**Abstract**

<ab>This article advances a party-centric analysis of gender quotas in Brazil*.* We examine how parties mediate electoral rules, finding that neither the implementation of the Lei de Cotas (Quota Law) in 1995 nor its 2009 mini-reform was sufficient to induce significant change in party strategies for the nomination and election of women. Moreover, we find that while the open-list proportional representation electoral system is an important part of the explanation for the quota’s failure to enhance women’s representation, an analysis of how those electoral rules interact with decentralized party politics and women’s absence from subnational party leadership structures yields superior explanatory power for understanding quota (non)compliance. We marshal extensive evidence on interparty variation in candidacies to Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies and state legislative assemblies and interviews with candidates, party leaders, bureaucrats, and activists throughout Brazil to show how electoral rules and party dynamics interact to undermine the gender quota, resulting in a limited increase in the number of female candidates and stagnation in the number of women elected. We conclude that reform efforts must target not only electoral rules but also the subnational party structures that mediate these rules if they are to enhance women’s political representation.</ab>