

Primaries vs. Quotas: Gender and Candidate Nominations in Mexico, 2003

Lisa Baldez

ABSTRACT

Parties throughout Latin America have recently addressed two distinct kinds of electoral reforms: primary elections and national-level gender quota laws. This study examines how these reforms interact, their mutual compatibility, and their effect on the nomination of men compared to that of women. It develops a series of hypotheses about this relationship by analyzing the 2003 legislative elections in Mexico, a case in which the three main parties relied on both gender quotas and primaries to select their candidates. Although the percentage of women elected to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies rose, the Federal Electoral Institute interpreted the gender quota law in a way that weakened its effect on women and limited the degree of openness in the primaries that were held.

Legislative office is the key to power in many democratic political systems. The rules for determining who gets the chance to hold that key therefore matter a great deal. Historically, candidate selection for many political parties in Latin America was a process that took place behind closed doors. Party leaders chose their preferred candidates in order to reward political loyalty and to satisfy formal and informal *cuotas de poder* among their supporters. In the past couple of decades, however, political parties have faced various pressures to make the process of candidate nomination more transparent and more democratic (Cárdenas García 1992). They have responded to demands for greater internal democracy by considering and, in many cases, adopting two distinct kinds of reforms: primary elections and national-level gender quota laws. Both reforms aim to increase the quality of political representation, in the sense of how much candidates for political office represent voters.

Primary elections generally mean the process of holding a vote to determine which candidate(s) will represent a given party in a general election. Primaries vary in terms of how much control party leaders wield over the election. Open primaries allow all registered voters to participate, while closed primaries are restricted to members of a particular party or designated delegates of a party (De Luca et al. 2002, 29). What “counts” as a legitimate primary election (that is, open or closed) may differ from country to country.

Using primaries to select legislative candidates has become an increasingly common practice in Latin America. Scholars and policy-

makers alike see them as the *sine qua non* of internal democratization for political parties. As one specialist in electoral law put it, "For many analysts, primary elections are the only reform available to parties if they really want to try to democratize. Defenders of primaries argue, moreover, that primaries are an indispensable instrument for strengthening the links between parties and society" (Lara Rivera 2006, 16). Parties have held primary elections to select some or all of their legislative candidates in Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela (Barreda 2004), as well as in Iceland, Israel, and Taiwan (De Luca et al. 2002).

Gender quota laws require all political parties in a given system to ensure that women fill a certain percentage of candidate slots. Gender quota laws apply to all parties in a given system, which distinguishes them from voluntary quotas adopted by individual parties; and they apply to candidates, which distinguishes them from reserved seats.¹ The effectiveness of gender quota laws depends on various factors, but on average, they generate a 10 percent increase in the number of women elected to office (Htun and Jones 2002). Quota advocates see such laws as the most efficient means of increasing women's representation and thus enhancing democracy. Of the nearly 40 countries that have adopted such laws since 1991, 12 are in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela (International IDEA 2006).

This article examines two issues. First, how do primaries and gender quota laws interact? Specifically, the question is how compatible primaries and quotas are with one another in terms of the effect they have on the nomination and election of men and women to legislative office. Theoretically, they are incompatible: in countries that adopt both reforms, political parties may have to manipulate the results of primary elections in order to conform with gender quotas defined by the law.² The second issue is how primaries and gender quota laws compare in terms of the nomination of male versus female candidates. How does the percentage of women appointed to candidate slots compare with the percentage that win primary elections? Do women do better in primaries than men, or do men do better than women? In posing and addressing these questions, this article makes two main theoretical contributions. First, it adds gender to the list of considerations to take into account when assessing the adoption and implementation of primary elections. Second, it adds primary elections to the list of factors to consider in determining the impact of gender quotas, thus contributing to a large and growing literature.

While both of these reforms aim to enhance democracy within political parties, they do so in distinct and potentially conflicting ways. Primaries are democratic to the extent that they take the power of nom-

inating candidates out of the hands of party leaders and disperse it more widely among rank-and-file party members and ordinary citizens, thus ostensibly enhancing the connections between voters and elected officials. Gender quotas are democratic in the sense that they enhance the election possibilities of a historically underrepresented group, women. Gender quota laws remove barriers that limit women's chances to win elective office. The two reforms reflect distinct understandings of political equality: quotas facilitate equality of results, while primaries foster equality of opportunity.

This article examines the interaction between primary elections and gender quotas in Mexico, in the context of the midterm legislative elections held in 2003—the first elections since Mexico's official transition to democracy in 2000. According to the news media, the big story of this election was the defeat suffered by the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) (Grayson 2003; Starr 2003).³ Another important story emerged from these elections that went virtually unnoticed by the media, however: the success of female candidates. Women won 23 percent of the seats in this election, up 7 percentage points from the 2000 election. These results catapulted Mexico upward in the world ranking of women in legislative office, from number 55 to number 29 (IPU 2004).⁴

A 7 percent increase in the percentage of women elected to congress is significant—yet it was not as impressive it might have been. This study argues that the limited nature of this increase can be attributed to the way Mexico's gender quota law was written and subsequently interpreted by the Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral*, IFE). An electoral reform passed in 2002 requires at least 30 percent of all the candidates for all political parties to be women, but allows an exemption for parties that select candidates by primary election (called *voto directo* in the law). This law was applied for the first time in the 2003 midterm elections. All the political parties obeyed the law in a technical sense, but several held primary elections in order to avoid complying with the gender quota.

While the IFE upheld strict standards for compliance with some aspects of the gender quota law, it disregarded others. Most significant was that the IFE did not hold the parties accountable to a particular definition of what counted as legitimate primary elections; if a party claimed to have chosen candidates via direct election, the IFE accepted that claim without scrutiny. The quota law's failure to define what constitutes *voto directo* and the IFE's unwillingness to adjudicate the issue mitigated the potential impact of the gender quota law. The story of candidate nominations in this election therefore provides an interesting perspective on the interactions between primaries and gender quotas—and sheds light on the status of efforts to promote democratization of the candidate nomination process.

THEORY AND METHOD

As far as this study could determine, questions about the interaction of primaries and gender quotas have not been posed or addressed in the scholarly literature. Most of the existing research on primaries focuses on the United States. What work has been done on primaries in developing countries is fairly recent. This emerging literature focuses on the conditions in which parties will adopt primaries in presidential elections (Carey and Polga-Hecimovich 2006; McCann 2004) and legislative elections (De Luca et al. 2002; Wuhs 2006) and the impact of candidate selection mechanisms on candidate background (Langston 2006) and federalism (De Remes 2006). This study found no research that examines the gendered effect of holding primaries to select candidates.

Existing research on gender quotas has examined the conditions in which quota laws are adopted and the laws' impact on the descriptive and substantive representation of women (Baldez 2004; Crocker 2003; Dahlerup 2003, 2006; Gray 2003; Htun and Jones 2002; International IDEA 2004; Jones 1996, 1998, 2004; Jones and Navia 1999; Krook 2003; Schmidt and Saunders 2004). Few, if any, scholars have examined gender quota laws in the context of other kinds of reforms to candidate nomination rules.

Existing research maintains that institutional variables account for much of the variation in quota law effectiveness. Specifically, quotas are more effective in multimember district electoral systems with high district magnitude, and where quota laws set a floor of 30 percent or more for female candidates (Jones 1996, 1998, 2004; Jones and Navia 1999). Quota laws can increase the number of women in open-list and closed-list proportional representation (PR) systems (Schmidt and Saunders 2004). In other words, quotas are more likely to be effective where voters choose from among lists of candidates created by political party leaders, where such lists are long, and where the percentage of women who appear on them is relatively high.

Primary elections decentralize the candidate selection process, while gender quotas reinforce the centralizing tendencies of existing selection rules. Primary elections limit the degree of control that party leaders exercise over the nomination process by taking it out of the hands of a single individual and dispersing it among a larger group of people. Gender quotas also limit the control that party leaders exercise over candidate nominations, but in a different way. Quotas constrain the range of candidates from which a party leader may choose, but the power to decide remains in the hands of party leaders. Gender quota laws preserve the control that party leaders historically have exercised over candidate selection, prompting one journalist to refer to them as "Boss Tweed Feminism" (McElroy 2001). Theoretically, gender quota

laws are not incompatible with the appointment process, and they may pit advocates of gender equity against advocates of decentralization and internal democratization within a party.

Although gender quota laws explicitly aim to favor female candidates, primaries may have the opposite effect. If, as Alejandro Poiré (2002) maintains, primaries favor candidates who are well known to the electorate and who possess substantial material resources, then primaries would favor male candidates over women. Given the inequitable distribution of resources within parties (one of the factors that prompted women to push for quotas in the first place), men are more likely to have higher name recognition and financial backing than are women. On the other hand, if women are better known on the local level due to their roles as community leaders, primary elections may favor them. Similarly, if voters are more inclined to support women than are party leaders, then the adoption of primaries may enhance women's chances.

This article examines Mexico as a single-country case study in order to generate plausible hypotheses about the relationship between primaries and gender quota laws.⁵ The analysis draws on 25 interviews conducted with male and female leaders of the three major parties—PRI, PRD, and PAN—in Mexico City in July 2002 and May 2003. Also analyzed are party documents, ongoing accounts of the issue in Mexico's leading newspapers, and reports from www.cimacnoticias.com, an online agency for news about women.

The analysis of candidate nominations relies on data from the website of the Federal Electoral Institute, which posts candidate lists submitted by parties in the month of April prior to an election. The lists were coded for gender. In cases of uncertainty, names were "Googled" to find photographs of the candidates or gender-specific text that would identify someone as male or female. Two research assistants, a native Spanish speaker and an expert on Mexican elections, coded the candidate lists separately.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN MEXICO

Three political parties dominate Mexican politics: the PRI, the PAN, and the PRD. The PRI controlled the government for decades until the election of Vicente Fox in 2000. Historically, it was considered a center-left party, although today most Mexicans view it as a rightist party (Camp 2004). The PRI has two main factions: the traditional and older *políticos*, whose power derives from strong clientelist networks at the grassroots level, "especially [among] the peasantry, the unionized working class, the poor and the less educated" (Klesner 2004, 91); and the younger *técnicos*, who have sought to make the party more competitive and respon-

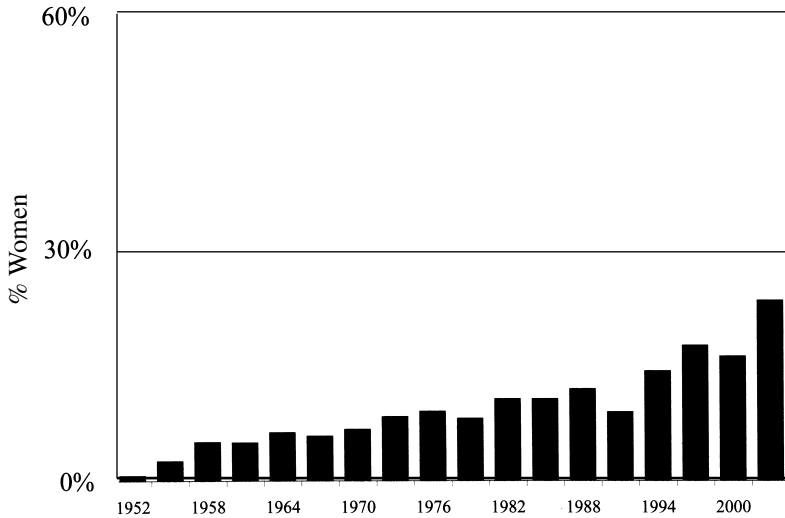
sive (Camp 2004, 210). The PRI has not explicitly embraced women's issues, but its history of opposition to the Catholic Church made it somewhat receptive to support for legalizing divorce and abortion.

The practice of selecting candidates through appointment by central party leaders defined the PRI. Until 2000, PRI leaders, under the close guidance of the party president, selected candidates who represented the different party's sectoral interests, according to their ability to get out the vote; this process was known as the *dedazo* (Langston 2001, 2003). The PRI claimed to have relied on primaries to choose gubernatorial candidates in 1998 (Poiré 2002) and the presidential candidate in 2000, but these primaries were decidedly closed. According to Steven Wuhs (2006, 43), "Where PRI leaders have moved toward more open selection processes, those leaders are typically still perceived as stacking the deck in favor of particular candidates." Kathleen Bruhn confirms this perspective, describing the presidential primary as "more a splashy publicity effort than evidence of a sea change in general PRI attitudes" (Bruhn 2004, 126). The PRI did not select any of its congressional candidates via primary in 2000 (Bruhn 2004).⁶ In 2001, the PRI adopted an internal rule that mandated gender parity among candidates for internal leadership positions and for the party's legislative candidates. To date (including the 2006 legislative election), the party complied with this rule by taking advantage of Mexico's system of electing two candidates for every seat—the main candidate, or *propietario*, and an alternate, called a *suplente*—to minimize the impact (Sansores 2006).

The PAN is a center-right party that comprises two main constituencies: Catholic and business (Loeza 1999). In recent elections, the PAN's support has been strong among "better-educated Mexicans, manufacturing-sector employees, and Catholics," especially in urban areas (Klesner 2004, 119). The PAN does not explicitly support women's rights, but it has made impressive strides in promoting women in the party. PAN leaders initially opposed gender quotas, but now the party not only supports them but, in some cases, has taken a leading role in adopting them (Baldez 2004; González 2006). In 1999, the PAN adopted a rule that required each "formula" of *propietario* and *suplente* to include a man and a woman.

Formed in 1939, the PAN has competed in every election that has taken place since 1958 (Camp 2004, 205). Its candidate selection rules are highly institutionalized. The party selects its candidates in closed primaries—conventions of party members who are themselves selected to attend by party leaders. Scholars disagree about the degree of democracy that this process represents; some argue that it confirms choices made by the party hierarchy (Grayson 2003), while others characterize it as "intensely democratic" (Lara Rivera 2006, 170). Wuhs (2006) views the PAN's delegate conventions as the most closed elections of the three main parties.

Figure 1. Women in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, 1952–2003



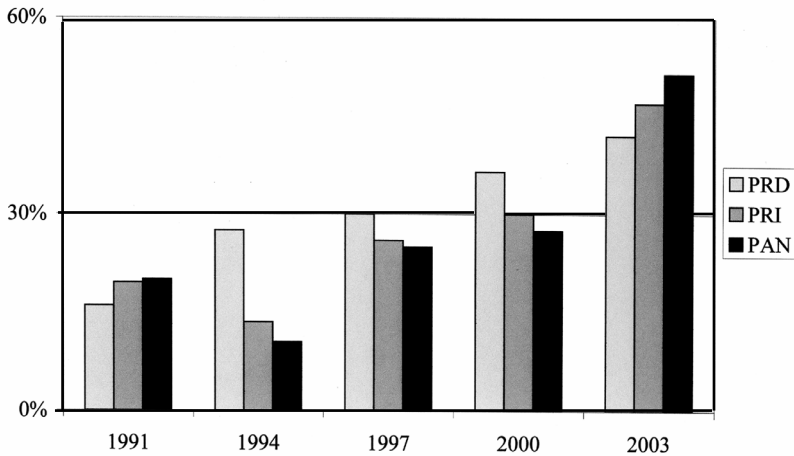
Source: Rodriguez 2003.

The PRD is the newest of the big three, having formed after the 1988 presidential election. It represents center-left views, although competing factions within the party have often prevented it from articulating a coherent ideological program (Camp 2004, 209). As Todd Eisenstadt (2004, 202) writes, “From its inception, the PRD was a political Tower of Babel formed from every leftist political party legalized in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as a large number of PRI dissidents.” Nevertheless, the party has consistently supported women’s rights, something that distinguishes it from the PRI and the PAN (Camp 2004, 209). The PRD was the first party to adopt a voluntary gender quota, in 1993 (Bruhn 2003). The party has sought to select legislative candidates by democratic internal rules in order to differentiate itself from the PRI. Factional competition and increasing regulation have tended to stymie the level of openness of the candidate selection process, but it remains the most open of the three main parties (Wuhs 2006).

None of the parties has a particularly impressive record in terms of getting women elected to Congress. Women’s share of legislative seats has been disproportionate to women’s share of the population since 1952, when women won the right to vote and to stand for office (see figure 1).⁷

Data on the percentage of women nominated as candidates confirm the presence of gender bias at the party level.⁸ Figure 2 presents data on women nominated to PR lists in each of the past five elections for

Figure 2. Female PR Candidates for Mexican Chamber of Deputies, 1991–2003



Source: IFE 1991, 1993, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2003b.

the Mexican Chamber of Deputies.⁹ It shows that female candidates reached the 30 percent threshold on only three occasions before 2003: in the PRD in 1997 and 2000, and in the PRI in 2000. Women constituted 30 percent of the electable candidates (for example, in the top ten positions) in only one instance before 2003: in the PRD in 1997.

The adoption of a gender quota law was a top priority for many women's groups in Mexico throughout the 1990s. Their efforts slowly bore fruit in terms of prompting parties first to adopt voluntary quotas and later to promote federal quota legislation. In 1991, women in leftist parties and various nongovernmental organizations formed a coalition, the National Convention of Women for Democracy, which sought to advance a women's rights agenda by electing women to Congress. Thirty-nine women from this group competed in the 1991 elections, but none of them was elected. Indeed, the overall percentage of women elected dropped that year, from 11.8 percent to 8.8 percent. Women redoubled their efforts and organized a series of increasingly formal cross-partisan coalitions in 1992, 1996, and 1998; gender quotas were the number one priority at each of these forums (Rodríguez 2003, 171–72).¹⁰

Congress responded to these appeals with a series of weak reforms. In 1993, it passed a law recommending (that is, not mandating) that parties promote more women. In 1996, it passed a law recommending that the parties establish a 30 percent gender quota for candidate lists. This law permitted the parties to comply by putting women primarily in the

alternate spots. The 1996 reform, furthermore, did not include a placement mandate, which meant that women could be (and were) clustered in unelectable positions at the bottom of the PR lists (Rodríguez 1998, 2003; Stevenson 1999, 2000, 2001). Despite these measures, and despite a decade of mobilization by women's groups, the percentage of women elected to the Chamber of Deputies did not increase in 2000; it actually dropped, from 17.4 percent to 16 percent. More and more women came to see a stronger quota law, one that applied to all parties, as the only viable way to boost women's share of congressional seats.

The status of the quota issue changed dramatically in 2002. In April of that year, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of a gender quota law for candidates to the state legislature of Coahuila. The court thereby robbed gender quota opponents of their main argument. Quota advocates in Congress seized this opportunity to get the legislature to add a much stricter set of gender quota provisions to the federal electoral law (Baldez 2004).

The law in question is a set of reforms to Article 175 of the Electoral Code, known as the COFIPE (*Código Federal de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales*). The Mexican Congress has five hundred members, who are elected by a mixed electoral system: two hundred legislators are selected from proportional representation (PR) districts and three hundred from single-member districts (SMD). Article 175-A applies a gender quota to both categories: party lists "in no case will include more than 70 percent of main candidates of the same sex" (IFE 2004). The law applies explicitly to the *propietarios*, thus prohibiting the practice of filling the quota by putting women in the alternate spots. Article 175-B stipulates a placement mandate. It divides the five PR lists (each with 40 candidates) into segments of three and requires "at least one candidate of a different gender" in each of the first three segments. In other words, women must appear in at least one of every three spots for the first nine spots on a list.

The law also spells out sanctions for noncompliance. If a party submits a list of candidates that fails to conform to these rules, it will have 48 hours to correct the problem. If, after 48 hours, the party has not complied, the Federal Electoral Institute will issue a public reprimand (*amonestación pública*) against the offending party. If, after another 24 hours, the party still has not fixed its lists, then that party will not be allowed to field any "corresponding candidates," an ambiguous clause that has prompted great concern among the parties.¹¹ The law also contains what proved to be an important escape clause. According to the final clause of the reform, Article 175-C, parties that select their candidates via *voto directo*—a direct vote or primary election—are exempt from these penalties. The law, however, does not define what constitutes *voto directo*.¹²

INTERPRETATION OF THE GENDER QUOTA LAW

The body that oversees elections, and therefore interprets and implements the electoral code, is the IFE General Council. The creation of the IFE as an autonomous agency was one of several electoral reforms made in the wake of the notoriously fraudulent presidential elections of 1988 (for details see Eisenstadt 2004). The General Council consists of 9 members who are independent citizens, appointed by a congressional committee and approved by a two-thirds vote of the Chamber of Deputies. An additional 12 party representatives sit on the General Council but do not vote.

The dramatic reduction in electoral fraud in recent years can be attributed largely to the IFE. The functions that the IFE performs give it tremendous political power: it decides which parties can compete in elections, approves candidate slates, dictates electoral law, oversees campaigns, counts the votes, validates electoral outcomes, and disburses public campaign financing (Camp 2004, 27). The IFE has contributed immensely to the process of democratization in Mexico.

The IFE played a significant role in interpreting and implementing the gender quota in the 2003 elections. Several of the nine IFE councilors understood the nuances of the quota issue because they had dealt with previous versions of the quota law in the 1997 and 2000 elections. Jacqueline Peschard, a political scientist who has written several articles about gender quotas (see, for example, Peschard 2002), played a critical role in educating her IFE colleagues about the law and leading discussions about how to enforce it. José Woldenberg, then IFE president, had made several public statements in which he affirmed the promotion of women as a critical part of strengthening democratization in Mexico.¹³ Yet despite the councilors' familiarity with and support for gender quotas and despite the enforcement mechanisms stipulated by the quota law, many female politicians remained skeptical that the parties would comply. Quota advocates actively lobbied the IFE councilors to make sure they would enforce the law effectively. Women from 8 of the 11 parties competing in the 2003 election formed a coalition, the Front for the Defense of Women's Political Rights, to demand proper implementation of the quota law (Ochoa 2003). Their efforts, along with actions taken by the Gender and Equity Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, focused on the IFE.

The IFE General Council met with representatives of the political parties to discuss the gender quota law on December 18, 2002, during one of the regular council meetings (IFE 2002). Councilor Peschard opened the discussion with a statement that emphasized the importance of the gender quota provision for Mexico's development and democratization. This reform "puts Mexico on a par with the world's consoli-

dated democracies,” she affirmed (IFE 2002, 292). She emphasized the cross-partisan consensus that existed on the issue of quotas, noting that the law passed “because it obtained the support of all the political forces” (IFE 2002, 292). She also noted that this level of consensus was unusual in that the quota law was the only one of 20 electoral reform bills that the 58th Congress actually passed.¹⁴

Most of the discussion during the IFE Council meeting centered on Section 3 of Article 175-C, which states that parties that fail to comply with the quota after two warnings will be denied to right to register “corresponding candidacies.” The IFE initially proposed its own interpretation of this ambiguous phrase. In cases in which a party violated the law, the IFE proposed that it would eliminate candidates at random until the nominations presented by the party represented “no more than 70 percent” of the overrepresented gender. Peschard described the IFE’s proposal this way:

What are the corresponding candidacies? Given that the law does not say what they are, we are proposing that in the case of nominations for the single-member district seats, we will hold a lottery among the universe of candidates of the predominant gender, the number necessary to equilibrate the representation of the predominant gender and that of women. (IFE 2002, 294)

In other words, in cases in which a party failed to comply with the quota law, the IFE would eliminate (presumably male) candidates by means of a lottery until men constituted no more than 70 percent of the spots, for both the PR and SMD seats. If a party failed to comply, it would lose the number of spots by which it violated the quota law. This proposal did not give parties an opportunity to replace the offending male candidates with female ones. As Peschard clarified,

Let’s take the extreme case, that is, that all 300 candidates are the same gender. Then if I only cancel 30 percent and leave 70 percent of the candidates for that party, so that they would all be men, what it says is that the entirety of candidates for that party would not add up to 300, but only 210 because I already eliminated 90, being of the same gender. That is to say, *there would be no possibilities for women to get onto the lists at that point.* (IFE 2002, 328, emphasis added)

Peschard defended the lottery proposal as preferable to another alternative that the IFE had considered, which would have required the cancellation of all the candidates on a party’s PR list.

If we didn’t do it by lottery, then if a party didn’t comply with the law, canceling the candidates would mean that [that party] would not have the right to register candidates for the PR lists and thus

would not participate in the election. In other words, at that extreme, they would be in a situation in which *we would cancel their entire registry of candidates*. (IFE 2002, 328, emphasis added)

Peschard's comments triggered serious concern among the party representatives present at the meeting, many of whom expressed doubts about the legality and feasibility of the IFE's proposal. IFE President Woldenberg followed up Peschard's explanation of the lottery system by making clear the IFE's firm intention to enforce the law. He summarized the discussion thus:

There are two grand themes in our discussion: what this all means in terms of the construction of a democratic system with the possibility for women to assume representative positions, and second, the specific formulas that can be deduced from the law, so that we can achieve what the legislators themselves established in Article 175 and the others. With respect to the first, it is necessary to highlight what several of you have said, that the participation and political representation of women define the quality of a democratic system; that is to say, *we are not discussing a minor issue*. There is no better way of understanding and measuring the civic nature of a nation than observing that society from the perspective of gender. (IFE 2002, 315, emphasis added)

Woldenberg then ended the discussion by acknowledging the vagueness of the law with regard to the definition of "corresponding candidates." He stressed the importance of figuring out how to handle "extreme cases" of violation of the quota law—but he added little to clarify what the IFE would do in such cases. Instead, he concluded by suggesting that the parties avoid these issues by simply complying in the first place.

I am convinced that the immense majority of the parties and coalitions will comply with this law. If they don't comply, they will be, in the first place, reconvened to try to comply; if they don't do it, they will be publicly castigated. Therefore, *what is most likely to happen is that these extreme cases will not occur*. (IFE 2002, 319, emphasis added)

These comments from the president of the IFE suggest that the IFE planned to take any violations of the quota law very seriously. At this meeting, IFE councilors sent a strong signal warning the parties to comply with the quota law in order to avoid a potentially complicated series of penalties with potentially disastrous consequences.

The IFE did not subject all parts of the quota law to the same level of scrutiny, however. To understand the impact that the quota law had on the outcome of the 2003 elections, the primary elections must be

considered. To a certain extent, a rule that exempts parties that choose candidates via primary elections from the quota law seems reasonable; parties cannot be expected to manipulate the results of primary elections in order to comply with the quota. But it is questionable how democratic most of the primary elections really were in this election. COFIPE—the federal electoral law—does not define what constitutes *voto directo*. Whether or not the parties choose candidates via appointment or direct election remains a matter of internal party statutes that does not fall under the IFE's jurisdiction (at least not yet).¹⁵

In the 2003 election, the IFE offered no guidelines as to what counted as legitimately direct primary elections. It considered both open and closed primaries as direct, and exempted all districts that held elections of any kind from the quota law. It did not issue guidelines about the interpretation of the “direct vote” clause contained in Article 175-C and did not question the degree to which parties used it to evade the quota law. It simply took parties at their word. The *voto directo* clause proved to be the Achilles' heel of the quota law.

The significance of the primary exemption to the quota law was not thoroughly discussed at the IFE General Council meetings. Only one reference to the issue appears in the discussions cited above: the representative from México Posible (a minor party that has since disbanded because it failed to win enough votes) criticized the *voto directo* exemption in Article 175-C as a way for parties to evade the quota law.

The [SMD] candidates that have been selected by a process of “direct vote” could be an element that distorts and renders ineffective the entire reform, given that if a political party elects all its candidates by direct vote and all of them are men, it will be legal, but not equal, and this could occur and it certainly will occur. (IFE 2002, 297)

Only one of the IFE councilors, Jaime Fernando Cárdenas, addressed this point, maintaining that only open, democratic elections held among all party members counted as legitimately direct, rather than as electoral window dressing for appointments.

[A direct vote] is that vote that is realized where the political party does not have *compromisarios* [people who are already committed to vote a particular way] or representatives. For example, the election that the PRD holds with its affiliates or sympathizers, or the internal elections that the PRI has held, of a universal character, that is what I understand by “direct vote.” I do not define as “direct vote” an election where there are delegates, *compromisarios* or representatives. (IFE 2002, 339)

Here the IFE councilor makes it clear that he did not consider closed primaries to count as examples of *voto directo*. Yet no other

public discussion of the issue took place during this session of the IFE, leaving the parties to understand that any election would count as a *voto directo* and thus would exempt them from compliance with the quota law. Woldenberg confirmed this interpretation on April 18, 2003, when the parties submitted their candidate lists to the IFE. Addressing the parties' claims to have held direct elections, he stated,

Given the limited time we have to address this issue, the Federal Electoral Institute accepts as true and valid the claims of the political parties [to have held direct elections], inasmuch as they are institutions of good faith, whose affirmations we must accept as genuine, unless proven otherwise. . . . I know of no test that would controvert or verify the process of direct election. As a result, I hold that they were fulfilled. (IFE 2003b, 9)

When the quota law was debated in Congress, female parliamentarians did not see the *voto directo* clause as an obstacle to effective implementation. PRD Deputy Hortensia Aragón fully expected that the IFE would count only *open* primaries as direct (Aragón 2002). In July 2002, one month after the quota bill passed and one year before it would be implemented, PRI Deputy Concepción González, then chair of the chamber's Gender and Equity Committee, was asked what effect this clause would have. She replied, "in the PRI we are not going to have many problems, because 50 percent of our candidates will be women [because of the PRI's internal statutes]" (González 2002). As it turned out, Deputy González was partly right: the PRI did comply with its own internal statutes that required 50 percent of candidates to be women, but—as few party leaders mentioned—it achieved parity by counting female *suplentes* (alternates) as part of that 50 percent (Maya 2003a). Neither González nor the other quota advocates seemed concerned that the parties would use the *voto directo* clause to evade the quota law.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QUOTA LAW IN THE 2003 ELECTION

How did the issues discussed in the IFE play out when the parties presented their candidate lists for the election? How did the two different kinds of candidate nomination rules (appointments and primaries) affect the gender balance among candidates? To what extent did political parties in this election rely on primary elections to choose their candidates? Did they manipulate the results of primaries to comply with the gender quota law? Did they adopt primaries to avoid having to comply with quotas? To answer these questions, we must take a close look at the placement of male and female candidates among the top three parties competing in the 2003 election: the PRI, the PRD, and the PAN.

This analysis looks first at the candidate lists for the PR seats, in terms of the balance between men and women overall and then in terms of how they were placed in electable positions. It then looks at the single-member district seats, both overall and in terms of placement in electable positions. For each case, it compares women who were appointed to candidate positions with women who emerged as candidates by virtue of winning a primary election, or *voto directo*. It is important to keep in mind that what counted as *voto directo* depended only on claims made by the parties themselves.

The analysis uses four criteria for comparing the placement of female candidates on the PR lists. The first two criteria evaluate formal compliance with the quota law. First, what was the number and percentage of female candidates overall? The quota law requires that women constitute 30 percent of the candidates; did the parties meet this threshold? Second, did each segment of three spots on each list contain at least one female candidate, as required by Article 175-B of the electoral law? The third measure compares the number of women appointed to the first spot on a list. Holding a spot as *cabecera* reflects the party's confidence in a particular leader. The fourth point of comparison is the percentage of women candidates who hold electable positions. The third and fourth criteria assess factors not mandated by the law but provide nonetheless useful ways to compare the parties in terms of their commitment to female candidates.

To illustrate the extent to which the parties complied with the quota law, an image of the PR ballots was created that depicts the placement of female candidates on the lists of the PRD, PRI, and PAN, in that order. Figure 3 simulates the 40 list positions for each of the 5 districts, for each of the 3 main parties. Figure 3 reveals several interesting findings, which are summarized in table 1 (p. 86).

Contrary to expectations, none of the three main parties conformed to a minimalist interpretation of the quota law in terms of the placement of female candidates. In the PR lists overall, each of them went beyond the requirements of the quota law—they overcomplied with it. Women constituted well over the minimum 30 percent of the PR candidates for each of the main parties: 42 percent for the PRD, 47 percent for the PRI, and 52 percent for the PAN. More important, the percentage of female candidates remains above 30 percent if we calculate the number of women placed in electable positions (that is, in the first ten spots of each list): 38 percent for the PRD, 30 percent for the PRI, and 38 percent for the PAN. The percentage of women actually elected for each party (34 percent for the PRD, 33 percent for the PRI, 39 percent for the PAN) comes close to the percentage of women in the top ten spots, affirming the validity of this estimate.¹⁶ These results suggest that gender bias was not the primary factor motivating the nomination of women to positions on the PR lists.

Figure 3. List Position of Female Candidates for PR Ballots, Chamber of Deputies, 2003

List Position	PRD					PRI					PAN				
	List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4	List 5	List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4	List 5	List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4	List 5
1	↓							↓	↓		↓			↓	
2	↓				↓									↓	↓
3		↓	↓	↓		↓	↓			↓		↓			
4											↓	↓			↓
5				↓	↓									↓	
6	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
7	↓										↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
8											↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
9		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
10		↓	↓		↓										↓
11															
12	↓			↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
13	↓			↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
14													↓	↓	↓
15		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
16	↓										↓	↓			
17				↓	↓				↓					↓	↓
18		↓	↓	↓	↓			↓		↓		↓	↓	↓	↓
19			↓		↓							↓	↓		↓
20	↓		↓						↓	↓				↓	↓
21		↓		↓		↓									↓
22							↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
23							↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
24	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
25				↓	↓	↓				↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
26			↓		↓	↓				↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
27	↓	↓			↓					↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
28			↓						↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
29				↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
30	↓	↓		↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
31			↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
32	↓			↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
33		↓	↓			↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓
34	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓	↓	↓			↓	↓	↓
35			↓			↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
36	↓					↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
37	↓	↓	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
38				↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		↓	↓
39			↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
40	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

↓ Female candidate
 [Black Box] Electable seat (won by party in 2003 election)
 [White Box] Segment of 3 candidates

Source: IFE 2003a, b

The PAN exhibited the highest level of gender equity in candidate placement—and the greatest degree of overcompliance with the quota law. That the PAN nominated more women than the PRI and the PRD is somewhat surprising. In the past, PAN leaders had strenuously opposed gender quotas. It was the PAN that filed the constitutional claim against the aforementioned gender quota law in the Coahuila state legislature (an antiquota strategy that backfired; see Baldez 2004). Critics saw the PAN as the party least favorably disposed to promote women in positions of leadership. In this election, however, progressive factions in the PAN leadership sought to use the quota law to appeal to younger, more progressive voters. The PAN's *cambio de sentido* on gender quotas also reflected the influence of savvy party leaders, such as Patricia Espinosa, head of the National Women's Institute under President Fox; and Margarita Zavala, head of the women's division of the party (Carranza Aguayo and Ortiz Vega 2002).

Few gender differences emerged in terms of whether PR candidates were chosen by appointment or primary election. Each of the three parties relied on distinct strategies for choosing its candidates for the PR seats. In the PRI, party leaders selected all the candidates for the PR seats, under the close supervision of then-party president Roberto Madrazo (Peschard-Sverdrup 2003). None of the PRI's candidates for PR spots were chosen by *voto directo*, but almost all its candidates for the SMD spots were, as we will see.

In the PRD, the 128-member Executive Committee appointed the first three candidates on each of its five regional lists, as well as all the odd-numbered spots on each list. All the even-numbered spots (with the exception of the number 2 spot) were elected by a convention of party delegates (Peschard-Sverdrup 2003). Overall, women and men fared about the same in the primary elections and appointments. Women emerged as winners of delegate elections in 19 percent of the total seats, compared to 29 percent for men. Party leaders appointed women to 29 percent of the seats and appointed men to the remaining 23 percent.

The PAN was the only party that held primary elections for most of its PR seats. As in the PRD, PAN party leaders appointed the first three people on each of the five regional lists “in order to maintain a degree of control” over the list and to “ensure that the selection of deputies [would] be influenced more by the party's state-level committees than by the governors” (Peschard-Sverdrup 2003). The other candidates were elected by closed primaries (conventions of party delegates at the state level) and confirmed by the PAN's National Executive Committee. Women and men performed equally well in the PAN elections, with a 49 percent and 51 percent share of wins, respectively. Although these three cases are hardly sufficient to draw valid conclusions, they show

Table 1. Women in PR Seats (summary of data presented in figure 3)

	PRD	PRI	PAN
Total ♀ candidates	84	94	104
♀ As percentage of all candidates	42%	47%	52%
♀ As percentage of top ten	38%	30%	38%
♀ As percentage of total elected	34%	33%	39%
♀ List headers	1	2	2
Electable segments of 3 with 2+ ♀	1	0	4
Total primary candidates	95	0	185
Primary ♀ candidates	38	0	98
Primary ♀ as percentage of all candidates	19%	0	49%
Appointed ♀ as percentage of all candidates	28%	47%	2%

few gender differences between the two types of candidate nomination processes for the PR seats in these elections.

How did women fare in the single-member-district seats? Interaction between the gender quota law and the *voto directo* escape clause (Article 175-B of the electoral law) proved more relevant in the SMDs than in the PR seats. If a party claimed to have relied on *voto directo* to select a candidate in a given district, the IFE accepted that claim without further inquiry. It is possible—and highly probable—that the primaries held by each of the three main parties were closed primaries, in which party leaders exerted significant control over the outcome of the vote. The primaries may have been fraudulently held; the PRI's internal elections in 1996, 1999, and 2002 were marred by fraud—even according to the party's own electoral committee (Eisenstadt 2004, 205, 232). In other words, if a party claimed to have held a primary election in a given district, that party automatically would be exempt from the quota law, regardless of the procedures by which a vote was held.

Let us put aside for a moment concerns about the openness of the primaries in this election and return to the question of gender differences. If we accept the parties' claims about primary elections, how did men and women perform in the primaries as compared to the appointed seats? The figures across the three main parties are uneven. In the PR seats, women in the PRD emerged as 19 percent of the candidates chosen by primary and 28 percent of the appointed candidates. Women did particularly well in the PAN, winning half of the primaries, which translated into half of the party's 200 slots. The comparison is moot for the PRI because the party appointed all its PR candidates. A clearer pattern emerges in the SMD seats, with women far more likely to be appointed than to win a primary: 15 times more likely in the PRD, twice as likely in the PRI, and 3 times more likely in the PAN.

Table 2. Women in SMD Seats

	PRD	PRI	PAN
Total appointed seats	256	6	120
Total primary seats	44	294	180
Total ♀ candidates	95	48	81
♀ as percentage of all candidates (300)	32%	16%	27%
♀ Primary candidates	5	46	28
Primary ♀ as percentage of all candidates	2%	16%	15%
♀ Appointed candidates	90	2	53
Appointed ♀ as percentage of all candidates ^a	30%	33%	44%
Total elected ^b	56	146	79
♀ Elected	11	25	22
♀ Elected as percentage of total	20%	17%	28%

Sources: IFE 2003a, b; República de México 2006.

^aData reflect percent compliance with gender quota law.

^bTotal does not equal 300 because of deputies elected from other parties.

Across the three main parties, appointing candidates was far from the norm: half of the candidates (that is, both men and women) were chosen in primaries (49.4 percent). The percentages differed significantly, as summarized in table 2.

The PRI selected nearly all of its SMD candidates by primary. As noted earlier, this constitutes a dramatic reversal in policy from all previous congressional elections, in which PRI leaders appointed candidates according to the famed *dedazo*.¹⁷ In the 2003 election, of the 300 single-member districts contested by the PRI, party leaders appointed candidates in only 6 of them. This means that the quota law applied to a mere 2 percent of the SMD seats and required the nomination of just 2 women. Both women were placed in ornamental districts and stood little chance of winning.¹⁸ Thus, with respect to the SMD segment of the election, the PRI adhered to the law—33 percent of the candidates in the districts to which the law applied were women—but the party's reliance on primaries meant that the law had almost no impact. An additional 46 female candidates emerged as winners of primary elections for the PRI, so that women constituted 15.3 percent of the PRI candidates chosen by primaries.

The quota law had a much bigger impact on the PAN, which appointed candidates in 120 of the 300 districts. The gender quota law thus applied to 40 percent of the SMDs for the PAN. The PAN appointed women in 53 districts, or 44 percent of the SMDs to which the quota applied. The PAN compares favorably to the PRI in terms of formal compliance, appointing women to 44 percent of the relevant districts versus 33 percent for the PRI. The PAN chose 180 of the 300 SMD candidates

in district-level conventions, claiming the *voto directo* exemption for 60 percent of the SMDs even though the party's executive committee (CEN) then ratified the candidates who had been chosen via primaries. Twenty-eight women emerged as winners in PAN primaries: 15 percent of all primary winners and 9.3 percent of appointed and primary candidates overall.

The PRD appointed candidates in 85 percent (256) of the districts and held primaries in 15 percent (44). Women held exactly 30 percent of the appointed spots and 1.7 percent of the primary spots. Few PRD women emerged as the winners of primaries, and they did so only in ornamental districts, where they were likely to lose.

To a certain extent, the results of the 2003 legislative elections confirm the findings of existing research on gender quota laws. Most of the women elected across all three parties came from the PR districts: 62, versus 47 from SMDs. This is not surprising, given that the PR seats are closed-list, the district magnitude is relatively large (with 40 seats per district), and the quota law has a placement mandate that requires one of every three candidates to be "from the opposite sex." What this analysis suggests, however, is that the relatively low percentage of women elected in single-member districts can be attributed to the degree to which the main parties—particularly the PRI—opted to hold primary elections. Primary elections mitigated the effect of gender quotas in this election. Future research on gender quotas must consider this factor if we are fully to understand the factors that affect the nomination and election of women.

After the election, quota supporters expressed their concerns about the problem presented by the *voto directo* clause, and advocated rescinding it. In a meeting held four months after the election, for example, the Parliament of Mexican Women (PMM) proposed that Congress vote to eliminate Article 175-C from the COFIPE (Maya 2003c). In an interview published on Cimacnoticias.com, IFE Councilor Jacqueline Peschard remarked that "female politicians and women's organizations characterized the *voto directo* mechanism as a *candado* [lock] that allowed the parties to evade granting more spots to female candidates, in a "legal but inequitable way" (quoted in Maya 2003c). Rafael Maya, a journalist who regularly covers the parties for Cimacnoticias.com, concurred with Peschard. He referred to Article 175-C as a "*candado* that the PAN legislators put into the law . . . the escape hatch that allows the parties to avoid their moral obligation of giving more decisionmaking posts to women" (Maya 2003b). He reported that the PRD "would have had 44 more women if the party hadn't resorted to 'democratic' elections" to select its candidates (Maya 2003b).

The characterization of primaries as a *candado* against women is a fascinating claim. Mexicans use the term *candado* to describe antidemo-

cratic features that “lock in” the preferences of powerful party leaders—such as their longstanding reliance on appointing candidates—against the wishes of the masses. While many analysts see primaries as a positive step toward democracy, quota advocates in Mexico see them as another instance of parties’ efforts to exclude women from political power. Had the IFE investigated the openness of primary elections, it is possible that the parties would have been forced to appoint more women.

Some women defended the use of primaries. Esthela Ponce, director of women’s issues for the PRI, asserted that the process by which her party selected its candidates was “transparent and democratic, in accord with a political institution committed to strengthening and embodying internal democracy” (Maya 2003a). Ironically, however, although she defended her party’s reliance on primaries, Ponce did not have to compete in them herself; PRI president Madrazo appointed her to the sixth spot in the PRI’s list for the first district. Yolanda Rodríguez, also a PRI member, stated that the party should set up a special fund so that women can be given media training and resources in order to strengthen their position as precandidates in primary elections (Maya 2003d), which also suggests that women fare worse than men in primaries.

CONCLUSIONS

Ultimately, the impact of the quota law in Mexico in 2003 can be attributed to the way it interacted with parties’ decision to hold primary elections. As IFE councilors affirmed, the parties complied fully with the law (Peschard 2003). The IFE, particularly under the leadership of Councilor Jacqueline Peschard, exercised considerable discretion about how it interpreted sanctions for noncompliance with the gender quota provision. The way the IFE interpreted the phrase *corresponding candidacies* virtually guaranteed full compliance. IFE discussions of the issue sent strong signals to party leaders, warning them about the consequences of not complying and making it clear that violations would be punished.

Technically, the parties fully implemented the quota law—but only insofar as the IFE uncritically accepted their claims to have chosen at least some of their candidates by primary election. The PRI, the PAN, and to a lesser extent the PRD claimed to have selected many of their candidates “directly” by primary, thus minimizing the impact of the quota. The parties could and did use the escape clause to evade the quota, free from official scrutiny about how open their primary elections actually were. Had the IFE decided to adjudicate this issue, it probably would have found wide variation in the degree of openness, and it could have challenged the parties as to whether they had evaded the quota law.

The percentage of women elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 2003 rose by seven points, but that increase might have been higher had the nature of the *voto directo* been subject to scrutiny. This issue was not raised before the election in 2003, nor was it raised in the process of nominating candidates for the 2006 legislative elections (Baldez forthcoming).

The analysis of candidate lists performed here reveals some results that mitigate some of the concern about whether the primary elections were or were not truly democratic. In the PR seats, each of Mexico's three main parties surpassed the legal requirements stipulated by the gender quota, and women competed in electable seats. Some analysts may discount these data because the deputies elected in PR seats have less status and clout than the SMD deputies. At the same time, however, these figures represent a dramatic improvement over previous elections in terms of the nomination of female candidates. For the first time ever, the parties demonstrated—and exercised—the political will necessary to put more women in elective office. This suggests that the quota law had the unanticipated result of making gender a sufficiently high-profile issue for the parties to compete on. Each sought to use the high percentage of women in the PR seats to signal a strong commitment to promoting women, a point that merits acknowledgment even if that commitment was not borne out to the fullest possible extent.

Although we cannot generalize from the results of one election, this analysis provides a baseline and a template that can guide future comparative research. In some cases, compliance with the quota law may have pitted national party leaders against local leaders over candidate nominations. Although candidate nominations are always a source of struggle, the quota law may have required national leaders to veto the choices of local leaders in order to ensure that their parties complied with the quota law. Holding primary elections then could provide a way for parties both to avoid the quota and to limit conflicts between national and local leaders. Given the salience of federalist conflicts in Mexico, this issue warrants close attention.

Existing accounts have tended to examine gender quotas primarily in terms of how much they improve the status of women. This is an important issue, but focusing on quotas only in terms of women misses several critical parts of the story. Gender quotas must be viewed as a reform of the way parties choose their candidates, amid discussions about candidate nominations and electoral rules more generally. In the context of transitions to democracy in Latin America, political parties throughout the region have faced pressures to democratize the way they make decisions. Historically, the candidate selection process for most Latin American parties has been highly centralized, with party leaders hand-picking their preferred candidates for parliamentary elections.

Demands for deeper democratization and greater transparency—as well as the desire to shed their dinosaur image—have prompted some parties to adopt primary elections. In the Mexican case—unlike that of Argentina—the quota law has had the effect of pitting gender quotas against primaries.

Advocates talk about a “quota fever” sweeping the world. In addition to the 33 countries that already have gender quota laws on the books, legislators in numerous other countries have considered quota legislation (International IDEA 2006). This analysis cautions advocates to be aware of how the impact of gender quotas can be limited by holding primary elections. The unintended consequences of the Mexican quota law demonstrate another way that institutions exert autonomous impact on political outcomes. The Mexican case suggests the importance of a strong enforcement mechanism within the quota law, as well as an effective enforcement agency. Fear of having the Federal Electoral Institute deny candidate lists proved the most important aspect of the law. Inclusion of this enforcement mechanism in the law reflects what Mexican quota advocates had learned from other countries with quota laws. Ongoing and future debates about the adoption of electoral gender quotas in other countries could likewise learn from Mexico’s experience.

NOTES

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1. For more on the distinction between quota laws and reserved seats, see Htun 2004.

2. In Argentina, parties routinely manipulate the results of the primaries to ensure compliance with the quota law. As De Luca et al. (2002, 420, fn. 12) note, “Even when the primaries are held, the party will occasionally change the order of candidates on the list that emerges out of the primary process. These changes are, however, virtually always carried out with the consent, albeit at times grudging, of the affected individuals.”

3. The PAN, the right-of-center party of President Vicente Fox, took a beating arguably far worse than typical for ruling parties in midterm elections. Its share of seats in the Mexican Congress dropped from 41 percent to 30 percent, with losses concentrated in the parties’ traditional base of support in the northern states. In the important industrial state of Nuevo León, the PAN lost control of the governorship, the state assembly, and most of the mayoralties. All the PAN representatives to the Mexico City legislature were defeated. Meanwhile, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) and the leftist Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) made impressive gains.

4. Current Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) data, as of April 27, 2006, show Mexico as 26th in the world ranking, with women as 25.8 percent of legislators. The rank of individual countries changes as other countries hold elections, and

the percentage of female legislators in a particular country may change due to retirements or resignations. See IPU 2006.

5. Testing these hypotheses will require comparing cases, which awaits further research.

6. Joy Langston describes the closed process by which the PRI chose its senate candidates that year: "In January 2000, the *Consejo Político Nacional*, a deliberative body of the PRI, decided on delegate conventions [to select senatorial candidates]. The actual requisites for the candidates that came out in March were so specific that only one possible candidate could be chosen. Finally, the Commission for the Internal Process had to ratify the candidacies, so the CEN [Executive Committee] had another break [*sic*] on any rebellion on the part of losing pre-candidates. Only after all these steps did the delegates to the conventions actually vote on the formulas" (2006, 410, fn. 6).

7. For a comprehensive study of women's involvement in Mexican politics, see Rodríguez 2003.

8. Comparing women elected to women nominated allows us to distinguish between gender bias in the electorate from gender bias among party leaders. Further research is necessary to provide a comprehensive longitudinal analysis of gender bias in the electorate, which is beyond the scope of this work. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for making this point.

9. Figure 2 shows data for PR candidates only; complete data for SMD candidates are not available on the IFE website.

10. It is not clear whether the same women participated in each of these coalitions.

11. The text of the law reads thus: "en caso de reincidencia se sancionará con la negativa del registro de las candidaturas correspondientes." See IFE 2004.

12. The law is intended to be a temporary measure; a transitory article states that it will apply to "at least the next five electoral cycles": 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015.

13. For one illustration of Woldenberg's views, see a review he wrote for the feminist magazine *Debate Feminista* (Woldenberg 2000).

14. For explanations about the level of consensus on the issue of gender quotas relative to other issues, see Jenson and Valiente 2003; Baldez 2004. I thank Temma Kaplan for initially bringing this issue to my attention.

15. The IFE has since sought to regulate expenditures associated with the candidate selection process (Peschard 2006, 96).

16. The degree of compliance among Mexican parties in the 2003 election compares favorably to that of parties in other countries. Argentine parties have tended to conform to a minimalist interpretation of the Argentine quota law in previous elections for the Chamber of Deputies (Mark P. Jones, personal communication).

17. Recent work by Joy Langston suggests that the PRI adopted primaries in an effort to devolve power from national to state-level party leaders. See Langston 2006.

18. The PRI appointed women in the Fifth District in Baja California and the Eleventh District in Michoacán; neither candidate won.

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