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Personalizing the presidency: Dilma Rousseff and a study of leadership personalities in Brazilian foreign policy

Abstract

Many important studies associate the presidential profile of Dilma Rousseff to the loss of domestic density and reach of Brazil's foreign policy, a perspective not yet confirmed by psychological mechanisms of leadership behavior in foreign policy. We offer a contribution by exploring the *Leadership Trait Analysis* framework with which personality concepts and comparisons between Brazilian presidents are examined. Our main findings reveal that Rousseff has leadership traits in close proximity to the average of Brazilian presidents, although her distinctions on "respecting constrains" and "focusing on causes" style mirror much of the impressions raised by the literature over her presidency.

Keywords: Dilma Rousseff; Foreign Policy; Leadership Trait Analysis; Brazil.

Introduction

In Brazil, the association of the individual profile of President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) to the decline in reach and projection of the country's international insertion is widespread (Fernandes 2013; Feres Júnior & Sassara 2016). Dilma Rousseff was one of the ministers of the previous government, until she became the successor and ascended to the presidency in the first election race of her carrier. Once in office, her personal governing style was compared to that of President Lula da Silva (2003-2010). Whenever there were policy changes, explanations to Brazil's loss of international prestige usually centered on Rousseff's personal leadership style.

Under Lula da Silva's administration, Brazilian foreign policy returned to some of its historical guidelines, such as the reinforcement of multilateralism, institutional revisionism, the

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increase of South-South Cooperation and the pursuit of a regional leadership role. These historical guidelines led to unprecedented international activism, a highly assertive presidential conduct of diplomatic matters, and the significant weight in the role of ideas over foreign policy, which can be testified by Brazil's expansion of public policies and companies abroad (Lima & Hirst 2006; Vigevani & Cepaluni 2007; Almeida 2004). These aspects were described a few times as part of an ideologized foreign policy that could threaten the institutional character of Brazil's diplomatic tradition; however, they were most frequently regarded as signs of a country's rising power in the regional and global levels (Milani et al. 2017).

Under Dilma Rousseff, the main impression was that this last emphasis had vanished. Foreign policy studies indicated how previous guidelines and strategies were maintained with little conceptual distinction, but mainly due to an inertial effect of the prior agenda (Cervo & Lessa 2014, 146), a reactive emphasis of its initiatives (Saraiva 2014, 25), focus on trade promotions rather than global ambitions (Casarões 2016), and difficulty maintaining confident dialogues with dynamic segments of society that would have based the country's international projection in previous periods (Cervo & Lessa 2014, 133). Views of the president's diplomatic engagement that has peaked in last years (Cason & Power 2009; Figueira 2010) often consent of its decline (Malamud 2014, 176) for reduced trips and presidential patience for diplomatic ceremonials (Stuenkel 2014), along with loss of prestige of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed by three ministers' changes and budget cuts regarding other ministries (Milani 2015).

Shifts in domestic and international circumstances were possible explanations for the decrease in international engagement (Rodrigues et al. 2019). As the world's largest economies were recovering from the global financial crisis and shifting their broader measures accordingly, Brazil went into recession and periods of political turmoil considerably restrictive of the government's abilities to external opportunities (Malamud 2017; Doctor 2017). A sense of mismatch between the Brazilian agenda and global decision-making came along interpretations that took into account the President's personal characteristics when conducting foreign policy. Images of an insular temperament and a "highly centralizing leadership" (Stuenkel 2017, 1) would have restricted the room for independent and globally visible foreign ministers (Stuenkel 2017, 1) just as supports of private sector representatives that have come from "close ties between business entities and the government's foreign policy agenda" in the past (Doctor 2017, 656). A "technocratic" or "pragmatic" profile was ascribed to the president's preference for tangible results and short-term returns instead of global projection investments (Malamud 2014, 178) well exemplified by the 'diplomacy of results' attributed to Rousseff as her type of expectations over the Brazilian diplomatic corps. The president's "harsh leadership style" was pointed out as the driving force that led her foreign policy into "a bureaucratic automatism" with "high aversion to risk and diplomatic daring" (Saraiva & Gomes 2016, 84), which also relates to its decline. Some works even discussed the President's personal lack of interest in foreign affairs, which analytically

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speaking, may be teleological approach, inferring one's interests and desires from one's behavior to explain it (Mercer 2005, 82).

In fact, connections between Rousseff's presidential profile and its effects on foreign policy seem to need a more systematic analysis. Our work seeks to fill this gap by exploring presidential personalities to pinpoint and translate how political leaders could tipically affect foreign policy issues. Presidents perceive political restrictions, arrange their alternatives and base their supports in very characteristic ways. Since the literature's perceptions of Dilma's image meet the same standards as the model we propose to address, we focused on comparing her leadership style with other national and foreign leaders, which allowed for an analysis capable of overcoming normative judgments or ad hoc descriptions of her behavior. The analysis is based on the Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA) framework, one of the most used techniques in the study of psychological profiles of leaders in foreign policy literature (Dyson 2006; Kesgin 2020; Çuhadar et al. 2021; Dyson & Raleigh 2014; Kaarbo 2018). Applying content analysis in spontaneous public addresses, LTA infers key and consistent traits that seem to guide leaderships' dispositions over their foreign policy management. By doing so, our results indicate that Rousseff's personality traits do not differ from Brazilian presidents in a broad perspective, presenting quite unusually medium scores. However, Dilma's two most prominent personality traits are not only befitting part of the literature's perception, but they are significantly different from Lula's, someone to whom she is often compared. When analyzing Lula's and Dilma's foreign policy decisions, differences in leadership traits allow us to test the relevance of leadership style studies in the decision-making process.

The article is structured as follows. In the next section, we present a review of the literature on the presidential figure and leadership trait analysis. In the third section we describe the data and method. The fourth section is dedicated to analyzing the results, highlighting Rousseff's profile as compared to other Brazilian presidents' profiles. The fifth section discusses a case study relating decisions toward Iran's human rights condemnations in the UN Human Rights Council and leader-orientated outcomes. In the last section we conclude the study.

Instruments of personality and leadership styles in foreign policy

Presidents are generally invested with vast properties of power to conduct foreign policy, often building much of its materiality, controlling large portions of policymakers' appointments, and embodying the center of decision-making environments over presidential regimes (Mora & Hey 2003; Malamud 2014; Jenne et al. 2017). In Brazil, works have paid recent attention to presidential preferences to inquire foreign policy outcomes that, even not addressing presidents as independent causal factors, have shown how ideology spectrums (Amorim Neto 2011), electoral cycles (Emerson 2015), or political parties tend to play major roles on defining Brazil's external agenda and engagement (Rodrigues et al. 2019). Yet, more traditionally, the

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presidentialization of foreign policy processes is the most prevalent idea within the subfield. Based on the perception that the diplomacy's traditional autonomy has diminished in its decision-making capabilites, this set of studies suggests an expansion of the direct management of presidency leaderships on defining country's international insertion (Danese 1999; Cason & Power 2009; Pinheiro 2009; Figueira 2010).

These works on the presidentialization of Brazil's foreign policy mobilized elements such as the loss of domestic support, biographic characteristics and previous experience of presidents in order to point out their level of engagement in foreign policy. Mainly, they establish a set of usual indicators to assess a presidents' level of activity in foreign policy matters. Since presidents direct their attentions to foreign agendas differently, the amount of time and frequency dispended on traveling, receiving visits, attending summits or giving speeches that refer to this area, was used to reveal leaders' sense of priorities to engage in foreign policy.

However, the degree of presidents' discretion and constraint on disposing these indicators was not always addressed. Interacting indicators have shown in foreign works how the frequency of presidential foreign policy speeches is highly affected by international events (Andrade & Young 1996). Or similarly, how presidential patterns of diplomatic travel owe much to external factors (Lebovic & Saunders 2016) and to tenure timing, presuming that presidents would travel more at their second term, especially for legacy building (Charnock McCann & Tenpas 2012). Thus, as presidential engagement is an important indicator by which foreign policy can be examined, it might not be exactly the tool where individual differences can make themselves felt.

Individual decision-makers are imperfect information processors, they do not react all the time as they are expected to, they learn from their experiences and support a variability of traits, emotions, beliefs and biases regarding the environmental constrains that surround them. As agents, decision-makers not only respond to political incentives based on their conditions, but they restructure, manipulate and alter the tendency for new restrictions (Carlsnaes 1992, 251). One of the most important debates about individual agency concerns the nature of the perceptions that can influence the decision-making process employed by leaders. Among psychological dimensions of political behavior, the analytical instrument of personality and leadership styles have been dedicated to investigate the association of stable elements under political executive perception and systematic differences on how they lead and respond to foreign policy dynamics (Hermann 1987; Winter & Stewart 1977).

For this work, three main research pathways can be described. The most classic tradition studied leaders as they differ from individuals in general, learning their exceptional behavior through a psychobiographical analysis of their trajectories (e.g., see George & George 1956). Then assuming that presidents typically vary in the way they act in office and mobilize support for their policies, the focus on presidential styles centered on the notion that leaders could be studied not by individual anecdotal components (Post 2003), but standardized leadership styles (Byars 1973; Burns 1978; Stoessinger 1979). Since microfoundational approaches gained ground

in foreign policy analysis, international studies start to implicate psychological processes as part of causal chains, and much of it was incorporated to explain the behavior of political elites in foreign affairs (Kertzer & Tingley 2018). Political psychology has studied for decades the relevance of personality traits in political manifestation as consistent dispositions to one's decisions and judgments, an effort that produced the categorization of a range of features for profiling leaderships in foreign policy.

Vertzberger (1998), for example, indicated how beliefs about one's own control would have implications for how risk is assessed. For the author, decision makers who perceive greater control believe that they can not only anticipate and guide events to serve their goals, but also allow themselves to reverse more mistakes after their decision has been made, making them more willing to take actions that others would consider risky (Davis & Phares 1967; Vertzberger 1998, 68). The contributions of the Leadership Trait Analysis approach (Hermann 1999) became influential among foreign policy scholars working on key personality traits to draw inferences about leadership styles regarding how they recognize and submit to constraints of their environments, how they frame information and their alternatives, or how they deal with concessions or integrity on adopting policies (Hermann 1999). This approach has offered important empirical support to foreign policy analysis in a variety of cases, such as British prime ministers (Dyson 2006), UN general secretaries (Kille 2006), Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton (Hermann 2003), European Union prime ministers (Kaarbo 2018), Soviet leaders (Winter et al. 1991), and sub-Saharan African leaders (Hermann 1987).

Before presenting the data and method of inference of the LTA of Brazilian presidents, we summarize the main characteristics of each of the seven traits of the leadership profile. *Belief in the ability to control events* underlies the leader's perception of his or her degrees of control over the situations. Leaders who exhibit high variations of this trait tend to be more purposeful and to violate norms (Hermann 1999, 15). Leaders who exhibit minor variations, on the other hand, tend to be reactive and to see constraints as relevant obstacles to their actions (Davis & Phares 1967; Hermann 1987). High *power needs* suggest a preference for well-defined hierarchies and unequivocal personal control over policy formulation and decision (Winter 1973; Etheredge 1978). High values of *Conceptual complexity* mean leaders who are able to deal with information that may require adaptation and redirection, as well as leaders who are more likely to incorporate contrary information, as lower levels are relatively more inflexible in their responses to stimuli, but their heuristic considerations tend to be more agile (Suedfeld & Tetlock 1977).

High *self-confidence* implies a preference for structures of consultation with loyal agents and close to the leader's preferences and experiences in the political environment. Leaders with lower levels of this characteristic are more adaptive to opinions that differ from their preference and choose more plural consultative structures (Winter et al. 1991 Ziller et al. 1977, 65). *Group bias* involves the belief that the group itself is exceptional and superior to other groups or nations, making strong emotional connections to whom the leader identifies and associates, seeking to

place them as central and extolling aspects of their identity (Winter & Stewart 1977). High *distrust of others* boosts perceptions of threat and encourages support for instruments of aggression to deal with them (Stuart & Starr 1981). *Task orientation* refers to the emphasis on principles, the solution of problems that they perceive as important, and goals that enable progress toward causes for which he leads. Task-oriented leaders are less sensitive to the opinions of others and inclined to ignore oppositions, while leaders with lower levels of task-orientation generally seek consensus and accommodate the preferences of other actors (Hermann 1987; Byars 1973).

Data and Method

The difficulty in measuring leaders' characteristics in their absence crossed a large body of leadership studies and pushed the remaining ones to develop assessment techniques that could measure different leaders consistently, produce meaningful observations from their comparison and be operable overall at a distance. The 'At-a-Distance' methods (Winter & Stewart 1977) came from those concerns utilizing content analysis of spontaneous interview responses to infer personality profiles of political leaders. The analysis identifies textual elements between words and sentences to estimate their frequency and put in categories that emulate the patterns linked to each personality trait (Schafer 2000). The method involves independent materials from the leaders' behavior, a non-reactive estimation, since leaders remain blind to their outputs until after its coding and repeated estimations that generate trust and replicability (Winter et al. 1991; Schafer 2000).

Leaders make speeches to explain and justify their options in a set of constructs to represent them. As important records of their belief systems and styles (Winter et al. 1991), the recognition of personality elements on verbal content assumes that patterns of thought and conduct usually mirror on communicating the speaker's structures of choice and perception (Weintraub 2005). For the analysis, the specific subject or topic addressed by the speaker does not actually matter, nor that true or genuine representations are being expressed. What does matter for the analysis are the intensity, descriptive nuances and the agent of actions that are being arranged throughout the speech. Languages in general induce a number of choices in language structures over others and, as characteristic verbal conducts, provide detailed links between traits of a speaker's personality (Weintraub 2005; Hermann 1999).

At the end of the 1990s, evolutions in software design allowed a resurgence of content analysis in cognitive studies. Also, the development of the Profiler-Plus by Michael Young and Mark Schafer enabled approaches such as Leadership Trait Analysis, which eased concerns about intercoder reliability and mostly analyzed larger samples of much more refined comparisons among them (Post 2003). In this article we use version 5.8.4 of Profiler-Plus and classic LTA codes provided by Social Science Automation, a systematically gathered data from a group of 284 world leaders compiled and estimated by Syracuse University in October 2012. For the Brazilian group, we used

the material of six recent presidential leaders besides Dilma Rousseff. Table 1 below summarizes those leaders, the number of interviews, responses and words of the national sample.

Table 1. Frequency of spontaneous interview responses

Brazilian Leaders	Interviews	Responses	Words
Michel Temer (2016-2018)	43	434	95.331
Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016)	151	914	251.799
Lula da Silva (2003-2010)	498	3.702	931.138
F. H. Cardoso (1995-2002)	36	430	95.165
Itamar Franco (1992-1994)	8	59	15.757
Collor de Melo (1990-1992)	47	300	70.374
José Sarney (1985-1989)	14	93	22.627
Total	797	5.932	1.482.191

Source: Elaborated by the authors

The Leadership Trait Analysis approach privileges the spontaneity of the speeches that compose the corpus, pursuits leaders' unpredictable authorship, making it more likely that the content is not obscured by adviser systems and others' creations. To preserve this condition, the sample includes responses extracted from individual interviews and press conferences published by the media or the virtual library of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil since they started publishing this content. The sample contemplates only interviews granted during the leaders' mandate, in keeping with their relation to the leadership role, and excludes official speeches, written interviews, and radio interviews, as radio programs seemed to have been prearranged with interviewees (Hermann 2003; Schafer 2000). The sample of interviews follows Hermann's criteria (1999) regarding the minimum of fifty responses per leader, displaying far larger amounts for some of the Brazilian leaders, as can be seen in Table 1.

The execution of coding involves the recognition of pre-defined textual references, as words or expressions composed of one or more predicates that, from a number of identified references, presents a percentage score from 0 to 1 to each trait. In the supplementary document 1, we address the coding procedures adopted in the elaboration of the textual references and illustrations in the marking of some of them in the speeches.

Finally, as Profilter Plus only supports Leadership Trait Analysis in the English language, it was necessary to translate the speeches gathered from Brazilian leaders. That implied running them through automated software, specifically Google Translate. The automated translation was preferred not only to make it feasible for the speeches' bank size, but mainly to avoid syntactic manipulation of the texts, which distributes translation noises among the Brazilian codes and do not compromise measurement equivalence. Hermann (1999, 40) also compared code applications between translated and original speeches and had an average agreement of 92% across the seven traits

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codes, which could be a minimal effect on the resulting scores. In particular, since 2016 Google's neural translation technology has significantly advanced their translation strategies with its solid use of training data. In lexical terms, this means competitive enough results (Wu et al. 2016; Tsai 2019) to present a morphosyntactic indexing as reliable as Profilter Plus recognitions, which has received meticulous and considerable validation. In the next section, we present the results of the LTA estimation.

Results

The typology of leadership profiles utilized in this study derives from personality traits that have been systematically related to leadership styles by a substantial body of research in foreign policies studies. To examine the resulting scores, Table 2 below summarizes the theoretical expectations by which we conduct our analysis.

**Table 2. Leadership Traits and Styles on Foreign Policy**

Traits	Description	Effects in foreign policy guidelines
Belief in the ability to control events	Perception of control and influence under the political environment.	*Challengers* Intends on defying or decisive positions, mostly risk takers and less committed to international standards.
Need for power	Emphasis on preserving or building one's own political legacy.	*Respecters* Stays open to compromise, cautious of potential payoffs and respecters of international commitments.
Conceptual complexity	Tendency to distinguish the complexity of political contexts and events.	*Closed to information* Perceives binary frames of action or diplomatic exits and more likely to persuades others to act.
Self-confidence	Belief in self-importance and experience in dealing with the politics.	*Open to information* Recognizes non traditional alternatives and flexible or reversible decisions.
In-group bias	Tendency to group maintenance, estimating their country as superior.	*Focus on causes/problem* Engages in positions based on causes or a particular set of goals for policy achievements, even if isolated.
Distrust of others	Suspicion of and aggressiveness to domestic and international opposition.	*Focus on relationships* Willing to assume positions of mediator of crises and conflicts, seek to monitor supports and place themselves as actors able to build consensus.
Task orientation	Focus on own principles, goals and problem solving.	

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on Hermann et al. (2001) and Hermann (1999).

The scores for the seven LTA traits of world leaders, Brazilian presidents and Dilma Rousseff are shown in figure 1. On the horizontal axis, each personality trait of the leaders is represented, while the vertical axis shows the estimated values of the LTA. Dilma's scores are represented by a light grey circle, while the average scores of the six Brazilian presidents and 284 world leaders are

represented by grey and dark grey circles, respectively. The vertical bars represent the standard deviation of the distribution of scores of these two groups of leaders.

Figure 1. LTA scores of Dilma Rousseff, Brazilian and world leaders
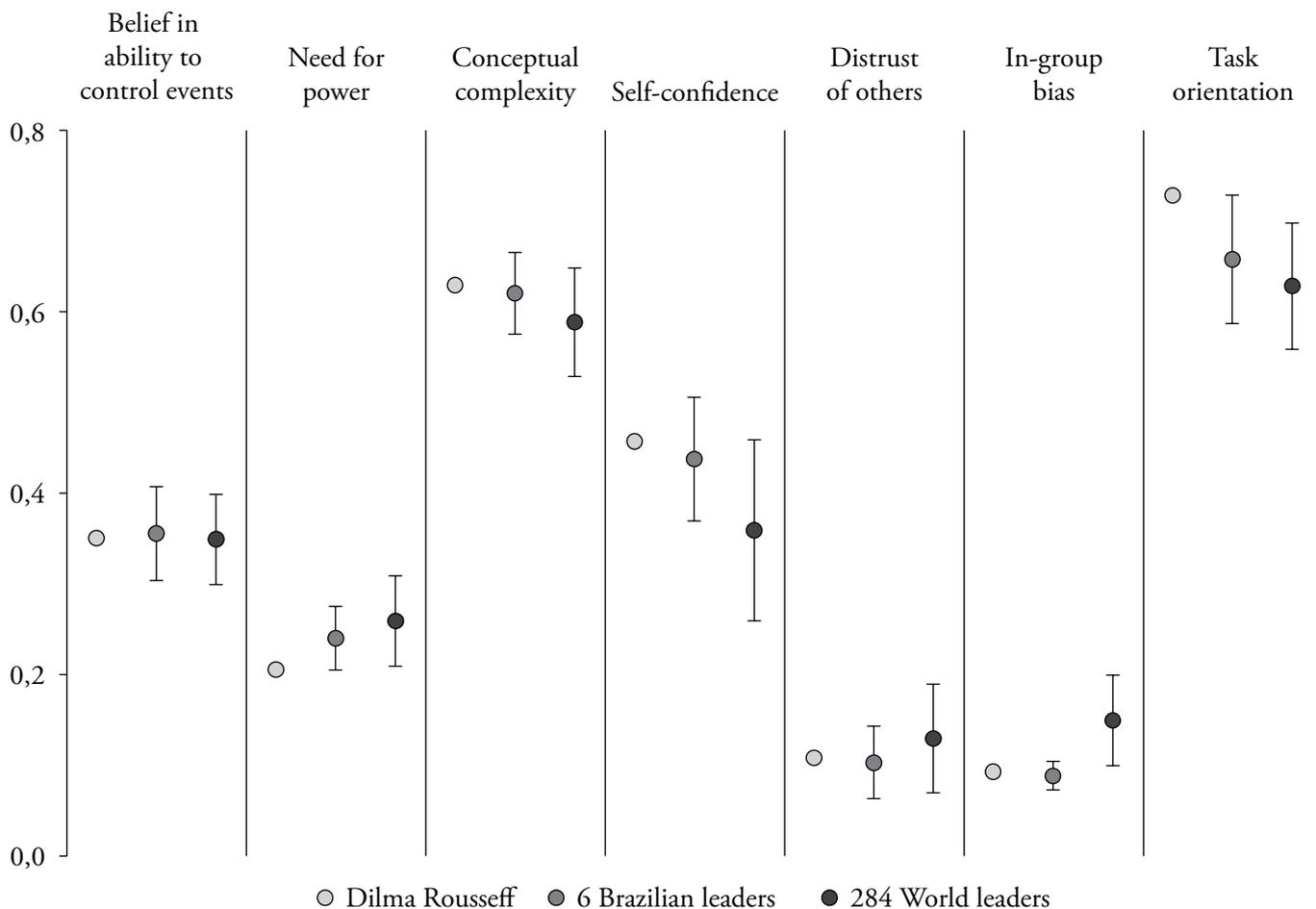
The results in figure 1 show that the president's traits did not exceed a standard deviation up or down from the estimated average among Brazilian presidents, putting in perspective Rousseff's differences from the average of her recent peers and mitigating a leadership profile as distinctive as literature formulations could presume, especially regarding Brazilian presidents. Therefore, Rousseff's most salient traits, namely high task orientation and low need for power, could allow us to explore if these more prominent distinctions were observable in the foreign policies, as highlighted by the literature.

The task orientation trait scored 0.73, at the upper limit of the deviation from the average of Brazilian leaders, and exceeds the one of world leaders. This high value suggests an emphasis on goals and problem solving in a more rigidly defined agenda, reducing the possibilities of accommodating positions. Similarly, in the trait 'need for power', scoring 0.21, close to extrapolating the Brazilian and world average standards, this time very close to the lower limit of both samples. To improve the comparison within Brazilian presidents, we present figure 2 below, disaggregating the seven leaders.

Figure 2. LTA scores of Brazilian presidents in standard deviations from means
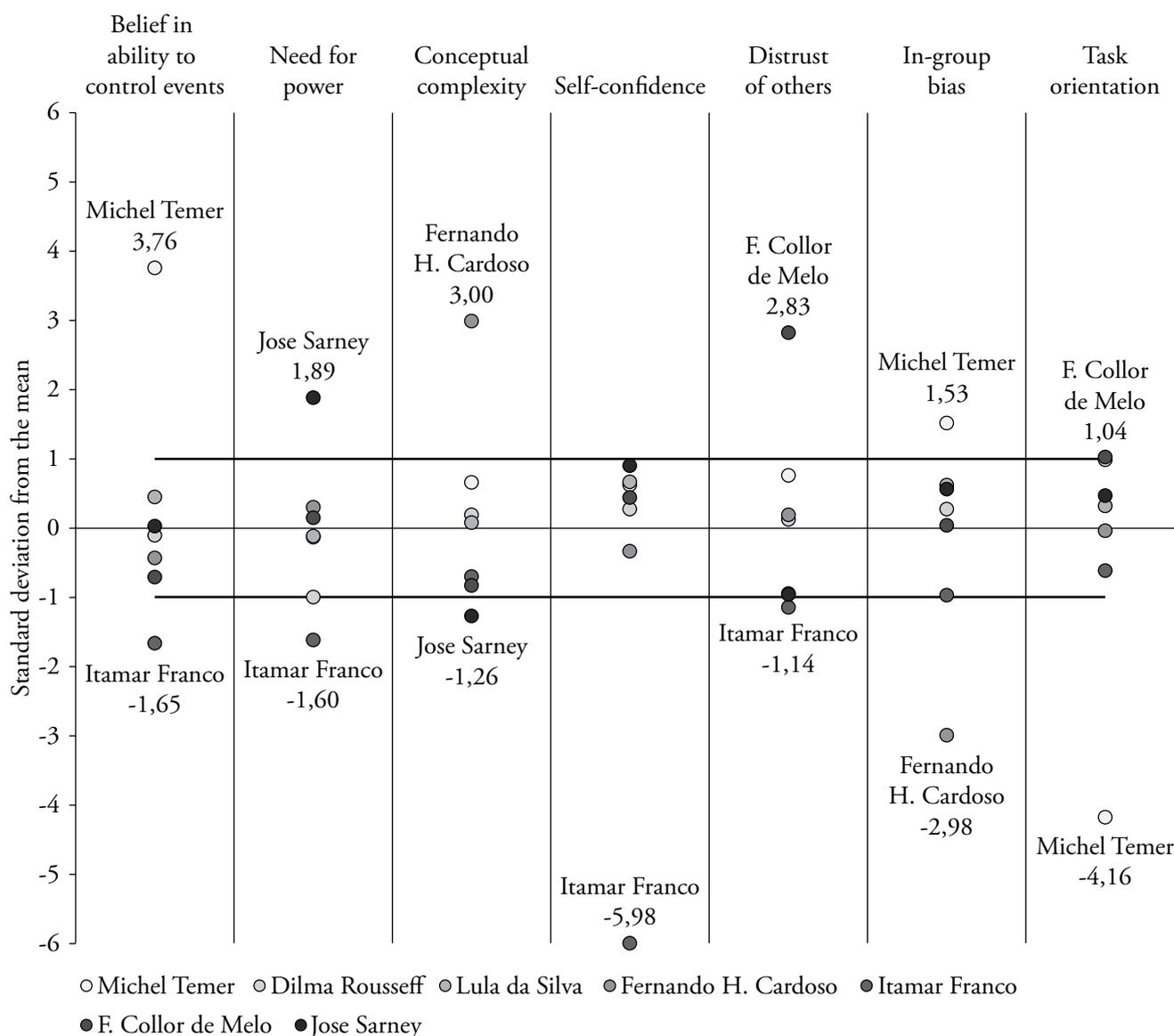
In Figure 2 it is possible to observe the disposition of the seven traits of the Brazilian presidencies and the variation in relation to the standard deviations of their average. Again, the horizontal axis represents the seven traits, and each president is identified with a grey scale circle. The vertical axis presents the standard deviations instead of the LTA scores. The horizontal black lines represent one standard deviation from the mean, making it easier to perceive the presidents with prominence in any of the traits.

The first interesting factor to note is that a substantial part of the presidential profiles shows accentuated levels in at least two traits. Michel Temer, for example, exhibited a high level of belief in the ability to control events, which is associated with purposeful attitudes in the construction of policies and willingness for riskier decisions, especially as a key trait of a constraint challenger style for Temer's profile. José Sarney exhibits a distance of almost two deviations from the average in need for power, which indicates a preference for hierarchical structures of decision-making

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environments and a focus on building one's own political reputation. As one of the elements of leadership that challenge political restrictions, he would also tend to take the lead of external positions and persist that those outcomes reflect their preferences.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso presented three deviations above the average in conceptual complexity and almost three deviations below in group bias trait. The first characteristic reveals the leader's sensitivity to observe nuances, as well as his willingness to recognize alternative information and options presented by his advisory group; the lesser suggests adherence to dialogues from external sources and global agendas. Both characteristics indicate a willingness to consult different opinions in the surroundings and to assume the role of mediator of crises and conflicts, seeking to monitor supports to put himself as an actor capable of building consensus. Lula da Silva has together with Rousseff the closest results from the average of Brazilian leaders. It can represent, in perspective, a leadership that can easily move between each trait's extreme variables. The only trait that has some proximity with the lower limit of the standard is distrust. Leaders with low scores in this dimension are more willing to accept opinions according to their own validity and to enter in agreements or arrangements that involve political trust and malleability.

As we can see in Figure 2, Dilma's scores in the "task oriented" and "need for power" traits are in the limit of one standard deviation, as her characteristics are more prominent in relation to the average of Brazilian leaders. To assess mathematically the difference in scores across Dilma and other presidents, and further examine the relevance of the difference between the distributions of scores, we provide in table 3 below an analysis of variance (Hermann 1999). Because our data violates the normal distribution assumption, we use the Kruskal-Wallis H test, a rank-based nonparametric test that can be used to determine if there are statistically significant differences between two or more groups. Table 3 below presents the results for each of the seven traits in the row and the distributions of the scores in the columns. In the column "6 presidents" we compare the distribution of Dilma's scores for each trait with the other 6 Brazilian presidents combined. After that, the columns represent the difference between Dilma's scores and each Brazilian president's in the sample.

Table 3. Kruskal-Wallis equality of populations rank test

Traits	6 leaders	J. Sarney	F. Collor	I. Franco	F.H.C.	Lula da Silva	M. Temer
BACE	4.62*	0.01	1.63	4.76*	0.04	5.21*	25.3***
PWR	13.0***	10.1**	6.79**	0.35	8.26**	9.22**	5.65*
CC	0.31	6.8**	6.86**	0.25	18.6***	0.59	1.01
SC	0.34	0.75	0.20	8.61**	1.45	1.59	0.34
IGB	0.42	0.05	0.38	0.48	2.79	1.22	0.55
DIS	1.18	1.41	12.4***	0.77	1.29	5.86*	3.37
TASK	24.4***	1.14	0.52	6.05*	9.55**	17.2***	54.6***
	564	13	47	8	31	423	42

Note: President Dilma has 146 observations. *** $p<0.001$, ** $p<0.01$, * $p<0.05$.

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Rousseff's difference in task orientation was sensible to Lula's and Temer's and matches the most prominent impression among the literature about a technocratic manager of Brazil's foreign policy. Her apparent difficulty to "deal with the subjectivity of foreign policy" (Pecequilo & Carmo 2017, 30; Saraiva & Gomes 2016) gained attention not as some tendency to return foreign policymaking to Itamaraty, but a preference for technical and tangible results rather than the diplomatic generalist aura. In 2013, it was attributed to her a quote that "Itamaraty does a lot of diplomacy and little foreign policy" addressing an excessively utilitarian view of Brazilian foreign policy. In fact, the fact that she asked how many engineers there were in the graduation class of the Rio Branco Institute might be more closely related to a personality trait that values the technical qualities of the consulting team more than that of a leader who "seemed not to realize that diplomacy is not an exact science, whose benefits can hardly be measured by a spreadsheet" (Milani 2015, 63).

In that sense, her disposition for purposes and goals might have contributed to the harmed relationship with the chancellery, as if Rousseff tended to dispose her government officials by how they could concretely pursue her quite defined agenda. Leaders who exhibit high task orientations may view advisors as tools for their goals, they are less sensitive to the positions of those who orbit their surroundings, and they are not usually concerned with the political support that appears to interfere in their cherished causes (Hermann et al. 2001). Rousseff's choices of Antonio Patriota (2011-2013) and Alberto Figueiredo (2013-2015) as ministers of foreign affairs reinforce it. Patriota for being regarded as another technocratic profile, "averse to political games", and Figueiredo due to Rousseff's reports about the security that he had shown in the negotiations at COP-17, when impasses in the final text were resolved by his intervention, or to the Rio+20 episode, when Figueiredo's performance seemed to have conquered the president's trust.

Regarding her openness to information, Dilma's resulting scores presented moderate levels on its decisive traits, conceptual complexity and self-confidence. Both were not only close to the average in Brazil, but they did not differ significantly from Lula da Silva's. This supports a more horizontal political dialogue between Palacio do Planalto and contingent actors, negating the very widespread perception of her centralizing decision-making style. Brazilian foreign policy works also highlight a presidential concern on results rather than relevant initiatives to global projection (Saraiva & Gomes 2016) which Rousseff's difference in "need for power" in regard to Lula may also support. While the lesser is often described by an international insertion with projection at a world level and narratives of denouncing the asymmetries of the international scenario, Dilma's priority for short-term economic goals meets a respecter style to world norms and constraints in comparison with Lula, more driven to avoid this kind of global stage, although previous international arrangements and commitments remained (Saraiva 2014, 25).

In order to illustrate these assumptions, we point out a particular case to address Rousseff's leadership personality empirically. Among a universe of foreign policy decisions, those regarding the Brazilian votes on Iran's human rights issues in the UN have shown advantageous comparisons for our analysis, as its surroundings are rarely engendered in terms of variables that remain

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unchanged. Their decisions concern the exact same country, issue, international conditions - the last year of Lula's tenure and the first months of Rousseff's - both moments of great popularity for them and situations where the presidents played predominant leadership roles with exclusive prerogatives to irreversibility decide their position. In these situations, not only are the leaders' personalities more likely to affect their preferences (Hermann et al. 2001), but explanations based on this dimension could find high empirical support, as the next section will explore.

The Iran Decisions

Brazil's decisions in UN resolutions over Iran's human rights situation involved a quite controversial scenario. Their preceding moments capture Rousseff's and Lula's growing involvement over its issues and allow particularly interesting comparisons at the individual level of our analysis. In drawing together these elements, the aim is to establish whether the expectations concerning their relative personalities receive empirical support in these cases. Lula's personality scores do not exceed a standard deviation in a broad perspective over Brazilian leaders, but his lower result in the trait "distrust of others" is considerable and key to define a focus on relationships style. Leaders who are more willing to assume positions of mediator of crises or conflicts, monitor their supports among the actors around and to place themselves as actors able to build consensus.

Dilma Rousseff's personality also presented medium traits, yet there are some differences from Lula to be examined. As her task-oriented scores are close to the standard's limit, it would be particularly important for her to engage in positions based on causes or a particular set of interests to achieve policy goals. Since her "need for power" trait is close to the bottom limit, we expect lower emphasis on developing her individual political legacy, as well as caution in regard to possible rewards obtained by taking risky stances.

The proximity between Lula and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013) attracted attention from the world and launched Brazil to a leading role in international security issues. The Tehran Declaration signed by Brazil, Turkey and Iran in 2010 was celebrated, with many believing that personal variables had their role in explaining the deal. Critics argued that these positions would compromise the international credibility of the Brazilian nuclear program, or that Brazil did not have worthy interests in the Middle East to justify the involvement. A large part of the literature generally recognizes the feat as the biggest symbol of ambition in Brazil's rising position in global politics.

In 2010, however, newspapers put the case of an Iranian woman, Sakineh Ashtiani, on the spotlight. She was sentenced to death by stoning in Iran. This case caused an international commotion and produced several campaigns that called for her release, a plea to which Lula refused to adhere, claiming that it was troubling to interfere in legal matters of another country. Still in the same month, however, during Dilma Rousseff's electoral campaign, Lula backtracks, criticizing the death penalty in Iran and offering asylum to Ashtiani. Meanwhile, Dilma stated for the first

time that the case "hurts her sensitivity and humanity". These are the main events that depict the scenario preceding two Brazilian decisions on UN resolutions that address the human rights situation in Iran. The first decision occurred in November 2010, under the Lula administration, and the other in March 2011, in the first months of the Dilma Rousseff administration.

In early June 2010, facing the condemnation, Celso Amorim, ministry of foreign affairs, requested that the Iranian chancellor suspend the punishment, but neither this nor the offer of asylum had any effect. A spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Persian government at the time claimed that Lula "is a very human and emotional person, and that he probably did not receive enough information about the case". On November 18, 2010, a resolution was voted on the UN General Assembly's human rights committee expressing "deep concern about recurrent human rights violations" in Iran and approving a specific report on the topic. Brazil abstained, stating that "the way in which some human rights situations are highlighted, while others are not, serves only to reinforce how issues of human rights are treated in a selective and politicized way", according to the representative of Brazil, Alan Sellos.

Before the vote, Dilma Rousseff, as president-elect, raised the tone of the statements on the execution of Sakineh, openly criticizing Brazil's abstention in the November resolution in an interview with the Washington Post in December 2010. In February 2011, the chancellor of Iran, Ali Akbar Salehi, declared that "there may be conflicts in certain areas in the bilateral relationship", but asked Dilma not to change the voting pattern of Brazil at the UN.

However, in March 2011, the Brazilian position on the United Nations Human Rights Council corresponded to Dilma's statements, voting in favor of the resolution that determined the appointment of a special rapporteur to examine the human rights situation in Iran. Brazil voted alongside the United States and against China and Russia. The vote indicated a change from Brazil's previous human rights votes and the special relationship with Iran forged under the previous government. Dilma's attachment to gender and human rights issues is likely to have played an important role in her decision, as her leadership style could explain a portion of her following a more rigid agenda. Silva and Hernández (2020, 27-28) demonstrate that there was a special connotation on gender issues in the official pronouncements of Dilma in relation to domestic and foreign policies, demonstrating the importance of the issue in structuring her preferences.

In sum, it is interesting to note that Dilma Rousseff's conduct involved a shift in relation with Iran, and implicitly with the United States, who played a leading role in the case. This corresponds to the "respecter" style direction, as her stance declined to an international norm's bias concerning the issue and the consequences that orbit Iran's disappointment with Brazil. Dilma's attachment to consistency in the Brazilian human rights agenda, still considering the selectivity protection discussion claimed by Lula, was highly remarked as the model expectations on her tendencies. As mentioned before, Lula's decision contemplates a broader range of decisions concerning Brazilian foreign policy toward Iran and the Middle East in 2010. Yet, on those and the examined position, Lula showed much of what would be expected of his trait's orientations and leadership personality.

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Conclusion

The systematization of Dilma Rousseff's leadership personality traits conducted in this article was able to clarify where the literature may have been imprecise, as well as indicate how the study of differences in presidential leadership style is a worthwhile endeavor. President Dilma Rousseff's personality would hardly have played a critical role in the direction of Brazilian foreign policy, as some studies could imply. Due to key characteristics, such as the perception of leaders in relation to restrictions, openness to information and options, as well as attention to support goals, Brazilian presidential personalities may inform different dispositions to the country's foreign policy. Presidential involvement in foreign affairs could be a driver of the Brazilian foreign policy activism and innovation in the international arena (Burges & Bastos 2017). Nevertheless, it is important to avoid the methodological trap of measuring leadership style or interests from the outcomes that are being studied.

The Leadership Trait Analysis method demonstrated its relevance as a tool to improve the understanding of individual-level variables that try to determine whether a leader's personality ultimately matters. This is a more controlled and systematic interpretation of personal characteristics which allows refined comparisons and less intuitive images about leaders. The study of political leaders may seem to predetermine answers to questions about the analytical payoffs from studying individual presidents or whether this unit must be considered to explain foreign policy behavior. But that was not the case. As indicated throughout the work, we do not claim that the first image could offer the only or the best level of analysis to understand presidencies and foreign policy. Our objective was to approach psychological mechanisms and foundations of presidential behavior through a model that was structured based on them and empirically replicable. The main contribution was to empirically verify accurate perceptions about Dilma Rousseff and their effects on the foreign policy of the period.

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