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Abstract

Women constitute over half of the world's population and enjoy, at least in the eyes of the law, full participatory political license-the right to vote and run for any elective office-in nearly all nation states. Despite this apparent environment of opportunity, women remain grossly underrepresented in national legislatures throughout the world. Exactly why nearly worldwide de jure political equality has not translated into a comparable increase in women's representation in elected office is a question often addressed in current political research. If the prevailing attitude toward women has changed enough to afford women the legal opportunity for participation, why is this impetus for involvement not borne out in the ranks of the world's legislatures?

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Women constitute over half of the world's population and enjoy, at least in the eyes of the law, full participatory political license-the right to vote and run for any elective office-in nearly all nation states. Despite this apparent environment of opportunity, women remain grossly underrepresented in national legislatures throughout the world. Exactly why nearly worldwide *de* jure political equality has not translated into a comparable increase in women's representation in elected office is a question often addressed in current political research. If the prevailing attitude toward women has changed enough to afford women the legal opportunity for participation, why is this impetus for involvement not borne out in the ranks of the world's legislatures?

This question is not merely interesting as an empirical puzzle to be solved, it also addresses broader issues of representation. Clearly, history tells us that a change in the law alone rarely guarantees a change in practice. This being the case, questions regarding the underrepresentation of women must include considerations of varying perceptions of the female legislator. An elected official actively employed in the creation of national legislation is, to a large extent, expected to represent the values, priorities and attitudes of the constituency. With this in mind, how women legislate, or how they are perceived to legislate is crucial to the success of women candidates. Thus, an investigation of the contextual factors affecting the representation of women in national legislative bodies is in part an investigation into the perceived character of the female legislator.

Literature Review

There are three hurdles women must negotiate in order to be elected to a national legislature. Women must decide to seek office, be nominated by a party, and receive the approval of voters. Research has found that women are not significantly disadvantaged at the polls, where their chances are about equal to those of men (Rasmussen 83; Matland *94;* Darcy and Schramm *1977).* This suggests that the party nomination process is crucial to the success of women. The literature suggests that structural, political and socio-economic factors may affect this process. The body of recent research attempting to delineate such determinants and explain just how they affect each stage in the electoral process is extensive, if not conclusive.

Theoretical approaches aimed at explicating the general trend of women's under-representation and disparities in representation across nations can be categorized into three basic explanatory classes: political, socioeconomic, and

structural (or institutional). Political explanations appeal to factors including party alignment and ideology; socioeconomic explanations focus on factors such as the level of unemployment and urbanization, and the importance of social welfare issues; and structural theories emphasize various types of electoral systems.

Institutional Factors

There has been a proliferation of research in the current literature focusing on institutional factors-the type and structure of the electoral system itself-as the major predictor of women's electability to national legislatures (Rule 1981, 1987, 1989; Norris 1985; Means 1972; Darcy, Welch and Clark 1987). A myriad of different electoral arrangements have been explored. Multimember districts have been found to have a higher percentage of women elected to national legislative offices than single-member districts (Means 1972; Rule 1981, 1987, 1990; Darcy, Welch and Clark 1985; Norris 1985; Carroll 1985). Various systems employing proportional representation have also been associated with higher percentages of women elected to office (Means 1972; Lakeman 1976; Castles 198 1; Lovenduski and Hills, 198 1; Norris 1985; Rule 1981, 1987; Vallance 1977, 1982; Skard and Haavio-Mannil 1984).

First, multi-member districts are hypothesized as being more conducive to the success of women than single-member districts in the election phase. In multi-member districts, where more than one candidate is nominated from each district, the percent of the vote needed to secure a seat will be lower, thus creating opportunity for minority candidates like women. Conversely, singlemember districts are thought to disadvantage women in the selection and nomination phase, as campaigns in such districts focus upon the individual candidate rather than the party. Hence, parties may be unwilling to nominate a female as the sole representative of the party. It has also been suggested that single-member districts might discourage women from even seeking nomination due to the increased campaign costs for individual candidates and the particularly combative nature of campaigns that focus upon individuals. Running in a multi-member district both alleviates some of the economic burden of campaigning, as well as shifting the focus from individual to party.

A related hypothesis emphasizes the relationship between district magnitude-the number of seats awarded in a given district-and women's representation (Rule 1997; Darcy, Welch, Clark 1990; Welch and Studlar 1991). There are two arguments in support of a positive association between district magnitude and percent of women elected. First, it has been observed that as the number of representatives in a district increases, the rate of turnover also increases. Thus, to the extent that increased turnover creates greater opportunity for underrepresented groups like women, higher district magnitudes should positively affect women's chances. Moreover, as was noted in regards to multi

member districts in general, as the number of seats increases, the percentage of the vote needed to win a seat decreases. Accordingly, women should have a greater chance for election when the district magnitude is high.

Previous research has also noted that party magnitude-the number of parties competing for seats-may be an intervening variable between district magnitude and the percent of women elected to national legislatures (Matland 1992). When there are many parties contesting seats in a district, the number of seats a party can expect to win is lower. If a party expects to win only one or two seats, contests become zero-sum games similar to those in single-member districts, thus discouraging parties from nominating women.

An alternative hypothesis is that the party list system of proportional representation affords the greatest opportunity for women. Under this system, parties create candidate lists, which are then presented to the voter. Seats are then distributed among the parties according to the proportion of votes received. This system is viewed as beneficial to female candidates in several ways.

First, since the focus of the election is shifted from individual representation to party representation, candidates run as a team on a common ballot. Therefore, party selectorates can safely add women to party lists as a means of broadening the appeal of the ticket without incurring the risks of advancing woman as the sole candidate. Similarly, powerful male candidates need not be excluded in order to open a spot for women candidates. In addition, voters may be more willing to vote for a woman candidate as one of many, rather than as their sole representative.

Political and Socioeconomic Factors

One political hypothesis suggests that right-wing parties, to the extent that they are successful at the polls, have a negative effect on women's representation in national legislatures (Rule 1981, 1987; Norris 1985; Lakeman 1976). Right-wing parties, which are commonly associated with conservative social policies and traditional religious views, also maintain a traditional view of women's social roles. Such parties may consider women to be ill-suited to political life and stress the importance of a woman's role as wife and mother, and thus fail to nominate women.

Unemployment has also been posited as negatively affecting the recruitment of female candidates. When unemployment levels are high, there may be increased competition for seats, thus hindering a woman's chances for nomination (Rule 198 1). Here unemployment is understood as an economic indicator reflecting levels of increased competition in the job market. But, this theorized relationship may not hold when social welfare issues, which might be highly correlated with high levels of unemployment, are a key political issue,

The perceived importance of social welfare issues and policy-making might positively affect a party's decision to run a female candidate, thus reversing the relationship between unemployment levels and recruitment of women. When social welfare policies are an important campaign issue, the pool of potential candidates may be expanded to include women, who are often perceived as championing such issues, as well as possessing special expertise from related fields (Rule 1981). Also, when social welfare issues are a primary concern to voters they may opt to elect women for the same reasons, perceiving that women will be more highly motivated to ameliorate the social ills of the constituency and thereby affect social welfare policies. Hence, the relative prominence of social welfare policy as a campaign issue should be positively associated with the percentage of women in national legislatures. Under this line of reasoning, unemployment as a measure of social "pain" may offset the affects of unemployment as a measure merely of economic depression.

Data and Methods
Research Strategy and Case Selection

In order to assess the effect of structural, political and socio-economic factors upon women's electoral opportunities to national legislative bodies, a within-system comparative strategy is employed as a means of control. By looking at the effects of these variables within a single country, it is possible to control for cultural, historical and other nation specific elements that might hide or intervene upon the expected causal relationships, or perhaps the generalizability of any conclusions. Accordingly, the unit of analysis is the legislative seat itself, for which demographic data is collected in keeping with each hypothesis.

Hungary's tripartite electoral system provides an excellent forum for testing the hypotheses. Hungary elects candidates to its national legislative body, the National Assembly, through a process incorporating both single member electoral districts and two types of proportional representation with party lists. 176 seats are filled through a two-round, majority vote system in single member districts. In the first round, a simple majority vote is required to gain a seat. If no single candidate receives a majority for a given seat, the top three candidates compete in a second round where a plurality of the vote secures a victory. 152 seats are allocated by proportional representation ballots in each county. Remaining seats are then allocated to each party via national party lists, according to the proportion of votes received. And, these national list seats are generally reserved for party leaders. Both the 1990 and 1994 elections are analyzed, thus allowing for both cross-sectional and longitudinal comparisons.

Operationalization

The available data admit of reasonably appropriate measures for all explanatory variables. In accordance with the Hungarian system, "single member district," refers to those seats in which one person is elected by either a majority, or a plurality rule. While there may be reason to think that majority and plurality systems might introduce their own causal variation, this difference is considered minimal; and, combination of both under the single concept of single member district is consistent with the literature. Conversely, multi-member districts are those with a district magnitude greater than one. Seats filled in this way are co-extensive in the Hungarian case with proportionally allocated seats; and, PR party list seats are those filled by the division of remaining votes according to the national party lists. District magnitude is simply the number of seats in each district, I for single member districts, varying between *3* and 28 for the multi-member districts.

Political and socio-economic concepts for the remaining hypotheses are measured in terms of the characteristics of parties and of counties or districts. A party ideology scale from right, to center, to left was created with the values of 1, 2, and *3* respectively. Each of the six parties gaining seats in the 1990 and 1994 elections are assigned a value according to the predominant ideological identification based upon party self-identification, platform, and agenda. The importance of social welfare issues is more difficult to capture, but the percent pensioners and percent single mothers as heads of household per county and district are two measures which should reasonably reflect the extent to which welfare issues will be important to a district or county's population. Unemployment is measured by percent unemployed and looking for work in each county and district. Level of urbanization is especially difficult to operationalize. The percent employed by agricultural or forestry industries is the best available measure and should provide a fair measure of urbanization to the extent that agricultural and forestry work is undertook in highly rural areas.

Data Sources

Census data for each county, and each district therein, was used as the source for all socio-economic measures (1990. Evi. Nepszamlalas. Kozponti Statisztikal Hivatal.). Election data was taken from *Parliamentary Elections 1994 (Orszaggyulesi Valasztasok 1994).*

Analysis/Results

Table I displays the numbers and percentages of men and women elected to Hungary's National Assembly in 1990 and 1994. The percentages are expectedly lopsided, with only *7.3* percent female in 1990 and I I percent in

1994, but there is an immediately observable increase between Hungary's first post-transition elections and the subsequent results in 1994.

Table I
Membership in the National Assembly by Gender

Sex	1990	1994
Male	357(92.7%)	343(88.9%)
Female	28(7.3%)	43(11.1%)
Total	385(100%)	386(100%)

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 indicate the sex of seat holders by mandate for 1990 and 1994. In 1990, approximately 21 percent of the women elected came from single-member districts, 29 percent were elected through county lists, and 50 percent gained their seats on national lists. These results are consistent with the hypotheses concerning mandate type, and do suggest prima facie that proportional representation systems afford the most opportunity for female candidates while single member districts are least conducive to women's electoral success.

In comparison, however, the 1994 elections indicate that mandate type is not the only determinant affecting women's chances. There is an overall increase in women's representation from 7.3 percent to 11. 1 percent in 1994; but, increases across mandate are not in accord with the expected relationship between women's opportunity and electoral type. In 1994 approximately 35 percent of the women elected gained their seats in single member districts, as opposed to 21 percent in 1990; this represents a nearly 14 percent increase in female legislators elected in single-member districts. Contrarily, there is only a 9 percent increase in county list seats, from 29 percent to 37 percent; and a 22 percent decrease in national list seats, where the percentage of female seatholders dropped from 50 percent to 28 percent. Here we see that, across mandate type, women made greater gains in single member districts than in both types of PR systems; and, women actually lost ground in national list PR races.

Moreover, Table 2.1 has a Chi-Square of 13.1, which is significant at the .00 1 level. By way of contrast, table 2.2, with a Chi-Square of only 2.3, denotes that there is no significant relation between the sex of the seatholder and mandate type in the 1994 elections.

Tables 2.1
Membership by Gender and Mandate, 1990

Mandate	Male		Female	Total
SMD	170 (96.6%)		6 (3.4%)	176(45.7%)
County list	111(93.3%)		8 (6.7%)	119 (30.9%)
Nat'l list	76(84.4%)		14(15.6%)	90(23.4%)
Total	357(92.7%)		28(7.3%)	385 (100&)
Chi-Square		13.1049 (2df)		
	.001 Significance level			
Kendall's Tau-b		0.164		
	.002 Significance level			

Table 2.2
Membership by Gender and Mandate, 1994

Mandate	Male	Female	Total
SMD	161 (91.5%)	15(8.5%)	176(45.6%)
County list		109(87.2%)	16(12.8%) 125(32.4%)
Nat'l list		73 (85.9%)	12(14.1%) 85(22.0%)
Total	343(88.9%)	43(11.1%)	386(100%)
Chi-Square		2.327 (2df)	
	.312 Significance level		
Kendall's Tau-b		0.072	
	.136 Significance level		

This preliminary assessment suggests that either mandate type does not affect the election of women as hypothesized, at least in the Hungarian case; or, that there must be some factor, or factors, exerting an effect upon the dependent variable, so as to mitigate the effects of electoral type.

In order to address this apparent inconsistency with the literature, bi

variate correlations were run to either accept or reject the null hypothesis for each independent variable. Then, a multivariate model was run to test the effects of each independent variable simultaneously and to establish the effect of each variable while all others are held constant.

But first, it is essential to note the landslide victory and subsequent shift in party make-up within the Assembly that occurred in 1994. Table 3 displays this shift according to mandate type. The aptly named Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), swept the 1994 elections, securing almost 33% of the votes cast. The MSZP endorses a relatively high level of government intervention towards the promotion of social welfare policies and maintains a far less traditional stance concerning the roles of women than other parties. Thus, the overwhelming success of a highly socialist party, understood here to indicate a social domestic policy rather than a strictly economic one, may have an anomalous effect on the percentage of women elected in 1994.

Table 3
Election Results by Party and Mandate, 1990 and 1994

Party	SM D		County list		Nat'l list		
	1990	1994	1990		1994	1990	1994
MDF	114		4	40	18	10	15
SZDSZ		35	17	34	28	23	25
FKGP	11		1	16	14	17	11
MSZP	1		149	14	53	18	7
Fidesz	1		0	8	7	12	13
KDNP	3		3	8	5	10	14
Other/Ind/Mult		11	2	0	0	0	0
Total	1	176	176	120	125	90	85

With this possibility duly noted, Table 4 displays correlations for all independent variables and the dependent variable for both 1990 and 1994. There are a few significant correlations that were clearly expected - sex of seat holder in 1990 is highly correlated with both district magnitude and mandate, while neither are significant for sex of seat holder in 94. Also, party in 1994 is expectedly correlated with both district magnitude and mandate. Unfortunately, several independent variables display a significant level of collinearity. These include the percent employed in agriculture or fanning, percent of single mothers, percent of homes with no comfort, and percent unemployed. Moreover, none of these socio-economic variables are significantly correlated with the sex of seatholder in either 1990 or 1994.

Table 4
Correlation Coefficients

Variable	Estimated Coeff		Standard Error Coeff./S.E*
MANDATE	0,5278	0 6a05	07756
DISTMAG	O~0072	0,0129	0,5581
PARTY90	-0,0998	01391	-07175
PIDEO	-00561	02358	-0.2379
PNOCOM	-3,7078	48696	-0.7614
PSMOMS	-253845	803408	-0316
PUNEMPOP	-1s028	230634	-05277
PPEN	1.192	10.9877	01085
PAGRIFOR	15.6913	15.7635	0.9954

N=374
Constant: -2 8683
-2 Log Likelihood: 183.787
Goodness of fit: 281 401
Model Chi-Square: 15,217   Sig: .0851
%Predicted Correctly: .93
*When the Coeff./S.E. exceeds 2, the
significance is approx. at the .05 level
(Hosmer and Lerneshow. 19897 33).

Even though the high levels of collinearity between the independent variables makes an interpretation of the explanatory powers of these indicators much more difficult, a logistic regression model was run to test for their

effects, Table 5 represents the results of regressions run for 1990 and 1994. As the poor correlations in Table 4 suggest, neither regression model produces significant results. No variable had a significant effect in 1990, nor were any independent variables significant in 1994.

Table 5
Regression Results

Variable	Estimated Coeff.		Standard Error	Coeff./S.E.*
MANDATE	0.7093	0.4986	1.423	
DISTMAG	-0.0024	0.0101	-0,2376	
PARTY94	-0.3611	0.273	-1.3227	
PIDEO	-0,1482	0,3967	-0.3736	
PNOCOM	1.8821	3.1567	0.5962	
PSMOMS	53.8993	53,3034	1,0112	
PUNEMPOP	-1,5949	16.2561	-0.0981	
PPEN	-6.8437	6.6571	-1.028	
PAGRIFOR	-6.9495	12.4357	-0,5588	

N=384
Constant -2.4111
-2 Log Likelihood: 259.747
Goodness of fit: 387.751
Model Chi-Square: 9.539   Sig: .3890
%Predicted Correctly .89

*When the Coeff./S.E. exceeds 2, the significance is approx. at the .05 level (Hosmer and Lemeshow. 1989:33).   1

While these first logistic models proved to have little explanatory power, a second model focusing only on cases within SMD's might fair better. The increase in percent women observed in SMD's in 1994 is the phenomena most in need of explanation, as this increase appears inconsistent with the

structural factors hypotheses, as well as with the data from *1990*. Hence, a
new model controlling for all other mandate types may prove more revealing.

Conclusion

No definitive conclusions may be drawn from the preceding analysis

regarding the relative impact of socio-political or economic factors upon women's success in gaining election to the National Assembly. But, while the data does partially reinforce previous theorizing about the significant impact of electoral structure on women's chances, there remains the puzzle of the *1994* election, which deserves further investigation. The *1994* elections represent an anomaly that suggests that electoral structure, while important, does not affect women's chances alone. Alternative models may better explain the disparate results between the *1990* and *1994* elections, and thus provide a more complete explanation of the Hungarian phenomena.

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