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Right "Man" for the Job? The Influence of Gender on Civil–Military Friction

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of women in politics on the risk of a coup d'état. Previous research indicates that the relationship between female political leaders and security is dependent on the office she holds. Subsequently, we expect female legislators to have a different influence than a female chief executive on the likelihood of a coup. We argue that a higher level of female representation reduces the risk of a coup d'état. However, we assert that a female chief executive has a different effect and increases coup risk. Using data covering 160 states over the years 1952 to 2009, our empirical tests provide support for our expectations. All else being equal, increased levels of women in parliament lead to a substantial drop in coup likelihood. However, the argument that a female chief executive will be more coup prone is not fully supported in our findings.

Keywords

coups and conflicts, gender issues, civil–military relations, female leaders, female representation

Previous research has found that women in politics can impact a variety aspects of civil–military relations. This includes findings such as states with higher levels of female representation act less militaristically in international affairs, spending less on their militaries, and using less violence interstate relations (Caprioli, 2000; Koch

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& Fulton, 2011; Regan & Paskeviciute, 2003). These findings suggest that there is less reliance on the military in international politics when there are more women in the legislature. This article builds on this notion by arguing that women in politics can also impact the role of military involvement in domestic politics. Specifically, we argue that women in politics promote political stability generally, and the likelihood of military intervention into politics specifically. However, we expect the political position of women to have differing effects on a country's propensity for a coup d'état. In line with earlier literature, we argue that female chief executives can be seen as a potential threat to the organizational interests of the military. That is, we expect states with more women in the legislature to have a lower risk of a coup d'état, while states with a female chief executive have a higher risk of a coup d'état.

We build our argument around the perception of the leader's competence and/or legitimacy, dynamics that are among the most commonly noted factor in a military's decision to engage in a coup. Popular erosion of support of the leader and his or her government has been called a necessary precursor for a coup (Finer, 1988). More specifically, the public must overtly demonstrate its antipathy for a regime (Welch, 1970). We argue that having more women in the legislature increases the government's legitimacy, subsequently reducing the risk of a coup. However, a female chief executive does not elicit the same legitimacy or public support and instead, she is more likely to be viewed with suspicion by the security sector. We argue that the belief that a female chief executive obtained her post through familial ties coupled with the perception that she is ill-suited to handle military matters makes her a more likely target of a coup by delegitimizing her governing authority (e.g., Jalalzai, 2008; Lawless, 2004).

This article begins with a discussion of the multiple ways women in the legislature diminish the risk of a coup. This is followed by an examination of the contrasting effect of a female chief executive on coup risk. Using data from over 160 states, we find that coup risk declines as female parliamentary representation increases. The findings indicate that women's parliamentary representation is a far more robust indicator of coup activity than other factors that are commonly purported to be associated with coups (e.g., state wealth and democracy), providing strong support for the theory. However, the presence of women in politics does not have a uniform effect on coup risk. While there is only limited evidence that female executives are in fact more likely to be targeted via coups, the overall results prompt us to conclude that gender dynamics are an important, yet previously understudied, aspect of civil–military friction.

Coup Risk and Women in Politics

Women in the Legislature

Legitimacy, defined as the government's rightful rule and citizens' willingness to obey them, has long been argued to be an important influence on coup activity

(Belkin & Schofer, 2003; Finer, 1988; Gilley, 2009; Levi, Sacks, & Tyler, 2009; Lindberg & Clark, 2008; McGowan, 2005; Welch, 1970; Zimmerman, 1979). Overthrowing a legitimate government is unwise since citizens are unlikely to support a coup and the subsequent leaders that undertook the endeavor. Feaver (1996), for example, argues that coup leaders must be able to frame themselves as being agents of the public, a difficult task when trying to confront a "legitimate" authority.

The level of female representation influences a state's legitimacy in multiple ways. The first way female representation impacts legitimacy is through symbolic representation, which Milliken and Krause (2002) called a vital component of government legitimacy. Thomas (1998) argued that a state cannot be truly legitimate if men and women do not have equal opportunity to serve the state. Lijphart (1999) further emphasized the role of women in politics on citizen's perceptions of the government. In his seminal study, citizens reported greater satisfaction with their government when the legislature had more women. Moreover, Inglehart and Norris (2003) argue that gender inequality, including low levels of female political representation, actually delegitimizes the government. A respondent in a survey conducted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2000, p. 45) highlights this point, stating "the increased participation of women in political life brings more credibility to the values of the Republic." Finally, Schwindt-Bayer (2010) further finds that respondents in states with higher levels of female representation report higher levels of trust in the legislature. Respondents also reported higher levels of satisfaction with democracy when there were more women in the legislature.

An interesting aspect of Schwindt-Bayer's study is that states with higher levels of female representation tended to have lower polity scores. For instance, Ecuador, with 32% of the legislature comprised of women had a polity score of five compared to Chile, with 15% of its legislature comprised of women scored a perfect ten on the Polity Scale. This indicates that respondents in states that are actually more democratic but have lower levels of female representation have less trust in their government compared with respondents in states with more women in politics. In essence, states that are less democratic but have high levels of female representation are perceived as more trustworthy and thus viewed as more legitimate by their citizens. The evidence from Latin America highlights the influence of women in the legislature on citizen perceptions of their government and dispels the notion that the relationship between legitimacy and women in politics stems from first having a legitimate government. That is, a legitimate government leads to more women in politics.

The connection of women in politics and satisfaction with the government may also be a by-product of women appearing to be more cooperative and less corrupt, both of which are factors that can improve governing and policy outcomes. The ability to compromise ensures the government can continue to function and not come to a standstill when there are opposing views on how to handle an issue. Research studies have repeatedly found that women work collaboratively and cooperate to resolve differences. Our argument believes that mere perceptions matter for legitimacy, but there is strong empirical evidence that this is more than a stereotype.

For instance, Walters, Stuhlmacher, and Meyer (1998) found that women exhibited a more collaborative approach to problem-solving. In a study specifically addressing how female politicians operate, Kathlene (1994) found that female committee chairs promote a collaborative effort in creating policy by acting as a facilitator in meetings as opposed to more authoritarian leadership styles. Furthermore, the female legislators interviewed by Reingold (1996) were much more likely than their male counterparts to prefer consensus building to handle disagreements among legislators. These studies indicate that women are more collaborative and show higher willingness to build consensus through compromise. This approach can help ensure the government continues to function and ultimately helps prevent legislative gridlock, a phenomenon that has been a noted contributor to coup attempts (e.g., Cheibub, 2002).

When the government is effectively managing issues, creating and implementing policies, and generally operating as it was designed, we can see a reinforcing effect in which citizen satisfaction with the government increases (Van Ryzin, 2007; Vigoda & Yuval, 2003). With both a functioning government and increased satisfaction with the government, a military coup to overcome poor governance and legislative gridlock is not as easily justified. Consequently, women's preference for and ability to build consensus in the legislature diminishes the risk of a coup. Furthermore, citizen satisfaction is higher when they believe the government is operating at its fullest. Thus, women in the legislature can improve citizen satisfaction through their ability to build consensus. The perception that women are less corrupt can further positively influence citizen support for their government.

Repeatedly women are believed to be more trustworthy than men and subsequently less likely to engage in corruption. Findings from Buchan, Croson, and Solnick (2008) support this belief, finding that women were more trustworthy while playing an investment game. In a recent survey experiment conducted in the United States, Barnes and Beaulieu (2014) found that the presence of female candidates in an election increased the impression that the election was free and fair. These findings further illustrate the impact of women in politics on citizen perceptions of government corruption and overall legitimacy of the government. Empirically, numerous studies have actually found a robust connection between high levels of female representation and low levels of corruption (Dollar, Fisman, & Gatti, 2001; Esarey & Chirillo, 2013; Swamy, Knack, Lee, & Azafar, 2001). Not only can high levels of women in the legislature reduce corruption but also simply having women in politics can improve the *perception* that the government is equitable and unpolluted. The World Bank (2001) has even encouraged greater inclusion of women in politics to combat corruption and promote general support for the government, bolstering the view that women in politics enhance good governance.

We believe these dynamics can influence the likelihood of a coup through multiple mechanisms. High levels of female representation make a government appear more democratic, more trustworthy, and less corrupt, all of which can increase citizen perception that the government is legitimate. Higher levels of women's

representation can also reduce the likelihood of legislative gridlock. These scenarios are in contrast to the typical scenarios in which the armed forces intervene into politics, that is, when the government as illegitimate, ineffectual, and—quite frequently—is already the target of overt signs of public resentment (Finer, 1988; Johnson & Thyne, in press; Welch, 1970). This leads to our first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: The likelihood of a coup is expected to decrease as the level of female parliamentary representation increases.

Female Executives

While the presence of women in the legislature can make the government appear more legitimate, female chief executives do not signify legitimacy to the same extent as women in the legislature. This is largely a product of the way many female chief executives obtained their positions, with a disproportionate number having obtained office through close familial ties, whether through a president or opposition leader (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010). Specifically, 33% of female chief executives that rose to office from 1960 to 2007 had family ties to prominent politicians (Jalalzai, 2008). For example, both Benazir Bhutto and India Gandhi were selected to head their respective parties due to the political power of their fathers. Moreover, they were specifically chosen due to their sex. The party leaders assumed the two women would be easy to control and would simply be a puppet of the party. The Indian Parliament even gave Gandhi the nickname of "the Dumb Doll," highlighting their perception that she would simply do the bidding of the party (Anderson, 2013; Everett, 2013). Familial ties are particularly important in explaining the presence of female chief executives in Latin America and Asia, regions with overall low gender equality and poor respect for women's rights. In fact, until recently, no woman had obtained the post of chief executive in Latin America without being the wife or daughter of a political leader (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010).[1]

Being selected for a post because of your sex and personal connections has led to their qualifications to hold office called into question, creating difficulties for them to exert authority. For instance, people in Indonesia questioned whether Sukarnoputuri would be anything more than a housewife had she not been the daughter of Bung Karno (Jalalzai, 2004). The people of Indonesia focused on Sukarnoputuri's family ties and did not take in to consideration her professional background and experience when making that remark. In actuality, she had extensive political experience, having been a member of parliament for ten years prior to becoming the leader of Indonesia. While Sukarnoputuri is not alone in having her qualifications called into question due to her family heritage, it is uncommon for a female leader to become chief executive due to her family name alone. Often, women in politics have the educational and professional experience to qualify them for the post. In her research, Jalalzai (2004) finds that of the fourty-four female chief executives in her

sample, only four have no political experience prior to their election. Thus, a female leader's legitimacy to hold office is often doubted even though she has the appropriate background and experience to be the chief executive. Legitimacy of the leader is a key factor in promoting a coup, thus the view that a female leader lacks legitimacy to govern increases her risk of being targeted by a coup.

Being a woman can also increase civil–military friction more broadly, adding to a female executive's threat of being the target of a coup. Military affairs and national security are commonly associated with men due to the fact that military forces are overwhelmingly comprised of men (Goldstein, 2001). Subsequently, women are typically viewed as less competent or less suited to handle military affairs (Falk & Kenski, 2006; Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993; Lawless, 2004).[2] Perceived incompetence in handling military affairs can encourage the military to view a female head of state as an unsuitable and illegitimate leader, prompting them to act and remove her from office.

In addition, studies have found men and women have differing views of the importance of providing budgetary support to the military. For instance, research has found that women typically prefer to spend less on the military (Togeby, 1994) and prefer less militaristic policies (Burris, 2008; Caprioli & Boyer, 2001; Regan & Paskeviciute, 2003). Even though Koch and Fulton (2011) find that female chief executives do not cut military budgets, the perception of women being less militaristic is widely held. The fear of cutting military budgets, along with engaging in more dovish policies, can further enhance civil–military friction. For example, to the disdain of the military, Corazon Aquino took a much "softer" and more diplomatic approach to dealing with rebel factions in the Philippines. Her policies sharply differed from the more militaristic approach the military leaders preferred (Col, 2013). Subsequently, Aquino was a frequent target of military coups, ultimately surviving four coup attempts against her.

Divergent views held by a female chief executive and the military on how to handle crises and disputes could heighten civil–military friction.[3] In addition, the belief by the military that she will cut their budget promotes further tension between the military and the female chief executive. Combined with legitimacy concerns from rising to power through family ties and not on merit, females often appear a less legitimate leader. This leads us to our second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Female chief executives are expected to be targeted by a coups more often than male chief executives.

Data and Method

We test our expectations with a global sample of cases that cover the years 1952–2009. We utilize data on coup attempts as the dependent variable (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers & Wolf, 2010; Feaver, 1999).[4] We follow the lead of Powell and Thyne

(2011, p. 253) by defining coup attempts as "illegal and overt attempts by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executive." We opt for a dichotomous version of the measure that considers whether or not the country experienced at least one coup attempt in the current year. An alternative is to utilize a count for the number of all coups that fall within the temporal unit, utilizing a count model such as negative binomial. We believe this approach is inappropriate, given scholars have concluded that coups in close succession are frequently not independent of each other. For example, the failed coup attempt in Mali on April 30, 2012, would not have occurred in the absence of the successful coup a month earlier. Estimating the association via a count model would necessarily violate one of the estimator's most fundamental assumptions.[5]

Women in parliament captures the percentage of parliamentary members in the lower house that are female. Data are primarily taken from the women in parliament data set (Paxton 1997), with updates from the World Bank. We expect higher levels of female representation to be associated with lower likelihood of a coup.

To account for the sex of the executive, we begin with data from the Archigos data set of political leaders, which codes a variety of variables for the effective leader, that is, "the person that de facto exercised power in a country" (Goemans, Gleditsch, & Chiozza, 2009, p. 271). We expect states with a female executive ($gender = 1$) to be more likely to experience a coup attempt than those with male executives ($gender = 0$). We give close attention to the timing of coups and leaders entering and exiting power, given the model could conflate executives when the state experiences within-year leadership transitions. Bolivia, for example, ended 1979 with a female (acting) president and 1980 with a male president and experienced a coup in each year. However, 1979 saw a male executive ousted and 1980 a female. Lidia Gueiler Tejada became acting president on November 16, 1979, a few weeks after the bloody coup undertaken against the Guevara government. Gueiler herself was ousted in similar fashion eight months later.

We begin by first coding gender as 1 if the state had a female executive at any time during the year and 0 if male leaders held power for the full year. Second, we recode the gender measure to 0 in cases of coups if case histories indicated that a female executive that held power for only part of the year was not actually the target of the coup. Consequently, "false positives" were corrected for Bolivia in 1979 (Lidia Gueiler), Burundi in 1993 (Sylvie Kinigi), Haiti in 1991 (Ertha Pascal-Trouillot), and Bangladesh in 1996 (Khaleda Zia). Each of these states saw a coup attempted during the year, but these female leaders were not the targets of the attempt.

Three other events of interest are also worth noting. First, Indira Gandhi's 1984 assassination at the hands of two body guards following Operation Blue Star is not considered to be a coup due to the lack of a wider political objective of the plotters. Second, Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana was constitutionally the acting head of state following the assassination of Rwandan President Habyarimana but is not recognized as the de facto head of state by the Archigos data project. Her capture and

murder by elements of the Rwandan army and National Guard is considered to be a coup by Powell and Thyne. Third, two infamous coup plots in the Philippines against President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo are also excluded due to the stringent criteria in the Powell and Thyne coup data set. In the first episode, the 2003 "Oakwood mutiny," soldiers seized a high-end apartment complex in the financial center of Makati and demanded the president step down. A similar process, the "Manila Peninsula siege," played out in 2007 when soldiers on trial for the 2003 mutiny stormed out of the courthouse and occupied Makati's Peninsula Hotel. The mutineers demanded the president's resignation, as they had done in 2003. We ultimately follow the coding decisions of our source data and defer to coding events as 0 when either the classification of the event or the recognized executive is in doubt. It should be noted that the model estimates are a conservative treatment of civil–military strains.

We also include a variety of control variables in an effort to account for other factors that have been regularly argued to be associated with coups. We control for *democracy* and *military regime* using the indicators from Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland (2010). *Wealth* and *growth rates* are captured using data updates from Gleditsch (2002). *Military expenditures* are proxied by considering the level of expenditures per soldier (Singer, 1987; Singer, Bremer, & Stuckey, 1972; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2015; World Bank, 2015). *Civil conflict* considers whether or not the country has an ongoing intrastate conflict, as coded by the Armed Conflict Data set (Themnér & Wallensteen, 2013). Following the suggestion of earlier studies, we recode conflicts to 0 when they are best described as bloody coup attempts (e.g., Hultquist, 2013). *Cold War* accounts for changing systemic dynamics and is coded 1 prior to 1990 and 0 from there and after. Cold War years are expected to be associated with more coups. Finally, we control for temporal dependence by including a measure for time since the last coup attempt as well as the measure's squared and cubed polynomials.[6]

Results

For each model, Table 1 reports logistic regressions that cluster the standard errors by country (a), control for random effects (b), and control for country-level fixed effects (c). The first set of Models (1a–1c) report logistic regressions assessing the influence of women in parliament while omitting the executive's sex. The second set (2a–2c) assesses the sex of the executive while omitting women in parliament. The final set of Models (3a–3c) includes both measures.

Women's representation is negative and statistically significant in each specification, providing strong support for the first hypothesis. Higher levels of female representation is strongly associated with a lessened risk of a coup. The coefficient for the variable is identical when introducing fixed effects and is marginally larger when introducing random effects. We illustrate the substantive significance of the measure by illustrating the predicted probability of a coup across different values of women in parliament in Figure 1. We report probabilities for what might be

Table 1. Gender Dynamics and Coups D'état, 1952–2009.

	1a	1b	1c	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	3c
Independent Variables	Cluster *SEs*	Random Effects	Fixed Effects	Cluster *SEs*	Random Effects	Fixed Effects	Cluster *SEs*	Random Effects	Fixed Effects
Parliament	−0.070***	−0.084***	−0.070**				−0.078***	−0.121***	−0.124**
	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.022)				(0.018)	(0.031)	(0.041)
Gender of executive				0.289	0.413	0.874†	0.175	−1.079	−0.607
				(0.630)	(0.461)	(0.500)	(0.767)	(1.055)	(1.103)
Democracy	0.204	0.062	−0.058	0.210	0.098	−0.051	0.196	0.477†	0.076
	(0.212)	(0.211)	(0.271)	(0.203)	(0.191)	(0.227)	(0.216)	(0.275)	(0.392)
GDPpc	−0.282**	−0.418***	−0.553*	−0.240*	−0.401***	−0.556**	−0.304**	−0.658***	−0.530
	(0.103)	(0.127)	(0.266)	(0.094)	(0.109)	(0.203)	(0.109)	(0.162)	(0.393)
Military expenditures	−0.339**	−0.387**	−0.415**	−0.253**	−0.299**	−0.332**	−0.326**	−0.509**	−0.624**
	(0.115)	(0.128)	(0.147)	(0.092)	(0.102)	(0.112)	(0.116)	(0.182)	(0.222)
Military regime	0.134	−0.030	−0.330	0.236†	0.083	−0.185	0.069	−0.100	−0.702*
	(0.154)	(0.213)	(0.252)	(0.130)	(0.166)	(0.186)	(0.160)	(0.286)	(0.354)
Civil conflict	0.497**	0.596**	0.587**	0.324*	0.416*	0.454*	0.513**	0.407	0.690*
	(0.166)	(0.196)	(0.221)	(0.162)	(0.167)	(0.187)	(0.165)	(0.276)	(0.331)
Cold War	0.196	0.281	0.633**	0.392*	0.516**	0.786***	0.163	0.482	0.951**
	(0.223)	(0.208)	(0.228)	(0.174)	(0.172)	(0.182)	(0.229)	(0.322)	(0.367)
Growth rate	−1.405†	−1.508*	−1.363†	−1.107†	−1.066†	−0.916	−1.198	−0.884	−0.936
	(0.725)	(0.764)	(0.788)	(0.581)	(0.620)	(0.626)	(0.748)	(1.127)	(1.202)
Time since coup	−0.306***	−0.247***	−0.196***	−0.282***	−0.222***	−0.179***	−0.351***	−0.199**	−0.144*
	(0.048)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.043)	(0.048)	(0.070)	(0.073)
$Time^2$	0.017***	0.015***	0.014***	0.015***	0.013***	0.013***	0.022***	0.012*	0.013*
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
$Time^3$	−0.000**	−0.000**	−0.000**	−0.000***	−0.000**	−0.000**	−0.000***	−0.000*	−0.000†
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	1.047	1.658†		0.138	0.824		1.335†	2.697*	−0.124**
	(0.733)	(0.900)		(0.619)	(0.767)		(0.782)	(1.134)	(0.041)
Observations	5,920	5,920	2,928	6,267	6,267	3,520	5,055	5,055	1,919
Number of countries	166	166	76	161	161	83	153	153	56

Note. Robust standard errors (*SEs*) are in parentheses. GDPpc = gross domestic product per capita.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$. †$p < .10$ (two-tailed).

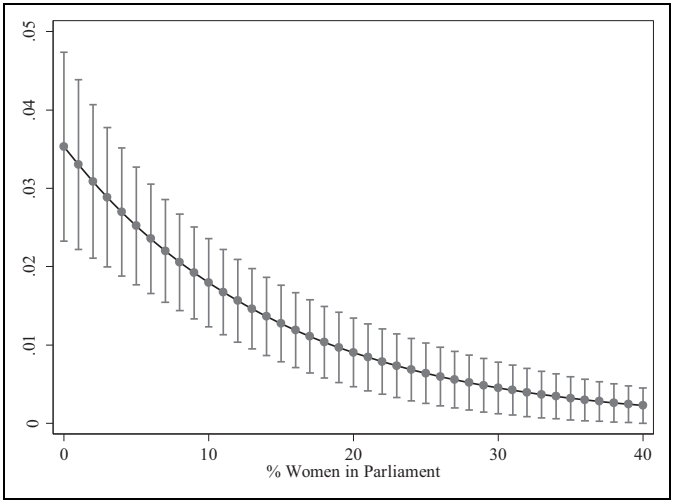

Figure 1. Women's parliamentary representation and the probability of a coup.

described as a typical case by holding all other independent variables at their median values. The illustration shows that as countries move from having no women in the legislature to 17% (the median for the most recent year in our sample), the probability of a coup attempt declines from .035 to .011, a drop of 69%. This pronounced dip continues until beginning to flatten when women's parliamentary representation is around 30%. Thus, Figure 1 further demonstrates the impact of female representation on the reduction of coup risk.

Unlike the relationship between women in the legislature, we expected the presence of a female chief executive to worsen civil–military friction and to promote coup activity. However, the results for the sex of the chief executive did not perform well, being insignificant in five of the six models in which it was included. This could suggest that the apparent vulnerability of female executives is not as strong as believed, or is spurious, best explained by a third variable accounted for in the model. The sole exception was Model 2c, which saw the measure significant with the expected positive sign at the .10 level. This model included country-level fixed effects, which means that countries would be dropped from the model if variable had no within-unit variation. Consequently, this specification would see the exclusion of cases in which the country never experienced a coup attempt or never had a female chief executive. In some ways, this could be seen as limiting the sample to cases more likely to have female executives and coups, perhaps biasing the results toward the second hypothesis (e.g., Clark & Linzer, 2015). Given that 70 states were dropped from the analysis, we cannot rule this out and ultimately cannot reject the null.

Our control variables behaved as expected. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was negative and significant in eight of the nine models, the exception being

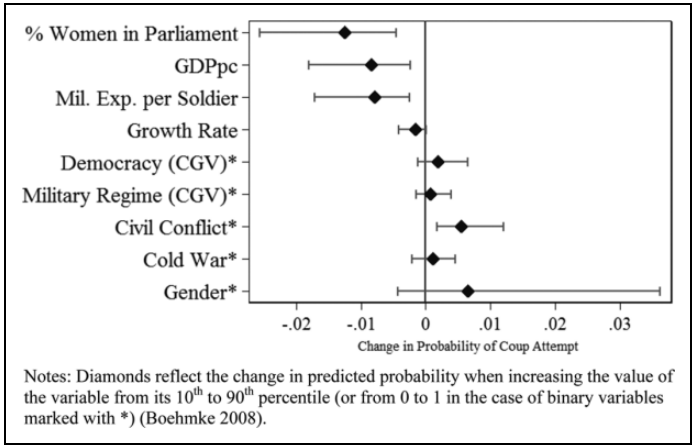

Figure 2. First difference change in predicted probability of a coup attempt.

3c, a fixed effects specification that sees a loss of 60% of the observations. Military expenditures had a significant and negative sign in each model, supporting the contention that higher payoffs to the military leads to fewer coups (e.g., Leon, 2014). In line with Bell and Koga Sudduth (in press), civil conflict was significantly additive to coup attempts. Cold War and growth rates, though displaying the expected signs, were only significant in five of nine models. Unsurprisingly, prior experience with coups was a robust and substantively strong predictor of coup activity.

The substantive influence of the controls is illustrated alongside our independent variables of interest in Figure 2. Here, the diamond illustrates how much the predicted probability of a coup attempt changes based on values of the listed measure, while the whiskers illustrate a 95% confidence interval. Diamonds falling on the left side of the horizontal "0" line point to a negative association, while those on the right side suggest a positive relationship with coups. The variable is significant if the confidence intervals do not cross the vertical 0 line, which represents a change in probability of 0. For dichotomous measures, the figure reports the change in probability of a coup attempt when changing the value of the variable from 0 to 1. For continuous variables, we consider changes when moving the value of the independent variable from its 10th percentile to its 90th percentile. The figure reports probabilities from the combined Model (3a) and excludes the controls for temporal dependence for presentation purposes. The results for women's parliamentary representation were already seen to be quite strong. We see additional evidence of this, as the substantive impact of the measure is actually (though not significantly) more pronounced than the other most robust determinants of coups: GDP per capita and military expenditures per solder. The variable for the sex of the executive, as indicated in Table 1, is statistically insignificant.

Conclusion

This article posited that gender was a potentially unexplored avenue in the study of coups. Building on prior scholarship, we argued that women's parliamentary representation and the sex of the executive would have important, albeit different, implications for civil–military relations. Specifically, we argued that higher levels of women's parliamentary representation would have a legitimizing influence on government, making it less likely to suffer a coup. In contrast, we argued that perceptions of female executives—both as less capable leaders and as a larger threat to the military's corporate interests—would make female executives more vulnerable to coup attempts. Our results provided robust support for the former but only minimal evidence for the latter.

Beyond the immediate goal of contributing to the literature on civil–military relations, the analyses presented here add to a healthy and growing literature on the nuanced effect of women on politics. In line with previous research, we find that there is a positive political benefit associated with increased women's access to national political office, but that benefit depends on the office women hold. High levels of women in the legislature have a stabilizing effect, but a female chief executive does not have the same impact. Therefore, we cannot assume simply including women in politics will have a uniform effect on political outcomes. However, as the presence of a female leader normalizes and becomes more commonplace, their authority to govern may be called into question less frequently as well as alter their behavior internationally. We may see the effect of a female chief executive on domestic stability, involvement in interstate disputes, and foreign policy converge with the effect of female representation as the number of female chief executives increases cross-nationally. Subsequently, the increase of women in politics in all political levels and across political posts is an area worthy of continued study. This line of research allows for a better understanding of the impact of women on politics specifically and factors that influence domestic politics and international relations broadly.

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Notes

1. Dilma Rouseff of Brazil and Laura Chinchilla of Costa Rica were both elected the president of their respective states in 2010. Neither one has close family ties to previous leaders.

2. However, recent survey research has found that a woman with experience in national security or foreign affairs can overcome the stereotype that she is ill-suited to maintain national security (Holman, Merolla, & Zechmeister, 2011).
3. For an in-depth discussion of principal agent clashes, see Feaver (2003).
4. See Feaver (1999) and Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers and Wolf (2010) for a discussion of "coup-ism."
5. Adopting event count models, whether Poisson or negative binomial regression, produces the same conclusions presented below.
6. To further insure the robustness of our findings, we take two additional steps in specifying additional models. First, we introduce a control variable for leftist governments since these are more likely to produce higher levels of female empowerment. Second, we control for the security environments by replacing the civil conflict measure with a measure for whether the state is involved in a strategic rivalry (Thompson & Dreyer, 2011). Rivalry has previously been argued to reduce the number of female parliamentarians (Schroeder, 2017).

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