

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

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Abstract

The following article uses a section from the survey Female presence in legislative spaces: a study of the 2010 elections for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais to see if those candidates' political trajectories differ from men's, and what were the variables with the most impact over voting. Political background has been accepted as an important factor on the amount of resources raised and votes received. This is discussed considering how this can affect newcomers, such as women. The data is comprised of a survey and financial disclosure and a linear regression was conducted to assess the impact of each variable. The article concludes that the women surveyed followed similar trajectories as men and corroborates the current knowledge that the variable with most impact is having held elective office. This can only be indicated, given the overall impact the financial variable and how it overshadowed the role of other variables.

Keywords

Brazil, campaign finance, political trajectories, women

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Introduction

The following article presents 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). Eighty-one of the 140 female candidates for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais, Brazil, were surveyed on five topics: political history, political circumstances in 2010, political views and ideology, plans for the future and general background. Using several key variables from the survey the article focuses on the question “*What political history variables had a positive impact on voting?*”.

Elections demand money, party support, leaderships' support, being known by the electorate, several competences (such as public speaking), among others. Those demands lay heavily upon minorities, including women, who have recently joined the political arena and are unfamiliar with navigating those waters. They also face added obstacles, such as prejudice, higher expectations, the perception of being a risk, and lacking political experience (Álvares 2008; Murray 2008; 2010; 2014). An investigation into women's political trajectories may demonstrate if they are following men's footsteps or if they have a different approach to being elected. If so, that means different pathways, such as careers or involvement with social movements might be more or less relevant to women.

The study conducted here is not an attempt to solve that question, but it is a contribution to its answer. The article will be divided thusly: i) a literature review discussing women's participation in politics and the impact of political trajectories; iii) a methodological section; iv) an analysis section, presenting the data, tests and discussion; iv) conclusion.

Literature review

There are two areas of interest here. One inquires if women are as inclined as men towards politics, if they participate, how, and in what circumstances. The other, studies the

characteristics that appear to be relevant when becoming a candidate and, for the case at hand, if there are any particularities when it comes to discussing female candidates.

Are women less inclined to participate in politics?

There are two general reasons for women's low presence in institutional politics: individual disinterest from women or traditionalism of political parties (Araújo 2006).² Both are superficial, considering they do not take into account the amount of factors that influence elections, specially a woman's election. The individual disinterest hypothesis is based on the outcome of there being fewer female candidates and even fewer elected, which is itself a methodological error (Allen 2013a). In addition, it does not account for individual idiosyncrasies, taking women as a somewhat homogenous group.

Phillips (1995) discusses informal obstacles in women's path towards political activities, arguing women face several other deterrents: being the primary caretaker of children and elderly, lower wages and association with jobs that have less symbolic value. Being newcomers makes them perceived as risky candidacies, which lowers the investment in their campaigns (Murray 2010a). Gender socialisation creates barriers that might affect political ambitions. For instance, marriage in which "women assume the majority of household labor and child care responsibilities", leaves them without time or financial resources to participate in politics (Lawless 2012 apud Allen 2013a: 150).

Norris, Lovenduski and Campbell (2004) demonstrate women feel their actions will not have an impact, discouraging them when it comes to participating in political activities. The study by Lawless and Fox (2010) discusses how women feel unqualified for political office, despite the fact they have, at least, the same qualifications as men. They argue women tend to underplay their qualifications and by adolescence choose more "feminine" areas, although there are no studies proving an innate gender difference in any abilities. This is also true in the electoral area (idem: 116). Part of the reason women reject entering the political arena is the sexist environment they would face (Allen 2013a; Murray 2014). Additionally, women believe

² These hypotheses assume a country and culture that is already relatively egalitarian, in which women are free to vote or stand for elections.

politicians should have excellent credentials and overwhelming ability. Men mostly stated personality traits that are crucial to being a good politician (Lawless and Fox 2010). Gender socialisation is part of the informal roadblocks that prevent higher female participation in politics; they feel they need to be above reproach, partially because of how politics is a “boy’s club”.

The first studies conducted on political gender gap in the middle of the 20th century showed a large difference, with women participating and even voting less than men. That gap has now narrowed, but not completely closed (Burns *et al* 2001; Norris *et al* 2004). Studies do not show conclusive evidence that women and men participate in different activities, but they indicate women sometimes prevail in protests, individual action and voting. Men tend to find themselves in formal actions, such as being affiliated with a party and being city councillors.

When income brackets are higher, the gap nearly closed in both studies, still with a slight advantage towards men. At higher levels of education, the participation gap closes (Norris *et al* 2004). A possible explanation is that men are more likely to be affiliated with formal political organisations and tend to hold blue-collar, unionised jobs more often.

Norris *et al* (2004) reported that feeling the ability 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: 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 concur 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; Murray 2008; Miguel and Feitosa 2009). Burns *et al* (2001) reported that gender discrimination actually boosts female participation, despite the fact that it hinders their opportunities to get better jobs and higher income.

According to Burns *et al* (2001: 259), there is not one factor that impedes women from participating. Women who can get non-political factors such as education, income and

employment have roughly 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. Lawless (2012 apud Allen 2013a), found in the United States there was gender parity in the pool of eligible political candidates, but men were more likely to decide to run. Allen (2013a) found a similar result in the United Kingdom, with male local councillors 10% more likely to run for Parliament than female councillors.

Research has found that income and education being equal, men and women participate in politics, informally and formally. That would account for individual interest, but are parties, political gatekeepers in the path for elective office, interested in electing women? Lawless and Fox (2010: 99-103) and Krook (2009: 36) show that parties avoid risk, and female candidates are perceived as risky. Parties have several ways of supporting women (Norris and Lovenduski 1995), from rhetorical and symbolic gestures to affirmative action and will choose to use those tools when they would benefit the whole party, regardless of ideology. Allen (2013a) found that the two most relevant groups for female councillors when it came to encouraging them to run for higher office were the two least likely to do it: party officials and their families.

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 attached to patriarchal notions, she attributes aspects of the political and electoral system for minorities' unfavourable electoral results. As Gomes (2012) and Lawless and Fox (2010) show, official party positions on female candidates can vary according to ideology, but parties' actions are not that different. The "calculations of electoral competition" (Araújo 2006: 4) are the most important aspect when deciding candidacies and that shifts the focus from making a just decision that would reverse female under-representation.

Álvares (2008) shows there are many factors in defining a candidate list: electability, affiliation, motivation and party structure centralisation. Each party has rules to determine the affiliates' degree of exclusion when defining candidacies. Despite different ideologies and party structure, all parties studied presented some degree of exclusion, indicating much is unknown

about the selection process. Mostly, party leaders make the decisions, differentiating only in which point of the process they interfere. Women must go through the same process as the men, but are likely to be judged more harshly, with a higher standard. Historic exclusion of women from politics becomes an added barrier because they do not fit the dominant profile (Murray 2010b). This makes them choose not to become affiliated or run. By continuing this behaviour, women never come to fit the profile, maintaining the pattern of exclusion (Álvares 2008: 928).

Araújo (2010: 580) distinguishes motivations that affect individual political careers. She develops two categories: *politics from circumstance* and *politics for a design*. The interviews 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. Her interpretation is that the idea of power is unattractive to outsiders. There is a negative perception that politics affects the choices made by these agents, who enter it unwillingly and as a means to an end. Insiders 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.

What are the characteristics sought in candidates?

Parliaments are becoming more homogenous, housing a political elite that does not represent the majority of the population (Allen 2013b: 687; Murray 2010b: 101). This comes from the development of pathways that facilitate entry in the political arena and/or teach the abilities required to become a politician, including careers such as lawyers, teachers, academics and, more broadly, liberal professionals. Other professions put the individual in direct contact with politics, such as journalism and representatives for unions or interest groups (Cairney 2007). Allen (2013b: 704) also discusses the idea of *traditional and direct routes*, respectively, “rising up” in the ranks and working directly in politics.

Burns *et al* (2001: 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.

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. 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. There is a particular pathway towards becoming a representative, including high-ranking universities, specific careers and “springboard positions” within local or party politics (Murray 2014: 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 majoritarian systems use to define candidates might be used in the Brazilian proportional representation and open-list system to decide which candidates get party support. Miguel (2003) explains that there needs to be cultural capital (knowing how politics works), economic capital (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. This helps incumbents more than newcomers, female incumbents more so than male (Pinto, Moritz and Schulz 2013: 220). Those resources can be different in nature, but within certain parameters of variation.

In Brazil, the following resources are highly relevant and may be used in different degrees by candidates: family and personal connections; grassroots movements; professional trajectory; financial resources and visibility; institutional capital. It has been widely accepted that in Brazil women rely heavily upon family connections (Miguel and Queiroz 2006), although family politics is, in fact, important for both sexes. The difference is that for men it is a springboard for the path chosen while for women it is the point of entry (Araújo 2010).

The traditional route is seen as a path from local political activism, to party affiliation, until political office, the most desired one usually being at the national level. For Brazil, local politics means volunteering or managing NGO's or associations, being part of an active union, leading collective political action. These are perceived as political training and an interest in politics that is not based on office or reward. Additionally, to a lesser degree, devoting time to a party and creating connections that way. It can also signal to the electorate the issues that are important to the candidate. Soares explains that women's massive participation against the civil-military dictatorship allowed them to become politically aware and aware of their rights. They became a "new social being" (Soares 1998: 35). By leaving the private sphere and constituting themselves into a collective, they managed to expose it and gradually politicise it (Farah 2004: 50). However, after the dictatorship ended, 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: 110-112).

Women have followed men into careers that can springboard into politics, particularly Journalism and Law (Ávila and Portes 2009: 95), which can mean a combination of traditional route and grassroots. Women are overwhelmingly present in teaching fields (UN 2010) and teachers' unions are very politically active. Women are less present in self-employed or employer categories (DIEESE 2011), which can mean less available time for political activity.

Campaigning is not a collective action, chiefly when it comes to financing. All 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 2001b: 32; Rabat 2011: 17). Campaigns receive funds from several sources, particularly businesses from any number of sectors (Samuels 2001b: 34). 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 and the need to stand out. Women are in a highly unfavourable position, with most being newcomers and without enough resources. According to Samuels (2001a), after elections, newcomers get the same incumbent "benefits", but he does not consider gender as a factor.

As Miguel (2003) argues, in acquiring political experience, an agent will want an Executive position for visibility and a Legislative position for general experience and peer recognition. In Brazil, political careers mostly follow a specific, hierarchical trajectory, alternating Executive and Legislative positions in municipal, state and federal levels, and including appointed offices along with elective offices. 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).

Pinto *et al* (2013: 220), shows that women who were successful³ had a traditional route, beginning, in fact as city councillors. 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 Gerais followed the pattern, and who were the most successful ones.

Conceptualization, operationalization and methodology

In 2010, there were over 15 million voters in the state of Minas Gerais, one of the largest electoral districts in Brazil. It had, in 2010, 77 seats in the State Assembly. There were 1.083 candidates in total, with 14 candidates per seat. Because the focus were female candidates and their political lives, it was decided to survey only them, and to attempt to contact all. Therefore, the sample is one of chance – the difference being parties that declined to give contact information and candidates who were not found. All candidates who were contacted chose to participate. 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.

The goal is to search for the variable which garnered more. It is clear that with a small case number from a particular year in a state election, this will not answer that question definitively, but it will provide a piece of the puzzle regarding women's participation in elections. Details

³ 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.

regarding the methodology are explained further with the data analysis. A linear regression analysis was used to determine the impact of each variable, as well as descriptive statistics.

Analysis and findings

There was a high disparity of values for votes and for funds declared. Votes ranged from 3 to 50.620 (standard-deviation of 11.487; mean is 625) and funds⁴ ranged from R\$ 0,00 to R\$ 1.351.639,14 (standard-deviation of R\$ 228.873,29; mean is R\$ 61.884,61). The variance 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. Much can be said about the veracity of declared investments and how they are presented. There is a chance funds are shuffled around and declared under different labels. Therefore, for statistical tests and overall analyses, only the total will be used.

The amounts for each variable are actually very small considering how costly an election is. Some candidates (18,5%) did not declare any funds – this happens when they give up; are not elected; had little funds raised; did not mean to run at all.⁵ Most (43,2%) had four figure values and only two spent more than one million reais. This shows the difficulty in getting funds and how unbalanced the situation is, even when considering women only.

Table 1 shows the top ten candidates in amount of votes, how much each spent, and how much per vote was spent. After the tenth candidate there is a steep decline in votes, but not in money spent; adding to the fact that some spent much less and garnered so many votes demonstrates that other variables are important.

Table 1: Top ten in amount votes (in R\$)
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⁴ This variable was extracted from public information from the Superior Electoral Court (TSE). It is possible that the candidates did not declare the full amount, but there is no way to verify this. However, it is safe to assume that the declaration of funds is not overly exaggerated, given current oversight.

⁵ There are accusations that parties get women to run to fill the 30% quota and public servants sometimes run to get paid vacation. Those are yet to be substantiated and there is no punishment for parties that do not meet the quota.

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

Source: Author, from data collect from the Superior Electoral Court.

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 wages⁶; and 51,8% were between the ages of 44 and 56. Other categories in those variables were evenly distributed.

Only education and monthly income had a significant correlation with votes received (Table 2). 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 education and monthly income with funds declared also presented statistically significant coefficients (Table 3). It was expected that many variables would correlate with both dependent variables and establishing causality may prove difficult. It can be that education and income have an effect on fund-raising which influences voting, but it is also possible that those happen independently.

Table 2: Significant correlations between Amount of votes and social background variables

			Amount of votes	Formal education	Monthly income
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: Author.

Table 3: Significant correlations between Funds declared and social background variables

⁶ The minimum wage, at the time, was R\$ 545,00, which is, approximately, US\$ 981,00.

			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: Author.

Relationship to the party

The candidates were asked questions about their relationship with their party and how it assisted them in 2010. These are opinions and perceptions from the candidates, so is no measurable impact on the dependent variables. It could be that women who felt they achieved more votes than expected felt better about their parties participation, but the disparity in votes makes that assessment difficult to ascertain.

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

Of the candidates, 61,7% said their parties have training for women who want to run. Considering that only 13,6% said their parties *actually* had courses in 2010, that number could be inflated. Nonetheless, they believe that women do not run for office for lack of societal support (48,1%); 13,6% said it was because of lack of party support. This could come from a perception that women do not even consider affiliation, that is, societal support comes before 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, unions and/or church leaders).

Most 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 receive in their day-to-day dealings with party members, and that party support can be skewed towards the men.

Most asserted they did not get any kind of material support from their parties. Generic publicity materials are in large supply, but candidates use individualised items also. Services such as day-care, transport, and meetings in cities with easy access have long been a demand of women. Campaign events can be individual, but are usually combined with another candidate running for another office, usually in the Executive, and participating in such an event can make quite a difference. 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 party-wide items.

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 participated in social movements in the past two years; if they had (previously or at the time of the survey) 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. A few who began in student organisations (13,6%) and church organisations (11,1%). Many (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 present a correlation. The fact that it did not contradicts current beliefs; it is possible that the prominent, traditional, political families that currently exist skewed that perception.

All variables that correlated with the amount of votes also correlated with funds declared, with a positive direction (Tables 4 and 5). Expectations were confirmed: having held an elective and/or appointed position⁷ 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 to succeed in politics, if one is able to have access to its support.

⁷ Appointed offices are, at the Executive level, secretaries for the city, state or nation or directors of public companies. Those positions are often bargaining chips for coalition formation.

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

Table 4: 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: Author.

Table 5: 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: Author.

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. 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.

Table 6: Correlation between Amount of votes and funds declared

		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: Author.

To explore further this relationship, a multiple regression analysis was carried out 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, period of affiliation, 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 23,739.⁸

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.

Table 7: Model Summary^b

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				

⁸ There is no parameter for this determination – the higher the better.

Table 7.1 Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2,007	10,887		-,184	,854
	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: Author.

As Table 1 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 model was adjusted several times, excluding the most important variables one by one, to visualise the impact of variables known to be key from the literature, 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 second model 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.

Table 8: Regression models summary (without Funds declared)						
	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: Author.

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 model, it is possible that its overall impact is negligible, contrary to what is believed. It was definitely the case for the group studied. The prejudice against women who achieve through their family can be detrimental instead of helpful, and that should be a future line of enquiry.

Other assumptions were confirmed. 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 Brazil. 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 the main factors that influenced votes for women in the 2010 election for the State Assembly of Minas Gerais. The literature review dealt with women's interest and ability to participate formally in politics and what are the characteristics sought after in candidates. Studies show that women do not have a smaller inclination for politics than men, but are less encouraged towards it. The participation gap in Western countries has narrowed; nonetheless, women still participate in different ways and follow different topics.

As Walby (1991; 1997) demonstrated, patriarchal notions evolve and 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 qualified, women feel they do not have the 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 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.

It is noticeable that the amount of involvement from a party depends, partially, on 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, and getting the "right" candidates the most amount of votes. 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 converge on a *traditional route*: 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.

Candidates are expected to have certain personal traits, some of which come with training. They are also expected to fund-raise individually and run with little party support. Women have been excluded from the construction of this mould and, when they decide to run, lack the necessary skill set and funds. They 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 election's outcome. Nonetheless, other variables are shown to be relevant. The fact that votes are counted first for party to divide seats can mean that "big spenders" might not get a seat at all.

Additionally, 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 for electoral success.

Financial resources enable the candidate to have better staff and marketing, and garner support with the party and other candidates. An elective office provides visibility and indicates experience to the voters, facilitating fund-raising. Therefore, as Miguel (2003) stated, the hierarchy of elective office is necessary to explain a candidate's successful first election. Most surveyed candidates had not held any type of political office. The overwhelming part that financial resources plays in Brazilian political life is an enormous barrier for newcomers. The demands for public financing or donation capping are based on similar findings, suggesting that such rules can equalise the competition by making candidates not dependent upon income or fund-raising. Currently, there is little research showing the effects of public campaign financing on the election of women and that could be a fruitful area for research.

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