

# Gender Quotas and Electoral Laws

Maria Laura Di Tommaso

Summer School on Gender Economics and Society

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

# Some facts

- More than half of the countries in the world have implemented some types of quotas.
- The share of elected positions held by women is small ([www.quotaproject.org](http://www.quotaproject.org)):
  - 19.5% of seats worldwide
  - 22.8% in Europe
  - 22.6 % in the Americas
  - 42 % in Nordic Countries

# Structure of the lecture

1. Types of Political Quotas
2. Pros and Cons of quotas
  1. Equity
  2. Efficiency
3. Impact of Quotas
  1. Descriptive Representation
  2. Participation
  3. Policy and Economic Outcomes
  4. Attitudes
4. Effectiveness of Quotas: Electoral Laws and Implications for design.

# 1. Types of Political Quotas

- Three types of political quotas (World Bank 2012):
  - Voluntary party quotas (61%, often in combination with other types)  
Nordic countries, Western countries and Australia and Canada, no USA
  - Candidate quotas (38%)  
Latin America, Africa
  - Reserved seats (20%)  
South Asia

Dependent variable: Share of female legislators in national assembly (lower house)			
GDP per capita	0.000128		
Party quota dummy	1.396		
Candidate quota dummy	5.711**		
Reserved seat dummy	8.407***		
Africa	-3.415		
Latin America	-4.113		
Middle East	-12.645***		
Asia	-7.969**		
Observations	124		
R squared	0.24		

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ ,  $p < 0.10$ .

Base category Europe and western countries (USA, Canada, Australia)

Source Pande and Ford 2011, pg 29

# Pros and Cons: Equity

- Improves **descriptive representation**: the extent to which a representative resembles those being represented, evaluated by descriptive characteristics that are politically relevant, such as geographical area of birth, occupation, ethnicity, or gender.
- Improves **substantive representation**: representatives acting in the interest of the represented.
- **Crowd out**: gender quota may crowd out other marginalized ethnic or socio-economic groups

# Pros and Cons: Efficiency

- Reduces taste discrimination
- More efficient selection of leaders overcoming market failure due to gender bias
- Role Model effect (Chung 2000, importance of women faculty for female students choices )
- Improves aspirations: Spencer (1999) Math tests with declarations about women attitudes= different test scores.
- Improves investments by women
- Worsens allocation
- Reduce women's incentives to invest
- Worsens attitudes: backlash against women; increased taste discrimination because quota violate social norms (Pakistan)

# The Impact of quotas: Descriptive Representation

- On average, share of women = 22% with quota and =13% without quota (quotaproject data base)
- Voluntary party quota (in 51 countries; positively correlated with leftist parties and with other parties having adopted quotas). Difficult to establish impact because endogeneous.
- Legislated candidate quotas: their impact depends on many different factors, mainly the electoral law.



# Electoral laws and quota

- Two systems:
  - Majoritarian (FPTP)
  - Proportional (PR)
- In FPTP systems women once included in the candidate list: higher probability to be elected. To express a gender bias, voters have to change party.
- In PR with open list (voters can choose candidates from the list), voters do not need to change party to express gender bias.
- Strategic behaviours by party:
  - in FPTP parties field female candidate in weaker electoral districts where they know they lose (Frechette, Maniquet, Morelli 2008)
  - In PR parties can assign women to the lowest part of the list. Worst situation: PR with closed list and women at the bottom of the list. Best: PR with closed list and women at the top

Questions???

Comments???

# The impact of quota: participation

- Run for an election, voting, participating as citizen
- Various channels: role model effect, increased aspirations, greater confidence in similar leaders
- Bhavnani (2009) for India: after quotas are removed, in the following election the number of female candidates increased by 7.4%
- Beaman et al (2009), West Bengal, India. Quotas in the long run enhance women's capabilities to run for an election. Also they provide evidence for changes in voters attitudes: having been exposed to a woman chief councilor weakens stereotypes about gender roles.
- Not much evidence of quotas on voter turnout.
- Beaman et al (2010), women speak 25% more in village meetings when a political leader position is reserved to women.

# The impact of quotas: policy and economic outcomes

## Substantial representation

- Female legislators make more pro female policies (Rehavi 2007 for US and Clots Figueras 2007 for India)
- Many studies on India: natural experiment.
- Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) for Rajasthan find that men and women have different policy preferences (women ask more for investment in drinking water). More men prefer road improvements in Rajasthan while in West Bengal more women prefer road investments. It depends on gender division of labor.
- Beamen et al (2010): data over 11 states in India: gender quotas increase investments in water infrastructure and education
- Iyer et al (2010): quota led to a 44% increase in reported crimes against women
- Evidence of female leaders being less corrupted (Beamen et al 2010)

# The impact of quotas: attitudes

- Implicit Association tests to measure impacts of quotas on discrimination among villagers: decrease in implicit gender discrimination among male respondents (speed of free association mechanisms). Beamen et al 2009
- But also male villagers increase their preferences against female leaders (after two rounds of reservation disappears). Short run backlash theory.

# Design of quotas and institutional systems: Gender bias among voters

- Quotas impact on percentages of elected women depends on electoral systems but also on gender bias.
- Bonomi et al 2013 for Italy find that even with 50% quotas in a proportional system with open lists, women's probability of receiving a vote increases from 12 to 36%. While the probability of man receiving a vote decreases from 88 to 64%.
- So the average gender gap of voters is equal to 28% (64-36).
- Quotas are necessary but not sufficient for each gender equality (in an open list proportional system).

# Bibliography

- Beaman, L., Chattopadhyay, R., Duflo, E., Pande, R., & Topalova, P. (2009). Powerful Women: Does Exposure Reduce Bias? *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(4).
- Beaman, L., Duflo, E., Pande, R., & Topalova, P. (2010). Political Reservation and Substantive Representation: Evidence from Indian Village Councils. *India Policy Forum*, Brookings and NCAER.
- Bhavnani, R. (2009), Do Electoral Quotas work after they are Withdrawn? Evidence from a Natural Experiment in India, *American Political Science Review*, 103(1)
- Bonomi, G., Brosio G. Di Tommaso M.L. (2013) “The Impact of Gender Quotas on Votes for Women Candidates: Evidence from Italy”, *Feminist Economics*, vol. 19, 4, pp 48-75.
- Chattopadhyay, R. & Duflo, E. (2004). The Impact of Reservation in the Panchayati Raj: Evidence from a Nationwide Randomized Experiment. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(9): 979-986.
- Chung, K. (2000), Role Models and Arguments for Affirmative Action. *The American Economic Review*, 90(3): 640:648
- Clots-Figueras, I. (2007). Are Female Leaders Good for Education?: Evidence from India. 39 *Economics Working Papers* we077342, Universidad Carlos III, Departamento de Economía.

# Bibliography

- Frechette, G. Maniquet, F. Morelli M. (2008), Incumbents' Interests and Gender Quota, *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(4): 891-909.
- Iyer, Lakshmi, Anandi Mani, Prachi Mishra, and Petia Topalova. 2010. "The Power of Political Voice: Women's Representation and Crime in India." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 4(4): 165–93.
- Pande, R., Ford, D., (2010), Gender Quota and Female Leadership: A Review, background paper for the World Development Report on Gender.
- World Bank (2012), *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.