



# Factors That Determine Women's Electoral Success in Running for Congress

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## Introduction

- Throughout history, men have been the face of politics. There have been 45 male presidents, including the current president, and 0 female presidents.
- The persistent gender gap in representing American women in Congress has prevented the American democracy from providing equal representation to all.
- After the historic 2018 midterm elections, more women were elected to Congress than ever before; however, women still only held approximately 24% of the seats in Congress (CAWP).
- Women's electoral success in Congress can be seen in states like California, where there have been more women elected to Congress than in any other state (CAWP).

### PURPOSE:

- This study is important to discover which factors lead to women's electoral success in Congress and to understand why men still have a majority in Congress even though women are constantly becoming more involved in politics across the nation.

## Research Design

### DATASOURCES:

- Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Women in the U.S. Congress 2019
- 2020 United States Census Bureau Race and Ethnicity Categories
- Open Secrets Campaign Finances, Center for Responsive Politics

### METHODS:

- Cross state comparison ranking female campaign finances raised.
- Descriptive analysis of race and ethnic factors for females in Congress.
- Representative gender and partisan comparison in each chamber of Congress and Congress as a whole.

### HYPOTHESES:

- Women are more likely to be elected to Congress if they ethnically and racially diverse.
- Women have more success in being elected to Congress if they are affiliated with the Democratic Party.
- States that raise more money for female candidates will assist in a larger number of female candidates being elected to Congress.

Figure 1

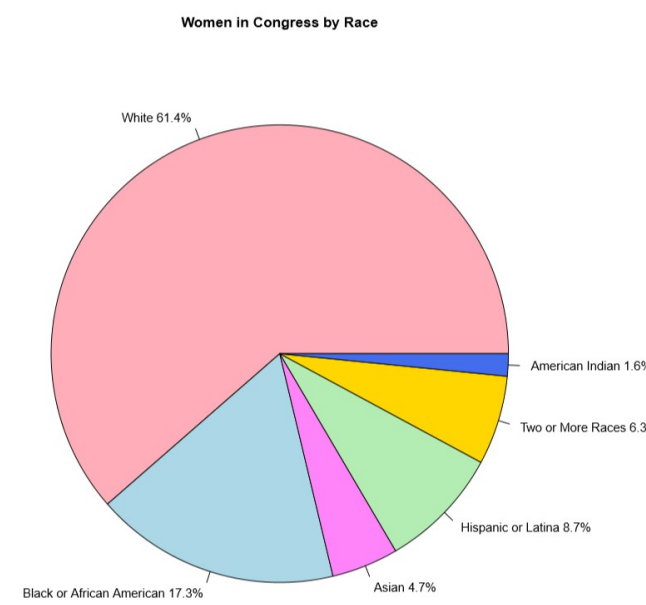


Figure 2

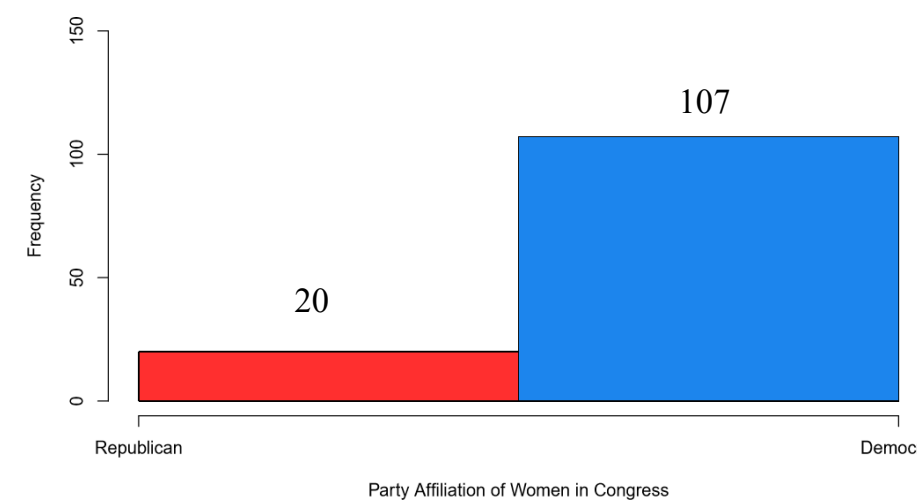


Figure 3

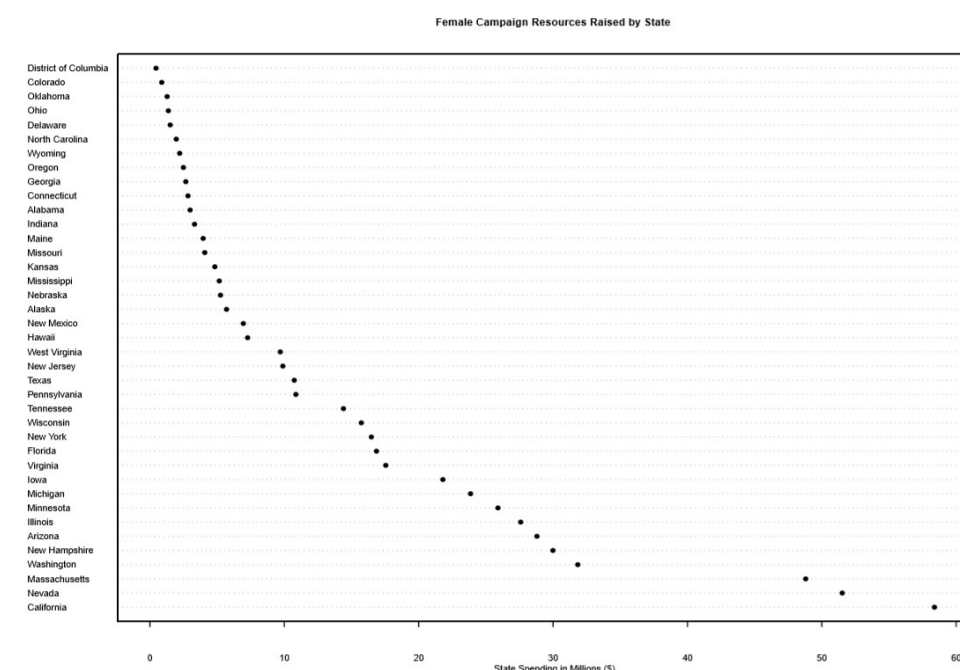
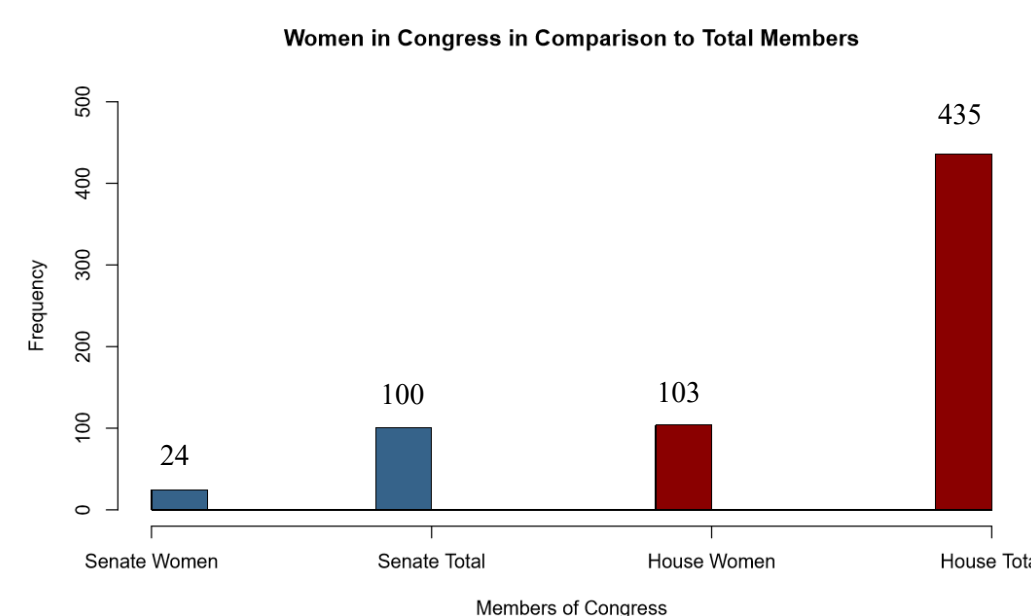


Figure 4



**Figure 1:** White women have more success in getting elected to Congress in comparison to all other racial and ethnic groups. These racial and ethnic groups were based on the U.S. Census Bureau's categories for race and ethnicity.

**Figure 2:** Democratic women are 5 times more prevalent than Republican women in the U.S. House and Senate.

**Figure 3:** The state of California has elected more women to Congress than any other state (CAWP). Figure 3 shows that California's female candidates also raised the most money for their first election to Congress in comparison to all states that currently have female representatives in Congress.

**Figure 4:** Even after the historic 2018 midterm elections, Figure 4 shows that women make up less than half of each chamber of Congress. CAWP helps examine the gender gap in American Politics displayed in this figure.

## Conclusion

### EMPIRICAL FINDINGS:

- The importance of racial diversity: With this data set I have found that racial diversity did not improve women's electoral success in Congress. The majority of women elected to Congress were white women, which shows that representation across racial and ethnic groups continue to be unequal for women in Congress.
- Party affiliation success: Based on the evidence in Figure 2, Democratic women have more success in being elected to Congress. This evidence draws attention to gender equality movements concerned with more liberal and social issues usually associated with left leaning members of Congress.
- Congressional Campaign Finances: Less progressive states like Oklahoma and Wyoming raised less money for female representatives, within their states, in their congressional campaigns.
- Overall, Democratic, white women from primarily liberal states have the greatest percentage of being elected to Congress. This research shows that women who are Republican, racially diverse, or are attempting to run in less progressive states are less likely to be elected to Congress.

## Acknowledgements

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