



O VALOR DO REAL: AS REGRAS ELEITORAIS E DE FINANCIAMENTO NO BRASIL SOB UMA PERSPECTIVA DE GÊNERO

BANG FOR THE BUCK: BRAZIL'S ELECTORAL AND POLITICAL FINANCING RULES FROM A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

EL VALOR DEL DINERO: LAS REGLAS ELECTORALES Y DE FINANCIAMIENTO DE BRASIL EN UNA PERSPECTIVA DE GÉNERO

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Resumo: O artigo discute gênero e financiamento de campanha, usando o Brasil para exemplificar como estes fatores, combinados com o sistema eleitoral, afetam o sucesso de mulheres nas eleições. Brasil é um bom caso por combinar um sistema proporcional de lista aberta, federalismo e distritos grandes, resultando em muitas candidaturas de natureza individualista. Dados de eleições estaduais e federais (2002-2018) foram coletados e analisados, com a introdução de uma nova medida, gasto por voto. Os resultados mostram que mulheres não se beneficiam como homens de uma vantagem em reeleição e que financiamento é mais bem distribuído entre eles, deixando algumas mulheres-elite como prováveis vencedoras. De modo geral, mulheres eleitas gastam 22% a mais por voto que homens eleitos na trajetória para a eleição. Isto explica em parte, junto com outros fatores analisados no artigo, a grande diferença de gênero na representação política brasileira.

Palavra-chave: Financiamento de campanha; Gênero; Sistema eleitoral; Eleição estadual; Eleição federal

Abstract: The following paper discusses gender and campaign financing, using the Brazilian case as to demonstrate how these factors, combined with the electoral system, affect women's success in elections. Brazil is a strong example because it uses a proportional representation system with open list, federalism, and large district magnitudes. This results in a large number of individualistic campaigns. Data from state and federal elections (2002-2018) was collected and analysed, with the introduction of a new measure, amount spent per vote. The results show that women do not benefit as much as men from an incumbent bump, and that funding is better distributed among men, leaving a few elite women as likely winners. Overall, elected women spend 22% more than elected men per vote on their path to office. This partly explains, along with the other factors analysed throughout the paper, the gender gap in Brazilian political representation.

Keywords: Campaign financing; Gender; Electoral system; State election; Federal election

Resumen: Este artículo analiza género y financiamiento de campañas, utilizando a Brasil para ejemplificar cómo estos factores, combinados con el sistema electoral, afectan el éxito de las candidatas en las elecciones. Brasil es un buen caso porque combina un sistema proporcional de lista abierta, federalismo y grandes distritos, lo que resulta en muchas candidaturas de carácter individualista. Los datos electorales estatales y federales (2002-2018) fueron recopilados y analizados y una nueva medida creada: gasto por voto. Los resultados muestran que las mujeres no se benefician como los hombres de la ventaja de reelección y que la financiación se distribuye peor entre ellas, dejando a algunas mujeres de élite como ganadoras probables. En general, las mujeres electas gastan un 22% más por voto que los hombres electos en el camino hacia la elección. Esto explica en parte, junto a otros factores analizados en el artículo, la gran brecha de género de la representación política en Brasil.

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Palabras clave: Financiamiento de campañas; Género; Sistema electoral; Elección estadual; Elección federal

1 Introduction

The focus on liberal conceptions of equality in most representative democracies has meant that achieving universal suffrage has been seen as sufficient in guaranteeing political equality for women. The diminutive presence of women in many national and local legislatures has been reasoned away with gender stereotypes that conclude that women simply do not like nor want to be in politics (ARAÚJO, 2006; HAWKESWORTH, 2005; LOVENDUSKI, 1998; NELSON, 1989; NORRIS, LOVENDUSKI, 1995; TOLLESON-RINEHART, CARROLL, 2006; WAYLEN 2015). However, research shows that while women do want to participate in institutional politics, they face additional obstacles. Those go beyond the formality of not being able to vote or be voted on (ARAÚJO, 2010; BJARNEGÅRD, KENNY, 2015; GOMES, 2012; LAWLESS, FOX, 2010; MURRAY, 2010).

For instance, women are generally perceived as “outsiders” (PUWAR, 2008; MURRAY, 2010). This follows from their literal status as people who were on the outside, as well as their lack of socialisation into politics. Outsider status results in less social skills and awareness of “how things are done”, including within their chosen parties, in running campaigns, and legislatures as women lack the network connections required to gain this knowledge. Limited networks become a larger issue as women struggle with access to donor networks to fund their campaigns as well as party elites to reinforce their value as a candidate. Many women go into institutional politics as a means to an end, likely being already active in politics and seeing institutional politics as a way to further their actions (ARAÚJO, 2010). Men, on the other hand, see politics as an end in itself. Consequently, men train and prepare for a world where politics is the goal. This results in a political divide in which politics is designed and defined by men and masculine stereotypes (GOMES, 2019) and secured by their networks and homosocial capital (BJARNEGÅRD, 2013). Party elites value tradition and loyalty, core elements that women tend to lack since they are not historically part of institutional politics. This is further reinforced as women remove themselves from participation altogether given their other responsibilities of care and work that prevent them from participating at all, let alone being fully dedicated to politics (MURRAY, 2015). Even when they are committed, it is a balancing act between the stereotype of the “devoted mother and wife” who perhaps should not be in politics at all and the “masculine woman” who takes on too many male traits to be deemed acceptable (BLIGH et al., 2012; DOVI, 2018; PRENTICE, CARRANZA, 2006).

Research by Folke and Rickne (2016) found that in situations of high competitiveness, parties will look to their most competent candidates, which reinforces ideas of the masculine as the norm, but diminishes women’s disadvantage in being chosen for re-election or top posts. However, in situations where competitiveness is low, parties will rely on internal relationships, excluding women from top ranks in election lists and top posts. Although an analysis of competence does fare well for women in Sweden, other contexts may differ. Competence may be associated with masculinity or

masculine traditions, such as networking. The authors highlight that women tend to view individual competence as more important than connections in contexts of high competition and are just as competitive as men. Meanwhile, men believe that women do not advance because of a lack of competence, despite similar age and women's well-established higher levels of education. Similarly, Durose et al. (2012) found that there is a level of "acceptability" for diversity, where deviation from the "white male" norm is acceptable if compensated in other areas, such as more experience, family tradition, etc.

While there is research on how gender and gender stereotypes affect voting, political networks, party elites, and candidate selection and placement, campaign spending is still an understudied field. It seems to be generally assumed that when women reach the candidate stage, they will be on a level playing field as men. In addition to this liberal view of equality, there is also the assumption that electoral systems determine a fair amount of how elections are structured and how parties support their candidates. Overall, countries with majoritarian systems have only one candidate per district, meaning parties **should** support their candidate wholeheartedly, even though campaigning rests on the shoulders on the candidate that has survived the primary process. Primaries are often brutal and expensive processes for candidates, and parties are looking for people who can bring in their own funds (BJARNEGÅRD, KENNY, 2015, MURIAAS et al., 2020). Countries with proportional representation usually run on closed-lists, meaning that parties campaign as a unit; although the process of deciding the order of that list is quite different for each country and, often, each party.

Brazil is one of the few countries in which there are no closed-list options, although not the only one to do so as a matter of rule. It is also by far the largest country to use this system, which makes its consequences exponentially greater. This means campaigns are candidate-centred, such as in majoritarian systems, and candidates from the same parties campaign against each other. Being a proportional system, there is more than one seat per district; in fact, Brazil has district magnitudes (number of seats available in each election), much higher than most countries. Consequently, voters have to pay attention to a high number of candidacies to pick one person, rather than choose from a few parties and their programmes.

In understanding this context and seeing that elected women spend more than men for fewer votes (GOMES, 2012), the goal of this study is to analyse campaign finance data through a gendered lens. The study spans multiple elections (2002-2016) and includes the state and federal electoral levels. Campaign finance has been the target of women and feminist politicians as well as organisations interested in gender equality for a few years (IDEA, 2014; MURIAAS et al. 2020; ÖHMAN, 2012). As women's presence in politics has stagnated in most countries despite suffrage legislation being in place for decades and gender quotas since the 90s, attention has turned towards other obstacles that might be interfering with women's path to elected office. While there are several factors at play, financing has now taken centre stage, both in legislation and in literal amounts spent

and how that can be equalised. In that sense, the Brazilian case becomes an interesting study, given the high number of legislations present and the oddity of the electoral system, which allows us a look into an extreme number of individually funded candidacies.

2 Theoretical background

Candidate selection in an open list system

Political recruitment institutions are complex, dynamic, and contradictory in the ways they interact with the several stages of the process (KENNY, 2011). As formal and informal rules exist in a continuum (BJARNEGÅRD, KENNY, 2015), newcomers find themselves lost between the “rules-in-form” and the “rules-in-use” and have to abide by the “way things are done” (ASHE et al., 2010; MACKAY, 2014; WAYLEN, 2017). For instance, research finds it is common that rules of gender equality are suppressed for biased, informal rules of “the good candidate”. These inevitably fit the accepted norms of the “local man” and “favourite son”, with its use of the “male loyalty” and “support for the local man” (BJARNEGÅRD, 2013; BUCKLEY, GREGORY, 2020; KENNY, 2011; KENNY, MACKAY, 2011). Others find that the adherence to different standards of gender equality results in certain parties selecting and electing more women (ARAÚJO, 2010; ASHE et al., 2010; FOLKE et al., 2015; FREIDENVALL, 2016).

On the other hand, research also shows that women tend to stay in local office, rather than use it as a stepping-stone to more competitive offices (ALLEN, 2013; GOULART, GOMES, 2018; MARIANI, 2008; MIGUEL, 2006). Women are less likely to have considered running for office than men, are less likely to be asked to run for office, and, as mentioned, face tougher primaries when they do (ALLEN, CUTTS, 2018; FOX, LAWLESS, 2005; LAWLESS, FOX, 2010; LAWLESS, PEARSON, 2008, MURIAAS et al. 2020). In essence, the road to office is paved with obstacles and roadblocks, but for women, particularly women of colour, those are in a higher number and demand more complex manoeuvres to navigate them.

In Brazil, internal party processes are still somewhat unknown. Most research focuses on higher selection levels for majoritarian elections (i.e., presidential or gubernatorial elections) and larger parties due to high party fragmentation. Moreover, research is focused on higher levels of competition, leaving local party processes understudied. Without research, selection processes for the legislative remain relatively opaque – especially in a context of low competitiveness for proportional candidacy, but high competitiveness for financial and symbolic support. Given how expensive elections are, parties focus on candidates who have a pre-existing support network that funds them and maximise their chance of winning (ÁLVARES, 2008; ALVES et al., 2012; LEONI et al., 2003; SAMUELS, 2000; WYLIE et al. 2019).

As stated, the Brazilian electoral system encourages highly individualistic campaigns. These end up being very costly, with individual candidacies just for state legislatures spending millions of

Brazilian reais (R\$). Each state is considered one district, without further subdivisions. Brazil is a federal system, with each federative entity being comparable and autonomous to the other (Union, state, municipality). There are 26 states, plus the Federal District of Brasília. As most states have large territories, candidates often choose to focus on informal regions to campaign in. The expanse of that region is often determined by how much funding they have.

Because of the open list system, there are no placement mandates. Parties elites informally choose whom to support and most of that support goes to a select few, reinforcing the importance of personal networks. Since candidates are encouraged to campaign individually (GOMES, 2019; SAMUELS, 2000; 2001a; 2001b) and the electorate is encouraged to vote for individuals (CARREIRÃO, 2008; KINZO, 2005), a self-perpetuating cycle developed over time by lack of adherence to parties and a political culture of clientelism. Consequently, Brazil has high levels of intra- and inter-party competition. For parties, having the highest number of candidacies possible means an increase in their overall vote share and thus, their seat share, which then goes to their highest-voted candidates (NICOLAU, 2006; ÁLVARES, 2008; ALMEIDA, GOMES, 2018).

During legislative campaigns, Brazilian parties often choose some privileged candidates who will be the *cabeça-de-chapa*. This candidate will act as if they were the first on a closed list system – they tend to have more speaking time in advertisements and receive more campaign funds, all decided internally and informally. Some parties have no intention to elect anyone beyond this individual, often identified as the “owner” of the party in the city or state. They will elect others if they get enough votes to “share”, that is, if they bring in enough votes to increase the party’s total vote count, but the goal is to get more individual votes for the *cabeça-de-chapa* (SPECK, MANCUSO, 2011; 2014). These individuals will not be without support in the legislative house as there will be post-election coalitions, but they might have to face internal contests if anyone else were to grow within the party.

There have been few occasions when women were selected for the *cabeça-de-chapa* position, argued to be an apparent contradiction (SPECK, SACCHET, 2012a). However, that falls in line with the concept of “alibi-women” (SAFFIOTTI, 2009), that is, the few women that are pointed to as evidence of gender equality when in fact they represent either wealth, whiteness, or both and gender inequality itself, as they tend to be unique.

Gender quotas for proportional candidacies have existed for all levels since 1995. Beginning at 20%, in 1997 they were increased to 30% and became mandatory in 2009. The law was part of an electoral reform which also increased the number of candidacies that each party can present by 50%. In this way, and quite strategically, parties had more candidacy spaces to fill, specifically 1.5 the number of seats and double for coalitions. Consequently, the quota became not 30% of 100%, but 30% of 150%.

This rendered the effect of the quota next to null, even symbolically (ARAÚJO, 2001; ALMEIDA, GOMES, 2018). Not only did it have no impact on how parties select their candidates, but it signalled to women candidates and voters that efforts would not be met with results. In fact,

most of Brazilian society does not know about the quota. Greater district magnitudes negatively affect women candidates. The larger the district, the more they get lost in a “sea of candidacies” (ARAÚJO, ALVES, 2007; ALMEIDA, GOMES, 2018; GOMES, 2015; 2016). Ultimately the lack of support and differentiated treatment defaulting to favouring men leaves women behind regardless of party ideology or funding (GOMES, 2016).

Gendering candidate funding and spending

The issue of campaign financing begins with two main factors. First, the origins of the funding for the party and its campaigns. Second, who divides those funds among candidates. Both can be more or less centralised and most research focuses on sources and rules of funding rather than its division, likely resulting from the lack of transparency and formality to these rules (CASAS-ZAMORA, 2008; GOMES, 2012; IDEA, 2014; SCARROW, 2007; SPECK, 2005). Political financing decentralisation could mean that parties would be less dependent on few sources. Another concern with large-scale corporate investment is a quid pro quo that interferes with the electorate’s overall access to candidates and violates the premise of “one person, one vote” (CASAS-ZAMORA, 2008; SAMUELS, 2001a). Without transparency in how parties divide their funds, we are unable to ascertain gender and racial differences in the distribution and are resigned to post hoc accountability. Many countries have created regulations that determine that an allotment of the overall funding must go to increase women’s presence in institutional politics, although this is not always connected to electoral financing (IDEA, 2014; MURIAAS et al. 2020; ÖHMAN, 2012)

Given the context of Brazilian campaigns as laid out in the previous section, elections are a time when candidates are looking for financial support from anyone (ARAÚJO, ALVES, 2007; GOMES, 2012; 2019; MIGUEL, 2003; NICOLAU, 2004; 2006; SAMUELS, 2001a; 2001b). There is little programmatic union in most Brazilian parties and even the ones who have it tend to support legislative candidacies that are more likely to win. This support comes in the form of funding, marketing materials, access to networks of donors, publicists, and party elites, and even time allotment during the Free Electoral Broadcast (HGPE, in Portuguese) (ARAÚJO, 2006; GOMES, 2012). Since women have smaller income and fewer assets, they have a smaller chance to invest in their own campaigns and to guarantee such campaign support (UN, 2010; GOMES, 2015; 2016; SPECK, SACCHET, 2012b).

Brazilian legislation concerning public funding of parties has been the object of constant discussion. Law 13.488/2017 excluded corporate investments to individual candidacies or parties. Individuals are free to invest in campaigns, up to 10% of their yearly income, including candidates themselves. Private transfers to individual candidacies go through the campaigns of each candidacy rather than the party. Candidates may transfer them from their own campaign to the campaign of others. For instance, a mayoral candidate may transfer donations to a city council candidate;

candidates for state and federal legislatures often create the so-called *dobradinha*, in which they campaign together. The HGPE also generates confusing results, with studies showing that it is distributed to leverage certain candidacies (NICOLAU, 2006; CERVI, 2011), while parties state that the distribution is egalitarian (GOMES, 2012).

Any party legally registered receives public funding, the Special Fund for Financial Assistance of Political Parties. This funding is for party maintenance and is distributed every year. The division is:

- 5% divided equally to all parties;
- 95% given out proportionally to the vote shares for the Chamber of Deputies in the last election.

It is regulated thusly:

- no more than 50% can be used for rent and salaries for the national office;
- 60% for state and municipal offices;
- 20% must go to a party institute or foundation dedicated to research and qualification;
- 5% must be used to promote women's participation in politics (this has been recently altered to ensure that these funds go through an official office within the party);
- during election years, some of these resources may be used for campaigning, including the allotted percentage for women.

Bearing in mind the corporate financing ban, the Special Fund for Campaign Financing (FEFC) was also created. It is combined with the remainder of the "Party Fund" to finance campaigns. It is divided thusly:

- 2% equally divided to all registered parties;
- 35% are divided proportionally according to vote shares between parties that have at least one elected member in the Chamber of Deputies;
- 48% is divided proportionally according to how many representatives each party has in the Chamber;
- 15% is divided according to how many senators each party has elected.

Public funding has been a great equaliser in Brazilian campaign funding (KRAUSE, 2015), as it gives all parties, regardless of size or year of registration, a head start. This offsets somewhat the disparity in private funding, which tends to benefit men. It also evens out the proportional aspect of public funding (SPECK, MARCIANO, 2015), which tends to benefit more established parties that already have their political actors put in place. Public funding is perceived as something that can assist women's candidacies as it creates a central regulation and equalises access (MURIAAS et al., 2020).

In 2018, it was determined by the Federal Supreme Court that given the 30% gender quota,

parties should spend 30% of resources on women's campaigns. Although the spirit of the decision was in line with the gender quota for proportional candidacies, this led to an increase in majoritarian candidacies of women, especially as second-in-command (such as vice-governors or vice-presidents; there was, in fact, a 7% increase in women being placed in those positions between 2014 and 2018, while the increase for them as the main candidate was only 1.5%).

In an electoral year, the electoral financial report must be done four months before and two months after the campaign. Candidates must also account for all they have received and spent in the campaign. All reports are public, including donors' names. Sanctions include fines, loss of public funding, party registration cancelation, and loss of office. Despite the regulation, it is difficult to keep detailed watch over all the reports due to filing processes which are confusing and extensive (SPECK, MANCUSO, 2011). For instance, it is common that candidates who drop out of the campaign or lose the elections (especially candidates with a low likelihood of winning or who receive few votes) stop reporting on their finances and leave out the last partial and/or final reports. Another important aspect is that when a candidate transfers from their revenue to other candidacies, that amount appears as revenue for both, resulting in duplicate reporting on the same funds. This adds complexity to auditing money that may appear in the report of several candidacies.

The large number of regulations and sanctions in Brazil comes partly from the political and legal tradition of over-legislation and prolixity (GOMES, 2019; STARLING, SCHWARCZ, 2015). However, it also stems from the population's distrust of political institutions and representatives (IDEA, 2014). If a piece of legislation will be practical for candidates, parties, and the electoral courts is another matter altogether. Samuels (2001a), Casas-Zamora (2008) and IDEA (2014) point to the volume of corporate donations in Brazil and this resource's association with improper relationships with representatives. There are several cases of backdoor funding (known as *caixa-dois*), undue influence, and fraudulent candidacies in Brazil. The high level of uncertainty leads investors and candidates to search for certainty through funding. The strong link between campaign investment and the number of votes shows that it is necessary to have large sums to secure a campaign (GOMES, 2012; SPECK, SACCHET, 2012b). On the other hand, money does not tell the whole story of gendered norms acting as obstacles for women candidates.

Women face increased obstacles on their paths to success due to the lack of characteristics associated with the traditional male politician profile. In Brazil, much has been said about women's and men's differences in political life and what are their paths to political office. Men are often prepared (by family) and prepare (through schooling, career, and party affiliation) to achieve the status of elected official. Women, on the other hand, do not have that previous connection, whether through legacy or career goal (ARAÚJO, 2010). While family connections are beneficial to men and women in Brazil, men generally do not face judgement for this as their legacy is usually handed down by tradition (ARAÚJO, 2010; MIGUEL, 2003). Women's careers, on the other hand, are often differentiated by ideology, with right-wing women usually benefitting from their husband's

connections and left-wing women having no family connections. This quite often becomes a rift among women, with left-wing women failing to respect their colleagues and their trajectory (GOMES, 2019).

This overall disparity leads to reduced access to the resources required to achieve the incumbency status which would give them the clout required to get more funding. According to research by Speck and Mancuso (2014), money is more important to women than men when it comes to elections as they find that women challengers, in the 2010 Brazilian elections, needed more campaign funding than men overall and women incumbents (with men and women incumbents at the federal level being similar in their study). If women challengers require more funds but are in no position to either have them on hand or acquire them through political networks, the likelihood that they will reach any office is significantly lowered.

Another relevant factor to consider is the shape of the opportunity structure in Brazil. This, overall, runs in zigzag, from legislative to executive, and local to state to federal. As mentioned, women have difficulty leaving the local level, particularly small towns, where competition is not as strong. One additional indication is that relocation and travel times might also hinder their aspirations (GOMES, 2012).

This study looks at the relationship between campaign funding and election in Brazil, attempting to ascertain the role that money plays in the elections of men and women. To do so, data spanning multiple elections and both the state and federal levels were collected. This is critical in demonstrating the obstacles faced by women candidates given that not only it shows one more facet on the path to office, but the interaction between factors.

3 Methods and data

This section explains the data collection and what it consists of, as well as explains the statistics used in the remainder of the paper. Given that most studies in this area have focused on one or two elections, there is a bit of an exploratory nature to the data analysis. However, there is an end goal here, which is to ascertain:

- if gender has an impact on campaign funding
- if gender has an impact on election apart from funding
- the impact of campaign spending for women and men at the state and federal levels.

Consequently, the data has been explored to verify differences among the following groups: elected men, non-elected men, elected women, and non-elected women. As well as descriptive statistics, a multinomial logistical regression model was conducted to ascertain the importance of gender and finances, for election and re-election. A one-way ANOVA was used so groups' means could be compared. For descriptive statistics, the raw financial and vote data is used; but for statistical analyses, they were logged, given their skewness.

The data comes from the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) and was downloaded between

November 2019 and January 2020. There are three separate sets: one for financial data, one for voting results,² and one for demographic information. Since 2014, the TSE has begun collecting data on the candidates' race/ethnicity. Each candidate received unique identifiers and had their expenses and votes added up; finally, the data were merged. Missing data on the candidates' gender was added manually, by looking up their names online when their gender could not be ascertained by the name. Financial data has been collected by the TSE since 2002, making that the first year of analysis.

Due to the complex nature of financial disclosures,³ issues of compliance, and corruption, electoral financial data can be considered a proxy, rather than absolute truth. The data was checked with frequency tables and observation, as well as reconstruction of the datasets to ensure reliability. Extreme outliers were individually verified and corrected. Since candidates submit two types of reports – revenues and expenses – this work focuses on expenses to analyse how much the campaign actually cost and to prevent the re-utilisation of the same revenue.

As Table 1 below⁴ shows, elected men and women do not have vastly dissimilar reported expenses, but the non-elected group shows a large difference. The mean votes in both groups are also very distinct. The standard deviations show that men seem to be closer together in results than women are to each other. That is, men differ less from each other, while women show a greater difference. Looking at this through the lens of party support and barriers in guaranteeing funds (whether it comes from personal income and assets or networks of donors), it indicates that men are more equal to each other and a group of elite women are in a better situation.

² Voting results are aggregated by voting zone and municipality, with no higher levels.

³ Until 2010, the data was comprised of a single *csv* file, including all the information for all candidates in all states or municipalities. After 2010, that file is still present, but there are also files per state. Each candidate must report each individual revenue *and* each individual expense, which means there are multiple, sometimes thousands, of entries for each person.

⁴ A version of this table for both election levels was created, but the results were quite similar. Correlation tests indicated that there was no need to run separate tests. Even then, they were conducted, and results were the same as they are for the aggregate population.

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics of the dependent variables by gender and results

Not-elected candidates		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Men	Expenses	46234	0,40	1.188.388,62	25.712,82	78.742,81	6,95	60,87
	Votes	46234	2,00	541.357,00	5.817,50	11.055,61	6,28	148,12
	USD/vote	46234	0,00	118,39	6,52	12,57	4,51	25,28
Women	Expenses	13701	0,52	1.112.757,55	17.439,74	58.406,51	8,53	98,80
	Votes	13701	2,00	136.706,00	2.862,69	7.358,41	5,51	44,89
	USD/vote	13701	0,00	118,57	13,56	20,43	2,53	6,69
Elected candidates								
Men	Expenses	6412	79,28	1.187.253,88	186.348,37	217.304,88	2,04	4,14
	Votes	6412	123,00	2.450.141,00	62.516,29	71.657,99	12,67	319,69
	USD/vote	6412	0,01	68,01	3,93	5,06	4,48	32,98
Women	Expenses	882	1.180,44	1.128.357,97	182.785,81	209.264,88	2,01	4,01
	Votes	882	1.144,00	2.060.786,00	58.154,03	92.765,45	13,69	265,55
	USD/vote	882	0,01	63,96	4,89	6,89	4,11	23,04

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE. Financial data in U.S. dollars

The most relevant result found in this section is how much is **spent per vote**. That variable is the mean of each candidate's expenses divided by the number of votes received.⁵ The creation of this variable allows us to analyse spending by gender on a comparable, individual level. Then we can critically consider the efficiency of their spending while considering how other factors may be at play. In a nutshell, this equalises the spending each candidate had, for analysis. If at the campaign level, women and men are equal, their spending should be relatively the same. That is not, however, what Table 1 shows.

Table 2 shows descriptive results for other variables. Women were approximately 21% of candidates at both levels, but only managed to elect about half that percentage. Out of elected women, half were challengers and had won their first election. The other half were returned, that is, were re-elected or moved on from state to federal office. This dataset does not capture other political transitions.⁶ Women did not have as high a professional political background, and fewer women than men were married, something consistent with other research (GOMES, 2012; MURRAY, 2014).

Table 2 – Independent variables

	Men	%	Women	%	Women/Men %
State election	37.315	70,88	10.335	70,87	21,69
Federal election	15.331	29,12	4.248	29,13	21,70
First elected	42.292	80,33	12.998	89,13	23,51
Returned	10.354	19,67	1.585	10,87	13,28
Non-married	18.166	34,51	8.311	56,99	31,39
Married	34.480	65,49	6.272	43,01	15,39
All levels of education	25.392	48,23	7.094	48,65	21,84
Completed college education	27.254	51,77	7.489	51,35	21,56
All occupations	41.919	79,62	12.578	86,25	23,08
Politician/civil servants	10.727	20,38	2.005	13,75	15,75
Total	52.646	100	14.583	100	67.229

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

Two variables consistently linked with electoral success are funding and political experience.

⁵ A Pearson correlation test was run to test the correlation between the two main variables, expenses and votes. The coefficient result was 0.732, with confidence interval of 99%. Other variations of the test, separating the data into groups of women, men, by level of election (federal/state) and result (elected/not-elected) gave similar results.

⁶ Municipal data between 2004-2016 shows that women were 23,10% of city councillor candidates, but only 10,80% of elected candidates. For majoritarian elections (mayor, governor, senator, and president), between 2002-2018, women were 14,50% of candidates, including titular and deputy candidates, and were 11,78% of elected candidates in the first round. Out of all women, 60,30% were deputy candidates.

These are, in themselves, connected. The more political experience one has, the more likely they are to receive money from sources, whether it is the party or an external donor. Since the dataset does not fully capture political experience through movement between political positions, occupation/profession was used as a proxy. This variable consists of the self-reported employment of each candidate. It was manipulated into a dummy variable separating all occupations from the ones that would give candidates political capital: elected or appointed political offices and civil servant positions. A correlation procedure between these two variables produced a chi-square value of 5468,169 (sig. ,000).

The chi-square results, in Table 3, show the relationships between gender and these variables. Neither election nor education levels had significant relationships, as expected; political occupation loses its significance when analysed for elected candidates only, demonstrating its importance for a successful election.⁷

Table 3 – Crosstabulation results between gender and independent variables

	Chi-Square Tests	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
State/Federal election	,000	1	,983
First election/return	866,141	3	,000
Civil status	2418,465	1	,000
Education (college education)	0,784	1	,376
Political occupation	326,672	1	,000

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

4 Results and discussion

This section discusses the results of the statistical tests and shows: 1) the overall importance of money in elections; 2) the importance of incumbency; 3) the relevance of gender for elections, and finally, 4) how all of these factors are intertwined. Essentially, men are more likely to win elections and get campaign funding (a “chicken or the egg” scenario) and therefore are more likely to be incumbents who get more funding given their political experience and visibility.

The analysis from the multinomial logistical regression⁸ (Table 4) shows that a 1 unit increase in expenses means a **7.5 increase in chances** of winning an election and **17.04 increase in chances** of winning subsequent attempts at either re-election or a change from state to federal deputy. **Being a man increases the chances of election by 1.39 and the chances of re-election by 1.98.** Having a college degree or a political occupation meant, respectively, an increase in 1.14 and 1.23 in chances

⁷ Chi-square: 5,069; sig. ,024.

⁸ Full results of the model undifferentiated by gender in the Appendix.

of being elected on a first attempt. When it comes to a subsequent win, respectively, each increased the odds of success by 1.39, and 4.02, confirming the importance of experience for political success.

The incumbent effect does provide a huge bump in funding and, in turn, in becoming re-elected. However, Brazilian women are the minority in that position, reaching its highest percentage (15%) in the Chamber of Deputies in 2018. Using a second model to verify this trend, the data were reanalysed with a combined variable for gender and political occupation. That model shows that a political occupation increases men's chances by 1.21, while it decreases women's chances for a first win. When a third model was conducted, separating men and women, it showed that among women only, a political occupation is helpful for a successful election. When it comes to re-election, women and men looking to keep themselves in the political field, respectively, see a bump in chances of 2.15 and 3.95 (Model 2). Consequently, the funding spent by men already in office seems to be more effective, as their time in office nearly doubles their chances of winning, which does not happen to women's. Model 3 shows how important expenses are for women; every increase in a unit in the expenses variable means an increase in chances by 9.32 for a first election and 22.44 for a return to the political system.⁹

As demonstrated by Table 1, non-elected candidates spend more per vote, which would make sense given that they have fewer votes. However, they also have fewer funds, roughly R\$400.00 (US\$158.730) less. This would lead us to surmise that the effect of money is indeed exponential and having less money does not mean a proportional reduction in votes in comparison with those who have more money. To visualise those results, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (full results in the Appendix).¹⁰ The state-level does not require moving to Brasília (although it can be a stepping-stone for it) but does come with power and perks of office. However, it also comes with similar obstacles, such as relocation and travel. One surprise from this check was that politicians returned to the political system at different levels shared the same means within their gender groups, that is, politicians at the federal level need to spend the same per vote as ones at the state level to ensure their seats. To be clear, women still outspent men in both these cases.

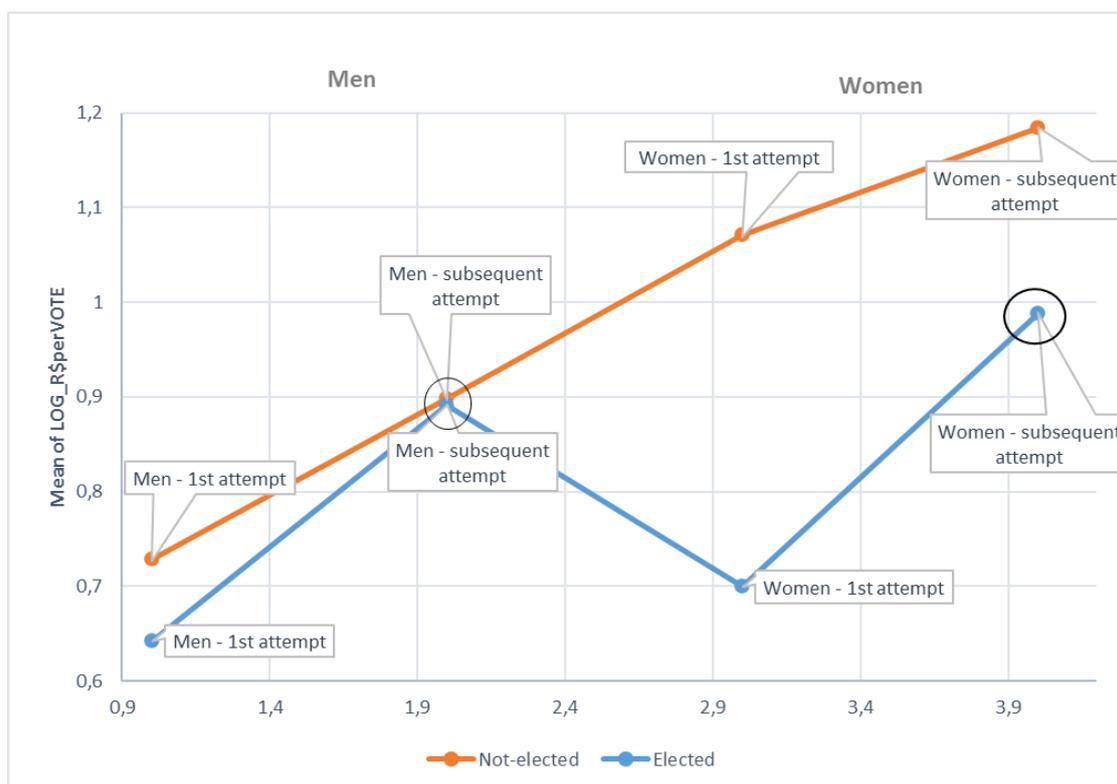
⁹ Men, respectively, have an odds ratio of 6.78 and 15.04.

¹⁰ Dividing the results by state and federal levels showed no difference.

Table 4 – Multinomial logistical regression models – win on 1st attempt and subsequent attempts

		Model 1 (undifferentiated by gender)				Model 2 (Political occupation*gender)				Model 3 (Women only)			
		β	S.E.	Exp(β)	Sig.	β	S.E.	Exp(β)	Sig.	β	S.E.	Exp(β)	Sig.
Win on 1st attempt	Expenses	2,015	0,029	7,498	0,000	2,014	0,145	7,494	0,000	2,232	0,077	9,323	0,000
	Gender (men as ref)	0,331	0,051	1,393	0,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Political occupation	0,206	0,04	1,229	0,001	-	-	-	-	0,265	0,109	1,304	0,014
	Men*political occupation	-	-	-	-	0,189	0,093	1,208	0,000	-	-	-	-
	Women*political occupation	-	-	-	-	-0,054	0,043	0,948	0,562	-	-	-	-
	College degree	0,132	0,039	1,141	0,000	0,131	0,039	1,14	0,001	0,195	0,111	1,216	0,079
Returned	Expenses	2,836	0,041	17,043	0,000	2,835	0,041	17,026	0,000	3,111	0,131	22,439	0,000
	Gender (men as ref)	0,684	0,069	1,982	0,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Political occupation	1,391	0,044	4,019	0,000	-	-	-	-	1,500	0,134	4,483	0,000
	Men*political occupation	-	-	-	-	1,374	0,047	3,950	0,000	-	-	-	-
	Women*political occupation	-	-	-	-	0,766	0,095	2,151	0,000	-	-	-	-
	College degree	0,327	0,049	1,387	0,000	0,326	0,049	1,385	0,000	0,214	0,163	1,239	0,189

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.



Graph 1 – One-way ANOVA means plot, R\$/Vote, per gender and election results

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

The graph plotted the means of the logged version of R\$ per vote spent by the following groups: non-elected men and women in their first election attempts and all their subsequent attempts; elected men and women in their first election attempts and all their subsequent attempts. The attempts variable is a dummy for the first attempt and subsequent attempts. The graph helps us visualise certain things. The first is that women always spent more per vote than do the men in the same group. Second, women who lost spent more per vote than all groups.¹¹ Third, women who were elected on their first attempt spent more than their counterparts. This is the closest men and women ever get to each other, meaning this difference is not statistically significant (Table 5). An interesting aspect of the graph is that women already in office have a large distance from their male counterparts. This means that even if they can make use of their political capital, **women politicians still need to spend more** to guarantee a win and are not favoured by an incumbent bump.

Losing women are the target when considering fraudulent candidacies for fulfilling quotas. An analysis in that vein would benefit from taking a closer look at how much money women who lost claimed to have spent and how many votes they got due to the expectation that fraudulent candidacies receive neither or are a front for money that passes through with no campaign being run.

¹¹ A version of this table for both election levels was created, but the results were quite similar. Correlation tests indicated that there was no need to run separate tests. Even then, they were conducted, and results were the same as they are for the aggregate population.

In comparison, men who won and men who lost are quite close within their first and subsequent groups, indicating a greater similarity between them in how much was spent per vote. In other words, their campaigns were proportional to the money they had, while women's was not. Women's campaigns had fewer votes than it would be expected considering how much money they had in all categories, but especially in the losing categories. Table 6 shows that, overall, losing groups of men and women had similar amounts of funding, especially men and women who lost their subsequent attempt. Their number of votes and thus, USD/vote, is wildly different, close to 50%.

Table 5 – One-way ANOVA – Multiple comparisons with women*challenger status*result

	Gender	Challenger status*result	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Women - 1st election/won	Men	1st election/lost	-0,02879	0,02833	0,972
		Subsequent election/lost	-0,1985*	0,02917	0,000
		1st election/won	0,05725	0,03032	0,559
		Subsequent election/won	-0,19206*	0,03062	0,000
	Women	1st election/lost	-0,37139*	0,02875	0,000
		Subsequent election/lost	-0,48513*	0,03376	0,000
Women subsequent election/won	Men	1st election/lost	0,25964*	0,0368	0,000
		Subsequent election/lost	0,08993	0,03745	0,240
		1st election/won	0,34568*	0,03836	0,000
		Subsequent election/won	0,09637	0,03859	0,196
	Women	1st election/lost	-0,08297	0,03712	0,331
		Subsequent election/lost	-0,19671*	0,04113	0,000
		1st election/won	0,28843*	0,04619	0,000

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

Overall, re-elections are extremely costly, which may explain renewal rates in Brazil.¹² But even if men find themselves raising double the funds for slightly more votes, meaning their incumbency status might have helped them with those funds, but not as much with visibility, women

¹² Renewal rates for the Chamber of Deputies were for 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018, respectively: 46.0% 46.4%, 43.7%, and 47.37%.

have to raise even more money to get fewer votes than they did in their first election. As it is harder for most women to raise as much money as men do, their likelihood for re-election is much smaller and, in this way, money and gender become intertwined.

Importantly, along with the skewness and kurtosis statistics presented in Table 1, money is more relevant to women and fewer women have enough of it, while it is better distributed among men. In this way, funding is possibly a way to offset gender, as having more of it does almost guarantee an election – but as other resources in Brazilian society, it is quite glaringly unevenly distributed, particularly among women. While elected women are more similar to elected men than they are to other women, they fall behind in funding and votes, meaning a higher expenditure of money per vote, that is, their funds are spent less efficiently.

A clear gender gap in campaign finance exists and is demonstrated by campaign funding being overall poorly distributed between men, who get more, and women, who get less and a poor distribution among women themselves, with an elite few who get more funding (although it can be argued that if it were possible to equally distribute those funds, fewer women would be elected). Outside of that elite and outside of legitimate candidates, there are doubts regarding the actual number of women's candidacies and how much money they indeed get for them. Given the current system, women essentially need more money to offset an electoral system that forces individualistic, highly visible campaigns and that benefits people who already have the clout, the connections, the status, the personal funds, and the recognition of “political animal”.

Table 6 – Descriptive statistics of main variables by gender, challenger status, and result of election

	Expenses (mean, in USD)	Votes (mean)	USD/vote (mean)
Men - 1st election/lost	19.010,50	4.887,59	6,39
Women - 1st election/lost	13.433,19	2.360,51	13,54
Men - subsequent election/lost	61.124,49	10.730,70	7,23
Women - subsequent election/lost	57.068,92	7.829,74	13,79
Men - 1st election/won	138.351,78	58.786,48	3,26
Women - 1st election/won	146.560,94	58.631,58	4,18
Men - subsequent election/won	241.073,46	66.768,97	4,69
Women - subsequent election/won	244.268,39	57.343,51	6,10

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

5 Conclusion

This paper set out to explore gender differences in campaign spending at the federal and state electoral levels in Brazil. To do so, a new measurement was created, allowing the analysis of efficiency in campaign spending – although simple, dividing the amount spent per votes gained enables us to compare candidates more clearly. I also compiled a large, primary dataset, rather than focus on one or two elections, which allowed for a novel use of the data. Despite there being a prior indication of a gender gap in campaign funding in Brazil, there was a dearth in research on the matter, particularly research that encompassed multiple elections and could offer definitive answers. The data presented here shows that not only do women receive less in funding, but that is also poorly distributed in comparison with men, and not sufficient to overcome the gender gap in politics, as women still receive fewer votes and therefore spend more per vote than men – the maximum range being the difference between men who won their first election attempt (USD/vote 3,26) and women who lost their subsequent attempt (USD/vote 13,79), a difference of 76,36%. Among elected men and women, the difference is of roughly 22% for both groups, that is, women spend 22% more per vote than men on their path to election. The data also shows that men are twice as likely to be re-elected as women, despite the general literature affirming the power of incumbents. When controlling for gender and political occupation, having political experience seems to hurt women running for the first time.

When it comes to corruption, I do not want to over- or understate its presence in Brazilian electoral campaigns and the reliability of the data. Given that winning candidates tend to follow predictions, including regarding how much they have received in campaign donations, the amounts reported are correct enough to allow for their analysis.

Brazil is a country of many contradictions; one of which is the use of proportional representation with an open list system. Gender equality in Brazil is on the ideological scale (ARAÚJO, 2005; GOMES, 2016; 2019), but that mostly means a rhetorical attachment to the issue. Some left-wing parties have internal quotas or comply with the electoral quota, but neither has made an impact overall or shown to apply their views when it comes to spending. The dataset does include a variable that splits parties between left and right, and it showed no effect.

What does have an impact is the likelihood of winning and electoral autonomy (GOMES, 2019). Elections in Brazil tread a line of extremely competitive and not competitive at all, where top-funded candidates have the “real” competition and remaining candidates do the busy work of getting votes for the party while hoping to get votes for themselves. In this context, there is only so much room for parties to promote women, given that, historically, they are not a part of the high-stakes level of the elections. So far, parties have had no need or desire to change their behaviour, and that has very little difference in the ideological spectrum. Election costs continue to rise and new strategies such as collective campaigns and use of social media have had only anecdotal successes.

Importantly, because of the open list system, parties “get away” with this – the lack of

placement mandates and the relative opaqueness of the support system given to proportional candidates means they often claim to support everyone equally with the little they have or rely on strict meritocracy. On the other hand, they make no effort to have fewer candidates and campaign as a unity. Since the gender quota rule has little enforcement, parties also do not feel the need to comply. Any effort to do so has only shown an increase in women candidacies with zero or close to zero votes (GOMES, 2012; WYLIE et al., 2019).¹³ Given the evidence presented here, however, the presence of fraudulent quota candidacies, also known as *candidatas-laranja*, should not look only at voting, given that most Brazilian candidacies have very few votes. The addition of campaign finance reports might be useful in determining if those candidacies were indeed legitimate. One relevant aspect of these investigations is the complicity from candidates, who may or may not accept the role of “sacrificial lambs”, either for the good of the party or because they were promised support in future elections.

Finally, it is critical to highlight that only in 2014 did the Superior Electoral Court start asking candidates to report on their race. It is expected that in future analyses the incorporation of that variable will show more nuanced results on the obstacles faced by indigenous and black candidates especially as, beginning in 2020, black candidates will also benefit from special financing rules.¹⁴

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¹³ Although there are only a few scientific studies on fraudulent candidacies, they have made the news quite often, especially due to scandals in 2018. Some examples:

<http://www.agenciapatriagalvao.org.br/politica/mulheres-na-politica-pf-e-mpsc-investigam-candidaturas-laranjas-e-ficticias/>

<https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-47446723>

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2019/11/justica-eleitoral-determina-que-candidata-laranja-do-psl-em-pe-devolva-r-380-mil.shtml>

<https://www.conjur.com.br/2019-set-18/uso-candidaturas-laranja-leva-cassacao-chapa-decide-tse>

¹⁴ <https://www.conjur.com.br/2020-set-10/lewandowski-determina-aplicacao-cotas-negros-nestas-eleicoes>

[44782005000100013&lng=pt&nrm=iso&tlng=pt](#)>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2016.

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Appendix**Descriptive statistics of the dependent variables by gender and results – in R\$**

		Not-elected candidates						
		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Men	Expenses	46234	1,00	2.997.920,00	64.865,12	198.642,63	6,947	60,867
	Votes	46234	2	541.357	5.817,50	11.055,61	6,281	148,124
	R\$/vote	46234	,00	298,65	16,46	31,72	4,506	25,279
Women	Expenses	13701	1,30	2.807.127,28	43.994,8320	147.340,73	8,531	98,804
	Votes	13701	2	136706	2.862,69	7.358,41	5,512	44,895
	R\$/vote	13701	,00	299,12	34,21	51,54	2,526	6,688
		Elected candidates						
Men	Expenses	6412	200,00	2.995.057,44	470.096,66	548.189,92	2,039	4,139
	Votes	6412	123	2.450.141	62.516,29	71.657,99	12,673	319,690
	R\$/vote	6412	,02	171,58	9,90	12,75	4,480	32,981
Women	Expenses	882	2977,87	2.846.482,11	461.109,47	527.907,58	2,008	4,005
	Votes	882	1144	2.060.786	58.154,03	92.765,45	13,695	265,549
	R\$/vote	882	,03	161,36	12,34	17,38	4,113	23,038

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE. Financial data in R\$.

Oneway Descriptives

R\$/Votes (log)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum	Between-Component Variance
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Men - 1st election/lost	38876	,7281	,68824	,00349	,7213	,7350	-3,56	2,48	
Men - subsequent election/lost	7358	,8978	,60096	,00701	,8841	,9116	-2,77	2,47	
Men - 1st election/won	3416	,6421	,50438	,00863	,6252	,6590	-1,58	2,33	
Men - subsequent election/won	2996	,8914	,40802	,00745	,8768	,9060	-1,81	2,40	
Women - 1st election/lost	12443	1,0707	,71550	,00641	1,0581	1,0833	-2,77	2,48	
Women - subsequent election/lost	1258	1,1845	,61300	,01728	1,1506	1,2184	-1,64	2,47	
Women - 1st election/won	555	,6993	,56633	,02404	,6521	,7465	-1,55	2,21	
Women - subsequent election/won	327	,9878	,40998	,02267	,9432	1,0324	-,26	2,19	
Total	67229	,8226	,67878	,00262	,8174	,8277	-3,56	2,48	
Model									
		Fixed Effects	,66260	,00256	,8176	,8276			
		Random Effects		,11675	,5465	1,0986			,03533

Source: the author with the data from the Superior Electoral Court – TSE.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
R\$/Votes (log)	Based on Mean	219,025	7	67221	,000
	Based on Median	217,372	7	67221	,000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	217,372	7	64749,680	,000
	Based on trimmed mean	217,936	7	67221	,000

ANOVA					
R\$/Votes (log)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1462,288	7	208,898	475,804	,000
Within Groups	29512,899	67221	,439		
Total	30975,187	67228			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means				
R\$/Votes (log)				
	Statistic^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	482,962	7	3382,496	,000
Brown-Forsythe	666,738	7	11154,797	,000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

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