Where is the Glass Made: A Self-Imposed Glass Ceiling? Why are there fewer women in politics?

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#### Abstract

Women compose roughly 50 percent of the population but only 17 percent of the members of Congress. The continual underrepresentation has fascinated researchers for decades. Women have made significant progress in many professional fields previously dominated by men. Why is there not a similar increase in female political participation? In an attempt to answer this question I looked at the Candidate Emergence Study. The study surveys potential candidates in 200 randomly selected districts. The survey asks the potential candidates a wide variety of questions from background information to their perception of politics. With the responses from this study I regressed a series of variables corresponding to recruitment, ambition, and perception. The results demonstrated that recruitment was gender neutral but women were less politically ambition. Furthermore, the female respondents on average have a positive view of themselves as candidates. In contradiction to prior research, I found that children have little to no effect on a candidate's decision to run for office. The results suggest that gender is no longer a significant factor and issues that traditionally held women back are no longer relevant. Therefore, I predict more women will gradually enter politics.


Ninety-two women were sworn into the $112^{\text {th }}$ Congress: seventy-six in the House, three delegates, and seventeen in the Senate (Manning and Shogan 2012). Women comprise around 17 percent of Congress. Although the number of women has increased over time, women as a group are still underrepresented. This perpetual underrepresentation is significant because men are making decisions about a whole range of issues including women's rights. Men will never have to make a decision between having an abortion or carrying a child to term because they are biologically incapable of becoming pregnant. Regardless of political identification all women have a vested interest in politics. Moreover, women often have different priorities - such as health or education - than their male counterparts (Sanbonmatsu et al 2009, 3). For example, in India an increase in female politicians "led to increases in the provision of public goods (both female-preferred ones such as water and sanitation and male-preferred goods such as irrigation and schools) and reduced corruption" (World Bank 2012, 6). If women are underrepresented so are their priorities. Congress is designed to be a political institution that represents the entire population. However, that is not currently the reality.
"Women now represent more than 40 percent of the global labor force...and more than half of the world's university students" (World Bank 2012, 3). Women have made notable progress in other predominantly male fields. Why is the same pattern not observed in politics? I hypothesize that in general women are recruited less often than men are. Candidates that are encouraged and helped to run will be more likely to run for office. If organizations and groups are encouraging men but not women this could explain the gender imbalance witnessed in Congress. If this is the case biased recruitment might be to blame for the low levels of female politicians. However, conversely women might have less political ambition than men. Women are more content either not participating in politics or if they do desire political office they are
content with a local position and aren't attracted to higher, national offices. Furthermore, women might have a cynical perception of their chances of success as a politician. I hypothesize that low female political participation is a combination of all three factors - biased recruitment, low political ambition, and pessimistic perception. I use data collected from a study conducted from 1998 to 2000. The study surveys potential candidates on a wide range of issues. In the following pages, I will give an overview of the current literature, explain the regressions I conducted, and I will discuss my results.

The study I draw my conclusions from is the Candidates Emergence Study. L. Sandy Maisel, Walter J. Stone, and Cherie D. Maestas were the principle investigators and in collaboration Sarah A. Fulton they published a paper discussing their findings. In previous analyses of this data set the researchers looked at similar variables and how they interacted with gender. However, they focused on how variables affected candidate's interest in Congressional office, especially in reference to political ambition. I extrapolate beyond Congressional races to include local elections. Although Congressional participation is important, I believe that the focus should instead be on local elections. I predict that if female participation can be increased at the local level then it will gradually increase at the national level as well.

## Literature Review

The literature agrees that there are fewer women in politics; however, there is a disagreement on the reasons why. Authors find that both external factors (such as recruitment, voter choice, etc) and internal factors (such as lower ambition, aversion to externalities, etc.) contribute to the low number of women politicians.

## Ambition

In their 2006 article, The Sense of a Woman: Gender, Ambition, and the Decision to Run for Congress, Fulton et al discuss the reasons female state legislators are less likely to run for the $\equiv$ Table 1

Comparison of Means

| COMPARISON OF MEANS |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
|  | Men <br> Mean | Women <br> Mean |
| Age | 3.82 | $4.09^{* *}$ |
| Chances of Winning, 1998 | 0.15 | 0.13 |
| Chances of Winning, Future | 0.36 | 0.34 |
| Children in Household | $0.42^{* *}$ | 0.31 |
| Congressional Ambition | $4.23^{* *}$ | 3.59 |
| Democrat | 0.48 | $0.69^{* *}$ |
| Difficulty of Winning State |  |  |
| $\quad$ Legislative Seat | $-0.26^{* *}$ | -0.53 |
| Education | 5.16 | 5.24 |
| Expected Benefit | 0.63 | 0.46 |
| Income | 3.89 | 3.86 |
| Likelihood of Running, 1998 | 1.35 | 1.34 |
| Personal Motivations | -0.59 | -0.71 |
| Political Costs | 1.00 | $1.15^{* *}$ |
| Recruitment | 0.87 | 0.82 |
| Relative Effectiveness and |  |  |
| $\quad$ Prestige of House | $-0.52^{* *}$ | -0.81 |
| Seniority | 3.65 | 3.50 |
| Single/Unmarried | 0.13 | $0.28^{* *}$ |
| State Legislative Professionalism | 0.17 | $0.19 \#$ |
| Term-Limited | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| Value of State Legislative Seat | 1.04 | 1.01 |
| White | 0.94 | 0.91 |

Note: Two -tailed t-tests. Data are clustered by congressional district and are weighted for the probability of a response. All results generated in Stata 7.0. " $p \leq 0.01$, " $p \leq 0.05, ~ \# p \leq 0.10$.
U.S. House. They argue that female legislators are less ambitious than men. They propose that "gender disparities in child-care responsibilities" (Fulton et al 2006,241 ) may be one reason for the inequality. The authors note that women with dependent children are far less ambitious. To reinforce these points the data gathered from state legislators illustrates that women who participated in the study are less likely to have dependent children and are more likely to be single and older than the men in the survey. Table 1 demonstrates these differences as divided based on gender. The authors also find
that gender influences "ambition and the decision to run..." (Fulton et al 2006, 235). They link gender to a tendency to view other legislative institutions (ie state legislatures) as more effective than Congress. For this reason, women are more content than men to remain in lower, more local offices. Additionally, the women from their survey data tend to be older; thus they are less likely to pursue high offices in favor of retirement.

The researchers, for the article The Sense of a Woman: Gender, Ambition, and the Decision to Run for Congress, uses data collected from the 875 state legislators surveys returned to the Candidate Emergence Study. Although this data set surveys potential U.S. House of

Representative member, it does not sample all potential candidates just those recommended to the researchers. The reasons for low female participation may not be completely addressed by the study because the study that the article draws its results from does not survey the general population.

Lawless and Fox also attempt to identify why there are fewer women in politics. Findings from the article Men Rule, by Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox, state that the main reason women are under-represented in elected offices is because they choose not to run. They note seven factor that influence women not to run for elected office:
"(1) Women are substantially more likely than men to perceive the electoral environment as highly competitive and biased against female candidates. (2) Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin's candidacies aggravated women's perceptions of gender bias in the electoral arena. (3) Women are much less likely than men to think they are qualified to run for office. (4) Female potential candidates are less competitive, less confident, and more risk averse than their male counter parts. (5) Women react more negatively than men to many aspects of modern campaigns. (6) Women are less likely than men to receive the suggestion to run for office - from anyone. (7) Women are still responsible for the majority of childcare and household tasks." (Fox and Lawless 2012, ii)

Although not all of the factors mentioned above are relevant to my research, they illustrate that a wide range of factors influence women's perception of politics and ultimately their decision to
run for elected office. Similar to the results found in the Candidate Emergence Study, Fox and Lawless find that women have less ambition to run for office.

When women do choose to run for office they are just as likely to succeed as men are. For example, women and men are equally capable of successfully fundraising and voters turn out for candidates regardless of their gender. Although candidates have the same probability of winning an election, regardless of gender, women are less likely to want to run (Fox and Lawless 2012, 3).

Moreover, in the article, The Sense of a Woman: Gender, Ambition, and the Decision to Run for Congress, the authors also find that women are just as likely as men to run for congressional office, if they have held prior office. Fulton et al justify this contradiction by noting that women value the benefits of holding office. (Fulton et al 2006, 244). As a result they conclude that women view congressional opportunities differently than men; therefore they will make "strategic considerations surrounding a congressional candidacy" (Fulton et al 2006, 235). If women feel the rewards of holding elected office outweighs the risks associated with campaigning for office, they will choose to run for elected office. Women may run for office less frequently than men but they are more selective about when to run and thus have a higher tendency to win.

## Voter Choice

In contradiction to previously mentioned research studies conducted by Eric Smith and Richard Fox (The Role of Candidate Sex in Voter Decision-Making, 1998) found that there was a gender bias against female candidates; which indicates a factor outside the control of the candidate is effecting the election. Female candidates are potentially being discriminated against
solely based on antiquated gender stereotypes about what a leader should be. The researchers

|  | Form 1 | Form 2 |  |
| :---: | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Election 1 | Thomas White (liberal) <br> v. | Thomas White (liberal) <br> v. <br> v. | sampled college undergraduate |
| Election 2 | Edward Milton (moderate) <br> vs. | Earol Harris (conservative) | students from both Wyoming |
| Edward Milton (moderate) |  |  |  |
| vs. |  |  |  |$\quad$ and California. In both samples

position on several issues. In some surveys the candidate was male and in others the potential candidate was female. The students were then asked to rate the candidate on "100-point feeling thermometer" (Fox and Smith 1998, 416) and indicate which candidate they would vote for. The experiment controlled for party bias by creating multiple elections with both men and women attributed conservative positions and in other elections they were attributed liberal positions (they also attributed some candidates moderate positions). The researchers found, that all other attribute being equal, male candidates were preferred to female candidates. These results support fears that voters have a bias against female candidates - a fear held by some potential women candidates.

However, in 2001 the same researchers, Eric Smith and Richard Fox, conducted a different study but looked for the same results (The Electoral Fortunes of Women Candidates for Congress, 2001). In the more recent study the two authors used data from the National Election Studies and the Senate Election Study. In 2001, Smith and Fox found results that contradicted their prior research. In the more recent study they find that women are slightly more likely to vote for female candidates and the sex of the candidate was not important to male voters (Fox
and Smith 2001, 216). Smith and Fox published their new results in the article The Electoral Fortunes of Women Candidates for Congress. The researchers believe that contradictory results arise from a difference in experimental construction. The first study was conducted in a laboratory setting; whereas the second study analyzed actual election data (Fox and Smith 2001, 217). Smith and Fox now argue that laboratory studies "are able to capture individual citizen biases;" however "they are unable to capture the 'true-life’ dynamics of actual vote choices by voters" (Smith and Fox 2001, 217). Although the experimental surveys provide potentially significant findings, the conclusions drawn from actual data do not support a bias against women.

## RECRUITMENT

In the article, Poised to Run, Sanbonmatsu et al (2009) continue the discussion about low women participation in politics. They argue that outside factors such as recruitment, political parties, and organizations are limiting the number of women in elected office (Sanbonmatsu et al 2009, 3). Their research suggests that there are more qualified women than are currently being recruited. Most female politicians have backgrounds in education or health. In comparison most male politicians have backgrounds in law or business. Although law and business are predominately male occupations, women could be recruited from those fields as well. Sanbonmatsu et al's (2009) findings suggest that more could be done during the recruiting phase to increase female political participation. They suggest that women not normally included, such as women in different professions, older women, younger women who do not yet have families, etc. should be approached by organizations or political recruiters. Additionally, the authors find that fewer women are encouraged to run (Sanbonmatsu 2009, 8). In fact they find that women are occasionally discourage from seeking elected office. If that is the case then the lack of female participation can be attributed to an external factor that women cannot control.

Women are recruited at a lower rate than men; however Jennifer Lawless and Richard
Fox (2009), in their paper Men Rule, find that in recent years organizations have developed to

| Table 8 |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Gender Differences in Recruitment to Specific Offices |  |  |
|  | Women | Men |
| Local or Community Office |  |  |
| School Board | $18 \%$ | $21 \%$ |
| City Council | 16 | 22 |
| Mayor | 6 | 10 |
| District Attorney | 1 | 2 |
| State Level Office | 16 |  |
| State Legislator | 1 | 24 |
| Statewide Office (i.e., State Treasurer) | 1 | 2 |
| Governor | 4 | 4 |
| Federal Office | 2 | 10 |
| House of Representatives <br> Senate | 4 |  |
| Sample Size | 1,766 | 1,848 |
| Notes: Entries indicate the percentage of respondents who report ever receiving the suggestion |  |  |
| to run for the office. The gender gap is significant at $p<.05$ for all comparisons. |  |  |

encourage and recruit
women to run for political
office. Although the new
organizations are aimed at
getting more women in
elected offices, only 22\%
of the women sampled by
Lawless and Fox had been
contacted by an
organization that
encouraged their candidacy. Recruitment is very important to potential candidates. 67\% of the candidates that have been encouraged to run for office by political actors stated that they "have considered running [for office]" (Fox and Lawless 2009, 13). In comparison, only 33\% of respondents without any encouragement stated that they also "have considered running [for office]." Non-political actors, such as family and friends, have the same effect on candidate's decision to run for office. $72 \%$ of respondents who have received some encouragement have thought about running for office. $78 \%$ of people who have not received the suggestion from a non-political source have not considered running for office. Recruitment is equally important to encourage both men and women to run for office; however men are simply recruited more often (Lawless and Fox 2012, 13).

## RESEARCH DESIGN

To measure the differences between men and women in regard to their political ambition, the level at which they are recruited, and how they perceive themselves and their chances as a candidate I used a previously gathered data set of potential candidates and regressed the responses accordingly.

The data set I used was the Candidates Emergence Study. In the study the researchers Maisel, Stone, and Maestas - conducted two surveys. The first, sent in the summer of 1997, was sent to individuals in 200 randomly selected districts with a potential knowledge of local politics. These individuals included "the two parties' national conventions, county chairs, and academics know as experts in American politics" (Fulton et al 1998, 1). In this survey respondents were asked to suggest "potentially strong candidates for the U.S. House in the district" (Fulton et al 1998, 1). After receiving responses from the first survey Maisel, Stone, and Maestas sent a second survey out to the individuals named from the first surveys, state representatives, state senators, and state legislators from districts that overlapped with the 200 districts randomly selected for the first survey. The second survey was then broken up into two surveys: one for the individuals that were named in the first survey and the second was just of state legislators. Some of the individuals named and sampled in the first survey included state legislators; therefore there is some overlapping between the two surveys. For my paper I chose to look at the survey that sampled the individuals named by the respondents in the original survey. The "named" survey includes some state legislators and it also looks at individuals that were not holding office that have the potential to run for the House. Although not all potential candidates will be included solely based on recommendation from the original survey, the "named" survey includes a wider range of individuals all of whom might be interested in running for the U.S. House.

To operationalize the variable ambition I looked at several survey questions that dealt with attraction to higher office, future plans, and interest in elective office. All variables are ordinal variables. Higher offices included the State Legislature, the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House, and the Governor's office. Additionally, there was a general question that asked about general interest in elected office and another that asked about the likelihood that the respondent would run for Congress in 2000 (question asked in 1998).

I measured the effects of recruitment by analyzing the survey questions that dealt who had contacted the potential candidate (PC). The survey included the following groups: national political party, national congressional campaign committee, state political party, party in the district or county, other community leaders, interest groups, pc's political party. The groups included in the survey range from informal groups (community leaders) to formal groups (national political party). Moreover, I analyzed the effects of recruitment by looking at how discouraged a PC would be if there was little assistance from their political party

Perception is measured by looking at variables that relate to perceived success in future elections or factors that contribute to elections, such as fundraising, name recognition, voter support, and overall strength of the candidate. Additionally, likelihood of winning the party nomination and likelihood of winning the general election if the candidate won the party nomination are looked at over three different time periods, in 1998, in the next 3-4 terms, and in the foreseeable future.

Each variable was analyzed in correlation with gender (0-male, 1-female), if the PC had dependent children (0-no, 1-yes), age (0-under 30, 1-30 to 39 years old, 2-40 to 49 years old, 350 to 59 years old, 4-60 to 64 years old, 5-65 and older), if the PC was holding elected office (0-
not holding elected office, 1-holding elected office), and if the PC was holding a political office (0-not holding political office, 1-holding political office).

## THEORY

Although de jure discrimination is illegal, I believe that there is still de facto discrimination against women, which leads to lower levels of political recruitment. Women do not traditionally occupy professions that are associated with potential politicians. As a result, there are very few women for groups interested in recruiting to choose from. Additionally, I believe that the pool of potential female candidates could be expanded, if organizations looked beyond the traditional professions and backgrounds. The data set used for this paper will thus skew the actual recruitment rates for women because the women surveyed are already identified as potential candidates. Therefore, the female respondents will have already attracted political attention presumably by traditional means.

Furthermore, I believe there will still be gender differences in political ambition and potential candidate's perceptions about their candidacy. The majority of women from the Candidate Emergence Study are between 40-49 years old. These respondents will still have traditional gender roles engrained in them. Although gender inequality has decrease, I predict that older respondents’ views will not reflect these changes. I believe this age group as a whole does not have the same view of the world as a younger generation does. Modern women have campaigned for president and vice president. Additionally, in the past few decades women have held powerful offices such as Secretary of State and Supreme Court Justice. The younger generations of women have grown up with powerful female role models that haven't existed in
the past. Although there have been many great female politicians they are usually not American or not publically visible. I predict that over the next decade or so the differences in ambition and perception will fade away. More women in politics will encourage more women to join politics and a self-perpetuating cycle will be created. However, there will be a lag in this cycle. There are many steps to take before an individual will be a viable candidate. It takes time to complete an undergrad degree, possibly a post-graduate degree, have a career, and build a reputation. I do not believe that women inherently have less political ambition than men or have a more negative perception of their chances as a candidate.

Moreover, the literature notes the important role children play in determining a candidate's level of ambition. However, I predict that children will play a relatively small role in determining recruitment, political ambition, and perception. Modern childcare services make it possible for both parents to have demanding careers and a family at the same time. Additionally, it is socially acceptable for mothers to have serious careers. Traditionally family structures have become a thing of the past. In fact gender roles are occasionally switched so that families will have a stay-at-home dad and a working mom. I believe family is still important to potential candidates regardless of their gender but I believe that society has evolved options that allow women to have both a family and a career.

Additionally, I predict that age will be negatively correlated with political ambition and recruitment. Candidates, on average, will be less ambitious the older they are. No one wants to work forever; therefore at a certain age potential candidates will start to look towards retirement instead of higher office. For similar reasons recruiting groups will favor younger candidates over older candidates. It makes more sense to put resources towards a candidate that will advocate
their issues for a long time, rather than a candidate who will spend one term in Congress then retire.

However, I predict that age will be positively correlated with potential candidate’s perception of himself or herself. I believe that individuals with more life experiences will have more confidence in themselves and their chances as a candidate. Additionally, if individuals are older they will likely have more business connections; thus they will be able to raise money with less difficulty and perceive their name recognition as higher.

Although not all of the respondents hold an elected or political office, many of them do. I believe that having political experience will be positively correlated with recruitment. I predict that groups will favor individuals that already have some experience and will therefore need less time to adjust to a new political environment or the stresses of a campaign. In addition, I predict that individuals holding either an elected or political office will be more attracted to careers in higher offices. I assume individuals like their current jobs and strive to serve their constituents on a national scale. Finally, I predict that holding elected or political office will improve individual's perception of their political success.

## DATA ANALYSIS

## Recruitment

Regardless of which organization or individual is recruiting candidates there are no significant correlations between gender and recruitment. Table 1.1 illustrates the percentage of men and women who were recruited by national political parties, national Congressional
campaign committees, state parties, local/district parties, community leaders, and interest groups. Each organization is measured on a dichotomous scale where zero is associated with no contact and one is associated with contact by the organization. Additionally, Table 1.2 demonstrates this finding. Similar to Table 1.1 the organizations listed are measure on the same dichotomous scale, which will remain constant through this paper. The organizations are individually regressed by the independent variable, gender. This finding is contradictory to previous research, which suggests that women are recruited at lower levels than men, which contributes to the low number of female politicians. Additionally, recruitment by Congressional campaign committees and interest groups do not have any correlations with variables I regressed. Although there might be another outside factor that explains how these two organizations choose the individuals, it appears that gender does not factor into their decision. These findings are very optimistic because they indicate the glass ceiling is disappearing.

Although women are more likely to be discouraged by the lack of assistance from their political party, the effect of gender only accounts for a small amount of variation in responses. Additionally, the differences between men and women are small. Table 1.3 displays the mean values for both men and women. The influence of a lack of assistance is measured on an ordinal scale where zero corresponds to "strongly discourage," one to "discourage," two to "somewhat discouraged," and three to "makes no difference." The mean values for both men and women fall between "discourage" and "somewhat discourage." This finding is significant because it demonstrates that men and women have similar attitudes towards recruitment. Although this analyze does not find that women are recruited less frequently than men, current literature, in contrast, does conclude that women are recruited less often than men.




| Number of Observations | 326 |
| :--- | ---: |
| F | 0.05 |
| Prob > F | 0.8316 |
| R-Squared | 0.0001 |
| Adj R-Squared | -0.0029 |
| Root MSE | 0.31430 |




National State Political
Party


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Table 1.3

|  | Influence of Lack of <br> Assistance |
| :---: | :---: |
| Mean for Men | 1.83 |
| Mean for Women | 1.57 |
| Significant | Yes |
|  | $P>\|t\| 0.0356$ |

Recruitment has been demonstrated to have significant positive effects on potential candidates and the likelihood that they will run for
office. Therefore if in the future women start to be recruited more frequently, the increase in female recruitment could have dramatic effects.

Groups including national parties, state political parties, parties in the district or county, and community leaders have recruitment preferences based on if the potential candidate holds political or elected office. In Tables 1.4 and 1.5 elected office is a dichotomous variable measured with a zero correlating to not holding elected office and one as holding elected office. In Table 1.4 each organization is regressed by "elected office." In Table 1.5 the same variables are being regressed; however the results are divided between men and women. When the regression correlation coefficient is statistically different than zero it is negative. If the potential candidate holds elected office, they are less likely to be recruited by national political parties, state political parties, and political parties in the district or county. These negative correlations are only seen for men when being recruited by state parties or district level parties (see Tables 1.4 and 1.5).

However, being contacted by a community leader is positively correlated with holding political office (see Table 1.6). In Table 1.6 political office is also a dichotomous variable where zero corresponds to not holding political office and one to holding political office. It is important to note that the public does not elect political officials, unlike the previous tables, which look at elected officials. Also there is a positive, significant relationship between women
holding political office and recruitment by a national party, a state political party, and community leaders (Table 1.7).

Having political experience has mixed results. Groups interested in recruiting potential candidates are not using political experience as a qualification. In fact holding elected office discourages some groups from contacting a candidate. This decline in recruitment could be attributed to the fact that organizations know that these individuals already have political ambition and will run or continue to run for political office regardless of encouragement. Therefore, organizations will focus more on other individual who will support their cause and will not run without encouragement. However, these results also seem contradictory to the interests of groups focusing on recruiting candidates. Individuals with experience in a particular field will usually be valued over individuals who do not have that experience. In this case the experience is hold elected office and the field is politics. There might be an outside, mitigating factor that is not captured in these results and deserves further research. Although groups appear not to recruit individuals with political experience, that is not always the case. There is an exception for community leaders and women and many national groups. The reasons for these exceptions are unknown; however it does indicate that women who pass the initial ceiling and enter politics are more likely to attract attention.

Holding an elected office is correlated with less discouragement from a lack of assistance. Table 1.8 displays the results of regressions between influence and holding political or elected office. The regression correlation coefficient is positive and significant for men but not for women. This finding meets the expectation that individuals with some experience are less affected when they do not receive any outside help. However, there is only a significant relationship for individuals holding elected office. There is no relationship between holding
political office and influence of not having outside support (see Table 1.8). The difference between elected office and political office could be attributed to the fact that individuals holding political office were not elected to their current position and may not have ever run for a political office. Therefore, individuals holding political office might still be apprehensive and want some encouragement.

In Table 1.9 displays the negative correlation coefficient for the regression between age and national party recruitment. National political parties were the only organization with a significant relationship with age. However, the relationship is only significant for men but not for women. Therefore, men are less likely to be recruited as they get older. National political parties might be looking for younger individuals because most congressmen usually start out in local politics then climb the ranks and this takes time. It would be unwise for a national party to invest resources into an individual who might retire before they ever reach the national stage. However, the negative correlation is slight (see Table 1.9). All the other potential recruitment groups have no correlations between the potential candidates they recruit and the potential candidate's age. Although national parties and age are negatively correlated, overall age does not seem to play a significant role in a group’s decision about whom to recruit.

Age has a significant correlation with the influence of the lack of assistance. Like previous tables, Table 1.10 shows the relationship between the variable (age) and influence assistance has on the potential candidate. The only statistically significant relationship is found between age and influence but only in relation to men and the relationship is particularly strong. Men in the older age ranges are more likely to be affected by a lack of help from their political party. For women there is no significant relationship (Table 1.10). I find these results surprising because I would expect older individuals to have more confidence in themselves regardless of
the level of outside support. It is important to note that age is not negatively correlated with recruitment, with the exception of national political party recruitment, because a decline in recruitment would likely greatly affect many older potential candidates. Additionally, the question asking about the influence of a potential candidate's political party does not specify local, state, or national. Therefore a candidate might still feel that they received assistance from their political party, even if the assistance came from the local or state party instead of the national party.

Furthermore, Table 1.11 illustrates that recruitment by state political parties is positively correlated with potential candidates that have dependent children. Having dependent children is measured as a dichotomous variable where "dependent" is defined as living at home and zero corresponds to no children living at home and one to having child and/or children at home. However, there is not a significant difference between gender, dependent children, and recruitment by a state political party (see Table 1.11). State parties might pursue candidates that espouse strong family values and having dependent children might help state parties project that image. Although there was a correlation between children and recruitment, only the state political party recruitment and dependent children were correlated and that relationship is weak. Overall, having dependent children does not play a large role in a group's selection of potential candidates. Moreover, there is not significant effect of having dependent children on how discouraging the lack of assistance from the political party will be. In line with my earlier prediction dependent children do not play a large role in candidate recruitment.

|  | Frequency | Percent |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Strongly Discourage | 72 | 16.82 |  |
| Discourage | 97 | 22.66 |  |
| Somewhat Discourage | 116 | 27.1 |  |
| Makes no Difference | 143 | 33.41 |  |

Table 1.12
past, that role might be decreasing or at least changing. The Candidate Emergence Study does not measure the positive effects of recruitment. As a result, I cannot determine the benefits with this current data set. However, the Candidates Emergence Study does ask questions about the negative effects of no assistance or a lack of recruitment. Although some candidates are discouraged when they do not receive any assistance from their political party, $33.41 \%$ of potential candidates say that no assistance "makes no difference." Additionally, only $16.82 \%$ of potential candidates say that they would be strongly discouraged (see Table 1.12). Not being recruited or assisted might not make a significant difference for many candidates.

## Ambition

When simply looking at gender, women are less likely to be attracted to a career in the U.S. House or the Governor's Office. However, there is no relationship between gender and attraction to a career in the State Legislature or attraction to a career in the Senate. Overall, women are less interested in holding elective office than their male counter-parts but there is no relationship between gender and likelihood that the potential candidate will run for office in 2000. Although some of the results are contradictory, there is not a universally negative correlation for women. Gender seems to play less of a role than implied other studies. The pattern of women having less political ambition could be slowly disappearing. Table 2.1 displays the results previously mentioned. Attraction to a career in politics (ie U.S. House, Governor’s Office, State Legislature, Senate) is measured on an ordinal scale where zero describes an extremely low attraction and six is the highest level of attraction. Interest in holding elected office is also measured on an ordinal scale ranging from zero that represents no interest to five that stands for holding office. Finally "likelihood the potential candidate will run in 2000" is measured on an ordinal scale where zero corresponds to extremely unlikely and six corresponds to extremely
likely. The aforementioned variable and the way they are measured remain constant through the paper. For this analysis, each dependent variable is individually regressed with gender.

For every measure of ambition, age is negatively correlated. Tables 2.2 and 2.2.1 show the results of the regression analysis run between multiple variables of ambition and age. Moreover, the regression analysis is broken down by gender. When looking at only men negative effect of age on ambition is particularly significant for men. However, the negative relationship between age and ambition is only significant for women when asked about their interest in holding elective office and their attraction to a career in the U.S. House of Representatives. For all the other variables - State Legislature, Senate, Governor’s Office, and likelihood that the PC will run for office in 2000 - the relationship between age and the variable was insignificant for women (see tables 2.2 and 2.2.1). These findings might be explained by the fact that women candidates tend to be older than their male counterparts. Additionally, these findings suggest that age is more of a factor than gender in determining ambition. Therefore, if women candidates tend to be older then their lack of ambition could be explained more by their age than by their gender. If this is the case then the issue shifts away from getting more women to participate in politics and instead becomes getting more young women to participate.

Additionally, having dependent children living at home is positively correlated with attraction to the Senate and Governor's Office. Also potential candidates with dependent children are more interested in holding elective office. In Table 2.3 "attraction to the Seante," "attraction to the Governor’s office," and "interest in holding elective office" are regressed by the variable representing dependent children. The three variables displayed are the only variables that had a significant relationship with dependent children. Each regression is also broken down by gender.


The relationship between ambition and dependent children is always insignificant for women and insignificant between men and attraction to the Senate (see Table 2.3). Although the relationship between having children and political ambition is not positive for women, the relationship is certainly not negative either. These findings contradict previous research that states women with children are less likely to have political ambition. Reasons that were previously keeping women out of politics might not be salient anymore. Additionally, the relationship is surprisingly positive for men with dependent children and political ambition. Potential candidates are not forced to choose between starting a family and having a career in politics.

Holding elected office is negatively correlated with attraction to a career in the U.S. House. Table 2.4 displays the results of the regressions between holding elected office and attraction to a career in the U.S. House. The negative relationship is significant for female elected officials but not for male elected officials (see Table 2.4). Moreover, holding political office is negatively correlated with attraction to the House of Representatives (see Table 2.5). However, this correlation is insignificant for men and women. These findings are significant because attraction to the House is the only higher office that is negatively correlated with political experience. These correlations could be due a negative perception of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Additionally, holding elected office is positively correlated with attraction to the State Legislature (see Table 2.4). I believe this correlation is deceptively strong and problematic due to the responses given by the individuals holding a position in the state legislature at the time of the survey. Therefore, the correlation between elected office and attraction to state legislator could simply be illustrating that State Legislators are part of the sample.

There was no correlation for any of the factors, expect age, I looked at and likelihood that potential candidates would run for office in 2000. This non-finding is significant because none of the factors that have traditionally curbed women's ambition are playing a role in their decision to run for office. The contradiction between running for office in 2000 and respondent's attraction to careers in certain offices could be explained by question wording. Women might want to run for office but they might not want to make a career out of politics. Whatever the reason might be for this contradiction in findings, women appear to be more ambitious than in the past.

## Perception

For most of the variables looked at gender has no relationship with how candidates perceive their chances of winning either their party nomination or the general election. However, Table 3.1 displays the two exceptions, name recognition and overall strength. Name recognition is measured on an ordinal scale where zero equates to extremely weak recognition and six

|  | Name Recognition | Overall Strength | 倍 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Intercept | $\begin{aligned} & 3.7668^{*} \\ & (0.0817) \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} 4.507^{*} \\ (0.0610) \end{gathered}$ | extremely strong. |
| Gender | $\begin{aligned} & 0.5313^{*} \\ & (0.1694) \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 0.3857^{*} \\ & \text { (0.1258) } \end{aligned}$ | Overall strength |
| Number of Observations | 447 | 438 | is measured on |
| F | 9.84 | 9.4 |  |
| Prob $>$ F | 0.0018 | 0.0023 | the same scale. |
| R-Squared | 0.0216 | 0.0211 |  |
| Adj R-Squared | 0.0194 | 0.0189 | Table 3.1 shows |
| Root MSE | 1.5133 | 1.1166 |  |

regressions models: one between name recognition and gender and the other between overall strength and gender. Gender is positively correlated to perceived name recognition and perceived overall strength of the potential candidate. Women have a more favorable view of
themselves in regard to those two measures. This finding seems to juxtapose past research. However, previous research also suggests that women run less often but they win more elections that they do run in. This observation suggests that women are stronger candidates than the men they are running against. If this logic holds then women might just be detecting this same pattern. Additionally, these findings suggest there could be an initial glass ceiling but the women that break this boundary are stronger candidates. The initial glass ceiling is possessing experiences and traits of a potential candidate. However, if more women had these experiences and traits, whatever they may be, more women would likely to perceive themselves as strong candidates and eventually run for office.

Age has a mixed correlation with potential candidates' perception of their chances of having a successful bid for office. Table 3.2 illustrates the relationships between age and four measures of perception: difficulty of winning the party nomination, likelihood of winning a party nomination, name recognition and overall strength. Difficulty of winning the party nomination is scale from zero that correlates to extremely low difficulty to six that correlates to extremely high difficulty. Likelihood of winning the party nomination over three different time periods: in 1998, the next three to four terms, or in the foreseeable future. Also the variable is measure on an ordinal scale where zero corresponds to extremely low and six to extremely high. Age is correlated with a negative perception of the likelihood of winning the party nomination only in the foreseeable future. Also, the correlation with the foreseeable future is only significant for men but not women. In contrast, as candidates increase in age, they believe that the difficulty of winning the party nomination decreases. It is important to note that zero is associated with an extremely low perception of difficulty and six is associated with extremely high difficulty. Again this relationship is significant for men but not for women (see table 3.2). These results could be
due to inconsistency between men's perception of themselves in the present verses with themselves in the future. Older potential candidates appear to view events further into the future more pessimistically. Women, on the other hand, have no correlations between age and ambition. This lack of correlations could be attributed to the fact that women candidates are older than their male counterparts. Age appears to be less of deterrent for women.

Although older potential candidates are pessimistic about events in the distant future, age is positively correlated with their perception of name recognition and overall strength. For men age and name recognition are significantly, positively correlated; however the same correlation is insignificant for women. The same phenomenon is observed for men and women and their perception of their overall strength (see table 3.2). There is a significant correlation for men but not for women. This relationship could suggest that individuals gain confidence over time.

Furthermore holding elected office was positively correlated with the perception that the potential candidate was likely to win the general election (if they won the nomination) in 1998, the general election in the next 3-4 terms, name recognition, the potential candidate's ability to raise funds for a campaign, and overall strength. Tables 3.3 and 3.3.1 display multiple measures of perception (all measured on ordinal scales where zero is extremely low and six is extremely high) and their individual relationship with hold elected office. Holding elected office imbues potential candidates with confidence. The likelihood of winning a general election in 1998 is significantly correlated only for women but not men. However, the likelihood of winning a general election in the next 3-4 terms and ability to raise funds for a campaign are significantly correlated for men but not women. The remaining variables - name recognition and overall strength - are significantly correlated for both men and women that hold elected office. The correlations between holding elected office and name recognition are stronger for women than
for men. This same result is found in the correlation between holding elected office and overall strength. It is also notable that holding elected office is never negatively correlated with a potential candidate's perception of future nominations, elections, or other political characteristics (see Table 3.3 and 3.3.1). Therefore, if women are elected to office once they are more likely to be optimistic about the future. The lack of female political participation could be due in part to the lack of historic participation. In which case, the rates of women politicians should increase over time as more women run and keep running. Additionally, the catalyst for women in politics may be holding an elected office. If women can be encouraged to run once, they might continue to run, thus increasing the total number of women in politics, especially in national politics.

Similar to elected office, holding a political office is positively correlated to name recognition and campaign fundraising (see table 3.4). The positive correlation between political office and name recognition is significant for both men and women. However, political office is only significantly correlated to fundraising for men. Although holding a political office does not provide as many positive correlations as holding elected office, some political experience does help to encourage potential candidates. Although encouraging women to run for elected office would be ideal, supporting women in political positions also has benefits that might translate into higher female political participation.

Having dependent children was only significant for one of the variables I looked at measuring a potential candidate's perception. Having dependent children was positively, correlated with the likelihood of winning the general election in the foreseeable future (see Table 3.5). The correlation was not significant when broken down by gender. Although having children might affect a candidate's future plans or a groups decision to recruit an individual, it
does not logically make sense that having children would alter a candidates view of themselves or their chances to win a party nomination or a general election.

Overall candidates have a favorable view of the future and the political success. Although there are some negative relationships, those relationships are with variables dealing with events in the foreseeable future. Individuals might have more uncertainty and increase anxiety with events further into the future. Moreover, women are not as confident about fundraising as men are. However, they are not pessimistic either. There simply isn't a relationship between the two variables. Fundraising is an important part of a successful campaign; therefore female political participation might increase if they were helped to fundraise.

## CONCLUSION

Gender is not as significant of a factor as it was once. Although there are still some differences between men and women, the gap appears to be shrinking. Male politicians typically have backgrounds in law, medicine, or business. In recent years, the majority of law school graduates are women. "More women than men now attend universities, with women's tertiary enrollment across the globe having risen more than sevenfold since 1970" (World Bank 2012, 9). If women begin to occupy the positions that typically produce politicians the number of female politicians might increase as well.

Although groups interested in recruiting are not selecting potential candidates based on gender, women are slightly more likely to be discouraged by a lack of assistance. Optimistically, women are not strongly discouraged. However, female political participation could be increased if women felt more support. A possible solution could be to hold workshops on fundraising, campaigning, or a whole range of topics that pertain to politics. Independent organization cannot
be coerced into recruiting more female candidates; therefore a substitute might be holding workshops that promote female political participation.

Furthermore, women are less likely to desire a career in some national offices. However, this lack of desire might not be a terrible thing. Many important decisions are made on a local level. Desirable ambition should not be determined by ranking elected offices in order of importance. Although national representation is important, local positions should not be undervalued either. I believe that women will be attracted to careers in national offices if there is less political gridlock. Important decisions are made on a national level; however the media is saturated with stories about the inefficiency of Congress. Local offices might be more appealing because more can be accomplished.

Moreover, women candidates have a higher probability of winning elections than men; however there are fewer women who chose to run. There might be an initial perception ceiling. Women who were named as potential candidates felt they were overall strong candidates. If all women held this view we should see more women running for office. Since that is not the case, I believe once women acquire certain experiences or qualification that make them a viable candidate women will have gained more confidence in themselves as a candidate. Further research should be done to identify these experiences and qualifications. If they can be identified organizations could use these characteristics to identify potential candidates to recruit or these characteristics could be encouraged.

In contradiction to previously research children do not heavily influence a potential candidate's decision to run. In fact, for men having children correlates to increased political ambition. Factors once thought to be relevant no long appear to have much influence. It is now
socially acceptable for women to have a career and a family. Additionally there are affordable childcare services available. I believe that the combination of these two factors have lead to the decreased effect of dependent children on potential candidates. If domestic responsibilities were the root cause of lower female participation, then in the near future there should be an influx of women into politics.

I do not believe that female political participation has hit a plateau. Although there are still low levels of female political participation, I believe that the numbers of female politicians will continue to rise. The decision to run for elective office is complex and includes factors unique to each individual. No survey will be able to capture every aspect that goes into the decision. However, I believe that gender does not predetermine attraction to elected office. As women continue to gain influence in the professional sphere, there will be a corresponding increase of female politicians in the political sphere. I predict that in the near future politicians will begin to come from a wide range of backgrounds with more diverse experiences.

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| 6L00＇0 | カ800\％ | 9LI0＇0 | 9てZ0＊0 | 6L90＇0 | S＜0＇0 | 2600＇0 | โع10＇0 | LOTO＇O | t000\％ | 68£0＇0 | 8LZO＊0 | pasenbs－y y ¢ p |
| $9 \angle 500$ | ヵtı0＇0 | 86500 | เฉ¢0＊0 | $90 \angle 0^{\circ}$ | て180\％0 | LOZO＇0 | s9to 0 | S850\％ | S8t0 0 | 857000 | ¢to 0 | pasenbs－y |
| カt850 | 6050＇0 | โع00\％ | 8890＇0 | 0000＇0 | $0000{ }^{\circ}$ | £ ¢8ا＇0 | t820＇0 | てTLO＇0 | Tくさを＇0 | t900\％ | 6LZO＇0 | $t<\mathrm{qO}_{\mathrm{d}}$ |
| โ8＇โ | ャ8＇$\varepsilon$ | ع8．8 | $8 \varepsilon^{\prime} \varepsilon$ | 6 Sz | $90 \cdot \varepsilon \tau$ |  | S8＇t | 9 ¢＇乙 $^{\prime}$ | て0＇โ | t9．L | $60^{\prime} \varepsilon$ | $\pm$ |
| ¢0โ | ऽระ | 8\＆t | †0¢ | £ャ | Ltt | $\angle 8$ | て6て | $6 L \varepsilon$ | 95 | ¢9¢ | して乙 | suo！̣enıasqo Ło дəqumn |
|  |  |  |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { (9z9Tㅇ) } \\ & \text { LZ9000- } \end{aligned}$ |  |  | $\left(566 I^{\circ} 0\right)$ $6680^{\circ} 0^{-}$ |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & (69 t \varepsilon \cdot 0) \\ & * * \dagger 96<\cdot 0 \end{aligned}$ | ләриәэ＊ว8У |
|  |  |  |  |  | $\begin{gathered} \left(858 t^{\circ} 0\right) \\ 0 z 05^{\circ} 0 \end{gathered}$ |  |  | （0L6s＇）で88て＇0 |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & \left(\angle \varepsilon I 0^{\prime} \tau\right) \\ & \star \pm S 9^{\prime} \mathrm{I}- \end{aligned}$ | ләриәэ |
| （0̌IT0） | （ $\downarrow$ ¢ $0^{\circ}{ }^{\circ}$ ） | （zLto ${ }^{\circ}$ ） |  | （ $5890{ }^{\circ} \mathrm{O}$ ） | （8690．0） | （6toz＇0） | （0780．0） | （1880．0） | （ع6દと＊） | （2t9\％0） | OZLT0） | 28\％ |
| 80st 0 | ＋ ttOT \％ | ＊\＆0tt＇0 | 298で0 | ＊88七8＊0 | ＊88tع＇0 | 6 tLzo | ＊0585\％0－ | ＊OS8t＇0－ | 9てもを0 | ＊8\＆St＇0－ | ＊8\＆らが0－ |  |
| （ع£セ $\varepsilon^{\circ} 0$ ） | （0＜Et＇0） | （0LZT＇0） |  | （z9LT＊） | （964 ${ }^{\circ} 0$ ） | （6ऽ89\％） | （98020） | （L8tでo） | （8LEO＇T） | （ع£0ャ＊） | （ちてで・） |  |
| ＊SS¢t＇t | ＊899でカ | ＊8Scz＇t | ＊$\varepsilon$ ¢9t＇$\varepsilon$ | ＊\＆て96＇て | ＊عて96＇乙 | 七tsく＇t |  | ＊てく9t＇t | L699＇โ | ＊七七てを＇を |  |  |
| иәшом | иวW | sұuәpuodsəy IIV | иәшом | иวผ | sұuәpuodsəy IIV | иәшом | иวW | sұuәpuodsəy ॥｜ษ | иәшом | иวW | słuapuodsəy ｜｜t |  |
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