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INCUMBENT REELECTION AND ELECTORAL ACCOUNTABILITY: A case study of the 2022 Brazilian Elections

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CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Since the democratization of Latin America, various countries allowed their incumbents to run for reelection. Most of these incumbent leaders were reelected in sequential presidential elections. With the democratic dividend theory in mind, this paper analyzed which factors increase the likelihood of incumbent reelection chances.

Democratic dividend theory argues that democracies provide more merits to their population than non-democracies due to higher levels of democratic accountability (Cheibub & Przeworski, 1999). Democratic accountability – the extent to which the position of the leaders depends on their population – is at the core of democracies and forms the basis of the legitimacy of democratic regimes (Olsen, 2013). To reach legitimacy, the electorate must expose their consent to the regime, which is done through accountability (Olsen, 2013). The population could punish or reward its leaders for their past actions and thereby weaken or strengthen their leaders' position. Therefore, to stay in power, a democratically elected leader needs to act in the best interest of the population (Cheibub & Przeworski, 1999).

The rewarding and punishing of democratically elected leaders are exercised through elections. The electorate holds their government accountable for their past actions by either reelecting or rejecting them (Barreda, 2014; Kenney, 2003). Via elections, the electorate can hold their government accountable, i.e., electoral accountability. In other words, the electorate could approve an official's position through elections and thereby, ensure the legitimacy of the democratic rule in a country (Cheibub & Przeworski, 1999). Therefore, the officials need to act in the interest of their electorate, i.e., provide merits for their electorate. These merits, or demerits, could impact the future position of democratically elected leaders. Thus, this raises the question of for which merits is electoral accountability most prone. Or in our case, *to which provided merits, and demerits, is the Latin American electoral accountability prone regarding the reelection of incumbents?*

The analysis consists of two parts: I) a cross-country multi-level regression analysis on the impact of various variables on the likelihood of incumbent reelections, and II) a case study on the 2022 Presidential elections in Brazil, based on semi-structured interviews with experts in the field. The first analysis showed a significant positive relationship between GDP growth and the likelihood of incumbent reelection, *ceteris paribus*. Moreover, the variable corruption 'control ratings' is also significant and positively related to the likelihood of incumbent reelection. This complies with hypothesis I: *Economic setbacks in the last year of an incumbent's term decrease their chances of reelection*, and hypothesis III: *A higher level of corruption decreases the incumbent's chances of reelection*. Other variables had no significant relationship with the incumbent's

chances of reelection. Referring to the theory, these outcomes show that electoral accountability is prone to economic voting (GDP growth) and corruption. An incumbent running for reelection could increase its reelection chances by providing merits concerning the GDP growth and corruption ratings.

The second analysis re-emphasized the importance of economic factors in the 2022 Brazilian Presidential elections, and democratic elections in general. According to the interviewees, GDP growth, inflation, and unemployment play an important role in the possible reelection of Bolsonaro. As the current Brazilian economic situation is not in its best shape, Bolsonaro's reelection chances could be reduced. Corruption is seen as a less important issue than during the 2018 elections. As the interviewees argue, Bolsonaro is not known as a corrupt politician and even after firing former Minister of Justice Sergio Moro, Bolsonaro did not collapse in the polls. This raises the question of how strong the corruption vote is in Brazil. Other influencing variables opted during the interviews are the position of the Evangelicals and health care.

These results bring an answer to the question *which provided merits, and demerits, is the Latin American electoral accountability prone to the reelection of incumbents?* Based on the conducted analysis, electoral accountability is strong in GDP growth and corruption. E.g., improvements in the GDP growth and corruption control impact the reelection likelihood of Latin American incumbents positively. However, electoral accountability in other policy fields, such as democratization, freedom of the press, receiving foreign money, the presence of rally events, unemployment ratings, and inflation, is not strong. Based on this conclusion, the question raised could be if the electorate only cares about GDP growth and corruption control, and whether those other policy fields are outside the scope of the government's accountability. If this is the case, the legitimacy of these policies could be questioned.

As already discussed in the quantitative analysis, the lack of significance of the various proposed factors and the reelection of incumbents could lie with other (de)merits. Concerning economics, the economic diversity of Latin American countries differs. Therefore, some countries are more prone to changes in international interest rates and commodity prices. In the qualitative analysis, these factors have been highlighted by Campello too. Especially concerning Brazil, a low-saving-commodity-exporting country, changes in international interest rates and commodity prices might be influential. Campello argued that these internationally determining variables are out of the reach of the Brazilian government to impact. However, they express themselves in domestic economic factors, i.e., GDP, unemployment, and inflation. Therefore, it might be interesting to reconduct the analysis, including these international economic factors instead of domestic economic variables, which are impacted by the international variables.

Besides excluding possibly other influential variables, other limitations could have impacted the quantitative results, e.g., the inclusion of inflation, which has also been highlighted in the interview with Campello.²⁶ Latin America faced episodes of hyperinflation. Although this period was mainly present during the 1980s, some hyperinflation dates were also included in our analysis. This could cause a bias in our analysis. It might be beneficial to exclude this data from the analysis as it could determine whether inflation has a significant impact on the reelection likelihood of incumbents.

A third limitation concerns the design of the dataset. The statistical analysis included 46 cases divided over 11 countries. However, due to the high level of missing cases, none of the models included all cases. This decreases the accuracy of the models and the entire analysis. The analysis would gain more strength if either more cases, or less variables were included. All these statistical improvements in the analysis, allow for further in-depth research on the effect of electoral accountability on incumbent leaders.

Nevertheless, the findings of this paper pose several implications. First, for the Latin American region, the importance of economic voting is re-emphasized. For democratic leaders focusing on reelection, the economic situation in their country could be of great importance. Although the quantitative analysis shows that especially GDP growth is of importance, the qualitative analysis argues differently. Therefore, it is impossible to conclude whether the electoral accountability is impacted by one specific economic variable or by the overall living standard in general. Nonetheless, for incumbents, knowing that their accountability to the electorate is likely to be based (partly) on the economic situation might be helpful in further reelection situations. With this knowledge, both the incumbents and new candidates for the presidency could design their policies and election campaigns to gain the presidential seat.

Second, specific to the highlighted situation in Brazil, and especially for Bolsonaro, it is too soon to predict or assume the possible reelection of Bolsonaro. Time already caught up by Moro's withdrawal and Alckamin's appointment as Lula's running-mate (Moro, 2022a, 2022b; Paraguassu, 2022). Therefore, when reading this paper, some part may have become inaccurate. Nevertheless, the importance of the economic situation was stressed as well. As the Brazilian electorate has been impacted by the economic situation before (e.g., the reelection of Lula), the current economic situation might be an interesting environment for a new election. During the 2022 elections in Brazil, to gain votes, the opposition could frame the current economic situation negatively. Especially, as Lula – possibly Bolsonaro's biggest opponent – lifted Brazil out of desperate economic times. If the Brazilian electoral accountability is prone to economic (de)merits, this could harm Bolsonaro's election outcomes. However, as stressed before, a lot can happen before October 2022.

²⁶ See transcript in Appendix 8, interview Campello.

Third, knowing which (de)merits impact the Latin American electoral accountability could assist the evaluations and analysis of Latin American elections. When the experts and journalists are aware of the (de)merits to which the Latin American electorate is prone and for which types of policies the incumbent leaders could be punished or rewarded, it could ease the analysis of the possible loss or win of an incumbent. Furthermore, on the theory of democratic dividend, the importance of economic voting and corruption creates a base to which (de)merits the electorate is prone. These outcomes assume a certain level of democratic legitimacy on such policies.

For further research, it might be interesting to dive further into the notion of economic voting, as both the qualitative and quantitative analyses highlight the importance of economic factors in the reelection of incumbents. Knowing to which economic factors the Latin American electoral accountability is prone, and to which economic policies or situations an incumbent could be rewarded or punished, could increase the relationship between economic voting and electoral accountability in the region.

In short, the conducted analyses emphasized the importance of economic voting and, to an extent, corruption ratings for Latin American electoral accountability. In the view of the democratic dividend theory, incumbents could increase their reelection chances when offering merits on these policy areas. Contrary, demerits concerning the economic situation or corruption ratings could decrease the incumbent's popularity and therefore, its corruption chances. Projecting these outcomes on our case, the Brazilian 2022 Presidential elections, one could assume that the current economic situation is going to play a major role. When this is the case, Bolsonaro's prospect is not too good.

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APPENDIX 1: DATASET DESCRIPTION

The dataset is a composition of all above mentioned data. In this section describes the composition is the dataset:

1. All included countries, presidents and whether they are reelected or not are added manually in the dataset.
2. All independent data (*'Inflation, GDP', 'Unemployment ratings', 'GDP growth', 'Control of Corruption', 'Freedom of the Press', 'Freedom House Index', 'ODA received', 'Rally events'*) are included in the analysis. From all variables, except *'rally events'*, data a year prior to the elections are included. When no data was available, the field was coded as missing. For rally events is the presence of an event up to six months before the events included and coded as *'1'*. When no rally event took place six months before the elections, the field was coded *'0'*

APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1a. Descriptive Statistics

		Country	Is the rerunning incumbent reelected?	Freedom House Index (year before election)	GDP Growth (year before election)	Unemployment ratings (year before election)
N	Valid	46	46	39	41	33
	Missing	0	0	7	5	13
Mean		11.91	.76	3.026	4.366	8.921
Std. Error		.991	.064	.1978	.660	0.782
Min		1	0	1.0	-6.00	2.40
Max		20	1	5.5	12.90	22.20

Table 1b. Descriptive Statistics

		Inflation, GDP Deflator (year before election)	ODA, recieved per capita in current US\$ (year before election)	Control of Corruption (year before election)	Freedom of the Press (year before election)	Rally Event (6 months before election)
N	Valid	41	44	24	32	34
	Missing	5	22	22	14	12
Mean		125.061	15.073	-.547	1.97	.21
Std. Error		114.663	3.557	.103	.131	.070
Min		1.90	.00	-1.37	1	0
Max		4711.20	87.80	.44	3	1

Table 2. Country means

Country		Is the incumbent reelected?	GDP Growth (Year before election)	Unemployment Ratings (Year before election)	Inflation, GDP Deflator (Year before election)	ODA per capita in current US\$ (Year before election)	Rally Event (six months before election)	Freedom House Index (Year before election)	Control of corruption (Year before election)	Freedom of the press (Year before election)
Argentina	Mean	.67	4.433	9.567	21.233	3.167	.00	2.167	-.216	1.50
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
	Std. Error	.333	3.729	1.198	10.740	.895	.000	.167	.146	.500
	Min	0	-2.60	7.70	2.80	1.60	0	2.0	-.36	1
	Max	1	10.10	11.80	40.00	4.70	0	2.5	-.07	2
Bolivia	Mean	1.00	5.700	2.833	6.500	63.800	.00	3.000	-.577	2.00
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Std. Error	.000	.777	.338	2.122	1.744	.000	.000	.030	.000
	Min	1	4.20	2.40	3.10	60.60	0	3.0	-.62	2
	Max	1	6.80	3.50	10.40	66.60	0	3.0	-.52	2
Brazil	Mean	1.00	3.200	8.267	7.533	2.767	.33	2.500	-.110	2.00
	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
	Std. Error	.000	.115	.751	.088	1.468	.333	.500	.030	.000
	Min	1	3.00	7.00	7.40	1.20	0	2.0	-.14	2
	Max	1	3.40	9.60	7.70	5.70	1	3.5	-.08	2
Colombia	Mean	1.00	4.950	10.10	3.350	16.750	.00	3.250	-.270	2.50
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Error	.000	.150	1.000	1.450	1.650	.000	.250	.140	.500
	Min	1	4.80	9.10	1.90	15.10	0	3.0	-.41	2
	Max	1	5.10	11.10	4.80	18.40	0	3.5	-.13	3

Dominican Republic	Mean	.75	6.700	6.567	11.262	10.800	.00	2.571	-.463	1.60
	N	8	8	3	8	8	8	7	3	5
	Std. Error	.164	1.519	.713	3.995	3.221	.000	.170	.322	.245
	Min	0	-1.30	5.20	2.50	.50	0	2.0	-.82	1
	Max	1	12.90	7.60	33.50	27.20	0	3.0	.18	2
Ecuador	Mean	1.00	6.000	3.550	9.400	13.350	.00	3.000	-.635	2.50
	N	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Error	.000	.400	.350	4.400	3.750	.000	.000	.055	.500
	Min	1	5.60	3.20	5.00	9.60	0	3.0	-.69	2
	Max	1	6.40	3.90	13.80	17.10	0	3.0	-.58	3
Honduras	Mean	1.00	3.900	6.700	3.700	44.50	.00	4.000	-.660	3.00
	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Std. Error
	Min	1	3.90	6.70	3.70	44.50	0	4.0	-.66	3
	Max	1	3.90	6.70	3.70	44.50	0	4.0	-.66	3
Nicaragua	Mean	.75	1.375	7.067	1182.7000	73.567	.50	4.500	-.963	2.33
	N	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	3
	Std. Error	.250	1.865	1.212	1176.167	8.227	.289	.456	.1489	.333
	Min	0	-2.00	4.70	5.90	59.30	0	3.5	-1.25	2
	Max	1	4.80	8.70	4711.20	87.80	1	5,5	-.75	3
Peru	Mean	1.00	6.900	8.000	14.80	16.100	.50	4.500		2.50
	N	2	2	1	2	2	2	2		2
	Std. Error	.000	5.400	.	11.900	1.500	.00	.000		.500
	Min	1	1.50	8.00	2.90	14.60	0	4.5		2
	Max	1	12.30	8.00	26.70	17.60	1	4.5		3
Puerto Rico	Mean	.50	2.911	15.100	4.889	.000		1.429	.425	1.00
	N	12	9	7	9	12		7	2	6
	Std. Error	.151	1.327	1.437	.579	.000		.071	.015	.000
	Min	0	-2.30	10.90	2.40	.00		1.0	.41	1
	Max	1	7.90	22.20	7.40	.00		1.5	.44	1

Venezuela	Mean	.83	3.525	8.760	24.500	2.000	.50	4.700	-1.210	2.75
	N	6	4	5	4	5	6	5	4	4
	Std. Error	.167	3.433	1.706	3.536	.251	.224	.300	.0726	.250
	Min	0	-6.00	5.10	14.10	1.70	0	4.0	-1.37	2
	Max	1	10.30	14.50	29.60	3.00	1	5.5	-1.03	3
Total	Mean	.76	4.366	8.921	125.061	15.073	.21	3.026	-.5467	1.97
	N	46	41	33	41	44	34	39	24	32
	Std. Error	.064	.660	.782	114.664	3.557	.070	.198	.1033	.131
	Min	0	-6.00	2.40	1.90	.00	0	1.0	-1.37	1
	Max	1	12.90	22.20	4711.20	87.80	1	5.5	.44	3

APPENDIX 3: RALLY EVENTS

Table 3. Rally Events

Military Events						
Country	Date	Election date	Months until election	Event	Specification	Actors
Peru ²⁷	02-1995	9-04-1995	2	Cenepa War	Border dispute	Peru, Ecuador
Nicaragua ²⁸	08-1989	25-02-1990	6	Tela Agreement	End of the Nicaraguan Revolution	Nicaragua, Contas, US
Diplomatic Events						
Country	Date	Election date	Months until election	Event	Specification	Actors
Brazil ²⁹	07-1998	4-10-1998	3	Ushuaia Protocol	Reaffirming democracy in the region	Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia
Venezuela ³⁰	09-2006	3-10-2006	0.5	Chavez at the UN	Calling Bush 'the devil'	Chavéz, George Bush

²⁷ Long, W. R. (1995, February 8). Peru, Ecuador Battle on Small but Deadly Scale : Latin America: As peace talks hit snag, platoon-size units continue war in Amazon rain forest. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-02-08-mn-29584-story.html>

²⁸ AP NEWS. (1989, August 8). Excerpts from Central American Accord in Tela, Honduras With PM-Central America, Bjt. *AP NEWS*. <https://apnews.com/article/64f09d4809626d881562327de5922f80>

²⁹ OHCHR. (n.d.). *OHCHR / Protocolo de Ushuaia Sobre Compromiso Democrático en el Mercosur*. United Nations Human Rights. Retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/ruleoflaw/compilationdemocracy/pages/mercosurprotocol.aspx>

³⁰ Stout, D. (2006, September 20). Chávez Calls Bush 'the Devil' in U.N. Speech. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/20/world/americas/20cnd-chavez.html>

Venezuela ³¹	04-2018	20-05-2018	1	Panama-Venezuela crisis	Sanctions on Maduro	Panama, Venezuela
Nicaragua ³²	06-2021	07-11-2021	6	Diplomatic crisis Spain - Nicaragua	Imprisoned opposition leaders	Spain, Nicaragua

Economic Events

Country	Date	Election date	Months until election	Event	Comment	Actors
Venezuela ³³	07-2012	07-10-2012	5	Mercosur membership	Full member of Mercosur	Venezuela, Mercosur

³¹ Reuters Staff. (2018, April 27). Venezuela, Panama to restore envoys and resume airline service. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-diplomacy/venezuela-panama-to-restore-envoys-resume-airline-service-maduro-idUSKBN1HX3IM>

³² Reuters. (2021, June 27). Nicaragua lambastes Spain's foreign minister in angry attack. *Reuters*. <http://www.reuters.com/world/americas/nicaragua-lambastes-spanish-foreign-minister-furious-broadside-2021-06-27/>

³³ Romero, S. (2012, August 1). Mercosur Trade Bloc Admits Venezuela as Full Member. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/01/world/americas/mercosur-trade-bloc-admits-venezuela-as-full-member.html>

APPENDIX 4: CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

Table 4. Correlations

		Freedom House Index (year before election)	Freedom of the press (year before election)
Freedom House Index (year before election)	Pearson Correlation	1	.768**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	38	27
Freedom of the press (year before election)	Pearson Correlation	.768**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	27	27

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX 5: MULTICOLLINEARITY

Table 5. Model 1 Economic Factors x Reelection Incumbent

	Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients			Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.		
(Constant)	.676	.224		3.018	.006		
GDP Growth (year before election)	.052	.018	.475	2.977	.006	.801	1.248
Unemployment ratings (year before election)	-.013	.017	-.137	-.754	.457	.618	1.618
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before election)	.000	.000	-.253	- 1.616	.118	.833	1.201
ODA received per capita in current US\$ (year before election)	.002	.003	.132	-.737	.467	.638	1.568

^a Dependent Variable: Is the rerunning incumbent reelected?

Table 6. Model 2 Political Factors x Reelection Incumbent

	Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients			Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.		
(Constant)	.796	.291		2.732	.017		
Control of Corruption (year before election)	-.546	.208	-.898	- 2.618	.021	.411	2.434
Rally event (6 months before election)	-.137	.198	-.189	-.695	.499	.657	1.522
Freedom House Index (year before election)	-.137	.098	-.547	- 1.392	.187	.314	3.190
Freedom of the press (year before elections)	.119	.144	.245	.825	.424	.547	1.827

^a Dependent Variable: Is the rerunning incumbent reelected?

APPENDIX 6: OUTLIERS

Table 7. Excl. Argentina Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	2.382 (0.906)	32.510* (1.357)	29.281* (1.266)	4.330 (0.738)	0.039 (8.572)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.412* (0.138)				1.896 (0.451)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.816 (0.120)			1.443 (0.433)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.919 (0.064)		0.951 (0.243)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.017 (0.025)	1.318 (0.601)
N	38	30	38	41	29
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.901	0.311	4.217	1.176	27.282
ICC(%) ^b	46.85%	8.63%	56.17%	26.33%	89.24%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 8. Excl. Argentina Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	6.963** (0.616)	0.493 (1.162)	0.872 (1.353)	1.399 (0.816)	4.081 (7.253)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	0.861 (1.243)				0.147 (5.634)
Freedom House Index		2.136 (0.432)			0.218 (2.310)
Freedom of the Press			2.558 (0.744)		4.194 (2.949)
Control of Corruption				0.013* (2.010)	0.002 (4.608)
N	31	36	30	22	17
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 9. Excl. Bolivia Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.721 (0.815)	22.994* (1.268)	33.560** (1.263)	3.516* (0.588)	0.055 (7.659)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.441** (0.131)				1.801 (0.394)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.827 (0.110)			1.388 (0.395)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.898 (0.055)		0.945 (0.185)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.013 (.025)	1.326 (0.525)
N	38	30	38	41	29
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.430	0.000	4.018	0.685	18.378
ICC(%) ^b	42.48%	0,00%	54.98%	17.23%	84.82%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 10. Excl. Bolivia Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.000** (0.548)	0.452 (1.102)	1.122 (1.302)	1.015 (0.780)	3.436 (7.102)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	1.199 (1.211)				0.159 (5.663)
Freedom House Index		2.112 (0.416)			0.219 (2.134)
Freedom of the Press			2.256 (0.717)		4.506 (2.971)
Control of Corruption				0.011* (2.130)	0.003 (4.545)
N	31	36	30	21	16
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 11. Excl. Brazil Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.583 (0.815)	22.389* (1.194)	33.294** (1.261)	2.738 (0.573)	0.005 (9.599)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.442** (0.129)				1.964 (0.465)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.824 (0.104)			1.521 (0.451)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.898 (0.055)		0.968 (0.221)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.024 (0.024)	1.440 (0.623)
N	38	30	38	41	29
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.296	0.000	4.007	0.512	25.478
ICC(%) ^b	41.10%	0.00%	54.91%	13.47%	88.56%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 12. Excl. Brazil Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.250** (0.546)	0.355 (1.149)	1.121 (1.289)	0.640 (0.978)	0.412 (8.152)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	0.952 (1.224)				0.077 (5.887)
Freedom House Index		2.285 (0.431)			0.445 (2.453)
Freedom of the Press			2.210 (0.708)		4.180 (2.888)
Control of Corruption				0.007* (2.216)	0.003 (4.187)
N	31	36	29	22	16
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 13. Excl. Colombia Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.743 (0.819)	25.282* (1.192)	35.534** (1.265)	3.157 (0.586)	0.055 (7.694)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.445** (0.131)				1.804 (0.396)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.815 (0.105)			1.389 (0.397)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.897 (0.056)		0.944 (0.186)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.020 (0.024)	1.323 (0.535)
N	39	31	39	42	30
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.472	0.000	4.050	0.648	18.637
ICC(%) ^b	42.90%	0.00%	55.18%	16.46%	85.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_0j) / (\text{var}(u_0j) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 14. Excl. Colombia Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.250** (0.546)	0.461 (1.117)	1.185 (1.331)	0.819 (0.859)	31.175 (8.162)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	1.142 (1.210)				0.370 (5.455)
Freedom House Index		2.129 (0.424)			0.133 (2.475)
Freedom of the Press			2.210 (0.739)		2.272 (4.096)
Control of Corruption				0.009* (2.084)	0.001 (4.934)
N	32	37	30	22	16
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 15. Excl. Dominican Republic Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	2.819 (0.944)	44.286* (1.407)	70.326* (1.795)	4.724 (0.800)	
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.442* (0.153)				
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.792 (0.118)			
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.887 (0.084)		
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.014 (0.026)	
N	33	30	33	36	
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	
Intercept Variance	3.171	0.000	6.399	1.423	
ICC(%) ^b	49.08%	0.00%	66.04%	30.19%	

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 16. Excl. Dominican Republic Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	8.353** (0.742)	0.382 (1.209)	0.649 (1.476)	1.376 (0.833)	
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	0.718 (1.310)				
Freedom House Index		2.414 (0.472)			
Freedom of the Press			3.229 (0.839)		
Control of Corruption				0.014 (2.143)	
N	26	32	27	21	
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 17. Excl. Ecuador Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.776 (0.815)	24.497* (1.242)	34.992** (1.261)	3.115 (0.587)	0.037 (8.201)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.445** (0.131)				1.846 (0.416)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.823 (0.108)			1.424 (0.414)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.896 (0.056)		0.949 (0.198)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.021 (0.024)	1.299 (0.538)
N	39	31	39	42	30
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.474	0.000	4.087	0.642	20.914
ICC(%) ^b	42.92%	0.00%	55.40%	16.33%	86.71%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 18. Excl. Ecuador Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.250** (0.546)	0.449 (1.113)	1.185 (1.331)	1.042 (0.779)	3.061 (7.676)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	1.142 (1.210)				0.106 (5.915)
Freedom House Index		2.143 (0.422)			0.185 (2.256)
Freedom of the Press			2.210 (0.739)		5.835 (3.309)
Control of Corruption				0.011* (2.124)	0.002 (4.754)
N	32	37	30	22	16
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 19. Excl. Honduras Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.767 (0.823)	25.921* (1.212)	36.886** (1.256)	3.415* (0.590)	0.055 (7.659)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.451** (0.131)				1.801 (0.394)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.819 (0.106)			1.388 (0.395)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.896 (0.056)		0.945 (0.185)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.019 (0.024)	1.326 (0.525)
N	40	32	40	43	31
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.513	0.000	4.048	0.699	18.380
ICC(%) ^b	43.31%	0.00%	55.16%	17.52%	84.82%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 20. Excl. Honduras Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.499** (0.544)	0.461 (1.134)	1.182 (1.344)	1.051 (0.779)	4.048 (7.596)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	1.090 (1.209)				0.144 (5.959)
Freedom House Index		2.160 (0.433)			0.216 (2.175)
Freedom of the Press			2.259 (0.748)		4.273 (3.164)
Control of Corruption				0.010* (2.096)	0.002 (4.421)
N	33	38	31	23	17
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^b $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^c ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 21. Excl. Nicaragua Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.900 (0.963)	35.147* (1.336)	33.495** (1.263)	1.932 (0.632)	0.055 (7.659)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.463* (0.144)				1.801 (0.394)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.808 (0.112)			1.388 (0.395)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.898 (0.055)		0.945 (0.185)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.194 (0.125)	1.326 (0.525)
N	37	30	37	41	29
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	3.222	0.000	4.011	0.469	18.378
ICC(%) ^b	49.48%	0.00%	54.94%	12.48%	84.82%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 22. Excl. Nicaragua Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.250** (0.546)	0.151 (1.402)	0.420 (1.483)	1.041 (0.797)	4.746 (7.086)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	6.434 (0.682)				0.163 (5.881)
Freedom House Index		3.711* (0.616)			0.185 (2.301)
Freedom of the Press			4.808 (0.962)		4.719 (3.054)
Control of Corruption				0.007* (2.308)	0.002 (4.583)
N	30	35	29	21	16
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 23. Excl. Peru Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	1.664 (0.836)	25.985* (1.206)	36.248** (1.258)	3.150 (0.586)	0.052 (7.812)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.664** (0.132)				1.822 (0.403)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.818 (0.105)			1.399 (0.401)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.888* (0.058)		0.945 (0.192)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.020 (0.024)	1.307 (0.585)
N	39	32	39	42	31
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	2.509	0.000	4.139	0.647	19.805
ICC(%) ^b	43.67%	0.00%	55.71%	16.43%	85.75%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 24. Excl. Peru Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.499** (0.544)	0.477 (1.151)	1.185 (1,331)	1,055 (0,780)	4,242 (6,999)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	0.909 (1.223)				0,147 (5,636)
Freedom House Index		2.128 (0.443)			0,214 (2,165)
Freedom of the Press			2.210 (0.739)		4,207 (2,945)
Control of Corruption				0.010* (2.063)	0.002 (4.402)
N	32	37	30	24	18
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 25. Excl. Puerto Rico Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	2.551 (0.634)	19.273 (1.770)	9.257** (0.604)	6.390* (0.680)	0.055 (3.885)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.338* (0.142)				1.642 (0.323)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.884 (0.206)			1.535 (0.423)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.999 (0.001)		0.999 (0.001)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.004 (0.022)	1.030 (0.046)
N	32	26	32	32	25
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC(%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 26. Excl. Puerto Rico Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	5.747** (0.542)	3.022 (1.779)	55.562 (3.004)	1.403 (0.965)	4.242 (6.999)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	1.043 (1.208)				0.147 (5.636)
Freedom House Index		1.288 (0.535)			0.214 (2.165)
Freedom of the Press			0.493 (1.212)		4.207 (2.945)
Control of Corruption				0.018 (2.441)	0.002 (4.402)
N	34	32	26	22	18
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 27. Excl. Venezuela Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	0.838 (0.883)	23.424* (1.241)	29.719** (1.168)	2.198 (0.500)	1.229 (2.444)
GDP Growth (year before elections)	1.618** (0.167)				1.749* (0.243)
Unemployment ratings (year before elections)		0.811 (0.111)			0.899 (0.209)
Inflation, GDP deflator (year before elections)			0.883* (0.059)		0.999 (0.001)
ODA recieved (year before elections)				1.029 (0.025)	1.022 (0.051)
N	37	28	37	39	28
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	1.710	0.000	3.307	0.197	0.000
ICC(%) ^b	34.2%	0.00%	50.13%	5.65%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b ICC = $\text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)

Table 28. Excl. Venezuela Multi-level regression “Incumbent Reelection”

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	6.963** (0.616)	0.530 (1.195)	1.364 (1.371)	0.979 (0.846)	1.383 (7.778)
Rally Event (Ref=No) (6 months before elections)	0.429 (1.308)				
Freedom House Index		2.018 (0.468)			0,245 (2.248)
Freedom of the Press			1.992 (0.771)		5.886 (3.416)
Control of Corruption				0.003* (2.686)	0.002 (4.648)
N	28	34	28	20	15
Residual Variance ^a	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29
Intercept Variance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ICC (%) ^b	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note: Multi-Level Logistic Regression odds ratio coefficients with standard errors between brackets.

Dependent variable: “Is the incumbent reelected?” with the reference category: No.

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

^a $\sigma^2 = \pi^2 / 3$ (Snijders & Bosker, 1999)

^b $ICC = \text{var}(u_{0j}) / (\text{var}(u_{0j}) + (\pi^2 / 3))$ (Sommet & Moselli, 2017)