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Frances Chang

Chapman University, chang245@mail.chapman.edu

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# Predictors of Support for a Woman President

Frances Chang

Department of Political Science, Chapman University; Orange, California

## Introduction to Research

- This study's objective is to explore the predictors of support for a female president by analyzing data from the American National Election Studies (ANES)
- The number of women running for office is rising domestically and internationally.
  - In the 2008 election, Hillary Clinton was the leading candidate for Democratic presidential nomination, and Sarah Palin was the Republican nominee for Vice President.
- In the United States, more and more women have been elected into office.
  - Pew Research Center (2015): more women have been elected in the 114<sup>th</sup> congressional election than ever; 104 women congress will be serving in office.
- The female participation rate is twice what it was in the past at 19%; however, women are still underrepresented and have to work harder to survive in a political world dominated by men.
- The study will find the factors that influence an individual's support for a woman president.

## Literature Review

- Research done in the 1970s found that gender stereotypes were a clear factor in influencing the voters.
- The public still often relies on stereotypes to evaluate women and men in the political world (Dolan & Lynch, 2004).
  - The public use the perception of a "typical women" and a "typical men" to influence their view on the candidates (Burns, Eberhardt & Merolla, 2013).
  - The symbol of the oval office and the public's image of the presidency make women candidates excluded as part of the executive branch (Lori Han, 2007).
- Gender Affinity Effect (Dolan, 2008)
  - Female voters would be more supportive for a women president for more reasons than men
- Gender transcends party (Dolan & Sanbonmatsu, 2009).
- Media attention toward a woman candidate
  - Media coverage about Palin was positive; however, her appearance and personal life were disproportionately mentioned (Miller & Peake, 2013).
  - Certain stereotypes that framed female candidates negatively were still present in the media during the election (Yoon & Lee, 2013).
- Social Desirability Effects (Streb, Burrell, Frederick & Genovese, 2008).
  - Individuals avoided stating their true preference on the questions about supporting a female president since they don't want to appear biased.

## Hypotheses:

- H1: An individual's party identification influences one's support for a female president
- H2: Stereotypical views toward a woman's role influences one's support for a women president.
- H3: Attention to media has an impact on one's support for a woman president.

## Data:

Table 1: Factors that influence one's support for a woman president "

Model	Coefficient (B)	Stand. Coefficient	Significance
Media Attention	-.035	-0.65	.000
Ideologies Liberal/ Conservative	.162	.161	.000
Party ID	.143	.208	.000
Age Group	.020	.044	.002
Gender	-.322	-.109	.000
Ethnicity	-.024	-.016	.271
Education	-.035	-.027	.054

Significant at <.05  
R square for the model is .138

Table 3 & Table 4:  
Individuals' view on equal role for women

Table 3:

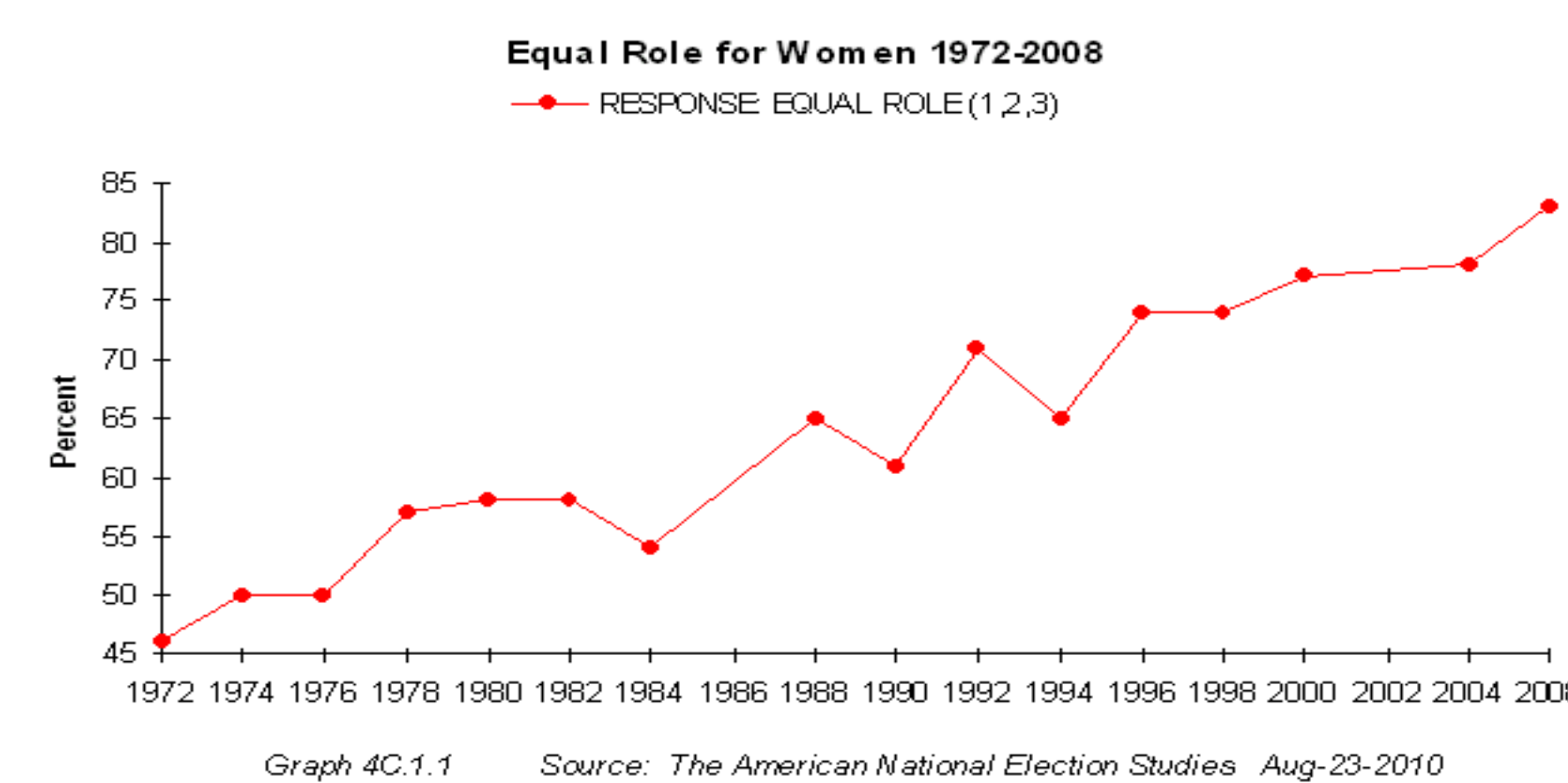


Table 4:

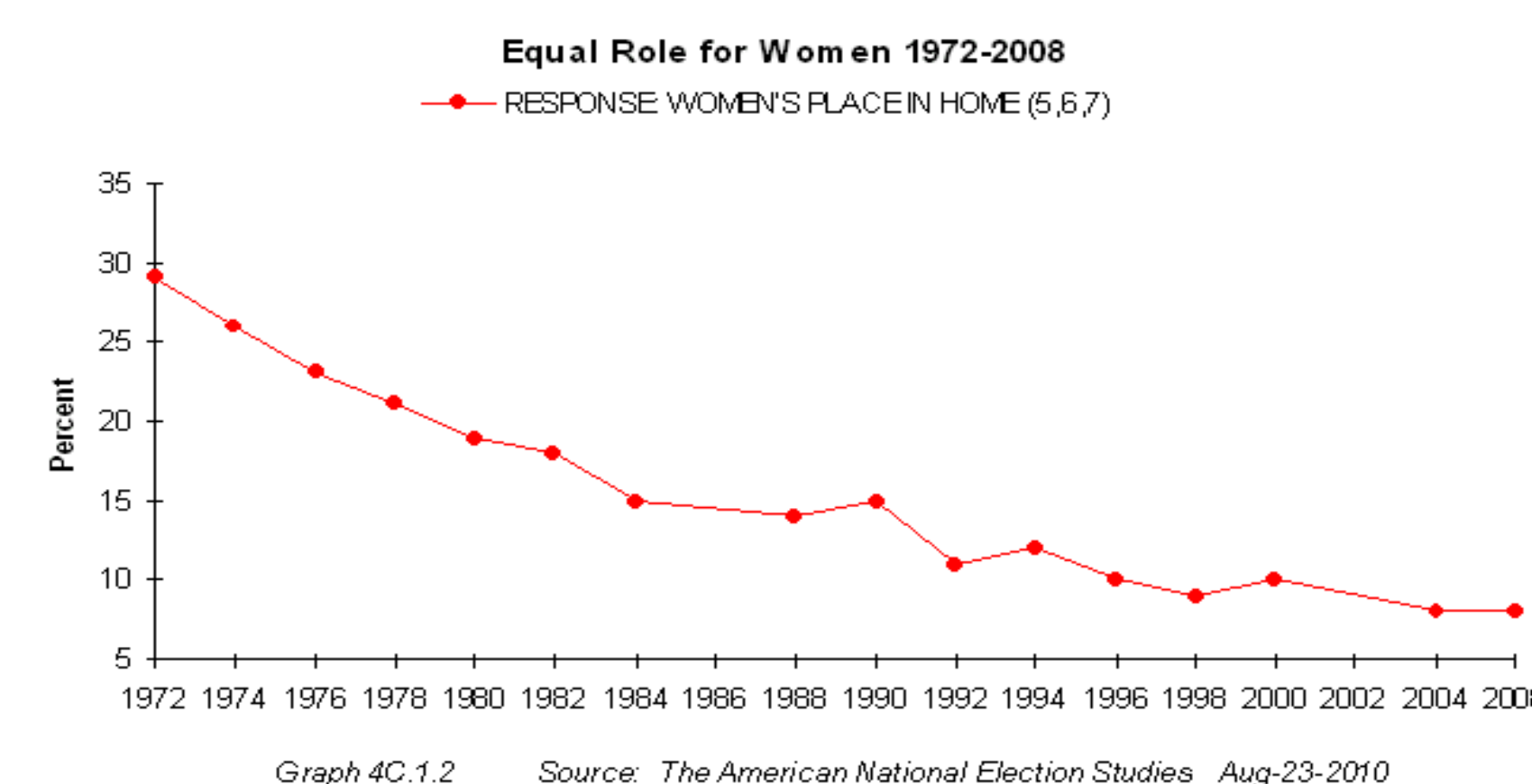


Table 2 :Stereotypical view toward role for women and the support for a woman president

Model	Coefficient (B)	Stand. Coefficient	Significance
Better if man works and woman takes care of home	-.079	-.076	.000
Hiring and promoting discriminate against women	-.186	-.102	.000
Opportunities compared for men and women	.224	.206	.000
Opportunity for achievement between man and woman	-.094	-.038	.220
Working mother's bond with child	.015	.013	.340

Significant at <.05  
R square for the model is .056

## Table Interpretation

- Among the variables, media attention, ideologies, party ID, age, gender, ethnicity and education included in Table 1, ethnicity and education are not statistically significant.
- The result in Table 1 showed party ID had the highest standardized coefficient of .208. An individual's ideology is the second highest and gender is ranked third.
- Media attention is an influential factor because the significance level is .000. Level of media attention is directly related to female presidential support. However, media attention is not the most influential factor that has impact on an individuals' view of a woman president compared with other variables such as party ID, ideology and gender.
- In Table 2, the stereotypical questions "opportunity for achievement in the U.S. for men and women" and "working mother's bond with child" were rendered insignificant.
- In Table 2, other questions are statistically significant but were not powerful enough to influence one's support for a woman president based on the R square for the model of .065.
- Table 3 and 4 obtained from the American National Election Studies (ANES) showed an individuals' view toward women is changing; more and more people support the equal role for women and fewer think that staying at home and taking care of children is a woman's job.

## Findings

H1: "An Individual's party identification influences one's support for a woman president"

The result showed party identification with Beta 0.208 is the highest among other variables, which shows that an individual's party identification is the most influential variable in support for a woman president.

H2: "Stereotypical views toward roles for women and the support for a women president "

The result showed individuals who think men have more opportunities are more supportive for a woman president, in which they believe that men and women should have equal rights. Although the questions "Better if men work and women take care of home," "hiring and promoting discriminate against women," and "opportunity compared men and women" are statistically significant, the R square with .056 shows the variables are not powerful in influencing one's support for a woman president.

H3: Media attention and the support for a woman president

Media attention with a significance level of .000 showed the variable has influence on supporting a woman president. However, by comparing with the standard coefficient, attention to media is not the major factor that has an impact on one's support for a woman president.

## Conclusions

- The results are consistent with previous studies by the scholars that party ID has more influence on an individuals' support for a woman president than gender
- Media attention did influence one's support for a woman president, but its impact is not as strong as other variables such as party ID, ideologies and gender.
- Individuals' stereotypical views on women's role are changing; more people are supportive for equal roles between women and men.
- Gender stereotype does not strongly influence one's support for a woman president based on the R square in the results.
- The data shows an individuals' view for a woman president is more positive, and it is possible to have a women president in the United States in the next 20 years.

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