

2016

Exploring the Negative Perceptions of Female Legislators: the Consequences of Gender Quotas in Argentina

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<https://doi.org/10.15760/honors.317>

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**Exploring the Negative Perceptions of Female Legislators: The Consequences of Gender
Quotas in Argentina**

by

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An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

Of

The requirements for the degree

Of

Bachelor of Arts

University Honors

Thesis Advisor:

Dr. Melody Ellis Valdini

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank every individual who has helped me in this journey. I cannot not express my gratitude towards those whom have provided me with the must needed support and guidance through the process of this paper. I would like to specifically acknowledge my thesis advisor Dr. Melody Valdini for her continual support and mentorship during every step of this process. Without her, I would have not had the opportunity to study in Argentina and or written a thesis on a subject that I find of great importance. I am truly grateful for having the opportunity to travel to Argentina and meeting many unforgettable friends. I would also like to acknowledge Zaira Minlodo for her indispensable aid in handing out surveys over many days in the hot sun with me in order to collect data. I know I would have not been able to pass out the amount of surveys that I did without her. Finally, to my caring and loving parents whom without them, would have never been able to complete this paper without their support and dedication to my education. My heartfelt gratitude to everyone.

ABSTRACT

This paper examines how the presence of gender quotas effect public perceptions of female legislators in regards to their competence and qualifications needed to enter public office. This paper suggests that gender quotas can promote negative public perceptions due to pre-established gender norms and meritocracy violations similarly to sentiments in Affirmative Action programs. Analyzing the survey data taken from participants in Argentina, the results suggests that perceptions of female legislators are impacted by the individual's knowledge of what a gender quota is as well as the specifics of how Argentine gender quotas are executed. Of the total percentage of participants who took the survey, only a fraction was well versed in the details of gender quotas in their own country. Female participants whom were more versed in gender quotas rated female legislators more favorably within the scenario without gender quotas than with gender quotas. One unexpected result was that difference in average perceptions by sex, with only slight differences of male participants between the scenario with gender quotas and without, compared to a large difference of female participants between the two scenarios. Overall, the results of this paper demonstrate that gender quotas can have negative impacts on the public perceptions of female legislators.

INTRODUCTION

Gender quotas are seen by many as the solution to equalizing the disparity between men and women in politics. Gender quotas vary from country to country; but the most essential element of a gender quota is to promote women's representation within an institution that displays gender bias towards men. In many countries, gender quotas have successfully increased the percentage of women in elected offices, especially countries within Northern Europe and Latin America. Of the Latin American countries, Argentina was one of the very first countries to nationally mandated gender quotas (Leyes de Cupo) as a reform measure to augment the presence of women in government. For many scholars, Argentina is seen as the model for gender quotas due to the elevated and continual rise of female legislators as well as their history of electing two female presidents within a country notorious for culture of "machismo". However, the introduction of gender quotas in Argentina was not as idyllic in its effects as many people had thought.

At the time of its introduction within the Argentine legislation, many legislators were opposed to having a national statute mandating the inclusion of women, arguing that women needed to earn the support of the people and parties like their predecessors¹. Heavy campaigning from women's rights activists and female legislators exerted the pressure needed to pass this national mandate; but be that as it may, the following few years of that monumental legislation, the percentage of women in the legislature was underwhelming to the 30% that was stated. This was due to political parties knowing placing female candidates in positions that the party was aware was impossible to win and or in positions that were physically impossible to fill based on

¹ Jaquette, J. S. (2009). Introduction. *Feminist Agendas and Democracy in Latin America*, 1-18.
doi:10.1215/9780822392569-001

their proportional electoral system. It wasn't until 1994 that a woman named María Merciadari de Moroni Morini won her case within the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, requiring parties to place female candidates in winnable positions on the ballot. In 2001, the percentages of women finally reached the mandated 30% and steadily continue to rise estimating at 32 percentage as of 2015².

The success³ of Argentine's gender quotas has allowed many international political figures and scholars to argue that gender quotas are the optimal solution to promoting women's representation in government and therefore further women's overall equality. However few scholars have looked at how gender quotas affect public perceptions of women within Latin America, countries that historically embedded with gendered social attitudes. This has resulted in lack of studies geared towards exploring the possible negative social aspects that are put on those women elected via quotas. How women's representation within a society is crucial to the advancement of women's equality as well as the types of methods best suited to promoting women's representation without negatively affecting the perception of women's ability to enter elected offices. To have legislation that solely address the process of how women enter politics, while ignoring the externalities that influence the actual effectiveness women have once in politics, can have major unintended consequences. Current legislation of gender quotas in Argentina directly focuses on how women enter politics, and have become extremely successful in promoting women's entrance into elected offices, but this mandate does little to ensure female legislators influence and substantive power in office. I argue that gender quotas promote negative

² Jaquette, J.S. (2009) and (2015). Retrieved October 17, 2015, from <http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=AR>

³ Success is used the context of the percentage of women in the Argentinian legislature

perceptions of women elected via gender quotas⁴. The assumption that women elected via gender quotas to be less qualified than their non-quota counterparts is due to the perception that quota women are unable to run for office independent of governmental intervention.

To begin, I will analyze how gender quotas have affected the political processes for female legislators once in office in order to create the context of the unintended consequences of gender quotas. Next, I will discuss the current literature regarding the benefits and consequences of gender quotas in relationship to its effectiveness in achieving women's empowerment in society. Furthermore, Franceschet and Piscopo's concept, the "label effect", and connect the phenomena of Fox and Lawless's gender perception hypothesis to the stigmatization of women elected via gender quotas and how these perceptions can negatively affect society's attitudes towards these legislators. Fourth, I will draw connections from entrenched gender attitudes and Affirmative Action (Affirmative Action programs have a propensity for promoting unfavorable perceptions in regards to the qualifications of the minority group the programs are meant to promote), with the combination of governmental intervention as a catalyst for examining the negative public perceptions of female legislators. Based on the data, my results showed that men are more favorably biased towards female legislators in a quota system than women. Finally, I will provide some thoughts on whether the benefits of gender quotas outweigh the negative social perceptions in the continuing advancement of women's equality in Argentina.

⁴ The literature does not give a clear definition of what it means to be a quota woman when discussing the differences between quota women and non-quota women. For this paper, when discussing women elected via quotas, it will refer to female legislators elected in office within a country (specially Argentina) that has strong enforcement of their gender quotas. It's very difficult to clearly differentiate which women are quota women and which or non-quota women due to the fact that Argentina has an estimated 32% female legislators (with the actual mandate being 30%). In the case of Argentina, it is a closed list, PR system, meaning that it is almost impossible to tell which women is a "quota woman" and which is not according to the rest of the 2% of female legislators, without inside knowledge of party elites who create these lists. For this paper, we will assume that all female legislators regardless of whether they were part of the mandate quota are "quota women".

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the implementation of gender quotas (1991), the literature has been overwhelming supportive on the positive consequences of gender quotas, but the few that are more wary of these statutes question whether gender quotas are the best avenues for women's advancement in politics. The majority of the literature regarding gender quotas supports the notion that gender quotas significantly increase women's roles and participation in politics. Proponents of gender quotas argue three main points: First, women already lack equality in many aspects of society such as economic and social influence, both which are necessary to gain entry into elected offices. Therefore, gender quotas are needed to boost women's descriptive representation in politics in order to create legislation that will further the overall equality of women in all areas of society⁵. Second, women have long been marginalized in a patriarchal system and due to their shared history women best represent other women. In order for women to be best represented within politics, it's argued that only women can represent women's issues, therefore women's descriptive representation in government is essential⁶. Many scholars argue that men simply cannot fully ascertain the experience of being women in a society, and to have any other sex represent women is insufficient to representing the identity and shared beliefs of what it means to be a woman⁷. Third, women's representation is foundational to fabric of democracy⁸ as they comprise up of half the population around the world. To have a democratic system that disproportionately represents one sex over the other violates the very foundation of democratic representation⁹. The fourth argument in favor of gender quotas is that descriptive and substantive

⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008), Wängnerud (2008), Fox and Lawless (2010).

⁶ Wagerud, (2009).

⁷ Schwindt Bayer, (2011).

⁸ Wängnerud, L. (2009). Women In Parliaments: Descriptive And Substantive Representation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 51-69.

⁹ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008) & Wängnerud, (2008)

representation will lead to substantive representation¹⁰. In theory, scholars argue that as the percentage of women's representation increases in the legislature, substantive representation will also increase manifesting in legislation directed to improving the lives of women in the public and private spheres¹¹. This argument relates to the concept that women best represent women, and that only women can create meaningful and substantive legislation due to their understanding of what it means to be a woman. However, this argument persuades the concept that women and men are inherently different on their perceptions and priorities, making gender quotas less about equalizing women's representation and more about women being different¹². Finally, the literature agrees that gender quotas provide symbolic power, which can be hard to quantify, yet can empower women to become more political activity due to an increase in descriptive representation¹³. Symbolic representation is one of the more nuanced concepts of gender quotas due to the difficulty of quantifying how symbolic representation affects women's opinions of themselves. This argument is contingent on women's their ability to identify those whom they relate to in an area traditionally dominated by men, and then to become inspired to become involved due to the symbolic representation of their peers. The literature is divided on whether this type of representation provides enough impact on the general populous to affect women's involvement in politics.

On the other side of the argument, critics argue that gender quotas have more indirect negative consequences than positive consequences. Scholars against the promotion of gender quotas argue that gender quotas are effective and could be successful in theory; however, realities of gender quotas are much more complex due to pre-existing externalities. One of the

¹⁰ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008) & Wagnerud, (2008)

¹¹ Wagnerud, (2009)

¹² Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008)

¹³ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008)., Franceschet and Piscopo, (2014). & Wagnerud, (2008).

main arguments against gender quotas is the lack of substantive representation that female legislators wield in legislative processes. As mentioned before, proponents for gender quotas argue that descriptive representation can be the most effective channels for substantive representation; however, many scholars against gender quotas argue that descriptive representation does not necessary equate to substantive representation¹⁴. Scholars have various explanations to answer why substantive representation is extremely difficult to achieve such as, party elite hierarchies, central vs. decentralized government, as well as pre-existing gender norms¹⁵. However, the most nuanced explanation of this phenomenon comes from Franceschet and Piscopo.

They argue that female legislators can experience hostility from their own party and colleagues because they were elected based on their gender and not on their qualifications¹⁶. This backlash can manifest in the types of committee seats female legislators are allocated, positions of leadership within parties, and even substantive power¹⁷ when it comes to the outcome of passing legislation¹⁸. This backlash towards female legislators can fuel and exacerbate the continual lack of substantive power for female legislators. Another argument against gender quotas is that gender quotas revoke voter selection in candidates. The purpose of the a democracy is to ensure that the people select those whom they believe best represent them, and to mandate a specific group of individuals violates the people's free choice of representation¹⁹. This is a direct rebuttal to proponents of gender quotas' argument of the need for governmental intervention as an

¹⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

¹⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008)., Wagnerud (2008)., Jones (2008)., Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson (2005). & Eagly and Karau (2008).

¹⁶ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2010).

¹⁷ Female legislators often must have a male legislator co-sponsor a bill in order to it to pass, making substantive power for female legislators contingent on the presence of a male legislator.

¹⁸ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2010).

¹⁹ Wagnerud, (2009).

equalizer to the gender ratio in elected offices. Implementing statutes that would hinder free candidacy selection could lead to backlash by the public, especially in a political climate that does not support the political ideas of a particular statute²⁰.

Critics against gender quotas are cautious whether gender quotas actually promote women's political involvement/political knowledge. Proponents of gender quotas have argued the significance of symbolic representation via gender quotas, and that this type of representation is indispensable for the overall inclusion of women in all aspects of society. The difficulty of this argument lies in how to quantify symbolic representation, but scholars such as Fraile and Gomez (2015) & Htun, Lacalle, and Micozzi (2013) argue

that symbolic representation does not produce the significant evidence of women's increased involvement²¹. Fraile and Gomez argue that the gender knowledge gap continues to show that men are more politically knowledgeable than women. Although this gap varies based on factors such as regional variation, education and social economic status; their findings showed noticeable and relatively equal disparity between men and women's political knowledge. Htun, Lacalle, and Micozzi directly explored whether the presence of female legislators contributes to increases of the introduction as well as the passing of women's centered bills. These scholars found that the presence of women in the legislature did in fact increase the percentage of women's issue bills; however, the approval rates of these bills declined as the percentage of

²⁰ Franceshet and Piscopo, (2008). & Dahlerup *, D., & Freidenvall *, L. (2005). Quotas As A 'fast Track' To Equal Representation For Women. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 26-48.

²¹ Fraile, M., & Gomez, R. (2015). Does Alejandro Know More About Politics than Catalina? Explaining the Latin American Gender Gap in Political Knowledge. *British Journal of Political Science Brit. J. Polit. Sci.*, 1-22. & Htun, M., Lacalle, M., & Micozzi, J. (2013). Does Women's Presence Change Legislative Behavior? Evidence from Argentina. *Journal of Politics in Latin American*, 95-125

female legislators increased²². This negative correlation between the percentage of female legislators and substantive power is crucial to understanding how the legislative processes affects the consequences of gender quotas. Finally gender quotas can be exploited to signify modernity and progressiveness. For countries looking to improve their reputation, especially regarding human rights, gender quotas can be very effective at promoting positive and progressive impressions on international and domestic levels²³.

Today women still have not achieved the equality to that of men, and can be seen in various socio/economic disparities such as wage gap, knowledge gap, and political positions. Research done on the consequences of gender quotas has mostly been in favor of gender quotas, because they can significantly increase women's descriptive representation. Although the literature is still mixed on whether descriptive representation helps increase substantive and symbolic representation, the literature overwhelmingly supports the benefits of gender quotas on women's descriptive representation, yet has still to come to a consensus whether the realities of gender quotas truly further women's overall equality.

Consequences of Gender Quotas

Women's substantive representation in the Argentinean legislation has had little effect from the increase in women's descriptive representation via gender quotas. This disconnect between substantive and descriptive representation manifests itself through the increase in domestic violence statistics²⁴, the gender knowledge gap²⁵, the gender wage gap, and substantive representation of women in government. With women's representation in the Argentine

²² M., Lacalle, M., & Micozzi, J. (2013).

²³ Wagnerud, (2008). & Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

²⁴ Cases of Domestic Violence within the last 5 years is demonstrated in Figure 1

²⁵ Knowledge in this regard refers to political knowledge within national and domestic politics. Fraile, M., & Gomez, R. (2015).

legislature being the highest in history, the rates of domestic violence is the canary in the coalmine regarding the substantial power/effectiveness of female legislators once in office.

Domestic Violence as a Consequence to Outcome

Many advocates of gender quotas argue these legislations create the necessary channels for women to create powerful legislation, especially legislation involving women's issues. However, domestic violence cases in Argentina have been steadily rising since the early 2000s and the sharp increase of femicides have caused outrage within the domestic and international community. Domestic violence statistics from the mid 2000s up to 2015 details femicides, victim's knowledge of resources available, and how often 911 calls are based on gender violence will be provided to better understand the prevalence of DV within Argentina. It's impossible to know the exact rate of domestic violence within a country but " experts estimate that 25 percent of all Argentine women are victims of domestic violence and that more than 40 per cent of female murder victims are killed by their partners"²⁶. According Ni Una Menos, an organization directed to stopping femicides and domestic violence in Argentina states, "as of 2014 a woman is killed every 30 hours, culminating in 277 homicides a year²⁷", with a total of 1808 since 2008²⁸. Those rates are staggering compared surrounding Latin American countries which include "88 in Columbia 83 in Peru; 71 in the Dominican Republic; 46 in El Salvador; 25 in Uruguay; 20 in Paraguay²⁹". According to National Women's Council (Consejo Nacional de la Mujer, CNM), the rates of violence towards women have only gotten worse within the past decade, with "one in

²⁶ Risley, A. (2006). Framing Violence. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 581-609. Retrieved October 1, 2015, from EBSCOhost.

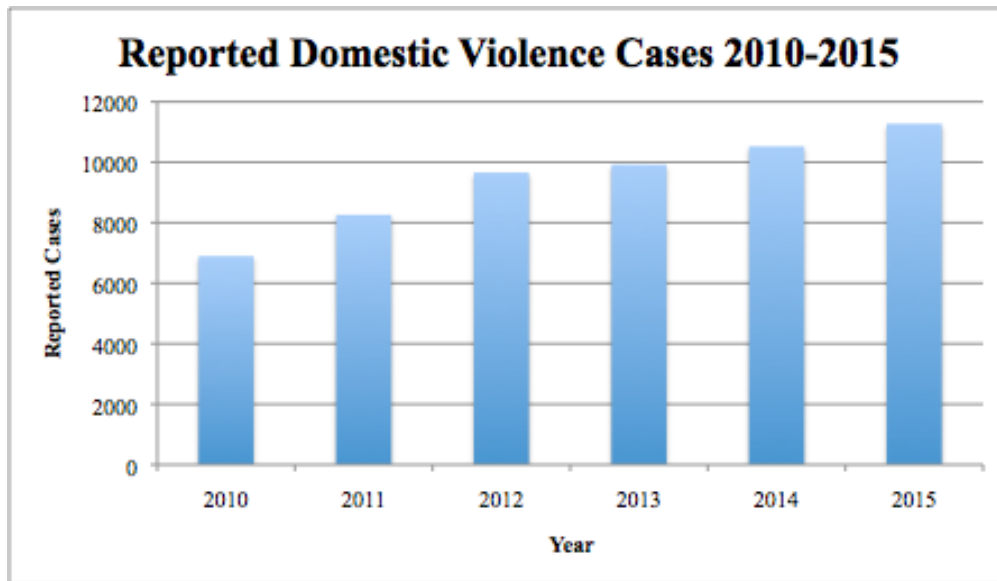
Berry, B. (2015, June 23). Ni Una Menos: Argentina Takes the Lead Against Sexism and Gender Violence in Latin America. Retrieved October 1, 2015.

²⁸ Porter, T. (2015, June 4). Argentina: 200,000 rally against femicide and domestic violence in Buenos Aires. Retrieved October 1, 2015.

²⁹ Berry, B. (2015).

three Argentinean women suffers from physical, psychological, sexual or economic abuse in her home ³⁰. Within the past three years, the rates of domestic violence has dramatically increased and as of “March 2012, over the last two years there has been a 43% increase in the number of violent crimes against women³¹.

Figure 1: Domestic Violence in Argentina from 2010-2015



Source: Supreme Court of Argentina³²

High levels of DV are further shown through emergency calls with “70 percent of 911 calls, which number between 9,000 and 11,000 calls per month, were related to gender violence” (*La Nación* 3 Dec. 2007; *El Siglo* 29 Sep. 2007). These statistics show that DV has not gone in

³⁰ Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, *Argentina: Women victims of domestic violence; state protection and resources available to victims (2005-2007)*, 17 January 2008, ARG102689.E, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/47ce6d7ca.html> [accessed 1 October 2015]

³¹ Ferrand, Graciela. "Argentina: Criminal Code Amendment to Include Femicide." *Global Legal Monitor*. Library of Congress, 3 May 2012. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.

³² Retrieved from <http://old.csjn.gov.ar/docus/documentos/verdoc.jsp?ID=95226>, the official URL of the Argentine Supreme Court

recent years, but in fact have risen even with the implementation of the most current 2009 Ley De Protección Integral a Las Mujeres (Ley 26.485, *Integral protection to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women in the areas that develop their interpersonal relationships*), which details the protection and prevention of women in Argentina on a federal level. Argentine Law. 26. 485, Ley de Protección Integral a Las Mujeres

The most current legislation on DV came in 2009, when Argentine Federal government implemented the a law known as *Integral protection to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women in the areas that develop their interpersonal relationships*, with the sole purpose of eradicating DV and femicides, but has yet to be fully implemented within all provinces of Argentina. Within this law, detailed definitions what constitutes as domestic violence along with the creation of Consejo Nacional de la Mujer, CNM. The CNM is tasked with the annotation, collection, production, and registration of all information regarding domestic violence against women³³. However, the CNM lacks any significant power or influence on the reformation of DV policies due to the lack of funding and decentralized system³⁴. Under this federal legislation, each province is mandated with allocating domestic violence resources and policies, which results in an inconsistent resources availability across Argentina. According to Franceschet, the greatest downfall of Law No. 26.485 is its inadequate “design to arbitrary implementation and insufficient funds”, which hinders victims of domestic violence from accessing the necessary aid³⁵. It’s evident from the statistics that critical mass of women in the Argentine legislature does not provide the impact that many gender quotas proponents argue.

³³ Argentina: Ley No. 26.485 de 2009 de protección integral para prevenir, sancionar y erradicar la violencia contra las mujeres en los ámbitos en que desarrollen sus relaciones interpersonales [Argentina], 11 March 2009, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4a016dd62.html> [accessed 2 October 2015]

³⁴ Franceschet and Piscopo’s *Sustaining Gendered Practices? Power, Parties, and Elite Political Networks in Argentina*, 2014

³⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2014).

Process vs Outcome

To understand how gender quotas are discussed within the literature, it's crucial to examine how success is measured within a concept that is hard to quantify. Franceschet and Piscopo have categorized the consequences of gender quotas in regards to their effectiveness into two theoretical concepts: descriptive and substantive representation³⁶. Descriptive representation refers to the numerical and demographical representation of a specific group which is quantified with a number. On the other hand, substantive representation indicates the influence/power women have on the introduction and passing of legislation. Often times, the literature will connect these two theories, linking an increase of descriptive representation to a nature increase substantive representation. This concept is one of the main arguments utilized for scholars discussing the real world benefits of gender quotas; however, Franceschet, Piscopo & Wängnerud argue that connecting descriptive and substantive representation is a myopic view of how gender quotas actually manifest for female legislators³⁷. Franceschet and Piscopo were the first to argue that the reason why substantive representation was not contingent of the percentage of women's representation due to gender norms that have been pre-established of the introduction of gender quotas³⁸. Their research has lead to a vanguard concept explaining why female legislators are unable to pass legislation at the rate of their male legislators within a gender quota system. The automatic presence of women in government does not mean that female legislators will wield the influence and power needed to pass legislation, especially legislation regarding women centered

³⁶ Franceschet, S., & Piscopo, J. (2008). Gender Quotas And Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons From Argentina. *Politics & Gender*.

³⁷ Franceschet, S., & Piscopo, J. (2008) and Wängnerud, L. (2009). Women In Parliaments: Descriptive And Substantive Representation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 51-69.

³⁸ Franceschet, S., & Piscopo, J. (2008).

issues. For many proponents of gender quotas, scholars argue that critical mass is the optimum way to ensure that women wield the necessary power to pass significant legislation. However, what critical mass theorists tend to overlook are the deeply entrenched historical power hierarchies within political parties³⁹.

According to the literature, existing research demonstrates that ‘political presence is neither absolute nor entirely sufficient for legislative action on women’s rights’⁴⁰. To understand why women have difficulty achieving substantive power once in office, Scholars like Htun, M, Lacalle, M, and Micozzi, provides crucial analysis on differentiating the *process* of legislative behavior and its *outcomes*. Many scholars focus on the process of representation, such as how bills are introduced, assignment of committee, legislator priorities, and committee behavior, because they are obvious indicators of influence and power. However, these committees are most often considered less important committees because their focus is on soft politics like social welfare, education, and health services: otherwise known as “feminine committees”⁴¹. This process of legislative behavior is what Franceschet and Piscopo coined as the “mandate effect”, which describes why a majority of female legislators are allocated to feminine committees, therefore, less influential positions⁴². This affects pressures female legislators in a quotas system to feel obligated to undertake substantive representation women and a pigeon holes them into centering their political careers around women’s issues only⁴³. There is nothing inherently wrong about people wanting to represent their own group, however, the complication with the mandate effect is the obligation not the desire for female legislators to commit themselves to women

³⁹Franceschet, S., & Piscopo, J. (2014). Sustaining Gendered Practices? Power, Parties, and Elite Political Networks in Argentina. *Comparative Political Studies*, 85-110

⁴⁰Htun, M., Lacalle, M., & Micozzi, J. (2013). Does Women's Presence Change Legislative Behavior? Evidence from Argentina. *Journal of Politics in Latin American*, 95-125.

⁴¹Htun, M., Lacalle, M., & Micozzi, J. (2013).

⁴²Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

⁴³Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

centered issues. But the crux of this effect is these feminine committees are often politically inferior seats because these committee wield very little substantive power. The mandate effect helps to understand why the process of legislative behavior differs greatly from the outcomes. Because female legislators are in positions of less influence, the chances of passing legislation is very slim due to their lack of substantive power, and therefore their outcomes come short compared to their processes⁴⁴. This disconnect between women's legislative behavior of process vs outcomes, perpetuates the stereotype that women are not as skilled politicians than their male counterparts as well as that these female legislators were not qualified for the position in the first place. These stereotypes promote negative perceptions that female legislators within a strong electoral quota system lack the ability to pass meaningful legislation.

Gendered Institutions

Gender affects both the manner in which women enter office, but also the institutions themselves (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2014). Due to these ingrained communal stereotypes, gender and the experience of being female affects the routes in which women enter politics.⁴⁵ As Eagly and Karau noted, male and female (agentic vs. communal) greatly affect how women are perceived in positions of power. Traits such as aggression and competition are closely associated with politics, as a result women are seen as less viable for political roles, and therefore are much less likely enter office.⁴⁶ Because masculine traits have long been associated with politics, the institution of politics has become gendered towards men, and has created a system that benefits those who exhibit masculine traits. The rules and norms of politics were created by and shaped

⁴⁴ Htun, M., Lacalle, M., & Micozzi, J. (2013).

⁴⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2014).

⁴⁶ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

my men, as result women must violate role congruity in order to succeed in an institution that alienate and shuns female behaviors and characteristics. Even though gender quotas has increased women's representation in politics, women still face the challenge of trying to succeed in an institution that benefits masculine behaviors and alienates women how violate role incongruity in order to mimic the necessary characteristics to gain power.

Gender Discrimination within the Legislature

Female legislators are often regulated to less influential positions in “feminine” committees (i.e. education, women's issues, and social welfare programs) to discourage and limit women's substantive representation⁴⁷. There is a misconception that once women's descriptive representation increases, so will their influence and power on law making. Gender attitudes do not halt once women enter office, but continue to shape how male legislators behave towards the new female competitors⁴⁸. Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, & Taylor-Robinson, 2005, argue that as historically marginalized groups gain representation within government, increased hostility from the male dominating group with arise⁴⁹. As gender quotas have significantly and rapidly increased women's representation so have their roles and tasks within less predominant and lower level committees within committee hierarchy.

Within Latin America, the term marianisma can be seen in the more nuanced role for female legislators as Schwindt-Bayer (2006) referred to as the “supermadre” label. This label refers to the role that female legislator should promote women's center issues, while men

⁴⁷ Heath, R., Schwindt-Bayer, L. & Taylor-Robinson, M. (2005). Women on The Sideline: Women's Representation on Committees In Latin American Legislatures. *American Journal of Political Science*, 420-420.

⁴⁸ Schwindt-Bayer, L. (2006). Still Supermadres? Gender and the Policy Priorities of Latin American Legislators. *American Journal of Political Science*, 570-585.

⁴⁹ Heath, R., Schwindt-Bayer, L. & Taylor-Robinson, (2005).

promote and oversee traditionally male dominated issues⁵⁰. This gender difference between male and female legislators harms women's advancement in substantive representation and isolates those whom try to defy the "supermadre" label because they violate the already established gender attitudes for how male and female legislators should behave. For women in quota systems, they are especially prone to hostility and gender discrimination from their colleagues because their numbers have rapidly and steadily increased, while their merits and abilities have been undermined because they were mandated not "elected". This makes it easier for male legislators and party elites to justify allocating them to lower positions and "feminized committees", because they are seen as less qualified due to the gender quota mandate.

Gender Gap in Self-Efficacy

Traditional gender roles negatively influence how women perceive themselves in regards to qualifications when considering running for electoral positions. On average women perceive themselves as less qualified for elected positions than their male counterpart; even in cases in which the female candidate is more qualified⁵¹. According to Fox and Lawless (2011), women are more likely to underestimate their skills and abilities, while on the other hand, men are more likely to overestimate their skills and abilities. Fox and Lawless call this phenomenon the gendered perception hypothesis, in which they argue the gender gap in self-efficacy is a result of the disparity between men and women's perceptions of their qualifications in the electoral arena⁵². Another prong to this hypothesis is that in almost every electoral arena, women and men are objectively and equally qualified for their respective positions, yet women still devalue their

⁵⁰ Schwindt-Bayer, (2006).

⁵¹ Cited in Fox and Lawless, (2008), a study regarding how female candidates perceive their qualifications to their actual qualifications,

⁵² Fox and Lawless, (2011).

skills and abilities more than men. The authors argue that the reason for this paradox is a result of ingrained socialization of traditional gender roles, in which men have been socialized to be more confident with abilities and skills they possess, even in cases in which they are objectively under qualified for an elected position⁵³. On the other hand women will undervalue their abilities due to the gendering of politics towards men, and as result women become overqualified in order to feel comfortable enough to participate alongside their male counterparts⁵⁴.

THEORY

The literature yields many varying discussions on the effectiveness of gender quotas, and their role for women's overall advancement for political equality. At first glance, the introduction of gender quotas promote women's equality via descriptive representation, yet when taking into account many externalities such as the inherent gender bias, backlash, electoral systems, and political power, the consequences of gender quotas become more apparent. The literature primarily looks at the overall percentages of women in legislatures as an indicator of success rather than the results of the increased percentages of female legislators. To understand why negative perceptions arise from gender quotas, it's important to analyze pre-existing gender norms that have prevailed within society's subconscious about the role in which women play in society.

Gender Norms

To understand the dichotomy between the role of politics and women's involvement, historical gender norms must be taken into account in order to understand that negative

⁵³ Fox and Lawless, (2010).

⁵⁴ Fox and Lawless, (2010).

perceptions of women in politics have been established earlier than the introduction of gender quotas. Strict gender norms affect how women are perceived in positions of power and can be amplified from statutes that aim to lessen these entrenched biases. Politics has long been seen as a man's role, yet in recent years, women have broadened their presence within all male dominated spheres, particularly in government. According to Eagly and Karau, society has established clear rules of behavior and attitudes for women and men and those roles have influenced the manner in which we see leadership positions. For men, traditional characteristics of masculinity such as aggression, control, and confidence, forcefulness, ambitious, and dominating have shaped the behaviors men attitudes in the public and private spheres. On the other hand, women are seen as the caregiver, characteristics such as nurturer, affectionate, helpful, sensitive, gentle, and sensitive are some of the most prominent traits associated with women. This relationship of agentic vs. communal is paramount to the perceptions of women as less capable leaders (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

Leadership in society has been deemed as an agentic position and therefore masculine with traits like decisiveness, self-sufficiency, and rationality are seen as vital qualities a leader must have in order to succeed. When women enter those positions, men perceive that behavior that as an incongruity of women's stereotypes to their actual behavior, as a result, men perceive women as less capable than men for leadership positions as well as evaluate actual women leaders more unfavorable. Because these norms dictate how we interact with one other as well as how individuals perceive the aptitude of a gender based on these norms, gender quotas can indirectly promote negative feelings towards those whom participate in an institution that threaten the status quo. The combination of traditional gender stereotypes and progressive

reforms can not only create backlash in form so of public resistance but harms the perception of women's ability and qualifications to be leaders in society.

The Label Effect

Women elected via gender quotas can be associated with negative perceptions from such as less qualified and autonomous due to possible backlash of the implementation of gender quotas.⁵⁵ According to Franceschet and Piscopo's research of gender quotas within Argentina, they conducted interviews that introduced a phenomenon they coined as the "label effect", which describes negative stereotypes of women elected via gender quotas⁵⁶. The label effect refers to the harmful stereotypes female legislators experience, which negatively affects how they are received and regarded by their colleagues (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008). Based on the responses from the interviewees⁵⁷, the label effect could be a result from legislators who resent the gender quota and thus manifest their resentment by thrusting negative stereotypes on female legislators. Franceschet and Piscopo also note that the label effect disproportionately affect young women and political newcomer, which discourages the number of new women entering elected offices. The label effect does not only affect how their colleagues perceive female legislators, but how the public sphere. During Cristina Kirchner's campaign for the presidential office, the media emphasized her role as the First Lady under her husband rather than her previous experience as a two time national senator and her entrance into politics prior to her husband, Nestor Kirchner's presidential election.⁵⁸ The label effect is an indirect consequence of

⁵⁵ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

⁵⁶ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

⁵⁷ Interviews were conducted by Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

⁵⁸ Franceschet and Piscopo, (2008).

gender quotas and can promote negative stereotypes of female legislators elected via gender quotas.

Due to the socialization of traditional gender roles, men and women have been influenced to perceive politics as a man's role and indirectly affect how they perceive female candidates' qualifications, which perpetuates the stigma that women are overall less qualified than their male counterparts in elected positions. In this case, women elected via gender quotas can be subjected to harsher stigmas from their colleagues because of this gender perception theory as well as the meritocracy principle violation.

Gender Quotas and Women's Involvement

Gender quotas have long been argued as the powerful way to promote women's political engagement, but the literature is strongly divided on whether or not gender quotas actually increases women's political participation. Studies have shown that women on average consistently rank below men in political participation as well as political knowledge around the world. The knowledge and understanding of politics between sexes of a society is defined as the gender knowledge gap. Political knowledge equates to political power, therefore, when there is a disparity between women and men, there is an unequal or overwhelming representation of men within government⁵⁹.

Proponents of gender quotas argue that in order to close this gender knowledge/participation gap and promote women's engagement in politic; women need to be incentivized via socialization methods. They argue that because gender quotas increase the

⁵⁹ Fraile, M., & Gomez, R. (2015). Does Alejandro Know More About Politics than Catalina? Explaining the Latin American Gender Gap in Political Knowledge. *British Journal of Political Science* *Brit. J. Polit. Sci.*, 1-22.

accessibility for females to enter office, as a result will encourage more women to become politically active, and hopefully, will promote the overall advancement in women's equality⁶⁰. As for the evidence to support that gender quotas alone promote women's overall engagement in politics is extremely hard to measure and that could be why the literature is so divided. However, Zetterberg (2009), conducted a study on survey responses taken from Latinobarómetro from 2005 regarding attitudes towards politics and society, which did not find evidence to support that gender quotas fostered women's political engagement⁶¹. According to the results, gender quotas did not show any positive affect in women's political participation because the lack of knowledge regarding gender quota laws, party elite gatekeepers, and governmental implementation of gender quota laws as a way to be perceived as a gender equal nation⁶². Because the gender quotas are so divisive on whether or not they promote women's equality or is just another façade of equality, it begs the question if gender quotas are illusions of, how does that affect how their colleagues and public perceive female legislators elected via gender quotas?

Since the implementation of gender quotas (1991), the literature has been mostly supportive on the consequences of gender quotas, but the few that yield more wary conclusions, question whether gender quotas are the best avenues for women's advancement in politics. By its nature, gender quotas diminish the free choice for voters on their pool of candidates. As a result of mandating female candidates, negative stereotypes can arise promoting the perception that female legislators elected via gender quotas are less qualified and autonomous⁶³. One of the biggest proponents of gender quotas is that women's descriptive representation can positively

⁶⁰ Fraile and Gomez, 2015 & Gray, (2003).

⁶¹ Zetterburg, 2009

⁶² Wagnerud, 2009 & Zetterberg, 2009

⁶³ Referenced from Franceschet and Picospo, *Gender Quotas And Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons From Argentina*, 2014

affect women's substantive representation; however, according to Wagnerud, the presence of women in a legislature does not necessarily guarantee women's substantive representation, due to the complexities of what it means to represent women as well as underlying gender norms that hinder women's power once in office⁶⁴. Gender quotas have become a highly divisive topic, due to whether or not these reforms truly advances women's equality or just promotes an illusion of equality through increasing women's descriptive representation.

Affirmative Action Programs and Gender Quotas

To best understand gender quotas within a country without that specific policy, Affirmative Action programs within the United States will be analyzed for their close similarity in regards to their social and cultural critiques. Social perceptions from gender quotas are similar to that those of Affirmative Action (AA) programs due to their promotion of underrepresented minorities within a various spheres of influences in a society. Affirmative Action is described as the practice of improving the educational and job opportunities individuals/groups of people that have historically been disenfranchised institutionally/culturally/socially from gaining position of power⁶⁵ and can manifest itself as quotas and or the activity of seeking to promote diversity within its employees/students. Like gender quotas, AA can be implemented through governmental intervention or self imposed by a company, educational system, organization, etc. AA and gender quotas can greatly differ through means of implementation and the various types of the processes in which they function, however, both involve the process of singling out a specific group and providing them with specific process in accessing various opportunities they otherwise would not have. According to the literature, the largest opposition to gender quotas

⁶⁴ Referenced from Wagnerud, *Women In Parliaments: Descriptive And Substantive Representation*, 2009

⁶⁵ Definition from Webster's Dictionary, (2015).

and AA is the concept that these programs violate the merit principle within a society that values a meritocracy.

According to authors Hing, Bobocel, & Zanna (2002), the merit principle - referred to as the equity principle is a distributive justice rule that prescribes that an individual's' relative outcome should be allocated proportionally based on the person's relative input⁶⁶. Based on the merit principle, the critic is that programs that specifically give an "unfair advantage" to a particular group based on a shared history/identity violates a system that should reward an individual's based on their input rather than an inherited characteristics. Those who strongly support the idea of a meritocracy are more likely to perceive those groups benefiting from gender quotas and AA as less qualified/experienced because they were rewarded based on an uncontrollable factor and not by the input of their work. In regards to gender quotas in Argentina, by allocating a specific percentage of women (30%) to be elected in the legislature (including the candidates running within a party), the perception that these women elected via gender quotas are there based on their sex and not on their qualifications. However, women are statistically more qualified than their male counterparts with regards to education⁶⁷, which can be contributed back to the perception that women must be overqualified for many elected positions in order to compete with their male counterparts⁶⁸. Because gender quotas violate the merit based principle due to the allocation of seats for women in government, combined with a smaller pool of candidates compared to their male counterparts; there is an assumption that parties allow any women to run, regardless if they qualified or not, in order to satisfy the quota. Based on the

⁶⁶ Hing, L., Bobocel, D., & Zanna, M. (2002)

⁶⁷ Fox, R., & Lawless J. (2011).

⁶⁸ Fox, R., & Lawless J. (2004). Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office. *America Journal of Political Science*, 264-280.

meritocracy principle, gender quotas can indirectly promote harmful perceptions of women's roles and qualifications in politics. The backlash for women elected via gender quotas is much higher in countries such as Argentina in regards to how women are perceived by their colleagues, and as a result, quota women have become tokenized for their gender and not for their abilities and contributions.

Gender Quotas before Societal Pace

Argentine gender quotas were implemented during a time in which society did not reflect the progressive movement gender quotas would accelerate, thus a higher chance of societal backlash. According to Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2005, political elites will use fast track methods of imposing progressive reforms (i.e. gender quotas) if they feel that society is not moving at the pace desired, however, the consequences of implementing dramatic changes in such a short period of time might cause greater resistance from party leaders as well as the public. On the other hand when politicians introduce progressive reforms at the pace of the society (i.e. incremental track), the likelihood of resistance is much lower⁶⁹. Argentina was the first country to introduce gender quotas in the world and since the implementation of gender quotas, women's descriptive representation has rapidly increased; however, the post institutional quota environment has promoted negative stereotypes of female legislators (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008). In order for a progressive reform to stay relevant and effective in a society, the public must be closely matched to the ideologies of those reforms⁷⁰. Argentine gender quotas were implemented

⁶⁹ Dahlerup *, D., & Freidenvall *, L. (2005). Quotas As A 'fast Track' To Equal Representation For Women. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 26-48.

⁷⁰ Wagnerud, (2009).

during an era that did not match the pace of the public, and even though women's representation dramatically increased, negative perceptions due to public resistance could harm the advancement of women's substantive representation and overall equality.

As a result of introducing gender quotas in a rapid manner which did not reflect society's speed, Argentina is an example of high public resistance to gender quotas. This resistance manifests within political parties, which have become the gatekeepers for female legislators, as well as the negative perceptions of political autonomy and ability of female legislators when gender quotas are present.

HYPOTHESIS

This discussion so far yields several expectations between the interactions that gender quotas place on how the public perceives female legislators. I argue that my data will demonstrate a measureable negative bias towards female legislators in the survey with gender quotas compared to the survey without gender quotas.

H1: Both women and men on average will rate the female candidates in the survey with gender quotas as less qualified than the survey without gender quotas.

Similar to Franceschet and Piscopo's research, I expect to the "label effect" to manifest itself via the participants responses, by rating the female legislators in the survey with gender quotas as less qualified than their non-quota counterparts. Historically entrenched gender attitudes has had a significant part in shaping how individuals view the aptitude of female legislators in roles traditionally male dominated, however, due to these subconscious and conscious attitudes of

gender roles, men will show lower levels of support for women in the survey with gender quotas due to entrenched gender norms. Along with gender norms, sentiments of a meritocracy violation similar to Affirmative Action policies in the United States will exacerbate negative perceptions of female legislators.

H2: Men will rate the female candidates in the survey with gender quotas as less qualified than the candidates in the survey without gender quotas

H3: Women will respond more favorable towards the survey without gender quotas

Women will have higher levels of favorability in the survey without gender quotas compared to survey with gender quotas due to: 1. women observe the social and cultural biased towards female legislators as “tokens”, therefore are pushing back at the concept that women need governmental regulations (i.e. gender quotas) in order to win elected seats. 2. women perceive gender quotas as an easier and more accessible channel for female legislators and therefore perceive women in quota systems as less qualified than their non quota counterparts.

DESIGN

When developing the type of data needed to obtain unbiased research on Argentinean public perception of female legislators, it was crucial the survey allowed the participants to express their opinions without ascertaining the goal of the survey. In order to obtain accurate and unbiased results, two sets of surveys were administered randomly to various locations in Rosario, Argentina. When conducting the surveys, three public locations were chosen, two local parks and a public law school, as a way to find participants of all ages, education, sex, and party affiliations. Another precaution taken during these surveys was to limit the people taking these

surveys together by limiting the groups to four or less people. Interactions between participants were discouraged in order to reduce the likelihood of sharing answers or being influenced by their peer's reactions/responses.

Each participant was asked to respond to 4 questions (3 being a Likert scale, and 1 being fill in the blank) on how they would rate three female candidates, all varying but similar in their qualifications, based on three different local and national elected positions. The participants were given a scenario based in a non-specific Latin American country's upcoming elections. They were given background information regarding all three candidate's' previous education and jobs and were then to provide an average for all three of the candidates qualifications on a 1-10 scale, 1 being not qualified to 10 being absolute qualified, for three positions (city council member, national senator member, and president). The questions given goes as follows:

In a Latin American country with gender quotas/without gender quotas, 3 female candidates are running for local, state and national elections. The first candidate, graduated with honors from the Law School and served as a member of the city council for 5 years. The second candidate earned a Master's degree in Economics with honors and served as a Senator in the national legislature for two terms. The third candidate graduated with masters in education and served as a mayor of a major city for two terms. From a scale of 1-10, 1 being the least qualified and 10 the best most qualified, please indicate with an average all three candidates how qualified you think they are for these positions below: City Council Member, National Senator, and President

⁷¹

Finally, the participants were asked to provide any information on what they knew about gender quotas in a free answer. Question number 4 (free answer) was meant to provide a context of the participant's knowledge of gender quotas within Argentina as a possible explanation for why they rated the female candidates as they did. For instance, if a participant gave low numerical responses to the female legislators in the survey with gender quotas and no knowledgeable on basics of the Argentinean gender quotas, it would be presumed that that

⁷¹ See Appendix for the full surveys

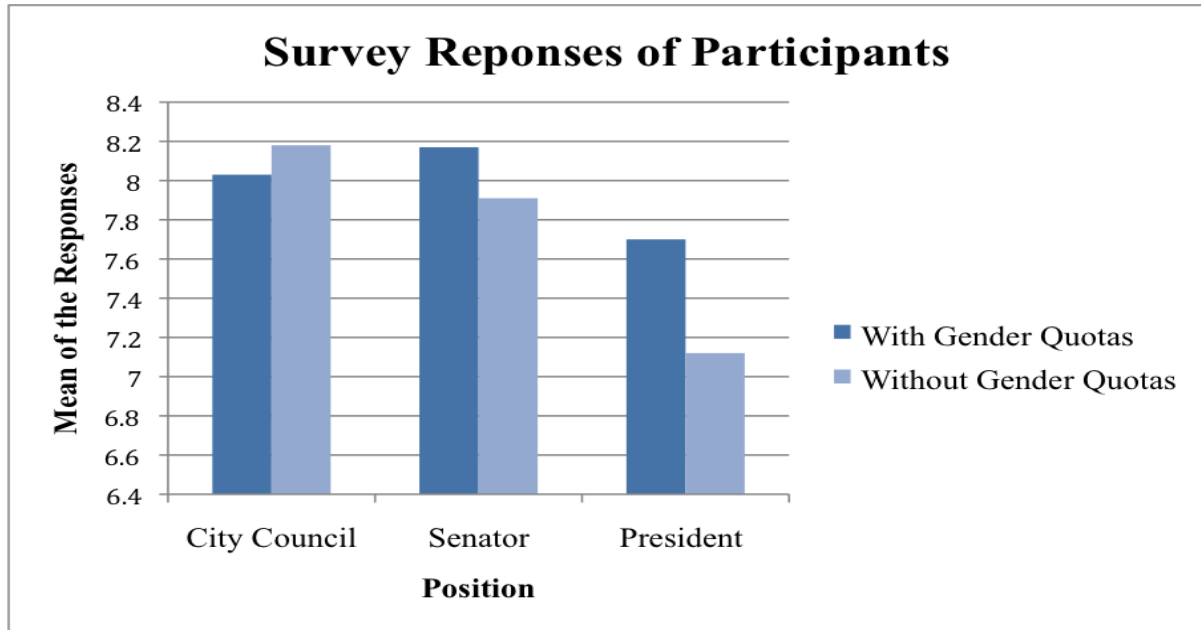
participants perceived these female candidates less favorably due to the mandate and not on their actual experience.

RESULTS

A total of 94 participants were surveyed with the ratio of male to females at 47:47. The participants were separated into two categories based on their responses on Question⁷². The first category were participants that scored below a “2” as seen in Figure 2 and Figure 3, and the second category were participants that scored a “2” or above as seen in Figure 4 and Figure 5. The total number of participants that score below a “2” is 64 and the total participants that score above a “2” is 30. The data shows a significant difference in how participants perceived how qualified the female legislators in the scenarios with and without gender quotas.

Figure 2: Participants Responses by knowledge of Gender Quotas

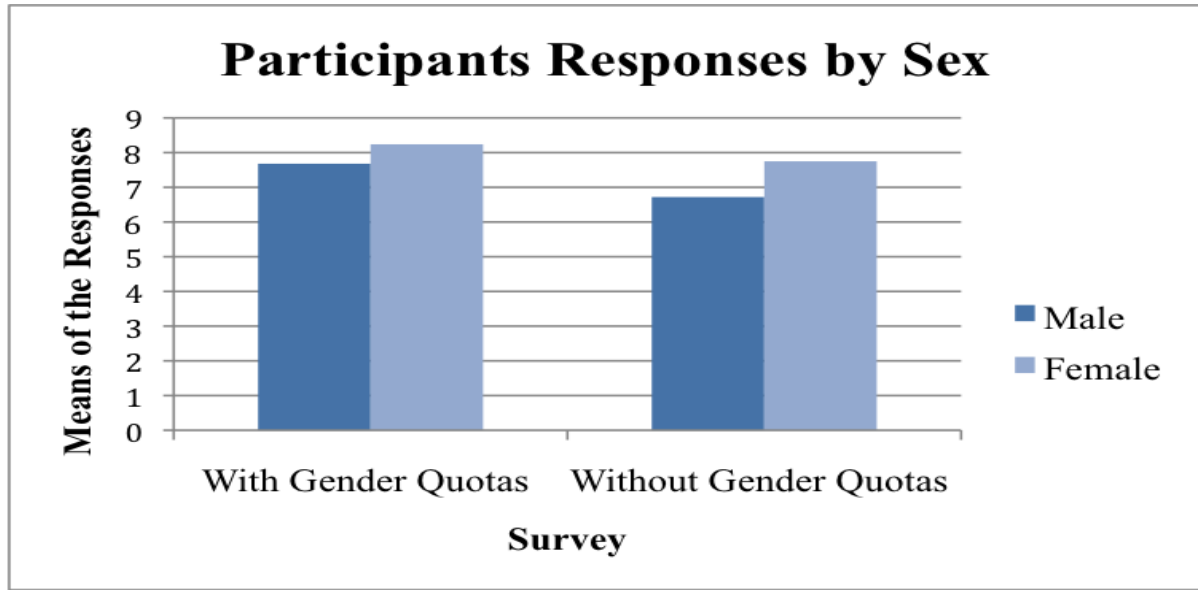
⁷² Question 4 was score from 0-3. 0 being no answer, 1 being the participant either wrote “I don’t know” or something similar to signify they did not know anything about gender quotas in Argentina. 2, signified that participants wrote 1/3 or 30% pertaining to the mandated percentage of women in the legislature. 3, signified extensive knowledge of gender quotas.



Source: Author's own Compilation

The data shows that participants, male and female rated the female legislators in the scenario with gender quota more favorably than compared to the non-quota scenario. For the three positions in the gender quota scenario, participants rated the female candidates for city council at an average of 8.03, senator at 8.17, and the presidential position at 7.7. For the scenario without gender quotas, participants rated the female candidates for city council at an average of 8.18, senator at 7.91, and 7.12.

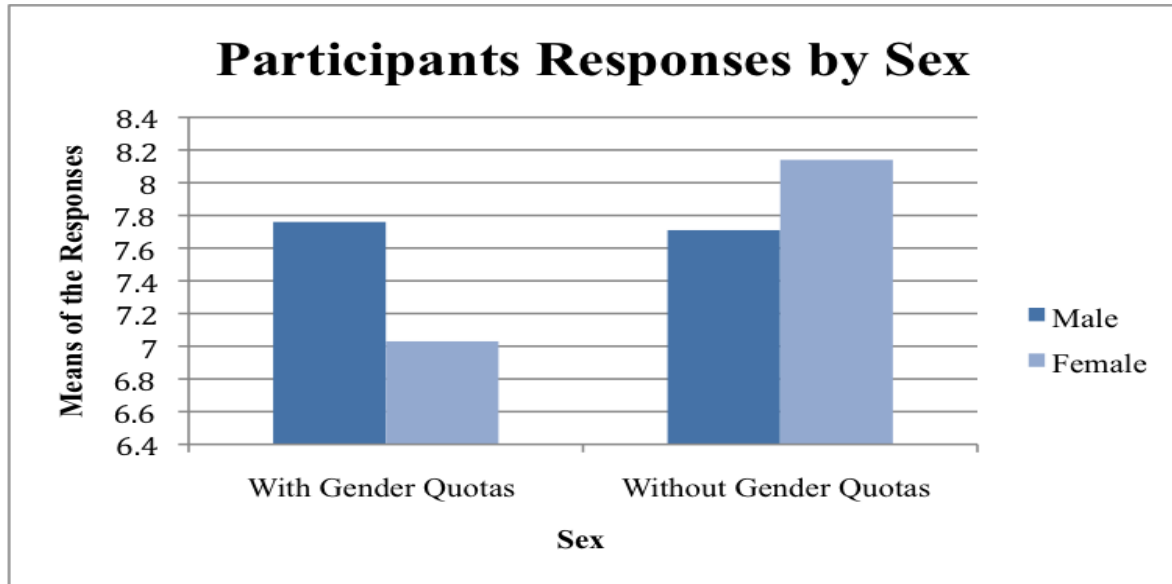
Figure 3: Participants Responses by Sex



Source: Author's own Compilation

The data collected from these surveys demonstrate that men and women perceive female legislators in a quota system differently as seen in Figure 3. Male participants rated female legislators in the quota system more favorable at an average of 7.68 compared than their non-quota counterparts at an average of 6.72. On the other hand, female participants rated female legislators within the quota system less qualified than their non-quota counterparts, with an average of 8.24 in the scenario without the gender quotas and 7.75 in the scenario with gender quotas.

Figure 4: Participants Responses by Sex (Average of Question 1-3)

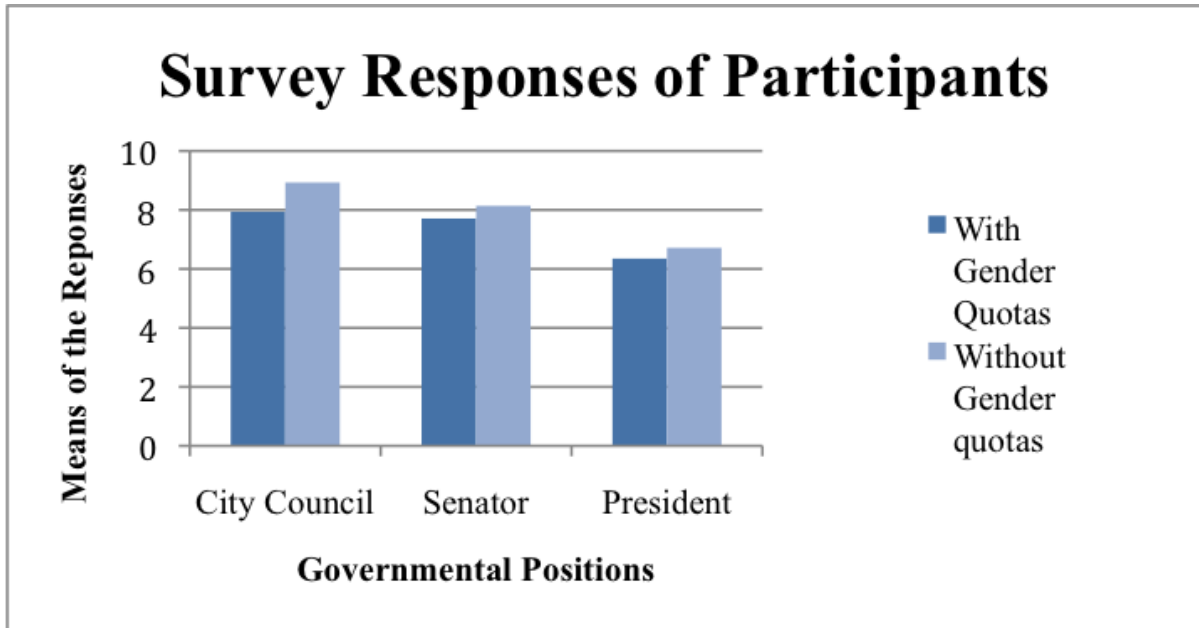


Source: Author’s own Compilation

Female participants show a significant difference in their responses between the two scenarios. Female legislators with the gender quota system were rated less favorably compared to their non-quota counterparts with the average being 7.76 and 7.71. Male participants displayed a very slight preference for the female legislators within the gender quotas system compared to the non-quota scenario. The average between the scenarios were 8.14 to 7.03.

Figure 5: Participants Response based on knowledge of Gender quotas⁷³

⁷³ To evaluate participants knowledge of gender quotas, they were given a score between 0-3, with scores 0-1 signifying no answer or no knowledge. For Table 3, only scores 2 and 3 were taken into account when calculating the means of the participants responses, comparing the survey with and without gender quotas.



Source: Author's own Compilation

The results in Figure 3 reveal that an overall average of both male and female participants rated the scenario of female legislators within the non-quota system more favorably compared to their quota counterparts. The three positions without the gender quota: City Council, Senator, and President were averaged at 8.93, 8.14, and 6.71, while the three positions with the gender quotas in the same order as before averaged at 7.94, 7.71, and 6.35.

Table 1 : Demographic of the Participants

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	47	50
Female	47	50
Age		

18-30	71	75.5	Implicit
31-40	8	8.5	
41-50	5	5.3	
51-60	5	5.3	
60<	3	3.1	
missing	2	2.1	
Education			vs. Explicit
Primary	2	2.1	
Secondary	8	8.5	
Tertiary	19	20.2	
Bachelors	50	53.1	
Masters/Doctorate	8	8.5	
Missing	6	6.3	

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias within the public's evaluation of female legislators will be measured in order to empirically analyze the social perceptions that female legislators within a quota electoral system are perceived as under qualified compared to a non quota counterparts. Measuring perceptions within a survey, especially regarding genders, is a particularly difficult due to isolate because it's considered a social faux pas to explicitly express biases towards one gender, in this case for female legislators. Biases are categorized into two main categories that allow us to evaluate a host of perceived concepts and thoughts. Explicit bias, just like the term alludes, is a form of bias that is obvious within an individual's attitudes and can be manifested in forms of speech or action ⁷⁴. However, often times, individuals will suppress their explicit bias in situations in which these biases are looked upon negatively by society. Scholars and researches have difficulty measuring bias, specifically in this case with self-evaluated surveys, because participants can suppress and or over express their thoughts in order to be perceived as more

⁷⁴ O'Shea, B., Watson, D. G., & Brown, G. D. (2016). Measuring implicit attitudes: A positive framing bias flaw in the Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure (IRAP). *Psychological Assessment*, 28(2), 158-170.

progressive or tolerant⁷⁵. In order to try to overcome that natural experimental error, scholars will look at implicit bias instead. What differs from implicit and explicit bias is that implicit bias are attitudes and evaluations that occur outside the conscious awareness without requiring respondents to look introspectively on their feelings⁷⁶. One of the biggest challenges with implicit bias is that it is subtler to evaluate (i.e. empirically), thus making it more difficult to isolate whether or not there is implicit bias to support a researches argument. In this case, the surveys conducted were written to indirectly look at biases that participants have towards female legislators within a gender quotas system. Due to the difficulties in measuring bias, the relationship between female legislators within a quota system and negative perceptions is more difficult to specify.

DISCUSSION

The results of this paper show that there are negative perceptions of female legislators are present within the Argentine public. However, the results are a bit more nuanced than what had previously predicted. To test the relationship between negative public perceptions of female legislators in the presence of gender quotas, surveys were analyzed for their responses o how qualified participants rated the female legislators for three different elected offices. To analyze the results, the participants were separated into two groups based on their response of question 4 in order to see how their knowledge of gender quotas effected their perceptions on the female legislators. When accounting for the two categories between analyzed separately, group 1 (participants who had no knowledge of gender quotas) did not support Hypothesis 1 or 3, but did support Hypothesis 3. For the group 2 (participants who

⁷⁵ O'Shea, B. (2016).

⁷⁶ O'Shea, B. (2016).

had knowledge of gender quotas), the results support Hypothesis 1, 2, and 3. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show that participants rated the female legislators within the gender quota system more favorably ⁷⁷, while in Figure 4 and 5 the results were inverted with participants favoring the female legislators without the gender quotas system. What as the most striking result of this paper was how female participants in both groups responded to female legislators in both scenarios, with and without gender quotas. Female participants rated the female legislators on average more than their male counterparts in all 4 scenarios in both groups. This can be seen in Figures 3 and 4, with Figure 4 showing the largest difference between female participants perceptions between the female legislators with and without gender quotas.

The contrasts between the two groups' results provide an interesting and nuanced approach to this area of study. One possible explanation to these results goes back to Hypothesis 2, which describes that women will rate female legislators more favorably in the scenario without gender quotas than with quotas. Women may be more cognitive than men of the realities of gender quotas and the negative stigmas and perception that female legislators experience once in office. More research is needed to provide a greater understanding on the relationship between public perceptions of female legislators. A possible future experiment could involve a cross-national study conducted of countries with and without gender quotas. By conducting a study with multiple countries with and without gender quotas, researches might be able to better identify the effect of gender quotas on perceptions of female legislators, as well as if whether other countries experience the similar "label effect" in Argentina.

⁷⁷ The senator and presidential system were rated more favorably with the exception of the city council position. There explanation of this is unclear but this result does not undermine the overall favorability participants displayed towards female legislators within a gender quota system in group 1.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The empirical results from this research supports that Argentinean female legislators are perceived as less qualified than their non-quota counterparts. The implicit biases exhibited in the results display a small yet significant bias towards female legislators in a non-quotas system compared to their quotas counterparts. Gender quotas can promote negative perceptions that female legislators elected via gender quotas are less qualified than their non-quotas counterparts. This paper first discussed the arguments for and against gender quotas as an effective manner in advancing women's overall equality. Furthermore, this paper examined how gender roles negatively affect the perceptions of women in politics, and as result, women become discourage in a participating in a gender institution that benefits masculine traits. Next, this paper discussed the consequences of introducing progressive reforms (i.e. gender quotas) at a fast rate than society can closely match. Additionally, this paper analyzed how gender quotas promote harmful perceptions of female legislators as less qualified, and compared gender quotas to Affirmative action as they both produce similar perceptions based on the violation of the merit principle. Finally, this paper examined the consequences of gender quotas on women's political engagement and how gender attitudes and biased have invoked gender discrimination, and as a result, has deeply influenced how female legislators are perceived by their colleagues.

Argentine women have entered politics at an unprecedented rate through the implementation of gender quotas, however, gender quotas have indirectly promoted negative perceptions of elected women via gender quotas as a less qualified than their non-quota counterparts. Gender roles and attitudes have become so ingrained in Latin American culture that these behaviors have transcended even the most well-intentioned and progressive reforms. Because gender cues affect how men and women evaluate women's roles in society, these social

cues have created harmful perceptions of women's ability to take office, and as a result affect how colleagues perceive female legislators.

Once in office, women have become marginalized to lesser positions due to status disconnect, similar to that of affirmative actions opponents, whom have created a hostile environment, in which women have been pigeon holed to women's issues. These negative stereotypes hinder female legislators from advancing the political hierarchy and discourage new and young women from participating in politics. The question that needs to be addressed is whether gender quotas is the most viable option for promoting women's advancement in government and if so, do the benefits outweigh the harmful consequences in the long run? The answer is not clear or simple, but it's become more obvious that just introducing gender quotas as a solution to women's descriptive representation or not the end-all-be-all to the overall advancement of women's equality.

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Appendix 1:

Survey Questions With Gender Quotas

Un país de América del Sur con límite mínimo de género cuenta (leyes de cupo) con tres mujeres que se postulan para las elecciones locales. Una de estas mujeres se graduó con honores de la Facultad de Derecho y trabajó como miembro del Consejo de la ciudad durante 5 años. La segunda se graduó con honores de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y trabajó como Diputada en la Legislatura por dos períodos y la tercera tiene master en educación y ha trabajado como Intendente de una ciudad importante durante dos mandatos.

En una escala de 1 a 10, donde el 1 es la calificación inferior y 10 la superior, indique la capacidad que crea que estas mujeres (un numero promedio entre las tres mujeres) tienen para los siguientes puestos:

Pregunta 1. Miembro del Consejo Municipal:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 2. Miembro del Senado:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 2. Presidenta

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 4. Escriba la información que conozca sobre límite mínimo de género en Argentina.

Survey Questions Without Gender Quotas

Un país de América del Sur sin límite mínimo de género cuenta (leyes de cupo) con tres mujeres que se postulan para las elecciones locales. Una de estas mujeres se graduó con honores de la

Facultad de Derecho y trabajó como miembro del Consejo de la ciudad durante 5 años. La segunda se graduó con honores de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y trabajó como Diputada en la Legislatura por dos períodos y la tercera tiene master en educación y ha trabajado como Intendente de una ciudad importante durante dos mandatos.

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Pregunta 1. Miembro del Consejo Municipal:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 2. Miembro del Senado:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 2. Presidenta

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Pregunta 4. Escriba la información que conozca sobre límite mínimo de género en Argentina

Appendix 2: Translated Survey Questions

In a Latin American country with gender quotas/without gender quotas, 3 female candidates are running for local, state and national elections. The first candidate, graduated with honors from the Law School and served as a member of the city council for 5 years. The second candidate earned a Masters degree in Economics with honors and served as a Senator in the national legislature for two terms. The third candidate graduated with a masters in education and served as a mayor of a major city for two terms. From a scale of 1-10, 1 being the least qualified and 10 the best most qualified, please indicate with an average all three candidates how qualified you think they are for these positions below:

City Council Member:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

National Senator:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

President:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Write any information you know regarding gender quotas in Argentina.

Survey Question Without Gender Quotas

In a Latin American country with gender quotas/without gender quotas, 3 female candidates are running for local, state and national elections. The first candidate, graduated with honors from the Law School and served as a member of the city council for 5 years. The second candidate earned a Masters degree in Economics with honors and served as a Senator in the national legislature for two terms. The third candidate graduated with a masters in education and served as a mayor of a major city for two terms.

From a scale of 1-10, 1 being the least qualified and 10 the best most qualified, please indicate with an average all three candidates how qualified you think they are for these positions below:

City Council Member:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

National Senator:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

President:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Write any information you know regarding gender quotas in Argentina.