![Universiteit Utrecht logo]

Universiteit Utrecht

MUNI

"Quota[ed]":

The impact of gender quota on the visibility of female politicians in the media

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Double Master's of European Governance

at

Masaryk University, the Czech Republic: 469528
Utrecht University, the Netherlands: 6099785

by

Eliza Archer

1

I would like to thank
Lauren
for her unwavering support
and Julian,
for always making me improve.
Finally,
I'd like to dedicate this thesis to Katie.
For providing constant guidance
and for sharing your passion
so fiercely.
This is for you.

Abstract

This thesis takes gender quota – a mechanism that is designed to correct imbalances – and examines whether the application of this mechanism can have positive benefits for female candidates media visibility. Gender quotas are widely recommended as a means of improving the supply of female candidates. However, the potential benefits quota may have on demand side factors – that often manifest in cultural realms such as the media – are yet to be analysed. This thesis fills a scholarly gap by examining how female candidates media visibility can be influenced by the introduction of quota. This thesis argues that the impact of the media on female candidates success in European society is yet to be fully examined, and uses the concept of Mediated Politics to emphasise this. It examines the chronic underrepresentation of females in both politics and media representation, and explores this relationship concluding a focus on improving the media attention female candidates receive could be a means of rectifying the current inequalities seen in Europe. Therefore, it examines whether quota can be used as a means of improving media equality. To analyse this, Ireland was used as a case study, as gender quota were introduced in 2012. It uses a Most Similar Design System to compare, through a content analysis, the media visibility of candidates during the 2011 and 2016 parliamentary campaigns. Expert interviews are then used to contextualise the findings. The findings indicate that positive benefits for media representation of female candidates can be observed with the introduction of quota however; particularly in the number of articles they are mentioned in. However, this thesis also identifies a number of social factors that could further explain the increase in media presence.

Keywords: women, politics, gender quota, inequality, media, visibility, gender

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
MSDS	Most Similar Design System
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
ACEOMW	Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
IDEA	Institute for democracy and Electoral Assistance
TD's	Teachtaí Dála (Irish Members of Parliament)
PR	Proportional Representation
STV	Single Transferable Vote
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
DSC	Dublin South-Central
WEX	Wexford

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Equality between the sexes in representative, democratic bodies has numerous benefits; from increased participation of women in society, to lowered corruption levels, and an enhancement of the democratic mechanism (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 476; Gilardi 2015; 958; Stockemer 2007; 477). Despite this, Europe is suffering from a serve and chronic underrepresentation of women in politics. In national parliaments women comprise, on average, just 30.7% of members (EIGE 2019). This is not a new issue; the underrepresentation of women in politics has historical routes that have found themselves ingrained into modern culture (Campus 2013; 11). The social acceptance of male power has always been clear, while women have long exerted power in a manner that means they were, more often that not, unrecognised in their influence as they asserted their influence behind closed doors (Campus 2013; 11; McIntosh 2013; 100). These inequalities have persisted into modern society and have manifested in a range of social, cultural and institutional scenarios. According to the EIGE's Gender Equality Index, despite the category of "power"[1] seeing the greatest improvement in the past 10 years, it also still sees the greatest gap between men and women across Europe (Shreeves 2019; 2; EIGE 2019). This persistent underrepresentation of women raises the question; why are women not being elected?

The Equality Report concluded that political culture, political structures, and access to funding could restrict women's ability to participate in, and succeed in the political process (European Commission 2018a). Additionally, the various barriers women face when attempting to enter the political sphere, and the persistent roadblocks they face even once they reach political office, are well documented by scholars. These factors are largely outlined in academia as "supply" verses "demand" factors (Norris & Lovenduski 1995). While the crux of the "supply" side is that there are simply not enough women willing to step forward, "demand" suggests greater emphasis on the cultural and social blocks that may be preventing women's progression (Norris & Lovenduski 1995).

Discussion around the media's impact has been increasingly prevalent in societal discourse recently. Pan-European news organisation *Politico.eu* recently released a podcast episode on women in politics, *"The XX Factor"*, that specifically focused on women and the media in the lead up to the European Parliamentary elections (Schaart & Gonzalez 2019). This series identified both a lack of media coverage and equally sexist coverage of female candidates as significant barriers to political progression.

This thesis argues that visibility in the media can prove pivotal to a campaign, and that, to some extent, visibility in any form, regardless of the way a candidate is portrayed, can be positive. Greater media presence can generate greater campaign donations, increased name recognition and result in more votes (Shields et al 1995;

---

[1] Power indicators include political, economic and social power (EIGE, 2019).

415; Goldenberg & Traugott 1987; 332; Kahn & Goldenberg 1991a, 111; Mutz 1995; 1035-40). The combination of these factors can greatly assist in propelling a campaign and eventual election. By this logic, one can assume that by improving media representation, female candidates would see greater electoral success. Simultaneously a cultural factor, that impacts "demand", would be shifted which may result in an overall more positive environment for female candidates.

Means of increasing the attention female candidates receive in the media are yet to be established. Increasingly, artificial mechanisms such as gender quota are being recommended by both scholars and international institutions to rectify imbalances. Currently, more than 100 countries have implemented some form of gender quota (Dahlerup 2007; 73, 80). However, they often focus on very specific barriers to women's entry – namely, they aim to increase the sheer number of women on voting cards or in parliamentary seats. While these measures have proved largely effective in increasingly supply, such mechanisms also carry negative connotations and can prove to be controversial when implemented (Dahlerup 2007; 73, 80). Thereby, by focusing only on the institutional benefits of quota, policy makers are failing to recognise the potential impact these mechanisms could have on "demand" side barriers.

This thesis will argue that examining cultural factors such as media representation – which in some cases can prove to be just as pervasive as institutional factors (Norris and Lovenduski 1999) – and whether gender quota can also rectify these imbalances could assist in strengthening arguments in favour of gender quota from the European Union.

While there is compressive literature detailing the media representation of women, and extensive literature on gender quota and it's influence on women's descriptive representation in politics, there is yet to be focused study on the overlap of these two topics – specifically whether gender quota can improve the media visibility of women. Therefore, this thesis aims to analyse whether wider benefits of quota can be observed filling a lacuna in the current literature.

1.1 Research Question

This thesis aims to establish whether a relationship between the introduction of quota and an increase in female candidates media visibility can be found. In doing so, it seeks to explore whether arguments in favour of gender quota can be strengthened and whether demand side factors can benefit from quota. Therefore, the central research question for this thesis is:

To what extent do gender quotas affect media representation of female candidates in electoral campaigns?

To answer this question Ireland, a country that introduced gender quota in 2012, will be used as a case study. As Ireland introduced legislated party quota between their 2011 and 2016 national elections, this case study is an ideal candidate for a comparative analysis, using the Most Similar Design System. A content analysis was run on the highest circulating Irish newspapers in 2011 and 2016. These two data sets were then compared and analysed. In addition, a series of expert interview were conducted to contextualise the results of the content analysis.

To support the main research question, two sub questions were used to guide the literature review:
1) *What are gender quotas?*
2) *How can the media impact electoral campaigns?*

2. Theory and Literature

To begin, it is important to highlight the importance of this research; therefore I will first examine the importance of gender equal representation in politics. Following this I will detail why parity has not yet been achieved across Europe through an analysis of the barriers female politicians face; a topic academic debate divides into "supply" verse "demand". Having identified the importance of greater female representation, and identifying the barriers they face, I will then look to the action taken by EU to increase gender representation, and the increasing number of European institutions that are recommending gender quota. This then warrants an explanation of gender quota, their benefits and downfalls and their application in Europe. Finally, using the concept of *Mediated Politics* this section will examine the demand side factors of the media, its importance in electoral success, and how quota can impact this factor.

2.1 Benefits of Women's Participation in Politics

While the benefits of gender parity in democratic bodies are well documented, there is not one clear and agreed upon argument for greater numbers of women in politics from within feminist scholarship (Dahlerup 2018; 5; Dahlerup 2006). However, there are six factors that reoccur throughout literature; justice; democracy; spillover effect; substantive representation; life experience; and the desire for equality.

Firstly, as women represent roughly 50% of the population, a reflection of this in representative bodies would be evidence of a just society (Shreeves 2019; 5). Additionally, equality is key to both effective quality of life and for the realisation of human rights, which also serve to create justice (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 476). Thus, increasing women's political participation can assist in creating a just and fair society for all citizens.

Second, equality serves as a measure of the purity of a democracy, the more equal the representation, the more democratic the society is said to be. As a result, underrepresentation of women can be viewed as a stark contrast to the principles of a democratic society; the principle of parity should enable women to be as involved in the decision making process as men making it something countries should strive for (Stockemer 2007; 477). Further, equal representation has been proven to assist in eliminating corruption, used as a means of legitimising democracy and of measuring and monitoring democratic progress (Phillips 1998 in Dingler et al. 2019; 305; Praud 2012; 295).

The third documented benefit details how increased presence of women in elected positions will result in a simultaneous "snowball" and "role-model" effect. Greater numbers of female candidates provide women with figures to look up to and encourage women to enter the political realm whilst simultaneously increasing their legitimacy as political actors (Gilardi 2015; 958; Phillips in Dingler et al. 2019; 305).

Additionally there is scholarly argument that advocates in favour of a "politics of presence" (Phillips 1995; 25). This demands the physical presence or "descriptive representation" of women in political bodies (Sanbonmatsu 2003; 367). Those in favour of descriptive representation suggest that women are best poised to represent women's issues therefore the presence of women will affect policy making in favour of women's issues (Sanbonmatsu 2003; 367). This creates greater "substantial representation", ie, policy and initiatives with benefits for women (Sanbonmatsu 2003; 367). Scholars have suggested that "if men and women have different attitudes at the mass level, which are reproduced amongst the political elites, then the numerical under-representation of women may have negative implications for women's substantive representation" (Campbell et al. 2010; 171). Research conducted has found that women's descriptive representation can contribute to their substantive representation (Xydias 2007; 64), thereby confirming that descriptive representation is necessary to ensure substantive representation. This is equally the most controversial of the arguments. The other side of the argument suggests that a women is not necessarily *only* represented by another women continuing that "substantive representation", i.e the introduction of policies that benefit women, can be introduced by any elected official (Sanbonmatsu 2003; 370-78).

However, the argument for descriptive representation is further supported by the theory of critical mass, which "links women's descriptive representation to policy change through the linchpin of a threshold number which, once surpassed, has a transformative impact upon legislatures and serves to produce policy change" (Beckwith 2007; 27). This can then influence various facets of politics including, but not limited to, discourse, policy agenda, and culture (Beckwith 2007; 27). According to critical mass theory, significant policy change in favour of women's issues will only eventuate once women (or any minority group for that matter) reach 30% of the voices in the discussion (Beckwith 2007; 27). Given these arguments, conclusions can

be drawn that women are not sufficiently represented in a descriptive or substantive sense when the parliament comprises of less than 30% females.

Similarly, it is argued women give more time to the "overlooked interests" and are more aware of the effects a policy may have on a woman as they have had different life experience to a male. As a result, viewpoints that male politicians are not aware of are raised, and female legislators are more likely to voice opinions on feminist and traditional women's issues than their male colleagues (Xydias 2007; 64; Campbell et al. 2010; 171). However, it is worth noting that some scholars also take issue with this argument. They suggest that women are by no means a homogenous group and what may constitute one "woman's interest" may not be applicable to all women (O'Neil & Domingo 2015, 5). As a result all women's interests may not be accurately represented just because the candidate is a female.

Finally, citizens across Europe desire equality. As much as 91% of Europeans believe that the promotion of gender equality is necessary to ensure a fair and democratic society (Eurobarometer 2017; 10). More than half of those who participated (54%) in the 2017 Eurobarometer believe there should be more women should be in positions of political decision-making (European Commission 2017; 15). Notably, as many as 70% of respondents were in favour of implementing legal or legislative measures to achieve parity (Eurobarometer 2017; 16).

In conclusion, the evidence that supports positive benefits for increased numbers of women in politics is overwhelming. While there are some controversial arguments, in this case, the benefits outweigh any criticism. However, despite the numerous benefits for women's increased political participation, many European Union Member States who fail to reach even the critical mass minimum of 30%. This, therefore, begs the question; why are women still underrepresented in European politics?

2.2 Why are Women Underrepresented?

When examining the reasons for underrepresentation of women, the crux of the argument centres on "demand" verses "supply". "Supply" is determined by the number of women willing to step forward or run for office, while "demand" details other factors that then determine whether those that do come forward are chosen (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 107). The "supply side", or the more institutional factors, have dominated scholarship in the past, with many suggesting that there are simply not enough women willing to run as candidates and as a result there are less women in parliament (Gilardi 2015; 968). However, recently a shift can be seen toward the case of "demand side" factors, which often present in less formal means (Cheng & Tavits 2011; 460-467).

The two arguments of "supply" and "demand" do, to some extent, overlap and interact (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 108). Put simply, "While supply stops people

applying, demand means if they apply they wont be selected." (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 108). Factors affecting "supply" can pivot on motivation, such as political aspiration and ambition, while "demand" factors can be affected by resources such as "time, money, and experience" (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 115; Krook 2010; 708). Further, "demand" can be influence by *perceived* factors, such as "abilities, qualifications and experience" and even gender (Krook 2010; 709; Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 115; Byerly & Ross 2006; 60). Those in positions of power often determine such factors and traditionally this power has been seen to largely lie in the hands of the male political elite (Krook 2010; 709). Demand factors have began to extend to past political elite and transcend into societal belief that is then *upheld* by the political elite. These more "informal factors" can also significantly influence electoral success (Cheng & Tavits 2011; 460-467), and therefore, should not be overlooked. As a result, this thesis argues a lack of "supply" can be exacerbated by "demand" factors that discourage women from presenting as a candidate in the first place (Krook 2010; 709; Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 115; Byerly & Ross 2006; 60; Haraldsson & Wängnerud 2018; 2).

Demand factors encapsulate a larger societal attitude and can discourage women from entering politics by framing politics as a space that is meant for men. These "demand side" factors necessitate a greater examination of the "institutional and cultural mechanisms of exclusion" as they can become apparent in the parties selection of females as candidates (Kantola 2009; 387, Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 107). They can manifest in a variety of manners, from the political leaning of a party, societal norms and values and religion, to the impact of the media (Krook 2010; 709; Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 115). These cultural factors are more difficult to identify and quantify, however can prove detrimental if they discourage groups, such as women from participating. For example, if an individual feels there is no need to step forward as the *demand* for them is not there, you will also see a lack of *supply*. It is this relationship that necessitates a greater focus on the demand side factors at play and it is for this reason that the demand side factor of the media will be focused upon.

Gender quota have often been proposed as a means of combatting the "supply" of women they do have the potential to influence the "demand" side of this equation also. However this is yet to be thoroughly examined. Despite the fact that the full effects and the extent of the effect of gender quota are yet to be determined, their implementation across Europe is increasing.

2.3 The EU, Gender Equality and Gender Quota

The literature clearly outlines the need for greater representation of women in politics, and the benefits it will have on wider society. Additionally, the underlying factors that may be influencing said underrepresentation are also identified through the supply and demand debate, and yet Europe still sees a chronic underrepresentation of

women. It is, therefore, necessary to examine what is – or maybe more importantly what *is not* – being done to combat the underrepresentation of women in politics in the European Union.

2.3.1 What are Gender Quotas?

Despite the rise in the use of gender quota many countries are hesitant to implement such a means of affirmative action. As more countries begin to introduce gender quota, questions surrounding their necessity, effectiveness and fairness are raised. This section will address the types of gender quota, arguments for and against their implementation, and also explore the possible wider benefits of gender quota.

Gender quotas are an artificial means of increasing women's political representation. The implementation of gender quotas "has become a trend in the world today" (Dahlerup 2007; 73, 80). Dahlerup (2007; 78; 2018; 63) defines quota in politics as "an affirmative action measure that establishes a percentage or number for the representation of a specific group" adding "it is a fast track policy designed to remedy and undesirable inequality".

Two types[2] of quota are most commonly observed in Europe – legislated quota and voluntary party quota (Shreeves 2019; 8). Legislated quotas require all parties nominate a specified minimum number of candidates from each gender on electoral lists while voluntary quotas are pledges made by individual parties to include a certain percentage of women (Shreeves 2019; 8). Party quotas are the most widely observable through the West while legislative quota are less favoured (Krook et al. 2009; 784-85). The benefit of legislative quota is that is requires all parties across the political spectrum to achieve a minimum level of gender representation, where party quota are more likely to be adopted by those on the left on the political spectrum (Krook et al. 2009; 785). Additional equality mechanisms, such as the "zipper system" are other means of achieving greater gender balance (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 476). Through this method, women and men are alternatively listed (ie. Male, female, male, female) on a party list. This method is seen across Europe, generally implemented by individual parties, but is not considered a quota system (Freidenvall, 2013; 14-18).

Quotas are not without controversy, their ability to achieve their main aim – that is, to increase the number of women in politics – is debated (White & Mariani, 2015; 215; Delgado-Márquez et al. 2013; 479; Krook et al. 2009; 787). The effectiveness of quota can be dependent on the type of quota implemented, political parties, political systems and by other factors including political and electoral systems, the local political climate, and local norms and practices (O'Neil & Domingo 2015, 2-3; Jones 2004; 1221). While some studies show that quota requiring greater numbers of

---

[2] There is a third means of gender quota, when seats are specifically reserved for women, however this is not seen in practice in Europe (Bush 2011; 105-106).

women on party ballots will ultimately lead to more women being elected, others suggest that while theoretically one may expect 30% quota to result in 30% representation, this is not always the case (Schwindt-Bayer 2009; 5-10). Therefore, the introduction of quota should not be seen as an automatic means of increasing the number of women in parliament. Though this may be true, generally speaking, countries with the highest number of women in parliament will often have implemented some method of gender quota (Dahlerup 2018; 61). This includes countries in the global south that are not often associated with progressive social values (Dahlerup 2018; 60). Therefore while their effectiveness is debated, generally speaking increases in female representation are seen over time (Dahlerup 2018; 60), suggesting they are a valuable tool in achieving equality.

Additional criticisms debate the unintended consequences of quota. Commonly, quotas are seen to be discriminatory towards men and thereby are deemed undemocratic (Delgado-Márquez, et al.; 479). Scholarly opponents retort that these methods do not constitute discrimination as they simply remove the structural barriers that were causing discrimination against women, thereby evening the playing field (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479).

Other critics suggest that quota may unintentionally set a cap on the number of women who will be selected in political lists (Shin 2014; 87). This "glass ceiling" theory suggests that instead of seeing the quota as a minimum number of women involved in the political process, parties will instead view this number as a sufficient number of women to be representative and no longer strive for greater diversity (Shin 2014; 87). This "glass ceiling" theory can be observed as a concern in much feminist literature (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479).

Finally, opponents also suggest women do not want quota for fear of ostracising themselves. They claim, "most women… do not want them and do not want to be treated as a special designated group" (Clancy et al. 2012; 117; White & Mariani, 2015; 215-16), insisting they may isolate women, or serve to delegitimise women as being "token" politicians (Dahlerup 2018; 68). This is particularly evident in the former soviet countries, as state sponsored quotas were introduced during the socialist era and women's political participation was seen only as a formality and not as a valuable contribution (Bitušíková 2005; 1006; Havelkovà et.al 1999, 158-64). Therefore quotas carry particularly negative connotations for some of these states (Shreeves 2019; 8; Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2005; 34).

Despite their perceived downfalls, gender quota can have multiple benefits for women in politics with sceptics even deeming them a "necessary evil" (Clancy et al. 2012; 18). The introduction of quota in national parliaments acts as a means of "fast-tracking" women's electoral success[3] (Shin 2014; 89; Dahlerup, & Freidenvall 2005;

---

[3] Success they suggest would otherwise take 70-80 years (Dahlerup, & Freidenvall 2005; 30-34).

27). They provide an "in" for first time candidates creating a success that endures through subsequent elections (Shin 2014; 89). Quotas are "critical" and are "the most effective way of achieving a better gender balance" (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479; O'Neil & Domingo 2015, 2). They create role models and women elected under quota gain confidence and run successful future campaigns (Shin 2014; 89; White & Mariani, 2015; 215). Furthermore, they focus on the political system, addressing the root cause of the problem (O'Neil & Domingo 2015, 2-3). As a result quota have been suggested as a temporary tool that would make it possible to "rectify the imbalance in political representation" (Bitušíková 2005; 1019).

As previously mentioned, the benefits of quota are most commonly looked at in relation to the supply of women, and the pure numbers of women that are elected before and after the introduction of quota. The demand side factors, which can often be encapsulated in deeply entrenched cultural norms, are not often associated directly with quota. The importance of these factors should not be overlooked. Therefore, this thesis further examines the demand side factor of the media and how this can be impacted by the introduction of gender quota.

2.3.2 A Brief History of the European Union and Gender Equality

The first moves made towards gender equality came in 1957 with Article 199 of the Treaty of Rome, which stipulated that men and women must receive equal work for equal pay (Rossilli 1999; 172). This momentum continued when Jacques Delors was head of the Commission in 1985. Delors attempted to significantly progress social policy and subsequently aimed to achieve greater equality between the sexes (Rossilli 1999; 172). The Delors Commission assisted in the formation and promotion of feminist networks that would result in the formation of the European Women's Lobby in 1990, which would continue to be pivotal to women's rights action in Europe until the present.

It was in the 1990's that a significant push in the direction of gender equality that extended beyond work could be observed. Gender Equality became a fundamental value of the European Union enshrined through Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) signed in 1992. In addition, article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Article 8 TFEU also called for promotional activities to ensure equality between men and women (Schonard, 2019). The fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing formally recognised the relationship between women and the media as one of the major areas of concern in achieving equality between women and men in contemporary societies and recommended governments implement positive action policies to increase women's political representation (Jones 2004; 1203; Rossilli 1999; 174).

It was after this conference that women's role in decision-making gained significant attention. Following the signing of the Beijing Declaration in 1996, the EC presented

the Recommendation on the participation of Women and Men in Decision Making, a recommendation that was not only aimed at political processes and positions, but equally positions in wider society (Rossilli 1999; 178; EIGE 2013). The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999 continued to highlight gender by committing to incorporate the concept of gender into all EU policies and institutions (Van der Vleuten 2007; 1). In 2013, the Gender Equality index of the European Institute for Gender Equality was launched (EIGE 2017; 1). One of the assigned categories in the Index is the *Domain of Power: Gender balance in decision-making*. In the 2017 report, this domain is said to be making "slow, but steady progress", despite remaining the domain with the overall lowest score (EIGE 2017; 23; EIGE 2016).

In the past two decades gender quotas have been increasingly recommended by various EU bodies as a means of combatting the underrepresentation of women in European politics and decision-making. This is particularly significant as in the past the term "quota" has been avoided with many institutions preferring to use "affirmative action" due to the negative connotations that were associated with quota (Dahlerup 2018; 69). However as the benefits of gender equality garner greater attention, the EU has publically committed to strive for "a gender balance in political representation and participation as a matter of justice, equality and democracy" (Shreeves 2019; 1). All three of European Unions main institutions have, through various recommendations, have committed to striving for gender equality (ACEOMW 2017; 5). Documents such as; *The Equality Report;* the *Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010;* the *European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020);* and the *European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2012 on women in political decision-making– quality and equality (2011/2295(INI)),* all identified the accelerating power that legislative quota had on improving gender equality in decision making (EIGE 2017; 25; Shreeves 2019; 1; Sartori, 2007; 34; European Parliament 2012; 5). According to the Council of Europe (2016; 2), "Electoral quotas are the most effective measures to achieve significant, rapid progress, provided that they are correctly designed and consistently implemented. Quotas should be adapted to the electoral system in force, set ambitious targets and be coupled with stringent sanctions for non-compliance." The European Commission has also committed to "Consider[ing] targeted initiatives to improve the gender balance in decision making" (European Commission 2010; 7). The Parliament has also "Call[ed] on political parties across Europe to introduce a quota system for candidate lists for party organs and elections" (European Parliament 2012; 5). While this shows consistent movement, no single, strong recommendation from the EU has been seen.

Despite a lack of strong calls for action in the EU, in 2019 a total of ten EU member states[4] had introduced legislative quota in at least the lower houses of their national parliaments (Gender Quota Database 2019). On average in Europe, countries that have political party quotas see higher averages of female representation than those

---

[4] Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Italy

without (ACEOMW 2017; 5). Despite only 10 of the 28 Member States having legislative quota, all EU Member States have publically committed to achieve gender equality. This has been done through their commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which include – though are not limited to – the introduction of legislative action to ensure equality (ACEOMW 2017; 4).

Further, the EU has made multiple steps forward to improve gender representation in the European media. For example, in 2013, the *Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 on gender equality and the media* was announced, in 2018, there was the *European Parliament resolution on gender equality in the media sector in the EU* and in 2018 the European Parliament commissioned a study on *Gender Equality in the media Sector* (Council of Europe 2019).

2.3.3 The Influence of the EU

The EU has the ability to influence Member States through a means of soft power, where laggards are looked upon disapprovingly by progressive states (Bulmer & Radaelli 2005; 349). While various EU bodies have recommended quotas, as previously mentioned, the EU is unable to introduce policy that regulates parity in politics, as this largely falls outside EU competences. While the EU cannot implement specific, targeted processes, the general recommendations made to Member States should not be underestimated in their influence (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 483).

Whether a country decides to introduce quota can often depend on the recommendation of international organisations (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479). It can be observed that international incentives from transnational organisations have positively influenced countries to implement gender quota across the developing world and international organisations hold greater swaying power than domestic pressures (Bush 2011; 104; 131). So called "policy scripts" provided by international organisations can act as templates for progress and form a pivotal part of the implementation process (Bush 2011; 106). Therefore, if the EU provided these policy scripts, Member States may be more inclined to follow.

The success of implementation in other national contexts is also influential (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479). If one countries implementation has provided successful results and positive affirmations, other nations may follow (Delgado-Márquez, et al. 2013; 479; Bulmer & Radaelli 2005; 348). Investing in research into the effectiveness of quota could then, depending on the results, inform the results of other countries.

Action and activism that takes place at the EU level can act as both a "political and symbolic space" through which women can "influence national policies" (Rossilli 1999; 179). Through EU institutions, women's voices have been projected in a way

that may have been silenced on a national level particularly in regards to politics (Rossilli 1999; 180). The EU has the ability to identify discourse and social movements that may be occurring in laggard states (or equally in progressive ones) and voice them to a wider audience, and as a result they will give these movements greater sway and attention.

Facilitated coordination mechanisms at the EU level, such as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), can also assist in the sharing of best practices (Bulmer & Radaelli 2005; 345). The OMC is intended to "increase the cohesion of regional, national and European policy" (Kaiser & Prange 2005; 241). These methods use soft law as enforcement mechanisms by providing a "guide" to Member States on how to conduct activities (Bulmer & Radaelli 2005; 348). These, while not legally enforceable, the peer review aspect of these mechanism develops benchmarks no state wishes to fall below. This can be particularly effective in "sensitive" policy areas (Bulmer & Radaelli 2005; 349).

Though recommendations made by the EU carry significant, albeit fluctuating, weight the greater the evidence in support of gender quota, the greater the weight such a recommendation would carry; further highlighting the importance of this research. If gender quotas are found not only to increase the numbers of women in politics, but simultaneously positively impact societal discourse or media representation surrounding women in politics, it would also strengthen arguments in favour of quota implementation. Such recommendations urging the introduction of gender quota would then come from an influential source, be seen and heard within member states, and could subsequently strengthen domestic campaigns in their favour.

2.4 The Importance of Media as a "Demand" Side Factor

This section is centres on the sub question: *How can the media impact electoral campaigns*? Having established the need for greater numbers of females in politics, and having identified the barriers that they face, it is necessary to further examine the media's role in the success of electoral candidates. To do so I will present the concept of *Mediated Politics* as described by Bennett and Entman (2000). This will establish the relationship between politics and the media; a relationship that is often overlooked or unappreciated in its complexity and importance (Ekström & Firmstone 2017; 7). I will use this relationship to establish why media visibility is important and why, it is visibility and not what is being said that is more pivotal to the success of a campaign. This will be followed by an examination of female candidates visibility in the media at present. Finally, I will use related literature to establish whether gender quota can be used as a means of increasing female candidates visibility in the media.

2.4.1 Mediated Politics

Mediated Politics describes the relationship between politics and the media as intertwined; the media presents a view of the world, reinforcing stereotypical views that can then influence the political realm (Bennett & Entman 2000; 2; Ross 2005; 60). To project a political message into the public sphere, politicians rely on a middleman who communicates their message from individuals to the public – namely the media (Payne 2012; 55). This creates a relationship where the realms of politics and the media are interdependent – the "news media needs stories and politicians need publicity" (Ross 2005; 60). This is reiterated by Ekström and Firmstone (2017; 7) who state, "Political performances take place in various media contexts. They are designed for media audiences, framed and interpreted in the media, and are therefore dependent on the discursive practices of media production."

The concept of *Mediated Politics* shows the pivotal impact the media has on public thought, opinion and on wider democratic process. The general population is only able to interact with politics at an arm's length therefore they rely on media sources to provide them information (Kahn 1994a, 155). Voters then learn much from the media (Weaver, 1996; 34). Television, newspapers and publicised debates are all valuable forums for voters to gather information about candidates (Weaver, 1996; 34). Mediated communication acts as a means of information dissemination, conversation starter and provides varying perspectives on social issues and "access to communication is one of the measures of power and equality in modern democracies" (Bennett and Entman 2000; 2,5). Therefore, "Communication can shape power and participation in society in negative ways, by obscuring the motives and interests behind political decisions, or in positive ways, by promoting the involvement of citizens in those decisions" (Bennett and Entman 2000; 2).

However, the relationship between the two is not always equal, as politicians are not always able to control the narrative, or frequency of their portrayal by the media (Trimble 2017; 9). The media hopes to produce readable content and will therefore select those issues it deems most important or "consumable" (Ross 2005; 71; Trimble 2017; 9). Therefore, the process of "mediation" can "transform events and issues into attention-grabbing accounts" and trivialise events (Trimble 2017; 9; Ross 2005; 71). This process of "framing" an issue or story can then simplify an issue an attempts to place these simplified narratives into that fit pre-existing assumptions, stereotypes and cultural norms (Entman 1993, 53; Trimble 2017; 9). Tabloids are often the most criticised for creating "politainment" which both sensationalises and simplifies politics and politicians reducing them to consumable content (Trimble 2017; 10-20). This uneven relationship gives the media the power to shape our beliefs and influence our society in a way citizens may not be directly aware of, resulting in them being more dominate in the media-politics relationship.

The media acts as a public agenda setting mechanism as well as providing a platform for the projection of thought and opinion regarding politics (Weaver, 1996; 37). This was first concretely established in the 1970's when it was suggested that the media

did not in fact determine *what* individuals thought, however did have a profound affect on what the public *thought about* (Gripsrud 2002; 43).

Importantly, the media also plays a role in the agenda setting of candidates (Weaver, 1996; 38-39). The media decides which characteristics to portray and how much to portray them (Weaver, 1996; 39). Print media consist of almost fifty per cent political, economic or governance-based stories which gives a large amount of space for these stories and provides space to build a public profile (Gallagher 2010 in Shor et al 2015; 964). As a result the media spends a large amount of its time setting the tone of political news by the selection stories and the framing that is broadcast (Lühiste and Banducci 2016; 223). Therefore the media can assist in furthering goals and airing demands of political movements (Payne 2012; 55). The media provides a platform for ideas to be disseminated and projected to the public. Such publicity can then translate into political momentum, which can propel a campaign forward (Payne 2012; 55).

Additionally, *Mediated Politics* can then be gendered (Trimble 2017; 9-10). The gendered turn in *Mediated Politics* suggests that the media perpetuates views that are in line with patriarchal structures (Ross 2005, 62; Trimble 2017; 9-10). When applied to politics, this will then mean the political space is continually portrayed as a space designated for men as men occupy the majority of political positions, leading to a "masculine" narrative (Gidengil & Everitt 2000; 572). Therefore the few female inclusions remaining will be classified "exceptions" (Trimble 2017; 10-20). This can seen as harmful for women, as it continues to apply historical gender structures to the present, creating a cultural barrier for women who wish to enter politics. They are deviating from the "traditional" role, and this could therefore lead to criticism.

The media often neglect to fully represent women and issues women care about, creating a critical hurdle for women to overcome (Ross 2005; 60). In creating our perceived world, the media provides society with "a perpetuation of a hegemonic worldview of male dominance" which thereby outlines the role and place of minorities, including women, and their status in society and thereby act as a means of both enforcing and reinforcing the status quo (McIntosh 2013; 99; Ross 2005; 62). Therefore, the media can serve as a means of confirming and reiterating dominant norms and values (Ross 2005; 62). This can often manifest in the mediated representation of gender, potentially aiding and abetting ingrained gender stereotypes and inequalities (McIntosh 2013; 99; Ross 2005). Further, as representation in the media acts as a means of legitimisation, if traditional roles and stereotypes isolate a minority, such as women, the media will continue to perpetuate these stereotypes and contributes to the continued isolation of this group. This hurdle, combined with the increasingly "mediated" world we reside in, creates an environment that may prove hostile for the political success of women (Thanikodi and Sugirtha 2007; 593-4).

Mediated Politics gives weight to the demand side factors that can affect electoral success of females. It further supports the arguments that suggest culture has long been seen as a determinative factor in female political participation being described as an "overwhelmingly powerful factor" (White 2006; 71, 81). Without the media's support and its platform, female politicians will struggle to have their voice heard and this could affect the numbers of females in parliament in the future. These cultural factors need adjusting to see substantial change in the numbers of women in parliament (White 2006; 71). Therefore, it is important to examine how sexism manifests in the media and how this can impact the visibility and also the viability of a candidate.

2.4.2 Visibility verses Viability: Sexism, the Media and Political Success

This section will examine how visibility and viability in the media can impact a candidate's campaign and how sexism can influence these two factors. Ultimately I will argue that sexism is undeniably present in the media, though it is not always a negative factor. In terms of viability, sexism can in some circumstances aid a campaign, however, when sexism impacts visibility, it can be detrimental.

Female candidates are subjected to various forms of media sexism that can affect their path into politics (Haraldsson & Wängnerud 2018; 2), including blatant sexist coverage (McCracken et al. 2018). Women's role, as portrayed in the media, often demand less authority, depict them as less capable, focus on domestic life and often sexualise the women present (McCracken et al. 2018; 7). The media may then negatively impact women, as it "distorts women's status in the social world" and does not portray them as role models (Tuchman 1979; 531).

In addition, women do not receive as much "issue" coverage when they are published instead receiving more "image" coverage (Kahn 1994b; 169). This, in some part, can be attributed to the media's perpetuation of stereotypes, with much of the focus on women's appearance or emotions stemming from the fact that these are, traditionally, seen as more feminine desires and means of expression (McIntosh 2013; 99). Women are they scrutinised for their fashion choices, hairstyles and emotion – or lack thereof – but it is often these aspects of their campaign that is focused on and described, as opposed to policy and aspirations (McCracken et al. 2018; 7; McIntosh 2013; 99; Clavero & Galligan 2010; 987). This can mean women's policy fail to gain the public attention when her fashion choices may, creating a frustrating scenario for female politicians.

However, media sexism may not always bode badly for female politicians in terms of viability (Kahn 1991). While women may face more sexist coverage in terms of a focus on the emotions, if these are "womanly" emotions, it may in factor work in the candidates favour. They can act as a means differentiating themselves from the crowd and create the image of a more "compassionate", "honest" or "caring" politician –

"womanly" aspects that have positive connotations (Clavero and Galligan 2010; 987; Kahn 1992; 506). This, when considered alongside Kahn's (1991, 1992, 1994a, 1994b) extensive research on female politicians and the media – which revealed that traditional media forms such as newspapers, often emphasise the "womanly" aspect of a female candidate – may in turn indicate that sexism, despite its problems, could work in favour of the candidate. Moreover, scholars have found that women actually receive greater positive coverage overall than male candidates (Kahn 1994a), which may stem from conforming to these sexist portrayals.

Contradicting this, there are arguments that suggest both sexist coverage and a lack of sexist coverage can affect the perception of female candidates. Women are subjected to coverage that often portrayed them in line with stereotypical beliefs; receiving descriptions of being "gentle", "modest" and "caring", as mentioned above (Clavero and Galligan 2010; 987). This can lead to them not being perceived as competent or string enough for politics. However, women are further held to a double standard as when an individual fails to conform to expected stereotypes they can then be perceived negatively (Bystrom et al, 2004; 10).

Some scholars take issue with this idea and have dismissed the proposal that voters will be swayed by the tone of coverage (Washbourne 2010; 103). They suggest there is an "active audience" who are not passive receptors to the views of a media broadcast. Instead it will be their personal attitudes and beliefs that determine whether or not these messages penetrate their thought (Abercrombie & Longhurst 1998 in Washbourne 2010; 103).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the portrayal, negative or positive, in line with sexist stereotypes or deviating from them, may not have a great impact. Audiences will use their pre-existing schema and beliefs to develop ideas, whatever the information presented to them. Visibility, on the other hand, can be detrimental to a campaign and therefore if sexism is preventing candidates from being visible in the media it can cause serious issues for a campaign.

Visibility is crucial as higher levels of media exposure result in greater likelihood of receiving votes as the candidates are more likely to be recognised by voters and subsequently more likely to be viewed as viable (Shields et al 1995; 415; Goldenberg & Traugott 1987; 332; Kahn & Goldenberg 1991a, 111). The ability of a candidate to be recognised by voters, by both their name and appearance, and the associations these factors have hold great influence. Those who appear more familiar have a greater chance of being elected (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 223). This could be attributed to the fact that voters are more likely to vote for a candidate they believe will win, therefore if media presence gives a candidate viability, it once again increases the chances that a voter will cast in favour of them (Kahn & Goldenberg 1991a, 111). Subsequently, a lack of local name recognition and relevant political experience will result in a lower chance of election success (White & Mariani, 2015;

216). Therefore, individuals who do not appear in newspaper, whether their coverage is positive or negative, can be perceived as less important or disregarded by voters and are less likely to receive their vote at the polling booth (Shor et al. 2015; 961).

Visibility can also both create and influence the voter's perception of a candidate through performative functions (Ekström & Firmstone 2017; 7), as "news coverage influences the pictures that people have of the candidates vying for political office" (Andina-Díaz 2006; 373). The importance of a candidate's image has also been emphasised as "people do not simply base their votes on ideological aspects, but rather take the professional qualifications, honesty, integrity or charisma of the candidates into account, when deciding for whom to cast their votes" (Andina-Díaz 2006; 353). While the media influences what voters learn and see about a politician it simultaneously gives voters criteria on which to base their decisions (age, birthplace, sex, etc.) and provides candidates with a platform to portray themselves. Through this platform, they can influence public opinion and "establish themselves as trustworthy" (Ekström & Firmstone 2017; 7).

When visibility in the media is not established voters are found to use gender as a way of filling information gaps that can often conform to stereotypes (Kahn 1992; 505). This can be problematic. If a voter receives inadequate information about a candidate, possibly because they are not featured in the media (Kahn 1992; 505), they will use their unconscious gender schema to create an opinion and evaluate candidates, which may conform to stereotypes that do not hold positive connotations. Therefore, in this case sexism is still present despite a lack of visibility. Therefore, one can argue that if the female candidate were present, they would at least have a chance to be presented in a manner that does not conform to sexist stereotypes.

Finally, media visibility can have very tangible benefits for a candidate. Greater media exposure has been found to result in increased campaign donations (Mutz 1995; 1035-40). Naturally, this would give candidates greater funding to increase advertising for their campaign and lead to even greater visibility.

To conclude, visibility proves to be more important to a political campaign than viability. This suggests that it is not *what* is being said, instead *if* you are being talked about that matters. While the saying "any publicity is better than no publicity for a politician" may have entered common thought, the literatures proves this to be true (Ross 2005; 64). The pivotal role that visibility has on the success of a political campaign is what makes it the focus of this research. It can be concluded that those candidates who do not appear in the media will be less likely to be recognised by constituents, will have less opportunity to voice their policies and opinions, will receive less funding and subsequently, will be less likely to be elected. This next section, therefore, will examine the visibility of female politicians and the impact that has on their electoral success.

2.4.3 Women and Media Coverage

The amount of media coverage received by female politicians – that is, whether they receive more or less than their male counter parts – is a debated topic amongst scholars. Initial studies found women receive less coverage and the coverage they do receive is more negative (Kahn & Goldenberg 1991b; 196). This was supported by further studies that show that despite women increasingly constituting a greater percentage of political players, they are still vastly underrepresented in the media (Shor et.al 2015; 960; Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 237-8). Contradictory to this, it has also been found that women actually receive more media coverage than men (Bystrom et.al 2004; 20). Additionally, others argue that both genders receive equal coverage though women's coverage is more likely to be negative (Rausch et al. 1999).

Despite these conflicting findings, the most recent Europe wide study – conducted by Lühiste and Banducci (2016; 225) – found that women are receiving less coverage consistently in a European context (Ross et al 2013; Lühiste & Banducci 2016). At its worst in Spain and Austria, female politicians receive approximately 5% of media coverage in the European election while accounting for approximately 40% (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 237-8). Overall they concluded that females receive 1.4% less coverage than male candidates (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 246).

This finding is in line with the results of the most recent Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) found that only 25.7% of people featured in the news are female (EP, 2018; 2). This number has been stagnant since 1995 (Macharia, 2015; 1). The GMMP found women make up only 16% of the people in politics and government stories across the world, the largest gender gap of all major topics (Macharia, 2015; 8). Women make up 26% of those featured in newspapers, and roughly 25% of individuals featured in social media tweets and news websites (Macharia, 2015; 8).

These findings echo statements from scholars who suggest that outside fields that are traditionally deemed "female", i.e education or health, women's voices will rarely be used as a voice of expertise (Beard 2015; 810). This is supported by statistics – only 18% of experts consulted on issues were women, thereby projecting an image that women to do not have the knowledge or authority to speak on issues (McCracken et.al, 2018; 21). Further, a recent EU report concluded that female candidates are less likely to appear in the news than male candidates; that women are also less likely to be quoted as sources; and that women are less likely to be consulted as experts (Baitlinger 2015; 579; McCracken et.al,, 2018; 21).

Additionally, the type of publication can also impact the portrayal of females. Larger newspapers are seen to be more professional and therefore are more likely to cover women more fairly than smaller tabloids (Kahn 1994a, 158). As previously noted, tabloids can also be more prone to sensationalising content for the consumer, which

could in turn mean it is more likely to conform to sexist portrayals (Trimble 2017; 10-20).

This can also have wider ramifications for women in society. If the media fail to feature female candidates as a result the public will not be aware of their presence and equally, they will not be aware that women do in fact occupy significant positions in society (Byerly & Ross 2006; 40).

It is important to note that some scholars have found support for a reverse causation, suggesting that women are underrepresented in the media due to their underrepresentation in politics and not due to a conscious choice by the media to underreport on women (Shor et al. 2015; 976). This is presented in the theory of a "paper ceiling", which is reflective of the "glass ceiling" often referenced when explaining women's participation in economic life (Shor et al. 2015; 960). The difference can be attributed to societal-level inequalities and media presence thereby acts as a means of social stratification (Shor et.al 2015; 960). Individuals who are mentioned in the media the most are almost exclusively male which reflects the amount of men that are in these higher positions (Shor et al. 2015; 969). It can then be concluded that the inequalities shown in media coverage manifest in the gender inequalities that can be observed in the workplace and that the prevalence of male names in the media can be attributed to external factors, or "the persistent dominance of men in top positions across various social categories" (Shor et al. 2015; 976). Therefore, they suggest gender imbalances in socio-economic participation are the greatest force in determining representation in the written press, suggesting the media does not have such a pivotal impact (Shor et.al 2015; 962). This is further supported by evidence that indicates that the presence of females in office, especially in top-level positions, will result in increased numbers of women being present in the media (Baitinger 2015; 588). News outlets support this theory and reject the idea that they do not cover female candidates. They have instead argued that it is a lack of female candidates (i.e. a lack of supply) that is the problem, and is not the fault of the media (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 107). Therefore, a focus on the political context may provide a better understanding of media representation than a focus on the media itself (Fowler and Lawless 2009, Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 227).

Additionally, it is worth noting that there have been suggestions that the underrepresentation of women provides female candidates with a unique marketing point, a factor they could use to gain greater political coverage (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 229). Similarly, it has been suggested that women can also choose to dress in a provocative manner to attract attention and attract attention quickly (Byerly & Ross 2006; 65). These unique selling points may in turn result in women garnering greater attention than their counterparts if they choose to capitalise upon them.

When considering the literature on media visibility and success alongside the underrepresentation of women in both the media and politics, conclusions can be

drawn regarding the relationship between the two. While it may be said that politics influences the media and not the reverse – as detailed in the "paper ceiling" theory – by the media persistently choosing only to cover those candidates that political parties put forward at the forefront of their campaigns, they encourage the perpetuation the preference of these candidates in future elections (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 249). This is further reinforced by the uneven relationship between politics and the media that is observed through *Mediated Politics* detailed in section 2.4.1. For this reason, the relationship between the media and the potential ramifications that emerge from underrepresentation should be addressed and solutions to this proposed. While the previous literature suggests that the imbalance "supply" of women can be somewhat rectified by the introduction of gender quota, it further begs the question; can gender quota also increase the media visibility of female candidates?

2.5 Quota's Influence on Media Representation

As we have already established the media forms an integral part of electoral success, and simultaneously is a means of perpetuating culture (see section 2.4.1-2.4.3). As women in Europe are still unrepresented in the media, it is presenting as a cultural barrier to their electoral success. Notably, there has been little scholarship that looks at how media representation of women can be influenced by artificial mechanisms, such as the introduction of quota. This section examines related literature to establish a hypothesis regarding this relationship.

Intuitively one would assume that great numbers of women running as candidates would result in greater numbers of women present in the media. However, the intuitive response may not be accurate. Studies examining the relationship between the introduction of party quota and the share of power women hold within a political party have found that women do not gain greater power with greater numbers (Verge & de la Fuente 2014; 76). Moreover, the introduction of quota has "been insufficient to significantly subvert the gendered pattern of participation and power relations" (Verge & de la Fuente 2014; 76). Similarly, it has been found that countries that introduced quota did not always see an increase in the number of female representatives that was proportionally greater than countries that did not introduce quota (Ruedin, 2012; 105). In these cases it is suggested that domestic culture may play a greater role than initially presumed (Ruedin, 2012; 105).

There has been evidence to suggest incumbents are more likely to receive greater media coverage than new candidates (Franklin 1993; 271; Kahn & Goldberg 1991b; 196). Those who have previously been elected already have a public profile, have proved themselves "relevant" to the constituency and have proved to be a viable candidate. Therefore, one could expect that in an environment where the majority of incumbents are male (as seen in much of Europe) those male candidates would therefore dominate the majority media coverage. Furthermore, it has been found when

an incumbent is female they receive less media coverage than their male counterparts, which also suggests that women are at a disadvantage even once they have been elected (Kahn 1994b; 178). It could also then be speculated that the introduction of more women, as one could expect with the introduction of quota and thereby an increase of women in politics, would not necessarily result in more women being visible in the media, however there is yet to be academic evidence.

In Lühiste and Banducci's (2016; 250) research, countries with legislated quota did not see greater media coverage than countries without quota. This suggests that societal norms and stereotypes may prevail despite attempts from the quota to intervene and that making the list as a candidate was not sufficient to warrant media attention (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 250). They suggest this could be particularly true in less progressive countries (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 250). However, it should be noted that Lühiste and Banducci's study only examined one election period and focused on the European elections. As European elections are often regarded as "second order" candidates may not be given the same press attention as national elections (Franklin 2006; Reiff and Schmitt 1980 in Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 232). Therefore, their results may not be applicable to national elections. Furthermore, by only analysing one year of elections, the lower numbers of women in the media that are seen in countries with quota could be attributed to cultural differences. Furthermore, the context in which quota were introduced was not examined. This raises the possibility that quotas were introduced in states that were attempting to rectify imbalances and therefore the media have not yet "caught up" with the changes.

In conclusion, while the current literature does not directly examine the relationship between the introduction of gender quota and media visibility, it does not paint an entirely positive picture. The literature would suggest that more women in politics will *not necessarily* result in greater visibility, as power structures and culture may cause women to still receive less coverage. However, the success of quota in general indicate that the positive ramifications may extend beyond the pure "supply" of female candidates and can break down the "demand" side barriers as they are so closely linked. Further, as news organisations have stated they would cover women if they were present (Norris & Lovenduski 1999; 115), it can be assumed that an increase in women will result in an increase in media visibility. However, this current uncertainty and the lack of research conducted on this topic only serves to reiterate the value of this thesis.

2.6 Interim Conclusion

This thesis argues that the most sexism a female candidate faces is not in fact the way they are portrayed, but whether they are visible at all. As noted in section 2.4.2 visibility in the media is pivotal to political success, and as it is now shown in section 2.4.3, women are failing to visible. Presence in the media legitimises women as noteworthy political actors as the media directly informs the voters about the presence

of politicians and their policy issues (Baitinger 2015; 588). As women are failing to receive this media attention, women are disadvantaged in political campaigns. Therefore, increasing the media visibility of women is key to achieving equality in politics. At present, the most widely used mechanism to achieve equality is gender quota. Support for quota is increasing and positive benefits are being observed – such as the presence of role models for aspiring candidates. However, there is yet to be convincing evidence in favour or against the effectiveness of quota on the media.

3. Hypotheses

This thesis seeks to find whether gender quota can have wider benefits that the most obvious increase in the supply of women. Specifically, it pursues a focus on the demand side factor of the media, and hopes to draw conclusions about the impact of gender quota on media visibility of female candidates potentially establishing a causal relationship that had, until now, been neglected by literature.

The literature, in combination with the concept of *Mediated Politics*, establishes media visibility as a crucial component of electoral success. Therefore, finding a means of increasing the underrepresentation of women in the media is crucial to improving their success in politics.

Through a thorough examination of previous literature and theory three hypothesis have been formed:

> **H1:** Female visibility in the media will increase with the introduction of gender quota

However, despite the hypothesised increased it is believed that;

> **H2:** Female candidates will receive less coverage in tabloid newspapers than in "quality" newspapers

And that, due to the fact that even with the introduction of quota women will often remain in the minority of candidates,

> **H3:** Female visibility will not equal that of male visibility

To test these hypotheses I will use two methods. I will focus on Ireland as a case study and firstly conduct a content analysis on newspapers from the 2011 and 2016 national elections. In addition to this, I will use expert interviews to contextualise my data and identify cultural factors that may otherwise be overlooked.

4. Methods

The previous section outlined the theoretical background and previous literature that led to my research question. Further, it emphasised the scientific relevance of this research. This section will describe how I seek to answer my research question, *to what extent do gender quotas affect media representation of female candidates in electoral campaigns?*

To answer this question this thesis pursues the methodological approach of both a content analysis and a series of expert interviews. To carry out these methodological approaches I chose Ireland as a case stud. Using Most Similar Design System, conducted a content analysis on three newspapers during a specific time period prior to the 2011 and 2016 national elections in Ireland. The intention is to see whether an increase in media visibility can be seen between the two elections, as Ireland introduced gender quota in 2012. In addition to the content analysis, a series of expert interviews with journalists and politicians were conducted to give contextual reference for the findings of the content analysis. From the combination of these two methods I hope to be able to draw valuable answers to my research question.

4.1 Ireland: A Case Study

4.1.1 Case Selection

The use of Ireland as a case study was well considered. Ireland, alongside Greece, introduced gender quota in 2012, making it one of the most recent European countries to introduce gender quota. Italy, which introduced quota in 2017, is the most recent. However, both Greece and Ireland still rank in the bottom 11 of European Member States in terms of equal representation (Eurostat 2019). Italy, on the other hand, has more than 30% representation, and has passed the threshold of critical mass, while Ireland and Greece still fall below this number (Eurostat 2019). If the number of women sits above the level of critical mass, this could suggest that changes in society could already be observed. Therefore, the low numbers of women in Ireland's Dàil again make for a good focus.

There are two criteria for quota to be effective. Firstly, for gender quota to be effective they must be enforced (Schwindt-Bayer 2009; 10-18). Ireland's gender quota is directly related to a political parties funding. If a party fails to present the minimum number of each gender, it will lose half of their state funding. Measures equal to this are not present in Greece or in Italy. Therefore, to gain a true insight into whether the media representation can be influenced by gender quota, functioning and effective gender quota must be in place – this is the case in Ireland. Secondly, for gender quota to be effective political parties must therefore also cooperate and place women in "winnable" seats (Brennan & Buckley 2017; 15; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; 10). Ireland's gender quota did not have a placement mandate, however, despite the

lack of mandate scholars have concluded that women were fairly placed in Ireland in 2016 (Brennan & Buckley 2017; 15). Equally, Ireland's legislated candidate quota also means that the competition between political candidates is still present (Dahlerup 2007; 84). As a result, all candidates will be competing equally for media attention. As a result, Ireland presented as the most fitting choice.

Ireland also presents as an ideal candidate for a case study, as implemented quota's on the number of women on party lists help to eliminate extraneous variables such as a lack of supply. Ireland has legislated gender equality quota and is one of only 10 countries in Europe that do so. The gender quota also assists in controlling for the "supply" side of the demand verses supply debate, ie. Party politics/list making, so the effect of media representation can be studied more easily.

Finally, the choice of a European country was made, as while there are many countries across the globe introducing gender quota, there is still a need for improvement within Europe – as demonstrated in the 30.7% average of women in politics. While there are other countries around the world that have implemented gender quota, for example Algeria, Cameroon and Chile (IDEA 2019), the fact that there are still such large inequalities in Europe means it is not necessary to stray outside the borders of the EU to find a fitting candidate for a case study. Further, as the EU hopes to be a leader in gender equality, it is important to see how these issues can be tackled in a European context, as these inequalities that persist in Europe must be fixed if the EU hopes to be a world leader in this realm.

In addition to the reasons listed above, Ireland also presents as a natural choice due to linguistic limitations. As I am only fluent in English, examination of non-English media would not be accurate and therefore is not feasible. The multilingual nature of the European Union can also make a content analysis difficult (Ekström & Firmstone 2017; 19). Attempting to compare news across cultures and without cultural context or understanding of the connotations of particular words or turn of phrase can lead to inaccurate conclusions. While the actual content of the articles will not be examined, many will have to be read to ensure they are referring to the desired politician and not a different individual of the same name. Therefore, the availability of media sources in English in Ireland allows for a thorough and accurate analysis.

4.1.2 The Context of Ireland's Gender Quotas

Ireland has long suffered with a chronic underrepresentation of women in its national parliament, the Dáil Éireann. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2019) Ireland ranks at number 86 in the world for the number of females represented in parliament. "Ireland has one of the worst parliamentary gender imbalances in the democratic world" (McGing and White 2012; 2), and while the percentage of women

in parliament has grown[5], the progress made has not been dramatic. Women still only manage to make up 22% of the Dáil Éireann; representing just 35 of the 123 members[6] (Women for Election 2019). Even with these increases, Ireland shows one of the greatest gender imbalances in a Europe.

Prior to 2011, Ireland had seen 30 years of cultural shifts (Buckley & McGing 2011, 222). Women had increasingly been participating in the labour force, had achieved higher levels of education, and these factors, according to research, should have aided women in their quest for electoral success (Buckley & McGing 2011, 222). Further, Ireland uses a proportional representation system with is also usually associated with positive effects for female candidates (Buckley & McGing 2011, 222).

Ireland introduced gender quota in 2012 making it the first state with a proportional representation by single transferable vote (PR-STV) electoral system to do so (Brennan & Buckley 2017; 17). The introduction of the quota followed the 2011 national election where just 15% of elected TD's were women (Brennan & Buckley 2017; 17). Following the introduction of the quota, there was an increase of 90% in the number of female candidates and 40% more females were elected when compared to the results of the 2011 elections (Brennan & Buckley 2017; 32).

The quota requires all parties to present a minimum of 30% of each gender[7] as candidates with a failure to do so resulting in a loss of 50% of government funding they are allocated under the 1997 Electoral Act (White & Mariani, 2015; 206).

Feminist scholars argue it is the patriarchal nature of Irish society has marginalised women's role in society, limiting them to roles in the private sphere and excluding them from politics (McGing & White 2012; 3). The cultural and religious environment of a country are often mentioned as a factor when examining women's success, with protestant countries seeing higher numbers of women in the labour market more generally which in turn lead to greater presence in office (Schwindt-Bayer, et.al 2010; 695). Due to the very Catholic underpinnings of Irish culture, one could also conclude that this a determining factor in women's underrepresentation in the country (Schwindt-Bayer, et.al. 2010; 696).

In addition to the cultural forces the electoral system that is operational in Ireland, namely the "single transferable" voting system, is often argued to affect the number of female politicians is the Ireland (McGing & White 2012; 4). The STV system is somewhat controversial and scholars are divided about its negative effects for female politicians (McGing & White 2012; 4). While it has also been said to be "generally accommodating" for female candidates, and it has been speculated that it could even assist female candidates in the future (White, 2006; 83), studies focusing on Ireland

---

[5] The Dáil Éireann held just 15.1% women at the time McGing and White (2012) was published.

[6] The 166 members of the Dáil are elected for terms of a maximum of 5 years.

[7] This will increase to 40% in the 2023 elections

have shown that female politician in the country are not advantaged by their gender, and are instead less likely to be elected (Galligan, et.al 1999). Other suggest that it's benefit depends on the country it is applied to, suggesting it is beneficial in Australia but detrimental in both Ireland and Malta (Schwindt-Bayer, et.al. 2010; 695).

While numerous studies have since analysed Irelands electoral quota, alongside their voting system and cultural context (eg. McGing and White 2012), they have failed to examine the potential impact the quota have had on the media. As Irish underrepresentation has been in part attributed to cultural forces (McGing & White 2012; 3), which can manifest in the media as established through the application of *Mediated Politics*, an examination of the media is warranted.

4.1.3 Methodological Benefits of a Case Study

A case study is valuable when answering my research question as the use of a case study allows for intense examination of an issue (Halperin and Heath 2016, 214). It allows for thorough analysis of cultural context. Furthermore the use of a case study, in combination with the Most Similar Design System, assists in keeping as many variables the same when comparing the 2011 and 2016 elections.

The use of a case study in this context will assist is potentially establishing a relationship that cannot be otherwise established (Yin 2009 in Halperin and Heath 2016, 215). A comparative method, such as the Most Similar Design System, applied to a case study is the most effective way of directly establishing a relationship between gender quotas and media coverage. A cross-country comparison could be clouded by cultural differences and thereby affect the validity of the results. By using a single case study, the results can then be compared to other countries and conclusions can be drawn as to whether it applies to a wider context.

A case study can also prove beneficial when variables of interest are present in a "special way" creating the basis for a "crucial experiment" (Naroll 1966 in Halperin and Heath 2016, 217). In this case, Ireland recent introduction of quota, and the financial penalties that exist for non-compliance with this quota make it a prime and relevant case to examine.

Furthermore, the use of a case study is a valuable resource for "a scholar with modest time and resources" while still "generate[ing] what may potentially be useful data on a particular case" (Collier 1993; 106).

4.1.4 Most Similar Design System

The most similar design system is a comparative research method. The use of a most similar system design allows for difference to be analysed and attributed to changing

factors – in this instance, the introduction of gender quota (Collier 1993; 105). By using this system a conclusion can then be draw as to the effect the introduction quota had on media representation, as – to the greatest possible extent – all other factors remained the same.

This thesis controls for numerous variables including the electoral system by using the MSDS, where the voting system remains the same before and after the introduction of the quota – leaving the quota as the independent variable and the dependent variable as media representation. Therefore, if the hypothesis is supported, any difference in media visibility (variable Y) can be attributed to the introduction of gender quota (variable X) in 2012 (Halperin and Heath 2016, 219). The selection of a small-N case should be based on the independent variable, ie. In this case based on the introduction of quota (Halperin and Heath 2016, 223). Therefore, the use of a MSDS, where it is only the independent variable that differs ensures this will be the case (Halperin and Heath 2016, 224).

A comparative method, involves the use of a minimum two observations however, the amount used is too few to constitute the use of a statistical analysis (Lijphart 1971), and therefore a statistical analysis will not be conducted.

4.2 Content Analysis

To examine media visibility of female candidates a quantitative content analysis will be conducted. A content analysis provides an unobtrusive method of collecting and analysing data (Halperin and Heath 2016, 345). This can therefore assist in reducing bias (Halperin and Heath 2016, 345).

4.2.1 Data Acquisition

For the purposes of this content analysis, the number of a) headlines and b) articles a candidates name appears in will be examined. This is done as both inclusion (in the article) and prominence (in the headline) in the news story is important (Trimble, 2007; 989-990). Three newspapers will be used to source the data (detailed in section 4.2.2). If a candidates name is mentioned more than once in an article it will not be counted multiple times.

The context of their name will only be examined to establish that the article is in fact about the political candidate, and not someone who shares the same name. Any greater context will not be examined, as this thesis aims to purely examine the visibility of these candidates, as visibility, outlined in section 2.4.2, is pivotal to electoral success and therefore the focus of this thesis.

4.2.2 The Selection of Newspapers

The newspapers chosen for analysis were *The Irish Independent*, *The Irish Times*, and *The Irish Sun*. These papers were chosen as they were among the the highest circulating newspapers[8] in both 2011 and 2016 in Ireland (NewsBrands 2019).[9] The largest circulating newspapers were selected as they, therefore, have the widest reach and as a result, potentially the greatest impact on voters (Kahn 1995; 24). Further, they can often provide more comprehensive stories and have space for greater coverage of different candidates (Kahn 1995; 24-26). The selected papers also provide comprehensive online search functions that allow for all articles during an election period to be made available.

Table 1. *Circulation of Chosen Newspapers 2011 and 2016*

	Circulation 2011 (Jan-June)	Circulation 2016 (Jan-June)
The Irish Independent	134,228	102,537
The Irish Times	100,951	72,011
The Irish Sun	79,893	60,689

Source: NewsBrands 2019

Furthermore, these three newspapers cumulatively represent two "reputable" newspapers and one "tabloid" news source. This format, of two reputable newspapers and one tabloid newspaper, is in line with the European Election Studies "Media Study 2009" and the "Longitudinal Media Study 1999-2009" (Shuck et al 2009; Banducci et.al 2009; Andres et.al 2009). These represent one of the largest European media studies in existence. These studies were also the basis for Lühiste and Banducci's (2016) research.

Newspapers are seen to be the media source that readers value the most and are granted the highest credibility and they remain "an important news source" in Ireland (Kiousis 2001; 381; OSCE 2007; 9). Traditional media sources are most trusted by Europeans, with 63% of respondents trusting print media and 73% of the Irish population (European Commission 2018b; 5-8).

4.2.3 Newspaper Political Leaning

The Irish Independent has been described as "right-wing populist" and has openly endorsed Irish centre right party Fianna Fáil (Euro-topics 2019; 1). *The Irish Times,* on the other hand, is a "liberal and outward-looking" newspaper (Brown 2015; 8-20),

---

[8] Excluding Sunday newspapers.

[9] *The Irish Sun* was not the highest circulating tabloid in 2011, The Irish Daily Sun was. The Irish Daily Star circulated to 80,349 people – Just 456 people more than The Irish Sun. In 2016, The Irish Sun however reached 6,744 more readers and was therefore chosen as the featured tabloid.

The Irish Sun, does not outwardly disclose it's political leaning, however it is owned by a conservative, "right-wing", "populist" (Kirkland 2007; 26).

4.2.4 Time Period Covered

In Ireland, a general election must follow the dissolution of the Dáil and must occur within 30 days of being called. Candidates are forbidden from erecting posters or signs more than 30 days before the election (Citizens Information Board, 2019). While some pre-campaigning does occur, and candidates are usually selected already, 30 days prior to the election date does still remain the "official" election campaign period (OSCE 2007; 3). Therefore, the dates listed in *Table 2* were used as the beginning and end of the search period for the content analysis.

Table 2. *Election Periods 2011 & 2016*

Year	Date of Election	Time Period Covered
2011	25 February 2011	26 January 2011 – 24 February 2011
2016	26 February 2016	27 January 2016 – 25 February 2016

The decision was made not to include the election date, as it is possible multiple news sources would be reporting on the winners of each consistency on that day thereby altering the accuracy of the results.

4.2.5 Constituencies

Three constituencies from Ireland's 40 were selected for analysis: 1) Dublin South-Central 2) Wexford and 3) Mayo. The three constituencies were selected purposefully as they are constituencies from a major city, urban centre and rural centre respectively. This was done as to achieve a sample that is as representative of the population as possible. Furthermore the constituency redrawing of 2013 did not affect these three constituencies. This will thereby ensure that the MSDS is as accurate as possible, leaving the introduction of quota as the only institutional difference.

4.2.6 Candidates

All the candidates that ran in the 2011 and 2016 elections in the chosen constituencies were used for the purposes of the content analysis. A full list of the candidates can be viewed in Appendix I-XVIII. By focusing on political candidates and not just those elected, an analysis of the process from the beginning can be conducted. Without looking at earlier phases certain trends may be overlooked (Haraldsson & Wängnerud 2018; 4).

4.3 Expert Interviews

To support the data provided through the content analysis, semi-structured expert interviews were conducted. They were conducted with a range of individuals including Irish politicians and journalists. These interviews aimed to obtain detail specific answers and specialised information. The interviews hope to create a larger range of data and thereby increase the validity of the study. Furthermore, the use of expert interviews provides this research with additional depth of knowledge and possible clarity for findings that might appear contradictive or require insider knowledge. Due to their close connection to the research focus, the selected experts opinions are valuable for contextualising the findings of the content analysis.

The aim was to speak to Irish politicians and journalists. Multiple politicians and journalists, both male and female, from various positions on the political spectrum were contacted. While many of those who were reached out to declined or failed to response, seven high quality interviews were still obtained. Despite this, the interviews hope to provide substantial answers that add value to the data found through the content analysis.

4.3.1 Participants

A total of five individual politicians were interviewed. All of who were women. While men were also contacted, the only responses that were received were from women. Equally, while multiple journalists were contacted, only one response was received – from a male.

4.3.2 Format of the Interviews

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format. The interviewees were asked a common set of semi-structured questions, in order to elicit specific information (Halperin and Heath 2016, 290), based on the theoretical framework. An interview guide (see Appendix XX and XXI) was prepared and consisted of 10-11 questions. The guide outlined a list of areas to be covered to ensure each interview was of similar value (Halperin and Heath 2016, 290). The format of a semi-structured interview then allowed for follow up questions that could probe for answers of greater relevance to the research question (Halperin and Heath 2016, 285). Closed questions were avoided where possible allowing the interviewee to form their argument and substantiate their answers and to attain comprehensive, insightful responses. The combination of structured and unstructured questions as well as follow-up questions allow for more detailed information to be disclosed and points to be clarified, thus providing more valid data (Halperin and Heath 2016, 289).

All of the interviewees were provided with the questions prior to the interview as all requested them. While preferences were made to have a phone conversation, the busy

schedules of the interviewees meant that this was not always possible. Therefore, three of the six responses were conducted via email, and it was agreed that follow up questions could be sent through to them if clarity was needed, or further questions came from their responses (Halperin and Heath 2016; 290).

Interviewees who were interviewed over the phone were informed that the interviews were being recorded and their consent was acquired. They were made aware of the level of confidentiality; what would happen with the obtained information; that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason and that published quotes would not identify them or the company or party they were affiliated with (Halperin and Heath 2016, 308).

All interviews were conducted in July and August 2019. The interviews were all conducted in English.

4.3.3 Coding of Interviews

When analysing the interviews the decision was made not to code the responses. As the interviews were designed to add context to the findings of the content analysis, simplifying the results into a coding scheme risks oversimplifying the results and losing the desired context. Therefore, quotes from the interviews will be used alongside the results of the content analysis and transcripts are available (see Appendix XXII-XXVII).

4.4 Methodological Limitations

Despite the value this thesis contributes to the field of mediated politics, gender studies and media studies, there are limitations that must be acknowledged.

4.4.1 Application to Other Cases

Firstly, while Ireland presents as an interesting an important case, and the findings can been seen as a valuable contribution regarding the affects gender quota may have, the findings for Ireland may not be able to be generalised and extended to the whole of Europe. Findings from case studies, while valuable in themselves, should be applied to other scenarios with a degree of caution (Halperin and Heath 2016, 215). The cultural differences, quota variations and various level of female representation in parliament present a difficulty in extending these findings to a wider setting. These results can only be applied to the investigated election period and may not even be generalised to different elections within Ireland, or different types or levels of elections eg. Local, national and European elections. Further research is required to determine whether this applies to other constituencies within Ireland and/or other

countries across Europe and the world. For greater validity, these results should be tested in other countries (Halperin and Heath 2016, 215).

It should also be noted that the STV system and constituencies that are present in Ireland are somewhat unique. This could also limit the application to other cases for direct comparison. However, the results from this study can still serve as an important starting point for further research into the effect of gender quota on media visibility.

4.4.2 Different Types of Media

This research is also specific to newspaper reporting and does not examine other types of media outlets, e.g., Television, Radio and Social Media. As newspapers are part of the "old" media, they may not be as applicable to "new" media platforms. Equally, these results may also differ between old media sources.

4.4.3 Limitations of Interviews

The interviews also come with some limitations. While the subjects will not know the exact scope of research question, there is the chance that respondents will give answers they expect the interviewer would like. All interviewees asked for questions to be provided beforehand, therefore this may also result in answers being more constructed. While interviews can provide greater insight and context, it should also be noted that individuals could enter interviews with bias and perceived ideas of what answers the interviewer desires (Halperin and Heath 2016, 345). Individuals are prone to giving "socially acceptable" answers and answers they believe will reflect positively on them and may not accurately reflect their own views (Halperin and Heath 2016, 345). Despite being told the interviews would remain confidential, and names would not be disclosed, this may be particularly apparent in this thesis as are all those interviewed posses a public profile.

Furthermore, it is assumed that all those interviewed possess the same amount of knowledge about the topic, but this may not be the case.

Finally, as the research seeks to explore changes that occurred between 2011 and 2016, the questions will be retrospective. As a result memories may have faded, or more recent trends in Irish society (events that have occurred since 2016) may influence the answers the candidates give even when they are asked about this specific timeframe.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Results of the Content Analysis

Figure 1.

Percentage of Male/Female Candidates by Consituency
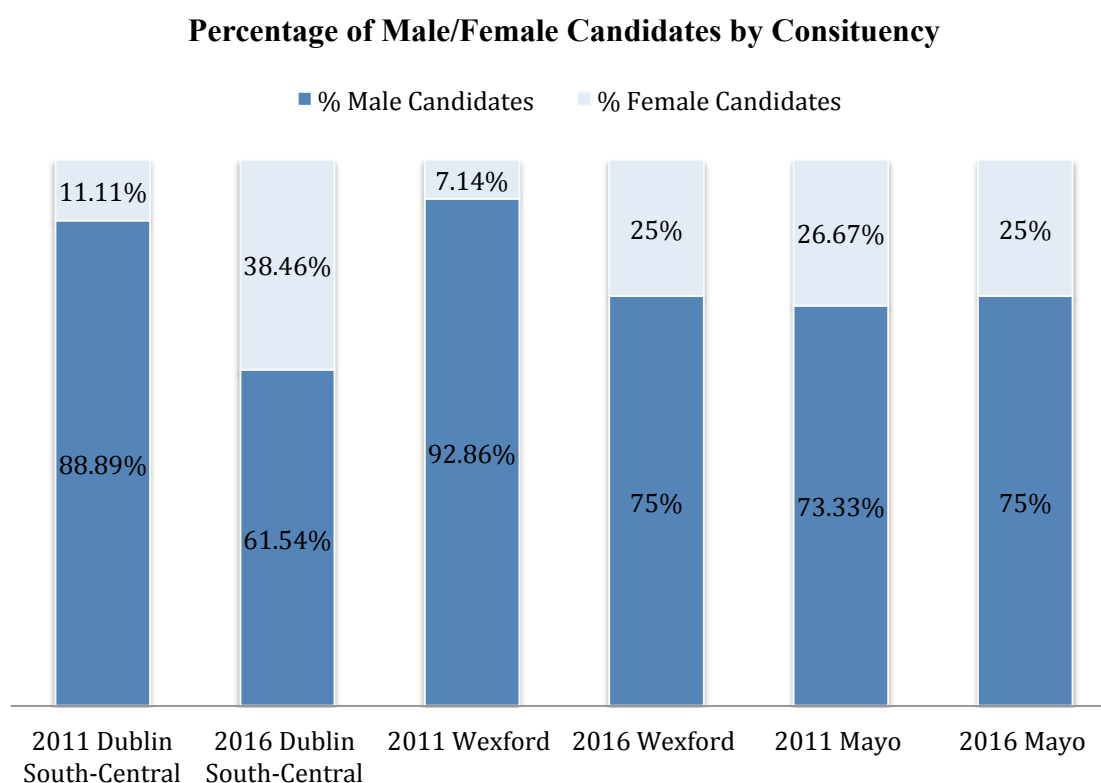
Two of the constituencies – Dublin South-Central and Wexford – showed an increase in the percentage of female candidates that ran in 2016 when compared to 2011. There was a particularly large increase in Dublin South-Central (27.35%). Mayo saw a slight decrease in the percentage of female candidates, from 26.67% to 25% of candidates. These figures are included to contextualise the increases in media coverage, as it is hypothesised that with more female candidates, more media visibility will result (see chapter 2). Therefore these should be viewed alongside any changes that may occur.

Table 3. *Changes in Coverage of Female Candidates Between 2011 and 2016*

	The Irish Independent	The Irish Times	The Irish Sun
DSC. Headlines	Increase	Increase	No change
DSC. Articles	Increase	Increase	No change
Wex. Headlines	Increase	No change	No change
Wex. Articles	Increase	Increase	No change
Mayo Headlines	No change	No change	No change
Mayo Articles	Increase	Increase	No change

40

The initial results show there has been an increase in the visibility of female politicians in the media, particularly in the number of mentions in articles while an increase in headlines was not as frequent, only changing in one constituency – Dublin South-Central, which was also the constituency that saw the greatest increase in female candidates (see Figure 1).

The Irish Independent saw increases across the all categories and constituencies, with the exception of mentions of female candidates in headlines in Mayo. *The Irish Times* also saw increases in article mentions for all constituencies, however saw no change in Wexford or Mayo for the number of headlines received by females. *The Irish Sun* saw no change in any constituency. No constituency, in any paper, saw decreases in female visibility.

Table 4. *Gender that Received the Greatest Coverage in 2016*

	The Irish Independent	The Irish Times	The Irish Sun
DSC. Headlines	Females	Females	No data
DSC. Articles	Females	Females	No data
Wex. Headlines	Males	Males	No data
Wex. Articles	Males	Males	No data
Mayo Headlines	Males	Males	No data
Mayo Articles	Males	Males	No data

Despite the increases, Males still dominated the press in all but one constituency – Dublin South-Central.

The following sections provide an in-depth break down of each newspaper by constituency. When looking at each constituency, three types of data are presented to help with the analysis, the percentage of headlines/articles that are to male/female candidates, the average number of headlines/articles a candidate received and the median number of headlines/articles received by candidates.

5.1.1 Irish Independent

The Irish Independent saw increases in female visibility all but one category – the number of headlines in Mayo.

5.1.1.1 Dublin South-Central

Figure 2.

**Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Independent of Male/
Female Candidates in Dublin South-Central**
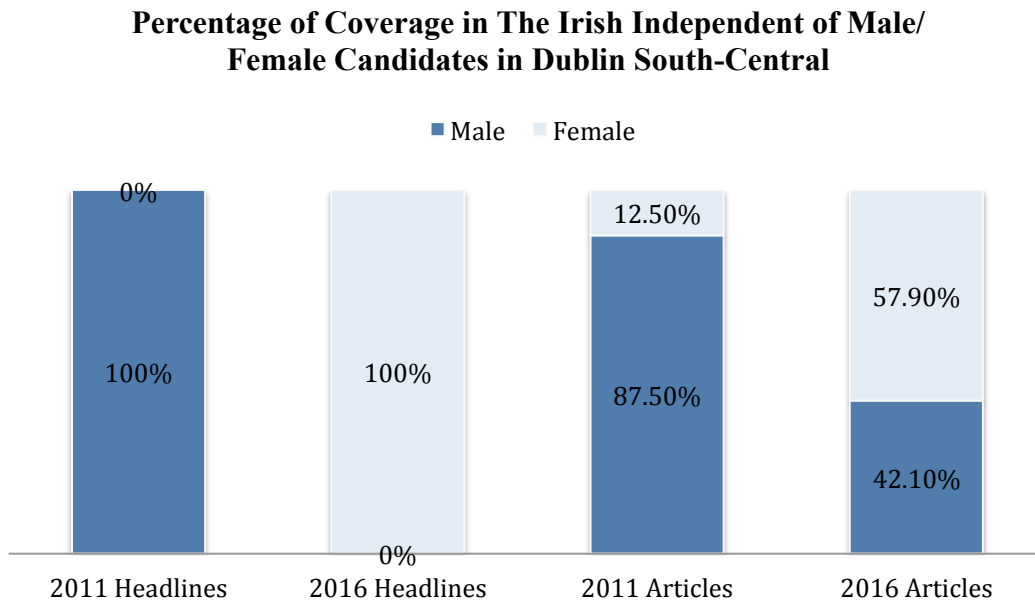
In *The Irish Independent,* the Dublin South-Central constituency saw an increase of both the number of female names mentioned in headlines and the number of female candidates mentioned in the news articles. This increase in media presence was larger than the increase in candidates.

The number of article mentions did show that there was a sizable increase in the number of articles a female candidate was mentioned in from 2011 to 2016, with female candidates receiving 57.9% of coverage. This is supported by the median and average as listed in Table 5 and Table 6. In particular, the average number of times a female candidate was mentioned in an article rose from 2.5 times to 5.8 times.

In the 2011 election a male received both the most headlines and article mentions, while in 2016 a female topped both categories (see Appendix II).

Table 5. *Median Coverage Levels of Dublin South-Central Candidates in the Irish Independent*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	0	1
2016 Male	0	1
2011 Female	0	2.5
2016 Female	0	4

The median coverage in articles was higher for females in both years, and increased for women between 2011 and 2016, but did not change for men between the two elections.

Table 6. *Average Coverage Levels of Dublin South-Central Candidates in The Irish Independent*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	0.1	2.2
2016 Average Males	0	2.625
2011 Average Females	0	2.5
2016 Average Females	0.6	5.8

The average number of headlines decreased for males and increased for females between 2011 and 2016. This was true also for articles. Females also had a higher average of articles in both years and a higher average of headlines in 2016.

5.1.1.2 Wexford

Figure 3.

Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Independent of Male/ Female Candidates in Wexford
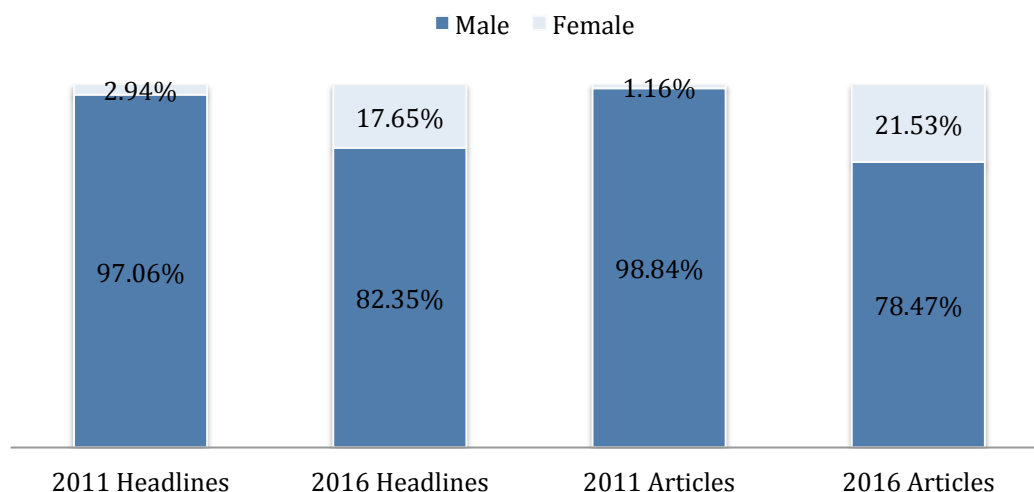
Wexford's results showed an increase in both the percentage of headlines a female received and the percentage of articles they were mentioned in, increasing by 14.1% and 20.37% respectively. There were also large jumps in the median and average coverage of female candidates (from 3 to 15, and 3 to 17.4). These numbers are not dissimilar to the increase in female candidates (from 7.14 to 17.86%).

Table 7. *Median Coverage Levels of Wexford Candidates in the Irish Independent*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	1	22
2016 Male	1	21.5
2011 Female	1	3
2016 Female	0	15

43

However, the median number of articles would show that women were still receiving less coverage. Furthermore, a male received the most mentions in headlines and articles in both 2011 and 2016 (see Appendix IV).

Table 8. *Average Coverage Levels of Wexford Candidates in The Irish Independent*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	2.5	19.6
2016 Average Males	1.3	28.8
2011 Average Females	1	3
2016 Average Females	0.6	17.4

5.1.1.3 Mayo

Figure 4.

Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Independent of Male/ Female Candidates in Mayo
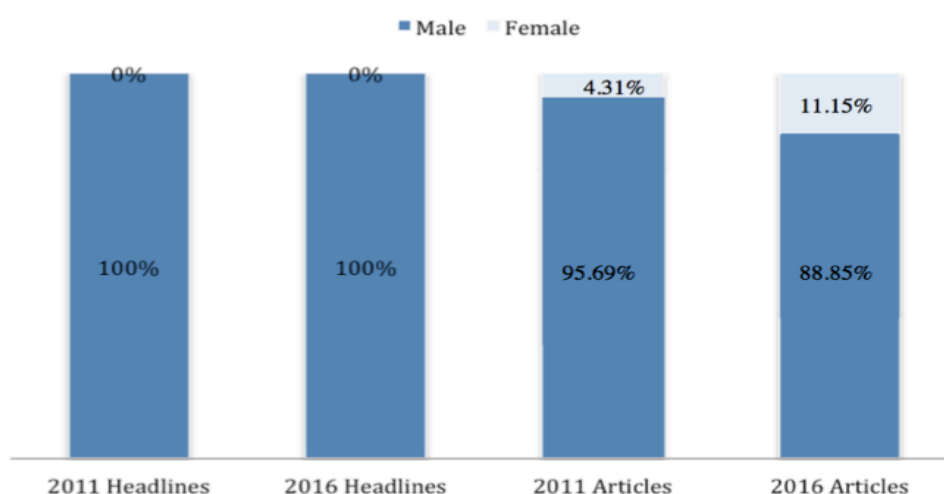
Between 2011 and 2016, males received 100% of the headlines.[10] However, the percentage of articles women were mentioned in did increase. Mayo, despite having a decrease in the number of female candidates, saw an increase in the percentage of headlines received by female candidates, with an increase of 6.48%. Both median coverage levels and average coverage levels rose for women. The average number of

---

[10] It should be noted that Mayo was the constituency of now former Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Enda Kenny. Kenny served as Taoiseach from 2011-2017, which meant he received a disproportional amount of media coverage. However, as he was present in both the 2011 and 2016 elections, the Most Similar Design System controls for his presence. It should still be kept in mind when viewing the results for Mayo.

articles male candidates appeared in decreased, however males still received more visibility than female candidates.

Table 9. *Median Coverage Levels of Mayo Candidates in the Irish Independent*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	0	2
2016 Male	0	1
2011 Female	0	2
2016 Female	0	8.5

Furthermore, the median number of articles candidates appeared in shows that a regular male candidate received less attention that female candidates. The median level of headlines for men and women was 0. Males saw a decrease in the median number of articles and females saw an increase

Table 10. *Average Coverage Levels of Mayo Candidates in The Irish Independent*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	1.9	24.4
2016 Average Males	2.4	20
2011 Average Females	0	2.2
2016 Average Females	0	7.5

Females in Mayo did not see any increase is the average number of headlines they received however there was an increase in the average number of article mentions (from 2.2 in 2011 to 7.5 in 2016).

A male received the first and second highest number of mentions in both headlines and articles (see Appendix VI).

5.1.2 The Irish Times

The Irish Times saw increases in the number of females mentioned in articles across all three constituencies. There was only an increase in headline mentions in Dublin South-Central, however all three constituencies showed low numbers of candidates names being mentioned in headlines whether they were male or female (see Appendix VIII).

5.1.2.1 Dublin South-Central

Figure 5.

Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Times of Male/Female Candidates in Dublin South-Central

■ Male ■ Female

	100%	36.36%	79.16%
		63.64%	20.84%
0%	0%		
2011 Headlines	2016 Headlines	2011 Articles	2016 Articles
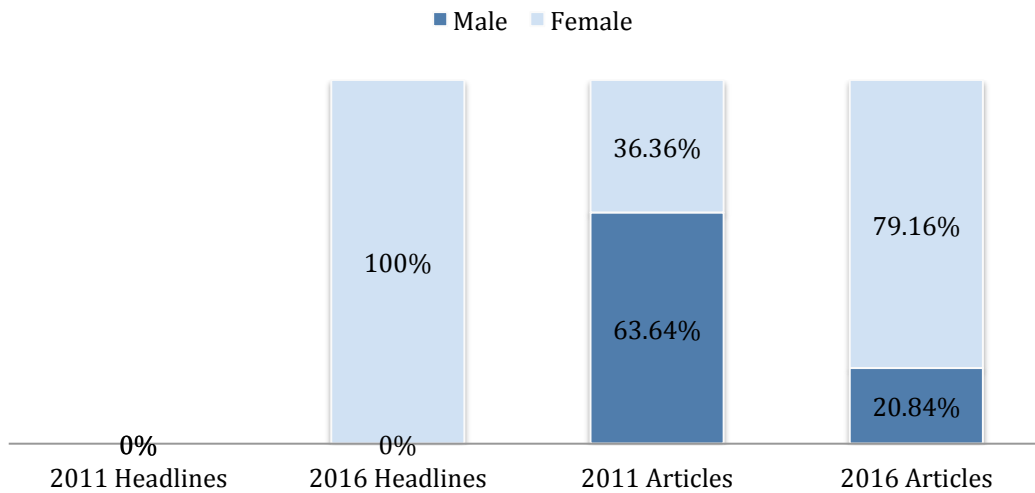
Male candidates were not detailed in any headlines in 2011. Female candidates received 100% of the headlines in 2016, compared to 0% in 2011. A large increase was seen in the number of article mentions for female candidates from 2011 to 2016, with an increase of 27.28%. The increase in article mentions was reflective of the percentage of female candidates that were represented. However this number is not as substantial when viewed alongside the mean and average number of headlines, which remained at 0.

The percentage of article mentions, average coverage and the mean coverage all showed increases for female candidates from 2011 to 2016. This coverage was disproportionate to the number of female candidates, and females received more media coverage than their male counterparts.

Table 11. *Median Coverage Levels of Dublin South-Central Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	0	0
2016 Male	0	0
2011 Female	0	2
2016 Female	0	2

The median coverage levels remained the same for both genders in both years.

46

Table 12. *Average Coverage Levels of Dublin South-Central Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	0	0.4
2016 Average Males	1.1	0.6
2011 Average Females	0	2
2016 Average Females	0	3.4

The average number of headlines and articles mentions for male candidates increased between 2011 and 2016. The average number of headlines for a female candidate did not increase while the average number of articles a female candidate was mentioned in did.

Two men and one woman were tied for the number of mentions in an article. In 2016, it was a female who topped both headlines and article mentions (see Appendix VIII).

5.1.2.2 Wexford

Figure 6.

Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Times of Male/Female Candidates in Wexford
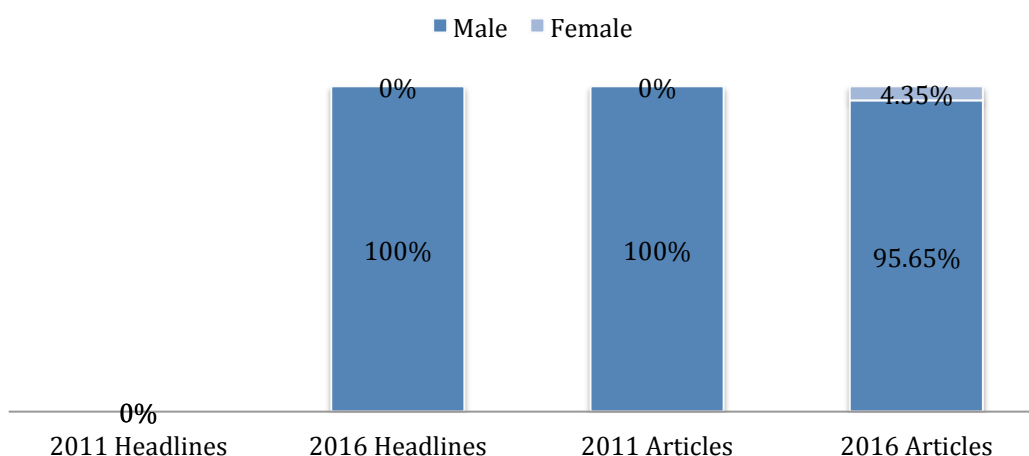
No Wexford candidate made headlines in 2011, male or female. Male candidates received 100% of the headlines for Wexford candidates in 2016. Female candidates received a slightly higher percentage of coverage in news articles in 2016 (an increase of 4.35%).

Table 13. *Median Coverage Levels of Wexford Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	0	0
2016 Male	0	0
2011 Female	0	0
2016 Female	0	0

The median levels of coverage show that many candidates received no media coverage in *The Irish Times*.

Table 14. *Average Coverage Levels of Wexford Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	0	1
2016 Average Males	0.6	6
2011 Average Females	0	0
2016 Average Females	0	0.6

In Wexford there was only a small increase in female visibility – seen in the number of article mentions. There was no increase in the number of females mentioned in headlines.

Two males were most visible in articles in 2011, and a single male received the most mentions in the 2016 election period. No candidate received any mentions in the 2011 headlines and a male topped the number of mentions in the 2016 election (see Appendix X).

Males received 100% of the headlines in 2016, while both males and female candidates in Wexford had failed to make a headline in 2011. While males did see an increase the average number of headlines received by a male this number sat at only 0.63, suggesting that male candidates were not receiving many headlines more than females, despite having 100% of the coverage.

There was only a small increase in the number of article mentions female candidates received (4.35%), and this did not match the increase in the number of female candidates (17.86%).

Figure 7.

Percentage of Coverage in The Irish Times of Male/Female Candidates in Mayo
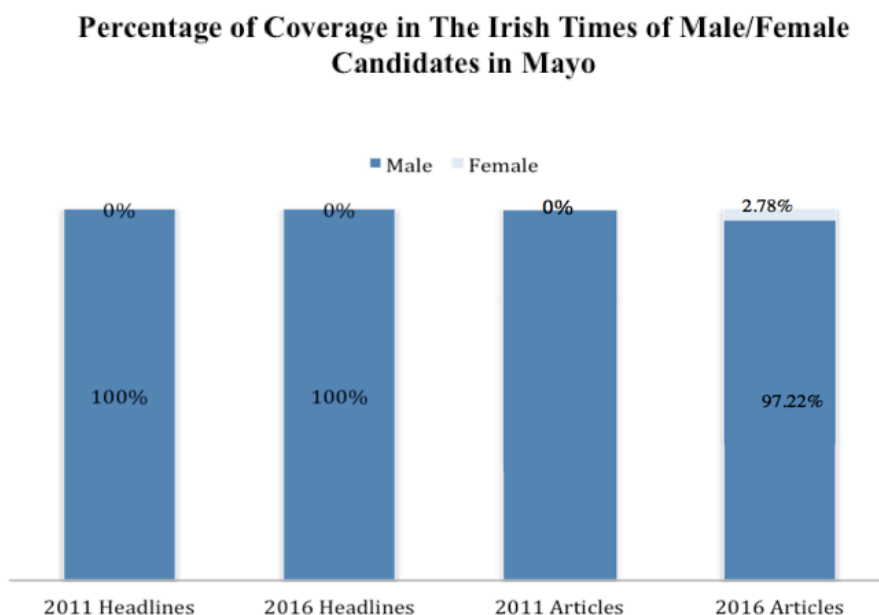
The percentage of headlines that featured women did not increase, however there was an increase in the percentage of articles females were mentioned in articles by a small margin (2.78%).

Male candidates in the constituent of Mayo received greater media attention than females. They received 100% of headlines in 2011 and 2016 and 100% of articles in 2011. There was a small increase of 2.78% of media coverage that then went to female candidates in 2016.

Table 15. *Median Coverage Levels of Mayo Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headlines	Article
2011 Male	0	0
2016 Male	0	0.5
2011 Female	0	0
2016 Female	0	3

The median number of headlines did not increase for males or female, but an increase was seen in the median number of articles for both sexes. The increase was greater for women (0.5 for men and 3 for women).

Table 16. *Average Coverage Levels of Mayo Candidates in the Irish Times*

	Headline	Article
2011 Average Males	0.8	4.9
2016 Average Males	3.59	29.1
2011 Average Females	0	0
2016 Average Females	0	2.5

The average number of headlines increased for males, but remained at 0 for women between 2011 and 2016. The average number of article mentions for males saw a large jump. There was also an increase for women, but not to the same extent.

Males received the most mentions in both articles and headlines in 2011 and 2016 (see Appendix XI and XII).

5.1.3 The Irish Sun

The Irish Sun presented a unique case as no candidate – male or female – was mentioned during the 2011 or 2016 election period. Therefore, no results are available (see appendix XIII – XVIII).

5.1.4 Hypotheses

From the results, highlighted in Table 3, it can be seen that media visibility did largely increase with the introduction of gender quotas as predicted by H1. It can be seen however that visibility in articles was much easier to increase that visibility in headlines.

H2 proved to be inconclusive, *The Irish Sun* failed to feature any political candidates in 2011 or 2016. Therefore, further analysis of other tabloid newspapers is required to confirm/deny this hypothesis.

As seen in Table 4, Females in Dublin South-Central received greater numbers of headlines and of article mentions than their male counterparts in both *The Irish Independent* and *The Irish Times*. This went against the hypothesised outcomes in H3 However, in both Mayo and Wexford; males did receive higher press coverage than females. Therefore H3 can be proved. However, this highlighted a potential city/urban/rural divide that warrants further research.

5.2 Analysis

The section will analyse the results of the previous section alongside the data gathered throughout the expert interviews. Here the interviews will be used to contextualise the findings of the content analysis.

5.2.1 The Power of the Media and its Value

Almost all those interviewed saw the media as vital to a campaign. Interviewee 3 identified "Media, both traditional print and broadcast and social media" as "very important". Others described the media as "pivotal", "integral" and a profile raising mechanism. It was described as "the best way to reach the largest possible number of people". However, Interviewee 4, when asked how the media influenced their campaign, responded "hardly at all" and also said they barely interacted with the media.

Interviewee 6 reiterated what had been said in the literature stating "The media sets the agenda, and the media can decide what is the big campaign issue in the run up to a general election". This supported the agenda setting mechanism the media hold and also provided evidence of the uneven relationship (Weaver, 1996; 38-39). This was particularly poignant as it was from the only interview with a journalist. The response indicates that those in the media are aware of the imbalance and of the power they hold.

The importance of culture, and the media as an extension of this, was also identified as a barrier for women. When talking about barriers for women, interviewee 1 responded, "It is the culture. And the hardest thing to change is the culture. If you were to ask me what the biggest barrier for women in Irish politics is, it's the culture and trying to change that... And this manifests in the media. There is a lot of lazy journalism. The media could decide tomorrow, "Right, we are really going to listen to women in politics and we are going to report the substance of what they say, in whatever speech or contribution they're making." Or are we are going to continue to comment on their looks and what they wear. Silly things."

One of the most interesting comments of culture came from interviewee 5 who said, "In Ireland we have these "c's" and one of them is "cash", women don't have the "cash". One is "confidence", and the others "culture", "childcare" and "candidate selection". They're the barriers for women. Everyone talks about it in Ireland. But there is also another one, it's the four "g's". "Geography", "gender", "genetics" – that's family connections – and, this one is quite interesting - the "GAA". Now the GAA, that's the sporting organisations. That's the big one in Ireland. If you're a member of the GAA, which men are and women aren't really, they'd be looking at you wondering why you were coming to sign up. But you're looking at all this

support within the sporting organisation, to get votes before you even start." This statement suggests that culture may have an even greater influence in Ireland than first believed. This is not to say that informal networks of power, such as the GAA, are not present in other countries, however could also mean that the media does not have as much power in Ireland as in other countries.

Interviewee 1 also highlighted the difference between national and regional media, suggesting local exposure is more valuable. This could be, in part, attributed to the political system of constituencies, and therefore, may mean the national papers that were examined are not always as pivotal as anticipated.

5.2.2 Acceptance of Quota

While the results of the content analysis seem to indicate the introduction of quota has had a positive impact on media coverage of female candidates, mixed results were seen in the interview responses. While one respondent, Interviewee 5, said "one of the greatest shifts [in Irish politics] has been the introduction of gender quota" Interviewee 1 questioned the effectiveness of the quota overall stating, "I don't think quota have impacted politics here. It's too soon to tell. Too soon to make a proper evaluation of the impact of quota." demonstrating this dichotomy. Interviewee 1 continued, "I think there has been a push but there has also been a pull effect. So there has been a push but there has also been a push against it. And it has caused a lot of conflict within parties where female candidates have been selected over male candidates to fulfil the quotas." This has, in their opinion had "a negative effect in terms of bullying and negative behaviours towards women who have been selected to run." Further, Interviewee 3 said they "think that gender quotas have brought the issue of women in politics to the fore, however, I am not convinced that the quotas have succeeded in seeing more women elected as ultimately every candidate, both female or male is at the mercy of the electorate." This statement emphasises the need to address demand side factors, as supply on it's own is not enough to change number of political representation.

The idea that quota were perceived as a "necessary evil" (Interviewee 6) was also suggested by more than one interviewee, a sentiment that was echoed in the literature. Interviewee 2 said that, "In an ideal world, we wouldn't need gender quotas however we do not live in an ideal world. Sometimes, targeted measures such as this are necessary to bring about gender parity at a faster rate than would otherwise be the case."

Despite this, they have been accepted. This helps to validate Ireland as an appropriate choice for a case study, as acceptance would suggest that they have been implemented fairly, which increases the validity of this study.

5.2.3 The Increased Visibility of Female Candidates

Generally speaking, the results support claims that the media will cover female candidates if they are present, sometimes even more so than their male counterparts. The results for *The Irish Independent* in Dublin South-Central do show that the increased number of female candidates did result in greater media coverage of female candidates, so much so that their coverage was disproportionate to the percentage of female candidates in the constituency. This was also true for the constituency of Mayo. As indicated in the literature, this increased visibility should have positive benefits for the candidates and should therefore, no matter the context, be celebrated.

As this coverage is greater than the increase in the number of candidates, it is not in line with proposed theories of the "paper ceiling", as then numbers that more closely reflect the descriptive representation of women would have been seen. This additional coverage could instead support the literature that suggests females get more coverage (Bystrom et.al 2004; 20), that they possess unique selling points (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 229), and/or that they receive additional scrutiny (Haraldsson & Wängnerud 2018; 2-10). For example, Interviewee 6 presented an alternative explanation for the increased visibility. They suggested that women get "more coverage if their placement on an election ticket has been the subject of some controversy or there has been some dispute at the selection convention – that can often mean that there is more coverage of them by virtue of that, for that reason." As the context of the candidate's campaigns was not examined, this could also explain the increased numbers, or may skew the results in some constituencies. This extra attention, one could assume, may not be entirely positive.

However, this conclusion is contradicted in the results for *The Irish Times* in the constituency of Wexford. Here, the number of female candidates increased by 17.86% but only an increase of 4.35% was seen. This may then indicate that there is a city/urban/rural difference, however greater research should be conducted to draw conclusions.

When examining Figure 2 for Dublin South-Central it would initially seem that the introduction of quota had seen a complete overhaul in the number of headlines female candidates received. However, when viewed alongside Table 5 and Table 6, it can be seen that, males or female, candidates received very little headlines, with the average headline received by a candidate being 0.2307 mentions. Therefore, while percentages may indicate that there was a great shift, the mean and median help to contextualise these figures and suggest the shift was not as notable as it appears.

However Dublin South-Central was still the constituency with the largest increase in the number of women, reaching 38.46% representation of female candidates. It was also the only constituency to see an increase in the number of headlines that female's appeared in, in both newspapers. This could be associated to the large increase in

female candidates. Notably, Dublin South-Central was the only constituency where women's representation surpassed critical mass. This could therefore indicate that an increase in headline mention was a result of female candidates passing the number of critical mass (30%), presenting an interesting direction for future research.

In addition, in The Irish Times and The Irish Independent showed unexpected results in Mayo. Here, a decrease in female candidates was seen, but an *increase* in news coverage. This could indicate a bigger societal shift that proved to bolster the profile of female candidates. This once again could indicate the women posses a unique selling point or could suggest that women were the subject of controversy (as previously mentioned) and therefore received greater attention.

Only one of those interviewed (Interviewee 2) felt that media attention of women had increased since the introduction of quota stating, "As the number of female politicians has increased, we have seen an increase in the number of female politicians covered in the media. I hope this will be inspiring for all young people, but particularly young girls, who may find role models for future political careers of their own!" In this response, the Interviewee also identified the positive benefits of having women in politics. Furthermore, the journalist interviewed (Interviewee 6), suggested as claimed in the literature, that the media would cover any candidate if they were running and seemed viable.

Interviewee 1 said: "in terms of take up by the media, they are likely to take the sound bytes rather than serious political discussion or academic discussion. And men tend to be very good at the sound bytes or at least better than women." This could indicate that these small sound bytes are what the media desire, and if men are providing them, this could explain the greater representation of men in the media.

Interviewee one also identified an aspect of media interaction that had not yet been considered – media networking. She indicated that "men can be better at building the relationships with the media – doing the schmoozing if you like...Where women tend to be busier and concentrating more on their job and all of that. So the informal network can have an impact on it and I think the informal networking is better done by men".

5.2.4 The Lack of Representation in Tabloids

The lack of political candidates present in *The Irish Sun* was striking. While the theory and previous literature suggested that tabloids would "sensationalise" issues into consumable content, they were not publishing about politics. This was particularly interesting in the constituency of Mayo, as the now former Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, was a candidate in both the examined years and still failed to have any presence in the tabloid. Therefore, my second hypothesis, that tabloid newspapers would see less representation of women, was not proved. However, as *The Irish Sun*

presented no data on this topic at all, further investigation into female candidates representation in tabloids verses "quality" papers should be pursued.

It could be concluded that in this instance, politics was not consumable or profitable content for them as a tabloid. This may further suggest that the "regular" Irish people are not engaged in politics, as the media does not feel it profitable to show it. However it also, following the theory of *Mediated Politics*, shows the agenda setting mechanism at play. In this instance, the media had a platform to project political voices but did not feel their readers needed to hear it. This is a very obvious manifestation of the uneven relationship between politicians and the media.

It could also be argued that tabloids are not the platform politicians are aiming to be visible in for as their somewhat inferior status and reputation for "sensationalising" issues could have negative ramifications. None of those interviewed mentioned tabloid news, though comments about media sensationalising issues were made (Interviewee 4, "Media exposure tends to come from sensationalism, adversity, the more "shocking" the headline/story, the more media exposure"). Despite the apparent lack of relationship between The Irish Sun and politicians, the paper does possess a wide reach and audience − providing a platform that could greatly assist with visibility.

5.2.5 Differences Between Publications and Constituencies

The Irish Independent represented more females in their headlines than *The Irish Times. The Irish Independent* sits further to the right of the political spectrum, contradicting literature that suggests left leaning institutions are more accepting of females (Beckwith 1997). However, the data sample is not large enough to draw concrete conclusions as to whether these results should be generalised.

The large increase in female candidates (27.35%) in the Dublin-South West constituency, the constituency based in a city, presented an interesting result when compared to the decrease in the percentage (1.67%) in Mayo, the rural constituency. This may indicate that party officials perceive city constituencies as more accepting of additional female candidates, and thereby placing them in a city was deemed more "winnable". It should be noted that Wexford, the urban constituency, recorded an increase of 17.86% in the number of female candidates, indicating that urban areas may also been seen as accepting of larger numbers of female candidates.

Furthermore, the increased media coverage of females in Dublin South-Central may also be related to the increase in candidates. It may serve to reinforce the idea that female candidates are accepted in city constituencies.

5.2.6 Men and Women in the Media and the Persistence of Sexism

A notable theme that reoccurred throughout many of the interviews was the sexism that was present in Irish society. Interviewee 1 told a particularly telling story about the culture of sexism: "I had a situation which I thought was quite a funny situation. I was canvasing one day and I was canvasing this man who lived on his own, so he was looking at my leaflet and me – and he was quite a nice man – and he said "yeah, it would be quite handy for them to have someone up there to make the tea for them". And he was a really nice man, and he was just talking out loud. He didn't mean to be offensive. He didn't say it in a way that meant "all you can do is make tea" but that was his reality. That's all he could see women's role as being – it would be handy for me to be there to make tea."

Interviewee 6 said, "Traditionally the approach of the media toward male and female candidates has differed in terms of treatment. Women only tended to get contacted some times in relation to what are perceived to be female issues" but said more recently that the difference is visibility could be attributed to the fact "that there are so many more male politicians than there are females... that inevitably people tend... to defer more to the male politicians than they would to the female politicians." Continuing, "I think this is something that is gradually changing, but it will only change when we have more female politicians and obviously that's going to be something that's going to take a long time to achieve." This final statement once again serves to reiterate the importance of social culture, but interestingly did not recognise the media as a means of changing the culture.

Not all participants felt there was a difference in the way males and females were treated in the media. Interviewee 2 indicated she "do[esn't] feel there is a bias in how the media treats men compared to women. However... sometimes feel[s] that women put themselves under greater pressure to perform strongly." Interviewee 6 suggested that all candidates are just covered equally, and Interviewee 3 presented a slightly contradictory response "In general, I think politicians are treated in a balanced manner based on the point they are making rather than their gender. However, media commentary on female politicians can at times be quite trivial. I remember one incident in particular where a newspaper ran a piece on former Tánaiste, Frances Fitzgerald wearing the same outfit two days in a row. I cannot imagine a male politician ever being subject to such commentary."

Those who did feel there were differences were passionate in their response. Interviewee 5 was aggravated by the media situation, stating "I've... noticed hostility... towards women in politics that I had not witnessed before. Women are being zoned in on; with every little move they make being scrutinised. You see it in the papers, they'll take the most awful looking photo they can of you and blow it up next to something you did, now you don't see that with the males do you?... I would say if they have a criticism of a women, it absolutely goes almost viral."

Interviewee 4, who also stated that they do not use the media, said, "It is said "bad publicity is better than none" but I don't agree. Media exposure tends to come from sensationalism, adversity, the more "shocking" the headline/story, the more media exposure." Interviewee 5 also said they avoided the media instead they "go back to the constituency. I work with them, the people. Decent people.", choosing to avoid journalists for fear of negative press.

This could indicate that some female politicians in Ireland are intentionally avoiding the press for fear of sexist coverage. Therefore, despite the literature indicating that visibility is more important is propelling a campaign, the sexist coverage may in turn be affecting the desire of female politicians to be visible. While this avoidance may somewhat be mitigated in Ireland, as politicians are more connected to their voters through the constituency, this may have detrimental effects for female candidates campaigns and may help to explain their persistent underrepresentation.

This may also mean that females are constantly avoiding situations that can be "sensationalised". This could explain the lack of media coverage of females in *The Irish Sun* however does not explain the absence of male candidates.

5.3 Alternative Explanations

While this study has presented valuable findings, it is important to note the alternative explanations for the increase of female candidates in the media. Many of these explanations are cultural factors that occur along a changing time span and could not be controlled for using the Most Similar Design System.

5.3.1 The "Earthquake" Elections

Both the 2011 and 2016 elections have been described as "earthquake" elections for Ireland (Gallager & Marsh 2011). They signified large shifts in the existing political dynamics, potentially influencing societal and political dynamics affecting this study.

The 2011 elections were set during a period that saw the end of the Irish "Celtic Tiger" economy[11] as Ireland suffered greatly during the Global Financial Crisis (Gallager & Marsh 2011). In 2010 a joint EU/IMF plan had been introduced which heightened political tensions (Reidy in Gallager & Marsh 2011). It saw Ireland enter the controversial 'Troika' loan programme, and simultaneously sparked a significant shift in Irish politics.

---

[11] The Celtic Tiger refers to a period of rapid economic growth in Ireland that was a result of Foreign Direct Investment. This period occurred in the mid to late 1990's and ended before the financial crisis in 2008.

The elections overhauled the Irish political scene. What had previously been Europe's most successful party – Fianna Fáil, a conservative party – lost almost 75% of the seats they previously held (Gallager & Marsh 2011). This lead to a left leaning coalition between Fine Gael and the Irish Labour Party.

Left leaning governments and parties are also often suggested to be more conducive to social progression and therefore may have been more accommodating of female candidates (Beckwith 1992). It could be argued that a left leaning party adopts a more socially progressive stance and may have had more women on their candidate lists. Therefore, if they were more likely to be winning seats – more viable – there is the possibility those female candidates they put forward were more likely to be more visible and would receive greater media attention. However, in this case, throughout this dramatic shift one thing remained constant – the low numbers of women elected (Buckley & McGing 2011, 222), suggesting that even a left leaning government – in this case – was not sufficient to proving more women.

Many political commentators also suggested that the 2016 election showed a dramatic shift in the Irish political realm. Prior to the election it was predicted that almost 40% of the population would not vote for the traditional three parties, and instead would see a swing towards smaller parties and independents (MacCarthaigh 2016). The left claimed the shift as a clear voice from voters on their desire for a "fair and equal Ireland" (Linehan 2016; 2). While this was largely referring to access to public services (Linehan 2016; 2), it could also be speculated that this shift to the left also encouraged equality in other realms such as women's rights and issues.

However, others said this shift could be interpreted in many different ways, and that "Commentators tend to pick and choose their numbers to suit the argument they're making at the time." (Linehan 2016; 4). In fact, the percentage of votes left wing parties received actually decreased (Linehan 2016; 5). Equally, a decrease in the number of TD's that do not identify as heterosexual actually decreased between 2011 and 2016, suggesting social movements and change were not necessarily a driving factor in the elections (Chambers 2016 in Linehan 2016; 14). Therefore, others have argued that the 2016 Dáil does not represent a radical shift in Irish society.

Despite the shift to the left and the change towards a more "equal" Ireland that was a result of the 2011 and 2016 elections, it would seem these two elections may not have had any direct impact on female politicians visibility in the media, and should not impact this study.

5.3.2 Women's and Social Movements

In 2012, between the two elections, there were two large-scale social movements, traditionally associated with the left of politics; the case of Savita Halappanavar and the same-sex marriage referendum.

Halappanavar was 17 weeks pregnant when her amniotic fluids broke causing her sever illness. Following said illness, Halappanavar sought a termination that was subsequently denied as her foetus still had a heartbeat (Lentin 2013; 105).. Ireland's heavily catholic population had historically been strongly against abortion (Lentin 2013; 105). The denial of this termination, and Halappanavar's eventual death from the illness sparked outrage in Ireland and began a feminist movement centred on a campaign to "Repeal the 8th"[12] (Lentin 2013; 105).

While the "Repeal the 8th" movement may not directly impact the visibility of female politicians, a wider women's movement could serve to benefit these candidates. With women's issues gaining greater attention, more advocates and NGO's being given media attention, greater number of female voices could be expected to be projected into the media. More female politicians may therefore have been asked about their views on the termination of pregnancy, as it is after all, a women's issue. This would support the literature, which shows that women are more often consulted on women's issues (Baitlinger 2015; 579; McCracken et.al, 2018; 21).

Furthermore, in 2015 Ireland passed a marriage equality referendum via popular vote. It was hailed as a "social revolution" in a country that has a conservative religious history (McDonald 2015, 1). The movement, which was pro equality and anti discrimination, could be seen to have sparked conversation for greater equality movements. This may then transcend into the domain of politics.

To gain greater insight into this explanation, interviewees were asked about social movements and the dynamics they saw emerging from this. Interviewee 2 acknowledged that "There is a long history of women's movements having a significant impact on Irish society.", however Interviewee 1 believed, "It's too soon to tell if it will have a lasting effect." A sentiment Interviewee 6 reiterated.

In conclusion, one could speculate that the combination of moves towards equality and a greater focus on women's issues in between the two elections could in fact explain the increase in women's media presence. To what extent this is true is more difficult to determine at this point in time.

5.3.3 Editors and Journalists

Journalists and media editors should not be viewed as passive actors in the agenda setting and media visibility process (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 226), and therefore

---

[12] The 8th Amendment stated "*The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right*". This was then the basis for a large pro-choice movement in Ireland that would result in the 8th amendment being repealed.

should be considered when looking at the results of this thesis. Individuals who create the news do so through the lens of their own bias, norms and values that can subsequently affect media coverage (Lühiste & Banducci 2016; 226). Further, they are potentially selecting whom to focus on based on their personal assumptions of which candidate is most viable. The editors in these publications play a significant role in determining the political direction of a paper and Irish media is increasingly seeing publications that have strong party affiliations (Greenslade 2018). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the political leanings of a publication and view the findings of this thesis in that context.

The editor of *The Irish Independent* during the 2011 elections was Gerry O'Regan. He was then replaced by Stephen Rae and Fionnan Sheahan was appointed the editor of the Irish Independent in 2015 (The Journal.ie 2012). Since 2012, Denis O'Brien, a wealthy businessman has owned almost 30% of the paper as part of a larger media empire (Leahy 2016). Prior to this, Tony O'Reilly, an equally wealthy businessman, held a majority of shared in the media company. O'Reilly long supported Fine Gael however, "ousted" the party in an "embittered" payback when they prevented a second licence for a company of his (Irish Examiner 2002). Both men express conservative political leanings and therefore, as previously mentioned, *The Irish Independent* is often viewed as an economically conservative and socially populist publication (Euro-topics 2019; 1).

The Irish Times had the same editor, Kevin O'Sullivan, from 2011-2017 (The Irish Times 2017). Prior to O'Sullivan's appointment, Geraldine Kennedy was heading the paper and there was some crossover between the positions in 2011. Kennedy was the first female editor of *The Irish Times* and also served as a politician. Having Kennedy as a predecessor, may have established a culture the looked to represent female candidates favourably, or at least equally. It may also mean that women's issues are more often featured and therefore as a result, see more women being visible. However, due to the fact that Geraldine Kennedy was in this position in both 2011 and 2016 does somewhat help to control this influence as it can be assumed that to an extent her views would remain similar between the two elections.

As for *The Irish Sun*, it is part of a larger organisation, the News Corporation owned by Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch is a media tycoon known for his conservative, right wing, populist views. Mick McNiffe was the London based editor in 2011 (Halliday 2012). McNiffe left in 2012 after "significant changes" were made to the company (Halliday 2012; 1). By the 2016 elections, Tony Gallagher had assumed the role (News UK 2015). As noted in section 5, no results were found for *The Irish Sun* in 2011 or 2016. Therefore, it can be assumed that these editorial changes did not impact the political direction of the tabloid in the researched period.

Further, it is also important to examine the role of journalists and the impact their gender could potentially have on the stories produced. The composition of journalists

during the 2011 and 2016 elections is more difficult to establish, particularly as guest contributors or a rotating number of journalists write many stories. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether there was a greater proportion of either sex present in the publications. However, while it is possible that journalists may have written articles with their own opinions, judgement, and stereotypes (Kahn 1994, 170a), it should also be noted that research does not suggest that more female journalists or editors will result in more coverage of women (Craft & Wanda 2004; 132-34). This is supported by results from the interviews conducted with one of the interviewees who said, "you don't always find when you have a woman interviewing a woman that you're going to get a better quality of interview. It can also be that you're going to get a better quality with a man. Because sometimes with a female journalist it's like a competitive situation. And I have seen female journalists give atrocious interviews to other women." Therefore, the fact that these numbers could not be sourced should not be dwelled upon too greatly.

There have also been suggestions that journalists, both women and men are making moves to focus more fairly on women (Byerly & Ross 2006; 70). This was supported by the interview conducted with an Irish journalist who said, a "female candidates saying something controversial or newsworthy doesn't get treated any different from a male saying the same. The fact that they're a candidate should mean they get the same coverage, and I think generally they do".

In conclusion, there is little to suggest that the editor and journalist could have affected the results of this thesis between the two elections. While this is not to say that individuals within media organisations, particularly editors and owners, have no influence or effect, it is quite the opposite. The effect and influence these individuals have can be significant, however, there is nothing to suggest that significant change was excerpted between the two elections of 2011 and 2016. Therefore, the MSDS should control for the different political affiliations of the papers.

5.3.4 The Move to New Media

The final factor to be considered is the move to "new" media sources. As online media sources and social media sites become increasingly integral to our society, more people are looking online for their news. The selected newspapers all provide comprehensive, subscription free news access, which helps to ensure their reach is still valuable, however it is the rise of social media that may be more interesting to consider in the context of this thesis.

If female candidates feel they are not being granted sufficient space in traditional media outlets, social media provides a viable alternative. Social media gives candidates a passage to their constituencies, allowing them to transpose a message directly and using their own terminology. Thereby giving them total control and total access.

With the increasing role social media plays in our lives, it is possible that between the 2011 and 2016 elections, female candidates were making their voices heard through other media platforms. This may mean there was an even greater presence of female candidates voices in the public sphere, and possibly that these voices demanded greater attention in the traditional media in 2016 than in previous years. Furthermore, Interviewee 6 said the "proliferation of social media as a platform has been one of the big changes, also in terms of coarsening the political debate." Which could indicate that social media is more hostile towards candidates. However, all this is purely speculative and this topic its self deserve close scrutiny and attention.

6. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to answer the central research question: *to what extent do gender quotas affect media representation of female candidates in electoral campaigns?*

To do so, using Ireland as a case study, the three largest circulating newspapers in Ireland were examined to observe whether gender quota had an effect on the level of media visibility of female candidates.

Using the sub questions of, 1) *What are gender quotas?* And 2) *How can the media impact electoral success?* It was concluded, using the literature, that gender quota are an artificial mechanism used to rectify imbalances (Bitušíková 2005; 1019; Dahlerup 2007; 73, 80), that's impacts on media had yet to be examined. Further, media exposure was found to be pivotal to political success. As described by the concept of *Mediated Politics*, the media provides a platform for politicians to disseminate ideas, communicate policy and connect with constituency. In addition to this, visibility in the media can result in greater funding, recognition and, as a result, higher numbers of votes (Shields et al 1995; 415; Goldenberg & Traugott 1987; 332; Kahn & Goldenberg 1991a, 111; Mutz 1995; 1035-40). Therefore according to the literature, by improving media coverage of female candidates, greater political success will ensue. This resulted in media visibility being the focus of this thesis. As a result, the clear and persistent underrepresentation of women in both politics and the media across Europe was striking, particularly as little has been done to rectify this imbalance (The European Commission 2018; 29). This reiterated the importance of this research.

The results of the content analysis largely showed increases from 2011 to 2016 in the number of articles and headlines female candidates were visible in. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender quota can increase female candidates visibility in the media. The results confirmed two of the proposed hypothesis (H1 and H3), and proved inconclusive on the third (H2).

The use of expert interviews highlighted some additional cultural factors that could be affecting the results. However none of these identified factors were events or occurrences between 2011 and 2016, which should therefore mean they are controlled for using the MSDS. For example, if Irish women avoid the media for fear of sexist coverage as some interviews indicated, these candidates can be expected to have avoided the media in both years.

Therefore, the implications of this research have potential to strengthen arguments in favour of gender quota. It indicates that the positive benefits of quota surpass the "foot-in-the-door" mentality and extend into society and culture. It also supports literature that suggests that female candidates will be covered if they are present (Norris and Lovenduski 1999).

These results could also provide greater momentum for domestic campaigns in favour of gender quota, particularly if the EU communicates the benefits to Member States using a strong policy script (Bush 2011; 106). The added benefits of the quota could assist in fighting the stigma associated with these mechanisms in some European countries and increased communication between Member States on their importance and effectiveness, using the OMC, could potentially bring positive results.

Further, while visibility in the media was seen to be more pivotal to electoral sex than the tone of coverage, the expert interviews did highlight sexist coverage as a significant barrier to women in politics. Therefore, the quality of the content should naturally be maintained and monitored and mechanisms to ensure fair coverage of women should be explored.

Finally, this thesis contributes to the current field of gender studies, media studies and electoral studies, by filling an academic gap. Further, from this thesis several paths for greater study have been identified.

1) Does the political leaning of a paper affect media visibility of a female candidate?
2) Is there a city/urban/rural divide in the attention given to female candidates in news sources?
3) Does reaching a critical mass of female candidates influence media representation?

   And finally, as this thesis was unable to record data on this topic,

4) Are there difference in the coverage of female candidates in tabloids and quality newspapers after the introduction of gender quota?

References

Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2017). Opinion on "Gender Balance in Decision making in Politics. Brussels: Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

Andina-Díaz, A. (2006). Political Competition When Media Create Candidates' Charisma. Public Choice, 127(3/4), 353-374.

Andres, S., Xezonakis, G., Banducci, S. & De Vreese, C.H. (2009). European Parliament Election Study 2009. Media Study. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5056 Data file Version 1.0.0 [Data set]. doi:10.4232/1.10203

Baitinger, G. (2015). Meet the Press or Meet the Men? Examining Women's Presence in American News Media. Political Research Quarterly, 68(3), 579-592.

Banducci, S., De Vreese, C.H., Semetko, H.A., Boomgarden, H.G., Luhiste, M., Peter, J., Schuck, A. & Xezonakis, G. (2014). European Parliament Election Study, Longitudinal Media Study 1999, 2004, 2009. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5178 Data file Version 1.0.0 [Data set]. doi:10.4232/1.5178

Beard, M. (2015). The Public Voice of Women. Women's History Review, 24(5), 809-818.

Beckwith, K. (2007). Numbers and Newness: The Descriptive and Substantive Representation of Women. Canadian Journal of Political Science, 40(1), 27-49.

Beckwith, K. (1992). Comparative Research and Electoral Systems: Lessons from France and Italy. Women and Politics, 12(1), 1–33.

Bennett, W., & Entman, R. (2000). Mediated Politics: An Introduction. In W. Bennett & R. Entman (Eds.), Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy (pp. 1-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brennan, M. & Buckley, F. (2017). The Irish legislative gender quota: The first election. Administration, 65(2), 15-35.

Bitušíková A. (2005). (In) Visible Women in Political Life in Slovakia. Sociologický Časopis / Czech Sociological Review, 41(6), 1005- 1021.

Brown, T. (2015). The Irish Times: 150 Years of Influence. London: Bloomsbury.

Buckley, F. & McGing, C. (2011). Women and the Election. In M. Gallagher & M. Marsh (Eds.), How Ireland Voted 2011: The Full Story of Ireland's Earthquake Election (pp. 222-239). London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Bulmer, S.J., Radaelli, C.M. (2005). The Europeanization of National Policy. In S.J. Bulmer, C. Lequesne (Eds.). The Member States of the European Union (pp. 228-359). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bush, S. S. (2011). International Politics and the Spread of Quotas for Women in Legislatures. International Organisation, 65(1), 203-137.

Bystrom, D. G., Banwart, M. C., Kaid, L. L. & Robertson, T. A. (2004). Gender and Candidate Communication. New York: Routledge.

Campbell, R., Childs, S. & Lovenduski, J. (2010). Do women need women representatives? British Journal of Political Science, 40(1), 171-194.

Campus, D. (2013). Women Political Leaders and the Media. New York: Palgrave and Macmillan.

Cheng, C. & Tavits, M. (2011). Informal Influences in Selecting Female Political Candidates. Political Research Quarterly, 64(2), 460-471.

Citizens Information Board (2019). General Elections. Retrieved from https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/elections_and_refere nda/national_elections/the_general_election.html

Clavero, S. & Galligan, Y. (2010). Gender equality in the European Union: Lessons for democracy? RECON Online Working Paper 2010/23, 1-22.

Clancy, E., Buckley, F., Finn, C., & O'Keeffee, M. The Road to 50/50 Gender Quotas for Ireland: Seanad & Dáil Debates 2012. Cork: 5050 Group Publishing, 2012.

Collier, D. (1993). Chapter 5: The Comparative Method. In A. Finifter (Ed.), Political Science: The State of the Disciple II (pp.105-120). Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association.

Council of Europe (2019). Gender Equality: Women in Media. Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/women-in-media

Craft, S. & Wanta, W. (2004). Women in the Newsroom: Influences of Female Editors and Reporters on the News Agenda. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 81(1): 124–38.

Dahlerup, D. & Freidenvall, L. (2005). Quotas as a 'fast track' to equal representation for women. International Feminist Journal of Politics, 7(1), 26-48.

Dahlerup, D. (Ed.). (2006). Women, Quotas and Politics. London and New York: Routledge.

Dahlerup, D. (2007). Electoral Gender Quotas: Between Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Result. Representation, 42(2), 73-92.

Dahlerup, D. (2018). Has Democracy failed women? Cambridge: Polity Press.

Delgado-Márquez, B. L., Ramírez-González, V. & López-Carmona. (2014). Ensuring Parliamentary Gender Equality Through a New Zipper Method: An Application to Finland. Social Indicators Research, 116(2), 475-492.

Dingler, S. C., Kroeber, C. & Fortin-Rittberger, J. (2019). Do parliaments underrepresent women's policy preferences? Exploring gender equality in policy congruence in 21 European democracies. Journal of European Public Policy, 26(2), 302-321.

Doyle, K. (2015, January 10). New Irish Independent and Sunday Independent editors. Herald. Retrieved from https://www.herald.ie/news/new-irish-independent-and-sunday-independent-editors-30896581.html

Ekström, M. & Firmstone, J. (2017). The Mediated Politics of Europe: A Comparative Study of Discourse. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

European Commission (2017). Special Eurobarometer 465: Gender Equality 2017, Gender Equality, Stereotypes, and Women in Politics. Brussels: European Commission.

European Commission (2018a). 2018 Report on Equality between women and men in the EU. Luxembourg: European Commission.

European Commission (2018b). Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake News and Disinformation Online. Brussels: European Commission.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2013). Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media – Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. Luxembourg: European Institute for Gender Equality.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2016). Gender Equality in power and decision-making: Journalist Thematic Network. Vilnius: European Institute for Gender Equality.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). Gender Equality Index 2017: Measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2015 – Main Findings. Vilnius: European Institute for Gender Equality.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). National parliaments: presidents and members. Retrieved from https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_pol_parl__wmid_natparl/bar/chart/year:2019-Q1/geo:EU28,BE,BG,CZ,DK,DE,EE,IE,EL,ES,FR,HR,IT,CY,LV,LT,LU,HU,MT,NL,AT,PL,PT,RO,SI,SK,FI,SE,UK,IS,LI,NO,ME,MK,AL,RS,TR,BA,XK/sex:M,W/UNIT:PC/POSITION:MEMB_PARL/EGROUP:PARL_SINGLOW.

European Parliament. (2012). Women in political decision-making. EuropeanParliament resolution of 13 March 2012 on women in political decision-making–quality and equality. 1-9.

Eurostat (2019). Seats held by women in national parliaments and governments. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_05_50/default/table?lang=en

Eurotopics (2019). The Irish Independent. Retrieved from https://www.eurotopics.net/en/148637/the-irish-independent#

Fowler, L. L. & Lawless, J. L. (2009). Looking for Sex in All the Wrong Places: Press Coverage and the Electoral Fortunes of Gubernatorial Candidates. Perspectives on Politics, 7(3), 519-536.

Franklin, C. H. (1993). Senate Incumbent Visibility over the Election Cycle. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 18(2), 271-290.

Freidenvall, L. (2013). Electoral Gender Quota Systems and their Implementation in Europe. Brussels: European Parliament.

Gallagher, M. & Marsh, M. (Eds). How Ireland Voted 2011: The Full Story of Ireland's Earthquake Election. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Galligan, Y., Laver, M. & Carney, G. (1999). "The Effect of Candidate Gender on Voting in Ireland 1997', Irish Political Studies, 14(1), 18-22.

Gidengil, E. & Everitt, J. (2003). Conventional Coverage/Unconventional Politicians: Gender and Media Coverage of Canadian Leaders' Debates, 1993, 1997, 2000. Canadian Journal of Political Science Association and the Société québécoise de sciencepolitique, 36(3), 559-577.

Gilardi, F. (2015). The Temporary Importance of Role Models for Women's Political Representation. American Journal of Political Science, 59(4), 957-970.

Goldenberg, E. N. & Michael W. Traugott. (1987). Mass Media Effects in Recognizing and Rating Candidates in U.S. Senate Elections. In J. Vermeer (Ed.), Campaigns in the News: Mass Media and Congressional Elections (pp. 109-132). New York: Greenwood Press.

Greenslade, R. (2018, September 16). Irish media's cosy ties to politics and money require scrutiny. The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/media/commentisfree/2018/sep/16/ireland-media-newspapers-politics-inquiry

Gripsrud, J. (2002). Understanding Media Culture. New York: Oxford University Press.

Halliday, J. (2012, October 16). Irish Sun's editor exits in strategic review. The Guardia. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/oct/16/irish-sun-editor-exits

Halperin, S. & Heath, O. (2017). Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills 2nd Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haraldsson, A. & Wängnerud, L. (2018). The effect of media sexism on women's political ambition: evidence from a worldwide study. Feminist Media Studies, 19(4), 1-17.

Havelková, H., Bryson, A. & Klepetáčová, J. (1999). The Political Representation of Women in Mass Media Discourse in the Czech Republic 1990-1998. Czech Sociological Review, 7(2), 145-165.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2019). Gender Quotas Database. Retrieved from https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/regions-overview

Irish Examiner (2002, December 6). O'Reilly 'took revenge in editorial'. TCM Archives Irish Examiner. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20090508122143/http://archives.tcm.ie/irishexaminer/2002/12/06/story187197121.asp

Jones, M. P. (2004). Legislation and the election of Women: Learning from the Costa Rican Experience. The Journal of Politics, 66(4), 1203-1223.

Kahn, K. F. (1991). Senate Elections in the News: Examining Campaign Coverage. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 16(3), 349-374.

Kahn, K. F. (1992). Does Being Male Help? An Investigation of the Effects of Candidate Gender and Campaign Coverage on Evaluations of U.S. Senate Candidates. The Journal of Politics, 54(2), 497-517.

Kahn, K. F. (1994a). The Distorted Mirror: Press Coverage of Women Candidates for Statewide Office. The Journal of Politics, 56(1), 154-173.

Kahn, K. F. (1994b). Does Gender Make a Difference? An Experimental Examination of Sex Stereotypes and Press Patterns in Statewide Campaigns. American Journal of Political Science, 38(1), 162-195.

Kahn, K. F. (1995). Characteristics of Press Coverage in Senate and Gubernatorial Elections: Information Available to Voters. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 20(1), 23-35.

Kahn, K. F. (2003). Assessing the Media's Impact on the Political Fortunes of Women. In S. J. Carroll (Ed.), Women and American Politics: New Questions, New Directions (pp. 173-189). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kahn, K. F. & Goldenberg, E. N. (1991a). The Media: Obstacle or Ally of Feminists? The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 515(1), 104-113.

Kahn, K. F. & Goldenberg, E. N. (1991b). Women Candidates in the News: An Examination of Gender Differences in U.S. Senate Campaign Coverage. The Public Opinion Quarterly, 55(2), 180-199.

Kaiser, R. & Prange, H. (2005). Missing the Lisbon Target? Multi-Level Innovation and EU Policy. Journal of Public Policy, 25(2), 241-263.

Kantola, J. (2009). "Women's Political Representation in the European Union." The Journal of Legislative Studies, 15(4), 379–400.

Kiousis, S. (2001). Public Trust or Mistrust? Perceptions of Media Credibility in the Information Age. Mass Communication & Society, 4(4), 381-403.

Kirkland, R. (2007). Rupert Murdoch. Foreign Policy, 158, 24-26, 28, 30.

Krook, M. L. (2010). Beyond Supply and Demand: A Feminist-institutionalist Theory of Candidate Selection. Political Research Quarterly, 63(4), 707-720.

Krook, M. L., Lovenduski, J. & Squires, J. (2009). Gender Quota and Models of Political Citizenship. British Journal of Political Science, 39(4), 781-803.

Leahy, P. (2016, October 23). Denis O'Brien's media power must be addressed, report says. The Irish Times. https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/denis-o-brien-s-media-power-must-be-addressed-report-says-1.2840470

Lentin, R. (2013). A woman died: Abortion and the politics of Ireland. Feminist Review, 105(1), 130-136.

Lijphart, A. (1971). Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. Cambridge University Press, 65(3), 682-693.

Linehan, H. (2016, March 1). Election outcome was political earthquake that never happened. The Irish Times. https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/election-outcome-was-political-earthquake-that-never-happened-1.2554836

Lühiste, M. & Banducci, S. (2016). Invisible Women? Comparing Candidates' News Coverage in Europe. Politics & Gender, 12, 223-253.

MacCarthaigh, M. (2016, January 7). Election 2016 could be the real 'earthquake' election. Retrieved from http://qpol.qub.ac.uk/election-2016-could-be-the-real-earthquake-irish-election/

McCracken, K., FitzSimons, A., Preist, S., Girstmair, S., & Murphy, B. (2018). Women's Rights & Gender Equality: Gender Equality in the Media Sector, Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Brussels.

McIntosh, H. (2013). Women and Politics and the Media: [Review of the three books *Political culture and media genre: Beyond the news*, *Women political leaders and the media*, and *Woman president: Confronting postfeminist political culture*]. Global Media Journal – Canadian edition, 6(2), 99-104.

Macharia, S. (2015). Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project 2015. Toronto & London: World Association for Christian Communication.

McDonald, H. (2015, May 23). Ireland becomes first country to legalise gay marriage by popular vote. The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/23/gay-marriage-ireland-yes-vote

McGing, C. & White, T. J. (2012). Gender and Representation in Ireland. Études Irlandaises, 37(2), 1-16.

Mutz, D. (1995). Effects of Horse-Race Coverage on Campaign Coffers: Strategic Contributing in Presidential Primaries. The Journal of Politics, 57(4), 1015-1042.

News UK (2015). Executives: Tony Gallagher. Retrieved from https://www.news.co.uk/who-we-are/executives/tony-gallagher/

NewsBrands Ireland (2019). Circulation. Retrieved from https://newsbrandsireland.ie/data-centre/circulation/

Norris, P. & Lovenduski, J. (1995). Political Recruitment: Gender, race and class in the British Parliament. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Neil, T & Domingo.P. (2015). Women and Power: Overcoming barriers to leadership and influence. Overseas Development Institute, London. 1-39.

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (2007). Ireland: 2007 Parliamentary Elections (Dáil Éireann): OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report 26 – 29 March 2007. Warsaw: OSCE.

Payne, J. G. (2012). Feminist Media as Alternative Media? Theorising Feminist Media from the Perspectives of Alternative Media Studies. In E. Zobl & R. Drüeke (Eds.), Femininst Media: Participatory Spaces, Networks and Cultural Citizenship (pp. 55-72). Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.

Phillips, A. (1995). The Politics of Presence. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Praud, J. (2012). Introduction: Gender Parity and Quotas in European Politics. West European Politics, 35(2), 286-300.

Rausch, J. D., Rozell, M. J. and Wilson, H. L. (1999). When women lose. Women and Politics 20(4), 1–21.

Ross, K. & Byerly, C. M. (2006). Women and the Media: A Critical Introduction. Melbourne: Blackwell Publishing.

Ross, K., Evans, E., Harrison, L., Shears, M. & Wadia, K. (2013). The Gender of News and News of Gender: A Study of Sex, Politics, and Press Coverage of the 2010 British General Election. The International Journal of Press/Politics, 18(1), 3-20.

Rossilli , M . G. (1999). The European Unions Policy on the Equality of Women. Feminist Studies, 25(1), 171-181.

Ruedin, D. (2012). The Representation of Women in National Parliaments: A Cross-national Comparison. European Sociological Review. 28(1), 96-109.

Sartori, A. (2007). REPORT on a Roadmap for equality between women and men, European Parliament, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. 1-33.

Sanbonmatsu, K. (2003). Gender-related political knowledge and the descriptive representation of women. Political Behaviour, 25(4), 367-388.

Schaart, E. & Gonzalez. C. (2019). XX Factor episode 3: Europe's hidden female politicians. Politico EU, Retrieved from https://www.politico.eu/newsletter/the-xx-factor/xx-factor-episode-3-europes-hidden-female-politicians/

Schonard, M. (2019). Fact Sheets on the European Union: Equality between men and women. Brussels: European Parliament.

Schuck, A., Xezonakis, G., Banducci, S., De Vreese, C.H. (2010): European Parliament Election Study 2009. Media Study. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5056 Data file Version 1.0.0 [Data set]. doi:10.4232/1.10203

Schwindt-Bayer, L. A. (2009). Making Quotas Work: The Effect of Gender Quota Laws on the Election of Women. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 34(1), 5-28.

Schwindt-Bayer, L. A., Malecki, M. & Crisp, B. F. (2010). Candidate Gender and Electoral Success in Single Transferable Vote Systems. British Journal of Political Science, 40(3), 693-709.

Shields, T, G., Goidel, R, K. & Tadlock, B. (1995). The Net Impact of Media Exposure on Individual Voting Decisions in U. S. Senate and House Elections. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 20(3), 415-430.

Shin, K. (2014). Women's sustainable representation and the spillover effect of electoral gender quotas in South Korea. International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique. 35(1). 80- 92.

Shor, E., Van de Rijt, A., Miltsov, A., Kulkarni, V. & Skiena, S. (2015). A Paper Ceiling: Explaining the Persistent Underrepresentation of Women in Printed News. American Sociological Review, 80(5), 960-984.

Shreeves, R., Prpic, M. & Claros, E. (2019). Women in Politics in the EU: State of play. Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Service.

Stockemer, D. (2007). Why are there Differences in the Political Representation of Women in the 27 Countries of the European Union? Perspectives on European Politics and Society, 8(4), 476-493.

Thanikodi, A. & Sugirtha, M. (2007). Status of women in Politics. The Indian Journal of Political Science, 68(3), 589-606.

The Irish Times (2017, April 5). Paul O'Neill appointed new 'Irish Times' Editor. The Irish Times. Retrieved from https://www.irishtimes.com/business/media-and-marketing/paul-o-neill-appointed-new-irish-times-editor-1.3037669

The Irish Times (2019). Profile: Geraldine Kennedy. Retrieved from https://www.irishtimes.com/profile/geraldine-kennedy-7.2615458

The Journal.ie. (2012). Evening Herald editor takes over helm at Irish Independent, The Journal.ie, retrieved from https://www.thejournal.ie/stephen-rae-new-editor-irish-independent-588667-Sep2012/

Trimble, L. (2007). Gender, Political Leadership and Media Visibility: "Globe and Mail" Coverage of Conservative Party of Canada Leadership Contests, Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue canadienne de science politique, 40(4), 969-993.

Trimble, L. (2017). Ms. Prime Minister: Gender, Media and Leadership. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Tuchman, G. (1979). Women's Depiction by the Mass Media. Signs, The University of Chicago Press, 4(3), 528-542.

Van der Vleuten, A. (2007). The Price of Gender Equality: Member States and Governance in the European Union. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Verge, T. & De la Fuente, M. (2014). Playing with different cards: Party politics, gender quotas and women's empowerment. International Political Science Review, 35(1), 67-79.

Washbourne, N. (2010). Mediating Politics: Newspapers, Radio, Television and the Internet. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Weaver, D. H. (1996, July). What Voters Learn from the Media. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 546, 34-47.

White, T. J. (2006). Why so Few Women in Dáil Éireann? The Effects of the Single Transferable Vote Election System. New Hibernia Review, 10(4), 71-83.

White, T. J. & Marani, M. (2015). Gendered Interest and Ambition: Quotas and Challenges to Achieving Greater Female Representation in Ireland. The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies, 39(1), 206-223.

Women for Election (2019). Support the #MoreWomen Movement. Women for Election. Retrieved from https://womenforelection.ie

Xydias, C. V. (2008). Inviting More Women to the Party: Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation in Germany. International Journal of Sociology, 37(4), 52-66.

Appendix

Appendix I. *2011 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in the Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Eric Byrne	Male	0	1
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	1
Michael Conaghan	Male	0	1
Joan Collins	Female	0	4
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	1	21
Michael Mulcahy	Male	0	1
Colm Brophy	Male	0	1
Henry Upton	Male	0	2
Ruairi McGinley	Male	0	1
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	1
Peter O'Neill	Male	0	0
Neville Bradley	Male	0	0
Colm Callanan	Male	0	0
Seán Connolly Farrell	Male	0	0
Paul King	Male	0	1
Gerry Kelly	Male	0	5
Noel Bennett	Male	0	0
Dominic Mooney	Male	0	0

Appendix II. *2016 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in the Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	0	7
Joan Collins	Female	3	12
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	4
Bríd Smith	Female	0	8
Catherine Ardagh	Female	0	3
Eric Byrne	Male	0	6
Máire Devine	Female	0	2
Liam Coyne	Male	0	3
Paul Hand	Male	0	1
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	1
Michael Gargan	Male	0	1
Neville Bradley	Male	0	1

Richard Murray	Male	0	1

Appendix III. *2011 Wexford Candidate Mentions in The Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	Headlines	Articles
Mick Wallace	Male	10	25
Brendan Howlin	Male	5	36
John Browne	Male	1	26
Liam Twomey	Male	1	22
Paul Kehoe	Male	2	23
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	4	23
Seán Connick	Male	3	31
Anthony Kelly	Male	1	11
Pat Cody	Male	2	22
John Dwyer	Male	1	12
Seamus O'Brien	Male	1	9
Danny Forde	Male	1	8
Siobhán Roseingrave	Female	1	3
Ruairí de Valera	Male	1	7

Appendix IV. *2016 Wexford Candidate Mentions in the Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Brendan Howlin	Male	4	86
James Browne	Male	0	22
Mick Wallace	Male	4	47
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	3	32
Paul Kehoe	Male	1	42
Johnny Mythen	Male	1	20
Ger Carthy	Male	1	23
Aoife Byrne	Female	2	19
Leonard Kelly	Male	0	15
Deirdre Wadding	Female	1	28
John Dwyer	Male	0	5
Julie Hogan	Female	0	13
Ann Walsh	Female	0	15
Caroline Foxe	Female	0	12
Emmet Moloney	Male	0	15
David Lloyd	Male	0	10

Appendix V. *2011 Mayo Candidate Mentions in the Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	**Headline**	**Article**
Enda Kenny	Male	18	214
Michael Ring	Male	0	5
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	4
Dara Calleary	Male	0	6
John O'Mahony	Male	1	12
Michael Kilcoyne	Male	0	3
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	1
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	1
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	3
Thérèse Ruane	Female	0	1
Martin Daly	Male	0	0
John Carey	Male	0	1
Dermot McDonnell	Male	0	1
Loretta Clarke	Female	0	2
Seán Forkin	Male	0	1

Appendix VI. *2016 Mayo Candidate Mentions in the Irish Independent*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Enda Kenny	Male	28	200
Michael Ring	Male	1	17
Dara Calleary	Male	0	11
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	12
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	8
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	9
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	3
Michael Farrington	Male	0	1
Margaret Sheehan	Female	0	1
Tom Moran	Male	0	2
George O'Malley	Male	0	1
Peter Jordan	Male	0	1
Stephen Manning	Male	0	1
Mohammad Kamal Uddin	Male	0	1

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Gerry O'Boyle	Male	0	1
Seán Forkin	Male	0	0

Appendix VII. *2011 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Eric Byrne	Male	0	0
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	1
Michael Conaghan	Male	0	0
Joan Collins	Female	0	3
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	0	3
Michael Mulcahy	Male	0	3
Colm Brophy	Male	0	0
Henry Upton	Male	0	0
Ruairi McGinley	Male	0	0
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	0
Peter O'Neill	Male	0	0
Neville Bradley	Male	0	0
Colm Callanan	Male	0	0
Seán Connolly Farrell	Male	0	0
Paul King	Male	0	0
Gerry Kelly	Male	0	1
Noel Bennett	Male	0	0
Dominic Mooney	Male	0	0

Appendix VIII. *2016 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	0	0
Joan Collins	Female	9	9
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	1
Bríd Smith	Female	0	7
Catherine Ardagh	Female	0	2
Eric Byrne	Male	0	1
Máire Devine	Female	0	0
Liam Coyne	Male	0	4
Paul Hand	Male	0	0
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	0
Michael Gargan	Male	0	0
Neville Bradley	Male	0	0

Richard Murray	Male	0	0

Appendix IX. *2011 Wexford Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	Headlines	Articles
Mick Wallace	Male	0	0
Brendan Howlin	Male	0	0
John Browne	Male	0	4
Liam Twomey	Male	0	4
Paul Kehoe	Male	0	0
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	0	2
Seán Connick	Male	0	2
Anthony Kelly	Male	0	0
Pat Cody	Male	0	0
John Dwyer	Male	0	1
Seamus O'Brien	Male	0	0
Danny Forde	Male	0	0
Siobhán Roseingrave	Female	0	0
Ruairí de Valera	Male	0	0

Appendix X. *2016 Wexford Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Brendan Howlin	Male	3	44
James Browne	Male	0	0
Mick Wallace	Male	4	12
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	0	4
Paul Kehoe	Male	0	5
Johnny Mythen	Male	0	1
Ger Carthy	Male	0	0
Aoife Byrne	Female	0	2
Leonard Kelly	Male	0	0
Deirdre Wadding	Female	0	0
John Dwyer	Male	0	0
Julie Hogan	Female	0	1
Ann Walsh	Female	0	0
Caroline Foxe	Female	0	0
Emmet Moloney	Male	0	0
David Lloyd	Male	0	0

Appendix XI. *2011 Mayo Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	**Headline**	**Article**

Enda Kenny	Male	8	38
Michael Ring	Male	0	1
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	0
Dara Calleary	Male	0	10
John O'Mahony	Male	0	0
Michael Kilcoyne	Male	0	0
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	0
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	0
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	0
Thérèse Ruane	Female	0	0
Martin Daly	Male	0	0
John Carey	Male	0	0
Dermot McDonnell	Male	0	0
Loretta Clarke	Female	0	0
Seán Forkin	Male	0	0

Appendix XII. *2016 Mayo Candidate Mentions in The Irish Times*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Enda Kenny	Male	42	318
Michael Ring	Male	0	22
Dara Calleary	Male	1	4
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	4
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	3
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	3
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	3
Michael Farrington	Male	0	1
Margaret Sheehan	Female	0	0
Tom Moran	Male	0	1
George O'Malley	Male	0	0
Peter Jordan	Male	0	0
Stephen Manning	Male	0	0
Mohammad Kamal Uddin	Male	0	0
Gerry O'Boyle	Male	0	0

Seán Forkin	Male	0	0

Appendix XIII. *2011 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Eric Byrne	Male	0	0
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	0
Michael Conaghan	Male	0	0
Joan Collins	Female	0	0
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	0	0
Michael Mulcahy	Male	0	0
Colm Brophy	Male	0	0
Henry Upton	Male	0	0
Ruairi McGinley	Male	0	0
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	0
Peter O'Neill	Male	0	0
Neville Bradley	Male	0	0
Colm Callanan	Male	0	0
Seán Connolly Farrell	Male	0	0
Paul King	Male	0	0
Gerry Kelly	Male	0	0
Noel Bennett	Male	0	0
Dominic Mooney	Male	0	0

Appendix XIV. *2016 Dublin South-Central Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Aengus Ó Snodaigh	Male	0	0
Joan Collins	Female	0	0
Catherine Byrne	Female	0	0
Bríd Smith	Female	0	0
Catherine Ardagh	Female	0	0
Eric Byrne	Male	0	0
Máire Devine	Female	0	0
Liam Coyne	Male	0	0
Paul Hand	Male	0	0
Oisín Ó hAlmhain	Male	0	0
Michael Gargan	Male	0	0
Neville Bradley	Male	0	0
Richard Murray	Male	0	0

Appendix XV. *2011 Wexford Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	Headlines	Articles
Mick Wallace	Male	0	0
Brendan Howlin	Male	0	0
John Browne	Male	0	0
Liam Twomey	Male	0	0
Paul Kehoe	Male	0	0
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	0	0
Seán Connick	Male	0	0
Anthony Kelly	Male	0	0
Pat Cody	Male	0	0
John Dwyer	Male	0	0
Seamus O'Brien	Male	0	0
Danny Forde	Male	0	0
Siobhán Roseingrave	Female	0	0
Ruairí de Valera	Male	0	0

Appendix XVI. *2016 Wexford Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Brendan Howlin	Male	0	0
James Browne	Male	0	0
Mick Wallace	Male	0	0
Michael W. D'Arcy	Male	0	0
Paul Kehoe	Male	0	0
Johnny Mythen	Male	0	0
Ger Carthy	Male	0	0
Aoife Byrne	Female	0	0
Leonard Kelly	Male	0	0
Deirdre Wadding	Female	0	0
John Dwyer	Male	0	0
Julie Hogan	Female	0	0
Ann Walsh	Female	0	0
Caroline Foxe	Female	0	0
Emmet Moloney	Male	0	0
David Lloyd	Male	0	0

Appendix XVII. *2011 Mayo Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	**Headline**	**Article**
Enda Kenny	Male	0	0

Michael Ring	Male	0	0
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	0
Dara Calleary	Male	0	0
John O'Mahony	Male	0	0
Michael Kilcoyne	Male	0	0
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	0
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	0
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	0
Thérèse Ruane	Female	0	0
Martin Daly	Male	0	0
John Carey	Male	0	0
Dermot McDonnell	Male	0	0
Loretta Clarke	Female	0	0
Seán Forkin	Male	0	0

Appendix XVIII. *2016 Mayo Candidate Mentions in The Irish Sun*

	Male/Female	Headline	Article
Enda Kenny	Male	0	0
Michael Ring	Male	0	0
Dara Calleary	Male	0	0
Lisa Chambers	Female	0	0
Michelle Mulherin	Female	0	0
Rose Conway-Walsh	Female	0	0
Jerry Cowley	Male	0	0
Michael Farrington	Male	0	0
Margaret Sheehan	Female	0	0
Tom Moran	Male	0	0
George O'Malley	Male	0	0
Peter Jordan	Male	0	0
Stephen Manning	Male	0	0
Mohammad Kamal Uddin	Male	0	0
Gerry O'Boyle	Male	0	0
Seán Forkin	Male	0	0

Appendix XIX. *The Percentage of Candidates that were Male/Female per constituency*

Constituency	% Male Candidates	% Female Candidates
2011 Dublin South-Central	88.89%	11.11%
2016 Dublin South-Central	61.54%	38.46%
2011 Wexford	92.86%	7.14%
2016 Wexford	75%	25%
2011 Mayo	73.33%	26.67%
2016 Mayo	75%	25%

Appendix XX. *"Skeleton" Interview Questions for Politicians*

<u>Leading questions</u>

How long have you been in politics?

How has the Irish political scene changed since you entered politics?

<u>The media</u>

How do you feel the media influences your political campaign?

Do you feel that greater media exposure is beneficial or detrimental to a campaign?

How do you, as a politician, use the media?

Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

<u>Quota</u>

How do you believe the introduction of gender quota was received both by the public and by politicians?

How do you feel the introduction of gender quota has affected the Irish political scene?

<u>Quota and the media</u>

Do you feel the new female candidates are validated in society/the media?

Do you feel female candidates are represented in the media more since the introduction of gender quota?

<u>Final</u>

Have women's movements and/or gender equality campaigns had an impact on Irish society? If so, how?

Do you have anything to add?

Appendix XXI. *"Skeleton" Interview Questions for Journalists*

<u>Leading questions</u>

1. How long have you been a journalist?

2. How has the Irish political scene changed since you began as a journalist?

<u>The media</u>

3. How do you feel the media influences political campaigns?

4. Do you feel that greater media exposure is beneficial or detrimental to a campaign?

5. Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

6. Do you have freedom as a journalist to decide which candidates to cover? What factors do you use to decide?

<u>Quota and the media</u>

6. How do you believe the introduction of gender quota was received both by the public and by the press?

7. How do you feel the introduction of gender quota has affected the Irish political scene?

8. Do you feel the new female candidates are validated in society/the media?

9. Do you feel female candidates are represented in the media more since the introduction of gender quota?

<u>Final</u>

10. Have women's movements and/or gender equality campaigns had an impact on Irish society? If so, how?

11. Do you have anything to add?

Appendix XXII. *Interview #1 with Politician*

How long have you been in politics?

Since 2004, that's when I ran first for the local party. That's when I ran here in Mayo, so you could say 2004 – so that's what? 16 years.

How has the Irish political scene changed since you entered politics?

It some senses it's changed a lot and in others it hasn't. What compelled me to run in 2004 was that, in the local party district here there had never been a woman on the ballot before.

There is obviously a problem with gender balance. People didn't even have the opportunity to vote before that. So that compelled me to run. Now I didn't get elected in 2004 but I got elected in 2009, but I worked in community development at the time and I remember bringing a group of women to – I was doing some training and development with them – and bringing them to the local party here and we had 31 seats within the Mayo city council local ed party and only 3 of them were women. Now you might say, how much have things changed since? In the most recent local elections we're still only left with three women in the local ed party here –so things haven't improved in that sense. So we need to identify these barriers that are preventing women from entering politics.

I think it's because of the make of the political parties. You have situations where you have commons. You have commons and it's quite difficult for women to get through those structures within the party structures. They tend to be male dominated.

Are the quota systems that have been introduced helping to fix this?

In some way at a national level they are helping to fix it. But at a local level they don't appear to have. Now they're not mandatory, it's just an incentive that's linked to funding. It's not mandatory. Ehrm, so while it has gone some way to addressing the situation at a national level it hasn't on a local level. Now maybe it needs more time for it to be fully implemented because it's only a new situation. But also maybe it needs to be more rigid in terms of the quotas in political parties being imposed. Like you know, you have to have 50/50 candidates.

How do you feel the media influences your political campaign?

Okay, I think it does influence it, it influences it quite a bit. But in terms of serious political commentary the male, the men will always be taken up first in the media. So for example I'm on the finance committee – economics would be my academic background – but in terms of take up by the media, they are likely to take the

soundbytes rather than serious political discussion or academic discussion. And men tend to be very good at the sound bytes or at least better than women. I think as well that men can be better at building the relationships with the media – doing the schmoozing if you like. With the media, you know the informal networking. Where women tend to be busier and concentrating more on their job and all of that. So the informal network can have an impact on it and I think the informal networking is better done by men, whether it be on the golf course or in the bar or wherever.

So from your point of view it's not just the media being more inclined to pick men but also men are better at utilising the media?

Yes, through informal networking.

How valuable to you as a politician is media exposure?

It's hugely valuable. Now there is a difference between the regional media and the national media. Now I would do a lot on local, regional radio and on community radio. I think the radio is extremely effective. And I think if people can hear your voice, they tend to, they think they know you better. So there is that link there rather than people just reading something in print in a newspaper. If people can have the tone, the voice as well as the content. Of course television is effective as well.

Now there is a lot of competition to get on national media. I do quite a bit on Virgin media, but on the main RTE television, it tends to be more confined to the male, traditional politician.

Television is more effective; television is more effective in that sense but the regional radio is targeted to the geographical area. I aim to be on it twice a week.

How have quota been dealt with in the media?

Its not really be dealt with, it's not. I don't think quota have impacted politics here. It's too soon to tell. Too soon to make a proper evaluation of the impact of quota.

Do you feel there has been a push for more women that is separate to this quota?

I think there has been a push but there has also been a pull effect. So there has been a push but there has also been a push against it. And it has caused a lot of conflict within parties where female candidates have been selected over male candidates to fulfil the quotas. And the backlash has been quite vicious within the parties.

So potentially it's having a negative effect on women's position?

It is yes. I think it's having a negative effect in terms of bullying and negative behaviours towards women who have been selected to run. Because the men would feel they have an entitlement – particularly those who have been around a long time – feel they have an entitlement to run. And because most of the common structures are made up of men, the are more likely to support men. So you see people breaking away from political parties because of selection conventions and maybe decisions at selection conventions being overridden by the implementation of these quota.

It's a painful experience – let me tell you!

There are times when you feel like saying, "just get on with it". I think most women would have felt some kind of intimidation, bullying or negative behaviour because of being selected to run.

Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

There is always the pressure on women to look a certain way. There is more pressure on women than there is on men and I think that's where the media needs to cop on. There is more focus on women's appearance than what they say and not on the appearance of men.

I haven't experienced myself but I'm pretty conservative in the way I dress.

When I started out on the doors you'd get comments. Particularly if you're a mother. You know, it would be "oh, who is looking after the children?" but you'd be mainly asked by women. Other women. As if you've left the children at home to look after themselves. When I started politics in 2004 I had two children under three. I had two babies if you like and that was the sort of comments and that really disturbed me. If it was my husband who was out canvasing on the doors, no one would be asking him. And then you still get it in an underlying way. Like you must somehow be neglecting the children if you're a woman in politics. But it mainly comes from other women – and that's the noticeable thing.

I had a situation which I thought was quite a funny situation. I was canvasing one day and I was canvasing this man who lived on his own, so he was looking at my leaflet and me – and he was quite a nice man – and he said "yeah, it would be quite handy for them to have someone up there to make the tea for them". And he was a really nice man, and he was just talking out loud. He didn't mean to be offensive. He didn't say it in a way that meant "all you can do is make tea" but that was his reality. That's all he could see women's role as being – it would be handy for me to be there to make tea.

So it's a reflection of Irish society?

It is the culture. And the hardest thing to change is the culture. If you were to ask me what the biggest barrier for women in Irish politics is, it's the culture and trying to change that. Now I do believe it will change, it will continue to change I think it takes everybody working together to do that. And it doesn't help when you have negative behaviour towards women who are elected to run in the first instance and then you have men who are – often within their own parties – who work against the female candidate being elected.

And this manifests in the media. There is a lot of lazy journalism. The media could decide tomorrow, Right we are really going to listen to women in politics and we are going to report the substance of what they say, in whatever speech or contribution they're making. Or as we are going to continue to comment on their looks and what they wear. Silly things. So I would, there are more women in media now. So I think there is an opportunity for them to do that. But you don't always find when you have a woman interviewing a woman that you're going to get a better quality of interview. It can also be that you're going to get a better quality with a woman. Because sometimes with a female journalist it's like a competitive situation. And I have seen female journalists give atrocious interviews to other women.

Have women's movements and/or gender equality campaigns had an impact on Irish society? If so, how?

It's too soon to tell if it will have a lasting effect. It does go to show that if you present women with an issue that they really care passionately about – women that aren't usually in politics – that they will get involved in an issue for change. What it did was, bring a lot of women who were involved in community development and engagement and bring them into the political arena.

If you can present a big idea to women, I think that motivates them.

The big part the media has to play, is this demonization. I mean, who in their right mind would want to go into a profession that is so hated? If you were a woman and a mother, do you really want to be the target of all that hate? The only way you will do that is if you have a real passion or a big idea.

Appendix XXIII. *Interview #2 with Politician*

How long have you been in politics?

I was first elected in 2014 as a local Councillor in the Stillorgan Ward of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, which is my home area. In 2016, I was elected to Dáil Éireann to represent my constituency of Dublin Rathdown. Then in 2017, I was appointed as Minister for Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht, becoming only the 19th woman to be a cabinet minister in Ireland.

How has the Irish political scene changed since you entered politics?

When I entered politics, Ireland was slowly emerging from a deep recession and many people were still struggling. Today the economic conditions are vastly improved, there is more investment taking place, we have effectively full employment, and people have more discretionary income in their pockets. During this period, Fine Gael has been in Government. In 2014 the Government had a huge majority in the Houses of the Oireachtas but today there is no majority at all. Fine Gael is in a Confidence and Supply arrangement with Fianna Fáil, the main opposition party. The emergence of this form of "New Politics" has been one of the biggest changes in the political scene since I entered politics.

How do you feel the media influences your political campaign?

Good media relations are crucial because a free press is an integral part of any democratic society. Engaging properly with the media can help you to raise the profile of some of the political issues that you are campaigning for; however the media will always ask probing questions so it is important to be aware of that also.

Do you feel that greater media exposure is beneficial or detrimental to a campaign?

Media is integral to any campaign as it is the best way to reach the largest possible number of people. It is important to be open and engage with the media as part of a democratic debate. As part of this, I believe it is important to stay true to your values and principles.

How do you, as a politician, use the media?

In my role as a public representative, I do regular interviews with the media. In addition, as a Government Minister, many of the initiatives that I lead are covered by media. I am a strong believer in the use of social media also, in order to engage with a wider audience. Many people nowadays use social media sites such as Facebook as their primary source of news. In my online activity, I try to always include a visual

aspect to my work – posting interesting pictures that highlight the work I do on a day-to-day basis.

Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

I don't feel there is a bias in how the media treats men compared to women. However, I sometimes feel that women put themselves under greater pressure to perform strongly. Politics is still dominated by men, in the Dáil only 22% of TDs are female. This means that women can sometimes feel marginalised or possibly suffer from impostor syndrome. This can lead to greater self-criticism.

How do you believe the introduction of gender quota was received both by the public and by politicians?

I think it was preceded by an important public debate so that when it was introduced, it was supported by most of the public and the politicians. We can all see the gender imbalance that exists at the moment. I think we all want to see big improvements in this. In an ideal world, we wouldn't need gender quotas however we do not live in an ideal world. Sometimes, targeted measures such as this are necessary to bring about gender parity at a faster rate than would otherwise be the case.

How do you feel the introduction of gender quota has affected the Irish political scene?

Undoubtedly, gender quotas have led to a noticeable increase in the number of women in politics. I myself was the beneficiary in some ways of a gender quota when I was first selected to contest the 2016 General Election. If Fine Gael Headquarters had not asked for a gender balanced ticket when we were selecting our local candidates then my place would have been taken by a man.

Do you feel the new female candidates are validated in society/the media?

I think so. It is generally appreciated across Irish society that having greater gender balance in our political representation is good for politics and good for the governance of Ireland. It leads to a better diversity of perspectives and approach, as women can often experience the world differently to men due to the continuing gender norms and stereotypes that exist.

Do you feel female candidates are represented in the media more since the introduction of gender quota?

I think female candidates are given the same political scrutiny as male candidates and this is a good thing. As the number of female politicians has increased, we have seen

an increase in the number of female politicians covered in the media. I hope this will be inspiring for all young people, but particularly young girls, who may find role models for future political careers of their own!

Have women's movements and/or gender equality campaigns had an impact on Irish society? If so, how?

There is a long history of women's movements having a significant impact on Irish society. In the 1916 Rising and the War of Independence, the organisation Cumann na mBan played an integral role, organising female volunteers as part of the struggle for Irish freedom. At the 1918 election, Irishwoman Constance Markievicz was the first women ever to be elected to the British House of Commons. Throughout the twentieth century on issues such as contraception, divorce, abortion, and other areas, movements of women played leading and decisive roles in helping to bring about gender equality. Those women are an inspiration to me and the other female parliamentarians of today. I was delighted to be selected as my party's campaign coordinator for both the referendum to repeal the ban on abortion in 2018 and to reform our divorce laws in a compassionate way only a few months ago. In many ways we stand on the shoulders of giants, but there is still a way to go.

Appendix XXIV. *Interview #3 with Politician*

How long have you been in politics?

5 years, first as a local representative (elected to Roscommon County Council in 2014) and then as a Senator (elected to the Seanad in 2016).

How do you feel the media influences your political campaign?

Media both traditional print and broadcast and social media is obviously very important. This is particularly relevant in a rural constituency where the geography means it is difficult to visit every area in the constituency on a weekly basis. Therefore it is important that you can keep people up to date with your work and through the media is a very important way to do this.

Do you feel that greater media exposure is beneficial or detrimental to a campaign?

This is linked to the previous question and it is all about trying to increase your profile and communicate your work to people in communities. Therefore media exposure is generally a positive thing, particularly for someone who hasn't been involved in politics for that long in order to increase your profile and get your message out.

How do you, as a politician, use the media?

As a public representative, I use all forms of media, the traditional print media and broadcast as well as social media (facebook, Instagram and twitter). I issue press statements on my work which are then picked up by local media as well as using social media to update people on my meetings with groups and organisations both locally and nationally. I also run adverts in local media to promote my constituency clinics which I run on a weekly basis in order to support communities across the constituency wherever possible.

Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

In general, I think politicians are treated in a balanced manner based on the point they are making rather than their gender. However, media commentary on female politicians can at times be quite trivial. I remember one incident in particular where a newspaper ran a piece on former Tánaiste, Frances Fitzgerald wearing the same outfit two days in a row. I cannot imagine a male politician ever being subject to such commentary.

How do you believe the introduction of gender quota was received both by the public and by politicians?

I want to be a representative because people believe I have the capabilities to do the job and that's very important to me. It's very much about being an individual who people believe they can talk to in terms of issues they might have as they feel [the person] is a good representative to highlight the issues in a particular area, whether that be at local level or at national level. It's very important to me that people would view me as being capable, not just seeing me as a woman.

I think that is a view held by most female politicians. I think that gender quotas have brought the issue of women in politics to the fore, however, I am not convinced that the quotas have succeeded in seeing more women elected as ultimately every candidate, both female or male is at the mercy of the electorate. They will vote predominantly for the representative that they feel can best represent their interests, regardless of gender.

I think new female candidates are not viewed any differently to new male candidates be they young or old. For the wider public, I do not think gender comes into consideration in terms of accepting the legitimacy of someone as a candidate for election. This is also true of the media. I think that there certainly is an increased level of participation in media by female politicians but I think that is a knock on effect of the increased participation of women in politics generally.

Appendix XXV. *Interview #4 with Politician*

How long have you been in politics?

10 years directly as a TD

How has the Irish political scene changed since you entered politics?

More independents and smaller parties. Also minority governments since 2016 – the first time in Ireland.

We have also seen the rise of left wing groups but little to no cooperation/cohesion.

How do you feel the media influences your political campaign?

Hardly at all

Do you feel that greater media exposure is beneficial or detrimental to a campaign?

It is said "bad publicity is better than none" but I don't agree. Media exposure tends to come from sensationalism, adversity, the more "shocking" the headline/story, the more media exposure.

How do you, as a politician, use the media?

I tend not to; I do occasional press releases but I do respond to requests/PR interviews/requests for comment etc.

I do use my email, website and the occasional tweet. But I'm not into communicating via twitter.

Do you feel the Irish media treats male and female candidates differently? If so how?

The only difference is there can be comment on female's hair, clothes and make up.

How do you believe the introduction of gender quota was received both by the public and by politicians?

I accepted but I'm on record as not agreeing

How do you feel the introduction of gender quota has affected the Irish political scene?

A few more women whom I feel could have been elected without quota were elected into office.

Do you feel the new female candidates are validated in society/the media?

Yes.

Do you feel female candidates are represented in the media more since the introduction of gender quota?

Depends on their "activities" and work.

Have women's movements and/or gender equality campaigns had an impact on Irish society? If so, how?

Laws have had an impact and education, access to education, encouragement of participation education, especially further education of women and the impact of female role models. I feel all of these things have had an impact.

In parts of my constituency it was women, over the years, who drove communities and development.

Appendix XXVI. *Interview #5 with Politician*

How long have you been in politics?

Well I have been involved in politics for a long time, I've been a national politician since 2011 and before that I operated on a local level since 2004.

How has the Irish political scene changed since you entered politics?

In my opinion, one of the greatest shifts has been the introduction of gender quota. They have monumentally changed the political scene and women have gained traction because of it. Most important was that these placed the onus on parties; by doing so it focused the minds of those in charge on one thing – getting more women on the cards. So you see, it shifted, the politics shifted in favour of women who might have been fighting for years to run.

However, I've also noticed hostility, particularly of late, towards women in politics that I had not witnessed before. Women are being zoned in on, with every little move they make being scrutinised. You see it in the papers, they'll take the most awful looking photo they can of you and blow it up next to something you did, now you don't see that with the males do you? You should see what they're doing to MMMMMMMM, it's disgusting. She wouldn't have a hope of finding a good story, they're ripping her to shreds. So in that sense while women are getting more visibility, I'm not sure it's good.

Really and truly, it's gendered. If they have a criticism of a woman, my god they'll go after them.

So you're suggesting women are overrepresented but the representation is critical?

I would say if they have a criticism of a women, it absolutely goes almost viral. And the reason is they will have this photograph of you, of the woman.

I mean if you look at HHHHHH they went after her for month on months, and she's a very pretty girl, and they put the most horrendous photos in the paper of her. And her local election results were disastrous. You use photographs for a reason – to sell news papers of make an impact. And I believe it did impact her.

So how do you see media representations impacting political campaigns?

They're pivotal, pivotal. They can help you get elected. They don't always give you two and a half months of exposure; they can pick you out if they want to. So if you take a male and a female and they take a picture of the female but not the male.

And what do you think about the idea, "all press is good press"?

I don't believe that. I don't believe it and again I think it's quite gendered. I don't think a woman… I think a male would have said that actually. Whereas a woman, it's a whole piece around confidence, it just knocks your confidence.

Usually middle aged, 35-45 year old journalists, short, with a chip on their shoulder. That's them.

And how does this affect a woman in politics?

You should really look at **u, giugiugiug,** what they have done to her is appalling. She's the butt of every joke in Ireland. There is a man who has done the same thing, but it's all over for him.

So no, I don't believe that. I think even in the UK, I know one woman – it's was dangerous driving or something – she got fired. And I think women get fired easier. And I think that has happened in our Irish government recently, women have been demoted and not the men.

And how do you feel the quota has been accepted?

No, I think it's accepted. And there is a group is Ireland called "Women for election", so it would be very strong. What's my point? So no, I think it's been accepted by the general public that women should be on the ticket. I think when women are on the ticket, and if they're put on the ticket as a viable candidate, not just to meet the quotas, they have a very good chance of being elected.

So you're suggesting political institutions were the barrier not the public?

Yes, I would think so yes. I think good women will get elected. But what is happening is that in the headquarters, you know, our own political organisations, they're not doing enough work themselves. And then they're under pressure to fill a quota. And they nearly go out towards the end and just pick women who haven't a hope of being elected.

Now in Ireland, I just read it. I'd forgotten it but, have you heard of the 4 or the 5 "c's" of getting elected?

No, I haven't.

Well in Ireland we have these "c's" and one of them is "cash", women don't have the "cash". One is "confidence", and the others "culture", "childcare" and "candidate selection". Yes.

They're the barriers for women. Everyone talks about it in Ireland. But there is also another one, it's the four "g's". "Geography", "gender", "genetics" – that's family connections – and, this one is quite interesting - the "GAA". Now the GAA, that's the sporting organisations. That's the big one in Ireland. If you're a member of the GAA, which men are and women aren't really, they'd be looking at you wondering why you were coming to sign up. But you're looking at all this support within the sporting organisation, to get votes before you even start. You have supporters and vote and before you're even a candidate. So for example, her in my constituency, if I say, "oh so and so is a member of this GAA", people will know them. A woman could be on a parent association but that's not really going to help. I mean it can help women if they're husband happens to be a member.

Genetics is also a barrier in Ireland as we have political dynasties, you know. All they have to do is put their hand up and they'll get elected. And the way that works is because their name is know; their name is known and people will vote based off their family. It's the name.

If you're a male and you have this genetics factor you'll get in, but it doesn't work the same for females. It's up to headquarters of the political organisations to change this.

And how do you use the media as a politician?

You know what, I try and keep away from them. I don't use them.

Why is that?

I think, I think they do not portray the work that you do. You know? And sometimes, they ah – I work really hard and I've done loads of stuff lately – but they cut right through that, they don't mention the work that I do. So I stay away from them, I do not like journalists.

And how does this impact your campaign?

It doesn't. You know what I do? I go back to the constituency. I work with them, the people. Decent people. The voter wants to know their politician.

And what about social changes, how have women's movements in Ireland impacted political life?

They've all been kind of accepted. I was on the ground working for that. But it's straight back to these bad old politics. It's the journalists.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Umm, no look. I just hope you'll contact me in 4 years and things will be different.

Appendix XXVII. *Interview #1 Journalist*

How long have you been in journalism?

Nine years this year. Wait actually I'm going to revise that. In terms of working in journalism and being a journalism student it would be about 12 years – so over a decade, that's hard to believe.

So not a short stint by any means! And you predominantly focus on political stories?

Yes, so I have covered politics exclusively since 2013 but I covered a lot of political stories before that also. First I was Political editor for aaaajbbbaaaa and then I was a political correspondent for the HHHHHHHH and I have recently moved to the jsbdkdjkjsbkajIrish where I am also a political correspondent. So that's my journey so far.

And how have you felt the political scene has changed since you've been covering politics?

I suppose the proliferation of social media as a platform has been one of the big changes, also in terms of coarsening the political debate. Which obviously is something that has been the subject of debate globally over the last few years, particularly in the aftermath of the election of Donald Trump. But it's something that I'm increasingly aware of here. You know that the level of political debate on twitter is not what it was when I first started doing this job six years ago.

How has the Irish political scene changed? I suppose that has been one change of government, we've gone from a, a rather not really a change of government but we have gone from a Fine Gael- Labour grand coalition with the biggest majority in the history of the state from 2011-2016 to ah, Fine Gael led minority which is supported by a number of independent TD's and underwritten by a confidence and supply agreement by Fianna Fael which is the main opposition party and has traditionally been the main party of government in Ireland. That has brought about a sort of political system which has, to my mind, sorta deeply dysfunctional in that there is an awful lot of opposition legislation that has been… and motions that have been passed in the Dáil that aren't having any practical impact because many of them are just ignored by the government and the will of the Dáil is frequently ignored by the government of the day, even though it's a minority government. So, I suppose the changes really domestically have been sorted see and the will of a grand majority government has been kind of lessened by virtue of the election result and by this now minority government that operates sort of day to day support from this opposition, or rather not day-to-day support by support that is constantly under review.

And obviously Brexit has had a huge impact on the scene here politically. In terms of bringing about a cross party consensus that I've actually never seen in Irish politics on any issue. You know there have been some suggestions of late that that bipartisan consensus has kind of cracked somewhat but it really hasn't when it comes to the kinda, core, fundamental issues of Brexit and the impasse that exists at the moment, there is no sort of desire among any party – main stream political party at least – in Ireland to ditch the back stop or anything like that.

So I suppose whilst you're kinda seeing a breakdown of politics in some respects, the fracturing on the vote in 2016 – with a lot of independents getting elected – and the labour party being almost wiped out, you are seeing a consensus emerging when it comes to the issue of national importance right now, which is Brexit.

The coarsening of the political debate on social media has been interesting in encouraging the election of kind of "protest politicians" and we have seen that, for example, the kind of "Trotsy-ite" party – "For profit and solidarity" – won a number of seats in the 2016 general election on the back of a very successful anti water charges movement and also that benefitted to some degree Sinn Fein as well, who have been a party strongly apposed to austerity, and is a party largely of protest and it isn't really a party of government in the South and hasn't been a party of government in the North for over two years.

So those are kind of broadly the changes, that's probably a lot there, but that's what the changes have been since I started covering politics. But I would underline the extent to which the coarsening of political debate online – when I started in this industry, twitter was somewhere where you could debate ideas and you could debate political controversies and whatever, but now it's just a dumpster fire.

And how do you feel these social media changes, as well as traditional media can impact a political campaign?

Well I mean I think it's increasingly having an impact on political campaigns, I mean look at Brexit. Look at the way the media was manipulated in relation to Brexit, the 350 million Euro a week promise for the NHS – which was a lie, effectively. And look at the way in which Donald Trump was able to get elected by courting the media in the run up to the 2016 general election, where he made these grand pronouncements and shocking and appalling statements that were carried live by all of the media outlets in the US. I think it shows how the media does have an influence on political campaigns. To an extent it's no different in Ireland. The media sets the agenda, and the media can decide what is the big campaign issue in the run up to a general election and I think it will be the same in the next Irish general election, which is probably going to take place in the next 8/9 months, whereby the media will have to shape what are the big issues in this election.

And you spoke of Donald Trump. He obviously received quite a bit of negative press, do you support this idea that all publicity is good publicity?

Well I think in that instance it was. I think Donald Trump was able to get across his message – whatever it is – but his message I suppose of America being broken and of America needing to be great again and this kind of protectionist approach, he was able to get that across because, and the main stream media was kind of fascinated that this guy who was on celebrity apprentice, or the apprentice rather was able to you know, run for president. And I think you saw the maximum amount of coverage he got contributed towards his message getting out there. And to voters that ultimately elected him president.

Absolutely, and in a more Irish context? And do you feel that this is dealt this the same for male and female candidates?

I think that the media, how do they treat them differently? I think that traditionally the approach of the media toward male and female candidates has differed in terms of treatment. Women only tended to get contacted some times in relation to what are perceived to be female issues, you know issues such as why isn't there more parental leave for politicians? Or why aren't there more women in politics generally? How can we get more women into politics? Those questions tend to be asked more of female politicians when really they should probably be really asked of the male politicians as they are the ones, inevitably because there are so many more of them, actually making decisions around these issues. So that's one aspect of how they're treated differently and I suppose the fact that there are so many more male politicians than there are females – there is still less, I think, than a quarter of Irish TD's are female – means that inevitably people tend to ah, people in the media tend to defer more to the male politicians than they would to the female politicians. I think this is something that is gradually changing, but it will only change when we have more female politicians and obviously that's going to be something that's going to take a long time to achieve. There have been blunt instruments introduced in terms of gender quotas and that has had an impact, and will continue to have an impact on future elections.

Speaking of gender quota, how have they been approached or portrayed in the media?

Well I think they have been portrayed as something that is a necessary evil. You know, gender quotas were something that were opposed even by some female politicians. But I think many saw the benefits of them in that they got female candidates onto election tickets that might otherwise not have even been on the ticket. They helped to encourage more women into politics because they knew that they would have a better chance of getting on the ticket and thus getting elected to the Dáil. But I think that, whilst there has been some hostility towards then, particularly driven by male quarters, I think the media has recognised broadly that this is a

necessary approach in order to generate more, and ensure there are more female politicians.

And so these female candidates who may have come in on a gender quota, do you feel they still receive the same media attention as other candidates?

I think they tend to get more coverage if their placement on an election ticket has been the subject of some controversy or there has been some dispute at the selection convention – that can often mean that there is more coverage of them by virtue of that, for that reason. And, you know, there can be references in media reporting that such and such is a gender quota candidates, but I don't think that necessarily means they are treated differently. If anything it could garner them more coverage by virtue of the fact that they've been put on a ticket because of their gender but I don't think they will necessarily be discriminated against – once you're a candidate you're a candidate. So, you know, female candidates saying something controversial or newsworthy doesn't get treated any different from a male saying the same. The fact that they're a candidate should mean they get the same coverage, and I think generally they do, once people get past the fact that people consider them a gender candidate.

As a journalist do you have quite a lot of freedom in choosing who you do and don't cover?

Yes, absolutely. There is no element of my job that involves not writing about a candidate because of their gender or because of how they got onto a ticket, unless there are particular circumstances.

And what if the paper you write for holds particular ideological perspectives or political leanings?

Well, there are certain parties that would not be covered as much as other parties. And that could be for a variety of reasons, that their ideology in not in line with the outlook of the news organisation or simply that that party does not garner sufficient support from the public could mean their candidates don't get covered. I suppose that, to give you an example, a candidate from Sinn Fein is not necessarily going to get as much coverage as a candidate from Finna Fail or Fine Gael because it's not as big a party. Also it depends on the constituency, if it's a no-hoper Sinn Fein in a South-Dublin constituency, they're not going to get as much coverage as a Finna Fail or Fine Gael candidate because that constituency is more likely to elect one of those candidates.

So it's also about how viable a candidate is?

Yes, that factors into the thinking in any sort of political story you do. A politician saying something and the level of newsworthiness of that is often dependent on who

that politician is, what their role is. A backbench politician saying something is obviously not as newsworthy a Cabinet minister or the Taosich saying something.

And as you addressed before, there have been political changes in Ireland, but there have also been social movements and change recently. Have you seen this have an impact?

I suppose these two referenda have, to some extent, forced political parties to confront issues that they otherwise wouldn't have otherwise confronted and have forced them to mobilise and bring into the political system an awful lot of the campaigners and canvassers who would have been involved in those campaigns and you know, I think the passage of the same-sex marriage referendum in 2015, the knock on effect of that, created the circumstances where an abortion referenda could be held in 2018. I don't think you would have had one without the other. And I think the political parties since those two referenda have tried to attract those involved in those campaign – a lot of them not political or not affiliated to one political party or another – so they had to try and get them, those people involved. And I think some have been more successful than others, but I think all political parties to some degree have benefitted from it. But the full outworking of that wont be apparent for a few years yet.

I think that's all I had in terms of concrete questions, is there anything you'd like to add?

I think that, just on that point, that these grassroots campaigns that impacted this legislation or the environment so much that these referendum on same sex marriage and abortion have passed, would not have been possible without the politicians bringing about the legislative frameworks for which these referenda have been held. So I think that's an important point to note.

I suppose there is an increasing awareness in Irish politics of the need to get more women into Irish politics. There is a number of reasons for this, not least the introduction of gender quota and the fact that Ireland has performed quite badly on an international standard in terms of getting more women into politician. So there has been an increasing appreciation for the need for women in Irish public life.