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## The Legislative Effectiveness of Women Under Gender Quotas: Argentina Before and After Quota Implementation

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THE LEGISLATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN UNDER GENDER QUOTAS:  
ARGENTINA BEFORE AND AFTER QUOTA IMPLEMENTATIONS

By

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### Abstract

In the field of politics and gender, political scientists have been keenly interested in legislative gender quotas: how they are adopted, how they place women into positions of power, and whether they change the descriptive, substantive, and formal representation of women. In this paper, I expand upon previous research by assessing the legislative effectiveness of women under gender quotas. I examine the legislative effectiveness of male and female Members of Congress (MCs) in the Argentine Senate and the Chamber of Deputies as defined by their ability to pass legislation both before and after the implementation of a national legislative gender quota. Contrary to much of the previous literature, I find that both before and after gender quota implementation, women MCs appear to surpass male MCs in their legislative effectiveness.

## **The Legislative Effectiveness of Women Under Gender Quotas:**

### **Argentina Before and After Quota Implementation**

In an effort to ensure women are properly represented in government, many countries, as well as political parties, have instituted gender quotas to increase the number of women in their legislatures (Krook, 2010). According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 33 countries have instituted legislative quotas, 24 countries have reserved seats, and over 100 political parties across various countries have adopted party quotas.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, these efforts may be in vain if women are not able to pass legislation as effectively as their male counterparts. Though there are many ways in which female legislators can influence policy, bill passage remains the most direct course of action to affect and create policy, as well as being the fundamental function of legislatures. Many factors may contribute to the success or failure of a quota; however, I hypothesize that even under the most successful quota laws, women will still be less effective legislators than men. Notwithstanding seemingly successful and genuine political efforts towards gender parity and inclusivity, discrimination and bias against female legislators may still prevent them from achieving the same levels of effectiveness as their male colleagues. In addition to existing bias, these discrepancies may be due to the unintended negative effects quotas have on perceptions of women MCs (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008).

I formed this hypothesis based on previous studies of Argentina and gender quotas. However, my findings in this paper are contrary to my hypothesis and similar studies of gender quota effectiveness in Argentina and elsewhere. In this paper, I find that women MCs' effectiveness often surpasses that of their male colleagues both before and after quota

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas>

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implementation. I also find that women's legislative effectiveness exhibits a gradual increase over time as more women begin to populate the legislature. This is an interesting and surprising finding, considering the discrimination and structural barriers facing women in government and the negative perceptions quotas cast on newly elected 'quota women' (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008).

Despite the implementation of gender quotas by numerous governments, women continue to be widely under-represented in legislative bodies, even in those that have instituted gender quotas (Krook, 2010). Many variables may impact the number of women elected, including the type of quotas that are implemented, how the quotas are enforced, and the threshold of elected women the quota is meant to achieve (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). Quotas have seen much success in placing women in positions of power as lawmakers and leaders. However, there are still many obstacles preventing women from holding these positions in name while also possessing the decision making power that comes with them. Post-quota implementation, women in legislatures may be challenged by attempts to neutralize the power of their positions as elected officials (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). These challenges may come from political elites, particularly male political elites, or in the form of menial committee assignments and problematic quota design (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008; Schwindt-Bayer, 2006). Women in legislatures may additionally be threatened, silenced, refused reelection, or refused nominations (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). In determining the success of quotas, we must also consider the quotas' origins in male majority legislative bodies, as well as consider their motivations for quota implementation (Arden, 2018; Driscoll & Krook, 2012).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Male political elites may champion quota implementation for a number of politically strategic reasons. Empirical evidence suggests that male political elites support quotas in times of low political popularity and increased political

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Nevertheless, women have still been elected and continue to serve in their positions as lawmakers. Women's participation in democracy at all levels, including their effectiveness as legislators, is extremely important in ensuring the accurate representation of women and their political preferences. In Jane Mansbridge's 1999 article, she discusses the different types of representation and, more specifically, descriptive representation and its role in ensuring accurate substantive representation of constituencies, particularly minority groups. She explains that representatives who do not share the experiences of their minority constituents experience cannot fully understand constituents' preferences in order to accurately represent them (Mansbridge, 1999). For example, she claims that only women can understand the un-crystallized preferences of other women, and for this reason, she argues that women should be represented by women (Mansbridge, 1999). Maintaining diversity within legislatures is important not only because of the unique perspectives, preferences, and skill sets of minorities but, additionally, because diverse legislatures enjoy greater public legitimacy among a wider array of their constituency (Mansbridge, 1999; Phillips, 1991). However, the legitimizing effects of descriptive representation require that minority groups entering the government receive equitable treatment (Kanthak & Krause, 2010). A change in formal representation, such as the implementation of quotas, does result in increased numbers of women in office, or increased descriptive representation, and increased policy responsiveness (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). Nonetheless, there may still be barriers that prevent women from being able to serve as effective legislators even under gender quotas.

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competition (Krook, 2010). Additionally, they may support quotas as a tokenistic gesture to show support for women while still actively working against more progressive policies and, in the case of Argentina, allegedly engaging in acts of nepotism by filling party-list placements that are reserved for female candidates with female relatives (Baker, 2014; Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Furthermore, Driscoll and Krook (2012) find that the quota may have only been passed into law in Argentina because it was intended to be unenforceable.

In this paper, I compare the legislative effectiveness of women elected with and without gender quotas in addition to comparing their effectiveness with that of their male colleagues. More specifically, I analyze the effectiveness of female legislators in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies and the Senate both before and after quotas were fully implemented. In doing so, I determine the effectiveness of gender quotas not only in their ability to place women in positions of power but also in their ability to ensure that those women can make policy changes, beyond the limitations of women's issues, in the legislature once they have been elected. Additionally, I focus on the legislative effectiveness of women comprehensively by examining their effectiveness across all policy areas proposed and passed in the legislature, rather than focusing on traditionally feminine policy areas alone. Through this distinction, I make a unique contribution to women's representation as a field of study by considering the effectiveness and broader policy goals of women MCs, rather than limiting my scope to the traditionally feminine policy areas which are more frequently studied to determine policy responsiveness.

### **Why Argentina?**

In 1991, gender quotas were first democratically implemented by law in Argentina when the government passed the *Ley de Cupos* which required all political parties to nominate, at a minimum, 30 percent women for the electable positions on their party lists (Piscopo, 2016). Due to its early adoption of legislative gender quotas, Argentina is widely studied in the field of gender and politics which made it ideal for further investigation in this paper. As a new democracy, Argentina implemented this law due to the efforts, campaigns, and mass mobilization of women (Barnes, 2012; Driscoll & Krook, 2012). After being faced with internal opposition, dwindling legitimacy, and economic turmoil in the 1970s, the military regime which



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once held power in Argentina was defeated in the Malvinas War in 1982 and was replaced with a new, democratic government (Gray, 2003). This democratic government was not without its struggles, but it also offered the women of Argentina a new path to enter the world of politics and government.

This regime transition could not have taken place without women taking up roles in organizations that opposed the regime and becoming key actors in defeating the military dictatorship (Gray, 2003). Rather than returning to traditional roles in the private realm, women transitioned their strategies from a fight for democracy to a fight for women's rights (Gray, 2003). The democratization of Argentina created a platform for women activists and politicians to demand a quota in accordance with modern democratic ideals, such as inclusivity and freedom from discrimination (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Politicians in favor of gender quotas argued that the exclusion of women from politics and government was a relic of the authoritarian political culture of the past (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). In 1991, the mass mobilization of over 5,000 women, alongside multiple campaigns led by women's organizations and lobbying efforts raised public awareness of the issue and led to the passage of gender quota laws in Argentina at the national level (Barnes, 2012; Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). The quota now enjoys much support and success in Argentina, and today the number of women serving in Argentina's parliament is 39 percent (Gender Quotas Database, 2018). Argentina was the forerunner for quota implementation not only in Latin America, with Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama all following Argentina's lead, but in many parliaments around the world (Piscopo, 2016).

The effectiveness of these quotas tends to vary, however, Argentina exhibits conditions which make it an ideal case to use in determining women's effectiveness under gender quotas.

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Factors that may impact the effectiveness of quotas include the type of electoral system, the district magnitude, and the party list type, among other characteristics (Gray, 2003). In terms of quota design, effectiveness may vary due to the strength of enforcement measures and requirements put in place by the quota law as well as the size of the quota itself (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). These are the characteristics examined by Leslie Schwindt-Bayer (2009) in her analysis of the effectiveness of different gender quota designs. She finds that quotas which require parties to place more women on their ballots increase the number of women elected, regardless of placement mandates or the strength of their enforcement mechanisms (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). However, sanctions upon party noncompliance and laws dictating the order of female candidates' placement on the ballots increase the number of women elected as well (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). Argentina's quotas exhibit all the characteristics found by Schwindt-Bayer to result in highly effective quotas (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009).

Argentina's law requires that a minimum of 30 percent of the candidates in all electoral districts must be women (Gray, 2003). However, when the quota was first introduced, the purposefully weak enforcement mechanisms of the original quota law allowed party non-compliance and caused female candidates who were excluded from the lists to file lawsuits against their own parties in the lower level provincial courts (Driscoll & Krook, 2012; Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Female candidates, as well as women's organizations, such as the National Women's Council and the President's Cabinet of Women Advisors, led active campaigns to close loopholes in the initial quota law (Gray, 2003). Many of these problems were rectified by Executive Decree 379/93 and Decree 1.246, which created guidelines for the formation of party lists (Gray, 2003; Krook, 2010). Argentina implemented a placement mandate which requires that parties place female candidates in winnable positions on the party list (Schwindt-Bayer,

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2009). Party lists in noncompliance with these requirements are rejected (Gray, 2003).<sup>3</sup>

Argentina has strong enforcement mechanisms in the form of independent electoral authorities which reject party lists that fail to comply with the quota (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). As an additional enforcement measure, any registered voter in Argentina is free to challenge party lists that they believe to be in noncompliance with the quota law (Krook, 2010). In terms of quota size, Argentina requires near gender parity, with the minimum required number of women on a party list set at 30 percent, and has seen much success in reaching and exceeding these minimums (Piscopo, 2016; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009).

Additionally, Argentina uses a closed party list system in which parties present one rank order party list and the electorate votes for entire lists rather than singular candidates (Political Database of the Americas, 2011). Having closed party lists in combination with gender quotas is the most effective way to ensure that women are elected (Gray, 2003; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). However, closed party list proportional representation systems also grant greater power to party leaders, particularly in presidential systems like in Argentina (Kunicova & Rose-Ackerman, 2001). This is not only associated with higher levels of corruption, but makes party leaders particularly powerful in constructing party lists, interpreting quota law, and agenda setting in the legislature (Calvo, 2014; Kunicova & Rose-Ackerman, 2001). When quotas were first being implemented, party leaders abused these powers through noncompliance, discriminatory legal interpretations of the quota, as well as alleged nepotism (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). Despite

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<sup>3</sup> Initially, noncompliance with the quota law was widespread, despite the law's passage and the remarkable collective action and organization of women who demanded the law be properly implemented. The law was met with strong opposition even after its passage as parties realized they would have to remove male candidates from their list to comply. After years of adjusting the law, campaigns, and many politically costly lawsuits brought by female candidates in pursuit of equality, the law was fully implemented in 2000. For a more detailed description of these events, I recommend Tracia Gray's piece, *Electoral Gender Quotas: Lessons from Argentina and Chile*.

these factors, Argentina's quota design is a near-perfect model of what an effective quota should exemplify. This made Argentina a particularly well suited case to determine if there are discrepancies in women's effectiveness as legislators once they have been elected under a quota.

### **Literature Review**

In further investigating my hypothesis, that even with successful gender quota implementation, women will still be less effective legislators than men, I found that there are many barriers under legislative gender quotas that may hinder women's ability to pass legislation at the same rate as men. According to Franceschet and Piscopo (2008), gender quotas affect women's substantive representation in unintended ways in the Argentine Congress. Though gender quota campaigns and the implementation of the gender quota itself have given female legislators a mandate in order to change policy, in some cases, it also supported an argument which disadvantaged women by reinforcing beliefs about their sociocultural roles and differences (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). This also reinforced the idea that "quota women" are different and therefore are believed to need special treatment; this is referred to as the "label effect" (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). Quota labels imposed on elected women may shape perceptions about their legislative abilities and, as a result, impact their effectiveness as legislators (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). After analyzing women's issue bill introduction, Franceschet and Piscopo (2008) find that both the mandate and label effects are present in the case of Argentina and that the number of women in a legislature does not equate to women having the same levels of political agency in that legislature. In their later work, Franceschet and Piscopo (2012) find additional evidence that in diverse countries such as Argentina, women who

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are elected under quota laws are seen as being less competent, qualified, and effective legislators despite empirical evidence that would suggest otherwise (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2012).

In contrast to Franceschet and Piscopo (2008), this paper considers women's effectiveness as legislators both before and after the implementation of quotas more broadly by focusing on their effectiveness in all areas of legislation rather than limiting my scope to traditionally feminine policy issues. The Argentine government has been supportive of women's mass entry into politics via the gender quota law, however, a strong women's agenda has yet to form in Argentina because the women elected may be non-feminist or anti-feminist and therefore work against more progressive feminist policy agendas (Gray, 2003). By broadening my study to include policy areas outside of traditionally feminine issues, I will garner a more holistic understanding of women's effectiveness regardless of their policy preferences.

In the context of the United States, which lacks any sort of gender quota, Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman and Dana Wittmer Wolfe (2019) find that bills focusing on women's issues are only half as likely to become law as other non-women's issue bills introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. This finding is particularly important because, assuming similar patterns would exist in legislatures with effective gender quotas, the poor performance of women's issues bills may have a spurious relationship with the effectiveness of women as legislators. This is why, to assess women's effectiveness accurately, it is important to consider women's effectiveness not only as it pertains to women's issues, which may perform poorly regardless of the efforts of women, but rather to consider women's effectiveness in all policy areas. Volden, Wiseman, and Wolfe (2019) also find that success rates of women's issues bills are cut in half again if the women's issue bill was sponsored by a female legislator, regardless of her seniority, party, or the current majority in the House. These findings provide evidence of the existing gap

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in legislative success between men and women within non-quota legislatures, as well as the gap in success between women's issues bills and other proposed legislation. In this paper, I will expand upon this research by gauging the effect that quotas have, both before and after their implementation, on women's ability to pass legislation.

Franceschet and Piscopo (2008) have also identified party leaders, executives, and informal political norms as the primary contributors to the label and mandate effect. These findings are supported in the literature as well. In examining the legislative empowerment of women in African legislatures post-gender quota implementation, Christie Arendt (2018) finds that parties play a significant role in the design of quotas. In her piece, Arendt (2018) emphasizes the importance of parties not only because of their hand in quota design, through their influence over the implementation, magnitude, and enforcement mechanisms of quota laws, but also because of the motivations they may have in creating gender quotas in the first place. These are the same parties and legislatures that have long been dominated by male political elites (Arendt, 2018). This is supported in the literature as well, as a common explanation for the adoption of gender quotas is that political elites adopt quotas for strategic reasons (Krook, 2010). Political elites may support quota adoption due to increased political competition, a decrease in popularity, as well as using quota adoption as a means to express to the public a commitment to women's issues without necessarily disrupting prevailing patterns of inequality (Driscoll & Krook, 2012; Krook, 2010).

Similarly, Kerryn Baker (2014), in her comparative piece focusing on gender quotas in Samoa and Papua New Guinea, finds that male political elites act in support of gender quotas in parliament, while still maintaining a conservative political culture. Male political elites have a great deal of power in determining the success of quota implementation and their support may be

given pragmatically for personal gain rather than ideologically (Baker, 2014). This type of support is a tokenistic gesture rather than a genuine willingness to empower women (Baker, 2014). For example, in Argentina, it was alleged that, in order to fill quotas, political elites would fill the party lists with their female relatives who would presumably be acting on behalf of their male relatives if elected (Hinojosa & Piscopo, 2013). I argue that these factors not only impact quota implementation and design, but they additionally continue to impact women who have been elected under quotas and may hinder their effectiveness as legislators. These findings support my hypothesis, that even with successful gender quota implementation, women will still be less effective legislators than men, especially considering the disproportionate power that parties have in the Argentine Congress (Calvo, 2014; Kunicova & Rose-Ackerman, 2001).

### **Research Design**

In applying these theories to the case of Argentina, I model many components of my methodology after the legislative effectiveness scores developed by the Center for Effective Law Making. Within an American context, the Center for Effective Law Making uses the number of bills that each Member of the House of Representatives sponsored, the number of those bills that received any action in committee, or action beyond committee on the floor of the House (Volden & Wiseman).<sup>4</sup> The authors also identify how many bills subsequently passed the House and the number of bills that became law.

Modified to Argentina, I analyze bill sponsorship by women in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. I then assess the number of women-sponsored bills that are rejected, the

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<sup>4</sup> <https://thelawmakers.org/methodology>

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number of bills that pass only their house of origin, and the number of bills that pass both houses and become law. I then compare the effectiveness of women both before and after quotas were put in place. Additionally, I compare these findings to the effectiveness of male legislators both before and after quotas to gain a more holistic understanding of legislative effectiveness in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies and the Senate overall. Comparing women's effectiveness with men's is key to ensuring that low levels of effectiveness exhibited by women are not due to gridlock in the legislature overall, and to examine the disparities in effectiveness between men and women more directly.

In the case of Argentina, there is no strict demarcation or election year which marks the full, successful implementation of the *Ley de Cupos*. Though the law was passed in 1991, the law was not explicitly clarified and lacked consequences in cases of quota noncompliance until 1993, after the rectification of Executive Decree 379/93 (Krook, 2010). Even with these clarifications, many of the party lists in the 1993 election failed to comply with the law due to their placement of women candidates in positions on party lists which were essentially unelectable (Krook, 2010). The partial implementation of the quota law led women to challenge the discriminatory legal interpretations and party-list placements of their own parties (Krook, 2010). Through a series of favorable rulings in lawsuits during the 1990s, in which the quota law was further clarified; the law was implemented in half of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies, as only half of the seats were up for reelection in 1993 (Krook, 2010). In 1994, during constitutional revisions, there were several reforms to the constitution, as well as adjustments to the electoral process in the Senate which strengthened the quota law and quelled concerns of its unconstitutionality (Krook, 2010).



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As the 1995 election approached, women continued to challenge the interpretations of the quota law which rendered it less effective (Krook, 2010). This continued until December of 2000 when Executive Decree 1.246 was ratified. Recognizing the flaws of Decree 379/93, and problems with inconsistencies in rulings in local and national level courts, Decree 1.246 explicitly clarified the implementation of the law (Krook, 2010). It reiterated much of the original law and unambiguously elucidated the prerequisites for party-list acceptance (Krook, 2010). The decree additionally required that parties amend their bylaws to include these provisions prior to the 2001 election (Krook, 2010). Mirroring the gradual changes in the quota law, we see a gradual increase in the number of elected women in Argentina as the quota becomes fully implemented. Table 1 below lists the percent of women that served in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate following the year 1991.

Table 1

<u>Chamber of Deputies</u>		<u>Senate</u>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Women (%)</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Women (%)</b>
1991	5.8	1992	5.8
1993	14.4	1995	14.4
1995	21.8	1999	21.8
1997	27.6	2001	27.6
1999	27.2	2003	27.2
2001	30.0	2005	30.0
2003	33.9	2007	33.9
2005	35.8		
2007	40.0		

Source: (Krook, 2010).

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Ideally, data before 1991 would be used to devise a more comprehensive model of women's effectiveness over time in Argentina. However, due to limited resources and the unavailability of such data outside of Argentina, I determine women's legislative effectiveness between the years 1994 to 2009. The Argentine Government keeps detailed public records of all actions taken by members of Congress in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (Calvo, 2014). The data I use was compiled by Ernesto Calvo from the public records of the Argentine Government for his research regarding legislator success in plurality-led congresses (Calvo, 2014). Using this data, I assigned a code, either one or zero, for the gender of MCs who have sponsored legislation from the year 1994 to 2009. I marked each MC as either male or female based primarily on the gender traditionally associated with their first names, as well as conducting additional research to confirm their gender if needed.

Each piece of proposed legislation in the data is was previously marked as either "*aprobado*," "*media sancion*," or "*sancionado*" meaning they were either approved in both houses, approved only in their house of origin, or signed into law, respectively. If the proposed legislation was rejected or did not leave committee, it was left blank in the data set. In order to conduct a multivariate analysis of the survival of bills proposed by men and women MCs before and after the quota, I assigned a code to each possible legislative result. I assigned a zero if the field was left blank, meaning that the legislation failed to progress beyond the committee, a one if the legislation passed its house of origin, a two if it passed both houses, and a three if the legislation was signed into law. At that point, I was able to assess the disparities in the frequency of bill passage by male and female MCs, as well as the differences in the success of those bills. More specifically, I was able to identify the points in the legislative process that bills sponsored by women may fail, where bill sponsored by men succeed or vice versa. I also created an

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additional variable in order to simplify bill passage data and conducted several t-tests to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between men and women in quota years versus non-quota years in terms of legislative effectiveness. For this variable, I coded bill passage with either a one or zero; zero being a rejection and one being passage at any point in the legislative process including passage only in its house of origin, both houses, or the bill being signed into law.

Though, as previously mentioned, there is no clear demarcation of full quota implementation, I will consider all elections after the passage of Decree 1.246 in 2000 to be ‘post-quota,’ and all years before the Decree to be ‘pre-quota.’<sup>5</sup> I will then analyze the differences between pre-quota men and women MCs and post-quota men and women MCs. From this, I can determine if the quotas implemented in Argentina have given women political power as members of Congress. By analyzing the lifespan of introduced legislation, I will be able to determine women’s effectiveness as legislators, and the impact that quotas have had on their effectiveness.

### **Data Analysis**

Exhibited in Table 2 is the percent of women-sponsored bills that pass each hurdle of the legislative process both before and after quota implementation. In Table 2, we see a slight increase in the percent of bills that pass in their house of origin following quota implementation. There is also an increase in the percent of bills that are approved in both houses, which implies

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<sup>5</sup> This approach is not without its limitations. By coding passages as a binary of one, being any legislative success whatsoever, and zero, being a failure to leave committee, much of the nuance and detail of the legislative process are lost. However, this simplification allows me to conduct t-tests more straightforwardly and observe broader trends in the legislative success of male and female MCs over time.

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slightly fewer percentages of bills are classified as rejections. However, fewer women-sponsored bills are being signed into law after quota implementation than before. This may be due to the sharp increase in the number of women in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate between 1994 and 2009, though I would expect to see a greater change over time (Calvo, 2014; Krook, 2010). Conversely, women appear to be able to overcome other hurdles in the legislative process by passing both houses, yet they are more likely to be rejected at the final hurdle in the years after the quota was implemented.

Table 2

*Bills Sponsored by Female Members of Congress*

	Rejected (%)	Approved in House of origin (%)	Approved in both Houses (%)	Signed into Law (%)
Before Quota	75.06	1.12	23.07	0.75
After Quota	71.58	1.53	26.42	0.46

In comparing these findings to the success rates of men-sponsored bills in Table 3, we see that men enjoy a similar increase in bill passage in the years before the quota and the years after. Male MCs have slightly lower bills success rates than women after the quota, and they experience similar drops in bills becoming law. These similarities may be due to an increase in overall consensus building in the legislature over time. It appears that before the quota, men were more successful at passing legislation, but begin to trail women over time as the quota is put into place and more women enter the legislature.

Table 3

*Bills Sponsored by Male Members of Congress*

	Rejected (%)	Approved in House of origin (%)	Approved in both Houses (%)	Signed into Law (%)
Before Quota	77.26	0.90	20.89	0.96
After Quota	74.40	1.48	23.71	0.42

I have chosen a broad approach in Tables 2 and 3 by presenting the average overall percentages of bill passage for male and female MC's in quota and non-quota years. These averages use data that spans periods of seven years, which includes all available pre-quota data, and nine years, which includes all available post-quota data. Though these measures are useful in understanding trends in bill success over time, they offer less specific information about bill success from year to year. It is important to consider the year to year changes as well due to the lack of clear boundaries between quota years and non-quota years in Argentina. For this reason, in Table 4, I list the bill success percentages for men and women in four sample years when the quota was not fully implemented. Similarly, in Table 5, I compare bill success percentages for men and women in four sample years when quotas were fully implemented with strict enforcement mechanisms. In these tables, regardless of the quota, we see that women consistently outperform their male counterparts in their ability to pass legislation through both houses. Additionally, women routinely exhibit lower percentages of bill rejection than men in both quota and non-quota years.

Table 4

*Bills Sponsored by Male and Female Members of Congress in Non-Quota Sample Years*

	Rejected (%)		Approved in House of origin (%)		Approved in both Houses (%)		Signed into Law (%)	
1994	76.65	<b>70.93</b>	0.80	<b>1.85</b>	21.40	<b>25.19</b>	1.15	<b>2.04</b>
1996	73.48	<b>72.53</b>	0.81	<b>0.79</b>	24.43	<b>25.79</b>	1.28	<b>0.89</b>
1998	72.70	<b>70.08</b>	1.01	<b>1.10</b>	25.27	<b>28.12</b>	1.01	<b>0.71</b>
2000	75.36	<b>71.12</b>	1.46	<b>1.37</b>	22.67	<b>26.66</b>	0.51	<b>0.86</b>

Key: The percentages for female MC's are displayed on the right and bolded.

Table 5

*Bills Sponsored by Male and Female Members of Congress in Quota Sample Years*

	Rejected (%)		Approved in House of origin (%)		Approved in both Houses (%)		Signed into Law (%)	
2003	67.67	<b>66.08</b>	1.93	<b>1.92</b>	30.06	<b>31.40</b>	0.35	<b>0.60</b>
2005	87.50	<b>84.96</b>	1.04	<b>0.81</b>	11.12	<b>14.01</b>	0.35	<b>0.22</b>
2007	73.27	<b>71.57</b>	1.76	<b>1.62</b>	24.46	<b>26.02</b>	0.05	<b>0.78</b>
2009	78.12	<b>76.26</b>	0.95	<b>0.82</b>	20.65	<b>22.74</b>	0.28	<b>0.17</b>

Key: The percentages for female MC's are displayed on the right and bolded.

Table 6 showcases the results of a t-test I conducted to determine the statistical significance of the differences in the legislative success of women before and after quota implementation. It should be noted that, for the simplicity of the t-test, I was not able to use the multivariate bill passage data. I have instead counted any passage throughout the legislative

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process as a success and used this data to conduct the test. In concurrence with the success rates presented in Table 2, I found that there is a statistically significant difference in the means of women-sponsored bill passage before and after quota implementation. In Table 6, we see that women have passed more bills after the quota was implemented. Approximately 25 percent of legislation sponsored by women passed in the years preceding the quota, and this figure increases to approximately 28 percent after quota implementations. Additionally, as shown in Table 6, the increases in women's legislative success in quota years are statistically significant.

Table 6

*Legislative Success of Women Before and After Quota Implementation*

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs.	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	<b>8,578</b>	<b>.2493588</b>	<b>.0046715</b>	<b>.4326671</b>	<b>.2402015</b>	<b>.2585162</b>
1	<b>20,168</b>	<b>.284163</b>	<b>.0031759</b>	<b>.451026</b>	<b>.277938</b>	<b>.2903881</b>
Combined	<b>28,746</b>	<b>.2737772</b>	<b>.00263</b>	<b>.4459038</b>	<b>.2686223</b>	<b>.2789321</b>
Difference		<b>-.0348042</b>	<b>.0057443</b>		<b>-.0460633</b>	<b>-.0235451</b>

diff = mean(0) – mean(1)

t = - **6.0589**

Ho: diff = 0

degrees of freedom = **28744**

Ha: diff &lt; 0

Ha: diff != 0

Ha: diff &gt; 0

Pr(T < t) = **0.0000**Pr( |T| > |t| ) = **0.0000**Pr( T > t ) = **1.0000**

However, the results exhibited in Table 7 suggest that this was a trend throughout the legislature rather than a tendency that could be exclusively attributed to women MCs after quota implementation. As seen in Table 7, there is also a statistically significant difference in the

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means of men-sponsored legislation passage both before and after the quota. Men appear to have higher rates of bill passage after quota implementation than before quota implementations.

Approximately 22 percent of men-sponsored legislation pass in non-quota years, and this figure rises to approximately 25 percent in post-quota years. In comparing these results to Table 6, we see that there is a greater difference in the means of women before and after the quota and that women additionally exhibit higher averages of bill passage than men both before and after the quota.

Table 7

*Legislative Success of Men Before and After Quota Implementation*

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs.	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	<b>23,115</b>	<b>.2274281</b>	<b>.0027571</b>	<b>.4191803</b>	<b>.222024</b>	<b>.2328322</b>
1	<b>34,625</b>	<b>.2560289</b>	<b>.0023455</b>	<b>.4364443</b>	<b>.2514316</b>	<b>.2606261</b>
Combined	<b>57,740</b>	<b>.2445791</b>	<b>.0017888</b>	<b>.4298411</b>	<b>.241073</b>	<b>.2480853</b>
Difference		<b>-.0286008</b>	<b>.003649</b>		<b>-.0357529</b>	<b>-.0214487</b>

  

diff = mean(0) – mean(1)		t = - <b>7.8379</b>
Ho: diff = 0		degrees of freedom = <b>57738</b>
Ha: diff < 0	Ha: diff != 0	Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = <b>0.0000</b>	Pr(  T  >  t  ) = <b>0.0000</b>	Pr( T > t ) = <b>1.0000</b>

I explore these disparities further in Table 8, which displays the results of the t-test I conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between men and women in non-quota years. When comparing the mean bill passage of women and men in non-quota years, we see that there is a statistically significant difference between these two figures.



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Women, on average, passed more legislation than men before quotas were implemented. In Table 8, we see that approximately 23 percent of men-sponsored legislation passes, whereas approximately 25 percent of women-sponsored legislation passes in pre-quota years. However, Table 9, which displays the t-test for the legislative success of men and women after quotas, shows similar results. In Table 9, it appears that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean number of passed legislation sponsored by men and women in quota years. Women have proportionately passed more legislation than men in post-quota years. Approximately 26 percent of men-sponsored legislation passes while 28 percent of women-sponsored legislation passes in post-quota years.

To ensure that these findings were not simply due to differences in the rate of bill introduction between men and women, I calculated the number of bills introduced per MC both before and after the quota. I found that women introduced an average of 63 bills per MC in non-quota years compared to men who introduced 57 bills on average per MC. In quota years, women's numbers increased to 80 bills introduced per MC while men introduced 69 bills per MC. These figures suggest that women are generally more active than men in the legislature both before and after the quota. Though we see an increase in both men and women per MC introduction averages in post quota years, women's number increased by a greater margin than men.

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Table 8

*Legislative Success of Men and Women in Non-Quota Years*

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs.	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	<b>23,115</b>	<b>.2274281</b>	<b>.0027571</b>	<b>.4191803</b>	<b>.222024</b>	<b>.232822</b>
1	<b>8,578</b>	<b>.2493588</b>	<b>.0046715</b>	<b>.4326671</b>	<b>.2402015</b>	<b>.2585162</b>
Combined	<b>31,693</b>	<b>.2333638</b>	<b>.0023759</b>	<b>.4229785</b>	<b>.2287069</b>	<b>.2380208</b>
Difference		<b>-.0219307</b>	<b>.0053463</b>		<b>-.0324097</b>	<b>-.0114518</b>
diff = mean(0) – mean(1)				t = - <b>4.1021</b>		
Ho: diff = 0				degrees of freedom = <b>31691</b>		
Ha: diff < 0		Ha: diff != 0		Ha: diff > 0		
Pr(T < t) = <b>0.0000</b>		Pr(  T  >  t  ) = <b>0.0000</b>		Pr( T > t ) = <b>1.0000</b>		

Table 9

*Legislative Success of Men and Women in Quota Years*

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs.	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	<b>34,625</b>	<b>.2560289</b>	<b>.0023455</b>	<b>.4364443</b>	<b>.2514316</b>	<b>.2606261</b>
1	<b>20,168</b>	<b>.284163</b>	<b>.0031759</b>	<b>.451026</b>	<b>.277938</b>	<b>.2903881</b>
Combined	<b>54,793</b>	<b>.2663844</b>	<b>.0018886</b>	<b>.4420716</b>	<b>.2626828</b>	<b>.270086</b>
Difference		<b>-.0281341</b>	<b>.0039141</b>		<b>-.0358057</b>	<b>-.0204626</b>
diff = mean(0) – mean(1)				t = - <b>7.1880</b>		
Ho: diff = 0				degrees of freedom = <b>54791</b>		
Ha: diff < 0		Ha: diff != 0		Ha: diff > 0		
Pr(T < t) = <b>0.0000</b>		Pr(  T  >  t  ) = <b>0.0000</b>		Pr( T > t ) = <b>1.0000</b>		

### Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this paper are quite different than anticipated based on previous studies and literature regarding Argentina and the implementation of gender quotas. Considering the results from the tables above, we cannot rule out that the differences between men and women, in both quota and non-quota years were not due to changes in the legislature's overall ability to build consensus and pass legislation more frequently. It is particularly interesting that we do not see a more dramatic change in women's effectiveness as women began to populate the legislature in increasingly large numbers. These findings are also in contradiction to much of the literature regarding women in Argentina's congress. The foundations of this paper were built around existing theory and research on women in Argentina, specifically expanding upon the findings of Franceschet and Piscopo's piece from 2008. As previously discussed, they find that, in Argentina, institutional norms and the control of male political elites over the electoral process lead to poor outcomes for the substantive representation of women (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). They find that, despite women's success in influencing the agenda of the legislature, they have not succeeded in influencing legislative outcomes (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). These disparities may be due to women's inability to successfully pass legislation focused on women's issues, whereas they have not been hindered in their ability to pass non-women's issue legislation. Franceschet and Piscopo (2008) presumably use much of the same data that is used in this study, in addition to earlier data from the legislative record, and yet, they come to a dramatically different conclusion.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In their 2008 piece, *Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation: Lessons from Argentina*, Franceschet and Piscopo use bill introduction data from 1989 to 2007. They use a much larger sample over a longer period of time. However, they still use presumably the same bill introduction data for the same years as I have in this paper, excluding the years 2008 and 2009. The variance in our results demands further investigation and research in the future.

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However, my findings may be explained by the fact that a women's caucus has yet to develop in Argentina and legislation may be moving forward gradually, increasing in frequency over time, through small cooperative groups rather than large caucuses (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). Perhaps, women MCs in Argentina are more likely to pass legislation through these small cooperative groups. Tiffany Barnes (2016), in her research regarding gender and legislative behavior, argues that women are more likely to collaborate than men despite structural barriers and discrimination that may hinder their ability to make policy. When women are marginalized, they are more likely to collaborate with other women to overcome these barriers and gain political agency (Barnes 2016). This may explain the high levels of legislative success I found, even before the quota, when there were still few women entering the legislature. Though Barnes finds that increasing women's numerical presences in legislatures is not sufficient to guarantee women will achieve political power she additionally finds that increasing women's numerical representation leads to greater collaboration among women in legislatures with weak party constraints (Barnes 2016). Further research should be conducted to determine the strength of the Argentine Government's party constraints throughout the implementation of gender quotas. However, these theories and findings may offer some explanation of the results in this paper.

Furthermore, the steady increase in women's legislative effectiveness over time may be explained by the behaviors and valuation of majority and minority groups within diverse legislatures. For example, Kanthak and Krause (2010) find that majority groups have an incentive to ensure that minority groups continue to be viable when they are endangered. When a minority group is small enough to achieve 'token status,' they receive more attention from the majority group (Kanthak & Krause, 2010). Kanthak and Krause (2010) additionally find that when minority groups are sufficiently small, which women MCs in all non-quota years were,

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they are more likely to undermine their fellow minority group members as a result of perceived competition for the attention of the majority. This could explain the slight increase in women legislative effectiveness over time as they continue to fill a larger portion of the legislature. Though Kanthak and Krause (2010) also find that increased support within minorities does not inevitably offset the decreasing support of majorities as the minorities size develops into a threat. These finding could explain why we are not seeing a more dramatic increase in women's legislative effectiveness as their numbers continue to increasing over time. Perhaps the gradual change we see is the result of shifting valuations as well as increased collaboration over time (Barnes 2016; Kanthak & Krause, 2010).

In conclusion, though my findings were not as I had predicted, they are, nonetheless, interesting and provide new evidence of apparent quota success in Argentina. Women appear to have overcome barriers that might have prevented them from achieving equal levels of effectiveness as their male counterparts. I find that women are not only equal to male MCs but, in some cases, seem to have surpassed them in their effectiveness. This is further evidence to support the idea that Argentina should be a model for other countries to adjust their current quotas to achieve full implementation, enforcement, and effectiveness, as well as being a model for gender quota implementation in the future.

More in-depth research should be conducted to monitor and assess women's legislative effectiveness as they increasingly populate legislatures and perhaps build larger coalitions over time. In the future, these findings could be expanded upon by using data from earlier in the legislative record, and considering women's party affiliation, in conjunction with the congressional and executive party majorities of the time, as well as their tenure as a Members of Congress. Controlling for these variables in future research would further explain the result I

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found and provide a more detailed account of the legislative effectiveness of women under quota laws. The role that parties play in Argentina should also be further investigated considering the influence that party leaders have in setting legislative agendas and the creation of party lists in addition to reports of corruption and nepotism. Furthermore, this work could be expanded upon by considering the cases of countries other than Argentina with nationally enforced legislative gender quotas. Hopefully, as countries continue to implement quotas, and develop new means of enforcement and methods of including women in legislatures, over time, we will garner a more holistic understanding of what an effective quota should look like and how it ensures women's ability to effectuate change in legislatures.

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