



MIXED-MEMBER ELECTION AND CANDIDATE SELECTION IN BOLIVIA'S 1993 AND 1997 ELECTIONS

Miguel Centellas

Jackson State University

Abstract

Mixed-member electoral systems became a popular choice for “electoral engineers” in the 1990s. Countries as diverse as Venezuela, Hungary, Lesotho, and Italy adopted the system. The assumption was that introducing single-member districts (SMDs) in countries that used list proportional representation electoral systems would introduce “constituency” oriented legislators who could be more easily held accountable to voters. This paper explores changes associated with the adoption of a mixed-member electoral system in Bolivia through a candidate-level analysis looking at differences in candidate profiles between two elections (1993 and 1997) and between two tiers (list and nominal). The paper relies on portion of a dataset (collected by the author) of Bolivian legislative candidates. The analysis shows mixed results: While SMD candidates were more likely to have municipal level political experience, there was no significant difference in the kind of legislative committees list and SMD candidates had served in.

Introduction

Despite considerable attention to the importance of legislatures in democracies, we still know comparatively little about legislatures beyond the United States. However, findings from studies of the American case (whether national or state legislatures) are hardly representative. For one thing, both the federal and state level legislatures are marked by similar institutional structures: a two-party system (with relatively under-institutionalized parties) operating in single-member district contests using simple plurality electoral systems. Recently, there is increasing attention to the systematic studies of legislatures beyond the U.S. Not surprisingly, findings from the American experience often do not apply to other contexts.

One area that has received limited attention is the issue of candidate selection and legislative career trajectories. The first major effort at a systematic cross-national study of careers in European legislatures is an edited volume by Heinrich Best and Maurizio Cotta (2000). Looking specifically at recruitment and careers in eleven (West) European countries since 1848, Best and Cotta's volume represents a monumental effort



to gather data (mostly archival and descriptive) on legislators' trajectories. Best and Cotta, building on previous case studies, use a variable-based approach that allows for empirically establishing patterns across the countries in their study. They found that legislative modernization was context-dependent: changes in socioeconomic structure preceded changes in elite representation, but that such changes were slow and that elites were able to adapt, primarily through institutional innovation (such as changing the electoral system) within parliamentary democracy. To date, the comparative literature on candidate selection remains small, and primarily limited to the experience of advanced industrial democracies (e.g. Gallagher 1988; Norris 1997; Katz 2001; Shugart, Valdini, and Suominen 2005; Rahat 2007; Shugart, Pekkanen, and Krauss 2013). Significant attention has been paid to Japan (Pekkanen, Nyblade, and Krauss 2006; Smith 2013; Smith, Pekkanen, and Krauss 2013), as well as a recent of single-country studies of Germany (Stratmann and Baur 2002) and New Zealand (McLeay and Vowles 2006).

Candidate selection is an important dimension of legislative politics in electoral democracies. How parties recruit, retain, and groom candidates is important for understanding how party systems operate within the constraints and incentives of the electoral system. Thus, how parties both select candidates and assign them to legislative posts is a vital point of intersection between party systems and electoral systems. Nevertheless, little attention has (yet) been paid to the analysis of the internal dynamics of legislatures beyond the American case.

Although legislatures were part of the broader focus on studies of the institutionalization and "consolidation" of democracy in Latin America since the 1990s, little attention was paid (until recently) to the specific dynamics of legislatures. Studies that focused on legislatures tended to focus on the balance of power between presidents and legislatures (e.g. Shugart and Carey 1992; Close 1995; Morgenstern and Nacif 2002) and often looked at the legislature as a whole—and especially in its relationship with the executive branch. Timothy Power's (2000) groundbreaking study of Brazilian political elites was based on analyses of individual-level legislators. However, its focus was on party institutionalization and did not look at career trajectories. Recently, there has been an increase in interest in candidate selection and retention (and broader questions of "candidate recruitment"), with a number of notable country-level case studies (e.g. Camp 1995; Santos 1999; Langston 2001; Siavelis 2002). A recent volume edited by Peter Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern (2008) offers the first major systematic study of candidate recruitment and selection in Latin America and its scope includes both the legislative and executive branches. However, the volume focuses primarily on a handful of Latin American countries—and most of which (Argentina is perhaps the only exception) are typically regarded as "successful" cases of democratic consolidation.

There has been some attention to legislative institutionalization in Latin America, but these have been relatively eclectic. For example, John Carey's (1996) study of legislative careers in the United States, Venezuela, and

Costa Rica was written at a time when American policy circles were giving significant attention to the issue of term limits. Carey discovered that, contrary to many of the claims made by proponents of term limits, term limits did not seem to diminish political “careerism.” However, Carey’s more significant contribution was to point out that legislators are primarily responsive to whoever controlled their future “fates” (whether in politics or the private sector). In cases where legislative careers are uncertain, one possibility of extending a political career is to seek a position within the executive branch.

Two studies of the Brazilian legislature fit Carey’s general framework well: Fabian Santos’s (1999) study of Brazilian legislative careers since the 1950s found that Brazilian legislators sought careers in the executive branch, which is viewed as more prestigious. This accounts for a “zig zag” pattern Santos observed, in which legislators moved from the legislature, then to the executive branch, then back again. An earlier study by Figueiredo and Limongi (1996) made a similar argument. Using a rational choice approach, Figueiredo and Limongi found that Brazilian legislators were more likely to return depending on the career opportunities within the legislature. For example, if seniority was used to determine leadership positions, incumbents were more likely to seek reelection. The findings of Santos (1999) and Figueiredo and Limongi (1996) are complementary: If legislators are “political entrepreneurs,” they should seek positions that improve their chances of either scaling the power ladder and/or remaining in relevant positions. In other words, they respond to those who control their “fates”—but they also pursue strategies based on available career opportunities.

One area that has received considerable attention in legislative studies and legislative careers has been the studies on female representation in legislatures (e.g. Kohn 1980; Rule 1987; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). It has since become conventional wisdom that institutional structures—particularly those related to the electoral system—have strong effects on the share of women in legislatures: particularly, the difference in female legislative representation rates in plurality (low) and proportional representation (high) electoral systems. Additionally, the growing literature on gender quotas has demonstrated the dramatic impact that institutional changes can make. Only recently, however, has attention in this literature shifted to questions of recruitment (how are female candidates recruited?) or careers (are the career trajectories of female legislators different?). These questions are significant. The increase of women’s participation in the legislature does not guarantee that women receive qualitatively equal participation (e.g. if they are systematically excluded from or significantly underrepresented in leadership positions).

But the introduction of gender quotas in many countries further complicates—or perhaps facilitates—emerging studies of legislative careers. This is particularly the case in Latin America, where legislative gender quotas have become increasingly common. As the number of

women in Latin American legislatures increases, this “crowds out” space traditionally available to men. This offers an opportunity to test some of the assumptions about legislative careers. For example, if parties actively pursue strategies to cultivate “professionalized” legislative cohorts, then we should expect that legislators with leadership experience would be more likely to return. In other words, parties should drop “weak” male candidates in order to comply with gender quotas. At the same time, however, if political actors respond to opportunity structures, then gender quotas may provide incentives for many political entrepreneurs to seek positions elsewhere (such as the executive). Finally, of course, there’s a range of possible questions about how female legislators operate within these institutional constraints—and whether parties actively seek to cultivate the careers or portfolios of the members of their legislative delegations.

This paper offers a preliminary exploration of candidate selection in Bolivia, a “new” democracy (since 1982) that has undergone a number of institutional reforms, including a change to the electoral system from list-proportional to mixed-member proportionality and the adoption of gender quotas.

The Legislature and Institutional Change in Bolivia

Bolivia’s legislature has received almost no attention from scholars—even though it plays an important role in the country’s political system. Although there is a body of scholarship related to Bolivia’s political parties and the overall party system (e.g. Sandoval 1993; R. Mayorga 1995; Zegada 1996; Zegada 1998; Romero Ballivián 1998; Rolón Anaya 1999), these have tended to be primarily qualitatively descriptive, focusing primarily on the political platforms and/or territorial electoral bases of individual parties. More recently, a number of studies have focused on the evolving nature of the party system—particularly in the aftermath of the political crisis that began in 2000 and peaked with a series of protests in 2003 that drove then-president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada from office (e.g. Arandia 2004; Mansilla et al 2004; F. Mayorga et al 2005; Domingo 2006). Such studies, however, are also primarily descriptive, focusing primarily on critiques (often polemic) of the political parties and their role in the political crisis. Interestingly, little attention was given to the role that legislators played in the political process.

The attention on parties suggests an implicit assumption about the political process in a “parliamentarized” system like Bolivia’s. Between 1982 and 2002, Bolivia’s political system could be described as a case of “parliamentarized presidentialism” (Mayorga 1997). Although Bolivia was nominally a presidential system, a constitutional provision that allowed the newly elected legislature to select a president in the event that no candidate obtained a simple majority of the popular vote, meant that the system behaved like a parliamentary system until 2005, when Evo Morales became the first presidential candidate to surpass that threshold. Additionally, because Bolivia used a “fused ballot” (Centellas 2001) system

in which legislative seats were apportioned on the basis of the presidential vote, Bolivia effectively operated like a parliamentary system with a list-PR electoral system. In this context, it made sense to study parties (rather than the legislature), since Bolivia's political system was essentially determined by the dynamics dictating party coalitions—necessary both for naming a president and retaining legislative cohesion (every Bolivian president from 1985–2003 governed with a multiparty portfolio coalition).

Bolivia's political system did not remain static, however. A series of institutional reforms fundamentally transformed the political system—often in unexpected ways (see Centellas 2007; 2009). Two of these reforms directly impacted the legislature: In 1995, after prolonged debate over electoral system reform, Bolivia adopted a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system, following the advice of constitutional engineers—for whom MMP was en vogue in the 1990s (e.g. Shugart and Wattenberg 2001). One of the goals was to improve the links between voters and parties—and by introducing constituent representation, increase accountability and improve legitimacy of parties—by facilitating the direct election of about half of the lower house in single-member district (SMD) elections. Although there is technically no distinction between uninominal deputies (those elected in SMDs) and their plurinominal (those elected on lists) colleagues, there are good reasons to suspect that they may behave differently. After all, the “fates” of both types of candidates are in different hands.

A second important reform was the introduction of gender quotas, first used in the 1997 election. Although female participation in the legislature was steadily improving in the 1990s, women were still grossly underrepresented and never accounted for more than 10 percent of the legislature. The new quota law mandated that one third of a party's candidate had to be women, and that male and female candidates had to be intermixed so that no three candidates of the same gender could be listed consecutively. An early assessment by Jimena Costa Benavides (2003) shows that the results of the quota were dramatic, with female participation increasing from 8.4 percent in 1993 to 18.5 percent in 1997. However, women's participation in the legislature has remained low in large part because of limitations to the quota law, which applies only to the list (or plurinominal) candidates; it does not apply to SMD (or uninominal) candidates. Not surprisingly, female deputies are disproportionately found on party lists. For example, 26.7 percent of all deputies elected on lists in 2005 were female, but only 7.1 percent of those elected in SMDs were. This discrepancy complicates matters, and makes it important to untangle the overlapping effects of election type (list or SMD) from any possible effect of gender.

A final important reform includes two waves of decentralization reforms. In 1994, Bolivia adopted a sweeping municipal decentralization reform that created 311 (since expanded to 329) municipalities. Voters in each municipality could elect their municipal governments and municipal governments had guaranteed fiscal resources (a full 20 percent of the

government's budget was earmarked for municipal governments on the basis of their populations). This did not mean that Bolivian citizens could for the first time elect their local authorities—they could do so since 1985, but mostly limited to urban areas. But it did mean that local authorities had significant fiscal and political autonomy from the central government. This matters for a study of legislative careers, because the effective introduction of municipal elections fundamentally alters the strategic calculus of political entrepreneurs. On the one hand, local government could be a steppingstone to a political career at the national level. On the other hand, some municipalities (e.g. the metropolitan cities of La Paz, El Alto, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba) are tempting political prizes in their own right. Thus, beginning in the mid-1990s, established politicians were tempted to leave the legislature and move into municipal politics—particularly if they had higher chances of winning, and especially with the lure of fiscal resources they might control. In fact, many did so. Additionally, as a consequence of regional autonomy movements that forcefully emerged in aftermath of the October 2003 political crisis, a second wave of political decentralization arrived with the adoption of a new constitution in 2009 that granted autonomy to the country's nine departments—establishing popular elections of governors and departmental assemblies.¹ Again, many established political figures abandoned the national political arena and moved into local and regional politics.

Together, these three reforms complicate any effort to study Bolivian legislators because it is difficult to disentangle the effects of each of the three distinct types of reform. Any significant changes in legislative personnel or behavior from 1997 onwards could be a product of one or more factors.

Finally, another institutional change was the result of the October 2003 crisis, which effectively collapsed the traditional party system. Beyond simply a collapse of the party system, the subsequent political realignment and the rise of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) as a hegemonic political party transformed Bolivia from a “parliamentarized” to a “pure” presidential system (Centellas 2008). Again, this complicates the analysis because of the timing. However, we can disaggregate Bolivia's political history into three distinct phases:

- “Parliamentarized” presidentialism, with list-PR (1982–1996)
- “Parliamentarized” presidentialism, with MMP and municipal decentralization (1997–2003)
- “Pure” presidentialism, with MMP and municipal decentralization (2004–present)

Throughout the rest of the paper (particularly in the analysis), there is a concerted effort to sort out the possible macro-institutional (or “contextual”) effects on legislative retention.

This paper limits itself to the elections immediately preceding and immediately following the mid-1990s institutional reforms. In doing so, the

study limits itself to the study of two elections: 1993 and 1997. One advantage of this narrow restriction is that it minimizes any potential effects caused by the breakdown of the “parliamentarized” presidential system that began around the time of the 2002 election. This limits the study to two proximate elections that took place within the broader institutional constraints of the same regime (“parliamentarized” presidentialism), despite variation in the electoral system and electoral incentives due to institutional reforms.

Data: Bolivian Candidate Characteristics Dataset

This paper uses a portion of a larger dataset on Bolivian legislative candidates. This paper focuses on legislative candidates in the 1993 and 1997 election, the two elections immediately preceding and following three significant institutional reforms: the adoption of a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system; the 1994 *Ley de Participación Popular* (LPP), which radically decentralized the country and the municipal level; and the introduction of gender quotas (applied to the list-proportional electoral tier). The data was collected from various sources, but primarily from primary sources provided by the Corte Nacional Electoral and Órgano Electoral Plurinacional.

The data includes information on 860 candidates for Bolivia’s Cámara de Diputados, the legislature’s lower chamber. Data was only collected on “relevant” candidates, using a collection protocol:

- All candidates who won a seat.
- All “first losers.” That means that candidate data was collected for the first candidate on every list for every party, regardless of the likelihood that he/she would win a seat. Likewise, data was collected for the second place candidate in every single-member (“uninominal”) district.
- First three list candidates for every major and secondary party. Major parties include ADN, MNR, and MIR; secondary parties include CONDEPA, MBL, and UCS.
- List candidate losers for major and secondary parties using a simple formula of 1.25s (i.e. if the party won 8 seats, data was collected for the next two losers).
- Every uninominal candidate from a major party (ADN, MNR, MIR).
- First three placed uninominal candidates, regardless of the party.

Due to missing candidate lists for some minor parties, the 1993 data is slightly reduced (from a potential 349 to 285). Although minimal data was retained (party ID, party vote share), because the identity of the candidates was unknown, data on most relevant variables (gender, previous experience) could not be determined. Thus, most analyses do not include information from these minor parties unless the candidate won a seat and could be identified. Full candidate lists for 1997 are available. However, two 1997 candidates are unknown because they were disqualified and are

listed in official records merely as “inhabilitado” in the official candidate list.² This reduces the 1997 candidate data from a potential 511 to 509 (230 list, 279 nominal).

In this paper, candidate-specific information is limited to previous political experience, either in the legislature or in municipal government. Although the LPP reform introduced municipal elections on a wider scale, municipal elections were introduced in 1985—though these were primarily limited to urban areas and the municipal governments had limited powers. Nevertheless, this means that legislative candidates could have had prior experience having been elected to municipal council and/or serving as mayors prior to the 1994 LPP. Prior municipal experience was coded with dummy variables for each municipal election (1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995), with an additional aggregative dummy variable for previous municipal experience in any year preceding the legislative election year.

Similarly, dummy variables were used to identify candidates with previous legislative experience. Two dummy variables were used: one for previous legislative experience in any prior legislative election (including some preceding the transition to democracy) and another variable for “incumbents” who served in the legislative term immediately preceding the relevant election year. It is important to note that not all “incumbent” legislators were elected in the previous election. Bolivia uses a system of suplente legislators; if any legislator leaves the chamber for any reason (e.g. death, appointment to a cabinet position, resignation), he or she is replaced by a waiting substitute legislator.

Because of the introduction of gender quotas requiring that every third list candidate must be female, data was collected on the gender of candidates. The dummy variable was coded “1” for female and “0” for male candidates.

Additionally, the data includes information on the legislative committee appointments of incumbent legislators. This includes appointment to the chamber’s executive committee, a small select group that includes the president of the chamber, two vice presidents, and four secretaries. It also includes membership in the various substantive committees. Until 1997, Bolivia’s Cámara de Diputados was organized into as many as twenty-two legislative committees. These were categorized into three types of committees, using the coding scheme outlined by Shugart, Pekanen, and Krauss (2013):

- “High policy” committees that deal with broad functions of or matters of state, such as managing the economy, foreign policy, or defense.
- “Public goods” committees that deal with the allocation of resources to broad categories of beneficiaries, such as education, healthcare, or women’s rights.
- “Distributive” committees that deal with policy areas in which benefits are disaggregated to specific geographic and/or sectoral

constituencies, such as mining, agriculture and peasant affairs, or public works.

It is important to note that Bolivian legislators often serve on multiple committees, and often serve inconsistently. That is, a legislator could serve during his or her four-year term on a “high policy” committee for two years, serve another two years on a “public goods” committee, all while serving on a “distributive” committee during the entire time. Similarly, a legislator could serve only one year on one committee. In the following analysis, individual legislators are coded as having served on any of these committees if he or she served at any time during the legislative term immediately preceding the election year.

Hypotheses

Based on the differences in incentive structures associated with different kinds of electoral systems—and the immediate institutional context in which the electoral system operated in Bolivia—this paper develops a number of research hypotheses. The basic assumptions that drive the hypotheses are as follows: Candidates who run on party lists have incentives to develop careers that show loyalty to the party, rather than specific constituencies. And parties have incentives to recruit and promote candidates who do a good job promoting the party “brand” in relevant policy areas. In contrast, candidates who run in single-member districts have incentives to develop careers that allow them to demonstrate the ability to deliver real tangible goods (or “pork”) to their constituents. Likewise, parties seeking to be competitive in competitive single-member districts should seek out candidates with stronger connections to specific local constituents.

In the immediate context of Bolivia’s institutional reforms, this paper tests the following hypotheses about expected differences between the 1993 and 1997 elections:

Hypothesis 1. Nominal (or SMD) candidates are more likely to have prior municipal experience. Following the logic of single-member plurality electoral systems, we should expect parties to recruit candidates who are known to local constituencies and have a proven track record of winning local contests. Political parties should prioritize placing candidates with experience serving in municipal elective office on their nominal lists.

Hypothesis 2. Nominal candidates are more likely to have served on a “distributive” committee. Because nominal candidates campaign in local districts—and because these are individual, personality driven contests—we should expect parties to seek candidates who can claim credit for having worked to delivered “pork” to their districts in the past. Because distributive committees offer the best avenue for these kind of policies, we should expect to see parties seek to place

incumbent or former legislators with such experience on their nominal lists.

Hypothesis 3. List candidate are more likely to have served on the legislative chamber's executive committee. Working under the assumption that party leaders are most likely to be selected to help lead the chamber, we should expect parties to place such members on their lists (and in a high position) in order to ensure their (re)election.

Hypothesis 4. List candidate are more likely to have served on "high policy" committee. Finally, if we operate under the assumption (as Shugart, Pekkanen, and Krauss 2013 do) that candidates who benefit the party "brand" by focusing on high policy issues (such as economic policy or foreign policy) are likely party leaders, then we should also expect them to be more likely to be placed on party lists (and in high positions) in order to ensure their (re)election.

We should note that our hypotheses operate in a unique electoral context: Unlike in other countries with mixed-member systems (such as Germany and Japan), Bolivian parties rarely nominate candidates to more than one tier—even though there is no legal proscription against it. This is remarkable, because in mixed-member systems parties typically dual nominate a large number of candidates in order to hedge their bets and maximize the possibility of election for incumbents and other "high value" candidates. In Japan, the practice is so commonplace that the term "zombie" has emerged to describe candidates who lose in the nominal tier but are "revived" by their election in the list tier (Pekkanen, Nyblade, and Krauss 2006).

To put this in perspective, in recent German elections nearly half of all candidates are dual nominated (that is, about half of candidates run in single-member districts but are also included in the list used to award seats under the proportional representation rules). Because of this provision, the percentage of winning candidates who are "zombies" is consistently around 15 percent of all winners.³

In contrast, only 3.7 percent of Bolivia's 1997 candidates were dual nominated and these were concentrated among small parties who won no seats; there were no zombies (no nominal loser went on to win a seat through the proportional representation tier). This quirk facilitates testing our hypotheses because parties overwhelmingly nominate candidates to one, but not both, tiers. Thus, we can directly compare differences in candidate selection norms for list and nominal tiers.

Finally, it is important to note that in Bolivia, parties have tight control over candidate nominations. Although internal dynamics of parties varies (e.g. some parties began introducing internal primaries for party leadership posts between elections), parties enjoyed a constitutional monopoly of representation. Parties provide the electoral court with one single, official list of candidates for both tiers. Thus, parties determine their candidates internally, candidates have no direct way to campaign at nominal levels.⁴

Table 1: Candidate characteristics (%) by year and electoral tier

	1993	1997	
		List	Nominal
Previous legislative experience	29.5	19.1	14.7
Incumbent	21.4	15.2	7.5
Legislative committee experience			
Executive committee	3.5	2.2	1.1
High policy	11.9	7.8	5.0
Public goods	9.8	7.0	2.5
Distributive goods	10.5	7.4	2.9
Previous municipal experience	10.9	7.8	22.6
Elected in 1995 municipal election	—	2.6	11.8
Female	8.1	26.5	9.0
Observations (N)	285	230	279

High Policy committees include: Poderes y Peticiones, Gobierno, Planeamiento, Política Internacional, Defensa, Derechos Humanos, and Constitución y Justicia
Public Goods committees include: Política Social, Salud, Educación, De la Mujer, Informática, Ciencia y Tecnología, Medio Ambiente, and Protección de Menores
Distributive committees include: Obras Públicas, Desarrollo Regional, Energía e Hidrocarburos, Política Agraria (Campesinado), Política Agropecuaria, Lucha Contra Tráfico de Drogas

This means that for the purpose of analyzing candidate nominations, we can treat political parties as unitary actors.

Empirical Tests of Hypotheses

In addition to simple difference-of-means tests, Table 1 offers snapshot of candidate characteristics for 1993 and 1997. Notice that previous candidates in 1997 were less likely to have previous legislative experience than candidate in 1993, and nominal candidates seemed less likely than list candidates to have such experience. On the other hand, 1997 candidates were more likely to have been previously elected in a municipal election, and nominal candidates were more likely to have such experience than list candidates. The quota law clearly had an effect on the percentage of female candidates in 1997, although the increase was limited to the list tier. Finally, consistent with the overall decline in prior legislative experience among 1997 candidates, 1997 candidates were generally less likely to have served on any type of legislative committee during the preceding legislative session (1993–1997).

To test whether there were significant differences in candidate characteristics between 1993 and 1997, I first used some simple difference of means tests. Table 2 presents the findings of the simple difference-of-means tests, using Welch's correction, which does not assume equal

Table 2: Differences in Candidate Characteristics by Election Year (Welch's correction)

	Election Year		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	1993	1997		
Previous Legislative experience	0.271 (0.457)	0.167 (0.373)	4.03***	498.7
Incumbents	0.214 (0.411)	0.110 (0.313)	3.71***	472.3
Previous Municipal experience	0.109 (0.312)	0.159 (0.366)	-2.05*	671.0
Female	0.081 (0.273)	0.169 (0.125)	-3.81***	742.2
Executive committee	0.035 (0.184)	0.016 (0.125)	1.58	432.9
Any legislative committee	0.189 (0.325)	0.104 (0.306)	3.17**	480.0
High policy committee	0.119 (0.325)	0.063 (0.243)	2.56*	465.7
Public goods committee	0.098 (0.298)	0.045 (0.208)	2.66**	442.5
Distributive committee	0.105 (0.307)	0.049 (0.216)	2.73**	445.3

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Welch's *t*-test; standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

variances in the two populations. The tests show statistically significant differences across most variables. The one exception was membership in the legislature's executive committee, which was not statistically different across the two years (likely because the membership was so small, limited to only seven deputies at a time, with little turnover). In particular, the difference-of-means test for previous municipal experience confirms the first hypothesis: 1997 candidates were more likely (overall) to have previous municipal experience than 1993 candidates. However, the difference is only marginally significant ($p = 0.0409$). The difference-of-means test for

Table 3: Differences in Candidate Characteristics by Election Tier

	Election Tier		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	List	Nominal		
Previous Legislative experience	0.191 (0.394)	0.147 (0.355)	1.32	467.7
Incumbents	0.152 (0.360)	0.075 (0.264)	2.67**	412.4
Previous Municipal experience	0.078 (0.269)	0.226 (0.419)	-4.80***	481.7
1995 municipal election	0.026 (0.011)	0.118 (0.019)	-4.18***	423.0
Female	0.265 (0.442)	0.090 (0.286)	5.19***	378.5
Executive committee	0.022 (0.146)	0.011 (0.103)	0.96	402.0
Any legislative committee	0.139 (0.347)	0.075 (0.264)	2.30*	422.8
High policy committee	0.078 (0.269)	0.050 (0.219)	1.27	440.7
Public goods committee	0.070 (0.255)	0.025 (0.157)	2.31*	365.8
Distributive committee	0.074 (0.262)	0.029 (0.167)	2.27*	374.9

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Welch's *t*-test; standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

gender also confirmed that 1997 candidates were more likely (overall) to be female than 1993 candidates. This difference was both larger (the share of female candidates more than doubled from 8.1 percent in 1993 to 16.9 percent in 1997) and highly significant ($p = 0.0002$).

To test whether candidate characteristics were significantly different across electoral tiers in 1997, I used another set of difference-of-means tests (again using Welch's correction). Table 3 presents those findings. The *t*-tests confirm a number of significant differences across both tiers, though

several contradicted some of the hypothesized expectations. While there was not a significant difference between tiers regarding previous legislative experience in any prior legislature, list candidates were significantly more likely to be current incumbents. At the same time, nominal candidates were much more likely to have prior municipal experience—and the difference was both large and highly significant. In 1997, nearly a quarter (22.6 percent) of nominal candidates had previously been elected to a municipal council (and served either as council members or mayors). Nearly half of these (11.8 percent of all candidates) had been elected in the immediately preceding 1995 election and were incumbent mayors or council members.

As expected, the gender gap between list and nominal candidates was both large and significant. Women made up just over a quarter (26.5 percent) of all list candidates in our dataset, but only 9.0 percent of nominal candidates—a figure not much different from the percentage of female candidates in the 1993 election, prior to the introduction of gender quotas. However, female candidates were more likely to be listed lower in the list of candidates, making them less likely to win seats. A comparison of the mean list rank between male and female candidates illustrates this: Of the 248 list candidates in 1997, 181 were male and 67 were female. The mean list rank for a female candidate was 3.48 while the mean list rank for a male candidate was 2.46. A Welch's t-test shows that this was a significant difference ($p = 0.0033$).

The difference in legislative experience between list and nominal candidates in 1997 was both smaller than expected and in the opposite direction. Although the share of executive committee members was twice as high among list candidates than nominal candidates (2.2 percent to 1.1 percent), the difference was not statistically significant. As expected, list candidates were more likely to have served on any legislative committee, but the difference was only marginally significant ($p = 0.0221$). There was no significant difference in the share of list and nominal candidates who had served on high policy committees. There were differences in public goods and distributive committees, but these were in unexpected directions. In particular, the tests contradicted the hypothesis that nominal candidates would be more likely to have served on distributive committees. Instead, parties seemed slightly more likely to nominate candidates who had served in distributive committees on their lists, rather than in single-member districts.

Finally, I tested the hypotheses using logistic regression models to determine which factors were significantly related to differences in whether candidates appeared on party list or nominal tiers in 1997 in multivariate models (see Table 4). In multivariate tests, incumbency had a minimal effect on nomination, and only when previous legislative experience was taken into account. Interestingly, while previous municipal experience mattered, the effect was significantly reduced when a specific variable for election to the 1995 municipal councils was introduced. In other words, parties did seem to nominate candidates with previous municipal

Table 4: Determinants that Candidates ran on Nominal Tier in Bolivia's 1997 Legislative Election

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Previous Legislative experience	0.235 (0.425)	0.235 (0.425)	0.233 (0.425)	
Incumbents	-1.502* (0.620)	-1.119* (0.545)	-1.082 (0.559)	-1.067 (0.701)
Female	-1.207*** (0.265)	-1.210*** (0.265)	-1.218*** (0.265)	-1.236*** (0.264)
Previous Municipal experience	0.832* (0.370)	0.825* (0.370)	0.827* (0.370)	1.093*** (0.294)
1995 municipal council	0.625 (0.571)	0.644 (0.571)	0.612 (0.571)	
High policy committee	0.458 (0.592)			0.351 (0.640)
Public goods committee		-0.275 (0.594)		-0.167 (0.623)
Distributive committee			-0.318 (0.580)	-0.260 (0.607)
Constant	0.336** (0.119)	0.337** (0.119)	0.339** (0.119)	0.358 (0.115)
Prob > χ^2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Adjusted R ²	0.0815	0.0809	0.0811	0.0797
Observations	509	509	509	509

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Logistic regression models; standard errors in parentheses.

experience to their 1997 nominal lists, but election in the immediately preceding 1995 election did not seem to matter significantly—although its introduction reduced the effect of the overall prior municipal experience variable. Most surprisingly, type of legislative committee had no significant effect in determining whether candidates were nominated on the nominal (rather than list) tier. Candidate gender did, however, matter:

Female candidates were significantly discriminated against when it came to the nominal tier, even when controlling for prior political experience.

Conclusions

In several ways, Bolivia's introduction of a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system in 1997 does not fit existing expectations based on established mixed-member systems, such as Germany or Japan. Consistent with expectations, Bolivian parties looked to previous winners of municipal elections when selecting nominal district candidates. However, there is little evidence (when controlling for other factors) of a preference for candidates from the most recent municipal election. This is surprising, since such winners would be "incumbents" in their districts and therefore likely to have access to a specific advantage other "previous" municipal officers lacked: local resources and/or policy arenas that could be give candidates a strategic advantage over their rivals. However, this may be a result of "pull" factors away from national legislative careers. Increasingly, local political offices are tempting political positions in their own right. In particular, recent reforms that allow for subnational parties may provide incentives for political entrepreneurs to put seize control of their own fates by focusing on municipal-level offices—particularly since municipal councils elected in 1995 were the first to enjoy significant fiscal and political autonomy.

Surprisingly, incumbents who served on "distributive" legislative committee were not more likely to be nominated to the nominal tier. Contrary to all expectations, service on different types of legislative committees did not seem to have any affect on whether candidates were nominated to the list or nominal tiers. One possible explanation for this, of course, may be that the legislative committee structure does not facilitate the kind of "pork" projects familiar to American politicians. Moreover, "distributive" goods may target constituencies that are so geographically disbursed that politicians can win little "credit" for benefitting geographically concentrated constituencies.

Another possible explanation for the lack of expected effect of legislative committee experience could be the introduction of gender quotas. Because parties had to nominate a significant number of female candidates (relative to the number they previously nominated), gender quotas were "disruptive." Parties may have been themselves forced to place many more incumbents (and therefore candidates with different types of committee experience) than they otherwise would have chosen. A look at 2002 and subsequent elections under MMP would help, by testing differences after the disruptive "shock" of the gender quota dissipates and as more women have opportunities to gain experience in municipal government and by serving on legislative committees.

Lastly, the lack of dual candidates remains puzzling. After all, strategic use of dual candidacies would have served to protect high-quality candidates (those with experience in the legislature). Moreover, parties

could have offered untested female candidates as “sacrificial lambs” in districts where the party was uncompetitive, while still offering them a spot on the party list. Conversely, parties could have put high-ranking candidates in districts where their experience was a plus and still secured their reelection by placing them high on the list. Parties could have done a better job retaining experienced incumbents even while the gender quota would unquestioningly lead to a larger number of “new” (in this case, not particularly “freshmen”) legislators. Yet a preliminary study of legislature turnover in Bolivia (Centellas 2013) found that the incumbency rate dropped from 21.5 percent in 1993 to 13.1 percent in 1997, and continued to decline (hitting 2.3 percent in 2005). That study also found no relationship between the probability that an incumbent returned in the subsequent election and his or her membership in any type of committee (or even just any legislative committee). Of course, this finding was limited to incumbents who returned (that is, won their reelection context); it did not take into account the number of incumbent candidates who ran for reelection but lost their seats. But the significant drop in legislative retention after the introduction of a mixed-member system, contradicts are expectations (and the experience of mixed-member systems in Germany, Japan, and elsewhere).

The ability to dual nominate candidates to two tiers offered parties a chance to maximize the impact of their experience while also retaining a larger number of incumbents. And yet the evidence suggests that parties instead chose to use the mixed-member system not to strategically place existing personnel, but rather to increase the total number of candidates. This observation poses interesting questions about how mixed-member systems work in different sociopolitical contexts.

Endnotes

¹ A compromise reform in 2005 allowed for the direct election of prefects, which had been formally appointed by the president, but made no provision for departmental or regional assemblies. But these had more limited autonomy (they could still be removed by the president, as several were).

² One of these was a uninominal candidate for the MNR; the other was a list candidate for ADN.

³ I thank Thomas Gschwend and Thomas Zittel for sharing their Germany dataset.

⁴ The exception would be if a candidate formed a new political party, and recruited candidates for all open position (in all departments and at all levels).

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