Electoral Crime Under Democracy: Evidence from Brazil

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Abstract

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Keywords: electoral politics; judicial politics; comparative politics; illegal behavior and the enforcement of law; political economy.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	9,470	46.34	11.02	17	86
Male	9,470	.793	.405	0	1
Political Experience	9,470	.091	.287	0	1
Campaign Expenditures (in R$)	9,470	52,555	210,742	0	4,949,250
Convicted at Trial	9,470	.641	.480	0	1
Convicted on Appeal	9,470	.537	.499	0	1
Probability of Election	9,442	.191	.393	0	1
Vote Distance to Election Cutoff (in p.p.)	9,442	−4.09	9.55	−92.82	12.83
Total Vote Share (in p.p.)	9,442	10.13	17.98	0.00	100.00

Table 2: Electoral Crime Rulings

	Appeals		Percent
Trial	Affirmed	Reversed	Reversed
Not Convicted	3380	22	0.6
Convicted	5059	1009	16.6

Table 3: First-Stage Regressions

	Outcome: Convicted at Trial		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Convicted on Appeal	.766***	.756***	.721***
	(.006)	(.007)	(.018)
Individual Controls	-	Yes	Yes
Fixed-Effects	-	-	Yes
Observations	9,470	9,470	9,470
Adjusted-R^2	.633	.648	.912
F-stat	16,364.9***	1,092.6***	650.7***

Note: First-Stage regressions here report the correlation between being convicted at trial and being convicted on appeal for all candidates who have had their candidacy challenged under charges of electoral irregularities. I present results including and excluding individual politician characteristics; municipal, electoral, and party fixed-effects; and use robust standard errors. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 1: Instrument Point Estimates and CIs

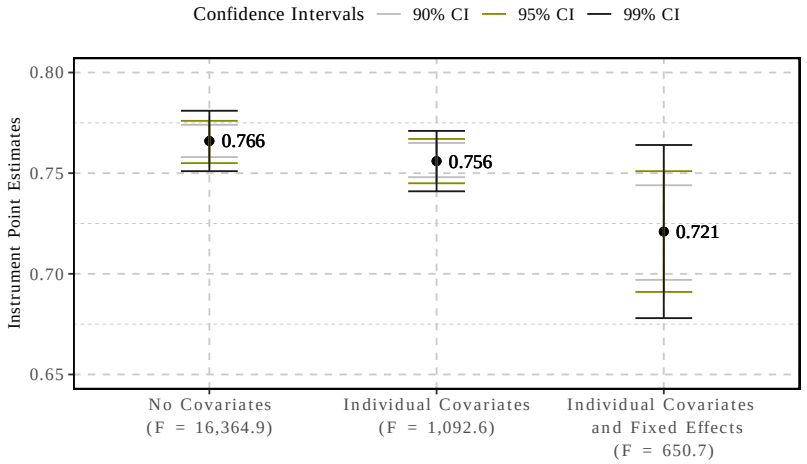

Table 4: Hausman Test of Instrument Strength

Outcome	Hausman Statistic	p-value
1. Probability of Election	109.28	.000
2. Total Vote Share	205.57	.000
3. Vote Distance to Election Cutoff:	1.88	.170
3.1. City Councilor	65.44	.000
3.2. Mayor	93.43	.000

Table 5: The Effect of Electoral Crime on the Probability of Election

	Outcome: Probability of Election					
	OLS	OLS	OLS	IV	IV	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Convicted at Trial	$-.208^{***}$	$-.169^{***}$	$-.120^{***}$	$-.272^{***}$	$-.290^{***}$	$-.214^{***}$
	(.009)	(.009)	(.001)	(.011)	(.010)	(.028)
Individual Controls	-	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
Fixed-Effects	-	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
Observations	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442
Adjusted-R^2	.065	.127	.456	.059	.055	.421
F-stat	653.58^{***}	86.48^{***}	22.7^{***}	707.35^{***}	818.75^{***}	108.91^{***}

Note: The regressions here estimate the effect of being convicted at trial on the probability of election for all candidates who have had their candidacy challenged under charges of electoral irregularities. Columns 1 and 4 display models not including individual candidate characteristics; columns 2 and 5 include age, gender, marital status, education level, political experience, and the amount spent in their campaign; columns 3 and 6 also include municipal, electoral, and party fixed-effects. I report robust standard errors for all specifications in this table. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 6: The Effect of Electoral Crime on the Total Vote Share

	Outcome: Total Vote Share (in p.p.)					
	OLS	OLS	OLS	IV	IV	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Convicted on Appeal	-12.945^{***}	-10.313^{***}	-9.648^{***}	-16.804^{***}	-17.983^{***}	-13.716^{***}
	(.418)	(.386)	(.017)	(.478)	(.479)	(1.176)
Individual Controls	-	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
Fixed-Effects	-	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
Observations	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442	9,442
Adjusted-R^2	.119	.255	.769	.109	.101	.736
F-stat	$1{,}278.91^{***}$	202.66^{***}	73.28^{***}	$1{,}360.8^{***}$	$1{,}581.75^{***}$	465.87^{***}

Note: The regressions here estimate the effect of being convicted at trial on the total vote share for all candidates who have had their candidacy challenged under charges of electoral irregularities. Columns 1 and 4 display models not including individual candidate characteristics; columns 2 and 5 include age, gender, marital status, education level, political experience, and the amount spent in their campaign; columns 3 and 6 also include municipal, electoral, and party fixed-effects. I report robust standard errors for all specifications in this table. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 7: The Effect of Electoral Crimes on the Vote Distance to Election Cutoff

	Outcome: Vote Distance to Election Cutoff (in p.p.)			
	OLS	IV	OLS	IV
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Convicted at Trial	$-.516^{***}$	$-.882^{***}$	-2.272^{***}	-8.621
	(.002)	(.124)	(.466)	(15.176)
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fixed-Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample	City Council	City Council	Mayor	Mayor
Observations	7,100	7,100	2,342	2,342
Adjusted-R^2	.479	.420	.472	.445
F-stat	29.33^{***}	1.41	66.74^{***}	5.9^{**}

Note: The regressions here estimate the effect of being convicted at trial on the distance to the election cutoff for candidates who have had their candidacy challenged under charges of electoral irregularities. All models include individual candidate characteristics and municipal, electoral, and party fixed-effects. Since election rules differ by office type, I split the sample into city council candidates (columns 1 and 2) and mayor candidates (columns 3 and 4). I report robust standard errors for all specifications in this table. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 8: Heterogeneous Sentencing across Trial and Appeals

	Difference in β	Std. Error	t-stat	p-value
Elected to Office	.030	.034	.870	.384
Age	.000	.001	.081	.935
Male	−.003	.024	−.113	.910
Incomplete College	−.029	.681	−.043	.966
Political Experience	−.003	.046	−.057	.955
Campaign Expenditures (in R$)	−.000	.000	−.340	.734
Marital Status:				
Divorced	−.003	.045	−.073	.942
Legally Divorced	.009	.075	.117	.907
Single	−.010	.025	−.401	.688
Widowed	.029	.074	.385	.700
Educational Levels:				
Completed ES/MS	−.035	.680	−.051	.959
Incomplete ES/MS	−.022	.680	−.032	.974
Can Read and Write	−.023	.681	−.033	.973
Completed HS	−.024	.680	−.035	.972
Incomplete HS	−.016	.681	−.023	.981
Completed College	−.013	.680	−.020	.984