"Beyond the Incumbency Disadvantage:

Why More Women Do Not Win Legislative Seats"

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Mexico City

March, 2012

Paper prepared for the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, April 12-15, 2012.

Abstract

Why women politicians tend to have more difficulty winning a legislative seat coming from SMD districts than their PR counterparts, even with gender quotas? Some of the common answers given, such as male incumbency advantage and voter bias, are not as complete as one might believe. Mexico is an excellent case to study this phenomenon because consecutive reelection is prohibited, so that incumbency alone cannot explain the gender gap in SMD races. Thus, we focus on a key difference between SMD and closed list PR, which is vigorous, local campaigning.

We analyze the impact of candidate background or experience on the vote shares and the probability of success of a sample of 600 candidates and found that the experience premium is larger than the gender gap in electoral returns. To understand why this is the case, we used interviews and found that men and women do not appear to campaign differently, whereas winners and losers do. This is because campaign success in Mexican SMDs depends heavily on the ability of the deputy hopeful to procure local political brokers who are able to control or mobilize blocks of voters, and candidate's prior experience helps create a valuable reputation for access to government services that these brokers need to deliver selective goods to their followers.

I. **Introduction.**

Much scholarly work on female legislative representation has asked why women are underrepresented politically, and why one sees such great variation in their ability to win elective office. In this line of comparative research, electoral systems, party bias, gender quotas, and the socio-economic status of women have taken center stage in explaining why some nations have far more women serving in national assemblies than others. One of the most important findings is that female candidates in single-member-district (SMD) plurality races have a more difficult time winning legislative seats than those who run in proportional representation (PR) systems, especially those with closed lists in which voters cannot change the order of candidate names (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Jones 2009; Rule 1987; Schwindt-Bayer, Malecki and Crisp, 2011).[1] As Wilma Rule points out, "PR countries with large numbers of representatives in districts are the leaders among democracies in the proportions of women in parliament. Single-member-district countries are the laggers; the highest three among them elect one-half as many women as the leading countries (1994, 690)." This difference in the ability of women to win plurality as compared to PR seats is important because more than 70 nations around the world have either SMD or mixed-member-systems.[2]

Women politicians in nations that elect representatives through closed party lists face fewer barriers in their quest to enter the legislature. Most importantly, party leaders (especially those in more centralized organizations) find it easier to place women on closed PR lists to broaden the party's appeal to voters simply because adding a woman does not necessarily take away a spot from an incumbent male (Caul 1999; Matland 1998; Rule 1987). Further, voters who are not

[1] As Darcy et al. (1994) pointed out, great variation exists within PR systems as well, which is related to district magnitude and the general status of women in society.

[2] There are roughly 60 nations, large and small, that use the first-past-the-post system, and another 16 that use a mixed-member-system.

favorably inclined towards female representatives should not reject a party label simply because it includes women on the closed list, and so, those who make nomination decisions will not fear for the competitiveness of the list.

On the other hand, female politicians often find it difficult to win plurality races due first, to the powerful effects of incumbency and second, a lack of female ambition and consequently a smaller recruitment pool (Rule 1987; Lawless and Fox 2005). For example, since roughly 90 percent of U.S. representatives run again and win their seats, and since most of these officeholders are men, it is extremely difficult for outsiders, such as women and other minorities, to break into the House (Burrell 1995; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Fox 2006). When American women do run, it is usually in districts in which it is difficult to defeat the incumbent or in open seat races.

Because the incumbency effect is so strong in the U.S., most researchers have accepted this explanation for all SMD systems--together with the lack of female political ambition. But in many nations around the world, the advantages of incumbency, even in SMD or open list PR systems, are not as strong as they are in the US, with its extreme candidate-centered campaigns. As a result, it behooves us to ask whether different causal mechanisms are at work in addition to incumbency effects.

This work focuses on one of the central differences between plurality and closed list proportional races: in the former, the candidate or the local party must conduct a campaign and in the latter, the candidates are not personally in charge of winning their seat in the legislature: rather, they can rely on national party appeals that sell the party label. Closed-list PR systems tend not to rely on candidate-centered campaigning because voters react to a immovable list of candidates with a party label attached, so that parties sell their brand, and the reputation of candidates on that list matters little. But in SMD races (and others, such as single-non-

transferable-vote and open list proportional representation), candidates cannot depend solely on the advantages offered by a popular brand name: they must sally forth and either persuade or mobilize voters (or both) to win on election day in a geographically delimited area. While great variations exist among different kinds of SMD campaigns, local electioneering and personal image have more weight in electoral outcomes than they do in PR contests, especially those with large district magnitude. The prime input of an SMD candidate's image is her prior professional and political background, because this professional experience can help campaign efforts and electoral outcomes (Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Carey and Shugart 1995).

Darcy, Welch and Clark (1994, 117) lay out the central problems for non-incumbents in the US candidate-centered campaigning context: candidates must self-select onto the ballot, develop their own campaign organizations, raise money, and run without much support from party organizations, and those who do are "high status individuals," while those who challenge them tend not have this kind of name recognition and image of competence. American candidate-centered SMD campaigns are driven by money and professional organization and transmitted to voters through various kinds of electronic media. In addition to the candidate's party affiliation, the personal image of the candidate is crucial because it transmits the idea of integrity and competence directly to voters. As Jacobson (1980) stated, prior elective office is often the most important marker of a "quality candidate" for voters.

However, the American style of congressional campaigns is only one type of possible plurality electioneering. Outside the confines of the American system, different kinds of first-past-the-post (FPTP) races are held, including those based on clientelistic vote brokering.[3] The kinds of professional and political backgrounds that allow women both to win nominations to winnable districts and gain votes could depend on how campaigns are run – that is, how votes are won, and therefore, must

[3] The literature is vast. For a sample of recent works, see Auyero (2002); Kitschelt and Wilkenson (2007); Schaffer (2007); Stokes (2005); Wang and Kurzman (2007); Wilkinson (2007).

aspect should be taken into account to explain the different levels of women's representation outside of the US. For example, instead of prior elective experience and party affiliation that help convince voters (and wealthy contributors) as to one's competence in office, it can be the case that background allows candidates to make more credible commitments to local leaders who control blocks of votes through the provision of clientelist exchanges.

This work uses a unique electoral system – Mexico's mixed-member system that combines both SMD and PR tiers and constitutionally prohibits consecutive reelection – to provide a complimentary explanation that fills this gap in the current literature on gender representation. Mexico is an excellent case to study the differences in SMD versus PR electoral systems: first, because this newer democracy has a mixed-member electoral system, one can compare how well women fare in the two electoral tiers without any confounding cross-national factors, such as large scale voter swings or cultural differences. Second, gender quotas are applied to both tiers, so the simple existence of a quota cannot explain differences in women's ability to win plurality elections. However, the differences in the design and application of the two quotas help drive different outcomes in the SMD and PR tiers, and they relate directly to our explanatory focus on professional backgrounds and their affect on plurality campaigns. Finally, and most importantly, Mexico is one of the few nations in the world that prohibits consecutive reelection, which removes this issue from consideration and allows us to examine the problems that SMDs represent for women lurking *beyond* the incumbency disadvantage. Mexico sees large differences between the proportion of women who win seats in the 300 SMD races as compared to the 200 seats in the PR tier, both before and after the ratification of the current electoral reform in 2008 (which was first applied in the legislative mid-term race of 2009). In 2006, only 137 female candidates won seats to the Chamber of Deputies, or 27.4 percent. After the new quotas were applied in 2009, 53 women won spots in the SMDs (17.7 percent) as compared to 88 via the PR lists (44 percent of all PR

seats), for a total of 28.2 percent of the entire Chamber. The difference between 18 percent and 44 percent merits explanation in a political system without incumbency advantage.

To understand these differences, first we ask whether women candidates in Mexico suffer a gender gap in vote returns and find that voters do tend to support women candidates in lower numbers than their male counterparts in the SMD races. But it could be that personal characteristics other than gender are driving these vote outcomes; in other words, that a trait that tracks with gender could lessen women's ability to attract fewer votes. In effect, we find that a lack of prior political background is associated with lower vote totals and electoral defeats, so that women and men with more experience were nominated to competitive districts and also won more votes than women and men who had little to no experience. Female candidates also have difficulties winning plurality seats in the Chamber of Deputies because their parties that control candidate selection tend to discriminate against female politicians by nominating many to run in districts that historically do not vote for that party. In fact, we will show that party leaders tend to shunt female politicians to the most electorally difficult districts, what we call losing districts, whose recent losing margins are above 5 percent on average.

But knowing that prior political experience helps female candidates avoid losing districts and erase the gender deficit in votes does not explain *why* this is the case, so the authors conducted extensive interviews with congressional candidates to capture why prior experience helps male and female candidates reach the Chamber of Deputies via SMD races.[4] It is possible that the female candidates in Mexico (unlike their US counterparts) run different types of campaigns or do not work as extensively in electioneering because of other constraints such as their familial

[4] As shown in Table 4 below, greater candidate experience benefits both men and women so that a woman with more experience will be more likely to defeat a male without prior posts. However, because prior backgrounds help candidates of both genders, a male hopeful will still win more votes than his female rival with the same level of experience.

responsibilities. Or, it could be that the prior experience somehow improves their campaigns because it allows them to mobilize or make credible promises to local voters.

The authors spoke to winning candidates as well as losers, men and women, from competitive and non-competitive districts for the 2009 mid-term elections for the Lower House. We discovered that women do not run on different types of platforms – such as those dedicated exclusively to the family, for example – nor do women campaign less than men (female winners spent more time in the field than losing men, for example, and just as much effort on voter mobilization as winning males). Rather, we found that prior local experience gives plurality candidates access to one of the most important tools in Mexican congressional elections: a valuable reputation with the political brokers at the neighborhood level who move blocks of voters in return for selective government resources.[5] Greater prior experience also gives party leaders some guarantee that female politicians are capable of running a campaign and winning office, and so women in bastion or competitive districts tend to have more experience than women in losing districts (see Table 3 below).

Electoral Systems and Female Representation in National Legislatures.

In closed list proportional representation systems, it is easier for political parties (especially those that are more centralized) to include women in their PR lists as a means to broaden the appeal of their platforms, without necessarily displacing a representatives of other powerful interests within the organization. Larger district magnitudes help quotas effectiveness in increasing female representation in the legislature for much the same reason (Jones 1998, Matland 2006; Matland and Studlar 1996).

[5] Norris y Lovenduski (1993) also found that female candidates tend to have fewer resources and a weaker network of alliances than their male counterparts.

The existence of a quota law can ease the path of women into the national legislature, as shown by country specific works that focus on the particularities of each political system and its electoral rules (Baldez 2004, 2007; Davidson-Schmidt 2006; Jones 1996, 2004); and cross-country comparisons where the effect of quotas is studied in a more general manner (Caul 1999; Jones 1998, 2009; Htun and Jones 2002; Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Generally, gender quotas are more effective in PR than in plurality systems because party leaders do not see the same potential for electoral harm by placing women on a list as opposed to choosing them to confront face to face an opposition candidate (Matland and Studlar 1996, 709 and 713).

Plurality systems, on the other hand, are associated with fewer women elected than in proportional representation systems, especially those with closed lists and larger district magnitudes. Women may find it difficult to succeed in plurality races for a number of reasons, including the incumbency advantage of legislators who tend to be men, because parties find it difficult to refuse incumbent male candidates the right to run again in the same district once they have proven their ability to win office. The issue of where women win nominations is also of concern: if party leaders control candidate selection, they may be reluctant to place women in bastion districts unless they have built up enough party or political service to "deserve" this distinction, or they might not think women are as able to run competent campaigns (Niven 1998). In certain more traditional societies, one might find a voter bias against female candidates, which is more acute in first-past-the-post races because voters react to a candidate, not a party label. Finally, several studies mention that although women win when they run, far fewer quality females decide to run, leading several scholars to conclude that women lack political ambition (Lawless and Fox 2005).

In earlier studies on the candidate-centered U.S. campaigns, some questioned whether women could not win races because of their lack of experience which then affected how voters

regarded their ability to hold office. Burrell (1994, 58-59) explains that background matters greatly in the US's single-member-district system and particularly for women: in plurality races, the candidate is as central to the voting decision as ideology or party affiliation, and so has to use this image to convince voters that she is competent. Competence is derived from "credentials," which is short hand for the overall trajectory of prior background posts.[6] But most works found that male and female candidates for the US House of Representatives hold very similar levels of prior experience (Burrell 1994; Carroll 1985; Fox 1997). The way men and women run their campaigns are not seen as a major factor explaining why women do not win more seats in the U.S. Congress, as many recent works find that the level of fundraising and voter contact is quite similar (Burrell 1995; Herrnson, Lay, Stokes 2003, but for a different view, see Fox 1997 and Murray 2010).

However, SMD races in plurality districts are run very differently *outside* of the U.S., because party organization or clientelist exchange can play much more important roles. Because campaign styles differ, one should expect that the type of candidate background that would support each type of district would be different as well. The best known case outside the U.S. is probably the United Kingdom, where campaigns are supervised by powerful national party organizations, less money is spent by candidates on media appeals, and the image of the candidates is not as important as their party affiliation and the policy promises made by the party leader (Denver, Hands, Fisher and MacAllister 2002; Whiteley and Seyd 1994).

Rather than the personal competence and party affiliation that one finds in U.S. campaigns, or party organization and affiliation as in the U.K., in many nations around the world --including

[6] Carroll (1985, 71-72) uses a survey from 1976 (very early in the American story of gender representation) to show that even then, 27 percent of women candidates for Congress had held at least one elected office, 37 percent an appointive government post, and over 50 percent at least one leadership post in their party, while 55 percent belonged to five or more organizations before winning the nomination.

Mexico-- clientelistic exchange of government access and resources in return for blocks of votes is a fundamental part of electioneering. Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007) argue that several factors help determine whether the parties will appeal with programs or with clientelistic goods: the level of economic modernization, the scope of government activity in the economy, the competitiveness of the party system, and levels of ethnicity. As Hicken points out (2007, 53), candidates in candidate-centered electoral systems have several alternative methods of reaching voters: through their personal image, pork spending, patron-client relations, intimidation, and direct vote buying. In poorer nations, where public service provision remains spotty, voters demand from their federal legislative representatives what they lack – water, sewage, paved roads, public lighting, new or renovated schools, and less corrupt policing, even if these elected officials cannot provide these goods directly.

As was the case with machine politics in the U.S. a century ago, candidates in electoral systems around the world that demand localized effort often rely on vote brokers to bring in large numbers of voters (either through positive exchange or through the promise of violence) (Coppedge 1993; Shefter 1994; Reichley 1993; Wang and Kurzman 2007, 69). These brokers can be tied to the party or be independent; and they can be paid either in cash or through access to government resources. Therefore, in systems in which votes are not won through programmatic appeals or through personal image of competence, female candidates might find that certain types of backgrounds are far more conducive to forging ties with these local brokers, and that without this prior experience, they will not be able to win their party's nomination to a district where they have a chance of winning, and they will not be able to erase or mitigate voters' bias against their gender.

In the following empirical section, using election returns at the district level for the 2009 legislative races, we first ask whether women won fewer votes than their male counterparts and find that they do. Then we examine whether this is in part due to the fact that they are nominated to losing districts, which they are, and then test whether prior political and professional experience mitigates these negative findings. We find that candidate quality, as measured by an array of prior political experience, leads to higher vote counts than the historical district average, and so we sought to fill in the causal gap between candidate quality, campaigning, and electoral outcomes. To do so, we used interviews with a range of candidates – male and female, winners and losers, from the three major parties – to uncover why richer backgrounds help win votes and victories in a system without the benefits of incumbency.[7]

The Mexican Case.

The newest edition of the Mexican electoral code that was passed in 2008 (Codigo Federal de Procedimientos Electorales, or COFIPE in the Spanish initials) holds that 40 percent of the candidates – not their alternates - for the Lower House must be of the "same gender."[8] The following section of the same article then goes on to weaken the impact of this 40 percent rule by allowing an important exception: if the parties use "democratic" means to nominate the candidates (which only holds for 300 SMD seats, not for the PR lists), then the gender quota will not apply. The COFIPE rules were also changed so that parties themselves define which nomination procedures are "democratic," not the IFE as had been the case before the 2008 reform. Thus, no quota necessarily applies for the 300 SMD seats because the parties can simply state that the nomination method they happen to use was in fact, "democratic."

[7] Obviously, we could reach a much smaller number of the 900 SMD candidates of the three major parties through interview than we could have using a survey instrument. However, surveys of elites, especially candidates difficult to carry out because of the tendency to answer delicate questions in a less than truthful manner.

[8] Art. 219. Art. 219, 1-2.

The COFIPE rules for the PR seats are not as forgiving as those for the SMDs, which increases its influence on final seat outcomes. The PR seats make up 200 of the 500 Lower House total, and are broken into five closed-list circumscriptions with district magnitude of 40, representing different regions of the nation. The ranking of these 40 names on the five lists cannot be changed by the voters. The top (PR) tier is not elected on a separate ballot, as it is in other mixed-member systems; rather, the lower tier (SMD) ballot totals in each of the five PR districts are used to determine the number of names each party will win from each top list tier.[9] This rule of course makes the outcomes of the 300 races extremely important for the number of PR slots won (although there is an 8 percent cap on overrepresentation). The COFIPE uses a very clear rule to determine the quota from the PR lists: of each set of five names, at least two must be from a single gender, and each gender must be alternated, which in effect, means the PR quota is 50 percent, not three out of every five. This clear rule makes it more difficult, yet not impossible, to evade the spirit of the quota law for the PR tier.[10]

TABLE ONE HERE.

It is important to note that thanks to the exception clause, very few of the parties actually nominate 40 percent of the same gender for SMD races.[11] On average, the three major parties hover around 28.5 percent, although the PAN is the closest at 36 percent, with the PRI in last place at 18.3 percent. As one can see from Table 1 (with information on only SMD candidates), the PRI has the largest *number* of female deputies, and the PAN has the highest *percentage* of women in

[9] For example, if the PRI wins 40 percent of the vote in the 5th Circumscription, then it will be able to place the first 16 names of the closed list in the Chamber.

[10] In 2009, twelve list PRI deputies from the 2nd Circumscription were elected, so necessarily 6 of these winners would have to be women. But of those who were elected in 2009, only 2 women remained to serve in the 2009-2012 Congress. Furthermore, many of the women elected on the Green Party's list gave up their seats in favor of their male alternates. See Cleary (2010).

[11] The only party that does is the minor Green Party, which has next to no geographical presence in the 300 districts, and so is happy to name women to lose these plurality elections.

its caucus. However, the numbers also tell a story about the differences between how many women are nominated (the PAN at 108 has the highest number; the PRD second at 87, and the PRI bringing up the rear with 55) and how many actually win a spot in the Chamber. Of the 2,028 registered candidates in SMDs in 2009, 635 were women, or 31 percent of the total. Nonetheless, only 53 of the 300 SMD seats were won by women, or 18 percent of these kinds of seats.

Party leaders in Mexico's three large parties generally control candidate selection for federal legislative seats, although variation exists among them. For the most part, leaders of party organs at both the state and federal levels, as well as governors are likely to have either decided or strongly influenced which party politician represents the party, no matter the formal nature of the statutes.[12] Few of the candidates are chosen in "true" primaries, in which more than one candidate is on the party ballot.

Since voters have little influence over which politician is chosen for almost all of the SMDs for the three major parties, one can ask: in which type of SMD district do party leaders tend to nominate women: bastion (historically won by their party); competitive (with a margin of victory within a range of ±5 percent); or those that are historically lost for that particular party? We find that female candidates are much more likely to be nominated to historically losing districts than their male counterparts.

TABLE 2 HERE.

[12] This is the most common for the PRI and the least common for the PRD nominations. However, the PRD's national party leadership tends to reserve those nominations for districts in which it thinks the party has a chance of winning, if and only if the party does not have a governor to decide. Even for the PRD with its strong internal factions, sitting PRD governors still have enormous influence on which politician wins a nomination to which post. Because the PRI has many governors, they decide many of the SMD candidacies and even some of the PR slots. The PAN's governors are also active in candidate imposition, but must share this influence with a strong national party HQ.

With information provided in Table 2, one can see almost 71 percent of female politicians are nominated in historically losing districts, as compared to 55 percent of all men.[13] Only 11 percent of all female candidates were placed in competitive districts, while a healthier 18.5 percent won the right to run for a safe or bastion district, compared to 29.3 percent of men. Of the 176 women who were placed in losing districts, only 16 of them managed to win races, or nine percent. Of the 73 women who won nominations to competitive or bastion districts, a far healthier 50.6 percent gained a seat in the Chamber.

Candidate quality can help a candidate overcome being placed in a losing district, as shown by the figures in Table 3, below. In it, one finds that of the female SMD candidates for the Chamber in our 2009 sample, those who win a nomination to a competitive or safe district can be defined as high quality, in that they held at least two or more prior posts. Of the 164 women in our sample, 111 landed in losing districts, or almost 68 percent; but what is most illuminated is that of these 111, 92 had low experience (77 percent) versus 19 who had high experience (43 percent). Adding together the numbers from the competitive and safe districts, one finds that 57 percent are high experience as compared to 23 percent who are low experience.

TABLE 3 HERE

Of course, one cannot abstract party leaders' intentions from these nomination outcomes. Although it might seem from these figures that party leaders deliberately punish their female co-partisans by nominating them in unwinnable districts, it could in fact be the case that no experienced women are available to run for competitive or bastion districts, and that the only female party members with the requisite ambition are found in areas in which the party has no possibility of winning. Because we have no data on *potential* candidates in a representative

[13] The 249 figure can be found in Table 1 by adding up the number of female candidates for the PAN, PRD, PRI, and PRI+PVEM.

sample of districts (Lawless and Fox 2005; Stone and Maisel 2003), we cannot be sure that this is not the case, although it seems odd that ambitious female politicians (with little experience) are present only in those districts without political opportunity, rather than those where there are hopes to win. [14]

***Empirical analysis of the political backgrounds of SMD candidates*.**

Our work follows closely on Schwindt-Bayer, Malecki, and Crisp (2010), in that we too use candidate level data on both winners and losers and district-level vote shares. However, we focus on the relationship between professional background and electoral outcomes by studying how prior experience can help or harm one's campaign style. In another study that uses individual level survey data comparing three Latin American nations, Schwindt-Bayer (2011) focuses on the differences in backgrounds between male and female legislators, but because the survey instrument includes only winners, her findings can tell us about the differences between elected men and women, but not winners and losers.

Our work uses an original dataset built by the authors containing the previous professional backgrounds of a random sample of 600 Mexican SMD candidates (from an universe of 900) from the center-right Party of National Action (PAN), the centrist Party of the Institutional Revolution (PRI) and center-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in the 2009 federal deputy election. We do not use information from prior electoral cycles because of the large-scale changes introduced by the 2008 electoral law. The sample includes 200 SMD candidates from each major party and it is representative of the proportion of female and male candidates nominated from each of these parties. To collect this information we consulted local and national newspapers

[14] While women in Mexico have more political information, they have less interest in politics, as measured by the ENCUP survey in 2003. 44 percent of the women versus 28 percent of men interviewed declared they had no interest in politics. On the other hand, more women (41 percent) knew how long a deputy serves in office, as compared to only 33 percent of men(Fernández Poncela 2003,5- 7).

available online or via news databases such as *Infolatina*, which collects newspaper and magazine stories on economic, political and social issues of Mexico. Clearly, once elected, winning candidates publicize more information about themselves in official websites and the like. To reduce this source of bias against information on losing candidates, we ignored the personal resumes that deputies make available online *after* they took office, that is to say, our coding was based on online or news sources that were available before election day.

Table 4 summarizes the descriptive statistics of the previous experience of our sample of candidates, and two split samples: winners and losers, on the one hand, and men and female candidates, on the other. We measure past political experience with a series of binary or dummy variables for three types of backgrounds: bureaucratic appointments, elective offices, and political party positions. Bureaucratic posts include municipal, state or federal government appointments such as cabinet secretaries, undersecretaries or general directors. Partisan positions include experience in municipal, state or national party affiliate. Elective positions include members of the municipal assembly (regidor), state deputy, former federal deputy or senator. We also collected information on national or local union organizations typically affiliated with the PRI, as well as participation in social movements or business groups.[15]

TABLE 4 HERE.

As Table 4 indicates, there are clear differences between the political backgrounds of winners and losers in our sample of candidates. Winning candidates from the PAN, PRI or PRD have more political experience than losing candidates: about 22 percent of all candidates have had a bureaucratic post at the state level but this proportion increases to 45 percent among winners, whereas only 10 percent of losers had such experience. Prior experience in an elective office also

[15] We do not measure the number of posts held or the length of the political career because the data sources does not allow for these measures.

differs significantly between winners and losers. About 26 percent of all candidates were local deputies but this proportion is 43 percent among winners and 17 percent among losers. Similarly, 22 percent of winning candidates have worked in their party committees either at the municipal or state level, whereas this proportion is less than 10 percent among losing candidates. It is worth noting that, among winners, the proportion of state bureaucrats is about as high as that of state deputies (45 vs. 43 percent).

Our sample includes 164 or 27.3 percent female candidates, and 436 males. The last two columns in Table 3 split our sample by gender. In general, the differences in backgrounds between male and female candidates are smaller than those between winners and losers, an indication that prior experience is more important in explaining election outcomes than gender. Still, 25.7 percent of male candidates worked in the state government whereas only 12.8 percent of females had such experience. Similarly, 28 percent of male candidates were local deputies but only 20 percent of females held such office before running for a seat in the federal congress. Because these data cover only candidates for plurality races, few had experience in the federal government: 8 percent for men and 3 percent for women.

*Political backgrounds and electoral outcomes***.**

The outcome of the 2009 legislative elections in SMD races can be summarized as follows. The PRI nominated female candidates to 18.3 percent of the 300 SMD seats, whereas the PAN nominated 36 percent and PRD, 29 percent. On election day, the PRI received an average of 40 percent of the valid votes (which excludes null votes and those of parties that lost their registration), the PAN won 28.7 percent and the PRD 13.9 percent. The PRI did slightly better than its average record observed between 1997 and 2006, which was 37.1 percent. These vote returns

mean that the PRI won 188 seats of the SMD seats (62.7 percent), the PAN 70 seats, and the PRD 39. The average district margin of victory in SMD races was 14.5 percent.

Are female candidates penalized at the polls in Mexican legislative races? If we compare the unconditional vote returns of female and male candidates we observe an average difference of about 5 percentage points in favor of men. However, as depicted earlier (Table 2), the gender gap in vote shares may be in part due to the fact that political parties nominate most of their female candidates to relatively weak districts, meaning that voters do not necessary punish female deputy hopefuls, but rather political leaders who control candidate selection do. To reduce this source of statistical bias we estimate the effect of candidate gender with a series of regression models that control for three types of covariates: first, the historical strength of each candidate's political party, measured by the *average vote share* observed at the district level between 1997 and 2006. Second, the *party label* of the candidate, which we measure with two dummy variables for PAN and PRD candidates, respectively, so that we keep PRI candidates as our baseline or comparison group. Third, a vector of political *background variables* that control for bureaucratic, elective or partisan experience before running for congress. With this specification we seek to estimate whether female candidates receive more or fewer votes relative to males in otherwise similar districts. Our second goal is to estimate to what extent do political backgrounds offset or widen the gender gap in legislative SMD races in Mexico. The general form of our regression equations are the following:

$$\textit{Candidate VoteShare}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Female}_i + \beta_2 \text{PAN}_i + \beta_3 \text{PRD}_i + \beta_4 \text{PartyStrength}_i + \beta_5 \text{Background}_i + u_i \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Prob}\,(\textit{CandidateVictory}_i \mid \boldsymbol{X}) = f(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Female}_i + \beta_2 \text{PAN}_i + \beta_3 \text{PRD}_i + \beta_4 \text{PartyStrength}_i + \beta_5 \text{Background}_i) \quad (2)$$

Table 5 below summarizes the estimation of four different OLS specifications of equation (1) to explain the vote shares that each candidate received in 2009. Our sample includes 200 SMD candidates from the PAN, PRI and PRD, respectively, for a total of 600 observations. The explanatory variables of interest are the gender of the candidate, on the one hand, and four different sets of political background covariates, on the other. Each model controls for the party label of the candidate as well as the average vote share received by the political party of any given candidate between 1997 and 2006, which we consider a proxy of party strength or the historical vote share in the district.

TABLE 5 HERE

The four models in Table 5 suggest that the vote shares of female candidates are between 1.4 and 1.6 percentage points lower than those of males, controlling for party strength, party ID and different types of political experience, meaning that either voters are biased against women, or that party leaders place women in losing districts, or both. This gap is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Model 1 in the Table estimates the effect of previous bureaucratic experience in legislative vote shares. We find that candidates with prior state government experience receive 2.9 percentage points more votes than those without such qualification, so that the positive effect of a prior state government post is larger than the negative effect of being a female candidate. On the other hand, bureaucratic experience in municipal or federal governments does not seem to have a significant vote payoff.

With a similar specification, Model 2 of Table 5 indicates that former municipal presidents also receive 3 points more at the polls, whereas former local or federal deputies have no impact on vote shares. Perhaps surprisingly, Model 3 finds that candidates with partisan experience in municipal party committees receive 3.3 points greater vote shares but party posts at higher levels

have no significant impact. Finally, Model 4 suggests that candidates with national union experience or prior business affiliations receive fewer votes. Moreover, to test whether the effect of prior backgrounds differed between male and female candidates, we also estimated a series of models with interactive effects between gender and backgrounds (available upon request). None of the interaction terms proved significant, which suggests that women with more experience receive the same electoral payoff as experienced men.

To sum up, our OLS models for legislative vote shares find that former state bureaucrats, municipal presidents or members of municipal party committees receive a similar premium at the polls of about 3 percentage points. It is worth noting that the premium of these kinds of backgrounds is about twice as big as the gender gap in vote shares (about 1.5 points). On the other hand, former legislators or higher posts in party committees have no significant impact.

The previous models estimated the effect of political backgrounds in observed vote shares. Clearly, a 3 point advantage in expected vote shares may not be enough to secure a victory in a SMD race, especially since the average district margin is about 14 percent. It may be the case that a given candidate's rivals may have even more experience, or the race may simply be lopsided against a given candidate. However, in competitive races these effects may increase the chances of securing a seat. Thus, a second outcome of interest is the probability of victory of a given candidate, a binary outcome that can be estimated with a logistic regression.

Table 6 below presents the estimates of the effect of political backgrounds on the probability of victory and summarizes the results of four logistic models that follow equation 2 (above). The first result of note is that the gender dummy variable, while negative, is *not* statistically significant in none of the four models, so that even if female candidates from the PAN, PRI and PRD receive fewer votes, this effect is not decisive in the election outcome. Once we

control for party strength and candidate backgrounds, male and female candidates are just as likely to win. This is a very important result because it suggests that if potential female candidates acquire enough political experience they can run a successful campaign for congress and win office.

TABLE 6 HERE

As before, Model 1 in Table 6 indicates that candidates with state bureaucratic experience are more likely to win. The estimated effect implies that, all else being equal, candidates with state government experience are 21 percentage points more likely to win regardless of their gender. Model 2 finds two results that contrast with the OLS models. First, even if former majors receive larger vote shares, their actual chances of victory remain unchanged. Second, former local deputies are in fact more likely to win a seat, even if their vote shares did not change significantly. The estimated effect implies that, all else constant, prior local deputies are 10 percent more likely to win regardless of their gender. Finally, Model 3 reinforces the finding that experience in a municipal party committee increases the likelihood of winning a SMD seat by about as much as having state government experience. Table 7 and Figure 1 illustrate the predicted probabilities depicted by the logit models discussed here.

To sum up, our logit models that estimate the probability of victory in a SMD race find that former state bureaucrats, local deputies and members of municipal party committees are more likely to win than those without such backgrounds. Moreover, these effects are not different between women and male candidates because gender has no statistical impact on the likelihood of winning, once prior background is taken into account.

As we have seen before, there are significant experience gaps between winners and losers, and minor ones between female and male candidates. Can it be the case that our results stem

from the fact that we are comparing inexperienced female candidates in losing districts with experienced males in competitive ones? To analyze this possibility, we estimate the gender gap on vote shares using propensity score matching. The idea underlying propensity score matching is to adjust multiple-case comparisons for their so called pre-treatment observable differences. In our case, we want to identify candidates that are otherwise similar in their backgrounds and the type of district they are running, but with the exception that some of them are females and other are males.

To do so, we estimate a probit model to predict the probability that a given candidate will be female, which is our treatment variable of interest, given on the same covariates that we used on equation (2). The procedure uses the predicted probability of being female as a propensity score for each candidate. Since some candidates predicted to be females (treated group) are in fact females, while others will be observed as males, we can find a comparable (i.e., having a very similar background) male candidate for each female in our sample. By comparing candidates with similar propensity scores but different gender, we get an unbiased estimate of the gender gap in vote shares.

Table 8 presents results that show that once we match candidates by their background and district characteristics, the gender gap is reduced and becomes statistically insignificant (while there is a significant gender gap on unconditional vote shares - 6.27 percentage points).

TABLE 8 HERE

So far, our statistical analysis for a sample of 600 SMD candidates from the PAN, PRD and PRD has pointed out the kind of political backgrounds that most significantly affect vote shares and the likelihood of winning a plurality seat. However, regression analysis alone cannot illuminate the mechanisms underlying these effects. To understand why political experience and certain

backgrounds matter in Mexican legislative races we need to understand the actual workings of political campaigns in contemporary Mexico. We turn to this issue in the next section where we discuss the findings of in-depth interviews with a number of candidates.

II. **Why Prior Experience Matters for Successful Plurality Campaigns**.

To capture why a more extensive career background matters for vote-winning, especially in plurality races, one must understand how Mexican Chamber campaigns are managed and carried out. While works on campaigns in the U.S. have recognized that prior background is an important element in enabling female politicians to reach a legislative seat, to our knowledge, none has recognized the link between background and successful campaigns in the candidate-centered campaigns outside the U.S.

What is a campaign? Agranoff (1976, 3) defines it as the "coordinated effort to elect candidates to office … (and) the human and material resources to do so. Many different types of scholars have measured just how important campaign work was, especially in voter mobilization and turnout. Herrnson (1989) for example, argues that party organizations play an extremely important role candidate recruitment, issue placement, and media strategies, as well as voter mobilization and voter contact. Several different authors have now measured the impact of different types of campaigning activities on many types of outcomes, such as turnout, voter interest in elections, and percentage of votes (Gerber and Green 2000; Holbrook 1996; Shaw 1999). While one can argue that campaigning might only have "minimal" effects in the best of cases (such as the presidential race because of the great amount of media generated),[16] candidates continue to run expensive, time consuming, and draining campaigns in the belief that they can decide a race.

[16] Bartels (1993) and Herr (2002).

To better understand campaigning for the Chamber of Deputies in Mexico, the authors conducted interviews with more than 35 federal deputy candidates. Fifteen of these interview subjects were carefully pre-selected from the list of all the 2009 deputy candidates for the three major parties (PAN, PRD, and PRI) to include male and female candidates; those who had run in bastion, competitive, and losing districts; from the three major parties; those who ran in rural and urban districts; and most importantly, both those who had won and lost their plurality elections. The interviews were conducted over the course of several months in the summer and fall of 2010, and on average, they lasted from one hour to one hour and 15 minutes. The main goal was to verify whether women and men ran different sorts of campaigns and to determine whether and how prior experience can affect campaigns. In the interviews, the authors asked the former candidates roughly the same questions in a similar order, and our findings are based on what can be considered consensus answers from the respondents.[17] Another 25 PRI and PAN deputy candidates were interviewed from previous electoral cycles, but the focus was on how campaigns were run generally speaking after the transition to democracy in 2000, not on gender differences.

The Typical Congressional Campaign in Democratic (post-2000) Mexico.

Mexican federal legislative campaigns are not the candidate-centered affairs one sees in the U.S., in which ambitious politicians self-select onto the ballot through their personal fund raising efforts, hire their own team of experts, contract radio and television spots to sell their personal image, and mobilize through mass mailings and phone banks rather than rallies and walk-abouts.

[17] The interview questions followed the same template: Did your campaign search out party identifiers or more volatile areas? What themes did you focus on in your campaign? More economic issues, such as jobs and inflation, or more social oriented points (health, education)? Did you use campaign professionals in your campaign? Did you organize mass rallies? How many and at which points in the campaign? What types of activities did you use to reach voters: walk-abouts; canvassing; concerts, etc.? What kinds of support did you receive from local leaders and vote brokers? What kinds of communication tactics and materials did you use? Did you use volunteers or paid campaign workers? Did you raise funds on your own? Did you use the internet; phone-banks; or any other more "modern" tactics?

Rather, they are an combination of mass media appeals run out of the national party headquarters designed to sell the party label that exist uneasily with local candidate-managed electioneering in the 300 districts in which the candidates and their teams are responsible for mobilizing voters to come out on election day.

As Carey and Shugart (1995) explain, electoral systems without the possibility of consecutive reelection should remove most incentives to promote a personal vote; that is, one that is based on the personal image and past performance of the candidate because one cannot use personal performance in office to win a future term. In the Mexican case, the most important break on candidate-centered efforts is the constitutional prohibition against consecutive reelection, which cuts the direct link between the future career paths of the deputies and the voters they represent geographically. Further, national party leaders control the public campaign resources that come from the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE): the millions of pesos dedicated to electioneering are not sent directly to candidates; rather, each national party HQ receives the financing and allocates it to both candidates and state parties largely as it sees fit.[18] Third, it is (and has been since the 1996 electoral reforms) illegal for individual candidates to contract radio or television advertising that could bring their personal image to the attention of voters.[19] The combination of single term limits and the lack of local media efforts should mean that Mexican legislative elections – even those run in SMDs – are won or lost because of a combination of the state of the economy, party identification, and national media appeals that sell the party, not the image of the candidate.

But Mexico's legislative campaigning does not fulfill theoretical expectations: candidates in district races are extremely active in their campaigns, despite single term limits and the centralized

[18] The national party HQ decides how much time each state receives for its federal senate and deputy campaigns (Art 61 of the 2008 COFIPE). State party affiliates also receive money from state electoral commissions for state races and regular party activities.

[19] Art. 49, sections 3-8 of the COFIPE.

spending of the national party HQs. And thanks to the fact that local campaign efforts are largely run and managed by the candidates themselves, the backgrounds of the candidates come into play. At least two reasons help explain and candidate background might matter for campaigns: first, district candidates can raise their own funds, both legal and illegal, and campaign finance audits are extremely weak (before 2009, IFE could only audit the money that had been reported; it had no way of actually going to districts to count how many trucks, buses, dishwashers, bags of cement were used or given away in any given SMD campaign). Because of weak auditing practices and rules, both the individual candidate and the party have strong incentives to spend money in the field, that is, in the neighborhoods.[20] Second, most candidates who run in SMDs come from the local or state political arenas, and most return after their single term ends. Even though party leaders control candidate selection, they still want to choose candidates who can win popular support.[21] As a result, a reputation for serve to the local population – albeit in slightly different districts – in elected or government posts help candidates win support from area residents.

Plurality candidates reach out to and mobilize voters using several techniques, the most important of which are house to house canvassing in urban areas and walk-abouts.[22] Many of the candidates interviewed – both men and women, from all parties and areas of the nation – talked about how important it is that the voters see you ("que te vean"); that you have contact with your district's residents; that they have heard of you. In addition to the meet and greets, campaign

[20] Most candidates who were interviewed stated that their *opponent* had overshot the legal spending limit, which is set very low, considering how much money is spent on Mexican elections overall. Depending on whether the election is concurrent with the presidential or intermediate, the limit is roughly US $72,000. Most accused their rivals of spending up to 3.5 times that amount.

[21] The congressional campaigns last 90 days when they are in concurrent electoral years, and 60 days when they are not (Art. 237, sections 1-2).

[22] When asked about a defeated rival's campaign tactics, a winning woman in a losing district stated that her defeated rival had less contact with voters and he participated in fewer walk-abouts; so, even though had better publicity, she still defeated him. Author interview with Dep. Norma Leticia Orozco Torres, from a rural district of Guanajuato, August 28, 2010.

teams organize as many small meetings with local social and business leaders as they can. As one losing candidate stated, "If you don't have prior political work in the locality, then you have to do everything with money. On the other hand, if you already have connections with the local leaders, you spend less."[23]

The local leaders in any given municipality or district are those who control votes or money. These more important local leaders have contacts with the lower level neighborhood leaders who are capable of mobilizing blocks of voters.[24] The identity of these local leaders of course depends on the type of neighborhood involved, but almost always include: *padres de familia*, which is the rough equivalent of members of the PTA; leaders of the neighborhoods; probably the most important group who are made up of leaders of neighborhoods, blocks, and housing developments, and finally, those who are in charge of the markets, among many others. These local leaders are crucial for hiring the campaign workers (called *brigadistas*) and for financing them. The problem with the *brigadistas* was that they often did not do their work. The "natural leaders" in the area put their people in as *brigadistas*, so if they were not doing their jobs, it was because the natural or local leaders either did not care enough about the election to force them to, or they did not think the candidate could win.

Prior political background is an important base for electoral returns because those who have worked in the same area, as a local deputy, a bureaucrat in the municipal government, or the owner of a factory or a pharmacy not only are better known in the voting district, they also have pre-established contacts with local and neighborhood leaders who control votes, money, and

[23] Interview with Fernando Pérez Rodríguez, losing candidate for the PRD in a Mexico City district, August 30, 2010.

[24] Interview with Carlos Rey Gamiz, August 6, 2010. He lost the 26th Dtto, Magdalena Contreras and Álvaro Obregón in the 2009 dip fed elections

campaign workers. For example, a losing PRD candidate in Mexico City believed that he did not have the support of the local leaders who can move blocks of votes for two reasons: first, he was not local – meaning he was not from the delegation or municipality that controlled the federal district and second, he did not have enough money to buy them off.[25] These local leaders can sit the election out, shirk in their duties, or go work for the opposition candidates who could pay for their services. On the other hand, a winning PRD deputy said his job as Director of Urban Services in a city borough in Mexico City (that encompasses the federal district) was probably the most important one for his campaign victory, because people had known him for twenty years as someone who could get things done. *Gestoría* is an extremely important word in Mexican politics and it means the ability to gain access to government services, to help people get what they need from incompetent and nonresponsive government offices.[26] The neighborhood leaders who matter in many types of districts are those who are constantly are doing *gestoría* for their neighbors. The deputy hopeful has to have a reputation for getting access to government goods and services for their people. [27]

In several interviews with both men and women, winners and losers, it became clear that no differences could be drawn between how successful men and women approached vote mobilization: those women who had prior experience in the district in question stated that they

[25] Interview with Fernando Pérez Rodríguez, losing candidate for the PRD, August 30, 2010.

[26] A female winner in a losing district explains: First you go talk to them to win their confidence and trust. You have to eat and drink, go to fiestas, spend money on the saints feast days at the local church. Then you go to a second meeting, which is for work. Here you promise them *gestoría* for their people's problems in exchange for their vote on election day. Interview with María De La Paz Quiñones, June 14, 2010, PAN.

[27] Hector Hugo Hernández Rodríguez, a winner in a PRD safe district, July 29, 2010. Also, a PAN woman in a bastion district remarks that because of her prior contacts with local leaders in the area, she was able to make credible commitments to *gestoría*. As head of Social Services in the municipal government, she had already been on walk-abouts of the area, she had worked with the poor; she had given out money and municipal resources. Interview with Lucila Del Carmen Gallegos, Sept. 19, 2010.

could make credible promises to provide selective government goods and services because of their prior work in the area. On the other hand, unsuccessful male and females candidates were usually quite open about why they had done badly: they had not enough experience in the locality and not enough money to buy off the local leaders. Of course it is important to point out that not all areas have the same needs for basic services, such as public lighting and clean water. *Gestoría* takes different forms depending on the socio-economic status of the district. But even in wealthier areas, neighbors want to know that if they have a problem, they will have access to a public official who will be capable of solving it and the best guarantee of ability and interest is past experience as a politician or social leader who been committed to these kinds of activities in years past.[28]

The campaign team is usually made up of carefully selected and trusted allies, friends, or family members of the candidate. In almost all cases, workers have to be hired to carry out all the non-strategic activities involved in campaigning. Often, the more trusted members of the campaign team have to monitor the work of the local campaign workers and the brokers.[29] Prior experience helps in this area as well: without knowing who the locals are, it is difficult to connect to either local leaders or voters. In terms of advertising, the candidates used to saturate the district with printed posters, banners, and billboards; but after the 2007 reforms, they now must ask permission to hang campaign material from private homes and buildings.[30] The requirement to ask permission to place banners on private dwellings has further strengthened the localist nature of campaigning because the candidate's team must have close contacts with residents to be able to put up signs. To get voters interested in the elections, the campaign teams send trucks

[28] Interview with PRI Dep. Rodrigo Reina Liceaga, July 26, 2010, who won a difficult urban district in a suburb of Mexico City that had once been a bastion of the PAN, Naucalpan.

[29] Hector Hugo Hernández Rodríguez, a winner in a PRD safe district, DF, July 29, 2010.

[30] See Art. 236 of the COFIPE.

around the neighborhoods to smaller festivals, concerts, or food kitchens are set up during the course of the campaign. The team hands out promotional materials in the form of little gifts such as cups, key rings, hats. Large rallies used to be one of the signature elements of a PRI campaign under hegemony.[31] Now, usually only two to three are held throughout the months of campaigning because it can be very dangerous for the candidate who holds a rally to which nobody shows up. And even if they do come, there is no guarantee that they will vote for the candidate who organized the event.

A solid political or social trajectory in the same locality in which one is running for elected office helps in three related ways: first, it raises name recognition among voters. However, because most voters tend not to know the name of their favored candidate, this is perhaps the least important factor. Second, prior experience, especially in political office, provides those who control candidate nominations some assurance that the candidate will be able to stand the rigors of campaigning as well as vote the party line once in office, and so helps them win nominations in districts in which there is a possibility of winning. Finally, a proven track record provides a reputation to local political brokers who control or at least influence blocks of votes that the candidate in question is both willing and able to provide access to services or to policy makers, usually at the municipal level. Without these prior links with local and neighborhood leaders who control blocks of votes, many districts cannot be won. Less importantly, party leaders can be more receptive to a female candidate with more experience because this prior political work allows her to cause problems if she is not nominated.[32] This point should not be over exaggerated – not all losing pre-candidates are willing to threaten their party leaders over a lost nomination because they can always compete three years down the line.

[31] Interview with PRI Dep. Humberto Cervantes, June 1, 2004, winner of a mixed district.

[32] Interview with Lucila Del Carmen Gallegos, Sept. 19, 2010, winning PAN candidate from a bastion district.

Conclusions.

This paper asks why women politicians tend to have more difficulty winning a legislative seat coming from SMD districts than their PR counterparts, even with gender quotas. The common answer given for the greater difficulty of non-incumbents in SMD races is not as complete as one might believe. Mexico is an excellent case to study this phenomenon because while it has a PR and a SMD tier, both with a quota rule, the Constitution prohibits consecutive reelection, so that incumbency cannot explain the differential levels of female representation in both tiers. Of course, there are many answers to this question, including fairer rules that are easier to observe on the PR side and voter bias that is felt more directly in a plurality races in a single-member-district. We argue that one must also take into account the central difference between SMD and closed list PR types of representation, which is vigorous, local campaigning.

This paper turned to background experience and found that indeed, while a gender gap exists in election returns; its effects are mitigated once prior experience is taken into account. Rather than simply asserting that the quality of the candidates has an effect on vote shares, we used interviews with candidates of both genders and discovered that men and women do not appear to campaign differently, while winners and losers do. We found that campaign success in Mexican SMDs depends heavily on the ability of the deputy hopeful to procure local political brokers who are able to control or mobilize blocks of voters. As many interviewees notes, the candidate's prior experience in the locality helps create a valuable reputation for access to government services that these brokers need to deliver selective goods to their followers. The corollary is true as well; without these prior relations, the candidate must pay much more to procure these services, and then monitor compliance more heavily (which also costs more money). Because men have more political experience in Mexico, they tend to have more of these

important contacts. This is an important finding as many mixed-member systems exist around the world as well as other nations with simple SMD rules.

One should of course note that not all SMD campaigns are run like those in Mexico, with little to no personal media appeals, the lack of an incumbency advantage, and the enormous importance of political brokers in the neighborhoods. But this type of campaigning helps illustrate how political backgrounds matter in other types of plurality campaigning around the world – where the personal image of a candidate does not have the same weight as in the US case. It also pinpoints a central problem for female politicians: they must convince reluctant party leaders to select them to more "winnable" districts. It is likely that with greater prior experience, party leaders and the "selectorate" more generally would nominate female candidates for races in which victory is possible. The Mexican case is a first step in placing both prior experience and campaigning squarely into a more comparative framework.

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TABLE 1

2009 Elections for the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (SMD races)

	Candidates			Winners		
Political Party or Alliance	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
PAN	**192**	**108**	**300**	**54**	**16**	**70**
	64.0	*36.0*	*100%*	*77.1*	*22.9*	*100%*
PRD	**213**	**87**	**300**	**32**	**7**	**39**
	71	*29*	*100*	*82.1*	*18.0*	*100*
PRI*	**245**	**55**	**300**	**158**	**30**	**188**
	81.7	*18.3*	*100*	*84.0*	*16.0*	*100*
PVEM	**141**	**96**	**237**			
	59.5	*40.5*	*100*	-	-	-
PANAL	**194**	**97**	**291**			
	66.7	*33.3*	*100*			
PSD	**194**	**106**	**300**	-	-	-
	64.7	*35.3*	*100*			
Salvemos a México (PT+Conv.)	**214**	**86**	**300**	**3**	**0**	**3**
	71.3	28.7	100	100	0	100
Total	**1,393**	**635**	**2,028**	**247**	**53**	**300**
	68.7	*31.3*	*100%*	*82.3*	*17.7*	100%

*Figures in italics denote row percentages. * Includes PRI+PVEM coalition.*

Source: Aparicio and Langston (2009)

TABLE 2
SMD candidates for the Mexican Chamber of Deputies in 2009
Candidate gender and election outcome by district type

	Candidates			Winners		
District type	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Losing	**361**	**176**	**537**	**65**	**16**	**81**
%	55.5%	70.7%	59.7%	26.6%	30.2%	27.3%
Competitive	**99**	**27**	**126**	**47**	**9**	**56**
%	15.2%	10.8%	14.0%	19.3%	17.0%	18.9%
Safe	**191**	**46**	**237**	**132**	**28**	**160**
%	29.3%	18.5%	26.3%	54.1%	52.8%	53.9%
TOTAL	**651**	**249**	**900**	**244**	**53**	**297**
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Includes PAN, PRI and PRD candidates in SMD districts only.

Competitive disrticts are those with historical margins of victory of ±5% between 1997 and 2006.

The p-value for the chi-square test is 0.001 for candidates and 0.846 for winners.

Source: Aparicio and Langston (2009).

TABLE 3
SMD female candidates for the Mexican Chamber of Deputies in 2009
Candidate experience and district type

District type	**Low Experience**	**High Experience***	**Total**
Losing	**92**	**19**	**111**
%	*76.7*	*43.2*	*67.7*
Competitive	**15**	**9**	**24**
%	*12.5*	*20.5*	*14.6*
Safe	**13**	**16**	**29**
%	*10.8*	*36.4*	*17.7*
	120	44	164**
	100.00	100.00	100.00

* Candidates with 2 or more prior posts.

** out of a sample of 600 candidates.

TABLE 4
Descriptive statistics
Backgrounds of SMD candidates for the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, 2009

	Full sample	Winners	Losers	Males	Females
Candidate vote share	**27.78**	**44.16**	**19.34**	**29.49**	**23.22**
	[16.10]	[8.48]	[12.09]	[16.05]	[15.36]
Female candidate=1	**0.27**	**0.19**	**0.32**		
	[.44]	[.39]	[.46]		
Bureaucratic appointments					
Municipal government	**0.16**	**0.22**	**0.12**	**0.16**	**0.13**
	[.36]	[.41]	[.32]	[.37]	[.34]
State government	**0.22**	**0.45**	**0.10**	**0.26**	**0.13**
	[.41]	[.49]	[.30]	[.43]	[.33]
Federal government	**0.07**	**0.11**	**0.05**	**0.08**	**0.03**
	[.24]	[.31]	[.21]	[.27]	[.17]
Electoral posts					
Municipal president	**0.21**	**0.32**	**0.15**	**0.25**	**0.08**
	[.41]	[.47]	[.35]	[.44]	[.27]
Local deputy	**0.26**	**0.43**	**0.17**	**0.28**	**0.20**
	[.44]	[.45]	[.37]	[.45]	[.40]
Federal deputy	**0.12**	**0.17**	**0.09**	**0.12**	**0.12**
	[.3213]	[.3779]	[.2842]	[.3218]	[.321]
Senator	**0.01**	**0.02**	**0.01**	**0.02**	**0.01**
	[.1148]	[.155]	[.0868]	[.1258]	[.0781]
Partisan posts					
CDM-municipal committee	**0.11**	**0.22**	**0.05**	**0.11**	**0.10**
	[.3111]	[.4157]	[.2193]	[.3162]	[.2976]
CDE-state committee	**0.14**	**0.23**	**0.10**	**0.15**	**0.12**
	[.3507]	[.4189]	[.3017]	[.3588]	[.3282]
CEN-national committee	**0.02**	**0.04**	**0.02**	**0.03**	**0.02**
	[.1511]	[.1946]	[.1223]	[.157]	[.1344]
Observations	600	204	396	436	164

Means and standard deviations in brackets.

The sample includes 200 candidates from the PAN, PRI and PRD, respectively.

TABLE 5
Political background of legislative SMD candidates and 2009 vote shares (OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Female candidate	**-1.446**	**-1.699**	**-1.666**	**-1.588**
	[0.716]**	[0.724]**	[0.709]**	[0.712]**
PAN candidate	**-7.049**	**-7.679**	**-7.55**	**-8.297**
	[0.967]***	[0.960]***	[1.060]***	[0.955]***
PRD candidate	**-15.224**	**-15.802**	**-15.592**	**-16.347**
	[1.014]***	[1.005]***	[1.085]***	[1.009]***
1997-2006 vote share	**72.664**	**74.392**	**75.079**	**75.204**
	[2.644]***	[2.631]***	[2.502]***	[2.481]***
Bureaucratic appointments				
Municipal government	**0.253**			
	[1.017]			
State government	**2.962**			
	[1.006]***			
Federal government	**0.418**			
	[1.356]			
Elective posiion				
Regidor		**1.734**		
		[1.323]		
Municipal president		**3.034**		
		[0.974]***		
Local Deputy		**0.752**		
		[0.885]		
Federal Deputy		**-1.276**		
		[1.026]		
Partisan posts				
CDM (municipal committee)			**3.299**	
			[1.198]***	
CDE (state committee)			**-1.607**	
			[1.116]	
CEN (national committee)			**-0.414**	
			[2.175]	
Other				
National Union				**-5.007**
				[2.561]*
Local Union				**-0.698**
				[1.402]
Business				**-2.917**
				[1.648]*
Constant	**12.323**	**12.387**	**12.529**	**13.378**
	[1.271]***	[1.255]***	[1.351]***	[1.284]***
Observations	600	600	600	600
R2	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74

OLS estimates with robust standard errors in brackets.

*, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively.

TABLE 6
Political background of legislativeSMD candidates and probability of victory in 2009 (Logit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Female candidate	**-0.186**	**-0.272**	**-0.314**	**-0.312**
	[0.279]	[0.268]	[0.272]	[0.267]
PAN candidate	**-1.535**	**-1.657**	**-1.738**	**-2.03**
	[0.289]***	[0.284]***	[0.315]***	[0.294]***
PRD candidate	**-1.617**	**-1.74**	**-1.699**	**-2.053**
	[0.276]***	[0.279]***	[0.303]***	[0.284]***
1997-2006 vote share	**10.914**	**11.325**	**12.226**	**12.185**
	[1.163]***	[1.194]***	[1.160]***	[1.182]***
Bureaucratic appointments				
Municipal government	**0.062**			
	[0.306]			
State government	**1.062**			
	[0.290]***			
Federal government	**-0.064**			
	[0.452]			
Elective posiion				
Regidor		**0.424**		
		[0.367]		
Municipal president		**0.241**		
		[0.290]		
Local Deputy		**0.588**		
		[0.268]**		
Federal Deputy		**-0.213**		
		[0.375]		
Partisan posts				
CDM (municipal committee)			**1.043**	
			[0.410]**	
CDE (state committee)			**-0.476**	
			[0.339]	
CEN (national committee)			**-0.637**	
			[0.679]	
Other				
National Union				**-1.63**
				[0.764]**
Local Union				**-0.761**
				[0.439]*
Business				**-1.12**
				[0.527]**
Constant	**-3.644**	**-3.696**	**-3.768**	**-3.383**
	[0.450]***	[0.449]***	[0.461]***	[0.452]***
Observations	600	600	600	600
Pseudo R squared	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.36

Logit estimates with robust standard errors in brackets.

*, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10, 5 and 1%, respectively.

TABLE 7
Estimated effect of candidate backgrounds on the probability of victory in SMD races in Mexico

	Predicted probability of victory for:			
	PAN		PRI	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Baseline: SMD candidate with median party strength (32.4%)	**14.0%**	**12.0%**	**34.8%**	**30.8%**
With state govmt. Experience	**34.7%**	**30.7%**	**63.5%**	**59.2%**
Difference	20.6%	18.7%	28.7%	28.3%
Former local deputy	**22.0%**	**19.1%**	**48.1%**	**43.6%**
Difference	8.0%	7.1%	13.3%	12.8%
State govmt + local deputy + CDM	**71.3%**	**67.4%**	**89.0%**	**87.1%**
Difference	57.2%	55.4%	54.2%	56.3%

Predicted probabilities based on Table 5, model 5 (logit).

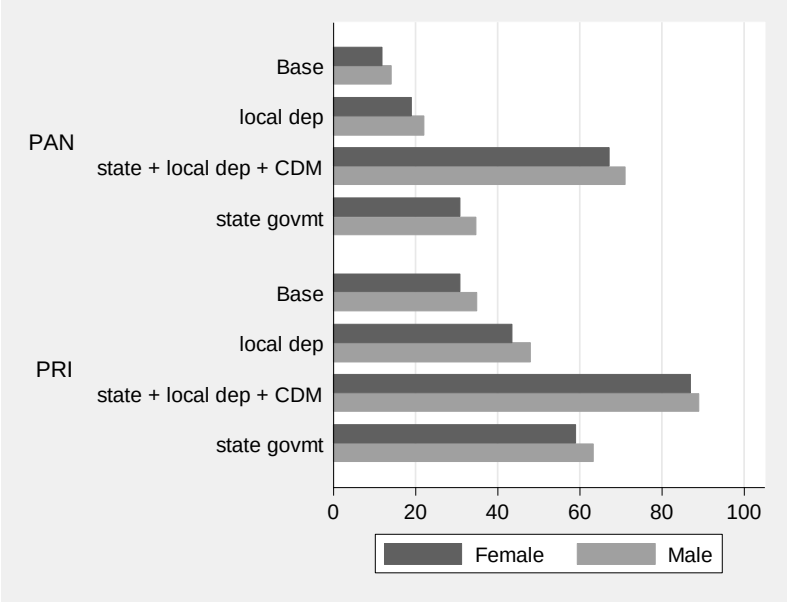

Figure 1. Predicted Probabilities.

Table 8.
Effect of gender on SMD vote shares

Sample	Females	Males	Difference	S.E.
Unmatched	23.23	29.50	**-6.27**	1.45***
Matched[1]	23.23	25.57	**-2.35**	2.06

[1]Average treatment effect among Females using nearest neighbor propensity score matching. Matching equation controls for party strength, party label, and candidate backgrounds.