

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION: EXPLAINING VARIATION IN WOMEN'S POLITICAL
REPRESENTATION AMONG OECD COUNTRIES

by

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(Under the Direction of Sherry Lowrance)

ABSTRACT

Over the last several decades, there has existed vast variation among the percentage of women elected to political office among OECD countries. Recent research indicated institutional and cultural dynamics are the main contributing factors regarding if women are elected. By integrating ideational analysis into the conceptualization of political parties, this study assesses the power of ideas and its role as the linking entity between institutions and cultural attitudes. This design tests whether or not a proportional representation system's effect on female political representation is conditioned by left-right party ideology of that country in a given election year. Results from an OLS regression analysis provide mixed results, but does yield an intriguing results that the presence of certain party ideas consistent with institutional rules is systematically related to greater women's representation.

INDEX WORDS: Women's representation, Proportional representation, Single-member district, Attitudes, Gender quotas, Political parties, Party ideology, Ideas

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DEDICATION

This work is first and foremost dedicated to my family. To my parents without whose unconditional support my education would never have been possible. It is also dedicated to the memory of Dr. Christopher Allen, as he was a major inspiration for this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Conventional wisdom would lead us to believe that the leading industrial democracies of the world would have many democratic values in common, particularly regarding the realm of the political representation of women. However, reality reveals this is not the case. There exists vast variation among the percentage of women elected to political office among OECD (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development) countries. This occurrence is puzzling in that we would expect these democratized countries to have similar levels of female representation in political office. One reason to expect these types of similarities is due to the fact that all of the countries in this study exist in a global context. In other words, there is a large amount of inter-connectedness and interaction between these nations. These increased interactions, whether economic, political or social, all have effects not only at the international level, but also the national level. For instance, countries have come together for many causes (e.g., human rights, terrorism, etc.), so in turn, what happens in one country might cause an international reaction. With regard to increased political representation of women, we would expect that as nations, such as the Nordic countries, manage to elect more women to parliament, that the other democracies would follow suit to demonstrate their commitment to these types of democratic values.

Before zeroing in on causal relationships, it is important to first understand the obstacles women face when trying to participate in the political process. Recent research has attributed the number of women elected to political office to various institutional and cultural factors. In her

chapter in *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*, Shvedova (2002) discusses the political and cultural contexts that have influence on women's participation in politics. She notes that one political obstacle is the prevalence of the "masculine model" of political life, which is organized according to male norms and values (Shvedova 2002: 35). This type of politics is based on ideas of competition and confrontation, rather than on systematic collaboration and consensus. Given this context, Shvedova (2002) says this conception of politics may deter women from even entering the political arena, therefore, resulting in women rejecting male-style politics. Thus, when they do participate in politics, they tend to do so in small numbers.

Another key political barrier to women's representation to parliament involves the lack of party support. Women may face challenges in terms of accessing resources for conducting election campaigns. Research indicates a large pool of women candidates, along with sufficient resources, can significantly increase the number of women elected (Shvedova 2002). However, the selection and nomination process within political parties may also hinder female participation. If selection criteria are based on patriarchal, "male characteristics," this could affect the perception of women as viable candidates to those who supply campaign funding (Shvedova 2002). Finally, a real determinant of women successfully getting elected is whether or not they are put in winnable positions on party lists. For example, most political parties in Sweden use "zipper" lists, which means the names on the list are alternated between men and women. This type of positive party support resulted in forty-five percent of women elected to the lower house of parliament in Sweden.¹

Aside from the political context, there are ideological and cultural deterrences for women in entering parliament. One example to highlight revolves around gender ideology, cultural patterns and social roles (Shvedova 2002). The cultural context in which women (and men) exist

¹ Election results from Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), updated as of December 31, 2011

can have a large impact on these types of political outcomes. Depending on the degree of traditionalism embedded in a country's culture, this could certainly affect women's access to parliament, as well as other positions within politics. It may prove to be challenging for women to seize opportunities for advancement, especially in politics, if societies are dominated by an ideology of a traditional "woman's place." The aforementioned ideological and psychological obstacles outline the general socio-cultural context in which women exist.

Within these contexts, many scholars have focused solely either on institutional factors or cultural explanations of women's underrepresentation. By integrating ideational analysis into the conceptualization of political parties, this study assesses the power of ideas, more specifically party ideology, and its role as the linking entity between institutions, cultural attitudes and political outcomes. Although it will be outlined in more detail in a later chapter, the argument put forth by this study is that the "ideas" of political parties are large contributing factors to whether or not women are elected to national office, in addition to the types of electoral systems. Party ideas will ultimately be assessed in this paper by examining the particular ideology of political parties. Further, this thesis also presents a largely exploratory analysis which focuses on seeing conditional effects of institutions and party ideology on the percentage of women elected. This analysis and its finding are not meant to predict overall rates of women's political representation, but rather the goal is to examine other ideational factors that might affect the political outcome. The findings might not be generalizable to non-OECD countries, and therefore is limited in scope. Using the same theoretical model for non-OECD countries may omit economic factors that are not included in this study, which could bias the research design and cause researchers to miss out on seeing the true effects of the independent variables.

This study is important for several reasons. First, understanding which variables have a significant impact on the number of women elected to national parliament will only enhance the academic community's knowledge for theory-building and theory-testing. Previous studies have not focused on specific party ideas (or ideology) as an independent variable. This study hopes to pick up where strictly institutional models have fallen short, in that it aims to examine institutions and ideology in the same model. Second, gaining insight into what types of institutions are effective and efficient can be tremendously helpful to legislators and party leaders when it comes to institutional design and change.

This study employs an OLS regression analysis to test my argument and various hypotheses. This large-N analysis will compare twenty-nine OECD countries² (N=165) and examine the changes in women's political representation in the lower house of parliament as they relate to institutional and ideational factors over the time period of 1980 to 2000. The unit of analysis is the individual country in a given election year.

This thesis will be divided into six chapters. The following chapter will examine the literature on women's representation in order to highlight the leading explanations advanced so far. The next chapter will outline in greater detail the theoretical and causal framework put forth in this study. Chapter four will discuss the quantitative analysis and provide details of the research design, including hypotheses and how variables will be measured. Chapter five will discuss the results of the regression analysis and assess the explanatory power of the models. Finally, chapter six will contain concluding remarks and discuss what implications this study has for future research in terms of integrating the role of ideas. This study aims to evaluate whether

² Only countries that were classified as OECD any year between the period of 1980-2000 are included in this study to increase unit homogeneity

or not political parties' ideas and objectives are consistent with institutional frameworks and whether or not this interaction produces more women elected to parliament.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A large literature has been accumulated over the past few decades concerning the contributing factors of women's political representation. Because of this, many explanations have been offered to describe the causes of women actually getting elected to office. Due to the nature of this study, this literature will focus on institutional, cultural and ideational factors. This examination elucidates the cross-national variations in women's representation and the various arguments that scholars have proposed thus far in explaining those variations.

Institutional Theory

Regarding women's political representation, a bulk of the literature focuses on how various institutional qualities can foster or hinder the election of women. With the resurgence of institutional analysis in comparative politics, the concept of political institution has taken on a breadth of new meaning. By political institution, I am referring to the institutions themselves, including party recruitment processes and electoral processes. My conceptualization of institutions includes rules, norms and processes.

Wilma Rule is one scholar who feels that the way to elect more women to the United States legislatures is to get rid of the winner-take-all electoral system in favor of full representation electoral methods (Hill 2004). The Proportional Representation (PR) Library³ offers great discussion on this alternative to the winner-take-all electoral systems: proportional representation (PR). This thesis does in fact acknowledge that there are a wide variety of different types of PR systems, but for the sake of brevity in this thesis, I am only going to

³ PR Library resources found online at <http://www.mthloyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/prlib.htm>.

address the three major ones distinguished by their voting method: party list, mixed-member system and single-transferable vote. In his article published on the PR Library Web site, Amy (2005) discusses how, in PR systems, legislators are elected in multimember districts instead of single-member districts. The number of seats that a party wins in an election is proportional to the amount of its support among voters. This system offers many advantages, including more accurate representation of parties, better representation for political and racial minorities, fewer wasted votes, higher levels of voter turnout, better representation of women, greater likelihood of majority rule and little opportunity for gerrymandering.

There exists wide variation amongst the types of PR systems. Party list voting is the most common form of PR, in which each party creates a list or slate of candidates equal to the number of seats in the district. In turn, voters indicate their preference for a particular party and parties then receive seats in proportion to their share of the vote. There are two types of lists: closed and open. In a closed list, the party fixes the order in which candidates are listed and elected, so the vote cast is for a party as a whole. Open lists, on the other hand, allow voters to express a preference for particular candidates. The order of the final list depends on the number of votes won by each candidate on a list. Another method is the mixed-member proportional voting (Amy 2005), frequently referred to as the “two vote system” and “the German system.” Half of the members of legislature are elected in single member district pluralities and half are elected by a party list vote and added on to the district members so that each party has its appropriate share of seats. This method is considered by many as the best of both worlds: geographical representation with close constituency ties, along with fairness and diversity.

The final voting method of the PR system is the single-transferable vote. Instead of voting for one person, voters rank each candidate in their order of choice. Once a candidate

reaches the threshold (minimum number of votes necessary to win a seat), the remaining votes are given to the next candidate in the party and the next highest ranked candidate. The advantages of this method include no wasting of votes and voters can cross party lines with their votes (Amy 2005).

For studies involving political recruitment and electoral processes, a great deal of evidence has been cited in support of a proportional system and the potential advantages it presents women in terms of getting elected (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Soe 2011). Norris posits comparative studies suggest three things affect whether women are elected. They are: 1) ballot structure-whether it is a party list or single candidate; 2) district magnitude- number of seats per district; and 3) degree of proportionality- allocation of votes to seats (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Norris concludes that multi-member constituencies with a high number of seats per district and party list systems tend to be favorable for women (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). A few key reasons why multi-member districts facilitate election of more women are that they present non zero-sum games for women candidates, and turnover is higher in these systems where fewer incumbents run for reelection, and therefore this changes the potential pool of candidates and their level of constituency service (Welch and Studlar 1990). In other words, women running for office in a multi-seat district are not competing for just one seat, but rather for a chance at multiple seats. This greatly increases any candidate's chances of getting elected from a mere mathematical perspective, in that more candidates are elected when multiple seats are available per district. Also, incumbents who do not wish to run for re-election are not as likely to give as much energy in developing the constituency ties and relationships. Further, the idea of presenting a "balanced ticket," will not only appeal to voters, but also make it easier for underrepresented groups in parliament to get elected (Norris 1995).

Beyond mere proportional representation, quota systems are often put in place to help balance women's representation. Many scholars attribute high levels of female representation in places like the Nordic countries to quotas (Soe 2001).

However, there are three basic types of quotas and the presence, implementation and compliance vary across the OECD countries. Electoral quotas for women may be constitutional, legislative or take the form of a political party quota. Voluntary party quotas are initiated by the internal workings of parties, as opposed to being mandated by law, and they entail that women must constitute a certain percentage of the members of a body, often a candidate list. The quota system places the burden of recruitment on those who control the recruitment process (Dahlrup, 2006). The core logic behind this system is to recruit women into political positions and to ensure that women are not isolated in political life. Today, quotas aim at ensuring that women constitute a "critical minority" of 20, 30, 40 or even 50 percent. For instance, the Hungarian Socialist Party has a 20 percent quota for women while the Swedish Social Democratic Labour Party has a 50 percent quota and alternates positions based on gender.

Besides the electoral system, the characteristics of democratic institutions can have an impact on the number of women elected to political office. Lijphart (1999) distinguishes between two basic types of democracy: majoritarian and consensus. He systematically handles the concept of democracy by examining the "dichotomous contrasts between the majoritarian and consensus models." (Lijphart, 1999:3) Consensual political institutions are often characterized by multi-party systems, proportional electoral systems and corporatist forms of interest representation. In this system, there is executive power sharing in multi-party coalitions and also a balance of power between the executive and legislative branches. Solid examples of consensual systems are Switzerland, Netherlands, Finland and Denmark. Majoritarian political

institutions, on the other hand, often entail two-party systems, disproportionate representation and pluralist forms of interest representation. There is one single party executive that dominates the legislature. It is disproportional because seats are not allocated according to a proportion of the vote won, but rather on the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, where someone is declared a winner after reaching a majority threshold of votes. Examples of majoritarian systems include the U.S., the UK, Canada and New Zealand.

How does democratic classification fit into the causal story of women's political representation? One contention from Lijphart (1999) and Birchfield and Crepaz (1998) is that consensus democracies possess greater women's representation in parliament and higher voter turnout, which in turn, leads to a higher quality of democracy. Consensual political structures allow broader access of different interests to the political process, mainly through the proportional electoral system. This could have a large impact on underrepresented groups, such as women, as access to their interests could play a role in the political process, and result in more women getting elected. Examining consensus or majoritarian qualities could prove to explain much of the variation in representation among the OECD countries. The typologies of democracy concept and its utility within this research design will be discussed at greater length in the chapter outlining the theory.

The Political Culturalists

Political culture has also been a major focus in research and theoretical development for decades. This is important for this study because culture could account for the variation in women's political representation. In other words, social cleavages and whether or not a country's culture is embedded in traditionalism could have a serious impact on the number of women elected. Almond and Verba (1963) developed what is known as the classical approach,

which conceptualizes the commitment to the democratic system in the form of attitudes. These scholarly giants contend that political culture needs to be understood as predominant beliefs, attitudes, values and sentiments about the political system in a given society and the role of self in that system (Almond and Verba 1963). While there has been abundant research utilizing the concept of political culture, there is debate as to how to define and measure the concept. For instance, Spinner (2006) criticizes the classical approach of Almond and Verba (1963). He claims the approach suffers from an epistemological and methodological problem, i.e., they assume political cultures to be located in individually internalized values and that actors are “honest” about pronouncing their attitudes (particularly in surveys). While there certainly are potential problems assessing whether actors’ expressed attitudes are the same as their actual attitudes, the concept of political culture has continued to be an important aspect of research in comparative politics.

Much of the political culture literature suggests that traditional cultural attitudes present major barriers to women’s representation in elected office (Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel 2002). For example, a society’s cultural heritage and religious background can be a factor in predicting levels of female representation. A country whose religion or culture views women in a very traditional role would probably have fewer women in office because these attitudes affect not only if a woman will get elected, but also if a woman even considers running. However, research has indicated that we are witnessing a global trend toward gender equality that is linked with a broader process of cultural change (Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel 2002).

Other studies also provide evidence that culture is a significant factor in determining gender equality with regard to political leaders (Kenski and Falk 2004). One study revolved around incorporating data from the 2000 National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) to

examine predictors of reporting that a woman would do a better job as president considering the national issue most important to the respondent (Kenski and Falk 2004). This research examined how stereotypes can result in biased attitudes about a political leader's ability to handle issues. The study showed that gender, age, race, education, party identification and ideology are associated with respondents' opinions (Kenski and Falk 2004). The point is that these factors that contribute to shaping individuals' opinions and attitudes could affect political outcomes. For instance, negative attitudes and perceptions about women could adversely affect whether or not women get elected.

Norris and Inglehart also compiled attitudinal information for their book, *Rising Tide*, which sets out to understand how modernization has changed cultural attitudes toward gender equality and try to analyze political consequences of this process (Inglehart and Norris 2003). Their core argument suggests that men's and women's lives have been altered in a two-stage modernization process including, 1) a shift from agrarian to industrialized societies, and 2) the move from industrial towards postindustrial societies (Inglehart and Norris, 2003). The authors posit that modernization underpins attitudinal change. For instance, cultural change lays the foundation for the mass mobilization of women's movements and support for public policies that reinforce and accelerate the process of gender equality. Their book compares public opinion data from the four waves of the World Values Survey in seventy countries⁴. This ultimately says cultural attitudes do lay a key foundation for women's advancement. The more modernized and mobilized women are, the more likely cultural shifts towards gender equality will occur.

As mentioned earlier as part of the cultural context, traditions continue to emphasize women's primary roles as mothers and housewives and to restrict them to those roles. Many societies around the world are dominated by an ideology of "a woman's place," which may be

⁴ World Values Survey Waves: 1981-1984; 1990-1994; 1995-1998; 2000-2004

associated with domestic, home life (Shvedova, 2002). According to this ideology, women should only play the role of “working mother,” which is generally low-paid and apolitical, and limit their involvement in other activities, such as political processes. This collective image of women in traditional, apolitical roles can affect not only the number of women choosing to run, but also whether or not constituents would vote for them. A traditional perception of women and their role in politics could certainly negatively affect the electoral success of women who do choose to run for elected office.

Role of Ideas

Throughout the evolution of political theory, scholars have focused on factors anywhere from institutions to interests. These concepts often fall short of the robust explanations that political scientists are seeking. “Ideas” is another concept explored in more recent research that has the potential to offer more insight into political processes. Theories concerning the role of ideas have emerged from non-rationalist and institutionalist thought. In a piece by Blyth (2003), one of the main points was that “theoretical advances are neither achieved through declarations of hegemony nor through rejection of alternatives.”(696) This thesis will embrace this idea. After all, the objective is to shed more light on an already contested subject and perhaps offer more theoretical potential.

Another piece by Deeg (2005) discussed how power and ideas enter into the institutional change process. He compares the change in bank systems in Germany and Italy, during which actors moved away from the German bank-based system. This change resulted from endogenous and exogenous pressures. In Italy, the state had to privatize banks because of the poor state of public finances and essentially create private sector actors to support the change. Even though the newer banks had a market-based system, they were still involved in old networks. Due to

this relationship, there was not as much positive feedback (Deeg, 2005). This piece is important because it demonstrates how institutional change depends not only on the interests of the actors, but also the embracing of certain ideas. In both cases, the actors wanted to change an institution (bank system) to make it more efficient; however, the German case exemplifies how ideas were aligned with interests to achieve better results. One of the main points of this piece is large exogenous shocks are not necessary to pressure a system to change (Deeg, 2005). The key determinant is powerful actors who have an interest in the change and have the means and power to accomplish it. In order for a change in the institution to take place, there must be exogenous or endogenous pressure and key players to cultivate the positive feedback of the new path. In other words, ideas are powerful when actors embrace the ideas of change and are in a position to act on it.

Lieberman (2002) is another scholar who contributes understanding to the concepts of ideas and institutions. He contends that scholars need to embrace a new approach to understanding political change that takes into account the dynamic and often conflicting interplay between layers of institutions, interest groups and ideas. He identifies three “dimensions of disorder:” governing institutions, organizational environments and ideological/cultural repertoires (Lieberman, 2002:703). When these orders are moving in conflicting directions, frictions can occur, which stores up latent pressure. When the pressure reaches a certain point, new political opportunities to reorder the system become available. In his theory, no equilibrium point is reached, as in rational choice theory. Pressures that ideas, interests and institutions deploy against one another are engaged in a continual interplay. They constantly reshape each other’s form and function, which allows for incremental and transformative change.

All of the literature of the role ideas play in institutional analysis indicates that ideas have power when a powerful actor embraces it and is in an institutional position that gives them motive and opportunity to translate it into policy. This particular research aims to identify an ideational measure that affects whether or not women get elected. Political parties and their ideas, or ideology, can be examined to see if a relationship exists between party ideology and the percent of women who are elected. Because parties play an important “gatekeeping” role for candidates, their ideology and the principles they embrace are inherently important to this study. Nomination procedures vary across countries and parties and can be distinguished by the breadth of the participation and the degree of centralization and decentralization of the process (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

In examining the body of literature surrounding the factors affecting women’s political representation, this study is not intentionally pitting these theoretical frameworks against each other. Rather, the focus of this thesis revolves around theory building and determining how institutional, cultural and ideational variables interact together with regards to certain political outcomes. The ultimate purpose of this paper is to gain additional insight into how the political systems and rules (institutions) create a framework where culture and ideas/ideology play a role in affecting women’s representation in twenty-nine OECD countries.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

Theoretical Framework

In evaluating the dynamics involved in the percentage of women elected to parliament, this thesis specifically examines patterns of female political representation and outcomes associated with electoral systems, cultural attitudes and ideas of political parties. This section begins with an assessment of the current state of affairs in terms of women's representation in parliament to get a comparative overview of regional differences. In order to assess the variable relationship between the concepts of electoral systems, culture, ideas and representation, this chapter will delineate the various mechanisms of each and how it impacts the number of women elected. Each section will lay out this research design's theoretical framework and will expound upon the logic of the argument(s). Regarding institutions, this study argues that electoral systems characterized by proportional representation are positively related to women's representation and is one of the main determinants. Further, a country that has implemented legal gender quotas, either through Constitutional Amendment or electoral law, will produce a higher number of women elected to parliament than those who do not enact legal gender quotas. With regard to the concept of ideas, I argue that this concept is maybe the linking entity between institutional factors and political outcomes, in that the ideas of particular parties, with respect to selecting women candidates and embracing gender equalizing reforms (such as quotas), can have a tremendous affect on whether or not women are selected to represent seats in parliament.

Those parties who actively implement the ideas of certain institutional reforms are much more likely to experience an increase in women's representation.

Overview of Women in Parliament

As Table 3.1 indicates, the Nordic countries are the world-wide leaders in terms of the number of women elected to parliament. In the United States (not listed), 16.8 percent of current officeholders are women. Despite the United States being considered one of the most liberal and democratic states, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) data shows it significantly lags behind most of the European Union members, and is 78th out of 149 total countries whose statistics are listed.

Table 3.1

Regional Averages of Women in the Single or Lower House of Parliament⁵

Nordic countries	42.0%
Americas	22.6%
Europe- excluding Nordic countries	22.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	20.4%
Asia	18.3%
Pacific	12.4%
Arab states	11.3%
Greece	13.0%
France	12.2%

Source: The data is from the Inter-Parliamentary Union

⁵ Percentages of women elected as of December 31, 2011

Culture and Attitudes

As Inglehart and Norris suggest, traditional cultural attitudes present major barriers to women's representation in elected office (Inglehart, Norris and Welzel 2002). By the same token, however, they contend there is indeed a global trend toward gender equality, and it is linked with a broader process of cultural change. Ideally, this thesis could benefit from incorporating a socio-cultural concept that reflects cultural attitudes and values. The task of finding data that most accurately measures and reflects attitudes related to gender parity in politics can be challenging for social scientists. Survey data can be an excellent qualitative as well as quantitative source, for the reason that it reflects attitudes and values. When utilizing survey data, it would be important to address how these attitudes are channeled through formal political processes and institutions, and ultimately connect individual attitudes to a broader societal level of analysis.

The World Value Survey (WVS), an ongoing project initiated by Ronald Inglehart, offers numerous data on individuals' attitudes across the world. One survey question in particular gauges the socio-cultural element of whether or not women get elected to office: "Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree? Men make better political leaders than women." The data from this question could be an accurate representation of attitudes and the differences in responses across countries would add to the explained variation in the dependent variable.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this particular thesis does not directly incorporate a cultural variable and the research framework, due to unavailability of reliable data. The particular WVS question was only asked in the Third through Fifth Waves of the WVS, which were conducted between 1995 and 2012. Since this study's temporal parameters are examining

all lower house parliament elections from 1980 to 2000, using the results from the WVS would leave the analysis with a great deal of missing data. Utilizing a shorter timeframe of study in order to incorporate WVS data would limit observing any lagged effects of attitudinal change and would cause less variation in observations over time. Further, this thesis examines twenty-nine OECD countries and only eleven of those countries were even asked this question. Including only those countries who were asked this particular question in this study would most certainly have decreased the sample size. As sample size diminishes so does the explanatory power of the model. Due to these problems of unavailability of reliable data, this thesis utilizes an alternative research design that does not include this WVS question and its results into the statistical analysis.

This design does not incorporate any exclusive cultural variable due to the “fuzziness” of the concept. Finding other sufficient data sets continually proves to be a challenge, particularly given the time constraints of this thesis and the fact that data could not be collected from primary sources. Had there been complete data for the twenty-nine OECD countries regarding the WVS question concerning if men make better political leaders than women, this study would have incorporated this into the analysis, because it would be a very accurate and specific indicator to assess actors’ attitudes about women and political office.

Not incorporating a cultural concept into this research design does not mean this thesis completely dismisses the value of political culture theory and research. Table 3.2 reveals summarized results of the WVS question. This table gives scholars a snapshot of how much citizens in each surveyed country strongly agree or agree with the statement “men make better political leaders than women.” As Table 3.2 indicates, Turkey trails the other surveyed countries. However, this not surprising, since the traditionalism embedded in Islam plays an

active part in many aspects of life. With only twenty-three percent of Americans surveyed either agreeing or strongly agreeing, we would expect there to be a higher percentage of female representatives. If this study were to formally test a cultural variable, one argument would be that the closer a country's overall attitudes are to the "agree" side of the scale, the less likely women will be elected to political office. Therefore, countries whose cultural attitudes are embedded in traditionalism might be reflected in this question, and those countries may have an inherent "bias" against women leaders. However, I do grant that these cultural attitudes may not be sufficient on their own to increase women's representation.

Table 3.2

WVS Ranking: Percent Who Agree /Strongly Agree that "Men Make Better Political Leaders than Women"

Turkey	62%
South Korea	48%
Japan	43%
Mexico	42%
Australia	24%
United States	23%
Canada	21%
Sweden	19%
Spain	19%
New Zealand	17%
Norway	16%

Consensus versus Majoritarian Democracies

In *Patterns of Democracy*, Lijphart (1999) concludes that the differences in the percentage of women elected are strongly and significantly related to the degree of consensus democracy. This is due to the various qualities among consensus democracies, particularly the multi-party system and proportional representation. Using Lijphart's logic, this thesis could argue that consensus democracies will have higher percentages of women leaders in parliament than majoritarian democracies. While this may not be particularly surprising, it could prove to be a valuable measure to this study in determining the true causality of consensus regimes. However, this particular research design has opted to not include this concept directly in the analysis, primarily due to collinearity issue. There appears to be a specific linear relationship between this particular dichotomous democracy concept and the concept of electoral systems. These two predictor variables are inherently highly correlated, as consensus democracies almost always have electoral systems based on proportional representation, while majoritarian democracies, on the other hand, tend to have electoral systems that are plurality-based.

In a situation where collinearity exists, the coefficient estimates may change erratically in response to small changes in the model or the data. While multicollinearity in itself does not reduce the predictive power or reliability of the model as a whole, it may not yield valid results about an individual predictor. The overall aim of this study is to identify specific predictor variables that do have a true (and hopefully statistically significant) impact on the dependent variable in question. Instead, this research design will rely on the qualities of electoral systems to capture the institutional context.

Electoral Systems and Voting Methods

Research has shown that the type of electoral system in a country can significantly affect the number of political minorities, including women, being elected into office. The single-member district electoral system results in a winner-take-all structure. Rule and Hill (1996) offer compelling evidence that these winner-take-all legislative districts discriminate against women. When a majority of votes is needed, even a small number of discriminatory voters can deny candidates the margin they need for election to a single seat. For instance, the United States is a prime example of a plurality system with single-member districts, along with a two-party system. The process of gerrymandering, where legislatures are permitted to redraw the lines of United States House districts, can have a large impact on the voting constituency. Further, the concept of swing vote can play a role in this two-party system as well, especially where districts themselves hold the balance between the two major parties. It is possible the votes of a small amount of swing voters in a few districts can drastically change the landscape of election outcomes. Studies have demonstrated that as the number of candidates who get elected in a district increases, so does the number of women nominated to the list and elected (Beckwith, 1992; Matland 1993; Rule 1981).

Proportional representation, on the other hand, involves legislators being elected in multi-member districts instead of single-member districts. The number of seats a party wins in an election is proportional to the amount of its support among voters. Multi-member districts tend to have a substantially higher percentage of women elected to state legislatures than single-member district system (Castles 1981, Norris 1985; Rule 1981; 1987). As mentioned earlier, the PR Library lists many advantages of the PR system, which include a more accurate representation of parties, better representation for political and racial minorities, fewer wasted

votes, higher levels of voter turnout, better representation of women, greater likelihood of majority rule and little opportunity for gerrymandering (Rule and Hill 2006).

With regard to the voting methods, party list voting has a number of advantages over plurality-majority or first-past-the-post voting. One potential advantage is that it increases the chances of getting accurate representation of parties in legislatures. It gives voter more choices of parties at the polls, increases voter turnout and wastes fewer votes (PR Library). In this section, I argue that those countries with proportional representation, as opposed to majority voting method will have larger numbers of women elected to parliament.

Gender Quotas

Quotas are another institutionalized method that many countries have adopted and introduced to increase the number of women elected. They are considered an institutional tool to increase the representation of historically excluded or under-represented groups (Dahl 2006). The core idea behind gender quota systems is to recruit women into political positions and to ensure that women are not only a few tokens in political life. A distinction must be made between regulations that aim to affect the following groups: 1) pool of potential candidates, 2) candidates who stand for election, and 3) those who get elected. Most quotas concern the second level, setting up minimum requirements of certain groups on the ballots. Quotas that target the third level are achieved in the form of reserved seats, in which certain groups are guaranteed a certain number of seats among those who are elected. Previous notions of having reserved seats, such as one or just a few seats dedicated just for women, may no longer be considered sufficient. Today, quota systems aim at ensuring women constitute a “critical minority” (often 30 percent or 40 percent) of those candidate lists.

Another important characteristic of gender quotas is how they are mandated. Quotas may be mandated in a state's constitution or by law. These are called legal quotas and are applicable to all political parties. Legal quotas may also prescribe sanctions for noncompliance issues. However, political parties themselves may elect to impose voluntary quotas. Phillips' chapter on the representation of women in *The Democracy Sourcebook* suggests that within the frameworks of representative democracy, it is political parties that have provided the vehicle for representation (Phillips 2003).

There is variation among countries that have numerous political parties with some type of quota and those with only one or two parties who opted to use quotas. However, if the leading party in a country uses a quota, this may have a significant impact on the overall rate of female representation. Another interesting phenomenon is described as contagion, which is a process by which one party in a multiparty system stimulates other parties to adopt their policies or strategies (Matland and Studlar 1996). Parties have the ability to inspire other, often larger, parties in such reforms as nominating more women candidates, and we would expect competitive strategies to be involved in this process. While contagion pressures may exist in both plurality and proportional representation system, these authors posit contagion is more likely to operate effectively in a PR systems than in single-member systems. This could account for why proportional representation systems have higher percentages of female legislators and have experienced faster increases in these numbers of women members.

Research has not provided strong evidence that quotas mandated from constitutional amendments and new electoral laws are any more efficient than political party quotas when increasing the number of women in parliament (Dahlerup 2006). It all depends on the actual rules and the possible sanctions for non-compliance. Concerning rule for nomination, the crucial

issue is whether there are any rules concerning the rank order on the list. For instance, a requirement of 40 percent may not result in any women elected if all women candidates are placed at the bottom of the list. Whether the nominated women are placed in a position with a real chance of election is the essential question. While reserved seats are a “guaranteed” way to ensure women are represented, this type of quota targets those who are elected. Reserved seats are distinct from the role of political parties and the degree to which they implement voluntary gender quotas. The existence of reserved seats will be captured in the legal quota variable.

Political Party Ideas (Ideology)

In Birchfield’s (2000) dissertation, she points out a common research strategy is to pit culture and structure against one another. She attempts to explain the variation in income inequality by showing that the level of income inequality in a given democratic society is determined by the interaction between existing political institutions and prevailing cultural attitudes about the legitimacy of politics and markets in rendering distributive justice. Birchfield’s research is particularly important for this topic in that she stresses how a more realistic causal explanation of cross-national variation in income equality must address how the economy and polity are organized and linked to one another both conceptually and practically. Conceptually, prevailing cultural attitudes and norms in a given society that characterize how citizens conceive of the legitimate roles of markets and politics in shaping distribution outcomes. In practical terms, specific constitutional structures and political institutions operate to channel those norms and preferences into actual policy outcomes. This is suggesting ideational and material forces must be understood in relation to one another. Like Birchfield, this thesis argues that both institutional and socio-cultural forces are essential to the causal story of women’s

political representation. In other words, this thesis is using a similar theoretical framework of incorporating both institutional and ideological factors into analyses.

The main objective of this thesis is to examine the role of party ideas and its relationship within institutional contexts. The task at hand is to collect data regarding the election periods and circumstances in which political parties embrace ideas of gender equality and/or parity with regards to women getting elected to public office. As gatekeepers to elected office, this study aims to examine how political parties can facilitate or impede women's participation in parliament. Cross-national studies often do not account for variation in women's presence in parliament between parties. Parties differ substantially in the number of women they nominate, where they rank women on party lists and in the number of women they send to parliament (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). These differences occur across parties and within the same parties over time. Many parties adopt formal policies to promote women candidates and these measures denote a process of changing attitudes toward women in politics (Kittilson 2006). Parties have not only adopted gender quotas for candidates, but they have also founded women's branches within the party organization, changed how they recruit candidates and offered special training programs and fundraising assistance to women candidates. These equalizing policies have diffused across nations and within various party systems.

It is evident that parties that enact gender quotas do provide an equalizing opportunity for women. However, the mere presence of quotas is not sufficient alone to truly impact the likelihood of women getting elected. Examining the "bite" of party quotas is equally important, and this entails whether or not the quota is enforced and if sanctions are applied for noncompliance by the party leaders. Parties who are committed to enforcement of these types of

voluntary gender quotas are demonstrating the embracement of certain ideas related to women's advancement or equal opportunity in the political arena. Quotas are an institution, but also a party action, and therefore an indicator of party "ideas."

Given the parameters of this thesis and limitations to in-depth data collection and examination of the various political party quotas in the twenty-nine OECD countries under examination, this thesis will conceptualize the linking variable of ideas in terms of party ideology. By analyzing this concept in terms of a right versus left spectrum, shifts in party ideology can be a reliable indicator of the ideas that party embraces, particularly as it pertains to women's rights and representation in politics. A party's ideology, organizational structure and age may affect their propensity and ability to adopt candidate gender quotas. In general, leftist parties may be more likely to support women's representation in parliament than rightist parties because they advocate more egalitarian ideologies (Beckwith 1986; Duverger 1955). Specific to the research question of this thesis, leftist parties may adopt quotas because their egalitarian ideology justifies intervention in the recruitment process for the sake of balancing power. Cross-national studies of the determining factors of the proportion of women a party sends to parliament, Caul (1999) finds leftist parties are more likely to send women to parliament. Later, this scholar concluded the main influences of the adoption of gender quotas by parties include the presence of women within the highest ranks of the party, the adoption of quotas by another party (contagion) and the degree of leftist values held by a party (Caul 2001).

This study posits that political parties possess the ability to provide equalizing opportunities for minority candidates, such as women. This section argues that institutional gender quotas, whether legal or voluntary party-imposed, are not the lone sufficient mechanisms to guarantee better representation of women in parliament. By integrating ideational analysis

into this research design, the goal is to shed additional light on the impact of party ideology in their selection of women candidates and the reforms they embrace to make it come to fruition. This study argues that the more leftist a political party is, the more likely women will indeed get elected. This argument outlines a positive relationship between more leftist party ideology and the percent of women elected. Party-initiated reforms like party quotas are essentially an intervening variable in this case. Culture and ideology impact the likelihood of adopting a quota, which in turn affects the percentage of female legislators.

CHAPTER 4

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Hypothesis, Research Design and Variables

This study examines twenty-nine OECD countries during election periods from 1980 to 2000, yielding a total of one hundred sixty-five cases (N=165). This time was chosen because Switzerland was the last OECD country to grant women the right to vote in 1971. The objective of picking 1980 as the starting point of observation was to allow ample time to view the variation of women's representation in all OECD countries. This thesis examines industrialized democracies so as to control for the economic context amongst these countries. This design will employ one dependent variable to measure women's political representation in parliament: the percentage of women in the Single or Lower House, in which data was used from the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Only the lower houses are included in this study to increase unit homogeneity, in that there is a good deal of variation in the manner in which upper houses are elected (i.e., directly elected, appointed, etc.). Since the frequency of elections varies greatly among the countries studied, the regression analysis was conducted with estimates clustering around the twenty-nine countries, so that countries with several elections during the temporal parameters did not bias the estimates.

Data was collected from secondary sources, mainly online databases and datasets from scholars. Election results regarding the percentage of women in parliament were obtained from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Information regarding gender quotas, both constitutional

and legislative, was retrieved from the Global Database of Quotas for Women.⁶ Data for the party ideas/ideology variable were derived from the RILE variable⁷ from the Comparative Manifesto Project⁸.

The core theoretical hypothesis is, while controlling for alternative explanation, as the degree of leftist party ideology increases at the aggregate national level, the percentage of women in political office will increase and become more balanced. Further, this study expects more leftist party ideology in conjunction with PR electoral systems will yield higher percentages of women elected than those countries with more conservative party mentalities. The regression models will test whether or not a proportional representation electoral system's effect on female political representation is conditioned by the left-right party ideology of that country in a given election year. This hypothesis is postulating that electoral systems and party ideology alone do not or cannot account for changes in the dependent variable.

This party ideology concept will be measured using the right-left position of the party (RILE) variable from Comparative Manifestos Project dataset. The Comparative Manifestos Project investigated different aspects of political party performance as well as the structure and development of party systems. This particular predictor is a continuous variable and indicates the overall right-left position of a party in an individual country in a given election year. The observed data reflected a minimum RILE score of -31.02 and maximum of 39.86.

The RILE variable had to be converted to a state-level measure, since the unit of analysis in this thesis is the country in a given election year. In order to create this state-level variable, the individual political party RILE scores were weighted according to the proportion of the vote

⁶ www.quotaproject.org

⁷ Right-left position of party as given in Michael Laver/Ian Budge (eds.): *Party Policy and Government Coalitions*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: The MacMillan Press 1992.

⁸ The Comparative Manifestos Project is based on quantitative content analysis of parties' election programs and covers all free, democratic elections since 1945 in fifty-five countries.

they received that particular election year and then composited into one country score.⁹ As a country's RILE score decreases, and therefore moves towards the "left" end of the spectrum, this study expects it to be associated with an increase in women's political representation.

The first alternative hypothesis is countries with PR systems are associated with a higher percentage of women elected to parliament. To test for this study's alternative hypotheses, I have operationalized the concepts of one of the primary institutional factors affecting women's success in getting elected to parliament: electoral systems. This particular research design has opted to measure this concept as a dichotomous variable and categorize countries according to the two main types of plurality systems and proportional representation systems. While this design does acknowledge there exists much variation amongst the types of proportional voting systems, countries who have mixed-member proportional representation systems (MMP), such as Germany¹⁰, have been categorized as "proportional," in that they behave more like PR systems. This independent variable has been coded for each country "0" for plurality system, and "1" as proportional representation system. This study argues that those countries with proportional representation and a non-plurality voting method will have larger numbers of women elected to parliament. The institutional framework of multi-member constituencies with a high number of seats per district and party list systems tend to be favorable for women (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Because of the coding scheme, regression results, which will be discussed in a later chapter, a one-unit change in the electoral system will be interpreted as moving from a plurality system to a proportional representation system.

⁹ The proportion of votes received by the total number of parties listed per country in each election year does not equal 1 (100%), so adjusted weights were created to calculate the state-level variable.

¹⁰ Other countries with mixed-systems that were coded as proportional include Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea and New Zealand (MMP elections for 1996 and 1999 only)

The next alternative hypothesis posits that countries that implement legal quotas, whether constitutional or legislative in nature, will experience a larger amount of women elected to public office. To test this hypothesis, the research design employs the use of another institutional variable which measures whether or not a country has legal gender quota laws. These gender quotas can be classified as constitutional quotas or legislative quotas and are a part of a country's law. However, the gender quotas can also be distinguished by the different groups of people they target in the election process. For example, reserved seats obviously target those who actually get elected and are a definite "guarantee" of seats for female politicians, and reserved seats are often mandated by a country's constitution. A legislated electoral law may require that party lists be comprised of a minimum percentage of women, which is an example that targets the potential candidates. This study recognizes how exploring these variations in gender quotas could provide insight into what types of quotas really have significant impact on the number of women elected. However, for parsimony's sake, this design chooses to collapse constitutional and legislated quotas into one category as legal quotas. This will be measured based on countries either having legal quotas (including both constitutional and legislative quotas) or not. This variable is ultimately measured dichotomously and will be coded "0" if the country does not have legal quotas enacted for that particular election year, and will be coded "1" if legal quotas do exist. Whether or not countries have political parties who adopt voluntary quotas is not included in this research design. The party ideology variable attempts to capture the "ideas" of parties, and the more leftist party ideology is, the more likely they are to support women's advancement reforms, such as enacting party gender quotas. A smaller RILE score indicates a more leftist party mentality for that particular country, while a higher RILE score would indicate a more rightist party mentality.

The percentage of women elected to parliament during elections from 1980 to 2000 is the dependent variable. This thesis examines online archival data regarding election results from the Inter-Parliamentary Union¹¹, regarding each lower or single-house election of twenty-nine OECD countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States). This variable is measured as a percentage, which simplifies comparisons. A rule of thumb for devising a good research design is to use data in which there is variation in the dependent variable. For the 165 observations (elections), the minimum percentage of women over the time period was 1.3 percent, while the maximum was 42.7 percent.

To test the core theoretical hypothesis, this study also employs the use of an interaction term that aims to capture the conditional effects of the electoral system and the country's overall party ideology for a given election. This research design acknowledges that including an interaction term results in purposefully introducing collinearity into the analysis. An additional regression analysis was conducted to include the interaction term (institution * party ideology), to see if the addition of this independent variable would have a significant effect on the percentage of women elected. In other words, incorporating this interaction term could reveal how the ideology, or ideas, of political parties has a strong effect on the dependent variable as it relates to countries that have proportional representation systems.

This portion of the analysis up until now employs the use of two equations, listed below, respectively (whereby PW= percentage of women; ES= electoral system; LQ= legal quotas; RILE= right-left party ideology):

¹¹ Archival data was found online at www.ipu.org

$$\text{Equation 1a: } PW = a + b_1 * ES + b_2 * LQ + b_3 * RILE$$

$$\text{Equation 1b with interaction: } PW = a + b_1 * ES + b_2 * LQ + b_3 * RILE + b_4 * ES * RILE$$

Finally, this study includes two additional regression analyses that utilize the concept of mean district magnitude in lieu of the electoral system of a nation. As mentioned earlier, studies have demonstrated that the number of women who are nominated to the list and elected will increase as the number of candidates getting elected in a district increases (Beckwith 1992; Matland 1993; Rule 1981). Incorporating the concept of mean district magnitude will test the robustness of this research design, and will hopefully be able to shed light as to whether it is simply the electoral system that is correlated with the percent of women elected. Or, it could reveal that the total number of viable seats per district is the real driving force, as there is variation amongst district magnitude within and across countries with proportional representation electoral systems. Similar to the logic in Model 1a, this hypothesis tests whether or not a larger mean district magnitude is associated with a larger amount of women in parliament.

This variable will be measured by using the mean district magnitude of each country per election year, whereby measures were used from Matt Golder's data set associated with his article examining democratic electoral systems around the world (Golder 2005). Golder's data set describes the electoral institutions used in all democratic legislative and presidential election in 199 countries between 1946 and 2000. In this case, district magnitude is associated with the mean legislator in the lower electoral tier.¹² A second model will be run incorporating the mean district magnitude variable will also include an interaction term that will be used that tests the combined effects of the new institutional variable (district magnitude) and the party ideology variable (RILE). In total, four separate regression models will be conducted to capture the

¹² For further details on this variable see Neto and Cox (1997) and Golder (2003)

effects of the differences between the institutional variables and the inclusion of interaction terms.

The second set of regression models can be clarified with two equations that incorporate the mean district magnitude variable instead of the type of electoral system. These equations are listed below (whereby MDM= mean district magnitude; all other variable labels remain the same as abovementioned):

$$\text{Equation 2a: } PW = a + b_1 * MDM + b_2 * LQ + b_3 * RILE$$

$$\text{Equation 2b with interaction: } PW = a + b_1 * MDM + b_2 * LQ + b_3 * RILE + b_4 * MDM * RILE$$

Each of these hypotheses of the four models could be falsified if the regression results yield no statistical significance with regards to the coefficients on the independent variables. Also, this analysis is interested in evaluating the estimates at a 95 percent confidence interval. Therefore, results yielding *p values* greater than .05 are taken to reflect non-significance. This would mean that there is greater than a five percent chance that the analysis would result in type 1 error, or when we reject the null when it is true.

CHAPTER 5

REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS

This study employs an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis, in which the total number of observations is 165 (N=165). The main interest of this thesis is to determine the magnitude of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, i.e. how much change in one yields how much change in the other. One of the advantages of using this method lies in the ability of the regression equation to generate a line of predicted values that are linearly related to the regressors. Under various assumptions, these estimates are BLUE (best linear unbiased estimate) and standard t-tests can be used to assess their statistical significance.

This research design can be conceptualized as four regression models conducted over two stages of analysis (called Model 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, respectively). The first stage utilizes the institutional concept of electoral systems. The second stage replaces the electoral systems variable with the mean district magnitude measure, in order to test robustness of the model. Both stages include a second, separate regression model run with the interaction term testing the combined effects of institutions and party ideology (right-left scores). Full regression analysis results for all four models will be listed in the Appendix, along with summary statistics and distributional charts.

Stage One Regression Analysis - Model 1a

In order to assess the actual relevance of adding an interaction term to capture shared effects of how the type of electoral system along with party ideology, we shall first put through the paces a model consisting of the major factors discussed so far ($PW = a + b_1 \cdot ES + b_2 \cdot LQ +$

b₃*RILE). The results of Model 1a are as follows (taking ‘plurality’ and ‘no legal quotas’ as the “baseline” for the “electoral system” and “legal quotas” dummy variables, respectively):

Table 5.1

Model 1a Regression Analysis Results

	Coefficient	P> t	95% confidence interval
Constant	10.28*	.000	6.76, 13.79
Electoral system	7.66*	.013	1.77, 13.54
Legal Quotas	-3.61	.263	-10.07, 2.86
RILE (right-left party score)	-.07	.476	-.267, .128

*p< .05

R-squared = .12

Thus, the model yields: $PW (\%) = 10.28 + 7.66*ES (\text{proportional}) - 3.61*LQ (\text{legal quotas}) - .07*RILE (\text{right-left party score})$. The R^2 reported is .12, which means that, even when including all these factors into the analysis, we can only account for just over eleven percent of the variation in the percentage of women in politics in the twenty-nine countries included here.

Overall, this model produced interesting results, including the fact that the electoral system variable was the only independent variable that was statistically significant, reported at the 95% confidence level. For this variable in Model 1a, a one-unit change, on average, is associated with an increase of 7.67 percentage points in the amount of elected women leaders. A one-unit changes means changing from a plurality electoral system to one of proportional representation (essentially moving away from single-member districts and such and towards a more proportional system). Zero is not in the confidence interval and the *p value* is less than .05,

so the results are statistically significant. When assessing substantive significance, one must consider how hard it is to achieve a one-unit change in the electoral system. Actually achieving this change within a country could be difficult and take time. If institutions could be altered and redesigned with ease, we would expect to observe many changes in design based on the varying political contexts. The hypothesis is supported, however, and this does provide valuable information that solidifies the fact that countries with proportional representation electoral systems tend to send larger numbers of women to parliament. This reveals a very powerful and indicates a potential causal relationship between this type of institution and the political outcomes of interest.

Interestingly, only three countries experienced a change from plurality to a more proportional system within the temporal parameters of this study, 1980-2000. The Czech Republic, surprisingly, experienced a decrease in the percentage of women elected when it adopted the proportional electoral system, however, this difference could also be explained by internal factors revolving around the major political changes that occurred with the former Czechoslovakia and how it ultimately has become the Czech Republic. Japan, on the other hand, had women represent 2.7 percent of lower house seats in parliament in 1993, but experienced an increase to 4.6 percent in 1996 and a total of 7.3 percent representation in 2000. While these few percentage point increases may not initially seem like much, it is important to understand the total percentage of women more than doubled between the years of 1993 and 2000 in Japan, and this is a feat within itself. Finally, New Zealand experienced an increase of 8 percent in women elected after changing to an MMP electoral system in 1996.

None of the other independent variables are statistically significant at an acceptable level, which means that, for all we know, none of them might actually be correlated with the dependent

variable in the actual population. Since the coefficients are statistically insignificant they have no effect on the dependent variable.

The core hypothesis in this thesis was, while controlling for alternative explanations, as the degrees of leftist party ideology increases at the aggregate national level, the percentage of women in political office will increase and become more balanced. I was hoping this variable could be interpreted as a country's overall party ideology moves from left to right, we would expect to see fewer women get elected to office, since parties that are more leftist tend to put more women candidates on lists and send them to parliament. However, these initial results in the stage one analysis are not statistically significant for this variable. These results do not support the core hypothesis of this thesis, so we cannot reject the null. Perhaps operationalizing this concept different or more precisely might shed additional light as to whether not political parties are the true gatekeepers for women entering politics.

The constant is the only other statistically significant variable in Model 1a analysis. If all the independent variables had a value of zero, we would expect that 10.28 percent of women would get elected to parliament, on average in a given election year.

Regression Model 1b with Interaction

What happens when we add to the model our new interaction term? The new model yielded the following coefficients: $PW (\%) = 10.05 + 7.9*ES (\text{proportional}) - 3.7*LQ (\text{legal quotas}) - .02*RILE (\text{right-left party score}) - .08*ES*RILE$, and the r-squared is still .12.

Table 5.2

Model 1b Regression Analysis Results

	Coefficient	P> t	95% confidence interval
Constant	10.05*	.000	5.7, 14.41
Electoral system	7.9*	.019	1.38, 14.41
Legal Quotas	-3.71	.254	-10.22, 2.81
RILE (right-left party score)	-0.02	.909	-.333, .298
Interaction (ES*RILE)	-0.08	.695	-.473, .319

*p< .05

R-squared= .12

To say these results are not encouraging would be an understatement. Both the R-squared and the coefficients tell the same story: the new interaction term does not add explanatory power to the model and is not statistically significant. The hypothesis was that a proportional electoral system combined with a more leftist party ideology score would indeed positively impact the dependent variable. In this particular case, we cannot reject the null hypothesis, since our hypothesis is not supported by the evidence. We cannot interpret the coefficients on the electoral system and RILE variables the same as in model 1a with the interaction included. Further, we cannot compare the size of the coefficient on the interaction terms to that of the other variable. Due to this caveat, more in-depth interpretation will be given in the final edition. This highlights the fact that electoral systems do seem to be a primary determinant of the percentage of women elected, and including additional variables such as interactions does not add to the predictive power of the model.

Stage Two Regression Analysis - Model 2a

As mentioned in chapter five regarding the research design, a second stage of regression analyses were conducted in order to test the robustness of the model. The logic here focuses around whether or not the total number of viable seats per district (district magnitude) is the real driving force (and perhaps a more accurate institutional measure), or is it simply the type of electoral system that is the primary determinant. This second stage analysis utilizes a different equation: $PW = a + b_1 * MDM + b_2 * LQ + b_3 * RILE$, which substitutes the mean district magnitude (MDM) for the electoral system variable used in the first stage of analysis. The results of model 2a are as follows:

Table 5.3

Model 2a Regression Analysis Results

	Coefficient	P> t	95% confidence interval
Constant	15.15*	.000	10.61, 19.68
Mean District Magnitude	.065*	.019	.018, .112
Legal Quotas	-0.52	.254	-7.43, 6.39
RILE (right-left party score)	-0.07	.910	-.286, .142

*p< .05

R-squared= .04

It appears this second stage model also reveals that the institutional variable tied to district size (single-member versus multi-member) is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. A one-unit change in the mean district magnitude of a country, on average, corresponds with a .065 percentage point increase in the amount of female legislators in

parliament. How difficult is it to increase the mean district magnitude? The answer to this question is inherently tied to the rules concerning redrawing of districts and who in the legislature can wield this power. Including the mean district magnitude variable in lieu of one categorizing the type of electoral system does yield a higher coefficient for the constant, however, this does not have substantive meaning as in the stage one models since this independent variable cannot take on the value of zero, in that it is impossible to have a mean district magnitude of zero since there is always at least one seat up for grabs, which would produce a MDM score greater than zero but perhaps less than one.

Similar to the stage one analysis, the only hypothesis that is supported is the one that indicates the larger the district magnitude, the more likely women will be elected. This study cannot reject the null for the other hypotheses concerning the existence of legal quotas and the right-left party ideology score of a country.

Regression Model 2b with Interaction

The new model yielded the following coefficients: $PW (\%) = 14.97 + .11*MDM - .79*LQ \text{ (legal quotas)} - .11*RILE \text{ (right-left party score)} + .005*MDM*RILE$, and the r-squared reported is .06. The much lower r-squared results from the models including the mean district magnitude concept indicate the stage one models utilizing the electoral systems variable are robust in terms of the estimates it produces. In other words, the second stage models do not provide any further insight around this institutional context and its particular impact on the dependent variable. However, the coefficient on the interaction term is statistically significant in this model. This interaction is telling us that mean district magnitude is more strongly related to female representation where the parties are rightist. This is unexpected, and contrary to the theory presented here, but is actually a very interesting result. It indicates that institutional

changes work to engender female representation where the political climate might not be amenable to it. Alternatively, female representation is not conditioned by institutional design where there are leftist parties. The coefficients of the interaction term show the effects of mean district magnitude and RILE on the dependent variable, after statistically controlling for the effects of the other independent variables individually. The results for Model 2b are as follows:

Table 5.4

Model 2b Regression Analysis Results

	Coefficient	P> t	95% confidence interval
Constant	14.97*	.000	10.53, 19.41
Mean District Magnitude	0.11*	.002	.042, .176
Legal Quotas	-0.79	.823	-7.96, 6.38
RILE (right-left party score)	-0.11	.307	-.341, .111
MDM*RILE	.006*	.049	.00003, .0115

*p< .05

R-squared= .04

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to include ideational analysis into the research design an ultimately test whether or not the independent variable of party ideology has a significant effect on the number of women elected to the lower house of parliament among the twenty-nine OECD countries between 1980 and 2000. After conducting two stages of regression analysis, it is evident these models fail to provide evidence that the ideas or ideology of political parties plays a determinant role in the election of women. These models did validate existing theories revolving around the role of electoral systems and how proportional representation systems do, on average, produce more women in parliament.

Given the shortcomings of these statistical models, it is important to discuss the limitations of the design before moving on to implications regarding the results and future research. These results may seem disappointing at first glance, but could also indicate an improper measure of the concepts, particularly that of party ideology. One possibility is that the right-left party ideology variable from the Comparative Manifesto Project may not be the most appropriate measure for this ideational concept. In other words, it might not actually capture the intended concept. Further, how I operationalized the variable regarding legal quotas might have oversimplified this concept by lumping constitutional and legislative quotas into one category. Better operationalization and more reliable data are needed in order to examine and test the causal power of ideas and ideology as it pertains to political parties.

Another limitation of this design is the dichotomous conceptualization of the electoral systems variable. There may exist a problematic nature of this simplification might become increasingly clear over time as more countries are using more complex electoral systems that employ multiple tiers and/or a combination of electoral formulas (Massicotte and Blais 1999; Shugart and Wattenberg 2001). While it would be difficult to construct a measure other than an ordinal or interval variable, I recommend further classification beyond these two categories to capture further variation. This study exchanged more precise measurement for parsimony.

Additionally, the results of this research did not provide the significant causal relationships as hypothesized regarding the existing of legal quotas. As a matter of fact, the model predicted a negative effect of legal quotas on the percentage of women elected, which is obviously contrary to conventional wisdom. Part of the failure of this quota variable could be due to the fact that the temporal parameters were not long enough. Perhaps more significant results would be produced if the timeframe was extended to 2010, as many countries adopted legal quotas in the mid-1990s, and this may not allow sufficient time to pass to see the true effects of this variable. As stated in an earlier chapter, the temporal parameters of 1980 to 2000 were chosen due to data availability.¹³ If I had expanded the temporal parameters given the data I had access to, it would have resulted in a great deal of missing data, which would certainly have biased the results.

This research design did not include a unique variable to measure the existence or effectiveness of voluntary party quotas. The data reveals that many countries without legal quotas do have various internal political parties that take the initiative to adopt party gender quotas. For example, in Sweden, the Social Democratic Party has had internal gender quotas since 1978 and currently uses the zipper system, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, the Left

¹³ The median district magnitude variable was only measured until 2000.

Party and Green Party both require a 50 percent minimum quota for women on party lists. Even though Sweden does not have legal quotas that are mandated by the constitution or electoral law, but still this country produces a very large amount of women in parliament. Perhaps choosing to omit a variable that deals solely with the concept of party quotas in this study has caused me to overlook a valuable indicator. For future research, I would recommend including a measure to capture the true effects of party quotas, including whether or not they exist, are they enforced and are sanctions imposed for non-compliance. It would be beneficial to test for collinearity between a newly created variable to encompass party quotas and the RILE variable, which measures party ideology based on examination of the political party manifestos. A qualitative approach may be warranted to really get at how to properly investigate and measure this concept.

Finally, this design could be limited by choosing to omit potentially key variables. This study opted to not include a variable specifically measuring the democracy and cultural levels of a country. The democracy variable was omitted due to concerns for collinearity of including a democracy and electoral system variable. By omitting this variable, bias may have been introduced into the coefficients. Given this information, future research may want to consider including a variable, even though it may be collinear to another independent variable, because OLS regression assumptions say it's best to keep the collinear variable in the analysis as long as perfect collinearity does not exist. A cultural variable was also omitted and this was due to lack of reliable data. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, attitudinal data from the WVS regarding the question asking individuals agreed with a statement about men making better political leaders would have been an ideal indicator of attitudes towards women and politics. However, this particular question was not in all of the countries and was not asked in the waves associated with the temporal parameters.

Regardless of the failure of this model to provide explanatory power regarding the independent variables of interest, this study is still important for theory-building. Since the electoral systems was the one of the main statistically significant variables (along with mean district magnitude), gaining insight into what types of institutions are effective and efficient can be tremendously helpful to legislators and party leaders regarding institutional design and change. Even though the core hypothesis of Model 1b was not supported, this failure in results encourages another look through a “new institutional” lens. Regardless of ideas, the institutions of electoral systems still prevail as a primary determinant affecting whether or not women are elected to parliament.

The core hypothesis in Model 2b, on the contrary, did yield interesting results that ultimately present us with a new theoretical puzzle. This unexpected, yet significant result necessitates further in-depth analysis of the causing mechanisms of this interaction. I recommend incorporating case study analysis into future research designs. The fact that institutional change works to foster female representation in a political climate that might not be conducive to that type of electoral success suggests there is something within political parties that is having a conditional effect upon the dependent variable. Further, it is interesting that the stage one regression produced non-significant results with the interaction when it included electoral systems, but the second stage did yield statistically significant results for Model 2b when incorporating the mean district magnitude. This might suggest that the size of the district, i.e., how many seats are available, is a more robust measure of this institutional effect than the variable of electoral systems. What does this really mean? For countries that are characterized by proportional representation systems, we may observe a wide variation in the number of districts within these types of systems. For countries with multi-member districts, it could be

that a large enough district magnitude would foster political parties with a certain ideology to have more success given the institutional context. In this case, future research needs to focus on what is it about rightist parties and a larger mean district magnitude that cause a higher percentage of women to be elected to parliament, particularly compared to leftist parties, who we would expect to be associated with this positive effect on the dependent variable.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COMPLETE REGRESSION RESULTS

Stage One Regression Analysis

Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
PW	175	15.59	10.27	1.3	42.7
ES	175	00.71	.4557	0	1
LQ	175	00.14	.3510	0	1
RILE	165	1.204	11.36	-31.02	39.86
ES*RILE	165	.0102	9.249	-31.02	36.60

Regression 1a

PW	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	95% CI
Constant	10.28	1.717	5.98	0.000	6.76, 13.79
ES	7.656	2.874	2.66	0.013	1.77, 13.54
LQ	-3.608	3.155	-1.14	0.263	-10.07, 2.86
RILE	-.0696	.0964	-0.72	0.476	-.267, .128

F (3, 28) = 3.53

Prob>F = 0.0276

R-squared = 0.1157

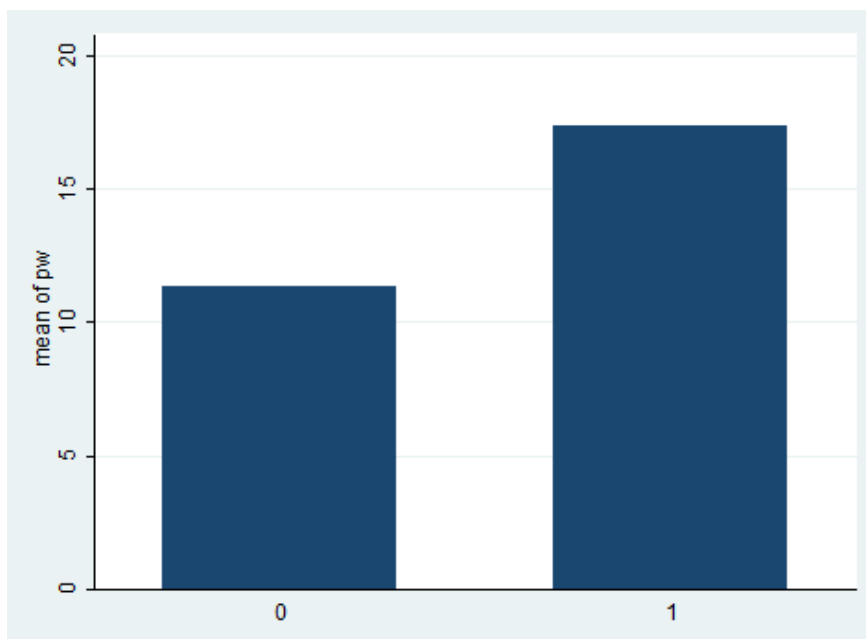
Root MSE = 9.8299

Collinearity Test- VIF

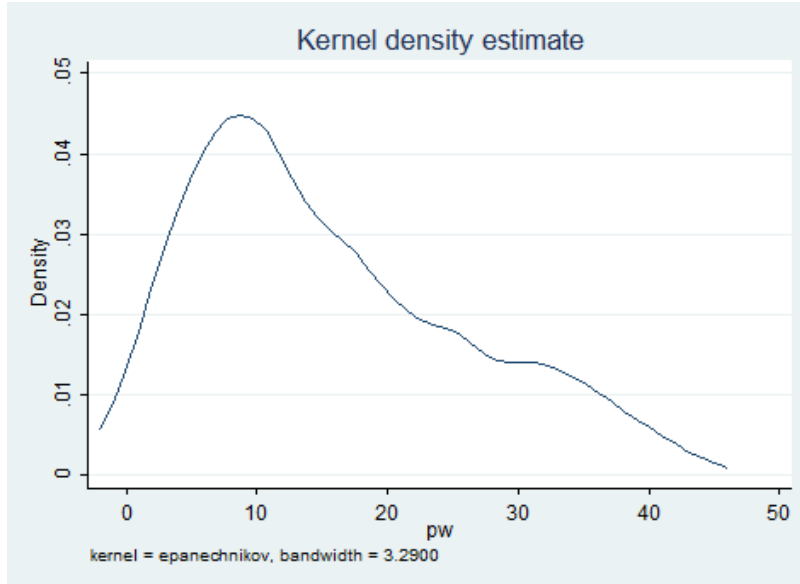
Variable	VIF	1/VIF
ES	1.09	.9146
LQ	1.09	.9167
RILE	1.05	.9565
Mean VIF	1.08	

Model 1a

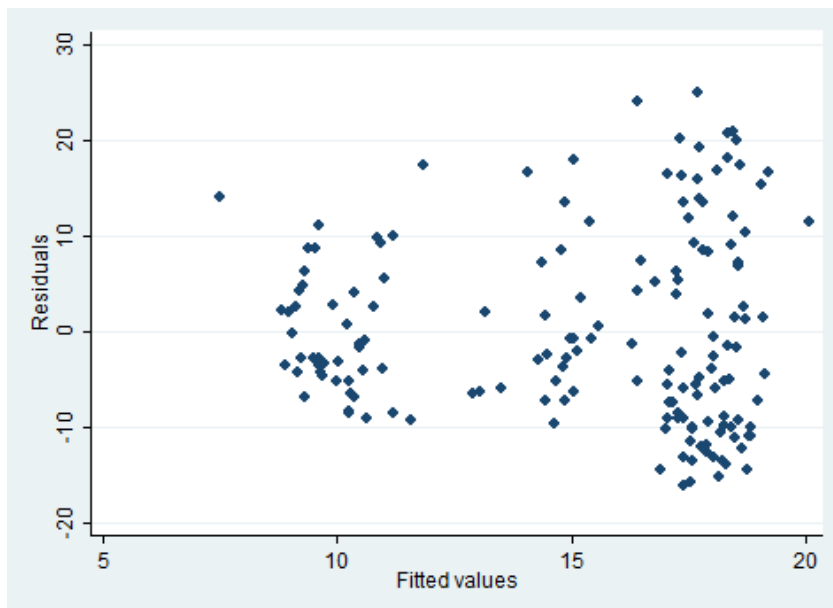
Distribution of Percentage of Women Elected according to Electoral Systems



Density Plot of Percentage of Women Elected



Residuals vs Fitted Values Plot Model 1a



Regression 1b

PW	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	T	P> t	95% CI
Constant	10.05*	2.126	4.73	.000	5.7, 14.41
ES	7.90*	3.181	2.48	.019	1.38, 14.41
LQ	-3.71	3.181	-1.17	.254	-10.22, 2.81
RILE	-0.02	.1540	-0.11	.909	-.333, .298
ES*RILE	-0.08	.1933	-0.40	.695	-.473, .319

F (4, 28) = 3.03

Prob>F = 0.0340

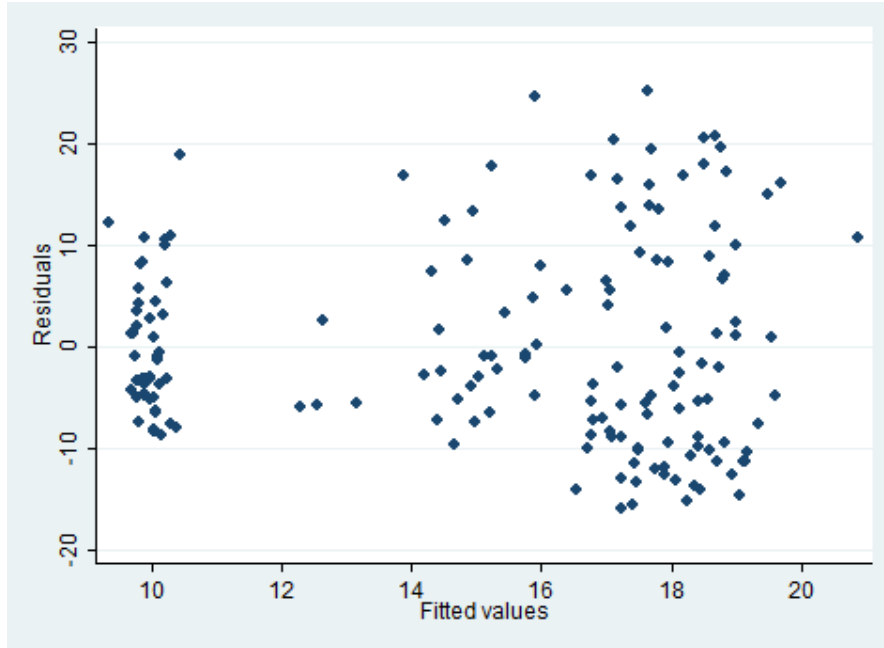
R-squared = 0.1171

Root MSE = 9.8523

Collinearity Test- VIF

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
ES	1.17	.8553
LQ	1.10	.9101
RILE	3.24	.3083
ES*RILE	3.17	.3151
Mean VIF	2.17	

Residuals vs. Fitted Values Plot Model 1a



Stage Two Regression Analysis

Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
PW	175	15.59	10.27	1.3	42.7
MDM	153	012.74	28.66	0	1
LQ	175	.1429	.3509	0	1
RILE	165	1.204	11.36	-31.02	39.86
MDM*RILE	165	-47.62	302.81	-2626.5	331.33

Regression 2a

PW	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	95% CI
Constant	15.15	2.213	6.85	.000	10.61, 19.68
MDM	.0649	.0231	2.81	.019	.018, .112
LQ	-.5196	3.372	-0.15	.254	-7.43, 6.39
RILE	-.0719	.1045	-0.69	.910	-.286, .142

F (3, 28) = 4.24

Prob>F = 0.0137

R-squared = 0.0443

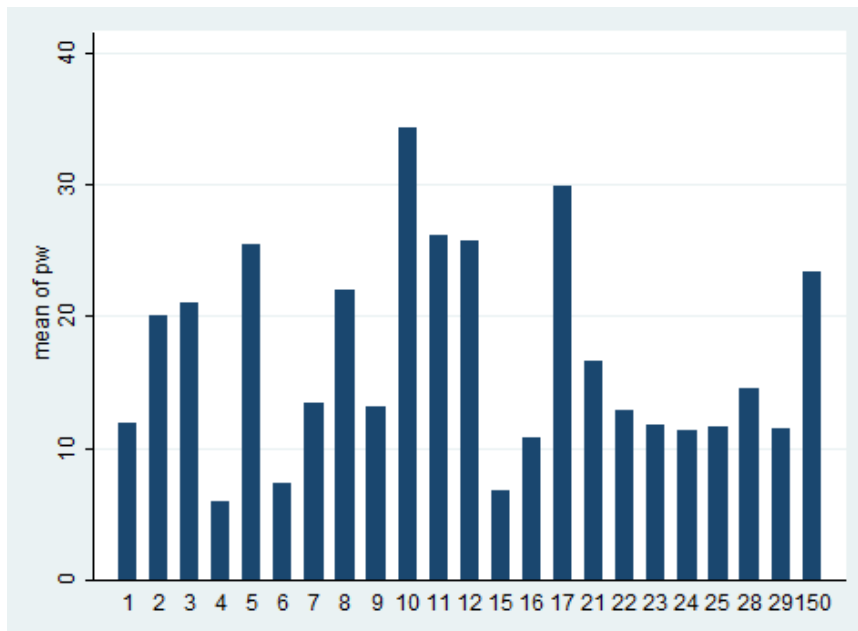
Root MSE = 10.321

Collinearity Test- VIF

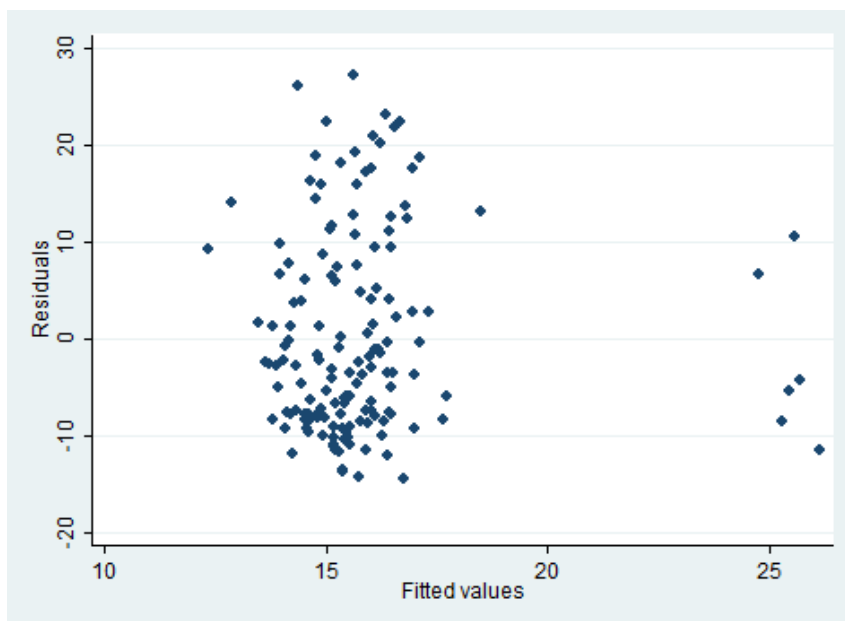
Variable	VIF	1/VIF
MDM	1.05	.9527
LQ	1.02	.9825
RILE	1.06	.9411
Mean VIF	1.04	

Model 2a

Distribution of Percentage of Women Elected according to Mean District Magnitude



Residuals vs Fitted Values Plot Model 2a



Regression 2b

PW	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	T	P> t	95% CI
Constant	14.97	2.167	6.91	.000	10.53, 19.41
MDM	.1089	.0327	3.33	.002	.042, .176
LQ	-.7905	3.502	-0.23	.823	-7.96, 6.38
RILE	-.1149	.1104	-1.04	.307	-.341, .111
MDM*RILE	.0058	.0028	2.06	.049	.00003, .0115

F (4, 28) = 4.24

Prob>F = 0.0083

R-squared = 0.0551

Root MSE = 10.297

Collinearity Test- VIF

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
MDM	2.40	.4161
LQ	1.02	.9759
RILE	1.27	.7866
MDM*RILE	2.79	.3586
Mean VIF	1.87	

Residuals vs Fitted Values Plot Model 2b

