Article

Party Politics

Women to the rescue: The gendered effects of public discontent on legislative nominations in Latin America

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Abstract
Political parties act as gatekeepers, meaning that improvements in the representation of women depend on parties' willingness to nominate women candidates. Previous research suggests that party characteristics and gender quotas largely explain women's nominations, but overlooks the political context in which parties operate. This study highlights the gendered outcomes that occur when parties make nomination decisions in times of public discontent, namely increasing political distrust and increasing perceived corruption. We theorize that parties hold similar biases to voters: gender stereotypes that regard women as more trustworthy and honest should advantage women as political trust falls and perceptions of corruption rise. We hypothesize that parties nominate larger percentages of women in these circumstances. Using two waves of data from over 100 political parties in 18 Latin American countries, we find that parties nominate more women when a large proportion of the public distrusts the national legislature, providing support for the theory.

Keywords
candidate nomination, candidate selection, gender stereotypes, political parties, women's representation

Introduction

Gender stereotypes matter when women run for office and when women govern. Voters perceive candidates in gendered terms, such as viewing women as less corrupt and more trustworthy (Barnes and Beaulieu, 2014; Morgan and Buice, 2013) and attributing women more competence in stereotypically feminine policy areas (Dolan, 2010). Women executives are judged more harshly than similarly performing men executives (Reyes-Housholder and Thomas, 2018), especially on their performance on security and corruption (Carlin et al. forthcoming). Do parties share and act on the same gendered notions as voters and constituents? Scholars have stressed how parties select women candidates in response to electoral rules, such as gender quotas (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009), and organizational structures, including party characteristics (Hinojosa, 2012) and party norms (Bjarnegård and Kenny, 2016). Yet parties might also base candidate nomination decisions on the public mood, anticipating when women candidates are viewed as "useful" for maximizing the party's vote share. If the party selectorate uses the same gendered cues as voters, then women's access to electoral office—a key indicator of the quality of democracy—depends on the political context, suggesting that efforts to boost women's

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representation by reforming electoral institutions and party structures can only do so much.

We examine how gender stereotypes shape party selectors' decisions to run women in contexts of discontent. Work on women as party leaders (rather than women as legislative candidates) suggests that women win party leadership when parties are in crisis, as captured by plummeting popularity or falling electoral success (Beckwith, 2015; O'Brien, 2015). While party crisis reduces the strategic value of party leadership for men, such moments could make women seem more valuable. In these contexts, gendered ideas that women are more trustworthy or, that women, as the traditionally underrepresented group, can signal a fresh start, work to women's advantage.

This same logic should apply outside the party: as voters become increasingly restive, parties should nominate more women. Whether public discontent brings more women into national politics is an urgent question, as political parties in advanced and young democracies alike face turbulent times. Voters across the globe perceive that party elites are out of touch, corrupt, and failing to bring about economic progress. Accurate or not, these perceptions have serious consequences for election outcomes. Our data come from a period in Latin America (2004–2012) characterized by rising dissatisfaction with government performance, increasing electoral volatility, and myriad corruption scandals (Joignant et al., 2017; Schwindt-Bayer, 2018; Telles and Mello, 2017). Other scholars have examined how these trends interrelate with democratic attitudes and support for traditional elites (Catterberg and Moreno, 2005; Mainwaring, 2006; Moreno, 2002; Telles, 2015). We pivot to asking whether public discontent has gendered effects on candidate nomination.

Using two waves of data for over a hundred unique political parties from 18 democratic Latin American countries, we explore how levels of distrust and perceived corruption shape parties' decisions to nominate women. The widespread adoption of gender quota laws, but with different rules and regulations, adds variation to the institutional backdrops in which Latin American parties make nomination decisions, allowing us to isolate the gendered effects of discontent from the institutions most directly associated with women's nominations. We find that parties indeed respond to discontent in gendered ways. Stereotypes about women as less corrupt and more trustworthy affect how many women the party nominates. Women's nominations increase as the public becomes more distrustful of their representatives and more likely to view corruption as pervasive. In particular, the relationship between distrust and women's nominations persists after controlling for confounding factors, including quota laws. Taken together, we find evidence that gender stereotypes about women's talents and attributes matter not just for voters, but also for the party selectorate who nominates women in the first place.

Gender, candidate selection, and political context

Focusing on the relationship between the gendered effects of the political context, in this case, the gendered effects of public discontent, and candidate nomination brings together several literatures not often placed in dialogue. Scholars examining the outcomes of candidate selection have traditionally focused on party-level explanations (Hazan and Rahat, 2010; Siavelis and Morgenstern, 2008), with feminist institutional scholars emphasizing how parties' formal and informal rules discriminate against women (Bjarnegård, 2013; Kenny, 2013). Institutional-level explanations, in contrast, have emphasized how electoral systems and gender quotas shape women's nominations, often concluding that institutions have larger effects than overall attitudes toward women as political leaders (Tripp and Kang, 2008). While this work acknowledges that gender stereotypes may matter, most empirical research linking stereotypes to women candidates has examined voter attitudes. However, the party selectorate—those who make candidate selection decisions—operates within and responds to the same contexts as voters themselves.

Parties, institutions, and candidate selection

Political parties serve as the primary avenues through which citizens obtain influence over formal politics, and they control access to positions of power within the state. As such, parties act as gatekeepers—determining who can win and wield influence over politics and policy. Norris and Lovenduski (1995) pushed party politics scholars to account for the gendered consequences of parties' gatekeeping roles, highlighting how parties' norms and practices excluded women, and opening up new avenues of research into why and when parties choose women rather than men (Bjarnegård, 2013; Hinojosa, 2012; Kenny, 2013). Yet even as more women enter politics, they remain underrepresented in positions of influence. For instance, women in Latin America fill parties' rank-and-file, but occupy only 23% of seats on parties' national executive boards (Morgan and Hinojosa, 2018). Similarly, women held about 25% of seats in the region's legislatures throughout the 2000s (Schwindt-Bayer, 2018: 58).

To explain this trend, researchers have emphasized the role of male bias within parties: promotion mechanisms, including candidate selection procedures, reproduce "homosocial capital"—like promotes like—and so men are favored and women are actively sidelined (Bjarnegård, 2013). Women remain outside the selectorate within political parties. At the same time, party-level factors such as bureaucratization, centralization, and inclusivity of decision-making can advantage women (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg, 2016; Hinojosa, 2012): fewer and more

open-minded selectors operating under transparent rules might be less parochial and more willing to promote women. Party ideology can also matter, with left parties more likely to promote women generally (Caul, 1999) and more likely to have party-level quotas for women candidates specifically (Davidson-Schmich, 2016). However, party ideology becomes less important for women's nominations after controlling for other factors, including electoral institutions (Funk et al., 2017).

Indeed, institutional factors have emerged as among the most important predictors of women's nominations. Proportional representation systems regularly produce more female candidates than plurality systems (Duverger, 1955). Proportional representation, especially when combined with large district magnitude, creates incentives for parties to diversify their candidate lists; similarly, larger party magnitude leads to the inclusion of greater numbers of women candidates (Matland, 1993). Thus, parties operating in proportional representation systems can afford to be "generous" when distributing nominations, choosing larger numbers of women overall, because women candidates do not "take away" electoral opportunities from men. Overall, parties promote more women when they have more electoral opportunities to distribute.

Many political parties also operate in countries with gender quota laws. In 1991, Argentina adopted the modern era's first gender quota law for candidacies, mandating that 30% of a party's candidacies go to women. Quotas quickly spread across the globe as a means to "fast track" the incorporation of women into politics (Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2005). Over 75 countries worldwide, from advanced industrialized democracies to semi-democratic states, now elect their legislatures using some form of quota law (Hughes et al., 2019). Well-designed and regularly enforced quota laws significantly raise the proportion of women nominated and elected (Htun and Jones, 2002; Paxton et al., 2010; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). Quotas even wash out the explanatory effects of other national-level factors, such as economic development and cultural attitudes toward women in power (Tripp and Kang, 2008). At the same time, parties' own candidate selection norms and practices interact with national-level affirmative action measures (Hinojosa, 2012; Piscopo, 2016; Verge and Espírito Santo, 2016). Parties can over- or under-comply with national quota laws, and so some party-level variation persists.

Gender stereotypes and public discontent

While parties and institutions shape women's nominations, gender stereotypes shape voters' behavior and preferences. Voters use gendered beliefs to assess women's leadership potential, traits, and policy competencies (Dolan, 2010; Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Paxton and Kunovich, 2003). Increasingly, however, scholars find that stereotypes behave dynamically, meaning their application changes with the political context. For instance, women are seen as having more masculine traits as their overall participation in politics increases (Diekman et al., 2005) and women candidates convey more trustworthiness when electoral fraud is likely (Barnes and Beaulieu, 2014). The latter finding particularly highlights how certain gender stereotypes—for example, that women are less corrupt or more honest—may resonate more in some contexts than others.

Gender stereotypes may thus make women more attractive candidates in certain circumstances. Women may benefit from times of low political trust: given their historical underrepresentation relative to men, women are often seen as outsiders who can generate political renewal (Smith et al., 2017). When trust in government is low, voters—both male and female—are more supportive of female political leaders (Morgan and Buice, 2013).[1] Generally, Latin Americans view women as more trustworthy than men. In 2009, the Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics found that 7 in 10 Brazilians believed that having greater numbers of women in politics would lead to greater honesty (Wylie, 2018: 17). Polling data from Mexico City also reveals sizeable differences in views of male and female politicians. More than half of women (52.7%) and one-third of men (35.3%) agreed with the statement that "women are more honest than men when they serve in a political position" (Fernández Poncela, 2014: 69).

Similarly, women candidates may be preferred over male candidates when the public perceives their government as highly corrupt. Women may be seen as inherently more honest, as naturally more risk averse, or more likely to eschew corruption for strategic reasons, because they are more likely to experience monitoring and thus more likely to get caught (Barnes and Beaulieu, 2018). The mechanism notwithstanding, voters perceive that women are less susceptible to corruption, expressing more support for women candidates as they become angrier about government corruption (Morgan and Buice, 2013). As Wylie argues for Brazil: "Public discontent with the corruption scandals of recent years and societal perceptions of women as novel candidates who are more honest and less corrupt (however essentialist) contribute to making women competitive contenders for the Senate" (2018: 178). Similarly, individuals are more likely to suspect that corrupt activities take place when elections involve male rather than female candidates (Barnes and Beaulieu, 2014). Survey data from Latin America in 2012 also show that respondents are considerably more likely to say that "men are more corrupt than women" than to say that "women are more corrupt than men" (Smith et al., 2017).

Rising discontent can affect all parties in the system, as public attitudes shape the context—or "decision environment" (Funk et al., 2017; Verge and Astudillo, 2019)—in which parties nominate candidates. Consequently, manifestations of discontent could advantage

women across party types. Scholars have suggested that some public attitudes—such as dissatisfaction with economic performance—disadvantage women legislative candidates (Funk et al., 2017), but the notion that discontent can *benefit* women's careers usually surfaces only in studies of women executives. For instance, crises within parties facilitate women's access to party leadership, including the post of prime minister (Beckwith, 2015; O'Brien, 2015). Falling public support leads European parties to run women as regional premiers (Verge and Astudillo, 2019). Corruption scandals and desire for change also facilitated the nomination of women presidential candidates in Latin America, nominations which often resulted in victory (Reyes-Housholder and Thomas, 2018). Brazil's Dilma Rousseff, for instance, became party leader amidst a far-reaching bribery scandal, earning her the nickname "cleaning lady" (Macaulay, 2017: 131).

Taking this logic to the country- (rather than party-) level and to the legislative branch, we propose that if parties' primary goal is to maximize votes, then parties will nominate the candidates seen as most useful *given* current political conditions. Scholars have repeatedly signaled the universality of party leaders' resistance to relinquishing power to women (Bjarnegård and Kenny, 2016; Roza, 2010), but the political context evolves. Thus, parties' nomination decisions depend not only on their characteristics and strategic response to electoral rules but also on the broader contexts in which they operate. Parties may read the political context in terms of gender stereotypes to determine whether women are beneficial to the party's ability to win votes. If distrust of politics and disgust toward corruption are high, then parties may well nominate more women.

The gendered effects of discontent on women's nominations

Understanding whether particular manifestations of discontent affect women's nominations is important because increasing the proportion of women legislators requires that women first appear on the ballot. Of course, simply being nominated is not enough, as parties in many systems control not only ballot access but also ballot ranking, campaign resources, and district assignment. Parties may still erode opportunities for women by placing them in unelectable list positions or in unelectable districts (Ryan et al., 2010) or by failing to provide them with campaign resources and support (Wylie, 2018). Nonetheless, the mere proportion of women nominated on its own exerts significant influence over the proportion of women elected (Funk et al., 2017). Thus, aggregate nomination outcomes are worthy of study in their own right.

Political parties' deliberations about how to maximize their seat share are strategic and calculated in response to the current context, including levels of public discontent during the election. We argue that parties' nomination decisions in response to public discontent have gendered effects because the selectorate (consciously or subconsciously) relies on gender stereotypes as they decide *which* candidates to nominate. These stereotypes should affect all party selectors, whether they comprise a large group (e.g. members at a nominating convention) or small group (e.g. party elites choosing candidates in a centralized process). For this reason, gender stereotypes should matter regardless of candidate selection procedures, which vary dramatically within countries and within parties, as parties frequently use different methods in different districts (Freidenberg, 2005; Hinojosa, 2012; Siavelis and Morgenstern, 2008).[2]

Selectors may draw on their own perceptions about men's and women's abilities and attributes or may engage in "imputed discrimination," meaning they rely on their beliefs about voters' prejudices to guide their decision-making (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). Neither the beliefs' origin nor their accuracy matters; what matters is that these beliefs exist, shaping nomination decisions. Parties attempt to attract voters by presenting a certain image, and regardless of whether the selectorate utilizes gender stereotypes implicitly or explicitly, or whether they themselves are biased or believe voters are biased, the effects on women's nominations will be the same.

We highlight two important circumstances in which gender stereotypes may lead parties to favor a larger proportion of women candidates. First, the selectorate might think that women can resuscitate the party's image as public discontent with the political establishment grows, as when voters distrust the national legislature. Because electoral politics is traditionally dominated by men, women are typically viewed as newcomers or fresh faces. This belief in women's outsider status persists even if women have been present in national-level politics for some time and even if the candidates themselves have previous political experience (Murray, 2010; Reyes-Housholder and Thomas, 2018). Furthermore, because traditional gender norms associate women with higher morality and more civic-mindedness, women are seen as more trustworthy. When the public distrusts their current politicians, parties can nominate women to convey renewal. When voters are eager to "throw the bums out," parties may nominate women to signal that the party is changing course and thus deserving of voters' trust.

H1: Women's nominations increase as the public becomes more distrustful of the legislature.

Second, when voters perceive corruption to be widespread among elected officials, parties may turn to women candidates to signal their party's honesty. In recent years, much academic work has analyzed the relationship between women's representation and actual levels of corruption (e.g. Esarey and Schwindt-Bayer, 2018; Goetz, 2007; Sung, 2012). However, our concern lies instead with

perceptions of women as less corrupt than men, not whether women are actually less likely than men to engage in corruption. If party selectors think that women are less corrupt than men or believe that voters think women are less corrupt than men, then parties will nominate more women as perceptions of government corruption rise.

H2: Women's nominations increase as the public perceives corruption to be commonplace.

Explaining women's nominations in Latin America

We examine how gender stereotypes about women's greater honesty and trustworthiness affect candidate selection outcomes. While we are unable to observe the exact process by which gender stereotypes enter into parties' candidate selection calculations or procedures, we can measure the aggregate consequences of gender stereotypes by observing whether more women or more men are nominated in different contexts. To do so, we take advantage of a novel data set generated during the Inter-American Development Bank's project on Gender and Political Parties in Latin America (GEPPAL, by its Spanish acronym). The GEPPAL project surveyed country experts in two waves, asking questions about parties' support for and promotion of women.

The 2009 GEPPAL wave includes parties in 18 countries, covering elections between 2004 and 2009, and the 2012 wave includes parties in 15 countries, covering elections between 2009 and 2012 (three countries did not hold elections between 2009 and 2012). For each of these elections, only parties receiving 5% of lower house seats were included. Combining the two survey waves results in a panel data set with 168 total observations, in which 59 parties appear in both survey waves and 50 parties appear only once. Parties may appear only once because of high electoral volatility during this period: consistent with rising levels of dissatisfaction (Schwindt-Bayer, 2018), many traditional political parties fragmented into separate parties and new competitors entered the arena. We combine the unique GEPPAL data with party- and country-level variables from multiple sources. In the final data set, the unit of analysis is the *party-country-election year*, meaning that each observation corresponds to an individual political party in a given country during a given election year. Our dependent variable is the percentage of women each party nominated to the legislature, taken from the GEPPAL surveys.

Measuring trust and corruption

We capture discontent at the time of the election using country-level data from the AmericasBarometer survey by the Latin American Public Opinion Project.[3] To measure levels of trust, we estimate general distrust in the legislature by summing the percentage of respondents who select 1, 2, or 3 on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates no trust and 7 indicates a lot of trust. The resulting variable indicates the level of distrust in the national legislature during the time of the election.[4] To measure levels of perceived corruption, we use the percentage of the population that perceives public corruption to be widespread, summing the percentage of respondents who believe that corruption among public officials is common or very common. The resulting variable indicates the level of perceived corruption in each country at the time of the election. Importantly, these two manifestations of discontent do not always go together. Our two measures are correlated at 0.39, indicating that these forms of discontent are distinct.

Control variables

In the multivariate analyses presented below, we include several control variables that may intervene in the relationship between discontent and parties' decisions about women's nominations. First, we control for two other forms of discontent that may also be present during the election: public dissatisfaction with the economy and with the executive's performance. We again use the AmericasBarometer survey data, creating variables capturing the percentage of respondents who perceive the national economic situation to be bad or very bad, and the percentage of respondents that rate the current president's job performance as bad or very bad. For both measures, higher values indicate greater discontent. We do not expect these forms of discontent to favor women's nominations. In fact, they may disadvantage women: gender stereotypes about women's policy competencies hold that men are better economic managers, and the electoral uncertainty introduced by low executive approval may make parties hesitant to risk running women (Funk et al., 2017).

Following the logic that certain contexts make parties more willing to nominate women, we control for political competition and the party's seat share. Parties will become more willing to nominate women when facing fewer competitors and when holding more seats in the legislature, because in each case they anticipate more electoral spoils to distribute. We measure political competition by calculating the effective number of parties that competed in the most recent election, based on the proportion of votes won by each party (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979). This measure essentially weights each party by its vote share to generate a measure of how many parties are competitive in the current electoral environment. We measure each party's seat share by calculating the percentage of lower house seats that are held by the party at the time of the election.[5]

We also control for other party characteristics that could facilitate women's nominations: ideology and the party's

overall "women friendliness." Conventional wisdom suggests that, because of their egalitarian principles, left-leaning political parties should be more gender inclusive, whereas parties of the right, given their more traditional ideas about women, should be more reluctant to include women as candidates (Caul, 1999). We measure party ideology using Baker and Greene's "Latin American Legislative Election Results with Party Ideology Scores," which is based on expert evaluations. Party ideology ranges from 1 (extreme left) to 20 (extreme right). We control for each party's women friendliness using three variables from the GEPPAL surveys: whether the party has a female president or secretary, whether the party's statute mentions gender equality, and whether the party has an internal gender quota for women candidates. The latter represents parties' signals that women's inclusion matters, because weak enforcement often renders party quotas more symbolic than substantive (Roza, 2010). We combine these variables using factor analysis to generate a measure of women friendliness. The resulting variable is continuous, with larger values indicating that the party is friendlier toward women, and vice versa.

Finally, at the country level, we control for gender quota laws, the percentage of women legislators currently in the lower house, whether the country elects its legislature using closed-list proportional representation (CLPR), and the second observation for each country. For quota laws, we measure the minimum percentage of candidates specified by the quota law, so countries that lack a quota are coded as zero. We opt for the quota threshold rather than the quota strength, as countries that had quotas had the most effective version given their electoral system.[6] For the percentage of women presently in the lower house, we use data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union. We expect that women officeholders will affect women's nominations by increasing the pool of potential female candidates with previous legislative experience, including incumbents. The presence of women in the legislature might also create a norm of women's representation that influences all parties' nomination decisions. For CLPR, we include a dummy variable (CLPR compared to all other systems), as studies have shown that women's political representation is highest in these systems (Alles, 2014; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). Finally, we include a dummy variable equal to one for countries present in the second wave of GEPPAL, to control for potential serial correlation.

The effects of discontent on women's nominations

Women's representation as political candidates in Latin America has increased significantly in recent decades, largely due to the implementation of gender quota laws. Yet, despite these improvements, in the election years we study (2004–2012), on average, women made up just 26% of parties' candidates for the lower (or unicameral) chamber. In fact, only 61 parties—of the 160 that reported data on women's nominations—nominated at least 30% women, and only 31 parties nominated 40% women or more. Overall, the percent women nominated ranged from 0 to 60, indicating that some Latin American parties nominated all men, but others nominated a majority (or close to a majority) of women.

Conventional wisdom and past research suggest that gender quotas and party ideology are among the most important predictors of women's nominations. In the context of Latin American parties, we find that these two factors are indeed important. When combined, quotas and ideology explain a little over a third of the variation we observe in women's nominations (full regression results not shown). However, this result also means that nearly two-thirds of the variation in women's nominations remain unexplained by quotas and ideology. Figure 1 plots the percentage of women nominated by each party across ideology and national quota laws for each country. The solid lines mark each country's quota threshold, identifying the minimum percentage of women required to be nominated by the quota law. Notably, the figure lacks a clear downward trend when moving from left-leaning parties to right-leaning ones, contrary to what the conventional wisdom would suggest. In other words, there is not clear visual evidence that left parties nominate substantially more women compared to right parties. Further, while some parties are clustered around or above the quota threshold, many others—notably parties in Bolivia, Brazil, and Panama—fall far short of meeting the quota. Finally, countries such as Chile and Uruguay lacked a quota law during this time period, meaning that determinants beyond quotas and ideology must affect women's nominations in each country.

Estimating the effects of discontent

Looking beyond quotas and party ideology, we theorize that the political context also shapes party gatekeepers' nomination decisions. Specifically, we highlight how distrust or corruption might favor women's nominations because of gender stereotypes that regard women as more moral, trustworthy, and honest. High levels of distrust and perceived corruption are not unusual in Latin America and appeared throughout the region during our period of study. Nonetheless, there is variation across countries as well as over time. In terms of distrust, an estimated 46% of Latin Americans expressed low trust in their national legislature between 2004 and 2012. But this average belies significant variation across countries. Uruguayans trusted their national legislature the most: an estimated 22% of Uruguayans reported low trust in the legislature in 2004, although this percentage rose to 32% in 2009. Respondents in neighboring Paraguay trusted their legislature the least, with an estimated 77% of the population reporting low trust in the national legislature.

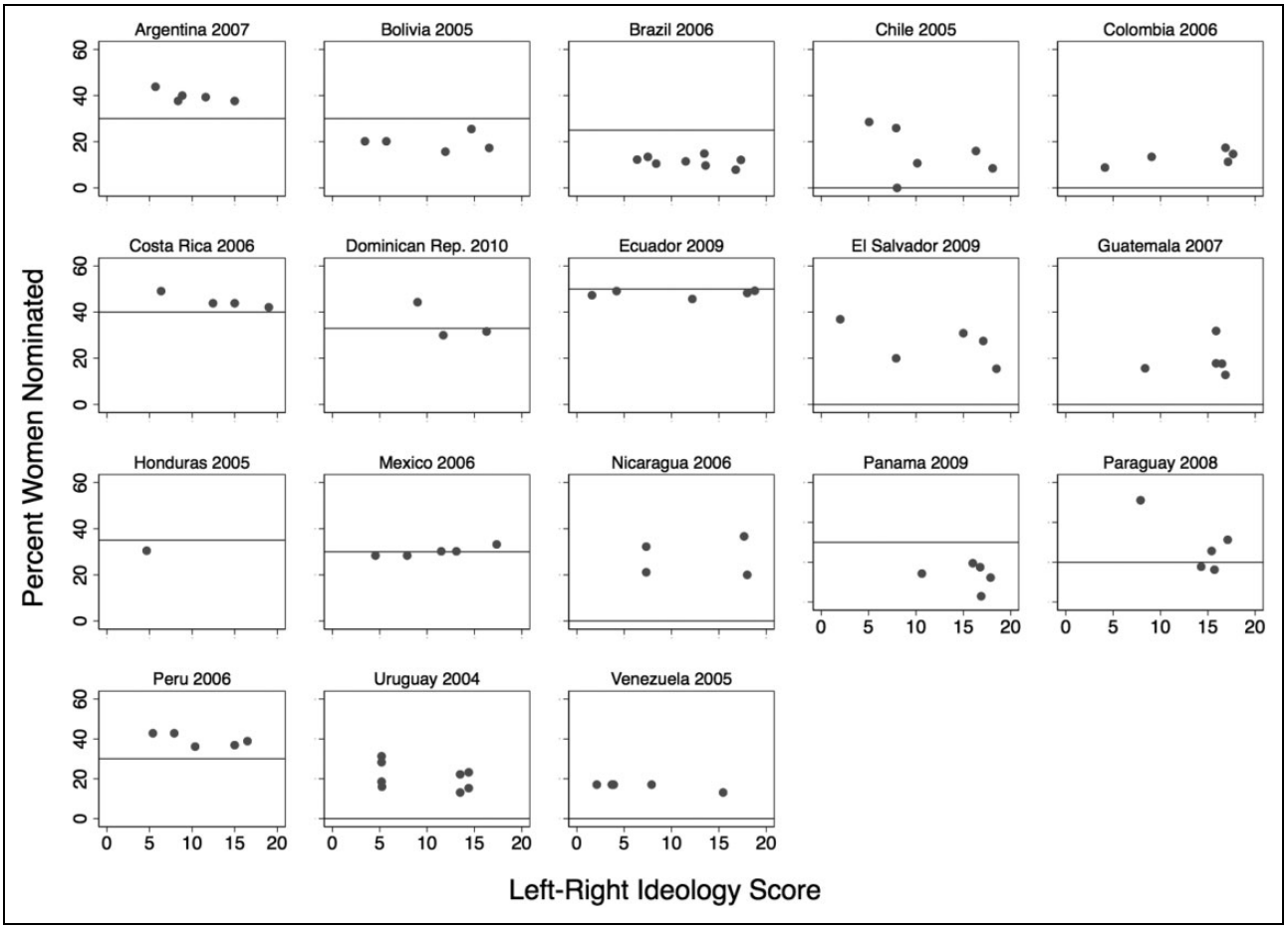

Figure 1. Variation in women's nominations across party ideology and quota thresholds. Note: Each dot represents a single political party. Quota thresholds denoted using solid lines. For presentation purposes, only data from the 2009 GEPPAL wave is used. GEPPAL: Gender and Political Parties in Latin America.

In terms of corruption, the vast majority of Latin Americans believed corruption in the public sector to be pervasive. Averaging across countries, between 2004 and 2012, an estimated 80% of Latin Americans viewed corruption among public officials as common or very common. The country with the lowest level of perceived corruption is Brazil in 2010. Yet, even there, over 69% of the population believed corruption to be commonplace (the same year Dilma Rousseff was elected). Even more stunning is Argentina in 2007, where 94% of the population believed that corruption was common (the highest value for this variable).

Examining the bivariate relationships between women's nominations and both distrust in legislatures and perceptions of corruption suggests that, as these forms of discontent increase, so does the percentage of women nominated. Visual representations of these relationships are presented in Figures 2 and 3, wherein the percentage of women nominated by each party is plotted across levels of distrust in the legislature (Figure 2) and perceptions of corruption (Figure 3). Each figure shows a positive relationship between women's nominations and increasing discontent. Simple bivariate regression analyses confirm the existence of these relationships statistically.[7] In terms of trust, the bivariate model estimates that a one percentage point increase in the percent of the population distrusting the legislature will result in a 0.19 percentage point increase in women's nominations ($p = 0.009$). Stated otherwise, parties are expected to nominate an additional 1% women when the percentage of the population that distrusts the legislature increases by five percentage points. In terms of corruption, the bivariate model estimates that a one percentage point increase in the percent of the population believing corruption to be widespread results in a 0.63 percentage point increase in women's nominations ($p = 0.000$).

Thus, the results of the two bivariate regressions suggest that the percentage of women nominated will increase as the public becomes more distrustful of their national legislature and as the public perceives corruption to be typical among public officials. These results provide preliminary support for the theory that the party

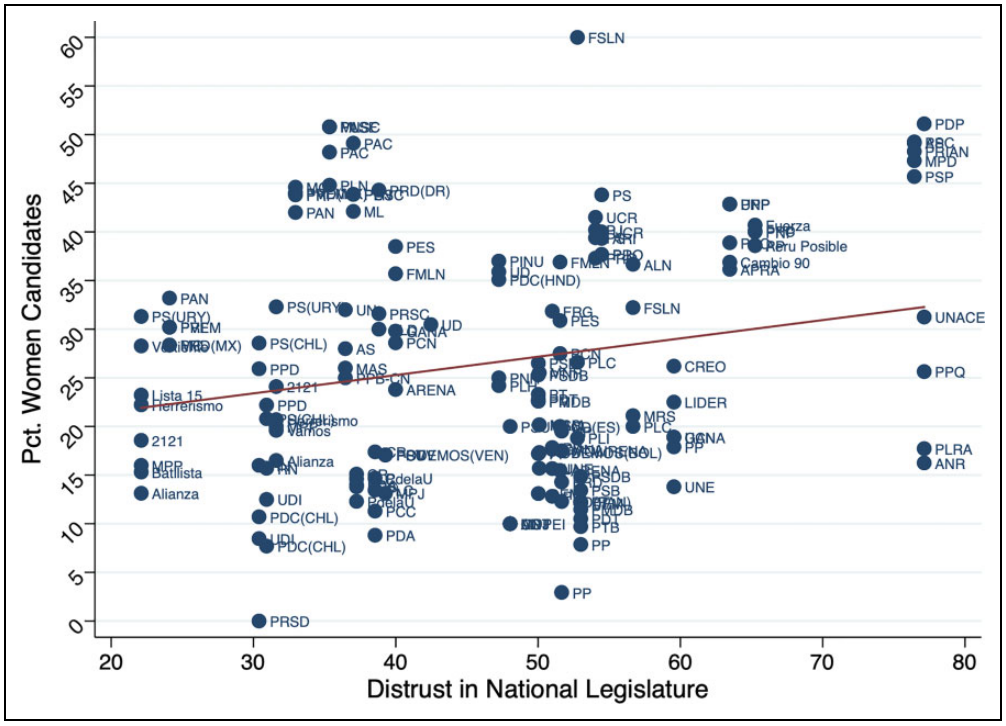

Figure 2. Relationship between women's nominations and distrust in the legislature.

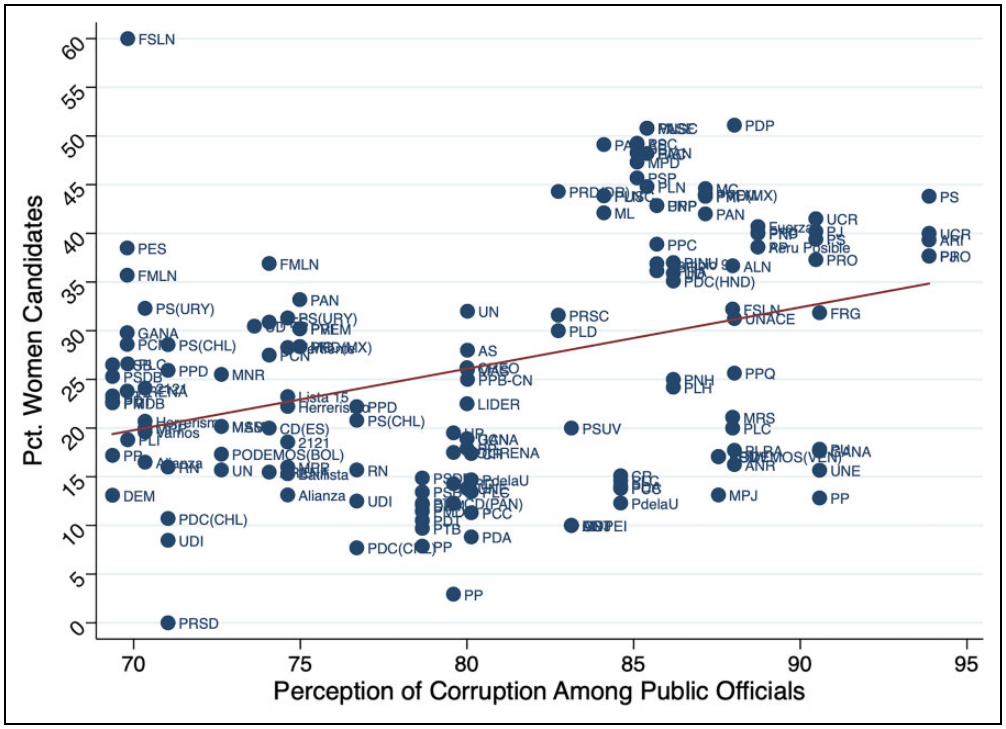

Figure 3. Relationship between women's nominations and perceptions of corruption.

selectorate will view women as more attractive candidates under certain conditions, such as when elections are held in contexts of pronounced distrust or large amounts of perceived corruption.

To probe the robustness of these results, we estimate a set of multivariate generalized least squares (GLS) models with random effects. The results are presented in Table 1. Each model presented in Table 1 includes the control

Table 1. The effects of distrust and corruption on women's nominations.

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Distrust in legislature	0.136* (0.060)		0.131* (0.061)
Corruption common		0.072 (0.091)	0.040 (0.091)
Perception poor economy	−0.026 (0.068)	0.016 (0.068)	−0.020 (0.070)
Exec. approval	−0.109 (0.077)	−0.105 (0.083)	−0.122 (0.082)
Prev. effective number of parties	−0.585^{+} (0.301)	−0.442 (0.301)	−0.576^{+} (0.303)
% Seats currently held	−0.063 (0.046)	−0.081^{+} (0.047)	−0.065 (0.047)
Ideology score	−0.406* (0.168)	−0.385* (0.171)	−0.405* (0.169)
Party women friendly	0.281 (0.679)	0.253 (0.689)	0.295 (0.681)
Quota threshold	0.430*** (0.057)	0.462*** (0.056)	0.430*** (0.057)
% Women prev. chamber	0.311** (0.110)	0.293** (0.114)	0.300** (0.112)
Closed-list PR	10.678*** (1.856)	10.801*** (1.889)	10.723*** (1.865)
Second survey wave	3.034*** (0.848)	3.268*** (0.867)	3.106*** (0.863)
Constant	13.010*** (3.839)	10.589 (7.740)	10.175 (7.660)
Overall R^2	0.629	0.619	0.630
Observations	160	160	160

Note: Models estimated using GLS with random effects. GLS: generalized least squares.
$^{+}p < 0.1$; $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$; $***p < 0.001$.

variables listed in the preceding section, which hold constant the effects of economic perceptions and executive approval as well as other party-level (seat share, ideology, and women friendliness) and country-level factors (effective number of parties, quota laws, women's legislative representation, electoral system type, and the second observation of each country).

The first model presented in Table 1 estimates the effect of distrust in the legislature on the percentage of women nominated by each party. Distrust in the legislature has a positive and statistically significant effect on women's nominations, even after controlling for possible confounding variables. Model 1 estimates that a one percentage point increase in the percentage of the population that distrusts the national legislature increases the percentage of women nominated by 0.14 percentage points (similar to the 0.19 percentage point increase predicted by the bivariate model). According to the model estimate, if levels of distrust were to increase from 20% of the population distrusting the national legislature to 80%—a 60 percentage point increase—we would expect parties' nomination of women to increase by 8.4 percentage points, on average.

The second model presented in Table 1 estimates the effect of perceived corruption on the percentage of women nominated. Model 2 predicts that a one percentage point increase in the percentage of the population that perceives corruption to be commonplace increases women's nominations by 0.07 percentage points (compared to 0.63 in the bivariate model). However, although the estimated relationship is positive as expected, the relationship is no longer statistically significant after controlling for additional variables.

Subtle differences in the way these variables are measured could explain why, after controlling for confounding factors, we observe stronger effects for distrust in the legislature compared to perceptions of corruption. Our measure of distrust asks about the legislature directly, echoing scholars' arguments that questions capturing dissatisfaction with institutions provide more valid measures of trust than questions about political actors (Catterberg and Moreno, 2005). Parties likely consider voters' beliefs about the legislative branch when making nomination decisions. In contrast, our measure of corruption asks about *public officials*, which can cue respondents to think about political figures outside the legislative branch, such as unelected bureaucrats and members of the security forces. Parties may be less sensitive to public attitudes that do not directly implicate the legislature, and so perceptions of widespread corruption may not influence their nomination decisions as heavily as manifestations of distrust in the legislature.[8] Supporting this notion, model 3 shows that distrust in the legislature remains statistically significant even after controlling for the simultaneous effects of perceived corruption.

In terms of the control variables, party ideology, quota laws, women's existing legislative representation, closed-list proportional representation systems, and inclusion in the second survey wave have a statistically significant effect on women's nominations in all models, as expected. However, parties' women friendliness is not statistically significant across any model specification. Robustness checks disaggregating the women friendliness measure into its three separate components (presence of women in party leadership, gender equality mentioned in party statute, and the adoption of a party quota) also reveal that no individual indicator has a statistically significant effect on women's nominations, contrary to expectations.[9]

Overall, the results of our analyses suggest that discontent can indeed have gendered effects. When a large proportion of the public distrusts the national legislature or perceives corruption to be pervasive among public officials, the party selectorate uses this information (either consciously or subconsciously) to make decisions about women's nominations to the lower house. However, our results also suggest that while the influence of distrust in the legislature remains robust across various model specifications, the influence of perceived corruption diminishes after controlling for other factors. Overall, these results provide support for the theory that parties rely on stereotypes of women as more honest and trustworthy to appeal to voters when public discontent is high. As the public becomes increasingly distrustful of politicians—and perhaps more perceptive of corruption as well—parties nominate larger percentages of women candidates to the legislature.

Conclusions

Gender stereotypes shape women's access to political power: voters and parties perceive that women's political talents and abilities differ from those of men. Yet whereas most gender stereotypes are presumed to disadvantage women—for instance, the perception that women are less competent in managing the economy and providing security—our study suggests that some gender stereotypes can, in certain contexts, advantage women. Times of discontent are not gender neutral, but neither do they always work against women. Stereotypes of women as more honest, more trustworthy, and less associated with the traditional political elite can advantage women during moments when the public distrusts politicians or perceives high amounts of political corruption. We find that these stereotypes affect candidate nomination outcomes even after controlling for factors that previous research indicates matter for women's nominations, such as electoral systems, quota laws, party ideology, and parties' women friendliness.

Even in Latin America, where most countries have adopted effective gender quota laws, context matters for which candidates are chosen. Turning a critical lens toward the gendered consequences of discontent provides important information about how political parties' response to the decision environment can undermine or enhance women's political representation. Yet even when parties propel women forward, the long-term advantage may not be present. The glass cliff analogy—that women are promoted during difficult times but ultimately positioned for failure—suggests that, if discontent were to become extreme, more women could obtain political power but with the deck stacked against them. Indeed, research on women executives has found that women are more likely to win nominations in such risky situations (Beckwith, 2015; Funk, 2017), and that women ascending to leadership posts during times of crisis have shorter tenures than men ascending in similar conditions (Thomas, 2018). When women fail to turn around declining parties or fail to restore confidence in systems otherwise viewed as illegitimate or corrupt, they risk perpetuating another, more pernicious gender stereotype: that women are not up to the job.

However, our study cannot identify exactly how and when party selectors take gender stereotypes into account. We look to the aggregate outcome of nomination decisions. Future scholars might pinpoint exactly which gender stereotypes, held by which selectors, intervene at which moments of candidate selection. Researchers could also examine whether the use of such stereotypes varies across candidate selection procedures.

Our study captures levels of public discontent, but future research might look to how parties' nomination of women responds as dissatisfaction waxes and wanes. One question is how parties behave as discontent persists or evolves into a crisis: do parties turn against women for being unable to "save" the party, or do they double-down on the positive messages women's presence may signal to voters? Another question is whether parties continue to nominate women once the public mood improves: do parties believe women have proven their mettle as capable politicians, or do they return to business-as-usual by privileging male candidates? Untangling the effects of prolonged discontent becomes especially important given many observers' fears that turbulent times are becoming the new normal in old and new democracies alike. These party-level and national-level dynamics offer fruitful avenues for researchers interested in the link between public attitudes, gender, and candidate selection.

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Notes

1. However, when women are perceived as political insiders (i.e. when women hold important political positions), they are no longer advantaged by low trust in government (Morgan and Buice, 2013).
2. Variation in candidate selection procedures also does not correspond with election system type.
3. Source: The AmericasBarometer by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), www.LapopSurveys.org. We thank LAPOP and its major supporters for making the data publicly available.
4. We use AmericasBarometer data from the year closest to the election. These data were collected before or during the election year, with the exception of four countries where data are only available the year after the election.
5. Vote share data comes from Baker and Green's "Latin American Legislative Election Results with Party Ideology Scores" (https://spot.colorado.edu/∼bakerab/data.html). Seat share data was collected from the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Parline Database (https://data.ipu.org), supplemented with original data collected by the authors. For their contributions to the Baker and Green data, we thank Baker and Green (2011), Coppedge (1998), Pop-Eleches (2009), and Wiesehomeier and Benoit (2009).
6. For example, all countries with CLPR and quota laws also included placement mandates and enforcement mechanisms.
7. Full OLS regression results are not presented here but are available upon request. The percentage of women nominated is correlated with distrust in the legislature at 0.21 ($p = 0.009$) and correlated with perceived corruption at 0.36 ($p = 0.000$).
8. No cross-national surveys ask about perceptions of corruption in the legislature.
9. Full results available upon request.

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