

Conditions Surrounding Participation

while the formal rules of candidate selection do not discriminate against women, resulting in the framing of women's political under-representation as an unfortunate consequence of a gender-neutral, fair and effective system which produces the best people for the job. → it is **the informal rules** that puts a significant advantage on men

- social conservatism
- social attitudes
- **localism** → local base and networks → privileges men:
- **personalism** → knowing the candidate is important; personal connection, but also being as easily contacted as possible
- Experience of local office, and being well-connected into the local community, are key to the recruitment and selection prospects of candidates. However as women's representation on local councils has never exceeded 21 per cent in Ireland. fewer women than men can harness this attribute
- **candidate selection procedures**
- women still fulfilling their traditional role by taking care of the house and children do not have the time to develop their networks, etc. and thus often 'lack' on these conditions
- the theory of supply and demand → factors that clarify whether one is suitable for candidacy
- 5 C's: care (childcare or/and other), cash, culture, candidate selection, confidence, (cyberspace)
- women are more likely to face harassment and abuse on internet, including physical and sexual violence.
- electors vote equally for men and women, women do face bias in candidate selection
- a lot of women who joined politics were either a widow of a male TD or the daughter of a previous male TD! → as if women have to prove their political credentials through men*

Supply and Demand Theory

The theory of supply and demand (Norris and Lovenduski, 1993; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Norris, 1997)

- **Supply:** conditioned by the availability (or lack) of resources (political experience, time, funds and networks) and motivational factors (Interest, confidence and ambition)
- > Individual-level
- Demand: influenced by the opportunity structure in a given constituency, such as the number of seat vacancies, as well as the selector's own attitudes and their perceptions of the "type" of candidates voters prefer
- > Institutional/structural-level

The 5 C's

- Care (childcare & other)
- Cash
- Culture (National, Political Institutions & Political Parties)
- Candidate selection
- Confidence
- > A 6th C – Cyberspace

Other Determinants

Explanations for varying levels of women's representation across nation-states at an institutional and/or societal level include:

Social-structural, socio-cultural, socio-economic

focuses on whether laws treat people differently based on gender.

key economic and social indicators

- What is the level of women's educational attainment?
- If high, should see high numbers of women in politics
- Puzzling – many countries, inc ROI, with high levels of women's educational attainment do not have high numbers of women in politics

Other Determinants (cont)

- What is the level of women's participation in the labour force?
- If high, should see high numbers of women in politics
- But again, not always congruently so.
- Gender parity in UN GDI corresponds to higher percentages of women in parliament
- Fertility rates – access to contraception
- Women make choices (to have/have not children; delay entry into politics due to family commitments; leave politics due to family commitments) which men don't face to the same extent
- What is the social eligibility pool?
- Usually, women politicians are highly educated, from professional backgrounds and are gainfully employed
- The trend seems to be suggesting that when women 'make it' in traditionally male-dominated jobs (judges, journalists, 3rd level teachers/lecturers, MDs. law), one observes increasing numbers of women in politics
- Similar obstacles
- Not always true – see Galligan (2010) in Coakley and Gallagher's Politics in the Republic of Ireland
- But comparing across similarly situated nation-states in terms of socio-economic progress, we still observe differences in the levels of women's parliamentary representation
- Political or politico-structural and institutional**
- focused on regime type and their effect on women's political representation
- Parliaments are considered to be gendered institutions
- Electoral systems – is one type more facilitatory of the election of women than others?
- PR systems versus majoritarian systems
- Need to look at factors such as
- District and party magnitudes
- Incumbency



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Other Determants (cont)

- Ideal electoral system for the election of women: closed PR List system with a DM of seven and a built-in 'zipper system'
- Over 100 countries worldwide use some form of gender quota to address gendered barriers and facilitate increased numbers of women to run for political office
- left-wing parties more favourable to introducing measures to advance the role of women in parties and electoral politics
- pipeline theory: women's access to lower levels of political office a determinant to their access to higher levels of political office
- Political Opportunity Structures
- sudden openings can advantage women, especially those who have stood outside male political circles (Jalalzai, 2013: 20)
- But also because of political circumstances which facilitates their accidental leadership
- Glass cliff: 'tendency for women to be more likely than men to be appointed to leadership positions that are risky and precarious' (Forbes, 2016)

Ideological and Culture Explanations

Gendered cultures/stereotypes within political institutions/organisations re-inscribe gendered roles

-> Women more likely to hold the positions of 'Secretary' and 'Treasurer' rather than 'Chair' or 'Vice-chair' in political parties - Support rather than leadership positions

-> Women's appointment to socio-cultural portfolios in cabinet

- "The 'masculine' association of toughness favours men in executive positions, while compassion is a liability for women (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Fox and Oxley, 2003).

Other Determants (cont)

- In cross-national studies, people tend to view leaders as possessing masculine' traits, which they associate with men, not women (Sczesny et al, 2004)" (Jalalzai, 2013: 17).
- Media reinforces gender stereotypes and associate women with 'feminine' issues
- Reporting on physical appearance and family background (Jalalzai, 2013 17 – 18)
- Women subjected to common gendered frames by the media (Murray, 2010)

Historical

The standard hypothesis is that the longer men and women have enjoyed equal voting and political rights, the more women are in parliament

-> we expect to see low women's political representation in states with low GDI [Gender Development Index] scores and high women's political representation in states with high GDI scores

However, this is not always perfectly congruent!



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