Democratization and gender politics in Africa

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Although many international organizations presume that democratization creates opportunities for women's political participation (Tusalem 2012, 173), the relationship between democracy and gender equality in politics is not straightforward. Over the past three decades, women's presence in African governments has expanded dramatically; however, that growth has not been limited to countries with electoral competition or on-going political liberalization. As Figures 21.1 and 21.2 demonstrate, women's legislative and cabinet representation has also grown considerably in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes, and some of Africa's highest percentages of women in parliament are found in relatively authoritarian states. In this chapter, we show how political openings facilitated women's mobilization in Africa, as well as why electoral competition, or minimalist democracy, does not guarantee women's representation and why Africa's contemporary authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes have often produced similar or higher proportions of women in politics.

<FIGURE 21.1 HERE>

<FIGURE 21.2 HERE>

To assess the relationship between democracy and women's political representation in Africa, the chapter is organized into four sections. The first breaks democratization into two parts: political liberalization and multiparty elections. We argue that political liberalization facilitated the emergence of autonomous women's associations that demanded greater representation for

women in elected and appointed office, setting the stage for the improvements seen in Figures 21.1 and 21.2.

The second section focuses on the role of regime type in explaining cross-national variation in women's descriptive representation in Africa. Democracy is associated with higher cabinet shares for women, and women's legislative representation tends to improve over multiple rounds of competitive elections (Arriola and Johnson 2014; Yoon 2001). However, we emphasize that quotas—not democracy—largely explain higher legislative shares for women and that electoral competition has not been a major factor in quota adoption.

The chapter's third section examines why, in the absence of quotas, multiparty competition has not produced significant improvements in women's election to public office. We argue that bias among party leaders often limits women's candidatures. In addition, women generally have lower levels of education and financial independence, making it difficult for them to compete in expensive campaigns. Finally, at the cultural level, surveys suggest many voters still perceive men to make better leaders than women, and women candidates report frequent attacks on their morality and sexuality when campaigning (Adams 2016; Afrobarometer 2016; Anderson, Diabah, and hMensa 2011). Family obligations further constrain women candidates' options, and violence against women candidates is a serious concern in some countries (Krook 2017).

Many advocates of gender equality want more African countries to adopt or enforce quotas, yet we argue in the fourth section that quotas have important limitations. While quotas bring more women into politics, scholars debate the impact on women's substantive representation. We

demonstrate that having more women in the legislature brings new issues of concern to women into politics but does not guarantee that women have the influence and autonomy needed to shift politics in a more gender-inclusive direction. Finally, we conclude with a brief discussion of unanswered questions in the field.

Political liberalization and women's role in politics

To understand the relationship between democracy and women's political representation in sub-Saharan Africa, it is helpful to distinguish political liberalization from multiparty elections. Political liberalization refers to the restoration of "previously repudiated freedoms of movement, speech, and association to individuals and groups in society" (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 159). When governments engage in political liberalization, they loosen ruling parties' monopoly over political organizing and allow for freer civil society organizing, although they do not necessarily hold elections. Many scholars argue that the fight for political liberalization and its partial realization in the early 1990s, though short-lived in many countries, had a lasting impact on women's political possibilities in Africa (Geisler 2004, 31; Nzomo 1993; Tripp et al. 2008).

The majority of women did not fare well in politics under the military and dominant-party regimes that predominated in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1985, women made up, on average, only 4 percent of cabinet ministers and 7.8 percent of legislators (Arriola and Johnson 2014). Although women were politically active, most governments used material benefits and coercion to channel women's activism into state-sanctioned associations (Beck 2003; Fallon

2010). As with workers and students, politicians rewarded women who towed the party line, while sideling those who made radical demands (Geisler 2004, 24; Tripp 2001).

State-sanctioned women's associations were not generally intended as pathways to power. Geisler (2004, 24) argues that, "[f]rom Ghana to Zimbabwe, which gained independence in 1957 and 1980 respectively, women were not represented in legislatures, party hierarchies and government positions, but were instead dressed in party colours singing and dancing praise songs for the male leadership, raising money and support."[1] With few opportunities to lead in the national political sphere, many African women focused on change in other public spheres, like markets, churches, and professional communities (Fallon 2003; Tripp 1994).

However, as popular upheaval spread across sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s, African women pushed beyond state-sanctioned organizing (Fallon 2003). Bratton and van de Walle (1997, 159) contend that at least twenty-eight African countries experienced mass political protests between 1988 and 1992 as citizens voiced frustrations with economic realities and years of authoritarian rule. Women played a major role in these protests. For example, women marched and protested in Mali, Nigeria, and Kenya to challenge government repression and promote democracy (Tripp et al. 2008, 77-9). Although not all women's associations demanded greater political freedoms (Fallon 2010), frustration with existing governments led many women to overcome fears of repression and push for change and greater female representation (Mikell 1995).

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[1] For a thorough discussion of women's limited political space across African cases during one-party and authoritarian rule, see Tripp et al. (2008).

According to Bratton and van de Walle (1997, 185), Africa's "mass political demonstrations…
[produced] at least a token political opening" in all countries where they occurred. Competitive
elections and lasting liberalization did not necessarily result, but even partial liberalization
created "political spaces" for women to organize independent of the state (Mikell 1995).
Women's organizations that had previously focused on economic and developmental issues
began to engage more directly in political activism (Fallon 2003). "New women's organizations
flourished" in both countries that moved toward multiparty democracy and those that did not
(Tripp et al. 2008, 76).

Other developments reinforced this growth in autonomous women's organizations. International
donor agencies began to fund women's non-governmental organizations with a political focus,
and international and regional bodies magnified women's efforts. In particular, the United
Nation's 1985 Nairobi Conference allowed African women activists to build transnational
networks and learn from other women's movements (Tripp et al. 2008). Increasingly, these
activists used regional bodies to advocate for women's rights, for example, pushing the African
Union and the Southern African Development Community to adopt gender parity protocols
(Adams 2006).

The end of violent conflict and white rule in states like South Africa, Angola, Rwanda, Sierra
Leone, and Liberia further contributed to women's mobilization. In her 2015 study of gender
after conflict, Tripp (2015) argues that women entered new economic and social roles during
wars, and from these positions became key players in grassroots peace movements. As countries

transitioned to peace, women used their credibility and organizational capacity to demand equality, particularly in new constitutions, and run for office. In some countries, peace transitions entailed political liberalization and elections, as in Liberia, South Africa, and Namibia. However, even in more authoritarian post-conflict states, like Rwanda and Uganda, women came to occupy a significant role in politics. Thanks to quotas, these two countries achieved some of the highest legislative shares for women on the continent (Burnet 2011). Overtime, their progress, as well as that of South Africa and Namibia in southern Africa, appears to have had a diffusion effect, with neighboring states moving in the direction of quotas and increased women's representation (Bauer 2012, 373).

In sum, political liberalization in the late 1980s and early 1990s helped create new political possibilities for women in sub-Saharan Africa. International movements and organizations, as well as post-conflict transitions, then reinforced women's political mobilization. Yet, as the examples of Rwanda and Uganda illustrate, improving women's descriptive representation in politics did not require competitive elections or on-going political liberalization. A moment of political opening was important for women's representation, but lasting democratization was not required.

Regime type and women's descriptive representation

As seen in Figures 21.1 and 21.2, the relationship between democracy and women's political representation in Africa is mixed. Some studies indicate that higher Freedom House and Polity

scores are actually correlated with lower levels of women's legislative representation (Stockemer 2011; Yoon 2001). However, women's representation has also been shown to increase over multiple rounds of competitive elections (Lindberg 2004), and higher Polity scores are correlated with higher shares for women in presidential cabinets (Arriola and Johnson 2014). At the local level, no cross-national data exists to test the relationship.

Quotas partly explain the weak relationship between regime type and women's legislative representation. As we discuss later, scholars debate quotas' impact on women's substantive representation, but they generally agree quotas explain most of the increase in women's legislative representation in Africa (Ballington 2004; Bauer 2012; Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008). As Table 21.1 illustrates, no African country has achieved more than 20 percent representation for women without a quota. Quotas have taken different forms, including reserved seats, laws or constitutional provisions mandating that parties put forward women candidates, and voluntary party commitments. Regardless of form, quotas have expanded women's parliamentary presence under authoritarian, democratic, and mixed regimes. Under democratic regimes, quotas produce on average four percent more legislative seats for women than under authoritarian regimes (Tripp 2005, 54). Even with this democracy bonus, however, the prevalence of quotas in Africa's authoritarian and semi-authoritarian states means that women's legislative representation has tended, on average, to be higher in those states than in the region's democracies.

<TABLE 21.1 HERE>

African governments have adopted quotas for a variety of reasons, many unrelated to electoral competition. Strong, cohesive women's movements have been imperative but require only modest political openings, not electoral competition, to emerge (Ballington 2004; Bauer 2012; Burnet 2011; Hughes, Krook, and Paxton 2015; Kang and Tripp 2018). International and regional commitments have also been important (Tripp and Kang 2008),[2] with some authoritarian governments, like Rwanda, using quotas – at least in part – to gain international legitimacy (Burnet 2011). At the domestic level, quotas have also helped incumbents to bring women into party networks and expand government patronage (Bauer and Burnet 2013; Muriaas and Wang 2012; Tripp 2012), making them valuable to authoritarian and democratic governments alike.

Although democracy cannot explain quota adoption or women's legislative representation, regime-related variables still matter for women's access to political office. Multi-member, proportional representation (PR) systems in Africa tend to produce higher proportions of women parliamentarians (4.31 percent more) than single-member, majoritarian systems (Lindberg 2004; Stockemer 2011; Yoon 2004). Because parties put forward multi-candidates lists in PR systems, they can nominate diverse candidates that appeal to a range of voters. By contrast, in single-member majoritarian systems, a woman candidate may be seen as too risky (Rule and Zimmerman 1994), resulting in fewer women running for office. African countries with higher levels of corruption also have fewer women in the legislature (Stockemer 2011).

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[2] Hughes, Krook, and Paxton (2006) find that domestic organizations' ties with international activist (rather than moderate) organizations can make governments resistant to quotas.

Beyond the legislature

Little has been written on cross-national variation in women's executive and local representation in Africa. Only one woman, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, has been elected president. Three were appointed during political transitions in Guinea Bissau, Central African Republic, and Liberia. Joyce Banda assumed the Malawian presidency upon the incumbent's death in 2012 but lost her bid for re-election in 2014. This small sample reaffirms the importance of post-conflict contexts for women's access to power and raises questions about democratic competition. Elections favored Sirleaf in 2005 when women's associations, which had been active in the peace movement, worked tirelessly to mobilize women voters (Adams 2008). In 2011, an opposition boycott and charges of fraud marred her reelection, although international observers declared it free and fair (Schmall 2011). Banda became embroiled in a major corruption scandal and had little voter support going into the 2014 election (Allison 2014). After attempting to annul the election because of irregularities, she stepped down, having earned only 20 percent of the vote (Dionne and Dulani 2014). Her low vote share is typical of African women presidential candidates. Although they are becoming more common, twenty-two of the twenty-seven women who ran for president before 2007 received less than 1 percent of the vote (Adams 2008, 477).

Arriola and Johnson (2014) find that democracy is positively correlated with women's cabinet representation. They hypothesize that presidents use women's appointments to garner popular support in national elections; however, Adams, Scherpereel, and Jacob (2016) disagree. Focusing on Ghana, they argue that women's movements and presidential flexibility are more important in

explaining why presidents appoint women to the cabinet in countries where women's legislative share is low. Where women's movements have not managed to secure quotas and presidents have little influence over legislative elections, they argue presidents respond to women's mobilization and international expectations by appointing women to the cabinet.

At the local level, democracy and decentralization are often assumed to increase women's political access, yet women's success in Africa's local elections is understudied. Women have not consistently fared better at the local level than the national level (Patterson 2002). As with national legislatures, women have generally achieved the highest representation on local councils in countries with local quota systems, like Uganda and Namibia (Lindeke and Wanzala 1994; Tripp 2012), and those with PR systems at the local level (Goetz 1998; Patterson 2002). Nonetheless, even in PR systems, women face challenges securing party nominations (Patterson 2002). When women do well in local elections, Lindeke and Wanzala (1994) argue it may reflect the seeming unimportance of local office. Over time, as local authorities gain greater powers, securing a party nomination can become more challenging (Abdullah 2014).

All told, existing research indicates that democratic regimes do not consistently produce higher levels of women's descriptive representation in Africa. Quotas in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes partially explain democracies' underperformance; however, as we explain below, women also face persistent barriers that reduce elections' ability to bring more women into public office.

Competitive elections and persistent barriers to gender parity

The limits on women's electoral success in Africa can be divided into three main categories related to political party bias and candidate selection, socioeconomic constraints, and cultural norms that discriminate against women in politics and tolerate violence against women in some cases.

Political party bias and candidate selection

Political parties function as gatekeepers to elected office in most African countries,[3] determining whether women are selected as candidates and receive support for their campaigns. Yet, candidate selection remains "the secret garden of politics" (Gallagher and Marsh 1988). Only twenty-seven parties in fifteen African countries hold official primaries (Ichino and Nathan 2012).[4] In most parties, the criteria for nomination are unclear. In theory, more institutionalized parties provide women with clearer nomination processes (Caul 1999; Yoon 2001), but the relationship between party institutionalization and women's nomination in Africa has not been

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[3] See the ACE Network's database (http://aceproject.org/epic-en/CDMap?question=PC008&questions=all) for information on the legality of independent candidacies across Africa. Data on independent candidacies are not readily available for most countries; however, Clayton et al.'s (2017) on-going research on Malawi suggests that women are less likely to run as independents than men.

[4] Ichino and Nathan find that primaries can favor women's nominations in large, populous districts because larger districts make patronage politics less feasible and increase voter focus on policy, an arena in which women face fewer disadvantages.

tested, nor has the relationship between PR electoral systems and women's nomination. Although countries with PR systems tend to elect more women, our own fieldwork in Benin in 2017, which has a competitive PR system, reveals that women still complain of party resistance (Johnson Under Review).

Party resistance takes several forms. Women in Sierra Leone report facing threats of violence when attempting to secure party nominations during the 2008 local elections (Abdullah 2014). In Nigeria and Benin, women complain party leaders tell them to step down when party financiers' prefer male candidates (Johnson Under Review; Omenma, Onu, and Omenma 2016). An April 2017 article from Kenya's *Standard* newspaper notes that women struggle to "overturn the tyranny of men in … party primaries," despite a constitutional provision that no gender shall make up more than two-thirds of the Kenyan parliament (Ayaga 2017).

Two factors are particularly important for understanding party leaders' resistance. First, politics in most African countries is socially and economically valuable. Elected positions offer formal perquisites like cars, salaries, and housing stipends, as well as informal benefits like the ability to distribute government contracts. In some countries, like Nigeria and Benin, elected officials play a major role in businesses' success (and vice versa) (Koter 2017; Omenma, Onu, and Omenma 2016). Unless women occupy newly created positions, like reserved seats, their presence is a direct threat to the men who currently occupy and aspire to valuable political posts. As such, women's access can take on a zero-sum quality. Abdullah's (2014) account of women candidates being pushed aside in Sierra Leone's 2008 local elections, which were seen as a "do-or-die"

affair, illustrates well the inverse relationship between party's openness to women candidates and the value of elected office.

A second factor that works against women is politicians' tendency to view outgroups as less qualified and to prefer politicians like themselves (Niven 1998). When parties engage in corrupt practices, the desire to avoid outsiders, especially women who are sometimes perceived as less open to illicit practices, may be even stronger (Stockemer 2011). In addition, with few women in politics, men are likely to rely on stereotypes and generalizations when assessing women's appropriateness as candidates. Instead of judging a woman on her own merit, party leaders are likely to judge her according to the perceived generic attributes of women as a group and conclude that she is unprepared for political competition (Niven 1998), which is expensive, time consuming, and potentially "dirty," as we explain below.

Socioeconomic status

Though problematic, party leaders' assumptions about women's preparation are not entirely unwarranted. Women's socioeconomic status in many African countries limits the pool of women with the educational, financial, and political resources to compete for public office.

Although formal education levels in Africa do not statistically correlate with cross-national differences in women's representation (Yoon 2004), education is critical for women's political progress. Many African countries have formal education or literacy requirements for elected

office, and where formal requirements are absent, literacy in a European language is often a de facto requirement. However, access to schooling in Africa is highly gendered. A staggering nine million girls have never had any form of schooling, compared to six million boys (UNESCO 2018). In addition, the literacy gap between men and women is often sizable. Consequently, when governments adopt educational requirements for political office, it often undermines women's access. When Zambia's 2015 constitution added a clause requiring that candidates for parliament hold a Grade 12 certificate, it prevented many female parliamentarians from seeking reelection (Moyo 2017).

Lack of financial capital and economic independence further limits women's electoral prospects. Elections are expensive in many African democracies as voters expect candidates to provide gifts, food, and cash (Koter 2017). In Kenya, "the Coalition for Accountable Political Finance estimates that the parliamentary candidates spent 40 percent of their budget on vote-buying" (Gutierrez-Romero 2012, 6). Once elected, politicians are further expected to help pay for school fees, medical bills, and other expenses. Parties rarely cover these costs (Jensen and Justesen 2014; Kramon 2016). Over time, campaign costs tend to increase, as in Ghana, where parliamentary candidates have tripled their campaign spending over multiple elections (Lindberg 2003, 131-132).

Unfortunately, women often lack the money needed to finance such campaigns. According to a 2016 study of women's employment opportunities in five African countries (Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Zambia, Ghana, and Mauritius), it is more difficult for women than men to enter the formal job market and leave agricultural work (Dieterich, Huang, and Thomas 2016). While

education can open formal sector doors, marriage works against educational benefits, with mainly single women securing formal jobs and married women turning to household or informal enterprises. Unfortunately, in doing so, they are less likely to improve their economic situation than men. Looking at household level data, Dieterich, Huang, and Thomas (2016, 5) find that "women gain less than men moving from the agricultural sector to the household enterprise sector," because they lack "the land, capital, and other inputs" to build successful businesses.

Adding to financial disadvantages, women's historic underrepresentation in politics and state employment means they are generally less tied into patronage networks that might allow them to mobilize resources. Many women who led state-sanctioned associations in the past relied on the goodwill of male patrons for resources. As women begin to compete directly with men for elected positions, male patrons may be less willing to provide women with needed resources. Without their own direct access to state resources, women are at a disadvantage in patronage-oriented electoral competition (Beck 2003; Tripp 2001).

Sociocultural norms

Sociocultural norms constitute a third barrier to women's electoral success. Although it is difficult to assess precisely how much patriarchal norms undermine women's political representation, there is good reason to believe women candidates when they complain of gender bias, as they did in our recent interviews in Benin and Zambia. In Afrobarometer (2016) surveys, 49.7 percent of respondents in nine African countries agreed that it "is better for a family if a

woman has the main responsibility for taking care of the home and children rather than a man."
An additional 37.9 percent agreed that "[w]hen jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a
job than women." Attitudes like these potentially undermine women's economic position and
political ambition. They may also reduce voter and party support for women candidates (Geisler
1995).

Cultural norms further impact women's electoral options through their impact on family
expectations. Women aspirants in Benin report, for example, not running because husbands or
brothers wanted their spot on the ballot (Johnson Under Review). Personal attacks on women's
morality, fidelity, and commitment to children and family are common across many African
states. In southern Africa, for example, Geisler (2004, 177) writes that opponents label women
who fail to marry and have children "immoral." Although divorced or childless women can still
be elected, Geisler argues these critiques make it more difficult for them to win. In African
cultures where norms are less restrictive, like the matrilineal kinship systems "found in the
south-central region surrounding the Zambezi river," women seem to be more likely to
participate in politics (Gottlieb and Robinson 2018, 7).

One disturbing way in which culture inhibits women's political progress is through tolerance of
violence against women. The World Health Organization (WHO et al. 2013) reports that over
one-third of African women have experienced intimate partner violence, many as early as age
fifteen. This parallels Afrobarometer (2016) data in which 28.9 percent of respondents believed
it was "sometimes or always justified for a man to beat his wife." Tolerance for violence against
women can make it difficult for women to run for and exercise political office; women

candidates around the world report that politics is risky. A 2016 global survey "found that more than 44 percent of elected female representatives have been threatened in office, including threats of death, rape, beatings, or abductions. Roughly two-thirds of those surveyed reported that 'several times or often' they had been subjected to humiliating remarks of a sexual or sexist nature" (Guest Blogger for Women and Foreign Policy Program 2017). In sub-Saharan Africa, women candidates report frequent harassment, particularly in countries where political violence is common. In Nigeria, "during a disagreement in the Senate chamber, male senator Dino Melaye threatened female senator Remi Tinubu, saying, 'I will beat you up . . . impregnate you and nothing will happen'" (Nayaradzo Mashayamombe cited in Krook 2017, 76). Such threats can undermine women's desire to run for office and make them less effective once in office by limiting their mobility and voice.

To summarize, women face important barriers to succeeding in multiparty elections. Women may fare better in countries with electoral systems that allocate seats based on proportional representation or where parties have transparent processes for selecting candidates. However, pre-existing barriers often keep women from entering politics, securing nominations, and campaigning effectively. Educational and literacy requirements disadvantage women without schooling. Expensive elections and expectations about patronage hurt women of limited financial means. And women's public life may be constrained by family obligations, gender norms, and violence.

Quotas and substantive representation for women in African democracies

Where women have overcome barriers to election, quotas have generally been key. They provide a "fast track" for women's descriptive representation when persistent party, socioeconomic, and cultural biases would normally limit women's presence in politics (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005). Yet, even as quotas ensure women's presence, their impact on women's political power is subject to debate, as they do not override existing gender inequalities. It is important to ask, therefore, whether quotas expand women's policy influence and facilitate the substantive representation of women's interests before embracing quotas as the primary tool for ensuring gender parity in African democracies.

Numerous case examples suggest that increasing the proportion of women in parliament improves the representation of women's interests. In Tanzania, as the proportion of women in government increased so did the amount of legislation dealing with issues like women's access to university education, maternity leave, and gender-based violence (Meena 2004). In Rwanda, where women make up a majority of parliament, they pushed through laws that enabled women to inherit land and increased punishments for gender-based violence (Burnet 2011; Powley and Pearson 2007). In Uganda, the parliament has been somewhat slower to take up issues of concern to women (Hanssen 2005); nonetheless, women parliamentarians advocated for several bills that passed in the late 2000s, related to domestic violence, female genital mutilation, marriage, and divorce (Tripp 2010, 106-7). Beyond legislation, research indicates that quota-induced equality can change parliamentary culture. As women politicians become more confident and assertive, they shift institutional norms so that gender issues become a more common part of parliamentary debate and professional relationships between men and women parliamentarians improve

(Devlin and Elgie 2008). Although this research focuses on the impact of women in parliament rather than quotas, the highest proportions of women are found in countries with quotas, suggesting that quotas contribute, at least indirectly, to greater substantive representation for women.

Quotas also have important shortcomings. One common critique is their focus on legislative and local bodies. Few countries have quotas for women in the executive branch (Niger and Kenya are exceptions), yet that is where decision-making power in Africa is concentrated (Mustapha and Whitfield 2009). With power situated in the executive, presidents and ministers can easily negate women's work at the local and legislative level. For example, in Uganda, women parliamentarians inserted a clause in the Land Reform Act of 1998 granting women ownership rights in spousal homestead property, but before the act was published and became law, the president removed the clause (Goetz and Hassim 2003, 21).

Beyond the general weakness of many African legislatures, women's political power may also be undermined by quotas themselves. Often "the very word 'quota' implies the negation of merit, individual worth, and fair competition," leading other politicians and the public to question the qualifications of women elected through quota systems (Mansbridge 2005, 629). When quotas rapidly expand the number of women in parliament, newly elected women may lack training and law-making skills (Hassim 2006; Yoon 2011). In systems with reserved seats, women may be further segregated into a political category of their own, becoming less likely to compete or win in general elections (Chowdhury 2002). For example, in Uganda and Kenya, which both reserve seats for women, political parties, women candidates, and voters perceive that women fare best

in reserved seats and should not generally compete in "mainstream" elections (Edgell 2018). In countries with party quotas, observers contend that parties put forward women candidates loyal to the party and sideline women who take feminist positions at odds with the party line (Hassim 2009a; Vincent 2004). Hassim (2009b) argues quotas fundamentally short-circuit the process of creating strong constituencies. Rather than coming to office through grassroots work, women enter office thanks to their connections and loyalty to party leaders. Moreover, these women may be distanced from the concerns of other women by class, education, and status. As such, Hassim questions whether they can be expected to challenge undemocratic practices or bring diverse interests into politics.

Conclusion

Women's political representation has undeniably improved over time across Africa, although we have demonstrated that moments of political opening and quota adoption have contributed more to these improvements than electoral competition. Facing barriers in political parties and society at large, women struggle to win elections in the absence of quotas. Nonetheless, greater gender parity in politics remains a worthwhile goal and is not at odds with democracy. We have shown that women parliamentarians bring new priorities to the table, and women's movements can be important advocates for political change. Quotas may offer the most efficient mechanism for bringing women into politics, but they are not a panacea for effective women's representation, as they may favor the rise of women politicians who are primarily loyal to the party and lack the autonomy to advocate for women's interests. To ensure women's influence and autonomy in

politics, it is important that governments, activists, and international actors address the forces limiting women's competitiveness in electoral politics. Without supportive parties, education, financial resources, and protection from violence, women may not be able to take full advantage of the opportunities democracy offers.

This chapter has focused on democracies' impact on women's descriptive representation, offering one perspective on gender and politics in sub-Saharan Africa; however, it has left several questions unanswered. The chapter has not, for example, considered women's role in the bureaucracy and courts, although both play a key role in establishing and defending women's rights. Although women judges are generally understudied (exceptions include Bauer and Dawuni 2016; Kang 2015), they may fill important representative functions through their adjudication of family and property laws. Similarly, little has been written about women bureaucrats despite their potential influence over the formulation and implementation of public policies that shape women's lives. Indeed, more work is needed on the relationship between women's presence in the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of African states and the substantive representation of women's interests in policy-making. As the field of gender and politics in Africa matures, this relationship is becoming more central to contemporary research, which promises significant new insights in the coming years.
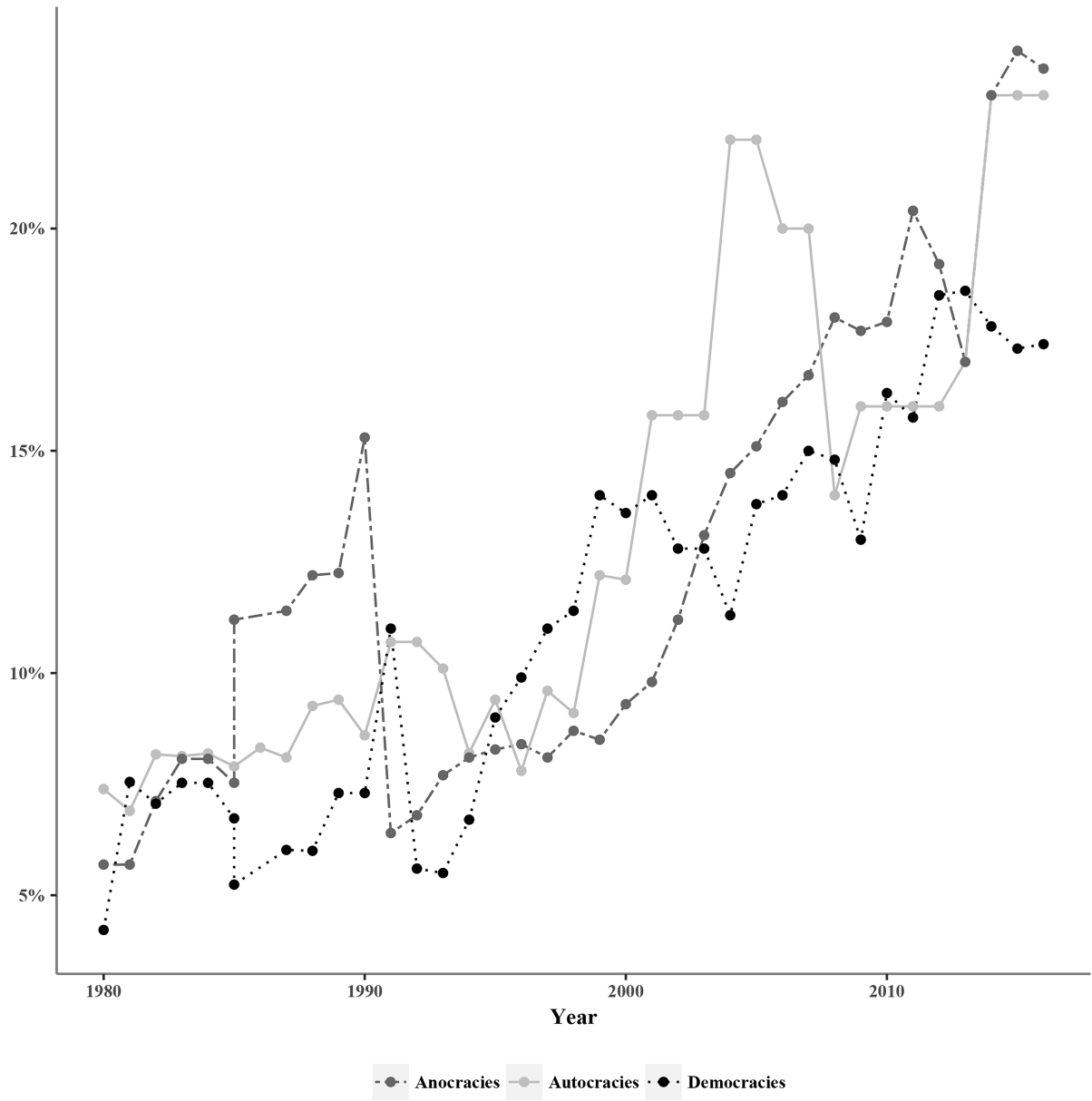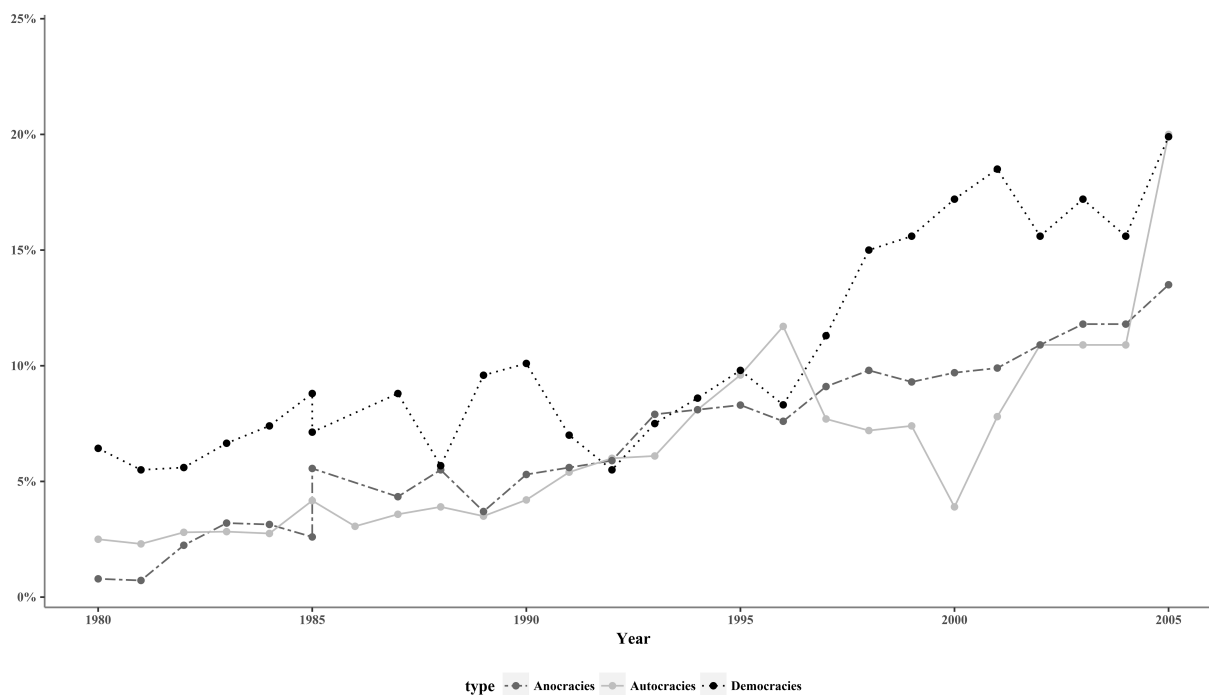
Figure 21.1

Figure 21.2

Table 21.1

Country	Quota System	Legislative %	Polity Score	Cabinet %
Rwanda	Legislated Candidate Quotas	53.8	-3	35.5
Senegal	Legislated Candidate Quotas	42.7	7	20
South Africa	Voluntary Party Quotas	42	9	41.7
Namibia	Voluntary Party Quotas	41.3	6	21.7
Mozambique	Voluntary Party Quotas	39.6	5	28.6
Ethiopia	Voluntary Party Quotas	38.8	-3	12.5
Angola	Legislated Candidate Quotas	36.8	-2	22.2
Burundi	Reserved Seats	36.4	-1	34.8
Tanzania	Reserved Seats	36	3	32.3
Uganda	Reserved Seats	35	-1	29.6
Zimbabwe	Reserved Seats	31.5	4	11.5
Cameroon	Voluntary Party Quotas	31.1	-4	14
Sudan	Reserved Seats	30.5	-4	15.2
South Sudan	Reserved Seats	26.5	N/A	22.7
Mauritania	Legislated Candidate Quotas	25.2	-2	26.9
Lesotho	Legislated Candidate Quotas	25	8	21.7
Equatorial Guinea	Voluntary Party Quotas	24	-6	8.7
Eritrea	Reserved Seats	22	-7	16.7
Guinea	Legislated Candidate Quotas	21.9	4	14.7
Kenya	Reserved Seats	19.7	9	30
Togo	Legislated Candidate Quotas	17.6	-2	20.7

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Malawi	Voluntary Party Quotas	16.7	6	11.1
Chad	No Quotas	14.9	-2	13.6
Gabon	No Quotas	14.2	3	12.5
Somalia	Reserved Seats	13.8	5	8
Guinea-Bissau	No Quotas	13.7	6	31.3
Niger	Reserved Seats	13.3	6	12.9
Djibouti	Reserved Seats	12.7	4	5.3
Zambia	No Quotas	12.7	7	20
Sierra Leone	No Quotas	12.4	7	6.9
Liberia	No Quotas	11	6	20
Ghana	No Quotas	10.9	8	23.1
Botswana	Voluntary Party Quotas	9.5	8	12.5
Burkina Faso	Legislated Candidate Quotas	9.4	6	12.5
Gambia	No Quotas	9.4	-5	21.1
Cote d'Ivoire	Voluntary Party Quotas	9.2	4	16.7
Congo (Democratic Republic)	Legislated Candidate Quotas	8.9	4	8.1
Mali	Voluntary Party Quotas	8.8	5	16.1
Congo (Republic)	Legislated Candidate Quotas	7.4	-4	10.5
Benin	No Quotas	7.2	7	14.8
Swaziland	Reserved Seats	6.2	-9	
Nigeria	No Quotas	6.6	7	24.1

Sources: The Quota Project at www.quotaproject.org, The Inter-Parliamentary Union at www.ipu.org, and the Polity IV Annual Timeseries Data from the Center for Systemic Peace at http://www.systemicpeace.org/index.html.

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