

ARTICLE

Does Greater Women's Presence Make a Difference? The Composition of Executive Party Committees and the Allocation of Public Funds for Election Campaigns in the 2018 Race to Brazil's Chamber of Deputies

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This article primarily aims to understand the extent to which women holding key party positions can contribute to improve women candidates' access to public funding for their campaigns. We have looked into the 2018 election to the Chamber of Deputies (Brazil's lower house of Congress) and present the following hypotheses: the greater presence of women in their parties' key decision-making levels leads to better access for women who ran for office, and left-wing parties have more women on their executive committees and, consequently, better-funded women candidates. We have used data from the Electoral Data Repository and the Party Information Management System, disclosed by Brazil's Superior Electoral Court. With these data, we were able to measure the number of women holding key party positions and the total public funds allocated to women candidates. We have used descriptive statistics and beta regression analysis to work on this information. We observed that the presence of women at the highest ranking positions at the state level could be positively linked to the total funding received by women candidates. Investigations into national and state levels, on the other hand, did not show evidence of our second hypothesis, as left-wing parties performed very similarly to parties across the ideological spectrum.

Keywords: Women's political participation; election funding; executive party committees; women members of female federal deputy.

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Women's political participation has been the subject of many scientific investigations in recent decades, which seek to understand why this is an underrepresented group and how to change this scenario. Among the determining factors identified in this process, campaign funding appears as one of the main barriers to women becoming elected officials (SACCHET and SPECK, 2012a; SANBONMATSU and ROGERS, 2020; SPECK and MANCUSO, 2014).

Looking into how many women struggle to access campaign funding, political parties have been a key part of this dynamic. This is because they not only recruit and select candidates, they also run the campaigns and can make access to financial resources easier, whether from donors or the party itself (JANUSZ, BARREIRO, and CINTRON, 2021; SACCHET and SPECK, 2012b). In this sense, the literature shows evidence that party leaders lean toward men when allocating these funds (HASSELL and VISALVANICH, 2019; KJAER and KROOK, 2019; WYLIE, 2020).

Observing how political parties operate is therefore essential to understanding the process of women's political representation. Many articles have addressed this issue by investigating party recruitment (BJARNEGÅRD, 2013; BJARNEGÅRD and KENNY, 2016; CHAPPELL, 2006; VERGE, 2012). Meanwhile, the conversation about the effects of party organization on women's political participation still requires further exploration (BARBOSA, 2015; BOLOGNESI and COSTA, 2015; BOLOGNESI, PERISSINOTTO, and CODATO, 2016).

Similarly, research that looks into women in party leadership positions is still scarce. In this group, Kittilson's research stands out (2011) as a principal investigation in the field. Her survey has shown that party spaces with more women tend to have programs focusing more on social justice issues and tend to adopt affirmative measures, including gender quotas. Other studies have shown that women holding leadership positions in parties can lead to more women running for office and being elected (CHENG and TAVITS, 2011; KUNOVICH and PAXTON, 2005; REZENDE and SILVA, 2018). Researchers including Cross and Pruyers (2019) have recently found that women party leaders have a direct influence on women's representation, increasing the number of women candidates appointed in multi-member majority system. Sundström and Stockemer (2022), in turn, have observed an increasing

number of women legislators in proportional representation systems. These findings suggest that women in party leadership positions promote women's presence in politics.

Given this evidence, we aimed to verify to what extent women's presence in intraparty dynamics may enhance women's political participation by making public funding available to women's campaigns. The literature has not yet investigated this relationship, which is a gap that this study aims to address. To this end, we propose the use of information on the composition of national and state-level party executive committees to investigate the link between the presence of women at high-ranking party spaces and the amount of public funds allocated to women candidates. Our analysis observed the allocation of money from the Special Fund for Campaign Financing (FEFC) and the Special Fund for Financial Aid to Political Parties (Party Fund) to female federal deputies in Brazil's 2018.

The main goal here is to understand to what extent women holding key party positions may contribute to improve women's access to public campaign funding. In other words: has a larger number of women in these positions meant more money for women candidates running in the 2018 race?

Our aim with this investigation is to expand the range of possibilities for fostering women's political participation. We know that affirmative actions, such as electoral quotas, have led to an increasing number of women candidates and, in a way, a growing number of women elected. This has been especially true in the 2018 elections, in which quotas were also applied in the allocation of public funding for campaigns, a topic that will be further discussed in this article.

We thus believe that the presence of women in key party positions can boost women's participation by allocating funds to them, which provides new perspectives to discuss the relevance of their work in these spaces. Studies have shown several aspects in the process of women's political participation, from institutional factors regarding electoral systems and the adoption of quotas (JOHN, SMITH, and ZACK, 2018; SCHWINDT-BAYER and MISHLER, 2005) to considerations about women's socialization and its connection to political ambition (FOX and LAWLESS, 2012; LAWLESS, 2015). However, while it is not possible to establish a causal relationship, most problems regarding gaps in women's political representation are linked to the

poor performance of this group in the organizational structures of parties (BARNES and HOLMAN, 2020; BARROS and NASCIMENTO, 2021; THOMSEN, 2015; THOMSEN and SWERS, 2017).

Having addressed this information, this article is organized in five parts, in addition to this introduction. The first is a brief theoretical review of women's access to campaign funds, focusing on the role political parties play in it. The second part—materials and methods—details the work conducted with data from the Electoral Data Repository and the Party Information Management System (SGIP3)¹ analyzed using descriptive statistics and beta regression techniques. The third part presents the results and the discussion regarding the composition of party executive committees and the allocation of public funds for election campaigns. The conclusion highlights the findings of our research and offers suggestions regarding possible measures that may help address gender inequalities in political funding.

Political parties and women's access to campaign finance

There has been an increase in recent years in the number of surveys that draw links between electoral funding and women's political participation, with some countries gaining prominence in this production, including the United States and Brazil (SACCHET, 2018; WILTSE, 2018). Many studies have focused on the race for seats at national lower houses of Congress and aimed to investigate both the effect of gender on funding and reported expenditures, and the effect of funding on election results (EDUARDO et al., 2023).

Regarding the difference in funding received by men and women, while some studies show no disadvantage for women in this process (BURRELL, 1985; FRAGA and HASSELL, 2020; INGALLS and ARRINGTON, 1991). Others show that women are overlooked in funding (BARBER et al., 2016; HERRICK, 1996; JENKINS, 2007; SACCHET, 2018), and that this directly affects their chances of being elected (JUNCKES et al., 2015; SACCHET and SPECK, 2012a; SANBONMATSU and ROGERS, 2020).

¹These data repositories are available on the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) website (<https://dadosabertos.tse.jus.br/>).

In proportional, open-list, and candidate-centered systems, as is the case in Brazil, one of the main obstacles for women to join the political elites is financial resources (GAMBOA and MORALES, 2021; JANUSZ, BARREIRO, and CINTRON, 2021). Consequently, many countries have been adopting initiatives aiming to reduce the socioeconomic disadvantage women face, including public funding for political campaigns (BALLINGTON and KAHANE, 2014).

As we reviewed the literature utilized in this discussion, we were able to list some of the most frequent variables found in investigations. Table 01 shows the most common links between independent and dependent variables. It should be noted that the same article may address more than one link.

Table 01. Main variables identified in studies on gender and campaign finance

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Country studied and number of articles
Gender	Electoral funding	United States (11), Canada (01), Belgium (01) ²
	Electoral performance	United States (01), Brazil (01), Canada (01) ³
Election funding	Electoral performance	United States (06), Brazil (04), Chile (01) ⁴
Political party	Election funding	United States (03) ⁵
Gender of donors	Election funding	United States (01), Canada (01) ⁶
Race	Election funding	United States (02) ⁷
Electoral system	Electoral performance	Brazil (01) ⁸

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on research into the Web of Science Platform (2021).

Notably, there is a small number of studies addressing the role of political parties in funding political campaigns. This article, therefore, aims to provide a contribution to improve this agenda, as political parties play, according to distributive dynamics, a key role in this sense (SACCHET, 2020). Party leaders are the ones who decide how and to which candidates to allocate funds. There is evidence showing that significant amounts of funds are allocated to few candidates, usually those who are

²Adams and Schreiber (2010); Barber, Butler and Preece (2016); Burrell (1985); Crespin and Deitz (2010); Fraga and Hassell (2020); Grumbach, Sahn, and Staszak (2020); Hogan (2007); Jenkins (2007); Kitchens and Swers (2016); Sanbonmatsu and Rogers (2020); Smulders, Put, and Maddens (2018); Tolley, Besco and Sevi (2020); Werner (1997).

³Carlomagno and Codato (2018); Hogan (2010); Kushner, Siegel, and Stanwick (1997).

⁴Adams and Schreiber (2010); Burrell (1985); Gamboa and Morales (2021); Herrick (1996); Hogan (2010, 2007); Ingalls and Arrington (1991); Janusz, Barreiro and Cintron (2021); Sacchet and Speck (2012a); Speck and Mancuso (2014); Wylie (2020).

⁵Crespin and Deitz (2010); Kitchens and Swers (2016); Thomsen and Swers (2017).

⁶Heerwig and Gordon (2018); Rekkas (2008).

⁷Fraga and Hassell (2020); Grumbach, Sahn, and Staszak (2020).

⁸Sacchet (2018).

more competitive (BOLOGNESI et al., 2020). However, this complex process involves not only statutory legislation, but also many peculiar informal aspects to each party, which can facilitate or hinder the entry and participation of women in these spaces (ÁLVARES, 2008; BJARNEGÅRD and ZETTERBERG, 2019; GATTO and WYLIE, 2021).

As previously mentioned, more in-depth analyses of intraparty dynamics demonstrate that putting an emphasis on women in leadership positions can increase the number of women candidates and elected representatives (CAUL, 2001; CHENG and TAVITS, 2011; KITTLSON, 2011, 2006; KUNOVICH and PAXTON, 2005). Moreover, the selection of women leaders can break the glass ceiling, paving the way for other women party members to get to leadership positions (JALALZAI and KROOK, 2010). This fact also contributes to voters' perception of the effectiveness of women in leadership positions, reducing traditional gender stereotypes about the role this group plays in the public and private spheres (BEAMAN et al., 2012; O'BRIEN, 2012).

Still regarding women's role in decision-making positions, there are indications that women in these spaces tend to be more inclusive of other women (KROOK and O'BRIEN, 2012) and also tend to use their power to advance pro-gender reforms (REYES-HOUSHOLDER, 2019, 2018). Based on these findings, we expect that (Hypothesis 01) the greater presence of women at parties' core decision-making levels may lead to more money being allocated to women candidates' campaigns. It is worth mentioning that, party leaders execute the distribution of public funds for campaigns, who are responsible for allocating this money. There has been, however, an attempt to control this distribution dynamics, and the parties must submit the criteria defined by their National Executive Committees to the Superior Electoral Court (TSE).

Looking into these documents, Ferreira (2021) aimed to observe the presence of information that showed who can manage the public funds allocated to the candidates. This information could be indicative of the level of party commitment to a transparent and coherent fund management. Most resolutions failed to mention the criteria that define women candidates' access to this money⁹ and usually only reported

⁹As exceptions, the author mentions the PP and the PSOL as parties that produced detailed reports of their fund allocation criteria. In addition to them, DEM, PMB, PV, and MDB have also presented some details about this process in their resolutions. Also, in the PV and the MDB's case, these funds would be managed with the participation of women members of the parties (FERREIRA, 2021).

that parties were to comply with the legally defined percentage of women candidates. Document analysis and information obtained through interviews with women candidates and women party leaders have shown that the resolutions were just a formality and that the allocation of public funds was executed in a way that is not explained in these documents.

So even though the law establishes that national party leadership bodies are responsible for allocating FEFC funds (and Party Fund resources when directed to campaigns), there was no definition of whether this money would move directly from the national offices to women candidates, or whether other party levels, including state headquarters, could mediate this transaction. Note that our investigation has focused on the revenues declared by candidates (both men and women) and has not looked into transfers of resources between candidacies.

In addition to the allocation of public money to women candidates, we will also look into the influence that party ideology can exert in this process. As women's political participation has been historically more encouraged by left-wing parties (ALLES, 2014; JONES, ALLES and TCHINTIAN, 2012; KATZ and MAIR, 2018), we believe that (Hypothesis 02) these parties have more women on their executive committees (both at national and state levels) and, consequently, (Hypothesis 03) allocate more public money to women candidates. Regarding ideology, also, left-wing parties are less likely to nominate 'ghost candidates' to stand for election and are more likely to nominate and get women elected (GATTO and WYLIE, 2021).

Materials and methods

The data utilized in this investigation were obtained from the Electoral Data Repository and SGIP3, both made available by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE, 2020).

As the dependent variable this article is interested in is public money allocated to candidates running for office in the 2018 female federal deputy race, our analysis focuses on cases ruled eligible by electoral courts, which means candidacies that effectively stood for election (7,658). For the same reason, cases in which there was no accountability¹⁰ (737) and no reports of use of public funds (1,415) were excluded

¹⁰There were 236 women and 501 men. The standardized residual test showed no prevalence or absence of either sex in the distribution of these cases.

from the database, adding up to 5,506 candidacies — 1,931 candidates were women and 3,575 were men¹¹. We created variables based on the information made available by the TSE (Table 02).

Table 02. Variables created

Variables and Dependent Variable	
Public funds	Sum of funding from the Special Fund for Campaign Finance (FEFC) and the Special Fund for Financial Aid to Political Parties (Party Fund).
Public Funding per Federative Unit	Aggregated public funds based on the federative unit where they were utilized.
Proportion of Public Funding per Federative Unit (dependent variable)	The proportion of public funding reported by each candidacy in each state (ranges from 0 to 1).

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on TSE data (2021).

Note: Total 5,506 units of analysis (1,931 women and 3,575 men).

Our calculation of the dependent variable was based on the work of Speck and Mancuso (2014). We therefore considered an index that indicated the proportion of funds received by a candidacy in relation to the total funds raised by all candidates from the same state running for a female federal deputy seat. As an example, we may consider the case of the state of Paraná, where all candidacies combined received R\$53,061,231 from public funds and candidate Gleise Hoffmann (PT) alone reported R\$1,301,322 in funds coming from the same source. Her index was therefore approximately 2.45. This means that the proportion of funds she received was 0.024 of the total funds raised by all candidates in the state. This approach was adopted to address the variation in the cost of electoral campaigns in different states, making it possible to compare candidates, regardless of their location (SPECK and MANCUSO, 2014, p. 39).

Considering their relevance for the discussion, we established three control variables for the model: running for reelection, the ideology of the party, and the race of the woman candidate. About the latter, this choice is justified by the fact that a more precise and detailed analysis of electoral campaign funding needs to consider the complex impact that race has on politics and on economic and social interactions (GRUMBACH, SAHN, and STASZAK, 2020). Regarding ideology, we

¹¹In this group, there were 256 women and 1,159 men.

adopted the classifications proposed by Barbieri and Ramos (2019), based on the works of Power and Zucco (2011) and Power and Rodrigues-Silveira (2019), according to which Brazilian parties are separated into groups to the right of the center, at the center, and to the left of the center in the political spectrum¹².

We created our independent variables based on the information collected from SGIP3 on August 9th, 2021. These refer to the so-called ‘núcleo duro’ (high-ranking positions) (PINHO, 2016) of national and state party committees and consist in the presence of women in the positions of 01. chair, 02. secretary-general, or 03. treasurer. While parties may have different organizational structures depending on their history and size, they all have these positions on their committees. Moreover, SGIP3 documents (2021) we reviewed show that these positions play an executive role across parties. These are positions that (on paper) have decision-making power and are not merely symbolic (FERREIRA, 2021).

We know that other leaders can have decision-making power in the fund allocation process¹³, including party caucus leaders in the lower house of Congress and the Senate (RIBEIRO, 2013), as well as members of parliament who are running for reelection. However, we chose not to include them to focus our analysis on members chosen within the parties.

Our survey also includes the type of party body that is operating. At the national level, we found documents of 30 executive committees and four definitive offices. Executive committees are part of the definitive offices, but differ from them because they play a specific role within a party. In this sense, anyone who takes part in a party’s executive committee is a member of its definitive office, but that is not the case the other way around. At the state level, they were divided into provisional offices (419 cases) and state headquarters (477 cases).

Provisional committees are temporary (ad hoc) party representation offices and, in the absence of state headquarters (especially when a party is at the early stages of its establishment in a given location), they are in charge of party dynamics including

¹²For ease of reading, we will refer to the ‘Left of the center’ as ‘Left’ and to the ‘Right of the center’ as ‘Right’ when discussing ideology.

¹³Analyzing seven Brazilian parties (PP, PFL/DEM, PMDB, PSDB, PSB, PDT, and PT), Pedro F. Ribeiro's research (2014) provides evidence that their high ranks are led by members of Congress and senators, but this information was only confirmed for half of them (PMDB, PP, and PFL/DEM).

organizing conventions and choosing candidates. They have a smaller number of members who are appointed by higher levels of the party, not chosen through intraparty elections as is the case of state headquarters (ESMERALDO, 2013). They are active for a defined amount of time, which does not necessarily happen with provisional offices. Table 03 summarizes this information.

Table 03. Total positions by type of party body

Type of party body		Total committees	Total positions
National Executive Committee (CEN)		34	102
Provisional State Executive Committee		419	1257
State Headquarters		477	1431

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on the TSE SGIP3 (2021).

These data were collected by analyzing the entire composition of the committees prior to the registration of candidacies with the electoral court, that is, prior to August 15th, 2018. This was the cut-off date both for the committees themselves and for the positions in them to be in effect, as many of the documents show names with the different effective dates for the positions and the committee. We therefore only considered the names that were part of this party group during the processes of self-promotion of candidacies within the parties and party conventions. The reason for this choice is that conventions mark the moment when candidacies are decided on¹⁴ (GUARNIERI, 2011). It should be noted that while party deliberations not necessarily occurred (only) during this time, this information could only be confirmed through ways that go beyond the quantitative nature of this article.

We collected, from these documents, the names of all members of each party body, as well as their position and duration. The names were checked and divided into 'women' and 'men'. Most often than not, reading the names was enough to place a person in one of these two categories. When a name was considered 'gender-neutral', we did a Google search (on news websites, party websites, and candidate pages, as well as on social media) to identify the person's sex.

¹⁴2018 elections calendar. Available at <<https://www.tse.jus.br/comunicacao/noticias/2018/janeiro/eleicoes-2018-2013-confira-o-calendario-com-as-principais-datas>>.

Also, regarding the collection of state information, it is worth mentioning that not all parties had committees across all Brazilian states in 2018. Five parties from 14 states¹⁵ were in this situation. Also, while the SGIP3 shows (2021) a provisional committee of the PHS party in the state of Roraima, documents about this were not available on the website, so this case was not used in our data collection.

The 2018 Brazilian elections

In 2018, 9,204 Brazilian women ran for one of 1,654 elective positions in the country's general elections. Only 290 of them were elected (3.15%). Bear in mind that more than 77 million voters in Brazil are women, which means 52.5% of total voters. While this is clearly a disproportionate scenario, that was progress compared to the 2014 elections, when only 190 women were elected to a seat in the race. Specifically regarding women elected to female federal deputy, the number of elected representatives grew from 51 in 2014 to 77 in 2018.

Regarding financial resources, the greatest source of revenue for all parties was public funds, amounting to R\$2.5 billion, corresponding to 76% of total funds reported. R\$1.7 billion of these funds came from the FEFC and the rest, approximately R\$800 million, from the Party Fund. Bear in mind that donations from legal entities were banned¹⁶.

Also in the 2018 elections, the Brazilian Supreme Court (STF), ruling on the Direct Action for the Declaration of Unconstitutionality (ADI) N° 5,617, required that parties allocate at least 30% of the total funds received from the FEFC (and the Party Fund, if directed to campaigns) to women candidates. This measure emerges as an important catalyst for women's political participation and the increase in the number of elected candidates. However, as mentioned earlier, party leaders were in charge of the execution of this action, as they are responsible for allocating this money.

In this sense, executive committees are key to political parties (RIBEIRO, 2014). For their relevance, having access to these spaces of power can allow political

¹⁵They are: DC-Tocantins; PCO (Acre, Amazonas, Amapá, Federal District, Rondônia, Roraima, Sergipe, and Tocantins); PCB (Mato Grosso do Sul, Mato Grosso, Paraíba, Rondônia, and Rio Grande do Sul); PMB (Alagoas, Paraíba, and Santa Catarina), and PSTU (Acre, Goiás, Mato Grosso, and Tocantins).

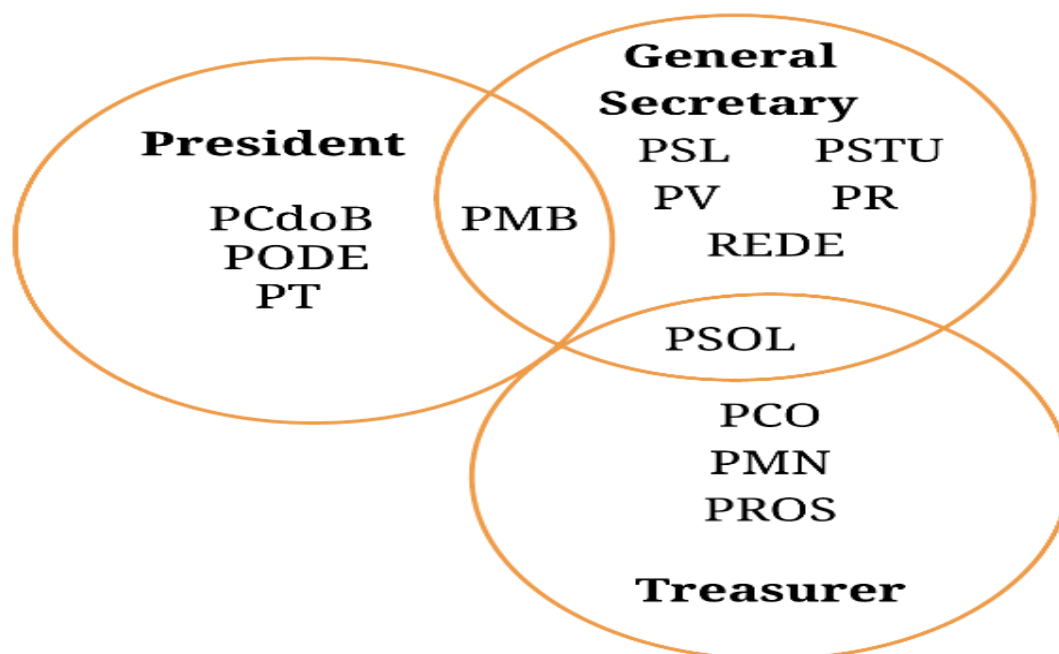
¹⁶This ban was the result of a ruling on the Direct Action for the Declaration of Unconstitutionality (ADI) No. 4,650 by the Brazilian Supreme Court (STF).

agenda building and decision-making on essential issues in party dynamics. Greater presence of women in these positions, therefore, can function as a “gateway that directly influences the possibility of women's empowerment, visibility, and electoral representation” (SILVA and CAMPOS, 2019, p. 70).

Composition of Party Executive Committees and distribution of public funds for campaigns — results

Our analysis of the composition of the national executive committees of Brazil's 34 parties shows that only four of these parties had a chairwoman, seven had a woman holding the position of secretary-general, and four had women treasurers. Interestingly, the only parties with women holding more than one position were PMB and PSOL (Graph 01).

Graph 01. Positions held by women on parties' national executive committees



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on the TSE SGIP3 (2021).

Considering that we are looking into three different positions in each party (102 total positions), this survey shows that women had held just over 12% of these positions. That is, they are still minority in party decision-making spaces.

At the state level, we observed a total of 896 party committees: 477 state headquarters and 419 provisional committees. While there are differences in numbers between the two types of party body, they are small differences —approximately 07%. Only 97 spaces had been chaired by women, just over 10%; 157 had women as secretaries-general (17.5%), and 206 as treasurers (23%). As expected, the numbers are even lower in cases where there was more than one woman in these positions: chair and secretary-general: 21; chair and treasurer: 23; and secretary-general and treasurer: 47. Table 04 shows the distribution of cases by type of committee.

Table 04. Number of women per position in state-level party bodies

	Total	Positions held by women		
		Chair	Secretary-general	Treasurer
Provisional	419	41	76	95
State headquarters	477	56	81	111
	% of total	10.8%	17.5%	23%

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on the TSE SGIP3 (2021).

Based on these data, provisional committees (248) had more women at high-ranking positions than state headquarters (212). A total of 460 state bodies had at least one woman occupying one of the three positions.

Separating cases by ideology, right-wing parties had 319 provisional committees (63%) and 189 state headquarters (37%). Left-wing parties had 90 provisional committees (32%) and 190 state headquarters (68%). Finally, the numbers of centrist parties were 10 (9%) and 98 (81%), respectively. These numbers show that right-wing parties had more provisional committees than other parties, which was also found in research conducted by Malu Gatto and Kristin Wylie (2021). The authors analyzed electoral cycles from 1998 to 2018, arguing that the extended use of this type of committee reduces the accountability of party decision-making processes, which tends not to benefit the nomination process and, consequently, the election of women.

Moving on to the observation of the distribution of positions across parties, Table 05 shows that the 34 parties had at least one woman in at least one of position. The lowest number was found in the MDB, with only three women, followed by PCB, PCO, and PSDB with five, AVANTE and DEM with seven, PSD with eight, and PATRI and PSB with nine.

Table 05. Number of women by position, party, and ideology

	Chair	Secretary-general	Treasurer	Total	Ideology
PSOL	05	10	10	25	Left
PCdoB	02	05	13	20	Left
PSTU	05	07	08	20	Left
PT	03	09	05	17	Left
PDT	01	08	07	16	Left
PROS	02	05	06	13	Left
PPS	03	03	06	12	Left
PPL	02	04	04	10	Left
PSB	01	03	05	09	Left
PCB	01	03	01	05	Left
PCO	02	02	01	05	Left
REDE	10	08	04	22	Center
PV	06	06	07	19	Center
PSDB	01	0	04	05	Center
MDB	0	01	02	03	Center
PMB	15	08	16	39	Right
PRP	04	09	10	23	Right
PMN	09	02	09	20	Right
PRTB	04	09	06	19	Right
PTC	0	06	08	14	Right
DC	01	04	08	13	Right
PR	02	05	06	13	Right
PSC	01	05	07	13	Right
PSL	02	05	05	12	Right
PTB	01	04	06	11	Right
Solidariedade	0	03	08	11	Right
PHS	0	05	05	10	Right
PODE	01	05	04	10	Right
PP	02	02	06	10	Right
PRB	02	03	05	10	Right
PATRI	01	04	04	09	Right
PSD	02	02	04	08	Right
AVANTE	04	02	01	07	Right
DEM	02	0	05	07	Right
Total	97	157	206	460	

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on the TSE SGIP3 (2021).

The parties with the most women in high-ranking positions at the state level were: PMB (39), PSOL (25), PRP (23), REDE (22), PCdoB, PMN, and PSTU (20). In this regard, there are no differences between party ideologies, as three parties were left-wing, one was centrist, and three were right-wing.

When we turn our focus to chairs, four parties did not have at least one woman holding this position: MDB, PHS, PTC, and Solidariedade (one is centrist and the others are right-wing). In cases where women did hold chair positions, the numbers by ideology show better performance of the center parties, with 17 occurrences (20.9%)

and similar performance of right- and left-wing parties, with 53 (9.9%) and 27 (9.6%) chairwomen, respectively.

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals that, in general terms, different parties show similarities regarding the presence of women in the positions reviewed by this study. This suggests that left-wing parties do not have proportionally more women on their executive committees, which does not provide sufficient evidence to confirm our second hypothesis¹⁷.

To provide a better understanding, a beta regression model (Table 06) was used with the three explanatory variables:

- the presence of women in chair, secretary-general, and treasurer positions (01 = presence and 0 = absence);
- control variables: party ideology, reelection, and race (identified as white or POC), and gender as an interactive variable in holding one of the three positions analyzed, where 01 means women candidates and 0 means male candidates.

Using the beta regression model below (Table 06), we can estimate the effect that the variables listed may have on our dependent variable of interest, the proportion of public funds allocated to women candidates per federative unit. To provide better understanding about this, we introduced two models. The first, in the middle column, takes into account all the cases analyzed. The second, in the right column, does not include the outliers¹⁸ of the race. As expected, in both models, the reelection variable has the highest regression coefficient, showing that standing for reelection is the biggest factor in campaign funding. Looking at this variable in relation to the gender of candidates, we observe that, taking outliers into account, it has a greater effect on women's funding, that is, women who run for reelection receive more public money than their male counterparts. However, this effect disappears when we disregard the outliers in the analysis.

Regarding the other control variables, we can also observe significant differences between the models. Regarding party ideology, we see, in the first model, that the position of a party on the left of the ideological spectrum had a negative effect

¹⁷Chi-squared tests were performed to compare the number of women in the three positions analyzed by party ideology and none of them showed statistical significance.

¹⁸We surveyed the outliers by calculating the z-score. We found a total of 130 cases.

on the funds received both, by women and men. This negative effect is maintained when outliers are excluded and, in this case, a right-wing party ideology also exerts a negative influence on the funds received by candidates of either sex.

Table 06. The impact of women's presence in national and state-level executive positions on the allocation of public funds to candidacies

	Dependent variable	
	Proportion of public funds by state with outliers	Proportion of public funds by state without outliers
Gender	-0.028 0.041	-0.064 0.042
National Chairperson	-0.09 0.058	-0.054 0.056
National Chairperson * gender	0.057 0.092	0.211* 0.091`
National Secretary-General	-0.253*** 0.053	-0.354*** 0.054
National Secretary-General * gender	0.027 0.086	-0.011 0.088
National Treasurer	-0.024 0.073	0.016 0.072
National Treasurer * gender	-0.038 0.113	-0.126 0.075
State-level Chairperson	-0.058 0.074	-0.054 0.073
State-level Chairperson * gender	0.301** 0.112	0.216 0.116
State-level Secretary-General	-0.041 0.053	0 0.051
State-level Secretary-General * gender	0.023 0.088	-0.011 0.088
State-level Treasurer	0.083 0.045	0.089* 0.044
State-level Treasurer * gender	-0.153* 0.075	-0.126 0.075
Right-wing ideology	-0.037 0.048	-0.125** 0.048
Left-wing ideology	-0.116* 0.058	-0.148* 0.057
Reelection	1.648*** 0.043	1.631*** 0.043
Reelection * gender	0.590*** 0.091	0.075 0.131
Race	0.044 0.03	0.087** 0.03
Note	4678	4550
Degrees of freedom for adjustment	21	21
Residual degrees of freedom	4657	4529

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2022), based on the TSE SGIP3 (2021).

Note: Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1.

Our third control variable, race, had no statistically significant effect in the first model. However, when outliers are not taken into account, it shows a positive effect of approximately 09% on the funds received by white candidates of either gender. That is, in the presence of outliers, race did not appear to be significantly correlated with the proportion of public money allocated to campaigns.

Now addressing the variables related to executive committees, the analysis of the coefficients shows that the presence of a woman in a national general secretariat has a negative effect of -25% on the funds received by candidacies in general in the first model, and of -35% in the second. That is, parties with women in these positions allocated less public money to their candidates, both men and women, compared to parties in which men held the same position. However, in both models, the same variable no longer has effect when we specifically observe the allocation of public money to women candidates. In other words, in this case, there is no significant difference in funds received by women, whether this position is held by a woman or a man.

Another noteworthy aspect in the first model is the negative effect that the presence of a woman in a state-level treasury generates in the allocation of public money to women's campaigns. According to this finding, parties that had men in their state treasury allocated more public funds to their women candidates. This effect disappears when we disregard the cases of outliers, and the presence of women treasurers means an increase of approximately 09% in funds allocated to men or women.

Meanwhile, the first model shows significant differences between the sexes in terms of state-level chairpersons. We see that state bodies chaired by women have allocated approximately 24% more public funds than those chaired by men. When we analyze the model without outliers, this effect no longer exists. However, women holding a national chairperson position becomes statistically significant in increasing the funds received by candidates from their parties by approximately 16%. This significant difference in the allocation of resources in women-led bodies (whether at national or state levels) points to a potential positive effect of women's representation in chair positions.

Discussion

As previously stated, this study has looked into three positions in each party's national executive committees (102 total positions), showing that women occupied just over 12% of these spaces. This means they are still a minority in party decision-making spaces. This fact may impact women's political participation, as access to these spaces may influence the allocation of party and electoral resources (REZENDE and SILVA, 2018). Moreover, the greater presence of women in Brazilian party leadership positions can provide the political capital needed for the elections. Likewise, it can give this group a better ability to influence the decision-making process (PINHO, 2016).

Regarding positions in state-level committees, as we look into the percentage of women in the total number of positions analyzed, their presence in these spaces is also notably small — they filled 17% (460) of the 2,643 positions¹⁹. The participation of women in party institutions must therefore increase, as few women hold leadership positions in their parties. This shows how most Brazilian parties continue to be oligarchies that maintain their complex networks of native associations at their different spaces and levels, including their executive committees (GUIMARÃES et al., 2019). In this sense, if people who have already conducted this work for a longer time take precedence, women are ultimately in disadvantage.

Another factor that contributes to this 'vicious cycle' is the fact that the candidate running for reelection is the one most connected to the percentage of public money received — showing party preference for people who are already in office (GATTO and THOMÉ, 2020). We should mention that several studies highlight reelection as a key factor in funding (SPECK and MANCUSO, 2014; WERNER, 1997). The analysis of men and women belonging to this group shows that the differences in their electoral dynamics virtually disappear (GAMBOA and MORALES, 2021). As demonstrated, in general, women who stood for reelection to Brazil's lower house of Congress in 2018 received more funds than men.

When we remove atypical cases from the model, however, this difference disappears. We thus see that the link between women's reelection and greater funding

¹⁹This number is the result of multiplying three positions per federative unit (81), multiplied by the total number of parties (81 x 34 = 2,754), minus exceptions.

may be understood as valid in specific situations and it is not supported in most cases. In other words, some — not all — women running for reelection in the 2018 race received more funds than men in the same situation.

Also in the topic of reelection, we should mention that the advantage that comes with running for office while in office, plus the fact that it is mostly an advantage for men, highlights how reelection is itself a variable determined by gender. While few women can enjoy the benefits of their parties' preferences, those who have never won an election before can be seen as facing two disadvantages, for being women and for being rookies.

In addition to the difference observed in cases for reelection, when we eliminate the outliers, the model reveals a new dynamic, in which not only left-wing ideology, but also right-wing ideology has a negative effect on funds received by men and women. This finding shows that, when we exclude extreme cases, a more uniform and general trend is observed across ideological groups.

Another relevant change is the positive effect that the variable race has in the second model. Such an effect may suggest that, without the skewed influence of outliers, there is a real trend that white candidates' campaigns receive proportionately more public money. This may also indicate that the outliers in the original model were somehow concealing the real effect of the race variable on the allocation of public funds. That is, a few candidates of color received an amount of public money that distorted the analysis, concealing the difference in funding for different groups in the original model.

Regarding the effect of the presence women at state-level chair positions, we see that women leaders at the state level may have played an important role in funding campaigns for women candidates. However, the presence of outliers may have distorted the true influence of women's presence in chair positions. Meanwhile, having national chairwomen shows a significant positive effect. Based on these findings, we may argue that state-level chairs can have a more localized or exceptional impact, while national leaders, previously hidden by the outliers, exert a more uniform and strategic influence.

In any case, based on the effects observed in the two models, two readings are plausible. At first, we may consider that the low number of women holding chair

positions could be a possible cause of the 'limited' effect of their presence on the allocation of funds to women candidates. The opposite, however, also makes sense. Because they are few, women in these positions could have 'done more' for their peers who are running for office. Bear in mind, nevertheless, that our observation as of now is focused on the presence of women in these positions without further discussing their agency as officeholders. We know that parties have their own specific internal characteristics that go far beyond the occupation of these spaces. We should also mention the possibility that state headquarters chaired by women may have received fewer funds to be allocated than those chaired by men. And, since the unit of analysis in this work is the candidacies, we did not directly explore the total amount of resources allocated to each party directory. However, it is plausible that differences at this level impact the ability to redistribute resources to female candidates.

Looking into partisan ideology, the analysis showed no evidence related to our second and third hypotheses. As verified, left-wing parties performed very similarly to parties on other parts across the ideological spectrum, both in terms of number of women holding leadership positions and in the funding reported by women candidates. As our observation was conducted within a defined time frame, it does not allow us to definitely state that there was a 'contagion effect'. This could lead us to think that, while there is a history of women being encouraged to take part in these spaces, even left-wing parties have a preference for male leaders at decision-making levels. In this sense, our finding corroborates the work of Funk, Hinojosa, and Piscopo (2017), who argue that left-wing parties in Latin America, are no more likely to have women in chair or secretary-general positions than parties on other parts across the ideological spectrum.

In short, this reiterates how parties must be considered institutions in which gender is an axis of hierarchization and inequality within their internal structures, as discussed in the literature (ARAÚJO, 2005; BARREIRA and GONÇALVES, 2012; KITTELSON, 2006; LOVENDUSKI, 1996; REZENDE, 2015). This study provides evidence that (Hypothesis 01) the presence of women in positions with decision-making power within these institutions can improve women's access to public funds. Therefore, party structures must change to ensure women are politically included in these spaces. This is the only way to develop and apply a project that can mitigate inequality in the access to positions of power and decision-making.

Finally, this finding suggests that gender diversity in leadership positions, including national and state-level chair positions, can positively influence fund allocation policies, prioritizing areas and initiatives that aim to promote gender equality and women's political participation.

Final considerations

Before we move on to our final considerations, we should note that our idea is not to consider public funding as a panacea for women's political participation, but rather to highlight its role as a catalyst in this process. This is because the number of women elected grew in races where they ran with more financial support (BARBIERI and RAMOS, 2019).

Also, bear in mind that the greater or lesser success of the use of public money in fostering the political participation of minority groups in power will depend on how this action is designed. In the Brazilian case, the creation of the FEFC mostly aimed to ensure funds for parties' political campaigns, replacing corporate donations. This money was not intended to reduce gender disparities in elective positions (FERREIRA, 2021). That happened later, as the Brazilian justice system ruled on it. So, the very design of the measure creates gaps in the success of its implementation, reducing its effects, as is the case with electoral quotas.

As we have seen, there is still a limited presence of women in the composition of high-ranking positions on parties' executive committees at the national and state levels — less than one fifth of these positions are held by women. Nevertheless, we saw evidence of differences in funding for women candidates when the composition of core positions of a party has a greater female presence.

We thus present evidence that more women holding key positions in party bodies may be a factor that benefits women's political participation by allocating public money to women candidates, an essential resource in election races. Therefore, the presence of women in intraparty decision-making environments is an essential requirement for significant gains in the context of women's political participation.

It is important to highlight that, when the number of women in these decision-making bodies increases, there is also a reorganization of the distribution of power within the parties. This change is fundamental, as the participation of women can only

be more accurately assessed once more women hold positions with real decision-making power. It is not enough to have a high percentage of women in party spaces — it is also necessary for them to be in positions with the power to act.

The next steps to further advance in this conversation include the investigation into how and when this money is received by women candidates, as well as into a better understanding of the real decision-making power that women have within executive committees. These objectives can be achieved through field research and interviews with party leaders.

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