

**Do Women's Political Caucuses
Make a Difference in the Passage
of
Women's Health Policies**

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Purpose of the Study

Explores whether women's legislative caucuses are instrumental in the passage of key women's health policies.

Previous study

Explored whether the increase of women's representation in the state legislatures lead to substantive legislation, that is whether they acted for women by adopting women's health policies.

Previous Results

- Women by themselves were not representing women's interests
- Party and women together impacted positively the passage of the women's health policies in the 1993-1994 and 1995-1996 sessions
- The more professional legislatures were less likely to adopt women's health policies (1995-1996).

Women's Health Policy Index (Dependent Variable)

- Prescription contraceptive coverage
- Direct access to OB services
- Obstetricians as primary care providers
- Medicaid waivers for family planning services

Women's Health Policy Index (Continued)

- Coverage for cervical cancer screening
- Coverage for breast cancer screening
- Reconstructive surgery after breast cancer surgery
- Minimum length of stay after inpatient breast cancer surgery

Independent Variables

- Women's characteristics
- Socioeconomic factors
- Political factors

Women's characteristics

- Percent of women state legislators
- Percent of women legislators-
Democrats
- Legislatures with 20% or more women

Political factors

- Legislative professionalism
- Policy liberalism
- Political culture
- Political party control
- Women's legislative caucuses

Formal Women's Legislative caucuses

Arkansas	Maryland
California	Massachusetts
Connecticut	Nevada
Florida	New York
Georgia	North Carolina
Hawaii	Rhode Island
Illinois	South Carolina
Indiana	West Virginia

Informal Women's Legislative caucuses

Alabama	Nebraska
Colorado	Oklahoma
Delaware	Oregon
Idaho	Pennsylvania
Iowa	Vermont
Michigan	Washington
Minnesota	Wisconsin
Missouri	Wyoming

No Women's Legislative caucuses

Alaska	New Mexico
Arizona	North Dakota
Kansas	Ohio
Kentucky	South Dakota
Maine	Tennessee
Mississippi	Texas
Montana	Utah
New Hampshire	Virginia
New Jersey	

Socioeconomic factors

- Wealth
- Urbanism
- Level of education

Methodology

- Ten year time frame, 1993 to 2002
- States- units of analysis

Table 1
Percent of Women State Legislators¹

State legislative sessions	Percent Women	Lowest Percent	Highest Percent
93-94	20.5	5.07	39.8
95-96	20.8	3.57	39.5
97-98	21.6	4.29	39.5
99-00	22.4	7.86	40.8
00-01	22.6	7.86	38.8

1. Source: Center for American Women in Politics

Table 2

Percent of Women Legislators who Are Democrats

	93-94	95-96	97-98	99-00	01-02
Mean percent	62.58	56.38	58.83	59.40	59.56

Source: Center for American Women in Politics

**Number and Percent of Legislatures
with 20 percent or more women Legislators by Session**

	93-94	95-96	97-98	99-00	01-02
Number	26	27	27	30	31
Percent	52	54	54	60	62

Source: Center for American Women in Politics

Session	Mean # of policies
Prior to 1993	1.12
1993-1994	.18
1995-1996	.62
1997-1998	1.44
1999-2000	.60
2001-2002	.42
1993-2000	3.26

Frequency of states Adopting Women's Health Policies		
Health Policy	Pre-1993	2002
Breast Cancer Screening	38	47
Length of Stay after Breast Cancer Surgery	1	22
Reconstructive Surgery	8	32
Cervical Cancer Screening	9	24
Direct Access to OB	0	38
Obstetrician as PCP	0	19
Contraceptive coverage	0	19
Family Planning Waivers	0	16

Control variables

- Wealth
- Urbanism
- Political party
- Ideology/liberalism
- Political culture
- Legislative professionalism
- Prior enactment of women's health policies
- Women's legislative caucuses

Two Regression Models

1. Percent of women legislators
2. 'Critical mass' Women legislators at 20% or greater

1993-2002			
Regression results for Women Legislators- Percent			
Independent variable	B	SE B	B
Constant	3.896	2.433	
Women legislators %	-0.011	0.044	-0.050
Legislature- Democrat	0.039	0.599	0.012
Formal women's caucus	0.669	0.573	0.191
Political culture- Individualistic	-1.811	0.776	-0.517**
Political culture- moralistic	-1.551	0.861	-0.443*
Policy liberalism	0.071	0.023	0.597***
Wealth	0.000	0.000	0.123
Legislative professionalism	-3.047	2.073	-0.262
Urbanism	0.028	0.023	0.248
Previous WHPI enactment	-0.497	0.352	-0.237
Mean # of WHPI- DV	3.26		
R square	0.371		
N	50		

1993-2002			
Regression results for Women Legislators- Percent			
Independent variable	B	SE B	B
Constant	3.605	2.458	
Women legislators %	-0.012	0.044	-0.051
Legislature- Democrat	0.027	0.605	0.008
Combined women's caucus	0.507	0.509	0.147
Political culture- Individualistic	-1.875	0.783	-0.535**
Political culture- moralistic	-1.834	0.830	-0.524**
Policy liberalism	0.070	0.023	0.581***
Wealth	0.000	0.000	0.136
Legislative professionalism	-3.268	2.133	-0.281
Urbanism	0.029	0.023	0.257
Previous WHPI enactment	-0.393	0.341	-0.187
Mean # of WHPI- DV	3.26		
R square	0.364		
N	50		

1993-2002			
Regression results for Women Legislators >= 20%			
Independent variable	B	SE B	B
Constant	3.558	2.453	
Women legislators >= 20%	0.049	0.637	0.015
Legislature- Democrat	0.025	0.605	0.007
Combined women's caucus	0.492	0.509	0.142
Political culture- Individualistic	- 1.893	0.786	- 0.540**
Political culture- moralistic	- 1.945	0.792	- 0.555**
Policy liberalism	0.067	0.024	0.559** *
Wealth	0.000	0.000	0.128
Legislative professionalism	- 3.037	2.058	-0.261
Urbanism	0.027	0.023	0.233
Previous WHPI enactment	- 0.397	0.341	-0.189
Mean # of WHPI- DV	3.26		
R square	0.363		
N	50		

*p = < .10

** p = < .05

*** p = < .01

1993-2002			
Regression results for Women Legislators >= 20%			
Independent variable	B	SE B	B
Constant	3.848	2.424	
Women legislators >= 20%	0.141	0.633	0.042
Legislature-Democrat	0.034	0.599	0.010
Formal women's caucus	0.667	0.573	0.190
Political culture-Individualistic	-1.843	0.778	-0.526**
Political culture-moralistic	-1.698	0.814	-0.485**
Policy liberalism	0.067	0.024	0.561***
Wealth	0.000	0.000	0.115
Legislative professionalism	-2.770	1.995	-0.238
Urbanism	0.024	0.023	0.213
Previous WHPI enactment	-0.498	0.352	-0.237
Mean # of WHPI-DV	3.26		
R square	0.370		
N	50		

Interpretation

Presence of Women Legislative Caucuses

- No statistically significant impact

Policy liberalism

- Statistically significant impact at $p = <.01$

Interpretation- continued

Political culture: individualistic and moralistic

- Statistically significant at $p = < .05$
- negative impact

Conclusions

- Presence of Women's Legislative Caucuses did not appear to be a significant factors in the passage of women's health policies
- Policy liberalism and political cultures are important factors

Limitations

- Units of analysis less than 100
- Only eight women's health policies included
- Data on the presence or absence of women's legislative caucuses incomplete

Further Research

- Identify other potential factors that may have impacted the passage of women's health policies, such as
 - The agenda setting process
 - Presence or absence of women's and other interest groups (health, physician)