It All Happens in Committee: Revisiting Female Marginalization in the Mexican Legislature

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Abstract

With quotas bringing more and more women into legislatures worldwide, the question remains whether they face discrimination once they make it into legislative office. Using data from the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) compare bill sponsorship, bill passage rates, and likelihood of holding a committee chair position among male and female deputies one legislative session before quotas came into force and two sessions after. They find little evidence that female legislators are marginalized as measured by these three metrics. We do not dispute these findings, but suggest that bill sponsorship and bill passage rates are not the most important measures of power in the Mexican legislature. Instead, the real action happens at the committee level, not just in its leadership, but also in ordinary committee membership. We use the Kerevel and Atkeson original dataset with a new modeling strategy that allows us to explore the potential role of gender marginalization in membership on committees. We find that although women are about equally likely as men to serve on more prestigious committees, they are significantly more likely to serve on less prestigious, "female oriented" committees. This suggests that female legislators may be taking on additional legislative work their male counterparts are not, and that gender marginalization continues in Mexico's lower chamber.

Introduction

Kerevel and Atkeson's 2013 article "Explaining the Marginalization of Women in Legislative Institutions published in the *Journal of Politics* explores whether female legislators experience marginalization within the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the Mexican Congress. We do not dispute Kerevel and Atkeson's findings based on their data

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set, but we question their substantive interpretation of the results. Our paper makes a theoretical critique about the use of bill sponsorship, bill passage, and committee chairing as indicators of female legislators' marginalization. We then employ a new modeling strategy using Kerevel and Atkeson's data to show that gender strongly predicts membership or lack of membership on various types of committees in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies during the period of their study. Our conclusion is that gender marginalization may still be operating in the Chamber, though it is not picked up in Kerevel and Atkeson's chosen measures of legislative effectiveness.

This paper proceeds as follows. In Section I we provide an overview of Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) and discuss our main critiques of their findings. We address those critiques through a new modeling approach laid out in Section II, leveraging Kerevel and Atkeson's own dataset to more explicitly model for committee membership. This enables us to understand how gender marginalization might be operating through committees. We present our results in Section III, and discuss the implications of our findings and future research opportunities in Section IV.

I Assessing the Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) Claim of No Gender Marginalization

In 2002, Mexico implemented a gender quota in the legislature. Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) compares one legislative session before the quota came into force (the 58th, from 2000 to 2003) to two sessions after the quota (the 59th, from 2003 to 2006, and the 60th, from 2006 to 2009).[1] Kerevel and Atkeson observe that "female legislators can be marginalized through placement on less prestigious committees, by being prevented from serving in leadership roles, and by an inability to get their legislation passed" (981). They identify two main causal explanations in the existing literature. The first is explicit or implicit gender discrimination as a result of overall societal bias against women, as well as a backlash against the rising numbers of female legislators that quotas generate.

The other explanation is incumbency advantage. Typically, the institutional and behavioral norms in legislatures favor incumbents, making it difficult for newcomers to be successful, at least in their first few sessions in office. Given women's historic underrepresentation in legislatures, they are often relatively new to office, as in the Mexican context following introduction of the quota. Thus, we might expect female legislators to have a more difficult time being successful in government. Since the Mexican constitution at the time

[1] The gender composition of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies has been evolving over time. In the current chamber, 37.6% of legislators are women. This is a significant change since 2006, the last year analyzed by Kerevel and Atkeson, where 23% of legislators were women. In the 58th legislature (2000 to 2003), the term before the quota was introduced, women comprised only 16% of legislators.

Kerevel and Atkeson were writing[2] did not allow consecutive re-election in the legislature, they argued that if marginalization of women were observed in the data, incumbency could be ruled out, as it would be controlled for in their analysis.[3]

Kerevel and Atkeson focus on three key outcome variables to gauge the performance of female and male legislators: total number of bills presented for a vote, bill passage rate, and serving as a committee chair. Perhaps surprisingly, given the gender discrimination the authors describe in Mexico, they find no evidence of gender marginalization within the Chamber of Deputies in any of these measures. Using a number of different specifications and robustness checks, we confirm these findings based on Kerevel and Atkesons data set,[4] which they have generously made publicly available. Yet given the fact that most coefficients they did find to be statistically significant are small and the Pseudo R2/Adjusted R2 values for their three models are also small (.06 and .07), this suggests to us that omitted variable bias may be a problem. More fundamentally, however, we believe a conclusion that there is *no* gender marginalization in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies is exaggerated. Furthermore, in focusing on bill sponsorship, bill passage, and committee chairing, Kerevel and Atkeson underestimate more important routes to power and prestige in the Mexican legislature, and therefore potential avenues of women's marginalization in the Chamber.

One problem with Kerevel and Atkeson's use of bill passage rate as an outcome variable has to do with a peculiarity of the Mexican Congress in that there is an almost perfect rate of party cohesion in voting on bills. In the 58th legislature, for example, among the three main political parties in Mexico the percentage of legislators who voted along party lines was high: 95.3% for the PRI, 97% for the PAN and 95.9% for the PRD (Weldon 2004, 576). In the authors dataset, a full 89.87% of the deputies are members of one of these three main parties. Thus, if legislators were merely voting with their parties on every single vote, as the evidence strongly suggests, then we would not expect a significant difference between female and male legislators' rates of bills passage, which is precisely what Kerevel and Atkeson find. In other words, the authors' results are not surprising, and therefore do not necessarily

[2]In January 2014, the President of Mexico signed into law a bill passed by the legislature that allows legislators in both houses of congress to be re-elected. The lower house will allow legislators to serve up to four, three-year terms consecutively, while in the upper house legislators may serve two, consecutive six-year terms.

[3]In practice, an indirect form of incumbency has long occurred in Mexico, with about 14% of deputies between 1934 and 1997 being re-elected in non-consecutive terms (Weldon 2004, 576). This is reflected in Kerevel and Atkeson's dataset, in which 13.98% of legislators had previous experience as a deputy. Thus, it is possible that the 58th and the 60th legislatures may have overlapping members because some may have returned to office in the 60th, though the authors dataset does not allow us to test for this possibility. Nevertheless, because Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) finds previous experience as a deputy to be a statistically significant predictor of holding a committee chair position, this weakens their claim that incumbency has no effect on their outcome variables. In the authors full dataset, only 10.25% of women have prior experience as a deputy, compared to 15.08% for men, suggesting that if prior experience is a predictor of success, then women could still be marginalized via this mechanism.

[4]See Appendix I for replication information.

reflect an absence of gender bias in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies.

Furthermore, neither of their model specifications for number of bills sponsored or bill passage rate accounts for the phenomenon of co-sponsorship. This could strongly influence their results if there are significant differences in women's and men's success at co-sponsorship and if co-sponsorship is key to successful bill passage. If some of the authors' coding for bills presented by individual legislators actually refers to co-sponsored bills for which only one congressperson is credited, then Kerevel and Atkeson's data underreports this metric. As publicly released, their dataset makes an analysis of this kind impossible, but it would be important to asses gender differences in bill co-sponsorship before making the wider assertion that women do not face marginalization in the Chamber of Deputies.[5]

I.I How Power in the Mexican Congress Actually Works: A Closer Look at Committees

One of the key routes to power in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies that Kerevel and Atkeson underemphasize is *membership* on different types of committees, not simply chairing them. As in many legislatures, bills in the Chamber are first developed in thematic committees. Heller and Weldon write that in Mexico's Chamber of Deputies "bills begin in committee and are introduced on the floor only with the signatures of a majority of the relevant committee or when discharged by a two-thirds vote on the floor (2001). This means that thematic committees wield incredible power over the introduction of legislation related to the committee's issue area. While Kerevel and Atkeson note that it is not impossible for legislators to sponsor legislation on issues for which they are not on a related committee, it is very difficult to do so (983). Thus if a deputy is not a member of a committee working on issues deemed to be important or significant to the legislature, he or she will likewise be unable to sponsor bills that address significant issues. If female legislators in particular are members of less prestigious committees, they will therefore present less prestigious bills.[6]

This matters because previous literature on gender marginalization in legislatures has found evidence of women being prevented from serving on committees seen as more influential or important, such as economics, foreign affairs, or procedural committees like budgets. At the same time, women are often filtered into committees that deal with "women's" or social issues that are widely perceived as less prestigious or influential. Kerevel and Atkeson

[5]Other recent research has included co-sponsorship in assessing differences across female and male legislators. See e.g., Anzia and Berry (2011).

[6]It may also be the case that female legislators, regardless of their committee membership, are asked to present specific bills precisely because the quota in Mexico has made party leaders sensitive to the issue of gender bias. Though women on committees may be unable to generate and put forward bills that they themselves created, it is possible that the other members of their committee or their party could be asking them to present other committee members' bills so that the committee or the party appears more "gender sensitive". More research would need to be done to exclude this possibility.

(2013) cites this literature, however, we find they have not dealt with the question of gendered committee membership adequately.

The authors specify a model to test whether gender is a significant predictor of the probability of serving as a committee *chair*, and find that there is no difference between women and men.[7] While admittedly their finding that women have an equal probability of holding these important positions is a positive sign for women's political participation, because very few legislators end up being committee chairs overall, this is not as substantively meaningful for gender marginalziation as it sounds. Only 8.52% of all deputies over the three legislative terms of Kerevel and Atkeson's study held a committee chair position. This means that we need to look more closely at committee membership, and the gender dynamics at work there.

Kerevel and Atkeson's dataset includes the number of thematic committees each legislator is a member of for six different types of committees, three of which are generally considered "more prestigious" (economic committees, foreign affairs / defense committees, and power committees), and three of which are generally viewed as "less prestigious" (burden committees,[8] social policy committees, and "women's" issue committees). Here, the authors limit their analysis to female deputies only, looking at women who served on at least one of the six types of committees, but *not* women who served on none. Kerevel and Atkeson find that women are significantly overrepresented on women's committees and social committees, and burden committees to a lesser extent, while they are underrepresented on economic committees though not power committees. They then make what we consider to be an unsubstantiated claim that "power committees are actually more important than economic committees." Thus they argue that the fact that women are not underrepresented on the most important committees (power) cancels out any discrimination they might be facing in being underrepresented on economic committees, or via their overrepresentation on non-prestigious committees. We take issue with this line of reasoning.

One of the main limitations of Kerevel and Atkeson's treatment of committee membership is that it only considers the number of female legislators who actually sit on a type of committee, rather than including the many female legislators who do *not* sit on a type of committee, particularly ones that are more prestigious. At the same time, their exclusion of male legislators also means that they do not assess the extent to which men might be exempt

[7] Kerevel and Atkeson's original calculation (Table 3, page 989) only presents confidence intervals for the probability of women and the probability of men serving as chairs. They argue that the difference is not significant since the confidence intervals overlap. We ran a simulation that calculated the *difference in means* betwen women and men and its confidence interval, but our results were not significant.

[8] "Burden committees is a catch-all term used in Kerevel and Atkeson (2013), which includes committees that are considered to deal with unimportant issues and that do not pass much substantive legislation. The authors mention "Youth and Sports" and "Citizen Participation" as two examples from the Mexican context (984). Yet it is difficult to interpret the extent to which a "burden" committee is actually a burden, since it could represent, on the one hand, uninteresting, low payoff legislative drudgery, but it could also represent, on the other hand, an undemanding, "reward" type of committee assignment for hard work expended in other areas.

from sitting on committees deemed less important where women are overrepresented. We offer an improvement on Kerevel and Atkeson's method of assessing gender marginalization by more fully exploring these committee membership dynamics to understand how gender marginalization may be operating at the committee level.

II Data and Methodology

We use the same data set on the 58th, 59th, and 60th legislative sessions of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (years 2000 - 2006) originally compiled and made publicly available by Kerevel and Atkeson (2013). While we are grateful the authors have made this data publicly available, we believe that this data set limits our ability to fully address the intuitions laid out in this paper. First, and most importantly for the models we employ here, we do not have access to the full universe of committees on which each legislator sat. We only have committee membership data for the six committee types the authors chose to report.

Second, because the authors assign each individual legislator an ID number that does not allow us to identify the person, we cannot collect any additional data to populate missing data fields in the data set. This is particularly problematic for the education variable, which shows as statistically significant in several model specifications, but 95 out of the total 1817 observations had missing fields for education. As mentioned previously, we are also unable to verify if any legislators in the 60th session were also present in the 58th. Despite these limitations, we rely on Kerevel and Atkeson's original data set as the best data available to address the issues we raise in this paper.

To fully explore committee membership, we employ a logit model to estimate the probability of a legislator being a member of six types of thematic committees: economic, foreign affairs, power, burden, social, and women's. For the dependent variable, we collapse each committee variable into a binary variable. Using the example of the economic committee type, we code an observation 0 if the legislator was on 0 economic committees, and 1 if the legislator served on one or more economic committees. For the women's committees, the maximum number of committees any one legislator served on was two; for all other committees, the maximum number of committees was three.

We also employ an ordered logit model, using as the dependent variable each of the six committee variables in their original Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) coding. This allows us to estimate the probability of membership for any number of committees, providing greater leverage in understanding if there are differences in probabilities between, for example, serving on 0 or 1 committees, versus serving on 1 or 2 committees. An ordered logit also allows us to test whether we have lost predictive power by collapsing the total number of committees into a dummy variable in our logit specification.

For both models, all covariates are the same as in Kerevel and Atkeson's original logit model for committee chair, though in our specification we include committee chair, committee secretary, party leader, and logged days in office as indepdent variables. We construct the set of observations in the same way as the authors do for their logit model, except that we do not exclude legislators from minor parties, giving us a slightly larger number of observations (1469 total).[9] Given the data limitations discussed above, we cannot control for the total number of committees in which any legislator is a member. This limits the broader conclusions we can draw from our findings, which we discuss in Section IV.

Because of the large number of covariates in Kerevel and Atkeson's model, most of which we include here for the sake of consistency, below we report only on the logit model, including only the statistically significant regression coefficients and their standard errors, as well as the "female" covariate for discussion purposes. We do not report the regression coefficients of the ordered logit models, as they are not substantially different from the logit.[10] Because both the logit and the ordered logit coefficients are reported in difficult-to-interpret log odds, we rely primarily on first differences - the predicted probability differentials between women and men – for the bulk of our substantive interpretation.

III Results

Table 1 provides select results of the logit model for the six committee types used as dependent variables in this analysis: economic, foreign affairs, power, burden, social, and women's issues. For each, we report the coefficient and standard error for the female covariate, and any other covariate that is significant at $\alpha = .05$ or greater. (For a complete list of other variables used in the model, see Annex II.) Here, we divide the committees into "more prestigious" (economic, foreign affairs, and power committees) and "less prestigious" (burden, social, and women's committees) following Kerevel and Atkeson's (2013) interpretation of which types of committees are generally associated with higher prestige in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies.

The most striking finding is that the single most predictive variable for whether a legislator serves on either a women's or a social committee is being female. Being female is also a strong predictor for service on a burden committee, though it falls slightly short of the customary significance value ($p = .08$). Conversely, being female negatively predicts serving on a power committee, although education is a more powerful predictor. In economics committees, the coefficient on female is negatively signed, indicating a possible negative association between being a woman and serving on an economics committee, although it is not statistically significant.

[9]The authors exclude minor parties from their committee chair logit because no legislator from a minor party held a committee chair.

[10]Full results available upon request.

Table 1: Logit Model Results: Female & Significant Covariates
Coefficient
(Standard Error)

	Membership on Committee Types (DVs)					
	"More Prestigious"			*"Less Prestigious"*		
	Economic	Foreign Affairs	Power	Burden	Social	Women's
IVs						
Female	-0.12	0.12	-0.71	0.47	0.88	3.97
	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.34)*	(0.27) .	(0.27)***	(0.58)***
Education	-0.17		0.53			
	(0.05)**		(0.07)***			
Former Deputy				-0.48		
				(0.20)*		
Former Senator		0.66		-0.97		
		(0.30)*		(0.41)*		
Mesa Dire. Member	-1.55			-1.04		-1.17
	(0.54)**			(0.42)*		(0.56)*
State party leader			0.44			
			(0.16)**			
PR	-0.49	0.30	0.42	-0.38		
	(0.13)***	(0.14)*	(0.13)**	(0.13)**		
59th leg.	0.37			0.37		
	(0.16)*			(0.16)*		
60th leg.	0.42			0.42		1.95
	(0.17)*			(0.17)*		(0.57)***
Committee Sec.			0.37			
			(0.13)**			
Days in office	0.77			0.77	1.05	
	(0.34)*			(0.34)*	(0.38)**	

*Denotes the following significance codes: '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1

Gender does not appear to impact membership on a foreign affairs committee, though in both of our models, few if any covariates are significant when foreign affairs committee is the dependent variable. One possible interpretation of this is that in the Chamber of Deputies, foreign affairs committees are "mixed bags" in terms of prestige because the bulk of important foreign affairs issues in Mexico are handled in the Senate.

Tables 2 and 3 present the predicted differences in probabilities between female and male

legislators in being a member of a "less prestigious" or "more prestigious" committee type, broken down by legislative session. We see in Table 2 that for the 58th, 59th (year of quota implementation), and 60th legislatures, the difference between women's and men's predicted probability of serving on both social policy and women's committees is positive and significant. In other words, women are more likely to serve on at least one of these types of committees compared to men. This pattern also holds for women's membership on burden committees, though curiously it is not significant in the period before the quota, but becomes significant in the first legislature under the quota (the 59th) and the session following. Overall, these results provide strong support for our intuition that women are more likely than men to serve on "less prestigious" women's committees, social committees, and burden committees.

Table 2: Logit Model: Predicted Differences Between Women and Men in Probability of Being a Committee Member on "Less Prestigious" Committees Difference (95% Confidence Interval)

	"Less Prestigious" Committees		
	Burden	Social	Women's
Legislature			
58th	0.12	0.21	0.35
	(-0.01 0.25)	(0.08 0.34)*	(0.21 0.52)*
59th	0.12	0.10	0.31
	(0.01 0.24)*	(0.00 0.20)*	(0.18 0.47)*
60th	0.18	0.13	0.475
	(0.06 0.29)*	(0.02 0.25)*	(0.30 0.62)*

*Denotes 95% confidence interval that does not include zero. All covariates other than female and legislative session dummies held at their median.

Meanwhile, in Table 3 we observe that gender is not a significant predictor of serving on a "more prestigious" committee like economics, foreign affairs, or power. All of the confidence intervals for these differences in probability between women and men contain zero, meaning we cannot be confident at the 95% level that these differences in probabilities are significant. Taken together, these predicted probabilities suggest that because women are about as likely as men to serve on "more prestigious" committees, but more likely than men to serve on "less prestigious" committees, they may be serving on a higher total amount of committees, a point to which we will return in Section IV.

Table 3: Logit Model: Predicted Differences Between Women and Men
in Probability of Being a Committee Member on
"More Prestigious" Committees
Difference (95% Confidence Interval)

	"More Prestigious" Committees		
	Economic	Foreign Affairs	Power
Legislature			
58th	-0.03	0.02	-0.09*
	(-0.16 0.11)	(-0.06 0.12)	(-0.16 -0.00)
59th	-0.10	-0.02	-0.03
	(-0.22 0.03)	(-0.10 0.07)	(-0.10 0.05)
60th	-0.12*	-0.06	-0.05
	(-0.23 -0.01)	(-0.14 0.03)	(-0.12 0.02)

*Denotes 95% confidence interval that does not include zero. All covariates other than female and legislative session dummies held at their median.

Looking at the differences in predicted probabilities of membership between female and male legislators using an ordered logit model can provide some additional insight into these results. Recall that the logit model predicted whether a legislator was on zero committees versus being on one or more committees. In the event that we lost information about committee membership in our dependent variables by having collapsed them into binaries, we also estimated an ordered logit model that preserved the actual number of committees legislators served on for each committee type. In this way, we are able to calculate the differences in predicted probabilities of membership between women and men for serving on different numbers of committees per type (0, 1, 2, and 3 committees).

Note that we were not able to perform an ordered logit for the women's committee dependent variable. In this committee type, the maximum number of committees reported was 2, however, the 4 legislators in the data set serving on 2 women's committees were all female. Since we cannot run the ordered logit for a dependent variable in which there is no variation across all independent variables, we would have had to recode legislators serving on 2 committees as having served on 1, effectively turning the dependent variable into the very same binary variable of the logit model.

For the burden, foreign and economic committees, the few legislators reported as serving on 3 committees were of the same gender (2 men in economic, 3 men in foreign, and 1 female for burden), but we recoded those observations as having been members of 2 committees. This preserved a three-level dependent variable, but does represent a loss of information we were trying to avoid. Given that no men are in a high number of burden committees, and no women on a high number of economic or foreign committees – itself an interesting finding –

this means our estimates for differences between women and men in these committees might be biased downward.

Interestingly, we find that the differences in predicted probabilities for women and men is not significant for serving on either 1 or 2 committees for any committee type, though we do find evidence in some committee types that the probability differentials for serving on 0 committees are significant (the remainder of the discussion describes these results for 0 committees). This suggests that our use of the logit model is appropriate, with little predictive power lost in combining service on 1, 2, or 3 committees into the binary category "one or more". Importantly, we can observe the possible mechanism by which gender plays the greatest role in the marginalization of female legislators in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies: where women are more likely to serve on zero powerful committees and men are more likely to serve on zero less powerful ones.

Table 4 reports the differences in probabilities between women and men serving on zero power, economics, social, and burden committees,[11] along with their 95% confidence intervals. Theoretically, if men are more likely to sit on zero social or burden committees, while women are more likely to sit on zero power or economics committees, this would provide additional evidence of the marginalization of female legislators in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies. We observe some interesting though mixed results in this regard.[12]

In the 58th legislature, the session before the quota was introduced, women were significantly more likely to serve on zero power committees, an effect that disappeared in the 59th legislature when the quota was introduced, and persisted into the following session. Though we are not making causal claims, this could suggest that the quota was effective in making women no more likely than men to *not* be on a power committee.

This is the opposite trend that we see, however, when we look at the economics committee. In the 58th legislature, again before the quota, women were about equally likely as men to not serve on any economics committees, but in the 59th and 60th sessions they were more likely than men to not serve on any. In other words, the presence of a quota is associated with a *decrease* in women's probability of participating on economics committees. While we cannot point to a trend with only two session's worth of data, this finding is still noteworthy.

[11] As mentioned previously, we were unable to use women's committe membership as a dependent variable with an ordered logit model, however, we would expect the outcome to be similar to the results observed in the logit specification.

[12] The foreign affairs committee results (not shown) are not significant for female and male legislators having served on zero committees, but because we suspect that foreign affairs committees are less important overall in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies than the Senate, we are not overly concerend by this finding.

Table 4: Ordered Logit Model
Significant Predicted Differences Between Women and Men
in Probability of Being on Zero Committees,
Difference (95% Confidence Interval)

	Committee Type			
	Power	Economics	Social	Burden
Legislature				
58th	0.091		-0.19	
	(0.01 0.17)*		(-0.30 -0.07)*	
59th		0.18		
		(0.00 0.23)*		
60th		0.12	-0.11	-0.18
		(0.01 0.23)*	(-0.20 -0.00)*	(-0.28 -0.06)*

*Denotes 95% confidence interval that does not include zero. All covariates other than female and legislative session dummies held at their median.

Interestingly, Table 4 also reports somewhat inconsistent results regarding the social and burden committees. Before the quota in the 58th legislature, women were less likely to serve on zero social committees – in other words, women served on *more* social committees than men – a difference that evaporated in the first session with the quota but returned again in the 60th. It is difficult to meaningfully interpret this result. One explanation could be that in the first wave of women entering the legislature under the quota, there was a rush by either party leadership or female legislators themselves to sit women on non-social committees, a drive that fell off in the following session, possibly as women took "ownership" of social committee work, such as health and education. Of course, this is an explanation that we cannot test with the current data set.

Women and men were about equally likely to not sit on burden committees in the 58th and 59th legislatures, but women were more likely to sit on at least one burden committee in the 60th legislature. As noted earlier, "burden" committee work is difficult to interpret.

IV Discussion and Opportunities for Research

In this paper, we have shown that female legislators in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies are more likely to serve on "less prestigious" committees than male lesgislators, but are about equally as likely to serve on "more prestigious" committees. This suggests that female legislators may be working on a greater total number of committees as men. Although as discussed in Section II, the Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) data set does not provide the full

universe of committees that legislators sat on, we can reach some very tentative conclusions about the average number of committees women and men were members of in the committee types compiled by the authors. We do observe that the mean number of committees female legislators were members of was 2.8 while the mean number of committees male legislators were members of was 2.7, and more female legislators were members of 5 committees than male legislators. Again, we would need additional information to draw any sharp conclusions about gender differences in legislative burden among female and male legislators, but these figures are nonetheless suggestive. This may be a fruitful avenue for future research. If female legislators have to sit on both general and "women's" committees, this higher workload may impede their ability to reach more powerful positions in the Chamber and in later government appointments. For this reason, we believe that Kerevel and Atkeson's conclusion that there is little evidece of gender marginalization in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies is precipitous.

At the same time, male legislators' low participation on "less prestigious" or female-oriented committees suggest that at the very least, if outright gender discrimination is not at play, ingrained societal biases against what is perceived as "women's" and "men's" work in the legislature are evident. Another interesting line of future work revolves around exploring how the legislative committee is an important locus of recreating gender dynamics at large in society.

One of Kerevel and Atkeson's main theoretical concerns was determining whether an incumbency effect mattered for women, so they focused on a legislature were (direct) incumbency was prohibited. Now that the Mexico has recently lifted the prohibition, this opens up many possibilities for researchers who may be interested in looking at incumbency effects by comparing the same country under both a no-incumbency and incumbency regime.

We conclude by noting that although we believe Kerevel and Atkeson (2013) overlooks the importance of committee membership in accounting for the possible marginalization of female legislators, we exercise caution in overextending the conclusiveness of our findings. Only three legislative sessions' worth of data were at our disposal, so we would need additional data to observe longer-term trends in the composition of legislative committees in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies. Because the number of female legislators in the Chamber has risen in the last several years, an optimistic prediction would be that gendered forces in committee membership have declined. We hope that future research will reveal that to be the case.

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Annex I

Replication of models in Kerevel and Atkeson (2013):

Using a number of different methods, we put their three models to the test. Overall our results match their findings. Re-running the models on datasets using various configurations of Mahalanobis distance matching and coarsened exact matching yielded largely similar results. We also performed simulated predicted probabilities by disaggregating for education, prior experience, political party, and whether the legislator was elected under a single-member "winner takes all" or proportional representation electoral system (the Mexican Chamber of Deputies uses a combination of both, with 300 of the 500 seats being filled by single-member districts and the remaining 200 through proportional representation). Collapsing the authors' numerous dummy variables into binary categories produced similar results. Finally, we performed various robustness checks on both their original model and our new specifications. Each time, different combinations of covariates emerged significant, though a legislator's gender was never statistically significant as a predictor of his or her congressional performance outcomes. Full results available on request.

Annex II: Logit Model Results: Coefficients and Standard Errors

Table 5: Logit Model - Women's Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Women's Committee Membership
female	3.966^{***}
	(0.576)
committee_chair	0.154
	(0.392)
educ_level2_nums	-0.122
	(0.093)
p_diputadolocal	0.185
	(0.245)
p_feddeputy	-0.769^{*}
	(0.421)
p_senador	-0.069
	(0.647)
p_statepartyleader	0.570^{*}
	(0.343)
p_natpartyleader	-0.795
	(1.153)
jcp	-0.316
	(1,303.809)
mesadirectiva	-1.172^{**}
	(0.558)
tier	0.427^{*}
	(0.235)
prddummy	-0.606
	(0.475)
pandummy	-0.681^{*}
	(0.366)
pvemdummy	-0.951
	(0.622)
ptdummy	0.082
	(0.849)

Table 6: Logit Model - Social Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Social Committee Membership
female	0.881^{***}
	(0.266)
committee_chair	-0.321
	(0.211)
educ_level2_nums	-0.105^{*}
	(0.054)
p_diputadolocal	0.047
	(0.126)
p_feddeputy	0.236
	(0.184)
p_senador	-0.172
	(0.333)
p_statepartyleader	-0.241
	(0.175)
p_natpartyleader	-0.677
	(0.499)
jcp	-0.827
	(1.363)
mesadirectiva	-0.305
	(0.353)
tier	0.108
	(0.130)
prddummy	-0.225
	(0.245)
pandummy	-0.030
	(0.185)
pvemdummy	0.533
	(0.340)
ptdummy	0.142
	(0.483)

Table 7: Logit Model - Burden Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Burden Committee Membership
female	0.469^{*}
	(0.270)
committee_chair	-0.105
	(0.204)
educ_level2_nums	-0.082
	(0.053)
p_diputadolocal	-0.155
	(0.125)
p_feddeputy	-0.475^{**}
	(0.196)
p_senador	-0.970^{**}
	(0.413)
p_statepartyleader	0.273
	(0.168)
p_natpartyleader	-0.031
	(0.474)
jcp	10.831
	(295.397)
mesadirectiva	-1.036^{**}
	(0.415)
tier	-0.380^{***}
	(0.130)
prddummy	-0.053
	(0.238)
pandummy	-0.173
	(0.181)
pvemdummy	0.322
	(0.344)
ptdummy	-1.103^{*}
	(0.661)

Table 8: Logit Model - Foreign Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Foreign Committee Membership
female	0.123
	(0.308)
committee_chair	0.121
	(0.216)
educ_level2_nums	0.008
	(0.061)
p_diputadolocal	−0.206
	(0.141)
p_feddeputy	−0.113
	(0.199)
p_senador	0.655**
	(0.298)
p_statepartyleader	0.333*
	(0.174)
p_natpartyleader	0.499
	(0.385)
jcp	1.632
	(1.249)
mesadirectiva	0.265
	(0.353)
tier	0.296**
	(0.141)
prddummy	−0.154
	(0.269)
pandummy	−0.078
	(0.205)
pvemdummy	0.142
	(0.357)
ptdummy	−0.813
	(0.602)

Table 9: Logit Model - Power Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Power Committee Membership
female	-0.706^{**}
	(0.339)
committee_chair	0.155
	(0.203)
educ_level2_nums	0.532^{***}
	(0.072)
p_diputadolocal	0.197
	(0.131)
p_feddeputy	0.334^{*}
	(0.177)
p_senador	-0.135
	(0.299)
p_statepartyleader	0.444^{***}
	(0.162)
p_natpartyleader	-0.020
	(0.394)
jcp	0.706
	(0.930)
mesadirectiva	0.587^{*}
	(0.338)
tier	0.423^{***}
	(0.134)
prddummy	0.012
	(0.253)
pandummy	-0.158
	(0.194)
pvemdummy	0.241
	(0.358)
ptdummy	-0.299
	(0.495)

Table 10: Logit Model - Economic Committee Membership

	Dependent variable:
	Economic Committee Membership
female	−0.118
	(0.295)
committee_chair	−0.342
	(0.209)
educ_level2_nums	−0.172***
	(0.054)
p_diputadolocal	−0.070
	(0.125)
p_feddeputy	0.124
	(0.184)
p_senador	−0.214
	(0.338)
p_statepartyleader	−0.128
	(0.170)
p_natpartyleader	−0.105
	(0.445)
jcp	−0.998
	(1.330)
mesadirectiva	−1.553***
	(0.539)
tier	−0.489***
	(0.133)
prddummy	−0.033
	(0.241)
pandummy	−0.104
	(0.183)
pvemdummy	−0.050
	(0.371)
ptdummy	0.528
	(0.470)