

Are women voters more likely to vote for female candidates?

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The research, conducted by University of Wisconsin's Kathleen Dolan, examined the National Election Study (NES) data, which provided information about voters' reactions to female candidates and whether gender affinity was related to the election booth decision. The findings provided interesting results.

While the research looked at gender affinity, and such other issues as the desire for gender-specific representation on certain political issues, and the political party affiliation of both the candidate and the voter, the research did not find an overwhelming or consistent gender gap supporting female candidates. Instead, information about the candidate herself, and her position on significant issues seemed to be more important to the voters' choice.

"As the number of women who seek elective office increases, we have increased our understanding of the sometimes complex dynamics that their candidacies raise," concludes the author in the article. "While women support female candidates, they are evaluated in the same way that all candidates are evaluated, through the lens of personal and political considerations that take many forms. Sometimes this leads to situations in which women are more likely to support female candidates than are men, but even in these situations, candidate sex may be only one of several important considerations."

Source: SAGE Publications

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