



Unanticipated Successes: Lessons from Peru's Experiences with Gender Quotas in Majoritarian Closed List and Open List PR Systems

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The Implementation of Quotas: Latin American Experiences

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As demonstrated in my paper entitled ‘The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Peru: Legal Reform, Discourses and Impacts’, gender quotas have been relatively successful in Peruvian municipal and congressional elections. These successes were unanticipated for two reasons. First, during the congressional debates virtually no attention was paid to how quotas would work in conjunction with the very different rules that are used in the two types of elections. Second, the positive impact of gender quotas in Peru was also unanticipated in the academic literature on electoral systems. Indeed, the success of gender quotas in Peruvian municipal and congressional elections actually contradicts much of the conventional wisdom in electoral studies.

In this paper, I first review the current thinking in the academic literature on the implications of open versus closed list systems and other key variables for the election of women. I then explain why gender quotas worked better than anticipated in Peruvian municipal and congressional elections. In the conclusion, I try to extrapolate some broader implications from the Peruvian case.

Closed versus Open List Systems

Party list systems have rules that determine which candidates fill the seats won by each party. Most list systems are *closed*: voters choose only among alternative lists, not among individual

candidates. In closed systems, the seats won by each party are filled by candidates in the order that they appear on the respective list.

In contrast, *open list* systems allow or require voters to cast ballots for specific candidates. Seats are allocated among the parties based on their respective shares of the vote, but distributed among the candidates of each party on the basis of the ballots that each one receives. Open list systems have been used in national elections in Brazil, Chile, Finland, pre-1992 Italy, Panama, Peru, and Sri Lanka, among other countries.¹

Open list systems vary significantly. Whereas Panamanians and Peruvians have the option of voting for individual candidates on the party list that they have chosen, Chileans and Finns must select individual candidates. In the latter cases, the votes for candidates of the same party are aggregated to determine its share of the seats.² Although Brazilians may cast ballots for party lists, over 90 percent choose to vote for individual candidates.³

The use of closed lists reinforces party discipline, since the leaders of each party (or possibly its members by means of a primary) determine the positions of the candidates on its list, which, in turn, strongly affect their chances of being elected. Moreover, candidates running on closed lists have little incentive to wage independent campaigns because voters cast ballots for the party, rather than for individuals. In contrast, open list systems encourage candidates to appeal directly to the voters and to establish their own campaign organizations. In building individual bases of support, candidates running under the open list format will 'incur debts, make compromises, and develop loyalties different from those of other candidates of the same party'.⁴

There is no consensus in the literature about which type of list is best for the election of women, but the predominant view is that open lists place female candidates at a disadvantage. Richard E. Matland reports that open list voting has consistently hurt women in local elections in Norway, a country noted for high levels of gender equality and female representation. He suggests that this negative impact is likely to be much greater in countries with more traditional views of gender roles.⁵ Mala N. Htun and Mark P. Jones argue that women are less likely to have the resources to wage individual campaigns because they are relative newcomers to politics.⁶ However, recent elections in the USA—where women must run as individual candidates—show that female candidates are at least as capable as men in terms of raising funds⁷ and that they are just as likely to win office.⁸ Indeed, the relatively low rate of female representation in the USA primarily reflects the inertia of incumbency and the reluctance of women to become candidates.

Some noted scholars have come down on the side of open list systems. Citing cross-national data from Western democracies in 1982,⁹ Matthew S. Shugart suggests that women are likely to benefit from systems that allow voting for individual candidates. He notes that the four countries with the highest rates of female representation all employ some sort of intra-party preference vote, and that women fare poorly as candidates in various closed list systems. However, it should be noted that all four of Shugart's positive cases are Scandinavian countries—which have a strong tradition of gender equity—and that only one of these (Finland) is truly an open list system. Wilma Rule,¹⁰ a pioneer in the study of female representation, also views open list systems favourably.

Matland¹¹ points out that the ‘crucial question is whether it is easier to convince voters to actively vote for women candidates, or easier to convince party gatekeepers that including more women on the party lists in prominent positions is both fair, and more importantly, strategically wise’. He goes on to suggest that the answer may well vary from country to country. Unfortunately, little, if any, empirical work has been done on this topic, perhaps because there are relatively few truly open list systems.

Table 1 presents data on the election of women to Latin American national legislatures before and after the adoption of gender quotas, distinguishing between closed and open list systems. Women fared slightly better under closed list systems in pre-quota elections and under open list systems in post-quota elections, but the differences are very small in both cases.¹² Moreover, the range within each category is much larger than the very small differences between the categories. The percentage of women winning office in the first post-quota elections in closed list systems ranges from three percent (Paraguayan Chamber of Deputies) to 33 percent (Argentine Senate) and in open list systems from six percent (Brazilian Chamber of Deputies) to 22 percent (Peru’s unicameral Congress in 2000). Thus, it would appear that the distinction between closed and open list systems is less important than other variables that may work in conjunction with both.

Table 1: Closed and Open List Systems in Latin America, Last Pre-Quota and First Post-Quota Elections

	Averages for Category				
	Quota	District Magnitude	% Women Elected Before Quota	% Women Elected After Quota	% Change
1. All Cases (N=15) ^a	27.3	18.4	8.8	13.7	4.9
A. Open List Systems (N=4) ^b	25.0	37.5	7.5	14.0	6.5
B. Closed List Systems (N=11) ^c	28.2	11.5	9.3	13.5	4.3

Note:

LH=Lower House; UH=Upper House; UC=Unicameral Chamber

^a Argentina LH, Bolivia LH & UH, Brazil LH, Costa Rica UC, Dominican Republic LH, Ecuador UC, Mexico LH & UH, Panama UC, Paraguay LH & UH, Peru UC, Venezuela LH & UH (pre-2000).

^b Brazil LH, Ecuador UC, Panama UC, Peru UC.

^c Argentina LH, Bolivia LH & UH, Costa Rica UC, Dominican Republic LH, Mexico LH & UH, Paraguay LH & UH, Venezuela LH & UH (pre-2000).

Source: Elaborated by author from data in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 of Htun and Jones (2002:38, 41) with adjustments to reflect the first post-quota elections in Argentina (1993) and Peru (2000).

Other Institutional Variables

Political scientists have identified other institutional variables that are thought to affect the election of female candidates and the impact of quotas in party list systems. These are discussed briefly in this section.

District magnitude, or ‘the number of seats filled at an election in a district’¹³ has been identified as a critical institutional variable affecting the election of women in cross-national studies and analyses of individual countries.¹⁴ Matland,¹⁵ however, argues that **party magnitude**, the number of members in a party’s delegation from an electoral district, is an even more powerful factor behind the success of female candidates. These two variables are related: higher district magnitudes usually contribute to larger party delegations. Party magnitude, though, also depends on other factors, especially the distribution of the vote and the rules for allocating seats among parties.

Under both open and closed list systems, at least the more important parties can be expected to nominate a more diverse array of candidates, including women, as district magnitude and anticipated party magnitude increase. Diversity allows a list to appeal to a broader spectrum of the electorate and thus increases its chances of success. Moreover, the expectation of large party delegations in high magnitude districts lessens competition for scarce list positions among candidates and factions within the party.¹⁶ Indeed, affirmative action programmes that benefit disadvantaged groups, such as quotas, are much easier to implement with longer lists. Finally, greater proportionality may increase turnover, which may in turn improve the chances of underrepresented groups.¹⁷

In addition, district magnitude is likely to affect specific patterns of recruitment within political parties under both closed and open list systems. If small magnitude districts are used, local or regional party organizations tend to select candidates. Central party organizations have greater influence over, if not a monopoly on, candidate selection when large magnitude districts are employed. Their influence is greatest in countries that use a single national district.¹⁸

It should be noted, however, that the empirical evidence linking high district or party magnitude to the electoral success of women comes overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, from closed list systems. While it is very likely that the nomination of women increases with district or party magnitude in open list systems, this author is unaware of any within-type study showing a positive association between these two variables. Moreover, it is easy to formulate contradictory theoretical predictions regarding the impact of district magnitude on the actual election of women in open list competition. On the one hand, if women do indeed have fewer resources than their male competitors, as Htun and Jones maintain, they would appear to be particularly disadvantaged in high magnitude districts that require extensive spending. On the other hand, high magnitude districts in open list systems allow candidates to win office with the votes of constituency groups.¹⁹

In contrast, one might expect party magnitude to increase the electoral chances of women under both open and closed list systems. If women tend to appear in lower positions than

men on a closed list, they are more likely to benefit disproportionately as the party picks up more seats. Similarly, if women tend to win fewer votes on average than men in an open list system, they are more likely to fill the last seats won by the party. Thus, to the extent that these assumptions are true, women are likely to have a greater share of seats in parties with large delegations than in those with small delegations.

There may also be **varying orientations** towards the political participation of women among different **political parties**, independent of their recruitment structures. Some political parties—primarily those on the left and the greens—tend to be more supportive of female candidates and are more likely to adopt internal gender quotas.²⁰ Although most Peruvian parties are notoriously ad hoc and personalistic, they may nevertheless offer varying degrees of support to women running for office. Indeed, the conventional wisdom among feminist political activists in Peru is that the national parties based in Lima are more receptive to female candidates than independent lists constructed at the local level, especially those outside of the capital.²¹ Among the national parties, the most visible champions of gender equity in the 1995 and 1998 municipal elections were several movements loyal to President Alberto Fujimori, who had provided decisive support for quotas, aggressively recruited female talent, and sponsored legislation on issues of special concern to women.²² Thus, it might be hypothesized that women are likely to fare best in the ranks of the pro-Fujimori parties, somewhat less well in other national parties, and worst on local independent lists.

Finally, Htun and Jones²³ maintain that the election of women in closed list systems is greatly enhanced by placement mandates, provisions that stipulate that women must be dispersed evenly throughout the list or placed in electable positions. Indeed, these authors argue convincingly that a combination of closed lists, high district magnitude, and placement mandates guarantee the election of a minimum number of female candidates. Placement mandates, however, are the most contentious aspect of quota legislation. Argentine political parties, for example, tend to place women in the lowest positions allowed by the law.²⁴

Htun and Jones are clearly writing with primary reference to party list systems that use proportional representation (PR), the most common type of electoral format in Latin America. Nevertheless, they do not explicitly limit their prescription to party list PR. Indeed, their data set includes mixed systems in which the quota law does not apply to single member districts, senatorial elections in Argentina, which are held under a majority list system, and the 1998 election for Ecuador's unicameral Congress, which used a combination of 'unlimited votes' and 'party block voting'.²⁵ In his analysis of the impact of quotas in Argentine provincial elections, Jones²⁶ also treats majority list and plurality systems.

Unanticipated Success in Municipal Elections

As noted in 'The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Peru: Legal Reform, Discourses and Impacts', especially in Table 3, the 1998 introduction of quotas in the closed list system used to elect Peruvian municipal councils produced dramatic increases in the number of councilwomen. Quotas made a big difference, even though no placement mandates were used and district magnitude had no impact.²⁷ Why were quotas successful in Peruvian municipal elections? Fortunately, the vast number of municipalities in Peru facilitates the sort of multivariate statistical analysis that helps us to answer this question. During the

course of undertaking this analysis, the author ‘discovered’ two variables that explain most of the success of quotas in Peruvian municipal elections. These two variables also have significance beyond Peru.

The first variable is the effective quota. Quota laws in Latin America typically mandate that women comprise a minimum percentage of candidates, even though representatives of legislatures and municipal councils are usually elected from districts of varying magnitude.²⁸ An unanticipated consequence of this across-the-board application of quotas is the creation of different ‘effective quotas’ for the same type of office, because the number of candidates on each list is usually equal to district magnitude, as in the case of Peruvian municipal elections, or related to the latter variable, as in the case of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies.

More generally, the effective quota can be defined as the minimum number of female candidates (excluding back-ups) required to satisfy the legal quota, divided by the total number of candidates on the list. Columns 1–3 in Table 2 illustrate this principle with data from the 1998 Peruvian municipal election, in which the legal quota was 25 percent. The effective quota, however, ranged from slightly over 25 percent to 40 percent. Table 2 also shows that effective quotas tended to be greatest in low magnitude electoral districts, which are most frequently found in district-level municipalities outside of Lima (see columns 2–5). Indeed, there were strong negative correlations between the average effective quota and district magnitude—a factor long thought to enhance the election of women—for each type of council (Table 2, column 6).

Table 2: Effective Quotas in 1998 Elections for Peruvian Municipal Councils

	1	2	3 ^a	4	5 ^b	6 ^c
	Minimum Number of Female Candidates	Total Number of Candidates (District Magnitude)	Effective Quota (%)	Number of Electoral Districts	Average Effective Quota (%)	Correlation with District Magnitude (Pearson’s r)
Provincial Level	10	39	25.64	1		
	4	15	26.67	4		
	4	13	30.77	5		
	3	11	27.27	43	31.69	-.539**
	3	9	33.33	56		
	2	7	28.57	50		
	2	6	33.33	1		
	2	5	40.00	34		
Districts in Lima	4	15	26.67	1		
	4	13	30.77	7		
	3	11	27.27	13	31.46	-.704**
	3	9	33.33	7		
	2	7	28.57	6		
	2	5	40.00	8		
Districts in Rest of	3	11	27.27	6		

Peru						
	3	9	33.33	22	39.51	-.771**
	2	7	28.57	48		
	2	5	40.00	1507		

Note:

^a Column 3 is equal to Column 1 divided by Column 2.

^b Column 5 is equal to the product of Columns 3 and 4, divided by the total number of electoral districts for each type of municipal council.

^c Column 6 lists the correlation between the effective quota and district magnitude for each type of council.

** Significant at the .01 level (two-tailed).

Source: Elaborated by author from data in Jurado Nacional de Elecciones (JNE) (1999).

The second newly discovered variable is the relative magnitude of the largest party, which is equivalent to its share of seats. Since 1983, Peruvian municipal elections have been held under a majoritarian list form. A new statute on municipal elections (Law 26,864) contained changes that reduced party magnitude on provincial councils and in the districts of Lima, but increased the share of seats won by first place plurality and run-off winners throughout the country (see Table 3).²⁹ Given the well-known fact that disproportionality increases as district magnitude decreases, it follows that the relative magnitude of the largest party is negatively correlated with district magnitude. Thus, there is a very strong positive association between district magnitude and party magnitude, but also a strong negative correlation between the former variable and the relative magnitude of the largest party (compare lines 2 and 4 in Table 3).

Table 3: Party Magnitude in Peruvian Municipal Elections, 1995 and 1998

	Provincial Level		Districts in Lima		Districts in Rest of Peru ^a	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
1. Average Party Magnitude	5.10	4.48	6.28	4.98	2.67	3.81
2. Correlation of 1 and District Magnitude (Pearson's r)	.887**	.936**	.907**	.930**	.798**	.800**
3. Average Relative Magnitude of Largest Party	.56	.69	.60	.68	.60	.74
4. Correlation of 3 and District Magnitude (Pearson's r)	-.182*	-.595**	-.384*	-.841**	-.274**	-.560**

Note:

^a Based on sample of 99 councils.

* Significant at the .05 level (two-tailed).

** Significant at the .01 level (two-tailed).

Source: Elaborated by author from data in the JNE (1997 and 1999).

The combination of high effective quotas and high relative party magnitudes often produced guaranteed seats for women without placement mandates. Under the rules employed in the 1998 election, plurality or run-off winners were awarded four seats in five-member districts, which are used in 85 percent of all local elections. Moreover, the effective quota in five-member districts was 40 percent, meaning that all parties—including the winner—had to have at least two female candidates. Hence, even if a plurality or run-off winner only complied minimally with the quota and placed both women at the very bottom of its list, at least one would still be elected. She alone accounted for 25 percent of the party's delegation and for 20 percent of the council's total membership.

This relationship between the effective quota and relative party magnitude is not just a quirk of Peruvian elections. In general, the proportion of seats that are guaranteed to quota candidates (G_q) can be specified by the following formula:

$$G_q = S_L/M - (1 - Q_E)*K, \text{ if } \geq 0,$$

where S_L is the number of seats won by the largest party, M is district magnitude, Q_E is the effective quota, and K is the ratio of the number of candidates on each list to district magnitude. (Although G_q may have a negative value, this result is the same as zero, or no guaranteed seats.) The above equation shows that the chances of guaranteeing seats for women can be enhanced not only by raising the effective quota—a rather obvious strategy—but also by increasing the relative magnitude of the largest party. Given that these two variables are both negatively correlated with district magnitude (see tables 2 and 3), it follows that G_q is too.³⁰

We can illustrate this general principle with the most common case in Peruvian municipal elections. If the largest party does indeed pick up four of five seats, as was usual in 1998, then $S_L/M = 4/5$, or .8. In a five-member district, the effective quota is .4, and $1 - Q_E = .6$. Moreover, in Peru, the number of candidates on each list is equal to district magnitude, so $k = 1$ and does not change the value of $1 - Q_E$. Thus, $G_q = .8 - .6 = .2$, or one out of five seats.

Schmidt³¹ presents pooled OLS regression models with data from the 1995 and 1998 municipal elections, before and after the adoption of quotas. This analysis shows that the effective quota and seats guaranteed by the effective quota and the relative magnitude of the largest party were the most important variables in explaining the greatly increased electoral success of women at the provincial level and in districts outside of Lima. Party magnitude was consistently positive, although not always significant. In contrast, district magnitude—the most prominent variable in the literature with regard to the election of women in party list systems—was *negatively* associated with the success of female candidates, although not significantly so. Any partisan differences in the nomination and election of women appear to be significant only in the districts outside of Lima, where—contrary to the expectations of Peruvian feminists—non-Fujimori national parties (rather than local independent lists) actually had a negative impact.

The effective quota is likely to have an impact beyond Peru because quota laws in Latin America are typically applied 'across the board', without regard to district magnitude. The analysis in Schmidt³² suggests that this variable is most likely to be important in party list

systems with a significant proportion of low magnitude districts and minimal compliance with the quota. Particular attention must be paid to the interpretation and implementation of quota legislation.

Guaranteed seats produced by the effective quota and the relative magnitude of the largest party may occur under closed party list PR when a party wins a landslide victory.³³ However, guaranteed seats are much more likely to be an important factor when majoritarian formulae—such as the rules used in Peruvian municipal elections—increase the relative magnitude of the largest party. Majoritarian closed list systems are used in local elections in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and some provinces of Argentina;³⁴ Peru's new system of regional elections; legislative elections in several Argentine provinces;³⁵ and in senatorial elections in Argentina, Bolivia and Mexico.

For example, in senatorial elections in Argentina, the plurality party is awarded two of three seats in each province, while the first runner-up fills the other. Thus, $S_I/M = 2/3$. Party lists are limited to two candidates, so a legal quota of 30 percent adopted before the 2001 election became an effective quota (Q_E) of 50 percent. Although placement mandates technically apply, they are superfluous because both positions on the list are electable. Only two candidates run in each province, so $K = 2/3$. Thus, $G_y = 2/3 - (1 - .50)*2/3$, or .33. In other words, in 2001, Argentine women were guaranteed to win at least one-third of the seats in the Senate, and, in fact, they did so.³⁶

Bolivia and Mexico also elect all or some of their respective senates in three member districts in which each party runs two candidates and the first-place party receives two seats. Legal quotas of 25 percent and 50 percent would at first sight appear to be sufficient to guarantee an effective quota of 50 percent, but Bolivian parties can use back-up candidates to fill their quotas.³⁷ Mexican parties could do the same in 2000. Recent reforms have closed this loophole, but Mexican quotas are still not district-specific.³⁸ In both Bolivia and Mexico, rigorous enforcement of a 30 percent legal quota for candidates in each three member senate district would produce an upper chamber that is at least one-third female, as in Argentina.

Unanticipated Success in Congressional Elections

As noted in 'The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Peru: Legal Reform, Discourses and Impacts', women have enjoyed a high degree of success in the open list PR system that is used to elect the Peruvian Congress, before and especially after the adoption of gender quotas. Why? The short answer is that female candidates are popular and can compete with men in obtaining preferential votes.

Indeed, the biggest constraint on the election of women in Peru, as in many other countries, has been a paucity of female candidates. Nevertheless, the election of women to the Peruvian Congress has been aided by several facilitating factors—optional and multiple preference votes and constraints on intra-list competition—that have not been anticipated in the literature. Another facilitating factor—the single national district—has generally been treated only as an extreme in the continuum of district magnitude. This section shows how these unanticipated factors facilitated the election of women and also assesses the impact of

other variables featured in the literature: district and party magnitude and party orientation. Unfortunately, given the character of Peruvian national elections, much of the ensuing analysis must be qualitative, rather than quantitative.

Optional Preferential Voting

Since 1985, Peruvian legislative elections have employed an open list system called the ‘double optional preferential vote’ (DOPV).³⁹ This system allows citizens to cast one or two non-ordinal ‘preferential votes’ for individual candidates on the party list that they have chosen. Seats are distributed among the parties in accordance with their respective shares of the valid vote, but preferential votes determine which candidates fill the seats won by each list.

Many Peruvians do not cast one or both preferential votes. For example, in the 2000 election, the number of preferential votes (9,929,963) was slightly less than the number of party list votes (9,935,125), even though two preferential votes may be cast for each party list vote.⁴⁰ Although it is impossible to know how many voters chose to cast only one preferential vote, it is clear that less than half of the electorate exercised the option to cast both. Thus, Peru’s DOPV differs from the open list systems used in Brazil and Chile, in which most or all of the voters cast ballots for individual candidates.

Survey data shows that poor voters are less likely to cast preferential votes and that those who do are more likely to choose only one candidate.⁴¹ In addition, voters from lower socio-economic strata are more likely to make errors in casting or counting preferential votes that often lead to the disqualification of individual ballots or entire precincts. In sum, a more affluent and better-educated *sub-electorate* chooses the Peruvian Congress. This sub-electorate has more a progressive attitude towards the political participation of women than the overall Peruvian electorate. Moreover, it disproportionately resides in Lima and the adjacent port of Callao. For instance, in 2000, voters in Lima–Callao accounted for 34.2 percent of the overall electorate, 36.7 percent of the valid presidential vote in the first round, and 37.2 percent of the valid party list vote for Congress, but 40.9 percent of the overall preferential vote, and 44.9 percent of the preferential votes received by the winning congressional candidates.⁴²

The Single National District and Magnitude

A single national district was used to elect the Senate from 1980–90 and unicameral legislative bodies in 1992, 1995 and 2000. Moreover, women had become increasingly competitive in the single national district well before the adoption of the quota, especially in Lima.

Although the single district reinforced centralism and had other pernicious repercussions, it facilitated the election of women in several ways. The great majority of professional women—who have the best chance of being elected—are either from Lima–Callao or reside there. The single national district allowed these capital-based professional women to run for the entire universe of congressional seats. It also centralized nominations in the hands of national party leaders, who are generally more receptive to female political participation than regional bosses.⁴³ Whereas 57 percent of legislators in the 1995–2000 Congress were from the provinces,⁴⁴ at least nine of its 13 female members (69 percent) were based in Lima.⁴⁵

Limeñas accounted for the same proportion of women in the short-lived 2000–01 Congress, in which a slim majority of legislators came from the capital.⁴⁶

In addition, the single national district magnified the power of the more affluent and better-educated electorate of Lima–Callao, which was far more prone to vote for women. Table 4 shows that, in 1995 and 2000, congresswomen drew a majority of their preferential votes from the capital and its port, while congressmen relied on the provinces for most of their support. The elimination of the single national district in 2001 removed one of the key factors that had facilitated the election of women, and the consequences were predictable, despite a higher quota and an even greater increase in female candidates in 2001 (see Table 4 in ‘The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Peru: Legal Reform, Discourses and Impacts’). In Lima and Callao, women won 12 of 39 seats (31 percent), exceeding the goal suggested by the new quota. In the rest of Peru, however, female candidates were elected to only ten of 81 seats, just 12 percent of the total at stake.

Table 4: Preferential Votes by Gender of Candidate and Residence of Voter, 1995 and 2000

	1995			2000		
	Lima–Callao	Rest of Peru	Total	Lima–Callao	Rest of Peru	Total
Average for All Winning Candidates						
Women	30,908	30,336	61,244**	29,445	20,710	50,155**
	(50.5%)	(49.5%)		(58.7%)	(41.3%)	
Men	6,535	11,327	17,862**	22,840	32,305	55,145**
	(36.6%)	(63.4%)		(41.4%)	(58.6%)	
Average for Winning Candidates Who Do Not Head List						
Women	10,043	11,799	21,842*	29,445	20,710	50,155**
	(46.0%)	(54.0%)		(58.7%)	(41.3%)	
Men	4,774	9,872	14,646*	18,188	26,406	44,594**
	(32.6%)	(67.4%)		(40.8%)	(59.2%)	

Notes:

* Significant differences at the .019 level (two-tailed) between the percentages of the vote derived from Lima–Callao and the provinces by female and male winners.

** Significant differences at the .01 level or better (two-tailed) between the percentages of the vote derived from Lima–Callao and the provinces by female and male winners.

Source: Calculated from JNE (1995) and the Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales (ONPE) (2002).

It could be argued that the single national district is not really a variable, but simply a manifestation of high district magnitude. It is impossible to test this hypothesis with only Peruvian data, given that there are only five cases and because district magnitude and socio-economic and political trends favouring the election of women both increased over time. There is, however, no significant association between district magnitude and the female percentage of the lower house delegations from the 26 districts in 1985 and 1990. Indeed, the partial correlation in the former year is negative, although not significant (-.1865, sig.=.372), if we control for socio-economic development with an index of unmet needs, the best measure available.⁴⁷ In the 2001 election—conducted in 25 districts with a quota—the

association between district magnitude and the election of women is positive (.342) but with a significance level that falls short of the traditional benchmark (.095). Although this data hardly constitutes a compelling reason to reject district magnitude as a positive factor in open list systems, it does suggest that its importance might have been exaggerated, due to conflation with other variables, such as patterns of political recruitment.

By pooling data from different elections, it is possible to conduct better tests of the relationship between party magnitude and the election of women in the single national district. Pearson correlations can be calculated for all elections in the single national district from 1980 to 2000 (n=53), those only with open list voting (1985–2000; n=44), and those conducted for unicameral legislatures under Fujimori (1992–2000; n=33). The first correlation shows only a weak, insignificant relationship (.10, sig.=.467); the second, for all open list systems, comes close to the conventional benchmark (.286, sig.=.06); but the third, for the most recent elections, is the weakest (.076, sig.=.676).

Why is there such a discrepancy between the second and third correlations? Most of the few women who were elected to the Senate in 1985 and 1990 belonged to large parties, but, since 1992, women have been sufficiently competitive to win on the lists of medium and small parties. As previously discussed, party magnitude facilitates the election of women in an open list system only to the extent that they tend to receive fewer votes than men. As shown in Table 4, female candidates have actually outperformed men in recent Peruvian elections held in a single national district.

Multiple Preference Votes

Another characteristic of Peruvian open list voting—its duality—also appears to have facilitated the success of women. Rather than campaigning for women and against men, proponents of female representation could ask Peruvians to split their two preferential votes equitably between the sexes. Many voters have adhered to the slogan of feminist non-governmental organizations, *‘De tus dos votos preferenciales, dale uno a la mujer’* (‘Of your two preferential votes, cast one for a woman’).

More broadly, multiple preferential votes may increase gender equity for reasons similar to the arguments for high district or party magnitude. Whereas the latter help parties to balance their ticket, the former might allow some voters to make a more ‘balanced choice’. For example, a man with traditional values might be reluctant to cast his only preferential ballot for a woman, but willing to ‘risk’ voting for a female candidate as one of his choices. According to this logic—which is admittedly speculative at this point—open list systems with multiple preferential votes—like in Italy and Peru—should be, *ceteris paribus*, more open to electing women than those with only one preferential vote, such as in Brazil and Chile.

Constraints on Intra-List Competition

As previously noted, open list voting stimulates intra-list competition that may place candidates with fewer financial resources, such as women, at a disadvantage. Indeed, three prominent congresswomen interviewed by the author—one from Fujimori’s alliance and two from opposition parties—agreed that women generally have less money and other campaign resources than men. Moreover, the Peruvian system, in which many lists are nominated by alliances of parties, is especially vulnerable to intra-list competition. Preferential voting has the paradoxical effect of facilitating the formation of electoral

alliances because candidates can be elected from any position on the list, but those from different parties running on the same list are more likely to compete with one another.

Other features of the Peruvian system have also stimulated intra-list competition. Given that party magnitudes were relatively large in the single national district and most of the preferential votes were cast for only a few candidates—particularly the head of the list—other candidates could be elected with very small numbers of votes. In 1995, for example, only 12 of the 67 winning candidates on Fujimori's list won more than 20,000 votes nationwide.⁴⁸ Razor-thin margins often separate winners and losers.

Almost all of the winning congressional candidates wage individual campaigns. This phenomenon began in 1985, even though the DOPV was new and the APRA—Peru's most hierarchical party—had a commanding lead throughout the campaign. In 1990, congressional candidates from four different parties running on the list of Mario Vargas Llosa's Democratic Front (FREDEMO) outspent the novelist's presidential campaign by almost two-and-a-half fold. A deluge of tasteless television commercials by FREDEMO congressional candidates, which drowned out and sometimes contradicted Llosa's message, was a major factor in his defeat.⁴⁹

Since the FREDEMO debacle, the leaders of Peruvian parties have usually placed limits on individual campaigns. Typically, the supporters of individual candidates distribute pamphlets, post flyers, and paint names and ballot numbers on walls. More affluent candidates may also erect billboards and buy print advertising. Individual candidates, though, usually do not engage in media advertising, which is the most effective way of reaching the electorate. These restrictions were especially severe in the various parties that supported Fujimori.

Party Orientation

A final variable that has been associated with greater female representation is the more supportive orientations of some political parties. This variable, however, presumes a stable party system, and Peruvian elections are among the most volatile in the world. Moreover, Peruvian parties are notoriously fluid and personalistic. Indeed, from the 1992 CCD election through 2000, the leading 'parties' were little more than personal vehicles for Fujimori and various opposition leaders.

During the 1980s, the left tended to be more inclusive, but it collapsed in the early 1990s. Fujimori was the most visible champion of gender equity in the past decade, but this orientation emerged only gradually and did not affect the composition of his lists before the 2000 election.⁵⁰ In 2000, Fujimori's lists did feature women in more prominent positions, and in 2001 all three candidates elected on the disgraced former president's slate were women. Moreover, women are a critical part of Fujimori's plans for a political comeback in 2006.⁵¹

Nevertheless, 'contagion' has been rapid, as the other parties quickly matched or surpassed Fujimori's initiatives on gender issues. Over time there have not been consistent differences among the parties in regard to the number of women nominated, their lists positions, or their relative success rates. Indeed, Peru's most prominent female politician, Lourdes Flores Nano—who was placed a strong third in the 2001 presidential election—is the leader of the country's major conservative party.

Lessons from Peru

A couple of specific lessons may be extrapolated from the experience of Peru's closed list municipal elections. First, the application of quota legislation in districts of varying magnitude is likely to create different 'effective quotas' for the same sort of office. The Peruvian experience strongly suggests that variation in the effective quota can be a significant factor affecting the electoral success of women. Second, even in the absence of controversial placement mandates, women may be guaranteed seats in closed party list systems—especially those that are majoritarian—by the effective quota and the relative magnitude of the largest party.

The insights provided by open list congressional elections are more tentative and may involve trade-offs with other values. For example, one might not want to increase the percentage of women elected by maintaining centralism or discriminating against less educated voters. But more progressive patterns of political recruitment, multiple preferential votes, and constraints on intra-list competition may all be legitimate ways of facilitating the election of women in open list systems.

It is also possible to extrapolate much broader lessons. Women may fare well in both closed and open party list systems, and any difference between these two categories is likely to be far less important than variation within them. Moreover, the preceding cases suggest that quotas and other institutional variables that affect the election of women may have a different 'logic' within different systems. District magnitude—a variable that often has been linked with the electoral success of women, particularly in PR systems—was not associated with the election of female candidates in the majoritarian party list system used in Peruvian municipal elections. Similarly, women comprise one-third of the Argentine Senate, which is elected in low magnitude, majoritarian districts. Nor did district or party magnitude per se appear to make much difference in open-list congressional elections, although here the evidence is admittedly weaker.

Future research should focus on the interaction of quotas and related factors in different kinds of electoral systems, rather than on the impact of discrete variables—such as district magnitude—across various systems. If there were a magic bullet for increasing the election of women through institutional engineering, it almost certainly would have been discovered by now. A messier but more likely possibility is that different sorts of institutional configurations favour (or hinder) the election of women. Moreover, their comparative advantages may even vary under different conditions.⁵² The analysis here strongly suggests that we are most likely to advance our knowledge of quotas and related variables by undertaking theoretically informed, context-sensitive studies of distinct institutional configurations, using district-level data and paying utmost attention to institutional details.

Notes

¹ Some other countries, such as Greece, use *flexible list* systems that ‘give both party leaders and voters some say in the allocation of a list’s seats among its candidates’ (Cox 1997, p. 61). Although the mechanics of flexible list systems vary widely, in most cases, list order is the predominant factor in determining which candidates are elected. This paper focuses on the more basic distinction between open and closed list systems.

² Taagepera and Shugart 1989, p. 25, refer to the Chilean and Finnish systems as ‘quasi-list’.

³ Personal communication with Timothy Power, an expert on Brazil.

⁴ Katz 1986, p. 101, also see Ames 1995.

⁵ Matland 1998, p. 82.

⁶ Htun and Jones 2002, p. 39.

⁷ Burrell 1998.

⁸ Duerst-Lahti 1998.

⁹ Shugart 1994, pp. 37–38.

¹⁰ Rule 1994, p. 18.

¹¹ Matland 1998, p. 81.

¹² Some of the systems in Table 1 use a mixture of party list PR and plurality, but the generalizations in this paragraph are also true if we just compare those that use party lists exclusively.

¹³ Taagepera and Shugart 1989, p. 19.

¹⁴ For example, see: Rule 1987; Norris 1996; Matland and Brown 1992; Jones 1998, p. 16.

¹⁵ Matland 1993.

¹⁶ This would appear to be especially true in open list systems, in which candidates can be elected from any position on the list.

¹⁷ See Matland 1993, p. 738; Norris 1996, p. 201.

¹⁸ Norris 1996, pp. 199–200.

¹⁹ Ames 1995.

²⁰ See Jones 2000 and Rule 2000.

²¹ Yáñez 1999.

²² See Schmidt 2003b.

²³ Htun and Jones 2002.

²⁴ Jones 1996, pp. 78–80, 87–89.

²⁵ Personal communication with Andrés Mejía Acosta, an authority on Ecuadorian elections.

²⁶ Jones 1998.

²⁷ Indeed, the Pearson’s r for district magnitude and the election of women are all negative: -.035 for provincial councils, -.075 for district councils in Lima, and -.065 for a sample of district councils outside of the capital.

²⁸ Jones 1995, pp. 12–15; Nickson 1995, p. 62.

²⁹ The rules used in Peruvian municipal elections are complex. For discussion, see Schmidt, 2003a.

³⁰ The Pearson’s r for district magnitude and G_d in 1998 are -.477** for provincial councils, -.740** for district councils in Lima, and -.679** for the sample of 99 district councils outside of the capital.

³¹ Schmidt 2003a.

³² Schmidt 2003a.

³³ Indeed, this sometimes occurred in higher magnitude districts under the arcane rules used in Peruvian municipal elections, see Schmidt 2003a.

³⁴ Nickson 1995, pp. 63–64.

³⁵ Jones 1998, pp. 8–9.

³⁶ IPU 2002.

³⁷ Bermúdez Valdivia 1998, pp. 47–50.

³⁸ *Diario Oficial* 2003.

³⁹ Open list voting with a single preferential vote had been used in the 1978 Constitutional Assembly election, which had been conducted in a single national district.

⁴⁰ ONPE 2002.

⁴¹ IMASEN 1995, pp. 19–20. It is also very likely that illiterate citizens cast fewer preferential votes.

⁴² ONPE 2002.

⁴³ Yáñez 2000.

⁴⁴ Tuesta Soldevilla 2001, p. 70.

⁴⁵ El Comercio and Movimiento Manuela Ramos 1999.

⁴⁶ Yáñez (2000) counted 18 *limeñas* among 26 congresswomen (69 percent). The JNE listed 64 members of Congress from the capital (53 percent) in unpublished data.

⁴⁷ The author developed an index of unmet basic need from data in (INEI 1993).

⁴⁸ Tuesta Soldevilla 2001, pp. 76–77.

⁴⁹ Schmidt 1996.

⁵⁰ See Schmidt 2003b.

⁵¹ See Fujimori 2002.

⁵² See Moser 2001, pp. 367–368.

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