

The Meanings of Success in Gender Quota Campaigns in the Pacific Islands Region

Kerryn Emma Baker

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Candidate's declaration

This thesis is my own original work except where cited.



Kerryn Emma Baker



Abstract

This thesis examines how actors involved in parliamentary gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region make sense of the success or failure of the campaigns. The meaning of success in quota campaigns is not fixed, but rather fluid. Different actors involved in campaigns interpret success or failure in different ways, and this in turn has an impact on how these campaigns are carried out. Using a qualitative-interpretive research method, this research drew on interviews with participants and archival data in four case studies – Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Bougainville and the French Pacific territories – to explore how the meanings of success in quota campaigns are understood by the actors involved.

In terms of evaluating success, five key themes emerged from narrative accounts of the quota campaigns. Success could be measured descriptively, as creating ‘equality of outcome’ in political representation for women and men. A smaller numerical increase in female representatives could also be considered a success as a ‘start’ to a longer process of increasing women’s representation. In terms of substantive representation, a successful outcome of a quota campaign was interpreted by some as better political decision-making. The final two themes were symbolic measures of quota success, with participants interpreting the meanings of success as strengthening culture and enhancing democracy.

This research shows how the meaning of success in quota campaigns, and related notions of gender and representation, are interpreted by actors through drawing on different traditions. These actors are not restricted by these traditions but are instead renegotiating and redefining them according to their goals, pressures from both cultural and international feminist contexts, and in answer to dilemmas that are presented. Each actor involved in a quota campaign potentially has a different, or multiple different, interpretations of what constitutes success in terms of quota adoption. An understanding of how success is defined in different contexts can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how gender quota campaigns are conducted, why gender quotas are adopted or not adopted, and the criteria by which gender quotas that are adopted will be evaluated.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	ix
Acronyms	x
 Chapter One: Introduction	
Introduction	1
Gender in the Pacific.....	4
Women's Representation	7
Women's Under-representation in Pacific Politics	8
Arguments for Greater Women's Representation.....	12
Quota Campaigns.....	15
Opposition to Gender Quotas	15
Quota Campaigns in the Pacific	17
Chapter Synopsis.....	18
 Chapter Two: Explanatory Framework	
Introduction	23
Quota Development	23
Fast vs. Incremental Quota Tracks	25
Exogenous vs. Endogenous Quota Development	26
Quota Design.....	28
Statutory Quotas	29
Party Quotas.....	30
Reserved Seats	30
Quota Effectiveness.....	31
Local Actors.....	33
Women's Movement.....	33
Political Actors.....	34
Other Local Actors	35
International Actors	35
International and Transnational Organisations.....	35
Transnational Networks	36
International Norms of Gender Equality	37
International and Regional Diffusion.....	39
Institutional Context	39
Political Culture	39
Electoral Institutions	40
Party Systems	40
Political Stability	40
Conclusion.....	41
 Chapter Three: Approach and Methodology	
Introduction	43
Approach.....	43
Contribution to the Literature	45
Case Selection	47

Data Collection	48
Where I Am Coming From	52
Challenges.....	53
Chapter Four: ‘E au le Ina’ilau a Tama’ita’i’: The Gender Quota Debate in Samoa	
Introduction.....	59
Background.....	61
Politics in Samoa	62
History of Women’s Representation	63
Barriers to Greater Women’s Representation	66
Arguments for Greater Women’s Representation	70
Quota Development.....	72
Arguments for the Quota.....	75
Arguments against the Quota.....	76
Quota Design	79
Local Actors	83
Political Actors	83
Women’s Movement	83
Other Local Actors.....	84
International Actors.....	85
International Diffusion	88
Institutional Context.....	89
Party System	89
Political Stability.....	90
Anticipated Effects of the Gender Quota	91
Discussion	92
Chapter Five: ‘Taim Bilong ol Meri’: Gender Quota Campaigns in Papua New Guinea, 2007-2012	
Introduction.....	95
Background.....	97
Politics in Papua New Guinea	97
History of Women’s Representation	98
Barriers to Greater Women’s Representation	99
Arguments for Greater Women’s Representation	101
Quota Development	101
Nominated Seats.....	103
Reserved Seats	105
Arguments for Reserved Seats.....	105
Arguments against Reserved Seats	106
Equality and Participation Bill	107
Quota Design	108
Local Actors	109
Women’s Movement	109
Political Actors	111
Other Local Actors.....	113
International Actors.....	113
International Pressure	115
Regional Diffusion	116

Institutional Context	116
Party System	116
Political Stability	117
Aftermath of the Reserved Seats Debate	118
Discussion.....	121
 Chapter Six: ' <i>Women are the Mothers of the Land</i> ': The Reserved Seats Debate in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville	
Introduction	123
Background	124
Conflict.....	126
Peace Process	129
Politics in Bougainville	132
Quota Development	134
Arguments for Reserved Seats for Women.....	137
Opposition to Reserved Seats for Women	140
Quota Design.....	140
Local Actors.....	143
Women's Movement.....	144
Political Actors.....	145
International Actors	146
International and Regional Diffusion.....	148
Institutional Context	149
Political Culture	149
Party System	150
Political Stability	151
Implementation of the Reserved Seats System.....	152
Discussion.....	154
 Chapter Seven: ' <i>Nous ne laisserons plus les hommes parler à notre place</i> ': The Parity Laws in the French Pacific Territories	
Introduction	157
Background	159
New Caledonia.....	160
French Polynesia.....	161
Wallis and Futuna	161
Quota Development	162
France	162
The Parity Laws in the Pacific Territories	163
Arguments for the Parity Laws	164
Arguments against the Parity Laws	165
New Caledonia.....	169
French Polynesia.....	171
Wallis and Futuna	171
Quota Design.....	171
Local Actors.....	174
Women's Movement.....	174
Political Actors.....	176
International Actors	178

Institutional Context.....	178
Political Culture	178
Electoral Systems	181
Party Systems.....	182
Aftermath of the Quota Debate	183
Discussion	186
 Chapter Eight: Conclusion	
Introduction.....	189
Quota Development	189
Quota Design	192
Local Actors	194
International Actors.....	196
Institutional Context.....	198
Meanings of Success in Quota Campaigns	200
Success as Equality of Results	200
Success as a 'Start'	201
Success as Better Decision-Making.....	203
Success as Strengthening Culture	205
Success as Improving Democracy	206
What Can This Tell Us About Quota Campaigns?.....	207
 References.....	209

List of Tables

Table 1:	Women's political representation in the Pacific Islands region – lower of only legislatures (as at 16 December 2014)	9
Table 2:	Explanatory framework	24
Table 3:	Women MPs in the Samoan Parliament, 1962-2014 (as at 16 December 2014)	65
Table 4:	Women MPs in the Papua New Guinean Parliament, 1977-2014 (as at 16 December 2014)	99
Table 5:	Women's representation in the French Pacific territories (as at 16 December 2014)	162
Table 6:	Quota design	193

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Cartoon, <i>Samoa Observer</i> , 13 January 2012.....	69
Figure 2:	Cartoon, <i>Samoa Observer</i> , 9 March 2012.....	70
Figure 3:	Cartoon, <i>Sunday Samoan</i> , 5 February 2012	87

Acronyms

ABG	Autonomous Bougainville Government
ANU	Australian National University
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BCC	Bougainville Constitutional Commission
BCL	Bougainville Copper Limited
BICWF	Bougainville Inter-Church Women's Forum
BIG	Bougainville Interim Government
BOCIDA	Bougainville Community Integrated Development Agency
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army
BRF	Bougainville Resistance Forces
BTG	Bougainville Transitional Government
BWPF	Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom
CDI	Centre for Democratic Institutions
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CS	Commonwealth Secretariat
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EFO	<i>Établissements français d'Océanie</i> (French Establishments of Oceania)
EPG	Eminent Person's Group
FCCI	<i>Fédération des comités de coordination indépendantistes</i> (Federation of Pro-Independence Co-operation Committees)
FLNKS	<i>Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste</i> (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front)
FPP	First Past the Post
FPU	<i>Front pour l'Unité</i> (Front for Unity)
GFKEL	<i>Groupe de femmes kanakes et exploitées en lute</i> (Group of Kanak and Exploited Women in Struggle)
HRPP	Human Rights Protection Party
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IWLN	Inailau Women's Leadership Network
LLG	Local Level Government
LNWDA	Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency
LPV	Limited Preferential Voting
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MHR	Member of the House of Representatives
MP	Member of Parliament
NCRA	National Coalition for Reform and Advancement
NCW	National Council of Women
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSA	Non-state actor
ODE	Office for Development Effectiveness
ODW	Office for the Development of Women
OLIPPAC	Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates
OSAGI	Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues
PALIKA	<i>Parti de Libération Kanak</i> (Party of Kanak Liberation)
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force
PPSEAWA	Pan Pacific and Southeast Asia Women's Association
PR	Proportional Representation
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
RPCR	<i>Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République</i> (Rally for Caledonia in the Republic)
RPR	<i>Rassemblement pour la République</i> (Rally for the Republic)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations
THE	Triumph Heritage Empowerment
TWG	Technical Working Group

UMP	<i>Union pour un Mouvement Populaire</i> (Union for a Popular Movement)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
US	United States
USP	University of the South Pacific
USTKE	<i>Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Kanaks et des Exploités</i> (Union of Kanak and Exploited Workers)
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Women are significantly under-represented in politics throughout the world. They hold only 21 per cent of parliamentary seats according to global statistics compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU, 2014). In the Pacific Islands, women's representation is much lower than the global average, with just 4.4 per cent women in lower or only legislative houses in the region. Four Pacific states – the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu – have no women in their single or lower house of Parliament (IPU, 2014; "No woman MP", 2014). Outside of the Pacific region, there is only one other state, Qatar, with no women in its legislature (IPU, 2014).

One potential method of increasing the number of women in politics is through the use of quotas, or measures designed to ensure a minimum level of women's representation. To address the issue of gender imbalance in politics, various countries have sought to increase women's representation through quotas. They generally take one of three forms: statutory quotas, which require parties to present a certain proportion of female candidates; party quotas, which are adopted by individual parties; and reserved seats, where a certain number of legislative seats are set aside for women (Norris, 2004). The term 'quotas' is sometimes used in a narrower sense that focuses on party candidate selection, thus excluding reserved seats, or in a broader sense that includes so-called 'soft quotas', or non-binding guidelines on women's representation used by parties. Over 100 countries have introduced some form of quota to increase the number of women in politics (Krook, 2009).

My research asks the question: how do political actors in the Pacific Islands region make sense of the success (or failure) of parliamentary gender quota campaigns? This question matters because the modernist empiricist analysis that dominates the quota literature tends to assume that definitions of successful quota campaigns are fixed and agreed upon, when in fact this is not the case. The political actors involved in quota campaigns interpret the success or failure of those campaigns in different ways, and this has an impact on how these campaigns are carried out.

To answer this question, I look at four campaigns for quota adoption in the Pacific Islands region. I focus on campaign narratives, foregrounding the interpretations of participants to explain how parliamentary gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region are understood by the actors involved. I examine how parliamentary gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region are conducted; who the key actors involved in the campaigns are; what explanations these actors offer for their support or opposition to quotas; and how the

institutional context in which these campaigns take place affect interpretations of their success or failure.

I have chosen the Pacific Islands region as the focus of this study for three main reasons. Firstly, the region is often regarded as having one of the worst records in terms of women's political representation. Progress in this area seems to be slow and inconsistent. In the period 1995-2008, women's representation increased by 5.3 per cent in Arab states, and 7.5 per cent in sub-Saharan African states, but only by 1.7 per cent in the Pacific region (Stephan, 2010). Furthermore, until 2012 no Pacific independent state had implemented a parliamentary-level gender quota. Elsewhere in the world, in the 1990s and 2000s there was a proliferation in the number of states using statutory gender quotas to increase the parliamentary representation of women. As of 2007, thirteen countries had a constitutional gender quota provision in place, 69 countries had one or more parties with a party quota system, and 34 countries had a statutory quota (Paxton & Hughes, 2007). The United Nations (UN) and other international organisations have strongly promoted gender quotas as a method of rapidly increasing the number of women in politics (see Clark & Rodrigues, 2008). Yet despite the significant global uptake of gender quotas, and the promotion of them by international bodies, only one Pacific state has introduced a quota to date.

Secondly, while there is a wealth of academic literature on the adoption of gender quotas, the Pacific Islands region has been largely excluded from this scholarly analysis. For instance, in two of the most significant academic texts on quota adoption – Drude Dahlerup's 2006 edited volume *Women, Quotas and Politics* and Mona Lena Krook's 2009 book *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* – the Pacific Islands region is not discussed, although there are chapters on other specific countries and regions in each volume.¹ This can most likely be attributed to the absence of any state-level parliamentary gender quotas in the Pacific region when these books were published. Furthermore, there has been a significant body of work related to quota campaigns and debates in other regions, including the Arab states (see, for example, Darhour & Dahlerup, 2013; Howard-Merriam,

¹ In Dahlerup (2006), there are chapters relating to countries that could arguably considered Pacific states – one that discusses party quotas in Australia and New Zealand (Krook, Lovenduski and Squires, 'Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand: gender quotas in the context of citizenship models', pp. 194-221), and another that discusses the gender quota campaign in Timor Leste (Ballington and Dahlerup, 'Gender quotas in post-conflict states: East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq', pp. 249-58) – but none relating to the Pacific Islands region as defined for the purposes of this research: the Melanesian states and territories of Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea (including the Autonomous Region of Bougainville), Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu; the Micronesian states and territories of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and the Polynesian states, self-governing countries and territories of American Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Wallis and Futuna.

1990; Liddell, 2009); Asia (see Ali, 2000; Nanivadekar, 2006; Rai & Sharma, 2000); Europe (see Bereni, 2007; Davidson-Schmich, 2006; Freidenvall, 2003); Latin America (see Baldez, 2004; Bruhn, 2003; Jones, 1996); and sub-Saharan Africa (see Bauer, 2008; Burnet, 2008; Hassim, 2005). In contrast, the Pacific Islands region has been the focus of little academic research in the field of quota adoption, with several notable exceptions (see Berman, 2005; George, 2014).

Thirdly, the region encompasses a broad range of political statuses, and electoral and party systems. Fraenkel and Grofman (2005, p. 261) note this political and institutional variety:

The Pacific Islands possess a diverse range of electoral systems and political institutions. The region includes a constitutional monarchy, in which the king and nobility select 21 of the 30 MPs (Tonga),² a state where only customary chiefs (*matai*) may stand for parliament (Samoa), and a territory with a cabinet composed of three kings and three members appointed as representatives of the French President (Wallis and Futuna). It includes the only country in the world to adopt a ranked-candidate system of voting that is closely related to the system invented by nineteenth century French mathematician Jean-Charles de Borda (Nauru), one of the few remaining democracies that still uses the single-non-transferable-vote (Vanuatu) and a unique variant on the French-style two-round system with multi-member districts and a directly elected president who is nevertheless required to maintain the confidence of parliament (Kiribati). The Pacific has countries which use the Anglo-American first-past-the-post (plurality in single-member districts) and block vote (plurality in multi-member districts), and others which use list system proportional representation methods of the sort common in Western Europe. With numerous tiny nations around the size of the ancient Greek city states, the Pacific has been described as a 'natural laboratory' for electoral systems analysis and experimentation.

Within this 'natural laboratory' there have also been a range of campaigns for parliamentary gender quotas conducted, both successful and unsuccessful, with proposals for various different quota systems. This diversity within the region provides an interesting environment for comparative study of quota campaigns.

I have organised this research on quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region around four case studies: Samoa, Bougainville, the three French Pacific territories, and Papua New Guinea. In 2013, Samoa became the first sovereign Pacific state to introduce a parliamentary-level

² This has since changed, with commoners now electing 17 of the 26 elected members of Parliament in Tonga, and nobles electing the other nine, after electoral reform in 2010 (see Powles, 2012).

gender quota. The Samoan quota sets a minimum level of women's representation at five members of Parliament (MPs). It mandates that if fewer than five women are elected in any general election, the highest-polling unsuccessful female candidates will occupy additional seats in Parliament to ensure there are five women MPs. At the sub-state level, quotas are already in place in the region. In the legislature of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, three seats are reserved for women as per the provisions of the 2004 Constitution, and in the French Pacific territories of New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna, in which the French 'parity laws' have been applied since 1999, mandating that equal numbers of male and female candidates be present on party lists. My fourth case study is a campaign for a parliamentary gender quota that was conducted in Papua New Guinea, an example of quota non-adoption. I focus on the period from 2007 to 2012, when there was a push for nominated seats and then reserved seats for women. While the campaign did succeed in amending the Constitution to allow for the possibility of reserved seats for women – one from each of the Papua New Guinea provinces – it ultimately failed in the attempt to institute these seats before the 2012 election.

Gender quotas are often controversial measures, but they do have the potential to increase levels of women's representation rapidly and significantly. The accounts of participants in quota campaigns are important in establishing how campaigns are conducted, the context in which quota adoption occurs, and the meanings of success as interpreted by those involved. In conducting this research my aim was to shed some light on the processes and politics of quota adoption within the Pacific region.

Gender in the Pacific

As the Pacific Islands region is geographically large and culturally diverse, it is impossible to make generalisations about the status of women in its pre-European contact history, and indeed in the periods since. In some areas of the Pacific, the status of women in society was high; in others, quite low (Drage, 1995). Some areas of the Pacific were traditionally patrilineal; others, for instance parts of Vanuatu and Fiji, were matrilineal (Huffer, 2006).

Scheyvens (2003, pp. 24-5) rejects depictions of Melanesian women in the pre-colonisation period "as appendages of men, or invisible, or only visible as wives and mothers". She claims that, "while women's domains were mostly separate from those of men, women were often regarded as equivalent in intrinsic worth and experienced their domains as a sources of security, solidarity, and dignity." While it was men who dominated the public sphere, women enjoyed influence and standing in the community (Scheyvens, 2003).

The importance of women to the community was recognised by men: "Women are seen as the cords that bind the present generation with the future, they link one tribe to another, link spirituality with nature, and are the entry and exit points for existence on earth" (Pollard 2003, p. 47). While Pollard is writing in the Solomon Islands context, similar sentiments are found in other Melanesian cultures. In Bougainville, for example, Ruth Saovana-Spriggs (2010, p. 204) notes the symbolic link between women's bodies and land in enabling the continuation of culture and tradition, as "the body of a woman reproduces life for the next generation."

Pollard (2003) notes that, in Solomon Islands, women's groups existed before colonisation. She writes: "Women had special places and positions within their clans and social groups, complementary to those of men" (p. 46). Women formed groups in order to carry out work, social and cultural activities. While religious missions in the period of colonisation were instrumental in establishing formal women's groups, they often built on existing forms of women's organisations from the pre-colonial era (Pollard, 2003). These women's groups gave Pacific women access to education, although this was often limited to sewing, methods of childcare, and other domestic tasks (Pollard, 2003).

Women's organisations are now more widespread than in the past. These organisations for the most part remain closely linked to religious institutions. In Solomon Islands today most community women's groups, of which there are more than one thousand, have connections to churches, and almost all of them incorporate Christian traditions such as prayers at the beginning of meetings (Pollard, 2003). Some states have established national councils of women, but these have been accused of taking resources from church-based groups (Drage, 1995). Most Pacific states have small departments or divisions whose aim is to promote the advancement of women, though only Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa have ministries of women. Huffer (2006) claims: "Most, if not all, women's offices are generally vastly under-resourced and under-financed" (p. 32).

The introduction of colonial administrations and missionaries was to have a profound impact on gender relations in the Pacific Islands, an impact which continues to the present day. Scheyvens (2003) points out some of the beneficial aspects of colonisation, such as the decline of war and violence, access to new methods of healthcare and education, and the formation of formalised women's groups. On the other hand, she notes the decline of traditional customs that underpinned women's social status, and the exclusion of women from the agricultural work through which they had derived standing in the community (Scheyvens, 2003). Church and colonial representatives imposed strict gender roles that largely restricted women to the private sphere (see Hill, 2012).

The Christian model of the nuclear family that was introduced to the region in the colonial era was an almost wholly unfamiliar construct (Drage, 1995). Established church traditions, such as a woman taking the name of her husband after marriage, cultivated a new sense of dependency in gender relations in the region (Huffer, 2006). Where churches were proactive in encouraging educational opportunities for Pacific women, it was generally in the context of teaching them how to carry out wifely duties in the European model of marriage (Meleisea & Meleisea, 1987, p. 60).

Christian traditions are now an integral part of local culture in many parts of the Pacific region. Douglas (2002, p. 8) writes: "Christianity is neither foreign nor imposed, but an indigenised daily spiritual experience and a powerful ritual practice." Saovana-Spriggs (2000, p. 27) notes: "During the past two hundred years, Christianity has taken deep root in the lives of Pacific Islanders and it is now an inseparable part of people's existence." These Christian traditions, however, have played a role in the devaluing of women's roles in society. The introduction of the church-sanctioned institution of marriage and the gender stereotypes associated with it has altered male-female relations. Huffer (2006) describes the marital relationship as "now often represented as one of dependency rather than partnership" (p. 35), claiming this can be linked to negative attitudes towards greater women's political representation. Clark and Rodrigues (2009, p. 18) also note the use of religious reasoning to oppose women entering politics. The support of religious leaders could be instrumental in encouraging more women into politics, although as Huffer (2006, p. 35) points out: "The established churches in the Pacific tend to be very conservative and unfavourable to changes in the status quo by which they are, generally, well served."

The post-colonial era in the Pacific Islands region, which began in 1962 with Samoa gaining its independence, brought more formal recognition of the rights of women. The constitutions of most states in the region contain protections from gender-based discrimination (Huffer, 2006). Most Pacific states have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), although Tonga and Palau have yet to do so. In her 1995 overview of women's representation in the Pacific region, Drage (1995, p. 70) noted: "On the surface women have the same legal right as men to participate in the process of democracy." Yet the formal right to equality does not always translate to equality in a practical sense.

The transfer to a cash economy has affected Pacific women, who in general earn less money than men, leading to what Huffer (2006) calls "the feminization of poverty" (p. 36). While women still play an important role in agriculture and food production, these contributions are scarcely recognized with a cash income (Drage, 1995). UN Women (2014, p. 6) notes that in

the Pacific region “women are more likely than men to be informal workers, a consequence of their limited skills, restricted mobility and gender norms.” The gender wage gap is an issue for women in the Pacific Islands region, especially for low-skilled workers (PIFS, 2013).

In terms of education, gender parity has largely been achieved in the region at primary and secondary levels (UN Women, 2014). The exceptions to this are Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Solomon Islands for both levels, Palau at primary school level, and Niue at secondary level (PIFS, 2013). In the parts of the region where access to education remains inequitable, barriers to girls attending school include high rates of teenage pregnancy, transport issues, an unsafe school environment, caregiving or work responsibilities, and cost (PIFS, 2013). At tertiary level, enrolments at the University of the South Pacific are generally higher for women than for men (PIFS, 2013).

In the Pacific Islands region, UN Women (2014) argues that gender-based violence is “at pandemic levels” (p. 5). In an AusAID³ report on the issue, domestic violence in Melanesia was described as “severe and pervasive” (ODE, 2008, vii). Key factors that contribute to women’s vulnerability to violence in this region include bride-price, a tradition that perpetuates the idea of a woman as her husband’s property; a lack of economic independence, which makes leaving an abusive relationship difficult for women; and cultural practices that give the continuance of peaceful relations between men and communities precedence over the wellbeing of individual women (ODE, 2008). This may include forcing a woman to marry her rapist in order to maintain relations between two communities (ODE, 2008). The report also identifies a sexual double standard, which punishes the sexual expression of women while condoning that of men, and the influence of patriarchal religions as contributing to the problem of domestic violence (ODE, 2008).

Women’s Representation

As previously noted, women’s representation in the Pacific Islands region is lower than in most other regions of the world. In general, the non-sovereign territories in the region have higher levels of women’s representation than independent states. The average percentage of female representatives is 13.2 per cent including non-sovereign territories, and 4.4 per cent for independent states. Fiji has the highest level of women’s representation in its legislative of all Pacific independent states, with 14 per cent. Women members of Parliament in the Pacific region tend to have relatively high levels of education, often from overseas institutions (Baker, Ng Shiu & Corbett, 2013; Crocombe, 2008). Crocombe (2008) notes that women who have

³ The Australian Agency for International Development. AusAID was integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2013.

success in Pacific politics are likely to be married to foreign men, and have small families; Corbett and Liki (2014) observe that women MPs usually fall into two groups, those who are single and those who have adult children. Also of importance is their membership of “political families” (Corbett & Liki, 2014). Family connections and influence are important (Croccombe, 2008), as is obvious in the success of women candidates in by-elections triggered by the death or resignation of a male relative (Baker et al., 2013).

Women’s Under-representation in Pacific Politics

Scholars of the Pacific have pointed to a multitude of potential reasons behind the enduring under-representation of women in politics in the region. The formal right for women to participate in politics is established by the constitutions of most Pacific countries (see Croccombe, Neemia, Ravuvu & von Busch, 1992), although this does not automatically result in equal opportunities for women. There are persisting institutional barriers to increasing women’s representation. For example, in Tonga only men can be nobles, which rules women out of contention for the nine parliamentary seats reserved for nobles. In Samoa, candidacy for Parliament is restricted to those who hold *matai* titles, of whom there are significantly more men than women (Huffer, 2006). Some female *matai* reported feeling “inferior” when working with male *matai* in decision-making roles (PPSEAWA et al. 2004, p. 7). Electoral systems may also play a role in women’s under-representation, although Fraenkel claims that simply changing to a more proportionally-based electoral system would be unlikely to result in significantly more women parliamentarians, due to the relative absence of strong political parties in the region (Fraenkel, 2006). Drage (1995) notes the persistence of cultural obstacles to equality of representation.

Potential cultural barriers to women’s access to political power include traditional gender roles and an enduring idea that women should play a background role in influencing political debate (see Drage, 1995; Huffer, 2006; So’o & Fraenkel, 2005). When looking at possible cultural obstacles it must be acknowledged that there are many deep-seated cultural traditions in the Pacific region that encourage respect towards women. Huffer (2006) claims that “women have traditionally been valued as complementary partners to men with specialised knowledge and functions to ensure the well being of society” (p. 6). Matrilineal land ownership was widespread in the Pacific, including parts of Micronesia and in many Solomon Islander communities (Huffer, 2006; Moore, 2007). Traditional practices which endure to the present day mean that men in many parts of the Pacific need the endorsement of women to gain standing in the community (Huffer, 2006). In Pacific history many prominent women have

Table 1: Women's political representation in the Pacific Islands region – lower or only legislatures (as at 16 December 2014)

COUNTRY	Women MPs	Total MPs	Percentage of Women MPs
French Polynesia	30	57	52.0
New Caledonia	24	54	44.4
Guam	3	15	20.0
Wallis and Futuna	4	20	20.0
Cook Islands	4	24	16.7
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands^a	3	20	15.0
Niue	3	20	15.0
Tokelau	3	20	15.0
Fiji ^b	7	50	14.0
Kiribati	4	46	8.7
Tuvalu	1	15	6.7
Samoa	3	49	6.1
American Samoa	1	18	5.6
Nauru	1	18	5.6
Republic of the Marshall Islands	1	33	3.0
Papua New Guinea	3	111	2.7
Solomon Islands	1	50	2.0
Federated States of Micronesia	0	14	0.0
Palau ^c	0	16	0.0
Tonga ^d	0	26	0.0
Vanuatu	0	52	0.0
TOTAL	96	728	13.2
TOTAL (EXCLUDING NON-SOVEREIGN TERRITORIES)	21	480	4.4

Source: Adapted from IPU Women in Parliament (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>)

Notes: ^aOne woman also sits in the nine-member Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Senate.

^b Eight women were elected in the 2014 Fijian general election, but one woman, Dr Jiko Luveni, subsequently vacated her seat in Parliament to take up the position of Speaker of Parliament (Smith, 2014).

^cThree women sit in the 13-member Palau Senate.

^dThe Tongan legislative assembly comprises of 17 members directly elected by universal suffrage, 9 members elected by Nobles, and up to 4 members appointed by the Prime Minister of Tonga. In the 2014 general election no women were elected, and as of 16 December 2014 no prime ministerial appointments to Parliament had been made.

become community leaders, chiefs, and queens (Huffer, 2006). In recent times, however, even in Pacific countries with a strong tradition of female leadership, women have been shut out of politics. Huffer (2006) notes the “apparent contradiction between the strong role women play in society, and the esteem they are generally held in, and their absence in open, public decision-making” (p. 44).

Culture in the Pacific Islands region today “tends to be conservative and patriarchal” (Huffer, 2006, p. 3). This is in large part due to the enforcement of gender roles by church and colonial powers, although traditional patriarchal structures that pre-dated colonisation existed in the region. While some Pacific societies were patrilineal before colonisation, others that were matrilineal became patrilineal during the colonial era (Huffer, 2006). In communities where women had previously had significant input into decision-making, they were then relegated to the domestic sphere; in others, colonial and church administrations replaced one set of customs that restricted women’s access to the public sphere with another (Drage, 1995; Huffer, 2006). This has an obvious effect on the under-representation of women in politics. The colonial and missionary influences “established gendered stereotypes that promote the male as “natural” decision-maker at the macro level, and which now disadvantage women who aspire to national leadership” (Webber & Johnson, 2008, p. 86). A study of women’s representation in Tuvalu claimed cultural factors as the primary barrier to women’s access to Parliament (Kofe & Taomia, 2006). Yet Huffer (2006) argues that it is not culture and custom but rather their interpretation by those in favour of the status quo that results in women’s under-representation. Men, and sometimes women, who are reluctant to give women a greater voice in the public sphere use the culture argument as a method of limiting their opportunities.

The lack of support for female candidates is also found in party selection processes. Parties have often been unwilling to select women, and female candidates who are selected find themselves in hard-to-win seats, sometimes running against men from their own party (Huffer, 2006). Unsuccessful male nominees can act to make a female candidate’s campaign more difficult (Huffer, 2006). Women can choose to stand as independents, but to some extent this restricts their chance of election, especially in countries with strong party-based systems (Lee, 2009). Independent candidates are also cut off from potentially beneficial training and monetary support from parties (Huffer, 2006).

Female candidates in the Pacific claim to face opposition from men, their families, and leaders in their communities and churches (Huffer, 2006). Douglas (2002, p. 10) notes the “widespread...contempt for women’s political capacities.” To combat this, women strive to

appear compatible with and not a challenge to patriarchal political and social structures (Huffer, 2006). In addition, female candidates also often receive little support from female voters (Lauti & Fraenkel, 2006; PPSEAWA et al., 2004). The view that politics is men's work is widespread in the Pacific (Drage, 1995; Huffer, 2006; Pollard, 2003; PPSEAWA et al., 2004; Stephan, 2010), and many women share this view (Douglas, 2002). According to Huffer (2006), this "is in large part due to the fact that the absence of women in politics has become a norm throughout the region" (p. 34). Furthermore, female voters are often coerced into voting for the candidate of choice of their husband or community leader (Drage, 1995; Huffer, 2006). Female candidates in the Pacific region clearly cannot assume the support of women in their constituencies; Huffer (2006) raises the point, however, that women running for election should not have to rely mainly on votes from other women.

Another barrier to increased representation is the nature of women's movements in Pacific Island countries. Clark and Rodrigues (2009) claim there is no "united and effective women's movement to advocate for and support women into parliament" in the region (p. 19). Studies of Solomon Islands have shown that women's groups there are all explicitly Christian and most have strong connections with churches (Pollard, 2003; Webber & Johnson, 2008). Scheyvens (2003) argues that, although women's groups in Melanesia by and large continue the Christian traditions of their founders, it "is clearly possible to work through seemingly conservative institutions to empower women" (p. 40). Stephan (2010) notes the importance of establishing women's networks to share knowledge and support potential women MPs. Regional sharing between women's groups in the Pacific region is made difficult by language, financial, and geographic barriers.

Women in the Pacific earn less monetary income than men, making them "more vulnerable to poverty" (Huffer, 2006, p. 36), and less likely to actively participate in the political process (Drage, 1995). Many reports suggest a lack of financial means and economic independence is a barrier to candidacy and election for women (Clark & Rodrigues, 2009; Huffer, 2006; Kofe & Taomia, 2006; McLeod, 2002; PPSEAWA et al., 2004). Financial disadvantage is a problem for women candidates across the world, but it is of particular concern in the Pacific region, where vote-buying through gifts or cash payments is a widespread practice (Huffer, 2006). Fraenkel (2006, p. 96) writes: "women's marginal position in money politics thus becomes another means of ensuring their marginalisation from Pacific parliaments."

Access to employment can be a determinant of participation in politics (Drage, 1995). While Samoa has a greater number of women than men in paid employment, in most Pacific countries this situation is reversed (Huffer, 2006). Women face especially high obstacles to paid employment in countries where incomes are lower and/or birth rates are higher

(Fraenkel, 2006). Access to education is another potential indicator of political activity (Drage, 1995). While in some areas of the Pacific girls are now outperforming boys at secondary level, in others girls still have unequal access to schooling (Huffer, 2006; see also PIFS, 2013; UN Women, 2014). If women do not have a formal education, they may lack the confidence to enter politics. Many scholars note a lack of political efficacy in Pacific women which contributes to their under-representation in legislatures (Clark & Rodrigues, 2009; Kofe & Taomia, 2006; Lauti & Fraenkel, 2006).

In many areas of the Pacific it is obviously not a lack of qualifications that is preventing women from entering politics. In Kiribati, Samoa, Nauru, and Solomon Islands, there is a far greater proportion of women in leadership positions in ministries than in parliaments (Fraenkel, 2009). Liki (2010), in her study of the growing number of women in top- and mid-level jobs in the Solomon Islands civil service, notes the importance of access to tertiary education, affirmative action, and a shift in general opinion within the public sector in favour of women in leadership positions. Despite these signs of progress, Solomon Islands currently has just a single female member of Parliament. There are many reasons why senior public servants could decide not to run for parliament: in some places, the public service pays better; some women could prefer the focus on policy rather than getting – and staying – elected; and, where there is a requirement that public servants resign their positions to run for office, women in leadership positions may not be willing to take that risk (Fraenkel, 2009; Drage, 1995).

Family commitments are cited by many women as a reason not to enter politics (PPSEAWA et al., 2004). Fraenkel (2006) notes the added difficulties faced by female candidates who have families. Many women who do stand are either single and childless, or have grown children (Fraenkel, 2006). Following application of the parity law, women entered the New Caledonian and French Polynesian legislatures in unprecedented numbers, but women with young children were noticeably absent from the new female cohort (Bargel, Guyon & Rettig, 2010). Even for women without young children, the added responsibilities of public office often caused tensions with spouses (Bargel et al., 2010). The report notes: “Family constraints played a central part in the decision to engage or not to engage” (Bargel et al. 2010, p. 3).

Arguments for Greater Women’s Representation

Women’s under-representation has, especially since the 1990s, become an increasingly salient political issue. Various arguments are employed to make a case for greater women’s representation in politics. Justice arguments stress the importance of equal opportunities for women and men to participate in the political sphere (Sawer, 2000). The right of women to equal access to decision-making positions is recognized in international conventions, including

CEDAW and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Sawer (2000) claims that most justice arguments are accompanied by utility arguments, to appeal to political elites. Utility arguments focus on the advantage to political actors of greater women's representation – the widening pool of political talent, for example, or gaining support from female voters.

Symbolic arguments, according to Sawer (2000), fall into two separate categories. The first is that greater women's representation will have positive effects for women in wider society. Scholars have argued that higher levels of women's representation can increase levels of political efficacy and engagement among women (see Atkeson & Carrillo, 2007; Karp & Banducci, 2008). Female legislators could also provide younger women with prominent role models. A study by Campbell and Wolbrecht (2006) found the presence of visible and high-profile female candidates and politicians increased the likelihood the girls would express interest in being politically active in the future.

The second category of symbolic arguments is that the under-representation of women impacts negatively on the legitimacy of political institutions (Sawer, 2000). It is claimed that if groups, particularly women, are excluded from political decision-making, the political system cannot be regarded as representative. Thus, the presence of women in legislatures is considered an important indicator of democratic legitimacy. Similarly, it is argued "that women's increased presence in political institutions will improve qualitatively the ethos and character of those institutions" (Allen & Dean, 2008, p. 213). A 1999 World Bank study showed a correlation between increased female representation and lower levels of corruption (Dollar, Fisman & Gatti, 1999). Women can be seen as 'reformers' in male-dominated political systems, who can decrease corruption and improve accountability in governance, and in doing so "revitalize public faith in the political system" (Baldez 2006, p. 104).

There is also what Sawer (2000, p. 363) refers to as the 'making a difference' argument. Proponents maintain that the presence of women in legislatures will make a substantive difference to political debate and decision-making. It is argued that because of their different points of view, lived experiences, and legislative priorities, men and women make different contributions to decision-making, meaning the presence of both genders in the legislature is essential. Jane Mansbridge (2005, p. 622) has written that "descriptive representation by gender improves substantive outcomes for women in every polity for which we have a measure." Many studies of the legislative behaviour of women have indicated a propensity to support and advocate for women's issues (Bratton, 2005; Catalano, 2009; Kittilson, 2008; Xydias, 2007-8). Other studies, however, do not find a strong link between women's descriptive and substantive representation (Cowell-Meyers & Langbein, 2009). Critics of the

'making a difference' argument note that women are not a homogeneous group with identical interests, and even if 'women's interests' could be articulated, the presence of women in legislatures does not guarantee the adequate representation of those interests (Sawer, 2000).

Some scholars have argued that a 'critical mass' of women is necessary to gain substantive representation for women. In nuclear physics, critical mass is the amount of fissile material required for a nuclear reaction. In terms of women's representation, critical mass refers to the number of women needed to make a substantial impact on policy. The term was first used in Kanter's (1977a, 1977b) work on the effect of the presence of women in corporate bodies.

Drude Dahlerup (1988) is often presented as supporting the 'critical mass' theory, but this is a misinterpretation of her work. In fact, Dahlerup claims that critical mass is less important than 'critical acts', and the individual actors that carry them out. Other studies support this claim – Crowley (2004) found women can still make a significant difference as 'token' legislators below critical mass, while Carroll (2001) notes that women are more likely to act for women when they make up a smaller proportion of the legislature. Pro-women policies are usually the result of individual women or groups of women pressing specific issues, rather than a certain proportion of the legislative population being female.

The literature suggests various 'critical mass' points, from 15 to 40 per cent (Beckwith, 2007). This theory, however, is "problematic and under-theorized" (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers, 2007, p. 533). Beckwith (2007) notes that a sudden influx of female MPs may not necessarily result in substantive policy gains for women, if the new women members lack legislative experience and have not had time to establish a solid support base. Further negative consequences could be a backlash from male politicians, larger numbers making cross-partisan work impossible, and the advancement of women on anti-feminist policy platforms (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers, 2007).

Anne Phillips (1995) proposes a new theory on the link between descriptive and substantive representation: the 'politics of presence'. She argues that all women do not have common needs and interests, but that lived experiences of women create gender-specific interests. These interests are complex and not clearly defined, making it essential that women be present in legislatures to represent them – if they could be articulated simply it would be easy for any male to adopt the task of their advocacy. Since they are not, however, women legislators are uniquely qualified to represent these interests (Phillips, 1998). Iris Marion Young (2002), writing on the same subject, suggests that female legislators are important to present an alternative social perspective to that of men. She claims broad groups, including women, are impossible to define through needs and interests, but share a societal status because of

structural inequalities. This status informs their social perspectives, creating a unique contribution to debate.

Quota Campaigns

The first country to use a statutory quota was Argentina in the 1993 elections (Jones, 2009). Since then, quota systems have spread rapidly throughout the world. Quota requirements range from 5 per cent in Nepal to 50 per cent in France, with a quota of around 30 per cent being the most widespread (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). The enforcement of quota provisions also varies, but in a study of quota adoption in Latin America it was found that on average they delivered an immediate five percentage point increase in female legislators (Htun & Jones, 2002).

In instances where quotas have been effective, they have managed to change the face of power in previously male-dominated political spheres. For example, since Rwanda introduced a 30 per cent quota for women in decision-making positions in its constitution, women have come to dominate the lower house of Parliament, with 51 of the 80 seats (63.8 per cent) currently held by female representatives (IPU, 2014). Quotas are not universally accepted as a positive development, however, with various criticisms levelled at them.

Opposition to Gender Quotas

Opponents of quota provisions argue that they aren't consistent with the liberal principle of equal opportunity (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). On the other hand, quota supporters view special measures as a method of circumventing the structural barriers that maintain an unfair system (Dahlerup, 2002). Another argument against quotas is that they are contrary to the principles of democracy, taking the power away from voters to decide who will be their representative (Dahlerup, 2005). Opponents also use a form of the 'slippery slope' argument, claiming that allowing quotas for women will lead to demands for quotas from other marginalized groups.

Some challenge the use of quotas by claiming that women's representation will increase naturally over time, meaning special measures are unnecessary. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005, p. 31) reject this argument, noting "that a backlash is possible...because gender inequality is not just a historical relic, but may be (re)produced in modern settings. Consequently, quotas are a possible remedy to the mechanisms of exclusion." The institution of quotas, however, may also create a political backlash (Allen & Dean, 2008). Quotas could result in female politicians being undervalued as 'quota women' and unable to effect real change (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). Potential measures to ensure that women politicians

are more than a token presence in legislatures could be an additional quota to ensure women are represented in Cabinet, as has been implemented in Bougainville, or the existence of a strong cross-party women's caucus, as is the case in Timor Leste (see Costa, Sawer & Sharp, 2013).

Two common criticisms of quotas are that they can be insulting to women, by denying them the chance to be elected on their own merits, and that they discriminate against men, by limiting their chances to be elected. These arguments ignore the additional structural barriers faced by women in campaigning against male candidates. In most countries, women have the equal right to participate in politics, and quotas are a way to ensure they can exercise that right. In her report on women's representation in the Pacific, Huffer (2006, pp. 44-5), responding to these criticisms, notes:

women are not treated equally in all other spheres of life. Differences and inequalities are prevalent (even though this differs somewhat from country to country), be it in terms of wages, access to land and titles, access to church hierarchy, access to credit and education, spousal and domestic abuse, and so forth. That differences between men and women currently exist is a fact of life that contemporary political systems in the Pacific (as elsewhere) have to deal with. It is disingenuous to claim that women are equal nominally in one sphere of life but not in others.

It is claimed that quotas allow a candidate's gender to trump her or his qualifications (Dahlerup, 2005). Linked to this critique is the assumption that quotas will lead to less-qualified representatives. This line of argument leads to the question of what constitutes a 'qualified' candidate for political office. In the Assembly of French Polynesia, for example, a study has shown that female legislators – many of whom were elected after the institution of the French parity laws – have higher levels of education than their male counterparts (Bargel et al., 2010).

There are barriers to women's participation in electoral politics that quotas do not resolve, such as issues of financial resources and family pressures. As Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) note, however, "quotas target the very heart of the recruitment process" (p. 41), removing the significant barrier to women's representation of entrenched party processes that favour male candidates. In a situation where women's representation is stagnating or even on the decline, it can be argued that some form of quota can provoke the necessary shift in power relations to "break up the male monopoly on elective office" (Baldez 2006, p. 104).

Quota Campaigns in the Pacific

Aside from some Pacific states being signatories to international covenants that promote the use of special measures, there have been regional commitments to increasing women's political representation. The 2004 Eminent Person's Group (EPG) review of the Pacific Islands Forum noted that a challenge facing Pacific leaders was to "increase the current low level of participation by women at all levels in decision-making process and structures" (EPG, 2004, p. 31). The following year, the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration was adopted at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting. Among the strategic objectives of the Plan were goals to improve gender equality; to ratify and implement international human rights conventions, including CEDAW; and to work towards "a strategy to support participatory democracy and consultative decision-making (including NSAs, youth, women, and disabled), and electoral process" (PIFS, 2007, p. 19).

The Ninth Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in 2004 produced the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality 2005 to 2015. The Platform for Action specifically recommended "affirmative action by promoting and putting in place policies and practices that enhance gender parity in political representation" and "security mechanisms for women candidates in the national general elections" (SPC, 2005, p. 22).

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat has made some efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making processes, including in 2008 co-hosting a Melanesian Sub-Regional Workshop on Special Measures to Increase the Number of Women in National Parliaments. The workshop was intended to be the first of a series to discuss the potential use of quotas in the region (Clark & Rodrigues, 2009). During the workshop each national delegation developed an individual strategy for the implementation of special measures (PIFS, 2008). Donors have supported efforts to increase women's political representation. For example, in 2012 the Australian Government launched a ten year project named *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, and listed as one of its key priority areas "increasing women's voice in decision-making, leadership, and peace-building" (DFAT, 2014, p. 15).

In their report on special measures in the Pacific region, Clark and Rodrigues (2009) note the absence of "political will on the part of governments to develop and/or implement policies to support gender equality in political governance" (p. 18), and set out long-term and short-term measures to increase women's representation. Long-term measures include voter education, campaign support for female candidates, building strong political party systems, and electoral

reform. In the short-term, however, temporary special measures could be used to provide an entry-point into political decision-making for Pacific women (Clark & Rodrigues, 2009).

Campaigns to increase women's representation exist in the Pacific. Organisations including UN Women and the Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI) have provided support for grass-roots campaigns in the region. Such campaigns tend to be hindered by a lack of momentum and the absence of significant media and political attention, and can also have an unhelpful focus on urban areas, ignoring rural constituencies where Pacific women have a chance of electoral success (Fraenkel, 2006). While campaigns for greater representation are occurring on regional and national levels, organizations within a few countries have also started campaigns for quota provisions as a means to increase representation for women.

In addition to the four quota campaigns profiled in this research, other campaigns for parliamentary gender quotas have arisen in the Pacific Islands region. In Solomon Islands, women's organisations have pushed for a reserved seats system. A proposal for ten reserved seats in 2008 was defeated in Cabinet (Wilson, 2014). In 2010 the policy document released by the governing National Coalition for Reform and Advancement (NCRA)⁴ included a proposal to introduce reserved seats for women (NCRA, 2010). The proposed quota gained the support of some male politicians (Atkin 2014), although Prime Minister Darcy Gordon Lilo stated that he would prefer not to legislate for special measures (Osifelo, 2012). The 2013 People's Survey found significant public support for special measures to increase women's political representation (RAMSI/ANU/USP, 2013).

Quotas are in place in the Pacific Islands region at lower levels of politics. In Vanuatu, reserved seats for women were introduced at the municipal government level in 2013. An amendment to the Municipalities Act mandated that one municipal council seat in each ward be reserved ("Reserved seats", 2013). All voters have two votes in municipal elections, one for a general ward seat and one for a reserved ward seat (Ligo, 2014). On the municipal council of the district where Vanuatu's capital is located, Port Vila, five seats have been reserved for women on the 17-seat council (Ligo, 2014).

Chapter Synopsis

Chapter Two outlines the explanatory framework of my thesis. I draw on theories and typologies from the global literature on quota adoption to inform my research in the Pacific Islands context. These include theories and typologies relating to quota development,

⁴ The NCRA governing coalition was made up of six parties: the Direct Development Party, Independent Democratic Party, Ownership, Unity and Responsibility Party, Reform and Democratic Party of Solomon Islands, Rural and Urban Party, and Solomon Islands Party for Rural Advancement. It also includes some independent MPs.

specifically the fast and incremental track discourses identified by Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005), and endogenous and exogenous quota adoption; the politics of quota design; the role of local actors, including the domestic women's movement and political elites; the role of international actors, including international and transnational organisations, transnational networks of activists, and the cross-national diffusion of quotas; and the institutional context, notably political culture, electoral institutions, party systems, and political stability.

Chapter Three discusses the approach and methodology of my thesis. I discuss the contribution to the literature of my research, in introducing four relatively unknown case studies into the field of quota adoption, in testing existing quota adoption theories in the unique conditions of the Pacific Islands region, and in using interpretive research methods in a field that has traditionally been studied through a positivist lens. I expand on the interpretive-qualitative approach used in my research, and the benefits and drawbacks associated with such an approach. I provide an overview of my data collection phase, examining the ethical issues associated with this kind of research and problems I encountered in conducting my research.

Chapter Four presents and analyses the data collected from participants in the campaign for a parliamentary gender quota in Samoa. The Samoan campaign for a gender quota was notable in that it was perceived to be largely driven by male political elites, most prominently Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, who was considered to have spearheaded the campaign and guaranteed its adoption through his significant personal popularity and the large parliamentary majority he controlled. The high level of political stability in Samoa was emphasised as significant to quota adoption. While women's groups and women politicians were involved in the debate around the quota, they distanced themselves from its design and development. Accounts of the quota adoption process often stressed international influences.

Chapter Five presents and analyses the data collected from participants in the campaign for nominated seats, and then reserved seats, in Papua New Guinea. The role of the women's movement in driving the quota campaign was emphasised in accounts of the process, with activists taking ownership of the campaign and attributing its outcome, non-adoption, to a constitutional crisis and the inability of successive Prime Ministers to maintain control of Cabinet. In this way, political instability was highlighted as crucial in quota non-adoption, despite the activism of the women's movement and support from various high-level male and female political elites.

Chapter Six presents and analyses the data collected from participants in the campaign for a reserved seats system in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Accounts of quota adoption in Bougainville were consistent with narratives in other post-conflict societies, where women

involved in the peace-making process mobilised to introduce a gender quota, with the assistance of prominent male political elites. The peace process in Bougainville, which involved the introduction of new political institutions and the writing of a new constitution, in this way could be said to have provided a ‘window of opportunity’ for advocates of gender quotas. The role of international actors in the quota campaign in Bougainville was disputed, with some accounts emphasising the role of international supporters, while others downplayed international influence on quota design and adoption.

Chapter Seven presents and analyses data from participants in the debates over quota adoption in the French Pacific territories of New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna. The parliamentary gender quota – the parity laws – adopted in these three territories differed from the other case studies in this thesis in that it was an exogenous development. The parity laws were debated and introduced through legislative process in France, and then applied to the legislatures in the Pacific territories. Nevertheless, there was debate over the ‘parity laws’ in the French Pacific, most notably in New Caledonia, and legislative attempts to block or delay quota adoption in each of the territories. Written accounts of the quota debates point to male members of the political elite as key actors mobilising against the parity laws, while women’s groups and individual women in civil society in New Caledonia are credited as the driving force behind the campaign to implement the parity laws in the territory.

Chapter Eight is the concluding chapter of my thesis. I draw out the key themes in narrative accounts of quota campaigns in each of the four case studies for comparative analysis, with a view to understanding how quota campaigns are conducted, and how their success or failure is interpreted by participants, in the Pacific Islands context. My research shows that quota development in the region can be endogenous, as was the case in Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville; or exogenous, as in the French Pacific territories. The design of proposed quotas were diverse, with statutory quotas in the strong party systems of the French Pacific, reserved seats in the fractured party systems of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, and a ‘best loser’ quota model in Samoa, where one party has dominated parliamentary politics for decades.

In terms of local actors, activists in the women’s movement mobilised for quota adoption in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, and the French Pacific. The exception to this was Samoa, where women in civil society and politics were involved in the quota debate but, in their narrative accounts of the process, did not take ownership of the campaign. The role of prominent male political elites was considered to be different in each case, with some driving the campaign (Samoa), some acting to block quota adoption (French Pacific territories), and

some publicly expressing support, be it influential (Bougainville), or ultimately ineffectual at ensuring quota adoption (Papua New Guinea).

The role of international actors was often contested in accounts of quota adoption. The influence of international norms of gender equality and pressure from international actors was stressed in some accounts of quota adoption in Samoa, yet there was often an emphasis on the local design of the quota. In Papua New Guinea accounts described a coalition between local women's groups and international organisations, although the perceived influence of the international actors within this coalition varied. In Bougainville participants in the quota campaign differed in their interpretations of international influence on quota adoption, while in the French Pacific the nature of the colonially-imposed gender quota leads to issues of what constitutes the 'international'.

With regards to institutional context, narrative accounts emphasised a key theme of political stability. In Samoa a high level of political stability was perceived to have ensured quota adoption, while a period of significant political instability in Papua New Guinea was associated with quota non-adoption. In Bougainville, however, the political instability in the aftermath of conflict was considered to constitute a 'window of opportunity' in which quotas for societal groups could be incorporated into new political institutions.

I set out the key themes in terms of the meanings of success of quota campaigns, drawn from narrative accounts from participants. Success can be interpreted through the arguments for greater women's representation set out by Sawer (2000): justice arguments, in terms of either ensuring equality of results for women and men, or creating a base level of minimum women's representation on which to gradually build; 'making a difference' arguments, in terms of enabling better parliamentary decision-making; and symbolic arguments, in terms of enhancing culture and improving democracy.

In this research I examine the meanings of success in quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region through oral and written narrative accounts of quota adoption processes in the Pacific Islands context. These findings, in particular with regards to endogenous and exogenous quota development, and the divergent effects of political stability in quota adoption, offer new perspectives on the existing global quota adoption literature, and show a potential new direction in which to take future research, focusing on how the actors involved interpret the meaning, or meanings, of success in quota campaigns. Furthermore, this thesis is the first cross-national study of quota adoption in the Pacific Islands region, the findings from which can inform further research on the political representation of Pacific women.

Chapter Two

EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter develops the explanatory framework of my thesis. My research looks at the experiences of participants involved in gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region with a view to examining how these experiences relate to or contradict the international literature on quota campaigns. Thus I examine the applicability, within a Pacific Islands context, of theories of quota adoption. The theories I will be using focus on the discourses used in quota campaigns; the design of quotas; and the individuals and institutional context that may influence the adoption and non-adoption of quotas.

Drawing on the work of Charles Ragin (1987; 2000), among others, in terms of methodology, Mona Lena Krook (2009) notes that similar combinations of factors can produce divergent outcomes in the case of quota campaigns:

existing research offers various accounts as to why quotas are adopted, involving multiple actors and motivations coming together in complex and even contradictory ways, as well as diverse intuitions as to why some quotas are more successful than others, producing breakthroughs in distinct countries despite being designed along a variety of different lines.

She makes the case for quotas to be considered a “global phenomenon”, and presents a framework for the comparative study of quotas that aims “to privilege the possibility of causal diversity across quota campaigns, recognizing that these may be linked in various ways as part of a broader global wave leading to distinct trajectories of quota reform” (Krook, 2009, p. 35). In the following chapters, I intend to draw on Krook’s framework to comparatively analyse quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region through an interpretive lens, with a view to situating these quota campaigns within this “global wave” (Krook, 2009, p. 35).

Quota Development

Gender quota development is usually seen as conforming to one of two trends, defined by Drude Dahlerup and Lenita Freidenvall (2005) as the ‘fast’ track and the ‘incremental’ track. They use these terms to distinguish between quota adoption as a method to rapidly increase women’s participation in decision-making bodies from a low base level of representation (the ‘fast’ track), and quota adoption as a tool to supplement other measures that have resulted in a gradual increase in women’s representation (the ‘incremental’ track). In evaluating the literature on quota development, one feature I discovered was the mostly unchallenged

assumption that quotas could be considered exogenous political developments. I challenge the idea in existing literature around quota adoption that quotas in all cases constitute an ‘exogenous shock’ to a political system, arguing that many quotas could be considered endogenous developments as they are adopted by the political institutions in which they will be implemented. I argue that in addition to the two quota adoption models set out by Dahlerup and Freidenvall, there is another axis of quota adoption – ‘exogenous’ and ‘endogenous’ tracks. The ‘exogenous’ track model relates to quota adoption in cases where a quota policy is not adopted by a political institution but instead imposed upon it, using the example of India in the 1930s, when British colonial legislation dictated quota development in the form of reserved seats for women and other marginalised groups.

Table 2: Explanatory framework

	Key Texts	Types
Track to Quota Adoption	Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2005	‘Incremental’ ‘Fast’
Quota Development	Baldez, 2006; Kudva and Misra, 2008	Exogenous Endogenous
Quota Design	Dahlerup, 2006; Htun and Jones, 2002; Krook, 2009; Matland, 2006; Norris, 2004	Quota type Details of quota measures Fit with political institutions Role of actors
Local Actors	Krook, 2009	Women’s movement Political Elite Academics Judiciary Government departments
International Actors	Krook, 2009	International and transnational organisations Transnational networks International norms of gender equality International and regional diffusion
Structural Factors	Baldez, 2004; Inhetveen, 1999; Norris and Inglehart, 2001; Paxton and Hughes, 2007	Political culture Electoral institutions Party systems Political stability

Fast vs. Incremental Quota Tracks

To illustrate the differences between the ‘incremental’ and ‘fast’ tracks to greater women’s representation, Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) compare the cases of Costa Rica and Denmark. In the former, the introduction of a quota meant that women’s representation increased from 19 to 35 per cent in just one election. In the latter, a similar increase was only achieved over the course of twenty years and eight elections (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

The high percentage of women in Scandinavian parliaments is often used as an argument in favour of the implementation of legislative quotas in other countries. The Scandinavian countries, however, are in fact examples of the ‘incremental track’ of quota adoption. Quotas began to be implemented after a level of women’s representation of over 20 per cent had already been reached, a process that took about six decades in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Even then, the only quotas used in Scandinavian politics were party quotas, and not all political parties instituted them (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

In contrast to the incremental track to greater women’s representation in evidence in Scandinavian parliaments, statutory quotas can provide a ‘fast track’, dramatically increasing the number of women in parliament in just one election. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005, p. 29) conceptualise the two tracks as discourses, with a shared goal of advancing women’s political representation, but with different assumptions about and solutions for the problem of under-representation. Dahlerup (2006, p. 5) defines discourses as “interlinked constructions of meanings, which includes perceptions of possible actions (but not actual actions).”

While the common thread in fast and incremental track discourses is the ultimate aim of equal access to decision-making positions for both women and men (Dahlerup 2006), the ‘incremental’ track discourse identifies the lack of political resources that women have in comparison to men as the main obstacle to greater women’s representation. The discourse favours a gradualist approach to increased representation, and assumes that greater women’s representation is a by-product of development over time. It is more hostile to the introduction of legally or constitutionally mandated quotas (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

The ‘fast’ track discourse, in comparison, counters the theory that an increase in political resources would directly correspond to increased representation, and instead argues that discrimination against women, both overt and implicit, is the key factor hindering the advancement of women’s representation. Special measures such as quotas are seen as necessary to combat the discrimination that bars women from office. The discourse rejects the assumption that women’s representation will increase naturally over time. Proponents argue

that without active measures, progress may stall or a backlash may even occur, causing women's representation to regress (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

The 'incremental' track discourse is influenced by the theory of 'equality of opportunity', thus believing that the removal of formal barriers to women's representation is enough to level the playing field for male and female candidates (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). The 'fast' track discourse emphasises the importance of what can be termed 'equality of results'. This discourse contends that in addition to formal barriers, informal methods of discrimination block women from political office. To counter these barriers, both formal and informal, special measures such as quotas are an important tool (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

While the 'fast' track to greater women's representation may provide the most tangible signs of progress, it may leave female politicians without the connections and power base that the 'incremental' track may present (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). Nevertheless, the authors argue that the 'incremental' track may no longer be an appropriate model for countries looking to improve women's representation. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) write: "The fast track discourse represents the impatience of today's feminists, who are not willing to wait seventy to eighty years to achieve their goals" (p. 30).

The 'fast track' discourse emphasises both discrimination and the structural barriers to political power for women as the key to understanding women's under-representation. The onus is therefore on political institutions, rather than individual women, to rectify the situation (Dahlerup, 2006). The Beijing Platform for Action, which was adopted at the UN Conference on Women in 1995, "clearly represents the fast track discourse" (Dahlerup, 2006, p. 6). The Platform for Action explicitly recommends that governments adopt fast track quota measures "where appropriate" to increase women's political representation (UN, 1995, p. 76).

Exogenous vs. Endogenous Quota Development

The existing literature on gender quotas tends to treat quota adoption as an 'exogenous shock' to a political system (Baldez, 2006, p. 104; see also Bhavnani, 2009, p. 24; Júlio & Tavares, 2010). Kudva and Misra (2008, pp. 62-3) write:

The quota literature assumes that the imposition of gender quotas must be an exogenous shock; given the entrenched nature of patriarchy, such a policy could rarely emerge from deliberative processes in a democratic polity. There is a related argument: that women are socialized into mistakenly believing that they do not need quotas or adequate representation, and that, bar conscious acts of mobilization, it is only through quota implementation that a feminist

political consciousness and a common gendered identity can be generated.

Both these positions argue for the exogeneity of the institutional locus of change: outside the community of women, outside the local, and definitely outside the realm of the state and formal political systems.

They argue against considering all cases of quota adoption as an exogenous development (Kudva and Misra, 2008). In many cases of quota adoption, rather, quotas can be considered endogenous developments.

This does not preclude the existence of an exogenous model of quota adoption. Quotas that are to be implemented at the sub-national level, but are passed at the national level, could be considered exogenous developments, as the quota regulations are in effect being imposed on, rather than adopted by, the political institutions. Examples of this could include quotas for local government institutions that passed in the national legislature, such as in India in the 1980s (Bhavnani, 2009), or quotas passed by a colonial power that are imposed on territorial institutions (as discussed below).

In some cases of quota adoption, colonial powers have implemented quota policies in the political institutions of territories (Krook, 2009). The first reserved seats for women system was introduced in India in the 1930s by the British government, a policy criticised by the pro-independence movement, and eventually abolished when independence was gained (Krook, 2009). The British government introduced quotas in India through the Government of India Act in 1935. The Act dictated that six seats be reserved for women in the Council of State, and nine seats in the Federal Assembly.⁵ They were indirectly elected by representatives sitting in the assemblies of the provinces (Krook, 2009). The gender quota, along with measures for other marginalised groups, were considered to be a tool to consolidate power: "In India, reserved seats were initially viewed as a tool for preserving colonial domination by giving various groups a stake in maintaining the existing regime" (Krook, 2009, p. 222).

The Indian government instituted a reserved seats for women system at the local governmental level in the 1980s; however, a gender quota has not been introduced at the national level despite campaigning from women's groups for a parliamentary quota (Krook, 2009). The British colony of India also encompassed what are now the independent states of Pakistan and Bangladesh. These states, therefore, have a shared colonial experience with gender quotas. In contrast to India, however, Pakistan introduced reserved seats for women

⁵ The Council of State was the upper legislative house, and the Federal Assembly the lower legislative house, of the British colony of India, as established by the Government of India Act 1935. The reserved seats for women made up a small fraction of the legislative assembly seats, below four per cent in both the lower and upper houses (Krook, 2009, p. 59).

after independence based on the colonial-era quota system (Rai, Bari, Mahtab & Mohanty, 2006), and currently has a gender quota requirement in its national legislature (Krook, 2009). Bangladesh also has a reserved seats for women system in place (Rai, 2005). While reserved seats are still in use in the former colonial territories, they have strong colonial connotations. The term used to describe such systems in the region – ‘reservations’ – is borrowed from the colonial-era legislation (Chowdhury, 2003).

Colonial implementation of gender quotas, as seen in the case of the Government of India Act 1935, could constitute ‘exogenous’ track quota adoption. Under this model, quotas are not an endogenous political development, adopted by the same political institution in which they will be implemented. Instead, under the ‘exogenous’ track model, quotas are imposed upon a political institution by a metropolitan power. While the case I have used as an example of the ‘exogenous’ track model was the adoption of the Government of India Act in the 1930s, there are more recent examples of the ‘exogenous’ track. One such example, the implementation of the French parity laws gender quota in the French overseas territories, is the focus of Chapter Seven.

It would be problematic to draw a binary distinction between ‘endogenous’ and ‘exogenous’ tracks of quota adoption. Domestic quota adoption that is primarily driven endogenously can still be influenced by exogenous aspects, for example the international diffusion of quotas, and the actions of international organisations and transnational networks of quota advocates. Likewise, in a case of ‘exogenous’ track quota adoption, where a quota is developed and instituted externally to the political institution in which it will be implemented, there can be endogenous aspects, such as local actors who may move to either block or encourage quota adoption. While there can be both endogenous and exogenous aspects to quota development, we can nevertheless distinguish between primarily ‘endogenous’ track quota adoption and primarily ‘exogenous’ track quota adoption.

Quota Design

The definition of the term ‘quota’, and indeed whether it is an appropriate term to use, is a somewhat contentious issue. Dahlerup (2006, p. 19), while acknowledging that there is some debate over what constitutes a quota, defines it as follows:

Quotas in politics involve setting up a percentage or number for the representation of a specific group, here women, most often in the form of a minimum percentage, for instance 20, 30 or 40 percent. Quotas are used as a measure to increase the representation of historically excluded or under-represented groups. Gender quotas may be constructed so as to require a

minimum representation for women or may state a maximum-minimum representation for both sexes, for instance no more than 60 and no less than 40 percent for each sex. In the case of the latter, gender neutral regulation, the quota provision sets a maximum for both sexes, which quotas for women do not.

Quotas generally take one of three forms: statutory quotas, which are legally or constitutionally mandated and require parties to present a certain proportion of female candidates; party quotas, which are voluntarily adopted by individual parties; and reserved seats, where a certain number of legislative seats are set aside for women (Norris, 2004). Other quota types include what are sometimes referred to as 'soft' quotas, or a target level of women's representation set out by a party or government, usually without defined implementation or enforcement mechanisms (Dahlerup, 2006). There is significant scholarly debate over whether 'soft' quotas ought to be considered a form of quota; for the purposes of my research, I have excluded them and focused on formalised quotas, rather than informal targets.

Krook (2004) notes that the type of quota adopted in a country is often related to its geographical proximity to countries with similar quotas. While reserved seats were the earliest form of gender quota to be implemented at the national level, from the 1930s, party and statutory quotas began to be introduced from the 1970s and 1990s, respectively (Jones, 2009; Krook, 2009). Quotas are now relatively widespread, with the IPU noting that 22 out of 48 countries holding elections in 2012 used some form of gender quota (IPU, 2013).

Statutory Quotas

Statutory quotas mandate a certain level of women's representation on party candidate rosters. They can be either introduced by a constitutional amendment or by law (Dahlerup, 2006). Statutory quotas are different to party quotas in that they are mandatory and apply across political party lines, rather than being adopted by an individual party. They differ from reserved seats in that they focus on candidate selection rather than mandating a set level of representation in Parliament (Krook, 2009). They are most often found in developing or post-conflict states (Krook, 2009). A minimum level of representation of around thirty per cent is most common in statutory quota provisions (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

The first statutory quota was not introduced until the early 1990s (Jones, 2009). This makes statutory quotas the most recent iteration of parliamentary gender quotas, post-dating both party quotas and reserved seat systems (Krook, 2009). While all statutory quotas are ostensibly put in place to increase women's political representation, Norris (2004) notes their

varied effectiveness from country to country. She highlights a range of factors that can impact on the efficacy of a statutory quota, such as the minimum level of representation required, placement mandates for party lists, and enforcement mechanisms. In elections held in 2012, women won 24 per cent of the parliamentary seats on average in countries with statutory quotas in place, compared to 12 per cent of seats in countries without any form of quota (IPU, 2013).

Party Quotas

Party quotas are measures adopted by individual political parties that set a minimum level of women's representation in terms of candidate selection. Similar to statutory quotas, party quotas focus on the candidate level; they differ in that party quotas are adopted within an individual party, and so have a more limited potential effect. Party quotas first emerged in Western European states in the 1970s, and are still commonly found in Europe (Krook, 2009). Increasingly, parties in other regions have also adopted party quotas (Norris, 2004). They are the most common form of parliamentary gender quota (Krook, 2009), and are advocated by international organisations including Socialist International, which encourages its member parties to adopt gender quotas (Leakovic, 2005). They differ from 'soft' quotas in that they are a formal commitment to a certain level of women's representation. The quota may be enforced as an internal regulation or form part of a party's constitution.

Scholars have argued that parties are more likely to adopt party quotas if they are on the left of the political spectrum (Caul, 2001), and if one or more of the parties they compete with have adopted gender quotas (Caul, 2001; Matland & Studlar, 1996). The number of women in executive positions in the party is also correlated with the likelihood that the party will adopt a quota (Caul, 2001). In Europe, parties that use a gender quota had significantly higher levels of women representatives than parties that did not; this could be attributed at least in part, however, to the fact that parties who adopted gender quotas are more likely to support women candidates (Norris, 2004).

Reserved Seats

Reserved seat systems involve a certain number of seats in a legislature being set aside for representatives belonging to a certain societal group. Reserved seats can be used to increase women's representation, but also the representation of ethnic and other groups. Unlike the other types of quotas listed above, reserved seats specify a minimum level of women's representation in the legislature, rather than a minimum proportion of female candidates (Krook, 2009). Reserved seats, therefore, are not guaranteeing *equality of opportunity* to contest elections, but rather ensuring an outcome of a minimum number of seats occupied by

women. The percentage of seats reserved for women tends to be low (Matland, 2006), although there are notable exceptions of up to 30 per cent (Krook, 2009).

Reserved seats are most often found in African, Asian and Arab states (Matland, 2006). A potential advantage of a reserved seats system is that the seats can use different selection mechanisms than other parliamentary seats, meaning that they can be “grafted onto an existing system” without necessarily requiring a significant change to the electoral institutions already in place (Matland, 2006, p. 290). Criticisms of reserved seats systems include arguments that they restrict women’s representation by confining them to the reserved seats (Matland, 2006). Depending on the method of selection used, women who take up reserved seats may also be considered less legitimate than other legislators (Matland, 2006; Norris, 2004).

Quota Effectiveness

The design of a quota can have a significant impact on its potential efficacy in increasing women’s representation. While a quota design that restricts effectiveness could be accidental, it is also possible that a quota is designed to either maximise or limit its tangible impact. Krook (2009) identifies three explanations for the variable impact of quotas between countries and parties. The first highlights the importance of the details of the quota measures; the second, how the quota interacts with the political institutions of a country; and the third, the actors involved in the implementation of the quota (Krook, 2009).

In terms of details of the quota measures, Krook (2009) stresses the wording, the features of the quota, the enforcement mechanisms, and the constitutional or legal validity. The wording of quota measures can significantly affect their impact and perceived legitimacy, as in the French case when political compromises at the drafting stages resulted in the replacement of the word ‘*garantit*’ (guarantee) with the word ‘*favorise*’ (favour) in the first amendment (Baudino, 2003). The features of a quota are also important. Looking at the Costa Rican experience, Jones (2004) notes the importance of including a placement mandate in quota measures. The enforcement mechanisms can ensure compliance from parties when strict penalties are in place (Baldez, 2004), and limit the effectiveness of a quota when penalties are considered to be lenient (Murray, 2007). The likelihood of a successful legal or constitutional challenge to quota measures is of concern to policy-makers, and the assent of the judiciary to a quota law can significantly increase its perceived validity (Baldez, 2004).

With regards to the institutional context, Krook (2009) observes that electoral systems, party systems and political culture can all have an effect on quota implementation. A proportional representation (PR) electoral system can impact on the efficacy of voluntary party quotas

(Caul, 1999; Davidson-Schmich, 2006). Htun and Jones (2002) argue that a closed-list PR electoral system is needed for quotas to be effective; Matland (2006) disputes this, claiming that quotas can also be effective in an open-list PR system. Characteristics of parties are significant, with the presence of women activists in the party and political ideology also having an impact (Caul, 1999; Davidson-Schmich, 2006). The ‘fit’ between a quota and political culture is important, with the success of the campaign for the parity law in France, for example, partly attributed to the rhetorical links drawn by campaigners between the concept of *parité* and the French political culture (Baudino, 2003). It should be noted, however, that none of these factors necessarily preclude quota effectiveness in all cases, and that “quotas may succeed in a variety of institutional contexts” (Krook, 2009, p. 41).

The final explanation for the varied effectiveness of quotas is related to the actors involved in quota implementation. Party elites play an important role in ensuring a quota is either effective or ineffective. Politicians can alter the language and provisions of quota measures to reduce efficacy (Baudino, 2003), or refuse to comply with the letter or spirit of quota legislation after it has passed (Sénac-Slawinski, 2008; Murray, 2004). Other groups of actors that can potentially have impact on the effectiveness of quota measures include women’s organisations, women’s branches and groups within political parties, the judiciary, and voters. Often political elites attempt to block or diminish the impact of quotas, and other state and civil society actors tend to support and promote effective quota measures. Nevertheless, sometimes political elites will push for quota reform even against public opposition, while some women’s groups will oppose quota measures, either because they are against quotas altogether or because they demand more radical quota reform (Krook, 2009).

Htun and Jones (2002) set out four conditions for the successful implementation of quotas. Firstly, the electoral system must have a high district magnitude, meaning there must be a high number of seats per electoral district. Secondly, the electoral system used must be closed-list proportional representation, with party lists dictated by the party executive and not subject to change by voters. Thirdly, there must be a placement mandate in place, meaning female candidates cannot be clustered at the bottom of a party list to meet the quota requirements. Finally, political parties must make a genuine effort to comply with quota requirements. Matland (2006) contests the requirement of high district magnitude. Instead of district magnitude, he suggests that a high party magnitude – the number of seats in each party’s delegation per district – is more important in determining the effectiveness of quota measures. He also argues that the conditions specified by Htun and Jones are “best understood as sufficient conditions, but not necessary conditions” (Matland, 2006, p. 284). He notes that quotas can be effective in the absence of one or more of these four conditions,

giving the example of Belgium, where he argues only one of these criteria – that political parties endeavour to comply with the quota requirements – was met (Matland, 2006).

Local Actors

Krook (2009, p. 20) notes that quota adoption can be the outcome of the actions of “multiple groups of actors who support reform for various and perhaps even conflicting reasons.” While international and transnational actors also play a role (discussed below), this section focuses on local actors – individuals and groups within a country that are involved in a gender quota campaign. The local actors whose roles are most commonly examined in the existing literature are members of the women’s movement and political elites. In addition, other local actors can potentially have an effect on the outcome of a quota campaign, such as members of the judiciary, academics, and state policy agencies.

Women’s Movement

The mobilisation of women’s groups is considered to be the catalyst for gender quota reform in many cases. Scholars consider the women’s movement to have played an important part in quota reforms in various countries (see Ballington & Dahlerup, 2006; Htun & Jones, 2002; Jaquette, 1997; Paxton & Hughes, 2007). The groups involved in quota campaigns can vary widely. A broad women’s network constitutes the main driver for quota reform in some cases (Lubertino, 2003; Pires, 2003; Tahri, 2004), while in others the push comes from women officials in party structures or governmental organisations (Araújo & García, 2006; García Quesada, 2003). In some cases, the emergence of a formalised organisational structure for the women’s movement, with strong connections to political elites, is the channel through which calls for a gender quota can be made (Hassim, 2002). Other case studies of quota adoption, however, prioritise the actions of individual women activists over a formalised women’s movement (Bruhn, 2003). High-profile individual women can initiate a quota debate (Abou-Zeid, 2004; Araújo, 2003; Rumman, 2007).

Women politicians and party members from across the political spectrum can form a coalition to advocate for quota adoption (Baldez, 2004, p. 246; Lubertino, 2003), or campaign to adopt policies they have learned from other parties in a form of contagion (Bruhn, 2003). Women politicians can also form coalitions with non-governmental organisations to support quota reform (Borić, 2005; Dimitrievska, 2005; Kanakuze, 2003; Schmidt, 2003), sometimes with the assistance of state policy agencies (Araújo & García, 2006; Costa Benavides, 2003; Squires, 2005). Furthermore, women’s groups can seek coalitions with other interest groups who are advocating for their own quotas in order to advance both agendas (Bonifert & Gurmai, 2004).

The role of the women's movement in quota campaigns is not always positive. In some cases, members of the women's movement can be ambivalent or even openly hostile to the idea of a gender quota (Araújo, 2003). Prominent individual women and women's groups can oppose quotas, because they disagree with the concept (Bunwaree, 2003; Mar'iyah, 2003; Ramsay, 2003), because they believe quotas are tokenistic (Tripp, Konaté & Lowe-Morna, 2006), or because they do not believe a quota proposal is radical enough (Tamale, 2004). Opponents in some cases have argued that quotas are pushed not by the grassroots women's movement, but elite or Diaspora women (Pires, 2003).

Political Actors

The influence of political actors can be pivotal to the outcome of gender quota campaigns. While members of the political elite can instigate quota campaigns, more commonly they are lobbied by other actors to introduce quota legislation (Krook, 2009). The support of one high-level male political actor has ensured the adoption of a quota in some cases (Schmidt, 2003). This actor is often the head of government or head of state, or leader of the political party in the case of the adoption of a party quota (see Araújo & García, 2006; Youssouf, 2007). Political actors who support quota campaigns tend to do so on pragmatic rather than ideological grounds, if they consider their support or perceived support to be personally advantageous. This support can be seen as a token gesture (see Fréchette, Maniquet & Morelli, 2008). High-level political actors can support the adoption of a gender quota in order to consolidate power (Schmidt, 2003; Tamale, 2004; Tripp et al., 2006), or in order to appeal to voters, especially after a period in opposition (Krook, Lovenduski & Squires, 2006). Members of the political elite can also direct their parties to support gender quotas not in anticipation of electoral advantage, but to prevent electoral disadvantage, as Baldez (2004, p. 234) notes: "Parties have adopted gender quotas in order to avoid being publicly portrayed as chauvinist." It is not always true that parties adopt quotas for a perceived political advantage, however, as in some cases parties have instituted a quota without widespread public knowledge, believing that it would not be popular with voters (Bruhn, 2003).

Political actors have significant influence on the adoption or non-adoption of quotas, and also on the design of the quota. Some male politicians may only pay lip service to the idea of gender equality, voting for quota laws that lack proper enforcement mechanisms (Htun & Jones, 2002). Those who are opposed to gender quotas may use their political influence to ensure the law is created or amended in such a way that would reduce the intended effect of the quota (García Quesada, 2003). A high quota such as the parity law in France, which ostensibly mandated equal numbers of male and female candidates, can have its impact reduced by "loopholes and weak penalties" (Murray, 2008, p. 479). Even if a party supports

quota adoption, other factors may influence their adherence to the new legislation, including pressure from male incumbents, local party interests, and coalition partners, and the pool of potential female candidates (Murray, 2007).

Other Local Actors

Other local actors can also have an effect on quota adoption. Academics sometimes play significant roles in quota debates (Bylesjö & Seda, 2006), and, as members of drafting committees, in quota design (Dimitrievska, 2005). Journalists can also play an advocacy role in quota campaigns (Bylesjö & Seda, 2006). Bureaucratic and judicial institutions are important in the adoption of statutory gender quotas as they are tasked with the enforcement of these laws (Jones, 1998). The court system can pose a significant challenge to the implementation of gender quotas, if the legislative measures are found to contravene constitutional anti-discrimination provisions (Baldez, 2004). Quota proposals can also attract the support of governmental policy agencies. While governmental policy agencies are usually not the source of an initial quota proposal (see Krook, 2009), they can advocate for the adoption of quotas, often in conjunction with women in political parties (Valiente, 2005).

International Actors

International and transnational actors can have a significant influence on quota campaigns. Some scholars consider international influences to be potentially more significant than domestic pressures in quota adoption (see Bush, 2011). Others note that their influence will most likely be stronger in quota campaigns that occur at a later stage of quota diffusion – that is, after other countries in the region or the world have adopted gender quotas – and in quota campaigns in countries that have less international influence than other states (Krook, 2009). International and transnational actors include international organisations, transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and transnational networks of actors in quota campaigns (Krook, 2009).

International and Transnational Organisations

In the vast majority of cases, international and transnational organisations act in support of quota adoption (see Krook, 2009). International and transnational organisations involved in quota campaigns can include global bodies (Ballington & Dahlerup, 2006), regional organisations (Tripp et al., 2006), and associations of political parties (Bonifert & Gurmai, 2005). The support of international and transnational organisations can add a sense of legitimacy and “moral backing” to domestic quota campaigns (Bonifert & Gurmai, 2005, p. 77); international organisations can also provide practical support, especially in terms of funding

for quota campaigns (Borić, 2005). The role of international organisations in quota campaigns, however, is not always positive. The response of international organisations, notably the UN, to domestic quota campaigns is not consistent across all cases (Ballington & Dahlerup, 2006). In some instances international organisations have moved to block campaigns for parliamentary gender quotas, such as in Timor Leste (Pires, 2003).

Transnational Networks

In addition to the work of international organisations, actors across different countries can form transnational networks that may have an impact on quota campaigns. The rise of what Gray, Kittilson and Sandholtz (2006, p. 299) call “internationalist feminism” has been a key factor in the level of international pressure for women’s rights. A variety of women’s agencies and groups are involved in internationalist feminism, engaging with both national administrations and supra-national entities to further women’s interests. Prügl and Meyer (1999, p. 9) refer to “trans-national issue networks” of international, national and sub-national women’s groups that have helped promote international norms of gender equality. True and Mintrom (2001) credit these networks as being the main influence behind the adoption of gender mainstreaming institutions in over 100 countries. They have also played an important role in the regional and international contagion of gender quotas.

The UN conferences on women, in particular the 1995 conference in Beijing, were important focal points for the networks. Today, online transnational resources for quota campaigns include the Quota Project,⁶ a database of quota information created by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the University of Stockholm, and the IPU’s Women in Politics database.⁷ There are also resources such as the Electoral Gender Quotas group on Facebook, which brings together academics and activists who share news and publications on gender quotas.⁸

Transnational networks working to promote gender quota adoption are commonly made up of politicians, activists or academics (Krook, 2009). These networks can be regional in nature (Araújo & García, 2006; Tripp et al., 2006), or formed along historical and linguistic linkages (Lubertino, 2003). Transnational networks can be used to increase dialogue between women’s organisations in different countries who may be considering quotas as an option (Bonifert & Gurmai, 2005), as well as to disseminate practical information about the use of quotas in other parts of the world (Yousouf, 2007).

⁶ <http://www.quotaproject.org/>

⁷ <http://www.ipu.org/bdf-e/BDFsearch.asp>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/178729575510662/>

International Norms of Gender Equality

International pressure can affect quota adoption, even when international actors are perhaps not directly involved, if political elites believe that introducing a quota will enhance their international reputation. Dahlerup (2006) claims that “the international image of a country is of growing importance in our globalized world” (p. 295). This can prove a strong impetus for reform (Abou-Zeid, 2006; see also Krook, 2009).

Scholars cite international norms in favour of special measures as influential (Htun & Jones, 2002). Gray et al. (2006, p. 299) argue: “Cross-border interactions always rely on a basis of shared norms.” International shared norms thus form the foundation of inter-state dialogue. The more dialogue occurs, the authors argue, the more societies are socialised in the dominant norms of the international community. International organisations can be the medium for the sharing of ideas and norms.

Gray et al. (2006, p. 302) note the work of international organisations like the UN and the World Bank in having “actively articulated and diffused transnational norms of gender equality.” The UN has played a considerable role in shaping international norms of gender equality. Krook (2001) acknowledges it as “the first international institution to place ‘decision-making’ on the gender equality agenda” (pp. 2-3). In 1946, the UN established the Commission on the Status of Women, a body that is still operating today. In 1976, the UN ‘Decade for Women’ began with the establishment of UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women.⁹ Furthermore, in 1978 the UN General Assembly adopted CEDAW. The convention has become a useful tool for women’s groups campaigning for women’s rights globally. Of the seven member states that have not yet ratified the convention, two are Pacific states – Palau and Tonga. Article Four of CEDAW (UN General Assembly, 1979) encourages the adoption of temporary special measures to gain equality for women:

Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

⁹ In 2011, UNIFEM was merged into the newly-created department of UN Women, along with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI), and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW).

Article Seven affirms the right of women to participation in politics and government. The UN has also organised a series of international conferences on women, which have significantly contributed to the diffusion of international norms of gender equality. The first conference was held in Mexico City in 1975, followed by Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985, and Beijing in 1995. These conferences, specifically the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, were significant in the diffusion of international norms relating to women's representation in politics (Abou-Zeid, 2006; Araújo & García, 2006; Tripp et al., 2006).

The Beijing conference set out a *Platform for Action*, which notes the under-representation of women in politics, and claims: "Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved" (UN, 1995, p. 74). The document lists as a strategic objective: "Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making" (UN, 1995, p. 75), and asks governments to "[t]ake measures, including where appropriate, in electoral systems that encourage political parties to integrate women in elective and non-elective public positions in the same proportion and levels as men" (UN, 1995, p. 76).

The Millennium Declaration was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000. Of the eight associated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), one is specifically focused on gender equality and the empowerment of women. One of its key indicators, furthermore, is the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. In October 2003, the General Assembly also passed a resolution urging states to take action to increase women's representation and participation in politics.

The Commonwealth of Nations, an international organisation with 54 member states, has also played a role in diffusing international norms of gender equality in regards to women's representation. The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (CS, 2005, pp. 29-30) lists as a governmental objective:

[To] increase women's representation to a minimum of 30 per cent in decision-making in parliament and local government by creating an enabling environment for women (including young women) to seek and advance political careers and by other measures such as encouraging political parties to adopt a 30 per cent target for women candidates as part of their manifestos and to provide leadership training for women. Governments who have already achieved 30 per cent should strive for much higher aspirations.

Scholars have argued that the involvement of international organisations in a country, and the ratification of conventions such as CEDAW, can influence national opinion on women's rights in that country (Gray et al., 2006). Studies have shown that the diffusion of international norms on gender equality have an effect on the representation of women in politics (Paxton, Hughes & Green, 2006).

International and Regional Diffusion

International and regional diffusion of quotas can occur. The women's movement has a role in the contagion of quotas between countries, with international networks of activists sharing campaign strategies (Bruhn, 2003). International meetings and conferences, including the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, can facilitate this transnational sharing, and influence domestic adoption of quotas (Araújo, 2003). Quota debates can be influenced by the quota policies of other countries in the region (Guadagnini, 2005; Krook, 2006; Pelham, 2002). For instance, Araújo and García (2006, p. 90) note a "contagion effect" in Latin American countries stemming from the adoption of a gender quota in Argentina in the early 1990s. Women's groups can draw on the examples of policies implemented elsewhere when formulating their own quota proposals (Bonifert & Gurmai, 2005).

Institutional Context

While the previous sections have focused on the actions of local and international actors, the institutional context in which a quota campaign takes place can also affect quota design and adoption. Baldez (2004) highlights the importance of domestic political context in quota adoption, focusing on party systems. Other features that can potentially have a bearing on the adoption of quotas are political culture, electoral institutions, and political stability.

Political Culture

The political culture of a country can either facilitate or prevent the institution of quotas. The cultural resistance to quotas can be very influential in the decision to adopt such measures (Inhetveen 1999; see also Norris & Inglehart 2001). The 'fit' between a quota and political culture is important. A significant feature in some instances of quota adoption is a political culture that places a high value on identity group representation (Meier, 2012). With regards to voluntary quotas, party culture can be influential in quota debates (Squires, 1996). Parties with a leftist ideological grounding, for example, are more likely to support gender quotas (Bruhn, 2003).

Electoral Institutions

The electoral institutions of a country can affect the type of quota proposed and the success of a campaign. The democratic nature of a country is not a strong indicator of women's representation. Norris and Inglehart (2001) attribute this to the prevalence of quota systems in communist states, and the fact that in a period of democratic transition, quotas that previously existed may be discarded because of their perceived ties to the undemocratic regime. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005, p. 34) dispute the "myth" of widespread use of quota systems in communist states, although they acknowledge that the misconception has affected contemporary quota debates in post-communist countries.

Baldez (2004, p. 236) argues that "quotas are less likely to be adopted in single-member district systems because the stakes are too high; they are more likely to be implemented in systems characterized by high district magnitudes." While this may be a general rule, she acknowledges cases of quota adoption in low district magnitude systems. She also notes that term limits may affect the chances of politicians supporting quotas, as the potential for re-election may influence their decision (Baldez, 2004).

Party Systems

The characteristics of party systems and the level of competition between political parties can have an impact on quota adoption. Being faced with a political environment of greater electoral competition may compel a party to adopt, or at least consider adopting, a voluntary gender quota (Baldez, 2004). Party leaders can support gender quotas for strategic reasons, both to appeal to a subset of voters with an overt display of commitment to greater women's representation, and to exert control over the candidate selection processes of the party through gender restrictions (Baldez, 2004).

Political Stability

Some scholars point to instances of political instability, or significant political change, as constituting a 'window of opportunity' in which the adoption of a gender quota is more likely (see Lépinard, 2007; Reyes & Azizah, 2002). Krook (2009, p. 28) notes that gender quota reforms "tend to emerge during moments of crisis or change." In a period of political transition or instability, quotas for women can be framed as a positive development, one that would have a transformative influence on democracy (Lovecy, 2000).

Quota adoption is often connected with periods of democratic transition. In times of democratic change, women can seek to negotiate greater access to political decision-making positions (Hassim, 2002). Quota reform can occur in these periods for both normative and

strategic reasons, with actors seeking both to redefine political systems, and rebuild a positive image within the international sphere (Araújo & García, 2006). Regime change can open a ‘window of opportunity’ for quota advocates (Tripp et al., 2006; Paxton & Hughes, 2007).

In post-conflict societies, women can seek to translate the social status earned through the shift in gender roles due to the conflict, or the significant role they played in peace-making activities, into political gains (Connell, 1998; Mebrahtu, 2007; Tripp et al., 2006). Paxton and Hughes (2007, p. 168) explain:

In the history of any nation, wars serve as defining moments, turning points, and catalysts for change. Armed conflict often alters the very fabric of society, shifting the ideas, beliefs, and social positions of its members. Specifically, with regard to women in politics, revolutionary movements or armed conflict may increase women’s subsequent political representation for a number of reasons: increased supply of female candidates, influence of cultural beliefs about women’s participation in ways favorable to their election, or alteration of the political opportunity structure to facilitate women’s entry into the halls of power.

The adoption of gender quotas is frequently a key issue for these women’s groups. In the post-conflict rebuilding period, political systems were often reformed, creating an opportunity for actors to push for gender quotas to be included in new or rewritten constitutions, or in new political institutions (Tripp et al., 2006).

Conclusion

In this research I draw on theories and typologies from existing quota adoption literature. I examine quota development in terms of the two quota adoption tracks identified by Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) – the ‘fast’ and ‘incremental’ tracks – and two alternate tracks, ‘exogenous’ and ‘endogenous’ quota adoption; the politics of quota design; the local and international actors involved in campaigns; and the institutional context that can influence the adoption or non-adoption of gender quotas. These theories inform my analysis of quota adoption (and non-adoption) in four case studies from the Pacific Islands region in chapters four to seven, with a view to examining how these case studies relate to or contradict the findings of the existing global quota adoption literature. The next chapter will discuss my research design and methodological approach.

Chapter Three

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter will examine the approach and methodology that I adopted in my research. I discuss my research design, and the interpretive-qualitative approach that I have applied to this research. I describe how my research on the Pacific Islands region contributes to the existing literature on quota adoption. I present the methods and types of data I have employed in the research, and the opportunities and constraints of each of the data-gathering methods I have used. Finally, I reflect on the ethical and practical concerns that have influenced the way I have approached and carried out my research.

Approach

In this thesis I adopted an interpretive-qualitative approach to my research into parliamentary gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region. An interpretive approach focuses on investigating meanings and beliefs in order to explain events, actions, and practices (see Bevir & Rhodes, 2003). In their book *Comparing Westminster*, authors R. A. W. Rhodes, John Wanna and Patrick Weller (2009, p. 29) describe the approach:

The interpretive approach encourages us to examine ways in which individuals create, sustain, and modify social life, institutions, and policies. It encourages us to recognize that institutional norms or some behavioural logic do not fix the actions of individuals. Rather, actions and strategies arise from the beliefs individuals adopt against the background of traditions and in response to the challenges they come to face.

Peter Larmour (2012, p. 5), in his work on corruption in the Pacific Islands region, set out his interpretive policy research approach as follows:

Language shapes our understanding of the world. Sometimes words amount to deeds. The same events can be understood differently by different groups of people. Statements of policy made at the centres of power are reinterpreted by those supposed to implement or benefit from them.

This research explores how political actors interpret the success or failure of parliamentary gender quota campaigns. The interpretive approach is preoccupied with the beliefs and meanings used by

political actors to make sense of their environment and inform their actions (Rhodes, 2011). The goal of interpretive policy research is not objective assessment of processes and outcomes, but rather “the exploration of multiple meanings and their ambiguities” (Yanow, 2006, p. 409). This approach stems from a constructivist epistemological standpoint which assumes that “any understanding of social and political phenomena is shaped by the experiences and perspectives of those involved, and also those observing” (Hendriks, 2007, p. 280). Thus, in my research I sought to gain an understanding of policy processes through the interpretations of political actors.

The interpretive approach holds that an understanding of actions is only possible by interrogating the beliefs held by the actors involved that inform their approach to a given dilemma (Bevir & Rhodes, 2006). The concept of ‘dilemma’ arises from the work of Mark Bevir (1999) to describe the process through which individual actors effect change to not only traditions,¹⁰ but also practices and beliefs. Rhodes (2011, p. 6) explains that to “accept a new belief is to pose a dilemma that asks questions of existing traditions.”

In this research, I looked at the adoption (and non-adoption) of parliamentary gender quotas as outcomes of dilemmas faced by individual political actors. The outcome of a dilemma is contingent on the actions of the individual involved: “Although dilemmas do not require particular solutions, we can understand the solutions at which people happen to arrive by reference to the character of the dilemma and of their existing beliefs” (Bevir & Rhodes, 2003, p. 37). The role of an interpretive political researcher is to explain processes of change through investigating dilemmas that challenge the beliefs of actors, and how these actors respond (see Rhodes, 2011).

The social context in which actors operate can have an influence on actions. Bevir and Rhodes (2006, p. 24) acknowledge that individuals “inherit concepts, values and practices from society”. While social contexts can influence actions, however, actions can also change social contexts:

Governance arises contingently as actors change their beliefs by drawing on historical traditions to respond to dilemmas, as the new beliefs lead them to modify their actions, and as the new actions coalesce in new practices and patterns of rule. (Bevir, 2011, p. 184)

¹⁰ A tradition, through an interpretive lens, can be defined as “a set of understandings or orthodoxies that someone learns of receives during socialization” (Rhodes et al., 2009, p. 27). Traditions are not fixed, but are instead fluid, and can be changed by the actions of individuals in response to dilemmas (Bevir & Rhodes, 2003). Rhodes (2011) restricts the definition of a tradition to beliefs and practices that are carried across generations, and that are related at a conceptual level. Thus, a tradition must have historical relevance, and a coherent conceptual basis.

The interpretation of beliefs is possible through situating them in relation to webs of other beliefs, to traditions, and to dilemmas (Rhodes, 2011).

I investigated how individual actors interpreted the ‘success’ or ‘failure’ of parliamentary gender quota campaigns through analysing their narrative accounts of the process. Interviewing was a significant part of my research process, through which I accessed first-hand accounts from actors involved in quota campaigns. I also utilised written documents that were available, including legislative session transcripts, reports, conference proceedings, newspaper articles, interviews, editorials, letters to the editor, and blog posts. These written records can also be considered interpretations of the policy processes:

Rather than readings these [written documents] as event evidence, they might be read for a sense of the times – of how people responded at that time to particular events or ideas. The focus is on meaning-making. One is, in a way, interrogating the written record when one was not or could not be present oneself. (Yanow, 2006, p. 411)

Interpretive policy research emphasises reflexivity on the behalf of the researcher, exploring how my background and experiences influence the collection and interpretation of data collected (Yanow, 2006, p. 408), and also flexibility in terms of research design:

As an inductive mode of inquiry, interpretive research is driven by practice not theory. So rather than walking along a clear deductive path of verifying the truth of a hypothesis, the interpretive researcher negotiates her way along a journey whose destination for the most part is uncertain. Eventually the research themes will emerge from the data, and in the form of thick not thin descriptions. All this demands being comfortable with a research process that is iterative, uncertain and open-ended. (Hendriks, 2007, p. 280)

Interpretive policy research can seek both to explain past policy processes and influence future policy, thus introducing a normative element to the research (Hendriks, 2007). This research on quota adoption could inform future quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands context.

Contribution to the Literature

The Pacific Islands region poses some important questions for researchers of issues regarding women’s political representation. The region has the lowest level of women’s parliamentary

representation in the world.¹¹ Related to this is the fact that until 2013 no Pacific independent state had implemented a parliamentary-level gender quota. In 1991, Argentina became the first country in the world to institute a statutory quota when the *ley de cupos* was passed; in the decades since, there has been a proliferation in the number of states worldwide using statutory quotas to increase the parliamentary representation of women (Krook, 2009). As of 2007, thirteen countries had a constitutional gender quota provision in place, 34 countries had other statutory quota provisions, and 69 countries had one or more parties with a party quota system (Paxton & Hughes, 2007). International organisations such as the United Nations have strongly promoted gender quotas as a method of rapidly increasing the number of women in politics (see Clark & Rodrigues, 2009). Yet despite the significant global uptake of gender quotas, and measures promoting them by international bodies, only one Pacific state has introduced a quota to date.

While there is a wealth of academic literature on the adoption of gender quotas (see Krook, 2009), the Pacific Islands region has been largely excluded from this scholarly analysis. There are various possible reasons for the omission of the Pacific Islands region from academic work on gender quota adoption. For a start, the introduction of quota measures has not occurred to the same extent in the Pacific region as in other parts of the world. Parliamentary gender quota policies of some sort can be found in various African, Asian, Middle East, European and Latin American countries (Krook, 2004). In comparison, no Pacific independent state had adopted a legal gender quota until 2013, when Samoa passed legislation to ensure a minimum of five women MPs. Quotas had previously been adopted at subnational level in the Pacific, with the Autonomous Region of Bougainville reserving three seats for women in its Parliament, and the three French territories in the region adopting France's parity laws. Scholarly work on the quota system in Bougainville has been limited, although some research on women in Bougainville has touched on political representation (see Morriss, 2006; Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). With regards to the French Pacific territories, research looking at the implementation of the parity laws was funded by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Government of New Caledonia, resulting in a report published in 2007 (Bargel et al., 2007). A 2005 article by Alan Berman also examined the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia (Berman, 2005), and recent work by Nicole George has looked at the effects of the parity laws in the French Pacific (George, 2014).

Despite the absence of academic literature on quota adoption in the region, the Pacific context provides a model environment in which to evaluate theories of quota adoption. In his article on

¹¹ Please refer to p. 2 (fn 1) for the definition of the Pacific Islands region as used in this research.

the discipline of Pacific Studies, Terence Wesley-Smith (1995) suggests that one rationale for studying the region is that it constitutes a natural laboratory for research, including political science research. With regards to gender quotas, given the low levels of women's representation in Pacific states and the low rate of quota adoption in the region, relative to other regions of the world, the Pacific provides interesting case studies to test existing quota adoption theories.

Through my research I will make an academic contribution in three ways. Firstly, I will use the Pacific Islands region as a 'natural laboratory', as per Wesley-Smith's rationale, in order to evaluate theories of quota adoption. Secondly, my research will introduce four recent and relatively unknown case studies to the field of electoral gender quota research. The use of gender quotas in the Pacific Islands region is relatively low in comparison to other developing regions. The recent gender quota campaigns in the region present the chance to add to the depth of academic research on electoral gender quotas. Thirdly, in this research I have utilised interpretive research methods in a field that has traditionally been studied through a positivist lens. The goal of interpretive policy research is not to objectively assess processes and outcomes, but rather to gain an understanding of policy events and processes through interpreting the experiences of actors involved. In this research, this involved analysis of narrative accounts of campaigns that resulted in quota adoption or non-adoption. While there is a wealth of existing academic literature on quota adoption, interpretive research methods have been underused in the field. Interpretive policy research offers a new perspective on quota adoption processes.

Case Selection

Given that the Pacific Islands region is both geographically large and culturally diverse, I elected to centre my research on four case studies of parliamentary gender quota campaigns – two at the state level and two at the sub-national level. Case study analysis can be defined as "the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalizable to other events" (George & Bennett, 2004, p. 5). Case study-focused research requires a rigorous process of case selection which could be at odds with the inductive approach of interpretive policy research. This problem can be managed by utilising 'thick descriptions' of each case study to ground comparisons, and by explicitly relating all comparisons between case studies to the research problem in question (Hendriks, 2007; see also Howarth, 2005). In this sense, the findings from case study-focused interpretive policy research can differ from empiricist comparative research which relates to hypothesis testing, a more deductive approach (Hendriks, 2007).

Approach and Methodology

My four case studies are: the campaign for five guaranteed seats in Samoa; the consecutive campaigns for nominated seats and reserved seats in Papua New Guinea; the campaign for reserved seats in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville; and the campaign to institute France's parity laws in the French Pacific territories. These case studies include three examples where gender quotas were introduced, and one case in which a quota was ultimately not introduced. Using four case studies allowed me to conduct in-depth research on each of the cases while at the same time maintaining a regional focus.

The Samoa, Bougainville and French Pacific cases are the only examples of parliamentary-level gender quota adoption in the Pacific Islands region to date. Furthermore, in each of these three cases a different form of quota was adopted: the 'best loser' model in Samoa; reserved seats in Bougainville; and a party quota system in the French Pacific territories. In this way they provide an interesting basis for regional comparison of campaigns for quota adoption.

For my fourth case, an example of non-adoption of a gender quota, I elected to study the campaigns for nominated seats and reserved seats in Papua New Guinea. There are other examples of quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region. In Solomon Islands, women's groups have pushed for reserved seats to be introduced, and in the Federated States of Micronesia and Fiji there have been campaigns for gender quotas. Papua New Guinea, however, is a significant case because although the campaign was ultimately unsuccessful in its attempt to institute reserved seats before the 2012 election, it did succeed in amending the Constitution to allow for province-based women's electorates. It is possible, therefore, that these women's electorates could be implemented in the future through a change to the electoral law. The Papua New Guinea case was therefore the most advanced quota campaign in the Pacific Islands region to date that did not result in quota adoption. For this reason, I chose the Papua New Guinea reserved seats campaign as my fourth case study.

Data Collection

In formulating my research design, I drew on the principles of ethnography, with the socio-cultural context of each case study foregrounded, and a focus on developing an understanding of what *has* occurred, rather than formulating theory about what *will* occur (Harrison, 2001). In my research I sought out interpretations from the actors involved of the processes that led to quota adoption or non-adoption in my respective cases. My aim, therefore, was not theory-building but rather to explore interpretations of the processes that influenced the success or failure of quota campaigns in these particular contexts.

To build an explanatory framework within which to situate these interpretations, I drew on the existing typologies and theories of quota adoption that I reviewed in Chapter Two. In particular, I am indebted to Mona Lena Krook for the extensive overview of quota literature in her 2009 book *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide*. I took a holistic approach to my evaluation of the quota campaigns with the intent of examining if, how, and to what extent local actors, international actors, and elements of the institutional context affected the adoption or non-adoption of parliamentary gender quotas. Thus, my explanatory framework was oriented towards establishing the social, political and institutional contexts in which campaigns for gender quotas took place.

I conducted fieldwork in four sites: Apia, Samoa (in July-September 2012 and November 2013); Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (September 2013); Buka, Autonomous Region of Bougainville (September 2013); and Arawa, Autonomous Region of Bougainville (September 2013). In addition to this, I made a trip to Paris, France to conduct some archival work in April 2013.

My research employs qualitative-interpretive mixed-method data collection methods. I had two main data sources, semi-structured interviews and archived documentation. I conducted a total of 53 semi-structured interviews with actors involved in quota campaigns in fieldwork trips to Samoa, Papua New Guinea, and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. In addition to individual interviews, I conducted one focus group with 9 male members of Parliament during my fieldwork in Samoa. I also conducted 7 interviews in Australia with actors involved in Pacific quota campaigns. Interviews were sound recorded where permission was given. The interviews I conducted were with figures who were involved in the debate around gender quotas in each of the case studies. Subjects included current and former women members of Parliament, male members of Parliament, unsuccessful political candidates, public servants, businesspeople, academics, and representatives from the media and from civil society organisations.

To conduct my research, I employed the method of narrative interviewing. Rai (2012) uses this method to gain insight into women's political representation through her research into the stories of individual women members of Parliament in India. As Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou (2008, p. 1) note, by using narrative studies to frame research "we are able to see different and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning, to bring them into useful dialogue with each other, and to understand more about individual and social change." Narrative studies foregrounds the act of story-telling:

Narrative inquiry is a research orientation that directs attention to narratives as a

way to study an aspect of society. It is not, however, just about studying texts, whether written or visual. It is about finding meaning in the stories people use, tell, and even live. (Ospina & Dodge, 2005, p. 145)

Through the semi-structured interviews that I conducted, individuals involved in the quota debates constructed their versions of the event narrative or story (see Riessman, 1993). The 'event' in each of my case studies is the adoption or non-adoption of a gender quota. Interview subjects were each 'narrators' of the event, giving an account of what happened while concurrently ascribing meaning to the actions of themselves and others. I was interested in their interpretations of the event, their opinions, and their justifications of their actions.

To gain access to interview subjects, I used a sample method often referred to as the 'snowball method' (see Davies, 2001; Goldstein, 2002; Tansey, 2007). For each field site, I first created a list of potential interviewees. These subjects were identified based largely on news reports about quota campaigns. I used publicly available contact information or gained access through existing contacts in the field to set up initial interviews. Then, at the interviews I asked subjects to propose other possible interviewees that I could contact. I repeated this process with any other interviewees. In my research, it continued until I could no longer elicit new names from interview subjects, or until my fieldtrip came to an end. While there are potential disadvantages to this method, notably that the sample of interview subjects could be skewed by interviewees recommending those with similar backgrounds and opinions to themselves (Tansey, 2007), this could be somewhat mitigated by ensuring a wide range of backgrounds and views were represented in the initial sample. Furthermore, the 'snowball method' provided access to a range of interview subjects that would have been inaccessible without referrals from other interviewees.

In line with the practices of narrative interviewing, I tried to ensure that the interviews were semi-structured and conversational in tone (Riessman, 1993). This required something of a balancing act between maintaining a conversational style and ensuring that the interview topics were well-covered:

Interpretive interviewing bears a family resemblance to common conversation, although the interviewer typically takes a more active role in directing the trajectory of the conversation than, say, a friend or family member might (Yanow, 2006, p. 410)

In the use of a semi-structured interview format, I tried to incorporate aspects of both the

structured approach to interviewing, with a strictly worded sequence of questions, and the unstructured approach, with a general topic to discuss but no sequence or question wording structure set out in advance (Davies, 2001). To this end, I devised a list of open-ended questions to ask in advance of each interview, but allowed space for divergence from this list, clarifications of points, and digressions that were interviewee-led. I avoided questions that could be construed as 'cross-examination' of the interviewee, instead foregrounding the interviewee's interpretation of her or his lived experience (Minister, 1991).

Most of the interviews that I conducted for this research could be classified as elite interviews. Elite interviews are important as a means to understand the context behind policy decision-making:

Elite interviews can shed light on the hidden elements of political action that are not clear from an analysis of political outcomes or other primary sources. By interviewing key participants in the political process, analysts can gain data about the political debates and deliberations that preceded decision making and action taking, and supplement official accounts with first-hand testimony. (Tansey, 2007, p. 767)

Elite interviews can illuminate the informal decision-making processes that inform policy, and complement accounts of formal processes gained from archival work (George & Bennett, 2004). An advantage of elite interviewing is that it allows an exchange between interviewer and subject, meaning that the researcher could gain insights on the policy-making process through dialogue that she or he would be unable to glean solely from archival research (Tansey, 2007), although supplementing the data obtained through elite interviewing with other sources is also important (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008).

While the majority of my interviews were with elite actors, non-elite actors were also an important source of information:

From an interpretive research perspective, especially one informed by critical theory, non-elite actors are also seen as playing a role in shaping policies, especially in rejecting top-down acts such as in policy implementation; and the researcher would want to understand their perspectives as well. (Yanow, 2006, p. 410)

In the context of my research, the non-elite actors interviewed were predominantly activists in the women's movement who self-identified as members of the 'grassroots'. These actors were an

Approach and Methodology

important gauge of the effectiveness of elite-led quota campaigns in gaining the support of the grassroots women's movement.

The data I gathered from interviews was supplemented with archival work. Over the course of my research I analysed media reports, interviews, letters to the editor and opinion pieces relating to women's representation. I also looked at reports from relevant organisations and conference proceedings, along with campaign materials. This archival work formed part of my event narrative analysis. Between the two sets of source material – interview data and written documents – I was able to uncover the rich interpretive descriptions that could not be obtained via other means. Using both interviewing and archival work also meant that I could draw out divergences between public and private statements.

Due to the scope of this research, my thesis differs from small-scale narrative research in not doing line by line narrative analysis. It does, however, incorporate the principles of narrative research in its interpretation of the events studied – the quota campaigns in each of the four case studies – through the stories of the event 'narrators' – interview subjects, and the authors of and contributors to archival records.

Where I Am Coming From

As a researcher from New Zealand, studying at an Australian university, I was an 'outsider' in my fieldwork sites. In the interviews I conducted, my personal motivations for carrying out research on the topic of gender quotas and in the context of the Pacific Islands were frequently examined. Interview subjects would often ask my own opinion on parliamentary gender quotas – which is, for the record, that I do support their use in many, and probably most, cases – and the foundations of my interest in the Pacific Islands region. I tried to be as open as possible in these conversations, referencing my previous study in the field of political science, feminist beliefs, and my employment history as a staffer for a Pacific Islander woman member of Parliament in New Zealand. When interviewing people who had dedicated significant time and resources to campaigning for gender quotas, a common question asked of me was how my research would further their aims. While I expect that my research is less directly useful to the campaigns analysed in this thesis than some of my interviewees may have hoped, I do think that it can contribute to a broader understanding of parliamentary gender quota campaigns and conceptions of their 'success' and 'failure' in the Pacific region, and elsewhere.

Challenges

In line with university regulations, I submitted a detailed Ethics Protocol to the Australian National University Human Research Ethics Committee prior to the commencement of my fieldwork. After some minor amendments, my Ethics Protocol was approved in June 2012. In terms of my interview-based research, the main ethical considerations were obtaining informed consent and ensuring privacy and confidentiality for those participants who did not wish to be identified. While my original Ethics Protocol specified that I would obtain written consent from my interview subjects, I ran into some difficulty in my early fieldwork with this stipulation. Several potential participants indicated that, although they would be happy to give verbal consent to be interviewed, they were unwilling to sign a written consent form. With this in mind, I amended my Ethics Protocol in August 2013 to allow for participants to give oral consent if they preferred not to sign a written consent form. The amendment broadened the pool of potential interviewees for my research and prevented any problems arising due to illiteracy. There is a gendered aspect to adult literacy in the Pacific Islands region, with more illiterate adult women than men in all countries except Tonga. The gap between male and female adult literacy rates is particularly significant in Papua New Guinea (World Bank, 2012). Although most of my interviews were with elite women, who tended to have high levels of education and literacy, there was the potential for written consent forms to pose a problem in other interviews. In accordance with my Ethics Protocol, I also sought the explicit permission of participants to sound record interviews. While some interview subjects declined to be recorded, the majority of interviews conducted were sound recorded. Where permission was given for sound recording, I then transcribed the interviews in full. In other cases, I took extensive notes, but did not quote directly from these interviews in my research.

Conducting fieldwork in the Pacific Islands region posed some challenges. As previously mentioned, I was an ‘outsider’ in the areas where I was conducting fieldwork; there were drawbacks to this status, notably that I do not speak Samoan or Tok Pisin. All the interviews that I conducted were in English. While all my interview subjects spoke English, for the majority it was not their first language, and it is possible that some would have found it easier to communicate in a language other than English. As an ‘outsider’, I was also aware of possible miscommunication and misinterpretation that might occur in an interview situation, as a result of cultural differences (Hendriks, 2007). In the interview context, an acknowledgement of the different cultural backgrounds of interviewer and subject was crucial (Minister, 1991).

As with most interview-based research, I did encounter some problems with potential interview

subjects who were either unable or unwilling to be interviewed. With regards to those that were unable to be interviewed, it was usually related to health or work reasons, or because they were out of the country at the time of my fieldtrip. In some cases I was able to gain accounts from these subjects via email communication. Potential interview subjects who were unwilling to be interviewed posed a more significant issue for my research. Goldstein (2002) theorises that research can be skewed if those potential interview subjects who are unwilling to be interviewed are significantly different to those who are willing to be interviewed in terms of their backgrounds or opinions. It was certainly the case in my research that those potential interview subjects who were willing to be interviewed were more likely to support the proposed gender quota than those who were unwilling to be interviewed. Where possible I sought to actively recruit interview subjects with different opinions to correct this bias. I was also able to mitigate this potential bias somewhat through the use of archival documents where those who were opposed to proposed gender quotas were interviewed or had published opinion pieces.

In conducting interviews over the course of my research, I was mindful of the fact that the topics to be covered were acutely personal for some of my interview subjects. Hendriks (2007, p. 286) notes that the interview process “can be emotionally distressing for interviewees”, a potential outcome that is in principle accounted for by ethics procedures, but that can be sometimes be unanticipated. In particular, in my research on the reserved seats campaign in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, many of the interviews I conducted involved the giving of accounts of women’s experiences during the conflict. The interview subjects felt that this was fundamental to an understanding of the processes that led to quota adoption in the region; nevertheless, it was emotionally difficult for some participants to recount these experiences. I tried to be conscious of this through ensuring interviewees were aware that they could stop the interview at any time they wished.

As Corbett (2014) acknowledges, “conducting interviews can be an intensely emotional experience” for both interviewer and interviewee (p. 354). Without a large amount of interviewing experience before I commenced my PhD research, I was essentially learning as I went. Perhaps the most important lesson I learnt about interviewing over the course of this research was the need to be flexible. I had to fit around interviewees’ schedules, so I got accustomed to interviews being postponed one, two, or even three times. I also had to fit my interview questions to however much time someone was able to give me, as interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to two and a half hours. Most of my interviews took place in offices, but sometimes the location was a

restaurant, a hotel lobby, or even on one occasion while the interviewee was waiting in line at the bank. I ended some interviews feeling frustrated or disappointed that it had not gone as well as it could due to time constraints, or a noisy environment that affected the flow of conversation or quality of the audio recording, or low energy on my part (especially if it was the last interview of a long day). Ultimately, I just tried to be as accommodating as possible, arranging interviews whenever and wherever I could, and making the most of however much time and energy a potential interviewee could give me.

Furthermore, there were logistical challenges to conducting fieldwork in the Pacific Islands region. Travel to my field sites was expensive and, as travel within the region is difficult, necessitated several trips to complete my fieldwork. Travel within Pacific countries can also be expensive, time-consuming, and hard to organise. On my research trip to Papua New Guinea, the practicalities of travel restricted me to the capital, Port Moresby. Similarly, in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, although I did travel to two field sites – Buka, on Buka Island, and Arawa, on Bougainville Island – I ruled out further travel to other sites for practical and safety reasons.

In my research I use four case studies: the French Pacific territories, an example of the implementation of a statutory quota in the Pacific Islands region; Bougainville, which has the only parliamentary reserved seats for women system currently in place; Samoa, the first independent Pacific state to introduce a parliamentary-level gender quota; and Papua New Guinea, where a high-level campaign for reserved seats was run in the lead up to the 2012 general election. The first three of these case studies were chosen because they are examples of gender quota campaigns that resulted in quota adoption. For my fourth case study, I chose Papua New Guinea, the largest Pacific Island state and an example of a high-level parliamentary gender quota campaign that ultimately did not result in quota adoption.¹²

A significant decision I had to make in the early stages of my research was regarding the number of case studies I would use in my research. There were strong arguments for using a smaller number of cases, including the potential for more in-depth research of each case, and practical research regarding time and funding for fieldwork. I ultimately decided on four case studies. I believe that it was necessary to have four cases to show the diversity of quota types, quota

¹² One outcome of the parliamentary gender quota campaign in Papua New Guinea was a constitutional amendment to allow for reserved seats for women, labelled “women’s electorates”; the enabling legislation that would have established these women’s electorates, however, was defeated in Parliament prior to the 2012 election. It is possible that the reserved seats will be instituted in the Papua New Guinea Parliament in the future through this constitutional provision. For the purposes of this thesis, however, I look at the campaign during the period of 2007 to 2012.

Approach and Methodology

campaigns, and campaign outcomes within the Pacific Islands region. Using case studies also allowed for the in-depth research of each quota campaign that would have been absent from a region-wide survey.

Much of the data I collected over the course of my research was through semi-structured interviews. I sought interviews with actors who played a role in parliamentary gender quota campaigns. As I had not previously worked in any of my field sites, I had limited contacts, so developing relationships with key participants was an important part of my early fieldwork. The Pacific context also posed some unique challenges in this respect, with methods of organising interviews that may work elsewhere proving inappropriate in the area. For example, Goldstein (2002) suggests that, for US-based elite interviewing, advance letters should be sent to potential subjects, a practice that would be unworkable in the Pacific region. In general, I also found it difficult to arrange interviews by email. Many potential interview subjects did not regularly use their email accounts, and some had limited access to the internet. This made pre-arranging interviews before I arrived at the field sites a lot more difficult. The majority of my interviews were arranged by phone call, text message, and in some cases, in-person visits. I tried to arrange interviews with at most two days notice, as I found arranging interviews further in advance usually resulted in cancellation.

The focus group method was another mode of data collection that I sought to employ over the course of my fieldwork. The conversational tone and interviewee-led dialogue fostered by the focus group method is in line with the aims of narrative research. In this research, however, I found that it was very hard to organise focus groups compared to individual interviews. The one focus group I conducted was a spontaneous gathering of male members of the Samoan Parliament from both the ruling and opposition party. While the data collected in this focus group was very useful, I was not able to arrange focus groups in my other field sites.

For my case study of the French Pacific territories (detailed in Chapter Seven), I elected to conduct a desk review of the material. My reasons for doing so were threefold. Firstly, I took into consideration the language difficulties that might be encountered in doing research in the francophone Pacific. While English is widely spoken in my other case studies, it is less prevalent in the French Pacific territories. I was confident in my ability to read French texts, but I was aware that conducting interviews in French could be more difficult. Secondly, there were practical issues to deal with in regards to conducting fieldwork in the French territories. It would involve three field sites – New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna – and significant time and

financial resources. Thirdly, the parity laws were introduced in 1999, meaning that more time has elapsed since the quota debate in the French territories than in my other three case studies. This means that it would be potentially more difficult to find interview subjects to give narrative accounts of the quota campaign. Furthermore, it means that more has been written about the French Pacific experience of quota adoption than other, more recent campaigns (see, for example, Bargel et al., 2010; Berman, 2005). In my desk review of this case study, I used various sources, including media reports, letters to the editor and opinion pieces, published first-person accounts, transcripts of legislative debates, and reports from non-governmental organisations.

Chapter Four

'E AU LE INA'ILAU A TAMA'ITA'I¹³: THE GENDER QUOTA DEBATE IN SAMOA

[Women] are the flowers, you know, but at the same time we are supposed to be the treasure keepers, to keep the ways, we are here to advise our decision-makers...but the thing is that we advise them, but then they go do exactly what they want.

Vaa'siliifiti Moelagi Jackson, Vice-President, Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations (SUNGO) (2012, pers. comm., 8 August)

Introduction

My first case study of quota adoption in the Pacific Islands region is Samoa. In this chapter, I cover the period from 2011, when the Samoan Government announced its intention to introduce a gender quota, to the passage of the Constitution Amendment Bill 2013 in 2013. The quota will first be implemented in the 2016 general election, and will ensure there are at least five women members of Parliament. With regards to quota adoption research in the Pacific Islands context, Samoa is significant as it is the only independent Pacific state to introduce a parliamentary gender quota to date.

The Samoan case is notable for three primary reasons. Firstly, the design of the quota is relatively unusual, in that it is neither a fixed reserved seats system nor a party-based legal quota. The quota will operate under a 'best loser' system, where the highest-polling unsuccessful female candidates will occupy additional seats in the legislature to ensure there are at least five women members of Parliament. When the proposed legislation was initially announced, the Prime Minister cited the UN MDGs as a reason why his government was implementing a quota. In this way the quota legislation was framed as an external indicator of gender equality. The emphasis on international obligations sparked criticism that the Government was letting the UN dictate their national agenda. The design of the proposed Samoan quota, however, is considered to have local origins, and its target of ten per cent is well below the target of thirty per cent women's representation set in the third MDG, regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Secondly, while the existing literature usually identifies the mobilisation of women as the catalyst for quota adoption (Krook, 2009), in the case of Samoa the main proponent of the proposed

¹³ Samoan saying; can be translated as 'women achieve their goals'.

gender quota was considered to be a male political actor, the Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi. The decision by his Cabinet to implement a gender quota was unexpected, as he had previously expressed reluctance to consider special measures. The legislation, however, was eventually approved by Parliament with 44 votes in favour and five abstentions. While the two women members of Parliament voted for the Constitutional Amendment Bill 2013, and supported the gender quota publicly, they did not take a prominent role in quota advocacy (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Women's organisations and individual women actors were involved in the debate around quota adoption in Samoa; they distanced themselves, however, from the quota design and development, arguing that the manner in which the quota was proposed by the Government meant that there was little opportunity for civil society actors to influence the provisions of the legislation (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September).

Thirdly, the case of Samoa is also significant in its political context. Samoa has a high level of political stability. It has been continuously democratic since independence in 1962, and the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP) has been in power for 27 of the last 30 years. The current Prime Minister has held the position since 1998 and has significant personal power within the party. While successful quota campaigns that occur during periods of instability or transition have been well documented (see IPU, 2005), in this case it was a high level of political stability that ensured quota adoption. Due to its political dominance, the HRPP could implement its proposed quota quickly and with minimal controversy.

The relatively low minimum level of women's representation offered by the proposed legislation, in comparison to quotas in other countries around the world, could be seen as a tokenistic effort to acknowledge issues with women's access to decision-making in Samoa. Indeed, participants in the debate did not expect the quota to have a significant impact on parliamentary debate and the type of laws passed in Samoa, nor for it to make a difference for the majority of Samoan women who live in rural areas. Where it is expected to have an effect is on the number of female candidates in parliamentary elections. The quota was interpreted as a 'start', or a tool to be used to increase women's representation that would subsequently lead to improved parliamentary decision-making through the presence of women. For the most part, the quota was not expected to achieve the end goals of equality of representation and the substantive representation of women on its own.

The data presented in this chapter was collected through interviews and document analysis. The interviews were conducted during two fieldwork trips to Samoa, in July-September 2012 and

November 2013. I interviewed women and men involved in the quota debate, including current and former politicians, unsuccessful political candidates, members of civil society groups, academics, journalists, and current and former public servants. With regards to archival work, I drew from newspaper articles, letters to the editor, and columns, as well as reports of meetings and conference proceedings.

Background

Samoa is a Polynesian country with a population of just under 200,000. It was the first Pacific state to become independent, in 1962. It was initially called Western Samoa, but the ‘Western’ was dropped in 1997. The state of Samoa encompasses the two largest islands in the Samoan island group, Upolu and Savai'i, along with a number of smaller islands. The easternmost islands in the group form the United States territory of American Samoa.

Samoan culture is based around the system of *fa'amatai*. Under *fa'amatai*, the extended familial unit is led by a *matai*, a family member who has been chosen by consensus. The term *matai* is often translated into English as chief, although this is considered by some to be a mistranslation; the anthropologist Serge Tcherkézoff (1998, p. 419) explains it as follows: “The so-called (by foreigners) ‘chief system’ is a kind of aristocracy where there are no families who are not aristocratic.” The *fa'amatai* system is often described as democratic given that the family decides who receives a *matai* title, and the title can be removed and given to someone else if the family wishes (Tcherkézoff, 1998). In the event that a family cannot come to a consensus over the distribution of a title, the Land and Titles Court, the official registration body for *matai*, provides arbitration services. *Matai* have significant responsibilities within the family and wider community. At village level, only *matai* are eligible sit on the Village Council, which is the primary decision-making body. There is a hierarchy of *matai* titles, although the ranking of a title is not fixed and can change over time (Lawson, 1996; Tcherkézoff, 1998). The most important in contemporary Samoa are considered to be the four paramount titles (*tama'aiga*): Malietoa, Mata'afa, Tuimaleali'iifano and Tupua Tamasese.

A person who is determining eligibility to hold a *matai* title can trace her or his genealogical ties through either male or female relations (Lawson, 1996). The ambilineal nature of the *fa'amatai* system, along with the fact that there is no predetermined heir to a title, thus in theory any person in the *fa'amatai* system has a potential claim to a *matai* title, means that in principle “there are no bars to full female participation on a basis equal to males” (Lawson 1996, p. 123). In practice, however, the majority of *matai* title holders are men. While there have been prominent high-

ranking women *matai* at some points in Samoan history, they were relatively uncommon (Lawson, 1996). The anthropologist Margaret Mead (1928, p. 483), writing the late 1920s, noted at that time there was only one woman *matai* in the Samoan Islands,¹⁴ and argued that even women from the highest-ranking families “can neither own property nor openly participate in political affairs.”

Politics in Samoa

Asofou So’o (2009, p. 202), a prominent Samoan academic, argues that the Samoan constitution “blends the institutions and processes of liberal democracy with selected elements of Samoan custom and tradition.” In practice, this has meant acknowledgement of the traditional power structures of *fa’asamoa*, or the Samoan Way, within an imported Westminster style parliamentary system. Some scholars have documented what they perceive as tension between the principles of liberal democracy and those of traditional Samoan governance structures (see Huffer & So’o, 2005; Tuimaleali’ifano, 2001).

The customary hierarchy of Samoan society was upheld in the initial stages of the post-independence political system, with the four paramount chiefs all taking prominent positions (Tuimaleali’ifano, 1998). One became the first Prime Minister of Samoa, and one joined the Council of Deputies, while the position of Head of State (*O le Ao o le Malo*) was awarded jointly to two paramount chiefs, Malietoa Tanumafili II and Tupua Tamasese Mea’ole, for life (So’o, 2009). After the latter died in 1963, Malietoa Tanumafili II served as the sole Head of State until his death in 2007. Heads of State are now elected by Parliament to serve a five-year term (So’o, 2009). The current Head of State is Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Tupuola Tufuga Efi, a former Prime Minister and the son of Tupua Tamasese Mea’ole. He was first elected as Head of State in 2007 and re-elected in 2012.

Initially, there were 47 seats in the Samoan Parliament, with 45 general constituencies and two seats elected from the Individual Voters’ roll. Voters on the Individual Voters’ roll were Samoan citizens who were not ethnically Samoan, and thus not a part of the *fa’amatai* system upon which the political system was based. Membership of Parliament was, and remains, restricted to *matai* (with the exception of the Individual Voters’ seats), and MPs served three year terms. From the 1991 election, a number of constitutional amendments were made, including increasing the number of seats in Parliament to 49, increasing the number of Cabinet Ministers appointed by the

¹⁴ Mead was referring to both what is now the independent state of Samoa, and the US territory of American Samoa. Her research was conducted in the Manu’ā Islands in what is now American Samoa.

Prime Minister to twelve, and extending the length of a parliamentary term to five years (So'o, 2012).

After Samoa became independent, the number of *matai* titles proliferated as traditional titles were split to allow multiple holders. At the same time, new titles were being created. The process of establishing new titles was more difficult, however, hence the significant increase in split titles (Sapolu, Suaali'i-Sauni, Mulitalo, Fuata'i & Temese, 2012). The practice of title-splitting existed prior to 1962, but became more common after independence (Lawson, 1996). It was assumed the steep rise in the number of *matai* titles was associated with the voting laws, under which only *matai* were eligible to vote in the general constituencies (Lawson, 1996).¹⁵ Instituting universal suffrage for adults over the age of 21 as a solution to this issue was first proposed in 1975 (Sapolu et al., 2012).

Stephanie Lawson (1996) notes that both supporters and opponents of universal suffrage used appeals to tradition. Those in support argued that the proliferation of *matai* titles was eroding the *fa'amatai* system, while those in opposition argued that to end restricted suffrage would be to lose an expression of Samoan culture (Lawson, 1996). In 1990, a referendum was held on the issue and found 52.6 per cent of voters in favour of universal suffrage (So'o & Fraenkel, 2005). The general election of 1991 marked the first time in Samoa's post-independence history that non-*matai* could vote in parliamentary elections in the general constituencies.

History of Women's Representation

The restriction on parliamentary candidacy to *matai* has traditionally constrained women's political participation, as only a small fraction of *matai* are female. Women were historically the "behind-the-scenes power-brokers" who held *matai* to account (So'o & Fraenkel 2005, p. 337). Mead (1928, p. 483), reflecting on the lack of women *matai* in 1920s Samoan society, claimed: "The public role of a woman is entirely confined to wire-pulling and the private manipulation of the men-folk within her sphere of influence." Over time, even this element of control that women held in the *matai* system was weakened (So'o & Fraenkel, 2005). The introduction of universal suffrage created an influx of female voters, a fact the government attempted to capitalise on by creating a Women's Department and a Women's Day public holiday (Lawson, 1996; So'o & Fraenkel, 2005).

¹⁵ *Matai*-only suffrage and candidate eligibility rules were also used prior to independence in elections to the Legislative Assembly, which was set up in 1948. In the 1950s, there was some debate over moving to universal suffrage, but the voting system ultimately remained unchanged (see Lawson, 1996, pp. 135-136).

While all adult Samoan women have been eligible to vote since 1990, only *matai* can stand for election. According to 2011 figures, there were 16,787 *matai* (8.9 per cent of the total population), of which 1,766 (10.5 per cent) are women.¹⁶ Because one *matai* can hold multiple titles, the number of titles is much higher than that of individual *matai*, at 60,162, and 3,944 titles (6.6 per cent) are held by women.¹⁷ There are eleven villages with no female *matai*.

Despite the relatively low number of female *matai*, some women have been successful in national politics (see table 3). There were no women elected to the Samoan Parliament in the first three elections after independence in 1962. The first female MP, Leaupepe Taulapapa Faimaalaa Phillips, was elected in 1970 and served two terms, becoming Deputy Speaker in 1973. In 1975, the sitting Prime Minister died and his widow, Masiofo Laulu Fetauimalemau Fautino Mata'afa, won the resulting by-election for his seat. She lost the seat in the 1976 election, but regained it for a term in 1979. From 1976 to 1996, five more women entered Parliament, most for one or two terms: Sinagogo Hope Nelson Annandale (1976-1979), who was elected in an Individual Voters' seat; liga Falenaoti Niuafo'ou Regina Suafole (1976-1979); Matatumua Maimoaga Vermeulen (1982-1985 and 1991-1996); Aiona Dr Fanaafi Le-Tagaloa (1985-1988); and Fiame Naomi Mata'afa (1985-present).

In 1996, there were four women elected: Fiame;¹⁸ Masiofo Tuala Tamaalelagi Falenaoti Tiresa Malietoa; Tofaeono Faamuamua Anufesaina Tofaeono; and Tavui Lene. The latter two lost their seats directly after the election through court challenges, leaving just two female MPs remaining. A third, Maiava Visekota Ruth Peteru, entered Parliament after a by-election in 1998. The 2001-2005 term again saw three women elected (Fiame, Safuneituuga Paaga Neri Pepuleai and Fagafagamanualii Therese McCarthy), and a record four in the 2006-2010 term (Fiame, Safuneituuga, Gatoloaifaana Amataga Alesana-Gidlow and Fuimaono Naoia Tei). Following the 2011 election, there were just two female Samoan MPs: Fiame, who is the current Minister of Justice; and Gatoloaifaana. In 2014, a third woman MP, Faimalotoa Kika Iemaima Stowers-Ah Kau, was elected to Parliament in a by-election. In total, excluding those who were unseated in post-election court challenges, fourteen women have been elected to the Samoan Parliament.

¹⁶ Source: Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Apia, pers. comm., 2012.

¹⁷ Source: Land and Titles Court, Apia, pers. comm., 2012.

¹⁸ Samoan culture, when a *matai* title is bestowed that person then uses the title before their first name. If a *matai* holds multiple titles, they are all placed before the first name although there is no set convention with regards to the order of the titles. Referring to a *matai* by their title name is a mark of respect and in formal writing *matai* are usually referred to by their title rather than their last name. I have followed this convention in this chapter.

Table 3: Women MPs in the Samoan Parliament, 1962-2014 (as at 16 December 2014)

TERM	Women MPs	Total MPs	Percentage of Women MPs
1962-1963	0	47	0.0
1964-1966	0	47	0.0
1967-1969	0	47	0.0
1970-1972	1	47	2.1
1973-1975	2	47	4.3
1976-1978	2	47	4.3
1979-1981	1	47	2.1
1982-1984	1	47	2.1
1985-1987	2	47	4.3
1988-1990	1	47	2.1
1991-1995^a	2	49	4.1
1996-2000	3	49	6.1
2001-2005	3	49	6.1
2006-2010	4	49	8.2
2011-present	3	49	6.1

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, 2009

Notes: ^a From the 1991 election, Samoa changed from a three-year parliamentary term to a five-year term. The number of seats in Parliament also increased by two to 49 (So'o, 2012).

Acknowledging the low levels of women's representation in Samoa, there have been some efforts to encourage more women to enter politics. O le Inailau a Tamaitai (Women in Leadership) is a program launched in 2003 by women leaders in politics and the public service, with the aims of voter education and support for future female leaders in politics and the community (IWLN, 2003). In the lead-up to the 2006 general election Inailau ran a program of voter education and candidate training. The 2006 election had the largest number of female candidates in history, with around

twenty (see So'o, 2012; Afamasaga-Fuata'i et al., 2012), and the largest number of successful candidates, with four women elected to Parliament. This was taken as a sign of the Inailau network's success (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). The Inailau network was not active during the 2011 election, when the number of female candidates decreased significantly from the 2006 election, and only two women won seats.

Barriers to Greater Women's Representation

The Constitution of Samoa prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Candidacy for Parliament, however, is restricted to *matai* title holders, of whom the majority are male. It is common practice for male family members to be offered *matai* titles over their female relatives (PPSEAWA et al., 2004). While there are still female *matai*, some reported feeling "inferior" when working with male *matai* in decision-making roles (PPSEAWA et al., 2004, p. 7). Furthermore, around ten villages prohibit female *matai* title holders, a stance that is considered to be unconstitutional but has not yet been challenged in the Samoan courts. This means that only one in ten of potential parliamentary candidates are women.

Fiame, Samoa's longest-serving female Member of Parliament, acknowledges that the decision to run for political office in Samoa is more difficult for a woman than for a man (Tauafiafi, 2012). Female political candidates tend to be unmarried and childless, or have grown families. The Prime Minister notes that male candidates "have all the freedom to run for Parliament minus the home responsibilities left to their wives" (quoted in Tavita, 2012). A female chief executive officer (CEO) in the public service claimed:

you take a Samoan family for example, and that's the most likely person to contest for a seat will be the father, and that is because the mother would be the sole supporter for the father, and the one that will pull the family together and focus on doing that while the father figure is busy with the campaigning and the election processes. So you know women have other priorities and that running for a seat in Parliament is definitely way down the list of priorities because they've got to feed for their families, as the number one priority, care for the children as the number one priority, and attend to a number of other things, domestic affairs, before they can consider running for elections. (Anon 2012, pers. comm.)

It is often said that women occupy a special and esteemed place in the Samoan culture. Traditional culture emphasises the balance of the roles of men and women, exemplified in the relationship between brothers and sisters:

The gender principle central to the *fa'amatai* is the complementarity of male and female roles. This emanates from the unwritten, but firmly embedded, concept of *feagaiga* (sacred covenant), whereby the brother holds the secular power and the sister upholds the honour and dignity of the family. This bond between brother and sister is a powerful paradigm reflected in many other important relationships in Samoan culture. It is also the tie that gives Samoan women choices in their roles and responsibilities, which continue to be upheld today, including as peacemakers, wealth makers, healers, teachers, and redeemers in the family. (Afamasaga-Fuata'i et al., 2012, p. 162)

The extent of the influence that women have in the traditional governance structures of Samoa has been questioned, however. The current Vice-President of SUNGO,¹⁹ Vaasiliifiti Moelangi Jackson (2012, pers. comm., 8 August) argued that in practice the role of Samoan women in decision-making is limited.

Every Samoan village has a Women's Committee which operates alongside the Village Council. The *komiti tumāmā*, women's health committees, were set up in the 1920s and focused on village health, hygiene, and welfare. By the 1970s, the role of the *komiti* had expanded to include development projects, and village *komiti* were coordinated centrally, first by the National Council of Women, and then by the Women's Advisory Committee. The *komiti tumāmā* were renamed *komiti a tinā ma tāmā'ita'i*, or committee of ladies and mothers (Afamasaga-Fuata'i et al., 2012). Each village also elects a *sui tama'itai'i o nu'u* (village women representative), alongside a *pulenu'u*, or mayor. This women's representative works with the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (Afamasaga-Fuata'i et al., 2012).

Attitudes towards women in politics, from both men and women, constitute a further barrier to greater women's representation in Samoan politics. One interviewee said that every time she is approached about being a candidate by a male member of Parliament, she asks if they would let

¹⁹ SUNGO is a coalition made up of over 120 civil society organisations. Although SUNGO is an umbrella group comprising of NGO organisations that deal with a broad range of issues, not always related to gender, during the period when the quota legislation was debated and passed in Samoa, it was a woman-led organization; the CEO of SUNGO was a woman, as were its President and Vice-President.

their wives run too, to which the answer is always no. She claims that this is a common attitude amongst Samoan men:

So that means only those of us that are not married, or married to a non-Samoan, are going to make it into Parliament...[of the two female MPs at the time] one is not married, and one's married to a palagi²⁰... really we're not going to fix anything until that mindset changes. (Anon 2012, pers. comm.)

This attitude is perhaps characterised by a cartoon that appeared in the *Samoa Observer* on 13 January 2012 and showed a man and a boy in conversation. The man asked "Sole, about time we get more women in Parliament, don't you think", to which Sole answered, "I know Papa, but who's going to weed the grass[?]" ("Cartoon", 2012a, p. 13; see below). A similarly themed cartoon was published on 9 March, with Sole telling his father that his mother has been elected to Parliament under the law: "Papa, haven't you heard. She's part of the 5% Stui [Tuilaepa] wants in Parliament. Guess you gonna have to do the cooking from now on a ea?" ("Cartoon", 2012c, p. 13; see below). Other interviewees complained of paternalistic attitudes towards women: "[they] lump us with people with disabilities and children, that we need their help, it makes men feel really good I suppose" (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). The "subservient" attitudes of some Samoan women, as well as the feeling that Parliament was "a man's place" (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August) were also identified as issues.

The reluctance of parties to support female candidates is another issue in Samoa (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August), as is finance (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August), with many women who would be potential candidates unable to run because of a lack of resources. Another barrier to candidacy for women is the requirement in the Electoral Act that those running for Parliament be able to demonstrate service to their village. In many villages, women *matai* are discouraged or outright banned from sitting in the Village Council, which is usually the determinant of whether or not a candidate has met this service criteria.

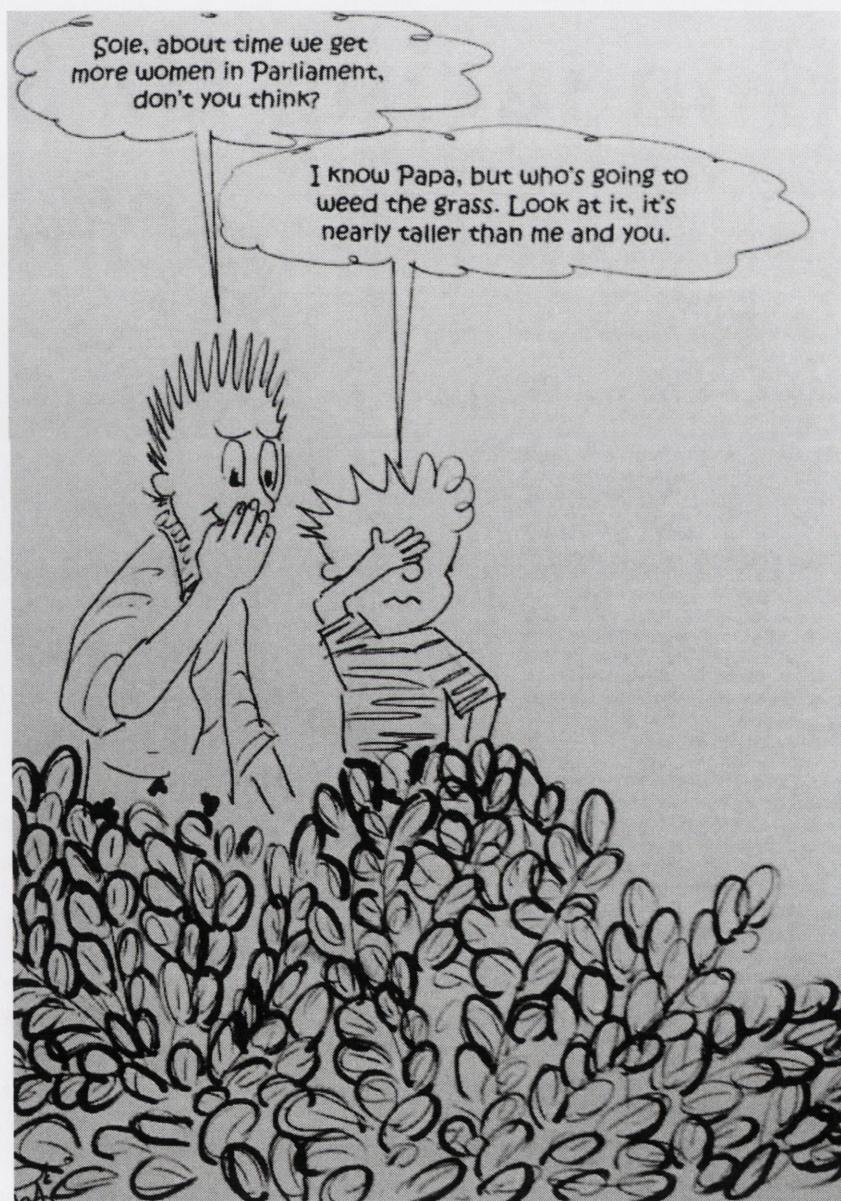
Even if elected, a woman's position in Parliament is often precarious. They are seen by some as "easy targets" for court challenges and for unseating when they bid for re-election (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Since 1996, three women have been elected to Parliament, only to be unseated in a court challenge.

²⁰ Samoan term for a foreigner, typically used to describe a person of European descent.

While women are under-represented in Samoan Parliament, there is a far greater proportion of women in leadership positions in ministries (Fraenkel, 2009). Women leaders in the public service, however, do not often put themselves forward as parliamentary candidates. Fiame claims:

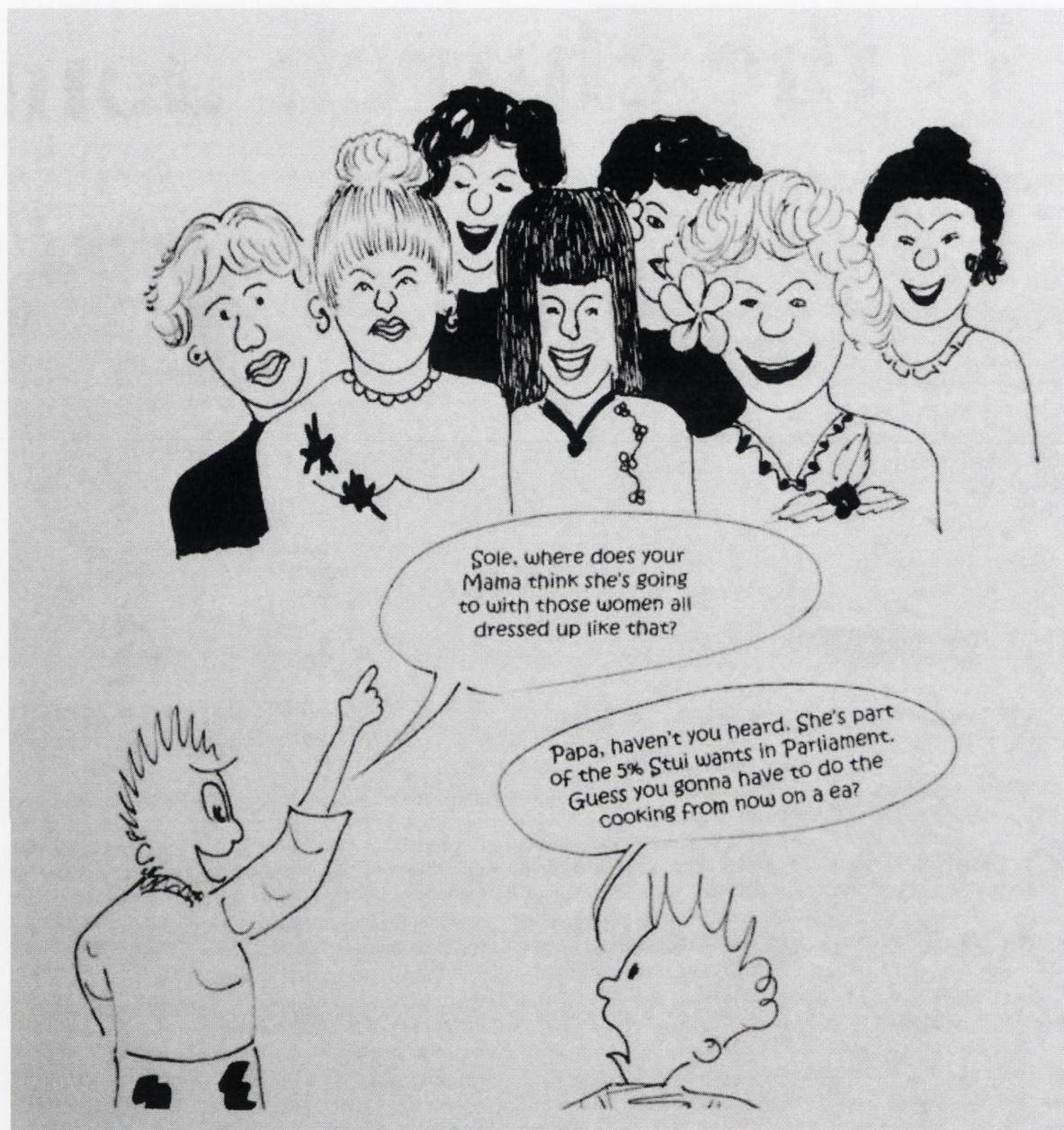
I think women are quite pragmatic. Politics isn't a very secure field to work in, I think it's high-risk, in terms of where you put your resources, and so forth. And I think it's high-risk in terms of how much you want to be a private person or a public person. And that's quite significant as well. (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August)

Figure 1: Cartoon, *Samoa Observer*, 13 January 2012



Source: "Cartoon", 2012a.

Figure 2: Cartoon, *Samoa Observer*, 9 March 2012



Source: "Cartoon", 2012c.

Other interviewees also attributed the apparent lack of political ambition in women public service leaders to women being more risk averse than men (Va'ai, LEK 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

Arguments for Greater Women's Representation

Almost all the actors involved in the gender quota debate in Samoa, whether supporting or opposing the quota, supported the goal of greater women's representation in general. The arguments used to show the importance of women's parliamentary representation tended to

stress the improvement women would make to Parliament and decision-making at that level. It was assumed that an increase in women's representation would make a significant substantive difference to political debate and decision-making in Samoa.

The potential for more balanced decision-making was frequently mentioned as an argument for greater women's representation (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Roina Vavatau (2012, pers. comm., 8 August), the CEO of SUNGO, explained:

we look at governments and Parliament just like a little home function, where me as a dad, or a mum, make my decision on my own. It's not quality decision. If you are the father, you make the decision on your own, you need the wife to say, how does this impact on everyday, who's going to do the washing, how much food do we need. We have to collaborate.

The participation of both men and women was seen as important to good decision-making at the parliamentary level. Women were also regarded as bringing a unique perspective to decision-making (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Again, balance between male and female perspectives was stressed (Anon, 2012, pers. comm., 12 September), although some argued that a women's point of view was preferable in decision-making: 'Parliament needs to run the country from a woman's perspective...there would be less hassles as seen there today' (Anon 2012, pers. comm.).

The different priorities and values of women were brought up as arguments for increased representation. Women were seen as having "motherly qualities" that were needed in Parliament (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August), and being less ambitious and ego-driven than men (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). They were expected to place a greater emphasis on health and welfare issues (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September), social issues, and children's issues (Tavita, TT 2012, pers. comm., 11 September). It was also argued that the "women's agenda" would be advanced by greater women's representation (Va'ai, LEK 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Issues such as violence against women (Peteru, MVR 2012, pers. comm., 4 September) and reproductive health (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August) could be better addressed by Parliament if the presence of women was increased.

Women were considered to be conscientious and thorough when making decisions, qualities that they could apply to parliamentary work. They were seen as possessing a greater grasp of the

potential implications of decisions (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August), and issues that Parliament faces:

I believe that women bring into parliamentary debate a great, a much more thorough understanding of an issue, of any matter, as well as the ability to see the necessary practical details in the implementation of any decision, which is something that you can see every time Parliament makes a decision, you can see gaps if you like in the decision-making that takes place. (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September)

Women were also thought of as hard-working. As one former parliamentary candidate said, "in Samoa, things happen because of women" (Anon 2012, pers. comm.).

Quota Development

The Samoan Government has historically rejected gender quotas as an option to increase women's representation. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Tuilaepa, the Government's stance was previously firmly against the use of quotas. The former CEO of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development claimed:

The current Prime Minister used to say...why thirty per cent when you can have a hundred per cent? And so in all of our international meetings, that was the position of the Government of Samoa. And that position was based on, you know, there are equal opportunities for women chiefs as male chiefs to enter Parliament. So if we want equality, in terms of representation, you compete on the same level. No special provisions, because the opportunities are the same. (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August)

In March 2011, in response to criticism that in his Cabinet of 13 members he had appointed only one female Minister, Tuilaepa claimed that one woman in Cabinet was "more than enough" (quoted in "Samoa PM says", 2011).

In September 2011, Prime Minister Tuilaepa made an announcement that he was seeking to implement legislation to increase women's representation. In October, he confirmed that he intended to put forward a bill to reserve ten per cent of parliamentary seats for women. Discussing his plans, Tuilaepa (quoted in "Samoa PM seeks", 2011) said:

If we do not put in the necessary stipulation in our legislation one never knows whether in the next elections there be absolutely no women in parliament. So this is part of our intention to ensure that there shall always be women in Parliament.

The announcement was the first indication that the Government's long-held position against the use of parliamentary gender quotas had changed, although it was claimed that the quota proposal had first been mooted about a year before the bill was drafted (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Tuilaepa stated that he hoped the legislation will be introduced before the next general election in 2016 ("Samoa PM seeks", 2011). In January 2012, the Constitution Amendment Bill 2012 was tabled in Parliament. Initially, MPs from the Tautua Samoa Party were outspoken in their opposition to the proposed quota. The Bill was debated in Parliament in the March 2012 sitting.

Shortly after the proposed legislation was announced, a UN technical advisor on special temporary measures visited Samoa. She met with civil society leaders, who say she encouraged them not to present alternatives to the bill:

The UN Technical Advisor came and said, you know, just be happy that there's political will behind the Government's bill, to support it, I said that's not my point, so there we have a Technical Advisor, who is very, to me, like imposing her ideas...[they] want a tick in the box, we want something that is progressive (Anon 2012, pers. comm.)

Public forums and workshops were held to facilitate discussion on the proposed quota legislation. SUNGO consulted on the legislation and held a national forum on 1 March 2012 to gather the views of the civil society community. Around one hundred people attended the forum, which resulted in a submission that SUNGO presented to Parliament. On 8 March 2012, the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development held a consultation on the legislation as part of its International Women's Day events programme. Village women's representatives, businesswomen, women from the public service and representatives from NGOs took part in the Ministry's consultation ("Women discuss", 2012).

The third reading of the quota bill, now entitled the Constitution Amendment Bill 2013, was held in June 2013. There were 44 votes in favour of the Bill, meaning that in addition to HRPP MPs, at least seven opposition MPs also voted for the legislation. This move was in contradiction to the Tautua Samoa Party's previous stance against the proposed quota. No MPs voted against,

although five MPs were absent for the vote. While all MPs present voted in favour, there were speeches criticising the bill, in particular the manner in which additional MPs would be selected (Hazelman-Siona, 2013b). Tuu'u Anasi'i Leota, from the HRPP, argued that women who became MPs because of the quota would not be considered full members of Parliament. He attracted criticism for a phrase used during his speech, "*E le o se pusi atoa a o le afa pusi*".²¹ Fiame, the Minister of Justice, objected to the use of the phrase, calling it "disrespectful and inappropriate" as the term *pusi* can be interpreted as a derogatory term for a woman (Hazelman-Siona, 2013a, p. 3). The use of the phrase was also criticised by two Samoan MPs from the New Zealand Parliament (Tapaleao, 2013). Letters to the editor of the *Samoa Observer* on the incident were split between those who considered the phrase offensive ("Letters", 2013a), and those who believed criticism of Tuu'u was unwarranted: "the encounter on Monday is a clear example of why people find it hard to accept women in decision-making roles...[they are too] emotional" ("Letters", 2013a, p. 13).

The Prime Minister dismissed the concerns of Tuu'u and other HRPP MPs about the bill:

there should not be a reason for anyone to disagree with this, except those who are afraid of losing their seat to a woman but really I see no need for any MP to be afraid.

These positions we hold are given to us by God and if God sees it fit that you are to be an MP than so shall it be but then again if your faith is weak then obviously you will not get far. (quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2013b, p. 2)

In response to other criticisms of the legislation, Tuilaepa (quoted in Lesa, 2013a, p. 4) claimed that "nothing is perfect from the start...what we are doing is opening the door."

The ten per cent gender quota is considered less controversial than other changes made by the Samoan Government in the past. For instance, in 2009 Samoan drivers shifted from the right-hand side of the road to the left-hand side. The change was intended to make cars more affordable, as they could be imported from New Zealand, Australia and Japan instead of the United States of America. Prior to the change, there was strong opposition, including an almost 20,000-strong march in central Apia in April 2008, and a legal challenge in the Supreme Court. The gender quota legislation, in contrast, was described as being "neither opposed with a passion nor driven with a passion" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Nonetheless, when the legislation was announced there was a lot of public debate on the issue of gender quotas in

²¹ The phrase can be translated to 'It's not a full *pusi* but half a *pusi*'. The word *pusi* in Samoan can mean a cat or an eel.

Samoa. The topic has been widely reported on in the media, and several public forums and debates have canvassed opinions.

Arguments for the Quota

Advocates for a gender quota argued that it would improve the substantive representation of women, and lead to better legislative outcomes. It was contended that women would be better at addressing issues relating to them (Curry, 2013, p. 15; Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Anon 2012, pers. comm.). More women in Parliament would mean less social and financial problems (Jackson, quoted in Netzler-lose, 2012a). Tuilaepa argued that greater women's representation would improve the parliamentary environment and strengthen consensus (Lesa, 2013a). It was suggested that more women in Parliament would result in more balanced decision-making ("Letters", 2013b), and bring more integrity to the legislature (Lesa, 2013b). Quotas were also seen as a way of "levelling the playing field", given the barriers to women entering Parliament (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September). Maiava Visekota Peteru, a former MP, argued that there are "a lot of barriers for women to enter [Parliament] so this bill will help knock down these barriers" (quoted in Tone, 2012c, p. 7).

A common refrain from advocates of the gender quota in the debate was that it was the only option available to increase women's representation. Tuilaepa points to the decrease in women MPs from four to two following the 2011 election as evidence of a trend (Abbott, 2012). He maintains that a quota is the only solution: "Without that amendment, we can never achieve 10 per cent. Who knows, we'll reach the end of the world before that number is found" (quoted in Malifa & Lesa, 2012, p. 28). Fiame (quoted in Tupufia, 2013, p. 4) pointed to other advances in gender equality, while the level of women's representation stagnated or declined: "I think we are pretty good in other areas [in terms of gender development] but in terms of women in politics, we haven't been good...that is why we developed this bill." She argued that the legislation was necessary: "I'm not a fan of temporary measures, but I can step back personally to realise that if you don't make institutional provisions, it's not going to change" (quoted in Sergel & Scott, 2013, p. 6). Others argued that education and awareness programmes are not enough (Netzler-lose, 2012a), and that a legislative quota was "inevitable" (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August).

The ten per cent quota was seen as "better than nothing" (Peteru, MVR 2012, pers. comm., 4 September). Women in the public service, former parliamentary candidates, and women in civil society expressed reservations about the consultation process and the provisions of the legislation, but ultimately were supportive of the quota. Common sentiments were that the

"Government is at least trying to do something" (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August); that it is "a good start" (Anon 2012, pers. comm.); a "beginning" (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September); "a first step" (Curry 2013, p. 15); and "a way forward" (Va'ai, LEK 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Some supported the bill on the basis that it was an opportunity to trial something new (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Anon 2012, pers. comm.). Not all women interviewed agreed with this sentiment, however, with one saying she "thought initially it was better than nothing. Then I thought...something that is bad is worse than nothing" (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September).

The types of arguments used by many supporters of the quota do indicate a sense of lack of ownership of the idea. Women in the public service and civil society in Samoa saw the quota as something that was already decided upon, and would happen whether they were ideologically supportive or not. For those that were in favour of quotas as a solution to women's political under-representation, the particular quota proposed by the Government was not usually supported enthusiastically, but was described as a "start" (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September; Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August).

Arguments against the quota

Central to arguments against the quota was the idea that it was incompatible with Samoan culture. Opponents emphasised the high status of women in traditional society, and claimed that Samoan society was not ready to elect more female representatives, and that Samoan women themselves were not prepared to put themselves forward as candidates. Other arguments employed against the proposed quota were similar to those used in quota debates in other countries, claiming that quotas were undemocratic and unfair, and that women entering Parliament under the quota would not deserve their seats and thus would not be respected.

The special status of women in traditional Samoan society was brought up throughout the quota debate. It was stressed that "women are quite powerful in their own way in Samoa" (Va'ai, LEK 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Culture arguments were used by the Tautua Samoa party who claimed that Samoan women did not need the parliamentary quota because of their high status in the community (Hazelman-Siona, 2012a). One opposition MP, Levaopolo Talatonu, argued that changes like the quota legislation will erode Samoan culture and traditions, specifically the village governance model where women and men meet separately (Tauafiafi, 2012). Others contended that while some cultural traditions may be discriminatory, the proposed quota was not an appropriate solution:

there are some cultural practices that may be counter-productive to the advancement of women's development. But you have to use culturally acceptable ways to address those kinds of things. It's very difficult to bring in...an idea or a way from overseas, which works overseas, and apply to here and hope and believe that it will work. Because most likely it won't. (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August)

It was suggested that the Samoan public wasn't ready for a gender quota to be implemented (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September; Lesa, 2012). Those who weren't necessarily opposed to the idea of a quota still warned of the dangers of radical change to the gender dynamics in Samoa: "we can't be too drastic in pushing and losing our cultural values" (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August).

Opponents of the legislation claimed that it was unnecessary. It was argued that women were not disadvantaged, given that in Samoa female students consistently outrank their male counterparts in educational standards at almost every level, and that the number of women in leadership positions in the Samoan public service has risen significantly in recent decades. One Tautua Samoa MP noted than there were more women CEOs in the public sector in Samoa than in New Zealand (Tone, 2012b). Opposition leader Palusalue Fa'apo II argues that the rights of women in Samoa are already respected, including the right to run for Parliament, meaning the introduction of a quota is superfluous (Netzler-lose, 2012b; "Samoa opposition against", 2012). He claimed that "patience" was all that was needed, as women's representation would gradually increase over time (quoted in Lesa, 2012, p. 12). Some of the perceived barriers to women's representation were seen as "excuses" (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August), and not reason enough to institute a quota. Others argued that barriers exist, but if issues such as domestic violence were addressed, increased women's representation would follow (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

A common argument used against the quota legislation was that women should be elected on merit. Fiame believed that most Samoan women would rather see women "get through on their own merits" rather than through a quota system (Mata'afa, NF 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Mata'afa Keni Lesa, the editor of the *Samoa Observer*, argued that the many high-profile women in the public and private sectors are respected because they "earned their places", and that adopting a gender quota would be insulting to women, as if would be "effectively saying women cannot get there on their own" (Lesa, 2012, p. 12). Women would not accept the quota, as they "have pride too, they do not want to be spoonfed" (Palusalue, quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012a,

p. 3), and they would be “looking at the ethics and the morality that comes with it...you would be labelled as a cheat” (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August).

It was claimed that women who entered Parliament under the legislation would experience stigma (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August), and be uncomfortable with the manner of their election (Afualo, quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012c). Concerns were raised about women appearing to have parliamentary positions “gifted to them on a silver plate” (“Letters”, 2012a, p. 13), and therefore being seen as “free riders” (SUNGO, 2012, p. 2), “gap fillers” (Tone, 2012c, p. 7), “second best” (“Letters”, 2013c, p. 13) or “second class citizens” (Lesa, 2013a, p. 4). Tautua Samoa MP Afualo Dr Wood Salele (2012, pers. comm., 28 August) stated he could not respect women who entered Parliament because of the quota: “I can only listen and accept someone who has won the election fairly”. Supporters of the bill acknowledged that women who won a constituency seat would perhaps command more respect in the House than female MPs who occupied additional seats due to the quota (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September).

The proposed quota was seen as going against principles of fairness and democracy. Unsuccessful male candidates may have gained a greater proportion of votes than women who would become MPs because of the quota. These women, therefore, would be coming into Parliament through an unfair process: “it’s just like someone who came through a window” (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). The Government was accused of passing undemocratic legislation (“Letters”, 2012b; “PM: What referendum?”, 2012). A Tautua Samoa MP claims the quota would mean that in future elections “the men have one chance to be elected while women have two chances” (quoted in Tauafiafi, 2012, p. 2). Concerns that the legislation discriminated against men were frequently expressed (Curry, 2013; Hazelman-Siona, 2013b; Lesa, 2013a; “Letters”, 2013c).

It was argued that the low number of female candidates in elections meant that Samoan women weren’t ready for Parliament. Fiame notes that percentage-wise, the ratio of successful to unsuccessful female candidates is better than that of men, meaning that “the issue really is about women putting up their hands” (Mata’afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Tautua Samoa argued that a quota would be forcing women to become MPs (Tone, 2012b). MP Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi argued:

Is this really what Samoan women want? We have given them the freedom the last 50 years to run in parliament. Do they really want to go into parliament? We can’t force them if they don’t want to. If they’re comfortable with the way things

are, I mean, what's wrong the current system? Have we deprived any rights of our women? The answer is no. (quoted in "Samoa opposition questions", 2012)

Fears were expressed that instituting a gender quota would lead to demands for guaranteed representation for other groups (Tuivaiese, 2013). At least one actor, a spokesperson from the disability organisation Nuanua O Le Alofa, did raise the possibility of a reserved seat for a woman with a disability after the gender quota was proposed ("Push in Samoa", 2012).

Opponents of the bill objected to the Government making amendments to the Constitution (Lesa, 2012; Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Questions of accountability were also raised, with critics alleging that the women who became MPs because of the quota would be accountable to the Prime Minister, instead of to a constituency of voters (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Other concerns related to the cost of passing the legislation and of additional MPs (Malifa, 2012; Tauafiafi, 2012), and the fluctuating size of Parliament from election to election (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August; Tuivaiese, 2013).

Quota Design

The quota legislation sets a minimum level of women's representation at 10 per cent. In Samoa's Parliament of 49 seats, this translates to at least five female MPs, although there is a provision in the legislation so that, if the size of Parliament increases, the minimum number of female MPs will also rise. The quota is designed so that if less than five women are elected in a general election, additional women will enter Parliament. These women will be the unsuccessful female candidates who won the highest percentages of votes in the election. If the quota had applied in the 2011 election, when two women were elected, an additional three female MPs would be brought in, to bring the total size of Parliament to 52 seats. The quota only applies if there are fewer than five women elected; if five or more women win seats in the general election, there would be no additional seats. While the constitutional amendment has been adopted by Parliament, an advocacy group for greater women's representation claimed they had been informed that the quota design could change in the future ("Women wanted separate roll", 2013).

The ten per cent quota is relatively low compared to quota requirements in other countries. While legal quotas range from five per cent to fifty per cent, a quota of around thirty per cent is most common (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). The quota proposal was described as "careful" and "not a radical way of making changes" (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Proponents argued that it would provide flexibility and ensure those entering Parliament under the legislation would be

“women of merit” (Tavita, TT 2012, pers. comm., 11 September), and that it would increase the number of women members of Parliament at “no cost to any male representation” (Tuilaepa quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012b, p. 2). The Prime Minister emphasised that the quota set ten per cent as the minimum level of women’s representation, and that there would be “no limitation to the maximum number of women we can have” (quoted in Lesa, 2013a, p. 4).

When introducing the quota, the Government was careful to point out that women who became MPs under the legislation would be selected from parliamentary candidates, rather than being appointed. It was argued that this would avoid the issue of women MPs being considered less legitimate than their male counterparts (Lesa, 2013a). Tuilaepa claimed it would ensure that “women will still have to go through the same baptism of fire” as male politicians (quoted in Malifa & Lesa, 2012, p. 28). He differentiated his proposed system with those in other countries “where they actually appoint the women” (quoted in Abbott, 2012).

The word ‘quota’ was avoided by government representatives when they were promoting the legislation. In a newspaper article published on 5 February 2012, Fiame (quoted in Tauafiafi, 2012) maintained that the legislation was “not a quota because it is done by bringing in women who stood as candidates” (p. 15). She gave the Bougainville Parliament’s three reserved seats for women as an example of what she considered a quota, arguing that this kind of system led to the reserved seats being considered “women’s seats” and the general seats “men’s seats”, a situation she described as “dangerous” (quoted in Tauafiafi, 2012, p. 15). There were, however, concerns raised in Samoa that the legislation would have the effect of creating a “ceiling” of 10 per cent women’s representation, thus inadvertently creating a further barrier to greater women’s representation (Lesa, 2012, p. 12; Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August).

The design of the legislation has been criticised, even by those who support the intent. It was labelled “convoluted” (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September), and the idea that women who were unsuccessful candidates in the general election could be called up as additional MPs if there weren’t enough women elected was dismissed as “insulting” (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September). In a speech in Parliament, one MP compared the system of selecting additional MPs to “drawing the winner to a raffle” (quoted in Tupufia, 2012, p. 3). A public forum organised by SUNGO to discuss the proposed quota found a high level of support for the idea of a gender quota, but widespread concern over the process of implementing the legislation (Tone, 2012a; Tone, 2012c; Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August).

Various alternative methods of increasing women's representation were proposed. One of the most common suggestions was to remove the restrictions around *matai* titles for women. The leader of Tautua Samoa suggested that the Government should be pushing villages to give more *matai* titles to women, and dealing with the villages that do not allow female *matai*, instead of focusing on a quota (Hazelman-Siona, 2012a). The Prime Minister (quoted in "PM: What referendum?", p. 10) responded that the bans on female *matai* in some Samoan villages were not a concern for Government: "Titles are the sovereignty of families and villages and government shouldn't interfere with it." The President of SUNGO, Vaasilifiiti Moelangi Jackson, proposed removing the requirement that candidates hold a *matai* title for women (Netzler-lose, 2012a). Women from rural areas also expressed support for allowing non-*matai* women to be candidates for Parliament (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September). While only around 10 per cent of *matai* are women, there are still over 1700 female *matai*, leading some to dismiss the argument that there are not enough potential female candidates (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). Another argument was that any women who wanted to be a parliamentary candidate could gain a title from at least one of the villages where she had familial connections: "Most Samoan women have access to titles" (Kerslake, M 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). Others were hesitant to make further changes to the electoral system based on the *matai* system, which is considered to be a fundamental part of Samoan culture: "a lot of how the society runs is based on the *fa'amatai*, so I think the base question around that is, if you take away the *fa'amatai*, is the alternative better?" (Mata"afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August).

The SUNGO submission on the proposed legislation contained an alternative suggestion of a separate electoral roll for women. Their proposal was to establish five reserved seats for women, to be elected by voters registered on a Women's Electoral Roll. According to SUNGO, advantages of this option would be that the number of members of Parliament would be fixed at 54; that women who did not live in their home villages would be encouraged to run; that the elected women would be better advocates for women's issues; and that candidates for the reserved seats would potentially require less financial resources than those in constituency seats (SUNGO, 2012). The separate electoral roll alternative was presented as a "more progressive" option than the quota proposed by the Government (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). Critics of this proposal argued that it would be costly to set up a separate roll for women, and that it would be popular with the general public (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September).

The importance of education and awareness-raising programs in increasing women's parliamentary representation was emphasised. Education and awareness programs and a strong voter education drive were suggested alternatives to a legal quota (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August; Anon 2012, pers. comm.). The proposed quota was criticised by community advocate Maria Levi (quoted in Tone, 2012c, p. 7), who argued: "There are so many women out there who do not understand the meaning of a democratic system of government so how can we introduce these big changes when women at the grassroots level do not understand the basics of a democratic society?" Proponents of a quota system stressed the need for an accompanying education program focusing on the political system (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September). Educational programs on gender roles and the importance of women's representation was also considered vital (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September), as was engaging men in the process: "the change is not going to come unless the boys want us there" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

The Tautua Samoa Party advocated a referendum on the proposed constitutional amendment. They argued that voters needed to have the chance to consider the changes to the Constitution (Netzler-Iose, 2012b). The Prime Minister (quoted in "PM: What referendum?", 2012) rejected this call:

That is why districts elect their representatives to Parliament. So they go in and make these sorts of decisions without Parliament having to go back to the people again and again. If the Opposition leader cannot make such a decision, then he shouldn't be in Parliament (p. 10).

Different types of quota were suggested as alternatives to the proposed legislation. Some argued that ten per cent was too low (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August), and that a thirty per cent quota would be preferable (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). Another alternative proposed was to institute reserved seats like the system used in the Parliament of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September). The leader of Tautua Samoa put forward the idea of a party quota, instead of a legal quota, whereby registered parties had to select a certain proportion of female candidates (Tone, 2012b). Afualo (2012, pers. comm., 28 August) explained that "the problem lies in the initiative from the parties to campaign for more women's seats. That has been a problem over the years, there has been a lack of willpower." A minimum of 20 per cent women candidates was suggested (Hazelman-Siona, 2012c; Tone, 2012b).

Local Actors

The quota initiative in Samoa originated within Cabinet, and observers perceived the main proponent to be Prime Minister Tuilaepa. The main public voices in opposition to the quota were also male political actors, from the opposition Tautua Samoa Party. While women MPs and some members of women's groups in Samoa supported the quota, in their narratives they did not take ownership of the campaign, which they saw as piloted by male members of the political elite.

Political Actors

The Prime Minister of Samoa is considered to be the driving force behind the gender quota legislation. Within Cabinet, Tuilaepa was the “main proposer” of the legislation (Anon 2012, pers. comm.), and civil servants referred to the quota as “the Prime Minister’s proposal” (Netzler-lose, 2012a, p. 4). Afualo (quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012c) claimed that Tuilaepa’s personal advocacy of the legislation would mean that any women who became MPs because of it would be beholden to him: “If you come into Parliament through this new process...simply put, you are there because Tuilaepa put you there” (p. 2).

There are two female MPs currently, both members of the governing HRPP. While both MPs have spoken in support of the legislation in Parliament and in the media, they have largely assumed a background role in the quota debate. Fiame explains:

there’s also a lot of room for misunderstanding I think, being a woman and a politician, that could be interpreted as a very sort of a personal thing. And I think it’s very important that men are seen to be active. (Mata’afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August)

Opposition MPs initially accused the HRPP of implementing a quota to shore up its numbers in Parliament (Netzler-lose, 2012b; Tauafiafi, 2012). The Tautua Samoa party opposed the concept of additional MPs in Parliament, and argued that women who occupied these additional seats would not be respected (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August).

Women’s Movement

In Samoa, women’s organisations were engaged to an extent in the quota campaign, although women in civil society were discouraged by what they perceived as the government’s unwillingness to consult with them over the issue. President of the Samoan branch of the Pan Pacific Southeast Asia Women’s Association (PPSEAWA), Papali’i Dr Viopapa Annandale, expressed

concern that there was no public consultation over the bill prior to its drafting ("Samoa forum", 2012). This was despite the proposal first being mooted about a year before the bill was drafted (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September). The lack of consultation meant that, while non-governmental actors could and did voice their opinions on the legislation, they lost any influence they may have had over the provisions of the bill: "If it's already an amendment and it's going to Parliament, well then yeah you can scream all you like, it's going to happen" (Anon 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

Non-governmental organisations have been the main advocates for greater women's representation in Samoa in the past (Peteru, MVR 2012, pers. comm., 4 September). SUNGO consulted on the bill, held a public forum, and prepared a submission to Parliament. The submission stated that an "overwhelming majority" of forum participants agreed with the intent of the legislation to increase the number of women in Parliament, but expressed concern over the design of the proposed quota. A separate women's electoral roll to elect five female parliamentarians was suggested as an alternative option, although the submission did not provide details on how the separate role would be implemented (SUNGO, 2012). Local organisations were supported by regional women's groups on this issue (Peteru, MVR 2012, pers. comm., 4 September).

The extent and nature of grassroots involvement in the gender quota campaign is contested. Some claimed that it was a grassroots movement, "though the Government has made that doorway...they just turned the knob to the door and we push" (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). It was argued that women from the grassroots were active participants in the forums on the issue (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Others, however, maintained that the campaign couldn't be characterised as grassroots (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September; Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August), and that village-based women had little influence on the campaign (Anon 2012, pers. comm.).

Other Local Actors

Other local actors that were involved in the debate around the proposed quota included representatives of the government department responsible for women's affairs. The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development publicly supported the current legislation (Netzler-lose, 2012a). This stance, however, is in marked contrast to previous positions held on the issue of gender quotas by the department. The former CEO of the Ministry claims that during her tenure, under the current Prime Minister, the official stance of the Government was resolutely opposed to

the use of parliamentary gender quotas (LFE Shon 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). The first public indication that this position had changed came in September 2011, when Tuilaepa announced his plans to introduce quota legislation.

International Actors

The UN has played a role in the quota campaign in Samoa, although the extent of its involvement is debated. A UN technical advisor on special temporary measures was sent to Samoa when the legislation was proposed. The UN also provided funding and support for public discussions on the legislation, including a public debate (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August; Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). Tautua Samoa MP Levaopolo Talatonu (quoted in Tauafiafi, 2012, p. 2) argues that the UN has been heavily involved in the campaign:

the United Nations is behind the push, and my concern is that if it's left unopposed, it will lead to Samoa's traditional form of government becoming lost eventually. It's an indication we're going backwards to the days before Samoa became independent...it's the UN which is calling the shots and the HRPP is sucking up to them.

Some interviewees argued that the UN were "neutral" and simply "encouraging debate" (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September), while others claimed that they were strongly promoting gender quotas (Anon 2012, pers. comm., 7 September).

International obligations and pressures seem to have played a large role in the quota debate in Samoa. Samoa was the first Pacific Islands state to ratify CEDAW. When the legislation was announced, the CEO of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development said the Ministry was "very happy with the Prime Minister's proposal as it aligns with [the] Government's obligation to CEDAW" (quoted in Netzler-lose, 2012a, p. 4). Tuilaepa referenced the UN human rights mandates on women's rights in his justification for the gender quota. He has also mentioned several times that the "embarrassment" of low levels of women's representation in the Pacific region contributed to the decision to implement a quota (Abbott, 2012; "Samoa pushes", 2011). Tuilaepa talked about needing the quota to reach global standards of equality. He claimed: "This move is to ensure that Samoa keeps up with the modern world in terms of gender equality and fairness" (quoted in Tone, 2012b, p. 1). The MDGs were often cited as a justification for the new legislation. The pressure to adhere to the target of 30 per cent women's representation contained in MDG 3 was acknowledged by the Prime Minister ("Samoa plans",

2011; “Samoa PM seeks”, 2011), other members of Cabinet (Mata’afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August), Tautua Samoa MPs (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August; Tauafiafi, 2012), and women in civil society (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

This emphasis on obligation to the international community led to criticism that the Government was allowing itself to be dictated to by the UN. Participants in the quota debate noted a common perception amongst the public that the UN was the driving force behind the quota legislation (Va'a, LR 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). Tautua Samoa MPs accused the Government of instituting a quota to win the approval of the UN (Salele, AW 2012, pers. comm., 28 August), and giving too much power to the international organisation: “The government wants Samoa to governed from outside” (Palusalue, quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012a, p. 3). A cartoon published in the *Sunday Samoan* on 5 February 2012 referenced the quota debate, with one character claiming “Sole, it brings tears to my eyes that our Constitution will once again be amended” and Sole replying “I agree, pretty soon this country’s name will be the United Nations of Samoa” (“Cartoon”, 2012b, p. 13; see below).

Critics of the quota proposal argued it was driven wholly from outside Samoa. There was a backlash against the quota from those who believed the Government had been unduly influenced by international actors: “Just because some organization outside Samoa says we need to have more women in Parliament, it does not mean we have to do it” (“Samoa forum”, 2012, p. 13). Afamasaga Toleafoa (2013a, p. 13), a former MP, claimed:

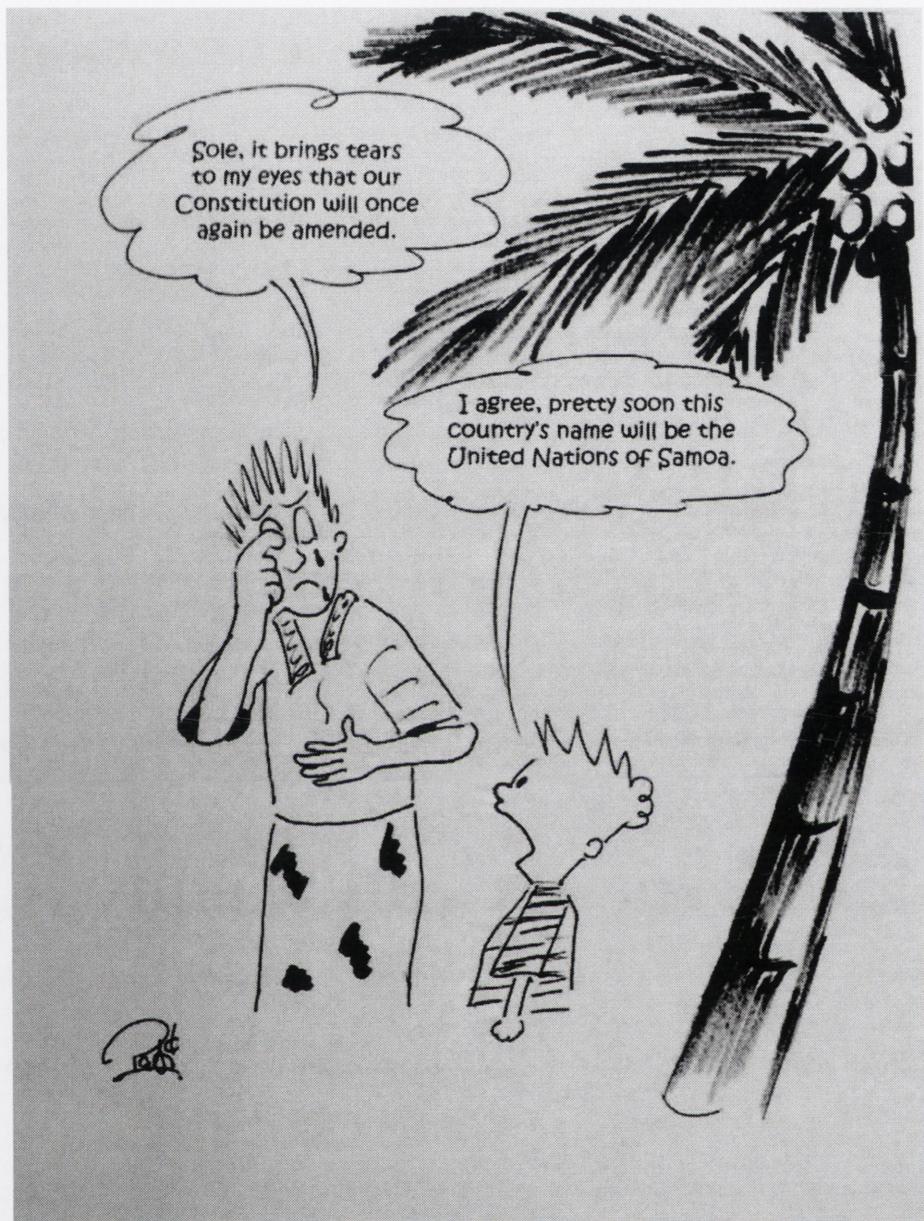
largely outside generated agendas [are] deciding issues which have a large bearing on life in this country now and in the future... The concern today is that these outside agendas are already driving the change process according to others’ visions of what Samoa should be like, without that serious nationwide dialogue taking place.

Some commenters disagreed with the notion that Samoa had obligations to international conventions, arguing that “human rights, whether international or domestic, [are] an issue entirely our own and therefore [should] be assessed and determined by our own fa’asinomaga,²² not otherwise” (Tuivaiese, 2013, p. 15), and that adhering to “ridiculous ‘one size fits all’ UN agendas and goals is not the smart thing to do” (“Samoa opposition questions”, 2012, p. 13). In a parliamentary debate, Fiame (quoted in Tupufia, 2012, p. 3) dismissed such concerns, arguing that

²² Point of reference.

Samoa's interests and the interests of the UN were aligned: "we are the United Nations...Samoa is part of the United Nations and therefore we are the UN."

Figure 3: Cartoon, *Sunday Samoan*, 5 February 2012



Source: "Cartoon", 2012b.

While it was generally accepted that international pressure played a significant role in the adoption of a gender quota in Samoa, the design of the gender quota was considered to be local. MDG 3 sets a target of 30 per cent women's representation by 2015, but the Samoan legislation only guarantees 10 per cent. It is unusual in design, especially given other quotas implemented in the Pacific Islands region follow the reserved seats and party candidate quota models.

Furthermore, it will not come into effect until the 2016 election, after the target date for the MDGs. This was seen as a deliberate attempt to distinguish it as a Samoan-designed quota: "How we've done it, I think has been totally local...Samoans and the Government particularly, they like to do things their way" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

While the Government has acknowledged international influence played a role in their decision to adopt a gender quota, the discrepancy between the 30 per cent target of MDG 3 and the 10 per cent quota adopted by Samoa has been noted. *Samoa Observer* Editor-in-Chief Savea Sano Malifa (2012) argues that the sudden emphasis on MDG 3 stems from the Government's concern about Samoa moving from least developed country status to developing country status in 2014, with the associated reduction in the level of aid received from the UN. He, along with other commentators, proposes that the quota legislation is designed to curry favour with the UN by demonstrating that Samoa is moving towards the MDG targets, thus ensuring the continuing provision of aid (Malifa, 2012; see also Tuivasiiese, 2013).

International Diffusion

Influence from outside Samoan was also perceived in more subtle ways, through observing the experiences of other countries. Letuimanu'asina Dr Emma Kruse Va'ai, a prominent academic, claimed: "we are very much a part of the international community and we're conscious...of all that advocacy throughout the world for more representation in Parliament for women" (2012, pers. comm., 5 September). Others also believed the Prime Minister introduced the quota after learning practices to increase women's representation from other countries (Anon 2012, pers. comm.). Tuilaepa himself argued that the proposal was not a command from the UN, but rather a national response to a transnational issue: "We don't have an agreement with the UN...but the world has been crying for more empowerment of women in their Parliaments" (quoted in Hazelman-Siona, 2012b, p. 1).

Within the Pacific Islands region, Samoa was the first independent state to introduce a parliamentary gender quota. While there were existing examples of gender quotas at the sub-national level in the Pacific Islands region, quota advocates in Samoa only explicitly referenced the reserved seats system in the Bougainville House of Representatives, and in a negative rather than a positive light. In an interview with the *Samoa Observer*, Fiame distinguished the proposed Samoan legislation from the Bougainville quota system, arguing that the former should not be considered a quota (Tauafiafi, 2012). The parity laws in use in the French Pacific territories were not mentioned in interviews or newspaper coverage of the Samoan quota debate. While this

suggests a lack of regional diffusion of gender quota legislation, proponents of the proposed quota in Samoa did portray the move as a potential model for other countries in the region (“Samoa plans”, 2011).

Institutional Context

Samoa has a high level of political stability. It has been continuously democratic since it was the first Pacific state to win independence in 1962, and its Prime Minister is the longest-serving current political leader in the Pacific Islands region. Tuilaepa has implemented a series of controversial political moves without losing the support of the Samoan public and the control of Parliament. His significant majority in Parliament, and his personal support from the public and within his party, ensured that the quota legislation he endorsed was passed comfortably.

Party System

The HRPP became the first Samoan political party when it was formed in 1979. It has been in power since 1982, save for a period in opposition from 1985 to 1988. The current Prime Minister has held the post since 1998. The HRPP currently hold a two-thirds majority in Parliament with 37 seats. To register as an official party in Parliament, a party must have at least eight members (So’o, 2009, p. 206). The only other party officially registered at present is Tautua Samoa, which was formed in 2008. The 12 non-government MPs are all aligned with Tautua Samoa.

Political parties in Samoa do not have strong ideological underpinnings, but rather exist “as a means of formally uniting members of parliament in order to get the required number to form a government” (So’o, 2012, p. 71). Party unity within the HRPP is maintained in part through a pragmatic expansion of Cabinet and the institution of sub-cabinet titled roles to attract and keep MPs within the party framework (So’o, 2012). The modern HRPP essentially does not have backbenchers, as every MP is either a Minister or holds an associate ministerial portfolio. So’o (2012) also credits the enduring power of the HRPP to populist policies and the implementation of measures within the party to deter defections. Iati (2013) claims the HRPP has used legislative measures to undermine and weaken opposition parties and coalitions, thus maintaining its stronghold on Samoan politics.

Parliamentary politics in Samoa has been controlled by the HRPP for the last quarter century. This context has created political stability in ensuring consistency in social and economic policy, while preventing the emergence of a strong opposition presence (Iati, 2013). The lack of a clear ideological foundation can perhaps be seen in the publicly expressed dissent of some HRPP MPs

on the issue of the gender quota (Hazelman-Siona, 2013a). Nevertheless, no HRPP MPs crossed the floor on the issue, and the political dominance of the HRPP and its leader, Tuilaepa, ensured the passage of the quota legislation through Parliament.

Political Stability

While Samoa is an outlier in the Pacific Islands region in terms of political stability, the Prime Minister has presided over several dramatic and controversial political changes. As stated above, in 2009 the Government changed the side of the road Samoan drivers used, from the right-hand side of the road to the left-hand side, in an attempt to make importing cars more affordable. The change was highly contentious, with large crowds protesting the move in Apia and an attempt to block the legislation in the courts. Furthermore, in late 2011, Samoa moved across the international date line from UTC -11 to UTC +13. In practical terms, the move meant that Samoa jumped from December 29, 2011 to December 31, 2011. This change was intended to improve business connections with Australia and New Zealand, which had both previously been approximately a day ahead of Samoa. Jon Fraenkel (2013, p. 201) writes of Samoa: “Far from being a tradition-bound government, Samoa is probably one of the most reform-oriented countries in the world – few states could change what side of the road their cars drive on and shift the dateline eastwards so as to enter the same time-zone as its major trading partners.”

Both the move to driving on the left-hand side of the road and the shift across the international date line were initially divisive, but neither affected Tuilaepa’s long-term popularity substantially. He has established control of both his party and Parliament, even following controversial law changes, to the extent that a piece of legislation that he has personally advocated, such as the gender quota bill, is considered a “fait accompli” (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September). Afamasaga Toleafoa (2013b, p. 14) said of the quota legislation before it passed: “Given the way decisions are made under the current regime, the deed is as good as done.”

Tuilaepa’s personal political dominance has allowed him to drive the gender quota bill forward even though his previous position was against the use of quotas. The first public indication that this position had changed was the announcement of quota legislation in September 2011. There has been speculation on the reason behind the policy shift. It has been suggested that the Government could be instituting a gender quota as a token gesture to further other political aims, or to gain favour with the UN. Whatever the reason for the policy shift, Tuilaepa’s strong personal support and the large parliamentary majority of the HRPP have ensured that the quota will be introduced.

As head of the political party that has dominated Samoan politics for twenty years, Prime Minister Tuilaepa has consolidated political power, which is manifested in strong public support and a two-thirds parliamentary majority. His personal dominance in the political sphere means that a policy he has endorsed will most likely be easily approved in Parliament. The position he is in enabled him to change the Government's stance on gender quotas, and implement a ten per cent quota, without significant controversy.

Anticipated Effects of the Gender Quota

There were mixed opinions regarding the possible effects of implementing the proposed quota. It was generally thought that the legislation would result in more women being encouraged to run for Parliament (Peteru, MVR 2012, pers. comm., 4 September; Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September; SUNGO 2012). Women MPs and CEOs expressed a determination to support female candidates in the next election with the goal of exceeding ten per cent women's representation and not needing to use the quota provisions (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August; Anon 2012, pers. comm.).

On the issue of the future effects of the quota on the substantive representation of women in Parliament, opinions were mixed. Some believed that it would lead to more balanced decision-making (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August), and that if the elected women worked together they could advance a "women's agenda" (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September). Others were not convinced that the quota would have a substantive impact on parliamentary decision-making, arguing that "the debate will always be on party lines" (Va'ai, LEK 2012, pers. comm., 5 September), and that it would have no effect on the kind of laws passed by Parliament (Tavita, TT 2012, pers. comm., 11 September).

The legislation had generated more public dialogue around gender roles, and around women's representation. One of the current women members of Parliament said: "I think the greater significance of the Bill is that it started the whole discussion around gender relations, something that's never really happened in Samoa before" (Mata'afa, FN 2012, pers. comm., 28 August). She also noted that having at least five women in Parliament would help to normalize women's representation and lead to greater acceptance of women in politics.

Doubts were raised about the ability of five women MPs to make an impact in Parliament. It was noted that the two current female MPs do not speak often in the House (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August), but as Roina Vavatau (2012, pers. comm., 8 August) noted: "the comments we

got from Parliament is but the women you have here don't talk. So do you blame them for not talking? There's only two of them in there." Greater women's representation could result in women MPs having more confidence to speak in the House, but the ten per cent quota was described as "minimal" (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August), and "not enough" to make a real difference (Anon 2012, pers. comm.).

The legislation was expected to have little effect for Samoan women living in rural areas. It was thought that it would be mostly educated urban women putting themselves forward as candidates (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). There was not a wide awareness program regarding the quota, and many people involved in the debate doubted that women living in rural areas understood the significance of the legislation (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September; Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September; Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). Some women from the villages did attend public forums and expressed their views of the quota: "one lady got up and said, 'What's the point? This is just going to benefit you people,' and...[she was referring to] urban women" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

There was a concern raised that the legislation would mean women stood less chance of being elected in the general election. Papali'i Dr Viopapa Annandale (2012, pers. comm., 10 September) claimed: "I think it's going to generate a sort of apathy.... I worry that fewer women will be elected in the general election, because I think some voters will say oh why waste your vote on a woman?" If women did come in as additional MPs, they might be perceived as "second-rate citizens in Parliament" (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September) and respected less than MPs who had won constituency seats.

Discussion

Opinions vary on the future benefits and disadvantages of the proposed legislation. It is assumed that the introduction of a quota will encourage more women to run for Parliament. These women, however, will most likely be educated urban-based women. The potential benefits of the quota are not expected to extend to the majority of Samoan women, who live in rural areas.

The proposed quota has been described as "minimal" (Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). The ten per cent minimum level of women's representation is relatively low, considering the worldwide average is thirty per cent (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). Given that the quota will guarantee just five women members in the Samoan Parliament, the proposed legislation could be seen as a tokenistic effort to acknowledge the issue of women's political under-representation.

Nonetheless, the passage of the Constitution Amendment Bill 2013 is a significant event in the Pacific Islands region as it makes Samoa the first independent Pacific state to institute a legal parliamentary gender quota. The quota legislation was viewed as part of the means to an end – greater women’s representation – rather than a mechanism to achieve that end on its own. It was widely believed that the quota would lead to higher numbers of women candidates, and many interviewees expressed the hope that in future elections the quota would not have been implemented, because five or more women would be elected. It was suggested that the presence of more women in the legislature would lead to better, more balanced decision-making, but interviewees were not necessarily convinced that the quota, with its guarantee of just five women MPs, would accomplish this result.

The gender quota debate in Samoa has been notable for the central role played by state actors, and the Prime Minister in particular. The Samoan gender quota campaign is unusual in that it has been directed almost entirely by political elites. Civil society actors, and particularly actors from the women’s movement, are the primary actors in most gender quota campaigns according to the literature (Krook, 2009; see also Htun & Jones, 2002; Jaquette, 1997). While civil society actors have been involved in the public debate in Samoa on gender quotas, through organising debates and forums, engaging with the media, and submitting to Parliament on the quota legislation, they did not claim ownership of the quota development and design. Many felt that the lack of consultation around the proposed bill had severely limited any influence they may have had on the quota design and implementation processes.

Another significant feature of the institutional context is the high level of political stability in Samoa, and how that positively influenced the outcome of the quota campaign. In the existing quota literature, periods of political instability have been associated with quota adoption in some cases (see Lépinard, 2007; Reyes & Azizah, 2002). In the case of Samoa, conversely, political stability was significant in explaining quota adoption. The political strength of the Human Rights Protection Party, and the personal political dominance of the Prime Minister, were very important dynamics in the quota debate. The support of Tuilaepa for the ten per cent quota essentially secured its passage into law.

The role of international actors in gender quota adoption can be significant, especially in countries that have limited international influence compared to other states, and countries in which quota campaigns are occurring after other states in the region have already adopted quotas (Krook, 2009). While Samoa, as a small island developing state, could be seen as having limited

international influence in comparison with larger and more developed states, as the first independent Pacific state to adopt a gender quota it was not obviously influenced by regional quota diffusion. International organisations, and specifically the United Nations, were involved in the Samoan gender quota debate, although the extent of their involvement is debated. The Prime Minister and other government representatives cited international obligations as one of the major reasons behind the Government's change of heart in regards to legislating for increased women's representation in Parliament. This rhetoric suggests an external orientation to the quota reform process, towards aligning with international norms of gender equality, while not necessarily engaging with domestic debates around democratic reform. While pressure from international organisations could be argued to have prompted the introduction of quota legislation in Samoa, the design of the quota itself is considered to be local.

Chapter Five

'TAIM BILONG OL MERI':²³ GENDER QUOTA CAMPAIGNS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, 2007-2012

In the end, you know, it did fail to the public perception, but I don't see it as a failure, I see it as part of a process. To me, politics is not about win or lose, it's about making inroads, moving forward.

Carol Kidu, former MP (2012, pers. comm., 17 October)

Introduction

Papua New Guinea is unlike the other case studies profiled in this research in that it is an example of a gender quota campaign resulting in quota non-adoption. In this chapter, I focus on the period from 2007 to 2012, when there was a push for nominated seats and then reserved seats for women. While the campaign did succeed in amending the Constitution to allow for the possibility of reserved seats for women – one from each of the Papua New Guinea provinces – it ultimately failed in the attempt to institute these seats before the 2012 election.

The quota campaign in Papua New Guinea was consistent with accounts of campaigns in the existing global literature in that the push for a gender quota came primarily from women's groups (see Krook, 2009). International actors were also involved in the campaign, providing support to local advocates. Furthermore, the reserved seats campaign was publicly supported by several prominent male political elites. In the case of Papua New Guinea, one significant feature of the institutional context leading to quota non-adoption was a period of political instability, the constitutional crisis of 2011-2012. Literature on quota adoption tends to associate periods of political instability and transition with positive quota adoption outcomes (see Lépinard, 2007; Reyes & Azizah, 2002). In this case, however, a period of acute political instability failed to provide a 'window of opportunity' for quota adoption, instead contributing to the failure of enabling legislation to implement a reserved seats system.

Women's groups were the driving force behind the campaign for reserved seats. The women's movement was more united with regards to the reserved seat proposal than in the nominated seats process. The National Council of Women (NCW) and the Women in Politics group in particular were heavily involved in promoting reserved seats. Other women's organizations, such as Papua Hahine and Women in Business, also played an important role. The role of the women's

²³ A saying used by supporters of the reserved seats legislation in Papua New Guinea (quoted in Chandler, 2011). Translation from Tok Pisin: 'The time for women has come'.

movement in driving the quota campaign was emphasised in accounts of the process, with activists taking ownership of the campaign and attributing its outcome, non-adoption, to a constitutional crisis and the inability of successive Prime Ministers to maintain control of Cabinet. In this way, political instability was highlighted as crucial to quota non-adoption, despite the activism of the women's movement and support from various high-level male and female political elites. The future success of the proposed reserved seat system was interpreted in a descriptive sense as the baseline of women's representation it would provide, which could then be built on in subsequent elections through women candidates contesting other seats; in a substantive sense, as its potential to change the style and substance of parliamentary debate; and in a symbolic sense, as leading to greater democratic legitimacy through a more representative Parliament.

Papua New Guinea has been continuously democratic since it won independence in 1975. The post-independence political history of the country, however, has been characterized by weak political parties and by frequent changes of government. The Women's Bill was introduced into Parliament in the midst of a constitutional crisis in which two separate factions were claiming to be the legitimate government, an event which had a significant impact on the outcome of the reserved seats campaign. The political instability of Papua New Guinea, characterized by the 2011-2012 constitutional crisis, may have appeared to offer a 'window of opportunity' for the quota legislation, with both men claiming to be Prime Minister publicly supporting the Women's Bill. As the crisis continued, however, MPs loyal to Sir Michael Somare stayed away from Parliament and the MPs of Peter O'Neill's coalition, made up of various parties and independent MPs, were offered a conscience vote on the enabling legislation, which failed to gain the requisite two-thirds majority in Parliament to be passed into law.

The data presented in this chapter draws from interviews conducted with participants in the quota debate and document analysis. The majority of the interviews took place during a fieldwork trip to Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, in September 2013. Other interviews were also conducted in Canberra, Australia in 2012 and 2013. Interviews were conducted with various actors, including current and former politicians, unsuccessful female candidates, officeholders and members of women's groups, lawyers, and employees of international organisations working in Papua New Guinea. The archival work draws on newspaper articles, letters to the editor, and reports from relevant organisations.

Background

Papua New Guinea is the largest state in Melanesia, with a population of over six million. It gained independence from Australia in 1975. Papua New Guinea encompasses the western half of the island of Papua, the islands of Manus, New Ireland, New Britain, and numerous other islands, as well as the Buka and Bougainville islands in the Solomon Islands archipelago, which make up the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. It is the most linguistically diverse country in the world, with over 800 different known languages spoken, and one of the most culturally diverse.

Politics in Papua New Guinea

The first national election with universal adult suffrage in Papua New Guinea was held in 1964 for what was then known as the House of Assembly. Further elections were held in 1968 and 1972, and in 1975 Papua New Guinea became independent. The first post-independence elections for the National Parliament took place in 1977. The voting system used was first past the post (FPP), and 109 members were elected: 89 in open constituencies, and 20 in provincial constituencies. From the 1997 election, the provincial seats became governors' seats, and those elected also served as governors of their provinces. The electoral system used in Papua New Guinea was changed from the 2007 election, with limited preferential voting (LPV) used in place of the original FPP system. Under the LPV system, voters choose their preferred three candidates who they rank in numerical order. In 2012, as a result of the number of provinces changing from 20 to 22, the number of governors' seats also increased by two.

Papua New Guinea has a multi-party political system, and the number of parties has proliferated in recent years. While ten or fewer parties contested national elections before 2002, in that year 43 parties were registered to contest the election. In 2007 the number of registered parties was 34. In addition, a large number of independent candidates stand for Parliament, with independents making up over half the total candidates in the 2007 election. Following the election, 23 parties won at least one seat. Twenty independent candidates also won seats, although most aligned themselves with a political party soon after the election (Gelu, 2011).

Governing coalitions are typically made up of numerous different parties. This makes governments particularly vulnerable to votes of no confidence. A controversial law, aimed at slowing the rate of administration changes, was introduced to protect governments from votes of no confidence for eighteen months following a general election,²⁴ and a year preceding a general election. After this

²⁴ This has since been extended to thirty months.

law was implemented, Sir Michael Somare became the first Prime Minister since independence to lead a government that lasted a full parliamentary term from 2002 to 2007.

History of Women's Representation

In Papua New Guinea, women have never made up more than 2.8 per cent of parliamentary seats. In the first House of Assembly election in 1964, three women contested seats, two expatriates and one PNG national. In the 1968 election there was just one female candidate. The first women to be elected to the House of Assembly, Josephine Abaijah, won her seat in the 1972 election (Sepoe, 2002).

In the first post-independence election in Papua New Guinea, three women were elected: Abaijah, Nahau Rooney and Waliyato Clowes. Rooney was re-elected in 1982, but for a ten-year period from 1987 there were no women members of Parliament. In 1997, Abaijah re-entered Parliament, along with another female MP, Carol Kidu. Australian-born Kidu was the only female MP from 2002 until she retired from Parliament in 2012. The 2012 election brought three new women into Parliament: Delilah Gore, who won the Sohe Open seat; Loujaya Toni, who won the Lae Open seat; and Julie Soso, who was elected Governor of the Eastern Highlands province.

Four women have become Ministers in Papua New Guinea. Rooney held ministerial portfolios from 1977 to 1982, and from 1985 to 1987. Kidu was a Minister in Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare's Cabinet from 2002 to 2011. After the 2012 election, Prime Minister Peter O'Neill appointed Toni as Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development, and in 2014 Gore also joined Cabinet as Minister for Higher Education.

The number of female candidates contesting elections has risen significantly since 1977, when just ten women contested. In 1997, there were 55 women contesting, up from 16 in the previous election (Sepoe, 2002). In 2007, 101 women stood as candidates in the general election (Haley & Anere, 2009), although just one woman, Kidu, was successful.

Efforts were made leading up to the 1997 election to elect female parliamentarians after a decade without women's representation. Workshops for women candidates were organised by Women in Politics and the NCW (Sepoe, 2002). The 1997 election saw a significant increase in the number of female candidates, and two women won seats. Leading up to the 2002 election, Women in Politics again ran workshops across Papua New Guinea for potential women candidates (Sepoe, 2002). Pre- and post-election workshops were also run for candidates and women elected in local level government elections.

Table 4: Women MPs in the Papua New Guinea Parliament, 1977-2014 (as at 16 December 2014)

TERM	Women MPs	Total MPs	Percentage of Women MPs
1977-1982	3	109	2.8
1982-1987	1	109	0.9
1987-1992	0	109	0.0
1992-1997	0	109	0.0
1997-2002	2	109	1.8
2002-2007	1	109	0.9
2007-2012	1	109	0.9
2012-present	3	111	2.7

Source: Adapted from Sepoe, 2002.

Barriers to Greater Women's Representation

Papua New Guinean academic Dr Orovu Sepoe (2002) notes there is substantial variance across Papua New Guinea in the experiences of women voters and candidates. Given the extraordinary cultural diversity across the country, this variation is to be expected. There are, however, some similarities in the types of barriers to women's representation.

Culture is seen as significant in terms of women's under-representation. It is often used as an argument against measures to increase women's representation. This is considered an excuse, however, employed by those who are invested in the status quo: "Custom has been employed by political elites for their own particular purposes" (Korare, 2002, p. 48). Nevertheless, cultural arguments remain an enduring barrier to greater women's representation. Indeed, not all women in Papua New Guinea believe that women should have space in the political sphere (Sepoe, 1996).

It has been noted that women in some Papua New Guinean cultures held a great deal of informal power in traditional society (Korare, 2002). This influence has been eroded by colonisation processes and the imposition of Western models of governance. The introduction of Christianity and associated ideas about gender roles also restricted women's access to decision-making

positions. Many women, however, believe that the influence of religious institutions has helped rather than hindered women's involvement in politics, through educational and employment opportunities, and through the establishment of church committees where women can gain experience relevant to a future political career (Korare, 2002).

Potential female candidates often lack the confidence necessary to put themselves forward to contest a seat. Women who do contest elections often face significant financial barriers (McLeod, 2002). Electioneering in Papua New Guinea is an expensive business and requires a substantial financial commitment from candidates. Vote-buying is common, with the influence of 'money politics' perceived to be on the increase since the advent of the LPV electoral system, as voters are able to allocate preferences to three candidates instead of voting for a single candidate under the previous FPP system (Haley & Dierikx, 2011). Women candidates need to have financial resources to compete: "women without money, with no background, no financial support themselves will never make it to politics" (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

Kidu (in Kidu & Setae, 2002, p. 51) notes the importance of familial connections and a clan voting base to her election to Parliament:

There is no doubt in my mind that the deciding factor for my win in 1997 was the fact that I was the widow of Sir Buri Kidu, the highly respected Chief Justice of PNG. In addition to that, Buri's birthplace and home is an urban village in my electorate, so I had a family and clan base vote as a foundation for the numbers necessary to win.

Kidu also writes that some voters told her that they would vote for her as an expatriate but they wouldn't vote for an indigenous Papua New Guinean woman (in Kidu & Setae, 2002).

The FPP voting system used in the past in Papua New Guinea was considered to be unfavourable to women candidates. When the voting system was changed to LPV for the 2007 election, it was reasoned that this would benefit women (Haley & Anere, 2009), as voters might be more inclined to give one of their preferences to a female candidate. In that election, however, only one woman, incumbent MP Kidu, won a seat. In 2012, it could be argued that the LPV system was beneficial to female candidates, as only one of the three women who were elected would have won her electorate under FPP. The other two women were declared the winners in their electorates after preferences had been distributed (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October).

Arguments for Greater Women's Representation

Advocates for greater women's representation stressed the need for balance in decision-making (see Korare 2002). It was argued that women's under-representation was undemocratic: "you can't call it a 'representative democracy' when half the population are not represented, it's as simple as that" (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). Proponents also stressed a human rights perspective: "it's their right to represent their interests, to have a voice in the highest decision-making body of the land" (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November).

It was argued that women can, and have, made a substantive difference in the Papua New Guinea Parliament. One interviewee claimed:

if you look at Dame Carol's influence in Parliament, you know, it's through her that any of the bills related to women have come to be. The domestic violence legislation that's still waiting to be passed, she led that. You know the Lukautim Pikinini Act,²⁵ she led that, you know? Any real sort of changes to the legislation in the country around gender issues was led by the only woman in Parliament. (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August)

The status of women in traditional society was also used by women in pushing for greater women's representation in politics. One female candidate claimed she had the respect of her constituency, quoting the saying "*"Harim tok bilong mama, kos meri karim yu'* (Listen to women because they gave birth to you and they should have your respect)" (in Korare, 2002, p. 49).

Quota Development

There have been past efforts in Papua New Guinea to introduce legislation designed to increase women's political representation. Provisions in the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government mandate one nominated seat for women in each of the provincial assemblies, one nominated seat in each of the urban local level government (LLG) councils, and two nominated seats in each rural LLG council. At the local level, most districts have not instituted the nominated seats (World Bank, 2012, p. 97). In the 1990s, the NCW called for a woman to enter Parliament as a nominated member, under the provisions of section 101 of the Papua New Guinea Constitution (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). That section, which deals with the composition of Parliament, allows for up to three nominated members to be appointed.

²⁵ A law regarding child welfare and the reporting of child abuse.

The Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC) was enacted in 2001 in an attempt to increase political stability in Papua New Guinea and to strengthen the political party system. One of the provisions of OLIPPAC is for a representative from the NCW to sit on the board responsible for overseeing the distribution of government funds to political parties. Another is that any party that endorses a female candidate who goes on to win at least ten per cent of votes in her electorate is refunded 75 per cent of her campaign expenses (Sepoe, 2002).

The next election, in 2002, saw a substantial increase in the number of female candidates who gained party endorsement. The 2002 election was the first election since independence in which there were more party affiliated women candidates than independents. From the 60 women candidates, two thirds were endorsed by political parties, in comparison to 12 out of 55 candidates in the 1997 election (Sepoe, 2002). The number of women elected, however, decreased from two in the previous term to just one, Kidu.

The Women in Politics group had proposed a quota provision to be included in OLIPPAC. Their suggestion was for a party quota under which each party had to nominate at least 30 per cent women candidates. The proposal was ultimately unsuccessful, with widespread opposition to the quota including from within Cabinet (Sepoe, 2002). Another quota proposal came from Transparency International PNG, who proposed twenty reserved seats be instituted (Korare, 2002). In 2006, when Parliament was debating the disestablishment of governors' seats, the President of the NCW proposed replacing those seats with women's seats (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September).

In the 2007 general election, a significantly higher number of female candidates stood than in previous elections. Despite 102 women contesting, only Kidu won her seat. Following the election, advocates for greater women's representation adopted what Kidu terms a "three-pronged approach" (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). The first element was capacity-building of potential future female parliamentarians. Secondly, there was an attempt to create nominated seats for women in Parliament. Thirdly, while the nominated seats process was ongoing, a proposal for reserved seats for women was being developed.

With regards to the first element, a UN diagnostic of the election identified key female candidates to work with in future elections. Other organisations, including CDI, worked on candidate training in the lead-up to the 2012 election (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). At the UN diagnostic workshop, held shortly after the 2007 election, many women who had been candidates expressed their support for temporary special measures to get women into Parliament (Bukikun, J 2013,

pers. comm., 3 September). To support this aim, a Joint Partners Technical Working Group (TWG) was established, chaired jointly by Kidu and the UN Resident Representative, with members representing women's groups, international organizations, and government departments. The TWG gave technical assistance to gender quota advocates, and also engaged in some lobbying on the issue (UNDP, 2009).

Nominated Seats

The proposal for nominated seats was based on the provision in section 101 of the Constitution which permits the appointment of up to three nominated members of Parliament. The Constitution states: "The Parliament may, from time to time, by a two-thirds absolute majority vote, appoint a person (other than a member) to be a nominated member of the Parliament" (pp. 62-3). These seats were not specifically for women but could in theory be used to increase the parliamentary representation of any societal group. The decision to first push for nominated seats for women was due to this existing provision in the Constitution. It was proposed as a temporary measure to increase women's representation and so that the women in the nominated seats could then press for other issues of importance to women, such as reserved seats (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August).

Kidu had attempted to implement this provision to bring in additional women in the previous parliamentary term, but her proposal had been defeated in Cabinet. Following the 2007 election, she made a second attempt to institute nominated seats. The Prime Minister, Somare, was supportive of the move (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September), and the Government had already signaled an intention to appoint four nominated women to Parliament, representing the four regions of Papua New Guinea, despite the Constitution only allowing for three appointees by nomination (UNDP, 2009; Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). After Cabinet approved the proposal. Expressions of interest were called for in late 2008 (UNDP, 2009). An advertisement was run in the media for a month to generate interest and gather applications from women (Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September). Ultimately, 79 women applied for the three positions. A human resources firm, Vanguard International, was hired to screen all applications (UNDP, 2009).

A screening committee was appointed to select a shortlist of applicants. The committee consisted of seven members, including representatives from church organizations, the public service, the University of Papua New Guinea, and other organizations. The President of the NCW chaired the

committee. The role of the screening committee was to prepare a longlist of twelve candidates, and from interviews with those twelve women prepare a shortlist of six women (UNDP, 2009).

The shortlist was sent to Parliament, where the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, Sir Mekere Morauta, were to meet and jointly decide on three nominees. Morauta, however, refused to be involved in the process. The Prime Minister then selected three women, but when Parliament voted to confirm their nominations in March 2009, they were voted down with only 60 votes in favour to 16 against, falling short of the two-thirds majority of 73 votes needed (UNDP, 2009). It was argued that the nominated seats were used as a “political football” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August), with even nominally supportive MPs not considering it a priority: “there were...able politicians supporting it but they weren’t going to risk anything for it” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August).

Morauta publicly opposed the nominated seats. His arguments against the proposal were threefold: firstly, that the process by which the appointments were made was not established in law first, and thus could be challenged in court; secondly, that a member of Parliament should be elected to office, not nominated; and finally, that three women would be too few to make a substantive difference in Parliament (UNDP, 2009). Concerns were raised by MPs about the roles and responsibilities of nominated MPs compared to elected MPs (UNDP, 2009). Some opponents of the proposal, from both within and outside Parliament, rejected the notion of nominated seats but voiced support for a reserved seat system in which the members would be elected by the public (UNDP, 2009; Lokoloko, M 2013, pers. comm., 5 September).

Several prominent women leaders also voiced their disagreement with the nomination process. One argued that the “entire process was like we were applying for a job...the process itself wasn’t done correctly” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 3 September), while another claimed that “the process was not very clear, was unfair, was so secretive, and the terms of reference were not clear” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 4 September). The UN report on the process notes disagreement among the screening committee members on whether or not it was necessary to include a representative from the NCW in the 12-person longlist (UNDP, 2009), which could have contributed to dissension among women leaders. Division over the nominated seats proposal led to a “power struggle” within the women’s movement (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 3 September), and hindered the chances of the proposal being approved by Parliament: “it failed, because we all didn’t cooperate with it” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

Reserved Seats

After the nominated seats process failed, the attention of advocates for greater women's representation shifted fully to the implementation of reserved seats. This measure was considered to have a greater chance of being instituted than the nominated seats. Several MPs, including the Leader of the Opposition, had indicated they would support a reserved seats system. At a public summit in Lae in 2009, governors endorsed the Morobe Communiqué which backed the establishment of provincial women's seats (World Bank, 2012).

The legislation advocated by Kidu amended the Constitution to add special seats for women as a category of parliamentary seats along with open seats, regional seats, and nominated seats. It would be accompanied by enabling legislation to institute the reserved seats before the 2012 general election. When the Women's Bill was first mooted, the Prime Minister at the time, Somare, was supportive of the legislation (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September).

Arguments for Reserved Seats

The argument was made that a parliamentary gender quota was necessary to compensate for the additional barriers women face in entering politics (World Bank, 2012). These include financial barriers, with women having "to compete with men who have so much money thrown around, you don't stand a chance against people like that" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). Reserved seats were seen as an essential tool in an environment where "the playing field is uneven" (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

Proponents of reserved seats argued that greater women's representation would have a substantive impact, because their perspective is different from that of male members of Parliament: "men don't see things how we women see it. Our perspective of how things should be done is quite different to how men see it" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). The idea of women bringing a "balance" to political decision-making was often mentioned (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). The late Scholla Kakas (2013, pers. comm., 3 September), who was President of the National Council of Women, used the analogy of a family:

looking at Parliament, it's just like a family. You need both parents to make the decisions, you listen to children and then see what the views are and you agree on raising children. The same applies in every decision making body...and especially with our national parliament. Women's voices are missing.

It was argued that men were more interested in bigger issues, and women were needed in Parliament to advocate for “small things” (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). Another argument advanced was that having provincial women’s seats would ease the workload of governors, given their dual roles as MPs and large electorates (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

Arguments against Reserved Seats

In Papua New Guinea, culture was at the heart of many objections to the Women’s Bill. Kidu (2012, pers. comm., 17 October) recounts: “at grassroots level, many people would have seen it as pushing the boundaries of culture. And so they would have been quite ambivalent about it.” Concerns were raised that the country was not ready for greater women’s representation (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November; see also “Push for more females”, 2012). Kidu said many MPs found her presence tolerable because she was Australian-born, but were opposed to representation for Papua New Guinean women: “many of my colleagues would say things like ‘oh we don’t mind you being here but we don’t want our women in here’” (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). Bob Danaya, the Governor of Western Province in Papua New Guinea, claimed in a speech in Parliament against the Women’s Bill that the role of women was not to enter politics:

In culture men are warriors. They go and protect women. We go and die for woman Mr Speaker - not a woman going to the war. No, we go and fight! And we support them and provide what they need also at the same time. (quoted in Fox, 2011)

The bill’s sponsor Kidu rejected this argument, claiming: “I don’t find it acceptable to say that the women’s role is in the home. I don’t want my daughters and my grand-daughters confined to that” (quoted in Fox, 2011).

Kidu explained that some of the opposition to quotas also stemmed from the belief that they were incompatible with democracy:

it’s not only pushing cultural boundaries but...people’s perception of what democracy is, also. Often people don’t understand there are many, many forms of democracy. And they’ve had this fixed idea of the elections and how they should be run and, because that’s all they’ve known since independence. And something different is...seen as favouring one segment of the population, when that segment has no voice anyway. (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October)

She stressed the connection between equal representation and representative democracy: “you can’t call it a representative democracy when half the population are not represented, it’s as simple as that” (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October).

The prospect of women who were elected in the reserved seats not being respected as much as other members of Parliament was raised by opponents of the bill (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September; Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September). Some MPs rejected the argument that women would make a substantive difference in Parliament, claiming greater women’s representation would make no difference and would thus be unnecessary (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). The cost of introducing extra parliamentary seats was also a consideration, although dismissed as “only an excuse” by supporters (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

Equality and Participation Bill

The Equality and Participation Bill, known as the Women’s Bill, was tabled in Parliament on 9 September 2012. The debate over reserved seats for women in Papua New Guinea was highly polarised and followed closely by national media. Kidu claims: “I would say, in the fifteen years I’ve been a member, I think it was the most worked on and researched and, you know, public campaign type of legislation in the whole time” (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). The Women’s Bill was passed by 72 votes to two on 23 November 2011. The Constitution was henceforth amended to include a provision for 22 reserved seats for women.

To implement the law, however, an amendment to the organic law on elections was needed (Fox, 2011). According to section 17 of the Papua New Guinea Constitution, changes to section 101 require only a simple majority in Parliament, but changes to the organic laws need a two-thirds majority. On 22 February 2012, the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (Amendment No 2) was debated. A conscience vote was allowed, despite Government MPs being bound to vote for other amendments, including the increase in the number of governors’ seats by two. Furthermore, MPs loyal to Somare were boycotting parliamentary sittings due to the ongoing constitutional crisis, reducing the number of potential votes. The amendment received 58 votes in Parliament, short of the 73 needed. While only one MP, Danaya, voted against the amendment, 21 MPs left the chamber shortly before the vote commenced (Elapa, 2012).

Quota Design

The Papua New Guinean proposal was for one reserved seat per province. While there was debate over whether to specify a set number of reserved seats in the legislation, ultimately the decision was made to tie the number of reserved seats to the number of provinces (Kwa, E 2012, pers. comm., 20 September). This number expanded from 20 to 22 in 2009 when two new provinces were created. Another suggestion was four reserved seats, representing the four regions of Papua New Guinea. This was decided against due to the size of each region and diversity within them (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September), as well as the fact that regional representation would require new electoral boundaries, while the electoral boundaries for provincial representation were already in place for the election of governors' seats (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). The reserved seats would have increased the size of Parliament to 133 seats, with 89 general electorate seats, 22 governors' seats, and 22 reserved seats for women. The establishment of the reserved seats would have ensured a minimum of 16.5 per cent female representation in the Papua New Guinea Parliament, a huge increase from the current 2.7 per cent. This quota, however, is relatively low compared to quota requirements in some other countries (see Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005).

The reserved seats were intended to be a temporary measure. The legislation included a sunset clause so that they would eventually be phased out (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). Women leaders in Papua New Guinea were broadly supportive of the reserved seats being introduced for a short period to familiarize the public with female political leadership and potentially change attitudes towards female candidates (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September; Lokoloko, M 2013, pers. comm., 5 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). A UN official noted that, while a smaller number of reserved seats could potentially have been proposed as a permanent fixture as in Bougainville, the 22 seats were more palatable to politicians and the public as a short-term measure (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September).

One criticism of the design was a concern that reserved seats would create a ceiling for women's representation. There was a fear that women would be discouraged from standing in general electorates if reserved seats were introduced. This is perhaps reflective of the similar criticisms of the reserved seats system in Bougainville (see CS/PIF, 2005; Kelly, 2010).

Local Actors

The reserved seats campaign in Papua New Guinea was “driven by women” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). Unlike the nominated seats process, which attracted strong criticism from within the women’s movement, the reserved seats proposal was widely supported by women’s groups and prominent individual women. It was also supported by notable political elites, including Kidu, at the time the sole female member of Parliament, and successive Prime Ministers Somare and O’Neill.

Women’s Movement

The push for a gender quota in Papua New Guinea came primarily from women’s groups. The women’s movement was more united with regards to the reserved seat proposal than in the nominated seats process:

We all decided to bury the axe for the failure [of the nominated seats proposal]...we decided to come united for the 22 reserved seats. We felt that that was a huge opportunity and we thought that would be really good because it will be on a level playing field. (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September)

A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) spokesperson claimed that the reserved seat campaign had galvanised the women’s movement in Papua New Guinea: “it is the 22 reserved seats advocacy that has spearheaded this unity within the women’s movement between the National Council of Women, the women’s organisations across the country, and their one goal is to get women on the floor of parliament” (quoted in “PNG reserved seats”, 2010).

Kidu, the sole female MP, sponsored the Bill, although she stresses that she was a “political conduit” and that the drive for reserved seats came from outside of Parliament (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). The NCW and the Women in Politics group in particular were heavily involved in promoting reserved seats. Other women’s organizations, such as Papua Hahine and Women in Business, also played an important role.

The NCW was first established in the late 1970s. As officeholder Lilly Tua (2013, pers. comm., 6 September) states, the “National Council of Women is the voice of women in Papua New Guinea. For political, for social, for cultural [issues], we speak for women”. The *National Council of Women Incorporation Act*, passed by the government of the time in 1979, formalised the NCW’s role as a conduit between Papua New Guinea women and the Government. Women in leadership became

a focus of the NCW from the late 1990s (World Bank, 2012). Support for the NCW is not uniform across the country, and there are other women's groups with different perspectives. Nevertheless, it is the broadest women's network in the country, with offices in every province, and their network was utilized extensively during the reserved seats campaign (Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September).

In 2009, the NCW and Women in Politics created a roadshow that travelled through the four regions of Papua New Guinea to generate awareness and campaign for the reserved seats legislation. The roadshow was funded by international donors, and led by the NCW. There was one team sent out to each of the four regions of Papua New Guinea, and altogether the roadshow covered every province, distributing materials and holding public meetings. The NCW used their strong provincial networks to plan events and mobilize supporters (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September). The main funding partner was UNDP, with AusAID also providing some support and UN Women supplying advocacy materials, including posters and booklets explaining how the reserved seats system would work (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). The effectiveness of the roadshow at gaining support for reserved seats was questioned by some aid workers:

You have to be really skilled and you have to have good community mobilisation.

You can't just go and give a lecture in a public place, you've got to sit with people and take them through it and they didn't do any of that. They did, you know, I think they did get radio debate, and...they did do public sort of forums and get the press along and things but ultimately it made no difference. (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August)

It was argued that the funding for effective community engagement was not forthcoming (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August), and inevitably the roadshow mainly targeted members of the provincial councils of women, meaning that for the most part the participants were "preaching to the converted" (Anon 2013, pers. comm.). Sepoe (2012, pers. comm., 13 November) notes that many women at grassroots level also gave their support to the campaign, although the issue was not fully embraced by the Papua New Guinean public.

The NCW had significant organisational capacity throughout the country through its network of provincial offices. Many of these provincial councils, however, have been criticised for failing to reach beyond the provincial centres into rural villages and hamlets, which may be a result of lack of funding and resources (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. com., 13 November). While attempts were made

to raise awareness of the issue outside urban centres, funding restrictions and geographical barriers made this difficult:

We tried to reach out to some villages that we could, but not as extensively as we [might have], not in the geographical terrain in PNG. You probably need helicopters to go out to the most remote villages tucked away behind these big mountain ranges so [there were] those practical difficulties. (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. com., 13 November)

Rural-based women in Papua New Guinea also have high rates of illiteracy, which was an added barrier to the dissemination of information about the reserved seats.

The lack of engagement with rural-based women gave rise to criticism that the campaign was driven by elite, urban women. This was a contested point, with some arguing this was not the case as it was largely driven by the women's movement: "In this country, [the] national women's movement is not the elite women. It's really the ordinary women who are in it...it is really a grassroots women's thing" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). Others claimed this was not true, and that the women's movement leaders "always see themselves, they're like we are the grassroots women, all of this but they're not really grassroots. They are quite prominent, they're educated women" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). While some interviewees conceded that elite women were driving the campaign, they argued that this was necessary to push the issue forward: "if the elite women don't do anything, then who will do it? Then will it ever happen?" (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November). Among the high profile advocates of reserved seats were former female members of Parliament, former parliamentary candidates, officials in political parties, academics, senior public servants, and prominent businesswomen, who created petitions and lobbied politicians to support the Women's Bill (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October; Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November).

Political Actors

The Papua New Guinean campaign for reserved seats was largely driven from outside Parliament, with less direct involvement from male political leaders. As 108 of the 109 parliamentarians at the time the legislation was debated were men, however, they played a pivotal role in the reserved seats debate. Male politicians were divided over their support of the Women's Bill.

Somare, who was Prime Minister when the Bill was proposed, was credited as a firm supporter of greater women's representation (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October), among other prominent

male politicians, included Puka Temu, the Deputy Prime Minister at the time (Lokoloko, M 2013, pers. comm., 5 September), and Powes Parkop, Governor of the National Capital District (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). Somare encouraged the nominated seats proposal (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September), and both Prime Minister Somare and his successor, O'Neill, publicly stated their support for the Women's Bill to establish reserved seats. O'Neill claimed that greater women's representation would improve governance in Papua New Guinea: "Only with the input of women will PNG go on and thrive to become a great nation" (quoted in Blackwell, 2011). The outspoken support of both Somare and O'Neill, however, did not guarantee the success of the reserved seats legislation:

We had assurance from Prime Minister but he is just one person...it meant that he had to convince those others who were with him to vote for what he believed in. And not everybody was with him when it came to the final casting of the votes.

(Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September)

Both the Somare and O'Neill governments were accused at different times of using the gender quota issue as a token gesture. During the nominated seats debate, the parliamentary opposition accused the Government and the Prime Minister, Somare, of using the opportunity simply to gain political advantage, arguing that three seats for women would not be enough to make a substantive difference in Parliament (UNDP, 2009). Observers noted that the nominated seats legislation was considered easy to cast aside by male MPs, and few MPs were willing to risk political capital for the proposal (Anon 2012, pers. comm., 17 August).

There were accusations that the O'Neill Government was using the Papua New Guinean legislation to gain support from women, but would not commit to passing the Women's Bill (Anon 2012, pers. comm.). The treatment of the reserved seats amendment by the O'Neill administration, given that it allowed its MPs a conscience vote on the issue, led to accusations that the quota had been supported merely as a token gesture, and that the government had no intention of establishing the reserved seats (Anon, pers. comm., 2012).

Other members of Parliament strongly opposed the legislation, including some provincial governors who raised concerns that the reserved seats organised by provincial boundaries would affect their roles (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). This was despite a resolution endorsed by governors at the 2009 Leaders' Summit in Lae for 22 reserved seats in Parliament (World Bank, 2012). Key figures in Parliament who opposed the Women's Bill included Bart Philemon, then the MP for the Lae Open constituency, and Danaya (Kenneth, 2012).

Other Local Actors

In Papua New Guinea, the governmental policy agency responsible for women's issues was also involved in the quota campaigns. This policy agency has existed in various forms since 1983, when the Women's Affairs Division of the Office of Youth and Recreation was created. The division was eventually relabeled the Gender and Development Division, within the Department for Community Development. In 2002, the department was restructured and the division was downsized, becoming the Gender and Development Branch. Three years later, the Office for the Development of Women (ODW) was created as a separate body reporting to the Prime Minister (World Bank, 2012). The ODW was involved in the campaign, working with women's organisations and development partners (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November). The ODW, and the Department for Community Development, were involved in gender sensitising programmes related to the reserved seats campaign, in conjunction with the UNDP (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September). Senior women public servants also advocated reserved seats (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November).

International Actors

Sepoe (2012, pers. comm., 13 November) described the reserved seats campaign in Papua New Guinea as "a partnership between civil society organisations, women's organisations especially, and the Government agency that had the responsibility of women's affairs, and development partners." These development partners included the UNDP, UN Women and AusAID. One interviewee, who worked for the UN in Papua New Guinea during the campaign, estimated that the funds spent by these development partners on the quota campaign came close to two million kina (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September).

Donors played an important role in the campaign, through providing significant technical and financial support. The UN offices in Papua New Guinea provided assistance to the campaign in the form of advocacy skills training and campaign materials (Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). UN Women ran media campaigns in support of the reserved seats, with print media, radio and TV advertisements (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). The UNDP's role included support to draft the Women's Bill, lobbying MPs, gender sensitising projects, and funding for projects, including a billboard advocating for reserved seats that was placed in a prominent position on the road leading to Parliament House (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September). AusAID also provided technical and funding assistance, often channeling funds through the UNDP.

Donor organizations were strongly represented on the TWG, which was tasked with coordinating the campaign for a gender quota in Papua New Guinea. The TWG brought together representatives from across the civil society, government and international aid sectors. Its members included representatives from UNIFEM (later UN Women), UNDP, the Department for Community Development, the parliamentary service, and civil society groups.

UN Women worked closely with leaders in the women's movement and prominent groups such as the NCW and Women in Politics. The extent of their collaboration with the women's movement, however, was dependent on funding and for that reason was largely limited to those working in the capital, Port Moresby (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). While the NCW was seen to be taking the lead on the reserved seats campaign, the UN provided technical assistance (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September), and the use of resources and conference facilities (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September).

A representative from UN Women acknowledged their role in the campaign could attract criticism that the reserved seats proposal was externally driven:

We are simply here to give them the guidance, to say international practices are this, what are quotas, how are they used...and the options there. So we give them all the technical support but I think over time there's always a criticism that it could be a push from the outside. (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September)

She disagreed with this notion, arguing that "the aspiration, the commitment, the drive came from the country. This is what the women want" (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). An AusAID representative reiterated the need to avoid a public perception that the campaign was donor driven:

I think I had actually quite a lot of influence but from a very much behind the scenes, resourcing and support sort of role. Because clearly it had to be led by Papua New Guineans, you know? And we were all, all of us were very conscious of this, this cannot be seen to be a donor driven thing, because it's so risky. If it's seen as a white person's colonial aspiration for PNG it's going to be wrecked from the start. (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 26 August)

Papua New Guineans involved in the women's movement rejected the idea that the reserved seats campaign was primarily driven by donors (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). Margaret Lokoloko (2013, pers. comm., 5

September), a Papua New Guinean who worked for the UNDP at the time of the campaign, claims: “it was a grassroots initiative, very much so. Donors just came in to give the technical assistance, guidance, for what was already a foregone conclusion.”

International Pressure

Papua New Guinea ratified CEDAW in 1995. Since then, however, progress towards meeting the objectives of CEDAW has been slow and the Government’s commitment to its CEDAW obligations has come into question. Its original report to the Secretary-General was not submitted until almost fifteen years after ratification (World Bank, 2012). UN representatives and members of the women’s movement stressed these international obligations in dealings with politicians over the quota legislation (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September).

Campaigners received public support from agencies including the UNDP (“UNDP keen to support”, 2012). UN logos were used on campaign materials, which was thought to increase the legitimacy of the campaign:

[The logos sent] the message that this is supported by a global body, that around the world advocates for equality and human rights, good governance, democracy...part of our job in your country is to look at your international commitments and support you, and our logos demonstrate our commitment.
(Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September)

Advocates noted that “we were quite fortunate because we did get a lot of attention from the global community” (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September), including support from prominent women political leaders and diplomats. Accusations were made, however, that these international actors were forcing the developments onto Papua New Guinea.

Gender advocates were accused of promoting the UN’s agenda (Kidu C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). Opponents argued that the reserved seats were a foreign idea that would be imposed on Papua New Guinea (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November). Kidu recounts being accused by a fellow MP of being “a pawn of AusAID” (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). She counters that in fact Papua New Guinean women “have been pushing this thing for many many many years, twenty years”, and that development agencies only assisted financially as the Government could not provide funds for the campaign (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October).

Regional Diffusion

No independent Pacific state has adopted a reserved seat system to date. The Autonomous Region of Bougainville, however, has three reserved seats for women in its Parliament. This created a precedent for Papua New Guinea, one that former Prime Minister Somare acknowledged: "It has created a benchmark for other Pacific states and has been broadly endorsed as a progressive first step for not only Bougainvillean but indeed for Papua New Guinean women generally" (quoted in Morriss, 2006). Supporters of the reserved seat campaign acknowledged the move by Samoa to institute a gender quota in 2013:

Samoa has taken the lead. Papua New Guinea was supposed to do it, they didn't, Samoa has taken over, so I'm hoping that we can now impress upon the government [that] your small sister country has done it, so why don't we do it...I hope that Samoa can also say yes, they learned a little bit from PNG. (Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 August)

The use of reserved seats in African countries was noted (Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). Women in reserved seats in the Ugandan Parliament came to Papua New Guinea to meet with women and share their experiences during the nominated seats process (UNDP, 2009). Representatives from the UN also emphasised the case of Rwanda as an example of successful implementation of reserved seats (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September; Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September).

Institutional Context

While Papua New Guinea has been continuously democratic since 1975, the post-independence political history of the country has been characterized by weak political parties and by frequent changes of government. The Women's Bill was introduced into Parliament in the midst of a constitutional crisis in which two separate factions were claiming to be the legitimate government, the timing of which had a significant impact on the outcome of the reserved seats campaign.

Party System

Measures have been made in Papua New Guinea to increase stability and create a stronger political party system. OLIPPAC, introduced in 2001, was intended to encourage stability and promote strong parties, but its provisions generally proved difficult to enforce (Fraenkel, 2012; Gelu, 2009). Another law, aimed at slowing the rate of administration changes, protected

governments from votes of no confidence for periods directly following and directly preceding a general election, thus limiting the opportunities to change a government mid-term. Somare, who had previously been Prime Minister twice before, led the first government to last a full parliamentary term from 2002 to 2007. He again became Prime Minister following the 2007 election.

The number of parties and independent candidates in Papua New Guinea politics means that governing coalitions are generally made up of multiple parties. This could constitute a test for a Prime Minister who wanted to pass controversial legislation. It was argued that the passage of the nominated seats legislation had been affected by a perceived lack of control of Cabinet by the Prime Minister: “the Prime Minister was not in control...it was the Prime Minister’s agenda, but half the time the Prime Minister is sick, or he’s not at the Cabinet, he’s got his deputy running the show” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September).

Political Stability

The passage of the Women’s Bill was affected by a constitutional crisis which began in 2011 (see May, 2011). In April, Somare had travelled to Singapore for medical treatment. When he had not returned by August, a motion of no-confidence was passed in Parliament and O’Neill was appointed Prime Minister by the Governor-General. Somare subsequently returned to Papua New Guinea and challenged O’Neill’s appointment in the Supreme Court. In December, the court in a 3-2 ruling declared the appointment unconstitutional and called for Somare to be reappointed. Following the Supreme Court’s ruling, however, O’Neill was re-elected as Prime Minister by the House, and the Speaker of the House announced that he would only recognise a government led by O’Neill. Both Somare and O’Neill appointed separate Cabinets and police commissioners (May & Haley 2014). In this context, the O’Neill Government took on the Women’s Bill, which had been developed by Dame Carol Kidu while she was a Cabinet Minister in the Somare Government.

The constitutional amendment to allow for reserved seats, sponsored by Kidu who was at that point Leader of the Opposition, was eventually passed under the O’Neill Government. To actually institute reserved seats, however, enabling legislation was needed which, as a change to the electoral law, would require a two-thirds majority. This piece of legislation, the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (Amendment No 2), was debated in early 2012. The O’Neill government allowed a conscience vote, despite government coalition MPs being bound to vote for other amendments to the electoral law, including one to increase the number of governors’ seats in Parliament.

Allowing a conscience vote on the enabling legislation for the reserved seats could have been a strategy by the administration to curry favour on both sides of the debates, given O'Neill had spoken out in support of the Women's Bill. A binding vote would have ensured reserved seats were created; instead, with a conscience vote, the enabling legislation was not adopted. It could also have been a compromise O'Neill had to make to the various parties and independent MPs that made up his governing coalition.

The ongoing constitutional crisis also hindered the potential passage of the enabling legislation, as MPs loyal to Somare were boycotting parliamentary sittings at the time it was debated, thus reducing the number of potential votes:

It all happened because of the impasse...like there was two governments, right?

Two of everything, and so people are not on the floor of Parliament in full numbers in order to have the voting take place. That was our disaster. (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September)

Ultimately, the political environment in which the Women's Bill and subsequent enabling legislation were debated did not prove conducive to the progress of the reserved seats campaign. The political instability of Papua New Guinea, characterized by the 2011-2012 constitutional crisis, may have appeared to offer a 'window of opportunity' for the quota legislation, with both Somare and O'Neill publicly supporting the Women's Bill. As the crisis continued, however, MPs loyal to Somare stayed away from Parliament and the MPs of O'Neill's coalition, made up of various parties and independent MPs, were offered a conscience vote on the enabling legislation, which failed to gain the requisite two-thirds majority in Parliament to become law.

Aftermath of the Reserved Seats Debate

The campaign for reserved seats in Papua New Guinea ultimately did not result in the institution of a quota before the 2012 general election. However, while the 22 reserved seats were not established in Papua New Guinea for the 2012 election, the campaign did result in an amendment to the Constitution to provide for reserved seats for women. It is possible, therefore, that the provision may be implemented in the future.

Despite the reserved seats system not being in place, the 2012 election proved to be a significant one for women. The 2012 election still saw a record 135 women run, with women making up four per cent of parliamentary candidates (Nicholas, 2012). Three women were elected to Parliament, the highest number of female MPs since three women were elected in the first post-independence

election in 1977. The outcome was particularly notable as none of the three women were incumbent MPs, since Kidu, the only women parliamentarian in the previous term, had retired. Gore, running for the Triumph Heritage Empowerment (THE) Party, won the Sohe Open seat in Oro Province. Another female THE candidate, Soso, was elected Governor of Eastern Highlands. She became the first women MP from the Highlands. Toni, who stood for the Indigenous People's Party, won the Lae Open seat. Proponents of the reserved seats system argued that the campaign had assisted the election of the three women in 2012, because of the advocacy and awareness campaign they had carried out (Kwa 2013, pers. comm., 20 September; Lokoloko, M 2013, pers. comm., 5 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). Others argued that these women had benefited from the sympathy of voters after the reserved seats legislation had failed to be implemented: "We call it a 'sorry vote'" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

The election was the first in which the LPV system had a significant effect for women candidates. Of the three women who won seats, only one, Gore, would have been elected under an FPP system. Given the highly publicised campaign for reserved seats in the years leading up to the election, it was suggested that the public awareness of women's under-representation raised by the campaign contributed to the success of the three new women parliamentarians. Other significant issues noted in the election were party support, notably the THE Party which endorsed two of the successful female candidates (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October), and the high profile of the three women in their respective electorates (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November).

The two most vocal opponents of the reserved seats legislation, Philemon and Danaya, both lost their seats in the 2012 election. Philemon lost to his younger, female relative Toni, while Governor Danaya also lost his re-election bid. Advocates of the reserved seats claimed to have coordinated efforts to have these MPs unseated:

We did some things like men who went against what we were doing, we told them, next Parliament, you're not coming back. We will make sure you're not coming back. And it happened, and it happened. (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 6 September)

Members of the women's movement stated they campaigned against these MPs because they were unsuited to Parliament: "you can't be leaders and talk about women, [the] other half of the population, like that in the Parliament" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September).

After being sworn into Parliament, all three women MPs stated that they would not support a resumed call for reserved seats. Gore claimed: "If I can do it others can too" (quoted in Setepano, 2012a). The MPs emphasised the need for women candidates to earn respect through competing against men ("Toni", 2012). Kidu responded:

I am saddened that the women have not been recognised for their five years of hard work lobbying which undoubtedly has had a big impact on the attitudinal change that seems to be occurring in PNG (quoted in Setepano, 2012b)

She said of their potential impact in the House: "they're three women of substance...[but] one was not enough, and to be quite frank, three is not enough either" (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October).

Some campaigners for reserved seats believe that there is still a chance they will be implemented in Papua New Guinea. Sepoe claims that supporters are "determined that it's not going to be a lost cause" (Sepoe, O 2012, pers. comm., 13 November). Kidu, however, disagrees:

I think personally reserved seats are finished now. I think it's served its purpose in helping getting some women in, but I don't think that methodology has traction anymore, and I think people are, some people are still saying we've got to keep going on it. I say no, I don't think so. I think it's like flogging a dead horse. (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October)

She believes that without a sitting MP who is committed to advancing the legislation, there is little hope of advancement (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October). Alternative methods to increase women's representation have been mooted (Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September), including a twenty per cent party candidate quota, included as one of several proposed changes to OLIPPAC.

It is widely believed by reserved seats campaigners that the awareness raised by the campaign about the issue of women's political under-representation, and the ensuing public debate on the merits of increasing the number of women in Parliament, had a positive effect on women's representation in subsequent elections. The election of three women MPs in 2012 could be partially attributable to the gender quota campaign. Furthermore, the 2013 LLG elections were heralded as a breakthrough in women's representation in Papua New Guinea (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September).

Discussion

The gender quota campaign in Papua New Guinea ultimately did not succeed in instituting a quota before the 2012 general election. Despite initial setbacks, including the failure of the nominated seats proposal in 2009, the period of acute political instability brought on by the 2011-2012 constitutional crisis appeared to offer a ‘window of opportunity’ for quota adoption. In periods of political instability or transition, some scholars consider quota adoption to be more likely (see Lépinard, 2007; Reyes & Azizah, 2002). This is because in this context, gender quotas can be framed as a positive change that can potentially improve the political environment (Lovecy, 2000).

In the case of Papua New Guinea, at the time of the constitutional crisis the women’s movement, which had been divided over the nominated seats proposal, was united in support of reserved seats. The reserved seats campaign had a key advocate from within Parliament in Kidu, the sole woman MP at the time. International organisations provided technical and financial support for the campaign. Furthermore, the reserved seats proposal was publicly endorsed by both of the men who were claiming to be the legitimate Prime Minister, Somare and O’Neill. In this context, the Equality and Participation Bill was passed and the Papua New Guinea Constitution amended to allow for the possibility of one reserved seat for women per province.

As the constitutional crisis continued, however, MPs who belonged to the Somare faction refused to attend parliamentary sittings, and O’Neill offered his coalition of MPs a conscience vote on the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (Amendment No 2) Bill, the enabling legislation needed to institute the reserved seats. The legislation was subsequently defeated in the House, failing to gain the necessary two-thirds majority. Advocates of the reserved seats proposal attributed the defeat of the enabling legislation to the constitutional crisis and associated political instability (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

The 22 reserved seats were not established in Papua New Guinea for the 2012 election, leading some of those involved in the campaign to label it a failure. The Women’s Bill did, however, lead to a constitutional amendment, meaning that it is possible reserved seats will be implemented in the future. Furthermore, the 2012 election proved to be a significant one for women. Three women were elected to Parliament, the highest number of female MPs since the 1977 election. It is hard to gauge the wider impact of the gender quota campaign in Papua New Guinea, but the awareness raised by the campaign about the issue of women’s political under-representation, and the public debate on the merits of increasing the number of women in Parliament sparked by the campaign, were cited by some participants in the quota debate as a measure of the campaign’s success.

During the campaign for reserved seats for women, advocates saw success as the significant increase in descriptive representation that would result from the quota, which would act as a platform for still greater women's representation; as a change in the substantive representation of women, with women representatives bringing a different focus and perspective to parliamentary debate; and as greater democratic legitimacy through the increased participation of women in political decision-making. In its aftermath, despite the reserved seats not being introduced for the 2012 election, it was considered by some to be successful in creating a forum for debate on gender equality and democratic reform in Papua New Guinea. The election of three new women MPs following the 2012 election was seen as a 'start' and attributed in part to the campaign.

Chapter Six

'WOMEN ARE THE MOTHERS OF THE LAND'²⁶: THE RESERVED SEATS DEBATE IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE

we had an advantage, Bougainville women, we had an advantage. The men respect that matrilineal status of women...And that means when women spoke, men listened. And they spoke as mothers, they spoke as sisters, they spoke as aunties, they spoke as grandmothers, and they were speaking for the children.

Magdalene Toroansi, former Member of the House of Representatives (MHR) for Central Bougainville (2013, pers. comm., 18 September)

Introduction

The third case study, quota adoption in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, is an example of successful adoption of a reserved seats system in the Pacific Islands context. Unlike the previous two chapters, however, this case study involves quota adoption at the sub-national level. The Bougainville House of Representatives was the first Pacific legislature to implement a reserved seats for women system. In this chapter, I focus on the period during which the Constitution of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville was drafted, and the decision of the Bougainville Constitutional Commission to include quota provisions in its draft constitution, which was then approved by the Bougainville Constituent Assembly. The Constitution mandates that three seats in the legislature be reserved for women.

The campaign for reserved seats for women in the Bougainville House of Representatives conforms to a common narrative in global quota adoption literature, that of a period of political crisis or transition constituting a 'window of opportunity' for quota adoption advocates (Reyes & Azizah, 2002). In contrast to the Papua New Guinea experience discussed in Chapter Five, gender quota advocates in Bougainville were able to use this 'window of opportunity' to negotiate the adoption of reserved seat provisions.

Accounts of quota adoption in Bougainville were consistent with narratives in other post-conflict societies, where women involved in the peace-making process mobilised to introduce a gender quota, with the assistance of prominent male political elites. Women's organisations in Bougainville were key actors in the campaign for a parliamentary gender quota. During the peace

²⁶ Bougainvillean saying (see Garasu, 2002, p. 28).

process and negotiations for an autonomous government in Bougainville, women's groups and individual women leaders stressed the importance of women's representation in future political structures in the region. The three reserved seats were intended as a minimum level of women's representation that it was hoped would increase over time, as a mechanism to ensure more balanced, gender-sensitive legislative outcomes, and as a way of preserving customary traditions of shared decision-making in the new political institutions.

The peace process in Bougainville, which involved the introduction of new political institutions and the writing of a new constitution, in this way could be said to have provided a 'window of opportunity' for advocates of gender quotas. The formal end to the Bougainville conflict enabled Bougainvilleans to develop new autonomous political structures. This constituted an opportunity for women, already emboldened by what they saw as the crucial role of women's organisations and individual women leaders in securing peace, to press for guaranteed seats in the new political institutions. The role of international actors in the quota campaign in Bougainville was disputed, with some accounts emphasising the role of international supporters, while others downplayed international influence on quota design and adoption.

The data presented in this chapter draws from interviews and document analysis. Interviews were conducted in Port Moresby, Buka, and Arawa in September 2013. Interview subjects included current and former MHRs, unsuccessful political candidates, members of the Bougainville Constitutional Commission (BCC), and representatives from women's groups and church organizations. The archival work conducted draws on election observation reports, newspaper articles, and reports from relevant organizations.

Background

The region of Bougainville comprises the two main islands of Buka and Bougainville, along with outlying atolls. Geographically, the region forms part of the Solomon Islands archipelago but politically it is incorporated into the state of Papua New Guinea. In 1975, just prior to Papua New Guinea achieving independence, the Provincial Assembly of Bougainville declared independence, adopting the name Republic of North Solomons. Despite these moves, when Papua New Guinea formally became independent in September 1975 Bougainville remained a province.

The issue of independence remains salient in Bougainville. Regan (1998, pp. 272-273) claims: "There is little doubt that Bougainvilleans share a sense of an identity distinct from other Papua New Guineans as well as a belief that Bougainville would be better off being independent." The

ethnic differences between Bougainvilleans and other Papua New Guineans are often noted. Nash and Ogan (1990, p. 9) note that a “focal symbol for this ethnic identity is skin colour,” with the derogatory term ‘red-skins’ used by Bougainvilleans in reference to the lighter-skinned Papua New Guineans (Nash & Ogan, 1990; Rolfe, 2001), although within the Bougainville region there are also cultural and ethnic distinctions (Regan, 1998; Rolfe, 2001).

The cultures of Bougainville are mostly matrilineal, with the exceptions of areas of Buin, Siwai, Nissan Island and the Polynesian islands (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). Sister Lorraine Garasu (2002, p. 28), a Catholic nun who led the Bougainville Inter-Church Women’s Forum (BICWF), writes: “There is a saying in Bougainville that ‘women are the mothers of the land.’” While women derive customary authority through the traditional systems of land ownership, in which land is passed down through the female lineage (O’Callaghan, 2002), the saying also has symbolic meaning, in that the “body of a woman reproduces life for the next generation” (Saovana-Spriggs, 2010, p. 204). It is argued by Bougainvillean academic Dr Ruth Saovana-Spriggs (2007) that the influence of women in these matrilineal societies goes further: “the matrilineal principle also governs the transmission of other property, traditional wealth and traditional knowledge of the lineage” (p. 10).

Although Bougainville is largely matrilineal, it is not matriarchal, and historically men have dominated the political sphere (Australian Government, 1999b). Women have arguably had some influence over political decision-making:

In almost all areas of Bougainville, women traditionally own the land. The land is sacred and protected by men on behalf of the women. The men as guardians share leadership with women, taking the responsibility in open debate to protect women from potential conflict; however, women have the power to veto decisions, and therefore are involved in the final consultative process. (quoted in Sirivi & Havini, 2004, pp. 149-150)²⁷

Women’s views in political debate are generally expressed through a male representative of the family or clan (Garasu, 2002). Nevertheless, Josephine Sirivi (2004a) notes that in traditional culture women have a role in leadership and peacemaking talks and associated ceremonies. Moreover, Saovana-Spriggs (2007) argues that in Bougainville “I see matriliney not as generating

²⁷ The idea that “women traditionally own the land” (quoted in Sirivi & Havini, 2004) is contested. While land is traditionally transferred through matrilineal lines, it must be noted that in matrilineal areas of Bougainville men are also landowners along with their mothers and sisters.

matriarchy but rather patterns of complementary power-sharing between men and women" (p. 12).

It has been claimed that during the colonial period, women's traditional influence on decision-making was eroded (Havini, 1999). Prior to European contact, Bougainvillean women had a relatively high social status in comparison with other areas of Papua New Guinea, where gender roles were more rigidly defined (Wesley-Smith & Ogan, 1992). Colonial infrastructure in the region was uneven, and concentrated around certain coastal areas; for Bougainvilleans in the early twentieth century, most contact with Europeans came through interactions with missionaries (Wesley-Smith & Ogan, 1992). Church organisations had significant authority in Bougainville, where around 97 per cent of the population identify as Christian (Hermkens, 2007). The most prominent of church institutions is the Catholic church (Regan, 2014).

In post-World War II Bougainville, practices employed by the colonial administration aimed at economic development focused on male labour, creating a marked shift in gender roles that damaged women's traditional status in the community (Wesley-Smith & Ogan, 1992). This change was then exacerbated by the economic and social transformations resulting from the mining boom:

The changes induced by mining after 1964 further disrupted social relations between the sexes...Although an ideology of matriliney remained strong in most of Bougainville, key positions in the mine, cooperative societies, and private businesses were invariably occupied by men. (Wesley-Smith & Ogan, 1992, p. 259)

In the pre-conflict years in Bougainville, however, there were access points to the public sphere for women. These included the North Solomons Women's Council and the North Solomons Provincial Parliament, which had some female members and encouraged educated women to enter the public sector workforce (see Havini, 1999; Saovana-Spriggs, 2007).

Conflict

Bougainville was the site of a struggle for self-determination waged from the 1970s through to the late 1990s. Conflict originally arose around the site of the Panguna copper mine in central Bougainville, which had opened in the early 1970s. The mine was an important source of revenue for the newly independent state of Papua New Guinea: "In the 1970s and 1980s the Panguna mine was the backbone of PNG's national economy, and the largest provider of foreign exchange" (Böge & Garasu, 2004, p. 565). Less than six per cent of the mine's profits, however, were returned to

Bougainville. A share of 4.27 per cent went to Bougainville's provincial government and 1.36 per cent to local landowners (Quodling, 1991, p. 34). Local opposition to the mine was led by Francis Ona, an employee of Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL). Ona, on behalf of local landowners and Bougainvillean mine workers, demanded a compensation payment of ten billion kina from the mine operators, BCL and the Papua New Guinea Government, for environmental degradation and loss of land caused by the mining. After their demands were refused, acts of sabotage were carried out against BCL, including arson, theft, and the destruction of power pylons (O'Callaghan, 2002). In May 1989, the mine was forced to close (Regan, 2010).

The conflict between forces led by Ona and the mining interests was initially about land rights and other mining-related grievances. In 1988, Ona (quoted in O'Callaghan, 2002) wrote: "Land to us is our lifeline and we cannot be separated from it" (p. 9). As it continued, however, the independence question was revived, and what eventually became known as the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) was formed. Historically, concerns over mining had contributed to a politicisation of Bougainvillean identity, with the idea of independence or self-governance gaining traction in the 1970s and ongoing support amongst Bougainvilleans for greater autonomy before and during the conflict (Regan, 2010).

Academic accounts of the conflict differ in where they place their emphasis on the main causes. Some stress ethnonationalism (see Griffin, 1990), while others focus on cultural aspects, and the social upheaval caused by the mining industry (see Filer, 1990). A class conflict lens is also applied, with Thompson and MacWilliam (1992) highlighting this as a key issue, while Wesley-Smith and Ogan (1992) look at the interaction between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production. Saovana-Spriggs (2007) examines the conflict from another perspective, centred around Bougainvillean's attachment to land and their sense of place. Regan (2014) identifies various groups that played a significant role in the origins of the conflict, including the younger generation of landowners from the Panguna area; young indigenous mine workers; marginalised youth who were involved in *raskol* gangs,²⁸ and were recruited by mine workers; and 'pressure groups', organisations of mostly older men from other parts of Bougainville who supported independence from Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea mobile police squads responded to the vandalism and destruction of BCL property with brutally violent tactics, which proved to be "the catalyst for mobilization of a wider secessionist rebellion" (Regan 2010, p. 20). Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel

²⁸ *Raskol* gangs is a common phrase used to describe criminal gangs in Papua New Guinea.

were sent to Bougainville in early 1989. The following year, the PNGDF and all government personnel withdrew from Bougainville, and the Papua New Guinea Government began a blockade of Bougainville. The BRA-controlled areas of Bougainville remained under this blockade until the mid-1990s (Regan, 2010). Conflict in Bougainville not just between the BRA and the Papua New Guinea government, but also between different Bougainvillean groups, led to casualties during this period (Regan, 2010). Groups opposing the BRA within Bougainville had become known as the Bougainville Resistance Forces (BRF) by the early 1990s. Divisions between the BRA and the BRF were mostly as a result of local disputes rather than ideological differences, but some groups within the BRF had links with the Papua New Guinea armed forces (Regan, 2010).

The number of lives lost during the conflict is hard to determine. It is often claimed that the death toll was between 15,000 and 20,000 (see Böge & Garasu, 2004; Downer, 2001; Saovana-Spriggs, 2000), with most deaths attributed to the blockade of Bougainville by Papua New Guinea. Braithwaite, Charlesworth, Reddy and Dunn (2010, p. 88), however, consider these figures to be exaggerated, and estimate the number of conflict deaths to be between 1000 and 2000.²⁹ Regan (2010) writes:

probably well over 1,000 Bougainvilleans died in the process of armed conflict, many more from extra-judicial killings on all sides, and an unknown number as a result of the PNG blockade of BRA-controlled areas...For PNG, the impacts included perhaps 300 combat deaths and many more injuries (p. 26)

Over the course of the conflict 50,000 Bougainvilleans were displaced from their homes and forced to live in refugees camps, labelled 'care centres', in areas under Papua New Guinea military occupation (Regan, 1998; Saovana-Spriggs, 2000).

Bougainvillean women played a role in activism before and during the conflict. In 1969, women were involved in the Rorovana incident, where an attempt to block construction of a port for the mine through passive resistance was met with a violent response from police (Braithwaite et al., 2010). In 1974, women blocked the road to the mine in protest and were subsequently beaten by police (UNIFEM, 2007). Prominent women involved in the New Panguna Landowners' Association³⁰ included Perpetua Serono, a cousin of Ona, among others (Havini, 1999; Wesley-Smith & Ogan, 1992). Although women generally were not engaged in the armed conflict

²⁹ This figure does not include deaths as a result of the blockade.

³⁰ The New Panguna Landowner's Association was formed in 1987 after disputes between older and younger members of the Panguna Landowner's Association. Its main spokesperson was Ona (Regan, 2010).

(UNIFEM, 2007), some did participate in violence. In one instance in 1996, women helped to set up an ambush of PNGDF soldiers in Kangu Beach, resulting in the killing of 12 soldiers (Charlesworth, 2008). Women also actively supported men engaged in the conflict through the preparation and supply of food and fuel (UNIFEM, 2007).

Peace Process

Regan (2002, p. 32) has described the Bougainville peace process as “long, complex and often difficult and slow moving.” Peace talks began in 1990, with discussions between the Papua New Guinea Government and leaders of the BRA on board New Zealand warships that ended in the *Endeavour Accords*. These accords were vague in wording and ultimately unsuccessful in bringing peace. Further talks the following year were held in Solomon Islands, yet directly after the talks the BRA claimed the resulting Honiara Declaration was invalid (Rolfe, 2001).

In October 1994, a peace conference was held in Arawa and attended by over one thousand Bougainvillean, including many women. The influence of the female attendees was noted: “The strong stand taken by women’s group leaders had a major impact on many attending the conference” (Regan, 1998, pp. 280-1). Most of the leaders of the BRA, however, did not attend. Following the conference, Catholic women’s groups organised another forum for women in Buka which was well-attended (Garasu, 2002).

The Australian Government hosted peace talks in Cairns in late 1995. Only one woman was invited to represent women’s interests, with “the men of both sides wrongly supposing that women were apolitical” (Saovana-Spriggs, 2004, p. 122). On the contrary, women were heavily invested in the peace process, and many held strong opinions on both sides of the independence debate. The Women’s Peace Forum, held in Arawa in 1996, attracted 700 participants. From this conference came several recommendations, advocating outside involvement in the peace process, assistance from international organisations, the removal of PNGDF forces and the end of military rule. The same year, the Bougainville Women Speak Out forum was held in Sydney and representatives of women’s groups met with members of the Australian Parliament (Garasu, 2002).

In 1997, the Papua New Guinea Government hired the British firm Sandline International to supply mercenaries to fight the BRA in Bougainville (Regan, 1997). The Papua New Guinea armed forces were opposed to the move and the PNGDF commander eventually forced Sandline out of Papua New Guinea. While Sandline mercenaries never fought in Bougainville, the political fallout was significant and the Prime Minister, Julius Chan, subsequently resigned (see Dinnen, May & Regan

1997).³¹ The ‘Sandline affair’ was in many ways the catalyst for renewed peacemaking efforts on the part of the Papua New Guinea Government, and greater involvement from the New Zealand and Australian governments in the peace process (Regan, 1997; Tapi, 2002).

The Burnham I talks were held in New Zealand in July 1997, and attended exclusively by Bougainvillean delegates. Thirteen women were among the 75 attendees, representing different sides of the conflict (Miriori, 2004a). Their contribution to the talks came as a surprise to some of the male delegates:

One fear the men has expressed to us about having women present was that our politics might be uninformed or ‘wimpy-washy’ and therefore counter-productive. On this count they were very surprised to find that women were as passionate as men about redressing the horrors of war. In fact, the men who had not heard women speak politically before were amazed to find them as vehement as the men on issues of politics and human rights. On our return to barracks each evening, men would come to congratulate the women for their contributions during the sessions and express surprise at their politics. (Havini, 2004a, p. 135)

A second round of talks were held at Burnham in October, this time including representatives from the Papua New Guinea Government and the PNGDF. Women delegates were not invited to Burnham II discussions (Sirivi, 2004b).

The Lincoln Summit followed the Burnham talks and was held in January 1998. A significant contingent of Bougainvillean women, about fifty, attended the Lincoln Summit (Garasu, 2002). Women held their own meetings at Lincoln, with the first being a spontaneous gathering after another meeting was abruptly cancelled, and several other more formal gatherings (Havini, 2004b). The Lincoln Agreement was signed on 23 January 1998. The female delegates had prepared a statement to read at the conclusion of the talks, which was almost overlooked by the organisers, but eventually was read out by Agnes Titus. The statement addressed the issue of women’s political representation in the future: “We look forward to being included in the new Bougainville government structure so that our rediscovery of women’s participation will continue to shape and build Bougainville’s development and government” (quoted in Sirivi & Havini, 2004, p. 150). The Lincoln women’s statement was a significant moment in the early stages of the

³¹ Chan regained the position of Prime Minister two months later in June 1997, but was then defeated in the national elections that month.

reserved seats campaign, as the women delegates publicly voiced their intent to advocate the inclusion of women in Bougainville's new political institutions.

One significant actor in the conflict who did not take part in the peace talks was Ona. He refused to join the peace process, claiming that the independence question had already been determined and declaring that Bougainville was now the Republic of Me'ekamui (Regan, 2010). Subsequently, Ona and his significant number of followers refused to engage with other Bougainvilleans in the establishment of an autonomous government. Ona died suddenly in 2005. His cause of death is still the subject of speculation, but was most likely due to natural causes (Braithwaite et al., 2010).

An official ceasefire was declared on 30 April 1998, and the 2001 Peace Agreement set out a roadmap for determining Bougainville's political future, weapons disposal, and arrangements for political autonomy. Signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement in 2001 in Arawa occurred shortly after the Bougainville Women's Summit was held. A statement was prepared at the Women's Summit for the signing ceremony, but was ultimately not included on the program, apparently due to disagreements amongst the different women's organisations. The statement was instead read during the sitting of the Bougainville People's Congress the next day (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007).

The role of women in the peace process in Bougainville is recognised as important in the academic literature on the crisis (see Braithwaite et al., 2010). Mothers went into the conflict zones to persuade their sons who were fighting to return to the village. It was claimed that women were uniquely placed to do so: "The mother has a position in the life of a young man, which goes back to his childhood and carries respect and authority, which they cannot ignore" (Chris Baria quoted in Howley, 2002, p. 164). It has been suggested that these efforts by women at a personal level were the start of the peace process (Saovana-Spriggs, 2000), although the narrative of Bougainvillean women as peacemakers has been questioned as too simplistic (see Braithwaite et al., 2010, p. 94).

Regan (2010) observed how women, in establishing local anti-violence and pro-reconciliation NGOs, used ideas about the traditional role of women in Bougainvillean society to push for a place for women in the public sphere in contemporary Bougainville:

Several such bodies were established and led by educated women, who in part drew upon perceptions of the importance of women's customary peace-making roles to provide legitimacy for their efforts to assert themselves in the public arena commonly regarded as a male preserve. Far from being a matter of

traditional custom, they were in fact largely engaged in the thoroughly “modern” struggle to assert the human rights of women to share in the exercise of public authority. They were challenging the patriarchal side of Bougainville social structures (p. 40)

Women were prominent in peace efforts, leading protest marches, vigils and prayer meetings, distributing petitions, speaking out in the media, and organising peace conferences (Böge & Garasu, 2004; Richards, 2002; Saovana-Spriggs, 2007; UNIFEM, 2007). They also used contacts in Australia, New Zealand and the international community to publicise the situation in Bougainville and its effects on women and children (Garasu, 2002). While the efforts women made in the peace process was acknowledged and celebrated at times, their role in formal peace processes was often limited. At peace talks, their voice was heard “from the sidelines” or through “discreet lobbying of the different parties” (Garasu, 2002, p. 31). In other spaces women were excluded, for instance in the discussions around weapons disposal (UNIFEM, 2007).

Politics in Bougainville

After Papua New Guinea gained independence in 1975, Bougainville became a province named North Solomons. There were provisions for a nominated seat for women in the Provincial Assembly, and so in the first term, from 1976 to 1979, there was one appointed female representative (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). Following the provincial election in 1980, a woman, Pauline Onsa, joined the Assembly after a member resigned. The third provincial election was the first time a woman, Titus, stood as a candidate in a general election (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). Titus was unsuccessful in the election, although she was later appointed to the Assembly because of her role as President of the North Solomons Women’s Council (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). While women were beginning to get more actively involved in politics in the 1980s, women in church organisations, notably those affiliated with the Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist churches, were hostile to the idea of women’s political representation (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007).

During the early stages of the conflict, the BRA set up the Bougainville Interim Government (BIG) as a civilian government (Regan, 2010). Furthermore, the Bougainville Transitional Government (BTG) was created in the mid-1990s and recognised by the Papua New Guinea Government. Titus was elected to the BTG and held a ministerial portfolio (Saovana-Spriggs, 2004). In 1998, the Bougainville Constituent Assembly was created, as a precursor to the democratically-elected Bougainville Reconciliation Government, for which elections were held in 1999, and which later became the Bougainville People’s Congress. There were six female members of the Bougainville

People's Congress, representing the main women's organisations, and four of these women became members of the executive (Australian Government, 1999a). While this may seem significant, Garasu (2002, p. 31) notes that the total number of representatives was 106, meaning women made up less than six per cent of seats, and that in discussions "it was decided that the time was 'not yet right' for stronger female representation." In 1999, an accord was reached between factions within Bougainville that recognised the authority of the Interim Provincial Government, with John Momis as governor, under the proviso that it govern in consultation with the Bougainville People's Congress (Regan, 2010). The interim government had four appointed female representatives (Garasu, 2002).

In the peace agreement, Bougainville was granted autonomy for the period leading up to a vote on the issue of independence. An Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) would be elected by the residents of Bougainville and would assume responsibility for most government functions. A referendum would be held on the issue of Bougainville's political future, between ten and fifteen years after the first ABG elections.³²

As a result of the peace agreement, a Bougainville Constitution was developed. A draft constitution was written by the BCC after extensive consultation across the region, and sent to the Bougainville Constituent Assembly for approval. The constitution adopted by the Constituent Assembly allows for a House of Representatives made up of 40 elected members,³³ including the President who is directly elected but also sits in the legislature. Of the other 39 members, 33 are elected from open seats, three from seats reserved for ex-combatants, and three from seats reserved for women. Women can also stand in the 33 open seats, although no female candidates have to date won an open electorate seat.

The start of the conflict had "disrupted the political build-up for women in Bougainville" that had been growing in the 1970s and 1980s, in terms of the slow increase of women in political decision-making positions (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007, p. 105). Yet some Bougainvillean women, writing about the conflict, argued that it also caused a change in women's roles in society in Bougainville, and renewed respect and recognition for the importance of the matrilineal tradition (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). Peace talks and the part women played in them resulted in "the emergence of a political voice for women" (Miriori, 2004a, p. 127). Regan (2010, p. 41) disagrees, claiming that despite the

³² This timeline means the referendum should happen between 2015 and 2020.

³³ There is also a Speaker appointed by the House of Representatives.

role some women took in dispute resolution during the conflict, many men were resistant to women being involved in post-conflict Bougainvillean politics:

Much of that [male] leadership viewed the traditional peace-making role of women as being over once the violence had ended and wanted the women to return to customary roles, leaving male leaders to occupy the public political space. Patriarchy was asserted over matriliney, a rebuff for the educated women seeking to increase public leadership roles for women.

While women had used the argument that they had a customary peacemaking role to enter the public sphere during the conflict, this was to some degree self-defeating in their efforts to maintain a public role after the conflict, when their role as peacemakers was considered to have ended. In this way, culture was used as a tool in attempts to both increase and constrain women's political influence.

Quota Development

Women were advocating greater representation in the future political institutions of Bougainville throughout the peace process. The issue of reserved seats was raised for the first time in 1998 by the only female representative in the BTG, Titus, during its final meeting, which was a combined session with the BIG. Titus tabled a submission calling for twelve seats for women in the next political institution that was to be formed, which became the Bougainville People's Congress. The request for twelve seats was based on the number of districts in Bougainville at the time (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September).

Titus traced the source of demands by ex-combatants to this meeting. She argues that her call for reserved seats for women was noted by the ex-combatants who were observing and taking part in the meeting:

They said if you women are calling for that number of seats, then us combatants too are going to call for seats. And actually I think that that was the birth of, you know, this idea [of reserved seats for ex-combatants]. They did not think about asking for seats before that. (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September)³⁴

³⁴ Braithwaite et al. (2010, pp. 78-9) argue instead that the proposal for reserved seats for ex-combatants originated first, and that women's seats were included in the constitution for gender balance as, given the lack of female combatants in the conflict, the ex-combatant seats were de facto men's reserved seats.

Initially many members of the congress were not in support of the submission, with even some of the female members speaking in opposition, although eventually the submission was approved by the majority (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). One prominent figure in support of the motion at that meeting was Joseph Kabui, who would go on to be the first President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September).

During the Bougainville Women's Summit in 2001, women's political representation was a common theme: "All speakers highlighted the need to increase women's participation in decision-making in Bougainville" (Miriori, 2004b, p. 172). The importance of having women representatives included on the commission that would develop the Bougainville Constitution was stressed at the summit. Garasu (2013, pers. comm., 12 September) described the discussion on women's representation at the summit:

All the women's groups came together and first thing first, we advocated for three women commissioners [on the] constitutional commission...So we didn't bargain for three reserved seats, we bargained to put three women in the constitutional commission [so that they could] advocate for three seats to be included in the constitution.

The BCC was established in 2002 to develop the Constitution of Bougainville. The establishment of the BCC was provided for in the Bougainville Peace Agreement, and its aim was to produce a draft constitution that could then be sent to the Bougainville Constituent Assembly for review (Regan, 2013). The BCC was designed to be representative while still being small enough to be workable; it was thus limited to a maximum of 27 members. Eventually, due to the refusal of the Me'ekamui Government led by Ona to nominate any representatives, the BCC was formed with only 24 members. Among these representatives were three women nominated by women's organisations: Francesca Semoso from the northern region, Elizabeth Sawai from the central region, and Bernadine Kira from the southern region (BCC, 2004). The women representatives on the BCC saw their role as promoting women's representation in the legislature that was to be established, as well as advocating women's issues generally: "we were there mainly to fight for the women" (Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

During initial public consultations held by the BCC, there was support for provisions in the Constitution to ensure reserved seats in Parliament, not only for women but for various societal groups. Among those considered were youth, church representatives, ex-combatants, and Bougainvillean living outside of Bougainville. There was also support for the representation of

traditional Chiefs in Parliament, although this proposal was ultimately not implemented by the BCC (BCC, 2004).³⁵ There were calls for gender balance in the legislature, with equal numbers of men and women representatives (Regan, A 2014, pers. comm., 16 October). Concerns over women's participation in politics were also raised, with a common complaint being about women who wore "six-pocket trousers" (Regan, A 2014, pers. comm., 16 October). Women who refused to wear traditional Melanesian dress were symbolic of a shift of gender roles and a rethinking of the place of women in society, a change that was opposed by some elements of Bougainvillean society.

The BCC finally decided on reserved seat representation for two groups, women and former combatants. The provisions for ex-combatants were much more contentious in the constitution-building process than those for women (BCC, 2004). The proposal for reserved seats for women, however, was still subject to debate:

it was not easy, I mean as a commissioner it was not easy. There was so much fighting because some men still think that the women should be in the kitchen, you know, that same old, same old story. (Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September)

The BCC's initial proposal was for one reserved seat for women in Parliament, although this was eventually extended to three (BCC, 2004).

According to prominent figures in the women's movement in Bougainville, most of the debate around reserved seats for women occurred within the BCC between the commissioners (Kauona, J 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Outside the commission, however, women were advocating reserved seats. Their activities included lobbying members of the BCC, holding public rallies, and speaking on radio programmes about the importance of women's representation (Hakena, H 2013, pers. comm., 11 September). The issue of reserved seats for women was also discussed widely in the public consultation sessions held by the BCC (Regan, A 2014, pers. comm., 16 October).

Semoso claimed that the general public in Bougainville was broadly supportive of reserved seats for women: "Bougainville was totally behind having the reserved seats in the Constitution" (2013, pers. comm., 12 September). Many women observers of the process also stressed the public

³⁵ There is a provision in the Constitution for traditional chiefs to be members of an advisory body to the House of Representatives.

support for the proposal (Jerome, J 2013, pers. comm., 10 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). Another member of the BCC, Kira, argued that there was public support for three reserved seats for women, but not for a greater number:

The public supported the three reserved seats because, maybe they realised that women were the major key players during the peace process, and maybe because it was already approved by the Bougainville Constitutional Commission, but they were not very much in favour of increasing the number to ten or fifteen (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September)

Three seats in the Bougainville House of Representatives were also reserved for ex-combatants. For the most part, women who advocated reserved seats believe that their initiative was co-opted by ex-combatants to advance their agenda of representation. Helen Hakena, the founder of Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency (LNWDA), explains: "It was the women's idea and the ex-combatants took it up" (2013, pers. comm., 11 September). While reserved seats were instituted for both women and ex-combatants, the former are considered permanent while the latter are considered a temporary measure. Under the provisions of the constitution, the ex-combatant seats were to be reviewed in the first term of the ABG, and to be abolished after the referendum on independence (Wolfers, 2006, p. 9).

Arguments for Reserved Seats for Women

Kira claims that the "main argument" for reserved seats for women was that women had played a key role in the peace process in Bougainville (2013, pers. comm., 18 September). It was argued that Western influences in Bougainville had eroded the "balance of power" between men and women that had existed in the pre-colonial era (quoted in Sirivi & Havini, 2004, p. 150). During the conflict, however, women had regained some status in decision-making on account of their contributions to the peace process. Bougainvillean women undoubtedly played a central role in advocating peace. Despite this, they were excluded from some of the peace talks and given only a tokenistic role in others (UNIFEM, 2007). Women's groups, unwilling to take a back seat role in future decision-making, used the opportunity created by the development of new political structures to push for guaranteed women's representation (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). The reserved seats were considered to be an acknowledgement of the instrumental role women played in the peace process. Semoso stressed this point: "Women brought back peace after the conflict. It was just the right thing to do, to say thank you to women" (2013, pers. comm., 12 September). Hakena

(2013, pers. comm., 11 September) argued that women's experiences during the conflict made them more qualified to enter politics:

we have shown that we are capable, we have gone to places, we have spoken to BRA members, we have spoken, you know, to the warring parties and men have listened which means they can listen to us when we bring issues up to the Parliament.

Other women agreed that the role women played in the peace process meant that they were entitled to ask for reserved seats in the legislature (Holan, H 2013, pers. comm., 10 September; Kokiai, M 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September).

It was also argued that women were needed in Parliament to advocate women's issues (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Tanne, B 2013, pers. comm., 13 September). Women were considered to be more likely to promote legislation dealing with domestic violence and other issues that disproportionately affect women (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). The idea of balanced decision-making was frequently brought up, with the metaphor of a family unit:

in a marriage, in a family, you always have that equal decision making before the family comes up with anything. So why can't we have that even in this government here? It's about, you know, men and women making decisions for the betterment of people in Bougainville. (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September)

I believe having more women in the government must also reflect the picture of a household. That is very, very important, because if a family is happy, a village, a community, and a nation can be happy...The whole heart, core of a nation is a family. (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September)

It was also stressed that female members of the legislature would offer a different perspective to that of men (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September).

Women's representation in politics was seen as an extension of Bougainville's societal structure, given that the majority of communities in Bougainville are matrilineal (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). Culture was invoked by advocates for reserved seats for women, who argued that guaranteed women's representation in Parliament would be a continuation of

traditional custom wherein women were influential in community decision-making. The report of the BCC acknowledged this argument:

Bougainvillean society – whether matrilineal or patrilineal – places great importance on the role of women in our decision making processes. There is a sense of partnership in decision-making that flows through our history. The BCC felt that it was essential that the importance of the customary role of women be reflected in the arrangements for the Bougainville legislature. (BCC, 2004, p. 159)

The reference to ‘partnership in decision-making’ also relates to another claim made during the process, that men and women had different but “complementary” roles in Bougainvillean society (quoted in Sirivi & Havini, 2004, p. 150). The concept of complementarity of decision-making through the representation of both men and women was also raised in interviews: “[women] will also complement the men’s views in decision-making” (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September). This argument has been used in other campaigns for gender quotas. For instance, in the campaign for the parity laws in France, campaigners pointed to the complementarity of the two genders as a reason for equality in political decision-making (see Lépinard, 2006). Similar arguments were also employed in the debate around the implementation of the parity laws in the Pacific territory of New Caledonia (de Bonnefoy, 2000b).

Despite the emphasis on traditional custom to justify women’s political representation, there was a widespread conviction that without reserved seats, women would not be represented in the legislature due to the difficulties they would face contesting against men in the open electorates (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Hakena, H 2013, pers. comm., 11 September; Kauona, J 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Kiraa, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). This reflected a pragmatic approach to the issue of women’s representation. The BCC reported views from the public that seats should be set aside for groups that would not be able to win general electorates (BCC, 2004), a view that factored into the decision to reserve seats for women:

There was a concern expressed that if no seats were set aside for women it could be likely that they would not succeed in contests for a single member constituency at the election, and that as a result there might be no female members in the legislature (BCC 2004, p. 159)

Marcelline Kokiai, who stood as a candidate for a women’s seat in 2005 and an open seat in 2010, claimed that “if we did not have reserved seats specifically for women, I don’t think we’d ever get

there. We would never. We are just lucky we've got reserved seats for the women" (2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

The reserved seats for women were consistently described as "a launching pad for aspiring women politicians" (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September), and a "start" (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September). Leaders in the women's movement in Bougainville were united in support of the reserved seats system. Many saw it as a temporary special measure, however, and expressed a view that the seats would one day be phased out as women began to successfully contest open electorates (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Hakena, H 2013, pers. comm., 11 September; Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September; Toroansi, M 2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

Opposition to Reserved Seats for Women

While supporters of reserved seats invoked custom, so did opponents of the proposal. Bougainvillean who were against guaranteed representation of women argued that it would be against traditional cultural norms for women to be involved in public life as politicians. The counter-argument raised was that, as traditional life in Bougainville changed, women lost the behind-the-scenes influence they once had on political decision-making, thus making it necessary for a space to be made for women in the political sphere (BCC, 2004).

Another argument used against the use of reserved seats was that it would be anti-democratic. Opponents claimed it was enough that women and men were equally eligible to compete for general seats. The response to this claim was that attitudes towards women in the public sphere in Bougainvillean society constituted an additional barrier to women's representation, which instituting reserved seats would ameliorate (BCC, 2004).

Quota Design

Reserved seats were the only type of quota considered by the BCC. This was not based on influence from elsewhere in the region, as no Pacific parliament had adopted reserved seats for women. Rather, it reflected a hostility towards political party systems on the part of the Bougainvillean public:

The views of Bougainvilleans about political parties have been influenced by perceptions of the manner in which the political party system operates in PNG and its divisive impacts in Bougainville in the past. The history of no-confidence

motions, the movable feast of temporary alliances to secure power and the failure of the integrity law (all in Port Moresby) have influenced an overwhelming view opposing the establishment of political parties in Bougainville. (BCC, 2004, p. 226)

The BCC also reported an attitude that political parties were incompatible with the Melanesian and Bougainvillean styles of political decision-making (BCC, 2004). While a system for political party registration was developed in Bougainville, a political party candidate-based quota was not considered in the constitutional commission discussions. Given the political system that has developed, with candidates who may be aligned with parties but who campaign primarily as independents, a party quota would most likely have had a far more limited effect on women's representation.

It was important to women's groups that any female representatives in Parliament were elected democratically. A situation where women were nominated or appointed to the legislature was considered unacceptable (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). The BCC, in its report, agreed:

The BCC was firmly of the view that in both the cases of women and former combatants the decision as to who the representative should be was a matter for all of the voters of Bougainville. The BCC opposed any idea that such representation should be simply a matter for nomination or other form of appointment by the relevant organizations. There was a strong view that there should be no 'free ride' and that all members of the House of Representatives should be selected democratically.

As a result, the proposal from the BCC, reflected in the Third Draft, is that in both cases the representatives should be elected by a popular vote of all enrolled voters in each of the three regions of Bougainville (see sub-clause 54(6)). This requirement should ensure that any representative of women or of former combatants is going to be broadly acceptable to the wider community – not just to women, or to former combatants. This should be a significant guarantee that the arrangements will not be abused or be undemocratic. (BCC, 2004, p. 158)

Rose Pihei, who was elected to the House of Representatives in 2010, noted that nominated members and elected members would be perceived differently: "nominated members don't have the power to make decisions...being an elected leader is better than having a nominated leader, because you will have grounds to support your points" (2013, pers. comm., 13 September).

These provisions ensured that every voter in Bougainville would have four votes: once for the representative for her or his local constituency, once each for the provincial reserved seats for women and ex-combatants, and once for the region-wide election of the President. It was considered important that both women and men vote for the representatives in the women's seats. Semoso, who was an MHR from 2005 to 2010, argued that as members in the reserved seats "we are just as powerful as those people that are not elected onto reserved seats, because we are elected by the same people" (2013, pers. comm., 12 September).

The number of seats that should be reserved for women was an issue of some contention. An initial proposal was for twelve seats, one in each of the districts. The justification given for district-level representation was threefold: it would allow women to maintain close connections with their constituents; it would enable better service delivery; and it would provide women with a space to learn about parliamentary processes and gain experience, making them more qualified candidates if they then chose to contest general seats (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). A district-level system was seen as a more "practical" option as the electorates would be a manageable size for women representatives (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September).

Within the BCC, the women representatives advocated ten reserved seats for women (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). When that proposal was rejected, a system of six reserved seats was suggested (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). The move to reduce the number of seats reserved for women to three was opposed, because it was argued that women could not effectively represent such large constituencies (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007, p. 106), but the women's representatives on the BCC found it difficult to lobby for more seats because they were a minority in the male-dominated commission (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). A smaller number of reserved seats was still considered to be better than no guaranteed representation:

We wanted ten, and then the men thought, what the hell, why on earth would you have ten? ...Then it came down to six, and the men said it was too many still. And then we came down to three, and even then they said no, let's keep it to one, and I said three, I think that's still not fair, but at least we will have three women on three reserved seats, you know, speaking for women in the three regions
(Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September)

While the BCC initially only allowed for one reserved seat for women, they subsequently increased the number to three. One reason for the change was that a single reserved seat would be elected

from the same whole-of-region constituency as the President, and it was thought this could potentially raise issues (BCC, 2004).

The three reserved seats for women that were ultimately provided for in the Constitution represent the three main regions of Bougainville: Northern, Central, and South. The boundaries of these regions correspond to the boundaries of the three Bougainville open electorates to the Papua New Guinea Parliament (Regan, 2005). These regions took on a political character in the debate on the political future of Bougainville as Papua New Guinea moved towards independence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with leaders from the Southern and Central region more likely to support independence than their Northern counterparts (Regan, 2005). Prior to the conflict, the balance of regional representation was considered important in the North Solomons Provincial Government executive and the highest positions – the publicly elected Premier, the appointed Deputy Premier and the Speaker, who was elected by the legislature – were customarily divided between the regions (Regan, 2005).

The three regions remain politically important and perhaps seemed a natural method of division with regards to the reserved seat constituencies. In considering the question of the number of reserved seats, the BCC (2004, p. 158) also acknowledged financial constraints: “As always in these matters the BCC’s decision had to take careful account of availability of financial resources.” The cost was taken into account as the BCC allocated three reserved seats each to just two groups, women and ex-combatants, with the latter intended to be a temporary measure (BCC, 2004).

One significant aspect of the Bougainville quota system is that one seat in the executive is also reserved for a woman, thus guaranteeing a female voice at the Cabinet table. The President has the power to appoint most members of Cabinet, including the Vice-President, representatives from each of the regions who have been nominated by the regional caucuses, and up to four additional members. With regards to the guaranteed women’s seat in Cabinet, however, the President is required to appoint the nominee of the female members of the House (BCC, 2004).

Local Actors

In Bougainville, narratives of quota adoption emphasise the role of women’s groups and individual women in pushing for the implementation of a reserved seats system. Women’s organisations in Bougainville were key actors in the campaign for a parliamentary gender quota. During the peace process and negotiations for an autonomous government in Bougainville, women’s groups and individual women leaders stressed the importance of women’s representation in future political

structures in the region. These advocates were supported in the campaign by some prominent male political elites.

Women's Movement

The first women's organisations in Bougainville were predominantly church based. The two most prominent groups in pre-conflict Bougainville were the Churches Women's Organisation, which was established in the 1960s, and the North Solomons Provincial Council of Women, founded in the 1970s (Garasu, 2002). During the conflict, groups established included then LNWDA, founded in 1992; the BICWF, founded in 1995; the Bougainville Community Integrated Development Agency (BOCIDA), also founded in 1995; and Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom (BWPF), founded in 1997.

The LNWDA primarily operated in northern Bougainville (Australian Government, 1999b). The organisation worked to distribute necessities to Bougainvilleans living under the blockade, and assisted rape victims during the conflict (Richards, 2002). Saovana-Spriggs (2007) argues that the LWNDA promoted Western ideas of women's rights which did not necessarily fit well with the belief systems of all Bougainvillean women. The membership of the BWPF is mainly from the central province of Bougainville (Sirivi, 2004c), although members describe it as a "Bougainville-wide organisation" (Saovana-Spriggs, 2010, p. 205). It was formed as an explicitly political organisation. There was some tension at the time of the BWPF's foundation between the BWPF and the Provincial Council of Women (Havini, 1999).

The women's movement in Bougainville was not a united force. There were significant divisions between different women's organisations, making articulating a women's agenda difficult. For instance, the Provincial Council of Women was aligned with the BTG while the BWPF were linked with the pro-independence movement (Australian Government, 1999b). On the issue of women's political representation, however, Saovana-Spriggs (2007, p. 108) writes that women's groups worked "to mobilize and network together to form a separate but united women's voice to pressure the male leaders to involve them in these vital political processes." Women on the Truce Monitoring Group, which was an unarmed force of around 300 personnel made up of military and civilian personnel from New Zealand, Australia, and Pacific nations, worked with Bougainvillean women to create a network of women's groups (Rolle, 2001; see also Sirivi, 2004c).

The Women's Summit in 2001 was seen by some as an opportunity for women's groups from all regions and sectors of society to network and form links with each other. Coalitions with political

and international actors were also cultivated, with politicians and non-governmental organisation (NGO) representatives also invited to the summit (Miriori, 2004b). The need to ensure women's representation in the development of new political institutions in Bougainville was a strong theme throughout the summit (Miriori, 2004b). The groups represented at the summit resolved to advocate women's representatives on the constitutional commission, who could then push for reserved seats for women (Garasu, L 2013, pers. comm., 12 September).

The three women's representatives on the BCC were appointed by women's groups (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). They acted as representatives of women from each of the three regions. These three women were considered by many in the women's movement as the key figures in establishing the reserved seats for women system in Bougainville (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Garasu, L 2013, pers. comm., 12 September; Holan, H 2013, pers. comm., 10 September).

An initial submission proposing reserved seats for women was written by Saovana-Spriggs with the assistance of some of her male colleagues on the Bougainville Technical Team. Saovana-Spriggs' original proposal was for twelve seats to be reserved for women (Saovana-Spriggs, 2007). As a member of the BTG, Agnes Titus also put forward a proposal for a reserved seats for women system.

Political Actors

There was some opposition among traditional elites in Bougainville to women becoming more involved in the political sphere. Regan (in Australian Government, 1999a) noted resistance from members of the councils of chiefs:

Through the women's organisations, women's leadership has emerged—strong, independent, articulate women's leadership. But that is quite contrary to the movement towards stronger traditional leadership through councils of chiefs. To some degree the councils of chiefs are about putting women back to where they should be traditionally, which is in the background—*influential*; everybody wants them to be *influential* and listened to, but not in the forefront of things. There is quite a tension there which will be a difficult one to resolve.

Several prominent male political leaders in Bougainville were credited as significant supporters of the campaign for reserved seats for women. In particular, Kabui was often singled out as an influential figure in the debate (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Sawai, E 2013, pers.

comm., 18 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). Although Regan acknowledges the public commitment to greater women's representation by leaders of the Bougainville People's Congress, he is sceptical of how political elites can change public perceptions of women's role in society:

Kabui and the more educated, articulate people leading the congress have an ideological commitment to increase the role of women, but it is a little bit inchoate. It is not clear. But he puts up the four women on to the executive, but where he goes in terms of turning around this traditional attitude to women's role in the background is a bit unclear, because that would require a very significant ideological shift and very significant policies designed to really undermine important aspects of the traditional authority. (in Australian Government, 1999a)

He concludes that opinion among political elites was divided on the issue of greater women's representation:

The leadership of the BIG, in particular, has shown openness to more public leadership roles for women. At the same time, there are signs of concern among many male leaders about the changes, and some who clearly want to see women moving back to what is seen as the traditional role of influence rather than public leadership. (Regan quoted in Australian Government, 1999b, p. 68)

Within the constitutional commission, the proposal for reserved seats for women was in general well-received. Commissioner Sawai noted that "most of the commissioners were supportive" (2013, pers. comm., 18 September). While widespread, this support was not unanimous, with significant debate during the constitution making process over guaranteed women's representation in the legislature (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Sawai (2013, pers. comm., 18 September) claimed that some commissioners who did not support the proposal walked out of the BCC meeting when it came to a vote, although this assertion was challenged by other members of the BCC (Regan, A 2014, pers. comm., 16 October).

International Actors

International and transnational organisations also played a role in the reserved seats debate in Bougainville. During the conflict, Bougainvillean women's organisations were in contact with activists in New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere (Garasu, 2002), which may have facilitated the spread of international norms of gender equality. Two delegations of women, from both the BRA-

and the Papua New Guinea-controlled regions of Bougainville, travelled to Beijing in 1995 for the UN Global Conference on Women. Women's participation in political decision-making was a key theme at the conference, with the *Platform for Action* developed in Beijing noting the under-representation of women in politics and setting out a strategic objective to adopt "measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making" (UN, 1995, p. 75). The MDGs, particularly MDG 3 which relates to the status of women and sets a target of 30 per cent women's political representation, were mentioned in interviews (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September).

International organisations operating in Bougainville could also have an influence on the campaign for a parliamentary gender quota. The BCC, in its report on the draft constitution, acknowledged the pressure from donor agencies with regards to gender equity initiatives: "Naturally gender equity and awareness have been fundamental to donor support in recent years in line with changing attitudes in the developed world" (BCC, 2004, p. 159). Böge and Garasu (2004, p. 575) note the significant number of NGOs working in Bougainville and their potential impact:

A considerable number of Australian and other foreign NGOs run programs on the island. One almost gets the impression that there is 'too much' help: too much money, too much outside interference, too many foreign ideas. There is the imminent danger of suppressing local indigenous initiatives and of proffering paternalistic attitudes.

Saovana-Spriggs (2000) claims that women's traditional place in Bougainvillean society tends to be misinterpreted by those from outside the region: "The authority exercised over land by Bougainville women is hugely misunderstood by well-meaning outsiders who have come in droves [to the region]" (p. 29). Working with women's groups, however, NGOs did advocate guaranteed women's representation in Parliament. They highlighted the important role women played in the peace process as a justification for reserved seats (Morris, 2006). One key organisation was the International Women's Development Agency, working with their key partner in Bougainville, the LNWDA (Hakena, H 2013, pers. comm., 11 September; Pihei, R 2013, pers. comm., 13 September).

International actors in the peace process also included governments from the Pacific region, and Australia and New Zealand. Their stance on the issue of women's political representation could have also had an effect on the decision to adopt reserved seats. The Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, in its report entitled *Bougainville: The Peace Process and Beyond*, stated its support for greater women's participation in the political

institutions of Bougainville (Australian Government, 1999b). There were Australian members of the BCC that contributed to the debate on reserved seats for women, including lawyers Anthony Regan and Ian Prentice.

The contribution of international actors in the debate on reserved seats for women in Bougainville was considered helpful by some observers of the process (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September). For the most part, however, women in Bougainville downplayed the influence of international actors in the campaign for reserved seats. Sawai, who sat on the BCC, argued that international organisations were supportive, but in an indirect sense (2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Another commissioner, Kira, claimed that during the reserved seats debate international organisations “didn’t really help much” (2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Garasu stressed that the reserved seats campaign was a local initiative: “We did it ourselves. We knew what we wanted and we spoke. International organisations, they didn’t play an important role” (2013, pers. comm., 12 September).

International and Regional Diffusion

Several prominent women leaders dismissed the idea that transnational learning had a significant influence in the establishment of reserved seats for women in Bougainville. Titus, who first proposed reserved seats as a member of the BTG, argued that the realities of living in a state of conflict meant opportunities to engage with the outside world and campaigns for parliamentary gender quotas elsewhere were limited. She claimed that “because we were going through a conflict we were actually not aware of what was happening outside...there was not much communication with the outside world” (2013, pers. comm., 9 September).

The use of parliamentary gender quota systems in other parts of the world, particularly in African countries, was referenced in interviews. The reserved seats system used in Rwanda, which was also instituted in a post-conflict setting, was the most frequent comparison mentioned (Holan, H 2013, pers. comm., 10 September; Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Furthermore, during interviews it was suggested that the Bougainvillean system of reserved seats had or could have an influence on other Pacific Island countries. Bougainville’s status as the first Pacific Island legislature to adopt reserved seats was considered as a point of pride: “It’s an honour, it’s a victory for the women of Bougainville. I don’t know but I think this is the first small island...and I’m proud” (Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Interviewees proposed that the Bougainvillean campaign had an influence on the rest of the Pacific region, including Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12

September). It was also claimed that Bougainville “became a role model” for the rest of Papua New Guinea, as activists campaigned for reserved seats for women in the national Parliament (Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

Institutional Context

Participants noted features of the institutional context in which the reserved seats campaign took place as being influential to eventual quota adoption. Advocates drew on elements of Bougainvillean culture to shape the debate, particularly the tradition of matriliney. Antipathy towards political parties was partially responsible for the quota design, a reserved seats system, while the period of political transition in post-conflict Bougainville, and the opportunity to create new political institutions, created a ‘window of opportunity’ to push for quota reform.

Political Culture

It was argued that Bougainvillean culture, in particular its mostly matrilineal system and traditional codes of respect for women, made it easier for the region to adopt a gender quota. Garasu (2013, pers. comm., 12 September) drew a comparison between campaigns for reserved seats in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea:

it wasn’t like a push, because I think our men already know where the women are and the role of women in society in Bougainville. So it’s not like in Papua New Guinea, pushing and pushing for the 22 seats.

Matriliney was emphasised as a fundamental part of Bougainvillean culture and a symbol of respect for women. Thus, a reserved seats for women system was justified as an extension of traditional decision-making processes that included both women and men:

brothers would go to a meeting in a chief house...[then] the brothers bring it back to their sisters, to their mothers, you know, and say, we talked about this, what do you think we should do? So it’s always that interconnecting, equal decision making (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September)

women are the ones who really hold the traditional leadership, or they’re always given that opportunity to speak, to represent their views. And even our menfolk know that, they respect that because we are a matrilineal society where woman is the one with the major say in decision-making and she’s [the] landowner at the

same time. She has the final say in decision-making. Men always consult the women in decision-making process. (Kauona, J 2013, pers. comm., 18 September)

Matriliney, and the high status of women in Bougainville society, were therefore cited as both an argument for the institution of reserved seats, and a reason for the success of the reserved seats campaign.

Party System

In the initial public consultations carried out by the BCC on the Bougainville Constitution, they found widespread hostility to the idea of a formal political party system in Bougainville (BCC, 2004). Among the reasons given were concerns around the potential for parties to cause rifts in Bougainville society, and a perception that parties in Papua New Guinea politics do not work for the best interests of the public (BCC, 2004). There was also a common view that “political parties do not sit well with our style of Melanesian consensus and traditional Bougainville leadership and kastom” (BCC, 2004, p. 226). While the BCC acknowledged these viewpoints, they did establish a party registration system in accordance with the Papua New Guinea Constitution, and international conventions on freedom of association (BCC, 2004).

There are political parties active in Bougainville politics. Four parties were registered for the 2005 election: the Bougainville Independence Movement Party, the Bougainville Labour Party, the Bougainville People’s Congress Party, and the New Bougainville Party (CS/PIF, 2005). A fifth, the Bougainville United Party, also registered before the 2010 election (Kelly, 2010). The Commonwealth-Pacific Islands Forum Expert Team observing the 2005 election noted that “campaigns of individual candidates appeared to be more prominent than those of political parties”, and that party affiliations were not printed on ballot papers (CS/PIF, 2005, p. 9). In both general elections, party connections, especially with the parties of the elected Presidents, were seen as advantageous for some women candidates standing in the reserved seat electorates (Baker, 2014). Nevertheless, the aversion among the Bougainvillean public to parties playing a prominent role in regional politics meant that parties had limited influence in the debate around the introduction of reserved seats for women.

The relatively weak party system in Bougainville had an obvious influence on the design of the gender quota. Part of the appeal of a reserved seats system was that it could operate outside of a formalised party system. A statutory quota system requires parties to present a certain proportion of female candidates (see Norris, 2004). Thus, implementation of the quota necessitates a party

system and independent candidates are excluded from quota requirements. Reserved seats systems, on the other hand, can be implemented even in the absence of any kind of party system, while ensuring a minimum level of women's representation.

Political Stability

Bougainville implemented a parliamentary gender quota as part of a process of significant political change. The conflict had lasted over a decade and had enduring effects on Bougainvillean life. When the formal end to the conflict enabled Bougainvillean to develop new autonomous political structures, this constituted an opportunity for advocates for greater women's political representation. Women, already emboldened by the crucial role of women's organisations and individual women leaders in securing peace, pushed for guaranteed seats in the new political institutions. Semoso (2013, pers. comm., 12 September) acknowledges that this period of transition made it easier for advocates of the reserved seats in Bougainville, comparing it to the reserved seats campaign in Papua New Guinea:

The reason as to why PNG is really going through a hard time right now to actually convince the male parliamentarians in there to say yes to the reserved seats in simply because it's hard once everything's established. It's hard to make a change once there is an established thing already in place.

During the conflict, and in the post-conflict period, women's organisations were highly active and had won seats at the negotiating table – and on the BCC – through their efforts during the peace process. While the women's movement in Bougainville was not wholly unified, it had grown significantly during the conflict with the foundation of new groups such as the LNWDA, the BICWF and BWPF.

Participants in the reserved seats campaign highlighted the role of women's groups in the peace process to explain their influence in post-conflict reconstruction: "women's groups were influential because at the time that the constitution was made, it's just after the conflict and most of the work that led up to the ceasefire was done by women" (Pihei, R 2013, pers. comm., 13 September). It is claimed that the strength of the new Bougainville women's movement, and the influence women's groups had as a result of their role in the peace process, enabled women to campaign successfully for a parliamentary gender quota.

Implementation of the Reserved Seats System

Since the adoption of the Bougainville Constitution in 2004 there have been two general elections, in 2005 and 2010.³⁶ In 2005, there were 25 female candidates, all contesting the reserved seats. The Northern seat had the fewest candidates, with six, followed by the Central seat with eight, and eleven women competed for the Southern seat. The seat on the executive went to the representative from Central Bougainville, Magdalene Toroansi,³⁷ while the representative from Northern Bougainville, Semoso, became Deputy Speaker.

In 2010, the number of female candidates was slightly less than in 2005, with only 23 women campaigning. Only 17 of these, however, were competing for the reserved seats, with five female candidates for general electorates and Toroansi running for President. Out of the five candidates for general seats, none were elected, although Semoso came second in the Tsitalato seat. Kelly (2010, p. 13) wrote of the chances of a woman winning in a general seat “that it would take a very high-profile and respected woman candidate with a well-organised and resourced campaign”.

It was argued after the first election that instituting the three reserved seats encouraged more women candidates to stand for Parliament than would have otherwise (Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005). Elizabeth Burain, a candidate in 2005 who later won a women’s seat in 2010, claimed that the reserved seats allowed women in the first election to “test the water” (quoted in Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005), and that after two elections the reserved seats had changed opinions in Bougainville about women in public roles (“Bougainville woman MP”, 2011). There were still claims that the three reserved seats were insufficient and “not enough” (Marcelline Tunim [Kokiai] quoted in Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005).

Candidates for the women’s seats in 2005 faced obstacles due to the larger size of their electorates, in comparison to the general seats. The Northern electorate encompasses the northernmost part of the island of Bougainville, the island of Buka, and the outlying atolls which many candidates could not afford to visit. Candidates for the Central and Southern electorates also faced logistical challenges during the campaign (Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005).

It was suggested by election observers at both the 2005 and the 2010 elections that reserving three seats for women could be having a negative effect by acting as a ceiling for women’s

³⁶ There was also a presidential by-election in 2008, prompted by the death of sitting President Joseph Kabui in June 2008.

³⁷ Toroansi was later removed from Cabinet and replaced with the representative from Southern Bougainville, Laura Ampa.

representation (CS/PIF, 2005; Kelly, 2010). One candidate in 2005 reported that she stood for a women's seat because she did not realise women were eligible for the general seats (Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005). There were also reports of women who intended to stand in a general constituency being forced by family members to run for a reserved seat instead (Bhagwan-Rolls, 2005). In 2010, one observer encountered a view among some voters that women should not contest general electorates as the three reserved seats were enough representation for women (Kelly, 2010).

Women in Bougainville acknowledge that there is a widespread "misinterpretation" of the Constitution by men in Bougainville (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). Hona Holan, the President of the Bougainville Women's Federation, claims that "if you try and contest the other seats, the open seats, the men will tell you no, that's not your seat" (2013, pers. comm., 10 September). Hakena had a similar observation in the 2010 election:

when the second House came, and we started to put women up in constituency levels, you know, where they are better known, men said, what more do you want? You already had three allocated seats, and that's enough. You are now intruding into men's territory. The constituency seats are not yours, they belong to the men. So then we found that there was a barrier there again. Men were blocking our participation. (2013, pers. comm., 11 September)

Others argue that women are confining themselves to three seats, as the majority of female candidates are concentrated in the reserved seats instead of vying for open electorates (Garasu, L 2013, pers. comm., 12 September).

The Constitution mandates that one women member in the reserved seats be appointed to Cabinet. The Cabinet appointment should be, according to the Constitution, decided on a vote by the women members in the reserved seats. In practice, however, the President has some sway in this nomination, as in other Cabinet nominations; after the 2005 election, Toroansi was appointed to Cabinet, and she recounts that "in my case it happened that the President had already asked me and the women had to be consulted" after the fact (2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

This provision of the Constitution is contentious, even among supporters of the reserved seats. Women members of the House and leaders in the women's movement contend that the provision acts as a ceiling, because it is interpreted as restricting the number of women ministers to one (Holan, H 2013, pers. comm., 10 September; Jerome, J 2013, pers. comm., 10 September; Tanne, B 2013, pers. comm., 13 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). The solution, it is

argued, is to encourage more women candidates to stand in open seats, as they are then free to be considered as additional Cabinet appointees (Jerome, J 2013, pers. comm., 10 September).

Discussion

A common theme in quota literature is found in accounts of quota adoption in post-conflict states, where a period of political crisis creates a ‘window of opportunity’ in which quota adoption is more likely (see Reyes & Azizah, 2002). A study carried out in 2005 showed that a quarter of the countries with levels of women’s representation of 30 per cent or higher were “post conflict” (IPU, 2005, p. 5). All of these countries had rapid increases in their levels of women’s political representation over a short period of time, in some cases in a single election. It is argued that these gains are related to their ‘post-conflict’ status and a resultant changing political environment:

An important part of the equation in these...countries is that they are countries in transition, and the process of establishing new constitutions and institutions and rewriting the rules of the political landscape provides a golden opportunity for women to influence the process and make their voices heard, especially in the drafting of electoral and political party laws. (IPU, 2005, p. 5)

Bougainville’s period of transition to an autonomous system of governance provided an opportunity for women to push for a parliamentary gender quota. Their position was strengthened by advocates stressing the role women’s groups played in the peace-making process. Participants in the quota debate often spoke of the reserved seats with the sense that they were a reward for women’s peacemaking efforts during the conflict: “The reserved seats came about because women played a major role in putting an end to the war” (Kokiai, M 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Success was viewed as creating a minimum level of women’s representation in the House of Representatives – albeit a level that was considered by many to be too low – that could be built upon. It was also construed as creating an avenue for “the sense of partnership in decision-making that flows through our history” (BCC, 2004, p. 159) to continue on in the newly established autonomous political institutions. In this way advocates claimed the reserved seats were strengthening traditional Bougainvillean culture as well as improving political decision-making.

Women’s groups and individual women leaders were therefore key figures in advocating the institution of a gender quota. The proposed quota was also supported by several prominent male

political elites (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). The extent of the role of international organisations in the campaign was contested. Women in Bougainville were exposed to international dialogue on quota adoption, including at the 1995 UN Global Conference on Women in Beijing which was attended by two delegations from the region. Furthermore, some actors noted the contribution to the reserved seats campaign of international organisations working in Bougainville during the peace process (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). Generally, though, local actors did not consider international actors to have significantly affected the outcome of the reserved seats campaign (Garasu, L 2013, pers. comm., 12 September; Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September).

The gender quota ultimately implemented in Bougainville was a reserved seats system that guaranteed a minimum of three female MHRs. The BCC noted a widespread hostility towards political parties in its initial public consultations on the new constitution (BCC, 2004). This influenced the type of quota system that was considered by the constitutional commission, as a reserved seats system can operate outside of a formalised party system. Members in the reserved seats are elected by popular vote, a crucial point for women's groups in the quota debate, and an aspect of the system that women MHRs feel adds legitimacy to their position (Pihei, R 2013, pers. comm., 13 September; Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). One relatively unusual provision in the Bougainville quota system is that it also reserves one seat in Cabinet for a representative from the reserved seats for women. This Cabinet appointee is selected by the women members of the House (BCC, 2004). In this way, women have guaranteed representation, not only in the House of Representatives, but at the highest level of political decision-making.

Chapter Seven

'NOUS NE LAISSEURONS PLUS LES HOMMES PARLER À NOTRE PLACE':³⁸ THE PARITY LAWS IN THE FRENCH PACIFIC TERRITORIES

Je dis que la parité en politique doit être une évidence et non imposée par une loi. S'il est humiliant pour une femme d'être reconnue par la force de la loi, il est encore plus humiliant pour les hommes de ne pas avoir appliqué le principe démocratique d'égalité. Après 60 ans d'attente, nous sommes contraintes de prendre un raccourci législatif.

I say that that parity in politics should be obvious and not imposed by law. If it is humiliating for a woman to be recognised by force of the law, it is more humiliating still for the men to not have applied the democratic principle of equality. After 60 years of waiting, we are forced to take a legislative shortcut.

Nicole Waïa, New Caledonian politician (quoted in "Nicole Waïa", 2000, p. 8)

Introduction

My final case study looks at the adoption of the parity laws in the French Pacific territories of New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna. This chapter focuses on the debates around the parity laws in the French Pacific territories in the late 1990s and early 2000s. When the parity laws were adopted, the three territories became the first parts of the Pacific Islands region to introduce a legislative gender quota. Under the provisions of the parity laws, political parties in the territories must present equal numbers of male and female candidates on their lists in a strict alternate order.

As in the previous chapter, this case involves quota adoption at the sub-national level. The introduction of parity laws in the French Pacific territories, however, differs from quota adoption in Bougainville and the other case studies profiled in this thesis in the manner of quota development. The quota was debated and introduced through legislative process in France, and then applied to the legislatures in the Pacific territories. This means that unlike the previous three case studies, where quota adoption (or non-adoption) was a largely endogenous process carried out in-country, in the French Pacific territories the parity laws were imposed from the external

³⁸ 'We will not let men speak in our place any longer' - Sylvie Robineau, quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8.

metropole. Quota adoption in the French Pacific territories, therefore, provides an example of an ‘exogenous’ track model of quota adoption.

Given that the parity laws were developed in, and designed for, the political context of the French mainland, their implementation in the Pacific territories could be viewed as essentially an inadvertent by-product of the larger quota campaign. Nevertheless, there was debate over the parity laws in the French Pacific, most notably in New Caledonia, and legislative attempts to block or delay quota adoption in each of the territories. Written accounts of the quota debates point to some male political elites in the territories as key actors mobilising against the parity laws, while women’s groups and individual women in civil society in New Caledonia are credited as the driving force behind the campaign to implement the parity laws in the territory.

France introduced two constitutional amendments known as the parity laws in 1999, mandating that political parties put forward equal numbers of male and female candidates. In France, the parity laws have had mixed results, with a large increase of women councillors at municipal level, significant changes at regional and European levels, but a disappointing impact on the gender make-up of the National Assembly. France currently has 27 per cent women’s representation in the National Assembly, and 22 per cent in its Senate. Murray (2008, p. 474) claims: “The overall impression of the parity law is that it has failed to live up to expectations, with the key positions of political power in France remaining largely in the hands of men.”

In contrast, the implementation of the parity law in the French Pacific territories has been described as “a real success” (SPC, 2007). While the Pacific Islands region has one of the lowest levels of women’s representation in the world, the parity laws have dramatically increased the number of female legislators in the French territories. In French Polynesia, more than half of the legislators in the Assembly are women, and women’s representation in the New Caledonian Congress is currently 44.4 per cent. In this way, the meaning of success in terms of descriptive representation goes beyond the goal of a ‘start’ as expressed by participants in the campaigns covered in the previous chapters, as the parity laws in these cases ensure equality or near-equality of representation. The effects of the parity laws have been less pronounced in the territory of Wallis and Futuna. Nevertheless, while its level of women’s representation at 20 per cent is lower than the other French territories, it is still significantly higher than most other Pacific states and territories. The presence of more women in politics was seen as leading to better political outcomes, and was framed as a mechanism to strengthen rather than a threat to traditional custom, as well as a symbol of greater democratic legitimacy.

The data presented in this chapter was collected via a desk review of archival material. Sources included published first-person accounts of the quota adoption process, transcripts of legislative debates, newspaper articles, letters to the editor, opinion pieces, cartoons published in newspapers, reports from relevant organizations, and academic articles. Where possible, I have translated quotes from primary sources myself, and in these cases the original French text is provided in the footnotes. In the cases where no original French text is given, the translations have been provided from a secondary source.

Background

The French overseas *départements* (departments) and collectivities are the areas of the world, outside of Europe, under French administrative control. This consists of three collectivities in the Pacific Islands region: Wallis and Futuna; French Polynesia; and New Caledonia, which has a unique status under the French Constitution as a special collectivity. Other French collectivities are the Caribbean islands of Saint Martin and Saint Barthélemy, and Saint Pierre and Miquelon in the Atlantic Ocean. France also has five overseas *départements*: French Guiana, in South America; Guadeloupe and Martinique, in the Caribbean region; and Réunion and Mayotte, in the Indian Ocean. Mrgudovic (2012) argues that despite constitutional changes in the 2000s, the political statuses of these *départements* and collectivities remain complex, with as many different statuses as there are overseas territories.

Historically, women in the French Pacific territories have had limited access to formal political institutions since colonisation. Political developments in the 1940s and 1950s resulted in the institution of seats for representatives of the Pacific territories in the French National Assembly, and the establishment of territorial assemblies, with universal suffrage ensuring equal access to political participation for both women and men (Fisher, 2013). Yet despite legal equality of access, women were continuously under-represented in political decision-making positions in the French Pacific until the institution of the parity laws quota from 1999.

Various barriers to women's representation in the French Pacific territories have been identified. In French Polynesia, Elliston (2000) notes that there were prominent women political leaders in the country in pre-twentieth century history, and highlights the "relatively egalitarian quality of gender relations" in French Polynesian society (p. 174). The low levels of women's political representation are attributed to, among other factors, the difficulties of combining politics with raising children (Crocombe, 1994).

The political sphere in New Caledonia was considered a male environment:

When a woman has political functions, it's difficult because her private life becomes public in a way. This is also why our society doesn't encourage women – because the woman will be subject to the aggression of politics, the world of politics is very hard.

(Marie-Adele Joredie, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.2)

Attitudes of male politicians could prevent women from entering politics, especially in the Loyalty Islands province:

I would say that before the law on parity, women were discouraged due to men's attitudes. In the [Loyalty] islands prior to parity when some women tried to get into politics, they were criticized severely by men. (Marie-Paul Tourte, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.12)

Church institutions have a prominent role in New Caledonian society, as is the case elsewhere in the Pacific region (Maclellan, 2005a). The influence of religious institutions, and their views on gender roles, constituted a barrier to women's involvement in politics according to some New Caledonian women leaders (see Berman, 2005, A.1.4).

New Caledonia

New Caledonia is a Melanesian island group with a population of around 260,000. Unlike other overseas territories and departments of France, New Caledonia has a special status as defined in the French Constitution which allows it a greater degree of political autonomy (Maclellan, 2005b). Since the mid-nineteenth century, it has been a colonial territory of France. The 1956 Defferre Law led to the establishment of a Territorial Assembly, elected by New Caledonians (Fisher, 2013). While the results of the French constitutional referendum in 1958 showed widespread support in New Caledonia for remaining a part of France, the 1960s saw an erosion of the political autonomy that had previously been granted to the territory through the Defferre Law, and the emergence of an indigenous nationalist movement led in part by the first generation of Kanaks to attend French universities (Chappell, 2013).

New Caledonia was the site of a protracted struggle for independence from France. The pro-independence movement mobilised the bulk of the Kanak community in New Caledonia in the 1980s under the leadership of Jean-Marie Tjibaou. A peace agreement was reached in 1988, and the Matignon Accord signed thereafter gave New Caledonia greater rights of self-determination,

and guaranteed a future referendum on independence. Tjibaou was assassinated the following year. The Noumea Accord, signed in 1998, granted New Caledonia a separate political status to other territories in the French Constitution, created the provincial assemblies and 54-seat Congress, and delayed the referendum for a further fifteen to twenty years (Fisher, 2013).

From its establishment to 1999, there were no female members of the Territorial Assembly (see Drage, 1995). In the first post-Noumea Accord elections in 1999, in which the parity law did not apply, nine women were elected ("Le vrai changement", 2004). In 2001, Déwé Gorodé, of the Palika Party,³⁹ was elected Vice-President of New Caledonia. She was one of two female members of the eleven-strong Cabinet. Prior to parity, around ten per cent of elected municipal positions were held by women (Berman, 2005).

French Polynesia

French Polynesia is made up of five archipelagos, and has a population of around 270,000. Much of the colonial territory was annexed in 1880 and initially named *Les Établissements français d'Océanie* (The French establishments of Oceania, or EFO). As in New Caledonia, the Defferre Law in 1956 led to the creation of a Territorial Assembly, and at this time the EFO became known as French Polynesia (Fisher, 2013).

Women in French Polynesia had some success in politics prior to the introduction of the parity law. The first female representative, Céline Oopa, was elected in 1961 (Bargel et al., 2010). Another woman, Huguette Hong Kiou, sat in the Assembly from 1984 to 1992 (Drage, 1995). In the 1996 election, five women (12 per cent) won seats in the Assembly of French Polynesia (von Strokirch, 2001).

Wallis and Futuna

Wallis and Futuna is an overseas collectivity of France, made up of the two island groups, the Wallis Islands and the Hoorn Islands. It has a smaller population than New Caledonia and French Polynesia, with around 15,000 inhabitants. The colony of Wallis and Futuna was administrated by New Caledonia until it became a separate political entity in 1961. Wallis and Futuna has a Territorial Assembly of twenty seats.

As in the other territories, politics in Wallis and Futuna has been historically a male-dominated sphere. Prior to the 1990s, no women had been elected to the Wallis and Futuna Territorial

³⁹ *Parti de Libération Kanak* (Party of Kanak Liberation)

Assembly. For the first time in 1992, two women won seats (Drage, 1995). In the following election, in 1998, two women were also elected, standing on lists of mostly female candidates (Bargel et al., 2010).

Table 5: Women's representation in the French Pacific territories (as at 16 December 2014)

TERRITORY	NUMBER OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS	TOTAL NUMBER OF LEGISLATORS	PERCENTAGE OF LEGISLATORS WHO ARE WOMEN
French Polynesia	30	57	52.0
New Caledonia (Congress)	24	54	44.4
- Loyalty Islands Provincial Assembly	7	14	50.0
- Northern Provincial Assembly	9	22	40.9
- Southern Provincial Assembly	20	40	50.0
Wallis and Futuna	4	20	15.0

Source: Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 17 December.

Quota Development

France

France has been described as having “a chronic history of women’s under-representation in all aspects of its political system” (Murray, 2009, p. 29). Women in France did not gain the right to vote and stand for elected office until 1944, and in the five decades that followed never accounted for more than 6 per cent of seats in the legislative assembly (Bereni, 2007). The first female Prime Minister, Edith Cresson, was appointed in 1991, although she held the post for less than a year. Prior to the implementation of the parity law in 1999, women made up less than 6 per cent of the Senate and 11 per cent of the Assembly, and held just 8 per cent of mayoral posts (Berman, 2005).

The argument for parity between women and men in legislatures was put forward by activists from the 1970s onward, although it first gained prominence in the late 1980s (Sénac-Slawinski, 2008). The publication of the book *Au pouvoir citoyennes: liberté, égalité, parité*⁴⁰ by authors Françoise Gaspard, Claude Servan-Schreiber and Anne Le Gall (1992) was a turning point in the

⁴⁰ ‘To power (female) citizens : liberty, equality, parity’

campaign for parity. Baudino (2003) notes that parity had significant support from the general public, becoming a “household word” (p. 386).

The campaign for parity culminated in two constitutional amendments that were passed on July 18, 1999. The first amendment states, ‘the law favours the equal access of women and men to electoral mandates and elective functions’,⁴¹ and the second, ‘political parties and groups contribute to the implementation of this principle’.⁴² On June 6, 2000, enabling laws to implement the parity law provisions were passed. A new law was enacted on 31 January 2007 to strengthen parity provisions and enforce parity on municipal and regional executives (Bargel et al., 2010).

The Parity Laws in the Pacific Territories

When the parity laws were adopted in France, it was assumed that they were to apply to all parts of France, including its overseas territories (de Bonnefoy, 2000a). On 8 March 2000, International Women’s Day, the French Secretary of Overseas Territories Jean-Jack Queyranne confirmed that parity would apply in the territories as well as in the French mainland (“Jean-Jack Queyranne”, 2000). While this line was held to by the French Government, there was opposition to – as well as support for – the parity laws in the Pacific territories, and attempts in each territory to prevent or delay the implementation of all or some of the quota provisions.

In 2000, Simon Loueckhote, a member of the French Senate for New Caledonia, announced that he would seek to amend the parity laws to delay their implementation in the territory. His proposed amendment would have delayed the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia until the 2007 municipal elections (Claudel, 2000a). Loueckhote, a member of the RPCR,⁴³ was a prominent figure in New Caledonian politics at that time, holding not only a senatorial seat but also the position of Speaker in the New Caledonia Congress. In French Polynesia, politician Emile Vernaudon spearheaded a move to obtain an exemption for overseas territories from the provisions around strict alternation of male and female candidates on party lists (von Strokirch, 2001). The representative for Wallis and Futuna in the French Senate, Robert Laufoaulu, also sought to amend the parity laws, to gain exemptions for the territory from the provisions that he felt would disadvantage Wallis and Futunan women (Bargel et al., 2010).

⁴¹ « *la loi favorise l'égal accès des femmes et des hommes aux mandats électoraux et fonctions électives* ».

⁴² « *les partis et groupements politiques contribuent à la mise en œuvre de ce principe* ».

⁴³ *Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République*. The party was affiliated with the French political party *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR). In 2002, the party changed its name to *Rassemblement-UMP*, after the RPR merged with other centre-right French parties to form the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (UMP).

Arguments for the Parity Laws

Supporters of the parity laws in the French Pacific territories argued that parity was a necessary development. They pointed to the historical absence of women from the New Caledonian legislature: "For years we wait for this to be done democratically and nothing happens. The parity law will finally help us. We really need it" (de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8).⁴⁴ The *Front National* party also labelled the constitutional amendments a "necessary change" ("Pour le Front National", 2000, p. 10).⁴⁵ Denise Kacatr, a women's rights activist from the Loyalty Islands and the government-appointed women's officer for that province, argued that "parity is necessary to force the hand of men" (de Bonnefoy, 2000a, p. 8).⁴⁶ Some advocates for parity expressed reluctant support for the legislative changes, arguing that it was the only way to advance women's representation, including the political party *Génération Calédonienne*: "[we] regret that it is necessary to use the law to impose this principle...[but] it is sometimes necessary to use it when society is struggling to overcome old taboos" ("Pour Génération Calédonienne", 2000, p. 10).⁴⁷

The parity laws were defended by *Génération Calédonienne* as adhering to "the democratic ideal" ("Pour Génération Calédonienne", 2000, p. 10).⁴⁸ Gorodé claimed the quota was "important as a symbol but it's important especially for democracy. It's not only a matter of Kanak women being considered equal to European women, but democracy concerns all women" (Berman, 2005, A.1.1). It was argued by a female municipal councillor, Cécile Waka, that greater women's representation in politics was important in terms of fairness: "We are equal to men" (Serre, 2001, p. 22).⁴⁹

The late Nicole Waïa, who was a spokeswoman for the *Union Calédonienne* party and a member of the New Caledonian Congress at the time, claimed that having more women in politics would have a substantive positive effect on political decision-making: "the future of our children should not be left solely in the hands of men, women should participate in building the country" (quoted in Claudel, 2000c, p. 4).⁵⁰ It was claimed that women could contribute a different perspective to political decision-making: "Sometimes women's points of view are very different from men's, so

⁴⁴ « Depuis des années, on attend que cela se fasse démocratiquement et rien ne se passe. Cette loi sur la parité va enfin nous aider. Nous en avions bien besoin ».

⁴⁵ « Une évolution nécessaire ».

⁴⁶ « Il faut instaurer la parité pour forcer un peu la main aux hommes ».

⁴⁷ « [on] regrette qu'il soit nécessaire de recourir à la loi pour imposer ce principe...[mais] il est parfois indispensable d'y recourir lorsque la société a du mal à dépasser ses vieux tabous ».

⁴⁸ « L'idéal démocratique ».

⁴⁹ « Nous sommes égales aux hommes ».

⁵⁰ « l'avenir de nos enfants ne doit pas rester uniquement entre les mains des hommes, les femmes doivent participer à la construction du pays ».

it's good that women should be in politics" (Tesser, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.13). Marie-Claire Beccalossi, a leading women's rights activist and a founder of the Council of Melanesian Women, argued that having more women in politics would lead to better decision-making:

If women enter the political sphere, they will be better administrators than men.

They will deal with issues efficiently and fairly, and they will also make savings.

Women are tougher in management than men. (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.17)

Waïa claimed that in decision-making, women and men could complement each other: "Men need to stop considering us as enemies. We can help them because we are complementary" (de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8).⁵¹ The idea of complementarity between the sexes was a common rhetorical argument in French debate as well (see Lépinard, 2006). The idea of sex as a 'natural' and complementary difference helped advocates fight claims that parity would lead to a multitude of quotas for identity groups (Lépinard, 2007).

Supporters of the parity laws linked their introduction with other significant changes in French politics, such as women gaining the right to vote in 1944 (« Les femmes ont le droit », 2000). The amendments were seen as being a part of "the long history of democratic conquests" ("Les femmes citoyennes", 2000, p. 10).⁵² One activist claimed that "this parity law is a continuation of a long and difficult struggle for women's rights" (« Les femmes ont le droit », 2000, p. 7).⁵³

Arguments against the Parity Laws

Opponents of the introduction of parity in New Caledonia used three main arguments (see Berman, 2005). Firstly, they claimed women were not prepared to enter politics. In introducing his amendment in the French Senate, Loueckhote stated: "New Caledonia is not ready yet" (de Bonnefoy, 2000a, p. 8).⁵⁴ He argued that Kanak women in particular would not be prepared for politics, due to cultural reasons (Bargel et al., 2010). He said that he had struggled to find women candidates to stand on his list in the preceding provincial elections, citing this experience as evidence of the need to delay the implementation of the parity laws ("Parité sur les listes", 2000).

⁵¹ « *Il faut que les hommes arrêtent de nous considérer comme des ennemis. Nous pouvons les aider parce que nous sommes complémentaires* ».

⁵² « *la longue histoire des conquêtes démocratiques* ».

⁵³ « *cette loi sur la parité s'inscrit dans la continuité d'un long et difficile combat pour les droits de la femme* ».

⁵⁴ « *la Nouvelle-Calédonie n'est pas encore prête* ».

In speaking in favour of his amendment, Loueckhote spoke of his respect for women: “[I have] always considered woman to be the most wonderful creature that God has created” (“Des personnalités”, 2000, p. 5).⁵⁵ Other supporters of the Loueckhote amendment stressed that it came from a place of concern for women. César Qenegei, a prominent Kanak public figure, argued that unexperienced women would be disrespected in political spaces:

We do not want them to be mocked by those that have the training and the experience...It is because of this that Simon wants a delay of the application of the law. Not out of contempt for women. On the contrary, out of respect. (Fléaux, 2000, p. 4)⁵⁶

Women’s groups rejected this argument. The Office of Women Citizens of Noumea referred to the struggle of Kanak women and men in the post-war era to gain democratic rights and advance the decolonisation agenda:

Evoking the lack of maturity of Kanak women today is equivalent to denying the process of decolonisation that took place in 1946 through the giving of the right to vote to Kanak men and women and their recognition as citizens (“Les femmes citoyennes”, 2000, p. 10).⁵⁷

Other parity activists pointed to the active role Kanak women played in politics already:

They have taken us for incompetent or incapable for too long. It is time for men to free our hands. For years Melanesian women have been involved in politics through associations. They are acting on the ground and it is because they are discreet that they have not been speaking out. (quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8)⁵⁸

Loueckhote claimed that it would be too difficult to find willing female candidates to fill party lists under the parity laws: “How to find 14 or 15 women to put on a list? It’s practically impossible...In New Caledonia, it is the political parties that will force women to enter politics” (quoted in

⁵⁵ « [J’ai] toujours considéré que la femme est la plus formidable créature que Dieu ait créée ».

⁵⁶ « Nous ne voulons pas qu’elles soient moquées par ceux qui ont la formation et l’expérience...C’est pour cela que Simon voulait un report de l’application de la loi. Pas par mépris des femmes. Au contraire, par respect. ».

⁵⁷ « Evoquer l’absence de maturité des femmes kanakes aujourd’hui équivaut à renier la démarche de décolonisation entreprise dès 1946 au travers du droit de vote donné aux hommes et aux femmes kanaks et leur reconnaissance en tant que citoyens ».

⁵⁸ « On nous prend pour des incomptentes ou des incapables depuis trop longtemps. Il est temps que les hommes nous lâchent la main. Il y a des années que les femmes mélanesiennes font de la politique au sein d’associations. Elles agissent sur le terrain et ce n’est parce qu’elles sont discrètes qu’elles n’ont rien à dire. »

Claudel, 2000a, p. 7).⁵⁹ Waïa acknowledged that finding candidates might be difficult, but disagreed that this was a valid reason to delay the implementation of the parity laws:

At some point, this mentality has to be shaken and this law will help us do that.
Recruiting will not be easy for anyone. It is true that finding Kanak women in the tribes, the villages, will not be obvious but now we are forced to take the plunge.
And it is better that is now than in 20 years. (quoted in Claudel, 2000c, p. 4)⁶⁰

When parity was applied from 2004, Loueckhote's fear proved unfounded, with enough female candidates putting their names forward (Berman, 2005).

The second argument used was that the parity law would have a negative effect on Kanak culture and custom. For Kanak society, the parity law was seen as constituting "a fundamental change in its traditional concept of the role of women" (CDI, 2002, p. 7). Members of the Customary Senate, an advisory body made up of Kanak elders, voiced fears that the parity laws would cause societal problems for the Kanak population (Berman, 2005). Qenegei argued that the move would negatively affect Kanak society: "this will disrupt the whole Melanesian environment" (quoted in Fléaux, 2000, p. 4).⁶¹ Gorodé dismissed this argument:

It's a question of power. Men are worried about and afraid of parity or of women who speak out publicly, who are political activists... Kanak men know that they've lost their power with respect to Europeans because of colonisation. So if they insist that parity is contrary to our custom, it's because up till now the power they still had was customary power. I think that's why they're worried about parity. But there is no need to worry, because parity has nothing to do with custom. (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.10).

Marie-Paul Tourte, a lawyer with Kanak heritage, agreed: "It's true that some customary authorities use custom as an instrument of power" (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.12). She argued that there was a place for women's political leadership in Kanak society:

⁵⁹ « Comment trouver 14 ou 15 femmes à mettre sur une liste? C'est pratiquement impossible...en Nouvelle-Calédonie, ce sont les partis politiques qui vont obliger les femmes à faire de la politique ».

⁶⁰ « A un moment donné, il faut bien bousculer les mentalités et cette loi va nous y aider. Recruter ne sera facile pour personne. Il est vrai qu'aller chercher les femmes kanakes dans les tribus, les villages, ne va pas être évident mais aujourd'hui nous sommes bien obligées de franchir le pas. Et il vaut mieux que ce soit maintenant plutôt que dans 20 ans. »

⁶¹ « cela va perturber le milieu mélanésien tout entier ».

When parity was being discussed, and even before with respect to the early women's movement, Kanak men cautioned us, saying that our demands would destabilize Kanak society. They said that in Kanak society women and men had well-defined positions. They said that our demands for a different status would endanger traditional values. So I think that this is still the attitude of the customary authorities. What we try to get them to understand is that parity is in fact a way of reinforcing society. Today there are new problems which didn't exist before when traditional life was the only way, for example problems with the young people, and also in the tribes. Problems due to modern life. We say that men and women have to work together to solve those problems in order to ensure the stability of the society. (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.12)

Kanak women's groups supported parity, taking a position which put them at odds with some male customary leaders and created a schism within the community (Berman, 2005).

Finally, opponents of the parity law argued that the law was a colonial imposition and a distraction from the fight for independence from France. A Kanak community leader voiced resentment of the parity laws: "The law is perceived as an affront because it comes from outside; it's as if the chiefs were being ordered about" (Tonya, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.16). When the Loueckhote amendment was put forward, an FLNKS⁶² spokesman criticised parity as a threat to the independence movement:

The political arm of the FLNKS...regrets that during this heated debate, certain politicians have hoped that the law on parity would apply 'ipso facto' in our country, thus calling into questions the will for decolonisation and self-government sanctioned by the Noumea Accord. (quoted in Claudel, 2000b, p. 2)⁶³

Waïa questioned the idea that the parity laws were a threat to the decolonisation process: "How does the fight for parity between men and women harm the process of decolonisation? For me, decolonisation should result in advancement, change, progress" (quoted in "Nicole Waïa", 2000, p.

⁶² *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste* (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front), a pro-independence umbrella group that includes the following parties : *Palika*, *Union Calédonienne*, *Union Progrésiste Mélanésienne* and *Rassemblement Démocratique Océanien*.

⁶³ « *Le bureau politique du FLNKS...regrette qu'à l'occasion de ce débat passionné, certains responsables politiques aient souhaité que la loi sur la parité s'applique « ipso facto » dans notre pays, remettant ainsi en cause la volonté de décolonisation et d'auto-organisation consacrée par l'accord de Nouméa* ».

8).⁶⁴ Other supporters of parity countered that this law was no different to other French laws imposed on New Caledonia in the post-colonial era: “All laws here are colonial laws” (Joredie, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.11).

New Caledonia

The initial reaction in New Caledonia to the passage of the parity laws was muted. This was attributed in part to the provincial elections that were taking place in the territory at the time (Claudel, 2000c). Over time, however, there was significant debate over the constitutional amendments in New Caledonia, a process set off by a proposal by a member of the French Senate to delay the implementation of parity in the territory. In February 2000, Senator Loueckhote announced that he would put forward an amendment to the parity laws. The move was labelled a “small bombshell”⁶⁵ by the newspaper *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* (Claudel, 2000a, p. 7). It was also criticised by Loueckhote’s colleagues in the RPCR. Marie-Noëlle Thémereau, who at the time was the Vice-President of the RPCR and would later serve as President of New Caledonia from 2004 to 2007, threatened to resign from the party if the amendment was tabled (de Bonnefoy, 2000a). She labelled the proposed amendment “a rear-guard, retrograde move” (quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000a, p. 8).⁶⁶

Nevertheless, the Loueckhote amendment won some support from political actors across the partisan divide in New Caledonia. Some representatives from the FLNKS, as well as members of the Customary Senate, publicly stated their support for postponing the application of the parity laws in the territory (Berman, 2005). Opponents of the amendment noted these expressions of support, with some attributing it to the fears of male politicians of losing their seats:

They are afraid...they are wondering which of them will have to go to make room for women (quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8)⁶⁷

This sudden ‘brotherhood’ between elected politicians, from RPCR to the political arm of the FLNKS through the FCCI,⁶⁸ does it not betray an anxiety that is purely electoral? (“Les femmes citoyennes”, 2000, p. 10)⁶⁹

⁶⁴ « *En quoi le combat pour la parité entre hommes et femmes porterait-il préjudice au processus de décolonisation? Pour moi, la décolonisation doit se traduire par des avancées, des changements, des progrès.* »

⁶⁵ « *Petit coup de théâtre* ».

⁶⁶ « *un combat d’arrière-garde, retrograde* ».

⁶⁷ « *Ils ont peur...Ils se demandent lesquels d’entre eux vont devoir s’en aller pour laisser la place aux femmes* ».

There was widespread disapproval of the Loueckhote amendment. *Les Nouvelles Caledoniennes* referred to “the wave of protests” (Claudel, 2000a, p. 7),⁷⁰ and “the outcry” (Claudel, 2000b, p. 2),⁷¹ in documenting the responses to the move. Initially, Loueckhote was unmoved, claiming that only a small number of women was opposed to the amendment: “There are only a few women who have reacted badly to my proposal” (quoted in Claudel, 2000a, p. 7).⁷²

Concerns were raised that the parity laws were not debated in the New Caledonian Congress, in which Loueckhote also held the role of Speaker at the time in addition to his senatorial position. Waïa noted that the issue of parity had not been debated properly in the territorial legislature. She claimed that this would have been preferable to a public debate of the kind that later took place in New Caledonia: “I am convinced that if the debate had taken place in this forum, it would not have taken place on the street and it would not have had this impact on women who now feel humiliated by your approach” (quoted in “Nicole Waïa”, 2000, p. 8).⁷³ Waïa made an attempt to debate the issue in Congress, filing a request for an urgent debate in March 2000 on the matter of “this law should be fully and immediately implemented in New Caledonia from its entry into force [in France]” (“Un vœu”, 2000, p. 6).⁷⁴ Representatives from the Alliance Party also criticised Loueckhote for not raising the issue of parity in Congress, claiming that in not doing so he was trying to avoid a public debate on the issue (Bélignon, 2000a, p. 6).

The Loueckhote amendment was publicly condemned by New Caledonian women: “As a woman, it is intolerable in terms of our rights. It’s degrading. We must fight against this archaic mindset” (quoted in Bélignon, 2000b, p. 7).⁷⁵ There was a cross-partisan effort to protest the amendment. A petition against the amendment was launched, and activists gathered five hundred signatures in one day in the Place de Cocotiers in central Noumea (“Cinq cents signatures”, 2000). The newspaper *Les Nouvelles Caledoniennes* noted that pro-parity activists involved in the petition

⁶⁸ *Fédération des comités de coordination indépendantistes* (Federation of Pro-Independence Co-operation Committees)

⁶⁹ « Cette soudaine « fraternité » entre élus politiciens, du RPCR au bureau politique du FLNKS en passant par la FCCI ne trahit-elle pas une inquiétude qui ne serait qu'électoraliste ? »

⁷⁰ « la vague de protestations ».

⁷¹ « Le tollé ».

⁷² « Ce ne sont que quelques femmes qui ont très mal réagi à ma proposition ».

⁷³ « Je suis persuadée que si le débat avait eu lieu dans cette enceinte, il n'aurait pas eu lieu sur la voie publique et n'aurait pas eu d'impact sur les femmes qui se sentent aujourd'hui humiliées par votre démarche ».

⁷⁴ « cette loi soit pleinement et immédiatement appliquée en Nouvelle-Calédonie dès son entrée en vigueur [en France] ».

⁷⁵ « En tant que femme, c'est intolérable vis-à-vis de nos droits. C'est dégradant. Il faut lutter contre l'archaïsme mental ».

signature-gathering were associated with various groups, including the trade union confederation USTKE,⁷⁶ and political parties, notably FLNKS, the Alliance, and the RPCR ("Cinq cents signatures", 2000). There was a march from Place de Cocotiers to the French High Commission, with protestors chanting "Simon, you're screwed" ("Cinq cents signatures", 2000, p. 7).⁷⁷ In ten days, the petition against the Loueckhote amendment was signed by 1600 people. On 22 March 2000, it was sent to the French Minister of the Interior and presented to Congress (de Bonnefoy, 2000b).

French Polynesia

The Assembly of French Polynesia initially indicated its support of the proposed parity laws (Bélignon, 2000a). Most political parties in the territory, however, eventually stated their opposition to the provisions of the quota (von Strokirch, 2001). An amendment to the parity law was proposed by Vernaudon to exempt overseas territories from the rules around strictly alternating men and women on party lists. The amendment originally won support in the National Assembly, and later in the Senate with the backing of Gaston Flosse, the representative from French Polynesia. Ultimately, however, it was rejected by a law commission report, and the parity law eventually passed without it (von Strokirch, 2001).

Wallis and Futuna

Members of the Wallis and Futuna legislature registered their support for the parity laws in 1999 (Bélignon, 2000a). In 2000, Senator Laufoaulu put forward an amendment to exclude the territory from the provision mandating that equal numbers of men and women be present on party lists. His argument was that the parity law would hinder rather than advance women's electoral chances in Wallis and Futuna, as women who had previously won election to the Territorial Assembly had stood on all-women lists, which would be prohibited under the new law. He requested an exemption for Wallis and Futuna so that the practice of all-women party lists could continue. The Laufoaulu amendment was unsuccessful, and parity was duly applied in Wallis and Futuna from 2002 (Bargel et al., 2010).

Quota Design

The campaign for parity in France resulted in two constitutional amendments in 1999, and the accompanying legislation that followed in 2000. While the amendment of the Constitution and the passage of the related laws was undoubtedly a victory for the parity movement, several

⁷⁶ *Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Kanaks et des Exploités* (Union of Kanak and Exploited Workers).

⁷⁷ « Simon, t'es foutu ».

commentators point out that the word '*parité*' is not actually used in the texts (Baudino, 2003; Krook, 2007). Political compromises at the drafting stages also limited the impact of the amendment (Baudino, 2003), with the replacement of the word '*garantit*' (guarantee) with the word '*favorise*' (favour) in the first amendment.

The parity laws apply to most elections held in France, but not to presidential races, elections to *conseils généraux*,⁷⁸ local elections in municipalities of less than 3500 residents, and single-member Senate constituencies (Bird, 2003). In municipalities with more than 3500 residents, as well as regional and European elections, proportional representation (PR) is used, and lists must have equal numbers of men and women. In the National Assembly elections, a two-round voting system is used, and parity is not as strictly enforced. Rather, parties are subjected to financial penalties if they do not have equal numbers of male and female candidates.

In elections that use a list-based PR voting system, parity law dictates that male and female candidates must be strictly alternated. The only exception to this was municipal elections in communes with a population over 3500, in which candidates are alternated in groups of six with three men and three women in each grouping. In single-member voting systems, parties that do not put forward equal numbers of male and female candidates are subject to financial penalties, which apply to the party's funding from the state. One part of this funding is calculated relative to the share of votes a party receives, and the second part relative to its share of seats. If a party neglects to field equal numbers of male and female candidates, the funding they receive based on vote share is decreased by a percentage corresponding to half the percentage of the gender gap among their candidates. The funding based on share of seats is unaffected by the parity laws (Murray, 2007). Reforms were passed in January 2007 to make the parity laws more effective. In regional and local elections, rules regarding list composition were changed so that one in every two candidates was required to be a woman, rather than three in six. At the national level, the financial penalties for non-compliance were increased (Murray, 2008).

In France, parity has had a significant impact on women's representation at municipal, regional and European levels. At national level, the parity law has been less effective. The 2002 legislative elections, the first under parity law, saw only a small increase in the number of women in the National Assembly. The 2007 and 2012 elections brought more women into the National Assembly, but women still only make up 27 per cent of *députés*. The provisions of the law have

⁷⁸ *Conseils généraux* (general councils) are the assemblies of the *départements* of France. There are 96 *départements* in mainland France, and five overseas *départements* – French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Réunion, and Mayotte.

played a part in making parity law less effective than it could have been. Murray (2008) describes the parity law as an “example of a law that did not go far enough in its first incarnation, with loopholes and weak penalties contributing to its initial poor performance in legislative elections” (p. 479). Many political parties, especially the larger parties, chose to pay the financial penalties rather than field more female candidates. Smaller parties have proved more likely to implement parity due to their increased dependence on the vote-share portion of state funding that would be withheld as a penalty for non-compliance (Murray, 2007), while larger parties were in a stronger position to be able to ignore the parity laws, even when the penalties ran into millions of euros.

At the municipal level, only elections in municipalities with a population of more than 3,500 are subject to parity law. This is because the electoral laws of the smaller constituencies would make parity difficult to apply (Lépinard, 2006). In practice, this means that a third of all municipal council representatives are elected without parity law being applied (Baudino, 2003), although there was a small increase in the number of female councillors and female mayors in these municipalities after the parity laws (Bird, 2003).

In the French Pacific, a PR voting system is used for legislative elections at territorial level. This means that political parties in the French Pacific cannot stand more male than female candidates and simply face financial penalties, as their French counterparts can. Instead, party lists must contain equal numbers of men and women to be registered. This measure has seen parity have more of an impact in the territorial assemblies of the French Pacific than in the French National Assembly.

In New Caledonia, parity law applied in municipal elections for communes with populations of more than 3,500 from 2001. Eleven of its 33 communes are large enough to implement the parity law (Bargel et al., 2010). Wallis and Futuna is not divided into communes, so parity does not apply at municipal level. In French Polynesia, where nine of the 48 communes have populations larger than 3,500, the parity law was not enforced at municipal level until 2008. While the law did not apply in the 2001 or 2004 municipal elections, political parties that believed it would apply had already started to recruit more women to stand. Therefore, women's representation at commune level increased from 19 per cent to 31 per cent over these two elections, despite the parity law not being enforced (Bargel et al., 2010).

The measures of the parity law, while perceived as limiting its effectiveness in France, have actually ensured its success in the French Pacific. The requirements for list-based PR voting systems, of strict alternation of male and female candidates, meant that French Pacific political

parties did not have the option of choosing a financial penalty over the application of parity. At municipal level, the law does not have a significant reach due to the small size of most communes in the territories. Parity law stipulates that only communes with a population greater than 3,500 are subject to its provisions, and only a minority of communes in New Caledonia and French Polynesia have a large enough population.

Local Actors

The implementation of the parity law in the French Pacific is different from quota adoption in France and other states in that it was a law imposed on the territories from the metropole. As such, debate on the issue was limited in the territories, and the role of local actors in supporting and opposing the measures was restricted. Nevertheless, there was opposition to the ‘parity law’ in the French Pacific, with attempts in each of the three territories to delay its implementation. Furthermore, there was a campaign led by women’s groups in New Caledonia in support of the proposed law.

Women’s Movement

In France, there was more opposition to the parity law from women and from within the feminist movement than in the French Pacific. Berman (2005) argues: “Given the relatively greater size and population in metropolitan France as well as greater diversity in the feminist movement, it was harder to prompt discipline and loyalty amongst women’s groups in France.” In contrast, he notes a widespread acceptance of the parity law amongst women in New Caledonia (Berman, 2005), where women from both sides of the political spectrum united in support of the parity law.

In New Caledonia, Berman (2005) has argued that the strong party system and the political cleavage around the issue of independence from France have hindered the development of a feminist movement, or any form of cross-partisan women’s movement. Women, particularly Kanak women, tended to be unwilling to use the term ‘feminist’ (Berman, 2005, A.1.8). Many supporters of the parity laws clarified they did not identify as feminists, such as a woman interviewed by *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* on International Women’s Day: “Myself, without being a feminist, I claim my rights. I am for equality and parity” (quoted in “Les femmes jugent”, 2001, p. 3).⁷⁹ Prominent female politicians and community leaders likewise rejected the label of feminist:

⁷⁹ « Moi-même, sans être féministe, je revendique mes droits. Je suis pour l’égalité et la parité ».

I'm a woman, I'm not a feminist. I've taken part in a number of international conferences on women's rights, for example in Thailand, Fiji, and the United States. I think women's rights should be recognized because we are human beings like men. But we should not be feminist. (Waïa, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.5)

I think women's rights come from their role in giving life. I don't agree with women's associations whose aim is to oppose men. I've never been a feminist...I don't oppose women to men in our society, so I'm not a feminist. (Joredie, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.6)

Other high-profile women leaders, however, questioned this antipathy to the feminist movement. Gorodé argued: "I think it's through ignorance that the term 'feminist' is not adopted here" (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.7). At the time the FLNKS was founded in 1984, one of the original member groups was the Group of Kanak and Exploited Women in Struggle (GFKEL),⁸⁰ a radical feminist organisation led by Sussana Ounei, although the group was not active beyond the late 1980s (Henningham, 1992, p. 80). While the GFKEL was a small group, it was evidence of an explicitly feminist dimension to the Kanak nationalist movement (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May).

The GFKEL was debating in the 1970s and the 1980s the place of women in Kanak custom (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). Feminism in the French political tradition has focused on the rights of the individual (see Revillard, 2007), a perspective that is potentially in conflict with communal-based customary Melanesian practice. Kanak women define themselves within a cultural context in which the custom is that men take a spokesperson role over women (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). There is, however, a distinction between two arguably 'public' spheres – the political sphere and the customary sphere – which women have been able to exploit. Thus, Kanak women can have a prominent role in provincial or national politics, while maintaining a "traditional" role in village affairs (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May).

The debate over the parity laws in New Caledonia was sparked by the proposed Loueckhote amendment. Many women's groups from both *caldoche*⁸¹ and Kanak communities publicly spoke out in support of parity. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* noted the wide-ranging opposition to the Loueckhote amendment among women in the territory: "In recent days, the level of popularity of

⁸⁰ *Groupe de femmes kanakes et exploitées en lutte*

⁸¹ New Caledonians of French descent.

Simon Loueckhote among women is flirting with absolute zero” (de Bonnefoy, 2000a, p. 8).⁸² Gorodé participated in a debate on the parity laws against Senator Loueckhote. A core group of parity activists then mobilised women’s groups. Protests were organised against the Loueckhote amendment in Noumea on International Women’s Day in 2000 (Bargel et al., 2010). Marches also took place in other parts of New Caledonia in support of the implementation of the parity laws, including in Koné, the capital of Northern Province (“Les femmes fêtent”, 2001).

With the advent of parity, the Women’s Council of New Caledonia in the Southern Province was reformed to support women candidates in the lead-up to its implementation (de Bonnefoy, 2000c). Campaigners against the Loueckhote amendment sought to take advantage of the women’s organisational capacity that had been formed around the issue of parity, citing other gendered issues that women should mobilise around, including abortion law, sexual harassment legislation, and the sole parent allowance: “Now that we are together, women from all walks of life and all ethnic groups, we are going to move to more aggressive work so that the fundamental rights of women will be respected in New Caledonia” (quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000b, p. 8).⁸³ The sense of solidarity amongst women’s groups fostered by the parity campaign, however, appeared to dissipate following the law’s application. One female politician from New Caledonia claimed that “it only went on for the time needed to put a stop to that [amendment]. At the time it was a cause that strongly mobilised the women, which affected them a lot” (quoted in Bargel et al., 2010, p. 14).⁸⁴

Political Actors

The key figures in opposition to the parity laws in the French Pacific territories were male political elites. Most prominent among them was Loueckhote, who was a significant figure in New Caledonian politics at the time. In his role as a Senator, he pushed for a delay in the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia. In French Polynesia, several high-profile political elites, including Vernaudon and Flosse, attempted to win an exemption for the territory from the provisions of the quota that mandated a strict alternation of male and female candidates on party lists.

⁸² « *Ces derniers jours, la cote de popularité de Simon Loueckhote auprès des femmes flirtait avec le zéro absolu* ».

⁸³ « *Maintenant que nous sommes réunies, femmes de tous horizons et de toutes ethnies, nous allons passer à un travail plus offensif pour que les droits élémentaires des femmes soient respectés en Nouvelle-Calédonie* ».

⁸⁴ Original text : « *ça n'a existé que le temps de contrer ça. À l'époque ça avait été une cause qui avait beaucoup mobilisé les femmes, qui les avait beaucoup ébranlées.* » (translation by Bargel et al.)

In the New Caledonian context, many of the male political elites who were most outspoken in their opposition to the parity laws were from the Loyalty Islands province. These men included Loueckhote, along with Qenegei and others. Nic Maclellan, a prominent commentator on New Caledonian politics, notes that this resistance amongst Loyalty Islands politicians was “partly cultural, partly mathematical” (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May).

The Loyalty Islands province was colonised later than the other New Caledonian provinces. While on mainland New Caledonia there were land confiscations from the 1860s and the creation of tribal reserves, in the Loyalty Islands customary land tenure was not disrupted in the same way, and so the customary system as it relates to land ownership was easier to maintain. The customary power of chieftainships has also endured to a greater sense in the Loyalty Islands province, as have custom and language, due to the limited amount of European contact and settlement relative to mainland New Caledonia (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). The population of the province is almost 97 per cent Kanak (Rivoilhan & Broustet, 2011). Due to these factors, traditional custom influences politics to a greater extent in the Loyalty Islands province than in other parts of New Caledonia (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). Prior to the institution of parity, no women had been elected to the Loyalty Islands Provincial Assembly (Maclellan, 2009a). The question of whether the parity laws constituted a breach of custom, therefore, was significant in the province. Community leaders in the Loyalty Islands such as Qenegei spoke out against the parity laws, citing potential disruption to Kanak culture and society (see Berman, 2005; Fléaux, 2000).

There were also potential reasons of self-interest for Loyalty Islands politicians to oppose the parity laws. Of all the provinces, the Loyalty Islands has the smallest assembly, with fourteen seats. Only half of these representatives are also entitled to sit in Congress, making up the smallest congressional delegation of the three provinces. In the 2014 election, seven party lists were competing for a share of these fourteen seats (Maclellan, 2014a) – the highest number of registered lists in any of the provinces – with one (UC-FLNKS) winning six seats and four others gaining two seats each (Maclellan, 2014b). Parties in the Loyalty Islands, therefore, are vying for a share of fewer seats, against more competition, than those in other provinces. Furthermore, many of the parties and party coalitions in the Loyalty Islands are factionalised, with several strong personalities competing for the top list positions (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). A high position on the party list is crucial, and for male politicians the party laws see every second list position made unavailable to them. This political and cultural environment was the context for the

parity debate in New Caledonia, in which many of the strongest voices in opposition were Loyalty Islands men.

Male political elites in the French Pacific were not universally opposed to the parity laws. While some voiced their opposition, and acted to delay their implementation or block some of the provisions, there was also support amongst political elites for the introduction of the quota. In New Caledonia, women's groups were joined in their support of parity by some high-profile male allies. An FLNKS politician, Bernard Lepeu, publicly spoke out against the Loueckhote amendment (de Bonnefoy, 2000a). Other parties such as *Génération Calédonienne* openly supported the implementation of the parity laws ("Pour Génération Calédonienne", 2000).

International Actors

In the debate over the parity laws in New Caledonia, one of the main questions raised was whether the legislation, which was passed by French politicians in the metropole, should be applied in the territorial institutions as in France. In this way, the debate around the quota reflected the fundamental political division in New Caledonia, over the question of independence. At the heart of this debate is the issue of whether New Caledonia constitutes a part of France, or is a separate country. Kanak opponents of the implementation of the parity laws argued that it was an outside imposition from France that was not relevant to the New Caledonian context (see Tonya quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.18). The stance of the French Government was that as the overseas departments and territories were part of the realm of France, the parity laws would apply ("Jean-Jack Queyranne", 2000, p. 10).

From a pro-independence standpoint, the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia could constitute an international imposition. Supporters of the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia, however, rejected the framing of the debate in this way. They argued that it was unfair to single out the quota legislation in a colonial context in which many laws were imposed from the metropole (Berman, 2005).

Institutional Context

Political Culture

In France, the concept of parity became popular after a proposed 25 per cent quota for city council elections was struck down by the Constitutional Court, which ruled that dividing candidates according to gender was incompatible with republican universalism enshrined in the

French Constitution (Baudino, 2003). Murray (2008) claims that republican universalism "has long served as an obstacle to equality for women" (p. 470). The concept has been defined as "a set of principles rooted in the formative experience of the French Revolution, specifically in the 1789 'Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen' (Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen)" (Bereni, 2007, p. 192). The French republican tradition eschews the political representation of groups and stresses individual representation. The citizen is an abstract individual, and no difference based on class, religion, ethnicity or gender is recognized. Parity supporters claimed that the concept of the universal citizen was masculinised from the outset, and that this had ensured male dominance of political institutions. Instead of opposing republican universalism outright, however, a modification to the constitution was proposed "to recognize explicitly the two sexes of the abstract universal citizen" (Krook, 2007, p. 7).

The challenge of finding a way to reconcile republican ideals with feminist demands is not new for the French women's movement. Bereni (2007) draws a comparison with campaigners for women's suffrage, who also expressed their demand for political inclusion in terms of republican universalism. The campaign for parity, however, took place at a time when the re-evaluation of the principles of republican universalism was a popular topic of intellectual debate in France (Bereni, 2007). The parity movement capitalised on this 'crisis', claiming that the introduction of parity would transform French democracy (Lovecy, 2000). Yet the parity debate was structured to be as non-threatening as possible to the French republican tradition. During the parliamentary debates on parity, Minister of Justice Élisabeth Guigou argued that parity was a step further towards the realisation of the aims of the French Revolution (Krook, 2007).

In the French Pacific, the French republican tradition coexists with indigenous constructs of political identity. The concept of group political identity has been explored in the campaigns for Kanak political rights and independence in New Caledonia, and the anti-nuclear and independence campaigns in French Polynesia, although feminism has not been adopted as a political identity by many women in the French Pacific. In New Caledonia, women's groups are seen as secondary to the work of political parties. Gorodé (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.7) explains:

The word 'feminist' is more or less a pejorative term here...You also asked why women are not united here. I think it's because political parties have a great influence here, and women are first and foremost affiliated to a political party.

Ramsay (2008) argues that because parity was framed as an issue related to republican universalism rather than feminism, it was more readily accepted in New Caledonia. Those in the

territory who publicly advocated the law tended to couch their support in pragmatic rather than ideological terms (Berman, 2005).

As we have seen, the primary political division in New Caledonian politics is over the issue of independence from France. During the parity debate, opponents of the quota argued both that it was contrary to indigenous custom in New Caledonia, and that it was a colonial imposition of the French state onto territorial politics. Kanak leader Marie-Adele Joredie spoke of the need to distinguish between customary and political institutions:

The customary structure is the chieftainship; a woman will never be able to be chief. But it is possible that a woman could be a municipal councillor and mayor. The woman is not a councillor of the tribe. I have always made this distinction, but others have not. None of the political parties have ever discussed this issue; how to distinguish between the two structures. What usually happens is that one structure is superimposed on the other. If I were mayor, I would not intervene in matters which concerned the customary authorities which have their own rules for life in the tribe. The administrative structure has its own domain of responsibility, in particular in implementing the laws of the Territory. (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.11)

In a statement entitled ‘With regards to custom, can Kanak women be members of the Customary Senate?’⁸⁵ Nidoish Naisseline (2005), the High Chief of Maré and a key figure in pro-independence politics, argued that traditional Kanak gender roles barring women from public speaking should not apply to what he considered to be a colonially-imposed non-traditional institution:

In my view, the question does not arise because the so-called Customary Senate is not a legitimate customary institution, either with regards to French law, or with regards to Kanak society...talk about a customary senate is nonsense, as custom is based on a tradition passed down from generation to generation and the so-called Customary Senate was created just over 8 years ago in the Organic Law...The so-called Customary Senate does not correspond to any Kanak reality and therefore has no legitimacy to represent our custom.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ « *Au regard de la Coutume, les femmes kanak peuvent-elles être membres du Sénat coutumier ?* »

⁸⁶ « *À mon avis, la question ne se pose pas, car le Sénat dit coutumier n'est pas une institution légitimement coutumière, et au regard de la loi française, et au regard de la société kanak... parler de sénat coutumier constitue un non-sens, vu que la coutume se fonde sur une tradition transmise de génération en génération et que le sénat dit coutumier n'a été créé qu'il y a à peine 8 ans par la loi Organique... Le Sénat dit coutumier*

He claims that if women are prohibited from sitting on the Customary Senate due to 'custom', then all Kanak people, including High Chiefs, should be barred as well (Naisseline, 2005). This view, that institutions imposed through French law are not traditional institutions and are therefore not bound by customary norms regarding gender roles, in theory also applies to the Congress – which, as Naisseline acknowledges, was created by the same piece of legislation as the Customary Senate. From this standpoint, the parity laws cannot be said to pose a threat to Kanak culture as their operation is restricted to the political, as opposed to customary, public sphere.

Electoral Systems

New Caledonia is divided into three provinces: Southern Province, in which the capital Noumea is located and in which around 70 per cent of New Caledonia's population resides; Northern Province, with around 20 per cent of the population; and the Loyalty Islands Province, with 10 per cent (Maclellan, 2005a). Each province has its own assembly. The Assembly of the Southern Province has 40 seats, with 32 sitting in Congress; in Northern Province, 22 seats with 15 in Congress; and in Loyalty Islands, 14 seats with seven in Congress. The voting system is list proportional representation, with parties that meet the five per cent electoral threshold in each province gaining seats in the provincial assemblies. The members of the provincial assemblies with the highest list placings also sit in the Congress. The New Caledonian Cabinet has between five and eleven members, who are elected by Congress in relation to their party or coalition's share of seats. The power-sharing provisions in the 1998 Noumea Accord dictate that every electoral list that wins a certain proportion of votes in an election is entitled to places in Cabinet.

The Assembly of French Polynesia has 57 members, who are elected from six multi-member constituencies. The largest constituencies are the Windward Islands, with 37 members, and the Leeward Islands with eight. The other constituencies, the Marquesas Islands, Austral Islands, and Eastern and Western Tuamotu Islands, each have three members. French Polynesia uses a two-round list proportional representation voting system. Parties that gain 12.5 per cent or more of the vote in the first round are eligible to participate in the run-off election to gain seats in the Assembly (Gonschor, 2010). Wallis and Futuna voters elected twenty representatives to the Territorial Assembly. Representatives are elected through a list proportional representation system, from multi-member constituencies. Thirteen representatives are elected from Wallis, and seven from Futuna (Angleviel, 2009).

ne correspond à aucune réalité kanak et n'a par conséquent aucune légitimité à représenter notre coutume. »

All of the French Pacific territories use list PR voting systems. Such systems are considered to be more advantageous to female candidates than other voting systems. Even before parity was implemented, the French Pacific territories – in particular New Caledonia in the post-Noumea Accord era and French Polynesia – tended to have relatively high levels of women’s representation in comparison to the rest of the Pacific Islands region. Since the introduction of parity, the list PR systems have ensured compliance by political parties, as the penalty for not standing enough female candidates is ineligibility to stand a list, rather than a financial penalty.

Party Systems

New Caledonia and French Polynesia are notable in the region for having strong political party systems. New Caledonia’s primary electoral divide is the issue of independence from France. On the pro-independence side, the main political group has historically been the FLNKS. On the pro-autonomy side, the RPCR was the dominant force from the late 1970s onwards. Since the signing of the Matignon Accord, however, the influence of these two major parties has waned, as evidenced by the growing number of electoral lists registered in each election – from 20 in 1989 to 31 in 2004 (MacLellan, 2005b). In the 2004 election, Thémereau split with the RPCR to join another party, *Avenir Ensemble*, of which she became the political leader. *Avenir Ensemble* won sixteen seats in the Congress and gained her the presidency. The *Rassemblement-UMP* (formerly the RPCR) polled the highest of the pro-autonomy parties in the 2009 election, after *Avenir Ensemble* had split and various members, including Thémereau, had formed a new party, *Calédonie Ensemble*. On the pro-independence side, the FLNKS was unable to decide on a single pro-independence list for the first three elections in the post-Noumea Accord era, in 1999, 2004 and 2009. Instead, the four FLNKS member parties presented their own lists or ran in different combinations which compete against each other, and other parties. In 2014, the pro-independence coalition *Arc-en-ciel* ran a combined ticket in the Southern Provincial election, significantly increasing the share of seats won in the Provincial Assembly by pro-independence politicians.

French Polynesia also has a strong party system. Historically French Polynesian politics has been controlled by the pro-autonomy *Tahoera'a Huiraatira* party, led by Flosse. A second party, *Tavini Huiraatira*, was formed in the 1970s as part of the pro-independence and anti-nuclear movement and has enjoyed greater political success in the past decade. Its leader, Oscar Temaru, has been President five times since 2004. A third major political party, *To Tatou Aia*, was formed when its leader, Gaston Tong Sang, split from his former party *Tahoera'a Huiraatira*. These three parties

dominate the political landscape. Although all three are headed by men, there are female leaders of minor parties, including Nicole Bouteau, of pro-autonomy party *No Oe E Te Nunaā* (Gonschor, 2010).

In contrast to the other French Pacific territories, Wallis and Futuna has a relatively weak party system. While a list PR voting system is used, in general only the first one or two candidates have a chance of election. Most lists are still headed by men. The few women who have been successful in politics in Wallis and Futuna have for the most part been positioned at the head of all- or mostly-women lists. There are a high number of lists, given the population of just over 15,000 people. In 2002, there were 32 lists registered in the territorial election (Angleviel, 2003). In the following election, in 2007, there were slightly fewer, with 26 registered, three of which were headed by women. Twenty lists won seats, including two of the women-led lists. This meant no list gained more than one seat in the twenty-seat Territorial Assembly (Angleviel, 2008).

A weak party system has played a role in the ineffectiveness of the parity law in Wallis and Futuna. As most party lists will only win up to one seat in the Assembly, female candidates generally need to be at the head of a list to stand a chance at being elected. In comparison, French Polynesia has a strong party system and has achieved gender parity in its Assembly, with the number of women assembly members actually surpassing the number of men after the 2008 election. In New Caledonia, the results of parity have been more mixed. A strong party system has played a role in gender parity in the Southern Provincial Assembly. In the Northern Provincial Assembly, however, men still outnumber women, and both Northern and the Loyalty Islands provinces have more men than women in their congressional delegations. These discrepancies is due to parties placing men at the heads of their lists, and gaining an uneven number of seats in either the provincial assembly or Congress.

Aftermath of the Quota Debate

The introduction of the parity laws had has mixed results in both France and the French Pacific territories. In France, while the law led to a significant increase in women's representation at municipal, regional and European levels, the results of parity in the National Assembly have been disappointing. Women currently make up just over a quarter of *députés* in the Assembly. In the French Pacific territory of French Polynesia, women's representation in the Territorial Assembly has exceeded parity with men, with 52 per cent female representatives. In contrast, women's representation in the Assembly of Wallis and Futuna has only risen slightly, with just four female members out of twenty (20 per cent). In New Caledonia, women's representation at territorial

level is 44.4 per cent, with equal numbers of men and women from the Southern province, but a lower proportion of women representatives from the Northern and Loyalty Islands provinces.

The effect of the parity laws in France varied over different political levels. Where parity was applied, the percentage of women elected to town councils more than doubled, from 21.4 per cent to 47.5 per cent (Lépinard, 2006). This increase in female councillors did not translate to an equal increase in female mayors, with men still over-represented in mayoral posts. The parity law has also improved women's representation at regional and European levels. At the national level, however, the parity law has been less effective, with Murray (2007) calling the results of the 2002 legislative elections an "unmitigated failure of parity" (p. 569). Only 38.9 per cent of candidates were women, and the results saw only a small increase in the number of female *députés*. In senatorial elections, the laws first applied in 2001. In the 74 seats contested using a PR voting system, the number of women elected quadrupled to 20, but in the 28 other seats contested the number of women elected remained static, at two (Southwell & Smith, 2007). Women currently hold 27 per cent of the seats in the National Assembly, and 22 per cent in the Senate.

When parity was first applied in the provincial elections, in 2004, women's representation in New Caledonia increased dramatically. In each of the three provincial assemblies, women made up 50 per cent of the seats, and the Congress had 46.3 per cent women's representation. Furthermore, following the 2004 elections, Thémereau was elected as the first female President of New Caledonia, while Gorodé was re-confirmed in her position as Vice-President. Thémereau was a founder and the leader of the *Avenir Ensemble* party, which won 16 Congress seats in the 2004 election. Fraenkel cites the election of these two women to the head of government as evidence that "women were well-prepared to take advantage of the new [parity] laws" (Fraenkel, 2006, p. 84). Gorodé's party, Palika, also cited the appointments as examples of "parity at the highest level" (Claudel, 2001, p. 6).⁸⁷ Berman (2005), however, notes that the Thémereau administration encountered a lot of resistance, especially from her former party, the *Rassemblement-UMP*. Members of the *Rassemblement-UMP* resigned from Cabinet hours after Thémereau and Gorodé were confirmed in their positions, thus bringing down the Government.⁸⁸ Although Thémereau and Gorodé were eventually reinstated as President and Vice-President, Berman (2005) argues:

⁸⁷ « *La parité au plus haut niveau* ».

⁸⁸ Under the power-sharing provisions of the 1998 Noumea Accord, all parties that win a certain percentage of the seats in Congress are entitled to seats in Cabinet, proportionate to their share of the vote. The members of Cabinet then elect a President and Vice-President. If one party in Cabinet resigns, the Government is dissolved and a new Cabinet must be elected by Congress.

the resistance Mme. Thémereau encountered in forming a government substantiates the claim that women face difficulties in entering a male dominated political culture. The climate for women to become part of the political colonial establishment remains very chilly.

Thémereau resigned as President in 2007, and was replaced by Harold Martin. In the provincial election of 2009, women won 47.4 per cent of the seats as in the three territorial assemblies,⁸⁹ and 44.4 per cent of seats in Congress. Maclellan (2009b, p. 10) observed: "New Caledonia's quota system has created an important mechanism for women to enter public life."

In the 2014 elections, 24 women were elected to the New Caledonia Congress, making up 44.4 per cent of the seats. Many of the older generation of R-UMP politicians stood down from the list, and the party contested the election under the new name Front for Unity (FPU).⁹⁰ Cynthia Ligard, who headed the FPU list in Southern Province, became the second female President of New Caledonia during 2014. She along with three other women sat in the 11-seat Cabinet until the collapse of the Ligard government in late 2014, due to disputes over fiscal policy amongst the anti-independence parties (see "Blame game", 2014). Furthermore, since 2012 New Caledonia has had a female representative in the French National Assembly, Sonia Lagarde of *Calédonie Ensemble*, who is also the first woman mayor of New Caledonia's capital, Noumea (Maclellan, 2014b).

While women have had more success at gaining top political positions in New Caledonia than in French Polynesia (or indeed in France), an enduring barrier to women gaining 50 per cent of seats in the New Caledonia Congress is the lack of women heading party lists. In 2014, while three women featured in the top positions of party lists in the Southern Province out of six total lists, men headed all seven party lists in the Loyalty Islands and all five lists in the Northern Province (Maclellan, N 2014, pers. comm., 21 May). This discrepancy means that in the Northern Provincial Assembly, men currently hold more seats than women – thirteen seats to nine – on account of some party lists winning an odd number of seats. In the Loyalty Islands, although women and men

⁸⁹ Equal numbers of men and women were elected to the Southern and Loyalty Islands provincial assemblies, but only nine women (40.9 per cent) were elected to the 22-seat Northern Provincial Assembly. In this province, four lists each won seats – the UNI FLNKS ticket with eleven seats, UC with seven, the Rassemblement-UMP with three, and Avenir Ensemble with one. As each of the four party lists in this province were headed by a male candidate, and they all won an uneven number of seats, this resulted in more men than women elected on all the party lists (and, in the case of Avenir Ensemble, no women at all), even though all lists complied with parity requirements.

⁹⁰ *Front pour l'Unité*

are equally represented in the Provincial Assembly, the congressional delegation is made up of six men and one woman – two men and one woman from the UC-FLNKS ticket, and a single man from each of the other four parties represented at provincial level.

In French Polynesia, the 2001 election – the first under the parity law – led to a significant increase in women's representation in the Assembly. Twenty-two women won seats, and Lucette Taero was elected as the first woman Speaker of the Assembly. Six women were also appointed to the seventeen-seat Cabinet (von Strokirch, 2002). This was a slight increase on the five women who held ministerial posts before 2001. In 2004, 27 women (47 per cent) were elected to the Assembly of French Polynesia, although the number of female ministers dropped to four (Bargel et al., 2010). There are currently thirty women (52 per cent) members of the Assembly.

Parity has been implemented in Wallis and Futuna in three territorial elections to date. The first election, in 2002, actually saw a drop in female legislators from the previous term, as only one woman was elected from a list in which she was in second place. Two more women gained seats in 2004 and 2005 when one male member resigned and another died, bringing the total number of female Assembly members to three (15 per cent) for the term (Bargel et al., 2010). In the 2007 election, two women won seats. Both women had previously been elected to the Assembly in second position on party lists, but in 2007 were at the head of their own respective lists (Bargel et al., 2010). Shortly after the territorial election, one Assembly member was elected to serve in the French National Assembly, and he was replaced in his territorial seat by the next person on his list, a woman (Bargel et al., 2010). This again brought the women's representation level in the Territorial Assembly to 15 per cent. In the latest election, in 2012, four women were elected (20 per cent).

It is important to note that parity at all political levels is yet to be achieved. Even after ten years of the parity law, women are still under-represented in political leadership positions at ministerial level and at mayoral level in the French Pacific. Given the low rates of women's political representation in the Pacific Islands region, however, the levels attained by the French Pacific territories are highly noteworthy.

Discussion

The introduction of the parity laws in the French Pacific territories is an interesting case study in exogenous quota development. While the quota literature tends to consider all quota adoption as an 'exogenous shock' to political institutions (Baldez, 2006, p. 104; see also Bhavnani, 2009, p. 24;

Júlio & Tavares, 2010), in many cases the adoption of a gender quota can be seen as an endogenous development, as the quota is adopted by the same political institution in which it will be implemented. In the case of the French Pacific territories, however, the parity laws were an external imposition from the metropole.

The classification of the quota adoption in the French Pacific territories as an exogenous development would be challenged by a French republican universalist worldview, in which the French republic encompasses both mainland France and the overseas territories and is indivisible as a political construct. Even if one recognises the French Pacific territorial political institutions as separate political constructs from those in the French mainland that passed the parity laws, there are still arguably endogenous aspects to the quota adoption in the territories, including the active role of the New Caledonian women's movement in advocating for quota implementation, and the actions of representatives of the territories in the French Senate in attempting to block the introduction of the quota. Quota adoption in the French Pacific territories conforms to a colonial track of quota adoption that is distinctly different to parliamentary gender quota adoption tracks in independent state political institutions.

A significant issue to consider when regarding cases of 'exogenous' track quota adoption in colonial contexts is the impact of quota design. In the case of the French Pacific territories, a gender quota that was designed for the French political system was applied to territorial institutions. In the territories, the list PR electoral system used meant that parties had to comply with the quota requirements or be ruled ineligible to contest the election; in the elections for the French National Assembly, parties who do not have equal numbers of male and female candidates have to pay a financial penalty, but are still permitted to contest the election. In practice, this means that the parity laws have had a transformative effect on gender balance in territorial politics in French Polynesia and New Caledonia that far exceeds their effect in the French National Assembly. One meaning of success of quota reform in these two French Pacific territories can be seen as equality (or near-equality) of representation, as opposed to the minimum level of women's representation advocated in the other quota campaigns examined in this thesis.

A key issue raised in opposition to the implementation of the parity laws in New Caledonia was that the quota was a colonial imposition. The response from quota advocates was that it was no different to any other law passed by the metropole and imposed in the territory (Berman, 2005). Implementation of the parity laws in the other parts of the French Pacific occurred in similar colonial contexts. Shineberg (1988, p. 93) writes of French Polynesia: "all the Territorial

institutions are creatures of the French parliament and may be changed according to the latter's will." Quota adoption in the French Pacific territories may have simply been a by-product of a metropolitan quota campaign, that itself was a solution to a perceived French, not French Pacific, problem. Nevertheless, the effects, both of the debate around quota adoption and its eventual implementation, have been considerable and wide-reaching. In terms of descriptive representation, the parity laws had the potential in the French Pacific to live up to their name and indeed have resulted in near-equal levels of female and male representation in the French Polynesian and New Caledonian legislatures. In the debate in New Caledonia, the quota was seen as having the potential to improve women's representation in a substantive sense through better political decision-making, and in a symbolic sense it was argued that the quota could both strengthen culture and enhance democracy.

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

This research examined how actors involved in quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands context interpreted the success or failure of these campaigns. I have focused on campaigns for parliamentary gender quotas in four parts of the Pacific Islands region: Samoa, Papua New Guinea, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, and the French Pacific territories. I looked at narrative accounts of the campaigns, foregrounding the interpretations of participants in the quota debates to explain how parliamentary gender quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region are conducted.

It has contributed to the literature on quota adoption in three important ways. Firstly, the research will introduce four recent and relatively unknown case studies to the field of electoral gender quota research. Secondly, the Pacific context provides an interesting environment in which to evaluate theories of quota adoption, as the region constitutes a natural “laboratory” for research as Wesley-Smith (1995) suggests. Thirdly, in this research I have utilised interpretive research methods in a field that has traditionally been studied through a positivist lens. The goal of interpretive policy research in my work was to gain an understanding of policy processes through the interpretations of actors involved.

In this concluding chapter, I draw out the commonalities and differences in narrative quota campaigns in each of the four case studies for comparative analysis. I examine the politics of quota development and design, the role of local and international actors in campaigns, and the features of the institutional context that participants identify as important to quota adoption or non-adoption. Finally, I evaluate the five key themes from narrative accounts to show the ways in which participants in Pacific Islands quota debates interpret the success or failure of campaigns.

Quota Development

The two commonly used quota development narratives are those defined by Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) as ‘fast’ track quota adoption and ‘incremental’ track quota adoption. They distinguish between quota adoption as a method to rapidly increase women’s participation in decision-making bodies from a low base level of representation (the ‘fast’ track), and quota adoption as a tool to supplement other measures that have resulted in a gradual increase in women’s representation (the ‘incremental’ track).

Quota development in Samoa, Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville appears to conform to the ‘fast’ track quota adoption narrative. In the cases of Samoa and

Papua New Guinea, the historically low levels of women's political representation, and lack of a gradual increase, was cited by quota advocates as a justification for quota adoption. In Samoa, Prime Minister Tuilaepa argued that quota adoption was a necessary development in order to improve women's political representation: "Without that [constitutional] amendment, we can never achieve 10 per cent. Who knows, we'll reach the end of the world before that number is found" (quoted in Malifa & Lesa, 2012, p. 28).

Quota advocates in Papua New Guinea also saw a quota system as essential to increasing women's representation: "there's no guarantee that we'll do it through other means" (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September). Eric Kwa, a lawyer who assisted in drafting the Equality and Participation Bill, noted that women's representation in the 2000s had stagnated, despite the fact that the numbers of women candidates contesting the election had risen significantly: "the reserved seat issue became prominent after the 2007 election, after almost 100 women stood, and all of them lost except for Dame Carol [Kidu, an incumbent MP]" (Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September).

Quota development in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville occurred in the context of political transition and the establishment of new political institutions. The low rate of women's representation in past political institutions in the region, however, meant that advocates for a gender quota saw it as potentially the only chance for women to win seats in the new House of Representatives:

it would be quite impossible for the women to win while contesting against male counterparts...If there were not three reserved seats, there would be only men in the Parliament at this time. (Kiraa, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September)

it was very good that the Bougainville Autonomous Government had...allowed the three reserved seats to be in the government, and that it allowed us to be here. If it was not there, we wouldn't be here. (Jerome, J 2013, pers. comm., 10 September)

A gradual increase in women's representation, as described in the 'incremental' track narrative, was seen as a virtual impossibility in the Bougainville political environment. As such, women's groups and individual women leaders pushed for 'fast' track quota adoption through the establishment of reserved seats.

In addition to the 'fast' track and 'incremental' track narratives of quota development, I argue that there is a second axis of quota development, an 'endogenous' track and an 'exogenous' track. The existing literature on gender quotas tends to treat quota adoption as an 'exogenous

'shock' to a political system. Kudva and Misra (2008) argue that literature tends to assume the impetus for quota adoption is an exogenous factor originating from outside local women's spaces and the domestic political sphere. They claim that in many cases of quota adoption, quotas can be considered endogenous developments, with quotas being advocated from within a political system, and quota legislation passed by members of the political institution in which it will be implemented.

This does not preclude the existence of an exogenous model of quota adoption. Quotas that are to be implemented at the sub-national level, but are passed at the national level, could be considered exogenous developments, as the quota regulations are in effect being imposed on, rather than adopted by, the political institutions. Examples of this could include quotas for local government institutions that passed in the national legislature, or quotas passed by a colonial power that are imposed on territorial institutions. This latter model, exemplified by quota adoption in the French Pacific territories, can be termed an 'exogenous' model of quota adoption.

Assuming a binary distinction between the 'endogenous' and 'exogenous' tracks of quota development is problematic. As some scholars point out (see Bush, 2011), domestic quota adoption can be greatly influenced by international actors, including international organisations. The international diffusion of quotas, and the influence of transnational networks of activists, can be exogenous aspects of quota development even in an endogenously driven case of quota adoption. Similarly, in primarily exogenous cases of quota adoption, there can be endogenous elements. This is evidenced by the parity laws debate in the French Pacific territories, with the New Caledonian women's movement actively campaigning for quota adoption, and some male political actors moving to prevent it. Although the quota in this case was imposed from the external metropole, processes of translation in New Caledonia gave the quota debate in the region a unique aspect, with opponents and proponents of parity arguing their respective cases in relation to the issue of self-determination and other localised issues.

Nevertheless, a distinction between primarily 'endogenous' quota adoption and primarily 'exogenous' quota adoption can be made. In this thesis I argue against the classification of quota adoption as an 'exogenous shock' to political institutions (Baldez, 2006, p. 104; see also Bhavnani, 2009, p. 24; Júlio & Tavares, 2010). There are both 'endogenous' and 'exogenous' track models of quota development, and in most cases endogenous and exogenous aspects will interact with each other in the process of quota adoption.

Quota Design

In the four cases of quota adoption profiled in this thesis, the design of the proposed quotas were diverse. They ranged from statutory, candidate-based quotas to reserved seats systems, to a ‘best loser’ quota model. The design of a quota can have a significant impact on its potential efficacy in increasing women’s representation. While a quota design that restricts effectiveness could be accidental, it is also possible that a quota is designed to either maximise or limit its tangible impact.

Statutory quotas were the quota model adopted in the French Pacific territories. The parity laws were designed for the French political system, with different measures applied to different political levels. In the French mainland, this led to significant disparity in the impact of the quota, with a significant increase of women councillors at municipal level and notable changes at regional and European levels, but a smaller effect on women’s representation in the National Assembly. In the Pacific territories, the list-based proportional representation system meant that political parties were required to comply fully with the quota requirements. The penalty in the territories of non-compliance was deregistration of party lists, compared to a financial penalty for non-compliant parties in the National Assembly elections. In territorial elections, party lists are required to have equal numbers of male and female candidates who are ranked in a ‘zippered’ style, with men and women occupying alternate spots on the list. This has maximised the effectiveness of the ‘parity laws’ in the strong party systems of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, with women’s representation in these legislatures at 44.4 and 52 per cent respectively. In Wallis and Futuna, which has a much weaker party system, the quota has had only a limited effect. As most parties in the territory only gain one seat in the Assembly, elected women are for the most part those who occupy the first position on party lists.

In the weaker party systems of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, reserved seat systems were proposed. Advocates for reserved seats in Papua New Guinea argued that it was the only type of quota that would work: “It’s not the best way, but right now it is the way to go” (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). The Papua New Guinean proposal was for one reserved seat per province. If implemented before the 2012 election, it would have resulted in the introduction of 22 ‘women’s electorates’, and ensured a minimum of 16.5 per cent female representation in the Papua New Guinea Parliament. This would have constituted a huge increase from the current level of women’s representation, which stands at three members of Parliament or 2.7 per cent.

Table 6: Quota design

TYPE	COUNTRIES	QUOTA FOR CANDIDATES OR ELECTED MPS	PERCENTAGE MANDATED
Statutory Quota	French Pacific territories	Candidates on party lists	50%
Reserved Seats	Papua New Guinea	Elected MPs	16.5%
	Bougainville		6%
'Best Loser' Quota	Samoa	Elected MPs	9.3% - 10.2%

In Bougainville, part of the appeal of a reserved seat system was that it could operate outside of a formal party system. The report of the BCC noted widespread opposition among the public to the establishment of parties in the new political system (BCC, 2004). Three reserved seats for women were instituted in the Bougainville House of Representatives, one for each of the three districts – North, Central and South. This means that women make up a minimum of six per cent of the seats in the 50-seat legislature. One significant aspect of the Bougainville quota system is that one seat in the executive is also reserved for a woman, thus guaranteeing a female voice at the Cabinet table. The President has the power to appoint most members of Cabinet, but with regards to the guaranteed women's seat in Cabinet, he or she is required to appoint the nominee of the female members of the House.

In Samoa, where one party has dominated parliamentary politics for decades, a 'best loser' quota model was proposed. The quota legislation sets a minimum level of women's representation at five female MPs, although there is a provision in the legislation so that, if the size of Parliament – currently 49 MPs – increases, the minimum number of female MPs will also rise. The quota is designed so that if fewer than five women are elected in a general election, additional women will enter Parliament. These women will be the unsuccessful female candidates who won the highest percentages of votes in the election. If the quota had applied in the 2011 election, when two women were elected, an additional three female MPs would be brought in, to bring the total size of Parliament to 52 seats. The quota only applies if there are fewer than five women elected; if five or more women win seats in the general election, there would be no additional seats. In Samoa's Parliament, five women would represent between 9.3 per cent and 10.2 per cent of MPs, depending on how many additional members were required to meet the quota.

Globally, for countries that seek to adopt a gender quota, a minimum level of representation of around thirty per cent is most common (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2005). Most of the quota campaigns in this study aimed for a relatively low minimum level of women's representation, with the proposed quotas in Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville all below twenty per cent. The exceptions to this were the French Pacific territories, with a quota requirement of 50 per cent, although this applies to candidates and not elected MPs as in the other cases. The design of the quota in some cases was limited by features of the institutional context, with party list-based statutory quotas unlikely to be effective in the weak party systems of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville. While both statutory quotas and reserved seat systems are in common use in other countries, suggesting international diffusion as a potential influence in quota design in three of the cases, Samoa's 'best loser' model was considered to be an endogenous design: "How we've done it, I think has been totally local...Samoans and the Government particularly, they like to do things their way" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

Local Actors

In terms of local actors, activists in the women's movement mobilised for quota adoption in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, and parts of the French Pacific, notably New Caledonia. The exception to this was Samoa, where women in civil society and politics were involved in the quota debate but, in their narrative accounts of the process, did not take ownership of the campaign. In Papua New Guinea, the campaign was described as being "driven by women" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September) and "what the women want" (Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). The fact that the women's movement was mostly united in favour of the reserved seats was emphasised: "All women's groups came together. That made a lot of impact. Churches, NGOs, they all came together" (Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September).

Similar narratives emerged in the Bougainville case. The role of women's groups and individual women in the campaign for reserved seats was emphasised: "it came from the women of Bougainville, educated ones, and the ones at the grassroots level" (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). As in Papua New Guinea, advocates stressed the unity of the women's movement in pushing for quota adoption:

every woman, every Bougainville woman was excited about having reserved seats in our Parliament. (Pihei, R 2013, pers. comm., 13 September)

women were one. It didn't matter which organisation they came from...we were just speaking the same voice and moving together. (Hakena, H 2013, pers. comm., 11 September)

There was widespread support in New Caledonia for the parity laws amongst women from both sides of the political spectrum (de Bonnefoy, 2000a). This stood in marked contrast to France, where there was more opposition from women's groups (Berman, 2005). Women's groups in New Caledonia organised marches, rallies and a petition in favour of the implementation of the parity laws (Bargel et al., 2010).

In Samoa, women's groups and women politicians were involved to a certain extent in the debate around the quota. There was criticism, however, of a perceived lack of consultation on the part of the Government around the quota:

If it's already an amendment and it's going to Parliament, well then yeah you can scream all you like, it's going to happen...[women's groups] have been given the opportunity to voice their opinions...But the word 'influence' is a tricky one, when the actual way that the legislation is written is not open to debate. (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September)

the thing that I had strongly felt against the process was the very limited consultation with women's groups, women individuals, before the bill was drafted. Although it was mooted, well the Prime Minister sort of said 'oh, well, we're going to be doing something or rather', but who did he actually consult? ...I just felt it was a *fait accompli*, anyway, [the] government's going to pass this bill whether we supported it or not (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September)

Members of women's groups distanced themselves from the design and development of the quota, identifying it as a Prime Minister-led government initiative.

The role of prominent male political elites was considered to be different in each case. In Samoa, male political elites were regarded as the main drivers of the quota campaign. In particular, the Prime Minister was named as the primary advocate of the quota legislation, both in Cabinet (Anon 2012, pers. comm.) and in public (Anon 2012, pers. comm., 11 September). The Prime Minister, when questioned on where the impetus for quota adoption originated, confirmed that it was led by politicians: "It is an initiative from within our cabinet" (quoted in Abbott, 2012). In the French Pacific territories, several high-level male political elites made unsuccessful attempts to block or postpone quota adoption. In New Caledonia, Simon Loueckhote, then a member of the French Senate and President of the New Caledonia Congress, sought to amend the parity laws legislation to delay its implementation in the territory until 2007 (Claudel, 2000a). An amendment proposed by French Polynesian politicians sought to exempt the overseas territories from strictly alternating male and female candidates

on party lists (von Storkich, 2001), while Senator Robert Laufoaulu attempted to prevent the introduction of the parity laws in Wallis and Futuna (Bargel et al., 2010).

In quota campaigns in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, prominent male political elites expressed support for moves to implement reserved seats. In Bougainville, some male political elites, including Sir Joseph Kabui who would go on to become the first President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, assisted women's groups and individual women who were mobilising to introduce a gender quota (Kira, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). While the campaign for reserved seats in Bougainville was successful, in Papua New Guinea reserved seats were not introduced despite support from male political elites. Successive Prime Ministers Sir Michael Somare and Peter O'Neill both expressed support for the Equality and Participation Bill (Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September; Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August; Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September). Despite their public support, however, MPs loyal to Somare were absent from Parliament for the vote on the enabling legislation, and the MPs of O'Neill's coalition, made up of various parties and independent MPs, were offered a conscience vote. The legislation ultimately failed to secure the two-thirds majority vote needed to implement the reserved seats system.

International Actors

The role of international actors was often contested in accounts of quota adoption. The influence of international norms of gender equality and pressure from international actors was stressed in some accounts of quota adoption in Samoa, yet there was often an emphasis on the local design of the quota. In Papua New Guinea, accounts described a coalition between local women's groups and international organisations, although the perceived influence of the international actors within this coalition varied. In Bougainville, participants in the quota campaign differed in their interpretations of international influence on quota adoption, while in the French Pacific the nature of the colonially-imposed gender quota leads to issues of what constitutes the 'international'.

The extent of the influence of international actors in the Samoan quota adoption process was disputed. With regards to the United Nations, some argued that they had little influence: "[The UN] are neutral, I mean they are encouraging debate, that is their role, but they're certainly not influencing one way or the other" (Annandale, PV 2012, pers. comm., 10 September). Others claimed that the UN was heavily involved, including a Tautua Samoa MP who claimed the organisation was "calling the shots and the HRPP is sucking up to them" (quoted in Tauafiafi, 2012, p. 2). When promoting quota adoption, representatives from the HRPP and the

Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development referenced international commitments, including CEDAW and the MDGs (Netzler-Iose, 2012a; "Samoa PM seeks", 2011). Tuilaepa also repeatedly referred to the "embarrassment" of the low levels of women's representation in the Pacific region in publicly arguing for the quota legislation (Abbott, 2012; "Samoa pushes", 2011). While the government acknowledged international norms with regards to quota adoption, the design of the Samoan quota was considered to be "totally local" (Retzlaff, S 2012, pers. comm., 5 September).

The role of international actors in the Papua New Guinea quota campaign was often described as one of providing support to local advocates. International organisations provided technical support, including campaign materials and funding for advertising (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 20 September; Bukikun, J 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). There was resistance to the idea that the campaign was donor driven, from both international and local actors (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 26 August; Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September). One local activist explained: "it's not because the UN came and told us to do it, they were helping us to do what we wanted to do" (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September).

International organisations that were involved in the Bougainville peace process were credited by some local actors as supportive influences in the campaign for reserved seats (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September), albeit in a background role: "indirectly they were supportive" (Sawai, E 2013, pers. comm., 18 September). Others claimed that their influence was not significant: "We did it ourselves. We knew when, we knew what we wanted and we spoke. International organisations, they didn't play an important role" (Garasu, L 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). International diffusion was arguably at play, with activists drawing on examples from other post-conflict states in their campaign (Holan, H 2013, pers. comm., 10 September). During the conflict, Bougainvillean women attended the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing, where women's political representation was a key theme (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September).

In the debate over the implementation of the French parity laws in the Pacific territories, a dominant question in New Caledonia was whether the legislation passed in the French mainland should automatically be applied in the territory. This relates to the key political cleavage in the territory, over the issue of independence from France, and whether New Caledonia should be considered an independent nation, or a part of France. While the position of the French Government was that the parity laws would apply in all overseas territories as in France ("Jean-Jack Queyranne", 2000), some in New Caledonia resented what they considered an imposition:

I don't think that the French should decide what is appropriate for New Caledonia. We should be allowed to make our own decisions. This is a basic problem...The only problem I have with parity is the way it has been imposed...I think that [the presence of women] should be natural. Someone shouldn't come and tell us what to do. What [it] shows [is] a misunderstanding of how societies function: thinking that there is one way which is appropriate for all societies.

(Tonya quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.18)

This echoes similar concerns raised in other case studies about international influence. For example, one critic of the quota legislation in Samoa questioned how suitable quota adoption would be, arguing that it was a foreign idea that had limited relevance to the Samoan context (Shon, LFE 2012, pers. comm., 10 August). From a pro-independence standpoint, the implementation of the parity laws in the French Pacific territories could constitute an international imposition. This raises interesting questions of what can be defined as an international actor in quota adoption in a colonial context.

Institutional Context

Narrative accounts of quota campaigns in the Pacific region emphasised a key theme of political stability. In Samoa, a high level of political stability was perceived to have ensured quota adoption, while a period of significant political instability in Papua New Guinea was associated with quota non-adoption. In Bougainville, however, the political instability in the aftermath of conflict was considered to constitute a 'window of opportunity' in which quotas for societal groups could be incorporated into new political institutions.

In the existing quota literature, periods of political instability or significant political change are seen as potentially constituting a 'window of opportunity' that can increase the likelihood of quota adoption (see Lépinard, 2007; Reyes & Azizah, 2002). Quota adoption is frequently associated with democratic transition and regime change (Araújo & García, 2006; Hassim, 2002; Paxton & Hughes, 2007). In post-conflict societies, women can negotiate political gains, including quota adoption, in a new or reformed political landscape (Tripp et al., 2006).

Accounts of quota adoption in Bougainville were consistent with narratives in other post-conflict societies, with the peace process and subsequent introduction of new political institutions providing a 'window of opportunity' for advocates of gender quotas. During the peace process and negotiations for an autonomous government in Bougainville, quota advocates stressed the importance of women's representation in future political structures in the region. In the development of new autonomous political structures, Bougainvillean women, already emboldened by the crucial role of women's organisations and individual

women leaders in securing peace, mobilised to press for guaranteed seats in the new political institutions.

In contrast, a period of political instability in Papua New Guinea was considered to have contributed to the outcome of quota non-adoption. The passage of the Equality and Participation Bill was affected by a constitutional crisis that began in August 2011. Two parliamentary factions – led by Somare and O'Neill – claimed to be the legitimate Government, and appointed separate Cabinets and police commissioners. Both men claiming to be Prime Minister had publicly supported the proposed reserved seats system. At the time the enabling legislation was debated, however, MPs loyal to Somare were boycotting parliamentary sittings, thus reducing the number of potential votes, while MPs in O'Neill's coalition were offered a conscience vote on the legislation, despite being bound to vote for other amendments to the electoral law, including one to increase the number of governors' seats in Parliament. Quota advocates attributed the failure to implement reserved seats to the constitutional crisis (Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September).

In Samoa, a high level of political stability was considered to have guaranteed quota adoption. The HRPP has been in power since 1982, save for a period in opposition from 1985 to 1988, and held a two-thirds majority in Parliament during the quota campaign. Tuilaepa has been Prime Minister since 1998, making him the longest-serving current political leader in the Pacific Islands region at the time the quota legislation was debated. His personal political dominance allowed him to drive the gender quota bill forward even though his previous position was against the use of quotas. Whatever the reason for the policy shift, Tuilaepa's strong personal support and the large parliamentary majority of the HRPP ensured that the quota was introduced.

In the French Pacific territories, a key issue in the debate around the proposed quota was the anticipated effects of the quota due to the electoral and party systems. This was especially true in French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna. The amendment to the parity laws proposed by French Polynesian politician Emile Vernaudon sought an exemption for overseas territories from the provisions of the quota that mandated strict alternation of male and female candidates on party lists. The electoral system used in French Polynesia and the other Pacific territories, list-based proportional representation, meant that political parties not complying with the quota requirements would not be able to contest elections, rather than having to pay a financial penalty as parties contesting French National Assembly elections could. The rules around strict alternation of candidates would dramatically change the gender make-up of the Assembly of French Polynesia, where there is a strong political party system. In Wallis and Futuna, which has a weaker political party system, the representative to the French Senate

also sought to amend the parity laws to exclude the territory. He argued that the quota would negatively rather than positively impact on women's representation in Wallis and Futuna. Women who had previously had success in winning seats in the Territorial Assembly had stood on all-women lists, which would not be allowed under the provisions of the parity laws. As most party lists who won seats in the Assembly of Wallis and Futuna only gained one seat, women in second or lower position on party lists were not expected to benefit from the quota.

Meanings of Success in Quota Campaigns

The meaning of success in a quota campaign is fluid rather than fixed. The definition of a successful quota campaign can vary between campaigns, and between participants within the same campaign. Success can be interpreted through the arguments for greater women's representation set out by Sawer (2000): justice, 'making a difference', and symbolic arguments. In terms of justice arguments, which focus on equal access to political participation for women and men, campaigns can be interpreted as successful if they have achieved a numerical increase in women's representation – either an increase to equal representation of male and female MPs, or a smaller increase that can be considered a 'start'. Interpretations of campaign success using the 'making a difference' argument can be seen when participants link quota implementation with an improvement in political decision-making. Symbolic measures of quota campaign success are perhaps the most difficult to quantify, with participants interpreting the meanings of success as strengthening culture and enhancing democracy within a country.

Success as Equality of Results

Dahlerup and Friedenvall (2005) note that the 'incremental' track quota discourse is influenced by the concept of 'equality of opportunity', wherein equality is women having no additional formal barriers to participation in the political sphere. The 'fast' track quota discourse, on the other hand, is influenced by the concept of 'equality of results', wherein equality is women achieving political success in the same numbers as men. The latter discourse rejects the notion that 'equality of opportunity' will inevitably result in increased women's representation over time, arguing that informal barriers to participation are just as (if not more) significant as formal barriers.

If success in quota debates is defined as 'equality of results', however, the 'fast' track quota proposals examined in this thesis can, for the most part, be interpreted as failures. As Table 6 showed, the reserved seat systems in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea have, or would have, only guaranteed between six and 16.5 per cent women's representation. The 'best loser' quota in Samoa ensures only around ten per cent. While the statutory quota in use in the

French Pacific territories in theory secures fifty per cent women's representation in a PR list electoral system, in practice women's representation is at twenty per cent in the Wallis and Futuna Territorial Assembly and 44.4 per cent in the New Caledonia Congress. In the French Polynesia Territorial Assembly, women have actually exceeded fifty per cent representation in terms of seats, yet at the ministerial level they are still under-represented, showing that numerical equal representation (or over-representation) at legislative level has not resulted in equality at the executive level.

In the campaigns in Samoa and Bougainville, the quotas that were eventually adopted were considered to be a compromise by some participants. In Samoa, the women's movement was pushing for a higher quota, with a thirty per cent figure suggested (Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Vavatau, R 2012, pers. comm., 8 August). In Bougainville, initial reserved seat proposals were for twelve seats (Saovana-Spriggs 2007; Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). The choice of which figure to push for is often a pragmatic one. In Bougainville, the proposal for twelve seats was based on the number of provinces in the region at the time (Titus, A 2013, pers. comm., 9 September). In Samoa, the figure of thirty per cent was adopted from international discourse on women's representation, in which a thirty per cent target goal is often set (see MDG 3, for example), aligning local demands with those made at the international level. Carol Kidu (2012, pers. comm., 17 October), in her recollection of the reserved seats campaign in Papua New Guinea, made the point that the number of reserved seats was tied to the number of provinces within the country simply to make them easier to implement, as the electoral boundaries needed had already been established for the governors' parliamentary seats.

In the French campaign for parity, there were also practical considerations to campaigning for gender equality in representation. A previous attempt at instituting a 25 per cent gender quota at municipal level had been ruled unconstitutional. The only way to institute a quota that would not be judged to contravene the rights of the individual, therefore, was to push for full gender parity. In all cases studied in this research, practical considerations shaped quota design. In the case of the French parity laws, campaigning for full parity was the only way to ensure that a gender quota would not be challenged under constitutional law; in Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, 'equality of outcome' was set aside in exchange for more modest – and arguably more palatable to politicians and the general public – quota designs.

Success as a 'Start'

An alternate way to interpret success in a quota campaign in terms of descriptive representation is as a 'start'. Advocates saw the implementation of a quota not as an end goal

to descriptive representation, but rather as a method through which greater women's representation would be achieved. In this way, the success of a quota campaign was interpreted not as quota implementation, but in terms of the future results that instituting a quota would bring.

Many quota campaign participants I interviewed interpreted quota success as the beginning of a process that would culminate in greater women's representation:

I can understand the arguments that you do have to use this quota now as a start, to [get] to a stage where you can then say women are competing quite evenly with men...So I've said in debates that in that way I would support this particular proposal, as a beginning, as a start, and eventually women should be competing on a level ground [with men]. (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September)

you have to have an opening point, [to] start somewhere to make the community believe in women as well. And I think the way we went about it was the best way for the community to see that yes, women can also participate as good leaders. And that's the three seats that we have at the moment. (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September)

In this vein, some participants in quota campaigns in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea stressed that the ultimate success of a quota would in itself mean that the quota was no longer necessary. They argued that quotas should ideally be temporary measures, to be phased out after a certain period of time:

I've always seen it as a launching pad for aspiring women politicians. It's a way to get them in, learn the ropes about politics, about the government systems, about the parliaments...There'll come a time maybe to say, we don't think we need the reserved seat anymore, because women are getting elected on the open seats. (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September)

It was going to have a sunset clause, after three elections. I don't think Bougainville had a sunset clause...One of the amendments put in was to have a sunset clause, which I think is necessary (Kidu, C 2012, pers. comm., 17 October)

In the case of reserved seats in Papua New Guinea, success was interpreted by some as the campaign starting a public conversation on women's political representation, despite the seats not being introduced. One interviewee, who worked in Papua New Guinea for an international aid donor, argued that in regards to the quota campaign "ultimately the effort wasn't

wasted...it was recycled into people beginning to think more about it, [that] it's ok to vote for a woman" (Anon 2013, pers. comm.). Participants drew a link between the debate over reserved seats leading up to the 2012 election and the subsequent election of three new women MPs (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September), as well as strong showings of women candidates in the 2013 local level government elections (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September; Kwa, E 2013, pers. comm., 20 September). A candidate in the 2012 general election who had stood in previous elections claimed being a candidate became easier for women:

people were ready to listen, they were ready to listen to what you had to say. I had no problems...generally throughout the country, because of the work done for the reserved seats, already the groundwork was prepared for [women candidates] (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September)

One member of the women's movement argued that the "campaign really opened up [the] minds of people" (Kassman, P 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). In this way, the Papua New Guinea campaign could be interpreted as successful in creating a space for debate on women's political representation in the country, even in the continued absence of reserved seats.

Success as Better Decision-Making

The success of a quota campaign can also be interpreted in terms of substantive representation, meaning that a successful quota campaign results in more women in Parliament who make an impact on parliamentary debate and decision-making. This was sometimes defined in concrete terms, such as an increased focus on issues such as domestic violence legislation. More often, it was a less specific conceptualisation of greater women's representation leading to more perspectives being included in parliamentary debate, more balanced decision-making, and better legislative outcomes.

Women involved in quota campaigns in Samoa and Bougainville interpreted success in part as substantive outcomes on issues relating to women. In Samoa, it was argued that the quota would bring in more women to Parliament, who would be more capable of advocating women's issues (Curry, 2013, p. 15; Jackson, VM 2012, pers. comm., 8 August; Anon 2012, pers. comm.). In Bougainville, "our women's issues" were considered to include weapons disposal, peace and reconciliation (Kiraa, B 2013, pers. comm., 18 September), along with rural service delivery and education (Tanne, B 2013, pers. comm., 13 September), and domestic violence, sorcery-related violence, and reproductive health (Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September).

Quota success was also framed in discussions as a shift in the focus of parliamentary debates and decision-making. In Papua New Guinea, office-holders in the National Council of Women argued that reserved seats would lead to more attention paid in Parliament to what they deemed ‘small things’, or issues that affect daily domestic life, as opposed to ‘big’ policy issues that men were more likely to emphasise (Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Tua, L 2013, pers. comm., 6 September). In almost all cases, success in a substantive sense was linked to the representation of different perspectives in legislative debate (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September; Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Tesser, quoted in Berman 2005, A.1.13).

More balanced parliamentary decision-making was another key indicator of success for participants in the quota debates. Frequently, the analogy of a family unit was used to describe the potential impact of a gender quota (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Kakas, S 2013, pers. comm., 3 September; Semoso, F 2013, pers. comm., 12 September). If the best form of decision-making at the domestic level is a husband and wife making decisions in partnership with each other, this idea could be extended to the parliamentary level with male and female MPs both needed to contribute to political decisions. This analogy draws from a heteronormative view of the nuclear family that is heavily influenced by Christian models of the family unit, which place the male adult as head of household but allow for a degree of complementarity in terms of the husband-wife relationship. The concept of complementarity was also used by participants, especially in Bougainville and the French Pacific (Burain, E 2013, pers. comm., 17 September; Waïa, quoted in de Bonnefoy, 2000b). Women and men working together, each bringing different skills and perspectives to the legislative process, was seen as the desirable end result of the quota campaign process.

Success in terms of substantive representation of women was viewed from an international donor perspective as better development outcomes:

There's good evidence to show that women in decision-making improves not only their own lives but the lives of people around them, their families and ultimately, you know, countries that are more equal have better economic development. There's a correlation there. And I think fundamentally one of the problems of development in PNG is it's so male dominated, any of the decision-making in any sphere, from the family institution upwards, is dominated by men. So my own view is that more women in decision-making generally, surely will have a flow-on effect to better development choices. (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 27 August)

Quota campaign success was interpreted as better decision-making in general terms by many participants. It was seen as leading to better financial and social policy (Jackson, quoted in Netzler-lose, 2012a), better political management (Beccalossi, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.17), and better nation-building outcomes (Waïa, quoted in Claudel, 2000c).

Success as Strengthening Culture

The idea that quotas presented a threat to traditional culture was often invoked during quota debates by opponents to reform. Arguments that instituting a quota would be contrary to customary practices were used in all four of the case studies (see BCC, 2004; Fléaux, 2000; Fox, 2011; Tauafiafi, 2012). In Bougainville and New Caledonia, however, arguments were made that the use of gender quotas would in fact strengthen traditional culture. In this way, success in quota campaigns was interpreted as symbolic, with quotas having a wider societal impact beyond parliamentary politics.

In Bougainville, during consultations held by the Constitutional Commission, the idea that reserved seats would reinforce customary traditions was expressed (BCC, 2004). The quota was seen as a way to incorporate features of traditional matrilineal societal structures, which are in place in most parts of Bougainville, into new political institutions. In terms of success, therefore, quotas would create a link between traditional community-based political structures and the new legislature, because the “sense of partnership in decision-making that flows through our history” would be legislated for in the House of Representatives (BCC, 2004).

One advocate for parity in New Caledonia, of Kanak descent, responded to claims that it would undermine custom by arguing that “parity is in fact a way of reinforcing society” (Tourte, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.12). She interpreted success in the parity campaign as providing a response to the challenges of modernity that were threatening the traditional Kanak lifestyle: “men and women have to work together to solve those problems in order to ensure the stability of the society” (Tourte, quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.12). Parity was presented as a new method of supporting traditional ways of life.

An alternate counter-argument to the idea that the parity laws would destabilise Kanak culture was that the political sphere and the customary sphere were separate, and so the quota would have no effect on Kanak customary traditions. It was this argument voiced by female Kanak politician Déwé Gorodé when she claimed that “parity has nothing to do with custom” (quoted in Berman, 2005, A.1.10). It reflects the views of Nidoish Naisseline (2005) when he set out his thoughts on the issue of women becoming members of the Customary Senate. The Customary Senate, like the Congress, is not an indigenous institution and so he argues it has no legitimacy in a customary sense – but neither do claims that women should be excluded on the basis of

custom (Naisseline, 2005). From this viewpoint, the parity laws do not, or should not, strengthen culture but neither do they destabilise it. Rather, they exist in a separate public sphere from traditional culture.

Success as Improving Democracy

Success was interpreted in symbolic terms in another way, in that quota campaigns can result in an improved democratic system. Again, quotas were framed by opponents in all cases as posing a threat to democracy, although supporters argued that quotas would enhance democracy and create a fairer political system. Quotas can be evaluated as successful on the basis of their positive impact on perceptions of democracy and fairness.

Quotas were often spoken of by participants in terms of their potential to “level the playing field” and make the political sphere as accessible for women as for men (Afamasaga, GT 2012, pers. comm., 6 September; Sape, J 2013, pers. comm., 4 September). They were viewed as a method of reducing the barriers to political representation for women (Tone, 2012c; World Bank, 2012). These included financial barriers due to the cost of campaigning (Anon 2013, pers. comm., 5 September), societal attitudes that favoured male political actors (BCC, 2004), and family pressures (Crocombe, 1994). Quotas would therefore be successful if they made the political system more balanced and fair for women seeking political positions.

In some cases, participants in campaigns appealed to what they saw as foundational principles of democracy to make the case for quotas. Carol Kidu (2012, pers. comm., 17 October) argued that the current male-dominated system in Papua New Guinea was undemocratic, a fact that could be remedied, at least in part, by a quota: “you can’t call it a representative democracy when half the population are not represented”. In New Caledonia, the parity laws were presented as a democratic advancement (Berman, 2005, A.1.1; “Pour Génération Calédonienne”, 2000). Proponents drew linkages between the campaign for parity and other campaigns for women’s rights, including the suffrage movement (« Les femmes ont le droit », 2000).

In Samoa, the first Pacific Islands state to become independent, there was a proposal during the debate over universal suffrage to abolish elections altogether, the argument being that they were a destabilising influence on the *fa'amatai* system (Lawson, 1996). There were also arguments against what was seen as the imposition of democratic practices in Fiji and Tonga (Larmour, 1994; Lawson, 1996). Morgan (2005, p. 4) notes an “ambivalence” amongst the public towards parliamentary institutions and democracy in Melanesia. Larmour (1994, p. 45) recounts a *Fiji Times* editorial which questioned whether democracy was a “foreign flower” that was unable to develop in the Pacific context. While the indicators of democratic

legitimacy may exist for the most part throughout the Pacific region, it could be argued that democracy is “rooted in particular social conditions and perhaps unable to flourish without them” (Larmour 1994, p. 59).

If we see democracy as an imposed concept in the Pacific, the interpretation of quota campaign success as an improvement to democracy seems to be focused on gaining international legitimacy. In Samoa, while the quota has been instituted at the national level, in advancing his agenda Tuilaepa often directed his rhetoric at the international level, citing UN mandates and human rights (“Samoa plans”, 2011; “Samoa PM seeks”, 2011). The Government was accused of instituting the quota to placate international demands for action on women’s political representation (Hazelman-Siona, 2012a; “Cartoon”, 2012b). During the quota debate, some participants argued that there were other barriers to women’s representation in Samoa that needed addressing more urgently. For example, there are around ten Samoan villages that do not allow women to hold *matai* titles, a restriction that some argued was unconstitutional (Hazelman-Siona, 2012a). The Prime Minister declined to address this issue in the debate, claiming that “government shouldn’t interfere” with the practice of title-giving (Tuilaepa quoted in “PM: What referendum?”, 2012, p. 10). Thus, reform at the parliamentary level was actioned over reform at the village level.

Lawson (1996, p. 160), writing on culture and democracy in three Pacific states, including Samoa, argued that: “External indicators, such as the adoption of constitutions, parliaments, [and] electoral procedures...cannot be accepted as proof positive of the unqualified acceptance of democracy and its values as the basis of the political system.” Quota adoption could perhaps also be added to that list of external democratic indicators. In some cases, and in particular Samoa, the orientation of the quota reform process seemed to suggest an outward focus towards meeting international obligations and goals, rather than matching up to a domestic interpretation of democratic legitimacy.

What Can This Tell Us About Quota Campaigns?

This research shows how the meaning of success in quota campaigns, and related notions of gender and representation, are interpreted by actors through drawing on different traditions. These actors are not restricted by these traditions but are instead renegotiating and redefining them according to their goals, pressures from both cultural and international feminist contexts, and in answer to dilemmas that are presented. In this way we see how actors within the Samoan Government changed their positions on quotas in response to international measures and the political realities of Samoa, with women’s representation dropping in the 2011 election (Abbott, 2012; Tupufia, 2013); how, in Papua New Guinea, the perceptions of

activists on the outcome of the quota campaigns there ranged from labelling it a failure in terms of legislative outcomes, to a success in raising public awareness on women's representation; in Bougainville, how campaigners for reserved seats used ideas about matriliney and the role of women in society to their advantage; and in the French Pacific, how women from both sides of the independence debate in New Caledonia joined forces to advocate the introduction of parity, supporting the exogenously developed laws through a locally owned campaign.

Within the Pacific region, local custom and the autonomy of local communities take on great importance within the broader political framework. This context can make quotas instituted at the parliamentary level potentially less meaningful as a vehicle of wider social change. It also, however, makes parliamentary gender quotas potentially easier to implement than local-level reform. We see, especially in the case of New Caledonia, how local custom and the parliamentary process were strictly delineated by quota supporters (see Berman, 2005), and in Samoa how parliamentary quota legislation was passed while village-level traditions that form a barrier to greater women's representation were left unchallenged ("PM: What referendum?", 2012). Even in this context, quota reform can in theory be effective in terms of representation: descriptively, in ensuring more members of the legislature are women; substantively, in giving women a greater voice in decision-making at the national level; and symbolically, in challenging notions of democracy and of the traditional role of women, even if this change is taking place in a non-customary political space.

In terms of global quota adoption literature, these findings show a potential new direction for future research. The debate within the literature should not just focus on the argument of whether or not to adopt quotas (although this is an interesting question). Academic work needs to also examine further the questions of what success looks like in quota campaigns, and who defines it. Simply counting the numbers of countries that adopt gender quotas and isolating factors that lead to their adoption misses an important facet of the process – the fact that each actor involved potentially has a different interpretation, or multiple different interpretations, of what constitutes success in terms of quota adoption. To understand how success is defined in different contexts is to understand more comprehensively how and why gender quotas are adopted in the Pacific region and more broadly.

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