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# Electoral Success and Political Institutionalization in the Federal Deputy Elections in Brazil (1998, 2002 and 2006)<sup>1</sup>

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This article aims to identify the variables with the greatest impact on the chances of electoral success for candidates for the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies\* in the 1998, 2002 and 2006 elections. Based upon data provided by the Supreme Electoral Court, this article firstly analyzes the relations between occupation, gender and level of education, on the one hand, and the electoral results (those elected and not elected), on the other. The article then presents a model of logistic regression in order to measure the real impact of these variables on the candidates' chances of electoral success. The same procedure was repeated for the right-, center and left-wing parties. We conclude that being a professional politician is the most important variable in determining the electoral success of a Federal Deputy candidate in Brazil, in the elections that were analyzed.

Keywords: Electoral success; Political institutionalization; Political recruitment; Elections; Political parties.

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## Introduction

In his well-known article, Nelson Polsby (2008) identifies three important dimensions for the process of institutionalization of the United States House of Representatives. As well as the increasing complexity of its internal organization and the increasing universalism of its decision-making process, he says, the institutionalization of an organization should also consider its functional distinction compared to other

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\* Translator's note: the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies is the equivalent of the House of Representatives in the U.S. and the House of Commons in the U.K.; a Federal Deputy is the equivalent of a Congressman/Congresswoman in the U.S. and Member of Parliament in the U.K.

organizations. In turn, in order for the function of organizations to be distinct, a distinct recruitment process must also be established so that it is increasingly difficult to join the institution without following certain processes and possessing certain attributes and, at the same time, increasingly easy to identify the unique characteristics of their recruits. In other theoretical terminology, a process of specialized recruitment results in a marked difference between the “professionals” of the organization and the “profane”, helping to identify the difference between the two (Bourdieu 1989). Therefore, whatever the theoretical perspective in question, the distinction of the recruitment process and the production of “professionals” is a fundamental moment in the “institutionalization of an organization”, in Polsby’s words, or the “autonomization of the field” in the French sociologist’s terms. This article aims to contribute to understanding the recruitment process of federal deputies in Brazil in three elections (1998, 2002 and 2006) and, consequently, to provide some indications about the institutionalization of the Chamber of Deputies.

But what do we understand by “recruitment process”? As Czudnowski reminds us, the study of recruitment is not the study of political elites. The latter is essentially engaged in mapping the socio-economic and professional attributes of the individuals in influential political positions (Czudnowski 1975, 155).<sup>2</sup> In Brazilian literature, this is the case, for example, with authors such as Fleischer (1981), Love (1982), Love and Barickman (1991), Miceli (1991), Marengo dos Santos (1997; 2001), Braga (1998), Santos (2000), Rodrigues (2002), Santos (2003), Marengo dos Santos and Serna (2006), Rodrigues (2006), Messenberg (2006), Perissinotto et al. (2007). Political recruitment studies, however, aim to analyze “the social and political processes through which such positions have been attained” or, to be even more specific, “the purpose of recruitment studies is to explain the processes which result in a differentiation between political elites and the masses and between political and other social elites” (Czudnowski 1975, 156).<sup>3</sup>

The process of political recruitment, however, can be studied by identifying the filters through which those who aim to achieve positions of authority in the contemporary representative democracies must pass. In summary, we can identify five filters in the recruitment process of democratic political elites: the first of them would operate predominantly through social obstacles which would define groups that are more or less “willing” to engage in political activity; the second filter would be of a social and institutional nature and would operate, so to speak, at the level of the political system, its rules and demands which, together with the social obstacles, would facilitate some groups in entering politics, to the detriment of others; the third filter, predominantly organizational, refers to the structure of political organizations, in particular, but not exclusively, the parties and the incentives that they give to attract and choose candidates and (re)produce the electoral success of some to the detriment of others; a forth filter, which would operate in all the

dimensions mentioned above, would be motivational, present in the “initial recruitment” (Czudnowski 1975, 160-168), a moment in which the individual decides to fully and continually dedicate him/herself to politics, and in the various stages of their political career and, finally, the last filter: the voter’s decision.

If we take the international literature as reference, the study of recruitment of political elites in Western democracies should pay special attention to political parties, since these would be the institutions through which the large world of “selectionables” would be reduced, by the “selectors” of each party, to a much smaller world of candidates (Guttsman 1965; 1974; Ranney 1965; Fernández 1970; Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Recchi 1996; Norris 1997; Pennings and Hazan 2001; Hopkin 2001; Rahat and Hazan 2001; Katz 2001; Siavelis and Morgenstern 2004). We can note, moreover, that political parties are the only institution that operates both in the electoral arena and the decision-making arena, reinforcing its importance as a place of recruitment of the political elite. In Brazil, there is a pressing need for this type of study, since, as is known here, to be a member of a party is condition *sine qua non* to stand for an elective position. There are very few studies, however, on political recruitment in Brazilian parties, among which we can cite Braga (2006) and Álvares (2006; 2007).

This article aims to contribute to advancing the study of the political recruitment process of Federal Deputies in Brazil, in the elections of 1998, 2002 and 2006, by seeking to fulfill two objectives. Firstly, we intend to identify which variables (political, demographic and societal) affect the chances of electoral success of the candidates running for Federal Deputy. In order to achieve this, we compare the worlds of the non-elected with that of the elected<sup>4</sup> in the three elections. Secondly, we intend to see how the impact of these variables appears among parties of different ideological positions.

Our data,<sup>5</sup> as we will see, reveals an increasing influence of political variables on the chances of electoral success, particularly the condition of professional politician. This, in turn, suggests two points: firstly, that an important dimension of the institutionalization process of Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies, that is, the professionalization of its members, is being established<sup>6</sup> and, secondly, that in the recruitment of federal deputies, the candidates with previous political experience (defined here as “professional politicians”) tend to be favored by the political parties when they face the final filter of the elections.<sup>7</sup>

This article is divided into three parts. In the first, we compare the world of the non-elected and the world of the elected in terms of occupation, gender and level of education. We present the percentage of these variables in the two worlds and we develop a model of logistic regression to test the impact of these variables on the chances of electoral success. The second part of the article carries out the same procedures, only now for each ideological position (right, center, left). Finally, to conclude, we will make some reflections on our findings.

## Occupation, Gender and Education among the Non-elected and the Elected

We now turn to the analysis of the data referring to the elected and non-elected with regard to occupation, gender and education. Our objective is to find out if such variables give evidence of any type of bias in the recruitment process of the elected or, in other words, if they affect in a significant way the chances of electoral success. Table 1 presents a comparison between the simple frequencies of the occupations present in the two worlds.

**Table 1<sup>8</sup>** Profession of the non-elected and elected candidates of the Chamber of Deputies in the 1998, 2002 and 2006 elections

Occupation*	1998		2002		2006	
	Non-elected (%)**	Elected (%)***	Non-elected (%)**	Elected (%)***	Non-elected (%)**	Elected (%)***
Economist	1.7	3.5	0.9	1.9	1.0	1.6
Engineer	3.4	7.2	2.2	5.7	1.9	4.7
Doctor	4.9	9.9	4.0	8.4	3.9	8.0
Lawyer	11.4	15.4	11.0	14.6	10.2	8.8
Politician of Legislative Power****	4.2	21.4	3.9	29.0	6.6	46.8
Trader	5.7	1.8	6.2	1.2	6.4	1.6
State servant	4.5	1.4	3.2	1.0	3.3	0.8
Federal servant	2.2	0.2	3.0	0.6	3.2	1.2
Businessperson	-	-	7.0	4.5	7.8	6.2
Industrialist	1.1	1.4	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.2

Source: TSE and Centre of Research in Political Sociology (NUSP) - Federal University of Paraná.

\* The association between the candidate's occupation and the condition of elected proved to be significant in all years ( $p=0.000$ ). The contingency coefficient was 0.32; 0.36 and 0.45 for 1998, 2002 and 2006, respectively.

\*\* N = 11.116

\*\*\* N = 1539

\*\*\*\* The Supreme Electoral Court's information registers political activity in a different way for each election. In 1998, Senators, Deputies and Councilors were registered as "members of the Legislative Power" (N=233); in 2002, in a single category "Senators, Deputies, Councilors" (N=298) and in 2006 Senators (N=1), Deputies (N=348) and Councilors (N=181) were registered separately. In order for us to compare the relationship between occupation and electoral success for the three elections we grouped together all of these categories in one: "Politicians of Legislative Power".

There is, obviously, an endless number of other occupations registered in the Supreme Electoral Court's (TSE) data. The choice of the occupations presented here can be justified on the basis of three arguments: a) they are the most interesting from the point of view of their percentage, always much higher than the others; b) they are more significant with regard to their greater or smaller representation in the world of the elected and, lastly; c) they are the occupations traditionally considered by the literature as "hotbeds" for political activity. Regarding this last point, cf. Offerlé (1999).

There are rather interesting indications here. Firstly, we can establish a clear distinction between under-represented and over-represented occupations in the world of the elected. Among those under-represented, the one that is most prominent is clearly that

of “trader”. This profession systematically presents high percentages among the non-elected and extremely low among the elected. It is different, in this case, from the businessperson (a category that was only registered from 2002 onwards) which, despite also being under-represented among the elected, presents a percentage that is always higher than traders and other occupations. If there is a category that suggests some influence of economic power in the chances of electoral success, it seems to be that of businessperson. That of industrialist represents very few in both worlds.

What also catches our attention is the fact that civil, state and federal servants are a resounding electoral failure. Contrary to what the literature normally says, (for example, Offerlé 1999; Guttsman 1965; Cayrol and Perrineau 1982; Daalder and Berg 1982), the traditional advantages of this job (easy to stand for election, familiarity with State issues, free time to dedicate oneself to the campaign and guaranteed employment)<sup>9</sup> do not translate, in these cases, into electoral success.

However, more interesting than the under-represented occupations are the professions that clearly and systematically come up as over-represented: economists, engineers, doctors and politicians of Legislative power. The presence of these professions in an obviously over-represented way in the elected world suggests an election process in which the chances of success tend to increase if the candidate has had a technical or legislative profession. In other words, we can see that the economically relevant occupations clearly lose out to the technical and political professions, indicating a process of professionalization of the field.

A possible way of interpreting this increasing presence of technical professions would be to think of it as a result of the growing need of parties for experts for formulating public policies. In relation to engineers, for example, Santos (2003, 118-22) suggests that the large presence of these professionals in the national political elite has been occurring since the 1964 coup, when political recruitment was influenced by the technocratic bias of the military governments. However, the data above show that the advent of the New Republic did not put an end to this process. Furthermore, we can observe that certain professions, such as doctors, tend to facilitate the conversion of a professional capital into a political capital, given contact with an extensive social network (see, for example, Coradini 2001). Confirmation of these hypotheses, however, would demand another type of research.

However, none of these occupations has a significant representation in the world of the elected when compared to politicians of legislative power. Notably, not only is there a definitive over-representation of politicians in the elected world in the three elections, but also that this over-representation increases in each election, with a huge boost in 2006. Talking in absolute numbers, we can turn our attention to the significant increase in professional politicians standing for the post of Federal Deputy in 2006, with 530 candidates declaring to be deputies, senators or councilors, compared to 298 in 2002, and 233 in 1998.

Finally, still with regard to profession, lawyers are over-represented in 1998 and 2002, but become under-represented in 2006. As in many parliaments in the world (Offerlé 1999; Dogan 1999; Guttsman 1965; Fernández 1970; Rodrigues 2002), here too, lawyers continue to be a typical political profession, their familiarity with speeches and intellectual language helping them to access political life, although not necessarily electoral success. In any case, if we compare it with the data on technical professions and with the presence of politicians, it seems that the old predominance of graduates of bachelor degrees has lost space to the rise of technicians and by the professionalization of politics.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2** Gender and education of the candidates not elected and elected to the Chamber of Deputies in the 1998, 2002 and 2006 elections

Variables	1998		2002		2006	
	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	88.8	94.3	88.2	91.8	86.9	91.2
Female	11.2	5.7	11.8	8.2	13.1	8.8
<b>Education</b>						
Reads and writes	0.6	0.2	1.2	0.4	0.2	0.2
Primary education incomplete	3.9	1.0	5.2	1.6	3.7	1.0
Completed primary education	4.2	0.6	6.6	2.1	7.6	1.4
Secondary education incomplete	5.0	1.9	6.1	1.2	3.6	0.6
Completed secondary education	17.3	9.6	19.4	9.7	23.5	9.0
Higher education incomplete	12.2	6.8	11.6	9.2	11.7	7.4
Completed higher education	55.5	79.1	47.9	74.9	49.6	80.5
Not given	1.3	0.8	2.0	1.0	0.0	0.0

Source: TSE and Centre of Research in Political Sociology (NUSP) – Federal University of Paraná.

The data referring to gender and education are far more homogenous (Table 2). Very briefly: in none of the elections is the percentage of women among the elected greater than the percentage of women among the non-elected; in all elections, only the category of graduates is over-represented in the elected world, with 23.6 percentage points in the 1998 elections being the smallest difference. According to this data, the elections for Federal Deputy in Brazil in the three elections analyzed here repeat the universal findings of the diverse studies of political elites: the over-representation of men with a high level of education.

In order to evaluate adequately the impact of these variables on the chances of electoral success, we have formulated a model of logistic regression.<sup>11</sup> The model, presented in Table 3, revealed the following:



**Table 3** Impact of the predictive variables on the chances of being elected Federal Deputy in 1998, 2002 and 2006

	1998	2002	2006
<b>Political variables</b>			
Professional politician	6.628**	12.074**	13.318**
PCdoB	3.235*	6.048**	4.423**
PDT	1.227	1.335	1.384
PFL	7.855**	9.151**	5.655**
PMDB	3.833**	4.599**	5.010**
PPS	0.351	1.325	1.504
PSB	1.632	1.227	1.627
PSDB	6.090**	4.626**	3.988**
PT	3.150**	5.418**	4.738**
PTB	2.777*	2.171*	1.465
PL	2.458**	1.698*	1.883*
PSOL <sup>1</sup>	-	-	0.453
<b>Demographic variables</b>			
Being a man	1.986*	1.535*	1.301
Having a degree	1.953*	1.993**	2.842**
Above 40 years of age	1.143	1.752**	1.323
<b>Societal variables</b>			
Lawyer	1.502*	1.909**	1.410
Economist	1.992*	2.432*	2.674*
Engineer	1.949*	2.885**	3.936**
Doctor	2.019**	2.581**	3.568**
Industrialist	1.596	5.331*	4.948
Priest	3.112*	6.688**	1.827
Businessperson	-	1.279	2.460**
Cattle farmer	-	2.785	9.737**

\* p<0.05

\*\*p<0.01

PSOL (Socialist Party) was the only party that presented a negative index in our regression.  $\beta$  for this specific party (taken as a dummy variable, with 0 for "Non PSOL" and 1 for PSOL) was -4,707, indicating that the chances for PSOL candidates are the opposite trend to other parties.

Let us now analyze the first of the demographic variables. From the data in Table 2, we had the impression that gender and education affected the chances of electoral success. In fact, the model revealed that both significantly affect the chances of being elected, but at a much lower level than we would imagine looking only at the simple frequency data. Being a man increases the chances of being elected by a factor of between one and a half and two in the three elections. Having a degree, on the other hand, raises the possibility



of being elected two or three-fold. Although less than expected, being a man and having a degree are important attributes for becoming a Federal Deputy. Age seems to have almost no influence on electoral success, being significant only in 2002, but with a very low value.

As for the societal variables, the results are as follows: The profession of “lawyer” only produces a significant impact on electoral success in the 1998 and 2002 elections, but even then much lower than what we would expect considering the traditional role this profession has in the history of parliaments, not only in Brazil but worldwide. Thus, it is very interesting to compare the impact of this profession with others of a more technical nature: economist, engineer and doctor not only have a bigger impact than the profession of lawyer, but are also significant in all the elections. As we said above, this seems to suggest that the old dominance of bachelor degree holders in Brazilian politics has given some ground to a more “technocratic” way of practicing politics.<sup>12</sup>

The occupation “priest” was significant in 1998; its impact increased dramatically in 2002 and completely lost importance in 2006. The impact of occupations such as “industrialist”, “businessperson” and “cattle farmer” varies greatly, revealing the absence of patterns such as those we can find in technical professions and in the political variables.<sup>13</sup>

The political variables, as one can see, are the most systematically significant for a candidate’s electoral success in the three elections. Interestingly, in all the elections, candidates belonging to the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), the Liberal Front Party (PFL), the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), the Worker’s Party (PT) and the Liberal Party (PL) raise their chances of electoral success by values rarely attained by the societal variables (only “cattle farmer”, “priest” and “industrialist” reach similar values, although not in all the elections).<sup>14</sup> However, none of these variables bring together recurring significance with repeatedly high and increasing values as is the case with the variable “professional politician”. In the 1998 elections, the candidate of political profession (councilor, deputy or senator) had six and a half times the chance of winning the election; in 2002 these chances increased to 12 times and, in 2006, 13.

As mentioned before, the fact that the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE), for each election, registered the political professions in a different way meant that we were obliged to gather all in a single rubric: “members of legislative power”. But if we take only the data for 2006, when we can separate councilors, senators and deputies, we notice that the impact of “deputy” (state and federal, since the Supreme Electoral Court’s database does not differentiate between the two) increases to 19.873 ( $p=0.05$ ) (Perissinotto and Miriade 2009, 309).

Thus, the data referring to the three elections suggest that there tends to be a greater chance of getting into the Chamber of Deputies for the political profession – with previous

legislative experience – indicating, therefore, a process of specialization of the successful candidates. The data exclusive to 2006, in turn, suggests that this professional politician is, above all, an individual with previous deputy (state or federal) experience. If it is state deputy, we can imagine that standing for federal deputy represents a step forward in their career; if it is federal deputy, we can suppose that it means the subject already has electoral capital and is therefore able to remain in the Chamber. Both situations reinforce the hypothesis of a process of institutionalization.

## **Occupation, Gender and Education among the Non-elected and the Elected by Position in the Ideological Spectrum**

The question we seek to answer now is the following: in the occupational distribution among the different ideological positions, is there a pattern that could reveal a cohesive social origin in the right, left and center?

The distinction between left and right used in this article follows, from a theoretical point of view, Norbert Bobbio's (1995) thesis, according to which the left identifies itself with political forces which fight for economic, social, cultural, gender and racial equality; from a practical point of view, we use the recurring suggestions found in Brazilian literature on the Brazilian political parties (for example, Figueiredo and Limongi 2001; Rodrigues 2002).<sup>15</sup> This leads to the following distribution: right-wing parties: Progressive Party (PP), Social Liberal Party (PSL), National Worker's Party (PTN), Brazilian Worker's Party (PTB), Social Christian Party (PSC), Liberal Party (PL), Liberal Front Party (PFL), Christian Social Democrat Party (PSDC), Republican Progressive Party (PRP), Party of the Reconstruction of the National Order (PRONA), Worker's Party of Brazil (PT do B) and Brazilian Progressive Party (PPB); center parties: Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) and Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB); left-wing parties: Democratic Worker's Party (PDT), Worker's Party (PT), Socialist Party of Unified Workers (PSTU), Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), Worker's Cause Party (PCO), Socialist Party (PSOL), Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB), Green Party (PV) and Socialist People's Party (PPS). We have also created an "undefined" category (Carreirão 2006, 143), not used in our analysis, consisting of the following parties: National Farmer's Party (PAN), Brazilian Labor Renewal Party (PRTB), Humanist Party of Solidarity (PHS), National Mobilization Party (PMN), Christian Worker's Party (PTC), Worker's General Party (PGT), National Reconstruction Party (PRN), Social Democratic Party (PSD), National Solidarity Party (PSN), Brazilian Republican Party (PRB) and Social Worker's Party (PST).<sup>16</sup> The data on occupation can be seen in the Table 4.

**Table 4** Occupation of elected and non-elected candidates  
for Federal Deputy *per year* and by position in the ideological spectrum (%)

Occupation	Right		Center		Left	
1998	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected
Lawyers	11.8	16.0	14.3	14.3	10.5	15.9
Bank clerk	0.6	0.0	0.7	1.1	2.6	4.4
Trader	6.1	2.8	5.0	0.5	4.4	1.8
Economist	2.2	3.3	2.4	3.8	0.9	3.5
Engineer	2.4	9.0	6.7	6.0	3.6	5.3
Industrialist	1.9	1.4	1.3	1.6	0.4	0.9
Doctor	5.6	7.5	7.4	11.5	4.4	12.4
Metallurgist	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.8	1.8
Legislative politician	2.8	18.9	6.3	26.4	5.4	19.5
State servant	4.8	1.4	4.1	2.2	3.6	0.0
Federal servant	1.5	0.5	2.6	0.0	2.7	0.0
2002	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected
Lawyers	10.8	13.0	15.1	15.8	10.7	14.5
Bank clerk	0.2	0.0	0.9	0.7	1.8	2.4
Trader	6.8	0.0	4.0	1.4	5.2	1.8
Economist	0.8	2.1	2.4	2.7	0.7	1.2
Businessperson	8.3	5.7	12.6	6.8	4.5	1.2
Engineer	2.0	6.2	3.1	6.2	2.5	4.8
Industrialist	0.3	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.0
Doctor	3.4	5.2	7.1	10.3	4.5	10.8
Metallurgist	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
Cattle farmer	0.3	2.1	1.8	0.0	0.3	0.0
Legislative politician	3.5	33.2	6.4	30.8	4.5	23.5
Priest	1.2	3.6	0.2	0.7	0.8	1.2
State servant	3.5	0.0	2.2	2.7	2.9	0.6
Federal servant	2.8	0.5	2.0	0.0	4.2	1.2
2006	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected	Non-elected	Elected
Lawyers	9.7	6.7	12.1	9.0	11.4	10.3
Bank clerk	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.0	1.4	1.6
Trader	8.1	1.8	4.0	1.3	4.6	1.1
Economist	1.2	1.8	0.8	1.3	0.8	1.6
Businessperson	8.5	7.3	11.1	7.1	6.4	3.8
Engineer	2.0	7.3	2.2	6.5	1.9	1.1
Industrialist	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0
Doctor	3.5	6.7	4.3	5.2	4.3	11.9
Metallurgist	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.6
Cattle farmer	0.3	1.8	0.8	0.0	0.2	1.1
Legislative politician	7.5	46.7	10.6	43.0	6.6	43.3
Priest	1.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.0
State servant	3.0	0.6	2.8	1.3	3.5	0.5
Federal servant	2.1	0.0	2.2	1.3	4.5	1.6

: TSE and Center for Research in Political Sociology (NUSP) – Federal University of Paraná.

Let us look first at the data that allows us to differentiate the right-wing, center and left-wing parties from the point of view of a supposed specific social base. Regarding this point, we see that the industrialists and businesspeople are present in a more significant way in the right-wing and center parties, the opposite happening with the metallurgic professional category. Another category clearly linked to the left-wing parties and practically absent from the right-wing and center parties, is that of bank clerks. This opposition (businesspeople and industrialists on the one hand, and metallurgists and bank clerks on the other) implies the presence of a class distinction which, despite being far from omnipresent (given the insignificant numerical importance of these occupations in the group of professions which dominate the more diverse parties), nevertheless seems have some political significance. Among the “holders”, traders are a constant: systematically under-represented in all the ideological positions.

We believe that this difference loses ground to a similar trend which we consider to be much more important, namely the over-representation of technical professions among the elected. Except in the case of engineers in the left-wing parties in the 2006 elections, in all other elections, for all ideological positions, the percentage of economists, engineers and doctors among the elected is greater than among the non-elected.<sup>17</sup>

This data allows us to critically engage with the theses of Leôncio Martins Rodrigues (2002). According to this author, who employs a methodology quite different from ours and has a more substantial group of data, the 51st law of the Chamber of Deputies would prove the existence of a correlation between the party’s position in the ideological spectrum and the socio-occupational composition of the party benches of the Federal Chamber. Moreover, according to Rodrigues, this relative standardization of social recruitment in the Brazilian parties would give our party system greater stability and cohesion than common sense suggests, and the party migrations, so looked down upon by ordinary public opinion, would occur within the limits defined by the social bases of the parties. Our data are less conclusive in this respect. It is true that we can perceive a separation between businesspeople and industrialists on the one hand, and metallurgists and bank clerks on the other, but the percentage of these categories within the parties does not even come close, for example, to the number of professional politicians.

It is interesting to compare the dominance of the technical professions of economist, engineer and doctor with the decrease in lawyers. The former are over-represented in all ideological positions in the 1998 and 2002 elections, but cease to be so, in all the ideological positions as well, in the 2006 elections. As we mentioned before, this seems to at least indicate the rise of a political practice anchored in technical and professional knowledge which has come to occupy space with the traditional bachelor graduate-style of doing politics.

In the case of state and federal servants, the failure shown in the general data (Table

1) is repeated. Except for the category “public state servant”, in the center parties during the 2002 elections, when there was a slight over-representation, in the other elections and for all ideological positions, civil servants are almost absent from the world of the elected, despite representing a significant percentage among the candidates.

Lastly, in relation to the members of legislative power, the data speaks for itself. It is by far the most over-represented category in all the elections and in all the ideological positions. We can see, moreover, that this is a growing over-representation, indicating the professionalization of politics as a phenomenon that occurs in all positions of the ideological spectrum, which could be interpreted as an expression of the institutionalization of the recruitment process for the Chamber of Deputies in Brazil.

In relation to the variables “gender” and “education”, the homogeneity seen in Table 2, that is, the systemic over-representation of men with a degree, is repeated when we evaluate the distribution of these attributes along the diverse ideological spectrum, as represented in Table 5.

**Table 5** Gender and education of the non-elected and elected candidates of the Chamber of Deputies in the 1998, 2002 and 2006 elections, by position in the ideological spectrum

Variables	Right		Center		Left	
	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)	Non-elected (%)	Elected (%)
<b>1998</b>						
Gender						
Male	89.7	97.6	88.0	91.8	88.0	92.0
Female	10.3	2.4	12.0	8.2	12.0	8.0
Education						
Reads and writes	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0
Primary education incomplete	3.9	0.9	3.3	0.0	3.3	2.7
Completed primary education	5.2	0.5	2.2	0.5	3.7	0.9
Secondary education incomplete	5.9	2.4	2.0	1.6	5.0	0.9
Completed secondary education	18.1	12.3	14.1	9.3	15.6	5.3
Higher education incomplete	12.2	5.2	9.6	6.6	13.3	9.7
Completed higher education	52.6	77.4	68.0	81.3	57.8	80.5
Not given	1.6	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.0
<b>2002</b>						
Gender						
Male	88.8	95.3	87.1	93.2	87.2	87.3
Female	11.1	4.7	12.9	6.8	12.8	12.7
Education						
Reads and writes	1.5	0.0	1.6	0.7	0.8	0.6
Primary education incomplete	5.5	2.1	2.7	0.0	4.3	2.4

Table 5 (cont.)						
Completed primary education	7.9	2.6	3.3	2.1	5.0	1.8
Secondary education incomplete	5.4	1.0	5.3	2.1	5.8	0.0
Completed secondary education	22.2	10.9	16.2	8.9	16.4	7.8
Higher education incomplete	11.2	7.3	10.9	8.2	13.0	12.7
Completed higher education	44.7	75.1	59.2	78.1	52.9	72.9
Not given	1.7	1.0	0.9	0.0	1.8	1.8
2006						
Gender						
Male	88.8	93.9	85.2	92.3	86.3	88.1
Female	11.2	6.1	14.8	7.7	13.7	11.9
Education						
Reads and writes	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.5
Primary education incomplete	3.1	1.2	1.0	0.6	4.0	1.1
Completed primary education	9.2	1.8	5.7	1.3	5.7	1.1
Secondary education incomplete	3.9	1.2	3.0	0.6	3.0	0.0
Completed secondary education	23.6	11.6	16.6	5.2	20.9	9.2
Higher education incomplete	3.9	1.2	12.2	7.1	11.6	9.2
Completed higher education	45.1	78.7	61.5	85.2	54.6	78.9
Not given	---	---	---	---	0.1	---

Source: TSE and Center for Research in Political Sociology (NUSP) – Federal University of Paraná.

Firstly, the over-representation of men in the world of the elected occurs in all ideological positions and, consequently, the under-representation of women among the elected is also a constant in all positions. The only exception here refers to the left in the 2002 elections, when the percentage of women among the non-elected is virtually the same as that found among the elected. However, there is a difference that needs to be addressed. Despite the systemic under-representation of women in all ideological positions and in all elections (the only exception being in the left-wing parties in 2002), female under-representation is much more accentuated in the right. In the three elections analyzed here, the difference in percentage points between the presence of women in the world of the elected and that of the non-elected, in the three ideological positions is the following: in the right-wing parties: 7.9, 6.4 and 5.1; in the center parties: 3.8, 6.1 and 7.1; in the left-wing parties: 4.0, 0.1 and 1.8. One notices, therefore, that the under-representation is greater in the right and center and much smaller among the left-wing parties.

When it comes to education, the only group systematically over-represented is that of completed higher education. In the “education” variable, like the “gender” variable, the over-representation of higher education graduates among the elected is greater among the right-wing parties, followed by the left-wing parties and smallest among the center parties.

The difference, in percentage points, for the three elections is the following: right-wing parties: 24.8, 30.4 and 33.6; center parties: 13.3, 18.9 and 23.7; left-wing parties: 22.7, 20.0 and 24.3. Therefore, the data on “gender” and “education” reveal, at the same time, a similarity and a difference. Parties of all ideological positions show an over-representation, in the world of the elected, of men and people who have completed higher education, but among the right-wing parties this over-representation is greater than in the center and left-wing parties.

For a more effective evaluation, we have created a model of regression in order to measure the impact of several political, demographic and societal variables on the chances of electoral success of candidates from the political parties in the three ideological positions. The data are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6** Impact of the predictive variables on the chances of being elected Federal Deputy in 1998, 2002 and 2006, by position in the ideological spectrum<sup>18</sup>

Predictive variables	Right	Center	Left
<b>1998</b>			
Political variables			
Professional politician	9.462**	6.590**	6.410**
Demographic variables			
Being a man	3.812*	1.339*	1.482
Having a degree	2.373**	1.838*	2.363*
Above 40 years of age	1.125	0.930	1.346
Societal variables			
Lawyer	1.442	1.333	1.917*
Economist	1.754	2.139	4.880*
Engineer	3.785**	1.180	1.858
Doctor	1.389	2.092*	3.519*
Priest	3.157	0.000	0.000
Industrialist	1.157	2.442	4.174
Metallurgist	0.000	0.000	5.976*
<b>2002</b>			
Political variables			
Professional politician	21.111**	7.863**	8.727**
Demographic variables			
Being a man	2.079	1.589	1.108
Having a degree	3.624**	1.851*	1.877*
Above 40 years of age	1.417	1.440*	1.920*
Societal variables			
Lawyer	1.552	1.422	1.618
Economist	3.090	1.616	1.976



Table 6 (cont.)

Engineer	3.656*	2.505	2.093
Doctor	1.796	1.870	2.705*
Priest	9.756**	5.301	2.548
Industrialist	9.069*	3.864	0.000
Metallurgist	0.000	---	0.000
Businessperson	1.915	1.118	0.510
Cattle farmer	16.906**	0.000	0.000
Bank clerk	0.000	1.371	1.867
<b>2006</b>			
Political variables			
Professional politician	16.970**	12.335**	16.320**
Demographic variables			
Being a man	1.137	1.574	1.074
Having a degree	3.569**	2.968**	2.670**
Above 40 years of age	0.923	1.841	1.582
Societal variables			
Lawyer	1.243	1.480	1.612
Economist	3.063	2.764	3.475
Engineer	6.621**	5.026*	1.021
Doctor	3.385*	2.360	4.654**
Priest	1.601	2.197	0.000
Industrialist <sup>2</sup>	58.954*	0.000	0.000
Metallurgist	0.000	0.000	71.225**
Businessperson	3.078*	2.103	1.791
Cattle farmer	24.768**	0.000	12.871*
Bank clerk	6.127	0.000	2.784

\* p<0.05

\*\*p<0.01

The values of Exp(B) present in the occupations Industrialist, Metallurgist and Cattle Farmer, for the 2006 elections, should be put into perspective. The regression weighs the objective frequencies found for the results of Exp(B). In this light, a very reduced N may bring differences which distort the presentation of the gathered data. In the case of “Industrialists”, on the Right in 2006, we only had two cases, one being elected, leading to the significant increase in the odds-ratio for this occupation. The same applies to the case of the “Metallurgists”, on the Left, where we find three elected in a total of four candidates. The problem is also repeated for the “Cattle Farmers”, in the right-wing and left-wing parties, with three elected of a total of seven candidates, and one elected of a total of two candidates, respectively.

The data of the model of regression show some important details of the parties in the three ideological positions. These particular details are, above all, to do with the social bases of recruitment revealed by the predominant type of occupation. We can notice that “industrialist” occupation is only significant in the right in 2002 (p=0.017) and 2006 (p=0.005) (although the ratios of chance are very high because of the very small N for this category). Being an

industrialist never appears as significant for the center and for the left. The “businessperson” occupation (a category which is not registered for 1998) proves significant only for the right ( $p=0.002$ ) in the 2006 election, never for the center nor for the left. Cattle farmer (another inexistent category for 1998) is significant in increasing the chances of electoral success for the right, both in 2002 ( $p=0.000$ ) and in 2006 ( $p=0.000$ ), and for the left only in 2006,<sup>19</sup> but we should also observe here that  $N$  is very small (as shown in footnote 19). Finally, the categories “metallurgist” and “bank clerk” prove to be significant in increasing the chances of electoral success only for the candidates of the left-wing parties: metallurgist is significant in 1998 ( $p=0.030$ ) and 2006 ( $p=0.000$ ), but in this latter case Beta is excessively big because  $N$  of this category is very reduced; bank clerk is only significant in 1998 ( $p=0.010$ ).

In relation to the liberal professions, we see that being a lawyer, with exception of the left-wing parties in the 1998 elections, does not increase the chances of electoral success. This is an important piece of information, given the prominent place such occupation had in Brazilian politics, dominated for a long time by bachelor degree holders (Adorno 1988 and Carvalho 1980). Neither did being an economist render much in the three elections, being significant only for the left in 1998. The engineering profession, however, increased the chances of electoral success mainly in the right and center. In the right, this occupation is significant in all elections, in the center, only in 2006, but never in the left. Being a doctor increases the chances of electoral success in the left-wing parties in all elections; for the right-wing parties, only in 2006, for the center parties, only in 1998. The importance of “priest” for the right in 2002 seems to be merely circumstantial, since this occupation is not significant in the other elections.

The data reinforce what we said earlier: the ever-decreasing influence of lawyers and the increasing importance of economists, engineers and doctors indicate a type of political recruitment which prioritizes specialized, technical knowledge above the oratory, bachelor degree culture of lawyers. However, it would be very interesting to investigate further the logic of recruitment of these professionals to the various ideological positions. For example, why are engineers more important for the right and the center? In all positions, depending on the election, being a doctor increases the chances of electoral success, but is that for the same reasons? Why is being a doctor in the left-wing parties particularly important?

Differences in age, for their part, tell us very little. Being over 40 years old was only significant to electoral success in the center and left-wing parties in the 2002 elections. Differences in gender also do not make a difference, since being a man is only significant in the right in the 1998 elections.

There are, therefore, important details regarding the demographic and societal variables which allow us to differentiate between right-wing, center and left-wing parties. But there are also decisive similarities with regard to the importance of having a higher

education qualification and being a professional politician in increasing the chances of electoral success.

In relation to the first point, without exception in all the elections and in all ideological positions, having a higher education qualification produces significant impacts on the chances of electoral success, with  $p=0.000$  consistently for the right. In all ideological positions and in all elections, being a political professional significantly increases a Federal Deputy candidate's chances of electoral success. Moreover, the ratios of chance increase consistently for all positions and elections. This means that the professionalization of the political activity, despite differences among the right, center and left, is an increasingly important requisite for electoral success. As we have said throughout this article, this suggests the presence of a process of increasing institutionalization of the Chamber of Deputies in Brazil, at least with regard to the recruitment of its members.

## Conclusion

The data presented in this article lead to at least four conclusions, the first two refer to the data in general, and the last two relate to the data distribution by ideological positions.

Firstly, when we analyzed the data as a whole, without separating it into ideological positions, we saw that some types of profession (especially engineer, economist and doctor) frequently produce more significant effects on the chances of electoral success than dominant economic positions, such as businesspeople, industrialists and cattle farmers, even though these positions are not completely insignificant in this point.

Secondly, still maintaining an overview of the data, it is clear that being a Professional politician is by far the most important variable in increasing the chances of electoral success. Therefore, the data not yet divided into ideological positions already indicates a process of institutionalization of the recruitment process for the Chamber of Deputies.

Thirdly, the societal and demographic variables reveal some important differences between the three ideological positions of the political parties: right, center and left. Thus, being an industrialist and businessperson is sometimes significant for electoral success for the right, but never for the left; being a metallurgist or bank clerk may eventually increase the chances of success on the left, but never on the right; engineer is an occupation which produces significant impacts mostly on the right, the same occurring with the medical profession on the left; a woman candidate encounters more difficulties accessing the world of the elected on the right and center than the left.

Finally, despite these differences, there are important similarities between the three ideological positions. Firstly, the completion of higher education impacts significantly

on the chances of electoral success in all the elections and ideological positions, without exception. Secondly, political professionalization is a variable which most increases chances of electoral success in all ideological positions and all elections analyzed here. We suggest that this similarity may be the expression of a process of institutionalization of recruitment in the Chamber of Deputies, a process that affects all parties regardless of their ideological position. These data indicate that in parties of all ideological positions (right, center and left), the logic of political competition in representative democracy does not allow for amateurism. Professionalization is an imperative for candidates of all parties as a logical result of the institutionalized electoral dynamic.

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## Notes

- 1 The authors would like to thank Angel Miriade (UFSCar) and Camila Tribess (UFPR) for their preparation and correction work on the databases used in this article. They also thank the anonymous partners of the Brazilian Political Science Review, whose comments on the whole improved this text. Following convention, the remaining errors are the total responsibility of the authors.
- 2 This is what we call in another article “the study of those who got there”. Cf. Perissinotto and Miriade (2009).
- 3 The political recruitment practice, understood as a process of attraction of individuals who could potentially carry out various political functions, may be, but not always, a “selection” process, rather, a process that selects, from an initial population of motivated people, those who will effectively be transformed into aspiring candidates, into candidates, and finally, into those who take up positions of authority. In our research we have observed that the scarcity of aspiring candidates, for example, reveals a recruitment process without “selection”. Cf. Siavelis and Morgenstern (2004, 6-7).
- 4 It is important to observe that this is not about a comparison between the world of the elected with the world of the candidates (which includes both the elected and non-elected). Our intention is to compare those who were successful with those who were not in this fundamental moment of the recruitment process, which is the election.
- 5 This study was carried out based on a database compiled from information on the candidates for the 1998, 2002 and 2006 legislative elections (state deputies, federal deputies and senators), made available by the Supreme Electoral Court’s website. The database was compiled by Angel Miriade, Bruno Bolognesi and Camila Tribess, under the direction of the Center for Research in Brazilian Political Sociology. It must be observed that there are serious problems in relation to the excessively generic character of some information and with the erratic way of registering

certain occupations in the three elections, which forced us to carry out some aggregations that will be explained in the course of the text. It must also be said that, given the exclusively quantitative character of this study, it reveals nothing about the processes which characterize “the secret gardens of party politics”, since, for this, qualitative methods such as extensive interviews with those involved in the selection process of the candidates, would be necessary and more adequate (Gallagher and Marsh 1988, 7). Relating to this point, see also Perissinotto and Miriade (2009, 303-4).

- 6 This point must be very clear: We do not intend to strictly apply Polsby’s proposals to Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies. Polsby’s text has two big advantages in relation to ours: firstly, he works with data referring to a very extensive historic period; secondly, he analyses several other dimensions of the process of institutionalization.
- 7 In this case, this article can contribute to a better knowledge of that third filter which we refer to above, that is, the party as locus where electoral success is produced or reproduced through the unequal distribution of support at the moment of election. Evidently, to know the methods by which party organizations privilege certain candidates in the electoral contest depends on another type of research.
- 8 There is, obviously, an endless number of other occupations registered in the Supreme Electoral Court’s (TSE) data. The choice of the occupations presented here can be justified on the basis of three arguments: a) they are the most interesting from the point of view of their percentage, always much higher than the others; b) they are more significant with regard to their greater or smaller representation in the world of the elected and, lastly; c) they are the occupations traditionally considered by the literature as “hotbeds” for political activity. Regarding this last point, cf. Offerlé (1999).
- 9 The situation of public servants and of retirees is proof that having free time is a necessary condition, but not sufficient, for political success. Retirees represent almost always close to 2.0% of candidates, a lot more than several other occupations, and are on average only 0.5% of those elected.
- 10 It is true that a Law degree among the members of the political elite could also, in certain circumstances, be seen as a technical profession based on highly specialized knowledge, acquired in higher education and operated by specialists. This is the case, for example, with the use of judicial knowledge in the Constitution and Justice Commission. We thank our referee at the Brazilian Political Science Review for this observation. However, throughout Brazilian history, a Law degree among those who have entered into political life has been seen much more as a space of socialization (the faculties of law) where certain social relationships were formed and consolidated and a certain way of practicing politics was learned than as a process of acquiring technical knowledge placed at the service of a “rationalized” political activity. For this reason, we prefer to deal with a Law degree as separate from the technical professions. For more on this point, cf. Adorno (1988), Love (1982), Carvalho (1980), Miceli (1991).
- 11 Logistic regression is a useful tool of statistical analysis in cases which aim to predict or explain the presence or absence of a determined characteristic from the values of a group of predictive measures. In this way, it is similar to the models of linear regression, but can be applied to situations in which the dependent variable is dichotomous. The independent or predictive variables can be interval or categorical, however in the latter case, they should be codified as indicatory or dummy measures. In this article, the coefficients obtained through the proposed models are used as estimate odds ratios for each of the independent variables introduced in the model.
- 12 Reinforcing this thesis is the fact that the model above was applied including the members of the minor parties, which we have designated as “undefined” in the next section of the article.

Only for these parties the association between lawyers, on the one hand, and the elected and non-elected, on the other, was significant ( $p=0.015$ ), with a contingency coefficient of 0.061.

- 13 The occupations “bank clerk” and “metallurgist”, which could identify another type of social base different to that of businessperson and industrialist, were retracted from the model because they never resulted in significant values. Actually, the occupation “metallurgist” produces a significant result and with a very high beta in 2006, but this is due to a very small N for this category from among the proportion of elected and non-elected, so that the election of only one individual results in this type of distortion.
- 14 This datum calls our attention to another aspect. We could presume that belonging to a state or federal government base would raise the chances of electoral success. A party’s rise to power would promote the “counterpart” effect in all elections. Our data shows that this is true only in part, since during the period analyzed we have a constant of possibility of electoral success promoted by parties that were in opposition one moment and in government the next.
- 15 For an alternative, very interesting way of distributing the parties across the ideological spectrum, see Braga (2007).
- 16 The criterion for categorizing a party as “undefined” was simply the lack of information on its ideological profile.
- 17 Here we have an important limit in the purely quantitative data. For example, doctors represent an important professional category among the candidates and are still more important among the elected. However, the meaning of being a doctor in the right-wing parties must be very different from that of the left-wing parties. The health worker’s movement might be important to the recruitment of doctors among the left-wing parties, while individual prestige probably plays a prominent role among the right-wing and center parties. Without more thorough qualitative research, however, we can only speculate on this matter. Regarding this point, see, for example, Coradini (2001).
- 18 1998 (direita):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional, ensino superior e engenheiro; 1998 (centro e esquerda):  $p=0,000$  só para político profissional; 2002 (direita):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional, ensino superior, sacerdote e pecuarista; 2002 (centro):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional; 2002 (esquerda):  $p=0,000$  somente para político profissional; 2006 (direita):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional, ensino superior, engenheiro e pecuarista; 2006 (centro):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional e ensino superior; 2006 (esquerda):  $p=0,000$  para político profissional, médico, ensino superior e metalúrgico.
- 19 Here we have another of the limits of the Supreme Electoral Court’s data: the category “cattle farmer” does not define the size of their farmland.

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