Political Parties and Gender Quota Implementation

The Role of Institutionalized Candidate Selection Procedures

Elin Bjarnegård
elin.bjarnegard@statsvet.uu.se

Pär Zetterberg
par.zetterberg@statsvet.uu.se

Department of Government, Uppsala University, Sweden

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Abstract

The role of political parties for electoral gender quota implementation has received limited empirical attention, despite the fact that parties are the main implementers of the reform. This paper addresses the issue by testing empirically the hypothesis that political parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures are more likely to implement legislative quotas and thus have a larger number of women candidates than other parties. The hypothesis is tested by making use of a unique dataset on almost 100 political parties in 18 Latin American countries. The empirical analysis provides support to the hypothesis: After quotas have been adopted, political parties with institutionalized selection procedures have on average 7 percent more women candidates than other parties. We qualify this finding by showing that implementation does not equal effectiveness. Parties with institutionalized recruitment structures do not put more women than others at the top of the candidate list, nor do they get more women elected. The analysis represents an initial attempt to properly operationalize the concept of institutionalization and, using large-scale statistical data, empirically examine its impact on gender quotas.
Gender quotas represent one of the widest reaching electoral reforms of the last decades. Approximately 100 countries across the globe have adopted such measures to increase the number of women in parliament and thus to level out gender inequalities in politics. An increasing body of research on the impact of quotas has shown that quotas may, but do not necessarily, increase the number of female legislators. In general, a specific quota type – reserved seats – generates the largest leap (in percent) of women in parliament, whereas candidate quotas (either voluntarily adopted by political parties or mandated in the constitution or electoral code) have shown to be slightly less effective. One reason as to why candidate quotas are not always effective is simply that they are not implemented. Because of political parties’ propensity to either disregard the quota rule as such or put women at the bottom of the lists, empirical research (mainly based on Latin American data) has shown that mandated candidate quotas (so called legislative quotas) are most effectively implemented whenever they include sanctions for non-compliance (e.g. annulation of the candidate list) as well as a placement mandate (to guarantee that women are put on electable slots).

A limitation with a focus on quota design is that such work tends to implicitly portray political parties as homogenous, responding equally to quota rules and regulations: “no sanctions, no implementation”, to put it simply. As a consequence, the role of political parties for the impact of legislative quotas has rarely been examined systematically, despite parties being the main implementers of the reform. Yet, political parties are heterogeneous, varying significantly in organizational structure, ideology, party culture, etc. Gender quotas as such do not affect these party features; they simply aim at influencing the outcome (or result) of parties’ candidate selection processes. Having the variety of political parties in mind, there are reasons to assume that political parties respond differently to quota policies, with some parties being more prone to implement them than others – regardless of whether sanctions for non-compliance are in place or not.

This paper assesses empirically the role of political parties in implementing legislative quotas, and thus brings together two bodies of literature that rarely speak to each other: party literature and research on gender quotas. More specifically, it pays attention to one aspect of political parties, namely the level of institutionalization (also referred to as formalization or bureaucratization) of the candidate selection process. It has been hypothesized that quota policies are most likely to be implemented by political parties that have a rule-bound decision
making process, that is, by parties in which the candidate selection process is institutionalized (Norris 1996). Until now, however, the lack of adequate large-scale data at the party level has made it difficult to properly operationalize the concept of institutionalization and empirically test the hypothesis.

With the use of unique data on almost 100 political parties, in 18 Latin American countries, the specific aim of this paper is to fill in this gap in the literature and test the hypothesis that political parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures are more likely to implement legislative quotas and thus have a larger number of women candidates than other parties. For each of the parties, the dataset includes information about issues such as the number of women on the candidate lists, the number of women elected, procedures used to select candidates, party ideology, mechanisms to increase the representation of women and minorities, etc.

To preview the results, the empirical analysis provides support to the hypothesis. Whenever there are legislative quotas in place, parties with institutionalized selection procedures are expected to have 7 percent more women candidates than political parties that do not have such selection procedures. With no quotas adopted, there is no such difference in number of women on the candidate lists between the two groups of parties. However, the analysis also presents an important qualification of this finding: While institutionalized recruitment structures do increase the degree to which parties implement the quota; they do not necessarily make quotas more effective. Parties with rule-bound selection procedures do not put more women than others at the top of the candidate list, nor do they get more women elected. Taken together, the analysis suggests that institutionalized selection procedures tend to make sanctions unnecessary. Institutionalized selection procedures do not however, take away the responsibility of policy makers to design the quota law in a way that – properly implemented – maximizes the possibilities of an effective outcome. Thus, rank order specifications are still pivotal. The analysis represents an initial attempt to properly operationalize the concept of institutionalization and, using large-scale statistical data, empirically examine its impact on quota implementation.

The paper proceeds as follows: In the next three sections, we briefly review the literature on the implementation of quotas, then theorize the relationship between institutionalized selection procedures and quota implementation, and then draw on Norris’s work (1996) to
operationalize the concept of institutionalization in candidate selection procedures. In the subsequent section, we present the data and measurements as well as the statistical model. Thereafter, we present the results of the empirical analysis. Finally, we conclude and discuss the implications of our findings.

The implementation and effectiveness of gender quotas

There are different types of electoral gender quotas, affecting different parts of the political recruitment process. First, aspirant quotas refer to the early stages of the recruitment process; a certain number of women should be among the pre-candidates. Second, candidate quotas put focus on the nominated, that is, on the political parties’ candidate lists. There should be a certain number (in percent) of women on the ballot. Third and finally, there are sometimes a number of special seats in the legislature that are reserved to women. Thus, in these cases, focus is on the elected. Only in this latter case do quotas provide women with actual guarantees of representation. In the other cases, quotas may increase the number of women in parliament; however, they do not necessarily do so. Their effectiveness hinges on, among other things, an effective implementation of the policies.

In this paper, focus is restricted to candidate quotas, more precisely to quotas that are adopted by law (i.e. legislative quotas). These should be contrasted with candidate quotas that are voluntarily adopted by specific political parties (so called party quotas). There are a number of factors, such as the electoral system, that impact how many women from candidate lists that finally end up in parliament: A proportional representation (PR) system with high district magnitude is likely to get more people on the list elected and thereby favor women; and a closed list system tends to make quotas more effective, as it does not give voters the possibility to favor male candidates over female ones. However, a fundamental requirement for quotas to be effective is that political parties implement the quota rule in the first place and put a specific number of women on the ballot. Yet, research on quota implementation has shown that political parties far from always do what the law requires. Gender quotas change power balances within political parties and they force party gatekeepers to put (female) newcomers on the lists while removing some of those (male politicians) that previously have been placed on the list. Thus, quotas tend to generate certain resistance within party organizations, which may impact the implementation process negatively.
As a result of poor implementation of legislative quotas, a number of countries have revised their quota policies and introduced sanctions for non-compliance. For instance, Mexico changed its quota law in 2002 to push the political parties to implement the policy: in the revised law, every candidate list that does not meet the quota requirements is nullified. Consequently, sanctions for non-compliance have become an important tool to guarantee that political parties implement legislative quotas: large-N statistical analyses of the effectiveness of quota policies have shown that sanctions are a crucial condition for quotas to increase the number of women in parliament.

Although sanctions for non-compliance are important for quotas to be implemented by political parties, they do not necessarily make quotas effective. Many political parties have chosen to implement quotas in a minimalist way, by putting women at the bottom of the candidate lists at non-electable slots. Therefore, a number of countries (e.g. Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica, etc.) have also included rank order requirements (or placement mandates) to make quotas more effective. Empirical analyses have shown that rank order specifications indeed are key mechanisms for making quotas work: combined with sanctions for non-compliance, quotas with placement mandates appear to substantively increase the number of women.

**Institutionalized candidate selection procedures and quota implementation**

By emphasizing the role of quota design for implementation of the policy, the literature has had a largely structural perspective: Whenever there are enforcement mechanisms such as sanctions and placement mandates, quotas are effectively implemented and they have the desired effects. Conversely, in the absence of such requirements, quotas tend not to be implemented and are thus largely toothless. We acknowledge the usefulness of analyzing how design matters for the successful implementation of quota policies; however, such an approach does not provide us with the full picture. Most importantly, it lacks an actor-perspective, that is, a focus on the main implementers of legislative quotas: political parties.

By highlighting the role of quota design and downplaying the role of actors, there is an implicit and perhaps unintentional assumption in the literature that political parties respond equally to quota policies. We find this assumption unlikely; rather, it is probable that
enforcement mechanisms such as sanctions for non-compliance are pivotal for quota implementation among some parties, whereas other parties require no sanctions to implement the reform. To reiterate, political parties vary in a large number of ways: their organizational structure, their ideology, their party culture, etc. As a consequence, we suggest that some political parties are more prone to implement quota policies than others.

The question then is which political parties are most likely to implement quotas. In this paper, we build on Norris’s work to test empirically one proposition: those political parties that have institutionalized their candidate selection procedures. In her work on political recruitment, Norris (1996) suggests that underrepresented groups such as women benefit from institutionalized recruitment structures, that is, from candidate selection procedures that are carried out according to written rules that are “detailed, explicit, standardized, implemented by party officials, and authorized in party documents”. The main reason is that institutionalized and formalized selection procedures, in contrast to patronage-based and informal processes, make it easy for outsiders to understand what it takes to get in. Or to put it differently: institutionalized recruitment structures make it difficult for gatekeepers to take completely arbitrary decisions. Patronage-based procedures, on the other hand, are generally characterized by party rules that are either brief or simply not implemented. Informal arrangements and personal relationships overtrump written rules, which also means that “procedures may vary from one selection to another”.

Norris takes the argument one step further. She puts the issue of recruitment structures in relation to quota policies and suggests that mandated quota rules (i.e. legislative quotas) are most likely to be implemented by those political parties that have institutionalized their selection procedures. The main reason is that these political parties, in contrast to parties that use patronage-based procedures, tend to take rules seriously. According to the argument, some parties are more likely to be rule-followers than others, regardless of the content of the rules. These parties have developed procedures – or a set of routines – for establishing and implementing formal rules. Decision making by different bodies within the organization is thus based on standardized rules and regulations.

Although Norris’s definition of institutionalization is oft-cited, the hypothesis about institutionalization and gender quotas has, to our knowledge, never been tested empirically. One reason for the lack of empirical tests is that comparative data at the party level (including
information about candidates and candidate selection procedures) have been scarce. As a consequence, the concept of institutionalization in candidate selection processes has not been sufficiently elaborated and properly operationalized. To enable a systematic large-N analysis, we build on Norris (1996) to theoretically specify and operationalize the concept of institutionalization.

**Operationalizing Norris’s definition of institutionalization**

When it comes to theoretically specifying institutionalization, we take our starting-point in Norris’ definition: “detailed, explicit, standardized, implemented by party officials, and authorized in party documents”. This definition tells us that formal institutionalization deals with rules that are to be found in party documents. It also tells us that these rules should be written out in some detail and they should be followed, i.e. implemented. Taking Norris’ definition seriously, we are thus faced with a three-dimensional concept, encompassing *authorization, specification and implementation*. Party rules should be authorized by written party documents, they should be specific enough to be clearly understood and they should be followed and implemented. We argue that, if we are to do Norris’ useful definition justice, we must operationalize it so as to encompass all three dimensions of institutionalization. This three-dimensionality has never been explicitly acknowledged, neither theoretically nor empirically.

Starting with the first criterion, *authorization*, we distinguish between those political parties that have written rules for how to select their candidates and those who have no formal rules whatsoever with respect to nominating candidates. In order for a political party to be characterized as having institutionalized candidate selection procedures, a key condition is that the party has written party rules for candidate selection process.

The second criterion, *specification*, puts an additional qualification to institutionalization: the formal rules should be “detailed, explicit and standardized”. This implies that they should not be overly general or vague, but that following these rules actually imposes important restrictions on the candidate selection procedure. The defining features of the candidate selection process should be specified. Hazan and Rahat point to four different aspects of candidate selection that should be considered in any theoretical framework analyzing such a procedure: eligibility criteria for candidacy, the selectorate, decentralization (or level of
decision-making), and appointment and voting system. In other words, reading the written rules, one should get as clear as possible an understanding of what the process is supposed to look like, who can become a candidate, who selects the candidates, where and how does this selection take place, and with what kind of decision rule. The process should be as specified as possible, giving as clear criteria as possible, and leaving as little room for improvisation as possible. In our examination of institutionalization, we are able to focus on two of these aspects, namely the ‘who’ (i.e. the selectorate) and the ‘where’ (the level of decision-making).

The third criterion concerns the implementation of formal rules. We must make sure that what is de jure authorized and specified in party regulation also matters for the de facto process. It is possible that formal written rules exist, and that they are quite specific in their wording – but nevertheless disregarded by political actors. This seems straightforward in theory, but is often more difficult to determine in practice. It is fairly common that candidate selection is a multi-stage process and that only parts of the stages involved are specified in writing. Often, what really matters for candidate selection departs from written regulations. For instance, party documents may specify that the party leader selects candidates, but this may only be a formal endorsement of a selection already made at a different level and by another selectorate. The real power struggle and difficult selection may have taken place at the local level, even if this level is not at all mentioned in party regulations.

Our elaboration of Norris’s definition of institutionalization thus leaves us with three criteria that all have to be fulfilled for any given aspect of a candidate selection process to be considered as institutionalized: Authorization, Specification and Implementation. The theoretical framework on which we base our operationalization is illustrated in Figure 1. With the theoretical scheme as a baseline, we believe that we are able to construct a valid measure of institutionalization.

\[\text{Figure 1}\]

1 Please see Appendix A for how the size of the selectorate and decentralization were measured.
AUTHORIZED?
Are there rules regarding candidate selection?

Yes
No

SPECIFIED?
Do the rules answer "where" and "who"?

Yes, both
Yes, one
No, none

IMPLEMENTED?
Are the rules implemented?

Yes, both
Yes, one
No, none

INSTITUTIONALIZED?
Is candidate selection institutionalized?

Fully
Partly
No

Figure 1. Operationalizing the concept of institutionalization: an illustration
**Data and methodology**

To test the hypothesis that quotas are most commonly implemented by political parties that have a rule-bound decision making process, we make use of data on almost 100 political parties in Latin America. *Género y Partidos Políticos en América Latina* [Gender and Political Parties in Latin America] (GEPPAL) is a collaborative project between the Inter-American Development Bank and International IDEA, resulting in a large dataset including extensive information on 94 political parties in 18 Latin American countries. Data was collected in 2009. The information in the dataset includes issues such as party ideology, candidate selection procedures, measures to increase the number of women and minorities, election results, etc.

One of the main advantages with GEPPAL is that it includes information *for each political party* about the number of women candidates on the candidate lists as well as the number of women elected to parliament. Such data at the party level is rare. By including information about women candidates, GEPPAL provides us with the opportunity to examine the impact of institutionalization on the outcome of the candidate selection process, i.e. the part of the recruitment process that is controlled by the political parties themselves. Our main independent variables are *legislative quotas* and *institutionalization of candidate selection*. Where there is a law aimed at influencing the result of the candidate selection process (i.e. to increase the number of female candidates), this is coded as ‘1’ and parties operating under a system where no such law exists get a ‘0’. It is important to note, from the start, that there is, indeed, a variation within these categories that calls for explanation beyond the mere existence of quota legislation. Among the 48 parties selecting candidates under some form of legislative quota (thus, scoring “1” on the legislative quota variable”), the number of candidates still ranges from just over 3 percent in Panama’s *Partido Político Panameñista* to over 50 percent in the small *Partido Democrático Progresista* in Paraguay. Thus, even though we see that parties that operate under a quota policy in general tend to not only select more women candidates (29 percent vs. 19.5 percent in parties with no quota restrictions; mean for all parties is 24.9 percent) but also send off more women to parliament (24 percent

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2 When it comes to the subsequent representation of women in parties under quota legislation, the range of variation is the maximum – from 0 percent to 100 percent. But it should be remembered that some of the parties might only get one or two representatives, which means that these numbers should be interpreted with caution.
vs. 12 percent), we can also conclude that there is a large and important variation within the group of parties that operate under a quota law. We want to understand this variation. When are quotas implemented, and when are they not? This is where our other main independent variable comes in: institutionalization.

Regarding institutionalization, we construct an index that includes the three dimensions of the concept (as developed in the section on operationalization): authorization, specification, and implementation. Authorization is measured by assessing if the party statutes include any information about how candidates to parliament are selected. A party is given a 0 if there is no such information and a 1 if there is. Specification is measured by two indicators; first, if the party statutes establishes who selects the candidates (yes or no), that is, if there is information about the size of the selectorate (ranging from individual composition to open primary election; cf. Hazan and Rahat 2010), and second, if it is established where candidates are selected (yes or no), i.e. at which level: national or subnational. Values range from 0 to 2, depending on the number of criteria each party meets. Note that we are only interested in assessing whether or not party statutes establish who selects candidates, and where. Finally, implementation takes not only the information from party statutes into account, but also the information from interviewed party officials about the actual candidate selection procedures used in the last elections. If the information in the party statutes is the same as the information given by the party official, with respect to the size of the selectorate and the level of decision-making, the candidate selection procedure is suggested to be implemented. Thus,

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3 In order to assess at which level candidates are selected, we have not only used the information from GEPPAL, but also read the party documents ourselves.

4 There are of course some limitations with relying on the information from party officials: First, they might have an interest in saying what is mentioned in the statutes, in order to put the party in a favorable light. As a consequence, we might underestimate the implementation problem and thus overestimate the level of institutionalization. Second, there is a possibility that the party actually implemented its party statutes in the last election, also in a situation in which there is a discrepancy between the party official’s version and the party statutes: the party might have changed its party statutes after the last elections and prior to 2009. However, we believe that this possibility is limited, as parties usually do not change their rules for candidate selection from year to year.

5 Note that measuring implementation is a rather complex issue, and there are some limitations with using our strategy. For instance, the theoretical point of departure is party documents, yet what we really measure is the possible discrepancy between party documents and party officials’ version of how the selection process is pursued. It might very well be that party documents are implemented and still we code it as not implemented, for instance, if there is a multi-stage selection process and the party statutes only mention who makes the final decision. In these cases, a party official might characterize the final decision as being just a formality and of little importance; instead, he or she might talk about the key actors (and the important levels of decision making) in the early phases of the selection process, when the “real” decisions are made. However, we argue that if party officials mention something else than what is stated in the party documents, then the formal rules do not cover
again values range from 0 to 2, depending on how many criteria that are met. To construct an index, and give each party a specific value on the institutionalization variable, we specify a set of conditions based on the three dimensions: First, to be regarded as fully institutionalized (and be given the value 2), a party has to (i) have its candidate selection mechanisms authorized in a party document, (ii) specify who selects candidates and where, and (iii) implement both these aspects in their selection procedures. Second, a party is regarded partly institutionalized (value 1) if it meets the first requirement (about authorization), specifies one or two of the criteria (i.e. who and where), and implements one of them. Third and finally, all other parties are regarded as not institutionalized (see also Figure 1 in the section on operationalizations). Descriptive statistics of the institutionalization variable show that there is quite a lot of variation across the political parties also for this variable: 25.9 percent of the parties are coded as “not institutionalized”, 40.7 percent are regarded as “partly institutionalized”, and 33.3 percent are characterized as “fully institutionalized”.

To properly assess the impact of institutionalized candidate selection procedures on quota implementation, we suggest an analytical model that takes some important control variables into account. Any relationship between institutionalization and quota implementation might be the result of a factor that has an impact on both the likelihood to institutionalize the candidate selection procedures and the number of women on the candidate lists. Here, we use two control variables at the party level and four control variables at the national level. Starting with the party factors, we control, first, for the possibility that party ideology has an impact not only on the number of female candidates but also on the likelihood to institutionalize the candidate selection process. Second, we control for party quotas. We do not expect a party operating under an effective voluntary quota to be affected by the introduction of a legal quota. In short, we do not expect that such a party even has to implement a legal quota: it is already a fait accompli.

As for the national level factors, we control, first, for a country’s level of democracy (using Polity score). It is likely that more democratic countries have a relatively large number of

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the distinguishing features of the process. For institutionalization to matter, the distinguishing features should be institutionalized, not just minor events or matters of formality. It means, utterly, that not only should formal rules be implemented; de facto practices should also have de jure backing.

6 For variable specification and coding of the control variables, see Appendix B.
parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures as well as more women running in general elections. Second, we take into account a country’s level of socio-economic development (using Human Development Index, HDI). A socio-economically developed country is likely to bring more women into the labor force and thus into public life. This might have an impact both on political party organizations and on women’s propensity to be candidates to political office. Third, we control for a politico-institutional variable: the electoral system. It has been widely acknowledged that proportional representation, especially with closed lists (that do not allow for preferential voting), is conducive for women’s political representation. This type of electoral system places a lot of power in the hands of the political parties, who have relatively good control over which candidate(s) is entering parliament. In doing so, the system gives potential candidates the incentive to ask for a transparent (and thereby institutionalized) candidate selection process.

The analytical model is performed using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis. There are a few limitations with OLS regression in analyses that have data at different levels of analysis (here, party level and national level). First, the assumption that observations (in this case; political parties) are independent from each other, is likely to be violated. Thus, there is likely to be so-called auto-correlation problems. Second, the error terms are not likely to be randomly distributed across an explanatory factor; that is, we are likely to have problems with heteroscedasticity. We take the former problem into account by treating only political parties from different countries as independent from each other. The second limitation is overcome by including robust standard errors in the analysis.

**Results**

In Model 1 (in Table 1) we test empirically Norris’s hypothesis that institutionalized parties are more likely to implement quotas. The analysis generates support to the hypothesis. The interaction term between legislative quotas and institutionalization is positive, substantially fairly large and significant at 90 percent level of significance. This indicates that legislative quotas do have a greater impact on the number of women candidates in more institutionalized parties. The underlying explanation for this relationship is simple: we expect political parties who authorize, specify, and implement their own formal rules for the candidate selection process to more commonly implement also candidate selection requirements adopted by the national policy makers.
Table 1: The relationship between institutionalized candidate selection procedures and the number of women candidates. Multivariate analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inst*legquota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party quota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system with closed lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.38***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative quotas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.34 (71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Unstandardized OLS regression coefficients, robust standard error in brackets. Checked by VIF statistics to be free of multicollinearity problems. Missing = list-wise deletion.

*** = sign. at < 0.01; ** = sign. at < 0.05, * = sign. at < 0.10.

Source: GEPPAL 2009. Other sources, see Appendix B.
The results presented in Table 1 are fairly robust and insensitive to model specification: thus, additional analyses (not reported here) confirm the result. For instance, we suspected the size of the quota to be important. Thus, in addition to simply distinguishing countries with quota legislation from those without quota legislation, we also ran an analysis in which we coded the quota variable by the size. The quota sizes in the data range from 20 percent to 40 percent, but most countries are at around 30 percent. Consequently, the variation in the sample was not particularly large, and the analysis yielded similar results to those presented here.

A key follow-up question relates to the size of the conditioned impact of institutionalization: How many more women do parties with institutionalized selection procedures put on the candidate lists following a quota reform? We address this question in Figure 2, which indicates some interesting results: If we concentrate all other values in Model 1 to the mean, political parties with fully institutionalized selection procedures are expected to put 31.1 percent women on the candidate lists. For parties with no institutionalized selection procedures, the expected number of women is 24.5 percent. Thus, there is an almost 7 percent difference. For parties with a medium level of institutionalization (that is, “partly institutionalized”), the expected value is exactly in between: 27.8 percent.

![Figure 2. The expected number of women candidates (in percent) as a function of the level of institutionalization and legislative quota adoption](image-url)
Interestingly, and in line with our argument, parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures do not have more women on the candidate lists whenever legislative quotas are not adopted. On the contrary, Figure 2 points at a small, reversed pattern: Whenever there are no legislative quotas in place, these parties have slightly lower levels of women candidates than parties with partly and not institutionalized selection procedures, respectively. As a consequence, the impact of legislative quotas on women’s political candidacy varies dramatically across the three groups of institutionalization. For parties with a high level of institutionalization, legislative quotas generate a 69 percentage point increase in women candidates, from 18.4 to 31.1 percent. On the other hand, for parties with low levels of institutionalization in candidate selection, there is barely an increase at all: quota policies are in these cases only expected to generate a 9 percentage point increase, from 22.5 to 24.5 percent.

To interpret this finding, we suggest that parties that already have institutionalized candidate selection procedures are used to following an established set of rules and practices when nominating candidates for election. Such internal rules regarding where decisions are made, and by whom, imposes restrictions preventing party officials from selecting candidates in an arbitrary manner. Selectors working in a party with an institutionalized candidate selection procedure are used to following fairly detailed regulations. It could be argued that it is almost common-sensical that party officials who are used to following internal rules also follow legal stipulations. We agree that it is, indeed, logical and likely, but not self evident. There is an important difference between internal party regulations and a legislative quota: the latter is imposed on the party, whereas regulations are usually adopted by the party. To follow one’s own rules could be quite different from obeying rules imposed from above, in particular if the rules imposed are perceived as reducing the prospects of electoral success. It does seem, however, that a party with an institutionalized candidate selection process often has enough organizational strength to implement different types of rules. When a new piece of legislation, such as the quota law, is passed, it is targeted towards altering the manner in which political parties go about to select their candidates. When there is already an existing formal framework for how candidates are selected, it is fairly easy to assess the impact this new law will have, and on what aspects of the candidate selection process. In a less institutionalized process, however, it is difficult to know where to start and how to proceed. It is difficult to
determine who is responsible for the implementation of the quota simply because it is often unclear who is responsible for candidate selection in the first place.

It is important to note that this finding does not necessarily mean that institutionalized parties are more gender-friendly or more likely to promote women candidates in general. As the above graph clearly illustrates: it takes a legislative quota. If there is no quota, institutionalized parties are not more likely to promote the participation of women than are any other parties. To put it bluntly: parties with institutionalized selection procedures are as such no more gender equal than others. They simply follow rules, obey laws and implement requirements, etc., regardless of the character of these rules and requirements.

This brings us back to the distinction between implementation and efficiency. The fact that a quota is implemented does not necessarily imply that it has the effect that policy-makers intended. An additional analysis supports this interpretation. An interaction model with institutionalization and legislative quotas, but with the percentage of women candidates at the top position of the political parties’ lists as the dependent variable, shows that there is no conditional impact of institutionalization on the number of women put on the highly electable slots on the top of the list.
Table 2: The relationship between institutionalized candidate selection procedures and the number of top women candidates. Multivariate analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inst*legquota</td>
<td>-1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
<td>-0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ideology</td>
<td>-1.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party quota</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic development</td>
<td>-23.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(54.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR system with closed lists</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative quotas</td>
<td>7.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>32.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² (N)</td>
<td>0.17 (68)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Unstandardized OLS regression coefficients, robust standard error in brackets. Checked by VIF statistics to be free of multicollinearity problems. Missing = list-wise deletion.

*** = sign. at < 0.01; ** = sign. at < 0.05, * = sign. at < 0.10.

Source: GEPPAL 2009. Other sources, see Appendix B.
The interaction coefficient is no longer statistically significant in this model. Our interpretation of this finding is that parties with institutionalized selection procedures put more women on their candidate lists, but they do not necessarily put them on the electable slots on the top of the list. The fact that top positions have an impact on election results is pretty common-sensical, but it nevertheless merits mentioning that the same model has been run with women representatives as the dependent variable, and that it generates similar results. They put the right number of women on their lists, because they are required to do so. The recruitment structure in these parties is largely guided by formal rules, and party officials will accordingly do what it takes not to break the rules. This, however, does not necessarily mean that party officials agree with the intention of the rules. In other words, the fact that they follow rules does not automatically make them more gender equal. In our view, this points to a potentially important limit to the benefits of institutionalized selection procedures. Where recruitment procedures are institutionalized, selectors will do what they are required to do but they are still likely to avoid directly challenging internal power structures and their paramount goal is still pursuing a winning election strategy.

This means that while institutionalization of candidate selection procedures makes implementation of quota legislation more likely, it does not necessarily imply an effective implementation in terms of increasing the number of elected women. When quotas are integrated into an already rule-based process, sanctions are superfluous. In terms of design of quota legislation, however, rank order does seem to be necessary in order to make sure that the intentions of quotas are realized by party officials, so that the increased number of women candidates also translates into an increased number of women representatives. A quota with a rank order would probably be needed in order for these rule-followers to also put women at the top of their lists. Candidate quotas without rank order do not primarily focus on altering the election result, only the recruitment process. A legislative quota with a stipulated rank order should, however, if implemented in an institutionalized party recruitment procedure, have an impact also on the result because it would require parties to not only put women on their lists, but to put them on the top, electable, slots. Theoretically, we assume that candidate quotas with rank order should have an effect also on representation.

Finally, we have to consider the possibility that even parties with generally rule-following party officials only follow rules up to a certain limit. If so, we do not know where they draw
that limit. It is possible that parties with institutionalized recruitment procedures, although they implement quotas without rank-order, would refuse to follow a strict rank ordered quota when power and electoral success are perceived as being in conflict with the placement of women on the upper positions of the candidate lists. With the data at our disposal, we are not able to assess empirically this possibility. In our sample, quotas with rank order overlap with quotas with sanctions to the extent that all Latin American countries with a quota law that specifies rank order also have sanctions for non-compliance. When strong sanctions are imposed, there are no alternatives but to stick to the rules. If not, candidate lists will often be disqualified. With sanctions in place, there is thus no room for party characteristics to influence the outcome. When legislation moves from carrots to sticks, it does not matter whether the implementing party has institutionalized its recruitment procedures or not. We can not distinguish between the effect of rank order and the effect of sanctions in this paper. But we can, certainly, point to the fact that institutionalization is important for the implementation of quotas. We are also able to show that there is an important limitation to the effect of implementation: it does have an impact on the number of candidates, but not on the number of women top candidates.

**Conclusion**

This paper has analyzed the relationship between political parties and gender quota implementation. More specifically, we have tested Norris’s hypothesis that institutionalized political parties are more likely than other parties to implement quota policies. The analysis represents an initial attempt to properly operationalize the concept of institutionalization and empirically examine its impact on quota implementation. Using data on political parties in 18 Latin American countries, the analysis supports the hypothesis. Whenever there are legislative quotas in place, parties with institutionalized selection procedures have on average seven percent more women candidates than political parties that do not have such selection procedures. The paper also demonstrates that implementation does not equal effectiveness: Parties with rule-bound selection procedures do not put more women than others at the top of the candidate list, nor do they get more women elected. Taken together, the findings indicate that institutionalized political parties indeed follow rules – but that does not automatically make them more gender equal.
To understand why institutionalized selection procedures make quota implementation more likely, we point at the organizational strength to implement different types of rules that parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures are likely to have. In these parties, it is fairly easy to assess the impact that a quota law will have, and on what aspects of the candidate selection process. In a less institutionalized process, on the other hand, it is difficult to determine who is responsible for the implementation process, simply because it is often unclear who is responsible for candidate selection in the first place.

Giving due attention to the organizations that parties are helps us understand why the intentions of policy-makers are not always fulfilled. It also suggests what could be done about it. Policies directed at parties are more likely to be implemented in parties with organizational strength. Even in these parties, however, policies are not always being effectively implemented in the sense that their intention is being recognized and fulfilled. For gender quotas, the analysis thus suggests that institutionalized selection procedures tend to make sanctions unnecessary. Institutionalized selection procedures do not however, take away the responsibility of policy makers to design the quota law in a way that – properly implemented – maximizes the possibilities of an effective outcome. Thus, rank order specifications are still pivotal. The analysis suggests that in order to understand the implementation of gender quotas, as well as of party-targeted reforms more generally, researchers should pay specific attention to the role of political parties. An equally important question that the analysis raises is also how institutionalized internal party procedures come about in the first place.
Appendix A: Coding of ‘Specification’ Variables

Selectorate size: The size of the party selectorate who makes the final formal decision in the selection of party candidates, according to the party statutes. The variable is coded as follows (authors’ coding, inspiration from Hazan and Rahat 2010): Individual composition = 1; Party elite = 2; Party congress = 3; Party primary = 4; Open primary = 5; Other = 666. Source: GEPPAL 2009.

Decentralization: The variable assesses the level at which the final decision of the candidate selection process is made. 1 = subnational level; 0 = national/federal level. Source: Authors’ elaboration, based on the party statutes for each of the political parties.

Appendix B: Coding of Control Variables

Party ideology: Score from 1 (left) to 10 (right), as perceived by party official. Source: GEPPAL 2009.


Socio-economic development: Human Development Index (HDI). Measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools; and a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) US dollars. Source: UNDP. http://hdr.undp.org/

Electoral system: Dummy variable with proportional representation using closed list = 1; all other electoral systems = 0. Source: GEPPAL 2009.

Legislative quotas: Dummy variable with countries that have adopted quota scoring 1 and other countries scoring 0. Source: GEPPAL 2009.
References


