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Interdependence Effects in Mixed-Superposition Electoral Systems: An Empirical Test on Women's Participation in Sub-national Elections

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ABSTRACT *Mixed-superposition electoral systems, while devoid of compensatory mechanisms interconnecting their proportional and non-proportional sections, may create effective linkages that exert some impact upon the behaviour of political parties. This article examines the resulting interdependence effects with respect to women's electoral participation and legislative representation. It is hypothesized that if political parties embrace the logic of ticket-balancing when forming their candidate lists in the proportional representation sections of elections, they become more willing to nominate female candidates in majoritarian districts, which creates an important interdependence effect that ultimately contributes to the increased levels of women's representation. This hypothesis is empirically tested on a sample of 139 sub-national elections held in Russia in 2003–2011, with some additional information derived from the results of 81 previously held elections. The statistical analysis confirms the presence of interdependence effects with respect to women's political participation. The principal contextual factor that intermediates the observed effects is political regime. It is shown that electoral authoritarianism mitigates the interdependence effects of mixed-superposition electoral systems.*

Introduction

Mixed-superposition electoral systems (Massicotte & Blais, 1999), also defined as parallel (Reynolds et al., 2005) or mixed member-majoritarian (Thames & Edwards, 2006) electoral systems, are the fastest-growing variety of rules for the election of national legislatures in the contemporary world. Once a rare and unusual species of electoral rules, “dismissed as eccentricities, transitional formulas, or instances of sheer manipulation doomed to disappear” (Blais & Massicotte, 2002: 54), in the 1990s mixed systems were employed in 15.3% of democratic national legislative elections worldwide (Golder, 2000: 114). As of 2013, they are used in more

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than 30 countries (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2013), including both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Among these countries, no less than 25 employ mixed-superposition systems. The main defining feature of such systems is that their proportional sections do not compensate for any lack of proportionality occurring in their majoritarian sections.¹ While the presence of compensatory mechanisms is often viewed as a principal advantage of mixed systems, which sometimes leads to characterizing them as “the best of both worlds” (Shugart & Wattenberg, 2001), the practical implementation of mixed compensatory rules, however construed, is technically difficult and may lead to unanticipated and undesirable political consequences (Bochsler, 2012), especially in the conditions when party systems are weak. In part, the current popularity of mixed-superposition electoral rules stems from their relative simplicity and easiness to understand. In all appearance, these systems are simple mechanical combinations of their component parts.

However, there is an influential stream of research according to which mixed-superposition systems are not as simple as they may seem. While there is no institutional linkage between the majoritarian and proportional sections of these systems, the effective linkages may occur as a result of the strategic choices made by the involved political actors. Such linkages, referred to as “contamination effects” or “interaction effects” by those scholars who discovered them (Cox & Schoppa, 2002; Ferrara et al., 2005; Herron & Nishikawa, 2001), were initially identified and explained in relation to complex strategies pursued by citizens when voting for two different sets of candidates. It has been also argued that the existence of two formally separate electoral tiers affects the behaviour of parties and politicians (Ferrara & Herron, 2005). The original focus of this stream of research was mostly on the consequences produced by interaction effects upon party system fragmentation. The scope of these consequences remains under discussion in the literature. Several scholars argue that party system institutionalization is a crucial intervening variable (Moser & Scheiner, 2004). While this argument finds support in some country case-studies, mostly on Japan (Crisp et al., 2012; Maeda, 2008), there is no empirical reason to deny the existence of so understood interaction effects in new democracies, with the level of democratic experience emerging as the crucial determinant of these effects’ strength (Riera, 2013). Even in countries with well-developed party systems, the study of such effects remains on the research agenda (Gschwend, 2007). Besides, party system fragmentation, however important, is not the only parameter on which these effects can be registered and assessed empirically. In the recent studies of mixed compensatory electoral systems, research focus markedly shifted to incumbency as an important factor that intermediates interaction effects (Hainmueller & Lutz, 2008; Karp, 2009).

My study builds on this stream of research by relating the problematic of effective linkages between different tiers of mixed-superposition systems to the study of women’s electoral participation and legislative representation. While reserving the term “interaction effects” for its traditional usage in the description of the behaviour of voters and parties, in the analysis below I use the term “interdependence effects” because it better corresponds to the specific meaning it has in this study. The growing

political involvement of women in the contemporary world is a multifaceted phenomenon. It tends to be positively influenced by a variety of political factors, such as the ideological orientations of the leading political parties (Paxton & Kunovich, 2003), their size (Matland & Taylor, 1997), and candidate nomination strategies (Harrison, 2002; Krook, 2010). Besides, there is an increased recognition that political culture explains significant variations among the national patterns of women's representation (Jalalzai, 2004). Yet electoral system effects are also important. In particular, there is a long-standing, empirically well-supported argument that proportional electoral systems are more favourable for women's representation than majoritarian rules (McAllister & Studlar, 2002; Matland, 1998; Norris, 1985; Rule, 1987). The few scholars who have attempted to examine the impact of mixed-superposition electoral systems on women's representation shared a common-sense assumption that since the sections of the mixed system are not interlinked, the system as a whole is bound to produce intermediate effects, returning larger numbers of female representatives in its proportional section than in its majoritarian section (Lindberg, 2004). This approach received empirical confirmation in cross-national research (Kostadinova, 2007), even though at least one country study produced different results (Moser, 2001). So far, this has entered the scholarly literature only marginally (Hennl & Kaiser, 2008). Given that the notion of "contagion" is central for the understanding of the contemporary upsurge in women's representation (Matland & Studlar, 1996), this indicates a significant gap in knowledge.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the nomination of female candidates in the different sections of mixed-superposition electoral systems occurs independently from each other, or the numbers of women nominated in proportional and majoritarian sections are interdependent. Empirically, the study is focused on elections held by mixed-superposition electoral systems in the sub-national units (regions) of Russia in December 2003 through December 2011. It has to be recognized that throughout much of this period, Russia was not a democracy but rather an electoral authoritarian regime (Schedler, 2006), which certainly exerted an impact upon the observed patterns of women's electoral participation. When dealing with this problem, I followed Moser and Scheiner (2012) in assuming that political contexts within which electoral systems operate are crucial determinants of their political consequences. Thus electoral authoritarianism enters my analysis as a contextual factor that profoundly conditions electoral system effects. The article consists of three sections. In the first section, I lay out my theoretical expectations regarding the impact of interdependence effects upon women's political participation and representation, and introduce electoral authoritarianism as a contextual factor. The second section describes the empirical data at my disposal and sets up research design. In the third section, I present the empirical findings.

Theory and Hypotheses

Before turning to the discussion of interdependence between the proportional and majoritarian sections of mixed-superposition electoral systems, it is important to

briefly overview the consequences of the two component systems in separation from each other. The essential reasoning beyond the theory according to which women's political participation is negatively affected by majoritarian rules is based on the notion that due to a constellation of political authority patterns in the contemporary societies, women tend to be relatively weak candidates (Wängnerud, 2009). As a result, the levels of their electoral success tend to be low under electoral provisions that create high thresholds of inclusion, conventionally defined as the minimum percentages of the vote that can earn a candidate a seat under the most favorable circumstances (Lijphart, 1994: 25). In majoritarian elections, the threshold of inclusion is very high. It is almost invariably lower under proportional election rules (Gallagher, 1992). Besides, majoritarian elections are candidate-centred, which makes gender a more influential factor in the voting decision, often to the disadvantage of female candidates (Norris, 1987: 130). Finally, majoritarian systems tend to facilitate incumbency advantage to a greater extent than proportional representation systems, also with negative consequences for women's electoral participation (Schwindt-Bayer, 2005).

In contrast, the lower thresholds of inclusion, normally corresponding to higher district magnitudes (Matland & Taylor, 1997), certainly contribute to women's representation under proportional representation systems. But more importantly, to a much greater extent than majoritarian systems, proportional rules are conducive to ticket-balancing. The principal motivation for ticket-balancing is the idea of mirror representation, with the party itself claiming to mirror its constituency (Matthews & Valen, 1999). From this perspective, the nomination of woman candidates can be seen as a benefit to the party by attracting female voters without alienating those voters who remain biased against female politicians. But a party should be reasonably confident of winning enough seats in order to perform as a "mirror". The mainstream literature on women's representation (Matland & Studlar, 1996; Matland & Taylor, 1997) identifies "party magnitude", understood as a number of seats a party expects to win in a district, as an important intervening variable. Therefore, the relationship between district magnitude and women's representation under proportional rules is not linear. By decreasing party magnitudes, very large district magnitudes may actually impair women's representation.

In mixed-superposition electoral systems, parties nominate two sets of candidates, one in party-list elections, and the other in majoritarian district elections. But these sets of candidates need not be entirely different. Quite the reverse, in the vast majority of mixed electoral systems, compensatory and non-compensatory alike, dual candidacy is not only allowed but also actively practised by political parties (Krauss et al., 2012). This creates a basis for interdependence effects with respect to women's political representation. Consider a party that wishes to increase its electoral appeal by ticket-balancing. This means that it has to place a considerable number of women on its party list. By doing so, it receives a simple political incentive to run at least some of them in majoritarian districts. Campaigning for two entirely different sets of candidates entails financial, coordination, information and other costs, and should be avoided as far as possible. Following this logic, political parties nominate

more female candidates in majoritarian districts in parallel with enhancing their number on proportional party lists, which is the major working hypothesis of this inquiry.

The contextualization of this hypothesis requires paying attention to the principal characteristics of the political environments in which parties make nomination decisions. While Russia has never succeeded in achieving a full-fledged liberal democratic order, its political regime of the 1990s and early 2000s can be characterized as a defective electoral democracy (Merkel, 2004). In the middle of the 2000s, Russia experienced an authoritarian transformation, as a result of which the basic characteristics of the country's political regime, including elections and political parties, became quite typical of electoral authoritarianism at the national (White et al., 2012) and sub-national (Gel'man & Ross, 2010) levels. The notion of electoral authoritarianism refers to a distinct political regime that, while remaining dictatorial in the basic patterns of power distribution and reproduction, at the same time permits certain institutions normally associated with democracy, such as partially competitive elections, legislatures and political parties (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007; Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010; Schedler, 2006).

There are no general reasons to view electoral authoritarianism as detrimental to women's representation. Historically, some varieties of authoritarianism invested huge efforts into the political mobilization of women. *Prima facie*, this concerns the communist regimes (Friedgut, 1979). A recent statistical analysis of Stockemer (2013) identifies communist regimes as one of the strongest factors positively associated with women's representation. There are certain empirical reasons to believe that electoral authoritarianism also can be good for women's representation. In Africa, where a vast majority of authoritarian regimes belong to this category, they have larger shares of female members in their parliaments than democracies (Stockemer, 2011). However, positive effects of electoral authoritarianism upon women's representation in Africa are often associated with two institutional features, gender quotas (Baldez, 2006) and purely proportional electoral systems (Stroha, 2010). Without these features – for instance, under mixed electoral rules – the causal association between electoral authoritarianism and women's representation cannot be expected to be invariably positive.

Authoritarian elections are less competitive than democratic elections. This happens not only for the simple reason that the primary purpose of authoritarian elections is to sustain political monopoly, but also because such elections perform an important “signalling function” (Gandhi & Lust-Okar, 2009), sending a message of massive support and/or the lack of viable alternatives to the domestic and international publics. On the one hand, this increases the magnitude of the pro-government party in the proportional section of elections, which is potentially favourable for women's electoral participation. On the other hand, this decreases the competitiveness of majoritarian district elections, as a result of which the threshold of inclusion becomes higher to the detriment of women's representation. Thus the set of incentives for the nomination of women becomes rather complex, posing a dilemma for party elites.

I hypothesize that political parties resolve this dilemma by diversifying their nomination strategies in the different sections of elections. Since the logic of diversification applies not only to women but also to different societal sectors, this strategy, if pursued consistently, leads to a discrepancy between the compositions of proportional party lists and the sets of party nominees in majoritarian districts. As a result, the causal linkage between the numbers of women nominated in the different sections of elections becomes blurred, which mitigates interdependence effects in mixed-superposition electoral systems. Of course, there is no reason to expect that this distortion will equally affect all parties in the system. Political monopoly supplies increased magnitude to only one party, the pro-government “party of power”, which naturally subjects it to an authoritarian distortion. Note, however, that the electoral prominence of such parties makes them primary movers in the game of nominations and thereby bears heavily on the overall parameters of the system.

The Data and Research Design

The data for this analysis comes from elections to the legislative assemblies of Russia’s federal units, conventionally referred to as regions. In 2003, the Russian Federation comprised 89 regions. By the end of 2011, as a result of several mergers, their number decreased to 83. Each of the regions has its own basic law (constitution or statute). However, the institutional structures of the regions are fairly similar. Their chief executives (governors) are key players in regional governance, while legislatures have little influence on administrative appointments and policy implementation. The main functions of the legislatures are to adopt regional basic laws and other laws, to approve programmes of economic development and to endorse sub-national taxes (Goloso, 2004: 161–175). In 2005 through 2011, regional legislatures also possessed a formal power to confirm gubernatorial appointees who were nominated by the president of Russia (Moraski, 2006a). Thus regional legislatures are secondary but rather important institutions. Membership in these bodies is traditionally associated with the elite status in the Russian society (Goloso, 1997). Prior to December 2003, almost all regional legislatures were elected by different varieties of majoritarian rules, mostly by single-member plurality, but in some cases by different non-proportional formulas (Goloso, 2003). In 2002, national electoral legislation was amended to provide for the election of no less than a half of the deputies in the regional legislature, or one of its chambers, by party-list proportional representation (Moraski, 2006b). The practical implementation of this reform started in December 2003. Since then, the vast majority of regions elected their legislatures by mixed-superposition systems. From 1993 through 2003, a system of this type was also employed for the election of the lower chamber of the national legislature, the Duma, to be replaced with pure proportional representation in the 2007 and 2011 elections. However, for a variety of political reasons, very few regions followed the national example (Goloso, 2014), and mixed-superposition systems with large majoritarian sections remained prevalent at the regional level.

Variations of mixed-superposition electoral systems are not explanatory variables in this study, which is why I do not report on these parameters, but this is not to say that such variations were absent or generally inconsequential (Lyubarev, 2011). The predominant form of majoritarian electoral rules was single-member plurality; elections of party-list deputies were invariably held in single region-wide districts with the average magnitude of about 25; the largest remainders with the Hare quota and the Imperiali highest averages method were most common techniques of proportional seat allocation; and the legal thresholds of representation tended to be set at the 5% level in the beginning of the period, and at 7% later. Overall, in December 2003 through December 2011 Russia's regions held 167 elections to the single or lower chambers of their legislatures.² Mixed-superposition rules were employed in 147 of them, which constitutes the population of cases available for my study. However, some cases had to be excluded, and some additional data had to be brought into the analysis, due to the specific research tasks on my research agenda.

The overall levels of women's participation in Russian politics, both nationally and locally, changed over time, reflecting the complex trajectory of the country's political development. The idea of the "descriptive representation" of women (Wängnerud, 2009) was highly characteristic of the Soviet electoral practices before the fall of the communist regime (Carson, 1956; Friedgut, 1979; Mote, 1965). In the old system, women comprised from a third of the total deputies in the Supreme Councils of the Soviet Union and its constituent republics to half in the local councils. The first competitive elections held in 1989 and in 1990 immediately decreased the shares of women in the national legislatures to 15.7% and 5.5%, respectively. This dramatic decrease, however, was uneven across regions. Those regions that failed to elect pro-reform deputies tended to follow the Soviet pattern of women representation, while more politically advanced regions voted the reformers in but women out (Petrov, 1998: 173). In the regional legislative elections held in 1995–1998, women won only 9.3% of seats (Golosov, 2001). The shares of female deputies in the lower house of the national parliament were similarly low, falling from 10.2% in the 1995 elections to 7.7% in the 1999 elections (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2013). Then it increased to 9.6% in 2003 (Moser, 2003), to 14.0% in 2007, and to 13.6% in 2011 (TsIK, 2003–2013).

At the first glance, the principal hypothesis of this study is easy to test empirically. If there is a positive statistically significant association between the shares of women nominated in the proportional and majoritarian sections of elections, then interdependence effects induced by electoral rules are likely to be in place. However, such a solution would be vulnerable to a possible endogeneity problem. First, earlier studies have established considerable socio-structural (Golosov, 2001) and cultural (Stepanova & Kochkina, 2004) influences upon women's political participation in the regions of Russia. Second, there is a related factor of incumbency advantage. The varying degrees of women's participation in regional legislative elections may stem not from mixed-superposition rules, in 2003–2007 new to the vast majority of regions, but rather from the fact that under the impact of different factors, socio-structural or cultural, women gained varying levels of representation in regional

assemblies before the electoral reform. In order to identify such factors, I experimented with a number of empirical indicators that feature prominently in cross-regional ecological analyses of Russian politics. Most such variables, including the composition of the population by gender, ethnicity/religion, age, and education; the level of economic development; the official status of the region within the Russian Federation; and the political characteristics of the regional executive, turned out to be unrelated to women's representation. The impact of one socio-economic variable, the share of rural population, proved to be quite visible: predominantly rural regions have smaller proportions of women in their assemblies. As empirically demonstrated in a recent study (Golosov, 2014), in multiple regression analysis, the effects of this variable are completely overshadowed by the effects of a political variable, the vote for the communist left in national legislative elections. Unlike in many other countries (Opello, 2006), where the traditional political left is justly viewed as one of the key promoters of gender equality, in Russia voting for the communists in national elections is associated with lower levels of women's representation in regional legislative assemblies. A plausible explanation to this interesting phenomenon is that the massive left-wing vote in Russia is indicative of the socially conservative orientations in the electorate (Golosov, 2014). Thus the link between this variable and low women's representation is provided not by party support per se but rather by the so-called "gender ideology", a set of attitudes (Paxton & Kunovich, 2003) and stereotypes (Fox & Oxley, 2003) pertaining to the role of women in polity and society.

In order to examine interdependence effects as such, it is essential to design statistical inquiry in a way allowing for the isolation of these effectively or potentially important factors. When solving this problem, I noticed that all intervening variables identified above could be reduced to a set of easily quantifiable indicators pertaining to the previously achieved levels of women's electoral participation and success. If a positive association between the shares of women nominated in the proportional and majoritarian sections of elections is induced endogenously, this can be demonstrated by a multivariate analysis employing a control variable that accounts for the share of women among candidates in the previous election held in the same region. This approach entails several important consequences for the design of my inquiry. First, in order to take into account the previous levels of women's participation, it became necessary to extend the scope of inquiry to elections held before the introduction of mixed-superposition systems. Second, the task of tracing continuities between different elections made it imperative to introduce chronological thresholds, thus dividing the sample into sub-samples corresponding to substantively distinct phases of Russia's regional politics.

Fortunately, solving the second task was not problematic. There are several reasons for identifying the 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 national elections, each held in December of the corresponding year, as natural starting points for the distinct series of regional legislative elections. First, due to the instability of Russia's national party system combined with the chronic weakness of local party organizations (Golosov, 2004; Hale, 2006), the compositions of actors that were salient in regional electoral arenas throughout each of the periods were largely determined by the

political outcomes of the preceding national races. Second, the 2003 and 2007 national elections were accompanied by fundamental changes in legislation on elections and political parties. Third, the 2007 Duma elections opened the period of outright authoritarianism in Russia's electoral politics, which is particularly important given that according to one of my hypotheses, electoral authoritarianism exerts its own weight upon the phenomena under investigation.

The introduction of thus defined chronological thresholds allowed for dividing the sample into two sub-samples, one comprising the December 2003–April 2007 elections, with the December 1999–May 2003 elections serving as the source of information about the previous levels of women's electoral participation; and the other comprising the December 2007–December 2011 elections, with the December 2003–April 2007 elections (and in a few cases, earlier elections) serving the same purpose.³ The unit of analysis is region. I excluded from each of the sub-samples those regions that did not use majoritarian rules for the election of their deputies in the previous series of elections. In order to avoid the problem of heteroscedasticity, each of the regions enters each of the analyses only once, which in some cases made it necessary to eliminate redundant observations. I included the earliest elections held in the given region in the course of the given period. Upon these exclusions, the main sample for statistical analysis comprises 139 elections, 66 in the first sub-sample, and 73 in the second sub-sample. Additional information about the previous levels of women's electoral participation is derived from the results of 81 elections not included into the main sample. The overall number of regions included into this analysis is 81.

The major method used in this study is multivariate analysis. Bivariate relationships are reported as a supplementary source of information about collinearities between independent variables. For the majority of multivariate statistical tests performed in this study, dependent variables had to be constructed on the basis of percentage shares, which was obviously problematic given the bounded character of the values. In order to solve this problem, the logit transformation was used to form unbounded estimates in ordinary least-squares regression models, which is a fairly conventional method in contemporary statistical analysis (Qiana & Cuffney, 2012).⁴ The obvious alternative, log-linear models, were not employed because their assumptions are not consistent with the basic characteristics of the data at hand. The dependent variables are undeniably continuous, with none of the values reaching the upper bound or even lying close to it, and very few lying close to the lower bound. The statistical results were tested for robustness with a number of conventional techniques. The results using the robust standard errors are not significantly different. They are not reported for brevity. In addition, I performed a series of multivariate analyses with socio-economic, cultural and political independent variables listed above, including those of them that proved to be significant in my preliminary tests. As expected, the effects of these variables disappeared in the presence of the share of women among candidates in the previous election held in the same region. Thus the methodological design of this study does allow for eliminating the endogeneity problem.

Findings

Before reporting major substantive findings, it is important to provide some essential factual information about women's participation and success in Russia's regional legislative elections. This information is reported in Table 1. As follows from the table, the overall levels of women's electoral participation and success in sub-national elections have been relatively low, but not exceptionally low by national standards. The percentage share of women in the lower chamber of the national parliament, the State Duma, increased from 9.6 in 2003 (Moser, 2003) to 14.0 in 2007, and then slightly declined to 13.6 in 2011 (TsIK, 2003–2013). The regional elections largely followed this pattern. Therefore, a gap between the levels of women's representation at national and sub-national levels, while noticed in some other countries (Vengroff et al., 2003), was absent in Russia. The table shows that, starting with December 2003, the massive introduction of mixed-superposition systems contributed quite visibly to the extension of women's electoral participation and success, which resulted primarily from the theoretically expected effects of proportional representation. The major difference between the 2003–2007 and the 2007–2011 series of elections is that while proportional representation continued to entail the theoretically expected consequences, the level of success of female candidates in the majoritarian sections of elections became unprecedentedly low. This is consistent with my theoretical expectations regarding the impact of electoral authoritarianism: the decreasing competitiveness of majoritarian district elections came to the detriment of women's representation. Indeed, the average effective number of candidates in the district elections plummeted from 3.0 in 2003–2007 to 2.6 in 2007–2011.⁵

Table 1. Median shares of women among candidates and elected deputies in Russia's regional legislative assemblies, 1999–2011

	December 1999– May 2003	December 2003– April 2007	December 2007– December 2011
Median share of women among district candidates, %	13.39	13.86	14.02
Median share of women among party list candidates, %	13.95	18.70	19.44
Median share of women among all candidates, %	17.59	20.68	21.30
Median share of women among elected district deputies, %	9.30	10.62	8.33
Median share of women among elected party list deputies, %	15.00	12.50	14.29
Median share of women among all elected deputies, %	9.30	11.40	12.50
Number of elections	79	68	73

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

While the substantive focus of this study is on women's electoral participation rather than on their success, it is important to examine empirically whether the two phenomena are interconnected. There is some body of international research suggesting that, once nominated, women tend to perform well in elections (Darcy et al., 1994: 75), which naturally creates a strong causal link between nomination and success. Theoretically, however, it is also possible that larger shares of women among candidates are not convertible into higher levels of women's representation. This can happen if political parties pursue the strategy of token representation, placing women low on party lists and/or running them in districts that are safe for other parties' candidates. The analysis reported in Table 2 demonstrates that this is not the case in Russia's regional elections. Quite the reverse, the association between women's nomination and success is consistently strong throughout two series of elections, and it remains strong even if the crucial intervening variable, the previous level of women's representation in the assembly, is controlled for. Indeed, it may seem surprising that the control variable is so weak for the 2003–2007 series of elections. Yet the explanation is simple: these elections were held in

Table 2. Factors of success of female candidates in majoritarian districts: bivariate and multivariate patterns

		December 2003– April 2007	December 2007– December 2011
Bivariate correlations, Pearson's <i>r</i>	Share of female district deputies, %/Share of female district candidates, %	0.62**	0.56**
	Share of female district deputies, %/Previous share of female deputies, %	0.50**	0.49**
	Share of female district candidates, %/Previous share of female deputies, %	0.48**	0.26*
Multiple regression (dependent variable is Share of female district deputies, %, logit- transformed), beta- coefficients, standard errors in parentheses	Share of female district candidates, %	0.096** (0.025)	0.092** (0.021)
	Previous share of female deputies, %	0.028 (0.014)	0.046** (0.015)
	Intercept	-4.12** (0.35)	-4.39** (0.32)
R-squared		0.34	0.35
N		66	73

Notes: ** significant at 0.01; * significant at 0.05.

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

the conditions of a sweeping electoral reform that drastically changed district structures in almost all regions (Kynev, 2009), which naturally decreased incumbency advantage. In contrast, the 2007–2011 elections were not normally preceded by radical redistricting.

The second preliminary test aims at establishing the general validity of my hypothesis according to which political parties diversify their nomination strategies in the different sections of elections. A very direct way to address this issue is to examine the frequencies of double candidacies among different categories of candidates. The results of this test are reported in Table 3. In order to make the presentation consistent with the analysis below, I provide candidate breakdowns not only by gender but also by party, singling out the ER as a separate category for each of the periods under examination. As follows from the table, the patterns of double candidacy in the majoritarian and proportional sections of elections are quite dissimilar. Of course, some of the differences in the absolute values of the reported percentages are not very important because they reflect the fact that party lists in Russia tend to be much more populous than the sets of candidates in majoritarian districts, and that candidate-nomination capacities of political parties vary. What is important to observe is that while among district candidates, the shares of double candidacies among female and male candidates are very similar, the proportional sections of elections consistently display a large gap between these two categories. This means that if political parties choose to place female candidates on their lists, they do not discriminate between men and women in forging double candidacies. At the same time, in the overall composition of party lists women remain at a clear disadvantage.

Once the strong causal link between nomination and success is established empirically, and the analysis makes it possible to conclude that political parties do pursue different strategies in the majoritarian and proportional sections of elections, it is

Table 3. Double candidacies in Russia's regional legislative elections, 2007–2011

	December 2003–April 2007		December 2007–December 2011	
	ER	Other parties	ER	Other parties
Share of double candidacies among female district candidates, %	30.8	9.1	68.1	72.6
Share of double candidacies among male district candidates, %	27.5	10.2	71.1	75.7
Share of double candidacies among female list candidates, %	9.6	1.5	14.0	16.6
Share of double candidacies among male list candidates, %	16.3	4.7	22.3	27.4

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

Table 4. Factors of female candidate nomination in majoritarian districts: bivariate and multivariate patterns

		December 2003– April 2007	December 2007– December 2011
Bivariate correlations, Pearson's r	Share of female district candidates, %/Share of female party list candidates, %	0.45**	0.44**
	Share of female district candidates, %/Previous share of female district candidates, %	0.46**	0.60**
	Share of female district nominees, %/Previous share of female district candidates, %	0.49**	0.38**
Multiple regression (dependent variable is share of female district candidates, %, logit- transformed), beta- coefficients, standard errors in parentheses	Share of female party list candidates, %	0.016* (0.007)	0.015* (0.006)
	Previous share of female district candidates, %	0.023* (0.009)	0.051** (0.010)
	Intercept	-2.55** (0.16)	-2.86** (0.16)
R-squared		0.26	0.41
N		66	73

Notes: ** significant at 0.01; * significant at 0.05.

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

time to examine the factors of nomination as such. The results are reported in Table 4. They are generally consistent with my theoretical expectations. As follows from the table, there is a strong, sustainable over time positive association between the shares of women nominated in the majoritarian and proportional sections of elections. As a control variable, this portion of my analysis uses the share of female district nominees in the previous elections, which most directly addresses the possible endogeneity problem. In fact, bivariate analysis does demonstrate a significant positive association between the two independent variables. However, both of them remain significant in the multivariate models. For the 2003–2007 series of elections, the explanatory powers of the share of female party list candidates in the same elections and the share of female district candidates in the previous elections are almost equally strong, yet the overall goodness of the fit is modest, as testified by the R-squared value of just 0.26. For the 2007–2011 series of elections, the R-squared drastically increases to 0.41, but this happens exclusively due to the sizeable increase in the

explanatory power of the control variable. The principal reason for the relative weakness of this variable in 2003–2007 is clear from the analysis above: of course, radical redistricting blurred the patterns of nomination in the same way as it did with the patterns of success. Yet the fact that the relative importance of party list nomination remains modest requires a different explanation, for it suggests the emergence of a new intervening variable in the presence of which the impact of list nomination is mitigated. In the theoretical section of this analysis, I hypothesized that such a variable can be related to electoral authoritarianism. This hypothesis, however, has to be tested empirically.

The arrival of full-fledged electoral authoritarianism is the factor that distinguishes the 2003–2007 and 2007–2011 series of regional legislative elections most visibly. In 2005–2006, the Russian authorities implemented a package of institutional reforms and political measures that led to the emergence and subsequent consolidation of political monopoly. In particular, this package included the abolition of direct gubernatorial elections (Goode, 2007; Sharafutdinova, 2010); a new version of the law on political parties that allowed for the elimination of the majority of political parties registered in the country in 2001–2005 (Goloso, 2012); and the political reshuffling of the country's opposition by merging some of its most viable elements into a new "centre-left" party controlled by the authorities (March, 2009). Given that the effects of these measures upon regional electoral arenas were not immediate, the 2003–2007 elections retained some characteristics of electoral democracy, however defective (Goloso, 2011). Thus the comparison of the 2007–2011 and the previous series of regional elections allows for isolating and assessing the effects of electoral authoritarianism. In order to achieve this goal, I employed a two-step procedure. As a first step, I examined the patterns of candidate nomination by individual political parties. Despite the 2005–2006 reshuffling of the party system, major parties remained in place throughout both series of elections under examination. *Prima facie*, this concerns the emerging monopolistic "party of power", United Russia (ER). The most visible components of the opposition were the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) and the misleadingly labelled personalistic party with nationalist inclinations, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR). The new "centre-left" party, A Just Russia (SR), was formed by the merger of three entities, the Motherland Party, the Russian Pensioners' Party, and the Russian Party of Life. For analytical purposes, it is possible to consider the SR as a direct successor to them, which allows for tracing continuities in the patterns of candidate nomination. Both the number of other parties and their political capacities drastically decreased in 2007–2011, when they were present in only 26 of 73 elections, in comparison to 2003–2007, when they contested 46 of 66 elections.

The results of the analysis are reported in Table 5. While the logic of ticket-balancing in the process of party list nomination was certainly not alien to the ER, which is supported by some qualitative studies (Aivazova, 2008), the party's willingness to nominate female candidates in district elections was always fairly limited in comparison to the opposition parties, which resulted in a salient discrepancy between the two sets of the ER nominees. This discrepancy was already visible in

Table 5. Nomination of female district candidates by political party, 2003–2011

		ER	KPRF	LDPR	SR	Others
December 2003– April 2007	Average share of female district candidates, %	12.55	17.44	14.83	18.20	14.07
	Average share of female party list candidates, %	19.04	18.13	19.68	22.23	22.71
	Number of elections	66	64	63	48	51
	Bivariate correlation (Pearson's <i>r</i>)	0.31*	0.60**	0.33**	0.53**	0.47**
December 2007– December 2011	Average share of female district candidates, %	10.32	14.58	15.38	14.50	18.65
	Average share of female party list candidates, %	22.80	17.29	18.75	22.14	24.70
	Number of elections	73	73	71	69	26
	Bivariate correlation (Pearson's <i>r</i>)	0.20	0.50**	0.41**	0.53***	0.46*

Notes: ** significant at 0.01; * significant at 0.05. For the 2003–2007 elections, the label of SR refers to the combined lists of the Motherland Party, the Russian Pensioners' Party, and the Russian Party of Life.

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

the 2003–2007 series of elections, when the positive correlation between the shares of women among the party list and district candidates of the ER was rather weak, and it became glaring in 2007–2011, when no significant association could be observed. The general reasons for the idiosyncratic behaviour of the ER, related to its increased party magnitude under electoral authoritarianism, were discussed in the theoretical section of this analysis. Besides, the formation of the ER as a dominant party involved solving a commitment problem (Reuter & Remington, 2009), which practically meant that the overwhelmingly male regional administrative and business elites received assembly seats as a reward for their decision to join the ER. Given these elites' superior political resources, it was electorally expedient to run them in districts rather than waste safe positions on party lists.

Thus the ER emerges as the sole agency responsible for the above-established relative weakening of interdependence effects in 2007–2011. This preliminarily confirms my theoretical expectations but does not liberate me from the necessity to register the observed effect at the systemic level of analysis, which calls for a different operationalization of the related control variable. A solution was found in presenting the relationship between the patterns of party list and district nominations as a ratio of the number of all party list candidates nominated in the given

Table 6. Factors of female candidate nomination in majoritarian districts: multivariate models with an additional control (dependent variable is share of female district candidates, %, logit-transformed)

Independent variables (beta-coefficients, standard errors in parentheses)	December 2003– April 2007	December 2007– December 2011
Share of female party list candidates, %	0.017* (0.008)	0.023** (0.007)
Previous share of female district candidates, %	0.022* (0.010)	0.047** (0.010)
Party list candidates/district candidates ratio	−0.015 (0.050)	−0.079* (0.038)
Intercept	−2.52** (0.19)	−2.76** (0.159)
R-squared	0.26	0.45
N	66	73

Notes: ** significant at 0.01; * significant at 0.05.

Source: compiled by the author from the data provided by the Central Electoral Commission of Russia (TsIK 2003–2013).

region to the number of party-nominated district candidates. The greater the ratio, the larger is the discrepancy between the two sets of candidates, which directly corresponds to the substantive content of the phenomenon in question. The results of the analysis that controls for this discrepancy are reported in Table 6. As follows from the table, the discrepancy between the sets of party list and district candidates was always detrimental for women's district nomination. For the 2003–2007 series of elections, however, the association is weak and insignificant, as a result of which the model's goodness of the fit does not change in comparison to the estimates reported in Table 4. In contrast, in 2007–2011 the party list candidates/district candidates ratio becomes a statistically significant predictor of the share of female district nominees. More importantly, in the presence of the newly introduced control, the positive association between the variables of primary interest for this analysis, the shares of women among party list and district nominees, becomes much better-articulated. Given that the share of female district nominees in the previous elections retains its explanatory power, this leads to a visible increase in the overall goodness of the fit of the model.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine interdependence effects in mixed-superposition electoral systems with respect to an aspect that was largely overlooked in the previous literature, women's political participation. The analysis of legislative elections held in the regions of Russia in 2003–2011 demonstrates that there is a strong association between the numbers of women nominated in the party-list and majoritarian district sections of mixed-superposition electoral systems, which confirms the existence of interdependence effects. If political parties embrace

the logic of ticket-balancing when forming their candidate lists in the proportional representation sections of elections, they become more willing to nominate female candidates in majoritarian districts, which ultimately contributes to women's political empowerment. Since mixed-superposition systems are rapidly expanding around the globe, this conclusion is important for our understanding of the prospects for enhancing gender equality in politics. Gender quotas, while certainly facilitating women's representation, may be difficult to introduce and/or implement due to the constellations of societal attitudes and stereotypes that continue to prevail in many societies. "Pure" proportional representation is not necessarily consistent with the interests of the dominant political actors. In these conditions, mixed electoral systems can be viewed as an institutional compromise that not only satisfies different political desiderata and normative concepts of representation, but also, in comparison to other varieties of electoral rules, allows for a softer, less direct way of stimulating women's political participation, going beyond the logic of ticket-balancing as inherent in "pure" proportional representation. However, the analysis also demonstrates that there are limits to the generality of this conclusion. In particular, the observed effects depend on the principal characteristics of political regime. Electoral authoritarianism, by increasing the magnitude of the leading party and decreasing the competitiveness of majoritarian elections, creates an incentive for discrepancy between the patterns of nominations in the two sections of elections, which mitigates interdependence effects and entails negative consequences for women's representation.

Notes

1. In this analysis, I follow a well-established convention (Norris, 1997) by jointly referring to all non-proportional electoral systems, including but not limited to single-member plurality (first-past-the-post), multi-member plurality, two-round majority, and single non-transferable vote, as to majoritarian systems. I use the term "mixed electoral systems" rather than "mixed-member electoral systems" because the presence of the district (member) tier is embodied in the standard definition of the concept (Massicotte & Blais, 1999: 345).
2. With one exception to be mentioned below, upper-chamber elections are irrelevant to this study because they were invariably held by majoritarian systems.
3. The only exception was Sverdlovsk province, for which I employed the data from the previous election to the upper chamber of its legislature.
4. The logit transformation is defined as $\ln(x / (1-x))$, where x is a proportion or a ratio.
5. The Laakso and Taagepera (1979) effective number of parties/candidates is a measure of electoral fragmentation. Unless otherwise stated, all numerical data reported in this study are compiled by the author from TsIK (2003–2013).

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