# Online journalism and 2014 elections in Brazil: an analysis of Candibook, an initiative from the newspaper Gazeta do Povo (Paraná)[1]

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**Abstract**
This paper aims to analyze the Candibook as a monitoring tool for democracy during elections, as well as to identify from the data available the profile of candidates running to national (federal) and local deputy positions for Paraná (Brazil), in 2014. The hypotheses are: 1) the program is an innovative experience which constitutes a democracy monitoring practice; 2) from its information one might identify the social and ideological profile of the candidates, by observing political preferences and propositions. The methodology consists of descriptive statistics of the information available on the Candibook website, which is based on the candidates who answered the surveys. Among the results one might find that 1) the Candibook is an important journalistic contribution to improve democratic quality and electoral processes; 2) right wing, left wing and centrist candidates do not present differences among them related to the themes they support.
**Keywords:** Journalism. Elections. Candibook. Monitory democracy. Elites social control.

## Introduction

The research about the relation between Internet and Politics, one of the issues at stake in the communication and politics field since mid-1990's, oscillated from a euphoria, according to which the Internet could recreate the pillars of democracy (GROSSMAN, 1995; CORRADO; FIRESTONE, 1996), to a cynicism that saw this platform as a reproducer of offline patterns, without adding anything to the functioning of democratic political systems (MARGOLIS; RESNICK, 2000). Over the time, and due to the higher amount of empirical research especially since the 2000's, this area begins to adjust the magnifying glass on the subject, and leaves the thoughts on "potentials" of the digital environment (DAHLBERG, 2001) by the investment on results generated by the political use of this platform.

In this context, we discuss the role of online journalism, which creates possibilities for improving and expanding mechanisms for public monitoring of politics, especially on the occasion of electoral processes and representation. Indeed, the number of studies on the impact of digital technologies over the relations of political representation and parliamentary strategies of communication during or after elections has grown in the last decades (COLEMAN; MOSS, 2008; LESTON-BANDEIRA; BENDER, 2013; LILLEKER, 2015; MARQUES et al, 2014). This growing number of research indicates the importance of theme and digital technologies to the dynamics of relation among political elites and citizens, as well as the functioning of representative institutions.

We may highlight the contributions of Keane (2009) that are related to the central problem of this article, i.e. the impacts of Internet on relations of political representation and relations between political elites (or *quasi*-elites, aspirants to the exercise of power) and the constituents during the electoral process. The author sentences that there is an increasing tendency to public scrutiny of the political system between electoral periods, a process that is maximized with the development of technologies, which characterizes the existence of a "monitory democracy" in contemporary societies. Here, we try to apply this concept to electoral periods, once journalism, the institution that provided the studied tool, has been inserted more in the space of political visibility, and consequently it has approached the voter of the moment that initiates a democratic government cycle.

This text aims neither to make an inventory of the whole debate on the application of the concept, nor to make normative considerations about the possible effects of digital technologies over the relations of political representation and the electoral campaigns. Instead, we test two hypotheses:

1. Candibook, an initiative of the newspaper *Gazeta do Povo* (Paraná – Brazil) that gathered information about the candidates, can be considered an example of representative democracy monitoring practice, once it provides information on social profile variables of candidates, as well as on their ideological preferences. They also make a video in which postulants say the reasons that led them to run for the position. Therefore, it is an original and innovative program to offer information about candidates to Brazilian Parliament positions through Internet;

2. From the data of Candibook, we can trace the social and ideological profile of candidates and relate it to the party to which they belong, which led us to identify their political preferences and proposals. So the Candibook aggregates accountability to the system, by achieving one of the requirements for a monitory democracy.

The analysis starts from a general description of the program, by pointing its characteristics and analyzing the most significant information that can be extracted from the data provided on Candibook, on the Brazilian Superior Electoral Court (*TSE* – Acronym in Portuguese) website and on political elites monitoring portals. Secondly, we analyze the profile of candidates running to national (federal) and local parliamentarian positions from two questions: a) Are there significant differences between the two groups of candidates concerning the variables analyzed? b) Are there significant differences between ideological groups (centrist, right wing, and left wing) and political parties if we consider characteristics of profile and political behavior available on Candibook?

This article develops initially two discussions: one about representation and its relation with practices of digital democracy and monitory democracy; and another about online journalism and its contributions to the strengthening of political and electoral knowledge of citizens. After then, we present Candibook and analyze candidates' profiles. At last, we discuss the findings, and confront them with the research questions.

## Representation and digital monitoring: new questions on democracy

The current model of representative democracy is a target to several critiques. The distance between citizens and political actors and the limited participation of citizens in political issues are the main challenges of democratic regimes, which have undesirable effects on the quality of democracy (GOMES, 2005; MARQUES, 2008; ROSSETTO; CARREIRO, 2012; AGGIO; SAMPAIO, 2013; FARIA, 2012). According to Aggio and Sampaio (2013), this distancing may lead to broad autonomy in their actions and a low level of accountability. Thus, collective interests would not be well represented, and this could generate apathetic citizens concerning political issues. Consequently, political decisions would have low legitimacy.

Marques (2008) admits the existence of deficiencies in citizen participation beyond voting. The researcher points out that there are increasing demands for improvement of the conditions for participation from the civil sphere, and this demand can be explained by some factors, as the greater dynamics of civil movements, which have claims, and the digital communication apparatus, which can positively influence the democratic process (MARQUES, 2008).

The Internet can contribute to overcoming these challenges by broadening and facilitating the participation of the civil sphere in political processes and reducing the distance between citizens and representatives (GOMES, 2005). In this sense, the term e-democracy or digital democracy can be understood as "the branch of study that is interested in the incorporation of digital mechanisms in democratic practices, and their impact on political institutions" (FARIA, 2012, p.63 – Our translation). Digital democracy involves practices

to strengthen citizen participation in political affairs. It also involves other aspects, such as accountability to citizens, and the accessibility to relevant, good and clear information (transparency), in order to promote a better oriented civil participation.

Another concept that fits at this scope is "monitory democracy" (KEANE, 2009). According to this author, the impacts of contemporary media have undergone a new metamorphosis in representative democracy, which gave rise to a new format of this democratic model. The basic characteristic of the reconfiguration is to make possible the creation of several tools for citizens to monitor the political system and the actors that are part of it between electoral periods. So, democracy acquires several mechanisms to try to "punish and constrain" (FEENSTRA; KEANE, 2014, p.1265) those individuals who exercise power, especially through digital platforms. These institutions or instruments for monitoring political activities goes from alternative journalism to civil society organizations specialized in supervising actors and political institutions beyond the election period, acting "on behalf of the public" (FEENSTRA; KEANE, 2014; ALBUQUERQUE, 2013).

Rossetto and Carreiro (2012) mapped Brazilian online portals for digital democracy, mostly civil initiatives, and that can also be considered actions of monitoring. They identified 31 portals: three initiatives aimed to monitor public accounts, works and policies; eight of them monitored the actions of the representatives; six portals aimed to inform and educate for citizenship; six websites that encouraged participation; six portals that opened spaces for civic claims; one whose intention was promoting deliberation; and, at last, one of them focused on rights and access to justice (ROSSETTO; CARREIRO, 2012).

The initiative herein analyzed can be seen as one of these portals, but it is a unique case, once it is the appropriation of the digital environment by a journalistic vehicle to provide more than news: a complete profile on the candidates in the 2014 Brazilian parliamentary elections at local and national levels. In view of this performance of online journalism as a democratic reinforcement mechanism, even though the provision of such information does not always serve to encourage citizens to engage politically, (MARQUES, 2008)[2], it is discussed below how the literature presents these new possibilities and how the political field has reacted to such changes.

## Online political journalism: a new performance "on behalf of the public"

The use of Internet as a platform for social communication opened spaces for new modalities of production and diffusion of contents. The evolution from the *fac-simile* model – the mere reproduction of the offline format of the content, such as digitalization – to multimedia – whose publications take full advantage of the hypertext format (CANAVILHAS,

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2     According to Gomes (2011, p.31 – Our translation), people need reasons to participate in order to believe that they are using an "appropriate opportunity to achieve desirable ends".

2012) –, led the reader to expect more from the contents and consequently has transformed what is produced on the web to provide better content.

Traditional journalistic vehicles, especially printed newspapers (which have lost their audience due to the ease and gratuitous access of newspapers on the online environment), migrate to the Internet[3]. However, posting news exactly the same way they do in the printed version does not constitute an innovative action to reach audience, once the users of digital tools still have a young profile and expect from the information posted on the web three characteristics: speed, dynamism and audiovisual content compatible with digital technologies, and it is often expected that all these factors will be offered together (HARPER, 2003).

Interaction is also a fundamental requirement. Digital activism is a proof of the users' desired involvement with what is produced in the online environment. The 2013 and 2015 street protests in Brazil, the Arab Spring, and the Occupy movement are examples of actions especially organized through digital media, from which emerged some issues that enters into political and social agenda. In this way, more attention has been paid to the digital environment, once it allows the expansion of new ways of monitoring, claiming, and participating in the public sphere, making it more conflictual and unstable. Although the initiatives mentioned above have had social origins, the journalism plays a prominent role.

The entry of large traditional media vehicles into digital media brought news producers closer to their readers, who can now both practice the supervisory function of journalism directly, closer to the decision-making center, and to monitor and evaluate in real time the journalistic activity itself. Posting information on social networks, for example, ceases to be exclusive to newspapers, as it has been in traditional media. It is necessary to go beyond what was already done to attract and satisfy readers. In this context, the starting point that the vehicles found was to listen to their audience, by conducting polls about matters of traditional vehicles and interviews with candidates, as *Rede Globo*[4] has done for some presidential campaigns (ALBUQUERQUE, 2013). Another action was to ask and present the problems of the neighborhoods, as some local newspapers, both printed and televised, do.

On digital media, actions that reach higher levels of interaction with users are wishing "good morning" or asking the readers to send photos of their city/neighborhood, a movement that does not explore in fact what Internet can provide for public debate. Polls, when applied, generally do not call into more controversial issues, as the evaluation of the coverage. It is interesting to observe how this restriction of traditional journalism goes against the so-called democratization of communication, and the historical claims related to it in Brazil, which

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3    The number of paid digital signatures increased 118% between 2013 and 2014 (ANJ, 2015).
4    A famous Brazilian media enterprise that owes several radio and TV channels.

> […] represented an awareness that the configuration of the electronic media in a country is the result of political decisions from governmental instances and legislative dynamics, influenced by pressure systems from a well-placed actor at the moment when the means are installed. (SOARES, 2009, p.257 – Our translation).

The actors that prevailed in this case were the lobbies from big media companies. Thus, from the advent of digital technologies, journalism did not seem to change strategies to exercise its self-appointed representative-audit function. In this context, the newspaper *Gazeta do Povo* (from Paraná – Brazil) becomes innovative when it launches the Candibook program as a democratic reinforcement mechanism, from the moment that it publicly questions political agents and consequently opens space for civil action "to decide who wins and who loses" (FEENSTRA; KEANE, 2014, p.1266). The program is therefore characterized as a monitoring mechanism of representative democracy in the sense given by the term, as we demonstrate in the analysis below.

## Candibook: online journalism in favor of the quality of democracy

Elections are an odd period of involvement of journalism in the public sphere, which often puts itself in a watchdog position and seeks to represent the alleged interests of its readers and prospects. This "fourth power" acts to control the three official democratic powers, especially those that accumulate directly the representative function: Executive and Legislative (ALBUQUERQUE, 2000).

In 2010, the Brazilian newspaper *Gazeta do Povo*, from Paraná, makes available to its readers an online mechanism to provide information about candidates for all political positions. The so-called Candibook has become a unique initiative in the country to add content about candidates, from the most basic (as the region where the candidates are from) to more robust ones (as their declaration of property). This information, displayed in an interactive way, allows voters to keep up with several aspects of the candidates' life, work and posture, helping in the electoral decision.

## The mechanism

*Gazeta do Povo* is considered the most important and active newspaper of Paraná, according to the Brazilian National Journal Association (*ANJ* – Acronym in Portuguese)[5], and it has been famous by its political awareness initiatives as well as by denouncements against local politicians (QUADROS, 2013). The newspaper brings information about

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[5]    It holds the 27th position in the country, with daily circulation average of 40,525 printed and digital copies. Available at: http://www.anj.org.br/maiores-jornais-do-brasil/. Accessed on: Apr. 25, 2016.

representatives and candidates by showing how politics influences people's daily lives and seeking to clarify doubts about "what the Executive, the Legislative, the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office do, how they work, and how these institutions are influenced – or influence us – by politics and consequently by each citizen's vote" (GAZETA DO POVO, 2012, p.1 – Our translation).

Based on opinion polls conducted during electoral disputes, which demonstrate a significant parcel of the population without a defined vote, this newspaper begins to undertake campaigns, and aims to become a source of political-electoral information, along with several other civic campaigns and investigative political journalism sponsored by the newspaper, whose main highlight is the series of reports on the "Secret Diaries" of the Legislative Assembly of Paraná, throughout the year 2010[6].

We also may highlight the campaign for the "Conscious Vote", held in conjunction with the *Rede Paranaense de Comunicação* (*RPC*)[7], in 2010[8]. Candibook – *Portal of the Candidates* was launched in August 2010[9], as an extension of that first campaign. The portal aimed to provide a broad range of information about the candidates to the local parliament or even to the Presidency of Brazil.

Website navigation is simple. On the home page, there is a search field, through which the candidate can be located from his/her name, party or position. Further, there are links with deepening content and clarification. In "how the deputies are elected" there are some explanations about the distribution of places, what is the electoral quotient, and how to calculate the leftovers. The link "Understand each political role" is a guide that explains from humorous videos what the attributions of each representative political position are. By clicking on "Consult the rendering of accounts of the Legislative Assembly of Paraná", the public is directed to the Transparency Portal and if they see any irregularities they can notify *Gazeta* via an email available on the website. Information is also provided on the justification of the vote, documents that we may present at the polling station, the option to print the candidates' numbers and a guide on how to use the Candibook.

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6    Cf. "The reports helped to make 15 convictions". Available at: http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/vida-publica/especiais/diarios-secretos/caso-dos-diarios-secretos-gerou-15-condenacoes-8mggea9ef4jsy4iaxwfqla1ji. Accessed on: Mar. 12, 2016.
7    A local television enterprise.
8    Together with other media vehicles from the state: *RPC TV*, the newspaper *Folha de Londrina* and the radios *98 FM* and *Mundo Livre FM*. Available at: http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/vida-publica/eleicoes/2010/o-que-e-o-voto-consciente/. Accessed on: Feb. 21, 2015.
9    Available at: http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/eleicoes/conteudo.phtml?id 1282943. Accessed on: Feb. 21, 2015.

**Figure 1 –** Candibook*'s* homepage



Source: Candibook[10].

In order to gather information on candidates, *Gazeta* applies a standard survey to applicants, with questions about real name/ballot box name[11], political party, date and place of birth, city where they live, level of education, profession, religion, the football team they support, if they have held a political position before (and which one), if they have relatives in politics, their favorite book, name of a person and a political figure that they admire.

In addition, the candidates are invited to record an interview of approximately two minutes – an innovative action on this kind of platform. This is to map the reason for the application, the main proposals, and the candidate's differential. If the applicant is seeking re-election or the continuation of the political career, the interviewer asks what the highlights of the previous mandate were and which continuities will be for the next one, if re-elected.

From *TSE*, the website informs the declaration of property of the candidates. Another important information presented is the candidates' political positioning, through Nolan Chart[12]. The questionnaire has ten questions: five of them are about social issues and the

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10    Available at: http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/vida-publica/eleicoes/2014/candibook//. Accessed on: Dec. 10, 2015.
11    In Brazil, candidates are allowed to use a different name other than their real name in elections.
12    The Nolan Chart was developed by the US political scientist David Nolan. It allows us to identify political positioning according to the main wings of political thought.

other five are on economy. From their answers, the chart places the participant according to the following categories: left wing, right wing, centrist, libertarian and statist[13]. After the test, constituents can search within the portal candidates with their same political position.

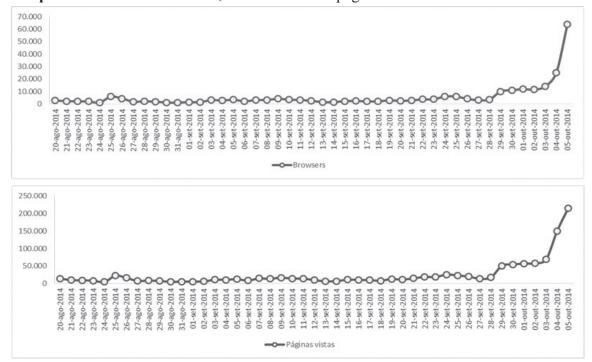**Figure 2** – Candidate page on Candibook



Source: Candibook[14].

Figure 2 shows that the portal provides links to social networks of postulants – Facebook, Twitter, and others. Through these networks, constituents can keep direct contact with candidates. Thus, Candibook can be considered a private initiative that contributes to the improvement of democracy, once it broadens the information possibilities for voters, falling under the category of "Information and Education for citizenship" (ROSSETTO; CARREIRO, 2012, p.284 – Our translation). That is to say, this is a portal whose purpose is to facilitate access to information, which enables greater development of values for citizenship.

13   Left wing: defense of economic restraints and non-interference of the government in moral issues; Right wing: economic liberalism and constraints on some moral issues; Centrist: balance between intervention and release; Libertarian: defense of freedom in social and economic matters; Statist: restriction on social and economic issues.

14   Available at: http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/vida-publica/eleicoes/2014/candibook//candidato/alex-canziani-silveira-alex-canziani-ptb-1414. Accessed on: Dec. 10, 2015.

The program's audience between August, 20 and October, 5 2014 was 223,430 browsers accessing 1,128,740 pages, and a concentration of 63,794 browsers searching 215,346 pages the day before elections (05/10) (Graph 1). So we can confirm that Candibook has already reached some credibility from the audience of Paraná as a political information source.

**Graph 1–** Access to Candibook, for Browser and page



Source: comScore Digital Analytix – *Gazeta do Povo*.

Considering the use of Candibook as an accountability tool, it presents the following problems: 1) the mechanism does not provide information in open format or a database to be easily manipulated by citizens; 2) it does not provide tools for monitoring the activities of those elected, after the election; 3) there are no in-depth tools for interacting with citizens, during or after the elections, as we will discuss later in this article. Even though there are limitations, this is a pioneer program, from which one can obtain relevant information on the profile and political action of candidates that is not made available or accessible to citizens through other websites, such as *TSE*'s.

In view of these parameters, two basic research questions guide the analysis: 1) are there significant differences between the two sets of candidates (national and local deputy candidates) in relation to the variables examined? 2) Are there significant differences between ideological wings (right wing, centrist and left wing) and political parties related to profile characteristics and political behavior made available?

The first procedure is to present the universe of analysis by discriminating respondents from non-respondents. It should be clarified that the focus of this analysis will be only respondents, once what matters here is the analytical yield of the information on Candibook to understand the political performance of candidates running to parliamentary places (local and national) for Paraná, in 2014.

## Candidates' profiles

In order to have an overview of the range of candidates with information available on Candibook, below are the numbers related to the responses obtained by the journalistic vehicle in order to make possible the entire composition of the applicant's profile. The data is presented in aggregate form due to the great party fragmentation, especially in relation to the candidates for the local parliament.

**Table 1 –** Respondents and non-respondents to the survey[15]

|  |  | No | | Yes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Political Party | PPD | 150 | 39.8 | 227 | 60.2 | 377 | 100.0 |
|  | PTB_DEM | 24 | 46.2 | 28 | 53.8 | 52 | 100.0 |
|  | PRP | 35 | 50.0 | 35 | 50.0 | 70 | 100.0 |
|  | PSD | 15 | 35.7 | 27 | 64.3 | 42 | 100.0 |
|  | PSDB PPS PV | 44 | 22.8 | 149 | 77.2 | 193 | 100.0 |
|  | PMDB | 18 | 32.7 | 37 | 67.3 | 55 | 100.0 |
|  | PSB PDT | 40 | 44.9 | 49 | 55.1 | 89 | 100.0 |
|  | PT | 14 | 29.8 | 33 | 70.2 | 47 | 100.0 |
|  | PPE | 18 | 26.5 | 50 | 73.5 | 68 | 100.0 |
| Position | Local Deputy | 278 | 38.9 | 436 | 61.1 | 714 | 100.0 |
|  | Federal Deputy | 80 | 28.7 | 199 | 71.3 | 279 | 100.0 |
| TOTAL | | **358** | **34.0** | **635** | **66.0** | **993** | **100.0** |

Source: The authors, from Candibook.

According to Table 1, among the 993 candidates in focus (714 local and 279 national deputy candidates), around 64% of them answered to the survey, and the highest percentage is among federal ones (71.3%). Related to the parties, the highest percentage of response lies on the group PSDB-PPS-PV (77.2% of all respondents), followed by PPE (73.5%) and PT (70.2%), while the lowest percentage were those belonging to the PRP block (50%).

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15   PPD: Minor right-wing parties (PEN; PHS; PMN; PROS; PRTB; PSC; PSDC; PSL; PTdoB; PTC; PTN; SD); PPE: Minor left-wing parties (PCdoB; PCB; PCO; PPL; PSOL; PSTU); PRP: Popular and Republican parties: (PP; PR; PRB; PRTB).

This response rate can be considered an indirect indicator of the concern of candidates with the accountability of each party that disputed the election.

Discarding, then, the 358 non-respondents, the empirical universe is composed of 436 local deputies and 199 national ones, i.e. 635 candidates, a very significant number, since it is not known another research that has applied a survey to the same number of candidates for other states with such high response rates.

This database constitutes a relevant basis for the knowledge of the candidates' characteristics, since it allows access to the following information about each subgroup: a) social profile: age, profession, schooling, occupation in public office, kinship with other politicians; b) ideological preferences: religion, sport and culture, self-imputation on the left-right wings gradient; positioning on the axes "x" and "y" on Nolan Chart and priorities for the exercise of the mandate, in addition to information available on the *TSE*'s website.

Firstly, we analyze information about social profile available on Candibook, and after that the data about behavior and ideological positioning.

**Table 2** – Sociopolitical profile of candidates[16]

| | | Federal Deputy | | Local Deputy | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % |
| Locality | Paraná – Curitiba (capital) | 65 | 32.5 | 98 | 22.5 |
| | Paraná - countryside | 85 | 43.0 | 218 | 50.0 |
| | Another locality | 49 | 24.5 | 120 | 27.5 |
| Schooling | Post-graduate studies | 23 | 11.5 | 39 | 8.9 |
| | Graduate studies | 91 | 45.5 | 202 | 46.3 |
| | No graduate studies | 85 | 43.0 | 195 | 44.7 |
| Occupation in public office | No | 78 | 39.2 | 208 | 48.0 |
| | Yes | 121 | 60.8 | 225 | 52.0 |
| Kinship with other politicians | No | 173 | 87.4 | 390 | 89.9 |
| | Yes | 25 | 12.6 | 44 | 10.1 |
| TOTAL | | **199** | **100.0** | **436** | **100.0** |

Source: The authors, from Candibook.

By analyzing the data from the respondents to the questions we can verify that there are not huge disparities of the characteristics between candidates to both positions. In fact, they have similar levels of schooling, do not have relatives in politics, although most of them

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16   Two candidates running to a local deputy position did not answer the question about occupation in public office. One of the candidates to a federal deputy place did not answer the question about relatives in politics, as well as two individuals running to a local deputy position.

have already held public positions (52.0%), with a slight advantage for federal deputies. This data also indicates the occurrence of the phenomenon of popularization of the Brazilian political class (RODRIGUES, 2006), as through the data available on Candibook we can observe the existence of a large number of candidates with no ties to traditional politics, low level of education and low incomes, usually from social underprivileged groups, people who benefited directly or indirectly from social policies.

Another interesting fact available in this portal is the priority areas of action and the ideological self-motivation of the candidates, obtained from the application of the Nolan Chart, summarized below.

**Table 3** – Ideological positioning of candidates

| | | Federal Deputy | | Local Deputy | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % |
| Area (disaggregated) | Health | 23 | 12.4 | 82 | 20.0 |
| | Education and Culture | 62 | 33.5 | 132 | 32.3 |
| | Human rights and minorities | 17 | 9.2 | 37 | 9.0 |
| | Political reform | 14 | 7,6 | 13 | 3.2 |
| | Sport | 5 | 2,7 | 12 | 2.9 |
| | Urban development and infrastructure | 6 | 3,2 | 13 | 3.2 |
| | Agriculture | 4 | 2,2 | 15 | 3.7 |
| | Economic development | 11 | 5,9 | 19 | 4.6 |
| | Security and Family | 24 | 13.0 | 38 | 9.3 |
| | Environment | 12 | 6.5 | 25 | 6.1 |
| | Social assistence | 6 | 3.2 | 23 | 5.6 |
| | Others | 15 | 7.0 | 27 | 6.2 |
| Area (aggregated) | Economy | 21 | 11.4 | 47 | 11.5 |
| | Politics and administration | 15 | 8.1 | 13 | 3.2 |
| | Social policies | 96 | 51.9 | 249 | 60.9 |
| | Security | 24 | 13.0 | 38 | 9.3 |
| | Environment and human rights | 29 | 15.7 | 62 | 15.2 |
| | Others | 14 | 7.0 | 27 | 6.2 |
| Ideological self-imputation | Right wing | 21 | 10.6 | 38 | 8.7 |
| | Statist | 36 | 18.1 | 83 | 19.0 |
| | Centrist | 100 | 50.3 | 259 | 59.4 |
| | Left wing | 27 | 13.6 | 35 | 8.0 |
| | Libertarian | 15 | 7.5 | 21 | 4.8 |
| TOTAL | | 199 | 100.0 | 436 | 100.0 |

Source: The authors, from Candibook.

From the data, we can verify that the areas of action prioritized by the candidates are education and culture, in a less aggregated analysis, and social policies, in a more aggregated analysis. Local deputy candidates tend to give greater importance to "Health", while candidates to the federal position give more importance to issues related to "Education and culture", "Public security and family" and "Political reform". Regarding the ideological self-imputation, there are also no great disparities between the different subgroups, except for a greater propensity to federal deputy candidates to be included in the extremes of the political-ideological spectrum, as candidates to the local parliament are more likely to define themselves as centrists.

The information about the classification of candidates in the different ideological wings is summarized in the table below.

**Table 4** – Ideological positioning of candidates according to party classification

| | | Ideology | | | | | | Total | |
| | | Right | | Centrism | | Left | | | |
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area (disaggregated) | Others | 21 | 7.2 | 13 | 6.1 | 7 | 5.3 | 41 | 6.5 |
| | Digital divide | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.2 |
| | Health | 47 | 16.2 | 40 | 18.8 | 18 | 13.6 | 105 | 16.5 |
| | Education and culture | 87 | 30.0 | 56 | 26.3 | 51 | 38.6 | 194 | 30.6 |
| | Human rights and minorities | 19 | 6.6 | 19 | 8.9 | 16 | 12.1 | 54 | 8.5 |
| | Political reform | 11 | 3.8 | 8 | 3.8 | 8 | 6.1 | 27 | 4.3 |
| | Sport | 11 | 3.8 | 4 | 1.9 | 2 | 1.5 | 17 | 2.7 |
| | Urban development and infrastructure | 8 | 2.8 | 6 | 2.8 | 5 | 3.8 | 19 | 3.0 |
| | Agriculture | 9 | 3.1 | 5 | 2.3 | 5 | 3.8 | 19 | 3.0 |
| | Economic development | 10 | 3.4 | 11 | 5.2 | 9 | 6.8 | 30 | 4.7 |
| | Public security and family | 34 | 11.7 | 25 | 11.7 | 3 | 2.3 | 62 | 9.8 |
| | Environment | 13 | 4.5 | 21 | 9.9 | 3 | 2.3 | 37 | 5.8 |
| | Social assistence | 20 | 6.9 | 5 | 2.3 | 4 | 3.0 | 29 | 4.6 |
| Area (aggregated) | Others | 21 | 7.2 | 13 | 6.1 | 7 | 5.3 | 41 | 6.5 |
| | Economy | 27 | 9.3 | 22 | 10.3 | 19 | 14.4 | 68 | 10.7 |
| | Politics and administration | 11 | 3.8 | 8 | 3.8 | 9 | 6.8 | 28 | 4.4 |
| | Social policies | 165 | 56.9 | 105 | 49.3 | 75 | 56.8 | 345 | 54.3 |
| | Environment and human rights | 32 | 11.0 | 40 | 18.8 | 19 | 14.4 | 91 | 14.3 |
| | Security | 34 | 11.7 | 25 | 11.7 | 3 | 2.3 | 62 | 9.8 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ideological self-imputation | Right wing | 38 | 13.1 | 14 | 6.6 | 7 | 5.3 | 59 | 9.3 |
| | Statist | 63 | 21.7 | 31 | 14.6 | 25 | 18.9 | 119 | 18.7 |
| | Centrist | 165 | 56.9 | 129 | 60.6 | 65 | 49.2 | 359 | 56.5 |
| | Left wing | 9 | 3.1 | 23 | 10.8 | 30 | 22.7 | 62 | 9.8 |
| | Libertarian | 15 | 5.2 | 16 | 7.5 | 5 | 3.8 | 36 | 5.7 |
| Total | | 290 | 100.0 | 213 | 100.0 | 132 | 100.0 | 635 | 100.0 |

Source: The authors, from Candibook.

Table 4 shows that the differences observed by ideology are higher than those observed by the candidates for different levels of parliament. Thus, candidates from all ideological wings tend to prioritize a "social agenda" and issues related to health, education and culture. However, regarding other issues in a disaggregated view, the candidates from right wing parties tend to prioritize thematic areas of public security and family (11.7%) and social assistance (6.9%); those from centrist parties are similar to those from the right wing in prioritizing public security and family (11.7%) and stand out in the environmental matter (9.9%); and the candidates from leftist parties tend to give greater importance to human rights and minorities (12.1%). In general, it is worth noting that the candidates in the three party groups presented a common priority: economy, especially those from left wing (14.4%).

Other interesting findings in the table above refer to the relationship between the ideological self-positioning of candidates and the imputation made from their affiliation to different political parties. Thus, although parliamentarians from all parties tend to consider themselves more centrists, according to the criteria of the Nolan Chart, the data shows that right wing candidates tend to consider themselves more statist, while in the case of leftist candidates the correspondence between self-imputation (left wing – 22.7%) and external imputation (centrist – 49.2%) is higher.

## Conclusion

This article aimed to analyze Candibook as a monitoring tool for democracy (KEANE, 2009) during electoral campaigns, and to identify through the data available on this platform the profile of candidates from Paraná to local and national (federal) parliaments.

Firstly, it should be noted that the analyzed program facilitates the collection of data about elections, provides content about candidates, and further offers information on the functioning of the Brazilian electoral system, such as explanations on the use of the electronic ballot box, the electoral quotient, amid other important issues for the audience.

Regarding the candidates, although most of them answered the survey (64%), it is a shame that 36% have not even been interested in posting the free video, from which it

is possible to achieve more visibility for their applications and political platforms. This may indicate a large number of candidates that are not willing to win and campaigned for another colleague or were recruited by the party to increase the number of votes reached by the coalition, which is important in the Brazilian electoral system to achieve the electoral quotient.

Candidates have similar profiles about social characteristics and it is interesting to observe the number of them with low levels of schooling and income. Other important findings are the flags raised by the candidates: "education and culture" and "social policies". Thus, it can be seen that they do not have very dissimilar profiles, both candidates from the same group or different groups (candidates to local and federal parliaments), except by the item "previous political experience", which was higher among candidates running for the national parliament, as expected.

Finally, positions traditionally linked to right or left wings remain in the responses of the candidates, according to the assumed ideology. On the other hand, if we pay attention to the themes defended by each spectrum this difference is not identified, and the data showed some surprises, such as the fact that leftist candidates defend less the guidelines related to "Environment and Human Rights" (14.4 %) compared to those in a centrist position (18.8%), but have a performance close to the right wing in defense of "Social policies". Regarding the differences in the ideological spectrum, only the candidates to the federal parliament presented more extreme positioning.

In sum, Candibook can be taken as a tool for monitory democracy (KEANE, 2009), once it sheds light on information about candidates. This can contribute to a more qualified and conscious choice of representatives, even though it does not constitute a tool that can change the whole political game that involves the dynamics of elections. Thus, the program is characterized as an important contribution from the journalism to the improvement of democracy's and electoral processes' quality, in addition to the so-called scandal culture often reproduced by the media.

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