

Título: The impact of political trajectories on voting: a study of female candidates for a state legislature in Brazil¹

Autora: Larissa Peixoto Vale Gomes

Afiliación institucional: no hay

Correo electrónico: larissapeixotogomes@gmail.com

Resumen: This article is based on the premise that the exclusion of women from positions of political power are the result of structural inequalities with strong historical roots and that are apparent when a woman tries to get elected and faces enormous obstacles. It is an excerpt of a larger research that included 81 female candidates for the Minas Gerais State Assembly in Brazil and tried to show how these women fit into political life.

Political background has been widely accepted as an important factor on the amount of resources raised (which has a large impact on voting by itself) and on the amount of votes received. This will be discussed considering how this can affect relative newcomers, such as women. The particular characteristics of the Brazilian electoral and political system are also discussed, given their particular impact on female candidacies.

Women make up over half of the Brazilian electorate, but only have 9% of national representatives. In the state election of 2010, only five women were elected for 77 seats. The section of the survey discussed attempted to understand from the candidates themselves their political history and trajectory. Those answers are cross-referenced with their financial disclosure and the amount of votes received in order to discover if those variables had an effect on the outcome.

Palabras clave: Minas Gerais, political trajectories, women

The following article presents a section of the data collected for the Master's research *Female presence in the legislative spaces: a study of the 2010 elections for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais* (GOMES, 2012). The research interviewed 81 of the 140

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female candidates for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais, Brasil, on five different topics: political history, political circumstances in 2010, political views and ideology, plans for the future and general background. The section that will be discussed regards the political trajectory taken by the candidates, using the political history and general background topics. Given that the survey focused on the women, the data will not allow for a comparison with the male candidates.²

The discussion and data will be focused on the question “What political history variables had a positive impact on voting?”. Part of the history that is presented to the voters is the candidates social background, such as profession, age and social-economic class, thus making it important to include those variables.

The article will be divided thusly: i) an introduction discussing women’s presence in politics; ii) a literature review on the impact of political trajectories; iii) a methodological section, presenting the data, tests conducted and discussion of the results; iv) conclusion.

Introduction: are women less inclined to participate in politics?

Generally speaking, there are two reasons put forward for the low presence of women in institutional politics: individual disinterest from women or the traditional nature of political parties (ARAÚJO, 2006).³ However, both hypotheses are superficial, considering they do not take into account the amount of factors that influence any election, specially the election of a woman. There is an overall assumption that there are things only men can really do, and a few female exceptions. The hypothesis of individual disinterest is based on the outcome of there being fewer female candidates and even fewer elected, which is in and of itself a methodological error. In addition, for a hypothesis based on individuality, it does not take into account the idiosyncrasies of each individual, taking women and as a more or less homogenous groups. Therefore, it does not consider that the smaller presence of women in politics can be related to their knowledge of the added difficulties they are likely to face.

² There were 943 male candidates. The percentage of male and female candidates was similar in most Brazilian states.

³ These hypotheses assume a country and culture that is already relatively egalitarian, in which women are free to vote or stand for elections.

Phillips (1995) discusses the notion of informal obstacles in the path of women towards political activities in general. According to her, women face several other deterrents such as being the primary caretaker of children and elderly, which adds to their time spent working, lower wages and association with jobs that have less symbolic value. Being newcomers makes them be perceived as risky candidacies, which lowers the investment in their campaigns.

Norris, Lovenduski and Campbell (2004) demonstrate that women feel that their actions will not have any impact, making that off-putting when it comes to participation in any political activity. The study conducted by Lawless and Fox (2010) discusses how women feel unqualified for political office, despite the fact that they have the same qualifications as men, if not more so (women have steadily gained more years of education than men in most Western countries). According to the authors, women tend to underplay their qualifications more than men and by adolescence, choose more “female” areas of study, despite the fact that there are no studies that prove an innate gender difference in any abilities. This is also true in the electoral area (*idem*, p. 116). Part of the reason women reject entering the political arena is the sexist environment they would have to face. In addition, women believe that politicians should have excellent credentials and overwhelming ability – the men mostly stated personality traits that are crucial to being a good politician. The socialisation of women is part of the informal roadblocks that prevent a higher female participation in politics; they feel they need to be above reproach, in part because of how politics is a “boy’s club”.

In the middle of the 20th century, there were a few studies detailing how women participated less in politics, even making gender a predictor for voter turnout (NORRIS, LOVENDUSKI and CAMPBELL, 2004). Even though that status changed, with women participating more and more in formal and informal political activities and even voting more than men, there is still a gender gap between male and female participation.

As Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001) and Norris *et al* (2004) show, that gender gap is small and it seems to be in a trend of diminishing. The studies do not show conclusive evidence that women and men participate in different activities, with women sometimes prevailing in protests, individual action and voting. Men, however, tend to find themselves in more formal actions, such as being affiliated with a party and being city councillors.

There have been some suggestions as to why there is a gender gap at all. With some differences between the studies presented here, they fall under these general categories: available time, available financial resources, formal education, and socialisation.

The study by Burns *et al* found that men and women in the United States have the same amount of free time, with men working more hours and women having more hours devoted to housework. There is, however, a lack of interpretation given to when those hours are spent. Most women work outside the home and do most of the housework. That is usually done during the hours political activities would take place. Norris *et al* found that, in the United Kingdom, being married, having children or being religious were not good predictors of political activism. Nonetheless, women with children do participate less than men with children; the gap almost closes when childless individuals are considered.

Income was also found to be an important variable, mainly for unmarried individuals. In the study by Norris *et al* (2004, p. 39), people who were married reported the same income, but single people showed an income gap between men and women. When the income is higher for both sexes, the activism gap diminishes, but does not completely close. Burns *et al* reported an even smaller difference, with a slight advantage towards men.

Reports by international organisations such as Social Watch and the World Economic Forum show that women have equal or more years of education than men do in the Western world. This does not address quality of education or segregation of fields of study. Norris *et al* found that the level of education is a good predictor of participation and that at lower levels, there is a gender gap of higher male participation. However, at higher levels, the gap closes. Something to be considered is that men are more likely to be affiliated with formal political organisations and tend to hold more blue-collar unionised jobs, which could explain that gap.

As for socialisation, Norris, Lovenduski and Campbell reported that feeling that one is able to have an impact is an important factor in participation. According to them, women feel they “have lower confidence that they can influence the political process through their own actions” (2004, p. 44). Men and women have different knowledge about politics, with the first knowing more about international politics and the latter knowing more about social issues. These findings seem to be in tune with the idea that

the socialisation process is differentiated, giving men more confidence and more interest in politics and encouraging women to focus on issues of care (PINHEIRO, 2007; MIGUEL and FEITOSA, 2009). Burns *et al* reported that gender discrimination actually boosts female participation, despite the fact that it hinders their opportunities to get better jobs and higher income.

What Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001, p. 259) summarise is quite compelling. According to their research, there is not one sole factor that impedes women from participating, but a host of them. This means that women who can get non-political factors such as education, income and employment have more or less of an equal chance, compared to men, of participating in a political activity. This supports the argument that female exclusion is a composition of structural and cultural constraints, and not an inherent female characteristic.

Putting aside the idea that women “simply do not like politics, given that there is clear evidence to the contrary, we are left with the hypothesis of traditionalism of political parties, which goes beyond typical sexism. Lawless and Fox’s (2010, pp. 99-103) study shows that women with the same qualifications as men are less likely to be recruited to run for political office regardless of party ideology or the office that is being targeted. In fact, any difference between Republicans and Democrats can be attributed to women’s organisations recruiting more progressive female political activists.

The recruitment patterns experienced by the eligible candidates we surveyed reflect entrenched stereotypical conceptions of a candidate and suggest that party gatekeepers more actively seek men than women to run for office. Considering the heavy weight that eligible candidates place on recruitment and the degree to which support for a candidacy bolsters levels of political ambition, both major political parties will continue to field an overwhelming majority of male candidates unless they make conscious efforts to recruit more women (LAWLESS and FOX, 2010, p. 111).

According to Krook, parties tend to fall back on “traditional” types of politician, particularly when competition is fierce. That can mean choosing men instead of women to stand for elections. Some reasons for the inclusion of women, sometimes through quotas, are also debated, namely: small degree of competition; symbolic gestures (instead of strategic ones); to respond to internal party struggles (2009, p. 36). As Araújo (2001; 2005) points out, quotas may be nothing more than symbolic, without in

fact working. Parties can choose several methods or a combination of them in their selection process. Norris and Lovenduski (1995) discuss three categories:

Rhetorical strategies, articulated in leadership speeches, official statements, and party platforms, aim to change the party ethos by affirming the need for social balance in the slate of candidates. Affirmative action programmes aim to encourage groups to run by providing training sessions, advisory group targets, special conferences, financial assistance, and group monitoring. Positive discrimination sets mandatory group quotas, at a specific level - whether 20, 40 or 50 per cent - applied to internal party bodies, shortlists of applicants, or lists of candidates (NORRIS and LONVEDUSKI, 1995, pp. 203-204).

According to Araújo (2006), parties are not necessarily guilty of sexism or cultural backwardness. Without excluding the possibility that some parties or social sectors are still attached to traditional notions of the role of women in society, she attributes aspects of the political and electoral system for the unfavourable electoral results of minorities. As Gomes (2012) shows, official party positions on female candidates can vary according to ideology, but the actions of the parties are not that different.

Politics has its own dynamic and logic, characterised by a complex pragmatic dimension when it comes to the calculations of electoral competition. It is because of that logic that women face disadvantages, and not necessarily in the direct denial of support. Although such dimensions are defined by gender, they tend not to determine a priori party focus, whether it is to take favourable or unfavourable action towards women. It becomes more complicated to develop proposals for bigger changes, that implicate in the rethinking of representation as a whole, taking as central reference and a priori the (just) need to reverse the situation of female under-representation (ARAÚJO, 2006, p.4).

The context Araújo and Gomes refer to is different, given that Brasil combines proportional representation and open list, diminishing the risk for parties to include minorities. A majoritarian system implies in removing a male incumbent and replacing him with a woman, which can prove to be quite difficult to justify (MURRAY, 2014). In the case of Brasil, each party can have, on its own, 1.5 times the amount of seats. A coalition can present double the amount of seats. Because each candidate campaigns on their own, given the open list system, the party is not expected to assist any of them, moreover, only has votes to gain. Every vote counts for the overall seats the party gets, so hardly any candidacy is rejected (ARAÚJO, 2010). On the other hand, parties can choose to assist the so-called “voting-magnets”, candidates that will already have many

votes. In this way, they ensure more votes for the party as a whole, electing more candidates. Female candidates hardly ever get any assistance other than official party material (GOMES, 2012). Male candidates also have difficulties with party support but less so, and have an easier time ensuring partnerships with other candidates, attracting investments, gaining the electorate's trust. This means that, in Brasil, women know they will not get the party backing they need, and with lower campaign investment, they will not be able to face the male candidates. In the study conducted by Gomes, the overall first place for state deputy in Minas Gerais raised over one million Brazilian reais. The female first place, who came in the 34th overall, raised roughly the same amount.

Data from 2002 show that 8,11% of Brazilian women and 11,1% of Brazilian men were affiliated with a party, a difference of one and a half million men more than women (ÁLVARES, 2008, p. 905). Each person affiliated with a party is a potential candidate and each party can define the selection process for the candidates. When studying the candidate selection for three Brazilian parties (Worker's Party, Brasil's Democratic Movement Party and the Progressive Party), Álvares shows there are many factors in order to define a candidate list: electability, affiliation, motivation and if the party structure is centralised (also in NORRIS and LOVENDUSKI, 1995). Each party has rules to determine the degree of exclusion of affiliates when defining candidacies. Despite different ideologies and party structure, all presented some degree of exclusion, indicating that there is still a lot not known about the selection process. Mostly, party leaders make the decisions, with a difference only in which point of the process do they interfere. Women, in order to become candidates, must go through the same process as the men, but will probably be judged more harshly, with a higher standard. However, historic exclusion of women from politics becomes an added barrier because they do not fit the dominant profile. This makes them choose not to become affiliated. By continuing this behaviour, women never come to fit the profile, maintaining the pattern of exclusion (ÁLVARES, 2008, p. 928).

It is a *pre-scrutiny* of names evaluated by the leadership (demand) and by the hopeful (supply), as far as they can show a social background that fits the *recognisable profile of competitor with a political career valued by the political market*. In this interaction of supply and demand of names, the entrance obstacles for women can be seen, both from the lack of personal resources from women, weakening the motivation to run (political experience), and the party evaluation of those with more qualified and who show electoral strength. In this context,

the social field gives substance to the notion that while men build their valued trajectory, socially, in their profession and in politics, being that the role expected from them, women began under strong disqualification of their functions, facing difficulties when their personal accomplishments are judged, even though they can overcome that characteristic social configuration (ÁLVARES, 2008, p. 928. Emphasis added).

What are the characteristics sought in candidates?

Despite the odds against them, women have been able to become candidates and get elected. Are they assuming more of the characteristics developed by men and falling into the traditional expectations for a successful politician or are those expectations changing and accepting the characteristics that are more developed by women? Moreover, what are the characteristics that conform to the pattern? As Allen (2013, p. 687) demonstrates, the studies in this area show that the British parliament is becoming more and more homogenous, with a specific political elite that does not resemble the public it is representing. This has been an increasing world trend, with political scientists such as Urbinatti and Rosanvallón discussing the legitimacy of democracy. After all, what does one have to do to be seen a political candidate?

First, there is the notion of “professionalisation”, that is, that there are particular careers that facilitate entry in the political realm and/or teach the abilities required to become a politician. This is related in Cairney (2007), with professionals such as lawyers, teachers, academics and, more broadly, liberal professionals as a whole. These professions are seen as “conducive” to politics. Other professions put the individual in direct contact with politics, such as journalism and representatives for unions or interest groups.

Allen develops two groups, the ones who go for *traditional routes*, participating in local politics (serving in city councils, mostly) and “rising up” in the ranks, and the ones who choose the *direct route* and work with institutional politics. For the UK study done by Allen, he found that focusing on local politics and steady political participation was not a successful way of ensuring a long parliamentary life (2013, p. 704).

Participation in civil society has been widely accepted in political science as something primarily female or, at least, the preferred route by women. Burns *et al* (2001, p. 63) reported that the traditional route, “through careers in fields like law and business” was

less common for women in the United States, who preferred voluntary organisations as a means for achieving political office. The increase of the years of education accomplished by women can have an effect on that, either with women combining activism with liberal professions or forgoing activism altogether.

The presence of professionals is also noted in the French parliament (MURRAY, 2010, p. 101). Given that and the fact that women in France are “disproportionately concentrated in low-status, low-paid, and part-time work”, there is a strong possibility of bias in parliament. Murray also notes that if women representatives follow the same trajectory than men they will be much more removed from the majority of women than male representatives are from the average man. This kind of argument brings to the surface the notion of relatability, of being able to represent people who are not similar to the representative. She reports that women still have different professions, particularly skilled non-manual labour, but the gap of traditionally male professions has been closing. Female and male new entrants in 2007 had almost the same percentage of liberal professions, and manager and engineer. Among heads of business and CEOs, female new entrants had a higher percentage than the men did.

Women representatives in France are also more likely to have built their political careers from the local level, something that was boosted by the parity law in 2001. The law, however, did not increase female presence in local Executive offices.

According to Murray (2014) the qualities that are sought in candidate selection are personal characteristics such as charisma, intelligence and rhetoric, as well as visibility, financial resources and networks. In her research, Murray found that those are mentioned more often than profession or formal education. Regardless, those attributes are important in that they lead to many of the ones preferred by parties.

Representatives often follow a particular (usually elite) path involving specific educational qualifications from selective establishments (such as Ivy League universities), certain careers (such as business and law), and certain springboard positions (such as coveted, usually male-dominated positions within local or party politics). Even allowing for some variation depending on the nature of the selectorate and electoral system, the current criteria for successful entry into politics are rather narrow (MURRAY, 2014, p. 7).

The pursuit of a political career demands the accumulation of several types of resources, which can be done in different combinations and degrees. What is used in majoritarian

systems to define candidates can be used in the Brazilian proportional representation and open-list system to decide which candidates get party support. Miguel (2003), using the theory set forth by Pierre Bourdieu, explains that there needs to be cultural capital (knowledge of how politics works), economic capital (the free time to participate in politics, but financial resources can be added to that) and social capital (a network of relationships). Because of the individualised nature of Brazilian politics, candidate selection can be very focused on who can bring their own resources and win without putting stress on the party while helping it. This characteristic helps incumbents more than newcomers, female incumbents more so than male (PINTO, MORITZ and SCHULZ, 2013, p. 220). Those resources can be different in nature, but within certain parameters of variation. After discussing the pattern found in other countries, the following subsections will deal with what has been found in Brasil.

Family and personal connections

It is accepted in Brasil that women in politics rely heavily upon family connections (MIGUEL and QUEIROZ, 2006). Family politics is, in fact, very strong for both men and women, but with the difference that for men it is a springboard for the path chosen while for women it is the point of entry (ARAÚJO, 2010).

The Brazilian party system is not rooted in society and/or ideology⁴ which makes party allegiances quite fluid. This means that political agents amass capital in other areas and develop loyalty on a person-to-person basis. Araújo's (2010) comparative study of female and male representatives in Brasil and Argentina show that Brazilian representatives did not mention the party as an important influence in their political careers – the few who did mention it were from left-wing parties. There are, approximately, 30 political parties in Brasil and affiliates constantly change parties. Some are only a few years old and others have changed designation in the past years. In part because the elections happen at the same time⁵, political arrangements govern

⁴ This has been thoroughly examined and a good historical summary can be seen in Fleischer, 2004. The years between 1946 and 1964 (after Getúlio Vargas' dictatorship) saw an unstable democratic period, but one that was beginning to establish strong political parties. The military dictatorship (1964-1985) stopped that process.

⁵ Every two years Brazilians go to the polls: the elections for president, governor, state deputy, federal deputy and senator are on the same year; two years after that, voters choose mayors and city councilors.

which party each candidate will belong to (candidates need to have been affiliated with the party for at least one year in order to run).

This context reinforces the notion of individualised politics and the importance of the candidate being self-sufficient. As noted previously, parties tend to choose one or few candidates to support, which forces overlooked candidates to rely solely on their abilities.

Grassroots movements

The traditional route is seen by the studies presented here as a path from local political activism, to party affiliation, until political office, the most desired one usually being federal or national representative.

One can have both beginnings, family and/or personal connections, as well as a ground-up political career. In the case of Brasil, local politics means volunteering or managing NGO's or associations, being part of an active union, leading protests or collective political action of any sort, and, to a lesser degree, devoting time to a party and creating connections that way (although this is very rare). Being a part of social and political movements is quite typical. It is perceived as political training and an interest in politics that is not based on office or reward. It can also signal to the electorate the issues that are important to the candidate.

Brasilian women have always been active, since before the republic, despite the fact that most efforts disappeared from the history books. The military dictatorship thrust forward, in fact, the organisation of a network of movements and activism to fight it. This helped many unorganised causes and was a training of sorts for women. Soares explains that the massive participation of women allowed them to become politically aware and know their rights. They became a "new social being", taking on several demands and frontlines (SOARES, 1998, p. 35). By leaving the private sphere and constituting themselves into a collective, they managed to expose it and gradually politicise it (FARAH, 2004, p. 50). On the other hand, once the dictatorship was over, many of the internal fights that had been suppressed for the greater goal came out. Women's and feminist movements were not an exception and a lot of them dispersed into other groups (ALVAREZ, 1990, pp. 110-112).

Araújo (2010, p. 580) points out differences in motivation which affect the political career of an individual. She develops two categories: politics from circumstance and politics for a design. The difference is making the conscious choice of entering politics for whatever reason. The interviews she conducted showed that women go into politics through circumstances, whether it is because of family heritage or being active in social movements. Men, on the other hand, set out to be politicians. The interpretation given by Araújo is that the idea of power is not attractive to outsiders, in this case, women. The negative perception that politics affects the choices made by these agents, who enter it unwillingly and as a means to an end. Insiders, such as men, see politics as an end, an achievement, and plan for it. This is neither bad nor good, but it can mean that men are better prepared to fit the common profile of politician.

Professions

In Brasil, women have increased in relevant areas such as Journalism (56,6%) and Law (48,9%) which could mean that the traditional route of combining grassroots movement with higher education might become more common for women in a few years (ÁVILA e PORTES, 2009, p. 95). Another aspect in the Brazilian case is the overwhelming presence of women in the teaching fields (UN, 2010), particularly lower levels of education. Teachers' unions are strong when it comes to political activism, and can become a point of entry of sorts.

A study by the Interparty Department of Statistical and Social-economic Studies (DIEESE, 2011), shows that women in Brasil are less self-employed than men (33,5% of women and 66,5% of men). However, self-employment has long been seen (NORRIS and LOVENDUSKI, 1995) as something that allows for a different distribution of work hours, which can permit political activity. The category of employers shows 73,5% of men and 26,3% of women. That category can encompass business owners and managers among others – this type of position is perceived as helpful for an applicant and candidate to political office.

Financial resources and visibility

For most candidates, campaigning is not a collective action, chiefly when it comes to financing. Male and female candidates must find their own campaign funding, which has become increasingly higher, especially given the lack of limits on how much can be

donated (SAMUELS, 2001a, p. 32; RABAT, 2011, p. 17). Campaigns receive funds from several sources, particularly businesses from any number of sectors (SAMUELS, 2001a, p. 34). According to Samuels, companies make investments with the goal of influencing public policy and expect a *quid-pro-quo*, many times a direct payoff (ibid., p. 42).

When examining the difference in spending between newcomers and incumbents for the Chamber of Deputies, Samuels (2001b, p. 581) argues that the system tends to favour candidates who can fund themselves, whether or not they are incumbents. However, being an incumbent has important advantages, such as being an “automatic” candidate and already having an electoral base and investors. Pinto, Moritz and Schulz (2013) discuss the importance of visibility, which is more easily achieved by being an incumbent. They found that the women elected in the 2010 elections in the state of Rio Grande do Sul were mostly incumbents.

A cyclic dynamic is very noticeable: to win, one needs money and visibility, attributes which tend to increase after the first election. The system balances itself between extreme permeability (allowing new agents to enter) and the need to stand out (which demands large amounts of investments that are beyond the capability of the majority). In this aspect women are in a highly unfavourable position, with most being newcomers and without enough resources. According to Samuels, after elections, they get the same incumbent “benefits”, but he does not consider gender as a factor.

Institutional capital

Most studies focus their efforts on national office, usually the lower house. The traditional route, then, is thought of the path taken towards that goal: the accumulation of capitals such as education and funding, establishing networks, working with NGO’s, voluntary associations or interest groups, entering a political party (and developing relationships within it as needed) and, eventually running for lower level offices.

Brasilian politics has a very clear hierarchy of political offices. The amount of possible positions can be seen as beneficial towards women and other minorities, as it given more seats for all and creates new points of entry (NORRIS and LOVENDUSKI, 1995). Cases where candidates jump steps are very rare and usually connected with him or she being wealthy and/or famous. Usually, candidates begin by being elected to city

councillor and possibly being head of a city secretariat; this allows for a mayoral candidacy or, the most likely option, state deputy (but this can depend on the size of the town); a state deputy will naturally run for federal deputy, with designs to be the mayor of a large city or governor; former governors tend to run for Senate seats or return to the Chamber of Deputies. Every deputy, senator or former mayor (of a large city) or former governor are likely choices for heads of ministries.

As Miguel (2003) argues, in acquiring political experience, an agent will want an Executive position for visibility (those allow for more power in expenditures and creating policy and have direct accountability) and a Legislative position for general experience and peer recognition.⁶ That being said, Executive positions are fewer and demand a lot of visibility and funding, which has to be taken into account when leaving the Legislative (LEONI, PEREIRA and QUEIROZ, 2003).

The study conducted by Pinto *et al* (2013, p. 220), shows that the women who were successful⁷ had a traditional route, beginning, in fact in city councillor. They had very structured political careers, which seemed to have been more relevant than other resources, even political activism. The following data will show if the female candidates from the 2010 election in the state of Minas Gerais⁸ followed the pattern or not, and who were the most successful ones.

Results and discussion

For the elections for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais in 2010, there were 140 female candidates and 943 male; 81 women from 14 parties participated in the survey. Only four women were elected, with one more taking over after someone from her party had to be excused. This section will focus on what were these women's trajectories and if those related to their votes; however, it will not make a comparison with the male candidates.

⁶ There are, however, disagreements as to what motivates incumbents to change levels and which incumbent do. For Samuels (2001b), deputies who are qualified will choose to leave the Chamber because they do not have a lot of power and/or recognition. Challenger can benefit by drawing more attention to themselves. Leoni, Pereira and Queiroz (2003) believe that qualified deputies often choose to remain stationary because they already know how the Chamber works and can run for office without giving up their seat.

⁷ They took into account high voting, not election, which is also done here. Pinto *et al* (2013) also considered candidates for both the state and federal legislatures.

⁸ Minas Gerais is one of the largest and most populated states in Brasil, with over 22 million inhabitants. It had, in 2010, 77 seats in the State Assembly. There were 1.083 candidates in total, with 14 candidates per seat.

There was a high disparity of values in the amount of votes and the funds declared. Votes ranged from 3 to 50.620 (standard-deviation of 11.486,86) and funds⁹ ranged from R\$ 0,00 to R\$ 1.351.639,14. The difference was affecting the statistical tests, so they were normalised using log 10, which has the advantage of allowing the comparisons between those two variables to be in the same unit. There are three financial variables that break down the total funds: investments done by the candidate; investments from the party; external investments (from individuals or businesses). Those are detailed below. A lot can be said about the veracity of declared investments and how they are presented. There is a chance that funds are shuffled around and declared under different labels. Therefore, for the statistical tests and overall analyses, only the total will be used. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see the how the amounts differ, and the standard deviations. Those indicate a heavy concentration of votes and funds in the hands of only a few candidates.

The amounts for each variable are actually very small considering how costly an election is. 18,5% of candidates interviewed did not declare any funds – this happens when they give up, do not get elected and had little funds raised, or did not mean to run at all.¹⁰ Most (43,2%) had four figure values (between R\$ 1.000,00 and R\$ 9.999,99) and only two spent more than one million reais. This shows the difficulty in getting funds and how unbalanced the situation is.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of financial variables (in R\$)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Funds declared (total)	81	0,00	1.351.639,14	61.884,61	228.873,29
Candidate investment	81	0,00	463.200,00	15.698,03	66.597,47
Party investment	81	0,00	452.199,10	13.484,71	60.607,73
External investment	80	0,00	796.680,04	33.135,64	122.234,82
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Source: the author, using data collected for the research.

⁹ This variable was extracted from public information provided by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE). It is quite possible that the candidates did not declared the full amount raised, but there is no other way verify this. On the other hand, it is safe to assume that the declaration of funds is not overly exaggerated, especially for a state election.

¹⁰ There are accusations that parties get women to run in order to fulfill the gender quota of 30% and that public servants sometimes run in order to get paid vacation. Those are never substantiated and there is not punishment for parties that do not meet the quota.

Table 2 shows the top ten candidates in amount of votes and how much each spent. A third column shows how much per vote was spent. There is a large disparity which may be attributed to more or less party support, more visibility, but also if the party is able to receive many votes as a whole. This list, after all, is not of elected candidates and, in fact, one of the highest voted on did not get elected because her party did not get enough seats. After the tenth candidate there is a steep decline in votes, but not necessarily in money spent, indicating that there could be other variables in play.

Amount of votes	Funds declared	R\$ per vote
50.620	R\$ 1.351.639,14	R\$ 26,70
49.668	R\$ 472.939,54	R\$ 9,52
43.810	R\$ 153.266,15	R\$ 3,50
40.498	R\$ 1.223.950,84	R\$ 30,22
37.442	R\$ 928.868,28	R\$ 24,81
26.318	R\$ 206.837,27	R\$ 7,86
24.815	R\$ 29.326,23	R\$ 1,18
22.792	R\$ 103.970,48	R\$ 4,56
19.262	R\$ 38.676,16	R\$ 2,01
9.338	R\$ 38996,18	R\$ 4,18

Social background

When it comes to social background, there was a typical profile: 48,1% had an university degree; 21% were teachers and 16% were business owners; 71,6% made between 1 and 10 minimum wages¹¹; and 51,8% were between the ages of 44 and 56. Other categories in those variables were evenly distributed.

Only formal education and monthly income had a significant correlation with the amount of votes received, as Table 3 shows. Spearman's rho was used because some of the variables were categorised, which is better served by a non-parametric coefficient. All tests were conducted at a 99% level of confidence. It is important to acknowledge that the correlation between formal education and monthly income with the amount of funds declared also presented statistically significant coefficients (Table 4). It is expected that many variables will correlate with both dependent variables and establishing causality may prove difficult. It can be that education and income have an

¹¹ The minimum wage, at the time, was R\$ 545,00, which was about US\$ 981,00.

effect on fund-raising which influences voting, but it is also possible that those happen independently.

Table 3: Significant correlations between Amount of votes and social background variables

			Amount of votes	Formal education	Renda mensal
Spearman's rho	Amount of votes	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,390**	,301**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000	,006
		N	81	81	81

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

Table 4: Significant correlations between Funds declared and social background variables

			Funds declared	Formal education	Monthly income
Spearman's rho	Funds declared	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,380**	,320**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,002	,009
		N	66	66	66

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

Relationship to the party

The candidates were asked several questions about their overall relationship with their party and how their party assisted in the 2010 elections. Given that these are opinions and perceptions from the candidates, there is no impact on the dependent variables that can be measured. It is, however, possible that positive answers come from candidates with the highest voting.

The majority of the candidates (90,1%) believes that it is the role of the party to take initiatives in order to assist female affiliates and candidates. 56,8% believe that the most important factor in order to achieve a high vote count is the support of the party. The support of social movements was chosen by 25,9% of candidates. Parties have larger platforms; they control how the Free Electoral Advertisement is used and the coalition formed; and can play pivotal roles in assisting candidates to get support financial and otherwise.

61,7% of candidates said their parties have capacitation courses for women who want to become candidates. However, considering that only 13,6% said their parties actually had those courses in 2010, and that Brazilian political parties are supposed to use 5% of their Party Fund¹² on the capacitation of women, that number could have been inflated. On the other hand, the candidates believe that women do not run for office for lack of societal support (48,1%); only 13,6% said it was because of lack of party support. Only 28,4% said that party support was the most important during their election; 54,3% stated it was the support of local leaderships (community, union and/or church leaders).

Most of the surveyed candidates believe women in their party do not get the same attention and respect as the men (51,9%) and they do not get the same advantages, opportunities, benefits and power as the men (42%). This is indicative of the kind of support these women can in their day-to-day dealing with the party and its members, and that party support can be skewed towards the men, instead of a more balanced or even individualised fashion.

They were also asked about the kind of assistance they received from the party. The table below shows that most women did not get any kind of support from their parties. Generic publicity materials are in large supply, but candidates use individualised items as well. Services such as day-care, transport, and meetings in cities with easy access have long been a demand of women in political parties. Campaign events can be individual, but are usually combined with another candidate running for another office.¹³ The table shows that the majority of the candidates felt their parties did not assist them enough, or at all. Only five chose to answer that they received a lot of help, but because it was for publicity materials, it is possible they meant the generic, party-wide items.

Table 5: Assistance provided by the party for 2010

	A lot		Some		None		Did not answer		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Financial	0	0	24	29,6	57	70,4	0	0	81	100
Publicity materials	5	6,2	60	74,1	16	19,8	0	0	81	100
Services	0	0	24	29,6	52	64,2	5	6,1	81	100

¹² In order to support themselves, parties get a Party Fund from the Union. The amount is established depending on how many deputies they have.

¹³ “Dobradinhas”, as they are called, are partnerships normally forged between state and federal candidates aiming for the Assembly or the Chamber of Deputies. However, most events focus on candidates for Executive positions.

Setting up events	0	0	49	60,5	31	38,3	1	1,2	81	100
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Source: the author, using data collected for the research

Political history

This subsection deals with past experiences and political connections established and if they had an impact on voting. Variables that showed a small or no correlation were: the type of political organization they started in; if they had participated in social movements in the past two years; if they ever had (or currently have) relatives who held political office.

Most of the women (43,2%) began their political trajectory in a political party, contradicting the notion that women begin in politics through social movements. There were a few who began in student organisations (13,6%) and church organisations (11,1%). 60,5% had participated in social movements recently. There was an almost even split between women who had had family members in political office (54,3% had none). The importance of family connections applies to men and women, so it was expected that this variable would correlate with the amount of votes or the funds declared for the campaign. The fact that it did not contradicts the notion that family is very interesting; it is possible that the prominent, traditional, political families that currently exist skewed that perception.

Once again, all variables that correlated with the amount of votes also correlated with funds declared, with a positive direction as well. The correlation coefficients can be seen in Tables 6 and 7. Expectations for these variables were confirmed: having held an elective and/or appointed position¹⁴ are highly correlated, as is having had a position in the party; time of affiliation was also significantly correlated. This confirms the notion that the party is central in order to succeed in politics, if one is able to have access to its support.

Having had elective office is more highly correlated with funds declared, which can indicate that political experience is very important to donors. Appointed office and position in the party are more important for votes, which demonstrates the importance

¹⁴ Appointed offices are in the Executive level, as secretaries of the city, state or nation or of public companies. Those positions are often bargaining chips for coalition formation.

of visibility to connect with voters and how much party support can push a candidate forward.

Table 6: Significant correlations between Amount of votes and political history variables

			Amount of votes	Elective office	Appointed office	Position in the party	Time affiliated (in years)
Spearman's rho	Amount of votes	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,544**	,412**	,580**	,441**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000
		N	81	81	81	81	77

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

Table 7: Significant correlations between Funds declared and political history variables

			Funds declared	Elective office	Appointed office	Position in the party	Time affiliated (in years)
Spearman's rho	Funds declared	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,607**	,369**	,457**	,431**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,002	,000	,000
		N	66	66	66	66	63

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

Given that spending money seems to be so important to a campaign it is relevant to treat it as a dependent variable and see how strong its relationship with other variables is. So, what happens when funds declared is seen as an independent variable and correlated with the amount of votes received? It was demonstrated above how crucial financing a campaign is and how uneven it can be in Brasil. Because they are both continuous, and normalised, it is possible to use the Pearson coefficient. The table below shows a very strong relationship between the two variables, with a coefficient of 0,852 and significance of 0,000.

		Amount of votes	Funds declared
Amount of votes	Pearson Correlation	1	,852**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	81	66
Funds declared	Pearson Correlation	,852**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	66	66

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

To explore further this relationship, an OLS regression was done with the relevant variables. The models below show that once funds declared and having held elective office are included, little else matters. The model with all the variables is shown below. The adjusted square, the preferred measure for small samples shows that this model explains 74% of the variance of the dependent variable. Variables that did not show any effect were: age, year the political trajectory began, and how long were the candidates affiliated to the party, having had appointed office, and having had a party position. Elective office and family in politics had a small and similar impact. The F-test, which displays the strength of the model, was 23,739.¹⁵

Removing all the variables except for funds declared gives an adjusted R square of 0,722, that is, it explains 72,2% of the variance of the dependent variable. The F-test was 170,099.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,882 ^a	,779	,746	,36179
a. Predictors: (Constant), party position, political trajectory began (year), family in office, age, appointed office, funds declared, time in the party (years), elective office				
b. Dependent Variable: amount of votes				

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2,007	10,887		-,184	,854

¹⁵ There is no parameter for this determination – the higher the better.

Funds declared	,538	,084	,624	6,398	,000
Age	,002	,005	,028	,420	,676
Political trajectory began (year)	,001	,005	,020	,244	,808
Time in the party (years)	,015	,011	,124	1,315	,194
Family in office	,224	,102	,156	2,194	,033
Elective office	,436	,200	,232	2,183	,033
Appointed office	-,101	,140	-,062	-,726	,471
Party position	,006	,004	,099	1,505	,138

a. Dependent Variable: Amount of votes

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

As Table 2 demonstrated, a lot of money was spent for only a few votes; this could mean that the importance of money is over expressed. Therefore, the models was adjusted several, excluding the most important variables, in order to visualise the impact of variables known to be key, but that were being overshadowed. This means that the predictability of the model was significantly lowered, however what was being looked for is the impact of a single relationship within the array of variables – the fact that the strength of its relationship with the dependent variable is smaller does not mean it is not significant.

A second model, without the funds declared, kept having held elective office as the most relevant predictor. For the sake of brevity and clarity, the following table will show a summary of all the models and the relevant results. After the fourth model, the regression lost all significance.

	Significant predictors	Adjusted R ²	F-test	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t value	Sig.
Model 1	Elective office	0,344	6,700	0,448	3,214	0,002
Model 2 (without elective office)	Appointed office	0,257	5,378	0,305	2,772	0,007
Model 3 (without appointed office)	Time in the party (years)	0,187	4,494	0,393	2, 931	0,005
Model 4 (without time in the party (years))	Political trajectory began (year)	0,101	3,212	-0,357	-3,258	0,002

Source: the author, using data collected for the research

One very interesting result came out of these regressions: at no point did having a family member having had political office was a good predictor of the candidates votes. Despite the correlation it had previously and its presence in the first OLS regression, it is possible that its overall impact is negligible, contrary to what is commonly believed.

Other assumptions made based on the literature were confirmed. First, elective office offers the best platform for candidates, making incumbency a high value ambition. Decisions about running for office, therefore, depend on the level of difficulty achieving it, reinforcing the hierarchical nature of political positions in Brasil. Appointed office offers some visibility and experience, but candidates are often criticised when they have not had any electoral experience.

The time spent in the same party is an interesting variable: only 22,2% of candidates belonged to the same party for ten years or more. It is possible that in other countries that variable is more significant and a better predictor.

When the candidate began her political trajectory had a small impact, but a significant one. With age not being a factor, it indicates that the commitment to a political life could be a key characteristic.

Conclusion

This article proposed to investigate what were the main factors that influenced votes for women in the 2010 election for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais. The first section dealt with women's interest and ability to participate in politics and a few reasons as to why they are not more present in party lists. Studies show that women do not have a smaller inclination for politics than men, but are less encouraged towards it. In the middle of the 20th century, this meant that women hardly participated at all. Nowadays, the activism gap has shrunk nearly to extinction in Western countries, showing that women do have an interest in politics. Nonetheless, they participate in different ways and follow different topics.

As Walby (1990; 1997) demonstrated, patriarchal notions do not vanish into thin air; they evolve and have become more subtle. When it comes to political participation, women tend to follow topics that are more associated with femininity and participate in less formal ways. Even when they are more than qualified, women feel they do not have the necessary attributes to be a politician and know that it is a risky endeavour personally, given the amount of financial resources and time and the possibility of facing discrimination. Parties do not see a need to encourage women to affiliate or run, even left-wing parties who are associated with women's and feminist issues. This leads

women to believe they are not welcome. In countries with a majoritarian system, this can be more harshly felt, given the low number of available candidacies.

The second part of the article dealt with what are the most desired characteristics for possible candidates by the main gatekeepers, the political parties. It is noticeable that the amount of involvement from a party depends, in part, on the institutional rules and what role they play in elections and government. Brazilian candidates are elected individually, but govern as parties, creating scattered elections and unusual connections and deals. They have two agendas: getting the most amount of votes collectively (which decides how many seats the party gets) and getting the “right” candidates the most amount of votes. With this in mind, parties will become more involved in a campaign if it has a chance to bring many votes on its own. The less it has to be involved, the better, which encourages the development of a “successful” candidate, someone who will get votes no matter what.

Authors more or less agree that the *traditional route* is becoming established with a community before running, while also getting a higher degree in a liberal profession. There are shortcuts, such as working directly with a legislator or even becoming a figurehead in a party. Brazil’s most voted legislative representative is a famous clown, who garnered more than one million votes and went on to be one of the most present and active deputy during the last legislature. Because of him, dozens of other candidates from the same party were also elected. The “fame route”, however, is rare, and this was an exceptional, but symbolic case.

Candidates are expected to have certain personal traits, some of which come with training, such as the ability to debate. They are also expected to raise their own funds and run, essentially, without any party support. Women have been excluded from the construction of this mould and, when they do decide to run, lack the necessary skill set and the funds. Women have lower incomes, less valued jobs and fewer financial holdings (UN, 2010).

Using statistical tests on data collected from a survey and the Superior Electoral Court, the findings show that financial resources are the most important factor in predicting the outcome of an election. Nonetheless, other variables are shown to be relevant. The fact that votes are counted first to the party in order to divide seats can determine that the “biggest spender” might not get a seat after all. In addition, once finances were removed

from the tests, other aspects of an electoral campaign became relevant. Other resources, such as having had an appointed office, a position within the party, and commitment to the party and political life are also essential, but to smaller degree.

Financial resources enable the candidate to have better staff and marketing, as well as garner support with the party and other candidates. An elective office provides visibility and indicates experience to the voters, making it easier to raise funds. Therefore, as Miguel (2003) stated, the hierarchy of elective office is necessary to explain a candidate's successful first election. Most of the surveyed candidates had not yet held any type of political office; in a municipal election, they might have been elected given that it is less demanding of resources.

The overwhelming part that financial resources plays in Brazilian political life is an enormous barrier for newcomers. The demands for public financing of campaigns or capping investments in campaigns by large businesses are based on findings such as these, which suggest that rules of the sort can equalise the competition. In this way, regardless of income, candidates have the same amount to spend.

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