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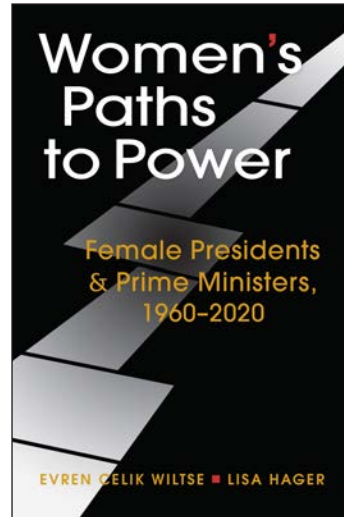
Women's Paths to Power:
Female Presidents
and Prime Ministers,
1960–2020

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1

Women's Paths to Political Power

Politico: “Trump Pulls Off Biggest Upset in U.S. History” (Goldmacher and Schreckinger 2016). NBC News: “2016 Election: Donald Trump Wins the White House in Upset” (Arkin and Siemaszko 2016). *Washington Post*: “Donald Trump Wins the Presidency in Stunning Upset over Hillary Clinton” (Tumulty, Rucker, and Gearan 2016). “Upset” immediately became one of the media’s choice words to describe 2016 election results. Why? Because before election night, polls and predictions pointed toward a Hillary Clinton victory. Once the initial shock wore off, Clinton’s loss to Donald Trump led many to ask, why have US voters yet to elect a female president? The 2020 election has sparked renewed interest in this question. Multiple women presidential hopefuls ran in the primary races, but Joe Biden won the nomination and the presidency. Now, the closest a woman is to the Oval Office in this election is as vice president, with Biden naming California senator Kamala Harris as his running mate. One hundred years after women’s suffrage, Senator Harris is only the third woman to run for the vice presidency in the United States and the first to capture the office.

Political commentators often seek to answer this question by focusing on voter sexism. For example, in the case of Clinton there was much debate in the media over whether voter sexism was the reason her extensive political career was not enough to beat Trump, a candidate labeled as politically inexperienced and anti-establishment (e.g.,

Bevan 2017; Cohen 2016; Peck 2017; Robbins 2017). However, sexism is present in the electorates of all the democracies around the world that *have* elected women as executives. From Brazil to Bangladesh, Liberia to Iceland, electorates granted access to women to serve as political executives, and in some cases for multiple terms. Scholars studying women presidents and prime ministers from across the globe have long since noted that voters possess gender stereotypes that serve as a substantial hurdle to women becoming executives (e.g., Kittilson 1999; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Sczesny et al. 2004). This has led to studies, notably Jalalzai (2013), that focus on how women overcome voter, but also institutional and cultural, sexism by examining the paths women executives take to office and the institutional and political characteristics of countries with women presidents or prime ministers.

The existing literature has identified three paths to executive positions: family, political activism, and political career. Women with male family members (i.e., fathers, brothers, or husbands) who hold political office or serve as high-ranking government officials are more likely to become executives (Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2004, 2008; Jalalzai and Rincker 2018; Richter 1991). Similarly, oftentimes women become executives after having served in the legislature or holding a cabinet position (Jalalzai 2004, 2013; Whicker and Isaacs 1999). Other women executives have less traditional political experience, having gained notoriety as political activists, typically by participating in national independence or democratization movements (Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2013; Katzenstein 1978; Richter 1991; Thompson 2002/2003). Across each of these three paths, the women are relatively highly educated (Jalalzai 2013). In general, the family path is most prominent in Asia and Latin America, whereas the political career path is common in Africa and Europe (Jalalzai 2013; Jalalzai and Rincker 2018). Interestingly, the political activism path occurs in each of these regions, with prominent activist politicians hailing from Iceland, Brazil, Malawi, and South Korea.

A related area of research examines institutional and political factors that increase the likelihood that women will become executives. Institutional factors focus on how much power is afforded to the executive and whether a nation has a dual executive (i.e., a president and prime minister) and/or a multiparty system. Political factors relate to the number of women serving in the legislative and executive branches, the nation's political stability, and historical trends involving the advancement of women's political rights, including suffrage and previous women executives. With respect to institutional factors, findings

suggest that women are more likely to serve as executives in countries with dual-executive and/or multiparty systems (e.g., Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2008, 2013, 2016a). However, the amount of power afforded to the executive does not influence whether women become presidents or prime ministers (Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). In other words, women are not more likely to serve in weak, or ceremonial, executive positions than strong, or head of government, posts. Mixed findings have been reported for political factors in which countries with more female legislators and previous women executives are more likely to have female presidents and/or prime ministers (Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). Conversely, women are less likely to lead nuclear power states (Jalalzai 2013). Interestingly, higher numbers of women cabinet members, political instability, and longer periods of women suffrage do not appear to influence whether women become executives (Jalalzai 2013, 2016a).

Women Executives: Remaining Questions and Research Opportunities

These two bodies of research—on the paths that women take to executive positions and the factors that increase the likelihood a country will have a woman executive—have developed separately. As a result, the literature provides an incomplete picture of how women can overcome voter, institutional, and cultural sexism to become presidents and prime ministers. Specifically, it is unclear which political and institutional factors lead women to take each path to executive office, and how the path a woman uses to reach executive office is influenced by the path(s) taken by her female predecessor(s). Do certain political and institutional factors cater to a particular path, or do they impact all types of women executives equally? Does a woman executive's path to office help or hinder future women from becoming presidents or prime ministers via the same or a different path? More work is needed to unpack the paths—and to examine the political and institutional factors that lead women to take each path to executive office and how a woman's ability to become president or prime minister is impacted by the path(s) her female predecessor(s) used to claim executive power.

Scope and Coverage

Other ways to expand the existing scholarship relate to how scholars have approached studying women executives. As also recognized by

Jalalzai (2013), most studies on the subject focus on one or a few cases or regions (e.g., Genovese 1993b; Montecinos 2017a; Opfell 1993; Richter 1991), provide qualitative in-depth descriptions of how women executives rose to power and behaved once in office (e.g., Genovese 1993b; Liswood 2007; O'Brien 2018; Opfell 1993; Skard 2014), and/or briefly examine women executives comparatively (e.g., Genovese 1993b). Consequently, there is a vast amount of research covering relatively short periods of time on individual and country-specific reasons that women have been able to capture executive posts. This simultaneously means that there is a dearth of work on the broader political and institutional factors that can explain over time whether countries have women executives and the paths women take to become presidents and prime ministers (Jalalzai 2013).

In order to identify patterns among countries that have had women executives and the paths they take to office, Jalalzai's (2013) groundbreaking study, which begins in 1960 with the first female executive, Sri Lankan prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, and ends in 2010, uses a comparative global approach and presents both descriptive and statistical analyses. The time period of 2000–2010 for the statistical analyses covers just 31 percent of all women executives who assumed office prior to 2020. Since 2010, thirty-six women have assumed an executive office, thus the literature would benefit from extending the time frame of these analyses of political and institutional factors that predict whether a country has a female president or prime minister, and from additional quantitative analyses on the paths women take to office.

Research Design

Additional opportunities for further research stem from specific aspects of existing descriptive and/or statistical analyses in the women executives literature. First, some researchers code women as taking multiple paths to executive office (e.g., Jalalzai 2013). Yet, many women who reach executive positions have had long political careers, whereas some come from prominent families or start as activists and gradually engage in political parties, rise up in the ranks, serve as legislators, and finally reach the presidency or premiership. Should they be considered as taking the family path, political activist path, or political career path to power? Consequently, more work is needed on how best to characterize a woman's path to

office, why multiple paths are dominant in several regions of the world, and why certain paths are common in one region but not another with similar political and institutional characteristics.

Second, studies exclude interim executives or those who stay in office for relatively short periods of time (e.g., Jalalzai 2013). Are these interim positions distributed randomly across the world, or are women serving in an interim capacity more in some regions than others? Additional research should examine the dynamics surrounding *all* female executives.

Third, studies include factors that directly and indirectly relate to whether women attain executive positions (e.g., Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). For example, proportional representation, quotas, and leftist parties are discussed as increasing the number of women in government and, consequently, the pool of potential women executives. Despite the role of parties in nominating executive candidates and/or selecting presidents and prime ministers (e.g., Jalalzai 2013, 2016a; Lovenduski 1993; Norris and Lovenduski 2010), the women under consideration are those who have already benefited from the party's emphasis on increasing female representation in government. Taken collectively, the literature would benefit from focusing on factors that directly help women reach executive positions.

Lastly, studies tend to use multiple indicators to measure essentially the same phenomenon. For example, previous work uses length of female suffrage, number of women in parliament, and number of women in the cabinet to assess the impact of women's representation in government on whether a country has a female executive (e.g., Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). Future studies adopting a parsimonious approach would help advance the body of work on women executives by providing a more concise explanation of how women become presidents and prime ministers around the world.

Additional Insights on Women Who Claim Executive Seats

Enhancing Prior Work on Women Executives

In order to add to this body of work on how women overcome voter, institutional, and cultural sexism to become executives across the globe, and to gain insight into how to break the glass ceiling of the US presidency, we enhance prior work through a global, mixed-methods

analysis of women executives from 1960 to 2020. Each effort to enhance existing work will now be discussed in turn.

First, we follow Jalalzai's (2013) lead by providing a comprehensive analysis of all female executives who have taken office since the installment of the first one, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, in 1960 in Sri Lanka. In doing so, our descriptive and quantitative analyses cover eight and fifteen more years, respectively, than those found in Jalalzai's (2013) book. Furthermore, this time period covers more than 130 women executives and adds over 50 cases to Jalalzai's (2013) data. The expanded coverage of our book allows for more patterns to be uncovered over time regarding the paths that women take to executive office and the institutional and political factors that tend to give rise to female presidents and prime ministers. Additionally, it is possible that the inclusion of additional cases stands to influence conventional wisdom stemming from the results of the extant literature.

Second, in our analyses we coded women presidents and prime ministers as taking one path to office. The authors and two undergraduate research assistants read Jalalzai's (2013) biographies of women presidents and prime ministers to discern which path propelled each woman to an executive seat. Women with a familial tie to political power (i.e., a parent, spouse, or sibling holding federal political office prior to her involvement in politics) are automatically coded as taking the family path to office (e.g., Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka). Women who participated in democratization, women's rights, or any other social or political movement prior to holding political office are coded as following the political activist path to her executive post (e.g., President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia). Lastly, women who began their careers by running for lower political offices and continued to work their way up the government ranks are coded as taking the political career path to the presidency or premiership (e.g., Prime Minister Julia Gillard of Australia). Any coding disagreement was resolved by consulting a variety of online biographical sources that tended to be used by Jalalzai (2013) (e.g., *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the BBC). These same biographical resources were also consulted to code and resolve coding disagreements over women who assumed office since 2010. In an effort to build on Jalalzai's (2013) data, biographies for these women can be found in the appendix.

Third, rather than excluding female interim executives from some or all analyses, we include them in both descriptive and quan-

titative analyses in order to fully determine the differences among them and their elected and appointed counterparts. To ensure that the inclusion of interim presidents and prime ministers does not bias the results, the descriptive analyses unpack the results based on whether women are elected, appointed, or interim executives and the quantitative analyses control for women who served on an interim basis.

Fourth, we focus on political and institutional factors that the literature has identified as directly impacting whether a woman becomes a president or prime minister. These are characteristics that can be used to describe the political and institutional environment of a country, including the extent of democratic institutionalism, level of human development, presence of a multiparty system, type of executive system, and female representation in government. These factors contrast with (1) direct factors found to have no impact on a woman's ability to become president or prime minister, such as the position's level of power (see Jalalzai 2013, 2016a); (2) indirect factors, for example, party quotas that help women get elected to legislative office; and (3) factors that are cultural or unique to each country and/or woman, like religious-based views of women, terrorist attacks, or the woman's educational attainment.

Lastly, the descriptive and statistical analyses in this book are parsimonious in an effort to avoid multiple measures of the same concept. In particular, we use one measure of female representation in government: the percentage of women in parliament.

Research Questions and Advancing the Literature on Women Executives

In addition to enhancing the existing work on women executives in the specific ways mentioned above, this book advances the literature by exploring the following research questions: (1) What are the dominant paths to power for women in different regions of the world? (2) What factors allow each path to result in an executive position? (3) What conditions increase the likelihood that a country will have a female executive? (4) Does the path that a woman takes to executive office help or hinder future female executives? (5) What circumstances determine how long a woman holds executive office? (6) Do certain paths influence how long women serve as presidents and prime ministers? While exploring each of these questions, special attention is also paid to changes that have occurred over time and differences among women

presidents and prime ministers who were elected, were appointed, or served on an interim basis.

Thus, this book builds upon previous studies by explaining (1) why certain paths are prevalent in certain regions; (2) how institutional and political factors determine the paths that women take to executive positions; (3) the impact a woman's path to executive office has on future women seeking presidencies and premierships; and (4) whether a woman's path to an executive position and the country's institutional and political environment dictate how long she stays in office.

Overall, the book contributes to the existing literature by offering additional insight into how women overcome various types of sexism (voter, institutional, and cultural) to become executives across the globe, how long female presidents and prime ministers remain in power, and the durability of the US presidency's glass ceiling. In the rest of this chapter we provide a more thorough review of the existing literature, highlight opportunities for additional research, and preview the remaining chapters.

Literature Review

Prior to Jalalzai's (2013) groundbreaking work on women presidents and prime ministers spanning 1960–2010, the literature on women executives was largely composed of case studies covering a relatively short time frame and/or a certain country or geographical region (e.g., Bauer and Tremblay 2011; Clemens 2006; Genovese 1993a, 1993b; King 2002; Murray 2010; Opfell 1993; Thompson and Lennartz 2006). These studies provided a wealth of information about women presidents and prime ministers, most notably that (1) women come to power in various different political contexts; (2) women possess different leadership styles; (3) women must overcome political stereotypes; and (4) "women's issues" are emphasized differently in each executive's policy agenda.

Additional scholars have concluded that a number of institutional, political, and cultural factors must be taken into account to explain a woman's ascension to power: electoral system, executive structure, quotas, parties, female representation in government, and economic development (e.g., Inglehart and Norris 2003; McDonagh 2009; Reynolds 1999). In an effort to draw generalizable conclusions

from the findings of prior research, Jalalzai (2013) identifies three primary paths that women take to become president or prime minister: (1) family, (2) political activism, and (3) political career. Before Jalalzai's work, the existing literature had not utilized a global approach to comprehensively study a woman's path to power or factors that increase the likelihood that a country will have a woman president or prime minister. The next two sections review these two dominant strands of literature on women presidents and prime ministers in more detail and highlight opportunities to build on the work of Jalalzai and others addressed in this book.

Paths to Executive Power

Family path. Many scholars observe that the family path is utilized by women most often in patriarchal and/or politically less stable countries, such as those in Latin America and Asia (Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2004, 2008, 2013; Jalalzai and Rincker 2018; Richter 1991). By capitalizing on familial connections to power, usually through husbands or fathers (Jalalzai and Rincker 2018), this path explains how women can reach executive seats in societies that are among the least favorable to women's civil rights and liberties. For example, Indira Gandhi's father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was among the founding fathers of India and had served as the first prime minister of the newly independent nation. Isabel Perón of Argentina, Mireya Moscoso of Panama, and Corazon Aquino of the Philippines all followed in the footsteps of their husbands to office. In patriarchal societies, especially those where women have recently gained suffrage, women must capitalize on their family name in order to overcome pervasive gender stereotypes that men are better suited for executive positions and to attain power (Baturu and Gray 2018; Fox and Oxley 2003; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Jalalzai and Rincker 2018; Sczesny et al. 2004). Women often take the family path to executive positions in politically unstable countries because power can be "inherited" or regained following regime changes often due to the assassination or imprisonment of male executives (Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2013). Frequent turnover also benefits women as more feminine qualities, such as collaboration and consensus building, are viewed as ideal traits for executives who must be able to promote unity in these politically turbulent countries (Jalalzai 2008; Katzenstein 1978; Saint-Germain 1993).

Building on these insights into the family path, this book offers additional dimensions to add to the women executives literature. First, it is unknown whether there is any variation in the use of the family path over time. Second, we do not know the impact of a woman becoming president or prime minister via the family path on more women rising to power similarly, so we explore these questions in our study. Third, we examine why the family path is dominant in some regions of the world that have experienced political instability and/or are relatively patriarchal—Latin America and Asia—but not in others that could also be characterized in one or both of these ways—the Caribbean, Africa, or the Middle East. Furthermore, since none of these regions are static, the book will also shed light on whether the family path's historical dominance in a region means that it will endure in the future. Fourth, although political instability and multiple leadership changes are prevalent in countries where women reach executive office via the family path, studies have not examined how long these female presidents and prime ministers stay in power. Thus we address longevity of term questions. Lastly, outside of women recently gaining suffrage (Baturu and Gray 2018), it is unclear which political and institutional factors give rise to women executives who take the family path. Consequently, we explore the possibility that various political and institutional factors can explain a woman's path to power via family ties. For example, it is likely that women take the family path to appointed executive posts in dual-executive systems or interim positions.

Political activism path. Women in patriarchal and/or politically less stable countries also tend to take the political activism path to executive positions. In addition to Asia and Latin America, this path is also common in Africa and Eastern Europe (Jalalzai 2013). For example, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Janet Jagan of Guyana, Agatha Barbara of Malta, and Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia all participated in democratization and/or women's rights movements before assuming power. There have also been examples of activist women in Nordic countries, such as prime minister of Iceland Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir. Participation in an activist movement can help women launch political careers and eventually reach executive posts for a few reasons. First, as the movement gains momentum, a critical juncture may be reached in which representation in formalized political institutions is needed in order to realize additional

change (Jalalzai 2013; Montecinos 2017b). Second, and relatedly, female leaders of activist movements running for political office to advance their political agenda already have voters mobilized on their behalf (Jalalzai 2013). Third, women are best able to capitalize on their political activist background by drawing upon stereotypes that they are maternal caretakers and peacebuilders to justify their political involvement, especially during or shortly after democratization movements (e.g., Geske and Bourque 2001; Jalalzai 2013; Salo 2010). Consequently, times of democratic transition have been advantageous for the rise of women executives.

Although these findings shed substantial light on how women reach executive positions using the political activist path, we add more insight into this path. First, it is unknown why this path is seen in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe but not other regions characterized as patriarchal and/or politically less stable, such as the Middle East. We look at different factors leading to the activist path and thereby shed light on the cases/regions that are more conducive to it. Second, as is the case with the family path, the existing literature has not explored whether certain institutional and political factors, such as multiparty systems, lead women to take the activist path to executive office; therefore, we consider this possibility. Third, we address how it has not been determined whether a woman taking the activist path to executive office encourages future female presidents and prime ministers to do so as well. Fourth, and also similarly to the family path, studies have not addressed how long activist women executives stay in office. We do, in light of the literature discussing the presence of political instability that would likely lead to relatively short terms in office. Lastly, the literature categorizes women as taking multiple paths to office in which there is considerable overlap between the family and political activist paths. The issue of overlapping paths deserves closer scrutiny. After a closer reading of individual biographies, we focus on the initial path that launched and steered their career to an executive post. Coming from a political dynasty provides immense name recognition to women politicians. Consequently, we placed women with familial ties to political office in the family path, in order to provide more insight into the factors leading women to the activist path. This also helps to better isolate the prevalence of the activist path in certain regions of the world, and any changes in its use over time or among elected, appointed, or interim executives.

Political career path. Other women, especially those in Africa and Europe, become involved in politics and reach executive posts in a much more traditional fashion than their political activist counterparts by pursuing political careers and holding political office, such as serving as a cabinet minister and/or an elected representative at the local, regional, and/or national level (e.g., Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985; Genovese 1993a; Jalalzai 2004, 2013). For example, Luísa Dias Diogo of Mozambique held various positions in the Department of Budget in the Ministry of Finance, including minister of finance, before being selected as prime minister. Another case in point is Tarja Halonen, who was a member of the Helsinki City Council, the Parliament of Finland, and the cabinet as the minister of social affairs and health, justice, and foreign affairs before being elected president of Finland. Similar to men, prior political experience serves as a set of qualifications that legitimizes a woman's election or appointment. However, becoming a president or prime minister often requires women to wait for an opening, highlight their outsider status, and/or hold "masculine" cabinet positions that handle foreign affairs or national defense (e.g., Jalalzai 2013; King 2002; Thompson and Lennartz 2006). For example, Margaret Thatcher was considered an outsider for being a woman and of a lower socioeconomic status than her male counterparts in the Conservative Party and Tory network (King 2002).

Taken collectively, current descriptive and statistical research on the political career path by Jalalzai (2013) confirms the conclusions of existing case study research (e.g., Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2009). However, more research, such as this book, is needed in order to understand fully the reasons why women take the political career path to executive office, and especially whether future female executives follow in the footsteps of their female predecessors and use this path to also reach the presidency or premiership.

The Covid-19 crisis illustrated the superior performance of women leaders (Aldrich and Lotito 2020; Huang 2020). Almost all the high-performing leaders, including Angela Merkel (Germany), Jacinda Ardern (New Zealand), Sanna Marin (Finland), and Erna Solberg (Norway), come from the political career path. While this book does not focus on the performance of the women after they took power, it may provide valuable insights for future research on the relationship between women leaders' paths to power and their performance while in office. The relatively underexplored question of paths to power could impact performance while in power.

We address these issues by first recognizing that, as was the case with the political activist and family paths, prior studies grouped any woman with prior political experience into this category. It is possible that removing activist women and those with major name recognition (family path) will better explain why the political career path is utilized most often in Africa and Europe, and any changes in this path over time. Second, we provide a clearer portrait of whether legislative or cabinet positions are more common before becoming president or prime minister. Closer scrutiny of individual biographies allows us to better chart the career paths of these women leaders. Our findings indicate cabinet positions are the more viable path for women, while most of the literature focuses on the legislative branch as a major pool for women leaders. Third, although it appears that the political career path is dominant in regions where the family and political activist paths are not (i.e., Latin American and Asia), we consider the possibility that certain institutional and political factors and the executive position itself influence whether a woman takes this path to power. For example, the political career path may be used most often in meritocratic and/or politically stable countries with dual executives in which qualified women in high-ranking cabinet positions have a better chance of being appointed prime minister than overcoming gender stereotypes to be elected president. Fourth, we acknowledge how the combination of qualified, politically experienced women in politically stable environments suggests that the political career path results in presidents and prime ministers who serve full terms in office and are well positioned for reelection or reappointment. Yet, current studies have not examined this possibility, so we do so by exploring how the political career path and various political and institutional factors influence a woman's length of time in executive office.

Factors That Facilitate a Woman's Rise to Executive Power

Electoral systems. Electoral systems have long been identified as crucial in promoting female representation in legislative government (e.g., Duverger 1955). In particular, multimember and proportional representation systems lead to more female legislators than single-member majoritarian districts (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 1998a; Paxton 1997; Rule 1985; Rule and Zimmerman 1994; Salmond 2006; Yoon 2010).

The benefits of multimember districts depend on the number of seats available. Women are more likely to be elected from districts where several seats are available because there are more opportunities and parties are more conscious about putting male and female candidates on the ballot (Matland 1993; Rule 1985; Taagepera 1994). How much proportional representation increases the number of women elected to parliament depends on the extent to which women are organizing and demanding representation, voter views of party elites, and whether parties utilize closed or open lists (Matland 1998b; Matland and Taylor 1997; Rule and Zimmerman 1994; Salmond 2006; Valdini 2012, 2013). Women benefit from closed lists when voters have traditional views of party elites, whereas women are more likely to reach parliament via open lists when electorates have progressive views of party elites (Matland 1998b; Rule and Zimmerman 1994; Valdini 2012). Although the extent to which multimember and proportional representation systems increase the number of women in the legislature depends, respectively, on the number of seats available and closed versus open lists, both systems produce more politically experienced female politicians, which increases the likelihood that women will serve as president or prime minister (Jalalzai 2013; Reynolds 1999). Consequently, multimember and proportional representation systems indirectly impact whether women can attain executive power via female representation in parliament.

Executive structures. Women are best able to ascend to power as prime ministers, especially those who wield relatively less power, in parliamentary and semi-presidential systems for two reasons (e.g., Hodson 1997; Jalalzai 2008, 2013, 2016a). First, the appointment system is conducive to women taking the political career path to office in which they work their way up in the party and/or government (Hodson 1997; Whicker and Isaacs 1999). Second, presidents, who enjoy a substantial amount of independence and are only curtailed by the threat of impeachment and/or not being reelected, are often thought of in general, and by voters, in “masculine” terms. Presidents must be strong, quick decisionmakers who garner the respect necessary to be commander in chief. Female politicians are perceived to be more collaborative and consensual, which are ideal qualities for a prime minister who must facilitate cooperation within parliament to ensure the government runs smoothly while simultane-

ously avoiding being removed from office via a vote of no confidence or an unsuccessful party election (Duerst-Lahti 1997).

Quotas. Quotas do not directly impact a woman being elected or appointed president or prime minister. However, they influence the ability of women to reach executive office, especially those taking the political career path. Quotas seek to increase female representation in a nation's legislature or executive branch.

A few different methods may be employed at the legislative level: reserved seats, legislative quotas, or party quotas (see Krook 2009). Reserved seats provide women with a certain number or percentage of spots in the national legislature. Legislative quotas require political parties to nominate a specific percentage of female candidates. Party quota systems are adopted by parties themselves to ensure that a particular number or percentage of its candidates are women (Hughes, Paxton, and Krook 2017). Findings suggest that quotas are best able to create gender parity within a nation's legislature in proportional representation systems where multiple seats are available per district and parties use closed lists (Htun and Jones 2002). Quotas are also most successful in countries dominated by leftist parties, which are more supportive of advancing gender equality (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Kittilson 1999). Quotas tend to be ineffective for two reasons: (1) significant and immediate consequences are not attached to failing to meet the mandate, and (2) they are difficult to implement in light of current political institutions and candidate selection practices (Jones 1998; Krook 2009; Schmidt and Saunders 2004; Schwindt-Bayer 2009).

Executive quotas are most commonly found in Latin America but differ vastly from one another in terms of scope and design (Htun and Piscopo 2014; Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes 2020). Executive quotas can operate at the federal level (e.g., Costa Rica), municipal level (e.g., Honduras), or both (e.g., Ecuador) and typically require that women hold 30–50 percent of the positions (Htun and Piscopo 2014; Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes 2020). At the federal level, Costa Rica has gone so far as to require that at least one of the two vice presidential candidates be female although the position is largely ceremonial (Htun and Piscopo 2014). Since many executive quotas have only recently been instituted, they have been relatively understudied (Htun and Piscopo 2014). However, initial findings suggest that female influence is increasing across Latin America as a result, especially in

Costa Rica with the mandated selection of at least one female vice presidential candidate (Franceschet and Piscopo 2013; Htun and Piscopo 2014; Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes 2020; Pignataro and Taylor-Robinson 2019; Piscopo 2015). Similar to legislative quotas, executive quotas can also be ineffective due to loopholes and issues with oversight and enforcement (Htun and Piscopo 2014).

Parties. Parties have an indirect influence on a woman's ability to become a president or prime minister despite being tasked with officially nominating candidates. In order to be considered for an executive position, a woman must have already benefited from factors relating to a party's structure and ideology that help women advance their political careers at all levels. Findings indicate that more women candidates are nominated for all political offices if parties have more control over their local affiliates, more members to choose from, and candidate selection criteria that emphasize qualifications and electability instead of ethnic or regional ties and party-level experience, which favor men (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2019; Lovenduski 1993). Yet, leftist parties tend to nominate more women as gender equality is an important party platform (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Kittilson 1999).

In addition to a party's internal structure, a country's party system can also influence whether a woman can rise to executive power. Multiparty parliamentary systems are routinely found to increase the likelihood that a country has had a female executive (Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). This is often because a coalition government is in place. Coalition governments require the prime minister to bring the parties together by building consensus, which is a task considered best suited for females because they are more collaborative than their independent male counterparts (Jalalzai 2013).

Female representation in government. It is conventionally assumed that as female representation in government increases, so too do the odds that a country will have a female executive (e.g., Jalalzai 2013, 2016a; Reynolds 1999). Additionally, the longer that women have had the right to vote and the more women who serve in the legislature and the cabinet, the more likely it should be that women will eventually break the executive glass ceiling (e.g., Reynolds 1999). Jalalzai's (2013, 2016a) statistical results are mixed in that neither the number of female ministers nor the length of time that women have had suf-

frage increase the likelihood that a country will have a female executive. However, longer periods of female suffrage are associated with countries that have had multiple female executives (Jalalzai 2016a). Jalalzai (2013, 2016a) does find that women are more likely to become presidents and prime ministers in countries with high numbers of female legislators and previous women rulers.

Economic, human, and political development. A country's level of economic development is typically associated with the global power of the executive. Economically developed countries, and their executives, tend to have more influence over worldwide economic issues and foreign affairs (Jalalzai 2013). Since elites and voters stereotypically consider foreign affairs, economics, and defense "masculine" issue areas that require male leadership (e.g., Duerst-Lahti 2006; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993), this could partially explain why many female executives hail from less economically developed, less globally powerful countries, such as Jamaica and Panama. However, as Jalalzai (2013) points out, relatively little research has been conducted on the relationship between economic development and whether women are able to break the executive glass ceiling. Jalalzai's (2013) results suggest that a country's level of economic development does not impact whether it has a female president or prime minister. However, women are less likely to head countries with nuclear weapons, thus highlighting the gender stereotypes that make it difficult for females to secure executive positions with significant amounts of power over "masculine" policy areas (Jalalzai 2013).

Although societal gender parity does not always equate to political equality between men and women, it is often assumed that countries with higher levels of human development have more female representation in government and a higher likelihood of having a woman executive (e.g., Jalalzai 2013, 2016a). Jalalzai (2013, 2016a) does not find support for this assumption when it comes to whether countries have a female president or prime minister. However, countries with higher levels of gender parity are more likely to have multiple female executives (Jalalzai 2016a). Since women rise to power in a variety of political contexts, there are also questions about the relationship between a country's political development (i.e., level of democracy) and stability and whether it has a female executive. Again, Jalalzai (2013, 2016a) does not find that political development or stability influences whether a country has a woman

president or prime minister. However, again, Jalalzai (2016a) finds that more democratic and unstable countries are more likely to have multiple women executives.

Unanswered questions. In examining the impact that development (economic, human, and political), political institutions, and female representation in government have on whether a country has a female executive, there are three areas ripe for additional research that we undertake in this book. First, we address how more work is needed on how a woman's path to executive office is dictated by factors that directly impact her rise to power—executive structure, multiparty system, female representation in government, and development—in contrast to those that are indirect and influence female representation in government—electoral systems, quotas, and parties. It is apparent how political institutions, such as the structure of the executive, are conducive to women taking the political career path to the presidency or premiership. However, it is unknown how these other direct factors impact women taking the family or political activist paths to executive office. For instance, women with family ties may have an advantage in a presidential system where name recognition helps offset voter stereotypes. When it comes to female representation in government and economic, human, and political development, it is less clear whether these factors facilitate women taking the political career path or the family and political activist paths. For example, developed countries with substantial female representation in government may be more conducive to women taking the political career path to reach executive office because they do not have to rely on dynastic political family ties or fight an uphill battle as political activists.

The second relatively underexplored issue we examine in this book relates to the relationship between each path to power and the tenure of women executives. Overall, it is unknown whether the path a woman takes to office influences how long she stays in power. For example, it is likely that women who take the family and political career paths to executive office serve for shorter periods of time than their counterparts who took the political career path because these paths are common in politically less stable countries; however, it is also possible that women who take the family path have lengthy tenures in office because their household name lessens the likelihood of efforts to overthrow the government. Similarly, activism can work

both ways: it could result in shorter terms in office due to the politically tumultuous circumstances in the country, or it could result in extended time in office for the activist woman leader who manages to gain electoral support despite the tense political climate.

Finally, we expand upon findings, such as Jalalzai's (2013, 2016a), that it is easier for women to rise to executive power in countries that have had a female president or prime minister by examining how the path a woman executive takes to office impacts her successor(s). It is unknown whether women are constrained by the path of their predecessor(s). In other words, for any given path, it is unclear whether future women executives have to take the same path as their predecessor(s). This may be considered relatively unproblematic if women are taking the political career path to executive office. However, it is possible that women are impeded from taking the political career path to power in countries that have only had female presidents and prime ministers who took the family or political activist paths to executive office.

Taken collectively, we provide a better understanding of how development, political institutions, and female representation in government impact whether a country has a female executive and the path she takes to executive office. In doing so, we also offer more insight into differences observed in the extant literature based on time, type of executive (i.e., elected, appointed, and interim), and region. The next section provides an overview of the book's chapters.

Overview of the Book

The next three chapters lay out the three different paths to executive power: family, political activist, and political career. Throughout each chapter, descriptive analyses are conducted over the time period of 1960 to 2020 with special attention paid to political and institutional factors that lead women to take each path to executive office and changes in the path's use over time, across each region, and among elected, appointed, and interim executives. Chapter 2 explores the family path and discusses cases that highlight the descriptive results, such as Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, President Janet Jagan of Guyana, and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh. Key findings of this chapter relate to the path's historical prevalence and regional concentration. Chapter 3 focuses on the political activist

path. Case studies are presented to underscore the findings regarding the different sources of mobilization and activism that occur under various political and institutional contexts. Some of the cases that are highlighted include President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and President Vigdís Finnbogadóttir of Iceland. Chapter 4 examines the most conventional and frequently used path to power: the political career path. Results show commonalities among women taking this path to executive power regarding their personal backgrounds (e.g., business, law, or government) and the offices they held prior to claiming executive office, in particular serving in parliament or the cabinet. Consequently, Chapter 4 also discusses the hierarchies between various cabinet positions (e.g., the Ministries of the Economy or Defense versus the Ministries of Culture or Women's Affairs). Cases highlighting these results include Prime Minister Tansu Çiller of Turkey, Prime Ministers Helle Thorning-Schmidt and Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, and Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar of Trinidad and Tobago.

The next three chapters statistically analyze women executives in terms of their paths to power, prevalence in countries around the world, and length of time in office. Chapters 5 and 6 statistically test whether the patterns identified in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 and the women executives literature systematically explain (1) the path women take to executive office, and (2) whether a country has a female president or prime minister, especially one taking each path to the presidency or premiership. Chapter 6 also addresses how a woman's path to office impacts her predecessors. Throughout both chapters, the time period under analysis is 1990–2015 due to data availability.

Chapter 7 focuses on how long a woman executive stays in office. The chapter begins with a statistical analysis exploring the impact that a woman's path to power and various political and institutional factors have on a woman's length of time in office. In order to uncover additional insight into a woman executive's tenure, the second half of the chapter presents descriptive analyses with case examples that focus on factors often included in research on women presidents and prime ministers: time, region, path to office, and type of executive (i.e., elected, appointed, and interim).

Chapter 8 is premised upon the notion that in order to fully understand how women reach executive office, it is important to examine women who were unable to obtain these positions. Consequently, the chapter examines the failed presidential candidacies of

two globally renowned politicians: Hillary Clinton of the United States in 2008 and 2016 and Marine Le Pen of France in 2012 and 2017. Despite the global scope of this book, these two women from globally powerful Western nations were chosen for two reasons. First, Clinton and Le Pen are the most prominent women to fail multiple times to reach an executive post near the end of the time period covered by this book: 1960–2020. Second, each woman's failed campaigns received substantial media coverage in global media outlets, and political commentators and scholars alike sought to explain their losses. Chapter 8 adds to this conversation by using the results of the previous chapters and advancing the argument that the family path is not a viable way to reach executive posts in democratic or meritocratic countries. This is supported by our findings that illustrate a strong congruence between certain paths and political and institutional characteristics. In particular, while some political settings repeatedly have women executives from the family path, others never have. In other words, hailing from a prominent political family appears to have served as a liability for these two women as Clinton attempted to follow in the footsteps of her husband, former president Bill Clinton and Le Pen sought the same office her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, was unable to capture throughout his extensive career as the founder and president of Front National and a member of the European Parliament.

Chapter 9 concludes the book by beginning with a summary of the findings from the qualitative and quantitative chapters (Chapters 2–7). The conclusions from Chapter 8's case studies on Hillary Clinton and Marine Le Pen are discussed along with how our findings can be used to explain the failed candidacies of other women across the globe. The chapter ends with a discussion of opportunities for future research. The suggestions provided are based on the book's findings and the applicability of the conclusions to other executive positions, such as mayors or governors.