

Women as Leaders: Lessons from Political Quotas in India Case Solution

Gender and Minority Quotas: Pros and Cons



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Definition

- Quota system sets aside a certain number of candidacies or seats for members of a particular group
 - "Reserve-seat"
 - "Candidate-quota"
 - Party-level
 - Across parties

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Pros

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Increased Participation by Women in Politics

Mona Lena Krook

- Women who do not believe they have been discriminated against band together with other women to change policy
- Women and minorities bring issues of other marginalized groups to the table (education, health, domestic violence, child marriage)
- Increase in involvement of female and minority constituents who are more comfortable bringing their issues to female and minority representatives
- Baldez: Gender quotas provide an "exogenous shock" to change the perception that politics are associated with men

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Democratize Electoral Process

"Gender quotas are democratic to the extent that they increase the inclusiveness of candidate nominations by requiring the participation of more women" (Baldez 105).

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Mexico

• National Action Party (PAN) dominated Mexican politics until 1990
• Citizens began pressing for more inclusive presidential choice & all men
• Government
• 1990: PAN lost all congressional seats for the first time
• PAN: This election was an opportunity to help the women through reforms

TheCaseSolutions.com Increased Representation of Women and Minorities in Government

Rwanda

- "In Rwanda, quotas led to gender parity in the legislature, at a critical time in the country's history" (Krook 106).
- Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in parliamentary office, 48.8%
- Women must hold at least 30% of political positions according to Rwandan constitution (Baldez 102)

Argentina

- Argentina became the first country to establish gender quotas in 1991
- Law requires women to make up 30% of candidates.
- Women's share of seats in Chamber of Deputies rose from 4% to 27%

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Lisa Baldez

- Institutional Revolution Party (PRI) dominated Mexican politics until 2000
- Dedazo (finger pointing) succession: incumbent presidents chose their own successors
- 2002: lists of candidates could be no more than 70% either sex, or candidates had to be chosen through primaries.

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Cons

- 1) they encourage positive action in candidate selection procedures, provoking a conflict between **principles of equality**,
 - 2) they promote identities over ideas, leading to a clash between distinct notions of **political representation**, and
 - 3) they recognize 'women' as a political category, raising question about gender and it's relation to **other kinds of identities**.
- (Krook, 791)

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Legitimacy to Status Quo

- By incorporating women, gender/ minority quotas re-legitimizes the candidate nomination process.
- This maintains a problematic political status quo.
- The problem is that gender quotas come at the expense of deeper reforms of the way in which candidates are nominated. (Baldez 106)

Rwanda

- When considering the case, The significance of gender quotas must be interpreted in terms of the overall political context. Nearly half of the legislators in Rwanda are women—but the elections that brought them to office were marked by “serious” irregularities and “fraud,” and “the main opposition parties and candidates had been banned or disqualified before voting began” (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2005a.)
- Depending on how democratic a legislature is, a small percentage of women in office may be more powerful and effective than a large one. (Baldez 108).