

Essays on the Candidate Entry Process for LGBTQ+ Individuals in Brazil

By

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For my parents

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The circumstance of an openly LGBTQ+ candidate on a ballot or a ticket is a remarkable statement of political liberalism in democracies across the world.<sup>1</sup> Over the last three decades, many LGBTQ+ politicians have come out publicly while in office, and many others have started their political careers as openly LGBTQ+ from the outset (e.g., Haider-Markel 2010; Haider-Markel and Bright 2014; Reynolds 2013; Reynolds 2019). Recent observational evidence from more established democracies suggests that the presence of LGBTQ+ candidates is not overwhelmingly affecting voters' electoral support decisions, coinciding with increasing numbers of LGBTQ+ politicians in high-level offices in the Global North (Haider-Markel et al. 2020; Magni and Reynolds 2018). Latin America's record of prominent LGBTQ+ officeholders is more modest but still noteworthy: in a handful of provinces, states, and major and smaller cities in countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela, LGBTQ+ officeholders have gained visibility for their country's LGBTQ+ population. But the liberal veneer that comes with LGBTQ+ descriptive representation may obscure the actual extent of the mass-public and elite approval of and support for LGBTQ+ candidates' emergence prior to and while campaigning for and competing in general elections. It also fails to represent how the candidate entry process specifically unfolds for politically ambitious LGBTQ+ individuals other than those at high-level offices. Moreover, recent scholarship suggests that openly LGBTQ+ candidates still can be penalized for their non-heterosexual identity (Magni and Reynolds 2021).

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<sup>1</sup> See entry for "LGBTQ+" in the Glossary.

As politicians, office-seeking LGBTQ+ individuals may leverage traits of their biographical profiles to navigate the candidate entry process. Two such traits are religion and marriage, both hallmarks of “respectability politics”—a strategy pursued by minority-group elites in which individuals adhere to mainstream hegemonic norms and behaviors that presumably counter negative beliefs about the group (see Higginbotham 1993: 187; Jefferson 2023). Below, I provide some examples of real-world LGBTQ+ politicians who publicly exhibit these attributes.

- Despite initially feeling that coming-out was akin to a “career death sentence” (Buttigieg 2019: 513), one prominent gay politician in the U.S. has been so outspoken about his faith that occasionally he has been called “Father Pete” (2019: 334). This candidate has also been outspoken about the major influence his husband has been in his life (Beyerlein and Klocek 2020: 551).<sup>2</sup>
- Another openly gay politician of faith has assured no office is nowadays off limits for gays in his party, Germany’s Christian Democratic Union, which is still ripe with internal divisions around LGBTQ+ rights (Magni and Reynolds 2023: 51-53).<sup>3</sup> This candidate has directly benefited from the expansion of these rights: “Wearing a ring,” he stated while publicly introducing his husband, “makes a partnership more binding than just ‘living together’” (Reitz 2018).
- Finally, despite clarifying religion should not be politicized, Brazil’s most prominent gay officeholder made sure to let voters know about his Catholic upbringing and how his faith empowered him to overcome adversities.<sup>4</sup> While being sworn in, he acknowledged his long-term boyfriend’s support during the campaign (Ker 2023).

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<sup>2</sup> Pete Buttigieg has served as the mayor of South Bend, IN for two terms (2012-2020) and is currently the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

<sup>3</sup> Jens Spahn has been serving as a federal representative in the German Parliament’s lower chamber since 2002. See also “Meine Art zu Lieben” *Der Spiegel* (Germany), November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Eduardo Leite has served as governor of Brazil’s southernmost state, Rio Grande do Sul, since 2018. <sup>Leite</sup>, Eduardo [@eduleite45]. (2022, October 26). *Sou #cristão, filho de pais #religiosos, e mesmo assim meu adversario tenta me difamar e imputar em mim uma perversidade revoltante. Eu não uso religião como arma política!* [Video] TikTok. <https://www.tiktok.com/@eduleite45/video/7158960869173497093>

All in all, LGBTQ+ candidates from democracies of all stripes may harness their faith or their marriage (or stable relationship) to shore up their electoral campaigns, in ways that potentially attenuate or directly undermine against their LGBTQ+ credibility—especially when faith-based arguments are invoked to counter LGBTQ+ rights.

These two overarching themes of respectability (i.e., being of faith and being married), along with a desire to add a new perspective about the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process, led to this dissertation. Respectability politics are foregrounded in chapters 3 and 5, while questions regarding barriers to the candidate entry process, and strategies to overcome them, are threaded through all chapters. The project comprises three chapters and a coda. While these themes bind the chapters due to a shared motivation in understanding how the public, candidates, and elites shape this process, each of the three chapters can be read as a self-contained essay, with the coda picking up and extending insights from the first and second chapters. I apply a diverse theoretical framework—mainly informed by social cognition and social identity theories (including self-categorization and social complexity variants), theories of political ambition and candidates' emergence, and theories of party elites' behavior—to tackle several research questions regarding the possibility of bias throughout the entire candidate entry process. How does approval of gay men's right to run for office differ when voters consider such approval in the abstract versus with respect to profiles of gay candidates with individuating information? Chapter 2 foregrounds the first stage of the candidate entry process, the qualification stage, by focusing on eligible voters' approval of gay men's right to run for office, by testing the effects of individuating profiles of gay candidates, and by revealing heterogeneous effects across religious identities. What barriers do candidates talk about, and how do they overcome them? Chapter 3 undertakes a more comprehensive overview of barriers and barrier-overcoming

tactics from the candidates' perspective in each stage of the candidate entry process. Do party elites gatekeep LGBTQ+ candidates by biasing the allocation of campaigning support? Chapter 4 pivots from studying the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process from the perspective of candidates and voters to centering on the campaign-support perspective of a more elusive actor: party gatekeepers. And, finally, does a gay penalty exist in the electoral realm? And can gay candidates reduce it by displaying religious and respectability markers? The coda (Chapter 5) analyzes the impact of faith-based homophily on electoral outcomes—that is, in the final stage of the candidate entry process.

The electoral context of municipal Brazil serves as an outlet for developing these chapters. In this setting electoral rules and strategic decisions have allowed a sizable pool of openly LGBTQ+ candidates to aspire to, seek party nomination for, and compete for elected office. I focus on local-level Brazil especially due to the ascendancy of religion in its electoral playing field, and the relevance of politicized religious identities in cultural and political debates pertaining to the rights and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people. The relative weakness of partisan identities in Brazil offers a striking contrast to the U.S.—inasmuch as partisanship fails to tightly constrain political attitudes and behavior relative to religion. I rely, however, on the U.S. as a shadow case to borrow from its scholarship around LGBTQ+ politics. Drawing on several years of fieldwork, I employ a multi-method approach involving (a) survey experiments, namely a vignette experiment embedded in a face-to-face (CAPI) survey and a conjoint experiment embedded in an online (CAWI) surveys; (b) semi-structured interviews with mayoral and legislative candidates from local elections in the 1996-2020 period; and (c) an original dataset of openly LGBTQ+ candidates merged with the entire microcensus of candidates running in the 2020 elections.

While this dissertation focuses on Brazil and municipal politics in that country, the discussions and results in this project have implications beyond that domain. The study of LGBTQ+ candidate entry in local Brazilian elections most obviously has implications for inquiries in Brazil's upper-level elections as they share the open-list proportional representation (OLPR) electoral system. Given the centrality of individual campaigning across elections at all levels of Brazilian government, the barriers that LGBTQ+ candidates perceive and face with voters and party elites in local elections are probably more similar to than dissimilar from those experienced by their upper-level counterparts. Likewise, this project may also inform the study of LGBTQ+ candidate entry in other countries with similar electoral contexts in the Latin American region—e.g., Colombia and probably Chile—and even beyond the Global South, as in the case of Finland or Poland. Another reason to consider that the implications of this project are relevant to a diverse set of upper-level elections is historical: openly LGBTQ+ people started devising ways to gain political representation at the local level, as opposed to a top-down approach. As such, lessons from a study of local-level politics in the Brazilian case may reveal dynamics in LGBTQ+ candidate entry that scale up to the state- or province-level and then to the national level.

The comparatively more fluid nature of partisanship in Brazil affords an opportunity to deepen our understanding of religion in LGBTQ+ politics. It is nonetheless important to recognize that mass partisanship is not irrelevant to understand either how LGBTQ+ candidate entry unfolds, or how religious leaders choose to position themselves—and influence their laity—when they electorally weaponize LGBTQ+ rights and issues. It is simply not the main focus of this dissertation. That said, I bring partisanship into the discussion in several chapters: in Chapters 3 and 4, to underscore how candidates are aware of mass expectations around

LGBTQ+ people's partisan alignments and how they choose to position themselves and, in the coda (Chapter 5), to discuss limitations to generalizability of findings due to a potential oversample of anti-Workers' Party participants in the conjoint experiment described in that section. In the remainder of this introduction, I outline the main arguments, methods, and conclusions of this dissertation's three essays and coda.

## **Summary of Chapters**

Chapter 2: Approval of Gay Men's Right to Run for Office: An Assessment of Individuating and Heterogeneous Effects in Local Brazil

This chapter assesses how the provision of individuating information affects the approval of group-level right to run by way of a vignette experiment. To do so, I manipulate the political aspirant's past record of mild offenses, a politically relevant aspect of their reputation that is not exclusive to any traditional or non-traditional subgroup of politicians. Against a baseline condition in which participants evaluate gay men's right to run as a group category, this manipulation allows the isolation of the individuating information's effect on the approval of group-level gay men's right to run. I find that participants are more approving of the right to run when exposed to a well-reputed gay aspirant (i.e., a clean record) relative to an ill-reputed gay aspirant. But the positive individuating information yields a lower level of the right to run's approval relative to the level of approval expressed absent any individuating information. I complement these findings by showing heterogeneous effects by religion, with consistently lower levels of approval towards gay men's right to run among Evangelical participants.

### Chapter 3: LGBTQ+ Candidates' Barriers and Tactics in the Entry Process: Insights from Brazil

Barriers to the candidate entry process for Latin American LGBTQ+ individuals have received implicit acknowledgment in published work, but they have not been explicitly addressed, especially not by interview-based research projects. This chapter addresses this deficit by investigating whether LGBTQ+ candidates in Brazil are sensitive to barriers examined by scholars on other non-traditional minorities, and whether they report barriers previously unrecognized or understudied by scholars, and, most importantly, how they tactically organize themselves to overcome them. I report three findings: First, I show that there are barriers that resonate with barriers theorized about other non-traditional candidates, but there are other barriers affecting more specifically the LGBTQ+ electoral experience. Second, LGBTQ+ candidates as a group discuss more barrier-overcoming tactics than barriers themselves. Third, intersectional analyses reveal no gender differences among LGBTQ+ individuals in terms of perceived barriers or tactics. There are suggestive differences in terms of race. Further, unlike LGBs, transgender candidates express relying more on their internal sense of self-efficacy than on encouragement from parties and voters.

### Chapter 4: Party Gatekeeping and Support for LGBTQ+ Candidates: The Allocation of Ballot Numbers in Brazil

The notion that party-gatekeeping behavior affects LGBTQ+ candidate support has received scholarly attention, but systematic evidence on this topic is elusive. This chapter enhances our



understanding of the impact of party-gatekeeping behavior on the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process. Brazil provides a useful case for assessing the presence of party-gatekeeping behavior around LGBTQ+ candidacies due to the party-directed allocation of memorable ballot codes. Drawing from LGBTQ+ candidates' original data, a variety of regression analyses demonstrates that LGBTQ+ candidates compete with less memorable ballot codes. Subgroup analysis further reveals that this type of party-gatekeeping behavior most negatively impacts transgender and LGBTQ+ women candidates. Idiosyncratic evidence provides complementary insights regarding a special treatment towards LGBTQ+ candidates' ballot codes. Although these findings do not confirm that party elites are outright prejudiced, they show that the allocation of campaigning support is consistent with anti-LGBTQ+ bias and discrimination.

#### Chapter 5: The Gay Penalty and Faith-Based Homophily in Brazil: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment

This coda offers a brief assessment of faith-based homophily's effect on married and unmarried gay candidates' electability—that is, whether a participant's holding of religious beliefs similar to the gay candidate's increases his electability. Hence, in addition to offering concluding remarks, the coda serves as a fulcrum for investigating two main themes of respectability politics, namely religion and marriage/stable relationship, addressed in this dissertation's discussion of Brazil's LGBTQ+ entry process. Conjoint-experimental evidence shows that gay candidates are penalized and suggests that faith-based homophily does not favor religion-branded gay candidates relative to non-religious gay candidates—except for a minimal bump among Catholics.

## Chapter 2: Approval of Gay Men’s Right to Run for Office: An Assessment of Individuating Information and Heterogeneous Effects in Local Brazil

Democratic theory posits that functioning democracies allow all their citizens a “broad array of political rights,” including the right to run for elective office (Dahl 1998: 49). While voters who abide by this constitutive principle are needed for a democratic representative government to work, not all of them are required to believe that all citizens should be normatively treated as politically equal (Dahl 1961: 312-320). A long-standing research program on political tolerance has pointed precisely to the existence of “slippages” between voters’ level of general political tolerance and their degree of willingness to extend political freedoms to all citizens.<sup>5</sup> Earlier research noted that respondents affirmed an abstract commitment to political rights in surveys, only to retract it when it came to their extension to concrete groups in society (e.g., Prothro and Grigg 1960; Seligson 2003). However, later research has demonstrated a reversal of this conventional slippage: respondents who do not commit to the ideal of political equality in the abstract may nonetheless grant a political outlet to even disliked groups in concrete instances (Gibson 2013). One group that the public has directed political intolerance towards is gay men.<sup>6</sup> Gay men’s political rights have been subject to many *de facto* visibility restrictions throughout a great part of modern democratic history (e.g., Cook 1999; Michelson and Harrison 2022: 79-84; see also Asal, Sommer and Harwood 2013 for a cross-country account of *de jure* restrictions).

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<sup>5</sup> On a related note, another example of such slippages is the “principle-policy puzzle” (Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991), which manifests when citizens initially back equality as a normative concept but curb their support when faced with specific applications of the policy.

<sup>6</sup> In this discussion, I refer broadly to the preceding identity label variants that previous generations of gay men predominantly have adhered to in social interactions. The label “homosexual” is one of them although its ongoing applicability varies across countries and in general its use has been disfavored over time. I elaborate on the reasons why this label has been used in the experimental design later in the chapter.

Political scientists have argued that cue-taking based around stereotypes related to gay men's outgroup status can loom large for some groups of voters, lowering support for both gay men's access to and standing in public office (e.g., Loewy and Redman 2022; Doan and Haider-Markel 2010; Bailey and Nawara 2017). In such a context, scholars argue that one way to increase support is by providing individuating information, that is, relevant information that concerns an individual's profile with the potential to minimize reliance on stereotypes in third-person evaluations (e.g., Fiske and Neuberg 1990). According to political psychologists, such individuating information can alter cue-taking in voters' judgments about a gay candidate's competence and electability when that information counters generalized beliefs about gay men (Golebiowska 2002; but see Golebiowska and Thomsen 1999). Extant work, however, has yet to examine whether these judgments can vary with individuating information applied to openly gay men as politicians. Similarly, past efforts have tested the impact of individuating information at the level of a specific gay political aspirant on gay men's right to run, overlooking how it fared relative to this right conceived for gay men as a general category (see Golebiowska 1996). In sum, what continues to warrant investigation is whether individuating information unrelated to generalizations about gay men can shape mass approval of a gay man's right to run. This chapter addresses the following question: how does approval of the right of gay men to run for office differ when individuals are asked to consider this question in the abstract versus with respect to profiles of gay aspirants with individuating information?

In this chapter, I assess how the provision of individuating information affects the approval of group-level right to run by way of a vignette experiment. To do so, I manipulate the political aspirant's past record marked by mild offenses, a politically relevant aspect of their reputation that is not exclusive to any traditional or non-traditional subgroup of politicians.

Against a baseline condition in which participants evaluate gay men's right to run as a group category, this manipulation allows the isolation of the individuating information's effect on the approval of group-level gay men's right to run. I find that participants are more approving of the right to run when exposed to a well-reputed gay aspirant (i.e., a record marked by mild offenses) relative to an ill-reputed gay aspirant. But the positive individuating information yields a lower level of the right to run's approval relative to the level of approval expressed absent any individuating information. I also show that disapproval of gay men's right to run is more salient among Evangelical participants. Echoing the literature on benevolent sexism, I venture the possibility that because gay aspirants to elected office may not be expected to display the protective abilities that are expected from their straight counterparts, the penalty for a gay aspirant's record marked by mild offenses is less pronounced. Robustness checks also show that stereotypical-neutral individuating information operates similarly—and yet slightly differently—to perceptions of the right to run on perceptions of the aspirant's qualification.

These findings may bear important implications for discussions around the candidate entry process for non-traditional groups and its legitimacy in the eyes of voters with democratic beliefs. Puzzlingly, participants expressed a level of approval for gay men's right to run as a general category that apparently serves as a ceiling rather than as a baseline. This is particularly important in Latin America, a region where, despite civil rights having been politically discussed and extended to gay men, gay men's numbers in public office have been low (Corrales 2015). Despite promising trends in group-level approval of gay men in Brazil and the region, these findings suggest caution regarding the extent in which such mass approval can travel to specific individuals (see Maia, Chiu, and Desposato 2023). This chapter examines this

question in the case of Brazil.<sup>7</sup> Understanding shifts in perceptions of gay men's right to run is a high priority for Brazilian democracy, where openly gay men have been steadily, albeit gradually, becoming more interested in running for office (see Santos 2016). And yet, survey data from the AmericasBarometer's 2018/19 shows that nearly a third of Brazilians disapprove of gay men's right to run.<sup>8</sup> In the remainder of this chapter, I briefly review the literature on which type of and how individuating information can shift disapproving attitudes towards gay men's right to run. Next, I outline the hypotheses and provide a description of the experimental setup. Before concluding, I provide an account of the main analysis and, in addition, I uncover heterogeneous effects across religious groups of participants in the sample.

### **Individuating Information and Candidates' Gay Self-Identification**

Various factors may influence the acceptance of openly gay men's right to run, including prevalent stereotypes about gay men. Assumptions about traditional gender roles, the perception of threats to masculinity, a need for cognitive closure, an aversion towards presumed promiscuity, and general homophobia can all contribute to negative attitudes towards gay men's rights (e.g., Magni and Reynolds 2021; Pinsof and Hasselton 2017). Moreover, voters may use a non-straight identity as a shorthand for a candidate's ideology, policy interests, expertise, and competence (e.g., Herrick and Thomas 1999, 2002; Loepp and Redman 2022: 8-9). The negative impact of these stereotypes is particularly pronounced in executive-level positions, which are commonly associated with straight men politicians (e.g., Oliver and Conroy 2018).

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<sup>7</sup> This experiment was embedded in the SPS Brazil survey. I am grateful to Drs. Sarah Berens and Franziska Deeg (University of Cologne, Germany), who are the researchers responsible for the SPS Brazil survey project. The survey is part of the project no. 374666841-SFB 1342, funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG, German Research Foundation).

<sup>8</sup> I refer to the proportion of citizens across the five Brazilian regions who do not report high approval towards homosexuals' right to run.

While these stereotypical assumptions about gay men—and gay men in politics—do not necessarily need to be negative, they tend to be (Boysen et al. 2011; Golebiowska and Thomsen 1999; Herrick and Thomas 1999, 2002; LaMar and Kite 1998). Moreover, a lack of personal or parasocial contact with gay men in politics may also prevent members of the general public from encountering information that challenges stereotypes. All in all, a candidate’s gay self-identification continues to be a readily available piece of information that voters can use to judge him (see Magni and Reynolds 2021).

Providing individuating information is arguably a useful strategy for challenging group-centered beliefs about gay men in politics, especially for political newcomers seeking to make a favorable impression on voters. Openly LGBTQ+ candidates may be particularly vulnerable to stereotypes that could distort their public image in an electoral playing field. By highlighting unique biographical information about gay candidates, voters can shift their focus towards the candidate's personality, policy stances, and behaviors as individuals, rather than solely as members of a group. And by emphasizing traits or experiences that are not stereotypically associated with gay individuals, voters can be encouraged to view the candidate as a unique individual with their own strengths and weaknesses. Individuating information is thought to be most effective when participants are exposed to stereotype-inconsistent information embodied by group exemplars that challenge voters' conceptualizations of group-level stereotypes (e.g., Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002).

One limitation is that the scholarship has primarily generated knowledge specific to one way in which individuating information may successfully work for openly gay candidates—i.e., counterstereotypical traits have been shown to reduce stereotype reliance in voter bias against gay candidates (Golebiowska 2003a; see also Nawara and Bailey 2017: 811-816). In other

words, the crux of this theoretical model's application to voting behavior is that stereotype-inconsistent information can dispel negative associations about gay candidates in voters' judgments of a specific gay candidate (e.g., Fiske and Neuberg 1990). However, a limitation is that the applicability of effective individuating information is narrowed down to a specific segment of the total pool of gay politicians: those who knowingly deviate from the prototypical group member exemplar or whose group membership can be ambiguous in terms of partisan, ideological or policy tenets (Golebiowska 1995: 200-201).<sup>9</sup> In practice, voters in low-information contexts may have varying abilities to focus on individuating information in ways that counter group-level stereotypes linked to openly gay individuals.

Moving forward, this focus on stereotype consistency regarding gay self-identification can lead to overlooking how other pieces of individuating information affect gay politicians in real-world politics. What remains unconsidered is the extent to which voters' evaluation of gay candidates' right to run will be affected if the individuating information voters receive goes beyond or is neutral vis-à-vis stereotype consistency of gay individuals. An alternative is to explore whether individualized information regarding stereotype consistency with common beliefs about politicians in general is consequential. The literature on stereotype content about politicians is limited; nevertheless, voters perceive politicians to be distinct from society at large (e.g., Allen et al. 2020; Carnes and Lupu 2016). This distinctiveness holds even when politicians self-identify as members of social groups that are less prototypical of politicians—that is, different from cis-straight men (see Koenig et al. 2011; Bauer 2015; Schneider and Bos 2011,2014). A recent study investigating stereotype content about politicians

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<sup>9</sup> As Huddy explains, “a prototype can either be the most typical group member—an actual person—or a fictional member who embodies the most common or most frequent attributes shared among group members” (2001: 133–34).

as a group across Latin American countries, including Brazil, points to politicians being perceived as immoral and incompetent (Ramos and Moriconi 2018).<sup>10</sup>

Unlike other scholars who use counter-stereotypes designed to counteract the negative effects of a candidate's gay self-identification, I focus instead on cues related to the realm of politicians. I theorize that voters may be responsive to more generally politics-relevant pieces of information when evaluating gay men's right to run. Scholars argue that voters rely (although not exclusively) on perceptions of a candidate's moral character features to evaluate candidate favorability (Funk 1999). Among them, fairness traits stand paramount because they can be the most decisive in candidate evaluations (Clifford 2018: 245).<sup>11</sup> Moral character is key because voters prefer candidates who espouse moral values aligned with their own (Clifford 2018). The public is prone to scrutinize politicians' biographies if allegations of moral missteps are credible and sustained (McDermott et al 2015: 962-963). As I explain further in the experimental design, I portray the hypothetical aspirant's moral character by offering either a clean record or a record marked by mild offenses related to drunk-driving behavior. In general, a social stigma against individuals' alcohol abuse has been documented (e.g., Kilian et al. 2021). Specifically, I focus on alcohol abuse because it may lead individuals to steer away from engaging in moral behaviors—e.g., refraining from driving while under the influence of alcohol—and instead enable morally contemptible and illicit behaviors such as drunk driving (Denton and Krebs 1990; Schomerus et al. 2011). Voters may have different motivations to weigh in the aspirant's moral character traits in their evaluations, and such considerations are dependent on the socioeconomic and political context (e.g., Clifford 2018; Merolla and Zechmeister 2009). In the next section, I theorize that

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<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, Morgan and Buice (2013: 658) observe in their research on women's descriptive representation in Latin America that in electoral contexts in which women have gained considerable political leverage, their reputation as outsiders wanes, and become part and parcel of the political establishment.

<sup>11</sup> Clifford (2018: 245) underscores that judgments of moral character can influence perceptions of competence.



such heuristics may affect voters' sensibility in different but convergent ways.

## **Theory and Hypotheses**

Drawing from social identity theory (SIT), I set out to test a set of hypotheses about the impact of individuating information on participants' approval of the hypothetical aspirant's right to run. The SIT canon underscores how individuals come to understand themselves by claiming a membership in a social group (Brewer 1991; Tajfel 1981). Accordingly, SIT scholars concern themselves with how a given individual's tendency to favor members of their own group influences that individual's perspectives into intergroup behavior. That is, as people cluster together in social identities, there is not just a predisposition to develop ingroup bias, but such clustering can also motivate hostility towards members of social outgroups. Political scientists zero in on the political implications of such motivations (e.g., Achen and Bartels 2016). From a SIT viewpoint, I expect that voters who are neither gay nor LGBTQ+ in general may derive political inferences about gay men as outsider candidates from their outgroup status. In social contexts that pervasively inform ingroup individuals about their shared characteristics, openly gay men may find themselves in an ambiguous position due to their cross-cutting memberships (Brewer and Pierce 2005; Roccas and Brewer 2002). In groups where gay men are less frequently represented or even unassimilated (Leyens and Yzerbyt 1992; Nam and Chen 2021), an ingroup candidate's gay identity may potentially limit the efficiency of the ingroup heuristic, such as partisanship, ethnoracial status, or religion (e.g., Casarez Lemi 2021: 1063-1064; Burge 2018; Cravens 2018). This is also the case in decision-making and leadership settings, such as in politics; many voters will not have regularly—or even at all—encountered an election involving a gay candidate. As uncommon politicians, gay politicians may thus have

a double bind in terms of matching the prototypical expectations of an ingroup leader: as gay men, their political ambition may seem ill-fitting; as politicians, their sexual identity may mark them as outsiders (see Hogg and van Knippenberg 2003).

Existing work overlooks this crucial point. It is most likely only gay men with an ambition to pursue office through electoral means who will act on their right to run. A large body of work on political ambition upholds this basic observation (Fox and Lawless 2005; Lawless 2012). Political ambition has been characterized in both nascent and expressive stages, with the former signifying a person's initial interest in candidacy (whether or not they act on that interest) and the latter (necessarily subsequent to the former) denoting the manifest behaviors following their concrete decision to run for office (Fox & Lawless 2005; Lawless 2012). In the case of aspirants to political office, I am referring mainly to gay men who hold a nascent ambition to seek office. Therefore, and unlike Golebiowska (1996), I am focusing on a subset of gay men who are presented as interested in engaging in electoral politics. If the focus is on gay men without any reference to their political ambition, there is a risk of diverting the attention of the public from this subset of politically ambitious gay men. Harkening back to the parlance used in the literature on political tolerance, there is a higher chance of registering a slippage if the right to run is formulated in the abstract—i.e., with no reference to a nascent ambition—versus with respect to openly gay individuals with an office-seeking propensity. Building on these theoretical insights, I consider the potential effect of individuating information that is orthogonal to gay self-identification stereotypes. I refer to this information as “upstanding” when referring to the presentation of positive information about the candidate’s moral character, and “mediocre” when referring to negative information about the candidate’s moral character.

## *Hypotheses*

Based upon the above discussion, I develop the following hypotheses. On the one hand, individuating information about the aspirant's standing as a politician is expected to matter. Thus, I expect participants to consider stereotype-inconsistent information (i.e., a gay politician is an outsider), leading participants to approve the aspirant's right to run more than the right to run for gay men in general at the baseline level. Otherwise, pieces of information that point to stereotype-consistent character traits in line with politicians in general, will lead participants to disapprove the aspirant's right to run more than the right to run for gay men in general at the baseline level. Hence, the following group of hypotheses can be derived from this theoretical backdrop:

The approval of the upstanding gay aspirant's right to run is higher than the same type of approval for homosexuals in general (H1a).

The approval of the mediocre gay aspirant's right to run is lower than the same type of approval for both the upstanding gay aspirant and gay men in general (H1b).

On the other hand, the provision of pieces of individuating information regarding the aspirant's standing as a prospective politician is expected not to matter in participants' evaluations. In this line of reasoning, participants are only sensitive to stereotype-inconsistent information regarding the aspirant's gay self-identification. One expectation is that participants in the experiment disregard the aspirant's upstanding moral character as a motivation for approving more of his right to run versus gay men in general. Moreover, another expectation consists of participants expressing a similar level of approval for the aspirant's right to run, regardless of his moral character being presented as upstanding or mediocre. One potential reason for such disregard for the aspirant's moral character among participants can be that there is appreciation not just for the integrity of the upstanding aspirant, but also for the authenticity of

the mediocre aspirant (Stiers et al 2021).<sup>12</sup> In this line of reasoning, this information may portray the aspirant as candid for not hiding his record marked by mild offenses to the public, despite the potential backlash that such revelation could unleash.<sup>13</sup> Thus, I develop two null hypotheses as follows, in which the group means I compare are expected to be statistically indistinguishable from each other.

H2a: The approval of the upstanding gay candidate's right to run does not differ from the same type of approval for homosexuals in general.

H2b: The approval of the mediocre gay candidate's right to run does not differ from the same type of approval for homosexuals in general.

If participants are saving face and hiding their subscription to negative stereotypes about gay men in politics, one way to reveal this respondent-behavior strategy would be to offer them a way out of this constraint. I test this possibility via the comparison of the mediocre gay aspirant to a mediocre straight candidate. Therefore, I formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: The approval of the mediocre gay candidate's right to run is lower than the same type of approval for the mediocre straight candidate.

### **Why Focus on Gay Men in Brazil?**

This chapter focuses on attitudes towards gay men's political rights in Brazil for three reasons: the relatively limited—but increasing—strength of partisan identities, the salience of a cultural backlash against LGBTQ+ rights, and the force of religious cues in emphasizing moral issues in such cultural-backlash politics. Among scholars, conventional wisdom has it that party

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<sup>12</sup> A common scholarly assumption is that the quality of government is created and attached to the “honesty, integrity [and] competence” of elected officials (e.g., Besley 2005: 45). And yet, this assumption does not exclusively appear to guide voters' choices. Politicians failing to show these character traits and even holding criminal records are nevertheless electorally successful (Agerberg 2020; Elkayam Shalem and Ben-Nun Bloom 2023). Previously left unaccounted, scholars have recently conceived authenticity as a potential factor to account for such phenomenon.

<sup>13</sup> Public opinion studies show that nonresponse propensity is high among heavy alcohol users, concerned about embarrassment (e.g., Lahaut et al. 2002).

brands in Brazil confer issue positions on party members in only a minor way and limited to the left-wing Workers' Party (Baker et al. 2016).<sup>14</sup> Moving into the right-of-center partisan camp, voters are less prone to keep track of a politician's value-based and policy-based deviations against the benchmark of a party brand (e.g., Samuels 2006; Samuels and Zucco 2018). Most recent survey trends have led scholars to argue that conservative voters are not attached to specific right-of-center party labels but that they shared an aversion to the PT's brand (see Amaral 2020). In addition, scholars contend that conservative voters are becoming more consistent affectively and ideologically and have begun to expect certain moral and social issue-based rhetoric and actions from their preferred candidates (Rennó 2020). One of these expectations for moral positioning revolves around opposition to gay- and other LGBTQ+-identity politics (Ferreira and Fuks 2021). This expectation is reinforced by the pull of religious heuristics among conservative voters (e.g., Smith 2019). Brazil's recent President, Jair Bolsonaro, has sustained his confrontation with LGBTQ+ rights precisely by drawing electoral support from homophobic populism, a worldview that brings religious values into public affairs (Corrales and Kyrik 2022).

With this context in mind, Brazilian municipal elections provide a good context for gauging the impact of different types of a hypothetical aspirant's non-partisan individuating information on public opinion towards gay men's right to run. Because the aspirant's moral character varies across the profiles, partisan information may either be irrelevant or negative, and it could contaminate the treatment. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that this chapter's focus on gay men is limited. For example, gay men who are politically active in the

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<sup>14</sup> Several PT politicians have endorsed or supported LGBTQ+ rights throughout democratic history (see Encarnación 2016, 2018). However, different factors such as linkages to the Catholic Church may have prevented the advancement of LGBTQ+ rights from becoming part of the PT's brand (Marsiaj 2010).

community are oftentimes seen as reproducing the same class dynamics as traditional politicians by other LGBTQ+ individuals in Brazil (see Carvalho and Carrara 2013). Future research should take up the question of the applicability of the findings to other subgroups within the broader LGBTQ+ community in the Brazilian context and elsewhere.

## Experimental Design and Data

To test the chapter's hypotheses, I designed a vignette experiment and embedded it in a face-to-face survey, conducted in São Paulo state, Brazil's largest. The survey was fielded by IBOPE *Inteligência*, a reputable polling firm in São Paulo.<sup>15</sup> IBOPE *Inteligência* administered this survey to 1,008 respondents, selected in a multistage sample, with PPS (probability proportional to size) sampling of municipalities across the state and employing quotas that matched the (18 and over) census population on education, gender, age, and income.<sup>16</sup> My experimental design randomly allocates respondents to one of four different conditions, namely a group-level or baseline condition and three individuating-information vignettes.<sup>17</sup> In these three vignettes, there are profiles with individuating information about the same hypothetical

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<sup>15</sup> The survey was administered using SurveyToGo. I conducted pretests in different areas in the city of São Paulo in July 16-19, 2019, to refine the wording of the treatment vignettes. Data collection started in late July and finished in mid-August. The draft instrument for this experiment was approved under Vanderbilt IRB protocol 191304 on August 20, 2019. I received the experimental data from Dr. Sarah Berens in April 2022.

<sup>16</sup> I include descriptive statistics in Table A2.1 in the Appendix.

<sup>17</sup> Random assignment seems to have unfolded successfully during the survey collection. I employ two multinomial logit models to assess whether demographic and socioeconomic sample characteristics (that is, age, gender, ethnoracial self-categorization, education, religion, and partisan status) predict assignment to the experimental conditions. See results in Tables A2 and A3. Models in both Table A2 and Table A3 present the assigned conditions as the dependent variable. From the four conditions, I use the control as the base condition in Table A2. Only one education level ("Technical/University or More") achieves statistical significance at the 10% level in the "mediocre straight" condition. None of my hypotheses entail comparisons between the base and the "mediocre straight" conditions though. Neither of the remaining variables achieve statistical significance at standard levels ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Overall, randomization appears to have yielded a balance across treatment conditions as intended in Table A2's Model (Wald  $\chi^2(16) = 16.8, p = .53$ ). Table A3's Model excludes the control condition and uses instead the "upstanding gay" condition as the baseline. Again, randomization appears to have yielded a balance across treatment conditions as intended in Model 2 (Wald  $\chi^2(16) = 11.75, p = .47$ ).

prospective aspirant to mayoral office, Rodrigo Silva.<sup>18</sup> A stem nudges participants that they should imagine this aspirant wants to run for office in their city.<sup>19</sup> Along with political ambition, another fixed attribute across the three treatment vignettes is the aspirant’s occupation. All participants are read that this aspirant is an accountant. Mayors in Brazil are typically well-educated, so the fact that the candidate holds an undergraduate degree is consistent with expectations.

		Signaling of Sexual Identity	
		Same-Sex Relationship	Opposite-Sex Relationship
Moral Character	Yes	<b>Upstanding Gay</b>	Upstanding Straight
	No	<b>Mediocre Gay</b>	<b>Mediocre Straight</b>

Table 2.1: Vignettes of Hypothetical Aspirants to Mayoral Office

In addition, each of the vignettes presents a unique combination of two attributes: sexual identity (gay/straight) and moral character (a record marked by a mild offense/a clean record). Table 1 illustrates my typology of individuating-information vignettes with a 2x2 array. When looking counterclockwise at Table 1, the cross-tabulation of categories deem four types of vignettes: the *upstanding gay* condition, the *mediocre gay* condition, the *mediocre straight* condition, and the *upstanding straight* condition. All vignette types that are assessed in this study are bolded in Table A2.1 and included in the Appendix.

<sup>18</sup> According to the census data compiled by the *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística* (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), among male Brazilians born in the 1980s, Rodrigo is the eighth-most common name in Brazil as a whole, and the second-most common in the state of São Paulo. As a surname for the potential candidate, I chose Silva due to its high prevalence as a surname in Brazil (Monasterio 2016).

<sup>19</sup> The full script is included in the Appendix.

In selecting this design, I was limited by the sample size to four conditions. Faced with a choice to drop either the baseline or one of the aspirant-individuating conditions, I decided to prune away the *upstanding straight* condition. This decision has prevented me from understanding whether a gay identity affects the approval of an upstanding aspirant's right to run. However, this decision is warranted to the extent that I gain the ability to understand how participants take the aspirant's gay identity into account when they have a cover story—i.e., the candidate committed mild offenses—to differentiate their evaluation of the aspirant's right to run from the baseline approval level. In an ideal design, I would take advantage of the interactions between all levels of the two variables—moral character and signaling of sexual identity—and would keep all experimental conditions enabled by the factorial design. In the remainder of this section, I describe in more detail each of the attributes that are present in the hypothetical aspirant's biography.

### *Moral Character*

With the moral character cue, I intend to prompt voters to consider the extent to which they rely less on category cues of gay men as related to their openly gay identity and more on their individuating information as prospective politicians. I based the negative moral character cue on a true event that took place a decade ago. According to newspaper coverage, a prominent federal senator was stopped at a random checkpoint and refused to take an alcohol breath test. This offense was aggravated by the fact that his driver license had expired (Venturini 2011). Brazil's most recent nationwide law setting down the regulation for penalizing drunk-driving offenses—i.e., known as *Lei Seca* or "dry law" in Portuguese—is one of the strictest in the Latin American region. Although this law has no tolerance for any alcohol



consumption prior to driving, none of the offenses presented here had legally deprived this politician—and no offense of this kind is to deprive any citizen—of the right to run.<sup>20</sup> Unlike this real-world politician, the hypothetical aspirant in my experiment is a political newcomer.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, participants' potential concerns about the severity of the negative moral character cue were addressed in the pretest.<sup>22</sup> None of them considered the offense so severe as to be disqualifying of the aspirant's right to run. Therefore, I consider this negative moral character cue is mild but in line with likely negative expectations about politicians' moral integrity in general. In other words, the hypothetical aspirant's behavior in the mediocre condition is arguably consistent with stereotypic beliefs about politically ambitious individuals. I am confident that the situation implied by the negative moral character cue is likely to have conveyed mundane realism to participants (Mutz 2011: 141-142).

### *Gay Identity*

I signal the openly gay identity of Rodrigo, a hypothetical political aspirant, by informing respondents that he “lives with his boyfriend, Diego.” Two clarifications about this signaling wording in the vignette are in order. First, I chose the partner's name (Diego) because

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<sup>20</sup> The Law 9.503, passed in 2008 and widely known as *Lei Seca* (or Dry Law in English), dictates the application of monetary fines and/or administrative penalties. Below 300 mg/dL of blood alcohol content, infractions under this law are generally considered only “administrative” offenses and not criminal ones. However, the *Lei Seca* also stipulates that the offender's behavior may lead to criminal charges if blood alcohol content is above the previously stated level, or if their associated psychomotor functioning has become significantly impaired, especially in cases involving an accident.

<sup>21</sup> An important distinction with studies involving political hypocrisy in moral scandals is that this study does not theoretically involve a current or past officeholding experience as a hypothetical aspirant's attribute. This distinction is worth stressing because abuse of power is a powerful moderator of attitudes towards moral scandals (see Doherty, Downdling, and Miller 2011). In addition, being a rookie aspirant discourages the perception that Rodrigo has gathered any sort of political acumen, which is noticeable even among losing candidates who compete more than once (Haime, Vallejo, and Schwindt-Bayer 2022). The hypothetical aspirant's misstep also occurred before any nomination has been launched. For these reasons, the prompt minimizes any suggestion that abuse of power had affected the judicial treatment of the drunk-driving hypothetical aspirant.

<sup>22</sup> Most participants arguably made comments pointing that it is morally reprehensible that a politician ought to refuse a breathalyzer test and drive with an expired license. During the pretests I received suggestions to make the wording more straightforward to participants. Both the full Portuguese text of the prompts and their translations into English can be found in the Appendix.

it does not have an equivalent name for women. The combination of the aspirant's and the cohabiting partner's first names should convey that they are a cohabiting couple.<sup>23</sup> I verified in the pretest that respondents realize that the hypothetical aspirant is in a same-sex relationship. Second, the relationship status referenced in the openly gay cue—i.e., living with a same-sex partner—is expected to approximate the prototypicality of openly gay people in respondent's considerations, more than alternatives such as “being married to Diego” (see Bailey and Nawara 2017). Otherwise, I use a women's typical name in Brazil (Ana) to convey in the vignette wording that the political aspirant is in an opposite-sex relationship.

### *Occupation and Political Ambition*

Beyond the sexual-identity cue, I also include two other fixed pieces of information: occupation and ambition. They should dissuade participants from thinking of these openly gay candidates as either stereotype-consistent or “in-name-only,” that is, not conforming to their stereotypes (Golebiowska 1996, 2001). As for occupation. I probed different signaling alternatives regarding the occupational-background cue during the pretest interviews. Occupation cues are frequently used in Brazilian municipal elections to signal not just education but also ideological, partisan, and socioeconomic leanings (Boas 2014; Boas and Smith 2015). In addition, I carefully verified with pretest participants whether a variety of occupations hinted at stereotype consistency with gay self-identification (e.g., Schneider and Bos 2019). And finally, I also checked whether the selected occupation could be diagnostic of the aspirant's ability to qualify as a candidate (Golebiowska 2001: 545). Other occupations such as high-school teacher, lawyer, or government official were discarded during the pretest due to

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<sup>23</sup> It is conventional to refer mayors and prominent council members in Brazilian cities by their first names (for an explanation see Schwarcz and Starling 2018: 24-25).

potentially partisan or ideological connotations. The other piece of information is political ambition. The stem nudges participants to suppose that the hypothetical aspirant expresses a desire to run for office.

### *Outcome Variables*

After being assigned to a baseline or one of the three treatment conditions, all participants respond to equivalent questions on the approval of the right to run. In the baseline condition, respondents are asked to evaluate their approval of LGBs' right to run in the abstract. I borrow a survey item (D5) from the AmericasBarometer's core questionnaire.<sup>24</sup> This item is part of a battery measuring political tolerance, pioneered to tap into a generalized sense of political tolerance for the rights of political minorities (Seligson, Moreno Morales, and Russo 2019: 241-242). Before answering a 10-point scale question on their approval of openly gay people's right to run, respondents in the baseline condition are prompted to "think of homosexuals in general." This stem is expected to evoke widespread beliefs about these openly gay men in general.<sup>25</sup> Two important clarifications are in order. First, the main difference between this study and Golebiowska (1996, 2001) is that the group-level approval of openly gay people's right to run is still referred to an individual. Thus, it is my understanding that the

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<sup>24</sup> When asked the D5 item on approval of homosexuals' right to run, respondents can choose a number between 1 and 10, with the lower value indicating strong disapproval and the higher value indicating strong approval. Following previous decisions in coding responses to the D5 item, responses 7 and higher represent "high approval;" responses ranging from 4 through 6 represent "medium approval;" and responses 3 and lower represent "low approval."

<sup>25</sup> It is not possible to ascertain which sexual identities encompassed in the LGB acronym were evoked in survey respondents' minds when they were asked about homosexuals' right to run. To the extent that gay, lesbian, and bisexual labels have been widely embraced in Brazil since the late 1990s (Simões and Facchini 2009: 181), it seems that using this acronym interchangeably with homosexual could have purchase in Brazil. However, evidence from the U.S. indicates that respondents typically interpret the term homosexual as referring to gay men (Haddock, Zanna, and Esses 1993). Social scientists in Brazil appear to suggest the same could be said of Brazilian respondents (Carrara 2013). Therefore, I analyze the term "homosexual" to refer to gay men. In addition, I do not use the term gay interchangeably with LGB identities (see Egan 2012). Abundant research suggests each remaining identity within the LGB group deserves a separate treatment (e.g., Doan and Haider-Markel 2010). With that in mind, I plan to eventually broaden my research agenda on individuating effects on the right to run to include other members of the LGB community.

AmericasBarometer’s wording item is arguably more adequate to gauge group-level approval rather than a reference to an individual who happens to identify as gay. Second, I use the term “homosexual” in the control condition to keep consistency with the wording of the AmericasBarometer D5 item.

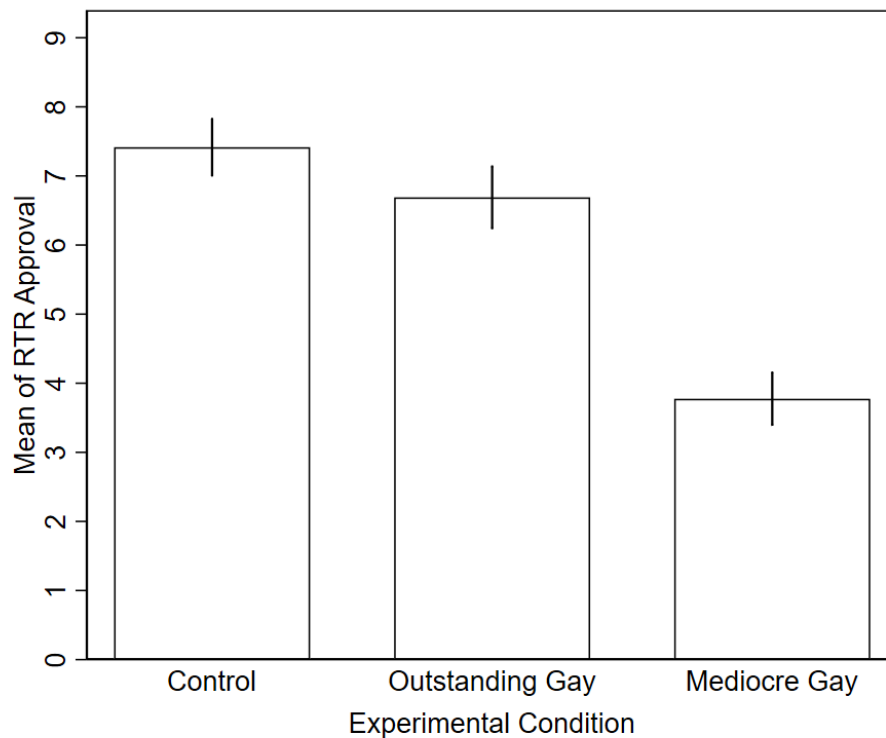
In addition to assessing approval of individual-targeted and group-targeted gay men’s right to run, I also ask participants responding to the vignette to evaluate how qualified the hypothetical aspirant is for the mayoral office. When assessing a candidate’s competence, scholars note that voters tend to build on the aspirant’s occupational background and experience. These pieces of information allow voters to make easy inferences about the connections a candidate may have to the office (Atkeson and Hamel 2020). Political experience has also been touted as a driver of voters’ assessments of a candidate’s competence (Kirkland and Coppock 2018). Nevertheless, the vignettes avoid by design providing participants in this experiment with concrete key information about the hypothetical aspirant’s functional competence for the mayoral office. Since perceptions of the aspirant’s moral character can ultimately affect how participants rate his competence to perform mayoral duties, I expect qualification assessments of the hypothetical aspirants to be dependent on either their moral integrity as politicians or their beliefs about gay men (see Clifford 2018).

## **Findings**

I first test whether participants diverge in their approval of gay men’s right to run when the target shifts from a baseline—i.e., for homosexuals in general—to Rodrigo Silva, a hypothetical gay aspirant running for elective office. To elicit contrasting reactions in participants’ approval of Rodrigo’s right to run, I manipulate two opposite pieces of information

that are expected to be either consistent or inconsistent with beliefs about politicians in general. As Figure 2.1 illustrates, I find support for H1B, but not for H1A. Against H1A, the stereotype-inconsistent individuating information does not increase the approval of the Rodrigo's right above the group-level approval. Being described as an upstanding politician negatively distinguishes Rodrigo from gay men in general: on average, being read about the upstanding gay aspirant reduces participants' approval of his right to run (6.7) compared to the baseline approval level of the right to run (7.4). This shift is statistically significant ( $t = 2.31$  and  $p < .01$  in a one-tailed test). Regarding H1B, assignment of participants to the mediocre gay aspirant condition depresses, as expected, the approval of Rodrigo's right to run among the participants assigned to that condition (3.6) to a larger extent relative to both those read about gays in general and his upstanding counterpart. The difference between the mediocre aspirant's approval level and the baseline approval level is also significant in statistical terms ( $t = 12.79$  and  $p < .01$  in a one-tailed test). Participants are sensitive to the contrast between the two hypothetical aspirants, disapproving the mediocre candidate's right to run vis-à-vis the upstanding candidate's right to run ( $t = 9.81$  and  $p < .01$  in a one-tailed test). Moreover, participants are not indifferent to these pieces of individuating information, providing robust support against H2A-B.

Figure 2.1: Predicted Values of Right to Run’s Approval (Only Gay Targets)



Note: Figures have 95% Confidence Intervals

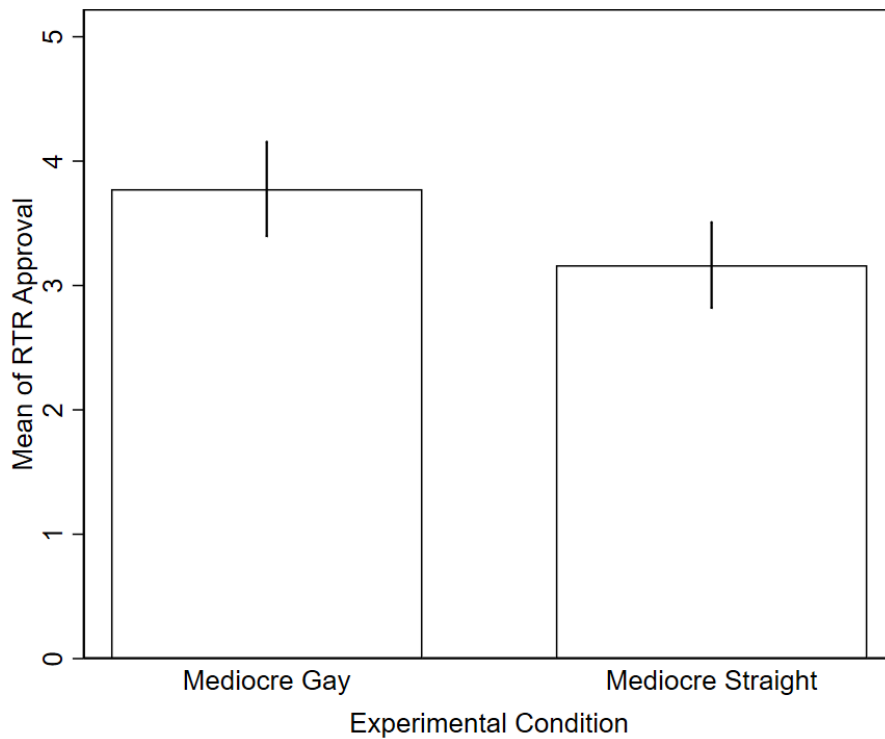
While participants are not oblivious to Rodrigo’s individuating information regarding him as a politician, he seems to be subject to different standards than gay men in general. Participants did not consider Rodrigo’s right to run above the approval of the group-targeted right to run—rather, the baseline approval level works in this experiment as a ceiling. The experimental data I collected does not account for a plausible mechanism at play.<sup>26</sup> Unlike the target in the baseline level, both versions of the hypothetical aspirant are introduced nevertheless as ambitious office-seeking individuals. High ambition is one the core dimensions of career politicians (Allen et al. 2020: 208-209). Although these hypothetical aspirants are not

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<sup>26</sup> It is also possible that the outcome question by which I sought to gauge participants’ approval did not fully prompt them to think of Rodrigo as a gay man, beyond his political ambition. In future research, I believe that altering the outcome question’s wording to “other aspirants similar to Rodrigo” may help to ensure participants are nudged to account for the individuating information when approving gay men’s right to run.

presented as “career politicians,” I speculate that Rodrigo’s approval level vis-à-vis the baseline approval level might be indication that participants assigned to the upstanding gay condition perceived him as not belonging to the global category of gay men. It is a possibility that the global category of gay men does not invoke an ambitious trait in participants’ evaluations of their right to run. In other words, participants may have subtyped both hypothetical profiles of Rodrigo as politicians because their office-seeking behavior leads to their perception as “more threatening than the amorphous and abstract group” of gay men as inquired in the baseline condition (Golebiowska 1996: 207).

Figure 2.2: Predicted Values of Right to Run’s Approval Across Mediocre Conditions



Note: Figures have 95% Confidence Intervals

I also test for the prevalence of stereotypical bias in the right to run’s approval of the mediocre gay aspirant relative to his straight counterpart (H3). As evinced by Figure 2.2, I do

not find evidence in favor of H3. On the contrary, Rodrigo's right to run in the mediocre condition is on average less disapproved when the profile states that he is gay (3.8) rather than straight (3.2). Although the difference in approval between the two conditions is not particularly large, it is statistically significant ( $t=2.33$  and  $p < .01$  in a one-tailed test) and it is directionally the opposite of what I predicted. This is an intriguing finding because participants in the other treatment condition give some semblance of face-saving behavior when they penalize Rodrigo in the upstanding gay condition. There is always a possibility participants outsmart on average the experimental design and choose to disguise their sincere disapproval by applying a more benign penalty to Rodrigo in the mediocre gay condition. However, I speculate that this unanticipated result is potentially due to participants' perceptions of Rodrigo as an outsider politician (see Barnes and Beaulieu 2019).<sup>27</sup> Under these circumstances, the milder penalty against Rodrigo in the mediocre gay condition may be attributed to his outsider status—that is, a mediocre gay aspirant may represent more of a change in comparison to a conventional straight man candidate.<sup>28</sup> But this comparatively lower penalty on Rodrigo as a mediocre gay

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<sup>27</sup> Perceptions of politicians as corrupt are widespread among participants in this experiment: 83% of respondents believe that more than half of all politicians in Brazil are corrupt.

<sup>28</sup> When Rodrigo is introduced as an aspirant with a record marked by mild offenses, there is a possibility that respondents may think of him as a convicted felon. This is particularly relevant in the Brazilian context because of the Complementary Law 135/2010, also known as *Lei da Ficha Limpa* (Clean Slate Law in English). The *Ficha Limpa* Law rules that convicted Brazilians are ineligible to run for elected office for a period of eight years after convictions for specified crimes or being impeached from political office, regardless of whether an appeal remains available. There are reasons to believe Brazilian voters are broadly familiar with the *Ficha Limpa* Law's general purpose (Falcão and Oliveira 2012). While DUI offenses are nominally excluded from these specified crimes, some voters without full information on the law's stipulations may yet think of Rodrigo as a convict and hence as automatically disqualified. I have not inquired about respondents' understanding of the legal scope of the *Ficha Limpa* Law. Unfortunately, I cannot assure whether respondents' views on the *Ficha Limpa* Law govern their thinking process behind their approval of Rodrigo's right to run. However, even in the worst-case scenario, if respondents were to effectively think that Rodrigo ought to be disqualified, the notion that respondents are not indifferent to the aspirant's sexual identity would still hold: An understanding (or misunderstanding) of the mediocre aspirant as a convict would not explain why the straight aspirant's right to run receives more disapproval than his gay counterpart's.



aspirant does not mean more broadly that a gay identity may be a factor mitigating the impact of corruption blunders in a prospective career in office.<sup>29</sup>

### *Aspirant's Perceived Qualification for Mayoral Office*

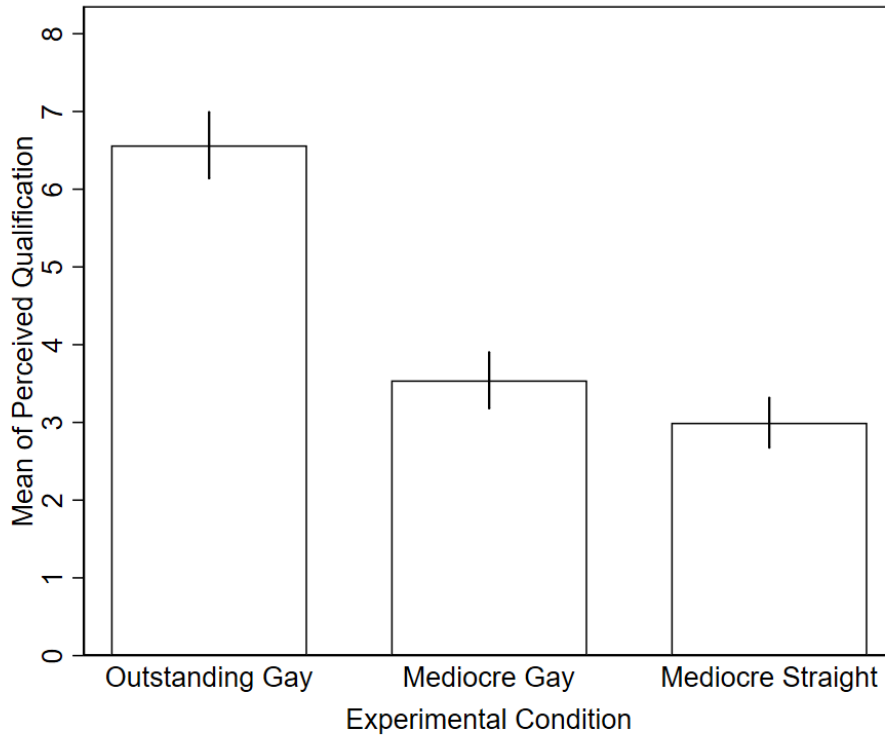
Figure 2.3 denotes that differences between individual-targeted perceptions of the aspirant profiles hold when participants are asked to evaluate Rodrigo's qualification. On average, participants agree more that Rodrigo in the upstanding gay condition is qualified than with the same statement about him in the mediocre gay condition (6.7 and 3.8 respectively;  $t=9.81$  and  $p = .01$  in a one-tailed test). Likewise, participants express less disagreement with the statement that Rodrigo in the mediocre gay condition is qualified than with the same statement about his straight counterpart (3.5 and 3 respectively;  $t= 2.21$  and  $p = .01$  in a one-tailed test). These evaluations about Rodrigo's perceived qualification in each of these conditions are highly correlated with each of their respective approvals of the right to run. Moreover, the relative but consistently lower scores in Rodrigo's perceived qualification for his city-wide mayoral office—bearing in mind that for both outcome scales I use the same 10-point scale—appear to provide a generalized sense that granting an openly gay aspirant the right to run does not necessarily imply perceiving them as qualified. Situating these findings in the electoral landscape of Brazil's municipal elections, I assess next whether religious participants react

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<sup>29</sup> Building on Barnes and Beaulieu (2019: 157-160), I find that scholarship offers some competing explanations for how different subsets of participants may penalize the mediocre gay aspirant in a milder manner. One appears particularly pertinent. Participants may have lowered his penalty relative to the mediocre straight aspirant because of his potentially marginalized position in the institutional context. Such perception may coexist with harsher penalties in the wake of moral character or corruption scandals (see Le Foulon and Reyes-Householder 2020 for an example related to a politician's biological gender). There is some anecdotic evidence in support of this interpretation: most LGBTQ+ mayors in Brazil have received impeachment threats and had considerable difficulties to reach consensus in their municipal legislative chambers.

consistently across the treatment and control conditions in their evaluation of gay men’s right to run for office.

Figure 2.3: Predicted Values of Aspirant’s Perceived Qualification



Note: Figures have 95% Confidence Intervals

### **Brazil’s Religion Wars and Gay Men’s Right to Run**

Ample research considers the impact of religious beliefs and morality judgments on the formation of attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights and persons (Golebiowska 1999; VanderStoep and Green 1988). Scholars argue that religiosity predisposes individuals to think of gay men as less “deserving of tolerance” (Herek 1987: 40; see also Herek and McLemore 2013; Janssen and Scheepers 2019). That is, highly religious individuals tend to generally abide to more traditional notions of morality, being “less willing to put up with political deviance” (Golebiowska 1999: 48). Religious beliefs are, as previously stated, an effective driver of

politicization in Brazil. Given such prevalence of religious beliefs, I consider a potential pattern in which treatment effects are not homogeneous among participants in each condition—that is, participants’ characteristics such as self-reported religious beliefs may condition the effects of being read Rodrigo’s randomly-assigned profile.<sup>30</sup> I test for heterogenous effects by regressing the approval of the right to run on the interaction between the treatment conditions and participants’ religious self-identification.<sup>31</sup> I focus on Brazil’s two major groups of religious respondents, Catholics and Evangelicals,<sup>32</sup> with respondents lumped together under “Secular/Other” group<sup>33</sup> as the reference category. I expect in this assessment that participants’ self-categorization as Evangelical will decrease approval for the right to run across the different conditions.

The bridge between religion and politics may be facilitated by the belief that same-sex attraction is an acquired attribute and, hence, acting upon it is a choice (Lewis 2009). Thus, LGBTQ+s can be regarded as less deserving of their civil and political rights as citizens because of a perceived moral failing on their part (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2005; Wood and

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<sup>30</sup> Factors other than respondent’s characteristics can condition treatment effects in face-to-face survey contexts. For example, scholars have considered source cues, which in this experiment’s data collection context may be interviewer’s gender. Another similar potential factor introducing heterogenous effects in responses is whether bystanders’ presence or interference in the interview affected interviewees’ candor in their responses. Table A2.7 and A2.8 in the Appendix undercut the likelihood any of these two factors may have affected participants’ opinion.

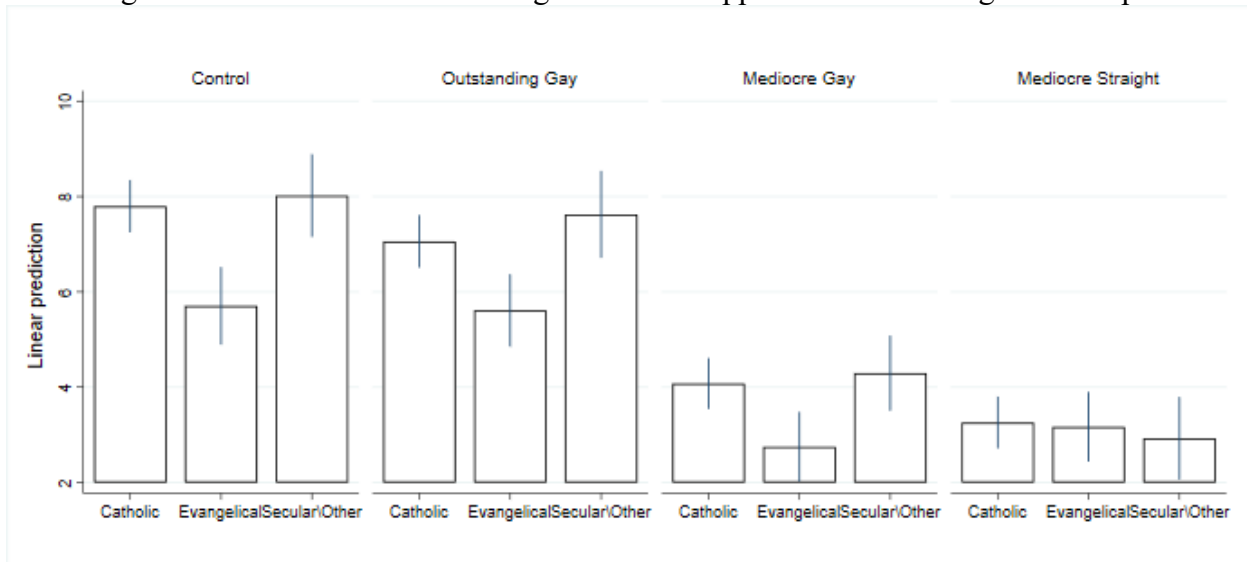
<sup>31</sup> I put to test whether treatment effect heterogeneity exists across religious-group levels. In other words, I evaluate the conditional average treatment effect (CATE) of the individuating-information vignettes by including participants’ religion-based traits and their interaction with their assignment to treatment conditions in a regression model (Kam and Trussler 2017). Because participants’ religion cannot be randomly assigned, it is important to stress that this estimation is descriptive and takes place beyond the experimental realm.

<sup>32</sup> Specialized scholars recommend analyzing mainline Protestants, Pentecostal, and non-Pentecostal Evangelicals alike in the sample with the encompassing term “Evangelicals” (Smith 2019). According to the 2018/19 AmericasBarometer’s Brazil study, nearly two thirds of all Latin American Non-Catholic Christians are Pentecostal.

<sup>33</sup> Participants who are lumped in this category (n=211) are in their majority secular (67%). The remainder of participants included in this category are evenly split among *Kardecistas/espíritistas* and non-specified minor religions. It is worth mentioning that *Kardecistas/espíritistas* in the total sample (3.6% vs. 2%) and those with no declared religion are clearly overrepresented relative to these categories’ equivalent shares in the 2018/19 AmericasBarometer’s Brazil study (3.6% vs. 2%, and 13.8% vs. 8%, respectively). Kardecism enjoys a unique, long-standing tradition in members of the urban middle and upper-middle social strata in Brazil (Warren 1968).

Bartkowski 2004). And even for religious institutions and people who now begrudgingly acknowledge and even tolerate same-sex attraction as such, provided the individuals remain closeted, an open gay identification continues to be seen as in conflict with religious values (Egan 2012: 604). Thus, for highly religious respondents, even those who may tolerate LGBs under certain circumstances, gay politicians such as the hypothetical aspirants under scrutiny here continue to represent an open defiance of established moral and religious values (Golebiowska and Thomsen 1999: 196-197). Although the survey where I embedded my experiment does not include an item tapping participants' religiosity, the 2018/19 AmericasBarometer's Brazil study indicates that Evangelical respondents are more religious than their Catholic counterparts in terms of their church attendance.

Figure 2.4: Predicted Values of Right to Run's Approval Across Religious Groups

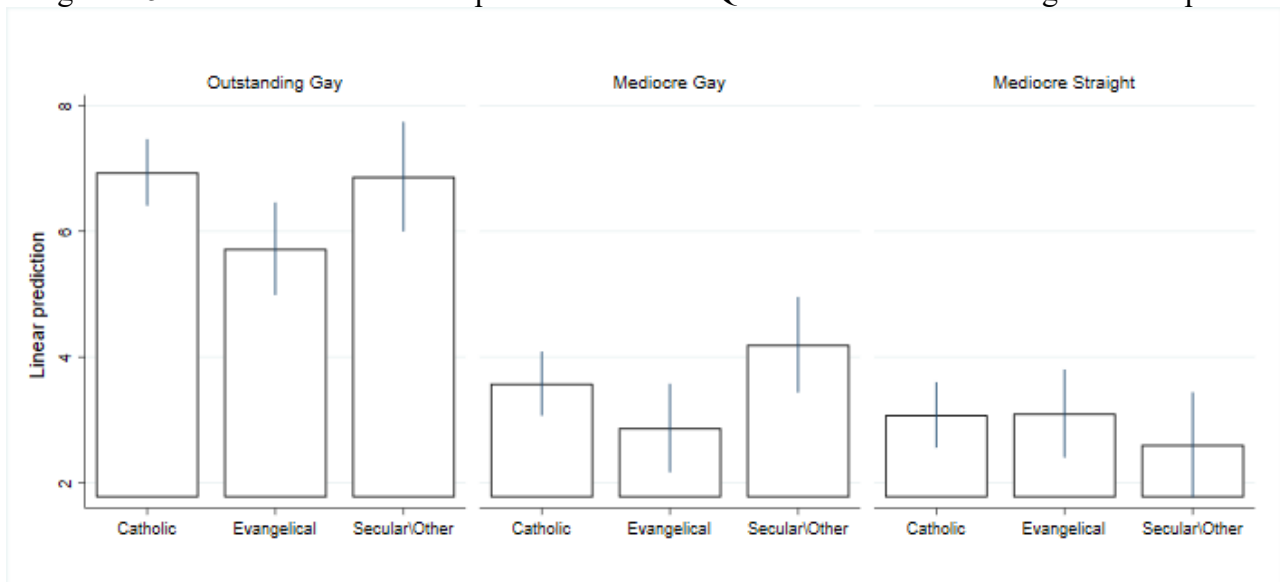


Note: Figures have 95% Confidence Intervals

Figure 2.4 suggests that the results in the previous section were masking heterogeneous treatment effects across religious groups. Relative to secular and minor-religion participants, Figure 2.4 lends credence to the expectation that Evangelical participants are, perhaps

predictably, much more likely to disapprove the right to run of gay men—both at the group and the individual level—than Catholics were. This is likely the outcome of a Pentecostalism-led shift in Brazil’s Evangelical camp: once conceived as an other-worldly religious outlook detached from mundane activities such as mainstream politics, Pentecostal denominations in Brazil abandoned this standoffish approach and propelled their value-based issues into the electoral arena, motivating their laity to defend them at the ballot box (Boas 2021).<sup>34</sup> In line with previous scholarship, Evangelical participants appear to have failed to have seen in Rodrigo—in neither of this hypothetical profiles—compatibility with the Evangelical political project (Boas and Smith 2015).

Figure 2.5: Predicted Values of Aspirant’s Perceived Qualification Across Religious Groups



Note: Figures have 95% Confidence Intervals

<sup>34</sup> A few denominations in the Evangelical camp deviate from this pattern and are LGBTQ+-positive, some of them even with a primarily ministerial outreach to LGBTQ+ people of faith (Natividade 2017).

Among Catholics, an otherwise rosier attitude towards Rodrigo's right to run is potentially due to the relative lack of comparable politicization of their religious identity centered around the opposition to LGBTQ+ rights (Smith 2019). Brazil's episcopal leadership has historically devoted more attention to socioeconomically progressive causes and pushed for mobilizing the faithful in terms of social justice demands in lieu of a moral-issues agenda (Hagopian 2008: 162-168). Moreover, Vatican leadership has at least symbolically stated a relatively more flexible interpretation of doctrine towards homosexual behavior in the recent past (Levine 2016). Hence, a defense of conservative moral values may have less traction on the bulk of self-identified Catholics to reject Rodrigo's ambition to run for mayoral office. However, while some Catholic participants may self-identify as such only nominally and some otherwise as more socially conservative, there is a sizable portion of them that may express ambivalence—i.e., conflict with underlying core values—towards the presence of openly gay men in elective office.<sup>35</sup> Figure 2.5 indicates that Rodrigo's perceived qualification obtained among Catholics is lower in comparison to their approval of Rodrigo's right to run in the upstanding gay condition, and even becoming indistinguishable from Rodrigo's perceived qualification among Evangelicals in the mediocre gay condition.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Craig et al. (2005: 13-15) show how ambivalence towards legislation on gay civil rights can play a role in shaping evaluations of political leaders. They do not analyze openly gay leaders, but their argument about ambivalence can be plausibly extended to this analysis: the interaction between the assignment to treatment conditions and religious self-identification among Catholics shows that their stance towards the presence of gay men in elected office may be more complex and still have a foot in both progressive and conservative stances towards gay rights: granting the openly gay aspirant the right to compete electorally does imply perceiving them as qualified to hold office.

<sup>36</sup> Such ambivalence is not exclusive to Catholic participants. However, as Catholics are nowadays still the largest denomination among religious Brazilians, it is of greater theoretical interest due to its contrast to largely determined Evangelicals.

## Conclusion

Evidence suggests that voters' negative dispositions towards openly gay candidates' stereotype consistency may be susceptible to change and that they have effectively shifted upwards over the past few years. If this is the case, more individuating information in alignment with stereotypes about gay men may have narrowed the gap between the higher level of approval in the baseline and the lower level of approval for the upstanding gay aspirant's right to run. Paraphrasing Hernnson, Lay and Stokes (2003), these results may imply that openly gay men in politics should undertake campaigns as "gay" rather than disconfirming their traits. It remains to be studied whether such campaigning strategies may lead voters to subtype openly gay candidates as a distinct group—that is, "gay politicians"—or rather come to perceive them as mainstream politicians. Likewise, such considerations around gay politicians are likely to impact party-gatekeeping behavior. For party elites, voters' considerations of openly gay candidates may define how much of an electoral asset or a liability they become, especially in times where voters are barely putting up with the political establishment and pushing for a revamping of the candidates' pool. Returning to the research questions, a pending task for this research is to evaluate more comprehensively how the interplay of multiple stereotype (in)consistencies affecting gay candidates running both as "gay" and as "politicians" may shape their recruitment and electability prospects in upcoming electoral contests.

This experiment constitutes a preliminary foray into the study of LGBTQ+ candidate entry and descriptive representation in Latin America, and several more design and methodological questions regarding future iterations of the experiment have now emerged than were anticipated at the beginning. In this vignette experiment I embedded in a face-to-face survey, two limitations became apparent to me: one is that the pieces of

information I offered to participants are limited and in a fixed order; and the other one is that they provide inadequate individualized insight into the interest each piece of individuating information awakes across participants, and how each subsequently affects their decision-making process. Conjoint experiments that employ visual cues can facilitate the exposition of traits' stereotype (in)consistency in a more realistic manner (e.g., Flores-Macías and Zarkin 2022: 1383-1387).<sup>37</sup> Conducting future iterations of this research in process-tracing environments could provide me with additional insight about the varying relevance of each type of individuating information across participants (Andersen and Ditonto 2018). Unlike decisions made in a conjoint-design environment, participants in a process-tracing environment would have access to the same pieces of individuating information, but they would have more leverage over their consumption. Therefore, participants can choose how many pieces of individuating information they need to reach a judgment as well as the order in which they become acquainted with them. Although this experiment points to participants' disposition to factor multiple pieces of information about gay politicians in their assessments, these new questions are, perhaps, the most important outcome of the study.

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<sup>37</sup> Golebiowska (2001) used audiovisual cues to provide a more refined and wholesome picture of stereotype-consistent and stereotype-inconsistent traits in hypothetical gay and lesbian candidates.



### Chapter 3: LGBTQ+ Candidates' Barriers and Tactics in the Entry Process: Insights from Brazil

The number of openly LGBTQ+ candidates pursuing office and succeeding remains small in the Global South (Corrales 2015, 2017). This is not to say there have not been increases: for example, in Brazil's municipal elections held between 1996 and 2020, the number of openly LGBTQ+ candidates increased from 40 to 687, while winners went from none to 103. In the grand scheme of Brazil's 2020 elections, however, LGBTQ+s constituted only 0.14% of all candidates and 0.17% of all office winners.<sup>38</sup> LGBTQ+ individuals make up approximately between 2% and 9% of the Brazilian population.<sup>39</sup> This numerical gap—that is, comparatively fewer LGBTQ+ politicians relative to the size of this group in the public—limits descriptive and substantive LGBTQ+ representation (e.g., Reynolds 2013). Political scientists have examined factors leading to women's and non-white individuals' underrepresentation. However, scholarship has less frequently considered barriers specific to LGBTQ+ candidate entry—not to mention the tactics to overcome them.<sup>40</sup> Interviewing LGBTQ+ candidates can identify which barriers line up with those accounted for in research on other minority groups, but also which ones are specific to some or all LGBTQ+ individuals. Hence, this chapter asks: what barriers and tactics do LGBTQ+ candidates talk about? And are there differences among LGBTQ+ candidates based on their subgroup identity?

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<sup>38</sup> The TSE greenlit 533,510 candidacies for 69,250 executive and legislative offices across municipalities in 2020. See Table A3.1's rightmost column in the Appendix, Section A3.1. For more information, visit <https://www.tse.jus.br/eleicoes/estatisticas/estatisticas-eleitorais>

<sup>39</sup> The first estimate comes from the 2019 round of the nationally representative PNS survey. This is the first government-led public health survey to include a survey item measuring sexual orientation. The second estimate comes from a [more recent public opinion survey, which](#) elevates this share to 9.3%.

<sup>40</sup> In addition, extant work has nearly exclusively examined these issues in liberal, advanced industrialized democracies.

To answer these questions, I develop a grounded theory of barrier- and tactic-related markers concerning politically ambitious LGBTQ+ individuals. I combine semi-open interviews with coding techniques to analyze accounts of a hard-to-reach population: LGBTQ+ aspirants and candidates (Charmaz 2014; Saldaña 2016). I obtain these accounts via transcripts of semi-open interviews—more precisely, my fieldwork engaged LGBTQ+ candidates from Brazil’s last seven nationwide municipal elections (1996-2020) during eight months between March 2020 and January 2021. To recruit interviewees, I referenced publicly available catalogues of LGBTQ+ candidates and combined this with my knowledge of LGBTQ+ politics in Brazil to create a mixed purposive snowball sample that reflects the variegated population of openly LGBTQ+ candidates. Building on previous scholarship, I also identify two different types of barriers relevant to examining the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process. On the one hand, barriers can be internal, such as an absence of ambition, aversion to office-seeking activities, or lack of inner-circle endorsement. On the other hand, there are also barriers beyond the candidates’ direct purview; namely, those stemming from party gatekeepers’ criteria for candidate entry or endorsement and from prejudices within the public. Moreover, I pinpoint the internal and external character of the tactics interviewees have used to overcome such barriers. Finally, I provide additional insights from the interview data by accounting differences among LGBTQ+ candidates based on gender, ethnicity, and transgender status.

Barriers to the candidate entry process for Latin American LGBTQ+ individuals have received implicit acknowledgment in published work, but to my knowledge they have not been explicitly addressed, especially not interview-based research projects. This paper addresses this deficit by investigating whether LGBTQ+ candidates in Brazil are sensitive to barriers examined by scholars on other non-traditional minorities, and whether they report barriers

previously unrecognized or understudied by scholars, and, most importantly, how they tactically organize themselves to overcome them. Transcripts' analyses reveal three important contributions about the considerations that LGBTQ+ candidates bring to their decision to enter and campaign for office. First, I show that there are barriers that resonate with barriers theorized about other non-traditional candidates, such as the ones I label "thin skin" or "professional overcompensation;" Moreover, there are other barriers affecting more specifically the LGBTQ+ electoral experience—these include what I term the born-this-way, single-issue, and the unfit-to-lead barriers as well as those grounded on religious beliefs. Second, LGBTQ+ candidates as a group discuss more barrier-overcoming tactics than barriers themselves, Third, I find through an intersectional analysis of the transcripts that there are no gender differences among LGBTQ+ individuals in terms of perceived barriers or tactics. There are suggestive differences in terms of race. Moreover, while LGBs express that encouragement from parties and voters is needed to overcome barriers, transgender candidates report relying more on their internal sense of self-efficacy. As in other groups of non-traditional candidates, the intersectional analyses ultimately point to the heterogeneity of LGBTQ+ candidates and their experiences running for office.

### **Locating Barriers**

There are several candidate entry models used to theorize around the presence of descriptively underrepresented groups in elective office. To organize my grounded analysis of barriers affecting LGBTQ+ candidate entry, I rely on one of them: the Qualified-Run-Succeed (QRS) model. The QRS model addresses barriers relating to qualification, nomination, and electability (Carnes 2018: 33-36; see also Fox and Lawless 2010 and Carnes and Lupu

forthcoming). In this chapter, the crux of this model's application is the identification of the stage at which aspirants from a politically underrepresented social group are more likely to be screened out. I build on previous research to suggest that, in working through the QRS path, the balance for candidates between internal and external barriers trends progressively away from internal barriers and towards external barriers. That is, first and foremost, the pursuit of elective office is driven primarily by aspirants' considerations about their own personality traits and feelings of efficacy, along with other background factors such as ideological motivations, the minority status, and political upbringing (Fox and Lawless 2005: 643-646). Therefore, these considerations at the qualification stage pertain to barriers that are inherently internal and require more introspection. That said, these considerations are expected to grow more strategic as aspirants realistically contemplate their candidacy prospects and their approach to the "political opportunity structure" (e.g., Schlesinger 1966; Saha and Catalano-Weeks 2022)—and, consequently, the barriers entailed by pursuing an elective position of power within the government.

A common scholarly thread with regards to qualification frames barriers with reference to the origins and consequences of political ambition—and hence their related barriers can be largely conceived of as "internal", meaning that its locus is the individual. This thread has been almost exclusively built around the apparent relative low levels of political ambition among women or non-White candidates (e.g., Fox and Lawless 2010). In this reading, a depressed level of political ambition can be attributed to aspirants' perceptions of traditional officeholders' behaviors and traits and the aspirants' non-alignment with specific gendered attributes of elective office—the so-called "masculinized ethos" of politics (Schneider et al. 2016: 517). Non-traditional aspirants such as cisgender women may feel they will not have proper or

enough qualifications to run (Bauer 2020). An additional characterization of women candidates is that their decision to pursue a political career is embedded in interpersonal relationships (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Scholars argue that the gendered experience of becoming a candidate entails women's acknowledgement of how political pursuits may affect their significant others—be they partners, family, friends, peers, or even neighbors. Therefore, gaining the support of such individuals tends to be more consequential for women's decision to venture into electoral politics. Finally, as more recent scholarship shows, a variation in this thread revolves around women being more averse to finding an outlet to express their ambition in conflict-seeking environments (e.g., Preece and Stoddard 2015). When the candidate entry process is modeled not in power-grabbing and domination-seeking terms but, instead, in communal terms, women become more likely to express political ambition (Schneider et al. 2016: 516-518).

Unlike the barriers surrounding qualification, the barriers regarding the nomination and success of underrepresented and non-traditional groups' members are conceived as standing largely outside of an aspirant's individual purview. These external barriers need not manifest exclusively in the presence of overt impediments, such as an aspirant holding a profession or occupation at odds with those conducive to success within the male-dominated recruitment pipeline or their lack of family ties. Rather, non-traditional aspirants may still be discouraged by others to run even in the absence of such explicit barriers for several reasons: the presumption that aspirants will not withstand pressures on the campaign trail, the sense that they are not electable, the belief that they will pursue biased policy goals, etc. In an effort to address these perceived barriers, political parties, civil society organizations, and governments have pushed for a more active approach in encouraging entry of non-traditional people into

elective office (Ruf 2021)—albeit in many cases these efforts have presumably not challenged the masculinized ethos of elective office (see Murray 2014).

### **LGBTQ+ Politization and Barriers to LGBTQ+ Candidates**

Whereas scholars have been primarily producing knowledge about candidate-entry barriers affecting (presumably cis-straight) women, there are fewer insights on barriers that deter LGBTQ+ candidate entry. Complicating matters, specialized scholars of LGBTQ+ candidate entry have complained about an apparent inclination to analyze the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process “mainly as [if it were] a copy-paste of research on women’s political representation” (Tremblay 2019: 10). To be sure, it is theoretically plausible to encounter an overlap of barriers between LGBTQ+ and cis-straight women candidates. Yet, addressing some specific issues affecting LGBTQ+ candidate entry may enable more comprehensive perspective on the set of barriers affecting LGBTQ+ individuals. Next, I will address three issues that have characterized contemporary scholarly discussions around potential impediments for LGBTQ+ candidate behavior in general: their relative powerlessness vis-à-vis straight politicians, the inherent limitations to represent LGBTQ+ interests, and the predominance of respectability politics.

Unlike other social groups, LGBTQ+ individuals exist within diverse social milieus, most likely being born and reared outside—but later choosing to become a part—of the LGBTQ+ community. For those individuals who are psychobiologically LGBTQ+ individuals (i.e., consistently seeing themselves and being perceived by others as lesbian, gays, bisexual, transgender, queer or other LGBTQ+ self-identifiers), scholars argue that their flocking to and concentration in large urban areas is crucial for them to become culturally and politically

embedded (Bailey 1999; Egan, Edelman, and Sherrill 2008; Sherrill 1996: 472).<sup>41</sup> Despite the extent that they may become a cohesive voting bloc in large cities and for certain elections, in a country as vast as the U.S., the LGBTQ+ influence as an electoral constituency can be marginal (Saraceno, Hansen, and Treul 2022; Flores, Herman, and Mallory 2015). One of the pioneering scholars of LGBTQ+ political behavior dubbed this unique feature of LGBTQ+ individuals' stance in democracy as “powerlessness:” an inability to advance their policy interests via commonplace majoritarian mechanisms of representative politics (Sherill 1993; see also Bishin, Freebourn and Teten 2021 and Proctor 2022).<sup>42</sup> Because LGBTQ+ aspirants rely on the support of cis-straight individuals to become candidates and attain public office, this assertion made about LGBTQ+ voters can be reasonably extended to LGBTQ+ candidates. To be sure, LGBTQ+ candidates can be electable, but their self-identification may arguably limit their ability to take political action for LGBTQ+ voters with whom they would arguably share common policy interests (Sherill 1993).

Besides their relative powerlessness in the general population, LGBTQ+ candidates can also come across barriers related to their role as brokers of LGBTQ+ interests.<sup>43</sup> LGBTQ+ representatives can be expected to pursue more equitable intergroup relationships in society. They are also expected to be connected to both marginal and the dominant subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community, amid a growing call to distinguish subgroup-level politicization (Jones et

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<sup>41</sup> For similar arguments about the politicization of LGBTQ+ individuals in Brazil, see Macrae (2018) and Simões and Facchini (2009).

<sup>42</sup> Although these writings refer to “gay and lesbian” people in particular, their ongoing relevance can be meaningfully applied to other subgroups in the LGBTQ+ acronym.

<sup>43</sup> The notion of broker that I use here differs but also approximates from the definition of brokers used in the comparative scholarship of clientelism. In this chapter, I do not conceive of brokers as intermediaries in the distribution of targeted benefits between party leaders and voters. But my definition of brokers resembles more how brokers build their acumen by keeping close ties to their voters, becoming knowledgeable of their needs and preferences (Stokes et al. 2013: 75).

al. 2018). Across members of the LGBTQ+ public, identity-based politicization concerns may vary based on their specific psychobiological traits and levels of cultural embeddedness (Snell 2020). Scholars tend to ascribe more relevance to cultural embeddedness when discussing the concept of descriptive and symbolic representation (Dovi 2002).<sup>44</sup> That is, such representatives must, through deliberately cultivated relationships with various subgroups, culturally embody the role of a broker of LGBTQ+ interests (Severs and de Jong 2018: 345). Notably, the emphasis is placed on the representative's acknowledgement of marginalized LGBTQ+ individuals and the integration of their interests into their policy agenda. But preferences for LGBTQ+ officeholding in the LGBTQ+ public are oftentimes fragmented and heterogeneous, especially outside of large urban centers where LGBTQ+ individuals' cultural traits may be less salient and more diffused. This is why LGBTQ+ representatives, both psychobiologically and culturally, can easily "fall prey to accusations of betrayal" (Severs and de Jong 2018: 347). Another related set of barriers pertains to how partisanship shapes the representation of LGBTQ+ interests (Proctor 2022). If LGBTQ+ voters tend to feel attached to a specific party or set of parties, LGBTQ+ candidates may find barriers to gaining the endorsement of their constituency when running under an alternative party banner. LGBTQ+ candidates who do not toe the partisan line with their constituency may lack a willingness to engage in or even actively eschew the representation of LGBTQ+ interests.

Finally, barriers may arise from expectations around LGBTQ+ candidate entry in the public as well. Interestingly, scholars argue that even LGBTQ+-friendly electorates may still prefer LGBTQ+ candidates who conform to heteronormative lifestyles and political norms

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<sup>44</sup> This debate introduces the idea of preferability for culturally descriptive candidates, which underlines a LGBTQ+ politician's representativeness in terms of their cultural ties to the LGBTQ+ community at large.



(Everitt and Horvath 2021: 2). LGBTQ+ candidates who do not conform to such standards may therefore encounter barriers in their pursuit of elective office. As was the case with other social groups pursuing civil and political rights, the politics of respectability may govern not just mass expectations about LGBTQ+ candidates, but also the latter's tactics for broadening support and electability. Paraphrasing Higginbotham (1993: 193-204), the assumption behind LGBTQ+ politicians abiding by respectability politics is that prejudices will be ceded, and equal political standing will ensue. The empirical record, however, is mixed: some work points to the nullity of respectability politics in changing public opinion (Jones 2022); other work indicates that conventionally respectable LGBTQ+ candidates are more likely to win over electoral support as compared to counterparts not adhering to respectability conventions (Everitt and Horvath 2021). While this literature review is not exhaustive, it provides an overview of three slices of research regarding LGBTQ+ political behavior—powerlessness, brokerage, and respectability—that may account for specific barriers along LGBTQ+ candidates' QRS path. In the next section, this paper examines the barriers verbalized by LGBTQ+ candidates. Complementing such first-person accounts of barriers, the section also turns to barrier-overcoming tactics described by LGBTQ+ candidates.

## **Case Selection**

Perhaps a key reason that prior studies in the U.S. have not substantially assessed barriers affecting LGBTQ+ candidate entry is that, in electoral politics, LGBTQ+ identification is linked to partisanship (Egan 2012; 2020). That is, party divisions on acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals delineate who (and whose party) can be representative of LGBTQ+ interests

(Proctor 2022; see also Snell 2020).<sup>45</sup> This feature of American LGBTQ+ candidate behavior stands in contrast with the case of Brazil, in which LGBTQ+ candidates are less constrained by partisan mandates and constituencies to obtain party nominations. Another important distinction is that Brazilian LGBTQ+ candidates need not surrender religious appeals, as religion is neither sorted into partisan camps nor guided by partisan attachments, at least not as markedly as in the United States (e.g., Djupe, Neiheisel, and Sokhey 2018; Margolis 2022).<sup>46</sup>

The comparative irrelevance of partisanship and relevance of religion to LGBTQ+ politics in the Brazilian case can be demonstrated by revisiting its recent experience with top-down political homo- and transphobia, a staple of former President Jair Bolsonaro's right-wing populist playbook (Kyrik and Corrales 2020). Although there have been non-religious references to homophobia in his rhetoric—such as exaltation of nationalistic and militaristic notions—the bulk of Bolsonaro's crusade against the recent expansion of gender, reproductive, and sexuality rights has clear religious appeals. With these appeals, Bolsonaro has buttressed his affinity with the conservative Christian outlook of some Brazilians voters (Smith 2019). This affinity was overwhelmingly clear with Evangelicals because of their outspoken militance against LGBTQ+ rights (Layton et al. 2021). In contrast to the U.S., however, scholars argue that Bolsonaro's religion-based appeals did not dissuade LGBTQ+ voters from voting for him (Kyrik and Corrales 2020; regarding the U.S., see Michelson and Schmitt 2020). Likewise, a

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<sup>45</sup> I am referring here to the crystallization of LGBTQ+ issues within the Democratic Party brand in the United States. This assertion is not meant to disqualify noteworthy contributions of scholars regarding non-Democratic LGBTQ+ candidate behavior—rather to observe its documented marginal status.

<sup>46</sup> This contrast can be best illustrated by way of briefly comparing the political experiences of Evangelicals in the U.S and Brazil, where they became the fastest-growing group of religious voters (Boas 2021). According to various scholars, Brazilian Evangelicals are more prone to adjust their partisan outlooks and choices to their religious convictions (Smith 2019). This is rather the opposite of what occurs in the U.S., where partisan outlooks are increasingly becoming a prime mover of Evangelicals' religious behavior (Margolis 2018).

non-trivial portion of LGBTQ+ candidates in 2020 persisted in running under a right-wing and Bolsonaro-adjacent party label.<sup>47</sup>

## Sample

An empirical study of LGBTQ+ political entry is a quintessential “rare-event problem” (Gulzar 2021: 254): those who run for office are a tiny fraction of the total LGBTQ+ eligible population in a country, even more so if compared against the entire set of eligible individuals in a country. I completed 49 interviews with openly self-identifying LGBTQ+s who competed in any of the municipal elections in the 1996-2020 period (see Appendix, Section 3.2). The sample misses closeted LGBTQ+ candidates—that is, interviewees must openly self-identify as LGBTQ+. Moreover, this sample comprises subjects who have also nurtured an expressive ambition, meaning that they have seriously taken steps towards “entering a specific race” (Lawless 2012: 23). All respondents manifested expressive ambition at the time of the interview. However, one of these candidates has not been ultimately pursued by the party to run.<sup>48</sup> Among these candidates, it merits noting that only a minority of them (37%) were elected.<sup>49</sup> Because of the sampling frame I used, there are no interviewees with only a nascent ambition (Lawless 2012: 19-20)—i.e., a gradual or sudden inclination to put forward their names for an eventual candidacy—and deprived of an expressive element in this ambition. That restriction to the sample ought to be kept in mind when considering the results, a point I return

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<sup>47</sup> This figure stands in contrast with the 2.9% of openly LGBT Republican-affiliated candidates that were registered to compete in the 2018 mid-term elections (Michelson and Schmitt 2020).

<sup>48</sup> In Brazil the nomination process entails a double candidate registration. First, parties are required to register aspirants as precandidates. Once the party internally nominates a precandidate, it is also the party’s prerogative to officialize them formally as candidates. Only one interviewee in the sample discussed his party’s decision not to launch him as a mayoral candidate in the general election, despite his registration as a precandidate.

<sup>49</sup> Only eighteen interviewees successfully attained office in my sample and seven of them were either elected for the first time or reelected in the 2020 elections.

to in the conclusion. In the Appendix, Sections A3.1-6, I provide more information about the sampling frame, recruiting methods, and other aspects of the fieldwork.

The prevalence of expressive ambition makes it likely that each candidate had strategically defined as their goal achieving a nomination and running for elective office. Interviewees also discuss how they lean into and remain in electoral politics. That is, they do not only weave into their narratives the acknowledgment of barriers, but also intentional and unintentional efforts to bypass or remove them. This is especially the case in Brazil, where electoral rules incentivize entrepreneurial approaches by political aspirants (Samuels 2002). I understand that any type of barrier that would impede them from achieving said goal could be faced with a tactical move to circumvent or overcome it. Thus, while the actions they undertake may not necessarily be expressed in tactical terms, they ultimately served them to attain office. That is, tactics can be conceptualized as means to achieve the strategy of running for office.<sup>50</sup> To test if barrier- and tactic-related gaps exist within the sample, I look at a dataset of 817 markers from the transcribed interviews, with 339 of them denoting barriers and the other 478 denoting tactics.

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<sup>50</sup> I borrow from the distinction posited by Shames and Atchinson (2019: 63): “Strategy is about defining your goals. Tactics are about how you achieve that goal.” The most obvious reason to run for office is attaining office. But several candidates go through the ordeal of entering this process with little expectation of attaining office. Instead, I believe that a more generalized goal shared by most interviewees in this sample is gaining public visibility (see Michelson and Harrison 2022)—this is not necessarily meant just to normalize the presence of LGBTQ+ candidates in electoral competitions, but also as a deliberate way to showcase their own understanding of what being publicly LGBTQ+ is for them, regardless of whether it is to endorse or to reject other LGBTQ+ people’s lifestyles.

## Research Methodology

Building on grounded-theory methodology, here I lay out in Figure 3.1 the methodological framework that led to the development of the thematic markers.<sup>51</sup> With several coding techniques drawn from qualitative text analysis, I inductively and iteratively generate—as represented with the double arrows in Figure 3.1—a generalizable typology of barrier- and tactic-related markers (Charmaz 2014).<sup>52</sup> This framework did not start as a blank slate. Rather, I organized the data collection in advance by designing the interview protocol items such that they were divided into three sections, each of them matching with the three thematic stages of the theoretical QRS model: qualified, run, and succeed. As I show in the Appendix, Section A3.5, the questions were correspondingly tailored to address each of these stages. As a consequence, for each stage along the QRS path, there are thematically grounded markers—that is, topical markers in this research project are bins for conceptual types of barriers and barrier-overcoming tactics that can be reasonably worked out as thematically bounded to a stage in the QRS path (see Rubin and Rubin 2012).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Grounded theory combines inductive, abductive, and deductive logics of inference to produce new theory (Charmaz 2014). Through an iterative process of constant comparisons between data points, grounded theory allows for either the development of new and the adaptation or customization of existing categories of barriers and barrier-overcoming tactics in the candidate entry process. An important feature of a grounded-theory approach is “attentiveness to the systematic inclusion of a range of voices and ways of knowing” (Ackerly et al. 2021: 4; see also Anoll 2022). This is why I pursued purposive sampling and selected openly, politically ambitious LGBTQ+ interviewees that are potentially not “preferable” from a politically progressive point of view (see Dovi 2002).

<sup>52</sup> For coding I rely on Taguette, an open-source tool for text analysis (Rampin and Rampin 2021).

<sup>53</sup> This grounded-theory method does not imply that statements excerpted from responses addressing questions about a specific stage may not be coded with a marker that corresponds thematically to the qualified stage in the QRS path (e.g., a statement extracted from a response to a question referring the succeed stage may contain a marker that addresses a marker corresponding to the qualified stage).

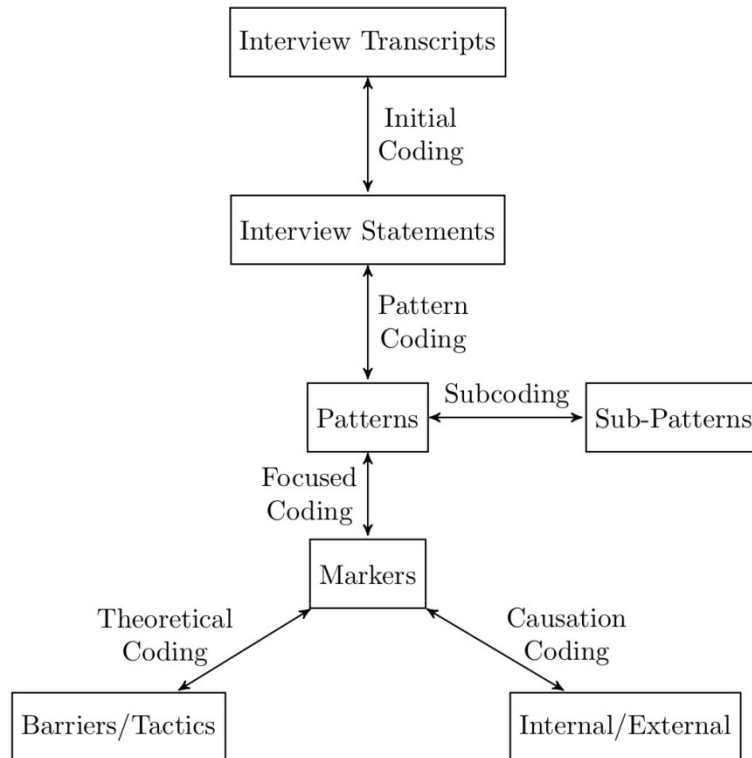


Figure 3.1: Methodological Framework

I apply several coding techniques in the analysis, as depicted in Figure 3.1. The initial coding technique entails “breaking down qualitative data into discrete interview excerpts” or statements (Saldaña 2016: 100). With pattern coding, text selection is further motivated by thematic patterns already present in previous scholarship or guided, instead, by patterns that are inductively developed in this open-ended coding cycle.<sup>54</sup> Thematic patterns are labeled with an emphasis on process, which is why they are formulated as gerunds—i.e., with verbs in pattern labels ending in *ing* (Saldaña 2016: 213-214). Next, with focused coding, I categorize patterns into markers based on “thematic or conceptual similarity” or overlap (Saldaña 2016: 209). For some specific markers, I have also subcoded different threads contributing to each marker’s

<sup>54</sup> By thematic pattern I refer to a “phrase or sentence describing more subtle and tacit processes” (Rossman and Rallis 2003: 282 as cited in Saldaña 2016: 15-16). Thematic patterns can be noticed before and during the coding cycles (Saldaña 2016: 198-200).

thematic pattern (Saldaña 2016: 91-94). This coding cycle involved an effort to closely examine the defining pattern in each marker to confirm a definitive list of markers (Saldaña 2016: 213). Additionally, causation coding allows me to classify the thematic markers according to their internal or external quality (Saldaña 2016: 186-198).

With theoretical coding, I also subsume thematic markers under one of two categories: barriers and barrier-overcoming tactics. I arrived at this classification scheme of barriers and tactics through an iterative, recursive exercise, going back and forth between the collection of statements and the emerging classification scheme—developing (and refining) a list of themes and markers with the aid of fieldwork notes, culling out the marker-containing statements from the transcripts, and writing memos about them (see Saldaña 2016: 44-45).<sup>55</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the units of analysis should be more generically taken as reports of barriers and tactics describing LGBTQ+ politicians as a whole. Since interviews were conducted with the assurance of confidentiality, I anonymize and deidentify interviewees by randomly assigning them a three-digit numerical code (See Appendix, Section A3.6).<sup>56</sup> Due to the above-mentioned efforts, I also analyze markers as if LGBTQ+ interviewees in the sample would belong to a common ingroup.<sup>57</sup> Despite analyzing markers as if interviewees were observably fellow members of a superordinate LGBTQ+ identity group, an important clarification is that I

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<sup>55</sup> It merits noting that while revising and casing patterns related to barrier-related markers, I discovered that many interviewees discussed barriers from a perspective of capability. Grounded-theory scholars suggest, in these cases, moving beyond induction and adopting abductive logic. Induction allows for the classification of markers within the preformed category of barriers, while abduction marshals intriguing observations into newly formulated categories where these observations would fall (Reichert 2007). This is how I developed the concept of barrier-overcoming tactics.

<sup>56</sup> Although in some cases respondents couched statements in the first-person, in many cases they did not. In the case of several interviewees, the markers denote reflections, critiques, remarks, and other sorts of statements about other LGBTQ+ aspirants.

<sup>57</sup> Only when interviewees make a direct reference to their specific subgroup—e.g., “we Lesbians” or “as I gay man myself”—as part of an argument, do I keep this reference intact for theoretical purpose. Otherwise, there are no references to interviewees’ identifying information.

do not assume they perceive themselves to be part of, or assimilated into such group beyond their own subgroup membership. In the next section, I map out the markers that resulted from these coding cycles, distinguishing them by the three stages constituting the QRS path.

## Analysis

### *Qualified Stage Markers*

In line with the QRS path, Table 3.1 pinpoints three within-candidate and situational barriers in interviewees' reports. The first I label *thin skin*. This marker is inspired by a notion first elaborated by Fox and Lawless (2011). Taking stock of the discussion in the previous section, this bin includes statements pointing to barriers emerging from theorizing around the gendered candidate entry process, specifically with respect to feeling that the political arena is overly conflictual or otherwise unappealing.<sup>58</sup> Second, the *inner-circle discouragement* marker identifies a pattern in which family, friends, or peers are described as failing to validate and support interviewees' decision to run (Hardy-Fanta 1993: 127-152; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013).<sup>59</sup> Third, one of the most salient patterns in the transcripts revolves around being at the receiving end of disqualifications based on LGBTQ+'s more diverse gender or sexual identity

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<sup>58</sup> Several threads informed the pattern that led to the thin-skin marker. One thread in reports directly involves an aversion towards politics as a conflict-prone game. Interviewee 140 summed up their entry into politics as a constant effort to "look straight into people's eyes and speak to them assertively." Another contributing thread entails interviewees complaining about the necessity of electoral clientelism practices to mobilize voters. In some cases, interviewees were caught off-guard by demands, such as "I will vote for you if you guarantee me ten cement bags" (133). Another interviewee explained in more detail: "voters fall for this type of [clientelist] logic. You [are supposed to] take charge of utility bills, monthly rent, food items. I struggled with such demands. It made me skeptical about running for office" (170). Yet another thread touches more specifically on the outsider status of LGBTQ+ politicians and its relationship to being thin-skinned. Interviewee 133 argues that "the Brazilian voter does not like soft [*frouxo*] men, [men who do not exude self-confidence.] I believe that effeminate gay men, with a looser definition of masculinity, may face difficulties. This may affect also [transgender and cisgender women]—in fact, anyone who does not conform to the aesthetic traits of people [in politics]."

<sup>59</sup> Interviewee 104 notes that "[his] parents were not fond of [his] candidacy, and even some friends were afraid and opposed, because [he] was putting [him]self at risk": "It is difficult. Just think about happened to Marielle [Franco, a councilor killed in an attack] in Rio de Janeiro [in March 2018]."



expressions. This *born-this-way* (BTW) marker is applied to interviewees' reports of unavoidable feelings and situations that come with managing an openly LGBTQ+ identity in politics.<sup>60</sup>

Category	Thematic Markers	Thematic Patterns
Barriers	Thin Skin	<i>Appraising electoral practices as transactional-style and conflictive</i>
	Inner-Circle Discouragement	<i>Feeling inner-circle reluctance in granting validation for electoral aspirations</i>
	Born-this-way	<i>Being exposed to unwarranted disqualifications due to LGBTQ+ identity</i>
Barrier-Overcoming Tactics	Professional Compensation	<i>Exhibiting professional credentials during campaign trail</i>
	Inner-Circle Encouragement	<i>Feeling inner-circle validation for electoral aspirations</i>
	Respectability	<i>Displaying non-prototypical LGBTQ+ attributes</i>
	Stereotypical Reliance	<i>Displaying prototypical LGBTQ+ attributes</i>

Table 3.1: Qualified-Stage Markers

There are two clear groups of barrier-overcoming tactics that involve the candidate's self-conceptualization. One group consists of two tactics that are focused on the candidate's situation. Professional qualifications are oftentimes utilized for self-promotion, especially among minority candidates (Bauer 2020: 63-79).<sup>61</sup> Moreover, certain professions may be better

<sup>60</sup> Interviewee 147 recalls how the mayoral candidate for whom they volunteered was targeted because of her sexual identity. During the campaign, they heard allegations that "if [the candidate] were to become mayor, she would plan to open a soap factory in town that would exclusively employ women workers." Making soap is an old-fashioned idiom in the Brazilian Northeast to refer to lesbian sex. Other allegations this interviewee reported included that the candidate "would steal women from their husbands." Some opponents even urged local voters "not to vote for [her], resorting to using derogatory slurs to tarnish her reputation." Another thread of the BTW marker pertains to occupational stereotypes. Interviewee 130 thinks that elections serve as an opportunity to show voters that "an openly gay man like [him] can engage in politics and not in stereotypical activities such as being a hairdresser or a dancer." He continues, "I am gay and a public servant. I hope I am helping people to think out of the box."

<sup>61</sup> It is worth noting that the study sample is comparatively well-educated, and more educated candidates may be more likely to recognize a tactical use of their own professional credentials and to notice it in other LGBTQ+ candidates. In fact, interviewees in the study sample report higher levels of post-secondary education attainment in comparison to both the contacted sample (88% vs. 77%) and the 2020 microcensus of LGBTQ+ candidates (88% vs. 52%) in the 2020 elections. That said, candidates in the LGBTQ+ microcensus are more educated than the totality of their

suiting to enter networks used by party operatives to recruit candidates (e.g., Thomsen and King 2020: 991-992). A pattern of emphasizing such credentials is apparent across statements that I classify under the *professional overcompensation* marker.<sup>62</sup> Another marker is the *inner-circle encouragement*, which refers to interviewees' memories of others' positive validation for their political aspirations. Another group pertains to two tactics that interviewees employ to deal with their LGBTQ+ identity. Under the *respectability* marker I include statements stressing non-prototypical attributes to arguably "disprove dominant [negative] stereotypes about the group" and thus increase social acceptance for themselves—and potentially for their whole group (Gould 2009: 89, as cited in Strolovitch and Crowder 2018: 341; Golebiowska 2001).<sup>63</sup> Interviewees also reveal a contrasting tactic, which relies on reasoning that a candidate's consistency with LGBTQ+ identity standards—behaving as a born-this-way LGBTQ+ politician—distinguishes them from traditional elites. These statements are grouped under the *stereotypical reliance* marker.<sup>64</sup> Transcripts suggest this tactic is more commonly at the disposal of LGBTQ+ individuals who are at the intersection of multiple identities.<sup>65</sup>

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counterparts in the 2020 elections (52% vs. 27%). Hence, LGBTQ+ candidates beyond this sample are likely to connect to this barrier. See Appendix, Section A3.1, for more information.

<sup>62</sup> Interviewee 178 reports that "[she] know[s] what hard work means, because [she] ha[s] been pushing for the last eight years two carts full of recyclables on the streets." She adds that "[she] studied law. [...] Anybody can engage in politics, regardless of having received an education or not." She continues, "I do not think that other lesbians, who do not share [her] life and work experience, activism, my education, are unable to enter politics. But those are my war tactics."

<sup>63</sup> The respectability pattern manifests in several interviews. The following interview excerpt sums it up: "The whole town knows that I identify as gay. People gradually became more respectful and even came to admire me for my lifestyle. I do not need to write it on my forehead. My husband and I are always together. I am convinced that I have been able to succeed as an openly gay in politics because I have always kept my composure as a married person" (Interviewee 107).

<sup>64</sup> Interviewee 168 provides an example of this marker's pattern: "I was not the only gay candidate running in [that] election. [...] The other one, a *travesti*, wound up with the most votes. He wears women's clothes to this day. Only women's clothes and accessories: skirts, lipstick, nails done. He has garnered people's support."

<sup>65</sup> Interviewee 112 hazarded, "Nowadays, a black transgender candidate is more viable than a white gay candidate. [...] I think there is a tendency to support minority-within-minority [candidacies in large cities]."

## *Run Stage Markers*

Prior to formally accessing the ballot, aspirants need to be registered with a party, which requires being in touch with party operatives. Interview transcripts reveal party-mediated barriers that appear similar to those affecting other minority candidates, as documented by scholars. The *gatekeeping* marker is applied to reports in which interviewees perceive that party operatives fall short in making their candidacies viable.<sup>66</sup> Another pattern that emerges from the transcripts is that some interviewees express their political aspiration despite not hailing from families with legacy connections. Thus, the *lack of family ties* marker traces this situational barrier.<sup>67</sup> On its top, Table 3.2 lists these two barriers corresponding to the run stage in the QRS path.

As illustrated in Table 3.2, the qualitative descriptive analysis yields at least three different barrier-overcoming tactics that pertain to party gatekeepers' recruitment, nomination and encouraging behavior and practices. The *party infiltration* marker congregates statements in which interviewees argue LGBTQ+ presence in intraparty committees can increase the fielding

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<sup>66</sup> This pattern is consistent with interviewees' acknowledgement of party-gatekeeping behavior before the qualified and run stages. Having said that, candidates who have experienced but already overcome party-gatekeeping barriers may not recall them as such—especially if more recent barriers related to the campaign trail are now occupying an interviewee's mind. As Interviewee 103 claims, party-gatekeeping behavior can arise “from within the party ranks, as some candidates became extremely jealous when they realized the level of support I was garnering.” Gatekeepers can be pressured by other candidates given that, in Brazil, legislative candidacies compete against each other.

<sup>67</sup> An excerpt of Interviewee 102's statement serves to capture this pattern: “So, I shared my candidacy plans with my family. My parents were shocked. In fact, my father was completely terrified because we do not belong to a political family. I am neither a daughter of, a granddaughter of, nor a relative of anyone who holds political power. I am the first person in the family to enter politics.” An excerpt from one of Interviewee 104's responses adds more depth by revealing a thread in which LGBTQ+ individuals can become the target of violence for not belonging to an insider family in politics: “In my city, politics is extremely *coronelista*, very traditional, you know? [Thus,] my parents were not approving of my candidacy.” Thus, a lack of family ties can deter candidates from advancing along the QRS path, especially for candidates who “challenge oligarchic groups in politics.” In Interviewee 104's words, “I think there are many instances of candidates who challenge oligarchic power. At least in my state, voters can frequently see that kind of challenge. [The death threats I received] were, in my opinion, more related to how I tackled it [as an outsider] and my self-expression.” *Coronelista* refers to *coronelismo* or coronelism, a system of governance in 1930s Brazil, centered on the figure of coronels or *coroneis*. These coronels were local bosses who factually exerted political power, regardless of whether they held elective or administrative positions (Leal 1975).

of LGBTQ+ candidate entry.<sup>68</sup> Relatedly, the *token* marker inventories statements in which interviewees explained their decisions to run in parties that do not have a track record of endorsing LGBTQ+ rights. Justifications for these decisions equally involve a) interviewees who are disillusioned with parties that are supposed to show conviction in their defense of LGBTQ+ rights, and b) interviewees who push against the political consolidation of encompassing LGBTQ+ norms of partisan allegiance. The *dynastic pedigree* marker is frequently mentioned as a situational tactic, especially among interviewees from smaller-sized municipalities.<sup>69</sup>

Category	Thematic Markers	Thematic Patterns
Barriers	Gatekeeping	<i>Believing party elites have preferences over recruiting, nominating, and encouraging LGBTQ+ candidates</i>
	(Lack of) Family Ties	<i>Highlighting office-seeking motivation without being socialized in a family with political ties</i>
Barrier-Overcoming Tactics	Party Infiltration	<i>Gaining an organizational foothold to spur LGBTQ+-friendly gatekeeping behavior</i>
	Token	<i>Being selected to primarily reach out and diversify a party's constituency</i>
	Dynastic Pedigree	<i>Self-presenting and being recognized as a legacy candidate can boost the chances of party endorsement</i>

Table 3.2: Run-Stage Markers

<sup>68</sup> Unlike the others, this marker denotes an altruistic tactic intended to influence party-gatekeeping behavior and practices from within (i.e., Cheng and Tavits 2011; Crowder-Meyer 2013). It merits noting that this tactic has been well-documented in Brazil's LGBTQ+ activism, both within nonpartisan and partisan organizations (Câmara 2018: 196-199; Marsiaj 2010). Scholars give credence to this tactic, as traditional gatekeepers' prospect of encouraging non-traditional candidacies are often met with skepticism by such candidates (see Pruyssers and Blais 2019). This skepticism is best represented by interviewee 132's following quote: "We need to get every party to include our talking points. We need to have a [more pluralistic] vision. The large parties are using us. Let's use them as well. Because they will keep using [our candidacies for their benefit]."

<sup>69</sup> There is a strain in the scholarship positing that legacy politicians behave differently from their non-legacy counterparts (Bragança, Ferraz and Rios 2015). Reasons for such distinctive behavior—especially among minority legacy politicians—can be manifold: these ties can expose aspirants to experiences of political socialization early on, the familiarity of a legacy surname can operate as a substitute for incumbency and facilitate a candidate's rapport with constituents and thus office attainment, etc. (Miguel, Marques and Machado 2015; see also Folke, Rickne and Smith 2021 and Schwindt-Bayer, Vallejo and Cantú 2022).

## *Succeed Stage Markers*

At the final stage of the QRS path, officially nominated candidates are put under voters' scrutiny. As in the other two stages, such scrutiny is considered with respect to barrier- and tactic-related markers, which are analyzed in tandem in some cases here. Following Table 3.3, I place interviewees' remarks about LGBTQ+ individuals' inability to hold office under an *unfit-to-lead* marker.<sup>70</sup> Some interviewees expressed that voters make assumptions about their values/opinions based on their LGBTQ+ self-identification, and I identify this type of statement with/under the *single-issue* marker (see Herrick and Thomas 1999).<sup>71</sup> To countervail such barriers, some interviewees hint at minimizing—generally selectively but, in a few cases, altogether—the relevance of LGBTQ+- or minority-specific issues in their platforms. Statements consistent with this tactic are tagged under the *mainstreaming* marker (Hertzog 1996).<sup>72</sup> With the *sellout* marker I capture interviewees' allusions to their peers' mainstreaming tactics as a barrier for LGBTQ+ representation, as they argue that such tactics involve free-riding and selling-out behavior (for an illuminating discussion on this concept, see White, Laird and Allen 2014: 785).<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> For example, interviewee 169 indicated, “Even if I were appraised as a leader, the transgender question would always take precedence over any degree that I would have accrued in my lifetime.”

<sup>71</sup> Interviewee 127 makes an interesting point about how geography conditions perceptions of single-issue candidacies: “There is a very young council-level candidate in my region, running under [a major left-of-center] banner, who is gay, pushes for LGBTQ+ policies, and does drag. He is a niche candidate because most people in my region deem him as too radical. But this is [small-town Brazil]. I believe that in a larger urban center his profile would be more electable.”

<sup>72</sup> Mainstreaming tactics are discussed by many interviewees, and the following interview excerpt demonstrates how challenging this can be: “I am also a gay candidate who endorses LGBTQ+ policy interests. But I need to talk to wider audiences, right? Otherwise, I cannot get a foothold to advance LGBTQ+ policies. I have been involved in LGBTQ+ activism for the past 11 years, but I need people to vote for me, even people who do not agree with advancing LGBTQ+ policies. It matters to me that voters do not perceive me as somebody who only represents LGBTQ+ individuals. I also care for other policy issues in my city.” (Interviewee 158).

<sup>73</sup> The reasoning behind this barrier is echoed in Wineinger (2021). Interviewee 161 provides a succinct evaluation of a sellout: “I do not think a LGBTQ+ [sellout] candidate is beneficial for [LGBTQ+ politics]. A sellout is not advancing

Category	Thematic Markers	Thematic Patterns
Barriers	Unfit-to-lead	<i>Being questioned about leadership skills by electorate</i>
	Single-issue	<i>Being questioned about policy-handling skills by electorate</i>
	Religious Backlash	<i>Being questioned about political skills by faithful electorate</i>
	Movement Gatekeeping	<i>Being questioned about the ability to represent LGBTQ+ interests by advocacy groups</i>
	Sell-out	<i>Deviating from advocacy-group norms of partisan allegiance</i>
Barrier-Overcoming Tactics	Counter-Movement Politics	<i>Criticizing CSOs for their candidate-entry prerogatives.</i>
	Mainstreaming	<i>Playing down LGBTQ+ or minority-specific policy issues</i>
	Ingroup Endorsement	<i>Being endorsed by CSOs</i>
	Religious Face-Saving	<i>Connecting with voters through religious socialization</i>

Table 3.3: Succeed-Stage Markers

Another source of cues for voters about LGBTQ+ candidates is whether they are ideologically aligned with LGBTQ+ organized interests in civil society (CSOs). Brazil’s LGBTQ+ CSOs have been proactive to field candidacies in parties across “a broader political spectrum” (De la Dehesa 2010: 103; Câmara 2018; Marsiaj 2010). However, left-of-center parties—spearheaded by the Workers’ Party—have been more adept at fielding movement-endorsed LGBTQ+ candidates (Encarnación 2016; Santos 2016). Interviewees are not unaware of this affinity between LGBTQ+ CSOs and leftist parties. When stated as a barrier, the *movement-gatekeeping* marker subsumes claims that LGBTQ+ CSOs deny their endorsements to candidates whose electoral platforms are not in keeping with LGBTQ+ norms of partisan allegiance. Otherwise, those statements in which interviewees imply that this affinity benefits

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our policy interests. It is at best a bittersweet candidacy. Despite being openly gay, this person is not one of us, standing side by side in our struggle, in our emancipation.”

them are grouped into the *ingroup-endorsement* marker. Additionally, some interviewees argue that lacking this endorsement is used to legitimize their opposition to the sway LGBTQ+ CSOs have over LGBTQ+ candidate entry – and these statements fall under the *counter-movement* marker.<sup>74</sup>

Because of the relatively loose relevance of party brands in Brazil, religious identity gains traction as a political cue among voters (Boas and Smith 2019; Layton et al. 2021). Moreover, since voters are likely to discuss politics in religious meetings, clergy commentary may share with congregants their beliefs about LGBTQ+ candidates (Smith and Boas 2014; Smith 2017; Smith 2019). Hence, religious cues can be key in local elections and there is ample evidence that religious voters can also pick up these cues (Boas 2014; Beyerlein and Klocek 2020; Franks and Scherr 2014; see also Madrid et al. 2022). Interviewees share depictions of their relatively conflictive rapport with local clergy, highlighting how religious discourse tends to be used against LGBTQ+ political representation. Thus, I bracket them under the *religious backlash* marker.<sup>75</sup> Religion is not perceived, however, as an exclusive realm of anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, especially in *hinterland* regions.<sup>76</sup> Various interviewees emphasize that their faith has

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<sup>74</sup> Interviewee 173's views on dominant LGBTQ+ politics embody the counter-movement pattern: "The [LGBTQ+ organizations] divide people and weaken [LGBTQ+] people's consciousness and critical-thinking skills, leaving them more susceptible to ideologies and utopian ideas." This interviewee also builds on homonationalist ideas of "patriotism and love for your own country" and pushes for homegrown organizations "inspired by Log Cabin Republicans or Gays for Trump" in Brazil. Other interviewees (124 and 135) contribute to the counter-movement pattern by expressing their differences with prominent LGBTQ+ candidates or hinting at a rural-urban gap. For a recap on the definition of homonationalism, see Puar (2013).

<sup>75</sup> The religious backlash marker can be exemplified through the following report by Interviewee 127: "I was once accosted by a politician, and he told me [that] we should play up a squabble. He justified it as a win-win situation for both of us. He said that our constituents would like us better for challenging each other. He insisted that it was imperative for him to confront me because his constituents would reward him, as a religious politician, for stepping up against an openly gay politician such as myself."

<sup>76</sup> Interviewee 108 synthesizes this idea by stating that "we need to debunk that image of LGBTQ+ individuals as narrow-minded activists who only demand rights for themselves and are on the prowl for conservatives, burning down churches, masturbating with crucifixes. We need to work against that narrative."

enabled them to connect with religious voters<sup>77</sup>—even prejudiced ones.<sup>78</sup> I label such statements with the *religious face-saving* marker. Moreover, several interviewees’ reports reinforce the centrality of worship congregations in local dissemination of electoral information (see Smith 2017).<sup>79</sup>

### *Aggregated and Intersectional Analysis of Barriers and Tactics*

Taking stock of the previous section, I analyze here barrier- and tactic-related markers at the aggregated level. In addition, I incorporate the distinction between internal and external barriers anticipated in the methodological framework. First, I explore how balanced is the input of LGBTQ+ interviewees writ large between these both baskets of markers. I find that my classification of markers along these two marker categories leads to a clear overall pattern: interviewees attach more relevance to tactics involving external sources to overcome barriers, but barriers themselves tend to be internal rather than external. With an intersectional lens, I dissect next the barrier and tactic markers data along some identity cleavages. These data dissections based on intersecting identities might help to detect how the balance of internal and external factors behaves along gender, race, and transgender/non-transgender status within the sample. The transcripts point to no gender differences among LGBTQ+ individuals in terms of

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<sup>77</sup> Multiple accounts point to the utility of a religious identity heuristic for LGBTQ+ politicians. For instance, Interviewee 131 discusses how “being raised Catholic has enabled [them] to be assimilated by voters in [their] city.” Another interviewee (106) implies that politics relies on religion, because “religious people have been supportive [of their candidacy] and it is [their] duty to validate constituents’ faith.” They continue, “In times of despair, it is religion, regardless of denominational differences, [and not politics], that provides solace to them.”

<sup>78</sup> A few interviewees also seek to court other denominations, especially Evangelical ones: “I am excited to hand out my freshly printed campaign flyers at Evangelical churches in my neighborhood. I am Catholic, but Evangelical voters—especially Pentecostals—are more attuned to my [socially conservative] ideas” (122).

<sup>79</sup> Small-town LGBTQ+ politicians frequently brand themselves publicly as devotees of their municipalities’ patron saints: “It has helped me electorally to attend mass. [...] People notice it because I do not just attend mass during the campaign trail, as most politicians tend to do. And I am attending my town’s patron saint festival tomorrow, as I always do” (110). Likewise, another interviewee (135) reports, “The [Catholic] Church wants politicians to be present in patron saint festivals. [And being present] helped me to offset the influence of Evangelicals in elections as well.”



perceived barriers or tactics: the general pattern holds. Moreover, I find that there are suggestive differences in terms of race. Lastly, unlike LGBs, transgender candidates as a group appear to perceive that encouragement from parties and voters is comparatively lacking. In comparison to LGBs, the interview transcripts may indicate that transgender candidates are pushed to further develop their internal sense of self-efficacy in order to navigate the candidate entry process.

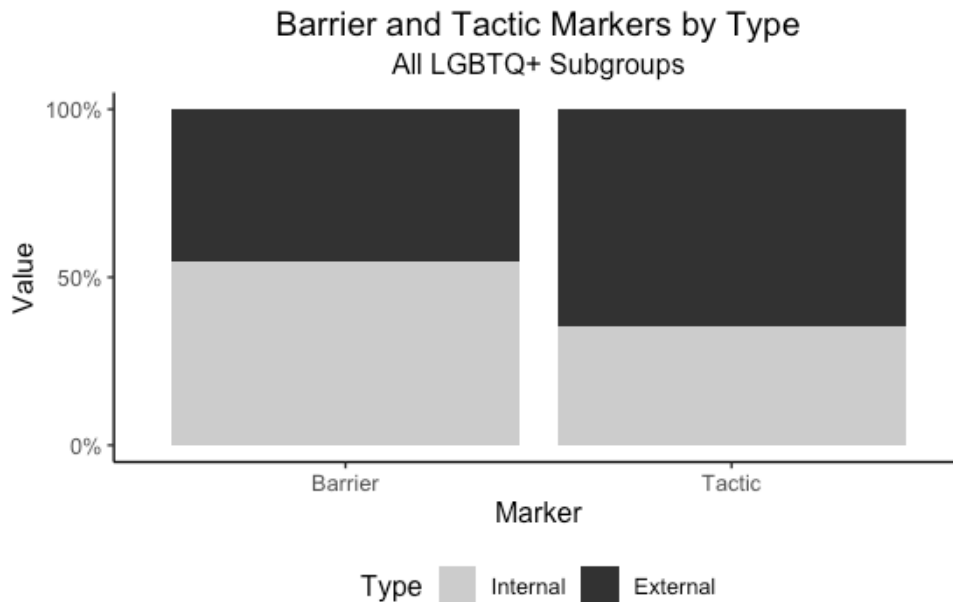
Figure 3.2 quantifies the markers culled from transcribed responses of LGBTQ+ interviewees into barriers and tactics, while also stacking them according to whether they are internal or external in their perceived source- that is, whether these markers are formulated as mainly concerning LGBTQ+ candidates' self-presentation and situation (either from themselves or others) or instead depending on the attitudes and choices made by party gatekeepers and voters. At first glance, Figure 3.2's left column conveys that interviewees appear to evenly balance the relevance they give along the QRS path to internal and external barriers, arising both from perceived self-judgments and perceived third-party judgments. Upon closer inspection, the discussion of barriers puts more weight on an introspective examination of capabilities, vocation, and other self-focused and situational features.<sup>80</sup> Notably, the fact that personal circumspection is likely the realm in which interviewees tend to think about barriers bears similarity to the reserved atmosphere in which Shames (2015: 553) describes how would-be candidates are exposed to self-deterrent pressures. While *silent*, a private frame of

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<sup>80</sup> Here I would like to call attention to the possibility that the distinction between internal and external barriers may be less clear to formulate in interview data from office-seeking aspirants with nascent ambition. Because I only interviewed people who held expressive ambition, I think that this distinction about the barriers' source works. Nascent ambitious aspirants may deter their office-seeking behavior on the basis of perceived extrinsic barriers (e.g., not being able to convince party authorities of their electability or not being accepted by fellow congregants as a candidate of faith), and yet they may nevertheless be processed as inherent to them instead of regarding them as belonging to other third-party actors.

consciousness offers more leeway for a profound reckoning of pros and cons to unfold- which is mostly unbeknownst to party gatekeepers and voters (and researchers) (Shames 2017).<sup>81</sup> If this tilt towards internal barriers meaningfully captures the thought processes of would-be candidates' stalled ambitions, it then assuages a sampling limitation to which I have already alluded but is worth reiterating: the sample only includes candidates who went on to run for office because I screened out would-be candidates who failed to overcome qualify-stage barriers.

Figure 3.2: Internal and External Barriers and Tactics (All Interviewees)



And yet, once candidates move on to discuss tactics to overcome these barriers, the transcribed statements foreground a different balance, emphasizing external over internal tactics. As the right bar in Figure 3.2 attests, the prospect of external support weighs up critically in interviewees' verbal treatment of tactics. In other words, the encouragement from

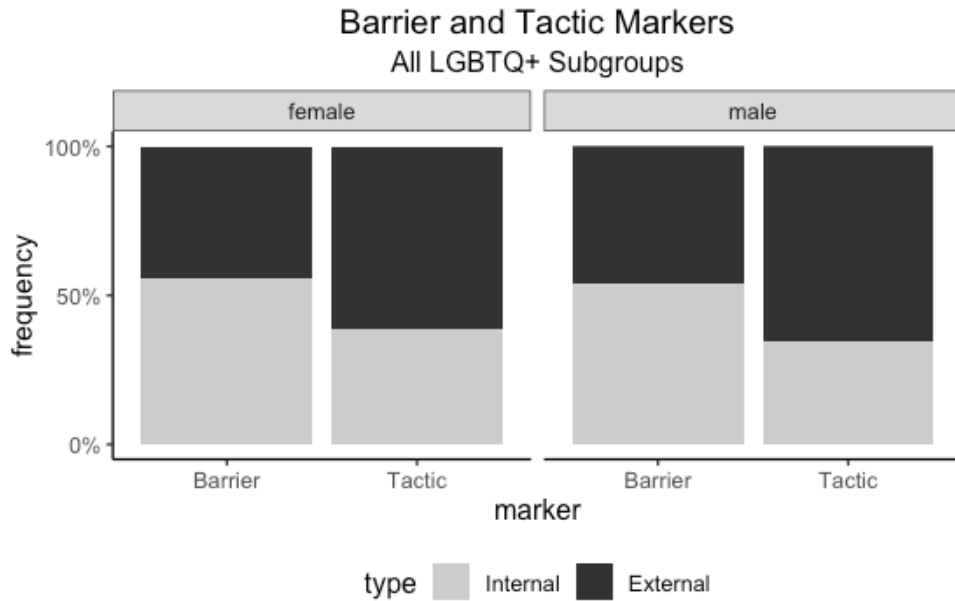
<sup>81</sup> In Shames' research (2015, 2017), candidate deterrence effects are gendered, even among minority noncandidates' silence—with cisgender women of color bearing the brunt of such a rational decision in her analysis.

parties, voters and others in civil society has more traction in their decision to lean into politics than their discouragement. To the extent that “more than an absence of impediments is required,” it becomes evident that encouragement from others has more traction in their considerations about the candidacy’s materialization than any type of discouragement. In other words, Figure 3.2 suggests that interviewees tend to place the tactical considerations to attain office away from the self-starter or the ambitious politician, for which barriers are surmountable by theoretical definition. Rather, it brings them closer to the relationally embedded decision model, in which ambition is bound to the prospect of party’s or electorate’s support for a candidacy (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013: 42-45).

Neither the barrier- nor the tactic-related trends observed in Figure 3.3 appear to split along gender lines. This may be an indication that among LGBTQ+ candidates gendered expectations differ from those among cis-straight candidates. This suggests that the LGBTQ+ candidate entry may call into question the travelling capacity of the conformity between gender and political engagement registered in cis-straight-majority samples and focus more on gendered personalities beyond biological sex and even gender identity (see McDermott 2016: 160). Given the sample’s larger proportion of self-identified men interviewees, an alternative interpretation for the gender-convergence in both marker types is that LGBTQ+ men are vocal about barriers and tactics that are likely relatable to LGBTQ+ persons who possess observable feminine personality traits. Moreover, there is always a possibility that interviewees do not necessarily speak for every member of the real-world pool of politically ambitious female-identifying LGBTQ+ individuals - that is, interviewees in my sample may be more experienced and calloused than non-experienced LGBTQ+ individuals and minimize apprehension towards

the “ethos of masculinity” (Fox and Lawless 2010: 167), hence being less bothered by internal barriers.

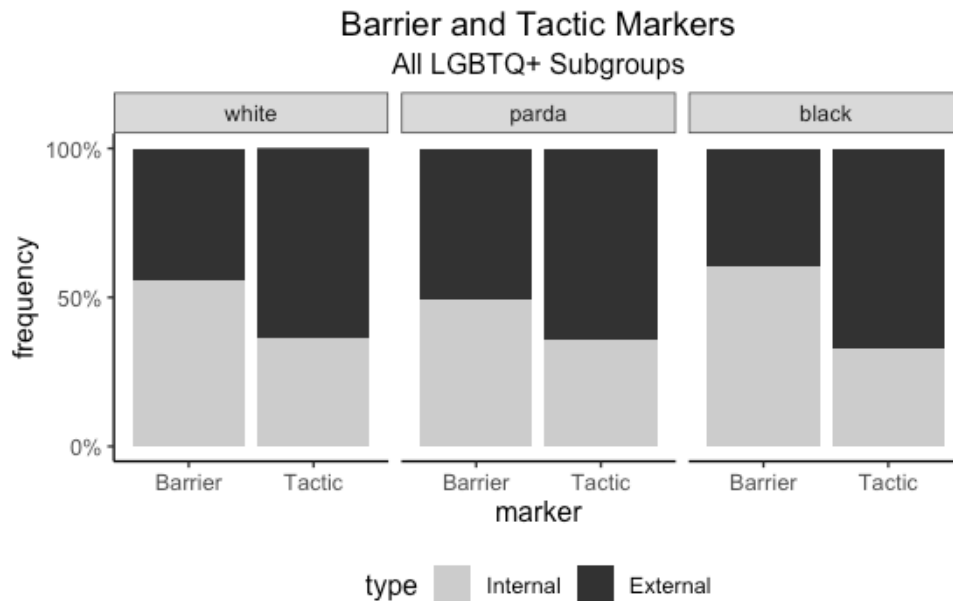
Figure 3.3: Internal and External Barriers and Tactics (By Gender)



Although the gap between barriers and tactics persists across ethnoracial categories in Figure 3.4, the severity of the gap changes. In particular, the intersection of blackness and LGBTQ+ identity produces the widest gap between markers. Upon closer inspection, self-identified race apparently affects how LGBTQ+ interviewees take internal barriers into account. The relatively larger share of internal barriers underlying how black interviewees discuss their candidate entry experiences is worthy of consideration since Brazil’s racial boundaries are relatively fluid and not strongly politicized (see De Micheli 2021). And this larger share of perceived internal barriers may complement a lack of evidence of electoral discrimination towards black candidates (Bueno and Dunning 2017). This is, however, a sample of LGBTQ+ candidates and political aspirants, and they might be more aware of how darker skin color can turn them into targets of discrimination (Layton and Smith 2017). Future work should

investigate the mechanisms that racialize LGBTQ+ individuals' candidacy experience. For example, the intersection of phenotypical features and LGBTQ+ identity among self-identified Black LGBTQ+ candidates may lead them to perceive internal barriers more readily than those who opt into a different racial self-categorization (see Johnson 2019).

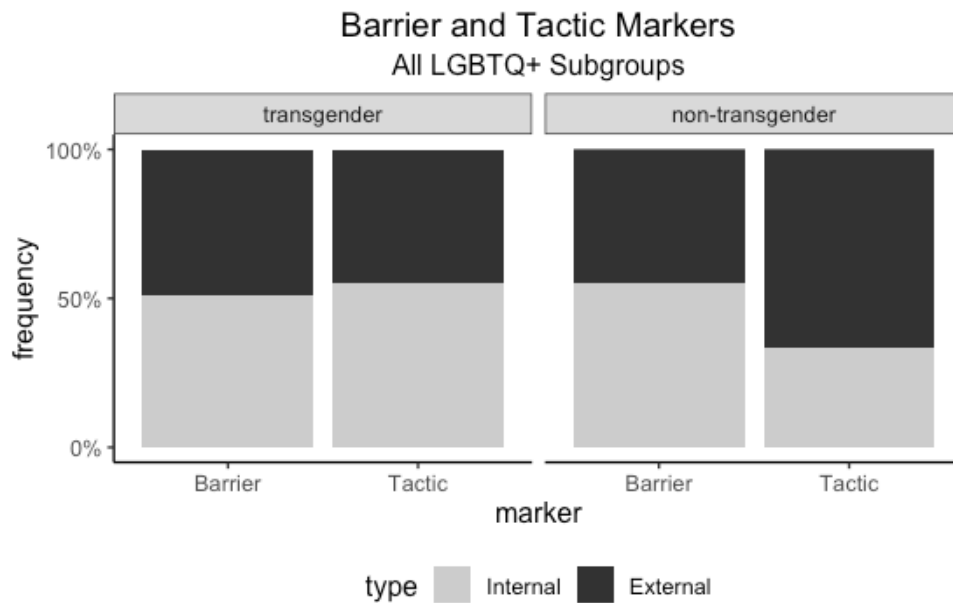
Figure 3.4: Internal and External Barriers and Tactics (By Ethnoracial Groups)



In line with scholarly work focused on transgender candidates' experience in the U.S., there are signs of marginalization of transgender interviewees when we compare their tactic-related markers with those of their non-transgender counterparts. The share of internal tactics reported by transgender interviewees in Figure 3.5 appears to outpace the internal-tactics share found among non-transgender interviewees in the sample. Transgender candidates in the sample perceive that they are left to their own devices rather than relying entirely on parties and other organizations. While transgender interviewees represent only slightly more than 10% of the sample, it appears to be enough to portray their rapport with the local party recruitment environment, raising issues about transgender bias on behalf of party gatekeepers. One potential

reason for the predominance of such statements is that there is a noticeable transgender sorting into right-of-center parties, which may be more likely to pay lip service to the commitment of resources and support during the campaign trail. As interviewee 117 argues, “transgender candidates stand in politics for themselves, despite being tokenized by parties. I believe that their thicker skin made them wiser than other LGBTQ+ individuals. I see how they are organizing themselves to rally behind key candidacies [of their own].”

Figure 3.5: Internal and External Barriers and Tactics (Transgender/non-Transgender)



**Discussion. Powerlessness, Failing Representation of LGBTQ+ Interests, and Respectability in Brazil**

Before concluding, it is important to address the three issues—i.e., powerlessness, limited brokerage, and respectability politics—that have dominated theorizing around LGBTQ+ politics in more established democracies and have theoretically informed this study's development of barriers and tactics within the self-reports of LGBTQ+ candidates in municipal

Brazil. One of the most fascinating findings from the transcripts' analysis is the documentation of an elusive and uneven sense of pan-LGBTQ+ political solidarity among LGBTQ+ interviewees in the Brazilian context. "São Paulo's LGBTQ+ parade is the largest of its kind worldwide. There are at least three million attendees. But no [LGBTQ+] representative elected" lamented interviewee (159). As interviewee 114 reflects, the peculiarity of LGBTQ+ individuals as a social group is precisely that there is heterogeneity not just across its letters, "but also within each of them, and in the additional ones that nowadays are [in different versions of] the acronym". This perceived letter-based splintering among LGBTQ+ individuals contrasts with the comparatively more cohesive group identification with which other minority social groups -such as Black Americans and women- have fomented political loyalty.<sup>82</sup> In other words, several LGBTQ+ individuals in elected politics perceive ordinary LGBTQ+ individuals to possess varying degrees of group-based attachment, to such an extent that willingness to vote for another LGBTQ+ candidate -in the same way as electoral homophily works among members of others groups such as Evangelicals (Boas 2021)- is perceived as less likely.

Expectations about effective descriptive representation among interviewees appear to be heterogeneous. Interviewee 158 commented that "within the [LGBTQ+] spectrum, there are candidates who only talk about the cause. Others talk about it and other issues as well. Some choose not to talk about it. And yet, there are others who talk against it." While describing this variety of profiles as "positive," he also cautioned that lack of "commitment with the cause" should prevent any candidate from self-presenting as LGBTQ+. Taking issue with this definition, interviewee 180 told me that "there are [queer people] in every party. [...] This is an

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<sup>82</sup> This is not to say that there is no in-group variation or heterogeneity-related barriers to political loyalty within these groups (e.g., Chong and Kim 2006, Cohen 1999).

important realization for the movement.” Despite being affiliated with different parties, both are running under a left-of-center banner for a city council seat in Brazil’s Northeast region.<sup>83</sup> To be clear, several interviewees acknowledge the situation and assert more work is needed to build a narrative that promotes political cohesion among LGBTQ+ candidates.<sup>84</sup> One of the pioneers of the LGBTQ+ movement in Brazil -included in my sample- even disclosed that disillusion with parties in general is creating momentum for a partisan organization exclusively representing LGBTQ+ interests (Interviewee 161).

Under these circumstances, it appears that the interviewees in my sample can relate to the experiences that led scholars in more established democracies to theorize about the difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in electoral politics. Equally important, however, is to highlight how relatable the typology I developed around barrier-overcoming tactics may comparatively be to theorizing about LGBTQ+ individuals’ electoral politics outside Brazil. While not all the tactic-related markers I pulled from the interview transcripts necessarily abide by the concept of respectability politics, my interviews suggest that many tactics are nevertheless in different—even divergent—ways bundled to it. That is, my interviewees choose between tactics that are either reliant on respectability politics or in opposition to them. Across the interview transcripts, the attractiveness of respectability politics varies considerably, but different conceptions are attached to the economic, political, or partisan environment in which interviewees experience electoral politics. In contrast to the U.S. experience, these specific

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<sup>83</sup> As I have already explained, I avoid using interviewees’ identifying information, although the regional reference in this case is true.

<sup>84</sup> It appears tempting to subsume the general notion of group solidarity presented here into the theory surrounding the concept of linked fate (Dawson 1994). However, as Rogers and Kim (2021) accurately warn, this micro-level concept has been used in several cases with inattentiveness to the original theoretical framework, which also involved meso-level group practices and elite-level agency. Therefore, while I build on aspects of this theory, I refrain from using this concept here.



selection of interviews also point to the relevance of religion for LGBTQ+ individuals who have faith-related tactics available to them. Questions about the effectiveness of pursuing respectability politics may be better left to deductive research. That said, it merits noting that the bulk of markers developed from the analysis of these LGBTQ+ candidates as a group are barrier-overcoming tactics, not barriers. Such prevalence of tactical discussion among interviewees may point to a necessary shift from a focus on barriers in the large-scale empirical comparative assessments of the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process.

### **Concluding Remarks**

As a non-probability sample, my sample of interviews is, admittedly, vulnerable to external and internal validity challenges (Lynch 2013)—and that is by design. I have purposefully oversampled openly gay candidates -the only sexual-minority identity included in the experimental design of another chapter- Hence, I am biasing my exploration of electoral penalty mechanisms in theoretically relevant interviews within this subgroup. Relatedly, I have also recruited theoretically relevant interviewees who may comparatively constitute outliers in the general population of LGBTQ+ candidates—such as religious or conservative LGBTQ+ individuals (Bleich and Pekkanen 2013: 87). Likewise, despite potentially tainting my data with confirmation bias, the recruitment of subjects from within a cluster of different sets of hard-to-reach individuals in rural areas and beyond Brazil’s more cosmopolitan urban centers—a key requirement for this study—depended to a great extent on my ability to obtain chain-referred contacts. Therefore, the takeaways I share in the previous section are suggestive of trends in Brazil’s LGBTQ+ candidate behavior and may serve to formulate generalizable claims in later work. Although the sample was not designed to be representative of the general population of

LGBTQ+ candidates, these findings may still offer comparative insight into LGBTQ+ populations where politically ambitious individuals experiencing intersecting identities and potentially identity-based cross-pressures that, quite bluntly, more conventional methods have not made available.

My sampling decisions also raise the question of the generalizability of my takeaways to the broader population of LGBTQ+ individuals who have not yet expressed ambition to run. As I indicated earlier in this chapter, a decisive factor in my sample is that interviewees hold an expressive ambition as an attribute. Having said that, the catalogue of barriers emerging from the qualified stage can be the most relatable to LGBTQ+ individuals with nascent ambition in comparison to the barriers arising in subsequent stages in the candidate entry process. But perhaps the larger question pertains to the role of ambition in motivating these candidates to devise barrier-overcoming tactics. As recent work unpacking ambition as a multidimensional concept suggests, ambition can be perceived in diverging ways by partisan and ideological stakeholders in the candidate entry process (Saha and Weeks 2022). Explaining how political ambition develops and unfolds along the QRS path, and more specifically, how LGBTQ+ candidates manifest it in resorting to barrier-overcoming tactics, are two goals beyond the scope of this chapter, but worth exploring in future elite experiments with wider samples of LGBTQ+ candidates. To my knowledge, this is the first theory-generating attempt at using first-person accounts to classify barrier-overcoming tactics. Therefore, my sample includes theorizing around barrier-overcoming tactics that builds upon the input from subgroups of cross-pressured LGBTQ+ interviewees. Individuals who did not move from the initial stage in the QRS path may relate to outlier interviewees who find themselves feeling the tension of holding conflicting identities.

This chapter began with the intention to formulate a typological classification of barriers and barrier-overcoming tactics through the lived experience of candidates who have physically and mentally embodied the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process in Brazil. I developed a grounded-theory research project by way of collecting interview data, analyzing it with qualitative coding techniques and synthesizing it by way of a novel classification scheme using the QRS path (Carnes 2018; see Carnes and Lupu forthcoming). The first finding from this chapter is that, while barriers emerging from interviewees' responses resemble those documented by scholars for other groups of non-traditional candidates, other barriers entail more specifically the LGBTQ+ electoral experience. Second, barrier-overcoming tactics are more prevalent in interviewees' reports than barriers themselves, Third, building on an intersectional analysis of the transcripts, I find that gender does not matter among LGBTQ+ individuals in terms of perceived barriers or tactics- but race appears to do, with slightly more emphasis on internal barriers. Moreover, interviewees' transgender-identity status has apparently an impact: transgender candidates report relying more on their internal sense of self-efficacy relative to their LGB counterparts. Taken together, these findings underline the heterogeneity of LGBTQ+ candidates and their experiences running for office.

## Chapter 4: Party Gatekeeping and Support for LGBTQ+ Candidates: The Allocation of Ballot Numbers in Brazil

LGBTQ+ representation is improving across the democratic world. But candidate entry into public office continues to rely on the support of cisgender, straight—and oftentimes light-skinned and affluent—men who typically predominate in politics (Sherrill 1996). Brazil is a case in point: the enduring overrepresentation of male, cis-straight and light-skinned officeholders has made the country a straggler in terms of legislative diversity in the Americas (Batista Pereira 2022; see also Cervi and Borba 2019). Interestingly, the candidate receiving the most nationwide votes in Brazil's 2020 local elections was a black transgender woman, Erika Hilton.<sup>85</sup> And yet, Hilton's remarkable win contrasts with many more LGBTQ+s' failure to attain office (Santos 2016). If LGBTQ+ officeholders were to numerically mirror their share in the general population, there would be at least 10 times more LGBTQ+ officeholders in office.<sup>86</sup> Political scientists argue success in attaining office may be a function of many factors, such as institutional devices (e.g., quotas, campaign reforms) or political socialization (e.g., career choices, areas of expertise). But one stands out prominently in the literature: party support ahead of the general election. This paper considers that factor and asks to what extent are parties failing to even the playing field in support of LGBTQ+ candidacies.

To date, few comparative studies have directly assessed how party gatekeeping—i.e., controlling access to elected positions of political power— affects LGBTQ+ candidate support in practice. This is understandable: party gatekeepers allocate campaign resources in procedures that remain largely opaque to political scientists (Gulzar, Hai and Paudel 2021). Party support for

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<sup>85</sup> Erika Hilton became the first black transgender councilor in São Paulo- Brazil's largest municipal district.

<sup>86</sup> The 2019 PNS study estimates 2% of the Brazilian population are self-identified LGBTQ+s (IBGE 2022). A more recent survey that claims to be nationally representative places the estimate of self-identified LGBTQ+ Brazilians at a higher percentage: 9%. See <https://www.pesquisadoorgulho.com.br/>

non-traditional candidates' campaigns can mean different things across countries. Where party elites do not directly control campaigning resources—as in the U.S.—there are more opportunities to account for how party elites support campaigning efforts because their influence is crucial to candidates' overcoming obstacles in logistics, legal assessment, fundraising, coordination of party personnel and endorsement of media outlets and prominent party figures, all of which are more open to public view (e.g., Hernnson 2009; Krebs 1998; Nyhan and Montgomery 2015). Where party elites administer campaign resources, however, they make these decisions in a centralized manner, shielded from public view. To be sure, parties can show outright support for non-traditional candidates by organizing committees specific to providing them mentoring and training resources—but even in an established democracy like Germany, party commitment to such resources may vary and should not be taken for granted (Ruf 2021: 80). In younger democracies, however, party-support decisions—such as dictating which candidate stands closest to prominent figures in a publicity photograph, offering appointed positions, or defraying campaign costs (e.g., posters, flyers, t-shirts)—are usually made behind closed doors (Arriola et al. 2022: 510; Desposato 2001: 185). In this context, dissecting whether party support does, in fact, tilt the playing field against non-traditional candidates such as LGBTQ+ candidates may seem like a burdensome task.

Brazil provides a useful case for assessing the presence of party-gatekeeping behavior around LGBTQ+ candidacies—even when party-support decisions are largely hidden from public view—due to the presence of ballot codes. Ballot codes are one dimension of non-monetary party support that is relevant within Brazil's highly-personalistic campaigning environment (Samuels 2002). Candidates promote their codes in campaign jingles and display them on *santinhos*—i.e., small handouts printed by the millions and handed over to voters in each electoral cycle (Smith

2016: 411). On election day, voters cast a vote by entering their preferred candidate's ballot code digit by digit via a numerical keyboard on the voting machine (Zucco and Nicolau 2016: 12).<sup>87</sup> Figure 4.1's left pane shows how a ballot is activated on the screen, while on the right pane there is a real-world image of a voting machine, used in all types of elections.<sup>88</sup> While candidates' ballot codes in Brazil's open-list, proportional representation (OLPR) system are unranked, the literature has offered evidence that easy-to-memorize numbers give candidates an edge in electoral competitions (Cunha Silva 2022).<sup>89</sup> Needless to say, party elites are likely aware of the premium effect of such ballot codes (Bueno and Dunning 2017: 352-4). Political commentary has discussed similar perceptions in the public (see D'Agostino 2012).

Figure 4.1: Depiction of Voting Machine and Ballot Display on the Machine's Screen



To investigate party-gatekeeping choices respecting LGBTQ+ candidates in Brazil, I leverage variation in the mnemonic quality of electoral codes via the "good-number" scoring index (Bueno and Dunning 2017). This index provides an efficient way to assess whether party gatekeepers allocate ballot codes to minority candidates in a manner consistent with bias. I draw

<sup>87</sup> Voters have also the option to vote for parties. They only need to enter the two-digit party code when they cast a vote for the party label. Most voters eschew voting for parties though.

<sup>88</sup> These images are screenshots taken from two videos uploaded in Brazil's YouTube official account. The image on the left pane does not correspond to a council-member ballot. Councilmembers' ballot codes are five-digit long. Thus, voters would need to press buttons in the keyboard five instead of four times to activate their preferred candidate's ballot.

<sup>89</sup> Candidates are likely aware of the fact some electoral codes can be catchier than others (Cunow et al. 2021: 10).

on past research and test whether a candidate's being openly LGBTQ+ shapes party gatekeepers' choices (Cunha Silva 2022; Janusz and Sells 2021; Janusz 2021; Janusz, Barreiro and Cintron 2022). Municipal Brazil offers a good vantage point to explore bias in the assignment of ballot codes to openly LGBTQ+ candidates. Local elections tend to unfold in low-information electoral playing fields, which heightens the relevance of ballot codes in all things campaigning but especially for LGBTQ+ candidates who scholars have shown to be at a potential disadvantage in low-information settings (see Smith and Boas 2015).

I demonstrate in this paper that a candidate's LGBTQ+ identity leads on average to the assignment of slightly lower-quality electoral codes. Unpacking the LGBTQ+ collective into subgroup identities leads to the two primary contributions of this article. First, within the LGBTQ+ collective, transgender candidates are on average allocated the lowest-quality ballot codes. Second, a gendered logic is pervasive in how the quality of ballot codes varies among LGBTQ+ candidates, emulating variation observable among cis-straight counterparts: LGBTQ+ men are granted better-quality ballot codes than LGBTQ+ women. I also undertake an analysis of intersectional identities, in which I find that married rather than single LGBTQ+ candidates are more likely to receive support from party elites via the assignment of better-quality ballot codes. Moreover, I put the former finding into dialogue with interviews I conducted with transgender candidates. Their testimonies back up the notion that oftentimes party elites fail to adequately provide campaigning resources and leave them to their own devices. Complementing the main contributions, I also find that cisgender men candidates are less likely to compete with ballot codes ending in number 24, culturally associated with passive homosexual behavior.

In the remainder of this paper, I provide a theoretical backdrop and hypotheses that guide the analysis. Next, I offer reasons for selecting Brazil as an empirical setting and describe the

general dataset. I also explain how candidates' LGBTQ+ identities were collected, verified, and merged into the dataset. I use an OLS regression framework with party-code fixed effects to arrive at findings, which I also consider via an intersectional lens.

### **Party-Gatekeeping Behavior and Support for LGBTQ+ Candidates**

In the LGBTQ+ descriptive representation and candidate entry literature, anti-LGBTQ+ bias emanating from the public predominates, with little attention paid to party elites.<sup>90</sup> To my knowledge no studies have explored party-gatekeeping behavior towards LGBTQ+ candidates. Yet insights from extant scholarship support an intuition that party elites differ both among themselves and from voters in how strongly they support LGBTQ+ candidates. A large body of literature reveal potential upper-status, male-gender or even light-skin bias in how party-gatekeeping behavior impacts the candidate entry process (Carnes 2018; Cheng and Tavits 2011; Crowder-Meyer 2013; Doherty, Dowling and Miller 2019; Ruf 2021). Others note that party gatekeepers fall back on non-partisan homophily cues to allocate resources in this process (e.g., Rehmert 2020)—and minorities likely perceive them as doing so (Butler and Preece 2016). Scholars also document how party gatekeepers tend to vary in their willingness to trailblaze minority candidacies (e.g., Crowder-Meyer and Cooperman 2019; Karpowitz, Monson, and Preece 2017).

There are several possible explanations why the existence of anti-LGBTQ+ bias in the interplay between party elites and voters may lead to the paucity of support for LGBTQ+ candidates. Party gatekeepers can presumably become acquainted with specific LGBTQ+

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<sup>90</sup> I define party gatekeepers as mainly referring to local party chairs. However, I acknowledge that there are other gatekeepers than local party chairs—either from within or beyond the party at different levels of government—can take part in the process.



candidates and revise their stereotypical notions (see Doherty, Dowling and Miller 2019: 1285; see also Tadlock et al. 2017). Like voters, however, party gatekeepers can employ a candidates' LGBTQ+ identity as a shortcut when evaluating candidates' ideology, policy interests and expertise, or competence (Doan and Haider-Markel 2010; Jones and Brewer 2019). If party elites and voters are alike in their prejudiced notions, they lack incentives to alter likely voters' perceptions of LGBTQ+ candidates (e.g., Mason and Wronski 2018). Party gatekeepers supportive of LGBTQ+ candidates may still withhold support from them if widespread bias in public opinion is assumed. Such behavior would be consistent with what Bateson (2020) calls "strategic discrimination." Thus, party gatekeepers may rationalize lack of support with concerns about LGBTQ+ candidates' viability among the public (see Herrick and Thomas 2002: 111). Alternatively, party gatekeepers may simply be out of touch and unable to update their thinking (Bateson 2020: 1670). That is, gatekeepers may unknowingly sustain discriminatory outcomes, stubbornly persisting in their refusal to support LGBTQ+ candidates even in the face of countervailing information about public opinion (Sheffer et al. 2018; see also Broockman et al. 2021; cf. Pereira 2021).

Scholars document choices LGBTQ+ candidates make that may reveal their perceptions of party gatekeepers' preferences regarding LGBTQ+ candidates. For example, candidates in the U.S. may self-select into more favorable districts or not fully disclose their LGBTQ+ identity (e.g., Golebiowska 2002; Haider-Markel 2010; Loepf and Redman 2020; Merolla, Schroedel, and Waller 2009; Kluttz 2014).<sup>91</sup> Recent work on group constituency formation highlights the

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<sup>91</sup> In general, this anticipation in LGBTQ+ candidate behavior stands in contrast with the trajectory of studies on other social groups (e.g., Carnes and Lupu 2016). For LGBTQ+ candidates, while experimental studies with eligible voters find strong penalization, observational studies seem more likely to find no evidence of electoral penalty (see Magni and Reynolds 2018).

gatekeeping role of party elites not only in shaping the legitimization of LGBTQ+s as a political group, but also in limiting the scope of visibility across LGBTQ+ subgroups and political discourse strategies (Hindman 2019; Proctor 2019; see also Cohen 1996). Insights from intersectional work also suggest candidates situated in multiple marginalized social groups face specific outness and visibility tribulations from party gatekeepers (Perry and Manley 2017). Party gatekeepers may create even greater tension for cross-pressured LGBTQ+ candidates as well (McCabe 2017)—that is, for those whose partisan or ideological identification are not in line with the predominant partisan or ideological alignment of the LGBTQ+ community (e.g., Burge 2020; Cravens 2020).

In recruiting and nominating LGBTQ+ candidates, party gatekeepers inevitably make self-interested decisions about whom to support—and thus let in bias, regardless of whether it originates with themselves or others. In this theoretical backdrop, I have so far not adjudicated between voters and parties regarding the source of anti-LGBTQ+ bias; rather, I have built on the scholarship centered on party-gatekeeping behavior to account for pathways in which bias creeps into the candidate entry process. In this section I have discussed anti-LGBTQ+ bias across the board. As anticipated in this section, party gatekeepers may be sensitive to LGBTQ+-subgroup identity cueing, leading to LGBTQ+ candidates not being subject to the same expressions of bias (Magni and Reynolds 2021: 1200-1202). If such variation of bias were to exist among party gatekeepers, it would provide additional insight into how party-gatekeeping behavior conditions LGBTQ+ candidates to experience the candidate entry pipeline in a compartmentalized rather than in a commonly shared way. In the next section, I provide theoretical implications of unpacking anti-LGBTQ+ bias by subgroup identities.

## **Party-Gatekeeping Behavior and the Unpacking of LGBTQ+ Identity**

Before unpacking, a recapitulation of why party gatekeepers may not make distinctions in support among LGBTQ+ candidates is in order. Party gatekeepers may avoid grappling with differences across LGBTQ+ subgroup identities because they behave as cognitive misers (e.g., Miler 2009). Moreover, organized pressure from and strategic negotiations with LGBTQ+ leaders may have instilled an umbrella-like “concept of gender nonconformity” into party gatekeepers’ minds (Taylor et al. 2018: 296). Mainstream narratives promoting the idea of innate LGBTQ+ identities could also contribute to this perception (Wuest 2019). These advocacy efforts may have successfully consolidated diverse interests and expressions into a politically effective, superordinate LGBTQ+ identity (Murib 2017; Taylor et al. 2018: 296-297). Party gatekeepers may also perceive LGBTQ+s as a distinct social group due to their shared coming-out experience and cultural milieu (see Egan, Edelman and Sherrill 2008; Lewis, Rogers and Sherrill 2011; see also Perrella, Brown, and Kay 2012: 92). Thus, party gatekeepers may prefer supporting candidates who are similar to them rather than LGBTQ+ individuals, whom they regard as different, in attaining seats for the party (Bjarnegård 2013; see also Shteynberg and Galinsky 2011).

There are otherwise good reasons to argue that party gatekeepers are sensitive to within-group diversity among LGBTQ+ people. The overwhelming presence of male officeholders makes it convenient for voters to associate officeholding with masculine traits (Bauer 2020). After all, they can sort LGBTQ+ candidates with the same gendered lens they may use with non-traditional minority candidates in general.<sup>92</sup> At first blush, it makes intuitive sense that party

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<sup>92</sup> Social psychologists have long proposed the notion that gender-atypical or gender-bending features serve as a common denominator across the LGBTQ+-identities spectrum (Konopka et al. 2021; Worthen 2013: 710).

gatekeepers could see in non-transgender LGBTQ+ men a closer fit to the agentic traits typically associated with elected officeholding and perhaps as more likely than LGBTQ+ cisgender women to be recipients of better-quality ballot codes. However, biased party gatekeepers are unlikely to be indifferent to a candidate's non-straight sexual identity. Like voters, I expect prejudiced party elites to potentially latch gender-atypical personality attributes onto LGB candidates (Kite and Deaux 1987; Madon 1997)- especially regarding leadership expectations (Lieberman and Golom 2015; Niedlich et al. 2015; Schneider and Bos 2019; see also Golebiowska and Thomsen 1999: 208). Findings in political science cautiously suggests that gay candidates who cannot convincingly exhibit their agentic credentials are punished to a greater extent than their lesbian counterparts (Haider-Markel and Bright 2016; Golebiowska 2002).

The empirical record warrants, however, some skepticism about how sexual identity may modify party gatekeepers' gendered lens pans out in practice. Lesbian candidates still face a structural impediment in terms of an agentic advantage, which makes that advantage less empirically salient. While women may be more likely than men to evaluate lesbians favorably, they are typically in a minority position among party gatekeepers, so the advantage that they are able to confer is likely minimal (see Doan and Haider-Markel 2010; Niedlich et al. 2015). Moreover, more recent assessments of this line of argument cast doubt on a presumed lesbian candidate's advantage over a gay candidate (see Golebiowska and Thomsen 1999). Gay men can be "perceived as more stereotypically feminine, but not less stereotypically masculine," than their cis-straight counterparts (Barrantes and Eaton 2018: 559). That is, gay men are potentially seen as more communal than their straight male counterparts, but they are also seen as agentic as them, suggesting a potential advantage for officeholding in comparison to lesbians (Barrantes and Eaton 2018: 556-557; Nawara and Bailey 2017: 839). When it comes to bisexual candidates,

it is even less clear how party gatekeepers may apply the gendered lens. Party gatekeepers with authoritarian predispositions may be less likely to extend support for non-transgender bisexual men (Worthen 2013: 704-705; see also Garelick et al. 2017).<sup>93</sup> It merits noting, however, that non-transgender bisexual men report in studies outside the discipline that they conceal their LGBTQ+ identity more than other LGBTQ+ individuals and may be, thus, more likely to pass as cis-straight men and derive the benefits of a better-quality ballot code (see Price, Puckett, and MocarSKI 2021: 1934-1936).<sup>94</sup>

The literature on party gatekeepers' treatment of transgender candidates is unfortunately lacking. Instead, I rely on some insights from party elite cues about transgender rights, and voters' attitudes towards transgender persons. Scholars document that social backlash against the advancement of LGBTQ+ rights, such as the reassignment of gender identity in official records, has provided cover for party elites with preexisting anti-transgender attitudes to display them more overtly and provided a target for otherwise indifferent elites hoping to expand their constituencies (Ayoub and Page 2020; see also Smith 2019). While it is certainly plausible that anti-transgender bias can plausibly originate in the voting public, there is likely a formative role of party elites in fomenting such opposition (see Lewis et al. 2022). Either way, experimental evidence anticipates a consistent lower support for transgender candidates than for their non-transgender lesbian and gay counterparts (Magni and Reynolds 2021; Jones et al. 2018). Moreover, party elites who may be deeply invested in male privilege can feel threatened by transgender nominees (e.g., Konopka et al. 2021). Scholars in different disciplines have

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<sup>93</sup> Social psychologists warn that bisexuals are penalized by bystanders who dislike ambiguity (Burke et al. 2017).

<sup>94</sup> Complicating matters, social psychologists state that bisexual individuals are likely to see themselves differently from their LGBTQ+ counterparts (Burke and LaFrance 2016b). This is consistent with evidence regarding bisexuals' political behavior, provided by social psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists altogether (e.g., Herek et al. 2010; Worthen 2020; Jones 2021).

stipulated masculinity threat as a mechanism that accounts for diversity rejection of transgender candidates in male-dominated spaces—which could be particularly problematic for transgender women candidates (e.g., Harrison and Michelson 2018; Miller and Grollman 2015). Transgender LGBTQ+ men appear to be less subject to gender-conforming scrutiny (Miller and Grollman 2015: 826; Schilt 2006; Worthen 2018: 550). And yet, recent work suggests that disgust towards politically engaged transgender persons is altogether higher than towards politically engaged gay and lesbian persons, without differences between transgender men and women (Casey 2016: 106-109). In sum, there is not much theoretical background in the current literature suggesting how party gatekeepers would behave regarding their support towards transgender people—which is why the ballot codes’ quality assigned to transgender people are especially meaningful to start unraveling on party-gatekeeping attitudes towards them.

## **Hypotheses**

In my analysis, I examine party-gatekeeping choices regarding support for LGBTQ+ candidates via the allocation of ballot codes in Brazil’s nationwide 2020 local elections. I ground this examination in the variation of mnemonic quality of ballot codes. While I do not adjudicate whether bias is borne out of party gatekeepers’ true preferences about supporting LGBTQ+ candidates, I theorize around the possibility that bias exists in the allocation of ballot codes.

Given the previous discussion, I state my hypotheses as follows:

LGBTQ+ candidates are assigned on average worse-quality ballot codes than their cis-straight counterparts (H1).

LGBTQ+ men candidates are assigned on average better-quality codes than their LGBTQ+ women counterparts (H2a).

Non-transgender gay candidates are assigned on average better-quality codes than their non-transgender lesbian counterparts (H2b).

Transgender candidates are assigned on average worse-quality ballot codes than their non-transgender counterparts (H3).

Transgender women candidates are assigned on average worse-quality ballot codes than other LGBTQ+ counterparts (H4).

### *Additional Research Questions*

In addition to hypotheses assessing the potential impact of open LGBTQ+ identities in party-gatekeeping behavior, I explore a set of research questions pertaining to how candidates' gender, race, and markers of political respectability, such as marital status, moderate such impact. First, I consider how features in candidates' biographies—“categories of difference”—such as gender and ethno-racial background intersect with LGBTQ+ superordinate and subgroup identities (Hancock 2007: 64; see also Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013). A broad body of scholarship raises the notion that candidate's minority ethno-racial background matters for recruitment and electability (Bueno and Dunning 2017; Janusz and Campos 2021; Layton and Smith 2017). Due to the centrality of interactions between candidates' LGBTQ+ identity and ethno-racial background (Bowleg 2008: 317-319), I build on recent work to provide more insights on the relevance of intersecting identities on the assignment of ballot codes' mnemonic quality (see Bergersen, Klar and Schmitt 2018; Moreau, Nuño-Pérez and Sanchez 2019).

Second, contemporary research takes stock of the mainstream pursuit of civil LGBTQ+ rights—which scholars have termed “respectability politics”—while wrestling with its divisive and marginalizing political legacies for those who envisioned other types of societal equality (e.g., Jones 2021; Proctor 2022). One of the most important tenets of the “respectability” narrative presents marriage equality as an opportunity to normalize LGBTQ+

relationships, assimilating them into heteronormative standards of relationships and sidelining other forms of relationship behavior susceptible of being cast as promiscuous or improper. Intuitively, this narrative could lead non-LGBTQ+ individuals—including political elites—to conceive of married LGBTQ+ individuals as more respectable (and more similar to themselves) than their unmarried counterparts (see Everitt and Horvath 2021). This issue is not unique to LGBTQ+ candidates: Bernhard, Shames and Teele (2021) show that married-with-kids candidates are appraised in a more positive light. And yet, a married-with-kids status can deter members of other social groups from pursuing elected office—such as cis-straight women (Crowder-Meyer 2020: 376-377). Therefore, I assess whether party gatekeepers are attentive to marital status when allocating ballot codes among LGBTQ+ candidates.

## **Case Selection**

There are three reasons why the case study of municipal Brazil's OLPR candidate entry process is particularly pertinent to the question of whether party gatekeepers reproduce prejudice against LGBTQ+ candidates. The first reason is that Brazil's high-magnitude OLPR system produces a very high number of candidates for the number of available seats (e.g., Samuels 2001)—and this is an opening for LGBTQ+ candidacies. For example, the seat-candidate ratio in nationwide municipal elections in 2000 was approximately 1:6; in 2020, it grew to 1:9.<sup>95</sup> While there are several negative externalities to this ever-mounting surplus of candidates, it has facilitated the emergence of a sizable pool of LGBTQ+ candidates (and especially of transgender candidates), allowing researchers like me to study them quantitatively. Arguably, one remarkably negative externality is that Brazil's candidate-centered OLPR system decimates party funding

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<sup>95</sup> This trend is also noticeable in upper-level elections (Wyllie, dos Santos and Marcelino 2019).



(Sacchet and Speck 2012; Deschamps et al. 2021). Thus, a second reason is that ballot codes become a precious nonmonetary commodity at the command of party gatekeepers within a sea of an excessive number of candidates.<sup>96</sup> Although choosing a candidate becomes an extremely complex decision in an OLPR-system context, voters realistically need to only enter the ballot code in a ballot machine. An extensive and reliable network of EMB's electoral machines ensures computerized entry. Translating this complex decision into an actual vote is straightforward. Thus, a third reason is that ballot codes' mnemonic quality can be a nontrivial heuristic for voters who are overloaded with electoral information but can comply with mandatory voting requirements by only remembering their preferred candidate's five-digit code.

## **Data, Variables and Method**

I assess these questions about the assignment of lower-quality ballot codes to LGBTQ+ candidates via a novel dataset. I construct this candidate-level dataset drawing from Brazil's nationwide 2020 Municipal elections via the R-package *ElectionsBR*, version 0.3.2 (Silva et al. 2021).<sup>97</sup> This dataset consists of 485,497 observations. Largely due to the efforts of LGBTQ+ non-governmental organizations (ANTRA, Aliança Nacional LGBTI+, #VoteLGBT, Brazil's Scruff Blog), I was able to ascertain candidates' openly LGBTQ+ identity status (see Appendix,

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<sup>96</sup> In this vein, local partisan branches in Brazil are oftentimes described as atomized and detached from upper-level, within-party organizations. Apart from the PT (Workers' Party), local party branches are characterized as "legal fictions" (Samuels and Zucco 2018: 82). Complicating matters, in several municipalities there is not even a single party branch, and on average there are less than two party branches per municipality (Cervi and Borba 2019: 70). Limited outreach suggests that rapports between would-be candidates and party chairs are unlikely to take place in partisan activities. Despite limited resources, this gives credence to the possibility that local-level party gatekeepers have a key role in Brazil's candidate selection process and have latitude to impose their candidate-supporting preferences (see Braga and Amaral 2013).

<sup>97</sup> All mayoral and council-level elections take place every four years across the entirety of municipalities in Brazil. Municipal elections are held around the midpoint of a presidential term, making them non-concurrent with state-level and federal-level elections.

Section A4.1). These organizations strive to publicize the candidacies and provide resources to openly LGBTQ+ candidates.<sup>98</sup> The 2020 electoral dataset comprises 687 registered candidates self-identified as LGBTQ+. Candidacy forms and documents are submitted to the *Tribunal Superior Eleitoral* (TSE), Brazil's electoral management body. In particular, the completion of the TSE's *Requerimento de Registro de Candidatura* (RRC) is key for this study. The RRC is a registration form collecting self-identified candidate data, such as identity attributes, along with sociodemographic indicators. The TSE makes RRC data about candidates publicly available. I merged candidates' LGBTQ+/non-LGBTQ+ identity data with publicly available RRC data via candidates' individual taxpayer registry identification. I describe the verification procedures of candidates' LGBTQ+ identity in the Appendix, Section A4.1. In the analysis section, I have excluded candidates who did not report any ethno-racial background to the TSE (around 5,773 candidates, or 1.18%). This does not, however, significantly affect the number of LGBTQ+ candidates in the sample, because most have self-reported these pieces of information to the TSE. There are only five dropouts among self-identified LGBTQ+s in the sample.

#### *LGBTQ+ Subsample*

The LGBTQ+-candidate subsample (n=687) is composed of the following subgroup identities: lesbian (102), gay (255), bisexual (39), transgender male-to-female (M-to-F) (276), transgender female-to-male (F-to-M) (15), and genderqueer (3). I use the plus symbol to include other unidentified non-cisgender and non-straight identities within this sample. That said, I do not claim that my findings necessarily speak to the political experiences of other minorities not included in this sample, such as asexual, intersexual, and other non-straight and/or non-cisgender individuals (See Worthen 2020). All candidates in the subsample are LGBTQ+ candidates

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<sup>98</sup> Idem as in fn 4

running for council-level office, elected every four years. Twenty-two openly LGBTQ+ candidates competing in executive elections -e.g., mayors and vice-mayors- are excluded.<sup>99</sup> Twenty-nine openly LGBTQ+ so-called co-candidates who were not the head candidate of council-level collective candidacies are not included either.<sup>100</sup> These exclusions are warranted by both theoretical and empirical reasons. Extant research demonstrates that the type of office matters for bias salience in candidate selection (e.g., Oliver and Conroy 2018; Sweet-Cushman 2022). Thus, it is reasonable to keep the level of office constant. Moreover, only council-level candidates receive a five-digit code; mayors receive a two-digit code, and co-candidates are not registered. I discuss in the Appendix some limitations inherent to the LGBTQ+-rights organizations' cataloging procedures (see Appendix, Section A4.2). I also provide in the Appendix a descriptive comparison between cis-straight and LGBTQ+ candidates across sociodemographic and partisan correlates (see Table A4.1 in Appendix, Section A4.3).

### *Variables*

I begin with elaborating on the dependent variable, namely, the mnemonic quality of candidates' ballot codes. Ballot codes comprise five digits: The first two digits stand for the TSE-assigned double-digit party code, while the remaining ones are ultimately decided by party elites. Ballot codes serve as the basis for the dependent variable: the good-number scoring index. The good-number index accounts for the mnemonic quality of electoral codes (Bueno and

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<sup>99</sup> Mayors can be elected under either of two electoral arrangements. Municipalities with more than 200,000 eligible citizens elect mayors through a runoff system. Those municipalities with lower populations of eligible citizens rely instead on plurality voting.

<sup>100</sup> Collective candidacies are informal slates of different individuals who are denominated co-candidates. Collective candidacies may present diverse arrangements of and proposals for how work for the role of councilor will be done. Only one of these co-candidates can be registered as an official candidate in the electoral management body. Although collective candidacies have been in place for at least two electoral cycles, the TSE has yet to authorize collective candidacies at the local level. See <https://www.tse.jus.br/legislacao/compilada/res/2019/resolucao-no-23-609-de-18-de-dezembro-de-2019>

Dunning 2017). This metric is constructed by adding up two indicators. First, one indicator rewards the maximum number of repeated digits, regardless of their position within the ballot code. Second, the other indicator rewards maximum number of adjacent consecutive integers forming an either ascending or descending sequence (for a description of how the index works and examples, see Table A4.2 in Appendix, Section A4.4). Nominally, the good-number index' maximum value is seven and the minimum value is zero. Examples of good-quality codes are 12121 or 65656 (i.e., attaining the maximal score of seven points), while a bad-quality code is 40369 or 13082 (i.e., attaining a zero-point score).

There are two main independent variables. First, *LGBTQ+ Identity* is a superordinate-level, nominal variable scored 1 if the candidate identifies themselves with any of the LGBTQ+ identities described in the previous section, and 0 otherwise. Second, *LGBTQ+ Identities* is a 6-point nominal variable that accounts for candidates' either no LGBTQ+ identity (that is, classified as cis-straight) (1) or another subgroup LGBTQ+ identity; i.e. that is, lesbian (2), gay (3), bisexual (4), F-to-M (5) or M-to-F/Queer (6).<sup>101</sup> Additionally, I control for a host of variables: age cohort (8–25 (1), 26–35 (2), 36–45 (3), 46–55 (4), 56+ (5)); educational attainment (primary or less (1), secondary (2), or post-secondary (3)); ethno-racial background (black/*amarela*/native (1), *pardo* (2) or white (3) identity); binary gender (men (1) or women (2)); marital status (single (1), divorced/widowed (2), or married (3)). I also control for party-fixed effects by including a dummy variable for each party (see Janusz and Sells 2022 for a similar approach). Among other unobservable factors, party-fixed effects are expected to account for a) the predisposition of party gatekeepers to allocate good-quality ballot codes to LGBTQ+

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<sup>101</sup> I lump M-to-F and queer candidates together so I can keep all observations.

candidates and b) the fact some party codes -the first two digits of the five-digit ballot codes- may lead on average to better-quality ballot codes than others.

### *Method*

When written out in equation form, the model to test the first hypothesis is as follows:

$$GoodNumber_i = \alpha + \beta_1LGBTQPlus_i + \beta_2Gender_i + \beta_3EducationalAttainment_i + \beta_4AgeCohort_i + \beta_5EthnoracialBackground_i + \beta_6PartyBanner_i + \epsilon_i$$

In the same vein, the model to test the second and third hypotheses is in the following manner:

$$GoodNumber_i = \alpha + \beta_1Lesbian_i + \beta_2Gay_i + \beta_3Bisexual_i + \beta_4FTM_i + \beta_5MT/Queer_i + \beta_6EducationalAttainment_i + \beta_7AgeCohort_i + \beta_8EthnoracialBackground_i + \beta_9PartyBanner_i + \epsilon_i$$

Men and cis-straight are the baseline categories for the two independent variables of interest. Finally, the model written in equation form to test an extension of the first hypothesis - i.e., regressing the good number metric on the interaction between the variable indicating LGBTQ+ status and strength of self-reported gender is as follows:

$$GoodNumber_i = \alpha + \beta_1LGBTQPlus_i + \beta_2Gender_i + \beta_3LGBTQPlus_i * Gender_i + \beta_4EducationalAttainment_i + \beta_5AgeCohort_i + \beta_6EthnoracialBackground_i + \beta_7PartyBanner_i + \epsilon_i$$

In the equation, good number represents the mnemonic-quality score of any candidate's ballot code. As described in the previous section, I include the independent variable and a host of controls on the right side. Originally, the TSE data offers a seven-point ordinal scale to account for candidate's attainment. However, the TSE data has more nuanced registry of less-than-primary education levels, which needs to be recodified to adjust with the average high levels of educational attainment in the LGBTQ+ subsample. Finally, the fifth variable (ethno-racial

background) is based on a self-assessment, and it is also drawn from TSE data records. As mentioned, I control last for the candidate's party affiliation.

## Results

I start the analysis with an OLS model accounting for party-fixed effects and robust standard errors. In Table 4.1, I present three models of ballot codes' assignment in Brazil's 2020 municipal elections regressed on a host of variables. In Model 1, the assignment of ballot codes is modeled as a function of a dummy variable accounting for candidates' yes/no LGBTQ+ status and a host of control variables. Model 2 mimics the first model with the only difference being that I also control for candidates' ethnic background. Model 3 is the first model with a modification; to test for a potential gendered scrutiny of LGBTQ+ candidates through the allocation of mnemonic-quality scores, I add a dummy interaction term between the main variable of interest and self-reported gender, with women as a baseline, where 1 is equal to candidates who are self-reported men and openly LGBTQ+ and 0 denotes candidates who are self-reported women and openly LGBTQ+. In the first model, *ceteris paribus*, being a man, being between 26 and 45 years old, and having attained a post-secondary education, all lead to being likely assigned to a more memorable ballot code.<sup>102</sup> Pardo and White candidates in the sample also have a slight advantage vis-à-vis Black competitors in Model 2.

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<sup>102</sup> Controlling for the candidate's educational attainment in a regression can arguably yield estimates affected by "post-treatment bias" (Egan 2012: 604-605). Educational attainment may both be the consequence of a candidate's coming-out choice and, at the same time, be associated with the stability of LGBTQ+ identity acquisition over time (Egan 2019: 706). Moreover, increasing levels of educational attainment are associated with the likelihood of considering the pursuit of elected office (Crowder-Meyer 2020: 374). Complicating matters, I cannot completely account for how a candidate's educational attainment affects party gatekeepers' decisions, on the one hand, to recruit and nominate candidates and, on the other hand, to allocate support to them. In sum, there are theoretical reasons to presume that a candidate's educational attainment and their choice to pursue office as openly LGBTQ+ are affected by each other. Thus, if educational attainment cannot be definitively identified as a pre-treatment variable on the mnemonic quality of allocated ballot codes, then excluding a candidate's educational

These models pertaining the assignment of easy-to-memorize ballot codes in the 2020 election provide general evidence that party gatekeepers contribute to reproduce cis-straight dominance in the electoral playing field. Party gatekeepers are aware of differences between LGBTQ+ and cis-straight candidates. In Model 1, LGBTQ+ candidates as a collective appear to be slightly penalized by party gatekeepers. Holding all else constant, party gatekeepers appear to give a mnemonic head start to non-LGBTQ+ candidates' ballot codes. This provides evidence in support of H1. Model 5 displays an output that mirrors Model 1, with the sole exception of adding an interaction term by which gender alters LGBTQ+ status. Hence, Model 3 predicts the mnemonic quality of ballot codes for any candidate at the intersection of LGBTQ+ identity status and gender. Party gatekeepers provide cis-straight male candidates with the best-quality ballot codes. Despite their ballot codes' quality being lower than those of their cis-straight men candidates, LGBTQ+ men candidates' ballot codes scores are nearly on par with those of cis-straight women candidates. These results provide initial support for H2a.

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attainment may reduce this bias and lead to more accurate estimates. Accordingly, I exclude candidates' educational attainment as a standard control variable from the regression model formulated above in the main regression's equation (see Figure A4.1 in Appendix, Section A4.6). Compared to cis-straight status as a baseline, such exclusion does not change the estimates of regressing candidates' good-number index on LGBTQ+ identity.

Table 4.1: Regression Results (Models 1-3)

VARIABLES	(1) Model 1	(3) Model 2	(5) Model 3
<i>Cis-Straight is baseline</i>			
LGBTQ+	-0.148*** (0.0392)	-0.141*** (0.0393)	-0.207*** (0.0535)
<i>Women is baseline</i>			
Men	0.0856*** (0.00276)	0.0847*** (0.00278)	0.0854*** (0.00276)
LGBTQ+*Men			0.144* (0.0782)
<i>18-25 is baseline</i>			
26-35	0.0180** (0.00792)	0.0185** (0.00796)	0.0180** (0.00792)
36-45	0.0173** (0.00763)	0.0186** (0.00767)	0.0173** (0.00763)
46-55	-0.0111 (0.00769)	-0.00928 (0.00773)	-0.0110 (0.00769)
56+	-0.0379*** (0.00790)	-0.0353*** (0.00796)	-0.0379*** (0.00790)
Secondary	0.0154*** (0.00314)	0.0158*** (0.00316)	0.0154*** (0.00314)
Post-Secondary	0.0605*** (0.00352)	0.0616*** (0.00356)	0.0605*** (0.00352)
<i>Black is baseline</i>			
Parida		0.0636*** (0.00437)	
White		0.0413*** (0.00436)	
Constant	3.552*** (0.0106)	2.241*** (0.0108)	2.289*** (0.0101)
Observations	485,497	479,772	485,497
R-squared	0.261	0.261	0.261
Party FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

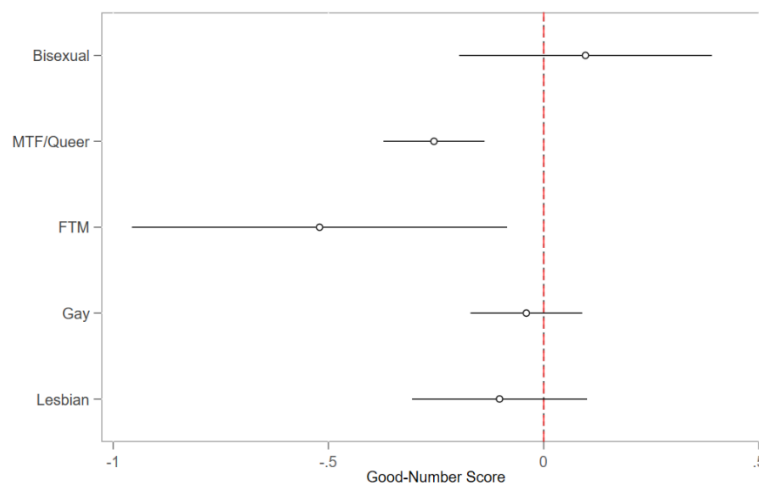
Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Unpacking the LGBTQ+ collective identity in Figure 4.2 reveals support for H3: the allocating logic of ballot codes appears to be consistent with the reproduction of anti-transgender bias (see Table A4.3's Models 4-5 in Appendix, Section A4.5). Unlike other subgroup identities in the LGBTQ+ collective, ballot codes specifically apportioned to *both* transgender subgroup identities are of a less memorable quality than the quality of cis-straight candidates' ballot codes. With cis-straight candidates as a baseline, both F-to-M and M-to-F candidates appear to be disadvantaged by party gatekeepers. Just in terms of direction, F-to-M candidates are



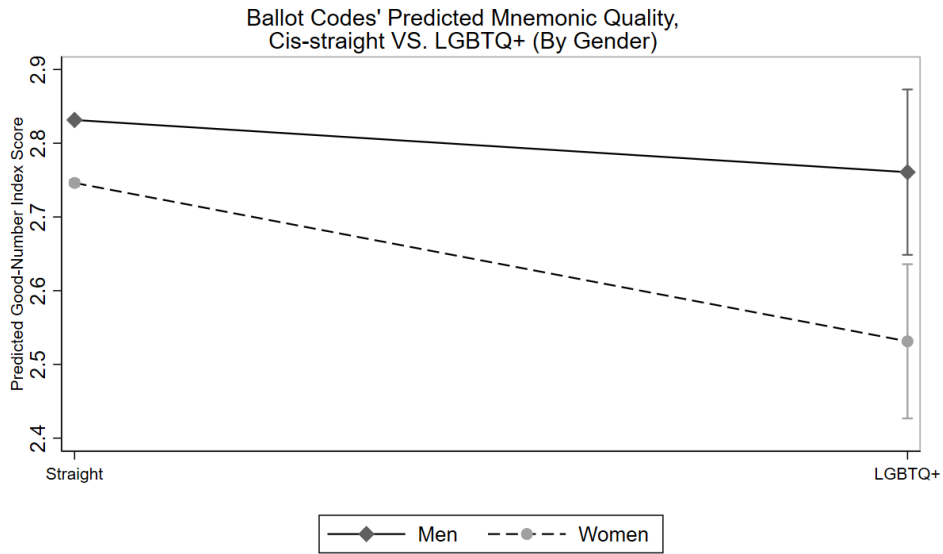
disenfranchised from the male privilege that otherwise favors their non-transgender LGBTQ+ peers. This finding squares well with the plea for visibility that Brazil’s transgender F-to-M political aspirants make explicit in their demands to parties (Nery 2018). It also situates the understandable lack of focus on F-to-M candidates in experimental protocols with hypothetical profiles (see Worthen 2013: 706). Political scientists have either tended to unintentionally “degender” transgender candidates for analysis purposes (Haider-Markel et al. 2017; Magni and Reynolds 2021), even if their design originally gendered them (Jones et al. 2018); or portrayed them instead as M-to-F (Jones and Brewer 2019). Therefore, while my expectation about transgender candidates involves their plurality, I consider how the gendering of transgender candidates maps onto party gatekeepers’ decision to allocate ballot codes, confirming evidence in support of H3. Figure 4.2 also suggests directional but no statistically significant support in favor of H2b. In general terms, LGBTQ+ men candidates are more likely than women candidates to obtain easier-to-memorize ballot codes. However, ballot code’s average mnemonic-quality scores for both groups should be taken with a grain of salt. As hinted before, these scores potentially mask a wider heterogeneity in terms of gender expression within each group.

Figure 4.2: Effect of LGBTQ+ Subgroup Identities on Ballot Codes’ Mnemonic Quality



Equally noticeable is that the intersectional inquiry in Model 3 uncovers a pervasive gendered logic that I capture in Figure 4.3. In Figure 4.3, I plot the marginal effects of a candidate's LGBTQ+ identity on the quality of the assigned ballot-code quality, calculated on the basis of their cisgender/transgender expression. As stated, candidates' gender expression is obtained from their official gender registration status as evinced by TSE candidate files. When it comes to LGBTQ+ candidates, it is important to highlight that their registration status match official government data. For example, regardless of their biological or registered-at-birth sex status, LGBTQ+ women (men) include cisgender lesbian (gay), cisgender bisexual, and all lesbian (gay), bisexual and straight F-to-M candidates who registered as women (men). I take advantage of this wealth of data to reveal that party gatekeepers' behavior suggests anti-transgender bias. Male privilege is evident, and Figure 4.3 sheds light on how it specifically manifests itself among LGBTQ+s. The quality of LGBTQ+ men's ballot codes is higher in comparison to LGBTQ+ women's ballot codes and on par with the quality of those assigned to cisgender women. This is likely to respond to different reasons. For example, one potential reason is that party gatekeepers perceive non-transgender bisexual men to be less liable to anti-LGBTQ+ bias and even to be nominally considered as "honorary" cis-straight (Seffner 2011: 47-48). But another reason might be that, while transgender men represent only 1.8% of LGBTQ+ men, transgender women candidates are the majority among LGBTQ+ women (61.2%). These results lend evidence in support of H1 and only of H2a and H2b in a directional manner. Although I cannot conclude that the analysis fully supports H3 and H4, a transgender penalty appears to be a plausible factor to understand the lower quality of LGBTQ+ women candidates' ballot codes- and potentially of gendered differences in other facets of party support towards LGBTQ+ candidates.

Figure 4.3: Predicted Ballot Codes' Mnemonic Quality



I now turn to an exploration of the secondary hypotheses. The first question concerns the conditional impact of a candidate's ethno-racial background on the mnemonic quality of LGBTQ+ candidates' ballot codes. Interestingly, none of the regression analyses (not displayed here) supports the claim that the intersection of LGBTQ+ and black identities decreases the mnemonic quality of candidates' ballot codes (see Table A4.4 in Appendix, Section A4.7). One caveat on this null finding is warranted: this paper uses data on candidate's self-identified ethno-racial background as informed by the TSE. Candidates' ethno-racial self-identifications are drawn from ratings based on the five-category ethno-racial classification used by the IBGE. Despite Bueno and Dunning's (2017: 6-7) assertion that the IBGE ethno-racial rating is valid, scholars also report a tendency among politicians to whiten or lighten their ethno-racial background ratings (see Mitchell-Walthour 2018: 57; see though De Micheli 2021). Moreover, the understandings of candidates' ethno-racial backgrounds may differ both across party gatekeepers and voters (see Campos and Machado 2015). A future iteration of this project could

perhaps crowdsource the classification of candidates' ethno-racial background to third parties (rather than leaving it to the candidate's discretion).

The second question inquiries about whether party gatekeepers put a premium on “respectable” LGBTQ+ candidates by assigning them better-quality ballot codes than to those who are not. The dataset does not contain a stock of attributes, practices or quirks that would allow me to test how a LGBTQ+ candidate could be appraised as less respectable in the eyes of party elites. That said, a safe proxy for candidate's respectability is marital status, and it is included in the dataset. Models 8 and 9 (not displayed here) test the influence of marital status. Model 8's output showcases that single LGBTQ+ candidates are less likely than married LGBTQ+ candidates to obtain memorable ballot codes. By the same token, a within-sample analysis in Model 9 demonstrates that the only subgroup identity for which being marital status does not appear to be a relevant factor in how party gatekeepers allocate ballot codes are MTF/Queer candidates (see Table A4.5 in Appendix, Section A4.8).

### **Qualitative Insights of Perceived Anti-Transgender Bias in Party-Gatekeeping Behavior**

Interviews I conducted with transgender candidates who competed in at least one election within the 1996-2020 period additionally offer qualitative evidence to the results I discuss in the previous section.<sup>103</sup> It merits noting that I have neither directly inquired nor probed them about the allocation of ballot codes. None of them made voluntary or self-motivated references to their perceptions of how ballot codes are allocated. But interviewees were vocal about their

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<sup>103</sup> These interviews are part of another dissertation project which investigates barriers to candidate emergence and entry among LGBTQ+ candidates who competed in at least one election in the 1996-2020 period. Brazil's CEPH-FGV committee reviewed the project and decided that it complied with local ethical standards on October 18, 2019 (Protocol 104/2019). This research was declared exempt from full board review under Vanderbilt IRB protocol 191292 on November 4, 2019. Following the CEPH-FGV guidance, I decided to anonymize the interviewees' names.

perceptions of anti-transgender bias on behalf of party elites in campaign support. Interviewee 100013 related to this experience and vividly commented on their struggle to be considered a priority by party gatekeepers: “At first it was hard because I was not a priority. [...] I needed to stand for myself and filed a complaint with my [local] party [chairs] due to my candidacy’s isolation [...] I made it very clear that I was the first F-to-M candidate in my city. [But the party chairs] did everything they could [to ignore my candidacy]. [...] [A few weeks prior to election day] my candidacy became a priority, I [received support from out-of-town party officials and] negotiated funds to [partially] pay for handouts and other print materials.”

Although applicable to several LGBTQ+ candidates in general, experiences of neglect like the ones described above have arguably been nudging transgender candidates to look for campaigning support in other parties. With regards to this situation, interviewee 19 stated: “I am worried, because I know far-right parties will never take stances for us, and yet LGBTQ+ persons are wanted for the sake of pooling votes. [...] I would be remiss not to acknowledge that left-of-center parties [bear responsibility for transgender candidates’ party-switching decisions], because if [they] would be more welcoming to LGBTQ+ people, mainly with us *travestis*, we would not have to be knocking on their doors, asking for resources in other parties, but unfortunately that is how things are.” But interviewee 66 disagreed with this pessimistic view: [Switching party affiliation] is one way to occupy positions of power within right-of-center parties. We can start making these parties less conservative from within them. The left is not ready though for that [strategy]. [...] I honestly believe we need LGBTQ+ people infiltrated in every place, in the same way religious and conservative people are infiltrated in every party.”

## Discussion

Thus far, I have analyzed the allocation of ballot codes using a mnemonic-quality criterion to find evidence of party-gatekeeping behavior consistent with bias and discrimination against LGBTQ+ candidates. Whether the findings about bias reached in the previous section are robust with regard to other criteria is nevertheless a pertinent question. Brazil's idiosyncrasy serves as an alternative for apparent bias in the allocation of ballot codes' digits (Cunha Silva 2022). The number 24 is of key interest due to its immediate and stereotypical association with homosexual male behavior- in Brazil's popular culture.<sup>104</sup> According to media outlets and anecdotal insights, the number 24 symbolizes emasculation and gender-nonconformity in common parlance. Threatened masculinity is a strong predictor of opposition towards gay men – in particular feminine gay men— and transgender people— especially transgender women (Wellman et al. 2021; see Harrison and Michelson 2019). Brazil's Soccer Confederation officers have recently caught flak for avoiding the no. 24 jersey in the men's soccer team (Mariani and Gabriel 2020). In Brazil, soccer and politics are well-connected. A cursory review of post-1979 Brazil's existing and defunct political parties' two-digit codes shows that none holds or has ever held the number 24 as a party code (see Table A4.7 in Appendix, Section A4.9). Likewise, the number 44 could also generate apprehension among party gatekeepers for its reminiscence to “*sapatão*” or “big shoe,” the slang term used to refer to “butch” lesbians in Brazil- an allusion to the stereotypical idea that lesbian women wear an oversized shoe size. It is thus conceivable that

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<sup>104</sup> The connection between the number 24 and homosexuality comes from a lottery game in which 25 animal figures are numerically ordered, popularized as *jogo do bicho* (animal lottery). In the case of the number 24, the deer is in the 24<sup>th</sup> position. The spelling and pronunciation of deer in Portuguese (*veado*) are similar to those of the Portuguese equivalent of “faggot” (“*viado*”).

several politicians -perhaps similarly to many soccer club managers and *aficionados*- share such concerns about ballot codes ending in these numbers.<sup>105</sup>

The idiosyncratic logic of ballot code assignment suggests that party-gatekeeping behavior in Brazil may be consistent with anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and bias. Ballot codes ending in 24 do not appear to be popular (see Figure A4.2 in Appendix, Section A4.9). Relative to (cis-straight women and) LGBTQ+ candidates, logistical analysis indicates that party gatekeepers avoid assigning ballot codes ending in the number 24 to cis-straight men candidates (see Table A4.7 in Appendix, Section A4.9). None of these associations appear to take place when I regress LGBTQ+ candidates' probability of being assigned a ballot code ending in either number 23 or number 25. More specifically, LGBTQ+ candidates—gay and MTF/Queer candidates slightly more—are more likely to be the recipients of ballot codes ending in the number 24 (see Table A4.8's Model 1 in Appendix, Section A4.9). Further analysis using the number 44 shows Lesbian candidates are the likeliest recipients of ballot codes ending in number 44, though (see Table A4.8's Model 2 in Appendix, Section A4.9). I speculate that lesbian candidates may be comfortable with ballot codes ending in number 44—potentially as a sign of pride (Tagliamento, Brunetto and Almeida 2022: 19-20).<sup>106</sup> All in all, it appears that a ballot code ending in number 24—more than one ending in number 44—represents a larger masculinity threat for traditional party elites.

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<sup>105</sup> Organized pressure succeeded, though. For the first time in history, Gleison Bremer wore Brazil's jersey no. 24 in the 2022 World Cup.

<sup>106</sup> The LesboCenso 2021/2022, a comprehensive survey geared toward Brazil's lesbian women, reveals that a fair share (26.4%) of respondents prefer to identify as "*sapatão*" rather than as lesbian.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I consider discrimination in party support for LGBTQ+ candidates via the varying quality of assigned ballot codes. I use Bueno and Dunning's (2017) good-number index, which gauges the mnemonic quality of legislative candidates' electoral codes. Candidates' ballot codes occupy a relevant role in Brazil's OLPR system. The findings underscore discriminating party-gatekeeping behavior towards LGBTQ+ candidates relative to cis-straight candidates. The results also demonstrate that unpacking the LGBTQ+ collective into subgroup identities is worth doing in order to further understand the implications of party-gatekeeping behavior on the support for LGBTQ+ candidates. Party elites are more likely to assign lower-quality ballot codes to transgender candidates relative to non-transgender LGBTQ+ candidates. Furthermore, party elites' allocation of ballot codes among LGBTQ+ candidates is likely gendered: that is, relative to LGBTQ+ men candidates, LGBTQ+ women candidates compete with lower-quality ballot codes. The analyses I present above also allow me to discuss my intersectional queries. Although race does not affect the discriminatory behavior of party elites towards LGBTQ+ candidates, married LGBTQ+ candidates are the recipients of better-quality ballot codes vis-à-vis their unmarried counterparts in the sample.

Given evidence of differential party-gatekeeping behavior regarding LGBTQ+ candidates, a reasonable next step is to theorize about when it is more likely to occur. In that sense, future research on LGBTQ+ candidate entry should directly grapple with the organizational settings in which party gatekeepers make decisions about assigning ballot codes to LGBTQ+ candidates.<sup>107</sup> Parties monopolize the most fundamental prerogative when it comes to support for LGBTQ+ candidate entry into elected office. Other forms of support may or may

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<sup>107</sup> Due to collinearity concerns, perhaps a better approach for this agenda is multilevel analysis at the party level.



not complement and strengthen the findings stated above. One of them is free television airtime for candidate-centered advertisements. Brazil's electoral management body apportions free television airtime to political parties ahead of election day. While Brazil's publicly financed electoral program levels the playing field between parties, party elites decide how to invest it in supporting candidates. With the availability of these resources in mind, I want to take the opportunity to caution that the results pointing to party-gatekeeping bias I find in this chapter need by no means be extended to the allocation of these resources to LGBTQ+ candidates. It is plausible that party gatekeepers compensate, intentionally or not, LGBTQ+ candidates with resources that could offset the effect of relatively less memorable ballot codes, and the results of the analyses do not imply that LGBTQ+ individuals should regard their specific identity as a detriment when negotiating a candidacy with party gatekeepers. Successful stories of transgender candidates at the ballot box can and do take place despite consistent findings that transgender candidates are more penalized by voters in the U.S. (see Jones et al. 2018). Erika Hilton's story suggests that party gatekeepers can indeed reward a candidate with multiple intersecting identities—LGBTQ+, black and a woman. Her ballot code is 50500, which obtains a 4, a pretty decent score.<sup>108</sup>

I include party-code fixed effects in regression models to control for unobservable and unmeasured traits of party organizations that may influence party elites' allocation of ballot codes to LGBTQ+ candidates. It is unlikely though that a party code captures every single potential confounding feature of organizational party environments. More can be done.<sup>109</sup> Women-in-

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<sup>108</sup> This is not to say that party gatekeepers did not account for her education and human capital when awarding her that ballot code.

<sup>109</sup> I do not discuss party-specific effects in this chapter because the chapter's focus is not on partisan differences in the assignment of memorable ballot codes. This is nevertheless a necessary step in future work. In an alternative model, I exclude party-fixed effects and control for parties' ideological placement on a five-point scale—i.e., classifying parties as being leftist, left-of-center, centrist, right-of-center, and new-right. I find that,

politics research argues that the presence of women in gatekeeping positions tends to favor the nomination of women candidates (e.g., Cheng and Tavits 2011; Crowder-Meyer 2013). Women are also consistently more likely than men to display favorability towards LGBTQ+ rights and attitudes—this gendered gap is also observed when it comes to assessing electability and viability of LGBTQ+ candidates. Future research endeavors should account for the gendered composition of local party chairs' committees given the evidence that women tend to favor LGBTQ+ candidates more than men (Magni and Reynolds 2021: 1207). Beyond the question of women's more likely allyship with LGBTQ+ rights and people, another line of inquiry could consist of investigating whether and how LGBTQ+ organizational involvement predisposes party gatekeepers to be more impartial when allocating ballot codes. Still another research project could test incentives for local party elites to implement LGBTQ+-friendly allocation of ballot codes in districts where LGBTQ+ candidates have never run. Finally, another productive approach would involve conducting a study on whether national-level LGBTQ+ party committees can nudge local gatekeepers to provide LGBTQ+ candidates -among some other forms of party support- with on average same-quality ballot codes as their peers.

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counterintuitively, relative to leftist parties, all other parties allocate on average better-quality ballot codes to openly LGBTQ+ candidates—except for the new-right parties (see Figure A4.3 in Appendix, Section A4.10). I use the leftist parties as the omitted category in the regression analysis because they have nominated nearly 40% of all LGBTQ+ candidates in the 2020 election.

## Chapter 5: The Gay Penalty and Faith-Based Homophily in Brazil: Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment

Does faith-based public opinion contribute to an electoral “gay penalty”? Despite the recent momentum for more civil and political rights for LGBTQ+ people across established and younger democracies, recent scholarship still finds that eligible voters penalize gay candidates (Carmines and Schmidt 2021; Magni and Reynolds 2021; Rajan and Pao 2022). Religious beliefs appear as a major factor driving such penalty (Magni and Reynolds 2021: 1212-1213). To a large extent, this notion is consistent with one of the previous chapters findings: when religious identities are politicized, LGBTQ+ aspirants and candidates are more likely facing challenges in their ability to successfully pass through the candidate entry process and, presumably, to achieve their ultimate goal of elected office.<sup>110</sup> And yet it is important to recall discussion from the first chapter: not all religious groups behave in the same way.<sup>111</sup> Relative to secular/non-religious voters, Catholics are consistently less likely than Evangelicals to deny a gay aspirant’s right to run for office. Likewise, insights from the second chapter suggest that openly LGBTQ+ candidates likely display their faith and religious commitment tactically, paying close attention to constituents’ preferences, in order to attain office.

This discussion suggests a nuanced set of connections among public opinion, gay candidates, religion, and election results. In this short coda to the dissertation, I provide new

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<sup>110</sup> Throughout the previous chapters, I clearly focus on voters’ rather than on party gatekeepers’ religious identities. In chapter three I explore in fn. 116 whether parties’ ideological positionings affect the quality of ballot codes allocated to LGBTQ+ candidates and find that LGBTQ+ candidates running with parties that are on the leftmost and rightmost ends of the ideological spectrum are less on average less memorable. Rightmost parties tend to align with the Evangelical political project. On the left, parties like the PT or PSOL are known to have ties with branches of the Catholic Church. While this is beyond the objectives of this dissertation, I speculate that party gatekeepers themselves may not be exempt from religion-infused bias towards openly LGBTQ+ candidate entry.

<sup>111</sup> Given the experimental design’s characteristics in Chapter 2, the evidence suggestive of electoral penalty is limited to the comparison between the straight/gay mediocre conditions of the hypothetical aspirant.

insight into this topic. My particular focus is on faith-based homophily. By homophily, I refer, in an electoral context, to the tendency among eligible voters to base their voting decisions on a shared identity marker (see Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954).<sup>112</sup> Via a conjoint experiment embedded in a survey in Brazil, I extend the findings of chapter one onto the last stage of the QRS path (as described in chapter two): the succeed stage. The primary objective is to explore whether the gay penalty is reduced for LGTBQ+ candidate who share a religious identity with the potential voter (i.e., the respondent in the survey).

My study offers two core findings. First, there is evidence that openly gay candidates are penalized. Second, faith-based homophily appears to have a mitigating effect—but a limited one—when Catholic respondents are matched with Catholic candidates. However, homophily ties do not seem to reduce the gay penalty in Evangelical respondent-candidate matches.

### **Faith-Based Homophily and the Gay Penalty**

Political scientists offer scant but valuable evidence that faith-based homophily can guide electoral behavior: participants are more likely to choose leaders with whom they share a religious identity, regardless of whether such support promises a material advantage (Adida, Laitin and Valfort 2015: 1204). Moreover, faith-based homophily appears to have the ability to alter perceptions of both in-group affection and out-group aversion, meaning that a “shared sense of shared identity” can engender more favorable judgments of individuals who might be regarded as part of the out-group in other identity markers (Berinsky et al. 2020: 746-749).

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<sup>112</sup> In their sociological study of friendships, Merton and Lazarsfeld (1954) conceive two types of homophily ties: status and value. Religion falls under the category of value homophily, as it refers to the tendency to associate with those that share similar beliefs and values, and most intrinsically influencing “the wide variety of internal states presumed to shape our orientation toward future behavior” (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001: 419).

Scholarly evidence appears to suggest a gay candidate may be less distrusted and electable—and simultaneously more disgusting—than a non-believer counterpart (Franks and Scherr 2014: 684-686). Moreover, another study points to gay, religious candidates being a “tough sell” in the United States (Beyerlein and Klocek 2020: 553). This coda builds on these theoretical insights and those from the first chapter to put to test whether these overlapping traits—faith and an LGBTQ+ identity—can mitigate the gay penalty.

### **Conjoint Experiment Design**

A conjoint-experimental design offers a convenient tool to analyze the marginal impact of faith-based homophily on the gay penalty. In this conjoint experiment, I randomly scrambled a candidates’ attributes so that I am able to estimate the net causal effect of both a candidate's openly gay identity and the marginal effect of faith-based homophily on voting considerations towards the candidate.

Each respondent completes three tasks in which they evaluate two hypothetical candidate profiles. Each task was displayed on different screens (for a visualization of a conjoint forced-comparison exercise, see Figure A5.1 in Appendix, Section A5.1). Profiles vary based on five attributes: religious identification, religiosity, partisanship, sexuality, and political experience (for the range of values associated with each attribute, see Table A5.1 in Appendix, Section A5.2). The only other information provided was gender (fixed as male/men) and age (ranging between 37 and 42).<sup>113</sup> Following best practices, I randomized the order of the

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<sup>113</sup> Around 192 millions of Brazilians—92.8% of the entire population—were living in municipalities ruled by 4,909 male mayors, representing 88.1% of the total of Brazilian mayors in 2016 (IBGE 2017, p. 14). While I take note that future work should address how other LGBTQ+ candidates’ identities affect their electability, I believe it is reasonable to open up this research agenda by focusing on gay men candidates. The candidates’ names were randomly picked from the IBGE's 20 most common male names in Brazil. See <https://censo2010.ibge.gov.br/nomes/#/search>. Age is

attributes across respondents to minimize the occurrence of primacy effects. The order of the attributes remained fixed across the three conjoint-choice tasks each participant was assigned.<sup>114</sup>

Each juxtaposition featured an openly gay candidate and a straight candidate with their relative positions (whether displayed on the left or right of the screen) randomized across tasks. I describe plausibility constraints in the supplementary information (see Appendix, Section A5.3), as well as challenges regarding gay identity's operationalization (see Appendix, Section A5.4) and the external validity of the findings (see Appendix, Section A5.5).

The conjoint experiment was embedded in an online nonprobability survey study fielded by the LAPOP Lab in Brazil between June and August 2019 (more information in Appendix, Section A5.6). The procedure described above yielded a total of 7,590 observations. The only outcome measure is a standard one in conjoint-choice set-ups: a binary, forced-choice measure that asks the respondent to select one of the hypothetical, mayoral profiles. The outcome question reads as follows: "If you had to choose between them, which candidate would you prefer as your mayor?" While the hypothetical enunciation of the outcome may make it not comparable to real-world vote choice, scholars have argued that revealed choices in conjoint experiments can be informative of respondents' relevant preferences in real settings (Carnes and Lupu 2016; Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto 2015). As a non-probabilistic sample,

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bound to randomly take one of six possible ages between 37 and 42 years. A meta-analysis of cross-country conjoint-experimental data—not including Brazil though—has demonstrated that voters are minimally likely to discriminate candidates in the 42-47 age range, indirectly endorsing the expectation should not pay much attention to the hypothetical candidates different ages in the range stipulated in this conjoint design (38-42) (Eshima and Smith 2022: 1859).

<sup>114</sup> Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2014) make no recommendation about an optimal number of tasks. A survey of recent scholarship suggests that scholars adopt a pragmatic approach when defining the number of conjoint choice tasks assigned to participants. Three tasks per participant is a number highly unlikely to fatigue survey takers (Bansak et al. 2018).

this sample is not representative: there were no equal chances for every voting-age Brazilian citizen of opting into the survey. Therefore, the sample is potentially affected by partisan bias, as discussed in Appendix, Section A5.6.

### **Case-Specific Expectations**

From a comparative perspective, Brazil is a convenient venue to test the effects of an openly gay candidate's religious attributes on voters' decision-making, because religious politicking is commonplace and likely informs faithful voters' candidate preferences (Ferreira and Fuks 2021; Rosenberg and Smith 2021). Brazil serves as a textbook counterpoint to the United States in terms of the interplay between religion and partisan politics: while partisanship stimulates U.S. voters of faith to “update core parts of their religious identities [and involvement] to reflect their political outlooks” (Margolis 2018: 38), scholars suggest the opposite is more likely true of Brazil's faith-motivated voters (Smith 2019; Zucco and Samuels 2018).

I expect that there will be a gay penalty and that homophily ties will operate differently across religious groups. Relative to self-reported Evangelical participants, I expect that Catholic participants will be less likely to penalize matched gay candidates than unmatched ones. Building on insights from previous chapters, I base this expectation on the different rapport these religious groups establish with LGBTQ+ people and rights, with Evangelicals being more likely to engage in clergy-driven political mobilization to counter LGBTQ+ rights and disapprove of LGBTQ+ individuals' right to run in elections.

## Widespread Gay Penalty and Irrelevance of Respectability Politics

I take a first look at the data by accounting for the impact of the full set of attributes on candidate choice. Figure 5.1 presents each of the attribute levels featured in the task profiles, by estimating their average marginal component effects (AMCE) (for the computation of the marginal means [MMs] for the full model, see Appendix, Section A5.7). AMCEs account for the change in the probability of a participant's choice of a profile when an attribute changes from the baseline level to another level of interest.<sup>115</sup> The results show that openly gay candidates for mayoral office in Brazil's municipal electoral playing field face a strong penalty due to their gay identity. The coefficients on both attribute levels signaling an openly gay identity—i.e., being in a relationship and being married- are among the largest in the regression model.<sup>116</sup>

I observe muted AMCEs from the marital status' levels; that is, there is no difference between a marriage and a stable relationship for gay candidates, but neither is there one for their straight counterparts. Respectability politics does not seem to affect participants' considerations about gay candidates' electability.

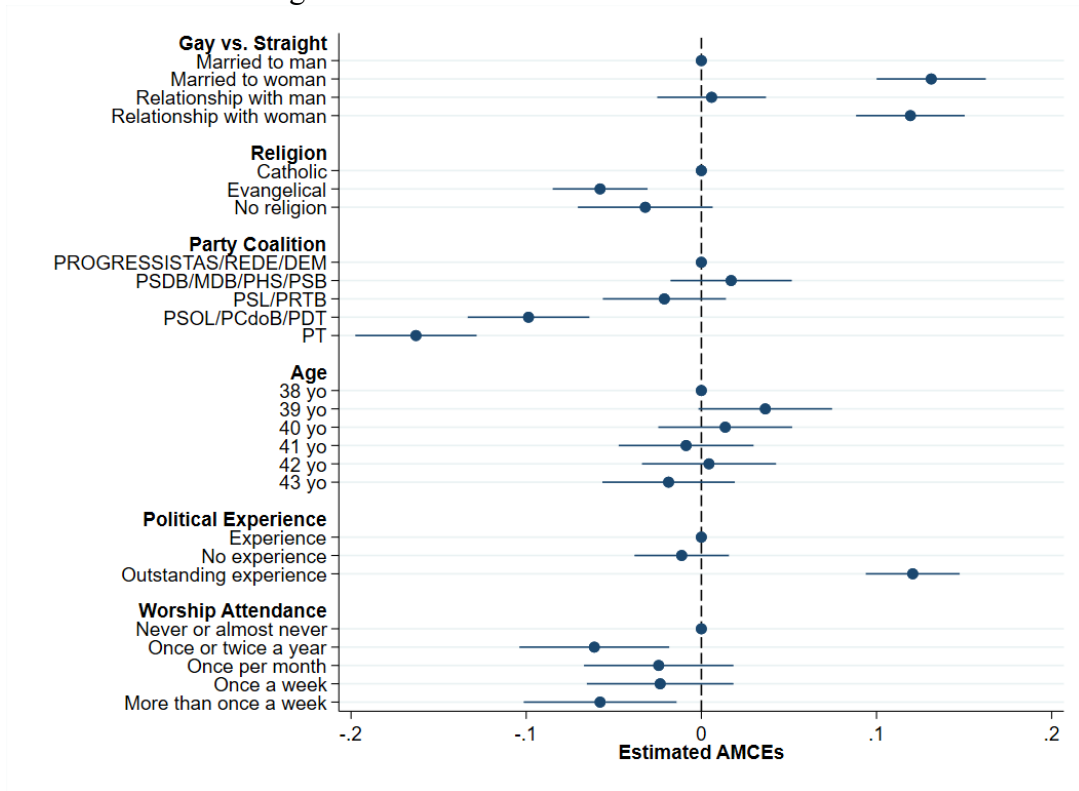
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<sup>115</sup> For the sake of brevity, this coda does not touch on important findings regarding other attributes such as partisanship or political experience.

<sup>116</sup> More context to interpret participants' preferences for candidates' party banners is provided in Appendix A5.6.



Figure 5.1: Estimated AMCEs in Full Model

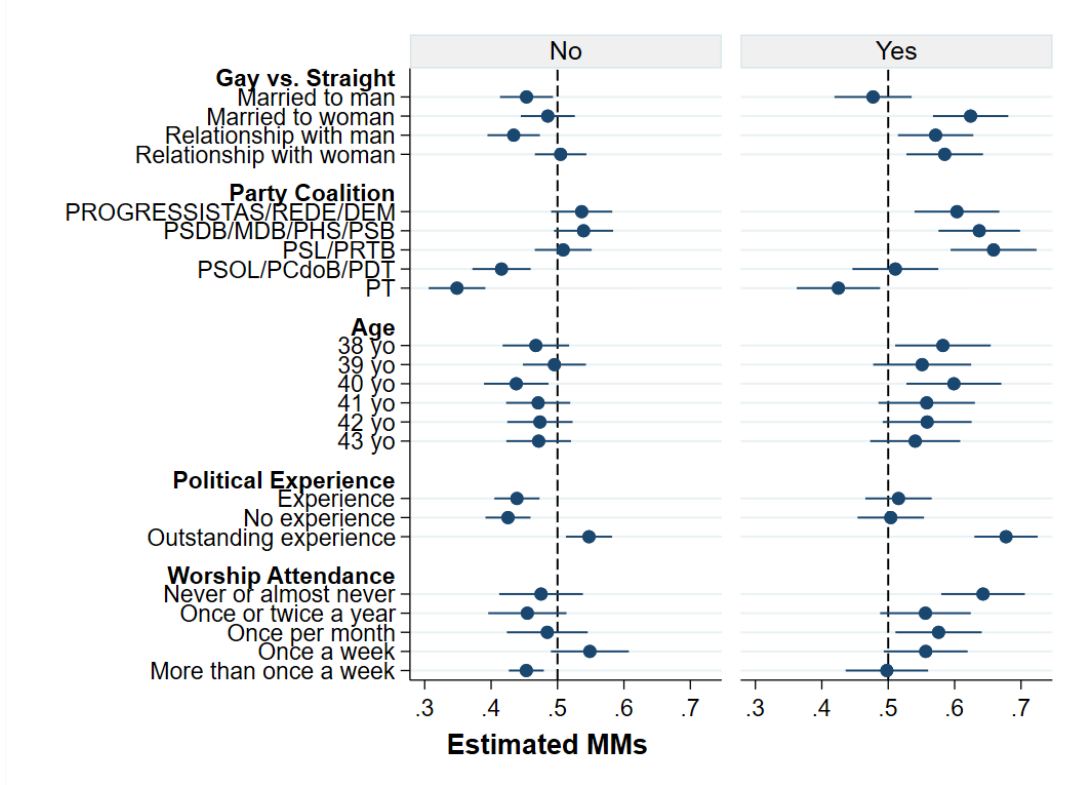


### Homophily Ties Among Catholic and Evangelical Respondents

Figures 5.2 and 5.3 display the marginal means (MMs) for the subsamples of self-reported Catholic and Evangelical respondents. For each of these subsamples, the analysis entails all types of candidates –regardless of whether these candidates were tagged as Catholic, Evangelical, or secular. In both figures, the model in the leftmost column (“Yes”) represents the impact of homophily ties via the occurrence of faith-based respondent-candidate matches. MMs represent the average probability that participants will choose a profile featuring each attribute level, averaging out all other attribute levels, and are preferable to AMCEs when conducting subgroup analysis (Leeper, Hobolt, and Tilley 2020). Most relevantly, neither Catholics nor Evangelicals appear to reward respectability markers. In fact, Figure 5.2 shows that Catholics penalize married gay candidates more than their counterparts in relationships other than

marriage. Indeed, unmarried gay candidates' electability is on par with the straight candidate's electability. Evangelicals are not indifferent to homophily ties, but Figure 5.3 reveals that their impact is only relevant to matches with straight candidates.

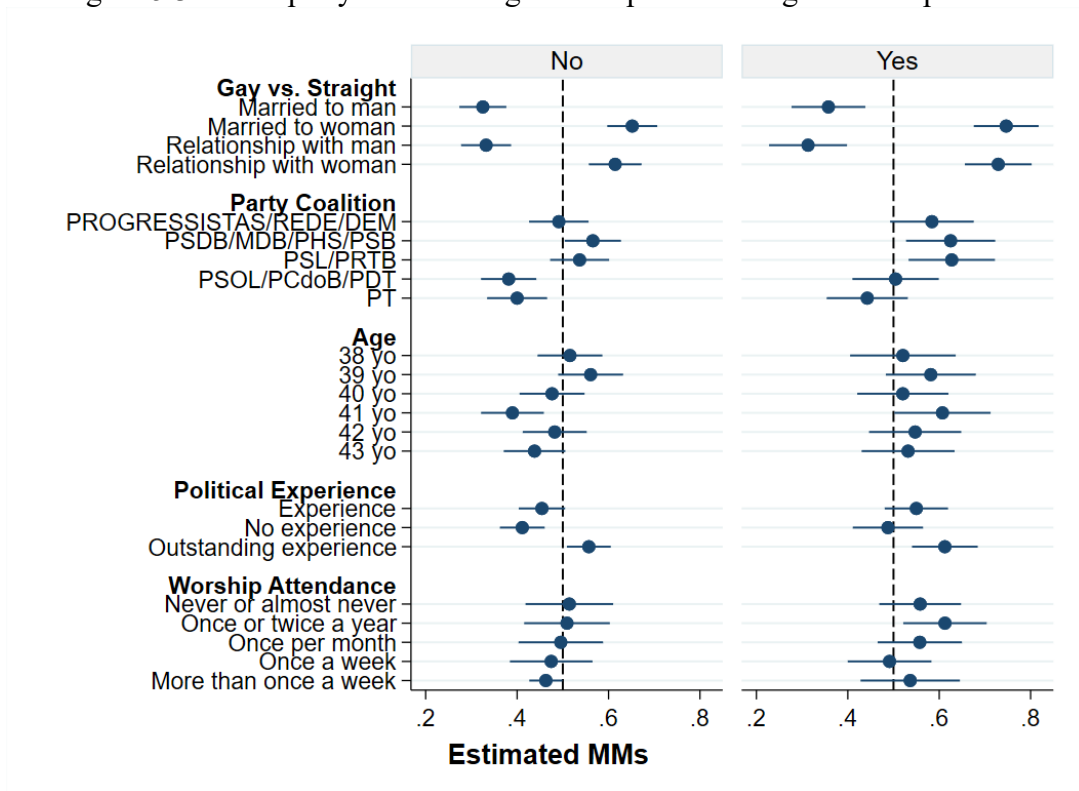
Figure 5.2: Homophily Ties Among Self-Reported Catholic Respondents



Despite Figure 5.3 showing that Evangelicals appear to put a premium on matched candidates running under far-right party banners, additional analyses show that this advantage does not extend to matched gay candidates when the analysis excludes straight candidates (see Figure A5.4 in Appendix, Section A5.8). These additional analyses also suggest Catholics prefer gay candidates competing under right-of-center party platforms relative to left-of-center alternatives— again, when the analysis excludes straight candidates (see Figure A5.3 in Appendix, Section A5.8). More to the point, Catholics rewarded gay candidates running under far-right banners (see "PSL-PRTB" attribute level in Figure 5.2) the most. Although these are

preliminary findings, Catholics are also more likely to reward matched candidates’ outstanding performance in office—for both gay and straight candidates—while, among Evangelicals, homophily ties do not move the needle. Noticeably, candidates’ religious commitment -measured with a worship service attendance proxy- has at best an inconclusive impact for matched gay candidates across Figures 5.2 and 5.3.<sup>117</sup>

Figure 5.3: Homophily Ties Among Self-Reported Evangelical Respondents



The failure of homophily ties in reducing the gay penalty among Evangelicals is evident in Figure 5.3. It may be due to several reasons. Differences in worship attendance between

<sup>117</sup> It is beyond the scope of this coda to tackle why respondents disapprove in general of religiously committed candidates (see Figure 5.1). One explanation may be that nonreligious or religiously disaffected voters in this sample may have more affinity toward candidates—whether gay or not—who are similar to them. Another possible explanation may derive from the makeup of the sample. Other characteristics of recruited participants in online panels, such as socioeconomic status, may affect the rates of self-reported religious commitment in some of these subgroups (see Castorena et al. 2023: 209). That is, I speculate that Catholic participants recruited into these panels may be less religiously committed than other potential participants who are less likely to have stable internet access. More religiously committed Catholic participants may be more likely to sympathize with Evangelical leaders.

Evangelicals and Catholics in this sample—with 72% and 34%, respectively, attending at least once a week—direct the attention to the weight that clergy's messages on LGBTQ+ issues carry in terms of faith-based public opinion towards LGBTQ+ rights and people in politics (see Smith 2017: 444). It is not just that less time in worship services makes Catholics less subject to this messaging, but also that messaging with political content is less common in Catholic than in Evangelical services (Smith 2020). In line with this contrast between voters from these religious groups, I expected the candidate's religious commitment to motivate Evangelical participants to consider high worship attendance a justification for faith-based affinity. Religious commitment, as signaled by regular worship attendance, appears to be insufficient to generate political connectedness between voters and matched candidates (for alternative measures of religious commitment, see Audette, Brockman, and Castro Cornejo 2020: 114-115).<sup>118</sup> While the religious marketplace in the Evangelical camp is more heterogeneous than the Catholic one, and expectations about gay candidates may vary across congregations, it is a possibility that the issue with the hypothetical gay Evangelical candidate may be the visibility of his relationship, regardless of whether he is married or unmarried. To be sure, gay candidates hailing from Evangelical circles exist. Evangelicals may need more or other types of information than I provided in the profile's attributes about the gay Evangelical candidate to find congruence between a gay Evangelical member of their congregation and the prototypical expectations about a leader emerging from their congregational circles (e.g., Beyerlein and Klocek 2020).<sup>119</sup> Evangelical gay candidates may perhaps be expected to

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<sup>118</sup> This is only a suggestive interpretation of the trend given across the ascending levels of the worship attendance variable—that is, from “never or almost never” to “more than once per week.” Ultimately, a thorough analysis of the conditional impact of religious commitment would require an interaction between the following attributes: candidate’s gay identity and his religious commitment. This should be complemented with further analysis exploring the impact of matched religious commitment in the general sample.

<sup>119</sup> There is possibly a point of connection with the scholarship on multiracial candidates (Casarez Lemi 2021). Due to more stringent norms of group identity, Evangelical gay candidates may need to showcase more than just religious

publicly downplay such identity or, instead, to proclaim it while engaging in trespassing strategies where they reinforce widely held beliefs about LGBTQ+ people among Evangelicals (see Bauer 2019).<sup>120</sup>

## **Closing Remarks**

In this coda I have explored the following expectation: faith-based homophily ties may reduce the gay penalty. That is, this coda provides an answer to this question: even if some faithful voters penalize openly gay candidates, could this penalty decrease if gay candidates can credibly claim that they belong to voters' religious group? I find that hypothetical gay candidates who have been introduced as Catholic benefit from homophily ties, whereas this is not so much the case for those presenting themselves as Evangelical. As mentioned in this coda, these results are bound to the nature of the sample, which is not just potentially less representative of certain segments of religious groups, but also likely infused with other types of biases, such as those brought on by negative partisan attachments towards the Workers' Party.

This coda contributes to a broader literature on faith-based voting behavior towards LGBTQ+ candidates by extending it to democracies outside the Global North. It most directly addresses work on the gay penalty, which largely focuses on the role of religion and the assumption that religion will catalyze a stronger backlash against gay candidates (see, e.g.,

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commitment to overcome the disadvantage among Evangelical voters. This is reminiscent of what social psychologists have coined the “ingroup overexclusion effect,” which is a tendency to request more information before accepting that a seemingly outgroup target can be considered an ingroup member (see Leyens and Yzerbyt 1992).

<sup>120</sup> Several studies in the social sciences point to this phenomenon among cross-pressured individuals debating themselves at the intersection of their gay and religious identities in the U.S., usually pertaining to non-Catholic faith traditions (e.g., Egan 2019; Lefevor et al. 2020; Pitt 2010).

Magni and Reynolds 2021: 1201). My findings are partially in line with that assumption, but they also introduce a nuance: voters' perception of a shared religion may foster affinity towards seemingly outgroup candidates and reduce electoral penalties. My findings suggest that, where Catholic participants are matched with gay candidates in terms of their faith, electability concerns about a gay candidate purely based on their gay identity may recede and even suggest that other attribute levels of the candidate's profile, such as a having been praised for an outstanding performance in office, may be more auspiciously contemplated by voters.

Due to the lack of previous scholarship, the coda fulfils primarily a hypothesis-generating role in theorizing around the impact of faith-based homophily in the electability of openly gay candidates. Thus, this is work early in the research cycle and the results are tentative. Subgroup analysis is not modeled for the full sample of participants. A better analysis and presentation of results would be to estimate a comparison of preferences for both gay and straight candidates as differences in subgroup marginal means between two groups of respondents: those experiencing faith-based homophily ties with the hypothetical candidates and those that do not. Such analysis of the marginal-mean impact of religious homophily would be better conducted across all groups of voters, including secular and non-denominational voters. That said, an issue is that voters that are neither Evangelical nor Catholic could be either religious or secular, and their match to non-religious candidates would not necessarily imply secular/non-religious voter-candidate homophily. Choosing this level of homophily matches as the baseline level would be problematic because its homophily meaning would not be clear. Future work should further refine the recruitment of denominational voters so a more representative sample to analyze faith-based homophily can be obtained.

With the LGBTQ+ candidate entry process in mind, this coda also looks back to the previous chapters by taking stock of how respectability politics more comprehensively affect the main stakeholders involved: LGBTQ+ candidates, party gatekeepers, and voters. As described in Chapter 3, respectability politics appears to be a wedge issue among LGBTQ+ candidates, and there are certainly divergent perspectives within this candidate pool about its applicability in terms of tactics along the later stages in the QRS path. From the perspective of party gatekeepers and voters, the utility of respectability politics also has a mixed record, as evidenced by the empirical findings presented throughout this dissertation. Drawing from the third chapter, party gatekeepers appear to consider marital status as a respectability marker that favorably informs their decision to grant memorable ballot codes. However, respectability politics may not be as fashionable with faith-based voters nor even, as this coda shows, with voters in general.

In line with the preliminary subgroup analysis pertaining to the right to run approval conducted in chapter one, there is a bittersweet implication: there may be limits to the acceptance and viability of gay candidates who rightfully enjoy the expansion of civil rights. This is not to say that gay candidates in marriages—or even in public relationships—are inevitably bound to succumb sooner or later in the candidate entry process. Rather, I conclude that a gay candidate's married status is less likely to act as an explicit cue that activates affinity in the minds of voters committed to "traditional" marriage. All in all, while in this dissertation I have provided reasons for why candidates seek to attract votes from the religious electorate through faith-based and respectability cues, this coda exposes their potential limitations as well.

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## Appendix to Chapter 2

### Instrument for Experiment

**[RANDOMLY ASSIGN RESPONDENTS TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: CONTROL, UPSTANDING, AND MEDIOCRE]**

**STEM.** [Eng] Suppose that Rodrigo Silva lives in your city, and wants to run for mayor next year. Here is more information about him: [Por] Suponha que Rodrigo Silva mora na sua cidade, e queira concorrer à prefeitura no ano que vem. Vamos apresentar algumas informações sobre ele:

#### UPSTANDING TREATMENT CONDITION

**VIG\_OUT.** [Eng] Rodrigo works as an accountant. Rodrigo believes all his life experiences prepared him for politics. Rodrigo has no criminal record. Rodrigo lives with his boyfriend, Diego. [Por] Rodrigo trabalha como contador. Ele não tem antecedentes criminais. Rodrigo acredita que suas experiências de vida o prepararam para a política. Rodrigo mora com seu namorado, Diego.

#### MEDIOCRE GAY TREATMENT CONDITION

**VIG\_MED.** [Eng] Rodrigo works as an accountant. Rodrigo has been caught by the police while driving drunk with an expired driver's license. Rodrigo believes all his life experiences prepared him for politics. Rodrigo lives with his boyfriend, Diego. [Por] Rodrigo trabalha como contador. Rodrigo tem passagem na polícia por ter sido pego na Lei Seca e dirigido com carteira de motorista vencida. Rodrigo acredita que as suas experiências de vida o prepararam para a política. Rodrigo mora com seu namorado, Diego.

#### MEDIOCRE HETEROSEXUAL TREATMENT CONDITION

**VIG\_MED.** [Eng] Rodrigo works as an accountant. Rodrigo has been caught by the police while driving drunk with an expired driver's license. Rodrigo believes all his life experiences prepared him for politics. Rodrigo lives with his girlfriend, Ana. [Por] Rodrigo trabalha como contador. Rodrigo tem passagem na polícia por ter sido pego na Lei Seca e dirigido com carteira de motorista vencida. Rodrigo acredita que as suas experiências de vida o prepararam para a política. Rodrigo mora com seu namorada, Ana.

#### OUTCOME MEASURE FOR TREATMENT CONDITIONS

**RIGHT\_TMT.** [Eng] Thinking of Rodrigo, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of him being permitted to run for the mayoral office of your city?

Choose a number on this 1-10 scale, 1 being that you strongly disapprove, and 10 that you strongly approve.

[Por] Pensando em Rodrigo, o quanto o(a) sr./sra. aprova ou desaprova que ele possa candidatar-se para a prefeitura da sua cidade?

Diga o número nesta escala que vai de 1 a 10, sendo que o 1 indica que você desaprova fortemente, e o 10 indica que aprova fortemente.

**QUAL\_TMT.** [Eng] 'I think Rodrigo is qualified to become mayor.' To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Choose a number on this 1-10 scale, 1 being that you strongly disagree, and 10 that you strongly agree.

**[Por]** ‘Eu acho que Rodrigo está qualificado para ser prefeito.’ Até que ponto concorda ou discorda com esa frase?

Diga o número nesta escala que vai de 1 a 10, sendo que o 1 indica que você discorda fortemente, e o 10 indica que concorda fortemente.

#### **CONTROL CONDITION**

**RIGHT\_CTL.** **[Eng]** And now, changing the topic and thinking of homosexuals, how strongly do you approve or disapprove of such people being permitted to run for public office?

Choose a number on this 1-10 scale, 1 being that you strongly disapprove, and 10 that you strongly approve.

**[Por]** E agora, mudando de assunto e pensando nos homossexuais, o quanto o(a) sr./sra. aprova ou desaprova que estas pessoas possam candidatar-se para cargos públicos? [24]

Diga o número nesta escala que vai de 1 a 10, sendo que o 1 indica que você desaprova fortemente, e o 10 indica que aprova fortemente.

Table A2.1: Descriptive Statistics

VARIABLES	(1) N	(2) Mean	(3) SD	(4) Min	(5) Max
Control	1008	.236	0.425	0	1
Upstanding Gay	1008	.24	0.427	0	1
Mediocre Gay	1008	.269	0.444	0	1
Mediocre Straight	1008	.255	0.436	0	1
Age	1008	43.181	15.646	18	85
Catholic	1003	.52	0.500	0	1
Evangelical	1003	.269	0.444	0	1
Secular/Other	1003	.21	0.408	0	1
Primary or Less	1008	.353	0.478	0	1
Secondary or Less	1008	.384	0.487	0	1
Technical/University or More	1008	.263	0.440	0	1
White	1000	.436	0.496	0	1
Black	1000	.145	0.352	0	1
Pardo	1000	.372	0.484	0	1
Other	1000	.047	0.212	0	1
Partisan	1008	.139	0.346	0	1
Female	1008	.531	0.499	0	1

Table A2.2: Multinomial Logit Testing Balance Among All Conditions

VARIABLES	(1) Upstanding Gay	(2) Mediocre Gay	(2) Mediocre Straight
26-35	0.0904 (0.299)	-0.392 (0.296)	-0.135 (0.308)
36-45	-0.0228 (0.310)	-0.0262 (0.293)	0.0661 (0.309)
46-55	-0.119 (0.342)	0.152 (0.314)	0.159 (0.331)
56-65	0.0386 (0.345)	-0.160 (0.334)	0.329 (0.335)
66+	-0.0560 (0.398)	-0.590 (0.405)	-0.342 (0.409)
Female	0.184 (0.188)	-0.132 (0.182)	0.0557 (0.185)
Black	-0.428 (0.283)	-0.254 (0.271)	-0.349 (0.269)
Pardo	-0.116 (0.211)	-0.0287 (0.207)	-0.341 (0.211)
Other	-0.319 (0.434)	-0.242 (0.418)	-0.642 (0.457)
Secondary or Less	-0.117 (0.238)	-0.0829 (0.228)	-0.234 (0.230)
Technical/University or More	-0.140 (0.255)	-0.283 (0.249)	-0.466* (0.254)
Evangelical	0.153 (0.225)	0.156 (0.221)	0.239 (0.222)
Secular/Other	-0.0564 (0.246)	0.136 (0.233)	0.0812 (0.242)
Partisan	-0.186 (0.262)	-0.0934 (0.251)	-0.345 (0.266)
Constant	0.107 (0.363)	0.432 (0.347)	0.383 (0.357)
Observations	995	995	995
LR chi2(18)	34.21	34.21	34.21
P	0.798	0.798	0.798

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A2.3: Multinomial Logit Testing Balance Between Experimental Conditions

VARIABLES	(1) Upstanding Gay	(2) Mediocre Gay
26-35	0.228 (0.307)	-0.261 (0.305)
36-45	-0.0867 (0.311)	-0.0938 (0.294)
46-55	-0.282 (0.337)	0.0143 (0.309)
56-65	-0.305 (0.335)	-0.475 (0.323)
66+	0.281 (0.408)	-0.255 (0.415)
Female	0.139 (0.186)	-0.184 (0.179)
Black	-0.0505 (0.284)	0.0742 (0.272)
Pardo	0.221 (0.208)	0.302 (0.202)
Other	0.338 (0.480)	0.415 (0.464)
Secondary or Less	0.104 (0.229)	0.162 (0.219)
Technical/University or More	0.327 (0.254)	0.189 (0.247)
Evangelical	-0.102 (0.218)	-0.0813 (0.213)
Secular/Other	-0.173 (0.247)	0.0530 (0.234)
Partisan	0.140 (0.277)	0.238 (0.264)
Constant	-0.265 (0.359)	0.0442 (0.342)
Observations	758	758
LR chi2(12)	24.46	24.46
P	0.657	0.657

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A2.4: Right to Run for Office Across Religious Groups  
(Only Experimental Conditions)

VARIABLES	Right to Run
Catholic	0.168 (0.524)
Evangelical	0.132 (0.580)
Upstanding Gay	4.604*** (0.640)
Mediocre Gay	1.404** (0.595)
Catholic#Upstanding Gay	-0.703 (0.753)
Catholic#Mediocre Gay	-0.537 (0.711)
Evangelical #Upstanding Gay	-2.082** (0.840)
Evangelical #Mediocre Gay	-1.714** (0.795)
26-35	-0.336 (0.385)
36-45	-0.443 (0.383)
46-55	-0.496 (0.407)
56-65	-0.759* (0.420)
66+	-0.305 (0.520)
Female	0.235 (0.232)
Black	-0.135 (0.356)
Pardo	0.00991 (0.261)
Other	-0.341 (0.585)
Secondary or Less	0.311 (0.285)
Technical/University or More	0.414 (0.320)
Partisan	0.240 (0.337)
Constant	3.082*** (0.599)
Observations	750
R-squared	0.237

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A2.5: RTR for Office Across Religious Groups (Full Sample)

VARIABLES	Right to Run
Catholic	0.242 (0.523)
Evangelical	0.222 (0.579)
Control	4.999*** (0.622)
Upstanding Gay	4.679*** (0.641)
Mediocre Gay	1.358** (0.594)
Catholic#Control	-0.377 (0.737)
Catholic#Upstanding Gay	-0.903 (0.752)
Catholic#Mediocre Gay	-0.503 (0.710)
Evangelical #Control	-2.405*** (0.833)
Evangelical #Upstanding Gay	-2.312*** (0.836)
Evangelical#Mediocre Gay	-1.810** (0.793)
26-35	-0.512 (0.332)
36-45	-0.658** (0.333)
46-55	-0.476 (0.355)
56-65	-0.864** (0.366)
66+	-0.616 (0.448)
Female	0.229 (0.202)
Black	0.297 (0.304)
Pardo	0.104 (0.227)
Other	0.420 (0.490)
Secondary or Less	0.310 (0.251)
Technical/University or More	0.589** (0.277)
Partisan	0.213 (0.288)
Constant	2.970*** (0.563)
Observations	995
R-squared	0.294

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



Table A2.6: Perceived Qualification Across Religious Groups (Treatment Conditions)

VARIABLES	Qualification
Catholic	0.242 (0.523)
Evangelical	0.222 (0.579)
Control	4.999*** (0.622)
Upstanding Gay	4.679*** (0.641)
Mediocre Gay	1.358** (0.594)
Catholic#Control	-0.377 (0.737)
Catholic#Upstanding Gay	-0.903 (0.752)
Catholic#Mediocre Gay	-0.503 (0.710)
Evangelical #Control	-2.405*** (0.833)
Evangelical #Upstanding Gay	-2.312*** (0.836)
Evangelical#Mediocre Gay	-1.810** (0.793)
26-35	-0.512 (0.332)
36-45	-0.658** (0.333)
46-55	-0.476 (0.355)
56-65	-0.864** (0.366)
66+	-0.616 (0.448)
Female	0.229 (0.202)
Black	0.297 (0.304)
Pardo	0.104 (0.227)
Other	0.420 (0.490)
Secondary or Less	0.310 (0.251)
Technical/University or More	0.589** (0.277)
Partisan	0.213 (0.288)
Constant	2.970*** (0.563)
Observations	995
R-squared	0.294

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A2.7: Gender-Interviewer Effects Across All Conditions

VARIABLES	Right to Run
Female Interviewer	-0.406 (0.465)
Upstanding Gay	4.386*** (0.581)
Mediocre Gay	3.739*** (0.556)
Mediocre Straight	0.738 (0.572)
Female Interviewer#Upstanding Gay	-0.255 (0.669)
Female Interviewer#Mediocre Gay	-0.309 (0.649)
Female Interviewer# Mediocre Straight	-0.171 (0.640)
26-35	-0.511 (0.335)
36-45	-0.702** (0.335)
46-55	-0.474 (0.358)
56-65	-0.832** (0.368)
66+	-0.433 (0.450)
Female	0.135 (0.204)
Black	0.213 (0.308)
Pardo	-0.0564 (0.229)
Other	0.292 (0.496)
Secondary or Less	0.249 (0.255)
Technical/University or More	0.594** (0.279)
Partisan	0.225 (0.293)
Constant	3.607*** (0.540)
Observations	1,000
R-squared	0.265

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A2.8: Bystander Effects Across All Conditions

VARIABLES	Right to Run
Far Presence	0.146 (0.527)
Some Interference	0.0317 (0.542)
Upstanding Gay	4.032*** (0.370)
Mediocre Gay	3.780*** (0.378)
Mediocre Straight	0.860** (0.362)
Far Presence #Upstanding Gay	-0.0224 (0.750)
Far Presence #Mediocre Gay	-0.714 (0.759)
Far Presence # Mediocre Straight	-0.693 (0.717)
Some Interference #Upstanding Gay	0.825 (0.761)
Some Interference #Mediocre Gay	-0.404 (0.738)
Some Interference # Mediocre Straight	-0.444 (0.739)
26-35	-0.502 (0.337)
36-45	-0.679** (0.336)
46-55	-0.430 (0.359)
56-65	-0.856** (0.372)
66+	-0.486 (0.453)
Female	0.126 (0.205)
Black	0.179 (0.309)
Pardo	-0.0555 (0.230)
Other	0.255 (0.499)
Secondary or Less	0.279 (0.255)
Technical/University or More	0.582** (0.281)
Partisan	0.251 (0.294)
Constant	3.263*** (0.436)
Observations	1,000
R-squared	0.265

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

### **Sample Demographics (Section A3.1)**

In Table A3.1 I compare the non-probability sample to two sampling frames: the general one—comprising all running candidates—and one specific to Brazil’s LGBTQ+ candidate population. Because data collection started before the 2020 election, these two frames were assembled while the data collection was taking place. Some distortions resulted from the absence of such sampling frames and others are by design. The sample is 74% male—much more than in the LGBTQ+ frame but closer to the gender balance achieved in the general frame and the 2016 LGBTQ+ sampling frame. Therefore, the sample overrepresents gay interviewees and underrepresents transgender male-to-female interviewees. Cisgender female, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender female-to-male interviewees’ values in the sample are nearly identical to their values in LGBTQ+ frame. With regards to ideology, the sample represents a compromise between the two frames: on the one hand, it comes closer to the left-leaning bias noticed in the LGBTQ+ frame; on the other hand, the sample tilts intentionally more towards interviewees running under ideologically center and right-of-center party banners—coming closer to these party banners’ benchmarks in the general frame. Although significantly whiter, the sample’s racial make-up seems to track closely across the two general samples, resembling the microcensus’ differences with the general frame—less Pardo and blacker. In comparison to the two frames, the resulting sample comes closer to the microcensus because interviewees are on average younger and more educated than the general frame.

Table A3.1: Candidates' Sociodemographic and Partisan Attributes

Attribute	Levels	Study Sample	Contacted Sample	LGBTQ+ Candidate 2020 Microcensus	TSE 2020 Elections Frame
Gender Identity	Cis Female	18%	17%	19%	35%
	Trans M-to-F	8%	10%	40%	
	Cis Male	70%	69%	39%	65%
	Trans F-to-M	4%	4%	2%	
Sexual Identity	Lesbian	14%	13%	15%	-
	Gay	66%	67%	37%	-
	Bisexual	8%	8%	6%	-
	Uninformed	12%	12%	42%	-
Ethnicity/ Race	White	44%	61%	44%	47%
	Black	18%	22%	24%	11%
	Pardo	34%	24%	30%	40%
	Other	4%	3%	2%	2%
Age	18-25	8%	10%	14%	4%
	26-35	32%	31%	40%	17%
	36-45	34%	35%	30%	31%
	46-55	14%	16%	12%	29%
	56+	12%	8%	4%	19%
Education	Post-Secondary	88%	77%	52%	27%
	Secondary	10%	19%	39%	44%
	Primary or Less	2%	3%	9%	29%
Partisan Alignment	PT	8%	9%	18%	6%
	Left-of-Center	38%	41%	48%	20%
	Center	20%	20%	13%	24%
	Right-of-Center	34%	30%	21%	50%
N		49	79	687	489,948

### Data Collection (Section A3.2)

In this chapter, I use interview data emanating from a convenience sample of openly LGBTQ candidates across Brazil's past four local election cycles. The project involved the recruitment of interviewees who had sought office in any of the seven election cycles since 1996. To be sure, the goal was to strive for a "loosely representative" sample of LGBTQ+ candidates: one possibility was to mirror the sexual- and gender-identity of LGBTQ+ individuals running in

2020. Given the project's timetable, there was at its front end no frame with complete coverage of LGBTQ+ candidates for the 2020 election. The availability of previous elections' LGBTQ+ candidate records from both Brazil's EMB data, along with the lists compiled by the author with the aid of local LGBTQ+ CSOs' records and press coverage, offered a great starting point to start identifying potential interviewees who could refer others running in 2020. LGBTQ+ candidates' contacting information -most likely e-mails- was putatively available in the EMB records, but sometimes this information had mainly been used and checked during previous electoral campaigns. All things considered, initiating data collection from abroad quickly showed that getting in touch with elected officials, rather than non-elected candidates, was easier.<sup>121</sup>

As of late July 2020, I was able to obtain a list of openly LGBTQ+ precandidates from the ANLGBTTI+.<sup>122</sup> The candidate pool (n=411) can be broken down into the following sexual- and gender-identity categories: Gay (54.3%), M-to-F Transgender (16.3%), Lesbian (11.9%), Bisexual (9%), F-to-M Transgender (2%) and Queer and other sexual- and gender-intersecting identities (6.5%). Precandidates in this list were individuals who had voluntarily opted into these records. They did not represent the whole existing pool of candidates. Some of them did not have a firm foothold within a party, while some of them might have desisted, or were ultimately not selected as candidates. However, the lack of a definitive sampling frame for the 2020 elections made me nevertheless use this list's make-up as a guiding template that biased my recruiting efforts towards cisgender gay interviewees.

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<sup>121</sup> I held open-ended conversations with six openly LGBTQ+ individuals involved in party politics during a month-long stay in São Paulo, Brazil, in July 2019. These conversations served different purposes.

<sup>122</sup> I received a draft of this list in July 2020. The final precandidates' list on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The list is available upon request.

### **Sampling Strategy and Biases (Section A3.3)**

Interview data were collected via a combination of purposive (or judgment) and snowballing sampling techniques (Arber 2001; Miles and Huberman 1994). On the one hand, purposive sampling is useful to target subjects who are theoretically relevant in terms of profile attributes- i.e., for their ideology or public display of religiosity. A drawback, however, is that lack of referral made their contact only possible through “cold messages,” sent to either publicly available mail or social media accounts, such as Facebook Messenger, Instagram, and WhatsApp. On the other hand, I also used referrals. Chain-referred interviewees had been already included in my purposive sampling frame, while others were instead snowballed as interviewees dropped their names either voluntarily or in response to my request to refer LGBTQ+ interviewees with specific profiles. In most cases, these chain-referred or snowballed subjects were contacted via audio or text WhatsApp messages, oftentimes with a heads up from the referrer. The resulting sample was made up of 49 interviewees -half snowballed, half purposively recruited- as shown in the following figure.

### **Non-Response Bias (Section A3.4)**

By way of descriptive statistics and OLS regression analysis using a dataset of 79 contact attempts -that is, both successful and unsuccessful contacts- I can provide more detail on the qualitative data collection. The response rate for my sample was of 62%, which is comparatively good relative to the response rates reported in other studies involving elite interviews (e.g., Fox and Lawless 2005: 37). Because of the availability of the above-mentioned dataset, I can control - emulating Brehm’s (1993) analysis of nonresponse bias- for differences in sampling design

features between the sets of interviewed subjects and missing subjects. Therefore, I can be candid about the potential design biases affecting my sample, and whether and how their existence might condition my inferences about causal mechanisms. The analysis in the Table A3.2 below shows that self-reported sexual identity did not bias the recruitment in my sample. Relative to other-than-gay identities, the positive direction of the gay identity's coefficient only indicates that openly gay men candidates make up a majority of my sample. Moreover, respondents with past electoral experience were not more likely to participate in my sample. Relative to interviewees running under left-of-center party banners, only interviewees running under right-leaning party banners were more likely to opt into my sample. Relative to purposive contacts, the snowball technique appears to have influenced interviewees' likelihood of participating in the sample. Endorsed messages appear to be more effective than cold messages. Running for mayoral rather than legislative positions did not make interviewees more likely to participate in my sample. Lastly, interviewees who had held elected positions prior to, or attained elected positions in the 2020 elections, were slightly less likely to grant me an interview.



Table A3.2: Recruitment Bias in Sample

VARIABLES	(1) Interview is Granted
Gay	0.0520 (0.120)
Experience	0.210 (0.166)
Left-of-Center	0.239 (0.170)
Center	0.180 (0.193)
Right-of-Center	0.216 (0.173)
Right	0.363* (0.202)
Mayor	-0.0631 (0.193)
Snowball	0.231** (0.113)
Elected	-0.314* (0.166)
Constant	0.381*** (0.140)
Observations	79
R-squared	0.160

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

### **Questionnaire and Duration of Interviews (Section A3.5)**

My questionnaire design draws heavily from the in-depth, semi-structured questionnaire design developed by Fox and Lawless (2005), and to a lesser extent from Golebiowska (2003a). The questionnaire was modified beforehand in the question wordings and probing instructions, and other alterations were added during the fieldwork. The question on the relationship to the openly LGBT electorate was added after the data collection started. Semi-structured interviews followed in most cases the questionnaire script, with questions involving the following core sections: motivation to run, campaign experiences, and opinions on the presence of LGBTs in politics (including those on the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in elective office). I also allowed interviewees to raise additional issues or comments, which led several interviews to exceed the 45 minutes of expected length. Only three interviews lasted more than two hours. I asked for permission to tape the interviews for annotation purposes. None of the interviewed subjects refused to authorize that recording. Additionally, most interviews involved written notes during the interview and were supplemented by debriefing extensions on those notes immediately following the end of the interview. Quotations of the subjects' responses are authors' translations with minor stylistic edits.

#### *Protocol in English*

Below is an outline of the topics addressed during the interviews I have conducted. These conversations were expected to be free flowing, so the exact wording of each question varied.

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to take the time to be interviewed. Most of the questions I'm going to ask deal with your attitudes about running for office. I want to emphasize that I am

interested in your opinions and attitudes. Our discussion is totally anonymous. There are no right or wrong answers.

Everything you say here will be kept confidential, and your names or any other identifying information will not be linked to any report coming from this research. I will not share your responses with any other interviewee. You may refuse to participate in this study. Even if you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled as a participant of this study.

As the researcher, I inform you that the obtained materials and information associated with you can be published in lessons, conferences, scientific events, lectures or scientific journals. However, you will not be identified by name or in any form that would identify you as their source. The recordings will be kept as the property of this researcher.

First things first, would you permit me to record our interview? It will be for my own notetaking purposes only. It will not be released, distributed, or used by anyone not directly involved with this project.

### *Motivation*

1. [Warm-up question] What is your motivation for wanting to get politically involved?
2. Can you remember when you first realized that running for office was something that you might want to do? What makes you think you might have wanted to do this?

• *If the candidate's homosexual identity is not mentioned, probe for "non-political factors, such as aspects of your identity."*

3. Has anyone ever suggested or encouraged you to run for office?

• *If yes, probe: Who? What were their relations to you? Family and friends versus party leaders, elected officials, colleagues, community activists? How important was this kind of support to you in your deciding whether to enter a race? Whose support do you think is most important to run for office?*

### *Campaign*

4. Could you tell me a little bit about the campaign and the specific race you were involved in?

5. During the campaign I imagine you introduced yourself to people with various backgrounds and talked to them about your candidacy. Were there any aspects of the campaign that were particularly difficult? Surprising?

• *Probe about different impact of open homosexual identity on the electorate.*

• *Probe for partisan or religious differences in terms of how people respond to open homosexuality.*

6. How did you find out about the list of openly LGBTQ+ candidates created by the ABGLT prior to each election? What motivated you to be part of that list?

### *LGBTQ+ Individuals in Politics*

7. Lots of people say that, in order to enter the political arena, you need to have thick skin. Do you think this is an accurate assessment?

• *Probe about different impact of open LGBTQ+ identity on the electorate: How would you characterize the openly LGBTQ+ people who decide to run for office?*

8. Do you think that it is harder for openly LGBTQ+ women than openly LGBTQ+ men to obtain a candidacy in politics? Have you ever seen any patterns of sexism or racism within the LGBTQ+ community?

9. [For openly LGBTQ+ individuals in office:] Do you think being in office makes things easier for you or other openly LGBTQ+ candidates? Do you think your administration has been affected by the fact you are openly LGBTQ+?

Thank you for your time. I may follow up with you later if I have more questions, if that is okay?

### *Protocol in Portuguese*

Introdução: Obrigado por concordar em dedicar um pouco do seu tempo para ser entrevistado. A maioria das perguntas que vou fazer giram em torno da sua postura em relação à sua candidatura. Quero enfatizar que estamos interessados em suas opiniões e posturas. Nossa discussão é totalmente anônima. Não existem opiniões corretas ou incorretas.

Os dados obtidos por meio desta pesquisa serão confidenciais e não serão divulgados em nível individual, visando assegurar o sigilo de sua participação. Eu não usarei seu nome nem o identificarei de forma alguma. Não vou associar seus comentários à sua posição política ou a qualquer afiliação que você possa ter. Além disso, não transmitirei seus comentários a nenhuma outra pessoa que eu vier a entrevistar. Você tem a liberdade de não participar deste estudo. Caso concorde em participar, mesmo assim você pode interromper sua participação em qualquer

momento da pesquisa, sem penalidade ou perda de benefícios aos quais teria direito se continuasse participando do estudo.

Eu, o pesquisador responsável, informo você que eu posso tornar públicos nos meios acadêmicos e científicos os resultados obtidos de forma consolidada sem qualquer identificação de indivíduos entrevistados. Os registros de áudio ficarão sob a propriedade do pesquisador pertinente ao estudo e sob sua guarda.

Primeiro que tudo, me permite gravar nossa entrevista? Essa gravação será usada apenas para fins de anotação. A gravação não será publicada, distribuída ou usada por qualquer pessoa que não esteja diretamente envolvida com este projeto.

### *Motivação*

1. [Pergunta de aquecimento] Qual é a sua motivação para querer envolver-se com política?

2. Você consegue se lembrar quando percebeu pela primeira vez que concorrer para um cargo político era algo que você gostaria de fazer? O que você acha que fez você querer fazer isso?

• *Se a identidade homossexual do candidato não for mencionada, procure por “fatores não-políticos”, como características de sua identidade.*

3. Alguém já tinha sugerido ou encorajado você a concorrer a um cargo político?

• *Se sim, sondar: quem? Qual o tipo de relação entre você e essa pessoa? Família e amigos versus líderes partidários, autoridades eleitas, colegas, ativistas comunitários? Quão importante foi este tipo de apoio para você em sua decisão de concorrer e fazer campanha? De quem é o apoio que considera mais importante para concorrer a esse cargo?*

### *Campanha*

4. Você poderia me contar um pouco sobre a campanha? Ser mais específico sobre a campanha em que você esteve envolvido?

5. Durante a campanha, imagino que você se apresentou a pessoas de realidades e pensamentos variados e conversou com eles sobre sua candidatura. Havia algum aspecto da campanha que fosse particularmente difícil? Surpreendente?

- *Sondar a diferença do impacto da identidade LGBTQ+ assumida no eleitorado.*
- *Sondar as diferenças partidárias ou religiosas em termos de como as pessoas respondem à homossexualidade assumida.*

6. Como você ficou sabendo da lista dos candidatos de identidade LGBTQ+ assumida que a ABGLT cria antes de cada eleição? O que motivou você a formar parte dessa lista?

### *Pessoas LGBTQ+ assumidas na política*

7. Muitas pessoas dizem que ingressar à política uma pessoa precisa de ser calejado. Você acha que esta é uma avaliação correta?

- *Sondar os diferentes impactos da identidade LGBTQ+ assumida no eleitorado: Como você caracterizaria os tipos de pessoas LGBTQ+ assumidas que decidem concorrer a um cargo político?*

8. Você acha que é mais difícil para as lésbicas assumidas do que para os LGBTQ+ assumidos conseguirem se eleger? Você já viu algum sinal de sexismo ou racismo dentro da comunidade LGBTQ+?

9. [Para indivíduos gays assumidos que ocupam cargos políticos:] você acha que ocupar um cargo político facilita as coisas para você ou para outros candidatos LGBTQ+ assumidos? Você acha que seu trabalho no cargo político foi afetado pelo fato de você ser uma pessoa LGBTQ+ assumida?

### **Anonymity of Interviewees (Section A3.6)**

Per federal IRB policy, research involving interviews with elected officials or nominated candidates for elective office is most likely to be considered exempt from full board review. Moreover, researchers are not responsible for putting these subjects at risk of “criminal or civil liability” or affecting their “financial standing, employability, or reputation” (45 CFR §46.101(b)(2), as cited in Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2016: 278). However, the IRB policy is rather vague with several aspects of what entails running for office: such as whether the level of government or the candidate’s minority status matter. Given a history of violence against LGBTQ+ candidates in local Brazil, my IRB application already had planned to anonymize my interviewees’ identities despite the research’s exempt status.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, this project’s exempt status was also ratified by a Brazilian IRB.<sup>124</sup> Interviewees were informed of their anonymized status when they were read the informed consent. Although several interviewees stated they would have preferred their statements to be linked to their official identity, all consented to maintaining their anonymity upon the explanation that other interviewees would prefer the opposite. To quote them anonymously, I generated a random list of three-digit identification numbers.

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<sup>123</sup> This research was declared exempt from full board review under Vanderbilt IRB protocol 191292 on November 4, 2019.

<sup>124</sup> Prior to Vanderbilt’s IRB approval, Brazil’s CEPH-FGV committee had reviewed the project and decided that it complied with local ethical standards on October 18, 2019 (Protocol 104/2019).



### **Two-step Verification Procedure of Candidates' LGBTQ+ Identity (Section A4.1)**

While I trust the CSOs' cataloguing efforts, verification was key to produce a genuine dataset of openly LGBTQ+ candidates (Moravcsik 2014). The verification process consisted of multiple tasks, which can be grouped into two different procedures: one that was strictly non-contact, and a second one in which a first-hand corroboration of LGBTQ+/non-LGBTQ+ status was deemed necessary. Starting with the first procedure, a thorough vetting was in order due to three potential misclassification issues: 1) candidates in the catalogues could be non-LGBTQ+ "allies"- i.e., cis-straight candidates who explicitly commit to represent LGBTQ+ interests during their mandates; 2) when their subgroup LGBTQ+ identity was not declared as such; and 3) conflicting data about catalogued candidates' LGBTQ+ subgroup identity. Vetting efforts demanded sleuthing through the candidate's publicly available social media information and, if necessary, local press coverage. If the vetting efforts were still inconclusive, I got in touch with the candidate in question through messaging features of social media applications such as Facebook or Instagram. If the candidate's mobile number was publicly offered by candidates on social media, then I employed WhatsApp instead. If candidates failed (or perhaps refused) to provide a confirmation, those candidates ended up being considered non-LGBTQ+.

### **LGBTQ+ Candidate Data Limitations (Section A4.2)**

As with any observational dataset about LGBTQ+ populations, however, there are limitations at the intersection of candidates' gender and non-straight sexual identities. The most obvious limitation is that the data compulsorily treats transgender candidates as straight. Many

measurement issues could arise from such imposition: there is room to speculate for instance that bisexual candidates' ballot codes could of a different quality, had transgender candidates been able to state whether they identified themselves as such. Such discussion provides a convenient segue into another category that intersects different categories: *travesti*. Candidates who self-identify as *travesti* can be subsumed as M-to-F since they are likely to display a feminine gender expression. However, a hypothetical *travesti* candidate can claim a variety of gender identities, both within and beyond the gender binary, and even back and forth (Pierce 2020: 306-307). Hence, another limitation is that *travesti* candidates cannot become a category of its own. Instead, when *travesti* candidates declare a gay identity, I tally them according to their non-straight identity. Otherwise, I count them as transgender M-to-F. Along the same lines as with the *travesti* category, one final limitation is that this dataset also treats genderqueer or gender-nonconforming (GNC) identities such as drag as part of the transgender M-to-F candidates. The literature has yet to show whether GNC candidates such as drag-identifying individuals would be different from transgender candidates, especially among those individuals for whom a transgender or non-binary gender expression is rather permanent than part time (Bowers and Whitley 2020: 145-146).

### **Comparison of LGBTQ+/Cis-Straight Candidates (Section A4.3)**

There are few key differences between cis-straight and LGBTQ+ candidates. On average, LGBTQ+ candidates are on average younger -by almost 9 years- and more educated. Even the least LGBTQ+ subgroup with more less-than-primary educated members -namely, transgender men still claim more candidates with post-secondary education than their cis-straight men peers. Within the LGBTQ+, the non-transgender subgroups are the most educated ones, with non-

transgender gay candidates taking the lead. Each LGBTQ+ subgroup claims more self-identified black candidates than the cis-straight group. Interestingly, the LGBTQ+ subgroups with the smaller share of white candidates are the M-to-F candidates, which along with non-transgender bisexuals are the more diverse groups in the sample. LGBTQ+ candidates appear to be significantly likelier to run for office under left-of-center parties, although transgender subgroups appear to be relatively more open to be nominated by right-of-center parties. That said, cis-straight candidates' party banners are skewed towards the right-of-center parties along the spectrum of ideological placement.

Table A4.1: Comparison of Sociodemographic Attributes, Cis-Straight vs. LGBTQ+

Attribute		Candidates						
		Cis-Straight		LGBTQ+				
		Women	Men	Lesbian	Gay	Bisexual	M-to-F	F-to-M
Age		44	46	37	34	29	37	40
Educational Attainment (%)	Primary and Less	23	32	4	2	0	16.5	33
	Secondary	44	44	34	28	10	56.5	20
	Post-Secondary	33	24	62	70	90	27	47
Ethnic Identity (%)	Black	12	12	31	21	36	25	20
	Parda	38	41.5	21	26	26	39	13
	White	50	45.5	48	53	38	36	67
Party Ideological Placement (%)	Left	9	8	49	38	74	31	13
	Left-of-Center	17	17	30	34	15	20	47
	Center	24	24	6	11	3	20	0
	Established Right-Of-Center	27	27	6	9	0	16	20
	New Right-Of-Center	23	24	9	8	8	13	20

### Good-Number Index and Scoring Examples (Section A4.4)

The good-number index would range ordinarily between 0-7 points, in which a higher number denotes that a candidate’s electoral code possesses a better mnemonic quality. As we will see, however, it is important to control for party-fixed effects because not all parties are able to assign numbers across the whole range. Some parties also appear to systematically avoid assigning mnemonically high-quality ballot codes. For example, the Workers’ Party has scarcely assigned their highest-quality ballot codes to candidates, regardless of LGBTQ+ identity status or not. Ballot codes such as 13434 was used just once, while 13212 and 13232 have been assigned a few more times -ten and eleven respectively- but still under-assigned, all things considered.

Table A4.2: Ballot Codes’ Mnemonic Quality and Good-Number Score

Ballot Code	Digit Repetition	Digit Adjacency	Good-Number Score
40369	0	0	0
13082	0	0	0
15746	0	0	0
35244	1	0	1
13963	1	0	1
28680	1	0	1
90777	2	0	2
17199	2	0	2
15333	2	0	2
13456	0	3	3
45606	1	2	3
33013	2	1	3
13210	1	3	4
22222	4	0	4
19212	2	2	4
43456	1	4	5
77877	3	2	5
14545	2	3	5
23223	3	3	6
12123	2	4	6
65456	2	4	6
45454	3	4	7
65656	3	4	7
12121	3	4	7

**Unpacking LGBTQ+ Subgroup Identities (Regression Results corresponding to Figure 4.2)  
(Section A4.5)**

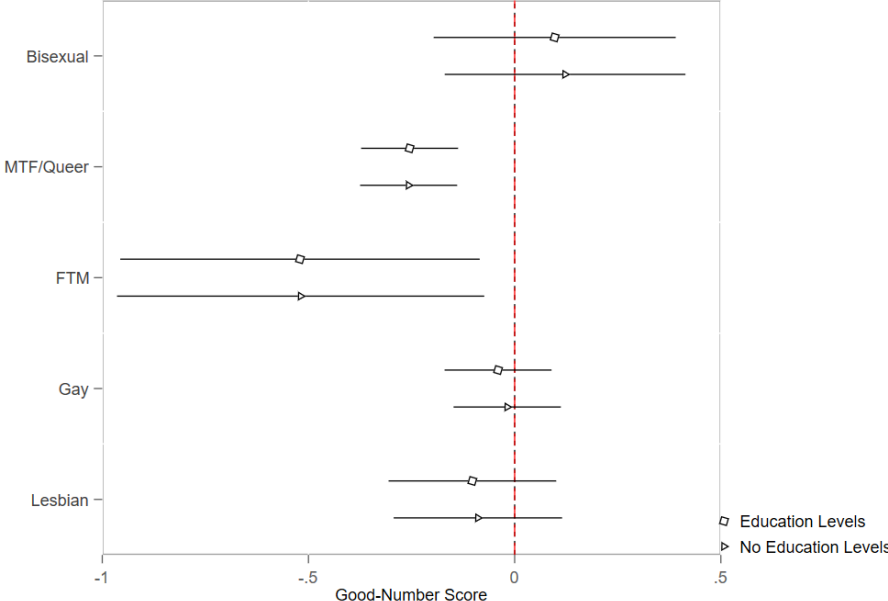
Table A4.3: Regression Results (Models 4-5)		
VARIABLES	(1) Model 4	(2) Model 5
<i>Cis-Straight is baseline</i>		
Lesbian	-0.113 (0.104)	-0.103 (0.104)
Gay	-0.0517 (0.0658)	-0.0371 (0.0660)
Bisexual	0.0885 (0.150)	0.0971 (0.150)
FTM	-0.526** (0.222)	-0.521** (0.222)
MTF/Queer	-0.260*** (0.0600)	-0.258*** (0.0601)
<i>Women is baseline</i>		
Men	0.0854*** (0.00276)	0.0845*** (0.00278)
<i>18-25 is baseline</i>		
26-35	0.0182** (0.00792)	0.0187** (0.00796)
36-45	0.0175** (0.00763)	0.0189** (0.00767)
46-55	-0.0109 (0.00769)	-0.00904 (0.00773)
56+	-0.0377*** (0.00790)	-0.0350*** (0.00796)
Secondary	0.0154*** (0.00314)	0.0158*** (0.00316)
Post-Secondary	0.0604*** (0.00352)	0.0614*** (0.00356)
<i>Black is baseline</i>		
Parida		0.0636*** (0.00437)
White		0.0413*** (0.00436)
Constant	3.552*** (0.0106)	2.241*** (0.0108)
Observations	485,497	479,772
R-squared	0.261	0.261
Party FE	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

The Exclusion of Educational Attainment as a Control Variable (Section A4.6)

Figure A4.1: Exclusion of Educational Attainment as a Control



## Ethnoracial Background (Section A4.7)

Table A4.4: Intersection of LGBTQ+ Identity and Ethnoracial Background

VARIABLES	(6) Model 6	(7) Model 7
<i>Cis-Straight and Bisexual are baseline</i>		
LGBTQ+	-0.148*** (0.0392)	
Lesbian		-0.0908 (0.381)
Gay		-0.0613 (0.410)
FTM		-0.873* (0.466)
MTF/Queer		-0.226 (0.364)
<i>Women is baseline</i>		
Men	0.0847*** (0.00278)	0.174 (0.135)
<i>18-25 is baseline</i>		
26-35	0.0185** (0.00796)	0.168 (0.140)
36-45	0.0187** (0.00767)	0.0792 (0.152)
46-55	-0.00927 (0.00773)	0.116 (0.180)
56+	-0.0353*** (0.0185**)	0.165 (0.245)
<i>Primary or Less is Baseline</i>		
Secondary	0.0158*** (0.00316)	0.176 (0.152)
Post-Secondary	0.0615*** (0.00356)	0.427** (0.166)
<i>Black is baseline</i>		
Parida	0.0640*** (0.00437)	-0.121 (0.452)
White	0.0416*** (0.00436)	0.239 (0.399)
<i>Bisexual and Black is baseline</i>		
Lesbian#Parida		-0.216 (0.542)
Lesbian#White		-0.308 (0.463)
Gay#Parida		0.264 (0.688)
Gay#White		-0.0433 (0.566)
FTM#Parida		0.264 (0.688)
FTM#White		-0.0433 (0.566)
MTF/Queer#Parida		0.165 (0.472)
MTF/Queer#White		-0.367 (0.426)
Constant	3.552*** (0.0106)	3.552*** (0.0106)
Observations	485,497	485,497
R-squared	0.261	0.261
Party FE	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Marriage Situation (Section A4.8)

Table A4.5: Intersection of LGBTQ+ Identity and Marital Status

VARIABLES	(8) Model 8	(9) Model 9
<i>Cis-Straight and Bisexual are baseline</i>		
LGBTQ+	-0.0812 (0.110)	
Lesbian		0.489 (0.317)
Gay		0.476* (0.245)
FTM		0.223 (0.257)
MTF/Queer		0.0884 (0.191)
<i>Women is baseline</i>		
Men	0.0831*** (0.00298)	0.158 (0.131)
<i>Married is baseline</i>		
Single	-0.0256*** (0.00295)	0.587** (0.228)
<i>Bisexual and Black is baseline</i>		
LGBTQ+#Single	-0.0715 (0.118)	
Lesbian#Single		-0.797** (0.389)
Gay#Single		-0.829*** (0.305)
FTM#Single		-1.070*** (0.356)
MTF/Queer#Single		-0.435 (0.280)
Constant	2.313*** (0.0109)	1.960*** (0.344)
Observations	429,681	641
R-squared	0.262	0.307
Party FE	Yes	Yes
Controls	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1



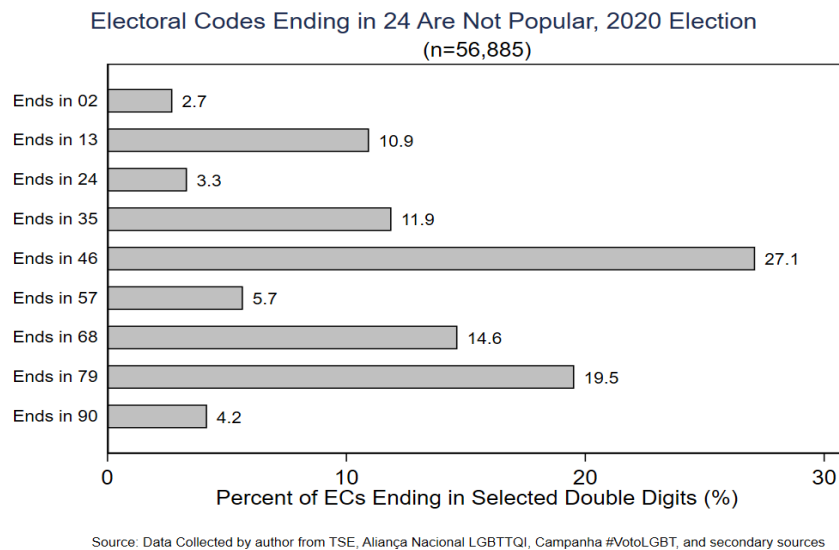
## Discussion Analysis (Section A4.9)

Table A4.6: Party Codes in Brazil's Democracy since 1981

Acronym	Name in Portuguese	Name in English	Established	Code
MDB	Movimento Democrático Brasileiro	Brazilian Democratic Movement	30.6.1981	15
PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro	Brazilian Labor Party	3.11.1981	14
PDT	Partido Democrático Trabalhista	Democratic Labor Party	10.11.1981	12
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores	Workers' Party	11.2.1982	13
PCdoB	Partido Comunista do Brasil	Communist Party of Brazil	23.6.1988	65
PSB	Partido Socialista Brasileiro	Brazilian Socialist Party	1.7.1988	40
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira	Brazilian Social Democracy Party	24.8.1989	45
AGIR	Agir	Let's Act	22.2.1990	36
PSC	Partido Social Cristão	Social Christian Party	29.3.1990	20
PMN	Partido da Mobilização Nacional	National Mobilization Party	25.10.1990	33
CIDADANIA	Cidadania	Citizenship	19.3.1992	23
PV	Partido Verde	Green Party	30.9.1993	43
AVANTE	Avante	Forward	11.10.1994	70
PP	Progressistas	Progressists	16.11.1995	11
PSTU	Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado	Unified Socialist Workers' Party	19.12.1995	16
PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro	Brazilian Communist Party	9.5.1996	21
PRTB	Partido Renovador Trabalhista Brasileiro	Brazilian Renewal Labor Party	18.2.1997	28
DC	Democracia Cristã	Christian Democracy	5.8.1997	27
PCO	Partido da Casusa Operária	Workers' Cause Party	30.9.1997	29
PODE	Podemos	We Can	2.10.1997	19
REPUBLICANOS	Republicanos	Republicans	25.8.2005	10
PSOL	Partido Socialismo e Liberdade	Socialism and Liberty Party	15.9.2005	50
PL	Partido Liberal	Liberal Party	19.12.2006	22
PSD	Partido Social Democrata	Democratic Social Party	27.9.2011	55
PATRIOTA	Patriota	Patriot	19.6.2012	51
PROS	Partido Republicano da Ordem Social	Republican Party of Social Order	24.9.2013	90
SOLIDARIEDADE	Solidariedade	Solidarity	24.9.2013	77
NOVO	Partido Noco	New Party	15.9.2015	30
REDE	Rede Sustentabilidade	Sustainability Network	22.9.2015	18
PMB	Partido da Mulher Brasileira	Brazilian Women's Party	29.9.2015	35
UP	Unidade Popular	Popular Unity	10.12.2019	80
UNIÃO	União Brasil	Brazil Union	8.2.2022	44

I also expose the low popularity of ballot codes ending in 24 in the general sample. I compare ballot codes ending in 24 to other ballot codes that share the following properties: 1) endings must have the same double-digit inner difference as 24; 2) numbers must have a difference a difference of 11 -or a multiple of 11- between them. Ballot code endings result from an arithmetic progression of integers between 0 and 100. This exercise is displayed in the Figure A4.2. Figure A4.2 displays the percentages of ballot codes' ending in 24 and other selected endings.

Figure A4.2: Sample-Wide Percentage of Ballot Codes Ending in Selected Double Digits



None of these numbers stand as necessarily attractive from a mnemonic point of view. I also include the double-digit endings of 0 and 2 and 9 and 0, respectively, despite their incomppliance with the first criterion. Without these two ending combinations, ballot codes ending in 24 would be the least issued. That said, there is no prior reason beyond the idiosyncratic meaning to expect ballot codes ending in 24 to have an overall lower frequency than most of their similar counterparts, and yet they are only a 0.34% of the entire sample, and a 3.3% of the selected sample (which accounts in itself for 11% of the entire sample).

I empirically test my intuition surrounding the assignment of electoral codes ending in 24 across LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ segments of candidates with logistical regression analysis. I separately test via two additional logistic regression models how electoral codes with adjacent smaller and upper number endings follow the same bias as those ending in 24. Therefore, the dependent variables for these analyses are coded 1 if an electoral code ends in one of the selected combinations of digits -namely 23, 24, and 25 - and 0 otherwise. These models can be generally specified as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}(\pi) = & \alpha + \beta_1 \text{LGBTQPlus}_i + \beta_2 \text{Gender}_i + \beta_3 \text{EducationalAttainment}_i \\ & + \beta_4 \text{AgeCohort}_i + \vartheta_{pc} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned}$$

where  $\text{logit}(\pi)$  is the logit function of probability that a candidate gets an electoral code ending in one of the two-digit combinations listed above. On the right side of the equation there are two dummy independent variables of interest: Candidates' gender and sexual identity status and self-identified gender. The former variable is coded 1 if the candidate self-identifies themselves as LGBTQ+ and 0 otherwise. The latter variable is coded 1 if the candidate self-identifies themselves as men and 0 otherwise. Additionally, controls such as candidates' self-declared educational achievement, age cohort, and party-code fixed effects –as detailed in the previous section- are also specified.

Table A4.7: Logistical Probability  
of Being Assigned a Ballot Code Ending in...

VARIABLES	(1) BC Ending in 23	(2) BC Ending in 24	(3) BC Ending in 25
LGBTQ+	-0.142 (0.141)	2.657*** (0.164)	-0.563 (0.505)
Men	0.416*** (0.0123)	-0.181*** (0.0477)	-0.243*** (0.0289)
26-35	0.00671 (0.0134)	-0.109* (0.0572)	-0.0209 (0.0358)
36-45	-0.0845*** (0.0148)	-0.131** (0.0623)	0.0330 (0.0379)
46-55	-0.185*** (0.0212)	-0.124 (0.0870)	0.134*** (0.0501)
56+	-0.349*** (0.0482)	-0.333 (0.205)	0.236** (0.0988)
Secondary	0.0981*** (0.0136)	-0.0716 (0.0536)	-0.0455 (0.0337)
Post-Secondary	0.183*** (0.0149)	-0.508*** (0.0670)	-0.156*** (0.0384)
Constant	-2.877*** (0.0286)	-5.205*** (0.115)	-4.810*** (0.0850)
Observations	489,923	489,117	489,117
Party-Code FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A4.7 reports the results of three logistic regression models. Model 2 allows for a more systematic assessment of which candidates are more likely to receive a ballot code ending in 24, along with its two complementary replications. With women candidates as the baseline, Model 2 reveals that there is a high probability that party elites avoid assigning electoral codes ending in 24 to men candidates. Moreover, a comparison across the three models yields that LGBTQ+ candidates are significantly more likely to be the recipients of electoral codes ending in 24. These results are also instructive to the extent that both the direction and significance of coefficients show a higher likelihood for cisgender men candidates' ballot codes to end in 23 instead (Model 1) and less to end in 25 (Model 3)—the number 23 being more conducive to a higher mnemonic quality than the number 25. These results are also in line with the mnemonic

logic governing the allocation of ballot codes across men and women candidates. Finally, Table A4.8 unpacks LGBTQ+ subgroup identities to predict the assignment of ballot codes ending in numbers 24 and 44 among LGBTQ+ candidates relative to cis-straight candidates.

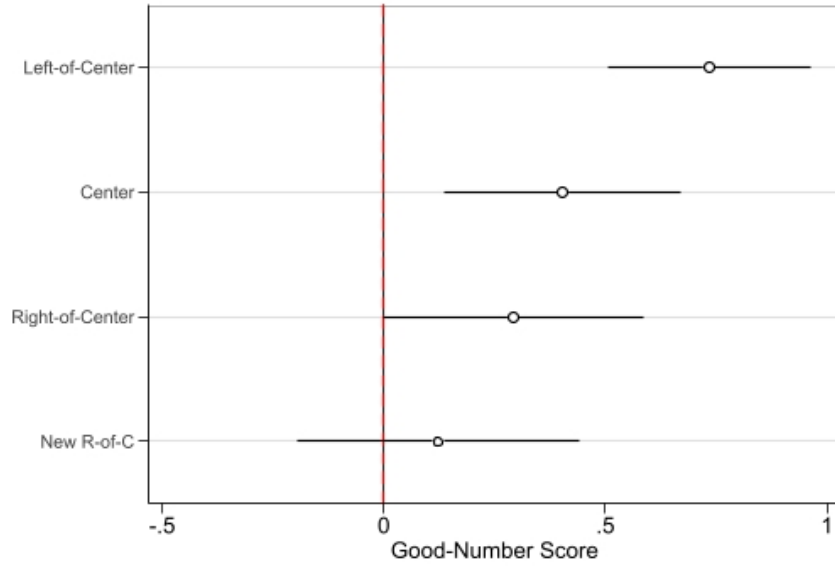
Table A4.8: Logistical Probability of Being Assigned a Ballot Code Ending in...

VARIABLES	(1) Number 24	(2) Number 44
Bisexual	2.023** (1.022)	(omitted)
FTM	(omitted)	(omitted)
MTF/Queer	3.020*** (0.227)	-0.577 (0.413)
Gay	3.361*** (0.242)	-0.943 (0.582)
Lesbian	2.014*** (0.591)	1.213*** (0.322)
26-35	-0.254** (0.120)	-0.0724 (0.0458)
36-45	-0.290** (0.115)	0.00376 (0.0439)
46-55	-0.381*** (0.117)	-0.0455 (0.0442)
56+	-0.344*** (0.121)	-0.0724 (0.0454)
Male	-0.194*** (0.0485)	-0.103*** (0.0159)
Secondary	-0.0787 (0.0538)	-0.156*** (0.0178)
Post-Secondary	-0.537*** (0.0680)	-0.323*** (0.0208)
Constant	-4.966*** (0.153)	-3.095*** (0.0560)
Observations	484,664	485,421
Party-Code FE	Yes	Yes

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Differences in Ballot Codes' Mnemonic Quality Across Party Families' Ideological Positionings in Brazil's 2020 Local Elections (Section A4.10)**

Figure A4.3. Predicted Ballot Codes' Mnemonic Quality, By Party Families' Ideology



## Appendix to Chapter 5

### Example of Candidate-Choice Task and Instrument

Figure A5.1: Visualization of Task

	<b>Marcos</b>	<b>Rodrigo</b>
<b>Estado civil</b>	Atualmente num relacionamento estável com Amanda	Casado com Tiago
<b>Vai para igreja</b>	Nunca ou quase nunca	Uma ou duas vezes ao mês
<b>Idade</b>	41	41
<b>Religião</b>	Não tem religião	Católico
<b>Partido e coligação</b>	PSL/PRTB ["Brasil acima de tudo, Deus acima de todos"]	PSOL/PCdoB/PDT ["Frente de Esquerda"]
<b>Expêriencia na política local</b>	Ocupou cadeira de vereador, e foi reconhecido pela coêrencia e honestidade	Ocupou cadeira de vereador

Upon completing the pre-treatment items of the survey, participants are randomly exposed to three binary juxtapositions of candidate profiles. The wordings of the outcome item and the treatment script -both in English and Portuguese- are listed below.

**STEM.** [Por] Suponha que voce tenha que escolher um entre dois candidatos à prefeitura. Vamos proporcionar alguns dados específicos sobre cada um desses candidatos. Teremos tres duplas de candidatos e para cada dupla, por favor indique qual é o candidato que voce prefere. Este exercicio é puramente hipotético. Mesmo que você não tenha certeza da resposta, escolha o perfil que mais te agrada.

**CANDIDATE\_PROFILES** [Randomly scramble the attributes for each candidate profile, but constrained the randomization to make one of the two candidates gay] [Randomize the following names for each of the six candidates' unique profile: Francisco, Bruno, Felipe, Marcos, Lucas, Diego]

Attributes	Values or Levels
Idade	37/38/39/40/41/42
Expêriencia na política local	[Eng] Never held office / Held seat on city council / Held seat on city council and was noted for being consistent and honest.
	[Por] Não ocupou nenhum cargo político / Ocupou cadeira de vereador / Ocupou cadeira de vereador, e foi reconhecido pela coêrencia e honestidade.
Partido e coligação	[Por] PT [No coalition] / PSOL/PCdoB/PDT [Left Front] / PSDB/DEM [“Producing to Give Jobs”] / MDB/PHS/PSB [“Popular Will”] / PSL/PRTB [“Brazil before everything, and God above all.”] / PROGRESSISTAS/REDE [“The Work Goes on”]
	[Por] PT [Sem coligação] / PSOL/PCdoB/PDT [Frente de Esquerda] / PSDB/MDB/PHS/PSB [“Produzir para empregar”] / PSL-/PRTB [“Brasil acima de tudo, Deus acima de todos”] / PROGRESSISTAS/REDE/DEM [“O Trabalho Continua”]
Religião	[Eng] Catholic / Evangelical / Does not have a religion [Por] Católico/Evangélico/Não tem religião
Vai para Igreja	[Eng] More than once a week / Once a week / Once or twice a month / A couple of times a year / Never
	[Por] Mais de uma vez por semana <sup>[SEP]</sup> / Uma vez por semana / Uma vez por mês <sup>[SEP]</sup> / Uma ou duas vezes por ano <sup>[SEP]</sup> / Nunca ou Quase Nunca <sup>[SEP]</sup>
Estado civil	[Eng] Currently in a stable relationship with [Female or male name to denote candidate’s sexuality] / Married with [Female or male name to denote candidate’s sexuality]
	[Por] Atualmente num relacionamento estável com [Nome masculino/nome feminino] / Casado com [Nome masculino/nome feminino]

**CHOICE.** Se tivesse que escolher entre esses candidatos, em quem você votaria para prefeito?

- (1) Candidato A
- (2) Candidato B

## POST-TREATMENT QUESTIONS

**REL1.** Qual é a sua religião, se tiver?

- (1) Católica
- (2) Protestante Tradicional ou Evangélica não Pentecostal
- (3) Evangélica Pentecostal
- (4) Espírita kardecista
- (5) Outra
- (6) Não tem religião (secular, agnóstico, ateu)



**REL2.** Com que frequência o(a) senhor(a) va à missa ou culto religioso?

- (1) Mais de uma vez por semana
- (2) Uma vez por semana
- (3) Uma vez por mês
- (4) Uma ou duas vezes por ano
- (5) Nunca ou Quase Nunca

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## Attributes and Levels of Conjoint-Choice Experiment

Table A5.1: Attributes and Levels of Conjoint-Choice Experiment

Attributes (Operationalization)	Levels
Age (Selected Ages)	38/39/40/41/42/43
Prior Experience (Prior Experience in Local Office)	Never held office / Held seat on city council / Held seat on city council and was noted for being consistent and honest.
Partisanship (Party and Coalition Banners)	PT (No coalition) / PSOL/PCdoB/PDT (Left Front) / PSDB/MDB/PP/DEM (Producing to Give Jobs) / PSL/PRTB (Brazil Before Everything, and God Above All)
Religion (Religious Identification)	Catholic / Evangelical / Does not have a religion
Religiosity (Church Attendance)	More than Once a Week / Once a week / Once or twice a month / A couple of times a year / Never or almost never
Sexual Identity (Marital Status)	Currently in a stable relationship with [Female name] / Married to [Female name] / Currently in a stable relationship with [Male name] / Married to [Male name]

## **Plausibility Constraints**

Not all attribute-level groupings with a chance of being randomly displayed on profiles are empirically relevant in a conjoint experiment. Therefore, scholars prune away attribute combinations in candidate profiles if they are empirically unlikely (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014). Due to this plausibility constraint, I specified the following restrictions: 1) a candidate depicted as non-religious will be depicted as never or almost never attending church services; and 2) a candidate who runs under the PSL/PRTB banner and is Evangelical will never be depicted as never or almost never attending church (see Dafoe, Zhang and Caughey 2018: 25).

## **Signaling of Gay Identity**

There is not a straightforward way to operationalize sexual identity in this conjoint experiment. Much of the scholarship operationalizes it as sexual orientation (Bansak et al. 2021; Magni and Reynolds 2021; Shafranek 2021). Explicitly listing a candidate's sexual orientation might not square well with the mundane realities of elections. Due to heteronormative expectations, a candidate's sexual orientation, much less identity, is not even a question unless there is an indication that the candidate in some apparent way deviates from the norm (Egan 2012 p. 601). A candidate's hypothetical gay identity can, then, not be signaled directly through an "openly gay" or "homosexual" level (See Barrantes and Eaton 2018). This is not only an issue circumscribed to political science. Similar discussions were raised by audit studies as well (Tilcsik 2011, p. 596-599). After contemplating other potential cues to signal an openly gay identity in the Brazilian context, I decided that the best way to operationalize the levels of this

attribute was by using the candidate's marital status as a proxy.<sup>125</sup> Marital status probably conveys sexual behavior and desire, but it most certainly signals sexual identity. With such a proxy, there is a risk of conflating participants' attitudes towards sex-same marriage with their preferences to vote for a hypothetical openly LGBT candidate.<sup>126</sup>

### **Concerns about External Validity**

A fixed, uniform profile distribution (i.e., a sample of profiles with half openly gay and half straight candidates) may appear to be controversial due to a loss of experimental realism, casting doubt on its external validity (Bansak et al. 2019; De la Cuesta, Egami and Imai 2020). According to De la Cuesta, Egami and Imai (2020), the AMCE's external validity depends on how accurately the distribution of the profiles' attribute levels reflects the same distribution in the real population. Fixing sexual identity to equal halves of the profile's sample clearly stands in contradiction with such a principle (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014:12). However, a "realistic" distribution would be wholly impractical given the true distribution of straight-gay pairings of candidates—only four—across all of Brazil's local, executive-level elections in 2016. The substantive meaning of the AMCE and MMs will be reported with the caveat that there is no opportunity to tap the true joint distribution of faith-based attributes—e.g., religion and religiosity—in the real population of male candidates in Brazilian municipal elections, regardless of their sexuality.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Prior to each election since 2008, the ABGLT makes a catalogue of openly LGBT candidates, and lists all the candidates that express consent for their inclusion. Therefore, one way to signal candidates' gay identity or lack of it is by way of an operationalization of the attribute with two levels: being listed in the ABGLT catalogue as gay, or not being listed in the ABGLT catalogue. However, the salience of this catalogue is not widespread enough among members of the electorate. Moreover, this signaling strategy might be imbued of ideological activism.

<sup>126</sup> To my knowledge, other examples using marriage status cues are Bailey and Nawara (2017) and Beyerlein and Klocek (2020).

<sup>127</sup> For an alternative justification of a non-uniform distribution of openly gay and straight candidates, see Bansak et al. (2021).

## Sample Characteristics

The conjoint experiment was embedded in a survey that was conducted by the LAPOP Lab and the IADB. The data collection took place in three batches between June 24 and August 26, 2019. The survey was programmed in Qualtrics. The survey's sampling design was a sample matching. In Brazil, the recruitment of participants was performed by Netquest. The study's participants were required to be individuals 18 or older, who live in Brazil, and voluntarily opt into the survey as participants. Netquest, a Spanish firm, has a proprietary panel of pre-screened individuals in Brazil. Netquest invited 6,997 to participate in the online study. 1,693 participants agreed to join the study. Moreover, 1,301 nominally completed their interviews, but 1,265 complied with the instruction of choosing candidates across the three tasks. Therefore, the minimum response rate (AAPOR's RR1) was of 18.6%. The incidence rate -individuals who opted into the survey and comply with the eligibility requirements- was 95%. This research was conducted under IRB 190384 from Vanderbilt University. This research poses no or minimal ethical concerns.

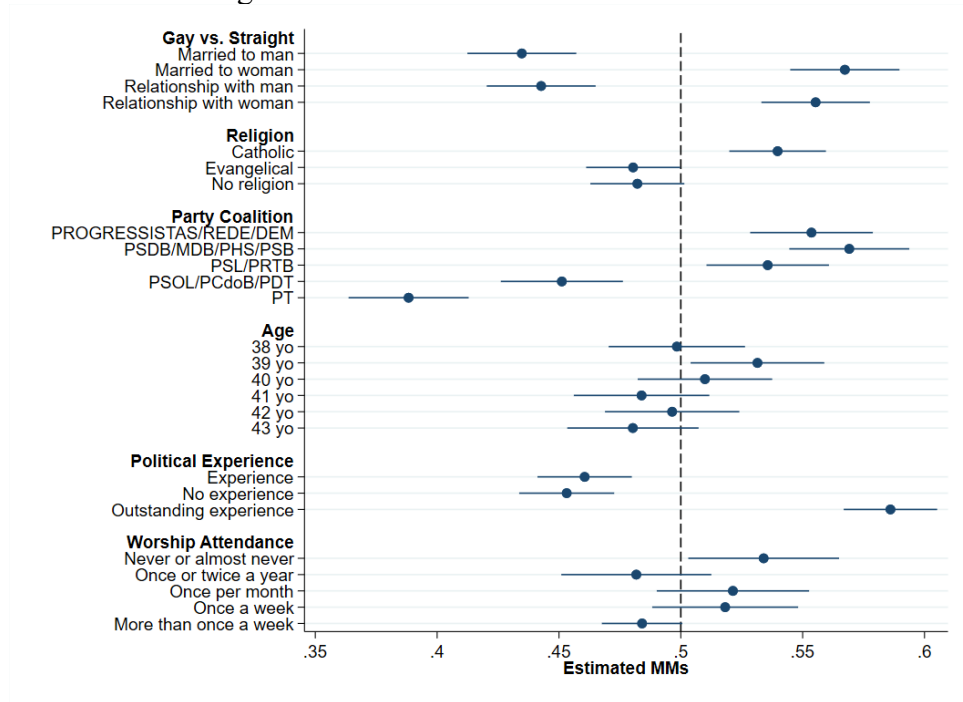
It merits note that, because religious identities and habits are an important component of this research, Catholics (47% vs. 64.6%) are underrepresented vis-à-vis the 2010 Census data, but this number comes closer to their share in the 2018/19 AB Brazil study (50.3%). All in all, they still constitute the largest religious group of respondents. The share of Evangelical and Mainline Protestant respondents is very similar to the ones both in the 2018/19 AB Brazil study and the last census data. Respondents with no declared religion (13.8% vs. 8%) and self-reported Kardecists/*espiritistas* (5.5% vs. 2%) are clearly overrepresented, with the latter doubling their share when contrasted with both the 2010 census and the 2018/19 AB Brazil study. These results

possibly reflect religious habits from urban middle and upper-middle social strata in Brazil and denote the lack of panelists from lower socioeconomic groups in online surveys in Latin America (Castorena et al. 2023: 277).

There are more partisan identifiers in this sample than in the AB 2018 Brazilian study: nearly 40% of the respondents declares sympathy for a political party, practically doubling the proportion in the AB (23.3%). This is unlikely an artifact of the survey mode, the question wording mode, or another survey design factor (e.g., Baker and Renno 2019: 908), the surplus of identification in this study is mostly fueled by identifiers with smaller parties. While all parties are rather disliked than liked by the respondents, the rejection of the PT appears to be the anchoring identity cue in Brazil's partisan marketplace. Four in ten respondents dislike the PT. Nevertheless, the data suggest that negative partisan identifiers in Brazil are no longer just *antipetistas*, as half of the respondents who harbor antipathy for the PSL—the party under which Bolsonaro ran for office in 2018—are either *petista* or PSOL sympathizers. Moreover, out-group bias towards the PT may generate an in-group bias among *antipetistas*: nearly 90% of self-declared PSL sympathizers also dislike the PT (Samuels and Zucco 2019: 68). The PSL was a rather tiny political organization in Brazil before Bolsonaro joined its ranks. After the data collection, Bolsonaro and his inner circle had abandoned the PSL, after quarreling with many of its officials in November 2019. Moving forward, Bolsonaro failed to secure the registration of his new political party for the 2020 Municipal elections, leaving those PSL sympathizers still with the chance to feel affinity with the PSL even if they sympathize more with Bolsonaro. It seems unlikely that Bolsonaro-driven sympathy for the PSL may have endured long after Bolsonaro's departure.

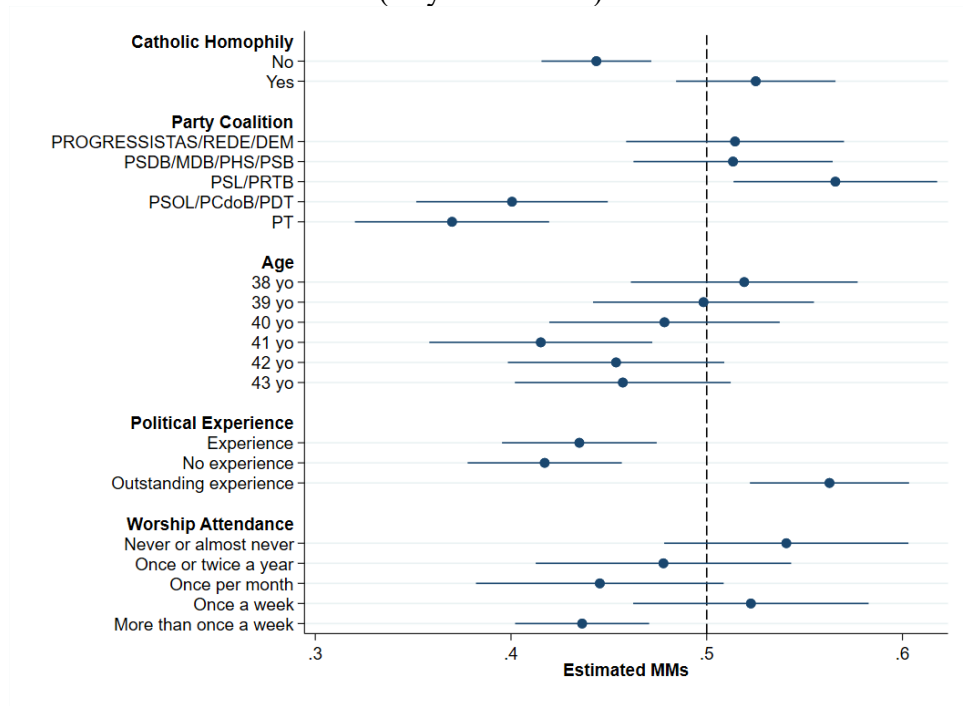
## Marginal Means of Full Model

Figure A5.2: Estimated MMs in Full Model



**Estimated MMs of Evangelical/Catholic Homophily Ties (Restricted to Preference for Gay Candidates as an Outcome)**

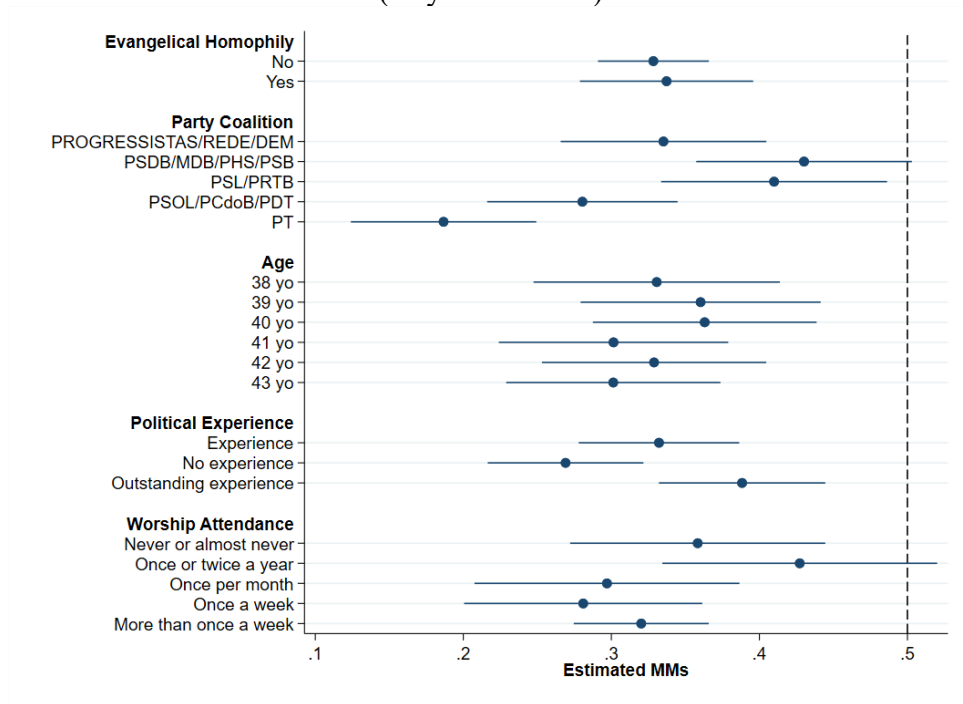
**Figure A5.3: Homophily Among Self-Reported Catholic Respondents (Gay Candidates)**





**Estimated MMs of Evangelical Homophily Ties (Restricted to Preference for Gay Candidates as an Outcome)**

Figure A5.4: Homophily Among Self-Reported Evangelical Respondents (Gay Candidates)



## Chapter 6: Glossary

*LGBTQ+*: The LGBTQ+ acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender and Queer. The plus symbol is supposed to make the acronym inclusive of unforeseen subgroup identities. Any acronym coined by social scientists to encompass the variety of subgroups within the LGBTQ+ minority is likely a narrow blanket from a comparative perspective; that is, there is always a chance to leave out a subgroup from the acronym. For example, most organizations in Brazil use the *travesti* (“transvestite”) category aside from the transgender category. That category would be unthinkable in the U.S. context.

*Cisgender/Transgender*: Both terms are used in the context of gender expressions. The cis- prefix means “this side of,” whereas the trans- prefix means “on the other side of.” By cisgender I refer to a gender identity or expression concurring with their biological or fixed-at-birth sex (Aultman 2014). While interchangeable with the term non-transgender, I reserve the latter term for comparisons among LGBTQ+s.

M-to-F, F-to-M: Throughout this dissertation, the analysis requires that transgender LGBTQ+ individuals are gendered. Following Worthen (2013, 2020), transgender women candidates are sometimes referred as M-to-F (male-to-female), while transgender men candidates are referred as F-to-M (female-to-male).

ANTRA: ANTRA stands for Brazil’s National Association of Travestis and Transsexuals (*Associação Nacional de Travestis e Transsexuais*).

IBGE: IBGE stands for Brazil’s official census and statistical agency, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. The initialism stems from the agency’s initials in Portuguese: *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística*.

TSE: TSE stands for Brazil’s electoral management body. It stems from *Tribunal Superior Eleitoral* in Portuguese.

PNS: PNS stands for Brazil’s National Public Health Survey. It stems from *Pesquisa Nacional de Saúde* in Portuguese.