

A good deal of research has been done looking at the overall representation of women and minority groups in legislatures. Less examined has been the extent to which such groups have managed to obtain power within legislatures. Looking at half the state houses over a 10-year period, the authors conclude that the picture is mixed. Such groups are

underrepresented at the top ranks of legislative leadership, such as Speaker or chairs of top committees, while overrepresented at lower leadership ranks, such as chairs of less prestigious committees. Women of color are the least likely to obtain positions of real power, regardless of seniority or other factors such as majority-party status.