Electoral Crime Under Democracy: Evidence from Brazil

Andre Assumpcao*

June 1st, 2019

Abstract

TBU

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

JEL classification: D72; K42; P48.

*Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Public Policy, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Contact details: aassumpcao@unc.edu.

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***	.747***
	(.006)	(.007)	(.008)
Individual Controls	-	Yes	Yes
Fixed-Effects	-	-	Yes
Observations	9,470	9,470	9,470
Adjusted-R^2	.633	.648	.859
F-stat	16,364.9***	1,092.6***	21.4***

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

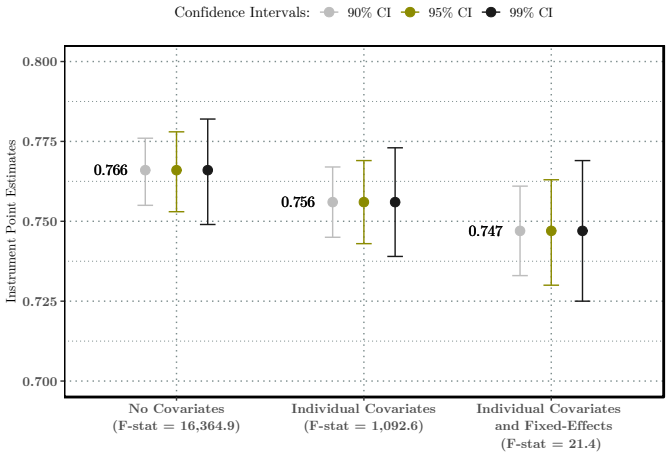

Table 4: Hausman Test of Instrument Strength

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	$-.208^{***}$	$-.169^{***}$	$-.194^{***}$	$-.272^{***}$	$-.235^{***}$	$-.259^{***}$
	(.009)	(.009)	(.014)	(.011)	(.010)	(.016)
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	.286	.059	.120	.282
F-stat	653.58^{***}	86.48^{***}	52.89^{***}	707.35^{***}	92.07^{***}	2.35^{***}

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^{***}	-12.453^{***}	-16.804^{***}	-14.247^{***}	-15.570^{***}
	(.418)	(.386)	(.585)	(.478)	(.447)	(.671)
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	.547	.109	.244	.544
F-stat	$1{,}278.91^{***}$	202.66^{***}	5.01^{***}	$1{,}360.8^{***}$	211.95^{***}	5.04^{***}

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	$-.609^{***}$	$-.869^{***}$	-7.994^{***}	-11.252^{***}
	(.065)	(.076)	(2.083)	(2.431)
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	.422	.419	.282	.276
F-stat	3.45^{***}	1.54^{***}	3.45^{***}	1.54^{***}

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

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	β_{trial}	β_{appeals}	$\beta_{\text{difference}}$	Std. Error	t-stat	p-value
Elected to Office	−.247	−.291	.044	.075	.593	.553
Age	−.002	−.000	−.002	.003	−.436	.663
Male	.020	.013	.007	.037	.187	.852
Political Experience	−.102	−.027	−.075	.075	−1.010	.313
Campaign Expenditures (in R$)	−.000	−.000	−.000	.000	−.233	.816
Marital Status:						
Divorced	−.009	.022	−.031	.040	−.779	.436
Legally Divorced	.069	.030	.039	.047	.822	.411
Single	−.002	.048	−.050	.040	−1.271	.204
Widowed	.033	−.008	.041	.063	.648	.517
Educational Levels:						
Completed ES/MS	−.242	−.314	.072	.094	.766	.444
Incomplete ES/MS	−.197	−.338	.141	.122	1.162	.245
Can Read and Write	−.154	−.372	.218	.165	1.323	.186
Completed HS	−.280	−.347	.067	.088	.758	.448
Incomplete HS	−.202	−.356	.154	.141	1.093	.274
Completed College	−.323	−.404	.081	.105	.777	.437
Incomplete College	−.282	−.374	.092	.143	.642	.521

Note: In this table, I report the coefficients of two regressions using the same covariates on the probability of receiving an unfavorable ruling at trial (column 1) and on appeals (column 2). I then recover the distributions of the differences in betas and test H0: $\beta_{\text{difference}} = 0$ for all covariates in the regressions (columns 3-6). Robust standard errors are clustered at the municipal-election pair level (equivalent to the judge-level error shared by all candidates in one municipality during one election period); party-fixed effects are included in both regressions but are not reported here.

Figure 2: Instrument Correlation with Covariates