

Supplementary Information

Additional Figures

Material

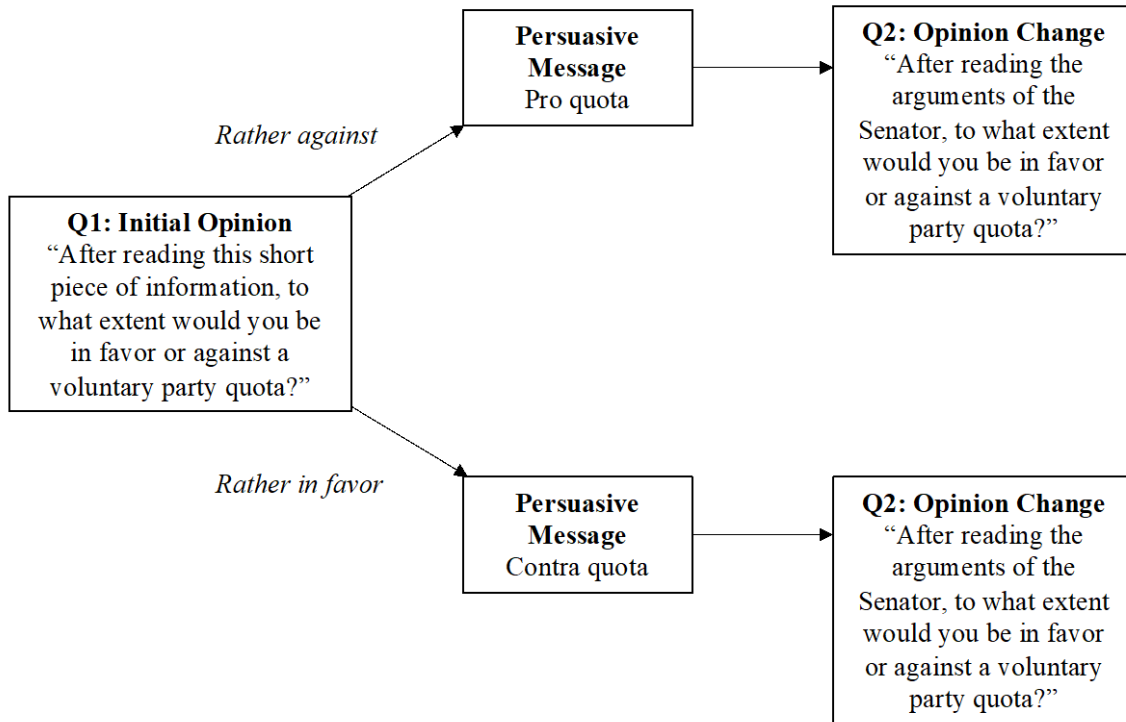
Questionnaire

References

Additional Figures

Figure 1.

Logic of the quasi-experimental script



Material

Table 1.

Stimuli Material quasi-experimental script

Pro statement	Anti-statement
<p>“Up to this day, there is still a drastic underrepresentation of women in state legislatures. The adoption of gender quotas is the most effective instrument for achieving a gender balance in political institutions, something that would not be accomplished without affirmative action. A quota is a fair measure that compensates for the structural discrimination against women that comes from the preferential selection of men. It would enable qualified women to enter the race, which enlarges the pool of competent candidates. This would allow the nomination and election of candidates based on tangible qualities, rather than sex.”</p>	<p>“In the past two years alone, women’s representation in state legislatures has increased drastically. This development demonstrates that there is no need to adopt a gender quota because women will gradually achieve gender balance in political institutions without affirmative action. A quota is an unfair measure that discriminates against men by legitimizing the preferential selection of women. Women would not have to battle as hard to enter the race. Instead, they would be nominated and elected for office only based on their sex rather than their tangible qualities.”</p>

Notes. See Dahlerup & Freidenvall (2010) for an extensive review of pro and counterarguments.

Figure 2.

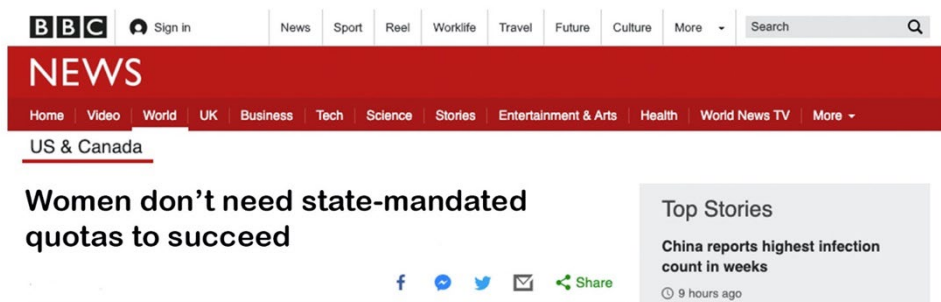
Mandatory ‘women quotas’ undermine Justices Ginsburg’s fight for equality

The image shows a screenshot of a BBC News website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a 'Sign in' button, and various news categories like News, Sport, Reel, Worklife, Travel, Future, Culture, and More. Below this is a red banner with the word 'NEWS' in white. Underneath the banner, there are more navigation options: Home, Video, World, UK, Business, Tech, Science, Stories, Entertainment & Arts, Health, World News TV, and More. The main content area features the article title 'Mandatory 'women quotas' undermine Justices Ginsburg's fight for equality' in a large, bold font. Below the title are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Messenger, Twitter, Email, and a 'Share' button. To the right of the article title, there is a 'Top Stories' section with a sub-headline 'China reports highest infection count in weeks' and a timestamp '9 hours ago'.

Notes. Boden (2020)

Figure 3.

Women don't need state-mandated quotas to succeed



Notes. Chavez (2020)

Figure 4.

Diversity quotas will only lead to token appointments, doing more harm than good.



Notes. Kamalnath (2020)

Figure 5.

Why American politics needs gender quota



Notes. Piatti-Crocker (2019)

Figure 6.

How to close the massive gender gap in Congress



Notes. Inspired by Zhou (2019)

Figure 7.

Political Analyst: Gender quotas is 'how female role models are created'



Notes. Inspired by Grüll (2020)

Questionnaire

Introduction Dear participant,

Welcome! Many thanks for your interest in my study.

In this study, I am interested in knowing your opinion about some general political issues. At the beginning of the survey, I will ask you to provide some demographic information about yourself regarding your age, racial background, area of living and education. Afterwards, you will be asked a few questions related to your profile, including your personal preferences and character. This will help me to interpret the results. Last, I will show you a couple of arguments about a specific political issue in the United States, which you will have to read carefully and evaluate afterwards.

It is important to note that the questionnaire is fully anonymous. I will not be able to identify the participants, so you should be free to answer according to your opinions and beliefs. I will only use the answers gathered for academic research, and under no circumstances your data will be transmitted to other parties or used for commercial purposes. The data made publicly available will be fully anonymised.

Participation is always voluntary and all participants can refuse to participate in the research and can pull out at any time without giving a reason for doing so. Please note that you have up to 7 days after completion of the survey to withdraw your permission for the use of your data in the research. None of these actions will at any time entail adverse consequences for you, and all compensation 'earned' up to that point will be paid. Participation in the research will not entail any kind of risks.

You are welcome to contact the principal investigator in the study (OMITTED) for any questions, and to request a copy of reports and articles written with the data (available July 2020). Please contact the Ethics committee for any complaint or questions about the study: OMITTED.

The questionnaire takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and for that you will be rewarded with \$1 USD. Thank you in advance!

Informed Consent By checking the box below, you agree with the following statements:- I want to participate in this study- I have read the information provided above- I agree that my data are made publicly available but only 1) anonymously and 2) for academic purposes only- I am 18 years old or older

- (1) Yes, I agree with the statements above
- (2) No, I do not agree with the statements above

Age Please indicate your year of birth

- (1) 2002
- (73) 1930

Gender What is your gender?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (3) Other, non-binary
- (4) Prefer not to say

Sexual Orientation Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- (1) Heterosexual (straight)
- (2) Homosexual (gay)
- (3) Bisexual
- (4) Other _____
- (5) Prefer not to say

Education What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

- (1) Less than 1st grade
- (2) 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th grade

- (3) 5th or 6th grade
- (4) 7th or 8th grade
- (5) 9th grade
- (6) 10th grade
- (7) 11th grade
- (8) 12th grade no diploma
- (9) High school graduate- high school diploma or equivalent (for example: GED)
- (10) Some college but no degree
- (11) Associate degree in college - Occupational/vocational program
- (12) Associate degree in college -- Academic program
- (13) Bachelor's degree (For example: BA, AB, BS)
- (14) Master's degree (For example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA)
- (15) Professional School Degree (For example: MD,DDS,DVM,LLB,JD)
- (16) Doctorate degree (For example: PhD, EdD)
- (17) Other (please specify)

Racial Background Below is a list of racial backgrounds. From the list, please choose one or more categories with which you identify.

- (1) Hispanic, Latino
- (2) White, Caucasian
- (3) Black, African-Black
- (4) American Indian or Alaska Native
- (5) American Indian or Alaska Native
- (6) Asian
- (7) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- (8) Other (please specify) _____
- (9) I prefer not to answer

Residence In which state do you currently reside?

(1) Alabama

(54) Other

State_other Please indicate in which state you currently reside in the U.S. _____

State_foreign Where do you currently reside? _____

Political Behavior and Attitudes In the following section, I will ask you some questions about your political behavior and attitudes.

Political Interest Generally speaking, how much interest do you usually have in what is going on in politics?

(1) A great deal

(2) A lot

(3) A moderate amount

(4) A little

(5) None at all

Ideological Position Many people use the terms “left” and “right” when they want to describe different political views. Here we have a scale which runs from left to right. Thinking of your own political views, where would you place these on this scale?

(1) Very Left

(10) Very Right

Partisanship Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as...

(1) A Democrat

(2) A Republican

(3) An Independent

(4) No preference

(5) Other (please specify) _____

Republicans Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not very strong Republican?

- (1) Strong
- (2) Not very strong

Democrats Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not very strong Democrat?

- (1) Strong
- (2) Not very strong

Centrists Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

- (1) Republican Party
- (2) Democratic Party

Factual Questions In the following section, you will be asked some factual questions about U.S. politics. Please answer to the best of your knowledge, while knowing that people rarely answer all questions correctly.

Political Knowledge 1 For how many years is a United States Senator elected – that is, how many years are there in one full term of office for a U.S. Senator?

- (1) 1
- (100) 100

Political Knowledge 2 On which of the following does the U.S. federal government currently spend the least?

- (1) Foreign aid
- (2) Medicare
- (3) National defense
- (4) Social Security

Political Knowledge 3 Do you happen to know which party currently has the most members in the U.S. Senate?

- (1) Republicans
- (2) Democrats

Issue Knowledge 1 Do you know approximately how many % of the 100 seats in the Senate are currently held by women?

- (1) 26%
- (2) 14%
- (3) 32 %
- (4) 41%

Issue Knowledge 2 Do you know approximately how many % of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives are currently held by men?

- (1) 77%
- (2) 64%
- (3) 83%
- (4) 91%

Issue Knowledge 3 And do you know how many of the nine justices at the current Supreme Court are female?

- (0) 0
- (9) 9

Issue Knowledge 4 Is the speaker of the House of Representatives female or male?

(1) Female

(2) Male

Personal Profile Now, I would like to know a little bit more about your profile and your views.

Need for Cognition To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. I would prefer complex to simple problems.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. Thinking is not my idea of fun

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

d. I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

e. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

f. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

IMC For this question, I would like to get a sense of who you are and how you think about yourself. Your personality could predict what kinds of decisions you make. I also want to see if people are reading the questions carefully. To show that you've read this much, please ignore the question about personality items below. Instead, mark the "Other" box and type in "I read the instructions". Which of these personality traits best describe you and your personality? Please click all that apply.

(1) Open to new experiences

(2) Conscientious

(3) Extraverted

(4) Agreeable

(5) Neurotic

(6) High Self-Esteem

(7) Risk-seeking

(8) Perfectionist

(9) Rigid

(10) Impulsive Warm

(11) Other _____

Neosexism First, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. Discrimination against women in the labor force is no longer a problem in United States.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. Women's requests in terms of equality between the sexes are simply exaggerated.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. Due to social pressures, firms frequently have to hire underqualified women.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Issue Importance Now, I would like to know how important or unimportant it is to you that there is an equal number of female and male representatives in political institutions. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. My attitude toward equal representation of men and women is very important to me personally.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. I do not care personally about this issue.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. I am personally very concerned about this issue.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Information Fictitious Bill Now, I would like you to read the following information carefully and answer the question below. “In May 2019, **the Senate passed the “Equal Representation of Genders Act” that demands a voluntary party quota** to improve gender parity in U.S. politics. The gender quota, which would be enacted by the parties themselves, would ask parties to **put forth female candidates in at least 30 percent of all contested congressional races**, and institute mechanisms to achieve these results. Although non-compliance would not be sanctioned, Congress would incentivize political parties to adopt the

quota and **provide federal campaign funds for those parties that enact the voluntary gender quota.**”

Initial Opinion After reading this short piece of information, to what extent would you be in favor or against a voluntary party quota?

- (0) Completely against
- (10) Completely in favor

Centrists You clicked '5' in the previous question. Based on your answer, I assume that you are neither in favor nor against a voluntary gender quota. If you had to choose, would you rather be in favor or against a voluntary party quota to improve gender parity in U.S. politics?

- (1) Rather against
- (2) Rather in favor
- (3) Neither

Selective Exposure Please read the following BBC news headlines. Please select the articles that you would be most interested in reading. You can choose a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 articles.

Persuasive Message 1: Pro quota, one-sided Now, I would like you to read a statement by a Senator and co-sponsor of the bill. Please read the statement carefully. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds.

“Up to this day, there is still a drastic underrepresentation of women in state legislatures. The adoption of gender quotas is the most effective instrument for achieving a gender balance in political institutions, something that would not be accomplished without affirmative action. A quota is a fair measure that compensates for the structural discrimination against women that comes from the preferential selection of men. It would enable qualified women to enter the race, which enlarges the pool of competent candidates This would allow the nomination and election of candidates based on tangible qualities, rather than sex.”

Persuasive Message 1: Contra quota, one-sided

Now, I would like you to read a statement by a Senator and co-sponsor of the bill.

Please read the statement carefully. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds.

“In the past two years alone, **women’s representation in state legislatures has increased drastically**. This development demonstrates that there is no need to adopt a gender quota because **women will gradually achieve gender balance** in political institutions without affirmative action. A quota is an **unfair measure that discriminates against men** by legitimizing the preferential selection of women. **Women would not have to battle as hard to enter the race**. Instead, they would be nominated and **elected for office only based on their sex rather than their tangible qualities.**”

Manipulation Check 1 To what extent did the arguments of the Senator align with your initial opinion on the voluntary gender quota that you had at the beginning of this survey?

- (1) A great deal
- (2) A lot
- (3) A moderate amount
- (4) A little
- (5) None at all

Elaboration Please answer the questions below.

a. How personally involved did you feel with the statement of the Senator?

- (1) Not at all
- (9) Very much

b. How deeply did you think about the statement of the Senator?

- (1) Not at all
- (9) Very much

Counterarguing Now, I would like to know what you felt and thought when reading the statement of the Senator. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? While reading ...

a. tried to find flaws in the presented arguments of the Senator.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. actively counter-argued the arguments of the Senator.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Negative Affect While reading the Senator's arguments, I felt ...

a. angry

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. enraged

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. Irritated

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

d. Annoyed

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

e. Anxious

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Attitude Bolstering / Social Validation / Self-assertion To what extent do you agree or disagree? While reading the Senator's statement ...

a. I thought that no argument would change my opinion on the subject

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. I made a mental list of the reasons in support of my perspective

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. thought about why my views are right for me

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

d. thought about people that share the same opinion which made me more confident in my opinion.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

e. refused to change my mind because I am confident in my opinion

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Source Derogation Now, I would like to know what you think about the Senator. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. The Senator is trustworthy.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. The Senator is credible.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. The Senator's level of expertise on the topic is high.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Derogation of Persuasive Tactic Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

a. The way the Senator tried to persuade people seems acceptable to me.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

b. The Senator tried to manipulate the audience in ways I do not like.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

c. I was annoyed by the Senator because he or she seemed to be trying to inappropriately manage or control the readers.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

d. I didn't mind the statement of the Senator; It tried to be persuasive without being excessively manipulative.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

e. The statement of the Senator was fair in what was said and shown.

(1) Strongly agree

(7) Strongly disagree

Opinion Change 1 After reading the arguments of the Senator, to what extent would you be in favor or against a voluntary party quota?

(0) Completely against

(10) Completely in favor

Treatment 1: Pro quota, one-sided In the following, I would like you to read a second statement of another senator that supports the bill. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds. “I support the idea of increasing the number of females in state legislatures, and believe a quota is the right tool to achieve this. A quota allows the **election of competent women** who will **break negative stereotypes** about female politicians and serve as **role models who inspire female citizens to get more politically involved**. They will function as effective politicians who can **contribute to more gender sensitive legislation** and policy outcomes and bring women's issues onto the formal political agenda. As such, quotas strengthen the process of democratization and **legitimize the political institutions and parties.**”

Treatment 2: Pro quota, two-sided In the following, I would like you to read a second statement of another senator that supports the bill. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds. “I support the idea of increasing the number of females in state legislatures, and believe a quota is the right tool to achieve this. Opponents argue that **women will be elected based on a rule** instead of their qualifications and will be regarded as 'tokens' which **reinforces negative stereotypes** about female politicians and **discourages women's political participation**. The opposite is the case: A quota allows the **election of competent women** who serve as **role models and inspire female citizens to get more politically involved**. A common fear is that **the stigmatization of 'quota women' render them ineffective**. This is unjustified. Once elected, these women can **contribute to more gender sensitive legislation** and policy outcomes and bring women's issues onto the formal political agenda. Instead of **violating the liberal principle of merit**, quotas strengthen the process of democratization and **legitimize the political institutions and parties.**”

Manipulation Check 2 Which of the following descriptions applies best to the statement you just read? The statement of the second Senator ...

- (1) contained only arguments in favor of the quota
- (2) contained only arguments against the quota
- (3) contained both, arguments in favor of and against the quota

Opinion Change 2 After reading the arguments of a second senator, to what extent would you be in favor or against a voluntary party quota?

- (0) Completely against
- (10) Completely in favor

Treatment 1: Anti quota, one-sided In the following, I would like you to read a second statement of another senator that opposes the bill. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds. “Although I support the idea of increasing the number of females in state legislatures, I don't believe that a quota is the right tool to achieve this. Because **women will be elected based on a rule** instead of their qualifications, they will be regarded as 'tokens' which **reinforces negative stereotypes** about female politicians and **discourages women's political participation. This stigmatization will also prevent them to function as effective politicians. Quotas violate the liberal principle of merit** and hurt democracy.”

Treatment 2: Anti quota, two-sided In the following, I would like you to read a second statement of another senator that opposes the bill. You will be able to move forward after 20 seconds. “Although I support the idea of increasing the number of females in state legislatures, I don't believe that a quota is the right tool to achieve this. Advocates believe that these women will serve as **role models and inspire female citizens to get more politically involved**. The opposite is the case: Because women will be **elected based on a rule instead of their qualifications**, they will be regarded as 'tokens' which **reinforces negative stereotypes** about female politicians and **discourages women's political participation**. The sponsors of the bill hope that these women will **contribute to more gender sensitive**

legislation and policy outcomes and bring women's issues onto the formal political agenda.

Their stigmatization will, however, prevent them to function as effective politicians.

Instead of strengthening the process of democratization and **legitimizing the political institutions and parties, quotas violate the liberal principle of merit** and hurt democracy”

Debrief You have successfully completed the survey! Thank you for your participation. A final word.

The information about the bill on the voluntary party quota in this survey was not real. There is currently no such bill under debate and all the arguments in support or against the bill were completely made up for the needs of my study. You were purposely exposed to arguments that did not align with your initial opinion on a voluntary party quota. The goal was to see with what strategies you would resist the counter-attitudinal arguments and examine to what extent the message is able to convince you of the opposite opinion. The headlines of the newspaper articles you were exposed to were also fictitious. This task served to explore if you mostly seek information that resonates with your personal opinion or chose news articles that go against your viewpoints.

Although the arguments were not expressed in this particular manner and setting, they are representative of the debate about gender quotas in other countries. In this sense they were, at the very least, realistic.

Once again, I want to mention very explicitly that all materials you were exposed to were completely made up. It is also important to note that I am neither in favour nor against the political positions expressed in this survey - that is, I do not have any particular position in favour or against a voluntary party quota in the USA. This study is completely independent and unaffiliated with any political party, in the USA or elsewhere.

If you are interested in learning more about gender quotas, you can consult the following website. The information helped me to create the material for this study:

<https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/ge/onePage>

Comments Is there anything you would like to communicate to me? You are welcome to contact the principal investigator of this research at OMITTED, including to request a copy of reports and articles written with the data (available July 2020).

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