

FROM 0 TO 1: THE ENTRY OF THE CANDIDATES ELECTION CAMPAIGN FOR RE-ELECTION IN PARANÁ

DE 0 AO 1: O LANÇAMENTO DAS CAMPANHAS DAS CANDIDATAS A DEPUTADAS ESTADUAIS PARA A REELEIÇÃO NO PARANÁ

DEL 0 AL 1: EL LANZAMIENTO DE LAS CAMPAÑAS DE LAS CANDIDATAS PARA DIPUTADAS ESTATALES EN LA REELECCIÓN EN PARANÁ



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ABSTRACT: For a long time, the participation of Brazilian women in electoral contests has been limited, showing lower numbers compared to other Latin American countries. Women's participation in electoral processes in the country is restricted for several reasons, including historical and structural issues, lack of internal democracy within political parties, inefficient public policies to promote women's inclusion in the electoral process, and especially the lack of representation. It is on this last aspect that this research focuses. The gradual and slow increase in the number of elected women is not enough to guarantee effective representation in the Legislative Chambers, and being in a prominent position does not ensure greater visibility for female candidates seeking reelection. With the advent of new communication technologies—which are also responsible for the democratization of access to information for candidates—one can assert that social media has been an ally for female candidacies in elections and reelection for legislative positions. How do female candidates utilize these platforms to reach their audience and garner more votes? These questions can be answered in various ways. One approach is to analyze how State Deputies utilize social media. In 2022, electoral campaigns will commence on August 16th, and it is on this date that the research will analyze the profiles of the five representatives from Paraná in the State Legislative Assembly (Alep), aiming to understand how the communication of the candidate's seeking reelection for the position of State Deputy in Paraná was constructed. By the end of this research, the goal is to comprehend the social media strategies adopted by the candidates during their campaign launches and determine the communicational profile utilized by them in the electoral landscape.

KEYWORDS: Woman. Re-election. Paraná. Communication. Social media.

RESUMO: *Há muito tempo, a participação das mulheres brasileiras em disputas eleitorais é limitada, apresentando números inferiores aos de outros países latinos. A participação das mulheres nos processos eleitorais no país é restringida por várias razões, incluindo questões históricas e estruturais, falta de democracia interna nos partidos, políticas públicas ineficientes para promover a inclusão das mulheres no processo eleitoral e, especialmente, a falta de representatividade. É sobre este último aspecto que esta pesquisa se concentra. O aumento gradual e lento do número de mulheres eleitas não é suficiente para garantir uma representação efetiva nas Câmaras Legislativas e, ao mesmo tempo, estar em uma posição de destaque não garante maior visibilidade para as candidatas que buscam a reeleição. Com o advento das novas tecnologias de comunicação - que também são responsáveis pelos processos de democratização do acesso à informação das candidatas -, pode-se afirmar que as redes sociais têm sido aliadas das candidaturas femininas nos processos de eleição e reeleição para cargos legislativos? Além disso, como as candidatas utilizam essas plataformas para alcançar seu público e conquistar mais votos? Essas questões podem ser respondidas de várias maneiras. Uma delas é analisar como as Deputadas Estaduais utilizam as redes sociais. Em 2022, as campanhas eleitorais terão início em 16 de agosto, e é nessa data que a pesquisa analisará o perfil das cinco representantes paranaenses na Assembleia Legislativa do Paraná (Alep), visando compreender como foi construída a comunicação das candidatas que buscam a reeleição para o cargo de Deputada Estadual no Paraná. Ao final desta pesquisa, espera-se compreender as estratégias de mídia social adotadas pelas candidatas durante o lançamento*

de suas candidaturas e determinar o perfil comunicacional utilizado por elas no cenário eleitoral.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Candidaturas femininas. Reeleição. Paraná. Comunicação. Redes sociais.

RESUMEN: No es nuevo que la participación de las mujeres brasileñas en la disputa electoral es restringida y con números muy bajos. La participación de las mujeres en los procesos electorales está restringida en el país debido a diferentes razones, incluyendo cuestiones histórico-estructurales, democracia partidos internos, políticas públicas ineficaces para la inclusión de las mujeres en el proceso electoral y, especialmente, la falta de representación de mujeres. Es sobre este último que esta investigación tiene su inicio. El creciente (y lento) número de mujeres electas en Brasil no es suficiente para asegurar una representación efectiva en las Cámaras Legislativas y, al mismo tiempo, desempeñar un papel de destacar no garantiza más visibilidad para los elegidos que deseen postularse la reelección. Con las nuevas tecnologías de comunicación disponibles - responsable de los procesos de democratización del acceso a información de candidatas - es posible afirmar que las redes sociales han sido aliadas de candidaturas femeninas en procesos electorales y reelección a un cargo legislativo? Además, ¿cómo son usadas estas plataformas para llegar a audiencia y ganar más votos? Las preguntas marcadas se pueden responder de diferentes maneras. Un de los pasos es analizar cómo las Diputadas del Estado de Paraná utilizan las redes sociales. En 2022, las campañas electorales comienzan el 16 de agosto, y es en esta fecha que la investigación analizará el perfil de las cinco representantes paranaenses en el Asamblea Legislativa de Paraná (Alep) para entender cómo fue la construcción comunicacional para la reelección. Al final de esta investigación, se espera que se pueda comprender cómo fueron las estrategias de redes sociales de ellas durante el lanzamiento de aplicaciones y si es posible definir el perfil de comunicación utilizado por ellas en el escenario electoral.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Candidatas. Reelección. Paraná. Comunicación. Redes sociales.

1. Introduction

Recent achievements in the Brazilian political structure include the right to vote, political participation, and occupying decision-making spaces. Although the first advancements are almost reaching 100 years (such as the right to vote in 1932, for example), political events in Brazil reinforce the idea that men predominantly dominate politics.

The predominance of men in the political sphere reflects decades of exclusion of women, especially Brazilian women. A concrete example of this persistent reality was the inauguration of the first female restroom in the Plenary of the Federal Senate in Brazil, which only occurred in 2015, less than ten years ago. Until then, since the election of Eunice Michiles

in 1979, women holding legislative positions in the Senate had to use the restroom in the Plenary's restaurant. This means they were forced to leave the space for discussion and decision-making whenever they needed to use the bathroom, while men did not face such a problem.

Luciana Panke (2016) asserts that "politics is a masculine universe" and supports this hypothesis through the analysis of low political participation of women throughout Latin America, which includes structural issues such as misogyny, patriarchy, feminism, and sexism. The author reports that gender issues in politics are broad and permeate sexism. Therefore, when discussing men in politics, the most damaging aspect is usually associated with corruption, while for women, the negative is related to sexual matters such as marriage, infidelity, and physical appearance.

Due to its masculinized nature, the presence of women in decision-making spaces is often viewed with astonishment, and questions arise about their competence to hold elective positions. Additionally, another problem women face in leadership positions is the violence with which their bodies are treated, from when they express their desire to participate in public life to when they effectively hold political positions.

Being a woman in politics requires facing daily challenges. Even when they gain space, they face more questioning about their actions and need to explain their attitudes and votes more than men elected to similar positions. When it comes to re-election, this dichotomy becomes even more evident. While men often boast about their accomplishments, even if they are insignificant, women must reinforce their list of activities beyond the political landscape. Once again, stereotypes emerge, and as candidates, they often find themselves obliged to reaffirm their commitments and characteristics to be considered a viable voting option.

Considering that the political landscape undergoes constant changes and that the visibility and political capital of current female lawmakers is altered with the election and exercise of legislative mandates, the question arises as to whether the political communication carried out by female candidates is reinforcing existing practices and behaviors, especially in the construction and reaffirmation of female stereotypes in legislative elections.

These stereotypes function as stigmas for women, related to a structural belief that there are suitable personal attributes for men or women to fulfill their societal roles (PANKE; IASULAITIS, 2016).

Research is the first step in understanding whether electoral political communication has contributed to the segregation of women and the low rates of elected female representatives in Paraná, especially regarding the launching of candidates and the lack of party visibility

related to their campaigns. To achieve these objectives, the research will analyze the profiles of the five state deputies from Paraná who are running for re-election in 2022. The day of candidate launches and the start of the Free Electoral Propaganda Schedule (FEPS) was chosen as the analysis date. In addition to personal profiles on Instagram, information from political parties during the same period was also collected, seeking to understand if they were promoting and highlighting female candidacies.

2. Female Participation and the Scenario in Paraná

According to Maria Montaner (2012), the submission of women to men and female oppression have historically been established, resulting in the exclusion of women from decision-making spaces to dedicate themselves to household tasks and childcare. The presence of women in the public sphere was therefore shaped and controlled by men, while expectations and responsibilities for the survival of the private sphere were exclusively assigned to women.

The presence of women in decision-making spaces, especially in legislative bodies, has been gradually increasing in Brazil and around the world, albeit at different rates. This is achieved through affirmative policies such as quotas or closed-list systems and participation incentives such as training and capacity-building programs. The growing presence of women in decision-making positions is an increasingly discussed topic globally, although we should not overlook setbacks that occur, such as the case of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

In Brazil, progress in this aspect has been plodding, and according to indices, gender equality is far from becoming a reality. The country ranks 154th out of 174 countries analyzed, according to a report by UN Women, regarding women's political Participation. Among Latin American countries, Brazil ranks 32nd, only ahead of Belize.

In the 2018 elections, for example, the Chamber of Deputies saw a 51% increase in the total number of elected female deputies, although the final number of female parliamentarians represents only 15% of the total federal deputies. In the Senate, female Participation is slightly lower, with only 12 female senators occupying 14.8% of the seats.

The Legislative Assembly of Paraná (Alep) reflects the low levels of female participation, highlighting the need and urgency to discuss the presence of more women in politics. The current legislature has five female state deputies out of 54 representatives. Cristina Silvestri, Luciana Rafagnin, Mabel Canto, Mara Lima, and Maria Victória make up the female caucus, officially established only in 2022.

The five seats represent only an increase of one female deputy compared to the two previous legislatures (both in 2011-2014 and 2015-2018). In other words, the number of elected women in Paraná has remained stable, with very low growth in the last legislature, not even reaching 10% representation in Alep.

Among the representatives from Paraná, Mara Lima is the only one present in the last three legislatures. Cristina Silvestri is serving her second term; Luciana Rafagnin has been elected four times as a state deputy but was not in the 2011-2014 legislature; Mabel Canto was first elected in 2015, and Maria Victória, like Cristina, is in her second term as a state deputy. All of them have announced their pre-candidacies for re-election, confirmed in the party convention, but they will only be registered and confirmed by the Regional Electoral Court after the completion of this article.

Even when holding political representation roles, female candidates often face the same difficulties present at the beginning of their careers. Panke (2016) explains that it is essential to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of women, including their talents, audience, and potentialities, to be recognized as members of the political sphere when entering political campaigns.

Considering this aspect, the question arises that female deputies must repeatedly reinforce stereotypes despite already occupying their legislative seats and demonstrate that they are more prepared than men to continue in their positions. This demand is not usually made for male candidates. In the discourse and message of male candidates, the focus is solely on reinforcing the idea that the space they occupied was well utilized and that there were highlights in their achievements.

Panke (2016), in analyzing female candidacies in Latin America, categorized different types of electoral campaigns conducted by women in terms of communication. These categories are linked to motherhood (sensitive or caring), the warrior figure (strong or leader), or the professional (hardworking or submissive). Although these categories are not used in this research, as the interest is to observe the overall construction of the campaign launch, it is important to highlight that these categories have proven relevant in other studies. Therefore, whether these characteristics are present in reelection, campaigns will also be questioned. The objective is to understand which elements support the construction of electoral campaigns and whether the communication is contributing to reinforcing stereotypes.

3. Electoral Communication in the Era of the Online Universe

Information and communication technologies have significantly impacted the world in the last 50 years (CASTELLS, 2005). While it is society itself and not just technology responsible for social changes, it is crucial to consider that technology has enabled advancements in the communication landscape, which is now interconnected, offering more significant possibilities for participation, citizenship, horizontality, and interaction, among others.

Termed by Castells (2005) as networked communication, the new forms of media production, dissemination, and consumption are interconnected in a vast network that no longer clearly distinguishes between content producers and consumers. With the advent of new technologies and social changes, what was once rigidly defined in terms of producers and receivers has now undergone a shift in meaning. According to Jenkins (2010), these new forms of communication acknowledge that media producers and consumers no longer operate separately but rather in a participatory culture, in which consumers claim the right to participate in the construction process of information (or content).

Raquel Recuero (2009) further emphasizes that when studying social structures, it is necessary to consider individuals and social actors as premises embedded in complex networks of relationships with other actors and individuals, acting as foundations in constructing both worlds. In contemporary times, a significant portion of these relationships occurs through social interactions, both online and offline.

Since many social attitudes are reflections of this social construction stemming from social relationships, Recuero also highlights that understanding how these realities manifest themselves allows us to comprehend the phenomena resulting from the established social structure and the position of the actors involved (RECUERO, 2009, p. 14).

It is important to note that social network analysis seeks to understand how interactions among individuals manifest themselves, in this case, through internet social tools, as well as the dissemination and influence of these structures in constructing the ties that connect individuals in their choices.

According to Raquel Recuero, the object of study must possess a structure that can be mapped in social network analysis. Furthermore, this structure must help understand the phenomenon at hand, as the object under analysis can partially explain the social system in which it is embedded.

However, at the same time, there are impacts of constant daily changes, mainly due to the speed of innovations in this field, which accelerate transformations in content production, distribution, and consumption - whether entertainment, information, or even political content. An infinite number of available content is constantly being produced, making it impossible to consume everything available.

In the face of these numerous transformations, Electoral communication also undergoes impacts. With advancements in communication methods, the electoral process, although still influenced by beliefs and values that have defined candidacies for many years, has been affected by the options available in the online environment. For this reason, in the last two elections in Brazil, both for federal and municipal positions, candidates have turned to social media as tools to garner votes and engage with voters.

4. Analysis of the official profiles of re-election candidates

Political activity is impacted by the media and their ability to influence public opinion. On the other hand, there is also the aspect of using these media channels to gain visibility, not only to achieve social legitimacy but also to maintain a position within the state's political apparatus. The fields of communication and electoral politics, and the interplay between them, are becoming increasingly interconnected. However, it is challenging to establish a standard for the circumstances in which one influences the other and vice versa. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify relationships that assist researchers in understanding society and, especially, making decisions about current political representation.

Mobilizing public opinion requires time and strategy. As the central objective of candidates in an electoral process is to secure votes, the more visibility they obtain through their actions, the greater the interest in them within decision-making spheres. Through this visibility, they achieve their primary goal: securing votes.

Regarding the specific role of legislators, Gomes (2004) highlights that the legislative process is when they have the highest visibility, as they act as *decision-makers* in public policies with a significant potential for being seen. This is because parliamentary functions are more closely related to legislative construction.

Media visibility during a mandate is more closely associated with the Executive Branch. Therefore, except for a few public policies of significant media relevance that direct visibility toward legislators, opportunities for visibility increase during the electoral period. This means

that during the electoral process, visibility quotas are expanded, reaching their peak in the competition for disseminating proposals and achievements in the period leading up to election day. In this scenario, the public is most attentive to public issues and the actions carried out by representatives over the past four years.

Thus, with more completed proposals and practical measures, reelection campaigns should ensure a closer connection with the public by presenting new proposals. This is supported by the fact that in 2018, the Paraná State Legislative Assembly reelected 33 out of 54 representatives (61%), demonstrating a more visible relationship and a higher conversion of votes for those already holding legislative positions. Three of the state deputies stood out for being reelected in the last election (Cristina, Mara, and Maria Victória). Therefore, women candidates also benefited from the available visibility quotas during their mandates.

After four years since the last elections and with the most significant female caucus in the History of the Paraná State Legislative Assembly, the question arises as to whether, even as candidates who already hold legislative positions, they still need to refute or reinforce stereotypes in their electoral campaigns. Within the scope of this research, the objective is to explore whether launching electoral campaigns neutralizes or reinforces the characteristics and attitudes observed by Panke (2016), which are considered fundamental elements in the construction of Latin American electoral campaigns, such as the figure of the mother, the warrior, and the professional.

4.1 Cristina Silvestri (PSDB)

State representative Cristina Silvestri holds a degree in History and is serving her second term in the Paraná State Legislative Assembly (Alep), being the most-voted woman in the last election. Currently, she holds the position of Special Prosecutor for Women, and this year, she changed parties, leaving the Partido da Cidadania and joining the PSDB. Widow of former federal deputy Cezar Silvestri and mother of the former mayor of Guarapuava and former state deputy Cesar Silvestri Filho, she entered politics after both had already been elected. In her profile on the Alep website, she defines herself as a "municipal deputy."

Image 01 is the only one that does not correspond to the date of August 16, as the candidate is the only one who does not have the official post of her candidacy on that date. The analyzed post on her Instagram profile still refers to the pre-launch of her re-election campaign, which took place on August 14. The photo received 275 likes, offering several possibilities for

analysis. Firstly, in the discursive and textual context of the message, it is possible to identify some situations portrayed in the image of the representative.

The first situation reinforces her role as a mother, enabling a connection with specific groups of women and demonstrating a maternal behavioral potential in her daily life. In Cristina's case, being the mother of Cesar and Teka and grandmother to five grandchildren highlights characteristics of this maternal instinct associated with traditional feminine definitions. Furthermore, there is a description of her work, not only mentioning that she is a farmer (with less prominence), but emphasizing her performance and political trajectory, especially in the ALEP, where she was the most voted woman, the first prosecutor, elected representative, and author of over 400 projects.

Image 1 - Screenshot of Cristina Silvestri's re-election candidacy launch



Source: Screenshot taken on August 14, 2022.

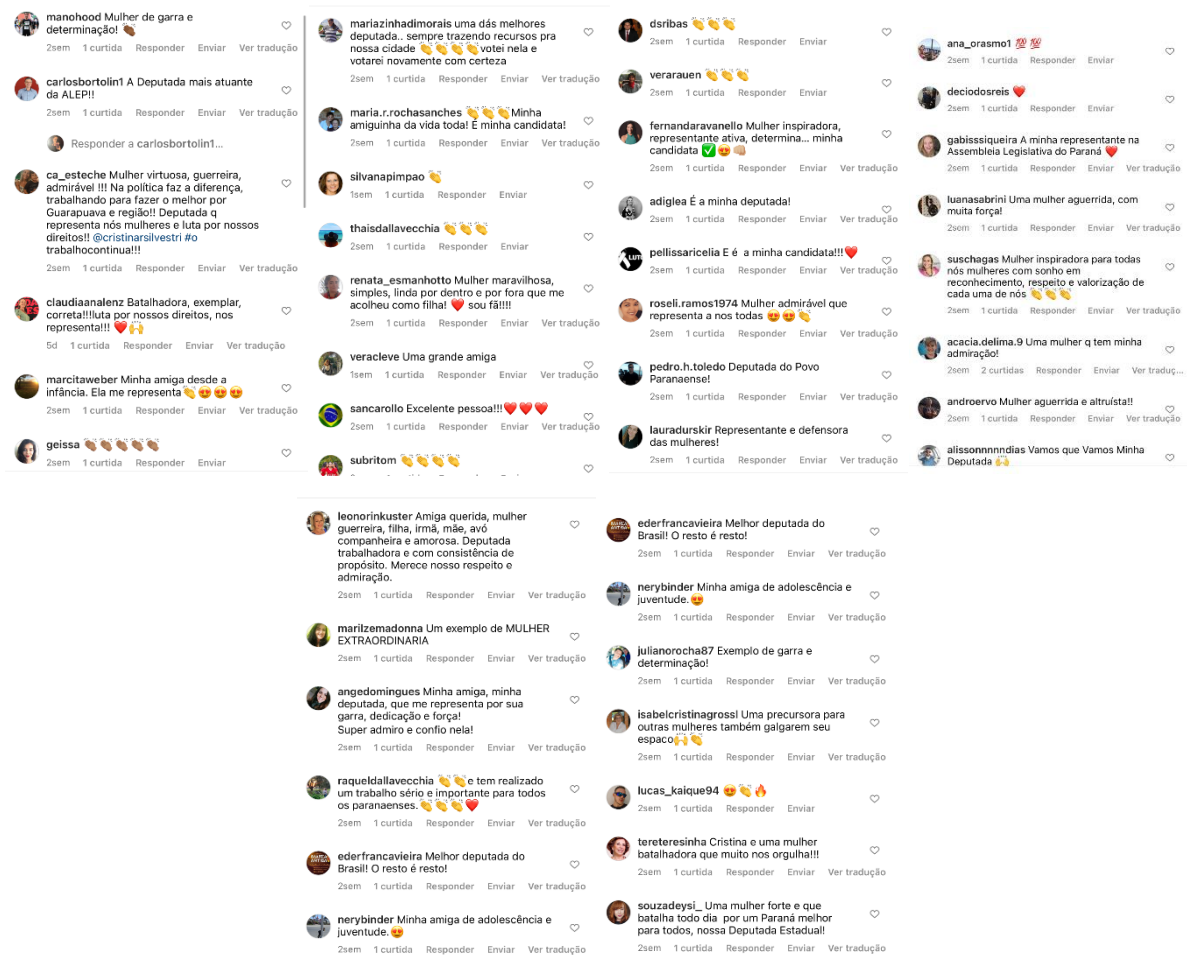
The interaction, a characteristic of social networks sustained and encouraged by the candidate's profile, also assists in the electorate's analysis of who Cristina is. Vittadini (1995) emphasizes that digital communication is currently closer to users, as its premise is to be more connected. Thus, it is *"a type of communication made possible by the specific potentialities of particular technological configurations, whose objective is to imitate or simulate interaction"*

among people." The candidate's profile stimulates interactivity and participation by requesting responses to the question: who is Cristina Silvestri?

Image 2 presents some of the comments that reinforce the messages transmitted by the candidate on her profile. People's discourses align with what is established by the campaign and simultaneously, strengthen the stereotypes present in most female candidacies.

As mentioned earlier by Panke (2016), when addressing the categories of the candidates, it can be observed that users reinforce both the stereotype of the mother and that of the worker and warrior. However, what stands out the most is the friend's figure, highlighting the sensitive side of motherhood and feminine emotions. According to the author, this representation is sacred and positive, bestowing the candidate a status of respect above her professional characteristics, which are not limited to motherhood. The word "performance" or "active" is also widely emphasized, especially regarding her work in the Assembly.

Image 2 - Comments on the candidate's post



Source: Screenshot taken on August 14, 2022.

4.2 Maria Lima

According to the information available on the Assembly's website, the singer Mara Lima, whose full name is Marilei de Souza Lima, is the daughter of a military man, married, mother of two daughters, and grandmother of four grandchildren. Although originally from southwestern Paraná, she began her political career in 2008 when she was elected councilwoman in Curitiba. Since 2011, she has held a seat in Aep, with her main representation being the evangelical bench. Affiliated with the Republican party, she is the leader of the evangelical bench and deputy leader of the party. Her political platforms include the defense of Christian values, family, women's rights, life, children's and adolescents' rights, and the rights of the elderly, as well as taking a stance against abortion, gender ideology, and drug legalization. Her mandate can be summarized by the phrase: "God, country, family, and freedom"³.

As a member of the Republican party, Deputy Mara Lima uses her name as her Instagram profile without directly referencing a political figure. As a gospel singer and evangelical community member, she emphasizes religion's presence in different moments. In Image 03, it can be noted that the post features a song performed by her ("Meu País"), and in the supporting text (caption) of her candidacy announcement, there are references to Bible passages and words related to religion once again.

Her campaign slogan is the only reference indicating that the singer is also a state deputy, as it says: "The good work **continues...**" (emphasis ours). The word "continues" alludes to the continuity of her mandate but does not mention how often she has been a deputy. This post received 951 likes within 24 hours.

³ Information available at: <https://www.assembleia.pr.leg.br/deputados/perfil/cantora-mara-lima>. Accessed in: 14 aug. 2022.

Image 03 - Screenshot of the launch of Mara Lima's reelection candidacy



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

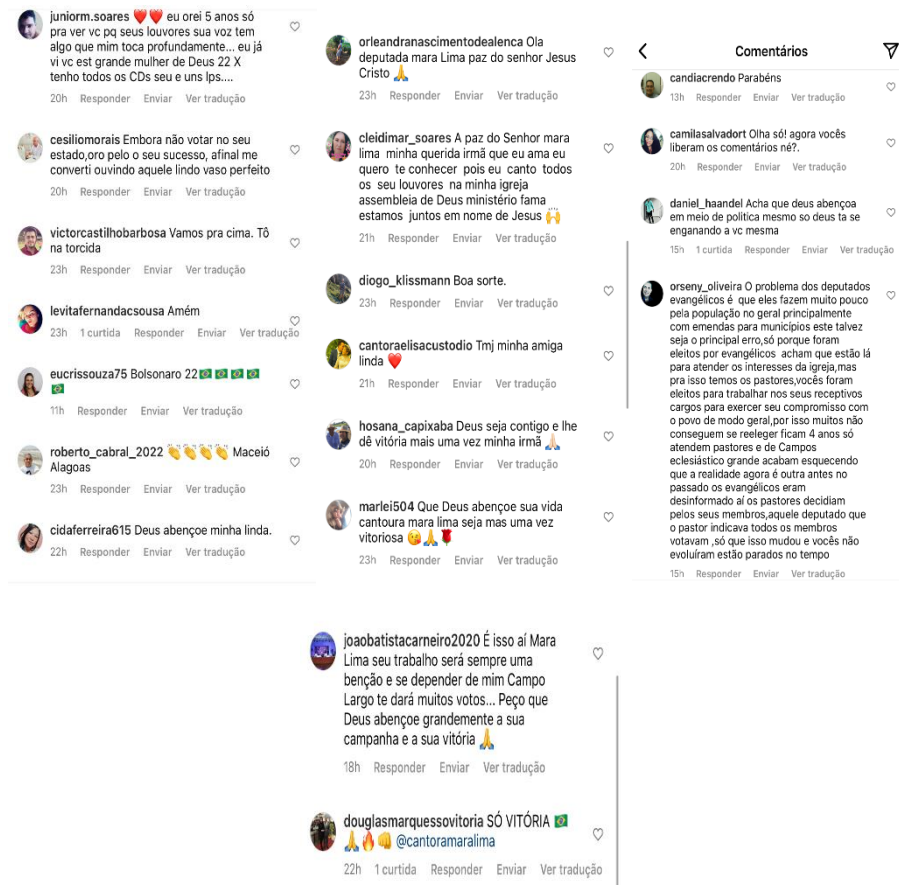
Panke (2015) explains that in electoral communication, it is essential to be accessible to the electorate, and participation and interaction are fundamental tools on social media. However, Mara Lima did not allow comments on her posts before the electoral period. Many channels and personalities adopt this practice to avoid offensive messages or discourage interaction. However, this attitude did not go unnoticed and was mentioned by the user @camilasalvadort in her comment: "Look, now you've allowed comments, huh!"

If it is necessary for candidates to be available, the opening of comments on the Deputy's social media during the electoral period confirms this need. Although women are more accepted in conversing with the public, the Deputy's non-electoral political communication did not involve interaction. With the arrival of elections, the relationship began to be included, although at no time was it observed that she responded or interacted with the received comments.

Image 04 also presents other relevant comments for analysis. As the Deputy is part of the evangelical bench, it is possible to note the presence of words like "God," "Jesus," "prayer," and emojis related to religion. Additionally, there is a message of support for candidate

Bolsonaro and another with criticisms of how evangelical deputies perform their work (without direct criticism towards the Deputy).

Image 04 - Screenshot of the most relevant comments on Deputy Mara Lima's post



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

4.3 Mabel Canto

For the first time holding a seat in the state legislature, Mabel Canto is married, a mother of two children, a lawyer, and a radio broadcaster. As evident from her history on the Assembly's⁴ website, she is also the daughter of Jocelito Canto, a politician from Paraná. She was the author of the Adequate Childbirth Law and the Women's Garage Project in her work at Alep. According to official information on the website, since the beginning of her mandate, she has been donating half of her salary to social institutions and people in vulnerable situations in the region.

⁴ Information available at: <https://www.assembleia.pr.leg.br/deputados/perfil/mabel-canto>. Accessed in: 14 aug. 2022.

Unlike the other candidates, Mabel announces her number and launches her campaign with a static image and a short video showing scenes from her family life and her role as a state deputy. Memory is another characteristic of the web that can be used in electoral campaigns to prove the work accomplished.

Furthermore, it plays a fundamental role in the continuity of the deputy's mandate, reiterating the characteristic of a working woman with a strong presence within Alep. Memory, unlike history, always establishes a connection between the present and the representation of the past (SODRÉ, 2009). By resuming her work at the Assembly, Deputy Mabel demonstrates continuity in political construction and reconstruction starting from her arrival.

Another difference for Mabel compared to the other candidates is the presence of a jingle in her campaign. The song even serves as the caption for her post.

Image 05 - Screenshot of the launch of Mabel Canto's reelection candidacy



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

The candidate's launch video reflects her connection with her father, Jocelito Canto, who is running for Federal Deputy. In the users' comments on Mabel's social media, this relationship is mentioned when discussing the "vote combination" between father and daughter.

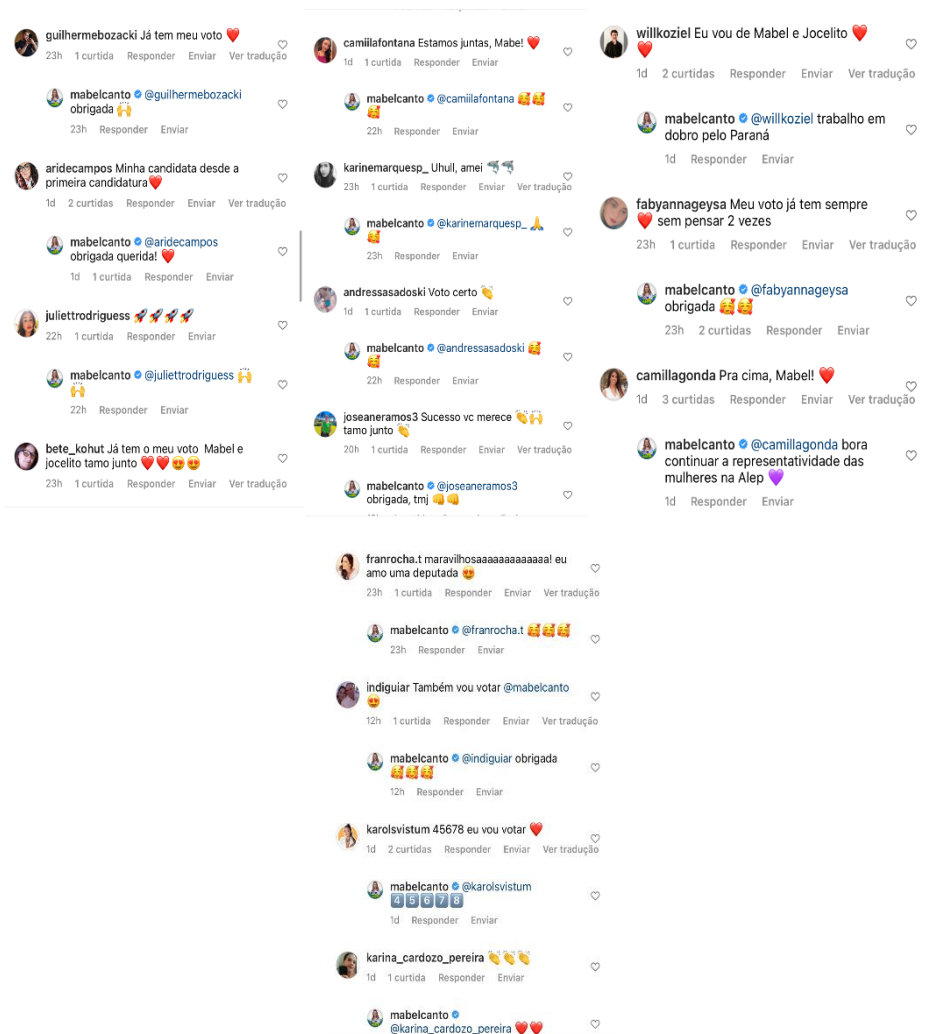
Here, it is essential to highlight the stereotype that many female candidates, such as Mabel, Maria Victória, and Cristina Silvestri, face: the idea that they can only achieve political positions because they are related to the men in their families. The quota policy requires political parties to encourage the participation of more women in electoral contests and, at the same time, facilitates the entry of women who were already close to decision-making processes, either as wives or daughters of politicians.

These institutions' political capital is paramount in the process of vote selection and transfer. In certain circumstances, this statement is corroborated, as evidenced in the case of the three mentioned deputies, whose family support allowed them to reach the position of Deputy.

At the same time, we recognize that many women are even more excluded from the process precisely because they are not part of the party elite and, therefore, cannot participate in the so-called "internal democracy" of political parties.

When analyzing the reality of the Legislative Assembly of Paraná, only two of the five female deputies do not have this family appeal. Therefore, belonging to a structured political group is a facilitator for the election of women in Paraná. This relationship is also observed among male candidates, with the presence of several deputies from traditional families in the Paraná scenario, such as Requião Filho, Anibelli Neto, and Artagão Júnior.

Image 06 - Screenshot of the most relevant comments on Deputy Mabel Canto's post



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

Among all the analyzed candidates, Mabel was the only one who interacted with her users, commenting on posts and liking comments. Recuero, when highlighting the analysis of social networks, emphasizes the importance of engagement in constructing networks. Thus, by

interacting instead of pushing away users, inclusion in constructing meanings is stimulated, and consequently, what is produced is valued. Since engagement makes all the difference in content delivery, especially due to algorithms, it is relevant to carry out this work because the number of likes and interactions is directly related to the audience's feedback regarding what I am producing, as well as how the content will be delivered to other potential voters.

4.4 Maria Victória

A state deputy in her second term, Maria Victória is the daughter of politicians and highlights in her biography on the Assembly's⁵ website that she followed her family's trajectory while preparing to fulfill her public role. She emphasizes her independence and preparedness, believing that the formation of a more humane society primarily goes through education. Besides being a businesswoman in the sector, she dedicates her term in the Legislative Assembly of Paraná specifically to education and health, highlighting her work on Rare Diseases. Similar to Mabel Canto's campaign, Maria Victória's biography reinforces the stereotype of being the daughter of politicians.

It is interesting to note that the last three mentioned candidates share a similar visual pattern, especially regarding the colors: green, yellow, and blue, which are associated with Governor Ratinho Júnior's campaign and also with President Jair Bolsonaro's.

Unlike other candidates, Maria Victória and Mara Lima do not emphasize their work in the Assembly or address their agendas and activities during their term. This could be a strategy to distance themselves from the idea of political renewal prevalent in previous legislatures. The notion that Legislative Chambers need new figures may once again become an electoral premise, and both candidates may have adopted this strategy to avoid losing potential voters. Therefore, it is a political communication strategy.

⁵ Information available at: <<https://www.assembleia.pr.leg.br/deputados/perfil/maria-victoria>>. Last viewed in 14 de aug. de 2022.

Image 07 - Screenshot of Maria Victória's candidacy announcement for re-election



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

The connection with Jair Bolsonaro becomes even more evident in the comments received on her post. In Image 08, it is possible to observe supportive words referencing the president's campaign directly, such as the use of emojis with the Brazilian flag. Despite not actively being part of the Evangelical caucus, the relationship between the candidate's parents and the president, who has a notable Evangelical appeal, leads to her receiving support from this audience as well. This is evidenced by religious-related emojis and the use of the words "Prayer" and "God."

Image 08 - Screenshot of the most relevant comments on Deputy Maria Victoria's post



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

No comments related to her performance as a state deputy in the Paraná State Legislative Assembly (Alep) are observed, nor is there any evidence of emphasis on her work in the field of education, as mentioned in her biography.

4.5 Luciana Rafagnin

The last analyzed deputy is Luciana Rafagnin. Affiliated with the Partido dos Trabalhadores, the deputy was first elected in 2002 and served two consecutive terms until 2010. After that period, she did not hold legislative positions until the last election 2018. In her biography on the Paraná State Legislative Assembly's⁶ website, she claims to have a life history and active participation in the struggles for women's rights, older people, children, education, health, family farming, social inclusion, and regional development. Additionally, she has been dedicated to causes such as improving living conditions in land reform settlements and camps, advocating for families affected by dams in Paraná, promoting quality education, and valuing education workers.

As the only essentially oppositional deputy to Governor Ratinho Junior and President Jair Bolsonaro, the campaign of the PT candidate presents an entirely different layout from the others. In addition to using colors outside the electoral standard, such as blue and green, the

⁶ Available at: <https://www.assembleia.pr.leg.br/deputados/perfil/luciana-rafagnin>. Accessed in: 14 aug. 2022.

deputy is the only one who explicitly expresses support for senatorial, gubernatorial, and presidential candidates.

However, in the text supporting the candidacy announcement, there is no reference to the fact that she already holds the position of deputy with experience and has served in the Assembly for three terms, like candidates Maria Victória and Mara Lima.

Image 09 - Screenshot of Luciana Rafagnin's re-election candidacy announcement



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

Luciana was the only candidate who received negative comments about her political party, which is expected in times of political polarization. User @leoluzchiapetti wishes luck to his cousin (possibly the deputy) but points out that it is difficult for someone from the PT to get elected. User @alves.francisco17, clearly a supporter of Jair Bolsonaro (referring to the old number), commented twice, once stating that Bolsonaro will be reelected and another calling the PT a disgrace. Emojis of discontentment and sadness were also used, demonstrating anger and indignation. Image 10 presents the main comments received on Luciana's candidacy announcement post.

Image 10 - Screenshot of the most relevant comments on Deputy Luciana Rafagnin's post



Source: Screenshot taken on August 17, 2022.

Even though it is a common practice for most commercial and political profiles, the candidate chose not to delete the negative comments she received. This decision may have been motivated by deleting the comments would reduce interaction and the reach of the content. At the same time, this choice may have been made to make it evident how hate speech can arise during the campaign and demonstrate to her supporters that the candidate is willing to deal with divergent opinions.

5. Final Considerations

This research is in the exploratory phase, representing the first stage of a broader project to understand the electoral communication of State Deputy candidates in Paraná in 2022. Even at this initial stage, it is already possible to identify some relationships among the candidates seeking re-election and the construction of their electoral campaigns.

One of the main characteristics is the active presence of their family political capital. This aspect is particularly relevant for candidates Maria Victória, Cristina Silvestri, and Mabel

Canto, whose family relationships will be reinforced during the election. Another prominent characteristic that has emerged since the launch of the campaigns is how some candidates emphasize their performance as deputies (Mabel and Cristina) while others downplay their previous work (Mara, Maria, and Luciana).

In addition to the individual profiles of the candidates, we also observe the official profiles of the political parties, although most of them do not directly reference the re-election candidates. For example, in the official description of PT Paraná, there are only photos of the candidate for state deputy Requião Filho. The Republican Party only emphasizes the governor's campaign, with a joint post featuring the candidate for federal deputy Janaína Naumann. The Progressistas highlight Deputy Maria Victória in several posts, but none are related to her re-election campaign, focusing only on her role as party president. Finally, in PSDB Paraná, there are posts featuring candidate Mabel Canto, but no mention or image of Cristina Silvestri is included in the publications.

At the end of this comprehensive research, it will be possible to understand what remained constant and what was relevant for the re-election of State Deputies in Paraná based on the analysis and initial observations of the campaigns. Furthermore, it will be explored whether these elements can contribute to increasing the successful participation of more women in electoral contests.

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