

Slowly but surely: The effects of electoral
quotas on women's candidacy and
representation in Indonesia

or

Effective over time: The impact of electoral
quotas on women's candidacy and
representation in Indonesia

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Presentation outline

- Origins and objectives of this study
- International literature on quotas
- Debate on effectiveness of quotas in Indonesia
- Evidence of quota effects on party behaviour
- Evidence of quota effects on voter behaviour
- Views of women candidates on women's representation in Indonesia
- Conclusion

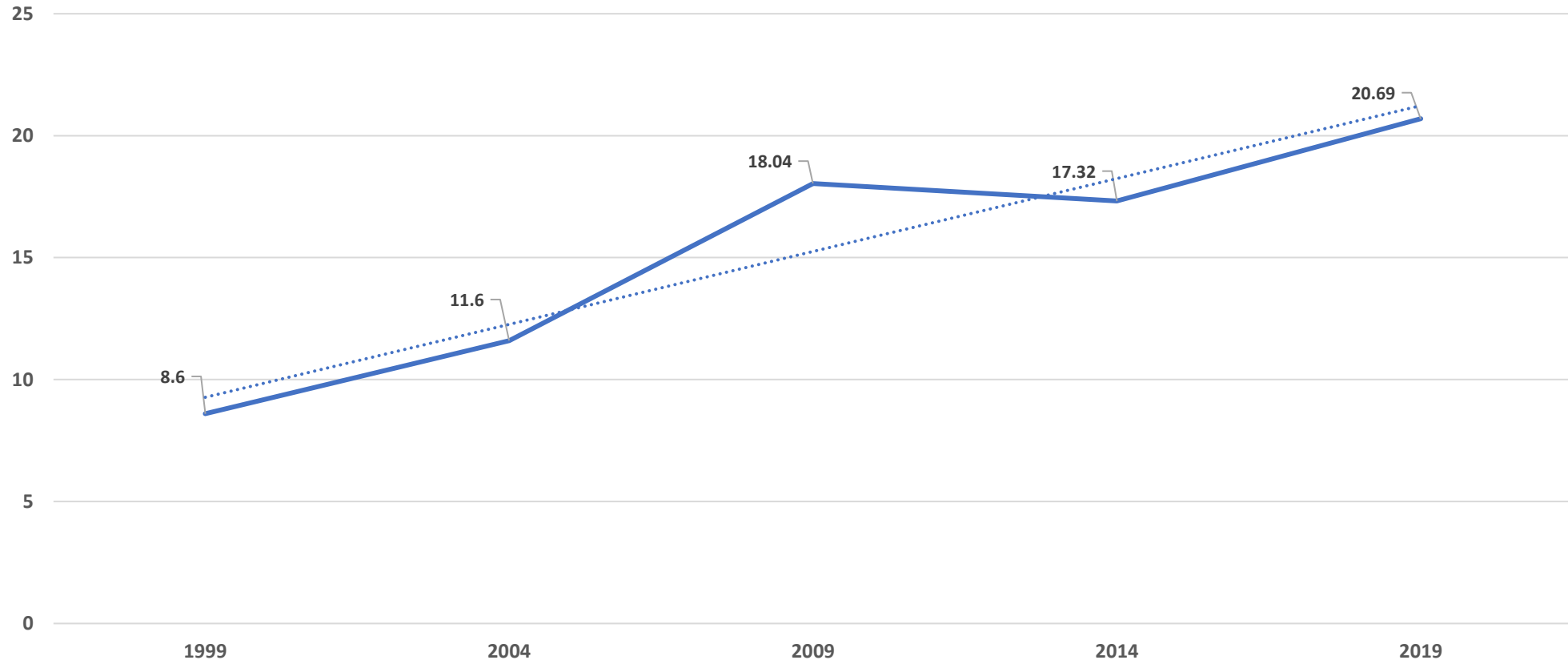
Origin of the paper

- Research for DFAT-funded project on women's economic and political participation (MAMPU)
- Experience of women's CSOs in engaging with parliament
- Strategies for more enhanced influence in parliament
- Debate on women's DPR representation – progress or failure?
- Debate on effectiveness of the 30 percent quota

Methodology

- Semi-structured interviews with over 50 women DPR/DPRD candidates – 2018 & 2019
- Interviews with c.10 female and male party leaders
- Interviews & informal interaction with activists in CSOs and academia
- Quantitative data from studies by CSOs and academics
- Literature on quotas – international and Indonesian

Figure 1: Women's DPR representation 1999-2019
(Percentage of seats)



The question: why has women's DPR representation increased?

- From 1999 to 2019 women's DPR representation more than doubled
- From 8.6% to 20.7%
 - Equal to average for Asia (20.7%), approaching global average (24.3%)
- But most literature stresses the barriers to women's election
 - Negative voter attitudes to women in public life (Aspinall, White & Savirani 2021)
 - Opposition within male-dominated political parties (Prihatini 2019, Soeseno 2014)
 - Marginalisation within legislatures (Prihatini 2019)
- So how do we explain this increase?
- If there are so many obstacles to women from voters, parties etc, have the quotas played a role in the increase?
- Can we find evidence for this?

Literature on quotas - themes

- Multiple studies on effectiveness (Hughes, Paxton & Krook 2017)
- Contextualisation essential – societal, political trends
 - Quotas most successful where women long accepted in public life (eg EU) (Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2005)
 - But this raised questions: Did quotas make any difference in EU etc?
 - Will they work against negative societal attitudes?

Literature cont... role of electoral systems

- Quotas interact with electoral system
- PR is generally seen as more favourable for women
 - Some scholars argue that this also applies to quotas (Krook 2010)
- Other studies dispute universality of this conclusion (Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2005)
- Highlight variables such as:
 - High district magnitude
 - Closed vs open-list PR
 - Rank order requirements (eg “zipper” list) (Htun & Jones 2002)

Literature cont... importance of quota design

- “...it is not simply having a quota but how the institution is designed that increases women’s representation” (Schwindt-Bayer 2009)
- Now generally accepted that *details* of design are critical
- Need for strong sanctions on parties and candidates for non-compliance
- Placement requirements particularly effective
 - Winnable seats in single-member district systems (eg Aust, UK)
 - Favourable placement on party lists in PR (eg Indonesia)

Literature cont... role of party “gatekeepers”

- Parties play a critical role as “gatekeepers”
- Esp their willingness to implement quotas with commitment to women’s representation, not just the minimum to meet requirements
- They reflect societal attitudes but have the capacity to lead change through:
 - Internal party culture and practices – eg. support for women leaders
 - Quality of women candidates – just for numbers, for dynastic purposes?
 - Placement on party lists sends message about seriousness
 - Promotion of women candidates in campaigning (Bjarnegard & Kenny 2015, Karp & Banducci 2008)

Literature cont... measure change over time

- Paxton & Hughes (2015) longitudinal study of quotas in 145 countries from 1990 to 2010
- Concluded that quotas “increasingly effective” when measured “over time”
- Quotas were often initially ineffective, but became more effective when countries “ratcheted up targets”

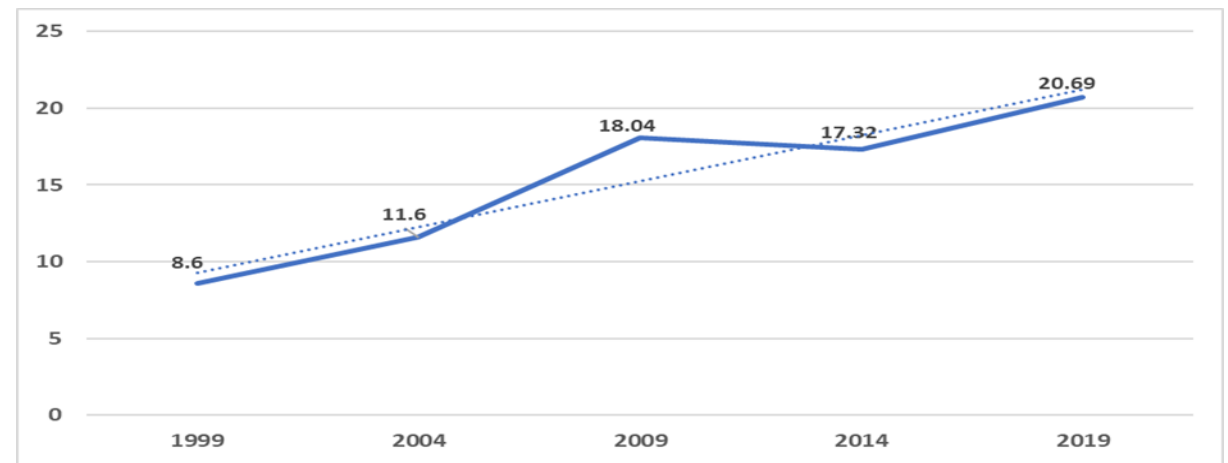
Debate on quotas in Indonesia

- Generally a sense of disappointment with slow progress
- Reflects international debate – role of quotas in context of changing societal attitudes & role of parties
- Positive assessments – election results “highlight the success” of quotas (Perdana & Hillman 2020)
- Negative assessments – “not delivered expected outcomes” (Prihatini 2018)
“will not bring about significant political change” (Davies & Idrus 2010)
- Disappointment in party practices and thus candidate quality
 - Reliance on “dynastic” candidates “entrenching inequality” in parties (Wardani & Subekti 2021, Puskapol 2019)

My argument

- Employing the argument that international experience shows that quota effects must be measured “over time”, esp with “ratcheting up” of targets (Paxton & Hughes 2015)
- Considering the importance of quota design in the context of a given electoral system (Dahlerup 2007, Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2009)
- Noting that quotas are most effective with “placement mandates and enforcement mechanisms” (Schwindt-Bayer 2009)
- I argue that:
 - history of quotas in Indonesia accords with international experience as above, and shows a correlation between strengthening quotas and increased women’s representation
 - there is some evidence of causation as shown by changes in party behaviour in relation to recruitment and placement of women candidates

History of quotas in Indonesia



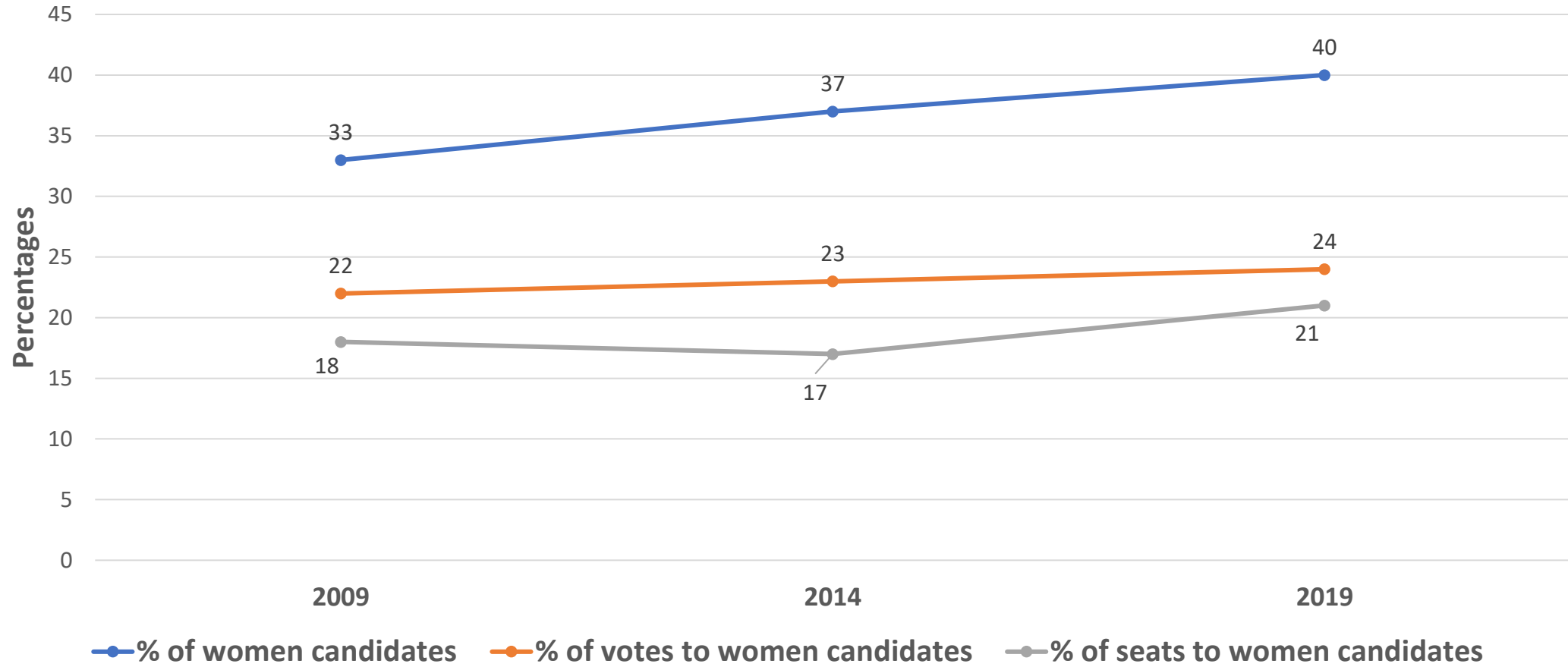
- 1999 – no quota (closed list PR)
- 2004 – parties encouraged to have 30% women candidates
- 2009 – 30% quota became obligatory (open list PR)
 - “Semi-zipper” system for party list (“one-in-three”)
 - Central & regional party boards (DPP) required to have 30% women
- 2014 – KPU regulations to enforce quota compliance in every electoral district
- 2019 – requirement to meet quota in every electoral district, not just national average
- This approach aims to change party behaviour and, through that, to influence voters to elect more women candidates

Have quotas changed party behaviour?

- Strongest evidence of quotas' positive effects is increase in women candidates since 2004
- 2004 – 32% - moral pressure only
- 2009 – 33% - candidate quota obligatory, semi-zipper, party board quota
- 2014 – 37% - KPU regulations to enforce candidate quota
- 2019 – 40% - legislation enforced compliance in every electoral district

Figure 2: Trends in Women Candidates, Votes & Seats 2009, 2014, 2019 Elections

Source: Cakra Wikara Indonesia 2019



Less positive evidence on placement behaviour

- Global issue of placement in “unwinnable” seats or low on party list
- More men than women in list position 1
- 2019: 1,021 men vs 325 women (12.8% vs 2.9% of all candidates)
- No. candidates elected from No.1 position: 308 men vs 57 women
- No. candidates elected from No.2 position: 80 men vs 29 women
- No. candidates elected from No.3 position: 15 men vs 14 women
- Percentage of candidates elected from no.1 position: 67% of men elected vs 48% of women elected
- Just following “the administrative requirement” – interviewees

Figure 3: No. of men & women elected at each position on party lists (2019)

Source: Perludem

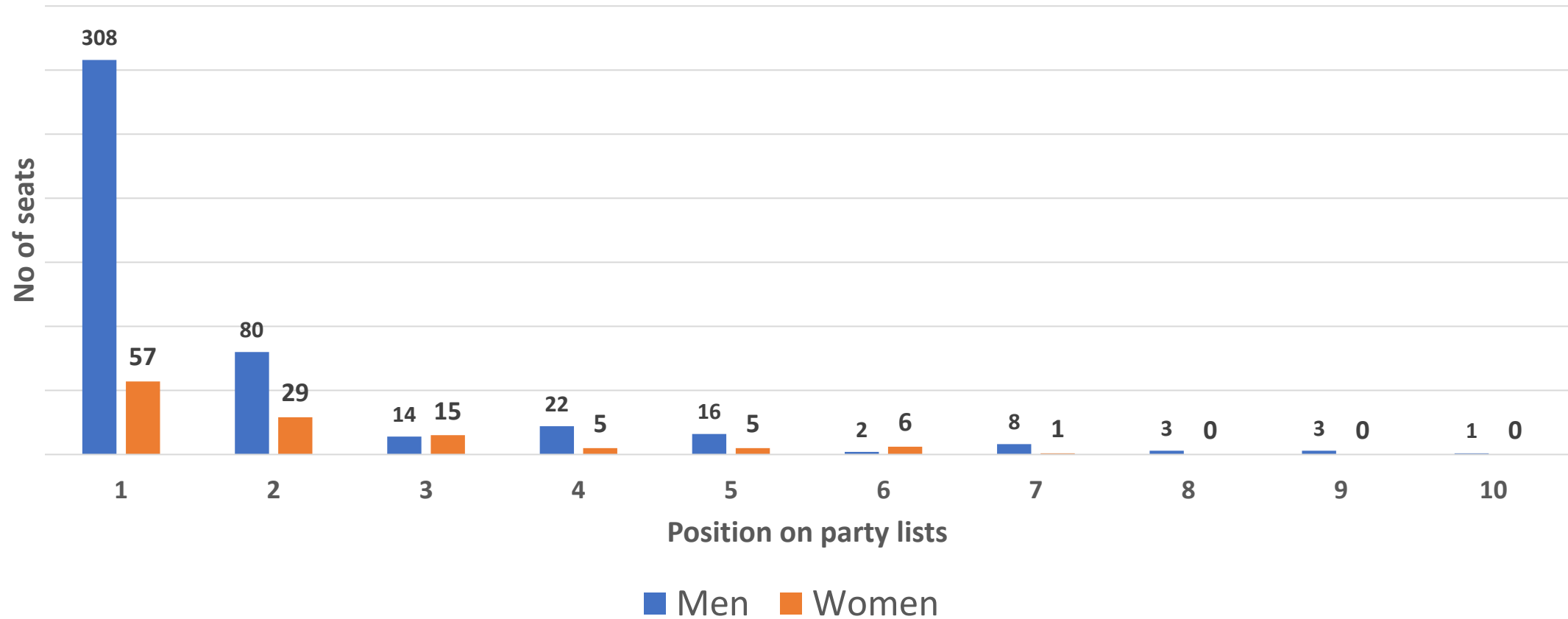
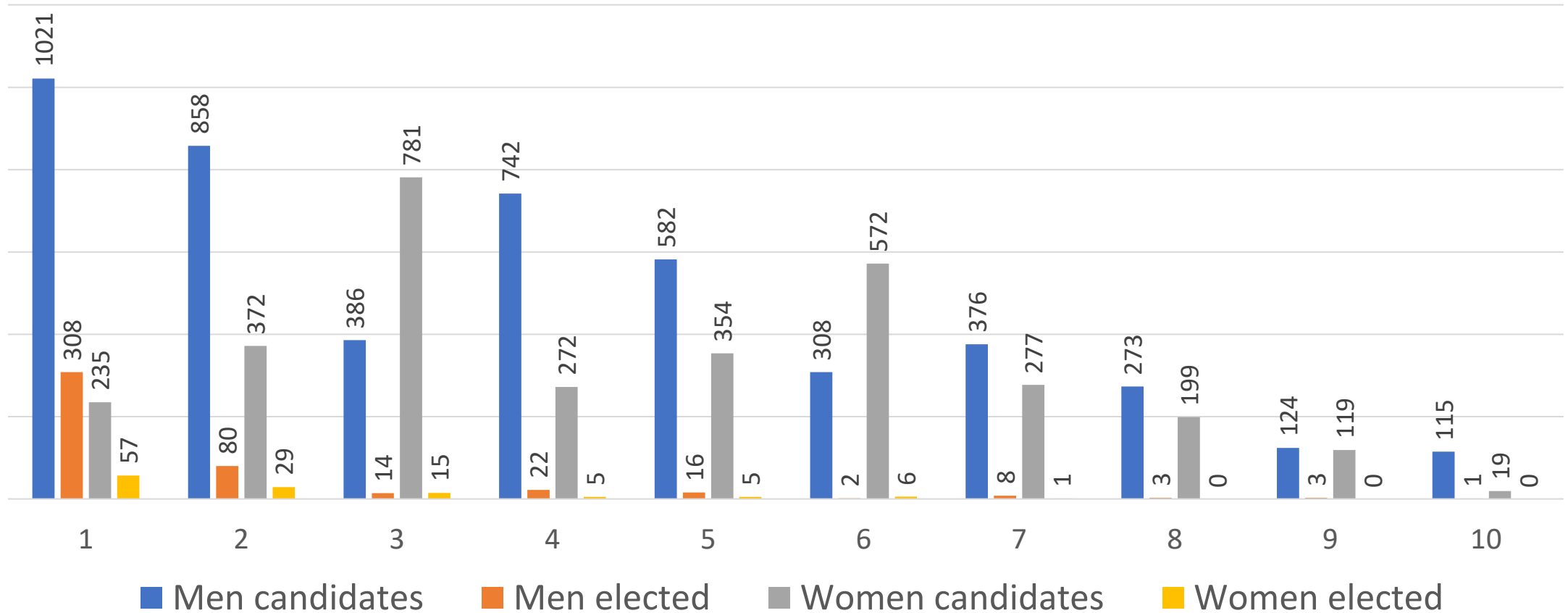


Figure 4: No. of men elected compared with no. of women elected at each party list position - 2019

Source: Perludem

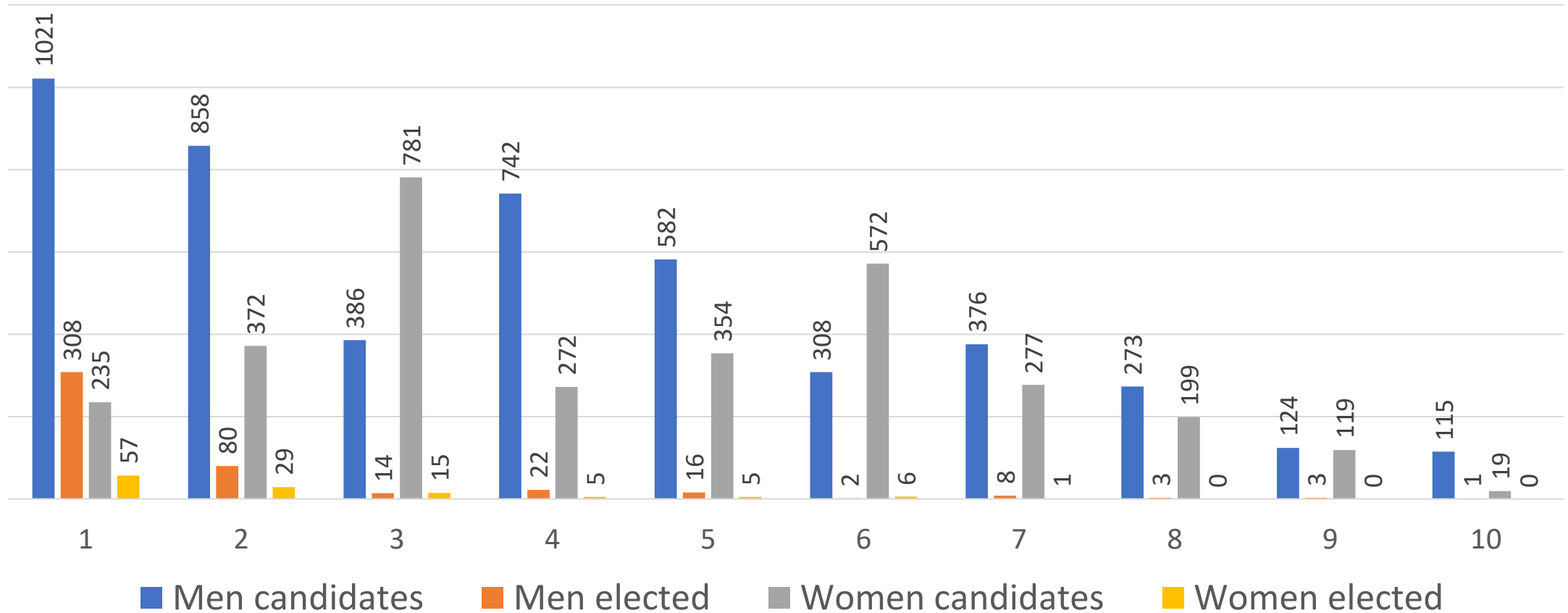


Some positive evidence on “three-in-one” rule

- Parties did the minimum necessary to comply
- **Thus**, no. of men on positions 1 to 3 progressively decreased
 - 1,071 → 858 → 386
- **While**, no. of women on positions 1 to 3 progressively increased
 - 235 → 372 → 781
- **But**, no. of men on position 4 increased: 386 → 742
- **Therefore**, the rule did force parties to make placement decisions that disadvantaged some prospective male candidates
 - Pushed into unfavourable no.4 position

Figure 4: No. of men elected compared with no. of women elected at each party list position - 2019

Source: Perludem



In summary, over time, the quotas...

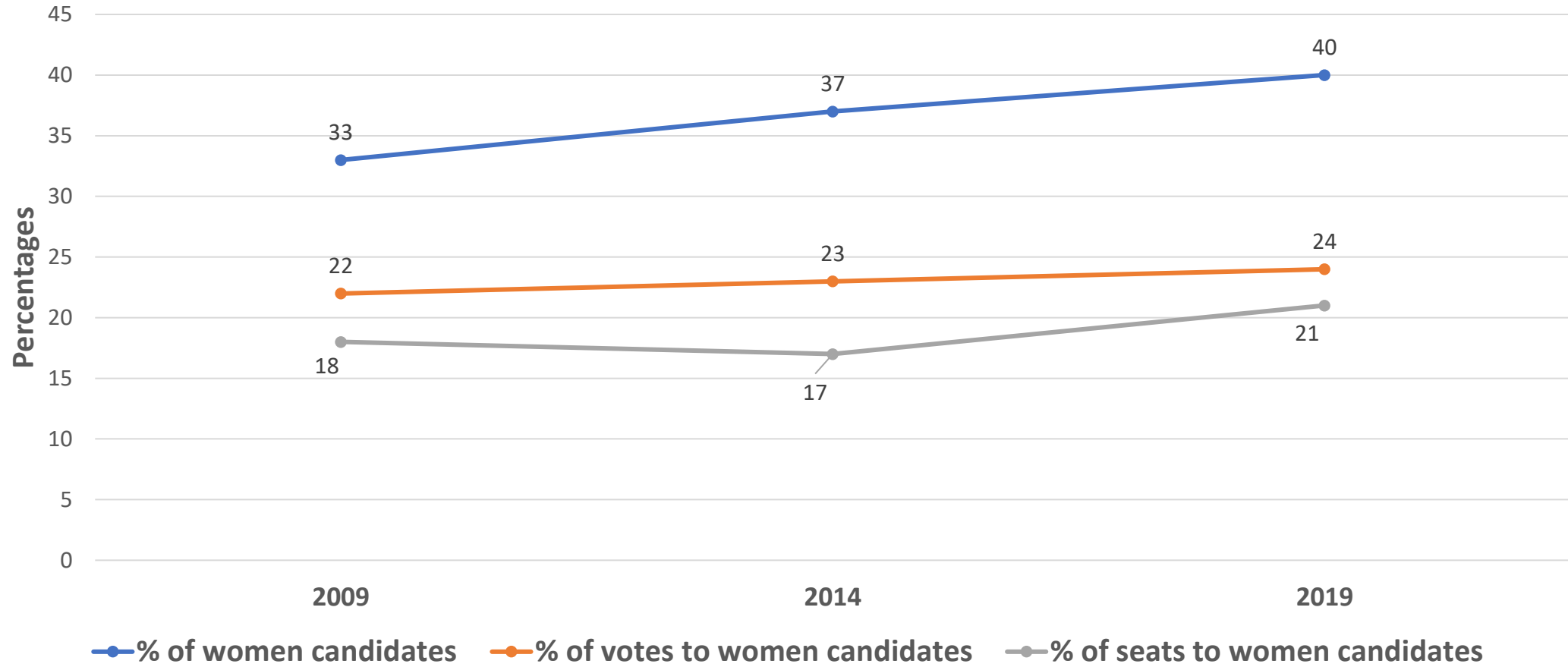
- Progressively increased total no of women candidates
- Forced parties to bunch women candidates at position no.3
- Pushed out some prospective men candidates to position no.4
- Accords with international findings that “ratcheting up” requirements work, but only “over time” (Paxton & Hughes 2015)

Changing voter behaviour?

- Proposition that quotas will change party behaviour, which will change voter behaviour
- But literature shows that quotas most effective when political and social conditions are conducive
- Given the opportunity to vote for women, how many voters will do so?

Figure 2: Trends in Women Candidates, Votes & Seats 2009, 2014, 2019 Elections

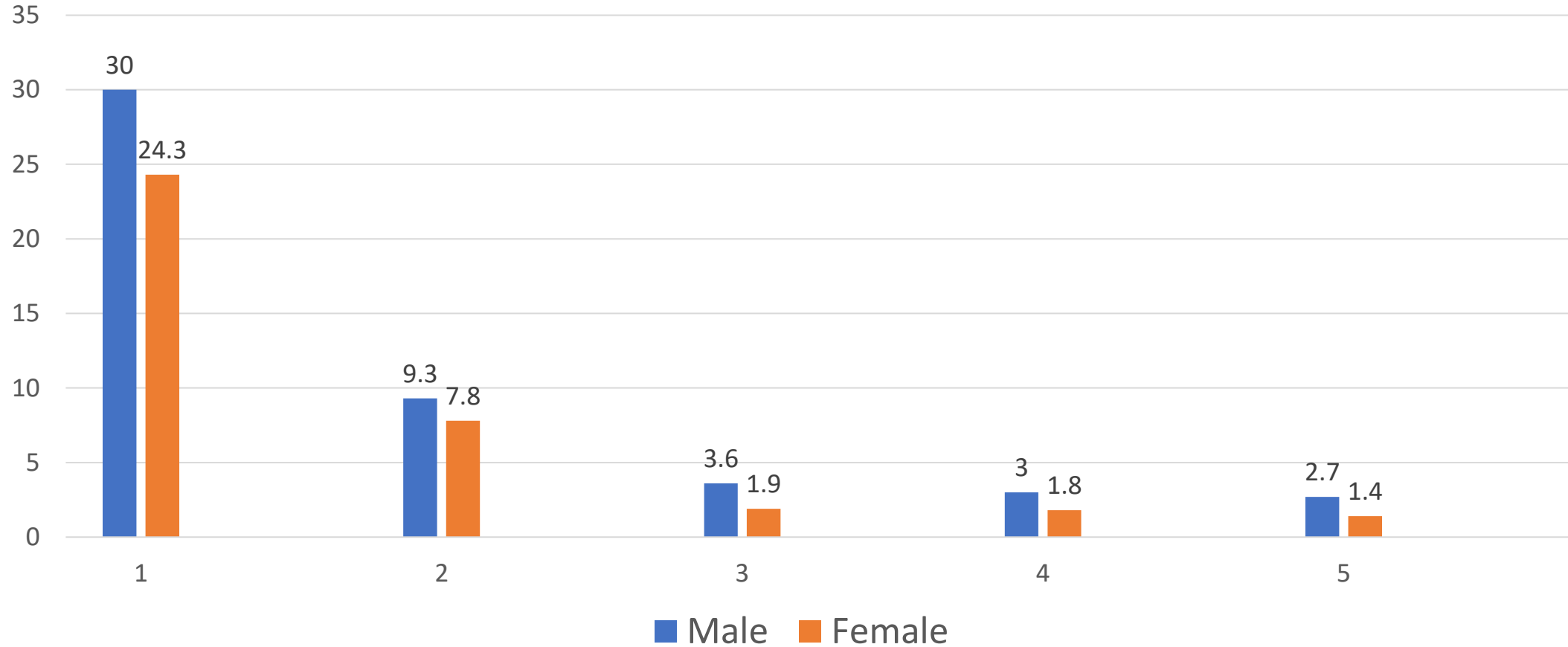
Source: Cakra Wikara Indonesia 2019



Lag between increase in women candidates and votes going to women

- As shown, parties still generally place women on low list positions
- But, even if women are placed at no.1, they perform less well than men
- 2019: 30% of men vs 24% of women were elected at position no.1
- Advantage of being no.1 did not universally compensate for apparent disadvantage of being a female candidate

Figure 5. Percentage of male & female candidates elected from their respective party list position (2019)



The role of “cultural” factors is ambiguous

- Most common explanation focus on cultural attitudes (White & Aspinall 2019)
- But ambiguity about how to understand effects of culture
 - “..whether these views influence voting is less clear” (White & Aspinall 2019)
- Conservative Islamic attitudes not a consistent barrier to:
 - Women holding public office (Fattore, Scotto & Sitasari 2010)
 - Women’s candidacy within Islamic parties (Prihatini 2019c)

The importance of regional differences

- Regional patterns show long-term attitudinal differences
- Clustering of support in northern Sulawesi & N.Maluku
 - Votes for women in North Sulawesi 43.6%, North Maluku 42.9% (2019)
 - 3 of 4 seats won by women
 - Historically high level of support, incl. provincial DPRD & DPRD Minahasa (Margret 2018)
- Low support in Bali, Aceh, Papua, C.&N. Kalimantan long-standing
 - Despite abundant women candidates (45.5% in West Papua 2019)
 - “voting around” women candidates in Bali (White & Aspinall 2019)

No consistent evidence parties suffer electorally for fielding women candidates

- 2009-2019: no correlation between a party's female representation and its total support
- PKB and Gerindra decreased percent. of women elected, while total vote increased
- But Nasdem and PKS greatly increased percent. of women elected, while total vote increased
- Demokrat's total vote declined, with percent. of women members also declining

Figure 6: Trends in proportions of seats won by women in each party: 2009 – 2019

Source: Cakra Wikara Indonesia 2019

Party	2009 Election			2014 Election			2019 Election		
	Total seats	Women's seats (no.)	Women's seats (%)	Total seats	Women's seats (no.)	Women's seats (%)	Total seats	Women's seats (no.)	Women's seats (%)
PKB	28	7	25.0	47	10	21.3	58	12	20.7
Gerindra	26	5	19.2	73	11	15.0	78	12	15.4
PDIP	94	17	18.0	109	21	19.3	128	26	20.3
Golkar	106	18	17.0	91	16	17.6	85	19	22.4
Nasdem	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	35	4	11.4	59	19	32.2
PKS	57	3	5.3	40	1	2.5	50	8	16.0
PPP	38	5	13.2	39	10	25.6	19	5	26.3
PAN	46	7	15.2	49	9	18.4	44	7	15.9
Democrat	148	35	23.7	61	13	21.3	54	10	18.5

Views of women candidates

- Normative issues
- Politics is for men only – public life not appropriate for women
- Issues related to their “ethnic group” (*suku*) – eg patrilineal (woman entering a hotel has bad connotations)
- Women in politics are bad wives and mothers (*rumahnya pasti berantakan*)
- Not being of the local *suku* or *aliran* was more of an obstacle than gender

Views of women candidates

- Instrumental issues
- What can women do for us? – men control the networks and can bring benefits to the community
- Women could get a high vote if they proved themselves in office
 - Some noted change in community attitudes, as well as internal party culture
 - 30% quota on DPP meant they were taken more seriously
- Candidates who agree with attitudes about women, family etc
 - But this meant they could achieve things for women, families etc
 - Many who mobilised support on the basis of their association with, or leadership of women's organisation or social welfare organisation (Aspinall, White, Savarini 2021)
 - Women can enter spaces inappropriate for men (pengajian, kitchens etc)

Conclusion

- International experience indicates effectiveness of quotas over time
 - Especially where gradually ratcheted up
 - Including placement mandates & enforcement mechanisms
- Indonesian experience reflects this trend
 - Gradual increase in women's representation as quotas progressively strengthened – incl. placement and enforcement
 - Not accompanied by major increase in vote for women
 - Challenge of societal attitudes, voter behaviour changing more slowly
- Grounds for optimism on women's representation
 - Remember that nos. have doubled since 1999
 - Advocacy for incremental change can bring results