have frequently been implemented as a political tool to achieve increases in the proportion of female membership within legislatures and parliamentary assemblies.^{14 15 16 17} Quotas are policies which establish standards at the party, governmental, or constitutional level which outline a minimum proportional threshold of seats that are to be occupied by female candidates. These policies largely emerged within European democratic systems during the late

6. Kim Fridkin Kahn, "Does Gender Make a Difference? An Experimental Examination of Sex Stereotypes and Press Patterns in Statewide Campaigns," *American Journal of Political Science*, 38.1 (1994), 167.

7. Miki Caul Kittilson and Kim Fridkin, "Gender, Candidate Portrayals, and Election Campaigns: A Comparative Perspective," *Politics and Gender*, 4 (2008), 382.

8. Ann J. Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 39.

9. Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* (New York: Beacon Books, 1989).

10. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 12.

11. Beatrice Edwards, "Women, Work, and Democracy in Latin America," *Convergence*, 27.2-3 (1994), 52.

12. Pamela Paxton, Melanie M. Hughes, and Jennifer L. Green, "The International Women's Movement and Women's Political Representation, 1893-2003," *American Sociological Review*, 71.6 (December 2006), 905.

13. Pamela Paxton, Melanie M. Hughes, and Matthew A. Painter II, "Growth in Women's Political Representation: A Longitudinal Exploration of Democracy, Electoral System and Gender Quotas," *European Journal of Political Research*, 49 (January 2010), 28.

14. Melanie M. Hughes, "Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women's Political Representation Worldwide," *American Political Science Review*, 105.3 (2011).

15. Melanie M. Hughes, Pamela Paxton and Mona L. Krook, "Gender Quotas for Legislatures and Corporate Boards," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 43.1 (2017).

16. Mona L. Krook and Diana Z. O'Brien, "The Politics of Group Representation: Quotas for Women and Minorities Worldwide," *Comparative Politics*, 42.3 (April 2010).

17. Pamela Paxton, Melanie M. Hughes and Tiffany D. Barnes, *Women, Politics and Power: A Global Perspective* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2021), 182.

1970s, and have quickly proliferated across the globe despite having been the subject of empirical scrutiny and political controversy.^{18 19} The ubiquity of these policies is highlighted by the fact that gender quota policies have been utilized by both quasi-democratic and authoritarian systems since their emergence specifically because of their utility in establishing a façade of equality within the government.²⁰ According to Zetterberg (2009), legislative gender quotas have, “been perhaps the most radical and intensely debated reform in the area of gender equality in the past fifty to sixty years.”²¹ Despite rampant debate concerning the issue, states within the international system have increasingly adopted some variation of these policies, and incorporated them into the electoral structure of the political framework of government.²²

Gender quota policies are not created and implemented with the exclusive intention of merely increasing the proportion of women that are elected to political office. Numerical representation is superficial compared to the goal of establishing representation in policy outcomes for women. Substantive representation allows policy changes that reflect women’s political ideals through their increased access to the legislative process. Arguably, one of the most substantively critical questions related to the implementation of these policies is whether they are able to effectively increase both the descriptive and the substantive representation for women through their imposition within the electoral system.²³ The fungibility of representation serves as arguably one of the most prominent rationales for promoting electoral quotas. It is asserted that increased access to the policymaking process for women will result in changes to society that reflect the representational inputs of women. Therefore, through access to the processes of policy-making, quotas are also posited to act as a political instrument which ensure that the group interests associated with women are more fully represented within government and in the public policy outcomes that are eventually produced.²⁴

Human Rights

Although the idea of human rights appears simplistic, being the rights that all are afforded by their status as human beings, the concept is far from absolute in its delineation. From a conceptual vantage, the usage of the term “human rights” can be interpreted in many different ways according to a wide array of interpretations. When researchers indicate that they are analyzing human rights the precise focus of their question can be difficult to immediately

18. Mark P. Jones, “Gender Quotas, Electoral Laws, and the Election of Women: Lessons from the Argentine Provinces,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 31.1 (1998).

19. Andrew Reynolds, “Women in Legislatures and Executives of the World: Knocking at the Highest Glass Ceiling,” *World Politics*, 51.4 (1999).

20. Sarah Sunn Bush and Par Zetterberg, “Gender Quotas and International Reputation,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 65.2 (April 2021).

21. Par Zetterberg, “Do Gender Quotas Foster Women’s Political Engagement? Lessons from Latin America,” *Political Research Quarterly*, 62.4 (2009).

22. Petra Meier, “A Gender Gap Not Closed by Quotas: The Renegotiation of the Public Sphere,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 10.3 (September 2008), 331-333.

23. Miki Caul Kittilson and Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer, *The Gendered Effects of Electoral Institutions: Political Engagement and Participation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

24. Stina Larsrud and Rita Taphorn, “Designing for Equality: Women’s Quotas and Women’s Political Participation,” *Development*, 50.1 (2007), 36-41.

ascertain. Conceptually, human rights are especially broad and includes a range of individual, more specifically focused sub-concepts that have been housed within the greater conception. At the most fundamental level, human rights can be divided into four different components. Human rights can be viewed as either being political, social, economic, or civil in nature.^{25 26 27} The traditional definition and understanding of human rights, which is constructed through political and civil human rights, is akin to what a majority of the population understand human rights to entail. Civil and political human rights make up the core of human rights resolutions and laws. Civil and political human rights are fundamental in that they serve as the basis to all levels of human physical integrity rights. More importantly, these are basic freedoms which one is entitled to simply because they are human.²⁸ If individuals do not have equality on all levels of these basic and fundamental human freedoms it is difficult to consider them full members of the society in which they live and operate.²⁹ Furthermore, it seems that it is impossible for there to be any development into higher levels of social and economic human rights which have been outlined by some researchers without a firm foundation of recognition in these basic political and civil human rights.³⁰

Although the definition of what is specifically a human right continues to evolve and accrete new statuses as time progresses and individuals become more enlightened and informed of the world around them, it appears unlikely that recognition of those new definitions will be recognized or honored unless these basic fundamental freedoms are granted to all members of the society interested in bolstering its levels of human rights recognition. Political and civil human rights are categorized as “first-generation rights” because these formations of human rights were the first to be established and widely accepted as norms accepted due to their intrinsic proximity to the welfare and autonomy of the individual.^{31 32} Recognition of these first-generation rights is prerequisite for acceptance and enforcement of later generation rights. Without basic respect for political and civil security, it is impossible to move further toward recognizing other aspects of human rights. It is evident, therefore, that these basic freedoms which are contained within the conception of civil and political human rights are essential for the well-being and dignity of all human beings.

Within modern scholarship the conception of human rights has been broadly expanded. Currently, the periphery of human rights conceptualization rests at issues such as the right to

25. William Felice, “Can World Poverty be Eliminated?,” *Human Rights and Human Welfare*, 3 (2003): 136.

26. Maria Green, “What We Talk About When We Talk About Indicators: Current Approaches to Human Rights Measurement,” *Human Rights Quarterly*, 23.4 (2001).

27. M. Rodwan Abouharb and David Cingranelli, *Human Rights and Structural Adjustment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

28. Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights: In Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 10.

29. *Ibid.*, 12-13.

30. Abouharb and Cingranelli 2007.

31. Margaret P. Karns and Karen A. Mingst, *International Organizations: The Politics and Processes of Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010).

32. Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Westview Press, 2007).

healthcare, the right to education, and the right to a certain economic wage.³³ In the future, human rights could potentially continue to be expanded outward, to include other novel rights, that encroach upon the liberties of others in society to achieve.³⁴ From this perspective, human rights expansion might could arguably become counterproductive to societal outcomes rather than beneficial to the well-being of a healthy and functioning society.³⁵ Despite continued conceptual expansion, the core of human rights is comprised of “first-generation’ rights that are innately individual, and reflect the physical integrity of the person by virtue of their status as human beings.

Human rights are often mis-portrayed as a monolithic concept.^{36 37 38 39} This is an oversimplification, and is a truncation of the multiple interconnected concepts that are housed within this notion into a single categorization. Instead, simple usage of the term “human rights” can be nebulous and subject to ambiguity. Considering human rights as a series of concentric circles where each layer builds upon the previous is a useful tool for dissecting the intricacies of the concept of human rights. At the core of the circle is the most basic and fundamental variation of human rights, physical integrity rights. Moving outward on the circle analogy, civil and political rights are located outside of the core human rights in the center. In many nations, these are tied into physical integrity rights as fundamental liberties that one should expect by virtue of the quality of being human. Finally, social and economic rights represent the newest frontier of rights theory, and occupy the perimeter of this metaphor. These are the furthest away from the core fundamental rights of the individual, but scholars and policy makers have attempted to connect these to physical integrity rights. Despite the breadth of the concept of human rights, physical integrity rights remain the most fundamental, are the most visible and are the most likely to be bolstered by women in legislatures.

Connecting Women, Government and Human Rights

One the primary influences upon female group identity has been through the process of exclusion from the political domain entirely.⁴⁰ The most obvious example of political exclusion

33. Amartya Sen, “Human Rights and Development,” in *Development as a Human Right: Legal, Political and Economic Dimensions*, ed. Bard A, Andreassen and Stephen M. Marks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 5-6.

34. Rajeev Malhotra, “Towards Implementing the Right to Development: A Framework for Indicators and Monitoring Methods,” in *Development as a Human Right: Legal, Political and Economic Dimensions*, ed. Bard A, Andreassen and Stephen M. Marks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 199.

35. Arjun Sengupta, “The Human Right to Development,” in *Development as a Human Right: Legal, Political and Economic Dimensions*, ed. Bard A, Andreassen and Stephen M. Marks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 33.

36. Donnelly 2003.

37. Abouharb and Cingranelli 2007, 32-33.

38. William F. Felice, *The Global New Deal: Economic and Social Human Rights in World Politics* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010). 10-11.

39. Abouharb and Cingranelli 2007, 32-33.

40. Tiffany D. Barnes, *Gendering Legislative Behavior: Institutional Constraints and Collaboration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 6.

was through the prohibitive barriers that disenfranchised women within democratic systems.⁴¹ Arguably, the most apparent example has been the disenfranchisement of women throughout most of history. In the United States, women have only possessed the right to vote for just over a century.⁴² The social hierarchy which prevailed, even within democratically-structured systems, constrained the ability of women to directly engage with their government and to influence the social outcomes which directly influenced their lives.

Similarly, in cases when women have been integrated into the political realm, they still face obstacles that are built upon negative stereotypes of their ability and competence to engage with public matters.⁴³ It is not uncommon that the biases constrain women once they are in elected office are strikingly similar to the arguments and beliefs that were used to prevent their initial access into the political process.^{44 45 46} Once elected, the challenges posited against women remain in place. For example, women who are able to secure electoral success must confront the biases which are maintained by members of their constituency. In these situations, women are often viewed with skepticism and negatively-associated biases by those around them, and they must work to overcome the challenges that are a consequence of pre-existing gender stereotypes.^{47 48} Valdini (2019) described this behavior of skepticism as prominent, and as a characteristic of, “men who actively fight against women’s inclusion due to their own misogyny, or ‘backlash’ against women in power due to discomfort with their presence.”⁴⁹ As candidates, women are often unfairly portrayed as less-qualified candidates than their male counterparts, even when they possess equal, or greater, qualifications than their opponents.⁵⁰ Similarly, even once women have won election, past research has indicated that women have more difficulty in

41. Pamela Paxton, Melanie M. Hughes, and Matthew A. Painter II, “Growth in Women’s Political Representation: A Longitudinal Exploration of Democracy, Electoral System and Gender Quotas,” *European Journal of Political Research*, 49 (January 2010), 25-26.

42. David E. Kyvig, *Explicit and Authentic Acts: Amending the U.S. Constitution, 1776-1995* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1996), XXX.

43. Barnes 2016, 6-8.

44. Dianne Bystrom, “Confronting Stereotypes and Double Standards in Campaign Communication,” in *Legislative Women: Getting Elected, Getting Ahead*, ed. Beth Reingold (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 59-62.

45. Jennifer L. Lawless and Kathryn Pearson, “Competing in Congressional Primaries,” in *Legislative Women: Getting Elected, Getting Ahead*, ed. Beth Reingold (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 22.

46. Barnes 2016, 31.

47. Jane Mansbridge, “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent ‘Yes.’” *The Journal of Politics*, 61.3 (1999).

48. Melissa S. Williams, *Voice, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and the Failings of Liberal Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

49. Melody Ellis Valdini, *The Inclusion Calculation: Why Men Appropriate Women’s Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 1.

50. Paxton, Hughes and Barnes 2021, 198-199.

obtaining funds for their re-election efforts.⁵¹ ⁵²For women, the political realm has been shown to be hostile as compared to men, and women are subject to unique challenges that men do not experience. These challenges require that women be adaptable to meet the necessity of the situation and to ensure political survival.

Most notably, the separation of public and private spheres has perpetuated an image of women as weak and incapable of dealing with the difficulties inherent within the domain of politics.⁵³ ⁵⁴ At national levels, decisions of legislatures and parliaments carry national consequences, and poor decisions in economic policy, security, or conflict can threaten national survival. According to John Keegan, “if warfare is as old as history and as universal as mankind, we must now enter the supremely important limitation that it is an entirely masculine activity.”⁵⁵ With many policy areas, women in leadership face more scrutiny than their male counterparts, but this is especially heightened within the domain of military conflict.⁵⁶ Women in positions of leadership, especially in the role of an executive, face contradictory expectations toward their performance and stereotypical expectations about their behavior.⁵⁷

As an elected leader, even within a democratically-oriented government where power is distributed among multiple actors, it is still assumed that the actions of the leader are typically perceived as being representative of the actions of the state. Based upon traditional gender stereotypes, Ann J. Tickner (1992) aptly described the historical dilemma that many women have faced due to their status as women in political power. According to Tickner, the worst possible political action which can occur within a state or government, “is to be like a woman because women are weak, fearful, indecisive and dependent.”⁵⁸ Operating under this assumption, voters could be hesitant to elect a female leader, and others within this political system could base their engagement with women based upon this stereotype. As a consequence of this belief about the political nature of women, female leaders could feel constrained in their actions, or could believe that they were operating under constant suspicion. This belief could lead to more aggressive actions that are not necessarily aligned with their ideals, but are viewed as necessary in an

51. Joanne Connor Green, “The Times.... Are They a-Changing? An Examination of the Impact of the Value of Campaign Resources for Women and Men Candidates for the US House of Representatives,” *Women & Politics*, 25.4 (2008).

52. Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon, *Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling: Women and Congressional Elections* (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2008).

53. Barnes 2016.

54. Jonathan Powell and Karina Mukazhanova-Powell, “Demonstrating Credentials? Female Executives, Women’s Status, and the Use of Force,” *Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy*, 40.2 (2019), 245.

55. John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 76.

56. Powell and Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019, 245.

57. Theresa Schroeder and Jonathan Powell, “Right Man’ for the Job? The Influence of Gender on Civil-Military Friction,” *Armed Forces and Society*, 44.3 (2018), 461.

58. Ann J. Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 39.

attempt to prove themselves as competent and capable in the eyes of a critical audience.⁵⁹ This has been shown to be the case with respect to military engagement, as women engage in what has been described as an inherently masculine activity.^{60 61}

In contrast to the hostility toward women that has been associated with the political realm, women's identity within the domestic realm has established women as the primary source of care and support within their familial relationships.^{62 63 64} Notably, Sara Ruddick (1995) posited the worldview of women as being inherently nurturing and oriented toward compassion, in alignment with the role of women as mothers and caregivers.⁶⁵ For women, group identity has been shown to be salient in a social and psychological context. However, it is not certain whether identity forces are able to shape policy outcomes, or if there are other factors in operation that dictate policy shifts and norms. Interestingly, women's group identification has been framed through both traditional and progressive lenses within different studies. Although this seems contradictory, previous empirical research has framed women through both lenses because of their roles as mothers and caregivers.^{66 67 68} Ana Catalano Weeks (2019) conducted one of the few studies directed toward discerning the political outcomes that are associated with legislative gender quota laws. Weeks recognized the inherent potential for greater numbers of women within a legislature to exert discernable political changes along a broad spectrum of policy issues. Although her analysis was broad in its composition, it was significant because she was able to show that women's descriptive representation and substantive representation are fungible at a general level. Her choice of policy issue area is grounded in the predominant assessment of women being interested in socially progressive policies and is reflected in her choice to use social justice and welfare state expansion as her primary independent variables.⁶⁹ The results that were obtained by Weeks (2019) in her analysis support the assertion that women are able to leverage the presence of a gender quota into political power and influence policy outcomes through their increased representation.⁷⁰ This finding supports the assumption that

59. Theresa Schroeder, "When Security Dominates the Agenda: The Influence of Ongoing Security Threats on Female Representation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 61.3 (2017), 565-566.

60. Keegan 1993.

61. Powell and Mukazhanova-Powell, 2019.

62. Mansbridge, 1999.

63. Michele L. Swers, *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

64. Iris Marion Young, "Equality of Whom? Social Groups and Judgments of Injustice," *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 9.1 (2001).

65. Ruddick 1989, 13.

66. Sarah Childs, "The Complicated Relationship Between Sex, Gender and the Substantive Representation of Women," *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13.1 (2006).

67. Ruddick 1989.

68. Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

69. Weeks 2019, 855.

70. Ibid.

women would be able to utilize their numerical power in legislatures to influence the governmental respect for human rights in a manner aligned toward their ideal.

Selected Data and Methodology

For the purpose of this project, human rights are interpreted as only pertaining to core physical integrity rights. These abuses are either initiated or sanctioned by the government, and entail physical abuses such as torture, political imprisonment and killing, or the disappearance of the individual due to the actions of the state.⁷¹ To measure physical integrity rights violations, the Political Terror Scale (PTS) is utilized. The PTS includes data on violations from both the State Department and Amnesty International. Both the State Department and Amnesty International utilize an identical five-point coding scheme in which a value of 1 indicates complete physical security of the individual under the rule of law up to a value of 5 which is indicative of pervasive state repression across multiple indicators of physical integrity.⁷²

Information about descriptive representation is drawn from the Varieties of Democracy Database (V-DEM).⁷³ This database includes the relevant information for the rest of the variables in this analysis. Included in this database are measurements for quota strength in both its ordinal (legal) and threshold (numerical) composition. Similarly, descriptive representation of women is included as both a continuous and as an ordinal variable. The ordinal scale is comprised of five categories where higher values represent greater numerical representation. Finally, all of the control variables that are used in this analysis are drawn from the V-DEM database.

Because the dependent variables contained in the PTS data are ordinal in their composition, an ordered probit analysis is most appropriate. The statistical analysis for this project is comprised of four ordered probit models which are presented in Tables 1 through 4. Tables 1 and 2 are basic ordered probit models used to corroborate the existing understanding that stronger quotas are associated with increased descriptive representation for women within legislatures and parliaments.⁷⁴ These tests rely upon the five-category ordinal measurement of descriptive representation so that an ordered probit model can be appropriately utilized. Tables 3 and 4 present the ordered probit findings regarding the relationship between descriptive representation of women and physical integrity rights that are observed within the state. These tests use the continuous measurement of descriptive representation, as opposed to the categorical measurement.

71. Reed M. Wood and Mark Gibney, "The Political Terror Scale (PTS): A Re-introduction and a Comparison to CIRI," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32 (2010), 367.

72. Ibid, 373.

73. Michael Coppedge, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, M. Steven Fish, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Anna Lührmann, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Brigitte Seim, Rachel Sigman, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jeffrey Staton, Steven Wilson, Agnes Cornell, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjøløw, Nina Ilchenko, Joshua Krusell, Laura Maxwell, Valeriya Mechkova, Juraj Medzihorsky, Josefine Pernes, Johannes von Römer, Natalia Stepanova, Aksel Sundström, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Tore Wig, and Daniel Ziblatt, "V-Dem [Country-Year/Country-Date] Dataset v9", *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project*, <https://www.v-dem.net/en/about/>.

74. Partin 2021.

Findings

Because this analysis utilizes the descriptive representation of women as the primary independent variable, it is essential to first test the relationship between quotas and the numerical representative changes that they influence for women. Tables 1 and 2 present the findings related to the efficacy of both variations of quota strength and the influence of these policies upon the descriptive representation of women within legislatures and parliaments. Legally stronger (Table 1) and higher quota thresholds (Table 2) are shown to be correlated with statistically significant increases in the descriptive representation of women, as expected.

Table 1	
VARIABLES	Ordinal Quota Strength and Descriptive Representation
Ordinal Strength	0.470*** (0.0133)
Constant cut1	-0.526*** (0.0103)
Constant cut2	0.0708*** (0.00982)
Constant cut3	0.445*** (0.0102)
Constant cut4	0.823*** (0.0111)
Observations	17,209
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

Table 2	
VARIABLES	Quota Threshold Strength and Descriptive Representation
Threshold Strength	0.0630*** (0.00384)
Constant cut1	-0.862*** (0.109)
Constant cut2	-0.0926 (0.0907)
Constant cut3	0.722*** (0.0931)
Observations	1,068
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

Table 3 presents the findings from the model that used the State Department data. Descriptive representation is positively correlated with increased repression of physical integrity rights, and is statistically significant with a p-value of less than .01. Among the control variables included in this model, international war, internal conflict, the imposition of multilateral economic sanctions, and the duration of existing sanctions are each significant and operate in the expected direction. Therefore, as women's descriptive representation is increased, state violations of physical integrity rights is also increased.

VARIABLES	Table 3 Political Terror Scale- State
Descriptive	1.723*** (0.453)
Coup	-0.223 (0.238)
International War	1.627*** (0.365)
Internal Conflict	0.392*** (0.150)
Logged GDP	0.0892 (0.135)
Women's Empowerment	-1.031 (0.764)
Democratic Breakdown	0.416 (0.466)
Average Educational Level	-0.0579 (0.0366)
Divided Government	-0.0629 (0.0534)
Multiordinal Sanctions	0.244* (0.141)
Sanction Duration	0.0263** (0.0132)
Polity Score	0.00837 (0.00737)
Constant cut1	0.513 (0.924)
Constant cut2	1.246 (0.923)
Constant cut3	1.951** (0.924)
Constant cut4	2.749*** (0.931)
Observations	555

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Similarly, the findings in Table 4 which were obtained using the Amnesty International measurement of physical integrity rights present a similar depiction of the relationship between the descriptive representation of women and the governmental respect for human rights.

VARIABLES	Table 4 Political Terror Scale- Amnesty
Descriptive	3.256*** (0.566)
Coup	-0.0345 (0.292)
International War	1.877*** (0.397)
Internal Conflict	-0.0811 (0.160)
Logged GDP	0.571*** (0.153)
Women's Empowerment	-3.773*** (0.933)
Democratic Breakdown	0.133 (0.565)
Average Educational Level	-0.113*** (0.0405)
Divided Government	-0.126** (0.0638)
Multiordinal Sanctions	0.277* (0.147)
Sanction Duration	-0.00418 (0.0138)
Polity Score	0.0117 (0.00870)
Constant cut1	2.901*** (1.032)
Constant cut2	3.823*** (1.035)
Constant cut3	4.461*** (1.037)
Constant cut4	5.264*** (1.044)
Observations	425

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Just as with the previous model, the descriptive representation of women is positively correlated with increases in violations of physical integrity rights of the state. This relationship is

statistically significant and has a p-value that is less than .01. Similarly, the control variables of international war and the presence of multiordinal economic sanctions are positively associated with physical rights abuses, and obtain statistical significance. In this model women's political empowerment is strongly statistically significant, and is negatively associated with human rights abuses by the state as is expected under the theoretical assumption that women will pursue socially beneficial goals as they gain power. However, this contrasts with the primary finding that greater numbers of women in office is correlated with stronger state violations of human rights. The contradictory nature of these coefficients suggests that past research suggesting that women in political leadership are often forced to act more forcefully than their male counterparts is correct, and that women in political office must adapt their actions to meet the needs of political survival as opposed to working to achieve their ideals.

Limitations and Suggestions for Continued Research

This project represents an empirical extension of the existing research concerning the political influence of women through their roles as policymakers within governmental bodies.⁷⁵ Human physical integrity rights in this study were only measured through the data that is included in the Political Terror Scale. While this scale is comprised of two separate measurements, the State Department data and Amnesty International data on human rights violation levels, there is some ambiguity that remains about specific patterns of oppression that might be influencing the direction and strength of the findings. The five-point coding scheme does not offer insight about the specific violation that is occurring within a state, but only allows for an aggregate assessment. Future inquiry into this topic can utilize additional databases that include human rights abuses. The Cingranelli Richards Human Rights Dataset (CIRI) includes information about individual human rights indicators. Using this data might reveal specific trends about the specific human rights areas that are most influenced through the increased representational proportion of women in government.⁷⁶ Utilization of multiple datasets can also serve to increase the robustness and external validity of the findings, especially if there is directional congruence in the results.

Further, this analysis only reveals the relationship that is present between the descriptive representation of women and the aggregate levels of physical rights repression that were observed within a state. Additional research can provide insight and clarification as to the causal reason that increases in descriptive representation of women is correlated with increases in human rights abuses observed within a state. Theoretically, this relationship could be explained as a product of biases that women face as leaders. Women in positions of power are frequently viewed more critically than their male counterparts.^{77 78} Increases in human rights abuses could be a consequence of these perceptions as women in leadership seek to assert themselves within the political sphere and dispel perceptions of weakness and ineffectual leadership.

75. Partin 2021.

76. David L. Cingranelli, David L. Richards, and K. Chad Clay, "The CIRI Human Rights Dataset, Version 2014.04.14," Harvard Dataverse, <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/cirihumanrightsdata>.

77. Powell and Mukazhanova-Powell 2019, 245.

78. Tickner 1992, 39.

Conclusion

The findings of this research are simultaneously expected and surprising. As expected, this analysis reinforces the understanding that women matter with respect to political outcomes, and their involvement influences the direction of policies. As the level of women's descriptive representation is increased within a state, there are observable shifts in political outcomes. However, the shift in human rights does not operate in the direction that is expected under the theoretical assumptions that women will operate in a manner more aligned with their roles as mothers and primary caregivers. Instead, stronger descriptive representation of women is associated with increases in state repression of the physical integrity rights of individuals. Notably, the findings associated with the Amnesty International model suggests that women might not be able to pursue their ideal political agendas, despite being directly engaged in the process of policymaking.

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