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## ¿Dónde Están Todas las Mujeres?: The Impact of Female Labor Force Participation on Female Political Representation in Latin America

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The University of Southern Mississippi

¿Dónde están todas las mujeres?: The Impact of Female Labor Force Participation on  
Female Political Representation in Latin America

by

Murakami A. Carpenter

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Honors College of  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Bachelor of Science  
in the Department of Political Science

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## Abstract

Do higher levels of female labor force participation increase female political representation? Over the past 40 years, the involvement of Latina women in the labor force and the number of female legislators in Latin America has been steadily increasing. To determine if there is a correlation between these two variables, this research builds on the socio-economic status model created by Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995). Using both a bivariate and a multivariate model, I test for a correlation between the number of women working and the number of elected female legislators in 24 Latin American countries. Contrary to expectations, I find that increases in female labor force participation did not increase female political representation. Instead, gender quotas significantly impacted female representation in Latin America.

Key Words: Latin America, Female Labor Force Participation, Female Political Representation, Gender Quotas

## Dedication

Charles and Ann Carpenter:

Thank you for your constant support and encouragement.

You made my education and dreams possible.

## Acknowledgment

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Ngoc Phan, for her inspiration and dedication to excellence. Through her tenacious passion for research, I was inspired to pursue my own research and complete the senior honors thesis. She encouraged me to present my work and to be confident in my findings. Thank you for changing my worldview and challenging me to make myself a better person.

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## List of Abbreviations

FLFP	Female Labor Force Participation
FPP	Female Political Participation
FPR	Female Political Representation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labor Organization
IPU	Inter-parliamentary Union
PAN	Partido de Acción Nacional (National Action Party)
PRM	Proportional Representation Model
Root MSE	Root Mean Squared Error
SES	Socio-Economic Status

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Social, economic, and political disparities continue to prevent many governments from achieving gender equality (Daley and Nolan, 1994; Ramiere, Soysal and Shanahan 1997; Cohen and Huffman, 2007). Significant disparities remain in both *female labor force participation* (FLFP) and *female political representation* (FPR). In Latin America and in the Caribbean, women make up 57.5 percent of the labor force but hold only 29 percent of the seats in lower or house parliaments (World Bank, 2012; IPU, 2014).<sup>1</sup> There is a gender gap between the female workforce participation and female political representation.

This research examines Latin America because these countries were among the first mandating *female political participation* (FPP) through national voter participation policies and electoral quotas (Schwindt-Bayer, 2014). In order to test the relationship between FLFP and FPR, this research employs the socioeconomic resource model (SES) created by Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995). The SES model argues that employment provides workers with labor-related skills that can transfer into political skills. Thus, when women join the labor force and learn labor-related skills, they can use these skills to promote social movements and political agendas.

The data for this research came from the World Bank and International Parliamentary Union (IPU). FPR, the dependent variable, was measured by the

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<sup>1</sup> The World Bank created the proportion for FLFP in Latin America and in the Caribbean. The Inter-parliamentary Union determined the proportion for FPR. FPR is measured as the number of seats held by women in lower or single house parliaments from the 24 Latin American countries included in this research.

proportion of seats held by women in the national legislatures. FLFP, the independent variable, was measured by the proportion of the female population that is economically active.

Two statistical models were used in this research. *Model 1* utilized a simple bivariate regression model which indicated that FLFP decreases FPR. A multivariate regression model was used in *Model 2* and added gender quotas as a dummy variable. *Model 2* demonstrated that the presence of gender quotas increases FPR. Although these findings support the null hypothesis, which shows no positive correlation between FLFP and FPR, it does not negate the theoretical basis of this research (Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995; Thornton, Alwin and Camburn, 1983; Corcoran-Nantes, 2014). My findings were synonymous with other research which indicated that FLFP affects FPR, electoral systems, social responsibilities, and the supply of female candidates (Banducci, Donovan and Karp, 2004; Michael, 1985; Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995).

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

In general, the literature has examined the impact of FLFP on fertility, education, or social norms on FPP but has not yet examined the relationship between FLFP and FPR. FPP is defined as the political participation of the general public and can be measured through participation in community organizations, voting, and advocacy groups (Bowler & Segura, 2012). FPR refers to the political participation of women in local and national governments as executives (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu, 2013). An example of FPR would be the successful presidential election of Michelle Bachelet in 2005 (Michelle Bachelet, 2015). The pertinent literature regarding FLFP and FPR is reviewed in three main sections: economics, demographics, and politics. Each section will further address the particular factors which affect FLFP and FPR.

### **Economics**

This section will examine the three economic factors which impact FLFP. First, FLFP can be affected as governments shift their economic development strategies from industries which support female labor to industries that promote male labor (Ross, 2008). Second, the effects of financial crises can heavily influence FLFP as women are accepted into the labor force during healthy economic upturns and encouraged to leave during economic depressions (Kim & Voos, 2011). Third, the dispersion of foreign emigrant labor has impacted FLFP as countries with lower GDP incomes support women to participate in cheap international labor (Pyle 2011, Fernandez-Kelly, 2011). These three factors will now be discussed in more detail.

The participation of women in the economy impacts a country's economic development strategies since female labor is channeled into specific job sectors. Research in oil-rich South American and Middle Eastern countries has shown that resource discoveries (large reserve of natural resources) lead to a decrease in FLFP (Ross, 2008). This occurs because women tend to work in the traded sector, which involves importable goods such as agriculture and manufacturing, while men are more likely to work in the non-traded sector, which involves non-importable goods such as construction and retail.

Economical declines have also been shown to have an impact on FLFP (Kim & Voos, 2011). For example, the Korean financial boom of the 1990s was followed by a financial crisis. Because of this economic downturn, wages fell and women workers were let go as the economy of Korea adapted. Corresponding research has found that 86.2 percent of employers encouraged voluntary resignation by women (Shin, 1999). Also, the non-labor force participation of college-educated women increased by 31.8 percent. When FLFP supersedes male labor force participation, it does so with heavy pay discrimination (Shin, 1999). This indicates that women were used as an economic buffer, since their employment was encouraged during healthy economic upturns and discouraged during economic declines. Another way in which women are used as an economic buffer is through international emigration.

The international dispersion of workers around the globe has increased in recent years (Fernandez-Kelly, 2011). Many governments, especially Central American governments, with lower levels of GDP encourage female worker emigration. They encourage female worker emigration because women are more likely to send remittances to their country of origin (Pyle, 2011). Women have been pushed to find jobs



internationally to support their families as the demand for cheap labor has increased in spite of employment and wage insecurity (Fernandez-Kelly, 2011).

Thus, it is observed that economic strategies, economic growth and decline along with worker dispersion can impact FLFP. The literature finds that changes in these factors can encourage and discourage FLFP depending on a country's situation. Despite the fact that many economic factors influence FLFP, there are other points to consider. I will next examine the impacts of demographics on FLFP.

### **Demographics**

Demographic factors influence FLFP in many ways including, fertility and reproductive rights, education, social norms, and religious ideologies. A lack of reproductive rights by women can lead to losses in their wages (IMF Staff, 2013). When women increase their levels of education, they can compete for work in other job areas usually reserved for educated males. Additionally, women can improve their own lives when they do participate in the labor force, although they are widely discouraged from doing so in many developing countries (Wolf, 2011). In regards to religious ideologies, various religious groups approach FLFP differently (Glass & Nath, 2006; Chiswick, 1986). Indeed, cultural norms may have more to do with how society views FLFP than religion. This section will discuss each of these topics consecutively beginning with the impacts of fertility and reproductive rights.

The supply of female workers to the labor force is affected by fertility rates and reproductive rights. The widespread lack of freedom in these areas can cause negative returns for women. Research has shown that women often experience heavy income

losses over their lifetimes for having children (IMF Staff, 2013). Due to social expectations, FLFP is discouraged when reproduction is controlled and monitored by community leaders (Sen, 2011). To clarify, women in many developing countries are not given the right to control reproduction. Rather, the head of the household, a community leader, or the older women in the household or community determine a woman's rate of reproduction. It is therefore apparent that FLFP is not encouraged in countries where reproduction is not moderated by the woman herself. However, education provides women an avenue into the workplace.

The enrollment of girls in schools increases their literacy and social skills which can impact their future employment (Michael, 1985). As women attain an education, they develop organizational and networking skills and encourage changes in gender-role attitudes (Thornton, Alwin and Camburn, 1983; Carpenter and Moore, 2014). When female education rises, women can compete for non-manual labor jobs increasing labor force participation (Goldin, 1995). This means that women can pursue white-collar jobs and gain employment in the non-traded sector. Overall, when women are working outside the home and becoming more educated, they gain job-related skills and increase their employment opportunities (Amin, Diamond, & Naved, 1998). In spite of this, cultural norms often deter women from every gaining an education and entering the labor force.

Although many developed countries endeavor to improve conditions for females in the workplace, many developing countries continue to discourage women from joining the labor force (Beneria, 2011). When women do participate in the labor force, they often find undocumented domestic jobs as nannies or maids without legal protection (Beneria, 2011). At the same time, however, the workplace can provide women a means to improve

their quality of life and social status (Wolf, 2011). Poorer households are less likely than are prosperous households to allow FLFP outside the home. Nevertheless, even prosperous households may require a female presence within the home to fulfill domestic responsibilities. Gender-role expectations can sometimes be attributed to religious ideologies. Thus, it is necessary to review the impact of religious practices on FLFP.

Research has shown that religious ideologies can negatively impact FLFP (Sherkat and Darnell, 1999; Chiswick, 1986). The more fundamentalist or traditional the religion, the less likely women are to participate in the labor force. Scholars find that women who adhere to strong religious pressures and are heavily involved in at-home work tend to be less likely to enter the labor force (Glass & Nath, 2006). However, there are variations in the levels of subscription to religious traditions, even among fundamentalist groups. For example, except in households with young children, Jewish women are among the highest participants of FLFP (Chiswick, 1986). It is possible however, that variations within a religious sect may provide multiple interpretations of traditional gender-roles. Thus, the literature shows that religion may play a role in FLFP although there is variation even within religions.

Subsequently, the research shows that reproductive rights, education, social norms and religion impact FLFP. The literature demonstrates that reproduction often has a negative impact on FLFP while education has a positive impact. Research has also shown that while some women suffer from undocumented, unregulated and gendered work, others are free to improve their quality of life by joining the labor force. Additionally, while more fundamentalist groups are less likely to allow women to participate in the labor force, other religious groups may be more open to FLFP. Finally, it is important to

consider the impact of politics on FPR, having examined the impacts of economics and demographics on FLFP. After reviewing the political factors influencing FPR, the SES model can be used to correlate the impacts of FLFP on FPR.

### **Politics**

Latin America has made significant efforts to promote FPR. In the 1960s, many Latin American countries passed suffrage laws leading to the adoption of quota laws in eleven countries and the introduction of women as political executives (IPU, 2005; Htun, 2005). To appreciate the impact of various political policies and institutions on FPR, it is necessary to examine, in succession, three factors: gender quotas, party rules, and election systems.

A gender quota refers to a seat, a position or a candidate slot that is reserved for a female candidate. Gender quotas are used to overcome biases in electoral practices and to avoid tokenism – one woman representing the whole. Quotas are instituted by constitutions, legislation, or political parties. These laws do not always translate votes into actual seats, possibly explaining why 15.8 percent of Latin American legislatures consist of female representatives. Most states with gender quotas continue to be deficit in regards to gender equality in the legislatures. For example, Argentina established a 30 percent female gender quota for legislative candidates maintaining a gap between the female population of the country and female representation in the government (Htun, 2005). Nine other countries followed Argentina's example with a minimum of 20 to 40 percent gender quota for female candidates on political party voting lists as referenced in

Table 1. However, the effectiveness of quotas is congruently dependent on party leaders and voters (Fox & Lawless, 1975, pp. 89-111).

<b>Table 1. Implementation of Minimum Quotas in the Lower House in Latin American Systems, by Country by Year</b>		
Argentina	1991	30%
Paraguay	1996	20%
Brazil	1997	30%
Costa Rica	1997	40%
Panama	1997	30%
Peru	1997	25%
Dominican Republic	2004	25%
Ecuador	2009	20-30%
Mexico	2009	30%
Bolivia	2010	30%
Peschard, Jacqueline. 2002. <i>The Quota System in Latin America: General Overview</i> . Translated by Jacqueline Peschard. Stockholm: IDEA.		

Latin American opinion polls indicate that Latino populations support gender quotas as “generally beneficial” (Peschard, 2002; Morales Hoyos, 2001). Biased party leadership tends to push women into “women’s wings” or feminist parties (Friedman, 2000; Caul, 1999; Htun, 2005). Mexico’s Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN, National Action Party) has been able to maintain more female candidates than other party. The PAN party has accomplished this by creating a lobbying process at the local and national party levels to promote female entry into mainstream leadership positions and by encouraging leaders to choose women as candidates (Htun, 2005). In spite of the positive impacts of gender quotas, it has been argued that quotas alone cannot officiate FPR (Dahlerup, 2005). Thus, in addition to gender quotas, it is crucial to create a foundational framework to educate and train women to become competent representatives. Once

women have been trained and recruited for public service, they then face the difficulty of presenting themselves as viable candidates to the public. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how female candidates are represented to the voters specifically through substantive and symbolic representation.

Women remain underrepresented in political institutions due to problems with substantive representation, which decreases symbolic representation (Carroll & Sanbonmatsu, 2013). *Substantive representation* refers to the specific issues which female representatives highlight in their political agendas (Lawless and Fox, 1975). These issues often contrast with the generality of male issue interests (Gerrity, Osborn and Morehouse Mendez, 2007). Women tend to use bill sponsorships to focus on “women’s issues,” such as health care and education, and use broad participation and cooperation strategies as opposed to the hierarchical approach of male representatives (Swers 1998; Tolleson-Rinehart and Stanley, 1994). *Symbolic representation* refers to the manner in which voters relate to a candidate in terms of shared physical, racial or ethnic characteristics (Pitkin, 1967). Symbolic representation is important because it can help to increase female voter participation (Campbell & Wolbrecht, 2006).

Research has shown that female representation can increase political efficacy among women, improve female identity and promote the potential political engagement of adolescent girls (Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2006; Atkeson, 2003; Burrell, 1996; Lawless and Fox, 1975). A rise in female representation draws attention to gender equality issues and increase government legitimacy among women (Lawless and Fox, 1975; Mansbridge, 1999). Among minority groups, minority representation has produced positive citizen attitudes towards the government and encouraged political participation

(Banducci, Donovan, & Karp, 2004). In fact, *descriptive representation*, representation which resembles the constituent, has been shown to increase knowledge about, and contact with, representatives thus increasing electoral participation (Dovi, 2014; Banducci, Donovan and Karp, 2004).

Election processes matter to FPR because women are more likely to be elected under a system of proportional *representation* (PR) than under a ballot directed toward specific candidates (Peschard, 2002). In 2000, women averaged 15 percent of congressional members in PR systems among 182 countries: 11 percent in mixed systems and 9 percent in plurality or majority systems (Norris, 2004). Women are more likely to lobby for female inclusion in policymaking when a party is bureaucratic and rule-oriented because parties can be held accountable (Matland, 2004). FPR in more institutionalized legislatures can vary from 12 percent to 35 percent while in countries with less institutionalized legislatures FPR remains near the regional average of 17 percent (Htun, 2005). These levels of FPR support the notion that more centralized legislative systems increase the probability of FPR as women acquire access to the chain of influence.

From examining the political factors, the literature shows that gender quotas can have positive impacts on FPR. Substantive representation can decrease FPR thus decreasing symbolic representation. Moreover, party rules can increase the recruitment and training of female candidates. Consequently, while substantive representation negatively affects FPR, the use of a PR system can suppress a female candidate's platform, thereby increasing her potential to gain office.

In sum, the literature demonstrates the economic and demographic factors affecting FLFP and the political factors influencing FPR. Economically, women fare better in countries with traded economic strategies and economic success. Demographically, fertility rates can have a negative impact on FLFP, as women are expected to participate in domestic labor. Further, while women may become educated and achieve employment, in instances of financial crises, they may still lose their employment. Social and religious institutions also impact FLFP but not as significantly as fertility, education, or cultural norms. Politically, gender quotas significantly increase FPR; thereby increasing symbolic and descriptive representation. While symbolic representation can support a female candidate's platform among female voters, PR systems, which suppress a candidate's personal platform, can increase the likelihood of a female candidate gaining office. To build upon this literature, this research uses the SES model created by Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995) to examine the possible relationship between FLFP and FPR.

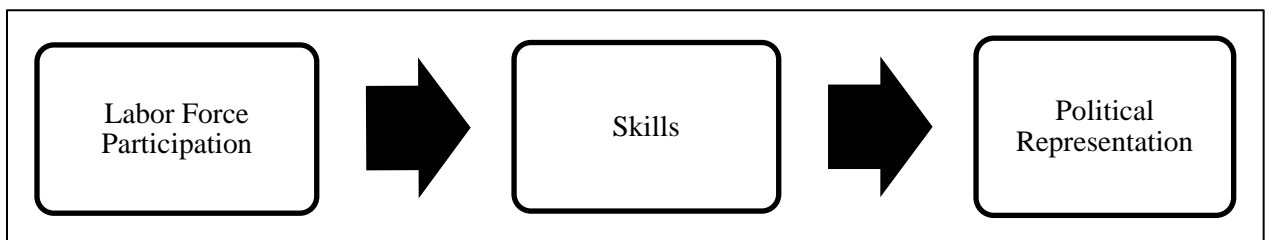


## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Theory and Hypothesis

The SES model maps the impacts of resources such as time, money, and skills on political participation (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). The model theorizes that those with more resources are more likely to participate in politics. For example, individuals who work can act on their political interests and apply skills learned at work into politics. This research expands on the SES model to examine the relationship between FLFP and FPR. This relationship is tested by the theory that skills learned through labor force participation positively impact political representation (*Figure 1*).

*Figure 1.* Theoretical model based on the SES model.



By acquiring skills in the labor force, women can then use these skills for political representation. For example, skills learned on-the-job can be used to forward the political interests of the worker. At work, women gain access to a larger community and may be mobilized by unions and other political institutions. When women are able to socialize outside of the home, they can employ “civic skills” (Carpenter & Moore, 2014). Utilizing these skills, women can act upon their political interests and begin participating politically. Thus, employment leads to the development of skills, leading to increased involvement of women in politics.

An example of the SES model is demonstrated by the poor, working women of Brazil who “strengthened their presence in non-institutional politics by protesting about the lack of basic services, health provisions, transportation, housing and unemployment,” (Corcoran-Nantes, 2014, p. 137). While these protests were not created for women, women were an integral part of these protests. The organization and political practices utilized in these protests indicates the influence of women in community mobilization. Thus, drawing on the SES theory, my research hypothesizes that as FLFP increases, FPR increases.

To test the hypothesis, FLFP is used as a measure of skills and FPR is measured by the proportion of seats held by women in Latin American legislatures. The research design involves both a bivariate regression model and a multivariate regression model. The bivariate regression model includes two continuous variables. The dependent variable is the proportion of female politicians in Latin America and the independent variable is female labor force participation. The multivariate regression model adds gender quotas as a dummy variable.

FLFP is a valid operationalization of skills because by entering the labor force, women must have skills necessary to work (e.g. operating a machine) (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). Similar to Banducci, Donovan and Karp (2004), female political representation is measured as the proportion of seats held by women in Latin American parliaments (hereinafter referred to as legislatures).

The dummy variable was coded by the countries that mandate gender quotas within the data population (Marx & Borner, 2011). The data for both FLFP and FPR

come from the World Bank Databank's Gender Statistic Indicator, which has been used by many researchers including Michael J. Ross who studied FLFP (Ross, 2008; Psacharopoulos & Txannatos, 1989).

The data included 24 Latin American states from a list of developing countries created by the World Bank; this population did not include Grenada or Dominica since the World Bank did not provide FLFP data in these countries (World Bank, 2014). The data spans ten years, from 2003 to 2013. I used two different data sources to measure FLFP and FPR. FLFP measures the percent of economically active women from ages 15 to 64, as estimated by the International Labor Organization (ILO). FPR measures the proportion of seats held by women in national legislatures. The World Bank compiled the data for the proportion of seats held by women in national legislatures from data provided by national legislatures to the IPU.

I ran two models in STATA. The first model is a bivariate regression model and the second model was a multivariate regression model. After the data was tabulated by year, country, and data series, the models were run in STATA (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2013). The bivariate regression model in *Model 1* measured the correlation between FLFP and FPR. *Model 2*, the multivariate regression model, measured the correlation between FLFP and FPR and included gender quotas as a dummy variable.

*Model 1:*

$$\text{Female Political Representation} = \alpha + \beta \text{Female Labor Force Participation} + u_i$$

*Model 2:*

$$\text{Female Political Representation} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Female Labor Force Participation} + \beta_2 \text{Gender Quotas} + u_i$$

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable, political representation, is measured by the proportion of seats held by women in national legislatures. This proportion is expressed as a percentage of all seats occupied by women in single or lower chambers of national legislatures, see *Figure 2*. Seats refer to the number of members in the legislature. Member seats are usually won in general elections. The average number of lower or single house seats in Latin American legislatures are 158.<sup>2</sup> The average number of seats held by women is forty-five. This leaves 113 seats for male candidates or open competition, depending on incumbency and legislative rules. Thus, women maintain an average of 29 percent of seats, while men maintain or compete for nearly 72 percent of seats.

*Figure 2*. Equation for the Proportion of Women in the Legislature

$$\frac{\text{Total number of seats occupied by women}}{\text{Total number of seats in the legislature}}$$

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<sup>2</sup> These numbers were derived from data provided by the IPU (IPU, 2014).

### **Independent Variable**

FLFP is the independent variable and is the proportion of the female population ages 15 to 64 that is economically active: all women who supply labor for the production of goods and services during each year (World Bank, 2012). This sample includes women who are employed or seeking work.

### **Dummy Variable**

The list of countries that have implemented gender quotas was compiled from Marx and Borner, and Htun (Marx and Borner, 2011; Htun, 2005). These countries include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru (see Table 1). Gender quotas were coded as a dichotomous variable, where zero indicated no gender quota and one indicated the inclusion of a gender quota.

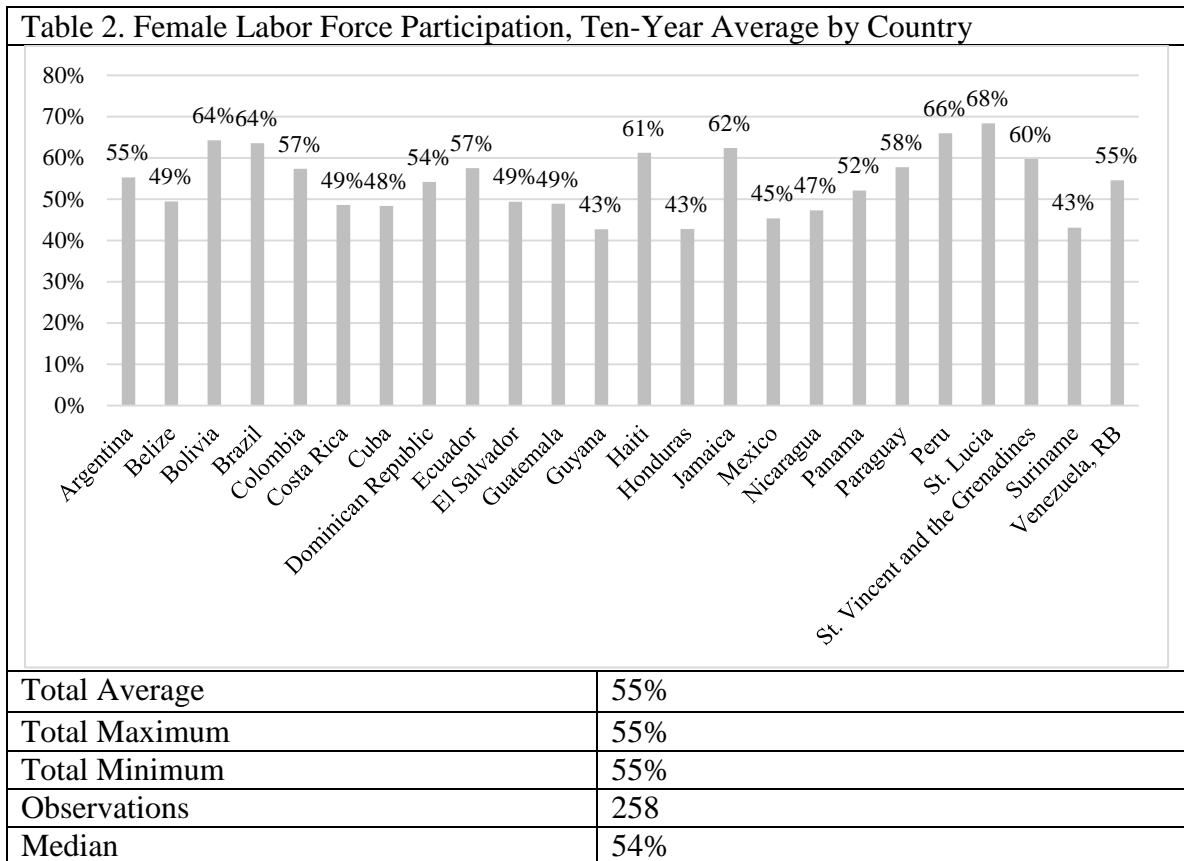
### **Data Limitations**

There are limitations to the World Bank data. First, the data only includes women between the ages of 15 to 64. This is because many countries have a maximum and minimum working age. Second, there are difficulties in measuring the number of workers. In developing countries, the household is often the basic unit of production. Due to seasonal work and other factors, households can experience large variations in labor force participation. Thus, unpaid workers, family workers, students and military members are not counted as economically active. Third, labor force surveys, which are comprehensive, and population censuses are often used to measure labor force

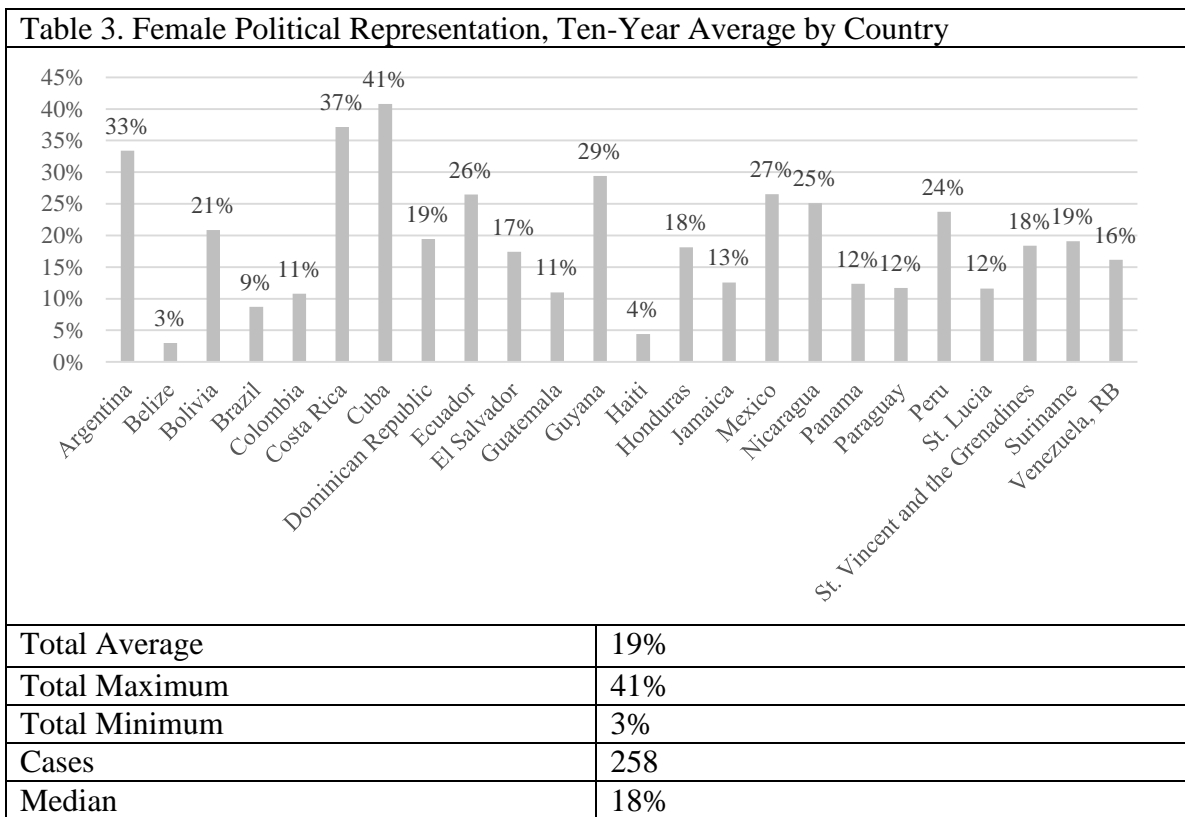
participation. However, national censuses or surveys only make limited observations; failing to control for variations in household labor force participation over time. Fourth, there were numerous instances of FPR excluded from the World Bank’s data. Exclusions include, suspensions or dissolutions of legislatures; difficulties in obtaining by-election results; replacements due to death; and institutional variations which prohibited the candidate from carrying out the term.

### Descriptive Statistics

An average FLFP of 54 percent; the lowest observation being 43 percent and the highest observation being 68 percent. The FLFP overall median is 54 percent. St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Haiti, Jamaica, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, St. Lucia have the highest levels of FLFP (Table 2). The data population included 258 cases of both FLFP and FPR.



The average level of FPR in the sample is 19 percent with the lowest average in Belize, 3 percent, and the highest average in Cuba, 41 percent, and an overall median of 18 percent. Bolivia, Peru, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Mexico, Guyana, Argentina, Costa Rica, and Cuba have above average FPR rates ranging from 21 to 41 percent (Table 3).



The average FPR in the countries implementing gender quotas is 22 percent with a deviation ranging from 20 to 40 percent. The median value for FPR is 21 percent. The average FLFP for these countries is 56 percent with a deviation ranging from 41 to 69 percent. The median value for FLFP is 56 percent.

## Chapter 4: Results

The percent of variation explained by *Model 1* in the dependent variable is only 7 percent ( $R^2 = 0.07$ ) while *Model 2* accounts for 13 percent of the variation in the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.1319$ ). Therefore, gender quotas have a greater impact on FPR and account for more variation than does FLFP on FPR. This is logical since I find a slightly lower root mean squared error (Root MSE) in *Model 2* (Root MSE = 10.158) than *Model 1* (Root MSE = 10.158).

The data shows that the average representation of women is 40.67 percent, and that female labor has a negative impact on FPR (-.39) (Table 4). As the percentage of FLFP increases, the level of FPR in Latin American countries decreases. When controlling for gender quotas, the average FPR slightly increases to 43.37 percent. FLFP continues to have a negative impact on FPR (-.49). However, gender quotas have a positive impact on FPR (5.60). This data shows that there is a 5.60 percent increase in women's representation when there is a gender quota. Thus, due to statistical conclusions, this research accepts the null hypothesis, which states that FLFP does not cause an increase in FPR. Instead, it appears that quotas significantly impact female representation in Latin America.



<b>Table 4. Female Political Representation (2003-year)</b>		
<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>
Labor Force Participation	-0.39*** (0.08)	-0.49*** 0.84
Quotas	—	5.60*** (1.32)
Intercept	40.67	43.37
R2	.08	.12
N	258	258
Standard errors in parentheses. Two-sided t-tests: ***indicates p<.01; **indicates < .05; *indicates p < .10.		

## Chapter 5 – Conclusion and Discussion

These results conclude that FLFP actually has a negative impact on FPR, even when controlling for quotas. Although the SES model theorizes that skills, and not labor force participation, can lead to political participation, other research has shown that labor force participation can impact political participation and consequently representation (Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995; Thornton, Alwin and Camburn, 1983; Corcoran-Nantes, 2014). Furthermore, the research by Corcoran-Nantes maintains validity since through education, health care and political support a woman can become politically active (Corcoran-Nantes, 2014; Goldin, 1995; Amin, Diamond and Naved, 1998; Fox and Lawless, 1975). While social and demographic factors may greatly impact FPR, FLFP continues to have an impact, although slight, on FPR (Banducci, Donovan and Karp, 2004; Michael, 1985; Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995). Thus, this research contributes to the SES model and other research in this area.

The results of *Model 2* demonstrate that the impact of gender quotas supersedes the impact of FLFP on FPR. Gender quotas, as a variable, account for more variation than does FLFP and correlates more strongly with FPR. However, while these results are intriguing, quotas are not enough to maintain FPR since implementation varies and women must be qualified and capable of holding office (Dahlerup 2005; Bhavnani 2009). Iversen and Rosenbluth examined the connection between FLFP and FPR and emphasized the necessity of women achieving seniority in the political system (Iversen & Rosenbluth, 2008). They found that the social responsibilities placed on female politicians are disruptive to their ability to attain seniority. The work of Iversen and Rosenbluth is supported by others who highlight the issue of supply. A candidate must

have the ambition, skills and knowledge necessary to campaign and win an election; however, the achievement is difficult when social and demographic factors deter women from fulfilling all of these requirements (Paxton, Kinovich, & Hughes, 2007). Together, these observations support the idea that gender quotas are not sufficient to maintain FPR.

While this research accepts the null hypothesis, these findings measure one aspect of the SES model and do not nullify the relationship between FLFP and FPR since other research maintains this relationship. Future research may be able to identify a better measure of skills to improve the correlation between FLFP and FPR.

### **Future Research**

Future research should include the political participation of female citizens instead of focusing on candidates and representatives. It is possible that women become politically active when they enter the labor force; however, it is likely that their political participation is more localized. Thus, surveys should measure various forms of political participation, such as, participation in local advocacy groups. For example, looking at the participation of women on school boards or in churches may help to inform the relationship between FLFP and FPP and capture the moment when women become politically active.

Other possibilities for future research include controlling for the long-term impacts of gender quotas and case studies. The long-term influences of gender quotas should be included in future research since changes in regulations can change the adherence to and support for gender quotas (Bhavnani, 2009). Also, research involving a single country or a small range of countries – such as, Mexico, Costa Rica and Cuba –

will help to better inform our current knowledge of FPP and may help to explain the deviation between states (Peschard, 2002).

As indicated by Professor Mark Jones, Latin America is undergoing many political changes and is likely to see “an increasingly diverse set of democracies and democratic experiences coexisting in the region” (Jones, 2012). These changes will provide students of Latin America a unique opportunity for research. With the increase in worker emigration, it is important for scholars to examine the advantages and disadvantages of the international job market. The success of gender quotas has encouraged researchers to develop means of transferring these models to other countries, such as India (Bhavnani, 2009). Therefore, future analysis on the influences of female labor participation, female political participation, and female political representation in Latin America may inform gender politics well into the future. The acceptance of female politicians in Latin America may help to better inform the political positions of the neighboring states and improve gender relations in the region.

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