

Gender Stereotypes and Electoral Success

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In recent years, the Democratic Party has been considerably more successful at electing women than the Republican Party. Research suggests that the Democratic advantage for women stems from a more inclusive party culture and party support for women-friendly policies. This paper considers whether the gender gap in representation between the parties may also be shaped by intersection of institutions and ideology. Specifically, this study examines how ideological gender differences between the sexes impact the success of female candidates in primary and general elections. The intersection of party ideology and gender stereotypes shape the playing field for female candidates differently than that of a man's, depending on the party of the candidate and the ideological dispositions of the electorate. Due to ideological stereotypes, women candidates are perceived to be more liberal than they truly are. The "liberal female candidate" stereotype creates advantages for female candidates in Democratic primaries, but disadvantages for female candidates in Republican primaries. The impact of gendered ideological stereotypes could have a profound impact on opportunity structure for female candidates, and partially explains why Democrats have been more successful than Republicans when it comes to recruitment and nomination of female candidates.

Over the past few decades, increasing numbers of women have run for office and the percentage of women elected to Congress has increased from just 3.5% in 1976 to 18.7% in 2014 (Center for American Women and Politics, 2014.) With Hillary Clinton's anticipated candidacy for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, women seem poised in breaking the highest and hardest glass ceiling of being a female president (Dittmar and Carroll 2014). Though women made gains, U.S. political offices have not yet achieved anything close to gender equality.¹

Over the past several decades, the Democratic Party has been more successful than the Republican Party at recruiting and nominating female candidates (Burrell 2014). In 2012, for example, the Democratic Party supported 118 female candidates for the House elections; whereas, compared to the Republican Party, 48 female candidates were supported (Fox 191). Furthermore, in 2012, House elections of 58 female Democratic candidates won, compared to 19 Republican female candidates (Fox 2014).

Researchers argue that the Democrats' success in recruiting female candidates is due to party culture and party policies. The Democratic Party made early and concerted efforts to promote and recruit women into positions of responsibility in the party hierarchy. Democratic policies relating to women's rights and caregiving such, as abortion rights or sexual harassment, align

¹ In the United States, women make up a greater proportion of the population, yet they are underrepresented in politics (Carroll 2014; Sanbonmatsu 2014). Research indicates that voters are not to blame for women's underrepresentation. When women run for office, they are as likely as men to win (Sanbonmatsu 2006). The key challenge facing women is that few women seek political office (Sanbonmatsu 2014). Scholars have identified numerous obstacles standing in the way of women's participation in public life and have categorized these obstacles such cash, childcare confidence, culture, and candidate selection.

with policy preferences of women (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Notably, women are more motivated to run in political elections based on the importance of policy (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013).

One underexplored factor in the success of female candidates is gender stereotypes. Women candidates are seen as more compassionate and more liberal than male candidates (Carroll 2014). In primary elections, candidates move towards the more extreme ends of the political spectrum to attract the votes of the primary electorate, which is more passionate and more ideological than the general electorate (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007). For Democratic women, primaries should be an opportunity for success because Democratic women are more likely to identify as liberals over the Democratic males (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Conversely, in the Republican Party, Republican women are more likely to label themselves as, “moderate” rather than Republican (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Based on party culture and ideology, Democratic women should observe higher success in the primary state of elections, than Republican women. If female Democratic candidate success in primary elections holds truth, then based on the structure and culture of general elections, Republican female candidates should perform better. Therefore, Republican women may perform better in general state elections, than Democratic women, because ideologically speaking, Republican women tend to lean more moderate than Republican males and Democrats (Ondercin and Welch 2009).

Literature Review

Culture in the United States is a barrier women have to overcome when running in elections. Gender is culturally constructed in biological differences between males and females. Physiologically women and men share more similarities; however, culture has divided gender into roles and expectations (Duerst-Lahti 2014)¹. How women choose to behave in society is based on normative positions given to gender. Historically, men have dominated the political field impacting the norms and stereotypes of politics. Some women choose not to enter into politics because elections are a masculine space (Duerst-Lahti 2014). Georgia Duerst-Lahti uses the term “presidential timber” to answer the question of what do Americans look for in their presidents? (2014). Three of the expectations, or traditions, seen as ideal for a presidential candidate are executive toughness, military hero, and the styles of debate (Duerst-Lahti 2014). All three expectations are geared towards male qualities, which are reflected by an institutional past of founders, incumbents, and important external actors whose characteristics have shaped over time the image of leaders in society (Duerst-Lahti 2014). Instead of finding the right *person* for the job, Americans look for the right *man* for the job.

The existence of gender stereotypes in American society impacts the success of female candidates. Danny Hayes defines stereotyping as the assignment “identical characteristics to any person in a group regardless of the actual variation among members of that group” (Hayes 2014, 135). Research shows stereotyped attitudes based on assumptions of women’s traits and abilities hurt female candidate at the polls (Dolan 2014). Some scholars believe gender stereotypes exist and are followed by voters because citizens are only willing to dedicate a limited amount of time to political matters (Hayes 2011). Voters use gender stereotypes to evaluate issue competencies and positions of both Democratic and Republican candidates, which means gender stereotypes transcend party lines (Hayes 2011). The most well-established gender stereotype is women are warmer and more empathetic than men, yet also less assertive and competent than men (Hayes 2011). Stereotypes on gender in politics have shown voters assuming women to be more effective on dealing with policy issues such as childcare, poverty, education, healthcare, and

women's' issues (Dolan 2014). If voters' attitudes of gender stereotypes in politics change then it is more likely that women will run for office (Hayes 2011).

The culture of media enhances gender stereotypes. Some scholars argue that the media harms women's chances of running in elections, and discourages numerous women from entering politics (Bystrom 2014). Women not only have to fight for themselves to get media coverage but most importantly they have to fight to get legitimacy from the media (Bystrom 2014). The idea that women are less likely to handle issues of military, war, and the economy than men exposes the media's coverage on women's leadership in politics leading to voters preferring a male candidate at higher levels of political office (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993). The media likes to focus more on a woman's clothing, age, and physical appearance than on her personal's opinions (Dittmar and Carroll 2014). For example, Sarah Palin's background as a beauty pageant contestant, caused many Americans to focus on her sex appeal then her identity as a vice presidential candidate (Dittmar and Carroll 2014). Furthermore, journalists are more likely to hold a woman's husband and children to certain standards more so than male candidates, and ask questions they normally do not ask male candidates (Bystrom 2014). In order to break stereotypes and win voters women have to not only persuade their constituents but also the media.

Confidence and political ambition impacts women's ability to run for office, as discussed by Richard Fox and Jennifer Lawless (2014). Studies show that young men are twice more likely to think about running for a political office in the future than young women are, which means gender still infiltrates itself into environment of politics (Fox 2014). Furthermore, Fox and Lawless' recruitment disadvantage hypothesis which states that; "Women in the pool of potential candidates will be less likely than their male counterparts to experience broad and sustained political recruitment and more likely to be discouraged from running for office" holds truth that women are not encouraged by others to run (Fox and Lawless, 2010, 313). In other words, women who are equally qualified to run choose not to run because men are recruited more to run for office (Fox and Lawless, 2010). Some scholars argue that if political parties and women's organizations supported women more, the amount of women running in elections would increase (Burrell 2014). The process of gaining more support will help women increase their political ambition to run for political offices (Fox and Lawless, 2010).

Candidate selection is another factor that can help or hurt women in politics. Political parties have the power of discouraging women to run in elections (Sanbonmatsu 2010). The goal of political parties is to win election, and have their opinions represented. Since political culture has historically clashed with gender, women have had to prove to both parties they can win elections. For example, politics is competitive, and for a female candidate competitiveness still remains a problem (Burrell 2014). Women have to break through society's teaching of how men are to be "confident, assertive, and self-promoting," and if a woman expresses these attitudes she is frowned upon (Fox and Lawless, 2011, 60). Women need support in order to prove they can win elections (Sanbonmatsu, 2006).² The demand for women to have support from political parties is

² The importance of cash in order to win an election hinders women to run in elections. The role of cash challenges women because females make less money than men (Lawless and Fox 2010). Also women have to fundraise and network against mostly male incumbents, who have a higher chance of being reelected (Lawless and Fox 2010). Another reason for cash being a struggle for women entering politics is the biological role of birthing children, which impedes on women working in the workforce and being economically independent at times. Additionally, economic factors such as more women living below the poverty line than men can explain why there is a gender gap in the United States (Carroll 2014, 139).

significant because political parties hold great power over women's participation in politics (Sanbonmatsu 2010). In a 2010, CAWP study, 24 percent of female state legislators said the most important reason they ran for office is because they were recruited by party leaders or other people in politics (Sanbonmatsu 2010). Kira Sanbonmatsu argues that in candidate selection, organizations, political leaders, and voters who are women result in political parties helping women's representation in politics (2010).

In the past few decades, political parties and organizations have helped women run for political positions. Political organizations and committees such as EMILY's List, NOW the National Federation of Republican Women, and the four congressional campaign committees between the Democratic and Republican Party, have all tried to help more women run (Burrell 2014). Barbara Burrell argues that with party organizations no longer being the main control of the nomination process, women's groups and organization have played key roles in recruiting women (Burrell 2014). Based on party culture, the Democratic Party has recruited and promoted women more than the Republican Party (Burrell 2014). As Jo Freeman, one of the founders of the women's liberation movement notes about political parties, "The Republican Party has become more hospitable to antifeminism, while the Democratic Party is perceived as the more pro-feminist party" (Burrell 2014). The "war on women" between the Democratic and Republican Party has shown that women are more accepted by the Democratic Party. In recent years, Democratic women have been obtaining state legislative positions at a higher rate than Republican women (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). The organization of the Democratic Party to support women has shown to be more successful based on Democratic women succeeding more than Republican women in elections (Burrell 2014). In 2012, for example, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee was able to reelect all of its Democratic female Senate contenders and get four new women elected into Senate positions (Burrell 2014). In the same election year, none of the three women running for Senate positions were the National Republican Senatorial Committee's independent expenditure beneficiaries (Burrell 2014).

Most notably, when women are nominated to run, they are as likely to have access to party resources as their male counterparts (Burrell 2014). Overall, factors that have helped women run in elections are "the rise of PACs promoting women's candidacies for public office and funding their campaigns; the lessening of party discrimination against women candidates; and the availability of substantial support from congressional campaign committees in competitive situations" (Burrell 2014, 240). Some scholars would argue that even though women may win an election, it does not mean they didn't overcome struggle with the selection process, which seems to be a problem for women (Sanbonmatsu, 2006). Nevertheless, women still tend to win at the same rates as men, which show an optimistic view of women's success in politics (Sanbonmatsu, 2006).

Women's decisions to run can be motivated by public policy because female candidates want to represent women's interests (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Eileen McDonagh argues that a state's public policies create an environment that influences the public's political attitudes towards female elections, and females as political leaders (2010). Overall, women are running for political positions that lack positive maternal public policies (McDonagh, 2010; Cowell-Meyers and Langbein, 2009). Due to the lack of policies geared toward women's interests, the importance of women in political office becomes clearly visible. Pearson, Kathryn, and Dancy argue how congresswomen are able to express women's interest through speeches made on the floor (2011). Furthermore, women have different levels of compassion, which makes women more liberal than men (Carroll 2014). An example of public policy where men and women differ

on compassion levels is education and health care (Carroll 2014). In both these issues, women are stereotyped as caregivers.

In terms of Democrats and Republicans, women's representation has become increasingly important. As mentioned earlier, political parties have influence over political recruitment, support, and elections (Elder 2014). For example, a woman in a state legislator position has to do largely with political parties (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Currently, the presence of Republican women as state legislators is declining, and Democratic women as state legislators is increasing (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Furthermore, in the 2012 elections, Democrats and Republicans had arguments about the "war on women," and who was more anti-women attitudes (Burrell 2014). If political parties, such as the Republican Party, want to continue to remain competitive, the role of women in politics needs to improve.

For the Republican Party, some scholars argue women face trouble ideologically. In 2008, Republican women elected into the legislature were more likely to describe themselves as moderate (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Based on Republican women's moderate leanings, Republican women may be less likely compared to Republican men to "experience a comfortable fit between their own ideologies and the dominant ideological tendencies of their party (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013, 95). As the Republican Party became more conservative, Republican women's representation has stalled (Elder 2014). Female republican candidates will struggle in primary elections because ideologically they lean more moderate, which clashes with the strategy of political parties (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007). Political parties pick more extreme ideological candidates for primary elections, and more moderate candidates for general elections (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007).

Furthermore, many voters will not accept women politicians based on their ideology, which leads to fewer opportunities for women to run in political offices (Paxton and Kunovich, 2013). If Republican voters are voting in primaries, they will want a more conservative candidate that fits their ideology (Paxton and Kunovich, 2013). Conversely, party culture for Democratic women in primaries has helped, because Democratic women continue to move on from primaries and win general elections (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Even when Republican women make gains, such as in the 2010 elections, Democratic women still outnumber Republican women in state legislatures (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013).

Ideologically, the Voter Median Theory is a base for political structure in which more voters nationally are moderate (Holcombe 1989). Women tend to lean more to the left side of politics more than men (Swers 2001). As mentioned previously, female Republican candidates struggle in the Republican Party, because they have more of a moderate philosophy. During primary elections candidates align themselves more with party teachings, and become further from the median district preferences (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007). Democratic women may perform better in primary state elections because they are more left than their male party members. However, in general state elections, Democratic women may succeed at lower levels due to ideology. In the Republican Party, women may perform better in general state elections over female Democratic candidates because ideologically speaking, Republican women tend to lean more moderate than Republican males and Democrats (Ondercin and Welch 2009). Nevertheless, Republican female candidates may not perform well in primaries because of ideology.

Research Question

Through all the perspectives of women's representation in politics, ideology impacts different types of elections. In general, the nature of politics differs depending on the type of election. As previously mentioned, primaries tend to be more extreme ideologically because the competition is within one's party. Studying women's representation and gender stereotypes in politics is significant because women make up a greater proportion of the United States' population (Carroll 2014). For the government to truly represent the citizens of the United States, the voices of women's interests need to be heard. Notably, Carroll and Sanbonmatsu explain women's representation in state legislatures is important because public policies such as education, health care, and families deeply influences women's lives (2013). In order to obtain political positions, women need to understand their strengths and weaknesses. For this study, the research question trying to be answered is will Republican women perform better in general elections than Democratic women? Exploration into determining whether Republican women do better in general state elections in Ohio than Democratic women is worthy of pursuit because the United States needs to understand how gender stereotypes about ideology can impact a candidate's success rate. Exploration into this research question will also show this will impact future elections and campaign strategies, as more women continue to put cracks in the glass ceiling.

Design

The literature presented in this paper suggests gender stereotypes, whether by voters or parties, will impact the success of female candidates. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, female Democratic women should perform better in primaries than Republican women. To answer the question of if Democratic women will do better in primary elections than Republican women and vice versa in general elections, I will create and examine a database comprised of candidate information from the 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 state primary and general election results in Ohio. I will compare these four years based on the recency of information, and to see if the election year is a variable I need to consider when studying electoral success. Additionally, all four elections have a mix of when elections were perceived as a Democratic or Republican year as well as the data has two presidential election years.

My main independent nominal variable will be gender coded as males being zero and females being one. My other independent variables will be incumbent, challenger, and open seat in order to compare the literature on the female candidates and incumbency in elections. The candidate status variable will be nominal and will be coded as zero for challengers, one for an open seat candidate, and two for an incumbent candidate. The coding numbers for candidates are based on the toughness of candidates to succeed in an election. An incumbent candidate is tougher to beat than an open seat election. My control variable, which could also be another independent nominal variable, is party. Candidates who identify with the Republican Party will be coded one. Candidates who identify with the Democratic Party will be coded zero. Other parties will be excluded in this study due to the focus being on the two main political parties in the United States.

Additional independent variables that may be worth exploring in order to help enhance this study is election experience, percentage of the votes won, and money raised.

Previous election experiences will be measured as an ordinal variable by on a scale of 1 to 5. This scale will range from: 1 being a female candidate running in her first election, 2 will represent a second election, 3 will represent a third election, 4 will represent a fourth election, and five will represent a five or more elections. The percentage of votes won in an election will

be an interval variable with the range set from 0 to 100. Money raised will be measured as an ordinal variable on 1 scale of 5, 1 being no money raised, and 5 being the maximum money allowed raised. All the independent variables will be put in a spreadsheet to see if gender impacts election results. A wide mix of ordinal, nominal, and interval variables in this study will help diversify the data, and provide more accurate information.

My dependent variables of electorate success will be measured nominally as either candidates winning primary elections, and general elections. A female candidate is able to have a 1 in both the primary winner and general election winner because the political structure of the primary election winner will move on to general election. Furthermore, primary elections, and general elections, are seen as conditional variables and will be further compared separately in order to see if how Republican female candidates, and Democratic female candidate perform based on different types of elections.

Other variables I have coded to make data collecting easier are election year, and chamber status. In terms of election year I coded with 2008 to be zero, 2010 to be one, 2012 to be two, and 2014 to be three. With the variable chamber status I coded the Ohio State House to be zero, and the Ohio State Senate to be one. The chamber status coding is based on the challenge of winning a state senate seat over a state house seat because there are fewer seats available in the senate than in the house.

Using Ohio's state legislature election results will be my confounding, or intervening variable, because the political landscape of Ohio can impact the candidate running in Ohio's House election; specifically, a female candidate's party identification. Since 1988, Ohio has been shifting more towards the Democratic side, which could influence more female Democrats to run in elections (Frey and Teixeira 2008). However, the state of Ohio is a good choice for this study because of its diverse demographics, and working class population (Frey and Teixeira 2008). Ohio's three big metropolitan areas consist of half the state's population and outside of the metropolitan areas are declining in population. This population decrease creates a complex political calculus of election outcomes (Frey and Teixeira 2008). Furthermore, the white working class votes dominate Ohio's electorate (Frey and Teixeira 2008). However, white college graduates and minorities are increasing in voter population in Ohio, and creating, once again, a complex political calculus of election outcomes (Frey and Teixeira 2008).

Based on the literature, my first hypothesis will be if women candidates are campaigning in primaries, then ideologically Democratic women should perform better than Republican women. I expect to see Democratic women perform better because in primary elections candidates tend to lean toward the more extreme ends ideologically in order to capture the internal votes of the political party (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007). If Democratic women are successful in primary elections, my second hypothesis will be if women candidates are campaigning in general elections, then ideologically Republican women should perform better than Democratic women. I expect gender stereotypes to impact women's electoral success in different types of elections. I expect to see Republican women do better in general elections because ideologically based on the Voter Median Theory, in general elections a more modern candidate will women, and Republican women tend to be more moderate politically compared to their male counterparts (Holcombe 1989; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013).

Hypothesis A: If women candidates are campaigning in primaries, then ideologically Democratic women should perform better than Republican women.

Hypothesis B: if women candidates are campaigning in general elections, then ideologically Republican women should perform better than Democratic women.

In order to test this hypothesis, I will need to compile the historical electoral results and conduct regression analysis with the results to see if there was statistical significance between the genders of the candidates. This data will be obtained from 2008 to 2014. Assuming that there is a difference, I will also input the independent variables; party, gender, incumbent, challenger, open seat candidate, election experience, money raised, and primary winner as numerical, or “dummy,” variables. These variables will be represented with either a 0 or a 1 to see if they impact the results derived from the data obtained. If they do have an impact on the results, they will be represented with a “1,” otherwise they will be represented as a “0.” These data observations will be able to help answer the questions: “did the Democratic female candidate win?” If so, was their statistical significance between the independent variables measured when said candidate won, versus when another female candidate lost.

In order to test if they have any significance I would have to conduct linear regression analysis in determining if these do actually impact the results or not, and determine if the level of significance is small enough that we can conclude significance. Based on previous, results driven research, I would argue there would be statistical significance between the independent variables of party, money raised, gender, and political party backing the candidate. I hypothesize these results with having direct impact on the results of the election, and impact the female Democratic candidate was elected into political office.

As a graphical representation of this data, I think it would be beneficial to insert a graph wherein the X-Axis notes the year of the election, and the Y-Axis is a combination of the independent variables, all developed based on the weight they impact the results. In producing a graph to represent the information, I will be able to show the positively sloping line, and how women are becoming more prominent in the political landscape. Also, this will be able to have a rough projection of the future involvement of women in state politics.

Analysis

For my first initial test, I have collect the data for the variables gender, party, incumbent, challenger, open seat, general win, and primary win from the 2008, 2010,2012, and 2014 state elections. The first test was a chi-square test where the dependent variable was primary election, and the independent variable was gender. There is a slight difference between men and women winning primary state elections in Ohio. In the cross tabulation, 80.4% of women won primary elections and 74.9% of men won primary elections. When adding the control variable of party in the chi-square test the data of candidates winning primary elections is as follows: 80.7% of Democratic female candidates, 76.2% of Democratic male candidates, 79.8% of Republican female candidates, and 73.8% of Republican male candidates. The Democrat cross-tab has a chi-square of 1.333 and a p-value of 0.248. The Republican cross-tab has a chi-square of 1.592 and a p-value of 0.207. If the null hypothesis is correct that, in the population from which the sample was drawn, there is no relationship between democratic females and primary election success,

then random sampling error will produce a 0.248 of the time. The p-values are greater than 0.05, which means we accept the null hypothesis.

Additionally, compared to how we predict general electoral success by not knowing the gender of Democratic candidates, we can improve our predication by 0% by knowing gender. In a comparison of Cramer’s V, a .049 versus .052 shows the Republicans to have a stronger relationship in general elections than the Democrats.

P Won * Gender * Party Cross tabulation

Party				Gender		Total
				Male	Female	
Democrat	P Won	Lost Primary Election	Count	92	31	123
			% within Gender	23.8%	19.3%	22.4%
	Won Primary Election	Count	295	130	425	
		% within Gender	76.2%	80.7%	77.6%	
	Total	Count	387	161	548	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Republican	P Won	Lost Primary Election	Count	126	20	146
			% within Gender	26.3%	20.2%	25.2%
	Won Primary Election	Count	354	79	433	
		% within Gender	73.8%	79.8%	74.8%	
	Total	Count	480	99	579	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Total	P Won	Lost Primary Election	Count	218	51	269
			% within Gender	25.1%	19.6%	23.9%
	Won Primary Election	Count	649	209	858	
		% within Gender	74.9%	80.4%	76.1%	
	Total	Count	867	260	1127	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

There is a no difference between men and women winning primary state elections in Ohio. In the cross tabulation, 58.6% of women won general elections and 58.9% of men won general elections. When adding the control variable of party in the chi-square test the data of candidates winning general elections is as follows: 38.8% of Democratic female candidates, 32.2% of Democratic male candidates, 45.5% of Republican female candidates, and 51.6% of Republican male candidates. The Democrat cross-tab has a chi-square of 2.151 and a p-value of 0.142. The Republican cross-tab has a chi-square of .276 and a p-value of .599. If the null hypothesis is correct that, in the population from which the sample was drawn, there is no relationship between republican females and primary election success, then random sampling error will produce a .599 of the time. The p-values are greater than 0.05, which means we accept the null hypothesis.

Additionally, compared to how we predict general electoral success by not knowing the gender of Republican candidates, we can improve our predication by 0% by knowing gender. In a comparison of Cramer’s V, a .063 versus .022 shows the Democrats to have a stronger relationship in general elections than the Republicans.

G Won * Gender * Party Crosstabulation

Party				Gender		Total
				Male	Female	
Democrat	G Won	Lost General Election	Count	263	98	361
			% within Gender	67.8%	61.3%	65.9%
	Won General Election	Count	125	62	187	
		% within Gender	32.2%	38.8%	34.1%	
	Total	Count	388	160	548	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Republican	G Won	Lost General Election	Count	245	55	300
			% within Gender	51.6%	54.5%	52.1%
	Won General Election	Count	230	46	276	
		% within Gender	48.4%	45.5%	47.9%	
	Total	Count	475	101	576	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Total	G Won	Lost General Election	Count	508	153	661
			% within Gender	58.9%	58.6%	58.8%
	Won General Election	Count	355	108	463	
		% within Gender	41.1%	41.4%	41.2%	
	Total	Count	863	261	1124	
		% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Discussion

The data collected from my database on female candidates should demonstrate how Democratic female candidates succeed in primary elections when other factors are relatively equal. Furthermore, if a Republican female candidate wins her primary election, I expect to see her winning the general election when compared to a Democratic female candidate. Additionally, I expect to find that Democratic women are in a better position to run in primary election with more experience, and more money because the Democratic Party does a better job of supporting women (Burrell 2014).

Studying women’s representation and gender stereotypes in politics is significant because women make up a greater proportion of the United States’ population (Carroll 2014). For the government to truly represent the citizens of the United States, the voices of women’s interests need to be heard. Although it could be argued that men can voice these interests, having a female representative only augments women’s interests and rights. Notably, Carroll and Sanbonmatsu explain women’s representation in state legislatures is important because public policies such as education, health care, and families deeply influences women’s lives (2013). In order to obtain political positions, women need to understand their strengths and weaknesses. The study of determining whether Republican women do better in general state elections in Ohio than Democratic women is worthy of pursuit because the United States needs to understand how gender stereotypes about ideology can impact a candidate’s success rate, and how this will impact future elections, and campaign strategies as more women continue to put cracks in the glass ceiling.

One of the limitations in this study is only female candidates from Ohio’s House elections are being analyzed making the data very specific and difficult to apply and generalize to the United States as a whole. Another limitation in this study is the selection of independent variable. This study could be stronger if more variables such as family, marital status, age, and how a female candidate is recruited to run in an election, and if a candidate identifies in her party as more moderate, liberal, or conservative. By adding more independent variables, the study could see more aspects that could impact the role of gender in politics. Another limitation to the

study is the lack of third party culture, which could provide further insight on party culture. Additionally, a third party variable could demonstrate in general how more liberal female candidates do better in primaries than more conservative female candidates instead of using the political identification terms Republican or Democrat.

For future studies I recommend applying my design to other states to see if Democratic women do better in primaries than Republican women. For example, a more conservative state, and a more liberal state, such as Alabama and New York, should be explored to see if different results prove gender stereotypes impact electoral success in state elections. Furthermore, I recommend this study of gender and electoral success be applied to local, and federal elections to see if local and federal elections produce similar results to state elections.

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ⁱ Beyond birthing children, childcare is an obstacle women face when running for political office because socially women are seen as the caregivers (Dittmar and Carroll 2014). Especially, if a female politician has younger children, the pressure between balancing a high-demanding career, and maternal responsibilities can be extremely difficult (Dittmar and Carroll 2014). Society views women as mothers, which is why women during campaigns are asked more questions about their parental roles than male candidates. However, being seen as the caregiver of children is not all negative. Kelly Dittmar and Susan Carroll study the case of Sarah Palin to explain how Palin used her personal experiences of being a mother to influence the McCain-Palin policy agenda by talking about her son’s down syndrome diagnosis (2014).