

Women's Leadership in Local Government

Osnat Akirav

Correspondence: The Department of Political Science, Western Galilee College, Akko, Israel

Received: December 20, 2020 Accepted: January 18, 2021 Online Published: February 18, 2021

doi:10.5539/res.v13n1p77

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v13n1p77>

Abstract

In the last two decades the number of women involved in politics locally and nationally has increased. Nevertheless, there is limited empirical work investigating the increase in the number of female candidates for the position of mayor. To fill this gap in the literature, we conducted interviews with 57 of the 72 female candidates for mayor in Israel before the October 2018 elections, and 37 of the 72 female candidates for mayor after the election. In addition, we interviewed 11 male candidates and men elected as mayors after the election, as well. On the individual level with regard to political ambition, we found that there are four components whose synergy results in more women being encouraged to run for mayor: mentoring, information, networking for women and training. We called this model the MINT model, which has emerged from the interviews conducted with the candidates. On the societal level, it is important to increase public awareness of the importance of gender representation and hence, voting for women to be mayors.

Keywords: mentoring, women for mayor, networking, training, political ambition

1. Introduction

Many studies focus on the theoretical and empirical complexity of gender representation in elections (Pini and McDonald, 2011; Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). The first step in this process is to identify the number of women in the political arena (descriptive representation). The next step is to analyze the content of their representation when they are in political positions (substantive representation). The final step is exploring why women seem to be underrepresented in political life. Is one of the factors involved in their underrepresentation a lack of political ambition? If so, what steps can be taken to improve this situation?

In the current study we analyze descriptive and substantive representation on the local level and explore three possible explanations for the small number of women participating in political life at the local government level: 1) the political ambition of women to become representatives, 2) the process through which parties recruit candidates and 3) public awareness about the importance of women as part of the political life in local government politics. We conducted interviews with 57 of the 72 female candidates for mayor in Israel before the October 2018 local government elections, and 37 of the 72 female candidates for mayor after the election. In addition, we also interviewed 11 male candidates and men elected as mayor after the election. In the current study we decide to overlook the women who are already well-established in politics. Because we want to concentrate on the previous step – the decision to run—and offer explanation how to increase the number of women, that in the future can be one of the well-established women in politics.

Based on our interviews, we maintain that there are four factors germane to the individual can promote women's participation in politics and increase their political ambition: 1) mentoring, 2) information, 3) networking and 4) training. We call this the MINT model, which has emerged from the interviews conducted with the candidates. On the societal level, there is a need for infusing a gender perspective into all public policies to counter gender bias. We also claim that combining the MINT model, which deals with individual factors, and public awareness, which is a societal issue, will improve the representation of women in political life.

Our study fills the gap on the limited empirical work investigating explanations for the small number of female candidates for mayor and suggests ideas for increasing them. Our goal is to develop a better understanding of the political ambition of female candidates to run for mayor, thereby increasing the descriptive representation of women in local government. Second, we want to explore agenda setting and the issues that female candidates and female elected officials want to promote, thereby increasing their substantive representation. Most previous studies have analyzed descriptive and substantive representation using institutional factors such as quotas and the type of electoral system (Krook and Norris, 2014; Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). In contrast, we analyze the personal perceptions of the female candidates regarding their political ambition in running for mayor in local elections. There is far less research on the effect of the personal perceptions of female candidates than the institutional effects on the election of women.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reasons for the Low Level of Gender Representation in Local Government

Gender representation at the sub-national level generally focuses on descriptive and substantive representation in municipalities, mainly in the US (Adams and Schreiber, 2011; Holman, 2014) and European countries (Hernández-Nicolás et al., 2018; Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). By studying descriptive and substantive representation through women elected as mayors, we switch the analysis from the national to the sub-national level. Scholars have argued that this kind of switch has two advantages. First, local councils have a major impact on the daily life of the residents because they make decisions about infrastructure projects, allocations of resources to social institutions, and policy choices related to women's collective interests (Smith, 2014; Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). Second, previous studies have concentrated on a single country (the US, Spain, Brazil and Germany), on the descriptive dimension, and on institutional factors such as quotas and the type of electoral system. Our focus is on the individual female candidates' perceptions during and after their race for mayor, a topic that has received little if any research attention (Tolleson-Rinehart, 2001). We also investigate this topic in Israel, a country in which it has never been explored. We argue that political ambition and the willingness to be recruited are shaped by the perceptions of the candidates regarding their ability to be elected. Hence, the best way to understand their political ambition is to talk directly with the candidates about their experience, rather than by assuming they understand the electoral context in the same way as outside observers such as academic scholars. However, it is important to note that Piscopo (2019) indicated that political ambition is not enough to increase the number of women in the political arena.

Indeed, the number of women mayors increased in the early 1990s but plateaued over the last quarter century (Crowder-Meyer, 2013). Scholars have offered several explanations for the change, which we can divide into four areas: *public awareness*, *political ambition*, *candidate's recruitment* and *formal rules*. With regard to public awareness, on councils with more native-born members, where the diversity of the population requires heterogeneous representation, such as in Spain, women mayors are more common (Hernández-Nicolás et al., 2018). Thus, diverse societies have more tolerance for underrepresented groups and are more willing to vote for them. Israel is considered a diverse society, so we expect to find more women on local councils. Second, studies have documented that female council candidates advance more in their political lives when the mayor is female. This effect spreads to neighboring municipalities and leads to an increasing share of female council members. Thus, the public comes to regard having women in higher positions in municipalities as natural, increasing awareness about gender representation. This pattern was found both in Germany and in Latin American countries, and we expect to see it in Israel as well (Baskaran and Hessami, 2018; Funk, 2017). Third, Smith and colleagues (2012) reported that in US cities the likelihood of having a female mayor increases when the mayor is selected by the council from among its members rather than through direct elections. This result implies that the political elites are more sensitive about the need for gender representation in the position of mayor than the general public. Fourth, regions in which there is strong female participation in the labor force, support for leftist rather than radical right-wing parties, and extensive urbanization tend to elect more women (Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). This study was conducted in Europe. However, we predict the opposite pattern in Israel with regard to urbanization. We expect that less urbanized areas will tend to elect more women as the head of their region council, because these regions have a diverse population. Thus, we predict that our findings will accord more with those of Hernández-Nicolás et al. (2018) that women mayors are more common in areas where the diversity of population requires heterogeneous representation.

In sum, we can say that when there is public awareness about and willingness to vote for women and to have women in high positions, their probability of being elected is greater. Furthermore, this public awareness is more common in diverse societies and where women play significant roles in areas other than the political arena, so it is natural to have them in the political arena.

However, as noted previously, men and women differ in their decision to run for office (Adams and Schreiber, 2011). Even though they may do well in the election, women are less likely to run. The research investigating this difference has pointed to two possible explanations: differences in *political ambition* and in *candidate's recruitment*. Studies about political ambition found that men are significantly more interested in a political career than women. When women do decide to run for a political position, they do so to pursue communal or policy-oriented goals. In contrast, men are usually looking for power (Allen and Cutts, 2018; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu, 2013; Preece et al., 2016). Niven et al. (2019) argued that women are significantly less confident in their political abilities and qualifications, but when they do run for office, they do it differently than men. Women weigh the decision to run for office more seriously and, thus, run more sophisticated campaigns when they do pursue office. Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) noted that women's decision-making about office holding "is more likely to be influenced by the beliefs and reactions, both real and perceived, of other people and to involve considerations of how candidacy and office holding would affect the lives of others with whom the potential candidate has close relationships" (p. 45). Furthermore, Sanbonmatsu and Carroll (2017) argued that in the absence of support and encouragement from spouses and children, friends and acquaintances, many women would

never think of running for office themselves nor feel comfortable doing so.

It seems that women have internalized the idea that they are outsiders to political life and their political ambition is less welcome or acceptable. If so, what is the role of party leaders in the effort to increase the number of women candidates in local government election? Being encouraged to run for office by a political actor is the most important step in considering a candidacy. Hence, such encouragement is very important in increasing political ambition among women (Crowder-Meyer, 2013; Fox and Lawless, 2010). Furthermore, at the local government level, local parties are very active in candidate recruitment (Crowder-Meyer, 2013). Indeed, women tend to respond less positively to recruitment efforts than men, but the party leaders have an important role in convincing them to do so. Piscopo (2019) indicated that women's underrepresentation in politics is a result of the lack of demand from party leaders rather than the supply of women who have the ambition to run for office. However, highly qualified and politically well-connected women from both major political parties in the US are less likely than similarly situated men to be recruited to run for public office by party leaders (Fox and Lawless, 2010; Preece et al., 2016). From the party organization perspective, there are times when party leaders do not invest effort in recruiting women as potential candidates, because their perception is that the women cannot win in a specific constituency (Crowder-Meyer, 2013; Sanbonmatsu, 2006). Alternatively, party leaders more often run female rather than male candidates as "sacrificial lambs" in unwinnable races (Stambough and O'Regan, 2007). Furthermore, Crowder-Meyer (2013) argued that the effects of party recruitment depend on party leaders' beliefs and choices about how broadly to cast the recruitment net. For example, party leaders using the traditional network of party members, business organizations, and party donors will recruit fewer female candidates. Furthermore, if the recruitment networks of party leaders do not change significantly over time, we should expect to see few increases in the proportion of women recruited to run in local government elections (Crowder-Meyer, 2013, 409).

Preece et al. (2016) suggested combining political ambition and candidate's recruitment to explain the underrepresentation of women in politics. In order to understand the "role recruitment plays in who ends up on the ballot, we must not only consider what recruitment messages party officials send, but also how individuals interpret and internalize these recruitment messages when they receive them. Recruitment is an interactive process, so the behavior of both the recruiters and recruits' matters" (Preece et al., 2016, 576).

Moving on from the personal level of women's political ambition and the institutional level of the party role in the candidate's recruitment, we argue that the formal rules established mostly by governments are important as well. Studies have established that the adoption of gender quotas plays an enormous role in increasing women's presence in local governments (Pini and McDonald, 2011; Sundström and Stockemer, 2015). There are a number of countries in which political parties have voluntarily introduced quotas for female candidates, and a few where national laws require a minimum percentage of female candidates or representatives at various electoral levels. In the UK all-women shortlists is an informal strategy allowing only women to stand in specific constituencies for a particular political party (Cutts et al., 2008). France was the first country in the world to require an equal number of male and female candidates for all elections by law (Bird 2003). This technique to create equality is called the zipper method and was applied for the first time in the municipal elections held on March 11, 2001. Bird (2003) indicated that as a result of the zipper method women hold almost half (47.5%) of the seats on municipal councils, up from just a quarter (25.7%) in previous elections. Delgado-Márquez et al. (2014) analyzed the application of this method in Finland and found that parity in gender representation increased at national, party, and constituency levels throughout all of the parliamentary elections in Finland, even approaching optimal numerical parity (i.e., 50% for each gender) in most cases. Thus, when there is demand through the formal rules, party leaders manage to find women with political ambition to run as candidates. In addition, the type of electoral system matters; women are less likely to be elected when the mayor is directly elected by voters rather than via a city council vote (Smith et al. 2012). Furthermore, women are more advantaged in districted council seats compared with at-large seats and disadvantaged in mayoral elections compared with both council seats and city clerkships (Crowder-Meyer, 2013). However, it is easier for a woman to enter political life in a proportional electoral system than in a majoritarian one (Schmidt et al., 2004).

2.2 *The MINT Model for Increasing the Number of Women in Local Government*

Based on these findings, we maintain that there are two levels --- the individual and the societal-- that can encourage women to be active in political life in local government and run for mayor. On the individual level there are four components women need in order to participate in political life: mentoring, information, networking and training. We call this the MINT model. The combination of all four components will enable female candidates to enter and influence the public arena. Note that all four components are integral parts of management studies. Employees in all levels of management need training to improve their skills, knowledge and effectiveness. They also need information about the work to be done, and the inputs and outputs that exist and are significant for effective work (Hwang, 2003; Iqbal et al., 2018). While the elements of mentoring and networking are more recent additions than information and training to management studies (Hu et al., 2014; Janssen et al., 2016), they have become very significant components of employees'

daily life.

Formal political training is rare compared to management training, but considered important by female candidates and in recent years has become very popular (Akirav and Ben-Horin, 2016; Dittmar, 2015; McGregor and Clover, 2011; Piscopo, 2019). McGregor et al. (2009) argued that it is important to investigate how particular political training programs either enable or constrain women participants from taking up roles within the political system. Barron (2006) maintained that political training could best be understood as part of a learning ecology framework. Such a model emphasizes that learning is always situated in local contexts and embedded within multiple communities of practice that “serve as critical mediators of cognitive and social practices” (p. 197). Akirav and Ben-Horin (2016) claimed that practices that provide organized training for women only, create synergy with the authentic leadership of women, promote gender awareness, and provide networking for women encourage more women to be active in political life at the local level.

Furthermore, an intervening structure to encourage women’s candidacies may overcome differences in political ambition (Kreitzer and Osborn, 2019). Kreitzer and Osborn (2019) defined intervening structures as groups that encourage women to run for political office through various means in the US. They found that many groups engage in multiple activities designed to aid women candidates, such as recruiting women to run for office, training women to run a campaign, and supporting women candidates financially. Furthermore, the informal network of female candidate groups is large, but it is not necessarily open to all women or fulfills their needs.

A nonpartisan organization that was established in order to increase the number of women in politics is EMILY’s¹ List. Pimlott (2007) found a significant positive relationship between endorsements by EMILY’s List and primary victories. She observed that EMILY’s List candidates are more likely to win their primaries than candidates not endorsed by the group. However, there are also other factors that are important such as incumbent status, total money raised, and the political atmosphere of the district. McGregor and Clover (2011) analyzed two political training programs for women only.² They found that the programs encourage women to engage in formal and informal roles in local government politics, and emphasize practical knowledge and strategic knowledge. These outcomes are similar to Akirav and Ben-Horin’s (2016) analysis of two NGO women only organizations³ that provided training before the Israeli elections for local government in 2013 and 2018, and in the periods between the elections. The participants indicated that the training programs were an important step in their decision to run for political positions in local government.

Furthermore, Dittmar (2015) indicated that when organizations encourage women to run for political office, and offer training programs, information, and resources to assist them throughout the recruitment process, the probability of women being recruited increases. Piscopo (2019) argued that, “By providing information, technical skills, confidence boosts, and access to networks, candidate training programs provide women aspirants with an invaluable service” (p. 2). However, there are three points that need to be considered about the gender gap in political ambition. First, encouraging women to run is not enough. Second, the system-level obstacles to women’s representation persist even as more women participate in political races. Third, reducing the gender gap requires the collective work of all political actors. In this respect Piscopo’s (2019) conclusions underscore the importance of gender mainstreaming, which we will discuss in the following section.

Scholars have argued that although mentoring and networking experiences are not gender neutral, they are important pathways for women to obtain positions of organizational leadership and political positions (Pini et al., 2004; Pini and McDonald, 2011; Schipani et al., 2009). For example, Pini et al. (2004) examined the efficacy of women-only networking through a case study of the Australian Local Government Women’s Association. They found that women-only networks have a valuable role to play in securing greater equity for women in management. Furthermore, the research has confirmed what many have learned through experience: mentoring and networking may help executive women reach the highest positions of leadership within their organizations or political groups (Akirav and Ben-Horin, 2016; Schipani et al., 2009). Women who have been elected as local government representatives have indicated the importance of practical knowledge. They claimed that they acquired this practical knowledge through mentors, observations on-the-job, workshops and/or training programs (McGregor and Clover, 2011).

Scholars have indicated that women-only networks promote women’s self-esteem, provide educational forums and help them develop new skills (Pini et al., 2004; Travers et al., 1997). Pini and McDonald’s (2011) finding that one of the obstacles women running for office in local elections face is the persistence of the old boys’ network underscores the importance of women-only networks. Similarly, Krook and Norris (2014) investigated the various interventions into

¹ EMILY stands for “Early Money Is Like Yeast.”

² The Women’s Campaign School (WCS) and the BCLGLA.

³ “We Power” (Women’s Electoral Power) and the “Local Council Women’s Union.”

candidate selection and election processes that might be pursued to enhance women's political representation. Their results highlighted the role of training programs, fund-raising networks and campaign funding in achieving this goal.

If, as scholars argued, mentoring and networking experiences are not gender neutral, why are they more significant for female candidates for mayor? In the interviews we conducted with male candidates and mayors they maintained that leadership is a characteristic that is intrinsic. No amount of training or mentoring can create it in those who lack it. In addition, they indicated that they did not need any training, mentoring or networking but perhaps other male candidates would appreciate having it. Some, even, were surprised about the offer.

All of the components of the MINT model are at the individual level. However, there is an additional and very important level that affects the number of women who run for and are elected mayor: the societal level. Within this level, the key component is raising public awareness about gender representation.

2.3 The MINT Model

The research model consists of the two levels mentioned previously: the individual and the societal. The individual level contains the four components of the MINT model (mentoring, information, networking and training), which as noted previously, has emerged from the interviews. And the political ambition of women. When these factors are all in place, they increase the number of female candidates for mayor. As in any management position, these elements are important for any candidate. However, as we will demonstrate, they are crucial for female candidates.

The second level is the society. Non-profit organizations and political organizations are included in the societal level. As previous scholars indicated, organizations that promote a gender-based agenda are important for increasing the number of women who run for and are elected to high political positions (Kreitzer and Osborn, 2019; McGregor and Clover, 2011).

In accordance with previous studies, the research model indicates that after an increase in descriptive representation, there is an increase in substantive representation (Bird 2003, Pini and McDonald, 2011). However, once women are elected mayor, do they concentrate only on women's issues or do they engage in other issues? In other words, who is being substantively represented by women?

2.4 What do Women do When They Are Elected?

The research on substantive representation mainly concentrates on female mayors' performance regarding budgets, policy issues, funding social welfare programs and leadership style (Hernández-Nicolás et al., 2018; Lynne et al., 2006). For example, Adams and Schreiber (2011) claimed that women engage with both general issues and specific gender issues. Lynne et al. (2006) asked whether female mayors emphasize different policy issues and whether women in local leadership utilize different decision-making processes in allocating resources compared to male mayors. They found similarities on policy issues, the use of power, and budget issues. However, some key gender differences emerged. Female mayors were far more willing to change the budget process, be more inclusive, and seek broader participation. Hernández-Nicolás et al. (2018) showed that councils with women mayors have smaller annual interest and debt repayment obligations and spend more on security, protection, and social promotion. However, Tolleson-Rinehart (2001) found few differences between men and women when focusing on the policy problems they faced in office. Indeed, men and women mayors were in agreement over the major issues facing their cities—housing, economic development, and education. Saltzstein (1986) examined the effect of female mayors on the employment of women in municipal bureaucracies in a national sample of cities. She found that a variety of supply and demand factors play a role but that the presence of a female mayor is also significant, especially in regard to changes in employment representation.

We argue that the gender of a mayor matters. The presence of a female mayor benefits both women and the general society. It increases female municipal employment, positively influences the level of municipal day-care provided, establishes gender equity committees and increases the provision and size of social welfare programs in cities (Ferreira and Gyourko, 2014; Holman, 2014). All of these issues are considered of concern to women. However, as indicated previously, female mayors are involved in all other general issues that are relevant to a municipality such as budgets, internal security, urban planning and economic development. But it is not just the gender that matters. Gender consciousness, which is defined as an awareness of what being a woman means – not just being a woman – matters as well. As Holman (2014) indicated, those with a gender consciousness are more likely to value and work on issues related to education, affordable housing, and social welfare, and are less likely to value economic development policies. In sum, we can see that both the descriptive and substantive representation of women are important not just for women, but also for the entire society.

Thus, our goal is to test whether the MINT model and women's political ambition at the individual level combined with public awareness at the societal level together create a formula that will increase the number of women candidates for mayor and, as a result, the number of women elected to that office.

3. Methodology

The study used in-depth interviews that focused on the individual female candidates' perceptions during and after their race for mayor. We conducted content analysis that was based on grounded theory, which served as the underlying framework for the open coding and axial coding of the interviews (Bernard et al., 2016). The process involves interpreting the codes, categories, and properties developed in open coding to refine the constructs and make them more abstract and theoretical (Bernard et al., 2016; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

Tolleson-Rinehart (2001) conducted interviews with five female mayors and five male predecessors or successors. We extended the number of the in-depth interviews significantly. We concentrated mainly⁴ on female candidates (a total of 95—57 before the election and 37 after the election), but also interviewed 11 male candidates and mayors. Our goal was to test our argument that the MINT model is an important pathway for women to obtain positions of organizational leadership and political positions.

In addition, we collected statistical data regarding the percentage of votes for each candidate, number of seats on the council, and number of municipalities headed by women.

Between June and early September 2018 we conducted in-depth interviews with 57 female candidates. The WePower organization gave us the list of the female candidates and their contact information. We sent all of these women a text message explaining the research and asked them to participate in the interviews. We then called the women who replied and interviewed them by phone (originally we wanted face to face interviews, but it was impossible to schedule time with the candidates, so we substituted telephone interviews). Each interview took between 30 and 45 minutes and was recorded.⁵ Afterwards, each recorded interview was transcribed. After the election, we sent another text message to all of the female candidates and asked for a follow up interview with the women who participated in the first interview and an initial interview with the women who did not participate in the study before the election. The interviews took place between December 2018 and March 2019, again by phone. Each interview took 30 minutes, and was recorded and transcribed. The interviews with the male candidates and head of municipalities took place half a year after the election. We used similar procedures to those we utilized with the female interviewees.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Public Awareness and Women Elected Mayor in 2018

Scholars indicated that, when there is public awareness about the necessity of gender equality for the entire society and willingness to vote for women and to have women in high positions, their probability of being elected is greater (Baskaran and Hessami, 2018; Funk, 2017). Our findings show that there has been an increase in public awareness in Israel regarding women candidates and those elected mayors.

Ninety women announced their candidacy for mayor. Ultimately, 72 of them took part in the election, while the others withdrew their candidacy. Some joined male candidates as their number two, some decided to leave political life and others ran just for the city council. The number of female candidates for mayor rose from 10 in 2008 (6 were elected) to 38 in 2013 (6 were elected) and then to 72 in 2018 (14 were elected). Despite the decline in the percentage of women elected since 2008, the percentage of women elected from all of the municipalities increased (2008 – 3.9%, 2013–5.3% and 2018–5.5%).

Six indicators provide evidence for the increase in the public awareness about the importance of having women mayors. First, there was an increase in the percentage of municipalities that elected women to head them. In the election of 2013 there were 5⁶ women elected as the head of a municipality, serving 3.39%⁷ of the people in Israel. In contrast, in the 2018 election 9.6%⁸ of the people in Israel had women as the heads of their municipality. Thus, there was an increase of about 283% in the number of Israelis living in a municipality headed by a woman. Second, 14 out of 72 candidates ran for a

⁴ We conducted 11 interviews with male candidates and men elected mayor after the election on October 2018. Our goal was to expand our understanding about the personal perceptions of the female candidates regarding their race for mayor in local elections. We also wanted to identify the main gender differences regarding the potential use of the MINT model.

⁵ For the interview questions, see Appendix 1.

⁶ In 2015 an additional woman was elected as head of a municipality.

⁷ <https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/settlements/Pages/default.aspx?mode=Yeshuv>

⁸ We looked at the data from the Central Bureau of Statistics about 2018 and calculated the total number of residents in the municipalities where women were elected as a percentage of the total population of Israel.

regional council⁹ position, while 58 out of 72 ran for head of a local council. The interesting outcome is the success rate: 35% of the women who ran for a regional council position won, while just 17.24% of the women who ran for head of a local council won. The one-way ANOVA we conducted for the type of municipality and the vote share for the women candidates for mayor strengthened the results. Residents whose local authority was a regional council tended to vote in favor of a woman candidate for the head of the council ($F=3.248$, $\text{sig}=0.045$). It is important to note that the size of most regional councils is similar to small cities (above 20,000 residents). Hence, we can see that greater public awareness about having a woman as the head of the municipality led to people voting for them. These results contradict Smith et al.'s (2012) findings that the likelihood of having a female mayor increases when the mayor is selected by the council from among its members rather than through direct elections. Given that regional councils are rural, the results also contradict Sundström and Stockemer's (2015) finding that regions in which there is extensive urbanization tend to elect more women.

Third, previous participation in the race for mayor matters but in an opposite way than what we expected. We conducted a χ^2 test and found that women who had participated in a previous race for mayor in the cities were less likely to be elected in the present election than women who had no previous experience in running for mayor in the regional councils (Pearson $\chi^2=9.412$, $\text{sig}=0.009$). It appears that it is easier for women to win election in regional contests rather than other types of municipalities.¹⁰ Indeed, regional councils have special characteristics. First, they are small communities that enable women to be salient as volunteers and leaders. Hence, it is easier to move from the community level to the regional level. Second, in a diverse society it is easier for the voters to accept a woman as a candidate and then the head of the municipality. In Israel the regional councils encompass several types of communities: moshavim, kibbutzim, community settlements, and some Muslim villages (mostly Bedouin). Diverse societies are more open and hence have fewer barriers to participation by those from underrepresented groups. Hernández-Nicolás et al. (2018) documented similar behavior in Spain. Third, each community is defined clearly, making it easier to create field agents in each community and increase the female candidate's access to the voters. It is easier to work directly with the voters first as a group and then as individuals. Fourth, since the last election in 2013 the advisors for gender equality have invested much more time in meetings with the heads of the regional council, provided training to encourage women to participate in the election, and offered lectures to increase public awareness about gender equality. Indeed, in 2016 a new position called the head of the Department to Promote Gender Equality in Regional Councils was created.

The fourth indicator about the increase in public awareness about the importance of having women mayors is the fact that in 21 municipalities there were 2 female candidates running for mayor with 1 to 6 male candidates. In these 21 municipalities 3 women were elected mayor (a 14.28% success rate). The rest of the 11 women elected mayor did not face any other woman candidate (a 22% success rate). The fact that more than one woman ran for mayor shows an increase in the political ambition of women. However, when it comes to public awareness and voting in favor of a woman as the head of the municipality, the probability of being elected declines.

Fifth, on average, the party list^{11,12} of women who ran for mayor gained two seats on the council. The standard deviation was 1.68 seats. Hence, when women run for mayor, their political party affiliates gain significant support from the public (81% of the political party affiliates of female candidates gained between 1 and 6 seats¹³). This support indicates that the public believes the women can do the job and accomplish the goals on which they campaigned. The public wants to see women as council members, especially when all of the lists on which women appear are represented equally by gender. The statistical analysis based on Pearson's correlation showed a strong positive correlation between the share of votes for women candidates for mayor and the number of seats their list won (Pearson= 0.799, $\text{sig}=0.000$). In the in-depth interviews, all of the women (100%) said that their party list was equal in gender and it should be this way for all party lists. Previous studies showed that in recent years there has been an increase in the number of women as council members, validating two parts of our argument: the role of public awareness and the political ambition of women to participate in

⁹ In Israel there are four types of municipalities: cities, local councils, regional councils and industrial councils. The latest category has no residents.

¹⁰ In order to address this issue, we interviewed female council members, the women in charge of gender equality on the regional councils and women from organizations that promote a gender-based agenda.

¹¹ In Israel residents vote directly for the head of the municipality or council and also for the list of a political party. Every candidate for head of the municipality must be the first on the party's list.

¹² The following section is not relevant to regional councils because the council members are elected differently than in cities and local councils. Hence, we used data about the 58 candidates who ran for mayor in cities and local councils.

¹³ Nineteen percent of the party lists of women who ran for mayor did not win any seats at all, while 2 party lists of women who ran for mayor gained 6 seats, 3 party lists of women who ran for mayor gained 5 seats and 10 party lists of women who ran for mayor won 4 seats.

political life in local government (Akirav and Ben-Horin, 2016; Allen and Cutts, 2018).

Sixth, two out of the 72 candidates were religious Jewish women (2.7%), one of whom won. Another 2 out of the 72 were Arab women (2.7%), neither of whom won. The rest, 94.6%, identified themselves as secular or traditional-secular women. As previous studies noted, it is harder for women in traditional societies to participate in political life for societal and individual reasons. There is little public awareness about having women in political positions or willingness to vote for them. On a personal level, these women tend to be less likely to participate in political life (A'li and Da'as, 2016; Waldoks, 2015). One of the Arab women candidates indicated that:

"In our village the vote is based on the *Hamulas* people are part of. In the election of 2013 one of the male candidates came from a small family; he was very educated and wealthy. I supported him and was very active in his campaign. Then I understood that each one has his voice to promote our village and we don't have to be part of a *Hamula*" (interview no. 3 Woman Before Election – WBE).

4.2 Political Ambition and the MINT Model

As described earlier we conducted interviews with 57 of the 72 female candidates for mayor before the election in October 2018, and 37 of the 72 female candidates for mayor after the election. We asked them why they chose to run, the obstacles they faced and the elements they thought would have helped them in their campaign. In addition, we interviewed 11 male candidates and men who were elected mayor after the election on October 2018, and asked them about the obstacles they faced and the elements they thought would have helped them in their campaign. These questions were framed based on the results of the interviews we conducted with the female candidates.

4.3 Political Ambition - The Decision to Run and the Candidates' Background¹⁴

The vast majority of the female candidates—97%—were involved for years in their municipalities' life before their decision to run for mayor. They were engaged in civic life (as directors of public organizations and as volunteers in NGOs) and were very active locally. Ninety-two percent of them had employment experience as managers or organizational advisors. In terms of education, 95.8% had a bachelor's or master's degree, 8.3% had a doctorate and only 4.1% had just a high school education. Ninety-five percent of them were married with small children and had the support of their spouses, who also had higher educations and worked in professional capacities. Thus, the female candidates for mayor were well-educated, experienced managers, very active in civic life, mothers of young children and had support from their spouses.

However, two women indicated that their spouses did not support them.

"At the beginning my husband was against, so I told him that if he says no, I will not run, but after I unpacked his objections, I could run" (interview no. 37 WBE)

Their decision to run was a process that took time. Eventually, they acknowledged that they could be at the heart of decision making, they should be there and they had a responsibility to be there for the future of their municipalities.

"I decided to run a year ago, since I served for 5 years as an opposition council member and managed to promote many projects in my city. I felt a great responsibility and mission to lead to create a transparent and professional management process" (interview no. 13 WBE)

Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of bringing professional techniques and skills to political life. However, the main obstacle they faced in their decision to run was financial, meaning, the need to raise money for the campaign.

"I don't want to respond to people of interest because they donated money to me. So I am going to do crowdfunding" (interview no. 5 WBE).

"I don't raise money; I finance myself" (interview no. 21 WBE).

Krook and Norris (2014) acknowledged financial support as one of the obstacles women face and offered two solutions. One approach is to create a special internal party fund for women's campaigns, while another is to provide subsidies to female candidates. The women interviewed indicated that they did not feel comfortable asking for money to support their campaign. Just three women said that the main obstacle was public exposure for their family.

4.4 What do Women Want/Need? Mentoring, Information, Networking and Training¹⁵

The MINT model has emerged from the interviews we conducted with the candidates. All of the women¹⁶ emphasized

¹⁴ Based on answers to questions 1, 4 and 5 from the interviews before the election.

¹⁵ Based on answers to questions 2, 3, 5 and 11 from the interviews before the election, answers to questions 3 and 5 from interviews with women after the election, and answers to question 3 from interviews with men after the election.

four components that they considered important to them first in their decision to run for mayor, second, before the election and third, after the election (whether they won or lost). The first component was *mentoring* – a safe place or person who had the same experience and could guide them and be there for them. Even though most of the female candidates had previous experience in management, they felt that managing a city was quite different and wanted to understand how to accomplish this goal.

"I needed professional staff that was familiar with the daily life of the city. I needed mentoring, so I tried to speak to a former woman mayor " (interview no. 21 WBE).

"Women candidates need and ask for a personal mentor who will be with them during the entire process from the decision to run until and during election day" (interview no. 15 WAE).

In contrast, while the male candidates and mayors agreed that it is lonely to be a mayor and having a mentor before and after the election sounded like a positive suggestion, they did not need one or use one.

"I offered other male candidates to have a mentor, but I didn't need it. Even though it can be important to candidates and mayors regardless of their gender" (interview no. 2, Male After Elections - MAE).

The second component was *information*, meaning learning about the bureaucracy and the rules governing it. Indeed, this kind of information should be transparent and easy to find. But, in fact, it needs someone with previous experience to help manage the entire process in an effective way. Examples include information about how to manage volunteers, how to organize for Election Day, how to plan for possible run-off elections, how to run a campaign professionally and how to use social media during the campaign. Indeed, this component is genderless, because men also need to know the same information.

"For women it is important to have all the information in order to succeed in the role" (interview no. 42 WBE).

"Election day is important event. I did not have mental preparation for it. I needed information and professional tools to manage election day" (interview no. 10 Women After Election, WAE).

The third component the women cited was *women-only networking*, meaning the ability to consult with their peer group, to share ideas, to be part of a discourse and a group that has experienced similar challenges and can suggest solutions.

"Women organizations help and support by connecting other women candidates to each other and present them to the general public as part of their campaign to increase the presence of women in the election" (interview no. 2 WBE).

There is a support group for women who run for the head of regional councils established by a women's organization" (interview no. 25 WBE).

Finally, the women talked about the need for *training* before and after the election that could help them prepare themselves to run for mayor and what to do if they won. Krook and Norris (2014) found the same need for networking and training that could increase the number of women participating in political life.

"I graduated from the first training program of the WePower organization" (interview no. 32 WBE).

"I used the training program of the WePower organization, but it was short. So I think that during the training process they should combine online meetings once a week for questions and answers" (interview no. 32 WBE).

However, when we asked male candidates and male mayors after the election about their point of view, they did not believe in the need for training.

"I don't believe in training or the need for clear information about the election process. The most important thing is to come with clear messages" (interview no. 6 MAE).

"You need to learn from experience; training isn't a substitute for learning from experience" (interview no. 2 MAE).

Furthermore, one of the male mayors argued that:

"It doesn't matter how many tools you have; eventually, the elections are emotional..... You can't teach leadership" (interview no. 5 MAE).

4.5 What do Women do When They Are in Political Positions?

The women who were interviewed after the election can be divided into two groups. The first and the smallest wanted to observe how the new mayor and the council members work and then decide how to precede (4 out of 37, or 10.8%). The

¹⁶ In every single interview, all four components of the MINT model were mentioned directly or in an indirect way.

second group, which was the largest, wanted to be a very active part of the opposition and fight for the agenda they declared they would promote (29 out of 37, or 78.3%). The rest in the second group were part of the coalition, so they wanted to be active as coalition members to advance their agenda.

"I am advancing two initiatives; one about tourism and technology, the second is about health" (interview no. 6 WAE)

"As an opposition member I am the voice for all the problems and putting them on the agenda" (interview no. 10 WAE)

Both groups acknowledged the important of gender awareness and gender mainstreaming and regarded them as part of their mission.

"My mission is to increase women's awareness to vote" (interview no 32 WAE)

Looking at the frequencies and percentages of the issues women want to represent substantively,¹⁷ we can see that building and strengthening their own political power is the most frequent (17.5%) and empowering women to participate in politics follows with 10%. Indeed, education and community, which are considered "soft" female issues, each received 10%. But at the same time we can see that women also want to promote "hard" male issues such as infrastructure and housing (7.5%), financial strength (5%), and security (2.5%). In this respect, women have begun to deal with topics that are generally male dominated. Additional issues they want to promote include transparency and fighting against corruption (5%), changing legislation regarding the municipality to strengthen the power of council members to oversee the mayor (5%), and transportation (2.5%). It was interesting to see the shift from "soft" female issues to "hard" male issues.

5. Summary

More women now participate in political life, but there are still challenges they have to face with regard to their gender when they run for mayor. We argue that the combination of the MINT components and public awareness could help women overcome the obstacles of gender in political life. These factors are particularly important for those from traditional and religious societies. Furthermore, we claim that these components can help increase the number of women participating in additional fields such as the economy, business and academia, all areas in which they are underrepresented.

Three actors are necessary to create the change: the women themselves and their decision to run for office, NGOs that can help establish the MINT components and the government whose laws can promote gender mainstreaming and encourage parties and individual women to participate in political life. Based on the results of our study, we maintain that when these three actors work together, they can help women achieve political positions as mayors or members of local councils.

Furthermore, countries such as France or the Scandinavian countries that have established gender equality by law or culture are more likely to have more women running for office than countries with traditional or religious societies. The successful marriage of all three actors mentioned above will increase the number of women candidates for mayor and the number of women running for office in general.

Logically, the MINT elements would prove beneficial to male candidates as well. However, our male interviewees seemed uninterested in them. Some maintained that they might be useful for others, but they did not need them. Other claimed that leadership is an innate skill and that no amount of mentoring, networking, training or information can help those who do not have it. Do men feel more comfortable in the political arena than women, so they feel they do not need outside help? Do women enter the political arena as if they were preparing for a new occupation? Future studies are needed to prove more insights into these questions.

References

- Adams, B. E., & Schreiber, R. (2011). Gender, campaign finance, and electoral success in municipal elections. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 33(1), 83-97. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9906.2010.00508.x>
- Akirav, O., & Ben-Horin, Y. (2016). The Four Anchors Model—Women Political Participation. *World Political Science*, 12(2), 241-259. <https://doi.org/10.1515/wps-2016-0007>
- Allen, P., & Cutts, D. (2018). Aspirant Candidate Behavior and Progressive Political Ambition. *Research and Politics*, 4(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168017691444>
- Barron, B. (2006). Interest and self-sustained learning as catalysts of development: A learning ecology perspective. *Human Development*, 49, 193-224. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000094368>

¹⁷ See Appendix 2.

- Baskaran, T., & Hessami, Z. (2018). Does the election of a female leader clear the way for more women in politics? *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 10(3), 95-121.
- Bernard, H. R., Wutich, A., & Ryan, G. W. (2016). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. SAGE publications.
- Bird, K. (2003). Who are the women? Where are the women? And what difference can they make? Effects of gender parity in French municipal elections. *French Politics*, 1(1), 5-38. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.fp.8200014>
- Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Carroll, S. J., & Sanbonmatsu, K. (2013). *More Women Can Run: Gender and Pathways to the State Legislatures*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199322428.001.0001>
- Crowder-Meyer, M. (2013). Gendered Recruitment Without Trying: How Local Party Recruiters Affect Women's Representation. *Politics and Gender*, 9(4), 390-413. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X13000391>
- Cutts, D., Childs, S., & Fieldhouse, E. (2008). This is what happens when you don't listen? All Women Shortlists at the 2005 election general election. *Party Politics*, 14(5), 575-595. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068808093391>
- DeCuir-Gunby, J. T., Marshall, P. L., & McCulloch, A. W. (2011). Developing and using a codebook for the analysis of interview data: An example from a professional development research project. *Field methods*, 23(2), 136-155. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X10388468>
- Delgado-Márquez, B. L., Ramírez-González, V., & López-Carmona, A. (2014). Ensuring parliamentary gender equality through a new zipper method: An application to Finland. *Social Indicators Research*, 116(2), 475-492. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0301-3>
- Dittmar, K. (2015). Encouragement is not Enough: Addressing Social and Structural Barriers to Female Recruitment. *Politics and Gender*, 11(4), 759-765. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X15000495>
- Ferreira, F., & Gyourko, J. (2014). Does gender matter for political leadership? The case of US mayors. *Journal of Public Economics*, 112, 24-39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2014.01.006>
- Fox, R. L., & Lawless, J. L. (2010). If Only They'd Ask: Gender, Recruitment, and Political Ambition. *Journal of Politics* 72(2), 310-26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381609990752>
- Funk, K. D. (2017). *The Causes and Consequences of Women's Representation in Local Governments* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Hernández-Nicolás, C. M., Martín-Ugedo, J. F., & Míguez-Vera, A. (2018). Women Mayors and Management of Spanish Councils: An Empirical Analysis. *Feminist Economics*, 24(1), 168-191. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2017.1347695>
- Holman, M. R. (2014). Sex and the city: Female leaders and spending on social welfare programs in US municipalities. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36(4), 701-715. <https://doi.org/10.1111/juaf.12066>
- Hu, C., Baranik, L. E., & Wu, T. (2014). Antidotes to dissimilar mentor-protégé dyads. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 85, 219-227. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2014.07.002>
- Hwang, A. S. (2003). Training strategies in the management of knowledge. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 7(3), 92-104. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673270310485659>
- Iqbal, M., Akbar, M., & Hamidah, A. (2018). The Influence of Learning Organization, Training and Knowledge to Official's Work Effectiveness in Regency Government of Ogan Komering Ilir. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijstrm/v6i4.em12>
- Janssen, S., van Vuuren, M., & de Jong, M. D. (2016). Informal mentoring at work: A review and suggestions for future research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 18(4), 498-517. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12069>
- Kreitzer, R. J., & Osborn, T. L. (2019). The emergence and activities of women's recruiting groups in the US. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7(4), 842-852. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2018.1531772>
- Krook, M. L., & Norris, P. (2014). Beyond quotas: strategies to promote gender equality in elected office. *Political Studies*, 62(1), 2-20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12116>
- Lynne A. W., Greg, C., Williams, D. W., & Hromic, H. (2006). The Democratic Sex: Gender Differences and the Exercise of Power. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 28(1), 119-140. https://doi.org/10.1300/J501v28n01_06
- McGregor, C., & Clover, D. (2011). Unsettling the Gendered Power Paradigm: Discomfort, Dissonance and Dissention among Women in Local government. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 34(1), 248-281.

- McGregor, C., Clover, D., Farrell, M., & Battacharay, S. (2009). Women's educational discourses in politics in India and Canada: Gendered differences or indifference to gender? *Global Media Journal*, 8(15).
- Niven, D., Straka, A., & Mhajne, A. (2019). Who Reveals, Who Conceals? Candidate Gender and Policy Transparency. *Political Research Quarterly* 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912919833180>
- Pimlott, J. P. (2007). The Chosen Few: EMILY's List Endorsements, 2000–2006. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*, Chicago, IL, April 12–15.
- Pini, B., & McDonald, P. (eds.) (2011). *Women and Representation in Local Government*. Routledge: New York.
- Pini, B., Brown, K., & Ryan, C. (2004). Women-Only Networks as a Strategy for Change? A Case Study from Local Government. *Women in Management Review*, 19(5/6), 286–292.
- Piscopo, J. M. (2019). The limits of leaning in: ambition, recruitment, and candidate training in comparative perspective. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7(4), 817-828. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2018.1532917>
- Preece, J., Stoddard, O., & Fisher, R. (2016). Run, Jane, Run! Gendered Responses to Political Party Recruitment. *Political Behavior*, 38(3), 561–77. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-015-9327-3>
- Saltzstein, G. H. (1986). Female mayors and women in municipal jobs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 140-164. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111298>
- Sanbonmatsu, K. (2006). Do Parties Know That 'Women Win?' Party Leader Beliefs About Women's Electoral Chances. *Politics and Gender*, 2(4), 431–450. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X06060132>
- Sanbonmatsu, K., & Carroll, S. J. (2017). Women's decisions to run for office: A relationally embedded model. In A.L. Bos and M.C. Schneider (Eds.), *The political psychology of women in U. S. politics*, (pp. 148-164). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Schipani, C. A., Dworkin, T. M., Kwolek-Folland, A., & Maurer, V. G. (2009). Pathways for women to obtain positions of organizational leadership: The significance of mentoring and networking. *Duke J. Gender L. & Pol'y*, 16, 89-136.
- Schmidt, G. D., & Saunders, K. L. (2004). Effective Quotas, Relative Party Magnitude, and the Success of Female Candidates Peruvian Municipal Elections In Comparative Perspective. *Comparative Political Studies*, 37(6), 704–734. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414004265884>
- Smith, A. R. (2014) Cities where women rule: Female political incorporation and the allocation of community development block grant funding. *Politics & Gender*, 10, 313–340.
- Smith, A. R., Reingold, B., & Owens, M. L. (2012). The political determinants of women's descriptive representation in cities. *Political Research Quarterly*, 65(2), 315-329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912910395327>
- Stambough, S. J., & O'Regan, V. R. (2007). Republican lambs and the Democratic pipeline: Partisan differences in the nomination of female gubernatorial candidates. *Politics & Gender*, 3(3), 349-368. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X0700030X>
- Style and Perception? In *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ed. Susan Carroll.
- Sundström, A., & Stockemer, D. (2015). What determines women's political representation at the local level? A fine-grained analysis of the European regions. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 56(3-4), 254-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020715215595691>
- Tolleson-Rinehart, S. (2001). Do Women Leaders Make a Difference: Substance,
- Travers, C., Stevens, S., & Pemberton, C. (1997). Women's Networking Across Boundaries: Recognizing Different Cultural Agendas. *Women in Management Review*, 12(2), 61–67. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649429710162820>

Appendix 1: Questions before and after the election

Questions before the election

1. When and why did you decide to run?
2. What in your background led you to decide to run for mayor?
3. Were you a social activist before? If so, where (locally/ nationally)?
4. To what degree was support from your family and spouse critical to your decision to run?
5. What was the main obstacle you faced before you decided to run?

6. What kinds of comments did you receive when you decided to run? From whom? Were some of the comments a result of your being a woman? Was there a difference in the comments from men and women?
7. What financial resources do you have for the election? How did you raise the money? Who helped you? What were the obstacles you faced?
8. What is the main obstacle you faced after your decision to run?
9. What kinds of tools do you use in order to increase your likelihood of being elected (social media, home meetings, newspaper articles, NGOs)?
10. What is the agenda you would like to advance in office?
11. What will be the gender composition of your list? Just women? A combination of men and women? Just men?

Questions after the election - women

1. What are the goals you want to accomplish in the next five years, based on the results of the election?
2. Would you change anything in the campaign?
3. Do you think you had enough tools before you started your campaign? If so, which tools did you use the most? If not, which tools were you missing?
4. What was your initial campaign strategy and what happened during the campaign?
5. Do you have a gender perspective? How much did you emphasize gender during the campaign? What were your considerations if you did and if you did not do so?
6. Did you place women in a realistic place on your list for winning a seat? Did you endorse the vision of an equal city or did you put the gender issue on your platform?
7. In practice, did you feel any gender differences among the people who worked for you?
8. How did you operate your campaign on social media?
9. How much did you use the traditional communication media during your campaign compared to social media?
10. Did you have any connection with the WePower organization or other NGOs that promote women in the political arena? If so, how did it help you?
11. Will you do it again?

Questions after the election – men

1. What are the important characteristics a candidate for mayor needs?
2. Do you think you had sufficient tools to run for mayor before you started the campaign? If yes, what kinds of tools did you use and if not, which tools did you need and didn't have?
3. Women who were candidates for mayor have argued that they needed information about the process of the race and the components of the job of mayor, training to improve their skills and understanding of the mayor's job, strategic networking with different groups of people such as think tanks or support groups and mentoring to accompany them throughout the process. How do you see these tools? How important are they to you? Which one of them did you use before you decided to run for office and during the race? Do you think that the need for these tools is typical for women running for mayor or have you heard similar statements from men running for mayor?

Appendix 2. Issues of concern to the female candidates for mayor

Issues	Frequency	Percentage
Improving the services of the municipality	1	2.5%
Transportation	1	2.5%
Employment options	1	2.5%
Sports	1	2.5%
Tourism	1	2.5%
Health	1	2.5%
Religious leaders	1	2.5%
Security	1	2.5%
Transparency and fight against corruption	2	5%
Welfare	2	5%
Changing legislation regarding the municipality	2	5%
Financial strength	2	5%
Quality of the environment	2	5%
Infrastructure and housing	3	7.5%
Empowering women to participate in politics	4	10%
Education	4	10%
Community	4	10%
Building and strengthening political power	7	17.5%

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).