

**Corruption Scandals in Women's Path to Executive Power**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the relationship between corruption scandals and women's path to executive power using the following research question: How do corruption scandals impact women's path to executive power? This examination contributes to the literature on women executives, corruption and gender. I will trace women's path to executive power and the impact of corruption scandal at different stages of their rise to national office using three case studies: Angela Merkel, Michelle Bachelet, and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. I will explore the impact of corruption scandals on their respective paths to national executive power using Beckwith's removal and deferral framework. The findings showcase that corruption scandals can be beneficial to women's rise to executive power in party leadership contests in parliamentary systems, and during national elections if corruption is a salient electoral topic and cultural gendered beliefs frame women candidates as less corrupt. For Merkel, corruption scandal was significant in accessing party leadership. For Johnson-Sirleaf, corruption scandal was significant during national elections. For Bachelet, corruption scandal had an ambiguous effect. Nevertheless, Bachelet's case informs a theoretical contribution by demonstrating that deferral can occur without removal and still facilitate senior women's path to power under Beckwith's framework.

**Keywords:** women executives, women head of government, women prime ministers, women presidents, women chancellor, corruption, corruption scandal, women's path to national leadership.

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### **The Impact of Corruption Scandal on Women's Path to Executive Power**

Women make up approximately 50% of the world population, yet only account for 6.6% of heads of state and 6.2% of heads of government in 2020 (IPU, 2020a). Women in politics are still underrepresented at every level of governance. Women made up 20.7% of ministers, and 24.3% of members of parliament (IPU, 2020a). Exploring the context and conditions under which women successfully rise to executive power is worthwhile given the scarcity of women executives. Understanding how women executives reach the executive office may help aspiring women executive candidates in their paths to national leadership. The literature has found that many women world leaders have ascended to power after crises and periods of instability such as military takeovers, periods of violence, and corruption (Jalalzai, 2008, p.223). Corruption scandals are one of the most prominent types of scandal in the political world (Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2016, p. 133). These factors inform this study's research question: How do corruption scandals impact women's path to executive power? The focus on corruption scandals explores how some crises may have gendered effects. Gender stereotypes contribute to perceptions about women being more honest, more risk averse, less likely to engage in corruption, and capable of restoring trust and order (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, p.157; Valdini, 2019, p.62). Corruption scandals may benefit women executives' path to the highest political office. In order to explore the relationship between corruption scandals and women's rise to executive, I will present three case studies in which a woman rose to power post-corruption scandal. The three case studies are Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former President of Liberia. In Merkel's case, the role of corruption scandal was significant during

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party leadership. In Johnson-Sirleaf's case, the role of corruption scandal was significant during national elections. In Bachelet's case, the role of corruption scandal was not particularly significant. The findings showcase that corruption scandals can be beneficial to women's rise to executive power in party leadership contests in parliamentary systems, and during national elections if corruption is a salient electoral topic and cultural gendered beliefs frame women candidates as less corrupt. The first and second chapters consist of a literature review on women's path to executive power, and the literature on corruption and gender. The third chapter discusses the methodology. The fourth chapter presents the impact of corruption on Angela Merkel's path to executive power. The fifth chapter discusses the impact of corruption on Michelle Bachelet's path to executive power. The sixth chapter examines the impact of corruption on Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's path to executive power. The seventh chapter discusses the case study findings. The eighth chapter presents the impact of corruption scandal on women's path to executive power using the case study findings. The concluding chapter discusses the framework analysis and amendments to Beckwith's removal and deferral framework.

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### **Chapter 1: Literature Review on Women's Representation**

#### ***Women's Representation***

Adequate women's representation ensures that no one group has monopoly over political power. Women's representation allows for women's diverse interests to be represented across all branches of government. Representation can take many forms, namely descriptive, symbolic, and substantive. Women's descriptive representation consists of how many women are in positions of power across the branches of government. Women's symbolic representation describes the emotional responses that ensues from the election of women, including the extent to which the election of women is personally meaningful, or symbolically valuable. Women's substantive representation addresses to what extent women politicians represent women's interests once in power (Paxton, Kunovich, & Hughes, 2007, p.272). Women's substantive representation is challenging because women form a heterogeneous group with diverse interests ranging from right-leaning to left-leaning ideologies (Celis & Childs, 2012). Further descriptive representation can remedy the challenges of substantive representation. More women elected to office may also bring more diverse interests and political standings, thereby better reflecting the diverse interests and issues women care about across the political spectrum (Norris, 1996, p. 90). Symbolic representation matters because people's affective relationship to democracy influences its quality (Schwindt-Bayer, 2010, pp. 155–156). If people don't feel adequately represented, voter apathy may follow. Citizens may be less invested in the democratic process. Populist regime may exploit these sentiments and deteriorate the democratic process. In sum, substantive and symbolic representation explore the period after women are in power whereas women's descriptive

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representation encompasses the period prior to women holding political office. Given the focus on paths to power, this study will focus on descriptive representation.

The political recruitment model developed by Norris and refined by Matland and Montgomery explores women's descriptive representation (Norris, 1997, p.2; Matland & Montgomery, 2003, pp.19-36; Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.113). The model presents the process of becoming an elected official. The first barrier is having the necessary individual resources and ambition to run for political office. Individuals who meet this criterion form the group of eligibles. Eligible become aspirants once they decide to run for political office. The second barrier is getting past political party gatekeepers to run for office. Then, aspirants become candidates once they are selected by a political party. The third barrier is getting elected. Candidates become legislators once they are elected by voters. The model explains the process of going from eligibles to aspirants, aspirants to candidates, and candidates to legislators. The three barriers to accessing political office are individual resources and ambition, political party gatekeepers, and the electorate. First, women have to decide to run. Then, gatekeepers have to select women as candidates. Lastly, voters have to elect women to political office.

The political recruitment model includes both the supply side and the demand side of women's political representation (Paxton, 1997, pp. 444–445). Supply side factors increase how many women are capable and willing to run for political office. Demand side factors describe how receptive the political structure is to women candidates. Supply side factors increase the supply of women that have the personal ambition and experience to run for elected office. Demand side factors are characteristics that shape the demand for women in politics including electoral systems,

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political party gatekeepers, and gender quotas. Supply side factors and demand side factors highlight barriers specific to women in politics. The three broad categories of barrier are social structural, political institutional, and cultural. Social Structural barrier influence supply side factors. Political institutional barriers shape demand side factors. Cultural barriers impact both supply side factors and demand side factors (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, pp.113-114)

### *Social Structural Factors*

The social structural perspective explores how gender inequality impacts women's political representation. Social structural arguments shed light on gendered barriers women face when running for office. Structural barriers impact the supply side factors of women's representation. Structural barriers include money, time, civil and political skills, education, work, networks, and violence against women in politics. Women tend to earn less income and own less assets than men (Warren, 2006, pp. 212–216). Women also tend to complete the majority of domestic labour and caregiving work (Chuki & Turner, 2017, p. 144; Coltrane, 2000). The second shift, coined by Arlie Hochschild, describes the domestic labour working women complete at home such as cooking and cleaning (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.165). The pattern of the second shift includes career women in law, business, education and politics. Women in these career fields are most likely to run for office (Fox & Lawless, 2014, p. 403). Women in the Global South in rural areas typically have more domestic labour than women in the Global North. The gender time gap means less time for other activities such as political aspirations (Anxo et al., 2011, p. 179; Bianchi & Milkie, 2009, p. 707). Globally, women tend to have higher rates of illiteracy and lower levels of education and

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political violence is used as a means to disincentivize women's participation in politics (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.151; Krook, 2017, pp. 79–84).

Women tend to be excluded from social and economic networks that can increase their status in society. Men and women have access to different informal networks; thus, networks are gendered (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.155). Homophily or homosociality explores how women and men prefer to collaborate with people with similar or shared traits. Homosociality explores how working with and building friendships with people of the same gender may seem easier and more predictable (Ibarra, 1997, pp.92-99; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001, pp.416-424). Men's informal network typically lead to access to more resources and connections resulting in men having more homosocial capital (Bjarnegård, 2013, pp.170-174). Men also make up the political elite and recruit people from their network. Social, professional, and political networks provide support and help individuals achieve their goals. The informal nature of networks leads to structural gendered differences (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.155). Nevertheless, women can also build up and form homosocial networks across political parties to advance their interest, receive and provide support (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.156).

Social structural arguments contextualize women's representation from a global point of view. The social structural perspective also highlights the need for structural solutions. Organizations such as EMILY in the United States help women with funding for their political aspirations. Similarly, candidate training programs can teach women civic skills. Informal political participation such as women's movement and social activism can also impart civic and political skills. Welfare systems such as paternity leaves, state funded childcare, and making political

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institutions more inclusive can help foster women's political participation (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.143).

### *Cultural Factors*

Whereas structural social factors focus on how society is set up in unequal gendered ways, cultural factors explore how cultural beliefs and attitudes impact women's representation (Schwindt-Bayer, 2010, p. 41). Culture impacts both the supply and demand side of women in politics (Yates & Hughes, 2017). Culture affects both how women feel about themselves as political individuals and shapes how receptive political structures are to women once they enter politics. If women are perceived to be outside their domain in a given culture, then the demand for women in politics will be minimal. Similarly, if women believe they do not belong in politics, they are unlikely to pursue political aspirations thereby stifling the supply side of women in politics. On the other hand, if women's political skills and ambition are fostered culturally, more women are likely to enter politics and rise through the ranks of the political structures. The singular goal of political party gatekeepers is to win elections, regardless of the gender of the candidate (Valdini, 2019, p.18). Cultural beliefs that frame women as competent only in the private sphere of the home, as inferior, irrational, incompetent, or codependent on men are likely to deter women from participating in politics (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.114; Chuki & Turner, 2017, p. 144). Conversely, cultural beliefs that present women as capable, ambitious, and equal to men can promote women's political participation. Culture plays a significant role in how women view themselves and impacts how women voters view women politicians. The World Values Survey measured the different cultural attitudes on women in politics across 53 countries in 2015 (Paxton,

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Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.121). One question that particularly indicative of cultural beliefs about women is whether men make better political leaders than women. The survey found that the average answer was between strongly disagree and disagree in Sweden. In the West and in Latin America, the survey found that the average answer was disagree. Conversely, in Nigeria, Ghana, Armenia, and Pakistan the average answer was in agreement with the statement that men make better leaders. In the Middle East, the average answer was between agree and strongly agree. These results demonstrate that there is a wide range and variety on women's role in society across countries, and regions based on cultural differences. Culture plays a role both in shaping to what extent women enter politics, and how well or poorly women are received once they enter.

Another area in which culture impacts women's representation is the gender gap in ambition. Women tend to have less political ambition (Fox & Lawless, 2014, pp. 406–410). Differences in ambition can start from an early age. Traditional sex-role socialization leads to girls being encouraged to partake in domestic private sphere activities within the family, and boys being encouraged to participate in public sphere activities outside the family (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.129; Fox & Lawless, 2010, p. 311). Schneider, Holman, Diekmann, and McAndrew (2016) find that an aversion for conflict plays a large role in explaining the gender gap in ambition. Women tend to be more interested in politics when it is framed as being of service to the community and helping others (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.130). Culture can help women's representation by encouraging and fostering their inclusion. Culture can also hinder women's representation by disincentivizing women from entering politics and excluding them

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from the political process when they do. Political and institutional factors significantly impact how women are included or excluded once they enter politics.

### *Political and Institutional Factors*

Political institutional factors impact the demand side of women's representation and determine whether the supply of willing and capable women will be included in the political process. Regime type such as democracy, semi democracy, or authoritarian regime impact women's representation. Under democratic regimes, the rules to attain political power are clear, consistent, and detailed. Parties and candidates know how to attain political power and can maximize their chances accordingly. Alternatively, women may be appointed to political positions in authoritarian regimes but can be removed just as easily. The path to power is random and inconsistent because the rules to reach political office change constantly under non-democracies. Although women's increased representation levels do not always correlate with democratic regimes, democratic regimes allow for a clear roadmap to positions of political power. (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, pp.162-164). The scope of this study is limited to discussing women's representation in democratic regimes.

In democratic regimes, proportional systems are more favourable to women's representation than plurality-majority systems. Electoral systems are key factors to consider for women's political representation. The three broad families of electoral systems are: plurality-majority, proportional, and mixed systems. Although specific electoral systems are more complex, the common characteristics of electoral systems allow for their grouping into three broad categories. Proportional systems tend to promote more women in positions of power (Norris, 2006,

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pp. 197–201). Under proportional representation systems, citizens vote for parties from a list of candidates. Then, parties win seats based on the share of votes received. For example, if a party wins 40% of the votes, the party make up about 40% of the seats. The list determines the order of the party candidates, and the seats are assigned based on that order. The seats are filled up by moving down the party list order. Women and men party members from the same district are not in direct competition with one another because many candidates can be elected from the same district. More women can get elected to seats if they are placed in favourable positions on the party list. Under the plurality-majority system, citizens vote for a single individual candidate in a given district. Women and men party candidates are in direct competition with one another to represent a given district. Selecting a woman candidate effectively means not selecting a man candidate because only one candidate can represent a district. Being selected as candidate for a district is a highly competitive zero-sum process under plurality-majority systems, which makes it less favourable for women. The mixed systems incorporate features of the proportional system and plurality-majority system. Even under mixed systems, the proportional part of the system results in more women in power compared to the plurality-majority part of the system (Henig, 2001, pp. 96–98; Kerevel et al., 2019, p. 161). Proportional systems are most beneficial to women's political representation.

In both the proportional and plurality system, women party elite can help aspiring women politicians access power in different ways (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005). In the plurality-majority system, women elite can help women get elected but not selected. In the proportional system, women elite can help women get selected but not elected (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.178).

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Under the proportional system, women elite can help aspiring women get selected as candidates but cannot significantly help them get elected to office. Women party elite in proportional systems can encourage the party to balance the party list by adding more women candidates to the list. Women party elite can influence the party to select more women as candidates however they cannot help women candidates secure favourable positions on the party list. Under the plurality-majority system, women elite can help aspiring women get elected but cannot help them get selected as candidate. Women party elite in plurality-majority system can help women candidates get elected by redirecting campaign funds, resources, additional training, and institutional support for their candidacy but cannot help them get selected as candidates. Women party elite cannot help aspiring women politician bypass party gatekeepers and get selected as candidates. The role of women party elite highlights that political parties have different incentives to include women under different electoral systems.

Political party gatekeepers impact the recruitment and selection of candidates (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173). Political parties are more likely to select women candidate if they believe women can win (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173; Valdini, 2019, p.21). In order to show a winning track record, women must first be given the opportunity to run. Candidate selection is usually determined by party elite, which tends to be dominated by men (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.174). Typically, men are incumbents and women challengers are at a disadvantage. Party elite may select a woman candidate if they believe it will benefit their party while considering how it may possibly hinder their own position. Inclusion calculation is the cost-benefit analysis party elites make when including women as candidates (Valdini, 2019). Party elites weight the

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potential gains and costs to their party and their own victory when selecting women candidates to run. Women candidates may appeal to women voters, enabling the party to capture a wider voter segment (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173). Historically, left-leaning parties have included more women but this trend no longer holds after the 2000s (Stockemer & Sundström, 2018, pp. 669–670). Right-leaning parties have adjusted their strategy to include more women in order to remain politically competitive. Some parties have informal gender quotas in an effort to include more women candidates. Other parties have put in place formal gender quotas to ensure women candidates are selected. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) categorizes three main types of quotas, namely candidate quotas, political party quotas, and reserved seats. Candidate quotas, also known as legal quotas or legislative quotas, require political parties to select a certain percentage of women candidates. Political party quotas are voluntary gender quotas informed by internal party rules and enforced by party leadership. Reserved seats ensure that a certain percentage of women are elected to office. Only women candidates can fill the reserved seats irrespective of how many women candidates run for office (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, pp.182-187). Overall, quotas can help increase the demand side of women in politics.

Once women are selected as candidates by political party gatekeepers, women candidate must be elected by the voters. After accounting for party elite decisions, culture did not significantly impact the number of women elected to office (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.178). These finding highlights that when party elite decide to include women candidates, the electorate tends to be receptive and vote for women candidates. Women candidates get elected at

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similar rates to men candidates (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.178). Men are elected at a higher rate compared to similarly qualified women candidates. As such, elected women tend to be better qualified than elected men (Fulton, 2012, pp. 308–310). Even if women and men are elected at similar rates, women are held to a higher standard (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.178).

In women's representation, the supply side highlights the cultural and societal structural barriers, and the demand side explores the cultural and political institutional barriers. The challenges in women's representation are complex and intersect with one another. The supply side and demand side explanations provide a useful framework for understanding women's representation. Women in parliament can form the supply side for women in cabinet. Likewise, women in cabinet can form the supply side for women executives (Whitford, Wilkins, & Ball, 2007, p.563).

### *Women in Parliament*

Women's representation in parliament began with nineteen women being elected to the Finish parliament in 1907. Women's share in parliament was 11.3% in 1995. Twenty years later in 2015, women's representation in parliament was 22.1% (IPU, 2020b, p.1). In 2020, the overall percentage of women in parliament globally is 24.9% and 2.1% of countries have reached parity. Gender parity, when at least 50% of the members are women, is far from being the norm. Rwanda, Cuba, Bolivia, and the United Arab Emirates are among the countries that have achieved gender parity parliaments. On the opposite side of the spectrum, Iran, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Brunei Darussalam have less than 10% of women in parliament (IPU, 2020b, p.15). Twenty-four out of

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191 countries still have less than 10% of women in parliament in 2020 (IPU, 2020b, p.2). Women's representation in parliament has varied drastically globally across regions and countries overtime.

Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes identify four patterns to women's parliamentary representation. The first pattern includes countries that never achieved a significant representation of women in parliament. Certain countries in the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, and the Pacific fall under this first pattern. The second pattern encompass countries where women were able to get elected to parliament early and continued to increase their numbers over time. Countries in the Scandinavian region follow this second pattern. The third pattern describes countries that suddenly made great gains during a short period of time. Many countries adopted gender quotas in the mid-1990s, when this third pattern started to emerge. The fourth pattern includes countries where women in parliament first made significant gains, but a plateau and a slow decline followed over time. Many formerly Communist countries fall under this fourth pattern where women's representation in parliament decreased after transitioning to democracy (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, pp.82-84). Counterintuitively, more democratic countries do not necessarily have more women in parliament than less democratic countries. Democracy does not have a significant impact in increasing women's representation in parliament (Stockemer, 2009; Blankenship & Kubicek, 2018, pp.44-46).

Women in parliament tend to hold lower rank and less prestigious roles but women speakers have increased from 8.3% to 15.6% between 2005 and 2015 (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.83; IPU, 2019a). Women in parliament can also gain experience and expertise by serving in committees. Committee assignments are related to appointments in cabinet. Sitting in power

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committees including treasury, budget, and foreign relations can help women get appointed to similar cabinet portfolios, which in turn can help women access executive power (Hansen, 2010, pp.384-398; Krook & O'Brien, 2012, pp.850-854; Murray & Sénac, 2018, pp.310-315). Appointments in finance and defence cabinet portfolios are considered steppingstones to executive power however women seldom get appointed to power committees (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.76). Women are less likely to be assigned to power committees and are more likely to be assigned to committees considered to be women's issues (Heath et al., 2005, pp. 432–433; Murray & Sénac, 2018, pp. 310–325). Even if committee appointments may limit women's power in parliament, gender-focused parliamentary intraparty and interparty caucuses can provide legislative support to advance their interest (Adams et al., 2019).

### ***Women in Cabinet***

Women's representation in cabinet started with the norm of one woman in cabinet (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.74; Barnes & Taylor-Robinson, 2017, p.231). Since then, women in cabinet have made significant gains. Women's share of cabinet minister posts was 11% in 2003, and increased to 16% in 2010 (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.75). By 2019, women's share of cabinet minister posts was 21% (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.75). Nine countries had gender parity cabinets in 2019: Spain with 64.7%, Nicaragua with 55.6%, Sweden with 54.4%, Albania with 53.3%, Colombia with 52.9%, Costa Rica with 51.9%, Rwanda with 51.9%, Canada with 50%, and France with 50% (IPU, 2019b). Gender parity cabinets are far from being the norm (Stockemer & Sundström, 2018, p.663; Franceschet & Thomas, 2015). There are still 11 countries with no women in cabinet, namely Azerbaijan, Belize, Brunei Darussalam, Iraq, Kiribati,

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Lithuania, Papua New Guinea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Vanuatu (IPU, 2019b). There is significant variation for women in cabinet across and within regions. As of 2019, women share in cabinet was 33% in the West, and 11% in the Middle East and North Africa. Within the Middle East region, women's share in cabinet was 29% the United Arab Emirates compared to none in Iraq and Saudi Arabia (IPU, 2019b). Within Europe, women's share in cabinet was 65% in Spain compared to just 29% in Portugal (IPU, 2019b).

Contrary to women in parliament, higher levels of democracy do increase women's appointment to cabinet (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.162; Krook & O'Brien, 2012). Women's share in cabinet increases with government turnover, regardless of party ideology (Stockemer & Sundström, 2018, p.668). Nevertheless, left-wing governments are more likely to appoint a woman as minister of defence in an attempt to break from the country's military regime (Barnes & O'Brien, 2018; Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.163). Women minister of defence were appointed in 41 countries by 2012 (Barnes & O'Brien, 2018; Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.76). Women are more likely to be appointed to cabinet when there are more women in parliament and more women in the governing party's legislature increase (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.171). The increased of supply of women in parliament funnel into cabinet thereby increasing women's representation in cabinet. Women in cabinet are also more likely to be appointed to high prestige cabinet portfolios when there are more women in parliament, and in the governing party's legislature (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.171).

Similar to committees in parliament, cabinet portfolios are also associated with high, medium, and low prestige. Portfolios can also be categorized into feminine policy domain,

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masculine policy domain, and unclassifiable ministries. Unclassifiable ministries include medium prestige portfolios that do not clearly fit in either masculine or feminine policy domains. Examples of unclassifiable policy domain ministries include justice, environment and natural resources, and planning and development. Feminine policy domain ministries include women's affairs, health and social welfare, and education to name a few. Masculine policy domain ministries include foreign affairs, defence and public security, and finance and economy among others. Prestige matters because high prestige cabinet portfolios such as finance and defence are considered steppingstones to executive power (Paxton, Hughes, Barnes, 2021, p.76). Women in cabinet were only appointed to finance or defence portfolios 2-3% of the time in 2019 (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.76). The top 5 portfolios held by women were family, social affairs, environment, energy and natural resources, employment, and women's affairs (IPU, 2020c).

Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson have categorized cabinet ministries portfolios with the prestige typology. They acknowledge that the prestige categories do not always map onto the feminine and masculine policy domain categories. The model fits the masculine-feminine division in so far as men are more likely to be appointed to high and medium prestige, masculine domain posts. Women being more likely to be appointed to low prestige feminine domain posts also fits under both models (Escobar-Lemmon & Taylor-Robinson, 2009, p.696). Men are expected to receive most of the unclassifiable medium prestige policy domains under the prestige model. However, women actually tend to receive more appointments to unclassifiable medium-prestige posts. Although the model does not align perfectly with the feminine-masculine division, the prestige model reveals areas of ambiguity in women's representation in cabinet. The cabinet

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gender power score developed by Krook and O'Brien (2012) assesses the strength of women's role in cabinet hold. The metric is based on how many women are appointed to cabinet, and the prestige of the portfolio they were assigned to. The countries with the strongest cabinet gender power score include Argentina, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Rwanda, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, and South Africa (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.77). In sum, women's representation in cabinet must consider both how many women get appointed to cabinet and the type of ministries women get appointed to.

### *Women in the National Executive*

Women are more likely to become prime ministers than presidents. The collaborative nature of the prime minister position makes it more likely for women to attain these positions compared to presidencies (Jalalzai, 2008, p.210). Presidencies are associated with independence, and toughness, stereotypically masculine traits whereas the role of prime minister is associated with stereotypically feminine characteristics such as collaboration, negotiation, and deliberation (Jalalzai, 2010, p.141). Effective leadership is also associated with stereotypically masculine traits such as aggression, competitiveness, dominance, and decisiveness (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The framing of leadership as a masculine trait hinders women's representation in the executive (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.71). Gendered understandings of leadership serve as an obstacle in women's path to executive power (Jalalzai, 2008, p.209). Women are more likely to become prime minister and more likely to attain executive office in systems where power is shared (Jalalzai, 2008, p.222). Between 1960 and 2013, 65% of noninterim women national leaders were in shared power roles (Jalalzai, 2013, p.48). Women in systems with strong presidential power are less likely

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to be elected through the popular vote (Jalalzai, 2008, p.223). Women are more likely to become prime ministers than presidents. Women in the national executive are more likely to access power in parliamentary systems than in presidential systems (Jalalzai, 2008, p.210; Jalalzai, 2016, p.447; Jalalzai, 2010, pp.139-149; Jalalzai, 2013, p.32; Jalalzai, 2014, pp.578-581).

The first woman executive was Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike in 1960. Between 1960 and 2019, 64 women have reached the highest political office (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.60). Once a woman is in power, it is more likely for the country to elect another woman executive (Jalalzai, 2016). The term woman executive is based on Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes' definition "the most powerful leadership position in their country" (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.60). Women executives are typically prime ministers or presidents depending on the electoral systems. Certain countries assign different titles to that role such as Chancellor in Germany. The term women executives excludes ceremonial or symbolic roles and dual or shared leadership roles (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, pp.60-64). In the following chapter, I will discuss women's path to executive power and corruption.

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### **Chapter 2: Corruption and Women's Path to Power**

Women executives come from diverse backgrounds and form a heterogenous group. Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes have identified five overarching themes across women executives discussing their shared characteristics (2014, pp.86-89; 2021, p.70). The first theme is familial ties to previous male executives. Many women leaders relied on familial ties to previous executives to access state power. The first woman executive, Sirimavo Bandaranaike ran after her husband, then incumbent prime minister, was assassinated. Bandaranaike ran for the party and campaigned to fulfill her late husband's political vision for Sri Lanka (Paxton & Hughes, 2014, p.86). Before 1995, 42% of elected women executives had familial ties to previous men executives. The second theme is that there are more women executives from the Global South than from the Global North. Whereas the Global South had its first female executive in 1960, the Global North elected its first woman executive, Margaret Thatcher in 1979. Since then, 67% of female executives have been from the Global South (Paxton & Hughes, 2014, p.88). The third theme is climbing the political ladder. Climbing the political ladder describes women executives taking the party insider path. The party insider path is the process of moving up the ranks of political parties to gain state leadership (Paxton & Hughes, 2014, p.88). The fourth theme is political and social instability. Women executives tend to be interim leaders for short-lived caretaker governments after military takeovers, coups, and countercoups. These women executives typically leave office once the dust settles (Paxton & Hughes, 2014, pp. 88-89). The fifth theme is the political outsider path. The political outsider path is rarely taken by women executives. There are no political outsider women executives in Latin America or Asia. As of 2010, only 15% of women executives ran as outsiders

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and they tend have short-lived political careers (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.70).

Paths to executive power describe the multiple ways women executive rise to power in different political contexts. These paths describe the multiple ways women can achieve executive power given the obstacles in their respective political circumstances. Henderson and Jeydel identify four paths to women's state leadership that overlap and concur with Paxton, Hughes, and Barnes' findings (2010, pp.21-22). The first path also describes the political family path. The political family path describes women in political dynasties. Women with familial ties have privileged access to political elite and electoral politics. Women in political dynasties compete for political power and gain state leadership using their political networks. Until recently, the literature on women executive leadership found that women in Latin America and South Asia almost exclusively used the familial path to access the executive office (Jalalzai, 2010, p.152; Jalalzai & Krook, 2010, p.13). For example, former Prime Minister of Bangladesh Khaleda Zia, and former President of Guyana were both widows of former executives. Former President of Argentina Cristina Fernández de Kirchner also benefitted from familial ties. Daughters of previous men executives include former Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto, former President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga, and current Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheik Hasina Wazed.

Many women in South East Asia have also benefitted from familial ties such as former President of Indonesia Megawati Sukarnoputri, former President of the Philippines Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former Prime Minister of Thailand Yingluck Shinawatra, and former President of South Korea Park Geun-hye (Paxton & Hughes, 2017, pp.83-86). The centrality of familial ties

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is linked to the widespread use of clientelism and patronage politics (Paxton & Hughes, 2017, p.366). The second path includes women who temporarily took over the political office for a recently deceased family member. For example, former President of Panama Mireya Moscoso de Arias, former President of Argentina Isabel Perón, former President of Nicaragua Violet Chamorro, and former President of the Philippines Corazon Aquino (Henderson & Jeydel, 2010, p.21). The third path is party insider, and the fourth path is running as a political outsider. The third path describes the party insider path referring to women climbing the political ladder through key positions. Typically, the party insider path includes a national nomination to represent the party and subsequently access state leadership through electoral victory. Women executives who took the party insider path include former Great Britain Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, and former Prime Minister of Canada Kim Campbell (Henderson & Jeydel, 2010, p.22; Paxton & Hughes, 2017, p.83). The fourth path of political outsider path is least successful path. Political outsiders are women candidate with little political experience or social ties to political elites runs for the executive office based on claims to change the status quo (Henderson & Jeydel, 2010, p.22).

Once women successfully reach to executive power, there are themes that emerge among women executives. Although women executives are far less common than men executives, women executives tend to achieve higher levels of education than their male predecessors (Jalalzai, 2013). On average, women were more likely to represent left-leaning parties between 1960 and 2000 (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173; Baturo & Gray, 2018). This trend is consistent with the finding that party ideology was a significant factor to women's representation prior to the 2000s

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(Stockemer & Sundström, 2018, p. 668). There have also been multiple women executives from right-leaning parties after 2000. For example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel from the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) elected in 2005, former United Kingdom Prime Minister Theresa May from the Conservative party elected in 2016, and former President of South Korea Park Geun-hye from the New Frontier party elected in 2012 to name a few (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173). Women prime ministers in Europe also tend to represent right-leaning parties (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.173; Müller-Rommel & Vercesi, 2017, pp.245-252).

Women executives also tend to rise to power during periods of transitions and crisis (Beckwith, 2015). Globally, women were more likely to become executives during the late 1980s and early 1990s during periods of democratic transitions (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.163; Jalalzai, 2017). Most countries that transitioned to democracy in 1975 did not elect a woman executive. Only 28 out of 68 countries that transitioned elected a woman executive in 1975 (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.163). Voters may be more open to elect a woman executive during transitions from a civil war, authoritarian leaders, or military dictatorships (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.163). Women may symbolize change because they are perceived as political outsiders, more peaceful and cooperative, and less likely to engage in corruption (Paxton, Hughes, & Barnes, 2021, p.163; Barnes, Beaulieu & Saxton, 2018; Valdini, 2019, pp.41-45; Barnes & Beaulieu, 2014, p.385). Because women are perceived as less susceptible to corruption, the crisis of corruption scandal may help aspiring women executives get elected to the highest political office.

Political scandal is defined as “any action of event involving a political that is regarded as

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illegal, corrupt, or unethical and prompts general outrage (Żemojtel-Piotrowska, Marganski, Baran, and Piotrowski, 2017, p.133). Corruption is defined as the misuse of public office for private gains (Nye, 1967, p.419; Bardhan, 1997, p.1321). These definitions highlight the public nature of a corruption scandal, which can elicit a strong negative reaction from the public towards the government. Corruption scandals can lead to citizens to punish the incumbent government by voting for an alternative party. Among other factors, gender stereotypes about women being less corrupt may increase the likelihood of women ascending to state power post-corruption scandal. Corruption scandals represent extraordinary circumstances in which women executive candidates are considered viable options for party leadership and subsequently state leadership. The risk of leadership failure is higher post corruption scandal because voters may punish the corrupt party at the polls. Corruption scandals destabilizes the system sufficiently to benefit women candidates.

Using Paxton, Barnes & Hughes's findings, I will provide an estimate of how many women executives have come to power post-corruption scandal. The table presents women executives elected from 1960 until 2020 based on Table 3.1 Women National Leaders, 1960-2020, (Paxton, Barnes, & Hughes, 2021, pp.61-63). I will exclude women executives with familial ties because they benefit from advantages inaccessible to most aspiring women executive. Women executives with familial ties benefit from access to political networks, exposure to key political actors, and the name recognition associated with political dynasties. Most aspiring women executives will not benefit from familial ties. In the table below, I will assess how many women executives came to power post-corruption scandal. Cases with military regimes prior to a woman executive acquiring power will not be considered as a corruption scandal case. Although corruption may occur within

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military regimes, the impact of corruption scandal cannot be isolated from the impact of a transition from a military regime. The electorate cannot exercise the same role of accountability in authoritarian military regimes as in democratic regimes. In order to determine whether a corruption scandal took place, I will use online news coverage about corruption scandals that have taken place prior to women executive rising to power. I will identify corruption scandals involving the executive in power prior to the woman executive. Prominent corruption scandals get media coverage and can potentially influence the electorate's voting decisions. The media sources used for this table include *CBC*, *CTV News*, *BBC*, *the Guardian*, *Britannica*, *Reuters*, and independent news sources in some cases. This exercise provides a rough estimate showing that 40% of women executives ascended to state leadership following a corruption scandal involving their predecessors. The bolded cases indicate that a corruption scandal took place prior to the woman executive rising to power. Corruption scandals may have played a significant role in many women executives' rise to power.

**Table 2***Women Executives Without Familial Ties & Corruption Scandal Cases*

#	Name	Title	Country	Dates of Rule	Familial Ties	Global North/South
1.	Golda Meir	Prime minister	Israel	1969-1974	No	North
2.	Margaret Thatcher	Prime minister	UK	1979-90	No	North
3.	Lydia Gueiler Tejada	President*	Bolivia	1979-80	No	South
4.	<b>Eugenia Charles</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Dominica</b>	<b>1980-95</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>

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5.	Gro Harlem Brundtland	Prime minister	Norway	1981, 1986-89, 1990-96	No	North
6.	Milka Planinc	Prime minister	Yugoslavia	1982-86	No	North
7.	Ertha Pascal-Trouillot	President*	Haiti	1990-91	No	South
8.	Kim Campbell	Prime minister*	Canada	1993	No	North
9.	Silvie Kinigi	President*	Burundi	1993-94	No	South
10.	Tansu Ciller	Prime minister	Turkey	1993-96	No	South
11.	Reneta Indzhova	Prime minister	Bulgaria	1994-95	No	North
12.	Ruth Perry	President	Liberia	1996-97	No	South
<b>13.</b>	<b>Jenny Shipley</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>1997-99</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
14.	Helen Clark	Prime minister	New Zealand	1999-2008	No	North
15.	Anneli Jäätteenmäki	Prime minister	Finland	2003	No	North
<b>16.</b>	<b>Nino Burdzhanadze</b>	<b>President*</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
<b>17.</b>	<b>Radmila Sekerinska</b>	<b>Prime minister*</b>	<b>Macedonia</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
<b>18.</b>	<b>Angela Merkel</b>	<b>Chancellor</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>2005-present</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
<b>19.</b>	<b>Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Liberia</b>	<b>2005-2018</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
<b>20.</b>	<b>Michelle Bachelet</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Chile</b>	<b>2006-10</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
<b>21.</b>	<b>Portia Simpson-Miller</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Jamaica</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
<b>22.</b>	<b>Zianaida Grecianii</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Moldova</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
23.	Johanna Siguroardottir	Prime minister	Iceland	2009-2013	No	North
<b>24.</b>	<b>Jadranka Kosor</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>2009-2011</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>

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25.	<b>Roza Otunbayeva</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
26.	Laura Chinchilla	President	Costa Rica	2010-present	No	South
27.	<b>Mari Kiviniemi</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Finland</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
28.	Julia Gillard	Prime minister	Australia	2010-2013	No	North
29.	<b>Kamla Persad-Bissessar</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	<b>2010-2015</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
30.	<b>Iveta Radicova</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>2010-2012</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
31.	Dilma Rousseff	President	Brazil	2011-2016	No	South
32.	Helle-Thorning-Schmidt	Prime minister	Denmark	2011-2015	No	North
33.	<b>Joyce Banda</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Malawi</b>	<b>2012-2014</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>South</b>
34.	<b>Alenka Bratušek</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
35.	Laimdota Straujuma	Prime minister	Latvia	2013-2016	No	North
36.	Erna Solberg	Prime minister	Norway	2013-present	No	North
37.	Catherine Samba-Panza	President*	Central African Republic	2014-2016	No	South
38.	<b>Ewa Kopacz</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
39.	Theresa May	Prime minister	United Kingdom	2016-2019	No	North
40.	Hilda Heine	President	Marshall Islands	2016-present	No	South
41.	Jacinda Arden	Prime minister	New Zealand	2017-present	No	North
42.	Katrín Jakobsdóttir	Prime minister	Iceland	2017-present	No	North
43.	Mia Mottley	Prime minister	Barbados	2018-present	No	South
44.	Mette Frederiksen	Prime minister	Denmark	2019-present	No	North
45.	Ana Brnabić	Prime minister	Serbia	2017-present	No	North

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46. .	<b>Brigitte Bierlein</b>	<b>Federal chancellor</b>	<b>Austria</b>	<b>2019- present</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>
47.	<b>Maia Sandu</b>	<b>Prime minister</b>	<b>Moldova</b>	<b>2019-2019</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>North</b>

\* interim leaders

**Bolded: corruption scandal**

### *Women and Corruption*

The literature on women and corruption finds mixed findings about women politicians and corruption. Whether women actually reduce corruption is contested from both sides. On the one hand, findings support that women in power reduce levels of corruption (Dollar et al., 2001; Esarey & Schwindt-Bayer, 2019; Swamy, Knack, Lee, & Azfar, 2001; Paweenawat, 2018; Rivas, 2013). On the other hand, findings suggest that the relationship between more women in power and less corruption may be spurious. The main claim is that gender alone is not sufficient to account for the curb in corruption when more women are in power (Sung, 2003; Esarey & Chirillo, 2013; Debski, Jetter, Mösle, & Stadelman, 2018; Alatas, Cameron, Chauduri, Erkal, & Gangadharan, 2009; Lee & Guven, 2013). Those in favour of the “fairer sex” thesis claim that women are less likely to engage in corruption and more women in power reduces overall corruption levels. Critics of the “fairer sex” thesis highlight that most studies are in democratic settings, where corruption levels are fairly low to begin with. The role of cultural attitudes and institutional sanctions impact whether more women in power actually reduces corruption levels (Debski, Jetter, Mösle, & Stadelman, 2018; Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, p.141). Based on these mixed findings, the relationship between women in power and corruption levels seems to be contextual rather than universal. Although the debate on whether women actually reduce corruption is beyond the scope of this paper, the idea that women are impacted differently by corruption is present across the

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literature. Corruption has also been presented as an obstacle to women's rise to power due to exclusion from corrupt political elite networks (Sundström & Wangnerud, 2016; Stockemer & Sundström, 2018; Stockemer & Byrne, 2012, p.811). Corruption scandals can serve as removing the barrier of corruption by dismantling government corrupt networks. Corrupt politicians in elite networks often lose their credibility and career. Women's exclusion from corrupt political elite networks shelters them from the fall out of the corruption scandal. Whereas corruption hinders women's rise to power, corruption scandals can benefit women's rise to power.

Conventional wisdom states that women are more honest than men, therefore women are less likely to engage in corruption (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, p.134). However, women are not perceived as less corrupt. Instead, women are perceived as more risk averse (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019). This risk averse perception informs perceptions about women being less likely to engage in corruption because of the institutional sanctions associated with corruption (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, pp.147-152). This perception then portrays women as unlikely to engage in corruption. There are differences in responses between perceptions held by men and women. Men respondents tend to believe women are more honest than men, and think women candidates are not likely to be marginalized. On the other hand, women respondents tend to believe that women are not more honest than men but that women candidates are more likely to be marginalized (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, p.135). These differential responses across gender demonstrates how the traits associated with gender is interpreted differently depending on the voter's gender. Risk averse candidates are less likely to risk the sanctions of engaging in corrupt behaviour, namely reputational, career, and

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financial losses (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019, p.142). The stereotypical association of women as risk averse may lead to perceptions of women being less corrupt.

When women do engage in corruption, they tend to get judged more harshly (Žemojtel-Piotrowska, Marganski, Baran, & Piotrowski, 2016, p.133). Even if individuals are engaging in the same behaviour, corruption scandals may impact men and women differently. Based on expectancy violations theory and shifting standards theory, women politicians who engage in corruption are judged more harshly than their male counterparts who engage in the same behaviour. Expectancy violations theory is based on the idea that people hold expectations about other people's behaviours. Following this assumption, violating these expectations will result in negative moral evaluations. Shifting standards theory describes how an action can be interpreted as more or less negative depending on the offenders' personal characteristics. Women may be held to a different standard than men in politics in corruption scandals. These differential expectations may benefit women politician in post-corruption scandals. The perception and expectation of certain voters that women are less likely to engage in corruption can benefit women's rise to executive power post-corruption scandal. Both studies showcase that perceptions held about men and women politicians and corruption differ. Two perceptions can be extracted from the literature on women and corruption based on the idea that women are less likely to engage in corruption. The first perception is that women are perceived as more honest. The second perception is that women are perceived as better at fighting corruption. These perceptions serve as useful tools to measure the impact of corruption scandal on women's path to executive power.

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### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The literature has explored the role of crisis in women's rise to power. This study will offer a narrowed down focus on the role of corruption scandal as a gendered crisis. Using Beckwith's removal and deferral framework, I will present three case studies to explore the relationship between corruption scandals and women's path to executive power: Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former President of Liberia. For each case study, I will provide a comprehensive analysis of secondary sources, and limited primary sources such as news articles to present the impact of corruption on women's path to executive power in the case studies. Secondary sources include academic articles, books, and biographies about the women executives. Primary sources include news coverage, interviews, and biographies. These materials will provide the basis for an in-depth analysis of the trajectory to power for each case study. The scope of this study is limited to democratically elected women executives without familial ties to previous men executives. The impact of corruption scandals can be seen readily in democratic regime because voters can punish the incumbent government at the polls by removing it from power (Hellwig & Samuels, 2008, p.68). Lastly, I will use the case studies findings to trace how corruption scandal impacts women's path to executive power at different stages using Beckwith's removal and deferral framework.

#### ***Theoretical Framework: Beckwith's removal and deferral model***

Leadership is typically associated with stereotypically masculine characteristic leading to a "think manager-think male" underlying belief. In times of crisis, qualities that are stereotypically feminine such as nurturing, healing, and bringing people together tend to be more valued. The

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“think crisis-think female” belief can create a window of opportunity for women’s leadership (Ryan et al., 2016, p. 450). The glass cliff effect explores how crisis can be beneficial to aspiring leadership positions candidates. The glass cliff effect describes the phenomenon in which individuals who in ordinary circumstances would not be considered for leadership positions, become viable options in times of crisis. Instability and crises are not strictly beneficial to women. In times of uncertainty, the structure opens up to all candidates with unfavourable odds including women, visible minorities, and women from visible minority groups. In the context of women executives, the glass cliff is a phenomenon describing the tendency of women having access to leadership positions in times of crisis. Crises may be caused by internal factors or external factors (Kulich, Lorenzi-Cioldi, Iacoviello, Faniko, & Ryan, 2015, pp.101-102). If internal factors cause the crisis, women are more likely to have access to leadership. Electing or selecting a woman leader signals change to the audience, which is the electorate in the case of women executives. The signaling effect of a woman leader may be an important factor in times of crisis (Kulich et al., 2015, p.100). If the crisis is brought by external factors outside of the control of current leadership, leadership change is unlikely (Kulich et al., 2015, p.101). A woman leader allows the party to signal change to the elected in order to minimize the effect of the crisis. In the political word, the most salient type of internally caused crisis is a corruption scandal.

In order to explore the relationship between corruption scandal and women’s path to executive power, I will use Beckwith’s removal and deferral model as the framework for this study. Beckwith’s removal and deferral model is twofold. First, a crisis removes the incumbent party leader, and senior elite men from power. Second, junior men opt to defer their candidacy. Junior

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men candidates defer their candidacy for leadership because they perceive a high risk of leadership failure and uncertainty post-crisis (Beckwith, 2015, p.722). Few junior men have the necessary experience to compete for leadership (Beckwith, 2015, p.729). The removal of senior men, and the deferral of junior men lead to an altered gendered political opportunity structure benefitting senior women. Senior women remain in power, are considered viable candidates, and are willing to compete for party leadership. Senior women have to opportunity to rise to party leadership, and subsequently gain the highest political office as state executive. This model is based on gendered strategic decision making which opens the political opportunity structure post-crisis. Junior men perceive taking leadership in post-crisis situations as risky, and likely to lead to failure. As junior men, they recognize their constant access to the political opportunity structure. Senior women recognize their limited access, and thus take advantage of the post-crisis context. The crisis opens up the political opportunity structure for women to rise to executive power. In this study, I will focus on how corruption scandal as a gendered crisis impacts women's rise to executive power.

### *Case Studies Selection*

I have selected Merkel, Bachelet, and Johnson-Sirleaf because they were elected to executive power post-corruption scandal and have no familial ties to previous executives. I used the most different systems design in my case study selection. Merkel is Chancellor of Germany, a developed state with a parliamentary system in Europe. Michelle Bachelet was the former President of Chile, a developing state with a presidential system in Latin America. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was the former President of Liberia, a developing state with a presidential system in Africa. Merkel is from the Global North whereas Bachelet and Johnson-Sirleaf are from the Global South.

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Merkel, Bachelet, and Johnson-Sirleaf have very different contexts yet they share the same outcome of a woman executive rising to power post-corruption scandal. In comparing these case studies, I can further explore the relationship between corruption scandals and women's path to executive power.

Another significant difference to consider is that Michelle Bachelet and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf came to power under presidential systems, and Angela Merkel rose to power in a parliamentary system. The most significant difference between both systems is that under the presidential systems, women executives face a double barrier. Women executives are expected to win the party leadership nomination, and the popular vote. Women executives in presidential systems faces two gatekeepers: the party, and the electorate (Jalalzai & Kook, 2010, p.9). Under a parliamentary system, women executives only require party leadership nomination. The party needs to win enough constituencies to win national elections (Jalalzai & Kook, 2010, p.9). The impact of corruption may be similar under both systems. Beckwith has applied the removal and deferral model in parliamentary systems. Testing the model on presidential systems may expand or narrow down the model's applicability across different political systems.

In terms of similarities, all three women executives were elected during the years of 2005 and 2006. They competed and rose to power in a similar international political climate. They were the first women to access the executive office in their respective countries. Their rise to power broke the political executive glass ceiling. In addition to post-crisis environments, they also came to power in post-conflict environments. For Merkel it was Germany's unification of East and West Germany through the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which marked the end of a political conflict.

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For Bachelet it was the 1989 Chile's plebiscite, which led to the removal of the Pinochet dictatorship (Fernandez & Vera, 2012, p.8). For Johnson-Sirleaf it was Liberia's era of civil wars, oppression, and human rights abuse, which ended with Charles Taylor stepping down from power and fleeing to Nigeria in 2003. In sum, all three cases experienced some level of political conflict, which ended prior to the women executive rising to power. The timing between the end of the political conflict, and the woman executive rising to power is different for each case.

Moreover, their successful political careers as first women executives led to numerous academic studies and substantial media coverage. They also have long successful careers as political executives. Angela Merkel became Chancellor of Germany in 2005 and is still in power fifteen years later in 2020. Michelle Bachelet completed her first presidential term in 2006 and was elected to power again in 2014. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became President in 2006 and remained President until 2018. Their prominence increases the sources available to conduct the case studies.

### *Case Studies Structure*

I have divided each case into three stages in order to explore the relationship between corruption scandals and women's rise to executive power. The first stage is nomination to party leadership. The second stage is nomination as the national candidate. The third and final stage is national elections. The first stage is based on the importance of party leadership in women's rise to executive power in parliamentary systems. Beckwith states that "for parliamentary systems, the major path to prime minister is through the gateway of party leader" (2005, p.722). By comparing the three cases, I will be able to assess whether that applies to presidential systems in Chile, and Liberia. The second stage of national candidate nominations is a requirement to compete in

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national elections. The third stage is based on the requirement of a national electoral victory in order for the woman candidate to rise to highest political office in democratic regimes.

I will assess the role of corruption scandal using two perceptions about women and corruption based on the literature on gender and corruption. First, the perception that women are more honest, and thus less corrupt. Second, the perception that women are better at fighting corruption. The role of corruption may be present, absent, or ambiguous for each stage. The role of corruption scandal as ambiguous indicates that there are mixed or contradictory findings about the role of corruption scandal. Using the case study findings, I will trace women's path to power and the impact of corruption scandal at different stages of their rise to executive office. I will present the findings using tables summarizing and comparing the impact of corruption scandal on women executive's rise to power. Lastly, I will discuss the impact of corruption scandals on women's path to power using the removal and deferral framework.

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### **Chapter 4: Angela Merkel**

In this chapter, I will discuss Angela Merkel's case study. I will present a detailed account of how Merkel became Chancellor of Germany and analyse the role of corruption scandal on her path to executive power. I will explore Merkel's career prior to the corruption scandal. Then, I will discuss her rise to power in three stages: party leadership nominations, national candidate nominations, and national elections. To conclude, I will present a table summarizing Merkel's case study findings.

#### ***Prior to Party Nomination***

Prior to the Christian Democratic Union party's (CDU) corruption scandal, Merkel had already begun climbing the political ladder. Angela Merkel is an East German protestant woman therefore she represents multiple minorities in Germany. Merkel had a triple quota status which helped the CDU meet its internal party quotas. She became a member of the CDU in October 1990 (Reutter, 2005, p.218). By December 1990, Merkel won her first seat in the German federal parliament, the Bundestag, representing the Mecklenburg West-Pomerania electoral district. Krause, an influential Eastern CDU party member, helped Merkel get on the party list for her first elections. Krause later recommended Merkel as a cabinet member to Helmut Kohl, then CDU party chairman. Kohl was seeking a woman member from East Germany to balance representation in his cabinet (Clemens, 2006, p.45). In January 1991, as a first-time member of parliament, Merkel was appointed to the cabinet as Minister for Women and Youth (Davidson-Schmich, 2011, p.214; Reutter, 2005, p. 219). Merkel's appointment was seen as an act of patronage from Kohl. In the media, she was dubbed as "*Kohl's Madcen*" which translates to "Kohl's little girl" (Reutter,

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2005, p.220). Merkel was successful in her role as Minister for Women and Youth. In 1994, Merkel was appointed as Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Safety for Nuclear Power Plants (Reutter, 2005, p.220). Following the CDU's electoral defeat on September 27, 1998, Kohl resigned as the party chair and expressed his endorsement for Wolfgang Schäuble as CDU party chair. Schäuble rose to party leadership and appointed Merkel as General Secretary (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.87). Schäuble viewed Merkel as "new and refreshing" (Clemens, 2006, p.45). At this stage of her career, Merkel was a highly competent and accomplished senior politician (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.89). Merkel swiftly and successfully climbed the party ladder prior to the CDU corruption scandal.

***Stage 1: Party Leadership Nomination***

On December 16, 1999, Chancellor Kohl appeared on German television and admitted to receiving approximately 2 million Deutsche Marks between 1993 and 1998 from anonymous CDU donors. Kohl refused to disclose the identity of the donors and remains silent on the issue to this day. The CDU's corruption scandal is also known as the "donations affair" (Helms, 2000, p.423). As a response to the corruption scandal, Merkel decided to publish an article condemning Kohl and calling for his resignation as honorary party head and encouraged the party to do the same. Without consulting with her party chair Schäuble, Merkel published this article in *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, an established national German newspaper (Ferree, 2006, p.50; Wiliarty, 2008a, p.90; Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.106). She was one of the first senior CDU member to publicly break from Kohl (Davidson-Schmich, 2011, p.335).

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Merkel took advantage of the public nature of the corruption scandal by publishing an article critiquing and therefore distancing herself from Kohl. In doing so, she presented herself as an honest and credible politician. She positioned herself in direct opposition to Kohl, framing herself as an honest alternative to the public, and more importantly to her party. By publicly critiquing Kohl, Merkel benefitted from having a “clean hands images” (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). Merkel did not inform Schäuble prior to the article’s publication and sought the counsel of trusted individuals before making her decision. Publishing the article was a strategic political maneuver (Reutter, 2005, p.215). In the article, Merkel begins by using descriptive pronouns such as “the party” and “the CDU”, however she switches to more inclusive pronouns such as “we”, “us”, “our” and “our party” when discussing the future of the CDU, thereby strategically including herself as part of that future (Sheeler & Anderson, 2014, p.484). Publicly breaking with Kohl allowed Merkel to be perceived as an honest politician. Being perceived as honest is advantageous in party leadership contests post-corruption scandal because the party’s credibility is questioned by the electorate. Electing an honest leader may redeem the party’s reputation. Merkel’s exclusion from the party’s inner circle sheltered her from its political corrupt network, which made her critique more credible. Women’s exclusion from corrupt male leadership networks also excludes women from exposure to corruption (Beckwith, 2015, pp.726-738). Women’s exclusion from corrupt networks makes it more difficult for women to engage in corruption. Merkel made sure the party and the electorate knew she was honest and had no involvement with the CDU’s corruption scandal.

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Following this public break with her former mentor, Merkel organized regional conferences to discuss how the party will move forward after the scandal (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.90; Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.106). Merkel framed herself as a leader capable of fighting corruption by organizing and showcasing her leadership skills during regional conferences. These conferences were intended for party members to discuss their concerns and find strategies to move forward from the campaign finance scandal (Davison-Schmich, 2011, p.335; Sheeler & Anderson, 2014, p.484). However, these conferences also became a forum to discuss and decide on the future leadership of the party (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.90). Merkel developed a bond with party members, who welcomed her by repeatedly cheering her nickname “Angie”. Party members also started supporting Merkel as the next party chair (Sheeler & Anderson, 2014, p.485). Even Schäuble, then CDU chair, admitted “one would have to be fairly deaf not to hear what the rank and file want” (Sheeler & Anderson, 2014, p.485). In the CDU’s political culture, the party chair candidates are expected to have support across internal party factions without actively pursuing the leadership position. In this way, aspiring party leaders are expected not openly and actively pursue the leadership position. Instead, they present themselves as viable candidates and gather support across internal party groups. Open candidacies typically receive criticism and are likely to fail (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). Merkel organized these conferences and leveraged the momentum of the corruption scandal to increase her popularity and showcase her leadership skills. Merkel was able to position herself as next in line for party leadership without overtly pursuing the role. Following Merkel’s article publication, Schäuble was accused of accepting illicit money. The corruption scandal led to Schäuble’s resignation as CDU party chair (Reutter, 2005, p.215; Davidson-Schmich, 2011,

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p.335). In April 2000, Merkel became the first woman chair of the CDU, with 96% of the votes at the party convention (Reutter, 2005, p.222).

Merkel's case demonstrates that a corruption scandal is not sufficient to rise to party leadership. The woman candidate must actively take advantage of the altered gendered political opportunity structure to present herself as the next party leader. Women candidates can leverage the perceptions of women being more honest and better at fighting corruption to their advantage. Merkel strategically took advantage of the corruption scandal to position herself as the next party leader. She publicly broke with Kohl and organized regional conferences to tackle the issue of corruption. Merkel increased her popularity and credibility within the party. During the first stage, perceptions about women being more honest and better at fighting corruption were significant in Merkel's rise to party leadership.

***Stage 2: National Candidate Nomination***

During the national candidate nomination, the CDU corruption scandal was no longer a salient issue. The CDU has a sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), which only competes in Bavaria (Reutter, 2005, p.222). The national candidate nomination consists of the CDU and the CSU jointly deciding on a single national candidate. If the candidate does not have the overwhelming support of both parties, the nomination can be contested by aspiring candidates (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). In 2002, two opponents were in the run to become national candidate: CDU Angela Merkel and CSU Edmund Stoiber. Stoiber had a long political career as a member of the Bundesrat, Bundesrat president from 1995-1996, member of the Bavarian parliament since 1974, Bavarian prime minister since 1993, and the party leader of the CSU since 1999. Stoiber

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was also a decade older than Merkel (Beckwith, 2015, p.739). Although Merkel was a senior CDU member, she was a young politician.

Merkel faced many challenges during her bid for chancellorship in 2002. Stoiber was a highly qualified and competitive opponent (Reutter, 2005, p.222). Opinion polls predicted that Stoiber had better odds of defeating incumbent Chancellor Schroder in elections than Merkel (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). Merkel openly ran as a chancellor candidate, which generated criticism within the party. Not only did she lack the support of her party and she also faced opposition from regional leaders who preferred Stoiber as state candidate (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). Merkel faced high levels of internal party pressure against her bid for chancellor (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.91). The parties decided that party committees would select the best candidate to compete in national elections. It seemed the committees would endorse Stoiber given party, regional, and poll support. If the committees chose Stoiber, Merkel would face pressure to step down as CDU leader. After weighing her options, Merkel met with Stoiber prior the committee meeting announcement. Merkel agreed to withdraw her bid for nomination if he supported Merkel's bid for leader of opposition in the Bundesrat. Becoming leader of opposition in the Bundesrat would give Merkel access to both the CSU and the CDU (Davison-Schmich, 2011, p.336; Wiliarty, 2008a, p.93). Before the committees could announce their decision, Merkel withdrew her bid for nomination (Davidson-Schmich, 2011, p.336; Reutter, 2005, p.223). Stoiber became the national CDU-CSU candidate and lost the elections to Schroder (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.108; Reutter, 2005, p.223). Merkel's bid for chancellor failed in the presence of a highly qualified and competitive opponent. Although the corruption scandal was able to remove highly qualified senior men from

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the CDU, qualified senior men from the CSU remained in power. Because the CDU and the CSU are sister parties, Merkel faced a double barrier of senior men before she was able to access the state candidate nomination.

In 2005, Chancellor Schroder declared snap elections, and this time Merkel was the preferred candidate for national elections. She had the support of the party and regional leaders (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.107). In the absence of highly qualified senior male opponents, Merkel rose as the party candidate for national elections (Beckwith, 2015, p.739). The sudden nature of the elections left the party no time to deliberate on a candidate and left her opponents unable to mobilize or contest her nomination (Davidson-Schmich, 2011, p.336; Wiliarty, 2008a, p.92). This time Merkel did not openly run as chancellor candidate, which silenced her critics (Wiliarty, 2008a, pp.90-92). Merkel had diversified her political experience as opposition leader, generating support from both the CSU and the CDU (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.93). The opinion polls favoured Merkel, regional leaders were in support of her candidacy, and she benefitted from internal party support (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.93). The same factors against Merkel in 2002 were in her favour by 2005. Merkel had strategically positioned herself to be the next national candidate by gaining support from the CSU. Merkel became the CDU's national candidate for the 2005 national elections. During the second stage, the corruption scandal, perceptions of women being more honest or capable of fighting corruption were not significant.

### ***Stage 3: National Elections***

During the 2005 elections, the CDU's finance corruption scandal was a nonissue (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.106). Although former state secretary in the defence ministry,

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Holger Pfals was on trial, the media did not cover the CDU' past scandal. Holger Pfals had been on the run for years since the scandal (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.106). Sensitive details were revealed during the trial. However, Merkel had successfully distanced herself and the party from the scandal. She changed the party staff and had restored the CDU's popularity and support (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.106). The controversial issue was that Merkel shifted from the traditional CDU platform which focused on family and religion. Merkel presented a more radical reform platform focused on social security system, tax system, and the labour market (Reutter, 2005, p.223). This platform shift moved the CDU away from the centre and the middle classes compared to previous years (Reutter, 2005, p.224). Merkel was perceived as lacking charisma and unable to relate to voters (Wiliarty, 2008a, p.81). Despite these drastic platform changes, Merkel won the federal elections on September 18, 2005. The CDU and its Bavarian sister party the CSU did poorly at the polls. It was the worst CDU/CSU results since 1949 (Reutter, 2005, p.223). Merkel received less votes from women, protestants, and East Germany than Stoiber in 2002, still she won the elections (Reutter, 2005, p.223). After the elections, Merkel was confirmed as the CDU/CSU parliamentary leader thereby eliminating any debates about the legitimacy of her leadership. She further secured her victory by negotiating a grand coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) (Reutter, 2005, p.223). Angela Merkel became Germany's first woman Chancellor on November 22, 2005 (Thompson & Lennartz, 2006, p.99).

The CDU's corruption scandal lost relevance as time passed and more pressing matters were on the agenda, namely Merkel's proposed reforms. The CDU corruption scandal was not a significant factor during the 2005 national elections. Merkel had successfully distanced herself and

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the party from the scandal and changed the party's staff post-corruption. During the third stage, the corruption scandal was not a significant factor. To conclude this chapter, the table below summarizes Merkel's case study findings.

**Table 3***Merkel Case Study Findings*

Perceptions Stages	Women being perceived as less corrupt.	Women being perceived as more capable at fighting corruption.
Stage 1: party leadership nomination	Present	Present
Stage 2: national candidate nomination	Absent	Absent
Stage 3: national elections	Absent	Absent

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### **Chapter 5: Michelle Bachelet**

In this chapter, I will discuss Michelle Bachelet's case study. I will explore how Bachelet became President of Chile and assess the role of corruption scandal on her path to power. I will discuss Bachelet's career before her nomination as the Concertacion coalition national candidate. Then, I will apply the three stages to Bachelet's case study: party leadership nomination, national candidate nominations, and national elections. To conclude, I will present a table summarizing Bachelet's case study findings.

#### ***Prior to Party Nomination***

Prior to her political career, Bachelet was a pediatrician treating children victim of political violence for Pidee, an NGO based in Santiago (Ross, 2006, p.726). She began her political career as an aid to Chile's sub-secretary of health in 1994 (Ross, 2006, p.726). In 1997, she expanded her field of expertise by studying military-civil relations at a Santiago think-tank specializing in national security issues (Ross, 2006, p.726; Langman & Contreras, 2005, p.2). She then studied at the Inter-American Defense College in Washington D.C. on a scholarship (Ross, 2006, p.726; Sigmund, 2006, p.9). In 1998, Bachelet became a senior advisor to the Minister of Defence. Then in 2000, Bachelet was appointed Minister of Health under President Lagos. Lagos made history by appointing five women cabinet ministers in an eighteen-member cabinet, the highest appointments of women in cabinet Chile had experienced thus far. Lagos was influenced by the growing pressure from social activism to increase women's political representation. The pressure for increased women's representation came from both within and outside of political parties and institutions. Gender parity in political representation became a mainstream concept amongst

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Chilean citizens (Tobar, 2008, pp.516-517). In a cabinet reshuffle in 2002, Bachelet became Chile's first woman Minister of Defence. Bachelet's appointment as Minister of Defence was symbolic because of her personal experience during Chile's past dictatorial military regime (Jalalzai, 2013, p.55). Michelle Bachelet was the daughter of an Air Force General, Alberto Bachelet. Alberto Bachelet was detained, tortured, and passed away under Pinochet's dictatorial regime. He became a prominent figure and was remembered as a political martyr by many Chileans. Michelle Bachelet and her mother, Angela Jeris were detained and forced into political exile in 1974. Bachelet's appointment as Minister of Defence was symbolic to many Chileans and was broadcasted widely in the media. Bachelet reinforced her commitment to national reconciliation and closure. In addition to gaining incredible visibility as the first woman Minister of Defence, Bachelet's appointment symbolized civil-military reconciliation in Chile.

During her time as cabinet minister, Bachelet continued to receive public and media attention. Soon, she became a public figure, and her work was consistently covered by media outlets. She first began gaining popularity in 2001. By 2002, she became the most popular politician with 66% approval ratings. In 2003, she surpassed President Lagos with 84% approval ratings (Doran, 2010, p.11). By late 2003, polls showed that Bachelet was the most popular minister (Navia, 2008, pp.120-121). In 2004, Lagos' presidential term was coming to an end. In September 2004, Bachelet's resigned as cabinet minister in hopes of becoming the next President of Chile. In the following section, I will discuss the absence of party leadership in her political career, and the corruption scandals during Bachelet's rise to executive power.

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### *Stage 1: Party Leadership Nomination*

Gaining party leadership is not a significant advantage for national candidate nominations in Chile. Chile's political parties are typically grouped under two coalitions: the left-leaning Concertacion coalition, and the right-leaning Alianza coalition. There are multiple party leaders within each coalition, and typically only one nomination per coalition. Chile's political parties are organized under coalitions because of its history of dictatorship and political violence. Chile's dictatorial past significantly shaped its current political structure. On September 11, 1973, General Augusto Pinochet ousted Salvador Allende's socialist government by a military coup d'état (Fernandez & Vera, 2012, p.7). The authoritarian regime forced leftist parties underground which led them to unite forces to fight against Pinochet's regime. Following years of tyranny and violence, the 1989 plebiscite led to a transition to democracy. During this era, two coalitions formed in support of and against Pinochet. The Alianza coalition was in favour of Pinochet, and the Concertacion coalition was against (Fernandez & Vera, 2012, p.8). Pinochet was defeated and Chile returned to a democratic regime under the rule of the Concertacion. After the return of democracy, parties on the left united to form the Concertacion, or Coalition of Parties for Democracy (Argote & Navia, 2018, p.8). On the left, the Concertacion was formed by the Christian Democracy Party (PDC), and multiple left leaning parties, including Socialist Party (PS), Party for Democracy (PD), and the Radical Party (PR) (Argote & Navia, 2018, p.7). On the right, the Alianza coalition, or Alliance for Chile was formed by two major parties, the National Renewal Party (RN) and the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) (Fernandez & Vera, 2012, p.8). Chile's political history resulted in two strong coalitions. The prominence of two coalitions often leads to

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two national candidates for presidential elections: a Concertacion candidate and an Alianza candidate (Balán, 2011, p.473; Tobar, 2008, p.512). The presidential elections consist of a two-round system. During the first round, if no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, then a second round takes place with the top two candidates competing for the presidential office (Thomas, 2011, pp.72-73).

The coalition structure in Chile means that party leadership does not offer a significant advantage to becoming the national coalition candidate for presidential elections. On the left, the Concertacion coalition has four party leaders. The selection process on the national candidate is often decided behind closed doors. Achieving party leadership does not represent a significant advantage to becoming nominated as the national coalition candidate. Becoming party leader was not a necessary steppingstone to becoming the national coalition candidate in the Chilean context, hence the absence of party leadership in Bachelet's path to power.

Despite the absence of party leadership, Bachelet had a successful career as a cabinet minister. Although there were eight corruption scandals during Bachelet's political career as a cabinet minister, Chile is one of the "cleanest" countries in the Latin American region (Balán, 2011, p.463). Accordingly, Chile has a lower tolerance for corruption compared to surrounding regions. Despite the numerous corruption scandals, President Lagos remained in power and continued to receive high approval ratings until the end of his term. During Lagos' first four years in office, there were eight corruption scandals. The corruption scandals included bribes in the health sector, Roncagua Bribes, MOP-Gate, Golden Handshakes, Corfo, and the Inverlink scandal between 2000-2004 (Balán, 2011, pp.472-473).

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The corruption scandals occurred during the beginning and middle of Lagos' term. There was no corruption scandal to report during the last two years of his term (Balán, 2011, p.473). The absence of the corruption scandals during the last two years of the term made corruption scandals a less salient issue as election time approached. The supply of insider information about Concertacion corruption to the media stopped given the approaching presidential elections (Balán, 2011, p.473). The coalition structure creates strong internal party competition. When strong internal party competition is paired with a weak opposition, there is incentive to leak party insider information about corruption in order to beat opponents within the coalition (Balán, 2011, p.462). In this case, the weak opposition for the Concertacion was the Alianza coalition. Alianza struggled to shed its past association with the dictatorial regime. However, with approaching presidential elections and a stronger opposition, the coalition members' priority shifts to winning national elections rather than advancing their own interest within the coalition (Balán, 2011, p.473). The Alianza coalition fared well at the polls for the upcoming elections, making them a stronger opposition.

### ***Stage 2: National Candidate Nomination***

In September 2004, Bachelet resigned as cabinet minister to pursue the national coalition candidate nomination. Soledad Alvear also resigned her position as Minister of Foreign Affairs in pursuit of the national coalition candidate nomination. As the 2006 elections approached, the right party candidate Joaquin Lavin was leading in the presidential polls (Balán, 2011, p.473). There was a general sense of discontentment with the Concertacion coalition. They faced increasing criticism of elitism and citizen exclusion in their governance. The corruption scandals were most

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prominent during the beginning and middle of Lagos' term with four scandals during the period of 2000-2002, and another four scandals during 2002-2004 (Balán, 2011, p.471). There were no corruption scandals reported in the media between 2004-2006 as the scheduled national elections approached (Balán, 2011, p.471). The lack of corruption scandals during the last two years of the term was a strategic approach on the part of Concertacion members. Concertacion members prioritized national electoral victory over individual professional advancement given approaching elections and a stronger opposition (Balán, 2011, p.473). By 2006, Lavin was leading at the polls and represented a threat for the Concertacion's electoral victory (Balán, 2011, p.473). Corruption scandals contributed to the antiestablishment and discontentment sentiments of the Chilean population. Although the corruption scandals did not impact the executive office, the Concertacion lost more than 10% of their seats in the lower house following the scandals (Balán, 2011, p.472). The loss in seats and votes demonstrates the lack of trust and dissatisfaction Chilean citizens had towards the Concertacion coalition, which further contributed to the already existing citizen disillusionment. During the nomination stage, the most salient citizen critique was that Concertacion members were antidemocratic technocrats who were out of touch with the daily realities of citizens (Tobar, 2008, p.513). Corruption scandals were one of many factors that left citizens highly dissatisfied with the status quo and the Concertacion government.

Both Bachelet and Alvear recognized the opportunity to run for the national candidate nomination in 2004. Their simultaneous decision to resign and run for nominations is indicative of the opportunity structure shifting in favour of a senior women candidates. Alvear was a Christian Democrat lawyer and the wife of the Christian Democratic Party president. In 1990, she was the

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only woman cabinet minister under Lagos (Tobar, 2008, p.516). Alvear had more executive experience than Bachelet, however Bachelet had more popularity than Alvear. Ultimately, Bachelet's popularity was Alvear's downfall during the national candidate nominations. Given the antiestablishment climate and Lavin's performance at the polls, the Concertacion decided to use primaries to nominate its national candidate. The use of primaries was a response to the antidemocratic and exclusionary criticism the coalition received from the electorate (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.116). Usually, the national candidate nominations were in the hands of party elite and done behind closed doors (Balán, 2011, p.473). Neither Bachelet nor Alvear were the preferred candidate of party elites (Thomas, 2011, p.69). Lavin's favoured position at the polls and citizen criticism led to the coalition changing their selection process for national candidate nominations. The shift in polls favouring Lavin was threatening and unusual given the right's difficulty with shedding its association with its dictatorial past.

Chile's stable electoral outcome resulted in the Concertacion dominance since Chile's return to democracy (Tobar, 2008, p.511). Voting patterns do not shift drastically in Chilean elections. The left coalition candidate benefits from a favourable position and is likely to win the presidency. Becoming the candidate is the major hurdle to overcome. Prior to national candidate nominations, a group of senators invited Bachelet to a secret meeting in Santiago to assess her interest in becoming the party nominee (Worth, 2008, pp.14-15). Bachelet knew she had party support going into the national candidate nominations. Accordingly, Bachelet was claimed by three of the four parties in the coalition as their pick for national candidate, namely Socialist Party (PS), Party for Democracy (PPD), and Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSP) (Tobar, 2008,

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p.510; Navia, 2008, pp.120-121). Alvear became the preferred candidate for the Christian Democratic Party (DC) (Tobar, 2008, p.510). Primaries were set for July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004 to determine the Concertacion national candidate nominations (Navia, 2008, p.120). Bachelet continued to receive increasing support at the polls (Navia, 2008, p.121; Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.166). It was clear that Bachelet's popularity with Chileans was superior to Alvear's. Alvear faced strong internal party pressure to step down. In June 2004, Alvear decided to withdraw her bid for national coalition nomination and Bachelet became the national Concertacion candidate for the 2006 presidential elections (Navia, 2008, p.121; Ross, 2005, p.1).

### *Stage 3: National Elections*

During the national elections, Michelle Bachelet was the official Concertacion candidate. The right coalition disintegrated and chose to run separately. The candidates on the right were Joaquin Lavín from the Independent Democratic Union party (UDI), and Sebastián Piñera from Renovación Nacional (Jalalzai, 2013, p.56; Thomas, 2011, p.69; Tobar, 2008, p.512). The absence of a right coalition divided the votes on the right between two candidates. Chile's electoral system consists of a two-round system. If no candidate receives over 50% of the votes during the first round, there is automatically a second round between the top two candidates. Chile's voting pattern has been stable since its return to democracy. Typically, the votes don't fluctuate drastically between the right coalition and the left coalition. The right coalition parties' decision to run separately resulted in a divided right. Parties on the right competed against each other to secure a spot for the second round. The left coalition was sure to secure position in the second round given Chile's voting patterns.

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Citizen exclusion from governance was a salient issue during the national elections, and corruption was absent by comparison. During the first round in December 2005, Bachelet competed against Lavin and Pinera (Tobar, 2008, p.517). Bachelet's campaign slogan was "Continuity & Change" (Tobar, 2008, p.515). The continuity part of her slogan signaled her commitment to continuing popular social programs started under Lagos. The change part of her slogan addressed citizen concerns about increasing corruption and elitism within the Concertacion. She framed herself as the change Chile needs and wants. Bachelet focused on issues of elitism and exclusion by emphasizing her commitment to more inclusive and democratic governance. Bachelet claimed that her candidacy was symbolic of not only the inclusion of women but all marginalized groups since Chile's return to democracy. Bachelet framed feminine leadership style as being more open and participatory (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.123). Bachelet's campaign directly addressed citizens' concerns about civilian exclusion. Civilian exclusion from governance was the salient electoral topic. The Concertacion corruption scandals were not. In the 2005 national elections, Bachelet received 45.9% of the votes, Pinera received 25.4% of the votes, and Lavin received 23.2% of the votes. Given that no candidate met the 50% threshold, the national elections entered the second round with Bachelet competing against Pinera.

During the second round in January 2006, Bachelet addressed gendered perceptions explicitly making gender an electoral topic. During her first television advertisement, Bachelet addressed Chileans who did not want to vote for her because she is a woman (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.124). In her address, Bachelet states "Strength knows no gender, and neither does honesty, conviction or ability. I bring a different kind of leadership, with perspective of someone who looks

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at things from a different angle. Let us change our mentality; when all is said and done, a woman President is simply a head of government who doesn't wear a tie" (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.123). In her speech, Bachelet actively fought against the perception that women are more honest in her statement: "Strength knows no gender, and neither does honesty" (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.123). Bachelet's speech points to a strong traditional gender ideology in Chile. Chile's gender ideology perpetuates the belief that women are more honest and less corrupt (Thomas, 2011, p.68). Under Chilean gender ideology men and women have differing qualities in the political sphere. Men are perceived to be more corrupt, more competitive, competent, authoritative, decisive, and driven by personal gains than women. Women are perceived as more honest, less corrupt, driven by the common good, selfless, and less driven by personal gains (Thomas, 2011, p.68). Bachelet may have benefitted from these perceptions as the last opinion poll prior to elections showed that Bachelet was perceived as honest and trustworthy by citizens (Thomas, 2011, p.77).

Bachelet recognized that traditional gender stereotypes also threatened her rise to power by framing her leadership as inferior to men who are perceived as more decisive (Thomas, 2011, p.68). Bachelet argued that her experiences as a woman led to a different leadership style, which is a positive change from authoritative male leadership styles (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.123). Pinera publicly criticized and questioned Bachelet's leadership skills. He claimed to believe that women were capable leaders, but he was unsure of Bachelet's leadership skills specifically. Bachelet pointed to her experience as Minister of Defence to showcase her leadership skills. As Minister of Defence, Bachelet was in charge of the Chilean Armed Forces and its military male leadership. Bachelet stated, "I was Minister of Defence and nobody thought I was soft like jelly"

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(Thomas & Adams, 2011, p.120). Bachelet directly fought against gendered perceptions, whether positive and negative.

Bachelet also discussed leadership qualities of everyday Chilean women in her speech. Bachelet became a symbol for the average Chilean woman. Bachelet is a single mother like many Chilean women (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.124). By framing herself as a symbol for Chilean women, she equates the validity of women's leadership, and Chilean women's leadership with her own (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.124). Chilean women typically voted for conservative parties. For the first time, the Concertacion was able to gather Chilean women's vote while retaining its typical male vote. Bachelet was able to shift women's vote, especially working-class and lower-class women (Tobar, 2008, p.517). Bachelet received 53.5% of the women vote during national elections (Tobar, 2008, p.517). Bachelet appealed to women by promising more inclusivity and promoting women's leadership qualities. Bachelet was able to make gender an electoral topic and shifted women's vote in the process. On January 15, 2006, Michelle Bachelet became the first woman president of Chile with 53.4% of the popular vote (Tobar, 2008, p.517). To conclude this chapter, the following table summarizes the findings on the role of corruption on Bachelet's rise to executive power.

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**Table 4***Bachelet Case Study Findings*

Stages \ Perceptions.	Women being perceived as less corrupt.	Women being perceived as more capable at fighting corruption.
Stage 1: party leadership nomination	Not applicable	Not applicable
Stage 2: national candidate nomination	Ambiguous	Absent
Stage 3: national elections	Ambiguous	Absent

## CORRUPTION AND WOMEN STATE EXECUTIVES

### **Chapter 6: Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf**

In this chapter, I will discuss how Johnson-Sirleaf became President of Liberia and explore the role of corruption scandal on her rise to the highest political office. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was the first elected woman executive in Africa, and the first woman President of Liberia, shattering two glass ceilings at once. I will discuss Johnson-Sirleaf's career prior to her nomination as national candidate for the 2005 national elections. Then, I will apply the three case study stages: party leadership nomination, national candidate nominations, and national elections. To conclude, I will present a table summarizing Johnson-Sirleaf's case study findings.

#### ***Prior to Party Nomination***

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's career prior to party nomination consists of academic achievements in higher education in the United States and professional political experiences in Liberia. Johnson-Sirleaf attended Madison Business College in Wisconsin in the United States and graduated with a bachelor's degree in accounting in 1962. She later continued her studies at the University of Colorado's Economic Institute (Robinson, 2006, p.15). Johnson-Sirleaf moved back to Liberia and began her political career working under President William Tubman's administration in the Treasury Department. Johnson-Sirleaf resigned her post to pursue further her education (Adams, 2017, p.190). In 1971, she graduated with a Master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.118). Johnson-Sirleaf returned to Liberia and served as assistant minister of finance from 1972 to 1973 (Adams, 2017, p.190). In 1979, Johnson-Sirleaf became Liberia's first woman Minister of Finance in William R. Tolbert's government (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.118).

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One year after Johnson-Sirleaf became Minister of Finance, the government was overthrown in a military coup by Sergeant Samuel Doe in 1980. Doe assassinated President William R. Tolbert, Jr. and a decade of military rule and civil war ensued. The warlord Charles Taylor formed rebel armies, known as the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and Prince Yormie Johnson's counterforces fought against the Doe military regime (Mikell, 2009, p.17). Johnson-Sirleaf was imprisoned for treason because she criticized the Doe regime. Johnson-Sirleaf was forced into political exile to Kenya, and later to the United States (Mikell, 2009, p.17). She pursued several senior positions at multinational corporations such as Citibank, and HSBC Equator Bank (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.118). Then, Johnson-Sirleaf became the director for the African Bureau of the UN Development Program (UNDP) and the Senior Loans Officer at the World Bank (Mikell, 2009, p.18; Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.118). Although Johnson-Sirleaf was out of harm's way, Liberia continued to experience political violence and instability.

After President Doe was assassinated, Charles Taylor invaded Liberia on December 24, 1989 (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113). Taylor's invasion led to a seven-year civil war in Liberia. In August 1996, Liberia finally reached a ceasefire, and elections were scheduled for 1997 (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113). Johnson-Sirleaf returned to Liberia to compete against Charles Taylor but lost the elections (Bauer, 2009, p.197). Despite his victory, Liberia entered a second civil war from 1999 to 2003 (Adams, 2017, p.185). On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Taylor was accused of crimes against humanity on charge of murder, enslavement, and the recruitment of child soldiers by a United Nations court (CNN Editorial Research, 2020). Taylor's indictment led to a corruption scandal exposing abuses of power and resulting in widespread outrage. Taylor's abuse of power

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while in office captured international attention. President George W. Bush made a statement requesting that Taylor step down from power (CNN Editorial Research, 2020). At last, the Accra Peace Agreement negotiations in August 2003 led to Charles Taylor fleeing to Nigeria (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113; Adams, 2017, p.185). A transitional government was put in place, and presidential and legislative elections were scheduled for 2005 (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113).

### ***Stage 1: Party Leadership Nomination***

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf did not become party leader on her path to executive power. Liberia's political landscape and institutions contribute to the absence of this stage in her path to executive power. Liberia's politically unstable and violent authoritarian past has contributed to weak institutions (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.114). Political parties tend to rely on charismatic candidates and regional ties to win elections (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113). Liberia's political culture highlights the importance of the candidate as an individual rather than ideology or partisanship (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113). Parties are not distinguished by their ideological or political platforms, instead they rely on their candidate's personal characteristics, and their regional strongholds. The party system is weak and not strongly institutionalized (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113). Initially, 59 parties and candidates attempted to compete in the 2005 national elections. Twenty-one parties, and one independent candidate actually competed office during the first round of national elections (Sawyer, 2008, p.181). Liberia has a two-round system. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, the second round takes place between the two candidates with the most votes.

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### *Stage 2: National Candidate Nomination*

In Liberia, trust in government has been eroded by years of political violence and corruption (Robinson, 2006, p.15). The 2005 elections were precipitated by former President Charles Taylor's flee to Nigeria in August 2003 (CNN Editorial Research, 2020). The 2003 The Accra Peace Agreement ended years of civil war and made way for the 2005 elections (Bauer, 2009, p.196). In the meantime, an interim government barred from running in the elections was put in place but there were no incumbent party or executive in power for the upcoming elections (Adams & Madison, 2008, p.480). In March 2004, Johnson-Sirleaf resigned from her position in the transition government in order to accept her nomination as the Unity Party's national candidate for the 2005 presidential elections (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.113).

Taylor's abuse of power while in office, and the outrage that followed his flee to Nigeria was the corruption scandal that led to the opening for Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to rise to executive power. Taylor's capture of presidential power was based on violence. President Samuel Doe was murdered by Taylor's ally, Prince Yormie Johnson's forces in 1989. In the same year, Charles Taylor invaded Liberia, and a civil war followed. Fighting resumed briefly in August 1996 to accommodate the 1997 presidential elections. During the 1997 elections, Johnson-Sirleaf ran for the Unity Party against Taylor. Taylor won the election with over 75% of the vote, whereas Johnson-Sirleaf received a mere 9.6% of the votes (Adams, 2017, p.185). There are three factors to consider during this election. First, the extent to which the elections were free, and fair was questionable. Second, Taylor had monopoly over communication resources, and the media. He controlled the only radio station that broadcasted outside the capital city of Monrovia (Adams,

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2008, pp.478-479). Third, there was a widespread belief if Taylor lost the elections, another era of violence would ensue. Despite Taylor's victory, Liberia entered its second civil war in 1999. Taylor's invasion sparked fourteen years of conflict and violence from December 1989 until his flee to Nigeria in August 2003. The Human Rights Watch reported that Taylor actively supported crimes including "killings, mutilation, rape, other sexual violence, sexual slavery, recruitment and use of child soldiers, abduction, and use of forced labor by Sierra Leonean armed opposition groups" (Robinson, 2006, p.15). During the fourteen years of conflict, it is estimated that between 250 000 and 300 000 out of 3 million Liberians were killed, 550 000 people officially registered as displaced persons, 80% of homes were damaged or destroyed, and infrastructure was almost nonexistent (Robinson, 2006, p.15; Bauer, 2009, p.196). Finally, in June 2003, Taylor was indicted for crimes against humanity by a United Nations court. In August 2003, Taylor stepped down as President of Liberia and fled to Nigeria as the Accra Peace Agreement marked the end Liberia's civil war. The peace agreement detailed the process and timeline to organize the 2005 elections and put a transitional government in place (Bauer, 2009, p.196). Charles Taylor's removal from executive power has been challenging for Liberia. Finally, domestic Liberian and international United Nations action served to remove Taylor from executive power in Liberia. The corruption scandal led to the removal of power of the incumbent executive, finally making way for aspiring executive candidates to run for presidential office. The removal of Taylor was necessary for Johnson-Sirleaf to compete and win the Liberian presidential office.

The Unity Party had already partnered with Johnson-Sirleaf in 1997. Johnson-Sirleaf remained their preferred candidate and became the national candidate for the 2005 national

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elections. The decision to nominate Johnson-Sirleaf as national candidate was done behind closed doors. Whether perceptions about women being more honest and better at fighting corruption played a role is difficult to assess. Johnson-Sirleaf was the Unity Party's candidate in 1997 in the absence of a corruption scandal. The Unity Party's preference for Johnson-Sirleaf is not contingent on the crisis of corruption scandal. The corruption scandal was significant and necessary for the removal of Charles Taylor, which allowed for Johnson-Sirleaf to run the Unity Party for the 2005 national elections.

### *Stage 3: National Elections*

The role of corruption scandal was significant in Johnson-Sirleaf's rise to executive power during the national elections because corruption was a salient electoral topic. The prominence of corruption as a salient issue in Liberia was most apparent during the national elections. Corruption has been an ongoing issue in Liberia. Even after Charles Taylor fled Liberia in 2003, the interim government continued to struggle with corruption. The interim government was expected to start development in Liberia until the 2005 presidential elections. Corruption led donors to stop development programs (Polgreen, 2006, p.A3). The European Union was helping Liberia bring electricity to its capital city, but they also withdrew due to high levels of corruption (Polgreen, 2006, p.A3). Corruption has been a major problem in Liberia, where bribes to government officials were considered common practice (Cooper, 2010, pp.48-50).

Johnson-Sirleaf opposing corruption throughout her career contributed to framing her as an honest politician. Before any coups or military regimes in Liberia, Johnson-Sirleaf had made multiple public speeches against corruption in the Tolbert government. Johnson-Sirleaf also

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supported activist groups that shared similar goals and visions for Liberia such as the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA), which was founded by highly educated Liberians. Johnson-Sirleaf has stated “MOJA played a pivotal role in radicalizing the urban and rural poor of Liberia, raising the issues of government corruption...” (Scully, 2016, p.37). Fighting corruption was important to Johnson-Sirleaf from the beginning of her career (Scully, 2016, pp.42-52). After the 1980 military coup by Sergeant Samuel Doe, she was coerced into being in his cabinet (Scully, 2016, p.46). Despite Doe’s authoritarian and violent regime, Johnson-Sirleaf continued to denounce corruption (Scully, 2016, p.49). She spoke out against corruption during a speech in a local school, which aggravated Doe (Scully, 2016, p.49). By November 1980, Johnson-Sirleaf fled Liberia for her safety. After the American government pressured Doe to hold elections, Johnson-Sirleaf returned to Liberia and founded the National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL) in 1984 (Scully, 2016, p.50). After another speech about corruption, Sirleaf was put under house arrest, and later put in prison only to be released in July 1986 (Scully, 2016, p.50). Johnson-Sirleaf’s fight against corruption has been characteristic of her public persona and career, which perpetuated her perceived incorruptibility in the public eye.

Johnson-Sirleaf acquired the nicknames of “Ma Ellen” during the 2005 electoral campaigns. Her campaign included both nicknames “Ma Ellen” and the “Old Ma” (Adams, 2017, p.187). “Ma Ellen” is culturally significant because the role of a mother represents a respected authority figure (Moran, 2012, pp.58-59; Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.121; Adams, 2017, p.187). By aligning her public image with motherhood, she simultaneously framed herself as a selfless caretaker and a powerful respected figure. Johnson-Sirleaf is both a mother and grandmother and

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was able to draw on those experiences to extend this role to the larger national family (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.121). This imagery also implies that she is less likely to be corrupt because she does not seek personal gains in her political career (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.121). By framing herself as a motherly figure, Johnson-Sirleaf was seen positively by those who perceive women to be more honest, and thereby less corrupt. Women were seen as separate from the corrupt political elite in Liberia, which were overwhelmingly dominated men. Women were perceived as being separate from corruption, warfare, and violence in Liberia (Mikell, 2009, p.19). The exclusion of women in government inner circle during the violent regimes further reinforced perceptions that women are more honest. Women's perceived honesty benefitted Johnson-Sirleaf in becoming national executive during the presidential elections.

Johnson-Sirleaf also acquired the nickname "Iron Lady", which framed her as a firm decision maker. (Mikell, 2009, p.21). With her second nickname, Johnson-Sirleaf benefitted from the positive traits typically associated with masculine leadership such as decisiveness, assertiveness, and competence (Thomas & Adams, 2010, pp.118-119; Campus, 2013, p.44). Her campaign material and media coverage highlighted Johnson-Sirleaf's careers in traditionally male dominated fields such as finance and politics. Johnson-Sirleaf's success in male dominated fields were indicative of her leadership skills (Thomas & Adams, 2010, pp.118-119). Johnson-Sirleaf benefitted from both positive traits traditionally associated with feminine and masculine leadership with her nicknames. Campaign slogans explicitly framed Johnson-Sirleaf as a better leader than her competition. Johnson-Sirleaf's campaign slogan included "All the men have failed Liberia-Let's try a woman" (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.125). Given the salience of corruption in Liberia

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and Johnsons-Sirleaf's commitment to fighting this longstanding national problem, her competence as a leader is also tied to her competence at fighting corruption. The slogan is based on perceptions about women and corruption and taps into Liberian's frustration with the political status quo (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.121). This slogan promotes the perception about women being better at fighting corruption, and benefits Johnson-Sirleaf's public appeal as presidential candidate.

During the first round of elections, two of twenty-two candidates were women, namely Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Margaret Tor-Thompson (Bauer, 2009, p.208). Johnson-Sirleaf's main competitor was George Weah, a famous Liberian professional soccer player in Europe for AC Milan (Bauer, 2009, p.196; Cooper, 2010, p.45). Weah was running for the Congress for Democratic Change party (CDC) (Adams, 2017, p.190). In contrast to Johnson-Sirleaf, Weah was politically inexperienced and had not graduated high school (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.118). During the first round on October 11, 2005, Weah came in first with 28.3 percent of the votes, followed by Johnson-Sirleaf with 19.8 percent. During the second round in November 2005, Johnson-Sirleaf received 59.4 percent of the votes. Initially, Weah contested the results claiming the elections were rigged (Cooper, 2010, p.46). Weah supporters took to the streets chanting "No Weah No Peace" (Cooper, 2010, p.46). Weah eventually conceded to Johnson-Sirleaf's victory. On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became the first woman President of Liberia (Adams, 2017, p.190; Robinson, 2006, p.14). To conclude this chapter, the table below summarizes Johnson-Sirleaf's case study findings.

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**Table 5***Johnson-Sirleaf Case Study Findings*

Perceptions Stages	Women being perceived as less corrupt.	Women being perceived as more capable at fighting corruption.
Stage 1: party leadership nomination	Absent	Absent
Stage 2: national candidate nomination	Absent	Absent
Stage 3: national elections	Present	Present

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### **Chapter 7: Findings**

In this chapter, I will discuss the case study findings on perceptions about women being more honest, and better at fighting corruption. I will compare the findings across the stages of party leadership nomination, national candidate nominations, and national elections. To conclude, I will present a table summarizing the case study findings across stages.

#### ***Case Study Comparison: The Impact of Perceptions Across Stages***

**Stage 1: Party Leadership Nomination.** Perceptions about women being more honest, and better at fighting corruption were both present and leveraged in the first stage of party leadership on Merkel's rise to executive power. Conversely, Bachelet and Johnson-Sirleaf never became party leader. The first stage of party leadership was only present in Merkel's case. The first stage of party leadership is significant under parliamentary systems and absent under multiparty presidential systems. In both presidential systems, Bachelet and Johnson-Sirleaf climbed the political ladder and made their way to the executive political office as cabinet ministers without party leaderships. Although Merkel had also become cabinet minister shortly after her entry to politics, it was not sufficient to become the national candidate nominee. Climbing the party ladder was central for Merkel under a parliamentary system. Corruption scandal was pivotal to Merkel's rise to executive power because it paved the path for her to rise to party leadership. The party leadership position allowed Merkel to be considered for the second stage of national candidate nomination.

**Stage 2: National Candidate Nomination.** In the second stage of national candidate nomination, perceptions about women being more honest and better at fighting corruption were

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absent for Merkel, and Johnson-Sirleaf. Perceptions about women being better at fighting corruption were also absent in Bachelet's case. However, the impact of perceptions about women being more honest was ambiguous for Bachelet. The Chilean electorate was already dissatisfied with Bachelet's party. Corruption scandals only exacerbated existing public dissatisfaction. The effect of corruption as escalating public dissatisfaction rather than instigating popular discontentment makes the role of corruption scandal ambiguous. Perceptions about women being more honest and better at fighting corruption were not particularly significant during the second stage for any of the women executives. Nevertheless, the role of corruption scandal was pivotal for Johnson-Sirleaf because it led to the removal of the tyrant Charles Taylor. Taylor's removal was necessary to allow Johnson-Sirleaf's pursuit of executive office.

**Stage 3: National Elections.** In the third stage of national elections, perceptions about women being more honest and better at fighting corruption were only present for Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. For Merkel, both perceptions were absent. For Bachelet, perceptions about women being honest were once again ambiguous, and perceptions about women being better at fighting corruption were absent. During Chile's national elections, perceptions about women being more honest were present but their impact remains ambiguous. Bachelet directly addressed this perception in her first television advertisement. Bachelet actively fought against the perception that women are more honest. Her speech affirms the relevance of the perception that women are more honest in the Chilean context. Bachelet's goal was to discredit gendered beliefs about leadership, honesty, and competence within the electorate. Perceptions about women being more honest were ambiguous in Bachelet's case. As for Johnson-Sirleaf, perceptions about women being

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more honest, and women being better at fighting corruption were both present and significant during national elections. Johnson-Sirleaf's nicknames and slogans leveraged perceptions about women being more honest and being better at fighting corruption. Her nicknames "Ma Ellen", and "Old Ma" frame Johnson-Sirleaf as a selfless caretaker and thus less likely to engage in corruption. Her nickname "the Iron Lady" communicate that she is competent and capable of fighting corruption. Her campaign slogan "All men in Liberia have failed-Let's try a woman" frames her as being better at fighting corruption than men politicians (Thomas & Adams, 2010, p.125). In sum, corruption manifested differently, and at different stages for every woman executive. To conclude this chapter, the following table summarizes the findings about perceptions about women being more honest, and perceptions about women being better at fighting corruption for Merkel, Bachelet, and Johnson-Sirleaf.

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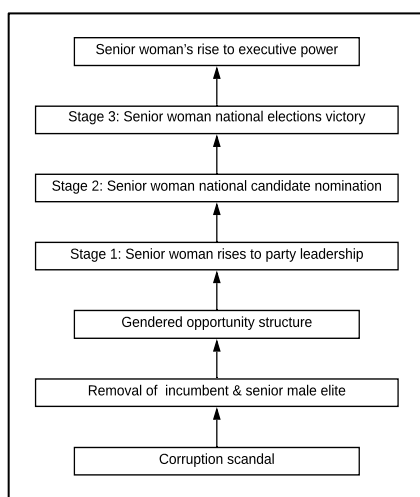
**Table 6***Summary Case Study Findings*

Perceptions about Women executives		Women being more honest	Women being better at fighting corruption
Angela Merkel	Stage 1	Present	Present
	Stage 2	Absent	Absent
	Stage 3	Absent	Absent
Michelle Bachelet	Stage 1	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
	Stage 2	Ambiguous	Absent
	Stage 3	Ambiguous	Absent
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Stage 1	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
	Stage 2	Absent	Absent
	Stage 3	Present	Present

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**Chapter 8: Women's Path to Power**

In this chapter, I will trace women's path to power and the impact of corruption scandal on their rise to executive office using Beckwith's removal and deferral framework. In the diagram Figure 1: Expected Path to Power, I applied the removal and deferral model to the structure of the case studies: the first stage of party leadership nomination, the second stage of national candidate nomination, and the third stage of national elections.

**Figure 1***Expected Path to Power*

The expected path to power describes how corruption scandal is expected to impact women's path to executive power based on the removal and deferral model. In the expected path to power, the corruption scandal leads to the removal of the incumbent male, and senior male elite. The corruption scandal creates an altered gendered political opportunity structure that benefits senior women through the removal of senior men and the deferral of junior men. Within this altered gendered opportunity structure, senior male elite are removed as competition, and senior women

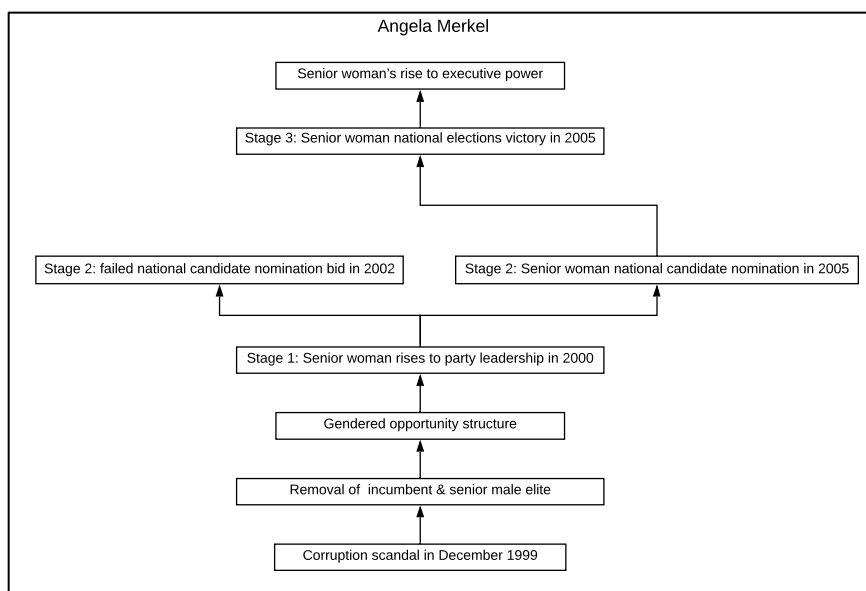
## CORRUPTION AND WOMEN STATE EXECUTIVES

remain in power. Simultaneously, junior men decide to defer their candidacy at leadership. Junior men perceive taking leadership in the aftermath of a corruption scandal as risky and likely to lead to leadership failure. The removal of senior men, and the deferral of junior male clear the path for senior women to rise to party leadership. Following party leadership, the senior woman wins the second stage of national candidate nominations in order to compete in the national elections. Lastly, the senior woman wins the last stage of national elections and becomes the national executive. In the expected path to power, the impact of corruption is most prominent during the first stage of party leadership. Corruption scandal facilitates women's path to executive power by clearing the path to party leadership through the removal of senior male elite competition and deferral of junior men.

### *Angela Merkel Path to Power*

In this section, I will present the impact of corruption scandal on Angela Merkel's path to power. Subsequently, I will briefly compare Angela Merkel's observed path to power with the expected path to power.

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**Figure 2***Observed Path to Power: Angela Merkel*

In the observed path to power for Angela Merkel, the 1999 CDU donations corruption scandal led to the removal of the incumbent party leader Schäuble, and senior male party elite. The corruption scandal led to an altered gendered political opportunity structure that benefitted Merkel. The incumbent leader, and senior male elite were removed as competition for the party leadership contest. Additionally, junior males deferred their candidacy for party leadership. Junior males lacked the experience to compete against Merkel. They may have perceived a high risk of leadership failure given mass public outrage following the corruption scandal. Merkel however recognized a window of opportunity to rise to party leadership as a senior woman during the aftermath of a corruption scandal. Merkel faced no competition and received the overwhelming party support in the party leadership contest. Corruption scandal significantly impacted the first stage of party leadership in Merkel's path to executive power.

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Then, Merkel attempted to become the national candidate nominee for the 2002 national elections. The selection procedure consisted of the CDU and its sister party the Christian Social Union (CSU) jointly deciding on a single candidate for national elections. Although the corruption scandal removed the incumbent and senior male elite from the CDU, it did not remove the incumbent and senior male party elite from CSU. Merkel had to compete against Edmund Stoiber, the incumbent party leader from the CSU. Ultimately, Merkel withdrew her bid for national candidate nominations for the 2002 elections. The corruption scandal did not clear the path for Merkel to become the national candidate nominee in 2002. Stoiber lost the 2002 elections, which removed him from future consideration as the CDU-CSU national candidate. When the snap elections were called in 2005, Merkel became the CDU-CSU national. The corruption scandal did not significantly impact the second stage of national candidate nominations in Merkel's path to executive power. In the third stage of national elections, the 1999 corruption scandal had become irrelevant by 2005. Merkle had renewed party personal after the corruption scandal. She had successfully distanced herself and the party from any association with the corruption scandal. Corruption scandal did not significantly impact the third stage of national elections.

Compared to the expected path to power, the observed path to power for Angela Merkel includes a failed second stage in 2002. The CDU corruption scandal did not clear the path for Merkel to become the 2002 national candidate nominee. In the presence of a competitive senior man, Merkel was not able to rise to national candidate nominations post-corruption scandal. Merkel's observed path to power includes an additional obstacle during the second stage of

## CORRUPTION AND WOMEN STATE EXECUTIVES

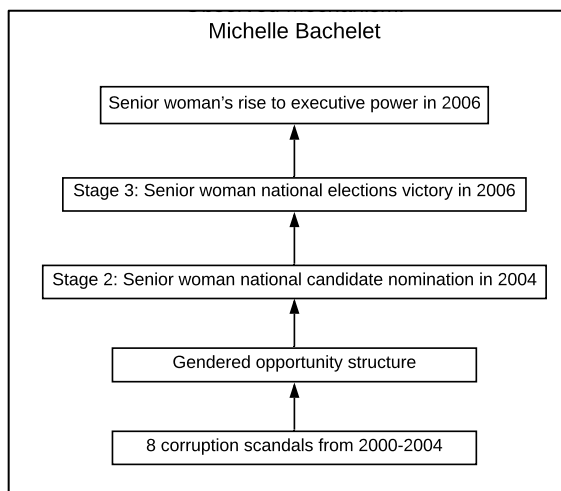
national candidate nomination. In 2005, however, Merkel successfully became the national candidate, won the national elections and became Germany's first woman Chancellor.

### *Michelle Bachelet Path to Power*

In this section, I will present the impact of corruption scandal on Michelle Bachelet's path to power. Then, I will briefly compare Michelle Bachelet's observed path to power with the expected path to power.

### **Figure 3**

#### *Observed Path to Power: Michelle Bachelet*



In the observed path to power for Michelle Bachelet, the 8 corruption scandals spanning between 2000 and 2004 did not remove the incumbent and senior men elite from power. Additionally, Bachelet never acquired party leadership. Mass popular dissatisfaction with the left coalition government altered the gender political opportunity structure in Bachelet's favour. The left coalition faced widespread public discontentment due to criticism about antidemocratic technocratic practices, civilian exclusion from governance, and corruption scandals. Senior and

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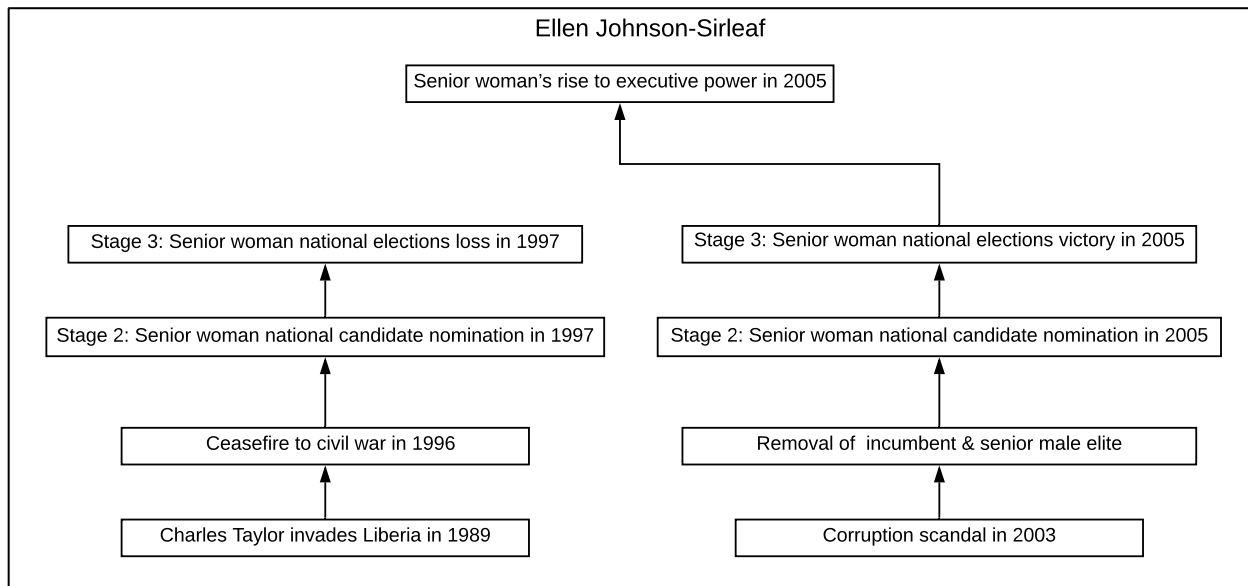
junior men contenders deferred their candidacy for national candidate nominations. Only two senior women coalition members contested the national candidate nomination: Bachelet and Alvear. Bachelet's popularity with the coalition and the electorate led to Alvear's candidacy withdrawal. Corruption had an amplifying effect on existing public dissatisfaction during the second stage of national candidate nomination, thus having an ambiguous effect. In the third stage of national elections, Bachelet's television advertisement dispelled the belief that honesty is linked to gender. Bachelet's address to the nation demonstrates the significance of gendered beliefs about women being more honest in Chile. Perceptions about women being honest had a minimal ambiguous effect because Bachelet actively fought against gendered perceptions rather than to leverage them.

Compared to the expected path to power, the observed path to power for Michelle Bachelet does not include the first stage of party leadership and that there was no removal process. However, the deferral process led an altered gendered political opportunity structure was present. Not only did junior men members defer, senior men also deferred their candidacy at leadership. The Chilean electorate was already dissatisfied with the left coalition in power. The corruption scandals only served to further aggravate their grievances. The crisis of public dissatisfaction altered the gender opportunity leading to candidacy deferral of both senior and junior contenders. Bachelet pursued national candidate nomination and became Chile's first woman President in 2006.

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*Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Path to Power*

In this section, I will discuss the impact of corruption scandal on Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's path to power. Then, I will briefly compare Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's observed path to power with the expected path to power.

**Figure 4***Observed Path to Power: Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf*

In the observed path to power, Johnson-Sirleaf never acquired party leadership. The 2003 corruption scandal led to Taylor's removal from power. The impact of corruption scandal was significant in Johnson-Sirleaf's rise to power because it led to the removal of Charles Taylor. The removal made way for Johnson-Sirleaf to pursue the executive office. During the second stage of national candidate nomination, the Unity Party's decision to select Johnson-Sirleaf was done behind closed doors. It is unclear whether corruption scandal significantly impacted the second stage of national candidate nominations. The Unity Party chose to partner with Johnson-Sirleaf in

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1997 in the absence of a corruption scandal. Thus, with or without corruption scandal, Johnson-Sirleaf remains the Unity Party's preferred candidate. The impact of corruption scandal was still significant in the third stage of national elections because corruption was an important electoral topic. Johnson-Sirleaf presented herself as capable and committed to curbing corruption. The gendered beliefs about corruption in Liberia were leveraged to Johnson-Sirleaf's advantage. She was framed as honest, and as better at fighting corruption. Corruption scandal significantly affected the third stage of national elections in Johnson-Sirleaf's path to executive power.

Compared to the expected path to power, the observed path to power for Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf does not include the first stage of party leadership and whether an altered gendered opportunity structure is unclear. Although corruption led to the removal of the incumbent, an altered gender opportunity structure cannot be confirmed. Johnson-Sirleaf's nomination was done behind closed party doors. It is unclear whether junior men party members voluntarily deferred their candidacy, or her selection was simply imposed by party elite. Corruption scandal removed the authoritarian incumbent national executive, which created the vacancy for Johnson-Sirleaf to pursue the highest political office. Johnson-Sirleaf won the national elections and became Liberia's first woman President in 2005.

### *Case Study Comparison: Corruption Scandal and Women's Path to Power*

In the following section, I will compare how corruption scandal impacted the three women's path to power at different stages of their rise to executive leadership. The impact of corruption scandal was pivotal in the first stage of party leadership in Angela Merkel's path to executive power (Wiliarty, 2008b, pp.486-488). The party leadership is significant under

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parliamentary systems, where the major path to executive power is through the gateway of party leadership (Beckwith, 2015, p.722). However, party leadership is not a significant stage in presidential systems in women's path to executive power. Both Bachelet, and Johnson-Sirleaf's path to executive power is completely void of the first stage of party leadership. Corruption scandal can significantly impact women's path to executive power during the first stage of party leadership under parliamentary systems. In presidential systems, the first stage of party leadership may be completely absent in women's path to executive power. In Johnson-Sirleaf's case, corruption scandal was significant prior to national candidate nominations because it led to the removal of Taylor. Taylor's removal allowed Johnson-Sirleaf to pursue the executive office. Corruption scandal was significant prior to the second stage of national candidate nominations in Johnson-Sirleaf's case. For the second stage of national candidate nomination, the impact of corruption scandal was not particularly significant for any of the women executives. Corruption scandals had an ambiguous impact in Bachelet's path to power by amplifying existing popular discontentment. Corruption scandals were not pivotal to her nomination as the national coalition candidate. Corruption scandal did not significantly impact women's path to executive power during the second stage of national candidate nomination. For the third stage of national elections, the impact of corruption scandals and corruption as an electoral topic was pivotal in Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's path to executive power. Corruption was a salient issue that plagued Liberia for years. Johnson-Sirleaf was able to leverage gendered perceptions about women and corruption to frame herself as honest, and the better candidate to fight corruption. Corruption was not an electoral topic and did not impact the third stage of national elections for Merkel or Bachelet. Corruption scandal has a

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significant impact during the third stage of national elections in women's path to executive power if corruption is a salient electoral issue and cultural gendered beliefs benefit women candidates.

### *Case Study Comparison: Removal and Deferral Framework*

In the following section, I will compare how well the removal and deferral framework applies to the case studies. The removal and deferral framework fits Merkel's case study better than Bachelet's, and Johnson-Sirleaf's case studies. In Merkel's case, both removal and deferral are present. In Bachelet's case, only deferral is present. In Johnson-Sirleaf's case only removal is present. The two factors that account for the differences between the case studies are the selection procedure in leadership contests and the type of leadership contest. The selection procedure in leadership contests contributes to differences in the deferral process of the framework. The type of leadership contest leads to differences in the removal process of the framework.

The selection procedure for the leadership contest determine whether there is an opportunity for deferral. The framework is based on gendered strategic decisions, which lead to an altered gendered political opportunity structure. The selection procedure determines whether an altered gendered opportunity structure can ensue from the crisis. The deferral of junior men post-crisis is a fundamental part of the framework. Junior men may perceive a high risk of leadership failure, and thus defer their candidacy. It is not possible to infer that an altered gendered opportunity structure was at play without voluntary deferrals. Gender strategic decisions can only take place if members have to opportunity to compete in leadership contests and choose to defer. Otherwise, the selection procedure imposes the selection of the candidate on its members. If the

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selection procedure does not allow for voluntary deferrals, the validity of gender strategic decisions in altered gendered opportunity structures cannot be gauged accurately.

Without the voluntary of deferral of junior men, it is unclear whether gendered decisions took place. Members do not have the opportunity to defer if the selection was imposed by party elite. However, if the deferral of junior men is done voluntarily, then a shift in the gender political opportunity structure can be inferred. The altered gendered political opportunity structure is an integral part of the removal and deferral framework. Junior men choose to defer their candidacy due to perceived high risk of leadership failure following a crisis. Whether junior men members voluntarily defer their candidacy is significant because it confirms whether a shift in the gender political opportunity structure is present.

The deferral process was present for both Merkel and Bachelet because the selection procedure allowed for opportunities for deferrals. In Merkel's case, the selection procedure for the party leadership was through party votes. Merkel won the party leadership with 96% of the votes at the party convention in 2000. This selection procedure opens up the political opportunity structure to all aspiring candidates, thus providing the opportunity for deferral. After the corruption scandal, senior men were removed, and junior men decided to defer their candidacy. The crisis of corruption scandal led to an altered gendered opportunity structure. The selection procedure also explains the lack of deferral in the 2002 national candidate nominations. The CDU-CSU joint national candidate selection procedure showcases that Stoiber had the opportunity to defer and chose not to do so. Stoiber was later removed from consideration for future national candidate nominations after losing the 2002 national elections. In 2002, Merkel lacked the support of the

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CSU and the CDU. By 2005, Merkel gained the support of both the CSU and CDU during the 2005 snap elections and became the national candidate nominee for the 2005 national elections. The snap election meant that the selection of the candidate was time sensitive. Although the snap election represents a crisis of time because of the urgency of the decision, the selection procedure still allowed for members to contest the nomination thus allowing for the opportunity to defer. The selection procedure in leadership contests allowed for deferrals in Merkel's case study.

In Bachelet's case, the selection procedure for the national candidate nomination was done through primaries. Using primaries opened up the political opportunity structure and allowed for all aspiring candidate to contest for the nomination. Only Bachelet and Alvear, two senior women, decided to compete for the national candidate nomination. Although there was no removal process, the deferral process included both senior and junior men member of the coalition. The crisis of mass public disapproval of the governing coalition led to the deferral of junior and senior men members of the coalition. An altered gender opportunity resulted from the crisis of mass electoral dissatisfaction. Similar to Merkel, the selection procedure in leadership contest allowed for deferral in Bachelet's case study. In Bachelet's case, both junior and senior men deferred in Bachelet's rise to executive power.

In Johnson-Sirleaf's case, the selection procedure was based on party elite decision making. Party elite candidate selection does not allow for an opportunity to defer and constrains the political opportunity structure for aspiring candidates. Whether an altered gender opportunity structure resulted from the crisis cannot be assessed. The selection is imposed upon party members rather than party members deferring their candidacy. Johnson-Sirleaf was selected as the national

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candidate by Unity party elite in 1997 and 2005. Contrary to Merkel and Bachelet, the deferral process was absent from Johnson-Sirleaf's case study. The selection procedure was based on party elite and did not allow for the opportunity for deferral.

The removal process was present for both Merkel and Johnson-Sirleaf and absent for Bachelet. The two type of leadership contest on the path to executive power in the case studies were party leadership, and national candidate nomination. The type of leadership contest plays a significant role in explaining the differences of removal process between the case studies. The removal of the incumbent and senior men at the party level by way of crisis is easier than the removal of the incumbent at the executive level. In Merkel's case, the removal of the incumbent party leader and senior men members cleared the path for party leadership. However, the corruption scandal did not clear the path for Merkel to gain national nominations. The joint decision process for the national candidate nominations based on the CDU and its sister party the CSU led Edmund Stoiber to contest and win the 2002 nominations. There was no removal process for the 2002 national candidate nominations. After the CDU's 2002 electoral loss, Stoiber was removed from consideration for future elections. Then Chancellor Schröder removed himself from power after the regional electoral loss of North Rhine-Westphalia. The electoral loss represented a crisis for Schröder, and he asked his party to vote against him in a motion of confidence, which triggered snap elections.

The removal of the national executive resulted in snap elections and allowed for Merkel's selection as the national candidate nominee. If the election was scheduled, Merkel's opponents would have the time to gather support for their candidacy and contest her nomination. Given the

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urgency of the selection, her opponents deferred. The incumbent executive was also removed by way of crisis in Johnson-Sirleaf's case. Taylor's corruption scandal led him to flee to Nigeria and created a vacancy for the executive office. Taylor's removal of power was the result of increasing domestic, and international pressure for him to step down following the indictment. Once Taylor was removed from power Johnson-Sirleaf had the opportunity to gain the highest political office. For both Merkel and Johnson-Sirleaf, the extreme circumstances leading to the removal of the incumbent national executive by way of crisis facilitated their path to executive power.

In Bachelet's case, the incumbent national executive was not removed from power. Despite the eight corruption scandals during President Lagos's first four years, his approval ratings remained high. There was still widespread public criticism and dissatisfaction with the governing coalition. The Chilean electorate criticized the governing coalition for being out of touch with citizens and perceived them as elitist antidemocratic technocrats. Even if there was mass public dissatisfaction with the governing coalition, President Lagos benefitted from public support. President Lagos benefitted from both public and coalition support making his removal unlikely and difficult. An incumbent party leader however only relies on party support. The removal of a party leader is easier and more likely. The crisis may cause the incumbent party leader to lose party support and lead to their removal from power. Incumbent national executive leaders have legitimacy from both the party and the electorate. Exceptional circumstances are required for the removal of the incumbent executive. Given Lagos' high approval ratings, there was no removal from power. The lack of removal in Bachelet's case is tied to the type of leadership contest.

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In sum, the removal process is contingent on the type of leadership contest and the deferral process is dependent on the selection procedure allowing for the opportunity for deferral. Party leadership contests are more likely to lead to removal compared to national executive leadership. The removal of the national executive is unlikely and requires exceptional circumstances. Whether the selection procedure allows for the opportunity for deferral determines whether the deferral framework will be present within the framework. To conclude this section, the table below summarizes how the removal and deferral framework applies in each case study.

**Table 7**

## Case Study Comparison Removal and Deferral Framework

Woman Executive	Electoral System	Type of leadership contest	Perceived Corruption levels	Corruption scandal key to rise to power	Crisis key to rise to power	Altered Gender Opportunity Structure	Removal	Deferral
Angela Merkel	Parliamentary System	1. Party leadership 2. National candidate nomination	Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michelle Bachelet	Presidential System	National candidate nomination	Medium	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Presidential System	National candidate nomination	High	Yes	Yes	Unclear, no opportunity for deferral due to party elite closed door selection	Yes	No

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### *Removal and Deferral Framework Discussion*

Based on the discussion of the three case studies, I suggest two amendments to the framework. The first is the inclusion of the incumbent national executive as part of the removal process. The second is reframing the removal and deferral framework as a complementary process. The removal process is not a prerequisite to the deferral process, as such the framework is not a compulsory sequential process. Instead, neither are necessary but either may be sufficient in facilitating women's path to the highest political office. However, the removal and deferral framework is only applicable in two cases: if both the removal and deferral processes are present, or only the deferral process is present. The removal process alone does not allow for the observation of an altered gender political opportunity structure resulting from strategic gendered decisions. The deferral process alone is sufficient to infer an altered political opportunity structure based on strategic gendered decisions. Even without the removal process, the deferral process is enough for the framework to apply.

The role of the incumbent national executive should be considered in the removal process. Including the role of the incumbent national executive is beneficial to the removal and deferral framework because it encompasses the broader impact the crisis may have. The crisis may lead to the removal of the incumbent executive. In Beckwith's removal and deferral framework, the removal process only considers the removal of possible opponents in leadership contests. However, if a crisis led to the removal of the incumbent executive, then including the incumbent executive as part of the removal process captures a broader scope of the impact of the crisis.

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In Merkel's case, only possible opponents were considered in the removal of the incumbent leader and senior men under Beckwith's framework. The removal was framed as only consisting of Stoiber, her opponent in the national candidate nomination. Once Stoiber lost the 2002 election, he was removed from consideration for future nominations. However, then Chancellor Schröder was also removed from power, albeit he triggered the removal himself. The snap elections were the result of an electoral loss, which was a crisis for Schröder and his party. The snap election called by Schröder led to his removal from executive power and allowed for Merkel's nomination as the 2005 national candidate. There were two removals that allowed for Merkel to gain the national candidate nomination in 2005: the removal of her opponent Stoiber and the removal of the incumbent executive Chancellor Schröder. Moreover, including the incumbent national executive in the removal process captures cases of removal and deferral that would otherwise go unnoticed. In Johnson-Sirleaf's case, if Taylor's removal from executive power after his indictment was not included as part of the removal process, the removal and deferral process appears to be entirely absent. If the incumbent national executive is not considered in the framework, the removal and deferral process appear to be absent even if the crisis led to the removal of the incumbent executive. Including the incumbent national executive captures a wider scope of the impact of crisis in the removal and deferral framework.

The second suggestion is framing the removal and deferral framework as a complementary process rather than a twofold sequential process. The removal and deferral framework describes a two-step process. First, a crisis removes the incumbent leader and senior men from power. Then, the removal is followed by the deferral of junior men. Strategic gendered decisions in leadership

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contests lead to an altered gendered political opportunity structure favouring senior women. However, deferral can take place without removal. The framework is a process in which removal is not a prerequisite to deferral. The process of removal alone is not indicative of an altered opportunity structure. The process of deferral alone however is sufficient to infer an altered gender opportunity structure caused by gendered strategic decisions. The altered political opportunity structure must be present for the framework to be apply. Although a combination of the removal and deferral process can be complementary, the deferral process alone is necessary for the framework to apply. The following table will summarize in which cases the removal and deferral framework applies, and in which cases the framework does not.

**Table 8**

## Removal and Deferral Framework Applicability

Crisis	Removal	Altered Structure	Deferral	Framework applies
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Yes	No	No	No	No

The removal process may still facilitate women's rise to executive power even if it does not lead to an altered political opportunity structure based on gendered strategic decisions. The removal process may be sufficient to facilitating women's path to power in some cases, and the deferral process may be sufficient in facilitating women's rise to executive power in others. In Johnson-Sirleaf's case, the removal of the incumbent national executive by way of crisis was not

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followed by a deferral process. Still, the removal process was pivotal to Johnson-Sirleaf's rise to power. However, in Bachelet's case the national leader was not removed from power, yet a crisis led to the deferral of both junior and senior men. Bachelet's case highlights that gendered strategic decisions can still take place in the absence of the removal process. Both junior and senior men deferred their candidacy to senior women in a post-crisis context even in the absence of the removal process. The selection process for the national candidate nomination was done through primaries and provided an opportunity for deferral. Yet, only two senior women, Bachelet and Alvear, decided to compete in the primaries. Even without removal, the deferral process took place and facilitated Bachelet's rise to executive power.

In Merkel's case both the removal and deferral steps were present and led to a complementary process. The removal complemented the deferral and led to her rise to party leadership. The removal of the incumbent leader and senior men in the 2000 party leadership contests led to the deferral of junior men. However, in the absence of both steps, Merkel was not able to win the national candidate nomination leadership contest in 2002. Neither removal nor deferral were present for the 2002 national candidate nominations, which led to a failed candidacy bid. When both removal and deferral steps were present in 2005, Merkel gained national candidate nomination for the snap elections. The removal process includes then Chancellor Schröder, and incumbent CSU party leader Stoiber. Chancellor Schröder triggered snap elections by asking his party to vote against during a vote of confidence in an effort to discipline his party for their electoral loss. Stoiber was removed from future considerations after his 2002 electoral loss. The CDU-CSU selection procedure allow for members to contest the candidacy, thereby allowing for

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opportunities to defer candidacy. Merkel's 2005 national candidate nomination leadership contest included both removal and deferral as complementary processes. Merkel's selection as the national candidate nominee in 2005 was a matter of urgency. Her selection can also be framed as a crisis of time rendering her opponents unable to contest her nomination. Despite the time sensitive nature of Merkel's selection, party members still had the opportunity to defer their candidacy. When both removal and deferral are present, they lead to a complementary process.

In Johnson-Sirleaf's case the selection procedure did not allow for the opportunity to defer due to party elite candidate selection. The removal process was present however it was not followed by deferral. In cases where removal is not followed by deferral, it is not possible to infer that an altered opportunity structure favouring senior women is present. Gender strategic decisions and an altered political opportunity structure cannot be assessed. With the removal process alone, the framework does not apply because an altered gender opportunity structure cannot be inferred from the removal process. Nevertheless, the initial removal of the incumbent leader and senior men played a significant role in Johnson-Sirleaf's rise to power.

Based on the discussion of the three case studies of Angela Merkel, Michelle Bachelet, and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the removal and deferral framework may fit other post-crisis cases as well. Whether the removal and deferral framework applies to other cases will depend on the selection process and the type of leadership contest. The type of leadership contest will inform whether the removal is more or less likely post-crisis. The removal of the incumbent executive is more challenging than the removal of the incumbent party leader because the national executive benefits

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from legitimacy from both party support and electoral vote. The political party's selection procedure for leadership contests will determine whether there is an opportunity for deferral.

### **Conclusion**

Corruption scandals can benefit women's rise to executive power during party leadership contests in parliamentary systems, and during national elections if corruption is a salient electoral topic and cultural gendered beliefs frame women candidates as less corrupt. In the first chapter, the case study of Angela Merkel demonstrates that the impact of corruption was pivotal in her path to executive power. In the first stage of party leadership, the corruption scandal led to the removal of the incumbent party leader, and the candidacy deferral of party members. However, the impact of corruption was absent during the second stage of national candidate nomination, and the third stage of national elections. The impact of corruption served to open the path to party leadership, which is the major gateway to executive power in parliamentary systems (Beckwith, 2015, p.722). The impact of corruption was pivotal to Merkel's rise to executive power.

In the second chapter, the case study of Michelle Bachelet showcases that the impact of corruption was ambiguous throughout her journey to executive power. The first stage of party leadership was absent in her path to power. The impact of corruption scandal was ambiguous for both the second stage of national candidate nomination, and the third stage of national elections. The impact of corruption scandal was a contributing factor to existing popular dissatisfaction. Corruption scandal did not result in the removal of the incumbent executive and stopped surfacing in the media two years prior to the national elections. Coalition party members still deferred their candidacy given the mass discontentment with the coalition in power. Corruption scandal was not

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integral in Bachelet's path to executive power. Corruption scandals exacerbated electorate dissatisfaction, which in turn may have contributed to candidacy deferrals. The extent to which corruption impacted Bachelet's rise to executive power is ambiguous overall.

In the third chapter, the case study of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf shows the impact of corruption scandal was significant in her path to executive power. Corruption scandal served to remove the incumbent executive from power, which was pivotal to her rise to executive power. The first stage of party leadership and the impact of corruption scandal during the second stage of national candidate nominations were absent. However, the role of corruption was present during the third stage of national elections. The gendered perceptions that frame women as less corrupt, and better at fighting corruption were leveraged in Johnson-Sirleaf's campaign. Corruption has been a salient ongoing national issue in Liberia. The impact of corruption scandal and corruption as a salient issue was significant in Johnson-Sirleaf's path to executive power. The three case study findings informed the path to power traced for each woman executive and explored the impact of corruption scandal on women's path to power in the discussion chapter.

The impact of corruption scandal on women's path to power differs under parliamentary systems and presidential systems. The first stage of party leadership was absent under presidential systems. Conversely, the first stage of party leadership was present under a parliamentary system. The impact of corruption was present to some extent for each woman executive. For Merkel, the removal and deferral process were present, and most significant for the first stage of party leadership. For Bachelet, the removal and deferral process were not present. However, a deferral process was present, and the impact of corruption scandal was ambiguous. For Johnson-Sirleaf,

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the removal and deferral process were not present. However, the removal process of the incumbent was significant in Johnson-Sirleaf's case. The impact of corruption was also significant during the third stage of national elections because corruption was a salient electoral topic.

### *Contribution to the literature on women's representation and corruption*

This study suggests a theoretical contribution to Beckwith's removal and deferral model, namely that the framework can still apply without the removal process. If both an altered gender political opportunity structure and the deferral process are present, senior women candidates can still benefit from an advantageous standing in leadership contests post-crisis. This was demonstrated by Bachelet's case, where the crisis of mass popular dissatisfaction with the government in power led to the deferral of both senior and junior men members of the coalition. If the crisis is significant enough, the crisis can lead to the deferral of both senior and junior men members thereby bypassing the need for the removal process under Beckwith's model. Nevertheless, having both the removal and deferral process is preferred as they ensure a cleared path to leadership for the senior women.

The literature on corruption and women's representation has found corruption to be an obstacle to women's representation (Stockemer & Sundström, 2018; Sundström & Wangnerud, 2016; Esarey & Chirillo, 2013). This study showcases that if corruption is an obstacle to women's representation, then corruption scandal can serve to remove that obstacle and aid women's rise to power. Corruption scandal can remove elite corrupt network and its participants from power. The exclusion of women from elite corrupt networks becomes an advantage post-corruption scandal. Furthermore, the gendered perceptions about women and corruption such as women being more

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honest and less susceptible to corruption, and better at fighting corruption can benefit women candidates post-corruption scandal (Norris, 1996, pp.91-98; Valdini,2019, Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019; Barnes, Beaulieu, & Saxton, 2018; Barnes & Beaulieu, 2014, p.385). In this way, corruption scandal is a gendered crisis.

The literature has established that crisis can benefit women's political representation (Beckwith, 2015). This study further narrowed the focus to corruption scandal, as a gendered crisis that benefits women's rise to power. Corruption scandal as a crisis can have gendered impacts based on societal gender bias or gender stereotypes. Aspiring women politicians can leverage frames associated with women and politics to their advantage to advance their political careers. The perception that women are less corrupt is beneficial to aspiring women candidates when gender ideology and cultural context also align with these gendered beliefs about women and corruption. However, the extent to which corruption scandal is beneficial on women's path to executive power varies across cases depending on the salience of corruption in society and the types of gendered beliefs held in that culture. This study concurs that the role of crisis can be beneficial to women's political representation on their path to executive power (Beckwith, 2015). Specifically, corruption scandals can benefit women's path to executive power during party leadership contests in parliamentary systems. Additionally, corruption scandals can also be beneficial during national elections if corruption is a salient electoral topic and cultural gendered beliefs align with the perception that women are less corrupt.

Lastly, this study further informs the literature on women executives by contributing to bank of case studies tracing paths to executive power, which can help identify emerging patterns

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with high levels of context. The themes emerging from these patterns contribute to a more nuanced understanding on women executives' rise to national leadership and gendered barriers. This study contributed insight on how gendered crisis impacts women's path to executive power. Women executives' path to power can guide and inform aspiring women executives on their paths to power in hopes of more gender balanced political representation in the highest political office.

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