

DRIVERS OF PRO-WOMEN INSTITUTIONS IN BRAZILIAN MUNICIPALITIES

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ABSTRACT

Worldwide violence against women is a major public health issue, human rights problem and public administration concern. In the search for solutions, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have adopted and created pro-women institutions with the goal of promoting gender equality by protecting women's rights through legal and formal tools. However, considerable variation exists in the number and type of these institutions across jurisdictions and government levels. Therefore, to explain jurisdictional variation in pro-women institutions, this research tests the pro-gender effects of both macro and micro factors. Among the macro-level drivers, the study tests the effects of economic, demographic, social, and political factors. Based on representative bureaucracy theory, we test the explanatory power of specific actors' gender, such a chief executive and legislator. We also tested the effect of the interaction between political representation and violence against women in the creation of pro-women institutions. The results indicate that the symbolic representation of gender through political positions did not influence the creation of pro-women institutions.

Keywords: representative bureaucracy, pro-women institution, violence against women, municipality, Brazil.

Introduction

In search of solutions to combat violence against women worldwide, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have adopted and created pro-women institutions with the goal of promoting gender equality by protecting women's rights through legal and formal tools. Having autonomy and interest in pro-women institutions seems insufficient to create and maintain pro-gender institutions, as considerable variation exists in the number and type of these institutions across jurisdictions and government levels.

Representative bureaucracy theory helps explain the creation and maintenance of pro-women institutions. In explaining varying representation of women in politics, scholars have focused on macro-level drivers such as national policies (Whitford, Wilkins and Ball, 2007), institutional factors (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2009, 2016; O'Brien 2015) and the introduction of gender quotas and electoral laws (Jones 2009; Baldez 2006, Norris 2004). While this literature examines the macro-level drivers, it lacks a closer examination of the role of institutional actors in driving pro-women institutional change. Actor-focused perspectives

are important in understanding the unfolding of institutional change processes (Battilana, Leca and Boxenbaum, 2009).

Therefore, to explain jurisdictional variation in pro-women institutions, this research tests the pro-gender effects of both macro and micro factors. Among the macro-level drivers, the study tests the pro-gender institutional effects of economic, demographic, social, and political factors. Based on representative bureaucracy theory, the study tests the explanatory power of specific actors' gender, such a chief executive and legislator. We also tested the effect of the interaction between political representation and violence against women in the creation of pro-women Institutions.

We rely on a data set derived from the 496 Brazilian municipalities of the state of Rio Grande do Sul in 2013 and 2018. The data exhibit considerable differences in the number and type of pro-women institutions at the municipal level. The study focuses on five pro-women institutions: (a) municipal policy for women, (b) council for women's rights, (c) women's police station, (d) reference center for women, and (e) shelter for women in violent situations. We use data from several official sources to explain the creation of pro-women institutions.

Representative Bureaucracy Theory

The theory of representative bureaucracy has as its central assumption the belief that a bureaucracy that reflects the composition of the population or the public it represents will better serve diverse interests and democratic principles (Liang, Park and Zhao, 2020). This theory posits that public administrators, driven by shared identities and values, are more likely to advocate for the interests of and produce substantive policy benefits for social groups that resemble their own demographic characteristics (Riccucci and Van Ryzin, 2017). Thus, bureaucratic representation relates to the demographic characteristics of public administrators (passive or symbolic representation) and to the process of acting in the interests of the focal groups that they resemble (active or substantive representation) (Meier 2019; Keizer 2010; Kennedy 2014; Park 2013; Park and Liang 2019; Selden 1997).

The two main related concepts, passive and active representation, are the central axis of the theory of representative bureaucracy. Passive representation refers to the fair proportion of traditionally marginalized and underrepresented populations (Bishu and Kennedy 2019). Active representation occurs "when shared demographic characteristics between bureaucrats and the public result in the promotion and adoption of programs and policies that benefit the specific population being represented" (Bishu and Kennedy 2019, 2). According to the representative bureaucratic theory, passive representation of minority groups leads to their active representation (Krislov, 1981; Mosher, 1982; Thielemann and Stewart, 1996; Howell and McLean, 2001; Kelly and Newman, 2001; Mier and Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Wilkins, 2006; Wilkins and Keiser, 2004). The transition between passive and active representation, first articulated by Frederick C. Mosher in 1968, is the main idea behind the theory of representative bureaucracy.

The literature provides evidence that representative bureaucrats promote public service effectiveness and administrative accountability, which can engender benefits for different social groups (Liang et al., 2020). For example, Meier, Wrinkle and Polinard (1999) showed that increasing the number of teachers who are part of minority groups is an important factor in improving the performance of all students, regardless of race and ethnicity. In another example, Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006) showed that police forces that have more women are able

to reduce the police misconduct. In the same sense, Hong (2017) shows that having more minority police officers is associated with a decrease in police misconduct.

Some authors even claim that the transformation of passive representation into active representation of the public bureaucracy cannot be obtained without a government workforce that is sufficiently representative of different population groups (Liang et al., 2020; Llorens, Wenger, and Kellough 2008; Riccucci 2009). On the other hand, some authors highlight possible conflicts that can occur between active representation and democratic values. Liang et al. (2020), for example, are concerned with respect to whether the enhanced policy outputs or outcomes for the group being represented, such as racial minorities or women, come at the expense of other groups in society, influencing that way the value of bureaucratic neutrality. In other words, we would be talking about an excessive bureaucratic representation, with negative results in the democratic balance of the resource distribution process in society (Lim 2006; Peters, Schröter, and von Maravi. 2015).

The trade-off between representation of the general public and the equitable distribution of resources in the public sector, therefore, is at the center of the contemporary exploration of representative bureaucracy (Meier 2019). Liang et al. (2020) suggest that the notion of distributional equity plays an important moderating role in this conflict. Distributional equity in representative bureaucracy describes a scenario in which “minority bureaucrats actively produce additional benefits for minority clients so long as those clients are receiving less than an equitable share however, bureaucrats no longer show partiality to clients of the same group” (Nicholson-Crotty, Grissom, and Nicholson-Crotty 2011, 586). This imply that the active advocacy of representative administrators for policy benefits of the minority group may decrease or cease beyond some equity point (Liang et al, 2020; Meier 2019).

Gender representation

The link between passive and active representation for gender¹, according to Wilkins (2006), relies on the expectation that women in political institutions will behave differently than their male counterparts. Mediating factors such as life experiences and socialization that may explain the differences in behavior (Wilkins, 2006). The representation for gender is associated with themes, areas and policies traditionally considered ‘gendered’ (Keiser, 2002). According to Keiser et al. (2002) three conditions must exist for a policy area to be considered as gendered: (i) the policy directly benefits women as a class, (ii) the gender of the bureaucrat changes the nature of the client-bureaucrat relationship, or (iii) the issue has been defined as a gendered issue through the political process.

A policy area that can certainly be considered gendered is violence against women. According to the World Health Organization (2002), worldwide violence against women is a major public health and human rights problem. Brazil, for example, has showed a significant growth of 30.7% in the number of homicides of women during the 2007-2017 period. In 2017 alone, almost five thousand women were killed, approximately 13 murders per day, the highest number since 2007 (IPEA, 2019). To face this problem, national and local governments have

¹ For most feminist scholars, “sex” denotes biological difference whereas “gender” denotes social differences (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995). The majority of the research on the policy impact of women is limited by the fact that we must analyze sex differences in behavior or attitudes as a proxy for gender differences (Swers 2002; Wilkins, 2006). Given this, we treat gender as a dichotomy - male and female - and thus empirically in this research gender and sex are equivalent.

created and maintained pro-women institutions with the goal of promoting gender equality by protecting women's rights through legal and formal tools. Brazilian municipalities have legal and administrative autonomy to create institutions to support women, such as, for example, council for women's rights, women's police station, and reference center and shelter for women in violent situations.

Based on representative bureaucracy theory, we expect that with more women in political leadership positions (passive representation) the chances of institutional entrepreneurs capable of initiating and actively participating in divergent changes will increase. According to Mackay (2008), whilst it is plausible that women representatives may act for women, there are no guarantees. Shifting identities, differences amongst women, partisan loyalties and institutional factors shape and constrain the inclination and capacity to act for women" (Mackay, 2008). Even without guarantees, the fact that a woman becomes a political leader can be a decisive factor in the creation of institutions to support women in municipalities (active representation).

Our first hypothesis holds that municipalities with women mayors are more likely to have pro-women institutions. The reason for this is simple, the mayor is the most important political position in the municipality, commanding the executive with broad powers to influence the creation, maintenance and extinction of local institutions. Mayors can use the public machine to support specific causes, such as the creation of pro-women institutions. In Brazil, according to the Federal Constitution of 1988, the mayor's term of office lasts for four years, with the possibility of reelection for another period of four years. Mayors are directly elected by the population, which, in principle, guarantees political legitimacy in their choices and decisions.

*H1: Municipalities led by a **female political leader** (passive representation) are more likely to have pro-women institutions (active representation).*

Explanations for the fact that women remain underrepresented in legislatures have been sought in the literature. Several studies show that the proportion of females serving in the legislatures is related to district magnitude (Engstrom 1987; Rule 1987; Schwindt-Bayer and Mischler 2005), party magnitude (Matland 1993), nominees selection model (Caul 1999) and form of electoral system (Whitford, Wilkins and Ball, 2007). Some studies also show that multiparty systems have more female representation (Norris 1987; Rule 1987). Women are better represented in legislative bodies in countries with fewer Catholics population, more population educated, more women in the workforce, higher employment levels, and more supportive public attitudes toward political gender equality (Norris 1987; Schwindt-Bayer and Mischler 2005).

Certainly, the simple presence of women in legislatures does not "automatically translate into substantive action on behalf of the unstable category 'women' and their contestable interests" (Mackay, 2008, 125). However, women's networks have learned about lobbying and advocacy to negotiate their views with government representatives and hold them accountable for conventions and resolutions. In many countries, women's movements have also successfully pressured Governments from below to change legal institutions, laws and policies (Kardam, 2005). Thus, we hypothesize that the creation of pro-women institutions depends on the number of women councilors in the municipalities, so that the greater the number of women councilors, the greater the chances of emerging institutional entrepreneurs capable of challenging the dominant male institutional logics. When occupying the position of councilor,

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a woman has at her disposal a set of important resources that can strengthen her role as an institutional entrepreneur. City councilors can channel gender demands in the municipality and work to make these demands effective through the creation of laws, public policies and institutions that can protect and guarantee women's rights.

*H2: The greater the percentage of **female legislative councilors**, the higher the probability of the existence of **pro-women institutions**.*

As the political game is a decisive factor in the performance of a counselor, its success in substantive terms often depends on its alliances and agreements that allow access to resources and power. The relationship with the mayor is often the most important for a counselor in the local political game. If it is from the same party as the mayor, the counselor has a better chance of accessing strategic resources that can help in achieving his goals. Political agreements and alliances are essential for the counselor to transform his symbolic representation into active representation, and if the agreement involves the participation of the mayor, the possibilities are even greater. Thus, our third hypothesis holds that the party alignment between women councilors and the mayor positively influences the possibility of creating pro-women institutions in the municipality.

*H3: The greater the percentage of **female legislative councilors from the same party as the mayor**, the higher the probability of the existence of **pro-women institutions**.*

The quality of the representative claim is improved if those concerned have been involved in collective dialogue and interaction. Weldon (2002) argues that the basis for substantive representation is the articulation or reflection of group perspective. The perspective is the product of social collectives, forged through interaction amongst members of marginalized social groups (Mackay, 2008). On these grounds, women's movements as sources of political representation 'come closer' than women representatives in the legislature (Mackay, 2008). Women's movements seek to articulate local political representation (Weldon, 2002) so that they can participate effectively in political decisions and impose their demands, and one of the institutionalized ways for that in Brazil is to apply for the position of councilor.

The number of women candidates for mayor and councilor, in a way, may reflect the existence and strength of more or less organized groups of women in the community. In this perspective, the stronger the social movements in the municipalities, the greater the chances of women becoming candidates for political leadership positions. We therefore hope that the number of women running for councilor indicates the presence of social movements related to gender in the municipalities. Even if women candidates are not elected, it is reasonable to assume that many of them will remain engaged in their political causes. Thus, we hypothesized that municipalities that have women's social movements (reflected in the volume of women candidate for mayor and councilor) are more likely to have pro-women institutions.

*H4: The greater the percentage of **female mayor and legislative councilors candidate**, the higher the probability of the existence of **pro-women institutions**.*

Method

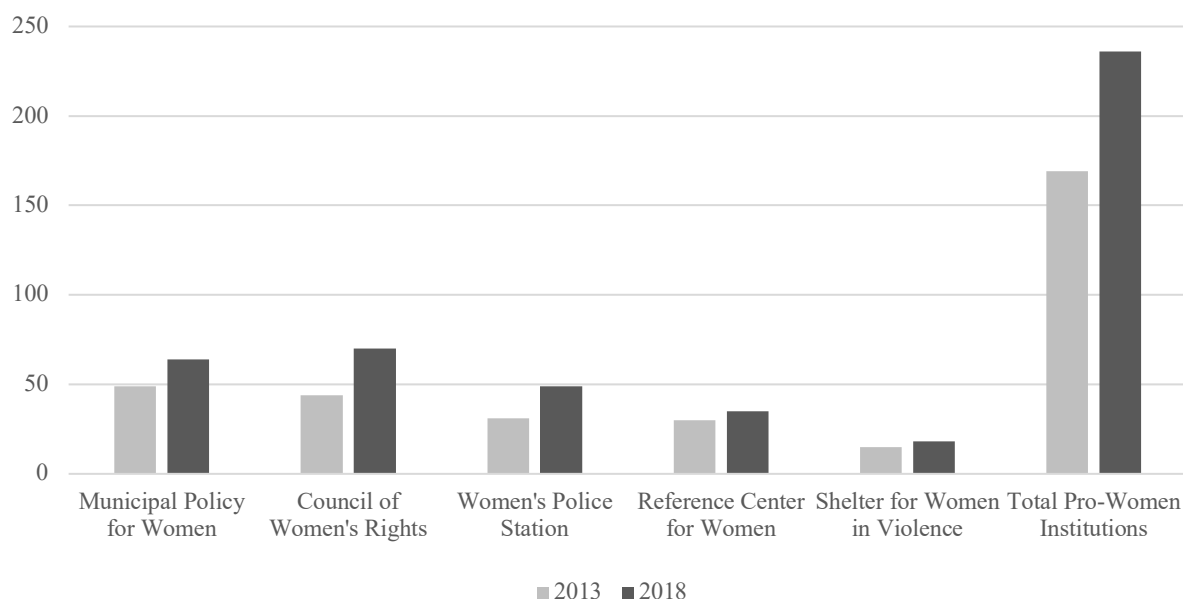
To explain jurisdictional variation in pro-women institutions we rely on a data set derived from the 496 Brazilian municipalities of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The data covers a period of ten years, from 2008 to 2018. The variables referring to pro-women institutions are from 2013 and 2018, while the political variables referring to bureaucratic representation are from 2008, 2012 and 2016, thus covering three municipal administrations: 2009-2012, 2013-2016 and 2017-2020. With this, we temporally organize the variables so that the models can capture the relationship between the creation of the institutions and events of immediately previous municipal administrations. The data exhibit considerable differences in the number and type of pro-women institutions at the municipal level.

Rio Grande do Sul (RS) is the fifth most populous state of Brazil, with approximately 11 million people. In economic terms, RS has the fourth-largest gross domestic product (GDP), surpassed only by the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Minas Gerais. Following a tragic national trend, RS also has a high rate of violence against women, including murders. RS had a rate of 5.2 homicides of women in 2017 for each group of 100,000 inhabitants, slightly above the national average of 4.7 homicides. Among the 27 Brazilian states, RS ranked 16th in 2017 in female homicides, while the state of São Paulo had the lowest rate, 2.2, and the state of Roraima the highest, 10.6 (IPEA, 2019).

Our dependents variable captures the existence of a specific policy in the municipality guaranteeing women's rights. The study focuses on five pro-women institutions as dependent variables: (a) municipal policy for women, (b) council for women's rights, (c) women's police station, (d) reference center for women, and (e) shelter for women in violent situations. In addition, we included a sixth dependent variable called (f) total pro-women institution, which consists of the sum of the five types of pro-women institutions in each municipality. The variables referring to pro-women institutions are dichotomous and cover two different periods, 2013 and 2018, due to the periodicity of the research. The only exception is the total variable pro-women institution, which is continuous.

Data came from the Basic Municipal Information Search database - MUNIC, provide by IBGE, the Brazilian agency responsible for conducting the main official surveys of the country. MUNIC provides different types of information about all the 5,665 Brazilian municipalities. Figure 1 shows the evolution of the creation of pro-women institutions. There is an increase of approximately 40% in the number of pro-women institutions in 2018 compared to 2013, from 169 to 236 institutions in all municipalities. This represents under 10% of the potential of institutions, considering an ideal situation in which all municipalities had the five types of institutions.

Figure 1. Evolution of the creation of pro-women institutions in the municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), 2013 and 2018.



Source: Munic data base (IBGE, 2013, 2018)

Figure 2 shows the distribution of pro-women institutions in the municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul. In 2013 there were 417 municipalities (84.1%) without any type of pro-women institutions, and in 2018 that number dropped to 389 (78, 4%), that is, 28 municipalities created at least one pro-women institution in the period. In 2013, 79 municipalities had at least one institution, while in 2018 it increased to 107 municipalities, an increase of 26.2% in the period. Although the numbers are still modest, in general, it is possible to observe that the number of pro-women institutions has been increasing in recent years in the municipalities of the state.

Figure 2. Number of municipalities with and without pro-women institutions in 2013 and 2018

Year	Number of municipalities with pro-women institutions (PWI)						
	Zero PWI	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	At least one
2013	417	32	23	12	5	7	79
2018	389	43	28	17	9	10	107
Variation	-6,7%	25,6%	17,8%	29,4%	44,4%	30%	26,2%

Source: MUNIC database (IBGE, 2013, 2018).

Our independent variables seek to capture political representation in the municipality: (a) female mayor (dichotomous); (b) percentage of women's mayor candidate; (c) percentage of women's councilor; (d) percentage of women's councilors aligned with the mayor (same political party); and (e) percentage of women's candidate for councilor. Data were collected from the Regional Electoral Court of Rio Grande do Sul (*Tribunal Regional Eleitoral - TRE-RS*), the body responsible for elections in the state. Results of all elections are available on the

TER-RS website (<http://www.tre-rs.jus.br/eleicoes/resultados-das-eleicoes>). Data refer to the last three municipal elections: 2008, 2012 and 2016.

We also use violence against women as independent variable. The first variable we call aggression and consists of (a) reports of violence against women, representing the sum of four types of sexual and physical violence against women reports: serious threat, personal injury, rape and attempted murder. The second variable is (b) murder of women. Our data derives from the Secretariat of Public Security (*Secretaria de Segurança Pública* - SSP-RS) of RS, the body responsible for collecting, aggregating and making available data on violence recorded in the state's municipalities, including data on violence against women. The values of these two variables consist of the two-year averages (2012/2013 and 2017/2018) immediately prior to the data on the creation of the pro-women institutions (2013 and 2018).

We control for (a) total population, (b) populational density (hab./km²), (c) percentage of women's population, and (d) percentage of women with higher education (2011). For economic, we control for (e) GDP per capita (2011 and 2017); (f) women's monthly income, in Brazilian currency (*Real* \$) (2011); and (g) percentage of employed women population (2011). For social and cultural, we control for (h) percentage of African descendent population (2011); (i) percentage of Evangelical population (2011); and (j) percentage of rural population (2012 and 2017); and (k) number of NGOs that act directly in the defense of human rights and/or social rights in support for women at risk. In terms of race, IBGE considers five racial types in Brazil: white, black, mestizo, yellow (Asian) and Indian. Thus, we consider as Afro-descendant population only the population classified by the IBGE as 'black'.

The NGO variable was collected from the Private Foundations and Nonprofit Associations Database - FASFIL, from IBGE, with data corresponding to 2012 and 2017. The other variables were collected from the 2010 Brazilian Census. Unavailability of yearly data at the municipal level is a limitation. However, we believe data should not considerably vary across time because differences between municipalities tend to be maintained over time, as crisis and economic growth tend to affect all municipalities. Moreover, we are interested in exploring differences between municipalities and not within-municipalities across time.

Finally, we control for the following political variables referring to the mayors of the municipalities: (l) mayor from conservative party; (m) re-elected mayor; (n) mayor age; and (o) mayor background education. These political data were collected at the Regional Electoral Court of RS (TRE-RS) and refer to the elections of 2008 and 2012, which defined the mayors for the municipal administrations from 2009 to 2012 and 2013 to 2016, respectively. Descriptive statistics for all variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	S.d.
Pro-Women Institutions				
Municipal policy for women's (d)	0	1	.11	.32
Council for women's right (d)	0	1	.11	.32
Women's police station (d)	0	1	.08	.27
Reference center for women (d)	0	1	.07	.25
Shelter for women in violence (d)	0	1	.03	.18
Total pro-women institutions	0	5	.41	1.01

Gender representation

Mayor woman (d)	0	1	.06	.23
% Women's councilor	0	55.55	14.04	11.03
% Women council. from the mayor's party	0	100	21.98	36.27
% Women's mayor candidate	0	100	7.50	17.45
% Women's councilor candidate	0	66.66	25.60	9.46

Violence against women

Aggression (report; by thousand women)	0	27.89	8.83	4.48
Murder (by 1,000 women)	0	.65	.02	.07

Control

Total population	1,216	1,409,351	21,560	75,756
Density (hab./km ²)	1.60	2,950	86.98	317
% Women's population	44.70	53.61	49.79	1.27
% Women with higher education	.35	17.86	5.05	2.20
GDP per capita	9,608	95,030	29,122	13,577
Women's monthly income (Br R\$)	273	1,533	634	170
% Employed women population	11.29	37.39	24.44	5.17
% African descendent population	.14	14.14	3.22	2.60
% Evangelical population	.42	85.84	17.89	13.14
% Rural population	0	94.48	44.73	24.99
Human rights NGO's (x1,000 hab.)	0	7.40	.94	1.13
Mayor from conservative party (d)	0	1	.63	.48
Mayor re-elected (d)	0	1	.28	.45
Mayor age	24	82	49.86	9.74
Mayor background education	1	7	4.85	1.72

(d) Dichotomous variable (dummy); N = 992.

To test the effect of the independent variables on pro-women institutions we use binary logistic regression since the five pro-women variables are dichotomous. We estimate a model for each dependent variable. For the last dependent variable, 'total pro-women institutions', we use panel data with cross-section fixed effect regression, since this is a continuous variable.

Results and Discussion

The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 2. We estimate a model for each dependent variable. As can be seen, the variables referring to gender representation did not have any significant influence on pro-women institutions. In other words, the creation of institutions in the municipalities does not seem to have been influenced by the political representation of women in positions of mayor and councilor.

Table 2: Regression results

Variables	Dependent variables: Pro-Women Institutions (PWI) ^a					
	Municipal Policy	Council	Police Station	Reference Center	Shelter	Total PWI ^b
Gender representation						
Mayor woman	.786	1.233	-.481	1.115	4.286*	.005
Women's councilor	-.032*	.002	.006	-.001	.036	-.006
Women's councilor mayor's party	-.006	-.002	-.001	-.004	.000	.033
Women's mayor candidate	.005	.008	.009	.005	-.011	.054
Women's councilor candidate	.023	.030	.067*	.019	.086	.045
Violence against women						
Aggression	-.077	-.012	.041	-.028	-.002	.348*
Murder	-15.501	-1.849	-18.596*	-1.197	-3.497	-.025
Control variables						
Total population	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**	.352**
Density	.000	.000	-.001	.000	.000	.090**
Women's population	-.394*	-.069	.838*	.437	.404	.036
Women with higher education	.323**	.276**	.245*	.134	.030	.139**
GDP per capita	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	-.022
Women's monthly income	.000	.000	.000	.000	.004	.066
Women employed population	.002	.000	.018	.019	-.107	-.043
African descendent population	.033	.022	-.098	.024	.206	.048
Evangelical population	.026*	.036**	.018	.016	.019	.071**
Rural population	-.022*	-.027**	-.060**	-.026	-.042	-.141**
Human rights NGO's	.414	-.146	-1.060	-.213	.228	-.048
Mayor from conservative party	-.191	.043	.217	.189	-.841	-.017
Mayor re-elected	-.234	-.223	.322	-.521	-.897	.025
Mayor age	-.030*	-.018	-.024	-.021	.008	-.047*
Mayor background education	-.037	-.054	-.024	.017	-.140	.001
Constant	16.33*	-1.43	-46.66*	-25.39*	-.31.49	-.448**
-2 Log likelihood	334.86	392.81	190.43	305.30	114.70	-
Cox & Snell R²	.283	.252	.299	.149	.153	-
Anova (F)	-	-	-	-	-	36.04**
R²	-	-	-	-	-	.459

Unstandardized coefficient (B), except Total PWI with standardized coefficient (beta); * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

^a Binary logistic regression; ^b Cross-section fixed effect regression

Among the control variables, the population size showed a positive relationship with all pro-women institutions, as expected. In other words, there is a tendency for this type of institution to be created primarily in more populous cities. Another expected result is the negative relationship between the rural population and pro-women institutions. Pro-women institutions are predominantly phenomena that occur in urban and more populous areas.

Another variable that also showed a positive and significant relationship in four of the six estimated models was 'women with higher education'. In cities where women have a higher educational level, the chances of creating pro-women institutions are greater. One possible explanation for this result is that education makes women aware of their rights and able to demand and pressure their representatives so that those rights are respected. An interesting result, however, not expected, is the positive influence of the Evangelical population in the creation of two types of pro-women institutions, municipal policy and council for women's right. This may indicate a possible participation of Pentecostal churches in organized civil society movements focused on women's rights.

Thus, based on the results, the first five hypotheses of the research were rejected. This means that the symbolic representation of women through political positions in municipalities in the state of Rio Grande do Sul has not been converted into the creation of institutions to support women, which we consider in this work as substantive representation. The fact that the municipality has a woman as mayor, or has more women councilors than other municipalities, does not seem to influence the possibility of the existence of pro-women's institutions. A possible explanation for the results may be a low representation of gender movements in politics. In other words, even if some women are being elected to leadership positions in the municipalities, they do not seem to defend the causes traditionally defended by gender movements, including policies to protect and defend women's rights. Another explanation may be the low effectiveness of gender movements in municipalities in general, and not just in the political environment.

Final considerations

This study tested the effect of political factors on the creation of pro-women institutions in Brazilian municipalities. It also tested the interaction between political factors and indicators of violence against women in institution building. The results indicate that the symbolic representation of women in the municipalities investigated through political positions has not generated substantive representation through the creation of pro-women institutions. Thus, the findings of this study do not support the theory of bureaucratic representation.

One of the main limitations of the study is the lack of data. The MUNIC survey collects data on policies and institutions that support women in Brazilian municipalities only every four years, so that it is not possible to know exactly in which year each institution was created. Another limitation regarding the data consists of the sociodemographic variables, which are from the 2010 census, therefore outdated. The census in Brazil is carried out every ten years, and what was predicted for 2020 has been postponed to 2021 because of the pandemic caused by Covid-19.

A natural research agenda resulting from this study consists of replicating the research to the municipalities of the other Brazilian states. This will make it possible to compare the results and draw up a broader picture of the results of gender representation in the country. A second research agenda for future studies is to compare the results found in Brazil with results

from other countries, especially countries that, like Brazil, also have high rates of violence against women and disrespect for women's rights.

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