

The Limits of Intra-Party Competition for Women’s Political Representation

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Abstract

Party candidate selection is a black box. Though we observe final candidate lists, winners, and losers during elections, we rarely see the pool of eligible candidates parties draw from. We leverage a unique phenomenon from Rajasthan’s urban local body elections—“informal intra-party primaries” in which multiple aspirants file nominations for the same party ticket—as a rare window into this process. We ask where these primaries occur, why, and what they imply for the selection of women. Using candidate affidavit and administrative data from 2014 and 2019 urban local body elections, we show that informal primaries arise in competitive wards and less often in wards reserved for women. We find that they are likely driven by both party-led screening and candidate-led rent-seeking through hedging and rebel candidacies. Informal primaries have gendered consequences for candidate selection. We find that in wards reserved for women, parties screen on household rather than individual wealth. On the candidate side, we show that women who hedge candidacies and run as rebel independents do so out of necessity to get any ticket rather than rent-extracting leverage. Our findings suggest that upstream interventions in recruitment are necessary to improve both the quality and quantity of women’s representation.

Introduction

During the 2019 urban local body elections in Rajasthan, multiple individuals filed a nomination from the same party in the same ward in over 60 percent of wards. This is puzzling because parties in India do not hold formal primaries to choose their official candidate. Candidate selection is a black box, typically centralized in the hands of a few party elites ([Gulzar, Hai, and Paudel 2021](#); [Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008](#); [Singh 2023](#)). Voters, and often ordinary party members, have little insight into who is under consideration before the ticket is finalized. But this novel phenomenon generates something akin to an informal primary and provides a unique window into parties' candidate selection strategy—a process rarely empirically studied because it is unobserved. We describe the phenomenon as an informal primary because it is not institutionalized as a formal candidate selection process, voters do not choose the official party candidate from this pool of aspirants, and the final candidate selection by party elites remains an opaque and unobserved process—all necessary defining conditions for a primary ([Kenig, Cross, Pruyssers, and Rahat 2015](#)). In this paper, we ask three related questions: (1) where are informal primaries likely to occur, (2) why do they occur, and (3) what implications do they have for gendered candidate selection?

We argue that informal primaries emerge in competitive electoral environments either as a party's attempt to maximize its likelihood of winning elections or as candidates' efforts to extract rents from parties. If driven by parties, informal primaries can serve as a screening mechanism, allowing parties to choose the best candidate from the available pool by observing both tangible (wealth, education, muscle power) and intangible (networks, mobilization capacity) characteristics ([Aragón 2014](#); [Meirowitz 2005](#)). In this case, the party choosing a candidate through an informal primary should experience higher rates of electoral victory. Parties may also place multiple dummy candidates on a nomination list to ensure at least one individual's nomination is accepted to represent the party in the election. Alternatively, if driven by candidates themselves, informal primaries can become a route for individuals to extract “rents” from the party (promise of a ticket in the current or future elections, financial payouts, etc.) by threatening to

undercut a party’s votes—standing in opposition to the party’s preferred candidate as an independent or hedging across multiple parties.

Given that seats are reserved on a randomized and rotational basis for women during local elections, we theorize that informal primaries have distinct implications for gendered candidate selection. Because reserved seats are less competitive than non-reserved seats (Auerbach and Ziegfeld 2020), informal primaries are less likely to occur in them. But even when informal primaries do occur in reserved wards, we argue that they serve a different purpose. Women who file nominations, on average, are less privileged on socioeconomic dimensions because of historical societal marginalization, resulting in parties screening on household socioeconomic indicators rather than individual. Moreover, we theorize that candidate-driven hedging behavior may reflect necessity-driven ticket-shopping for women, as opposed to pure strategic, rent-seeking behavior for men.

We use administrative and electoral data from two rounds of Rajasthan’s urban local body elections (2014 and 2019 cycles) to provide evidence for our argument. We find that higher levels of competition at the ULB-level from the 2014 cycle strongly predict the occurrence of informal primaries at the ward-level during the 2019 cycle. Higher fragmentation of prior seat shares is strongly associated with higher occurrence of informal primaries. As theorized, informal primaries are less likely to occur in wards reserved for women and women from minority castes. We attribute this to lower levels of competitiveness in wards reserved for women, which have approximately one fewer candidate competing on average regardless of whether an informal primary occurs.

To distinguish between party-driven and candidate-driven mechanisms, we test several observable implications. Consistent with party-driven screening, nominees selected via an informal primary are substantially wealthier than the aspirants who were not chosen. Parties that select nominees through primaries are more likely to win ward elections and increase their vote share uniformly across quota and non-quota wards. We find evidence that parties screen on household wealth in quota wards, as opposed to an individual’s wealth in non-quota wards. Parties appear to read women candidates’ viability through the socioeconomic standing of their households rather than their individual profiles, con-

sistent with accounts in which women under quotas serve as the visible representatives of politically embedded families.

In addition to a screening function, nomination and post-rejection behavior points toward candidate-driven dynamics. A substantial share of aspirants in informal primaries also hedge their candidacy by filing nominations as independents. Indeed, a large proportion of rejected aspirants in informal primary wards contest as rebel independents, with rates far exceeding those in non-primary wards. If aspirants were purely party-recruited or dummy candidates, we would not observe such high rates of defection and hedging. These candidate-driven dynamics are equally (if not more) prevalent across quota and non-quota wards, but their gendered implications differ. In quota wards, women who hedge are poorer than women who do not—a pattern absent among men—suggesting that hedging among women may reflect the need to secure any ticket rather than strategic rent extraction.

Our findings carry implications for the design of institutional interventions aimed at improving women’s political representation. Formalizing or encouraging intra-party competition at the selection stage cannot substitute for addressing structural inequalities in who enters politics. Informal primaries yield electoral gains for parties but do not alter the composition of the candidate pool or close socioeconomic gaps between men and women aspirants. Moreover, the competitive dynamics that primaries generate—hedging across parties, contesting as rebel independents—actively disadvantage less-resourced women who lack the networks and wealth to secure a single party’s backing and, thus, experience lower electoral success. Achieving more equitable representation requires upstream interventions: expanding recruitment of women into political parties, lowering financial barriers to candidacy ([Faravelli, Khalil, and Ponnusamy 2025](#)), and building the organizational infrastructure that connects potential women aspirants to party networks ([Prillaman 2023a](#)).

This paper makes two novel contributions to the literatures on candidate selection, party politics, and gender politics. First, we provide a large and novel dataset that opens the black box of candidate selection and sheds light on observable characteristics favored

by political parties in competitive environments (Gulzar 2021). One of the key limitations of empirical studies on candidate selection is the unobserved pool of eligible individuals. Though we observe chosen candidates, winners, and losers, we rarely observe the individuals under consideration to become candidates. While our dataset does not give us the universe of possible candidates and is still limited to politically ambitious individuals who come forward, it brings us a step closer by providing us the pool of aspirants who file nominations for a party and from whom the final nominee is drawn. Second, we show how candidate selection occurs in an environment that does not have formal institutions guiding selection (such as primaries) but does have formal institutions conditioning selection (such as gender and caste quotas). Indian parties are weakly institutionalized, lacking formal procedures for candidate selection or clear qualification metrics that make candidacy predictable (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2019; Chhibber, Jensenius, and Suryanarayan 2014). At the same time, gender and caste quotas at the local level condition who is eligible to run for office in certain constituencies. Against this backdrop, the presence of informal primaries allows us to examine candidate selection under competing constraints and to show that the same informal competitive process has distinct gendered consequences for both party selection and candidate behavior.

Theoretical Perspectives

Candidate Selection by Parties

Parties and party elites are the primary gatekeepers to political leadership and candidacy (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Kittilson 2006; Norris and Lovenduski 1993). Canonical frameworks define selection as a function of supply and demand—who enters politics and has ambition versus whom a party chooses as its nominee (Norris and Lovenduski 1993). While individual-level factors, such as household composition, breadwinning constraints, and gendered political socialization (Bernhard, Shames, and Teele 2021; Bos, Greenlee, Holman, Oxley, and Lay 2022; Fox and Lawless 2003), shape who has ambition and runs for office, parties influence both who enters the pipeline and who emerges as a nominee

(Gulzar, Pathak, Thompson, and Tóth 2024; Norris 1997; Singh 2023). Candidate selection methods range from inclusive and open (where anyone can run and the electorate chooses nominees) to exclusive and closed (where party membership or other requirements restrict who can run and a single leader chooses nominees) (Rahat 2007; Rahat and Hazan 2001).

Much of what we know about candidate selection comes from Western democracies with greater party institutionalization—formal rules and institutions within the party dictating how candidates are chosen during elections (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Norris 1997; Rahat 2007). Many hold intra-party primaries, which let parties and voters learn about potential nominees and let aspirants signal their platforms and competitiveness (Aragón 2014; Bruhn 2018; Meirowitz 2005). However, much of the developing world, and certainly India, is characterized by weakly institutionalized parties. These parties lack formal rules and procedures for selecting candidates and clear qualification metrics that make candidacy predictable (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2019; Chhibber et al. 2014). Selection is typically exclusive and personalized: a restricted set of elites, sometimes a single leader, determines nominee lists through opaque, top-down screening committees (Farooqui and Sridharan 2014; Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008; Singh 2023). Formal primaries are rare or absent, so neither voters nor elites have an institutionalized way to aggregate information about aspirants (Meirowitz 2005). The voter sees only the final candidate contesting elections on a party’s label.

Opaque candidate selection procedures in countries like India have consequences for political parties and for our ability to study them. For parties, it means selecting candidates by leaning largely on visible heuristics. Parties fall back on observable characteristics and networks (for e.g., Chandra 2004 shows how parties and voters in patronage democracies use co-ethnicity as a heuristic in the absence of information). The traits parties reward in such settings are well documented: wealth, which funds campaigns (Bussell 2018; Vaishnav 2017); criminal records, valued for the capacity to mobilize resources and enforce local authority (Vaishnav 2017); education as a proxy for competence (Chaudhuri, Iversen, Jensenius, and Maitra 2025); and, underlying all of these, the ability to signal

loyalty and connections to elites who will bring an aspirant’s name to the table and lobby on their behalf (Auerbach and Thachil 2018; Bjarnegård 2013; Chaudhuri et al. 2025; Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008; Singh 2023). As researchers, the same opacity means the pool of individuals under consideration is almost never observed: we see candidate lists, winners, and losers, but rarely the group of aspirants from whom a nominee was drawn. Candidate selection in these settings is, in a literal sense, a black box (Gulzar et al. 2021; Singh 2023).

Gendered Implications

Though party institutionalization appears to produce mixed results for women’s political representation (Caul 1999; Hinojosa 2012; Pruyssers, Cross, Gauja, and Rahat 2017), heuristic-driven selection is certainly not gender-neutral. Parties shape recruitment and membership long before selection and absent internal quotas, this disadvantages women, who are less likely to be recruited and less likely to receive nominations even after entering politics (Bjarnegård 2013; Crowder-Meyer 2013; Fox and Lawless 2010; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Spary 2020). When selection then rewards visible wealth, criminal muscle, and elite connections, women are doubly disadvantaged: the burden falls on aspirants to make these traits legible, and a long history of marginalization leaves women with less wealth, fewer such networks, lower education, and weaker political ties than men (Auerbach, Singh, and Thachil 2024; Bjarnegård 2013; Singh 2023). Party membership compounds this, as dominant-caste groups and men hold stronger ties to parties than women (Prillaman 2023b; Singh 2023).

The result is a restricted candidate-supply among women aspirants. Whether through individual-level factors that shape who comes forward or through parties’ own recruitment, the pool of women aspirants differs systematically from the pool of men before any selection occurs. We should, thus, expect women aspirants and nominees to be younger, less wealthy, less educated, and less likely to have criminal records or formal employment than men. Formal gender quotas mandate the presence of women in office but do nothing to alter these underlying socioeconomic disadvantages (Chauchard, Brulé, and Heinze

2025; Heinze, Brulé, and Chauchard 2025). One way parties accommodate the constraint is by reading women’s viability through their families. Recent work has suggested that women’s participation and representation in politics is a household decision (Huidobro, Prillaman, and Singhania 2026). Where a woman’s individual profile offers little for the party to screen on, the household becomes the relevant unit. This is consistent with accounts in which women enter politics as the visible representatives of politically embedded families, at times as “proxies” for male relatives (Ban and Rao 2008; Chandra 2016).

Candidate Selection in India and the Informal Primary

India is a paradigmatic case of weakly institutionalized parties with opaque candidate selection processes that centralize power in the hands of a few party elites (Chhibber et al. 2014). Across elections, selection is top-down, run by exclusive screening committees, and there are no formal primaries to aggregate information or open the process. At the same time, gender and caste quotas at the local level formally condition who is eligible to run in a given ward. Indian local elections, thus, combine an absence of formal institutions guiding selection with the presence of formal institutions conditioning it.

Where candidate selection has largely been a black box, studied largely ethnographically and based on observable lists (Singh 2023; Ziegfield 2015), we exploit a novel phenomenon that offers a rare window into a party’s selection decisions. In urban local body elections in Rajasthan, we observe multiple aspirants filing under the same party in the same ward at the nomination stage. We call this intra-party competition for a party ticket an informal primary. It is informal because Indian parties do not hold primary elections akin to those in Western democracies and because the competing aspirants are not selected through any formal process by voters or party members (Kenig et al. 2015). Rather, we observe competition among aspirants at the first stage from which a single nominee emerges, implying that the party applies some discretionary, opaque process to choose among them. The phenomenon is widespread, even beyond local elections in Rajasthan, and openly acknowledged. For instance, the Telangana state president of the

Indian National Congress noted before municipal elections that it is “normal practice for more than one candidate from the party to file nominations,” with party “screening committees, led by in charge ministers,” finalizing the candidate in each ward (Ali 2026). Practically, the informal primary lets us observe something the candidate-selection literature usually cannot: the pool of aspirants competing for a party’s nomination and a tangible measure of the candidate supply that parties draw from. We acknowledge this is an imperfect proxy since those who file nominations have already overcome initial barriers to entry. However, given that the broader universe of eligible candidates is unobservable, this phenomenon provides the best available window into a pool that is otherwise unobserved.

We use the occurrence of these informal primaries to develop and test a theory of why they occur and what they imply for gendered theories of candidate selection. We argue that informal primaries arise where inter-party competition is most intense. Furthermore, we posit that they are driven by two mechanisms that are likely occurring simultaneously. The first mechanism is party-driven. In highly competitive wards, it is in a party’s best interest to choose the strongest possible candidate. Screening allows them to do so. Intra-party competition for a party ticket lets the party selectorate screen aspirants on tangible traits (wealth, education, muscle power) and intangible ones (networks, mobilization capacity) and choose the strongest nominee, yielding electoral gains (Aragón 2014; Bruhn 2018; Ichino and Nathan 2013; Meirowitz 2005). This intra-party competition renders individuals legible and visible to a party when they previously may not have been. Alongside screening, parties may also use multiple nominations as dummy candidacies to ensure at least one individual from their party contests the election on a party label. Dummy candidacies can act as insurance that if the preferred candidate’s nomination is rejected by election authorities, the party will have an alternative candidate to field in the election.

The second mechanism is candidate-driven. Aspirants, who know a ward is competitive, can use this competition to extract rents—a current or future ticket, financial payouts, or other leverage—from political parties. They can pose a credible electoral

threat to a party’s chances of winning in a ward by hedging their nomination across parties (or independent candidacy) and by re-contesting as “rebel” independents if passed over for the nomination. These accounts carry distinct observable implications, which we adjudicate empirically below.

Finally, we theorize that these dynamics carry distinct gendered consequences under quotas—not because parties screen differently in principle, but because the candidate supply differs. Because reserved wards are less competitive ([Auerbach and Ziegfeld 2020](#)) and fewer women come forward to contest elections, informal primaries should occur less often in quota wards. When they do occur, informal primaries serve a different purpose, both for the party and the candidate. A less-resourced supply of women aspirants leads parties to screen on household rather than individual wealth. Meanwhile, the candidate-driven behavior that signals extractive leverage among well-resourced men—hedging and threatening to defect—more plausibly signals precarity among women scrambling to secure any ticket.

Our proposed theory generates a set of observable implications that we test below. First, if informal primaries arise from inter-party competition, then high inter-party competition in a prior election should predict their occurrence in the next election cycle. Relatedly, if quota wards are less competitive, then informal primaries should occur there less frequently. Second, if parties use informal primaries to screen viable candidates, official nominees should be stronger than the aspirants they defeat on the traits parties reward. Consequently, parties that select through a primary should win more often and secure higher vote shares. If instead parties field dummy candidates, the aspirants who are not selected on the party ticket should withdraw once the preferred nominee clears nomination scrutiny. Third, if primaries are candidate-driven, aspirants should hedge by filing under multiple parties or under a party and as independents and re-contest as rebel independents when passed over for a party label. Finally, our gendered claims imply that, in wards reserved for women, the nominee premium should shift from individual to household socioeconomic indicators. Moreover, women aspirants who hedge should be less resourced than those who do not and that rejected women should be more likely than

men to re-contest as independents.

Empirical Context

We situate our study in one of India’s largest states, Rajasthan, that has a population of nearly 83 million. Here, urban local body elections, distinct from state and national elections, are held every five years in a first-past-the-post system to single-member constituencies. Representatives are elected to three types of urban local bodies, typically determined by population size: municipalities (*Nagar Palika*), municipal councils (*Nagar Parishad*), and municipal corporations (*Nagar Nigam*). Political parties participate in elections, nominating a candidate on behalf of the party in a constituency. Elections are a formal three-stage process. First, individuals file nominations that are scrutinized by the State Election Commission which has the power to accept or reject them. Second, candidates whose nominations are accepted can choose to remain in the race or withdraw their nominations. Third, on election day voters choose their preferred candidate from those on the ballot. Importantly, individuals may file nominations under multiple parties or as both a party candidate and an independent in the same ward. If rejected from one party, they may still contest as an independent if that nomination is accepted. These institutional features create opportunities for strategic behavior by aspirants.

Within each urban local body, wards are reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Castes (OBC) in proportion to their share of the municipal population. At least one third of all wards are additionally reserved for women, as mandated by the 74th Constitutional Amendment. Caste reservations are assigned to wards with the highest concentration of the relevant group, while the women’s reservation is allocated by lottery within each caste stratum and rotated across election cycles. These dual reservations produce ten ward types: general unreserved wards alongside wards reserved for SC, ST, and OBC candidates, each of which may be further reserved for women of that category. Both men and women can compete for unreserved seats, though in practice women made up only 7 percent of candidates and 7 percent of winners

in the unreserved seats during the election cycle relevant to this paper.

To test our proposed theory, we use administrative and affidavit data from the urban local body (ULB) elections held in Rajasthan, India between 2019 and 2021. During these elections, Indian National Congress (INC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) collectively won 75 percent of the seats, while independent candidates won 22 percent of seats and smaller political parties (including the Bahujan Samaj Party, Communist Party of India, and Nationalist Congress Party) split the remaining 3 percent of seats. Across 193 urban local bodies, 7,475 wards were up for elections. In total, there were over 39,400 candidates who contested elections. Since each candidate affidavit had to be manually digitized, we sampled 10 percent of wards from the population for our analysis, resulting in 725 unique wards and 3,501 unique candidates. We also use ULB-level election data from the 2014-2015 electoral cycle. This includes ULB-level turnout, seat-share, and vote-share data, which we use to predict the occurrence of informal primaries in the next election cycle.

Research Design

We exploit the existence of informal intra-party primaries to test our hypotheses. In our sampling process, we matched each ward with at least one party with an informal intra-party primary (“treated” ward) to a ward where no party had an informal primary (“control” ward) based on the reservation status of the ward. We oversampled wards that did not have any parties with informal intra-party primaries as well as wards reserved for ST and ST women to ensure adequate representation. Table 1 describes the summary of the sample in relation to the population and by two of the main political parties, BJP and INC. The difference in primary rates between the sample (33.7 percent) and

Table 1: Frequency of Informal Intra-Party Primaries

	Sample			Population		
	Primary	%	Total	Primary	%	Total
Overall	244	33.66	725	4520	60.47	7475
BJP	148	24.38	607	2744	42.40	6472
INC	158	25.65	616	2869	43.54	6589

population (60.5 percent) reflects our sampling strategy, which matched each ward with an informal primary to a ward without one and oversampled wards without primaries. Table SI.1 in Appendix A shows the frequency of primaries by quota versus non-quota wards in the sample and population. In the population, informal primaries occur in approximately 62 percent of non-quota wards compared to 57 percent of quota wards. This modest difference—consistent across BJP and INC—suggests that while quota wards are somewhat less likely to see intra-party competition, the phenomenon is widespread in both types of wards. For each ward in our sample, we recorded all the available information from candidate affidavits, including the candidate’s name, age, education level, occupation, criminal records, assets, and spousal information. A description of the variables can be found in Appendix C. It is important to note that where informal primaries occur is unlikely to be a randomized process. Therefore, comparison between estimates from primary and non-primary wards should not be treated as causal. In the absence of ward-level characteristics, such as voter turnout, electoral competitiveness, etc., we are unable to show balance between primary and non-primary wards.

We observe substantial variation in the proportion of wards where informal primaries occurred across districts. In the population (map on the left of Figure 1), proportion of wards with informal primaries ranges from 96 percent in Karauli to 34 percent in Kota. There is variation in the sample as well (map on the right of Figure 1), though it differs from the population due to our sampling strategy.

We also report variation across variables used in the analysis from candidate affidavits in Table 2. The average age of a candidate in our sample is almost 40. 37.7 percent of our sample is women, of whom 85 percent were in quota wards and 15 percent were in non-quota wards. The average number of years of education of a candidate was 8.93, equivalent to having a middle school education. The average wealth of a candidate was approximately Rs. 2.09 lakh ($\approx$ \$2,200) and 22 percent had filed an income tax return. Only 2.8 percent candidates in the sample had either a past, convicted, or current criminal case. Nearly half of the sample comprised independent candidates (unaffiliated with any party), while 21.7 percent and 21.6 percent candidates were affiliated with the BJP and

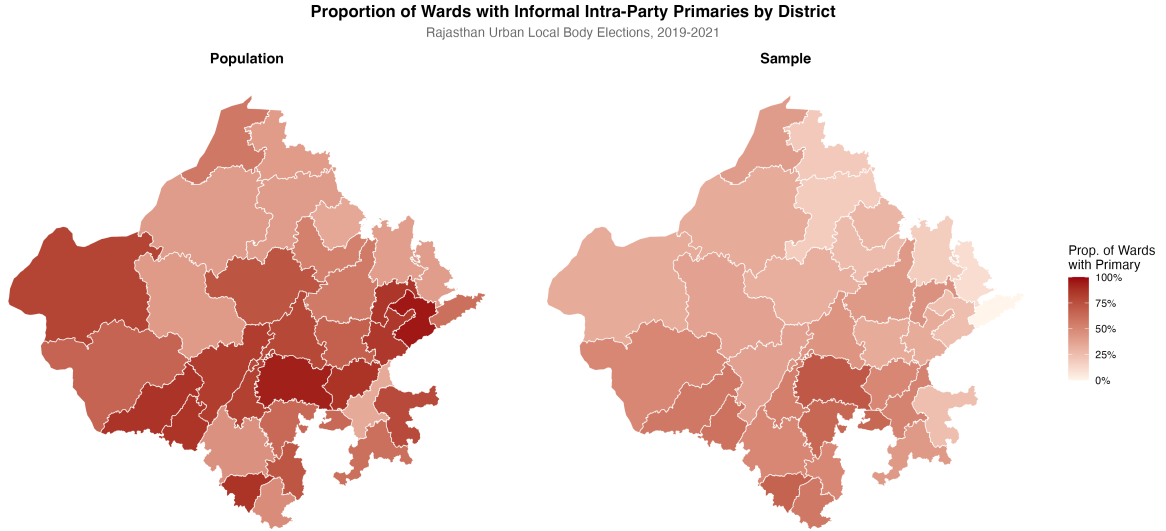


Figure 1: Distribution of Wards with Informal Intra-Party Primaries Across Districts in the Population and Sample

INC. The distribution each variable overall and broken down by quota and primary status can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Identification Strategy

For all analyses presented in this paper, we pool all seats that are not reserved for women (General, SC, ST, and OBC) into a single non-quota category and all seats reserved for women (General Women, SC Women, ST Women, and OBC Women) into a single quota category. We do so to increase statistical power and acknowledge that this pooling limits our ability to draw intersectional inferences for women in marginalized castes. Given that the reservation of wards for women is randomized and only 7 percent of candidates in non-quota wards are women, the quota variable captures the “effect” of gender reservations on the outcomes studied.

To examine where informal primaries are more likely to arise, we estimate a logit model at the party-ward-level. We include all observations for BJP and INC, the two major parties with sufficient primary cells for estimation. The outcome is a binary indicator equal to one if party p had two or more distinct aspirants file nominations in ward w , and zero otherwise. We only include observations wherein the party eventually contested the

Table 2: Candidate-Level Sample Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean (SD) or N (%)
<i>Demographics</i>	
Age (years)	39.62 (13.36)
Female	1491 (37.7%)
Years of Education	8.93 (6.07)
Employed (Self)	2139 (62.3%)
<i>Wealth and Financial</i>	
Log Wealth (Self)	12.25 (3.10)
Log Wealth (Spouse)	8.99 (5.71)
Log Wealth (Total)	12.90 (2.99)
Filed ITR (Self)	816 (22.0%)
Filed ITR (Spouse)	534 (14.4%)
<i>Criminality</i>	
Any Criminal Case	109 (2.8%)
<i>Party Affiliation</i>	
BJP	859 (21.7%)
INC	855 (21.6%)
Independent	2166 (54.7%)
Other	78 (2.0%)
<i>Sample Size</i>	
Total Candidates	3,958
Unique Wards	725

election, excluding cases where the party may have had an informal primary and then did not field a nominee during the election. We use the following model specification:

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr(\text{Primary}_{pw} = 1) = & \Lambda(\alpha_p + \beta_1 \text{VoteShare}_{p,u(w)} + \beta_2 \text{SeatShare}_{p,u(w)} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{Turnout}_{u(w)} + \beta_4 \text{HHI}_{u(w)} + \gamma \text{ResWard}_w) \end{aligned}$$

where $\Lambda(\cdot)$ is the logistic CDF, α_p are party fixed effects, $\text{VoteShare}_{p,u(w)}$ and $\text{SeatShare}_{p,u(w)}$ represent the 2014/15 vote and seat shares of party p in the ULB u containing ward w , $\text{Turnout}_{u(w)}$ is the 2014/15 ULB-level voter turnout, $\text{HHI}_{u(w)}$ is the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index of seat shares across all parties in the ULB (measuring the degree of partisan consolidation in the previous cycle), and ResWard_w is a vector of indicators for the eight reservation categories (with General as the omitted baseline) capturing the ward's gender

and caste quota status. To summarize the relationship between women’s reservation and primary occurrence on an interpretable scale, we additionally estimate linear probability models of primary occurrence on the quota indicator—both as an unadjusted difference in means and with ULB and party fixed effects—and report the analogous estimates for each disaggregated reservation category.

We present ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models with CR2 robust standard errors clustered at the ward-level. All specifications include ULB fixed effects, and models estimated at the party-ward-level or that pool candidates and aspirants across parties additionally include party fixed effects, so that comparisons are made within party and ULB rather than across parties. At the party-ward-level, we use the following model specification,

$$Y_{pw} = \beta_1 Quota_w + \alpha_u + \alpha_p + \epsilon_{pw}$$

where Y_{pw} is the outcome for party p in ward w , $Quota_w$ is a dummy variable for whether ward w is reserved for women, α_u represents ULB fixed effects, and α_p represents party fixed effects. At the candidate level, we use the following model specification,

$$Y_{ipw} = \beta_1 X_{ipw} + \beta_2 Quota_w + \beta_3 (X_{ipw} \times Quota_w) + \alpha_u + \alpha_p + \epsilon_{ipw}$$

where Y_{ipw} is the outcome for candidate i of party p in ward w , and X_{ipw} is a candidate-level indicator that varies by analysis (primarily, whether the aspirant was in an informal primary, whether they are the official party nominee, and whether they hedged their candidacy or were a rebel independent).

In the screening comparisons, the party fixed effects α_p ensure that we compare a party’s official nominee to the aspirants it passed over, and the nominees a party selects with and without an informal primary, within party and ULB rather than across parties. We assess the effect of quotas on candidate characteristics in the absence and presence of informal primaries. These characteristics include age, personal wealth, spousal wealth, total family wealth, whether the candidate or spouse filed a tax return, whether the candi-

date has any past, current, or pending criminal case, years of education, and employment status.

To study candidate-driven dynamics, we estimate two models at the level of the individual aspirant. We model hedging—whether an aspirant files under more than one party, or as both a party candidate and an independent—as a function of whether the aspirant competed in an informal primary, quota status, and their interaction. Because an aspirant can only contest as a rebel independent after their party nomination is rejected, we estimate the correlates of rebellion only among aspirants whose party nomination was rejected, regressing an indicator for re-contesting as an independent on quota status. Both aspirant-level models include ULB and party fixed effects, with standard errors clustered at the ward-level.

We examine how quotas moderate the relationship between a party holding an informal primary and electoral success as well as between informal primaries and electoral competitiveness, measured by whether the party won the constituency, its vote share, voter turnout, and the winning margin (the difference between the winner’s and runner-up’s vote shares) at the ward-level. The winner and vote-share models are estimated at the party-ward-level and include ULB and party fixed effects. Because voter turnout and the winning margin are measured at the ward-level and do not vary across parties within a ward, we estimate these specifications at the ward-level, with ULB fixed effects and a binary indicator for whether any party in the ward held an informal primary, rather than the party-ward-level primary indicator used for winner and vote share. When presenting electoral and descriptive results that do not require data from candidate affidavits, we utilize population-level data. To zoom into the dynamics of candidate selection and possible mechanisms underlying them, we use candidate-level data.

Results

Below, we present results addressing the three questions motivating our paper. First, we ask: where do informal primaries occur? Using data from the prior round of ULB

elections as well as the quota status of the wards, we predict where informal primaries are more likely to occur. Second, we assess why they occur. Here, using both population data and candidate characteristics from our sample of 2019 election results, we distinguish between party- and candidate-driven mechanisms. Third, we examine the gendered implications of candidate selection under two competing constraints—informal intra-party competition and formal quotas restricting the eligibility pool. Here, we also show that women aspirants systematically differ from male aspirants, across wards with and without informal primaries to reinforce the differences in candidate-supply between genders.

Predicting the Occurrence of Informal Primaries

We theorize that informal primaries are more likely to occur in competitive wards and less likely to occur in wards reserved for women. Using electoral data from the previous ULB-election cycle (2014–15), we predict where informal primaries are more likely to occur in the 2019–21 cycle with a party-ward-level logit. We find that informal primaries emerge where the prior cycle produced a competitive electoral landscape. The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) of seat shares, which measures the concentration of the 2014 election’s seats distribution across parties, strongly predicts the occurrence of primaries at the ward-level during the 2019 election.¹ As Figure 2 shows, higher seat HHI is associated with a lower likelihood of an informal primary (logit coefficient = -1.90 , $p < 0.01$), while parties’ own prior vote and seat shares are insignificant. In substantive terms, a 0.1-unit increase in seat HHI is associated with a 4.6 percentage point lower likelihood of an informal primary. These results are robust to a Poisson count specification and to aggregating up to the party-ULB level (Appendix E).

Next, using the reservation status of a ward in the 2019 election cycle, we test whether quota wards experience informal primaries less frequently. We find evidence supporting our claim. The top panel of Figure 3 reports two model specifications with nearly identical

¹HHI is the sum of squared party seat shares at the ULB level from the 2014–15 cycle. It ranges from near zero (seats evenly split across many parties) to one (a single party holds all seats); a higher value implies greater one-party consolidation.

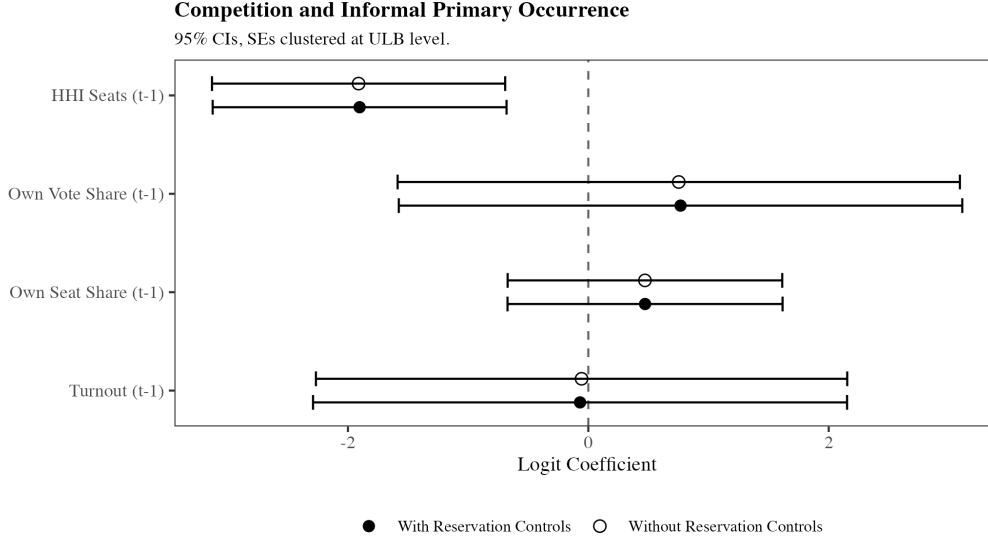


Figure 2: Competition and the Occurrence of Informal Primaries. Logit coefficients (95% CIs) from a party-ward-level model predicting informal primary occurrence in 2019–21 from 2014–15 ULB-level covariates; standard errors clustered at the ULB-level.

estimates from the pooled quota estimate (comparing all wards reserved for women to those not reserved for women). Wards reserved for women are 4.4–4.6 percentage points less likely to have an informal primary ($p < 0.01$) when compared to unreserved wards, with and without ULB and party fixed effects. In the appendix, we report a model that controls for competitiveness during the previous election cycle as a robustness check and find a nearly identical estimate to the difference-in-means and fixed effects model estimates (Table SI.8). Disaggregating the pooled quota coefficient, we find that relative to general and caste-reserved wards, wards reserved for women (General, OBC women, and SC women) are all less likely to have an informal primary.

Lower incidence of informal primaries in quota wards reflects lower competitiveness in these wards. We find that quota wards attract fewer aspirants per party ticket—0.12 fewer across all wards and 0.15 fewer within primary wards ($p < 0.001$, Table SI.10)—and fewer candidates overall (a population mean of 5.6 in quota wards versus 6.7 in non-quota wards).

Because greater inter-party competition predicts higher intra-party competition, we find that wards with informal primaries are associated with higher voter turnout and smaller victory margins (Figure 4). But the quota coefficient on either measure of com-

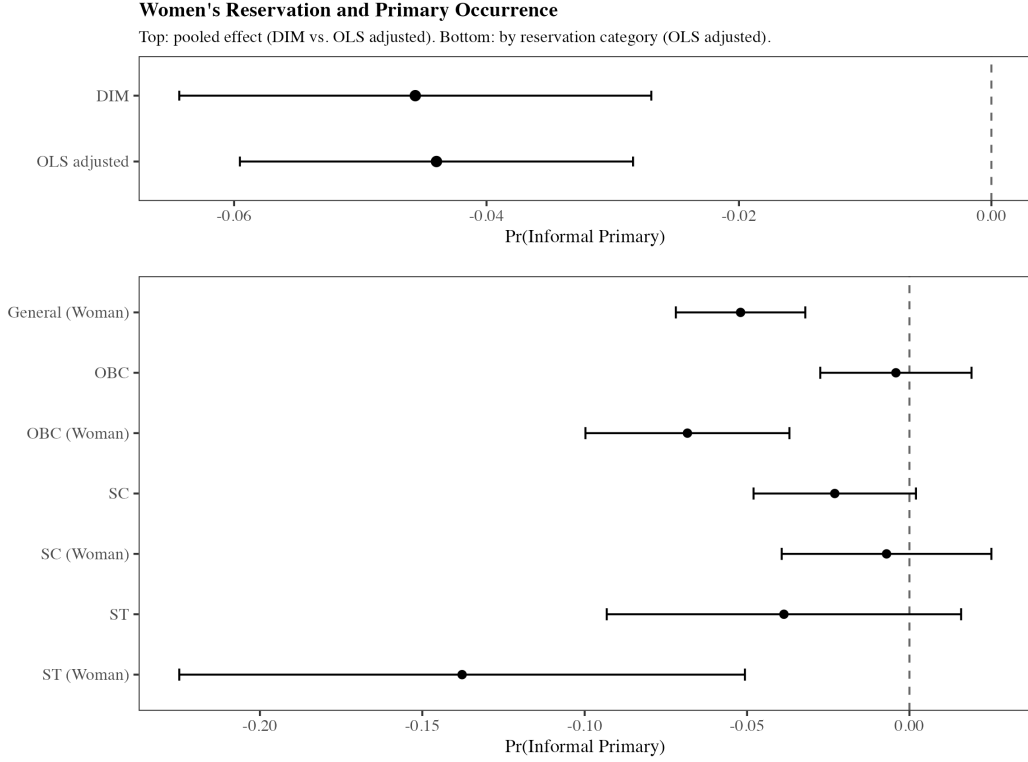


Figure 3: Women's Reservation and the Occurrence of Informal Primaries. Estimates are from linear-probability models at the party-ward-level (BJP and INC); coefficients give the change in the probability that a party holds an informal primary. *Top panel:* the pooled women-reservation effect under two specifications—one without party and ULB fixed effects and one with. *Bottom panel:* the effect of each reservation category relative to General wards, from the party and ULB-fixed-effects model. All models include heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors, clustered at the ward-level (CR2). Bars are 95% confidence intervals.

petitiveness is statistically insignificant. In fact, quota wards nearly wash out the gains in voter turnout associated with an informal primary occurring in that ward. Overall, we find strong evidence supporting our claim higher levels of inter-party competition predict informal primaries, while quotas depress the likelihood of informal primaries. Below, we adjudicate between two mechanisms for why informal primaries may be occurring in these competitive wards.

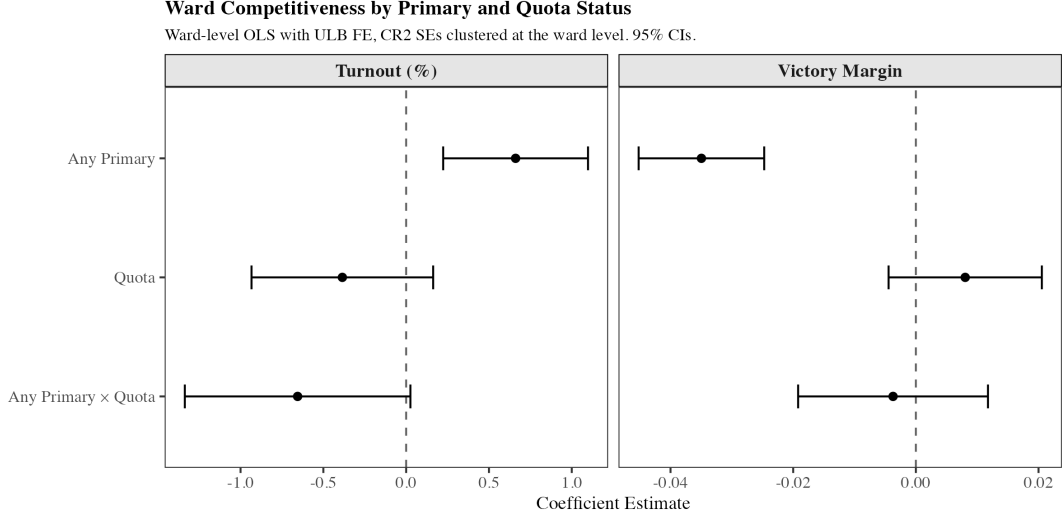


Figure 4: Ward Competitiveness by Primary and Quota Status. OLS coefficients (95% CIs) from ward-level regressions of turnout (percentage points) and the winner’s vote-share margin over the runner-up on an indicator for any informal primary in the ward, quota status, and their interaction. ULB fixed effects; CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level.

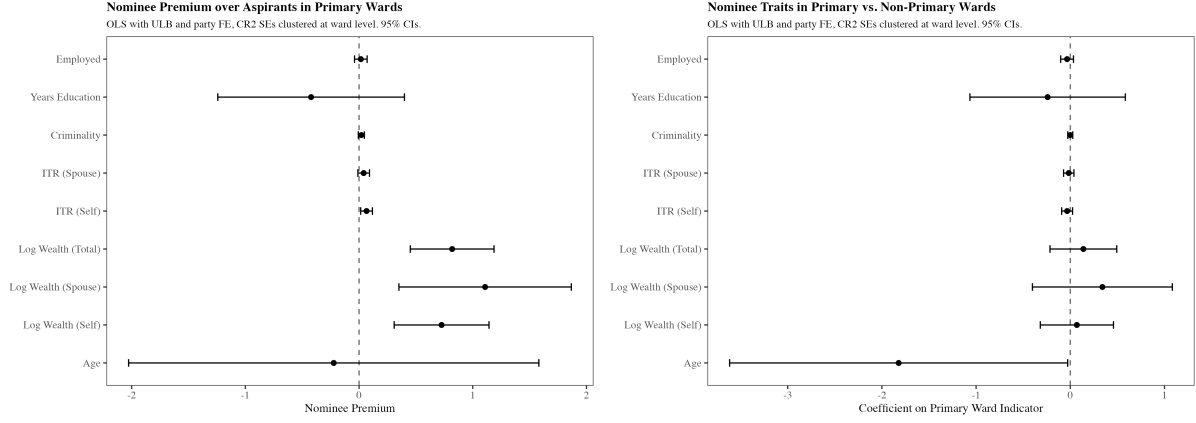
Why Do Primaries Occur

Party-Driven Screening and Dummy Candidacy

If informal primaries are party-driven, the competition they generate should allow parties to either screen candidates—selecting stronger nominees from the aspirant pool and to win more often as a result—or place dummy candidates, who withdraw after the nomination scrutiny phase. We find modest evidence for the former, but no evidence for the latter.

First, we find that within primary wards, parties select nominees who are significantly wealthier than the aspirants, measured by self, spousal, and total wealth, and more likely to have filed a tax return (left panel of Figure 5). The informal primary process results in parties selecting nominees who look similar to nominees chosen in non-primary wards (right panel of Figure 5). Though the estimates on wealth are positive and directionally consistent with the screening story, they are statistically insignificant. We take this as an indicator that the primary’s main role is to sort within the pool of available aspirants rather than to produce a categorically different nominee.

The electoral payoff of this screening is uniform across quota and non-quota wards. Figure 6 shows that when a party selects its nominee through an informal primary, that



(a) Nominee premium over aspirants

(b) Primary vs. non-primary nominees

Figure 5: Party-Driven Screening. Left: differences between official nominees and competing aspirants within primary wards. Right: differences between nominees selected via a primary and nominees selected without competition. OLS with ULB and party fixed effects, CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level; 95% CIs.

nominee is 7.4 percentage points more likely to win ($p < 0.01$) and secures a 1.8 percentage point higher vote share ($p < 0.01$) than a nominee selected without competition. The interaction with quota status is null for both outcomes, indicating that parties enjoy the electoral benefits of competition regardless of whether the ward is reserved for women.

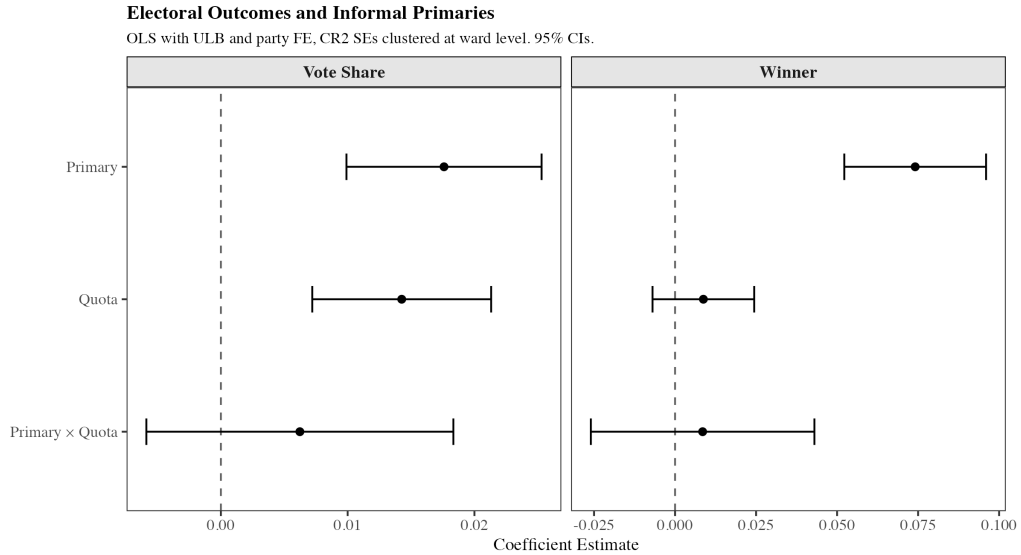


Figure 6: Electoral Outcomes and Informal Primaries. OLS coefficients (95% CIs) for winning and vote share regressed on primary occurrence, quota status, and their interaction at the party-ward-level. Population data; ULB *and* party fixed effects; CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level.

If parties are placing dummy candidates in competitive wards to ensure at least one

of their candidates ends up on the ballot, we would expect high rates of withdrawal after the nomination phase. That is, once the party’s preferred candidate’s nomination papers are approved by the State Election Commission (SEC), all other candidates running on the same party label withdraw their nomination (if they are accepted). We do not find any evidence of high withdrawal-rates after the nomination phase. Instead, we find that an overwhelming majority of individuals who filed nominations under the same party label are rejected by the SEC. In primary wards, nearly 60 percent of aspirants’ nomination papers are rejected by the SEC, while only 0.5 percent of them withdraw even after their nominations are accepted. While we could interpret the combination of the nominee premium and high rejection rates as an indicator that aspirants are of low quality and, therefore, dummies to begin with, this interpretation would contradict expected party behavior. If a party wants to ensure one of its candidates makes it onto the ballot, it will at least want these dummy candidates to pass the nomination scrutiny phase. In conclusion, our evidence suggests that the party is more likely to be using informal primaries as a screening mechanism rather than to place dummy candidates on nomination lists. But below we show that the strongest evidence points towards candidate-driven rent extraction driving these informal primaries.

Candidate-Driven Hedging and Rebellion Candidacy

We posit that informal primaries may also be driven by candidates themselves, who are seeking to extract rents from political parties. These rents may include receiving the nomination during the current or a future election cycle, financial payouts, or other political rewards. If true, we expect to see two key indicators of extractive behavior: individuals hedging candidacy by filing multiple nominations and running as independents after being rejected from running on the party label. We find strong empirical evidence for both phenomenon.

Because hedging and rebellion are choices made by individuals, we estimate them at the aspirant level rather than aggregating to the party-ward-level. First, we find that aspirants who compete in informal primaries are far more likely to hedge, that

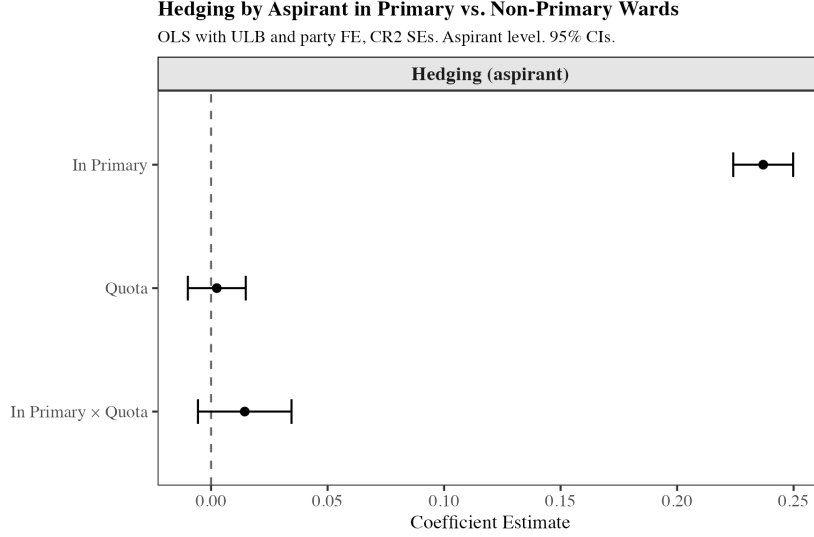


Figure 7: Candidate-Driven Hedging. OLS coefficients for individual hedging (filing under multiple parties or as an independent) on competing in a primary, quota status, and their interaction, estimated at the aspirant level (ULB fixed effects, CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level; 95% CIs).

is file nominations under more than one party, or as both a party candidate and an independent. 41.9 percent of aspirants in primary wards hedge their candidacy, relative to a baseline of 10.8 percent in non-primary wards. This represents nearly a fourfold increase in hedging rates in primary wards. Holding quota status constant, competing in a primary is associated with a 24.8 percentage point higher individual probability of hedging (Figure 7; $p < 0.01$), and this relationship is statistically indistinguishable across quota and non-quota wards (interaction ≈ 0).

Second, we find that among individuals who were hedging their candidacy in primary wards, nearly 35 percent run as “rebel” independents even after their party-label nomination is rejected by the SEC. If aspirants were purely party-recruited dummy candidates, we would not observe defection on this scale. The rates of independent candidacy post party nomination rejection are similarly high across quota and non-quota wards.

In summary, we find that hedging and rebellion are thus pervasive in wards with informal primaries, and occur at similarly high rates across quota and non-quota wards. We take these results to be strong evidence in favor of the candidate-driven mechanisms underlying informal primary occurrence. Collectively, the results indicate that both party- and candidate-driven mechanisms are likely at play in explaining why informal primaries

occur in competitive electoral environments. We, however, cannot draw any causal claims from our results because these informal primaries are not randomly assigned. In what follows, we assess the gendered implications of these dynamics on candidate selection.

Gendered Implications for Candidate Selection

In a previous section, we demonstrated that informal primaries occur less frequently in quota wards, reflecting diminished electoral competitiveness in wards reserved for women. Yet, when these informal primaries do arise in quota wards, what are their implications for a party's candidate selection strategy and aspirant behavior? We argue that informal primaries serve a different purpose in quota wards. We first show that women aspirants look different from men aspirants across socioeconomic traits. Then, we show that differences in this candidate supply likely influence parties to pivot towards screening on household indicators of wealth, as opposed to individual. On the candidate-side, we show that women aspirants participate in primaries less for rent-seeking purposes and more as their final chance to become electoral candidates.

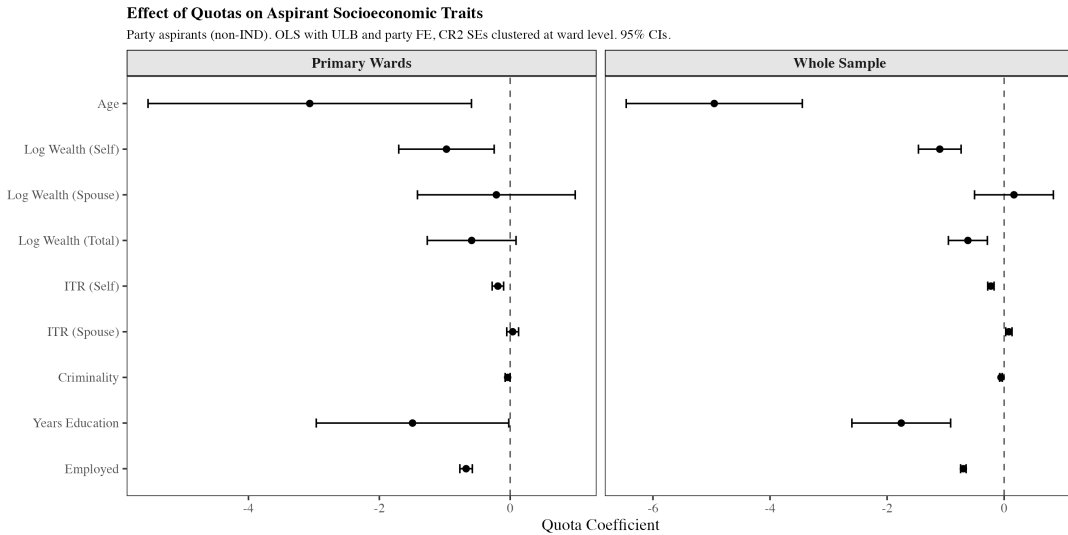


Figure 8: Gendered Differences in Candidate Supply. Each point is the coefficient on a women's-reservation (quota) indicator from a separate regression of an aspirant-level trait on quota status; bars are 95% confidence intervals. The left panel restricts the sample to party aspirants competing in party-ward informal primaries; the right panel includes all party aspirants (non-independent filers) in the affidavit sample. OLS with ULB and party fixed effects; CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level. Axes differ across panels.

Women aspirants differ significantly from their male counterparts, regardless of whether the ward they compete in has an informal primary or not. Figure 8 reports the effect of women’s reservation on aspirants’ socioeconomic traits, estimated both within party-ward primaries and across the whole sample of party aspirants. In both samples, aspirants in quota wards are systematically younger, poorer in personal wealth, less educated, less likely to have filed an income-tax return, less likely to have a criminal case, and far less likely to be employed. The one dimension on which quota and non-quota aspirants do not differ is spousal wealth). These findings reinforce a result we present below: parties in quota wards screen on household rather than individual wealth because of these differences in the candidate supply.

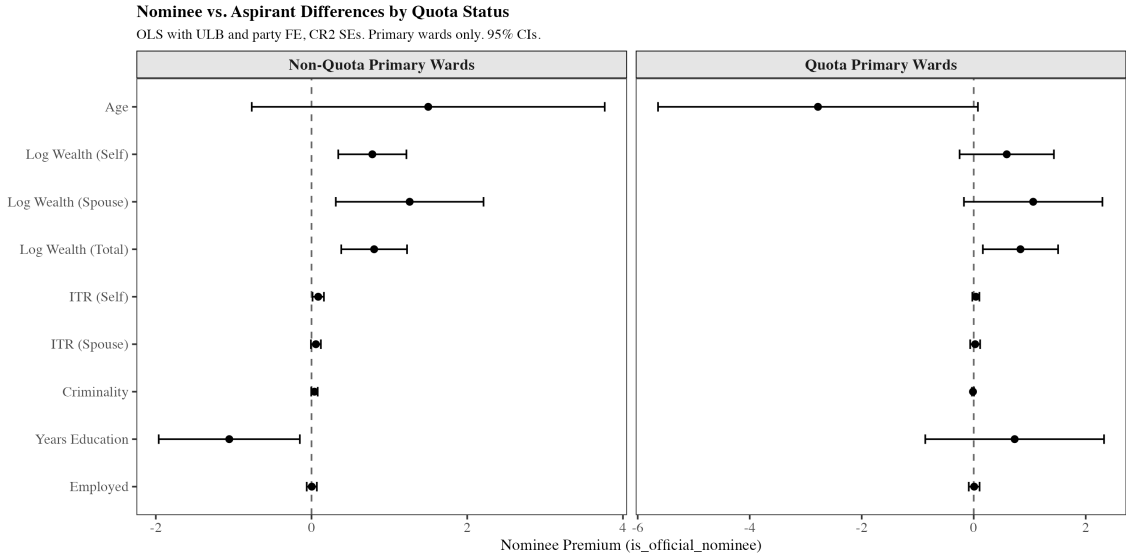


Figure 9: Nominee Premium by Quota Status. Differences between official nominees and competing aspirants within primary wards, estimated separately for non-quota (left) and quota (right) wards. In quota wards the premium on the nominee’s own wealth vanishes while the premium on spousal and total household wealth persists. OLS with ULB and party fixed effects, CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level; 95% CIs.

In the pooled sample, we had observed that parties choose official nominees who held an advantage over competing aspirants on both their own and their household’s wealth (Figure 5). In quota wards, however, this premium shifts primarily toward the household. When comparing the nominee premium between non-quota and quota wards with informal primaries, we see that the party selects on individual indicators of wealth in non-quota wards and on the household indicator of wealth in quota wards (Figure 9).

We suggest that this shift occurs because at baseline, women are less wealthy relative to men as a result of historical marginalization and accordingly, the party accounts for household wealth as opposed to the individual's. This shift would be consistent with accounts of women's political representation in India in which female candidates come from politically embedded families and can be "proxies" for male relatives (Ban and Rao 2008; Chandra 2016).

Candidate-driven hedging dynamics are equally prevalent across quota and non-quota wards, but the kind of aspirant who hedges differs. We have suggestive evidence that women who hedge their candidacy are poorer than women who do not, though the spousal and total wealth is stastically indistinguishable (Figure 10). This is clearly not the case for men who hedge their candidacy in non-quota wards. We note that we are likely underpowered in our sample to detect statistically significant estimates. However, given the directional consistency of the wealth estimates from our sample, we argue that it is likely that female primary aspirants who hedge do so out of desperation to secure a party ticket.

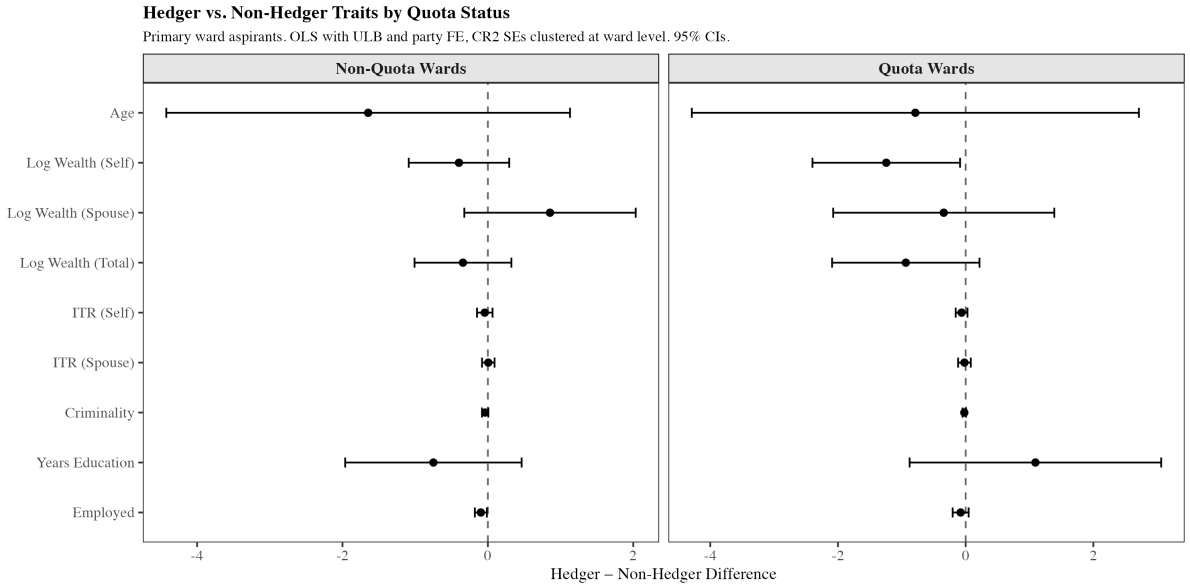


Figure 10: Hedger vs Non-Hedger Traits by Quota Status. Differences between hedgers and non-hedgers among primary-ward aspirants, estimated separately for non-quota (left) and quota (right) wards. OLS with ULB and party fixed effects, CR2 standard errors clustered at the ward-level; 95% CIs.

At the same time, our data indicates higher rates of rebel independent candidacy in

quota wards with informal primaries, relative to non-quota wards with informal primaries: 37.1 percent of aspirants in quota wards relative to 33.7 percent in non-quota wards (Figure 11). When rejected from running on a party label, women aspirants are more 2.7 percentage points ($p < 0.01$) more likely to run as independents compared to men aspirants. We conclude that the same competitive behavior that signals leverage or extractive behavior in non-quota wards with informal primaries, signals precarity in quota wards.

Rebellion Among Rejected Aspirants

Rejected party aspirants only. Left: group means (95% CIs). Right: adjusted difference (ULB and party FE, CR2 SEs).

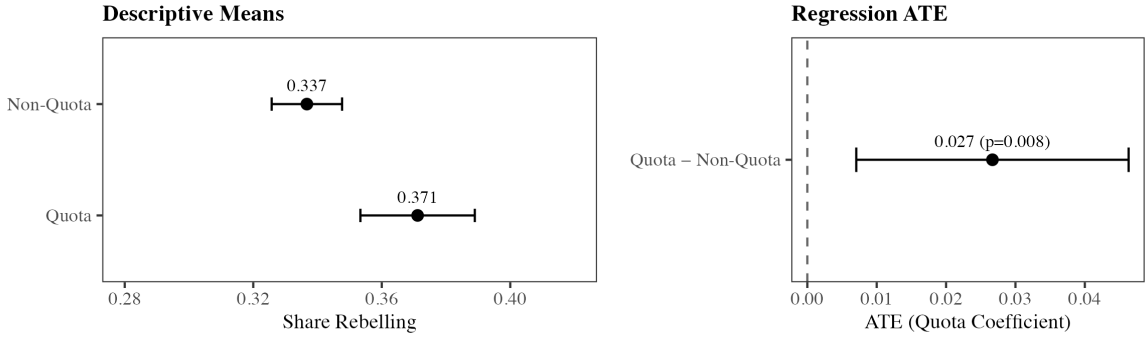


Figure 11: Rebellion Among Rejected Aspirants. A two-panel plot showing the descriptive share of rejected party aspirants re-contesting as rebel independents by quota status (group means, 95% CIs) alongside the adjusted Quota – Non-Quota difference from a regression with ULB fixed effects, with the coefficient and p -value labeled.

Discussion

In this paper, we exploit the unique phenomenon of informal primaries in local elections in India to explore party candidate selection strategies. We argue that inter-party competition generates intra-party competition for candidacy. Because wards reserved for women are less competitive, we theorize that informal primaries are less likely to occur in those wards. To explain why these informal primaries occur, we posit two mutually-coexistent mechanisms: party-driven screening and dummy candidacy as well as candidate-driven hedging and rebellion candidacy. We further argue that these informal primaries serve a different purpose in quota wards, for both parties and candidates. For parties, they provide an opportunity to screen on household, rather than individual, socioeconomic

traits. For female candidates, informal primaries act as last-ditch attempt to secure their spot on the electoral ballot. Overall, informal primaries allow us to provide a lens into how parties select candidates—the socioeconomic traits they prioritize in choosing their representatives on the ballot and the gendered implications of their decisions.

Overall, we find that higher inter-party competition in a previous election cycle strongly predicts intra-party competition in the next election cycle. In line with our expectations of how quota interact with informal primaries, we find that wards reserved for women are less competitive and, accordingly, less likely to host informal intra-party primaries. Wards reserved for women are roughly 4.4 to 4.6 percentage points less likely to see an informal primary than unreserved wards. Quota wards also attract fewer aspirants per party ticket and fewer candidates overall.

Turning to why informal primaries occur, we find evidence of both party- and candidate-driven dynamics. Consistent with party-driven screening, nominees selected through a primary are substantially wealthier than aspirants. Consequently, parties that select their candidate via an informal primary are more likely to win and to increase their vote share uniformly across quota and non-quota wards. We find no support for the alternative that parties simply file dummy candidates: rather than withdrawing once the preferred nominee is confirmed, the overwhelming majority of additional aspirants are rejected at the nomination-scrutiny stage. We find strong evidence that candidate-driven rent extraction likely influences occurrence of informal primaries. Aspirants in primary wards hedge at nearly four times the rate of those in non-primary wards, and a large share of rejected aspirants re-contest as rebel independents. This behavior is difficult to square with a pool of candidates that parties themselves recruited and controlled. Both mechanisms, we conclude, are likely at play in explaining why informal primaries arise in competitive electoral environments.

More importantly, the gendered consequences of these dynamics flow from the candidate-supply constraint. Because women aspirants are individually less wealthy than men, parties in quota wards screen on the household rather than the individual. We find that the nominee premium over aspirants shifts from the individuals to the household—women

nominees come from wealthier families relative to women aspirants. This finding is consistent with accounts in which women enter politics as the representatives of politically embedded families and may even be proxies for male members of their households (Amar, Bamezai, and Kumar 2025; Ban and Rao 2008; Chandra 2016; Heinze et al. 2025; Huidobro et al. 2026). The candidate-driven dynamics are similarly gendered. Women are significantly more likely to run as rebel independents if their party nomination is rejected, relative to men. Moreover, women aspirants who hedge in quota wards are poorer than those who do not—a pattern absent among men. The same competitive behavior that signals leverage among well-resourced men likely signals precarity among women scrambling to secure any ticket. When women aspirants are structurally younger and less wealthy, educated, and employed than men—regardless of whether an informal primary occurs—parties face a binding supply constraint that the intra-party competition primaries generate cannot, on its own, resolve. Parties optimize within the pool available to them; they cannot overcome the underlying inequalities in who enters it.

Given the nature of our data, we acknowledge limitations posed by our analysis and avenues for future work. First, because informal intra-party primaries are not randomly assigned, comparisons between primary and non-primary wards should not be interpreted causally. Unobserved ward-level characteristics, such as electoral competitiveness or local party strength, may confound these estimates. Second, our sample covers only 10 percent of wards and we are likely underpowered to detect effects within ULBs. For this reason, we pool quota and non-quota aspirants and nominees across general and caste reserved wards and are further underpowered to detect intersectional effects of caste and gender reservations. Third, the aspirant pool we observe (those who file nominations) represents individuals who have already overcome initial barriers to political entry, meaning our proxy for candidate supply likely understates the true extent of supply-side inequality. A wider data collection effort that includes ward-level characteristics for balance tests, a larger sample size that provides adequate number of wards within ULBs, and a survey of potential aspirants who do not file (such as party workers) can complement the analyses we present.

Our findings indicate that political parties' role in recruitment of and shaping the pipeline into politics for minority candidates may be even more important in shaping representation outcomes than candidate selection itself. Selection depends on who is eligible to run and parties play a critical role in shaping the pool of eligible aspirants. Politicians, including women, are often more educated, wealthy, and qualified than the population they represent ([Ban and Rao 2008](#); [Bhavnani, Huidobro, and Prillaman 2026](#); [Chaudhuri et al. 2025](#)). To create a more diverse pool of aspirants, including women, parties would need to adapt and change their recruitment strategies. For instance, in the case of women, lowering financial barriers to filing nominations or recruiting them through civil society organizations may increase the pool of eligible women aspirants ([Faravelli et al. 2025](#); [Prillaman 2023a](#)). In the long run, gender quotas may be a necessary but insufficient institutional mechanism to improve the quality and quantity of women's political representation ([Heinze 2025](#); [Jensenius 2017](#)). Gender quotas are only one part of the broader societal level change that is needed to change the structural conditions surrounding institutions that facilitate women's political entry.

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APPENDIX

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A Informal Primary Frequency by Quota Status

Table SI.1: Frequency of Informal Primaries by Quota Status

Category	Quota Status	Sample			Population		
		Primary	%	Total	Primary	%	Total
Overall							
Overall	Quota	93	36.90	252	1403	57.24	2451
Overall	Non-Quota	151	31.92	473	3117	62.04	5024
BJP							
BJP	Quota	52	25.12	207	840	39.83	2109
BJP	Non-Quota	96	24.00	400	1911	43.58	4385
INC							
INC	Quota	63	29.30	215	868	39.93	2174
INC	Non-Quota	95	23.69	401	2005	45.30	4426

B Frequency of Informal Intra-Party Primaries by District in the Population and Sample

Table SI.2: Informal Intra-Party Primaries by District

District	Population			Sample		
	Total	Primary	%	Total	Primary	%
Jaipur	570	318	55.8	74	31	41.9
Churu	410	165	40.2	49	9	18.4
Nagaur	410	299	72.9	47	15	31.9
Sikar	380	203	53.4	38	10	26.3
Jhunjhunu	360	127	35.3	31	9	29.0
Ajmer	345	271	78.6	16	7	43.8
Bharatpur	345	138	40.0	74	8	10.8
Alwar	330	131	39.7	55	10	18.2
Ganganagar	320	183	57.2	37	15	40.5
Pali	295	246	83.4	29	11	37.9
Kota	275	94	34.2	25	13	52.0
Jodhpur	270	112	41.5	8	3	37.5
Hanumangarh	245	100	40.8	40	8	20.0
Bhilwara	235	220	93.6	7	5	71.4
Chittorgarh	220	141	64.1	14	9	64.3
Tonk	200	135	67.5	27	9	33.3
Bikaner	190	77	40.5	6	2	33.3
Bundi	190	165	86.8	14	7	50.0
Jhalawar	175	106	60.6	12	5	41.7
Baran	165	128	77.6	8	2	25.0
Udaipur	165	75	45.5	14	7	50.0
Sirohi	160	138	86.2	5	3	60.0
Dausa	155	133	85.8	11	5	45.5
Dholpur	140	85	60.7	4	0	0.0
Karauli	140	134	95.7	4	1	25.0
Rajsamand	135	110	81.5	13	7	53.8
Sawai Madhopur	120	102	85.0	9	3	33.3
Jalore	115	100	87.0	7	4	57.1
Banswara	105	50	47.6	14	8	57.1
Barmer	100	66	66.0	14	7	50.0
Dungarpur	75	65	86.7	12	8	66.7
Jaisalmer	70	56	80.0	3	1	33.3
Pratapgarh	65	47	72.3	4	2	50.0

Table SI.3: Informal Intra-Party Primaries by District and Quota Status

District	Population									Sample								
	Non-Quota			Quota			All			Non-Quota			Quota			All		
	Tot	Pri	%	Tot	Pri	%	Tot	Pri	%	Tot	Pri	%	Tot	Pri	%	Tot	Pri	%
Jaipur	386	233	60.4	184	95	51.6	570	328	57.5	45	22	48.9	29	13	44.8	74	35	47.3
Churu	276	118	42.8	134	49	36.6	410	167	40.7	31	12	38.7	18	7	38.9	49	19	38.8
Nagaur	274	197	71.9	136	102	75.0	410	299	72.9	33	18	54.5	14	8	57.1	47	26	55.3
Sikar	255	139	54.5	125	64	51.2	380	203	53.4	27	9	33.3	11	6	54.5	38	15	39.5
Jhunjhunu	243	84	34.6	117	43	36.8	360	127	35.3	18	5	27.8	13	6	46.2	31	11	35.5
Ajmer	232	184	79.3	113	87	77.0	345	271	78.6	14	7	50.0	2	1	50.0	16	8	50.0
Bharatpur	231	96	41.6	114	42	36.8	345	138	40.0	47	9	19.1	27	6	22.2	74	15	20.3
Alwar	222	95	42.8	108	37	34.3	330	132	40.0	32	14	43.8	23	11	47.8	55	25	45.5
Ganganagar	216	126	58.3	104	57	54.8	320	183	57.2	22	10	45.5	15	8	53.3	37	18	48.6
Pali	199	165	82.9	96	81	84.4	295	246	83.4	20	10	50.0	9	5	55.6	29	15	51.7
Kota	184	72	39.1	91	29	31.9	275	101	36.7	12	6	50.0	13	7	53.8	25	13	52.0
Jodhpur	180	82	45.6	90	34	37.8	270	116	43.0	4	2	50.0	4	2	50.0	8	4	50.0
Hanumangarh	163	69	42.3	82	31	37.8	245	100	40.8	30	11	36.7	10	3	30.0	40	14	35.0
Bhilwara	160	149	93.1	75	71	94.7	235	220	93.6	7	5	71.4	0	0	0.0	7	5	71.4
Chittorgarh	147	105	71.4	73	39	53.4	220	144	65.5	8	5	62.5	6	4	66.7	14	9	64.3
Tonk	137	93	67.9	63	42	66.7	200	135	67.5	15	6	40.0	12	6	50.0	27	12	44.4
Bikaner	127	54	42.5	63	25	39.7	190	79	41.6	4	2	50.0	2	1	50.0	6	3	50.0
Bundi	128	110	85.9	62	55	88.7	190	165	86.8	12	6	50.0	2	1	50.0	14	7	50.0
Jhalawar	117	73	62.4	58	33	56.9	175	106	60.6	6	3	50.0	6	3	50.0	12	6	50.0
Baran	111	93	83.8	54	35	64.8	165	128	77.6	2	0	0.0	6	3	50.0	8	3	37.5
Udaipur	111	56	50.5	54	20	37.0	165	76	46.1	12	6	50.0	2	1	50.0	14	7	50.0
Sirohi	106	98	92.5	54	40	74.1	160	138	86.2	5	3	60.0	0	0	0.0	5	3	60.0
Dausa	104	91	87.5	51	42	82.4	155	133	85.8	8	5	62.5	3	2	66.7	11	7	63.6
Dholpur	95	58	61.1	45	27	60.0	140	85	60.7	2	1	50.0	2	0	0.0	4	1	25.0
Karauli	94	88	93.6	46	46	100.0	140	134	95.7	4	2	50.0	0	0	0.0	4	2	50.0
Rajsamand	89	76	85.4	46	34	73.9	135	110	81.5	9	5	55.6	4	2	50.0	13	7	53.8
Sawai Madhopur	82	70	85.4	38	32	84.2	120	102	85.0	6	3	50.0	3	2	66.7	9	5	55.6
Jalore	77	66	85.7	38	34	89.5	115	100	87.0	7	4	57.1	0	0	0.0	7	4	57.1
Banswara	71	35	49.3	34	15	44.1	105	50	47.6	12	7	58.3	2	1	50.0	14	8	57.1
Barmer	67	48	71.6	33	18	54.5	100	66	66.0	8	4	50.0	6	4	66.7	14	8	57.1
Dungarpur	50	45	90.0	25	20	80.0	75	65	86.7	7	5	71.4	5	3	60.0	12	8	66.7
Jaisalmer	46	39	84.8	24	17	70.8	70	56	80.0	0	0	0.0	3	1	33.3	3	1	33.3
Pratapgarh	44	34	77.3	21	13	61.9	65	47	72.3	4	2	50.0	0	0	0.0	4	2	50.0

C Variable Descriptions

Table SI.4: Variables Used in the Analysis

Variable	Description	Level	Source
Age	Age of the candidate in years as reported in election affidavit	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Years of Education	Number of years of formal education completed by the candidate imputed using election affidavit	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Criminality	Binary indicator for whether the candidate has any pending, convicted, or current criminal cases	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Log Wealth (Self)	Natural log of total self-reported wealth of the candidate (cash + land value)	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Log Wealth (Spouse)	Natural log of total self-reported wealth of the candidate's spouse (cash + land value)	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Log Wealth (Total)	Natural log of combined total wealth (self + spouse)	Candidate	Election Affidavit
ITR (Self)	Binary indicator for whether the candidate filed an income tax return (self)	Candidate	Election Affidavit
ITR (Spouse)	Binary indicator for whether the candidate's spouse filed an income tax return	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Employed (Self)	Binary indicator for whether the candidate reports being employed	Candidate	Election Affidavit
Vote Share	Party's share of total votes cast in a ward (party-ward level)	Party-Ward	Election Results
Winner	Binary indicator for whether the party's candidate won in the ward (party-ward level)	Party-Ward	Election Results
Is Primary	Binary indicator for whether the party had more than one unique candidate contesting nominations in a ward or whether candidate was in a primary	Party-Ward/Candidate	Nomination Data
Hedger	Binary indicator for whether an aspirant filed nominations under more than one distinct party (including as independent) in the same ward. Individuals are identified via fuzzy matching on transliterated name, age, sex, and caste category within ward (Jaro-Winkler distance ≤ 0.15). Used at the aspirant (individual) level.	Aspirant	Nomination Data
Rebel Independent	Binary indicator for whether an aspirant who was rejected from a non-independent party subsequently contested the election as an independent (accepted nomination, received votes). Constructed at the individual level using the same fuzzy-matching procedure.	Aspirant	Nomination Data
Turnout (2019–21)	Voter turnout percentage in the ward during the 2019–21 election cycle	Ward	Election Results
Any Primary	Binary indicator for whether any party held an informal primary in the ward	Ward	Nomination Data
HHI (Seat Shares)	Herfindahl-Hirschman Index of party seat shares at the ULB level from the 2014–15 cycle, calculated as the sum of squared seat shares across seven party groupings (BJP, BSP, CPI, CPI(M), INC, IND, NCP)	ULB	Election Results (2014–15)
Own Vote Share (Prev.)	Vote share of the same party in the ULB during the 2014–15 election cycle	Party-ULB	Election Results (2014–15)
Own Seat Share (Prev.)	Seat share of the same party in the ULB during the 2014–15 election cycle	Party-ULB	Election Results (2014–15)
Turnout (Prev.)	Voter turnout percentage at the ULB level during the 2014–15 election cycle	ULB	Election Results (2014–15)
Quota	Binary indicator for whether the ward is reserved for women	Ward	Election Results
Reservation Category	Eight-level factor for ward reservation status: General, General (Woman), OBC, OBC (Woman), SC, SC (Woman), ST, ST (Woman)	Ward	Election Results

D Variable Distributions

Distribution of Outcome Variables

Dashed lines show means

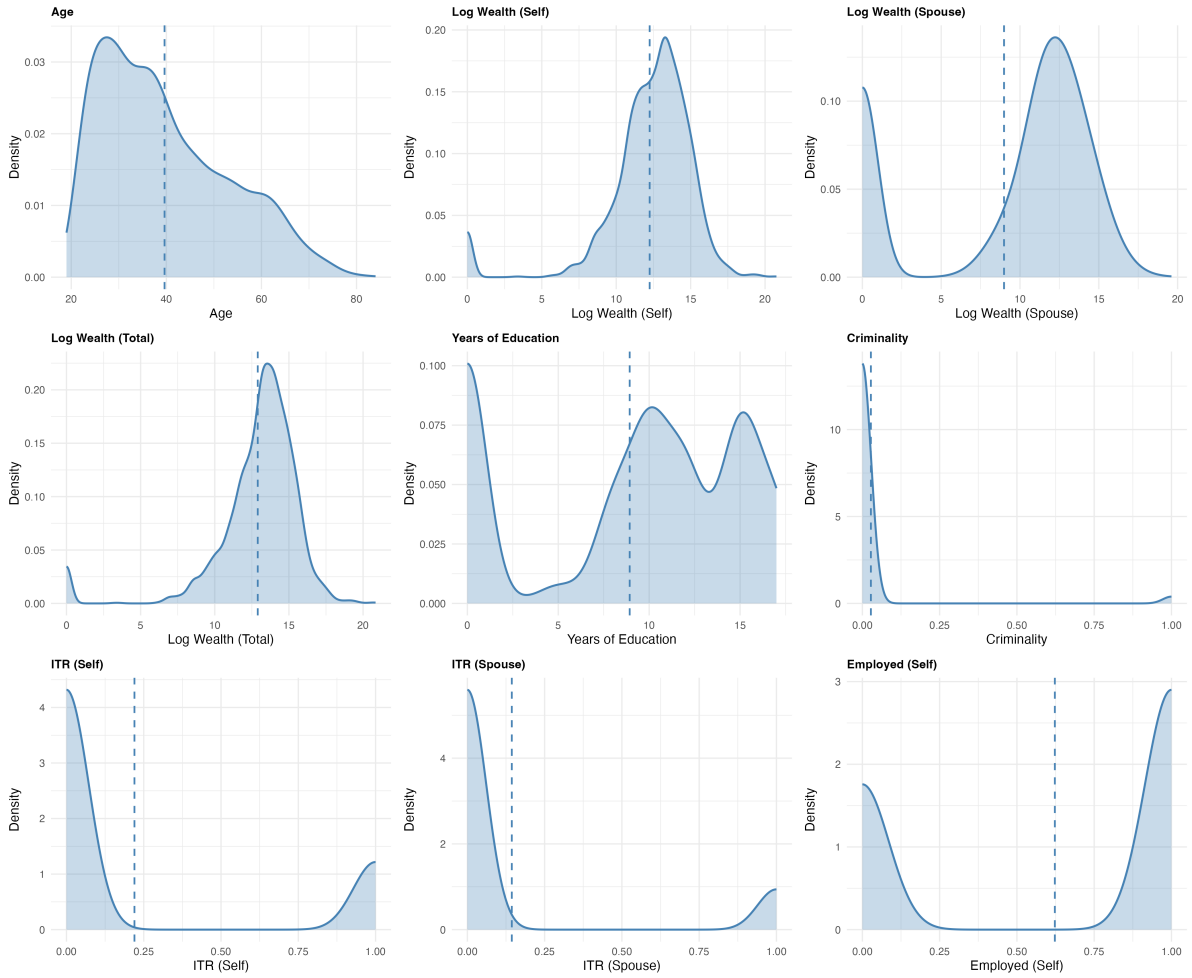


Figure SI.1: Variable Distributions

Distribution by Participation in Informal Intra-Party Primary

Dashed lines show group means

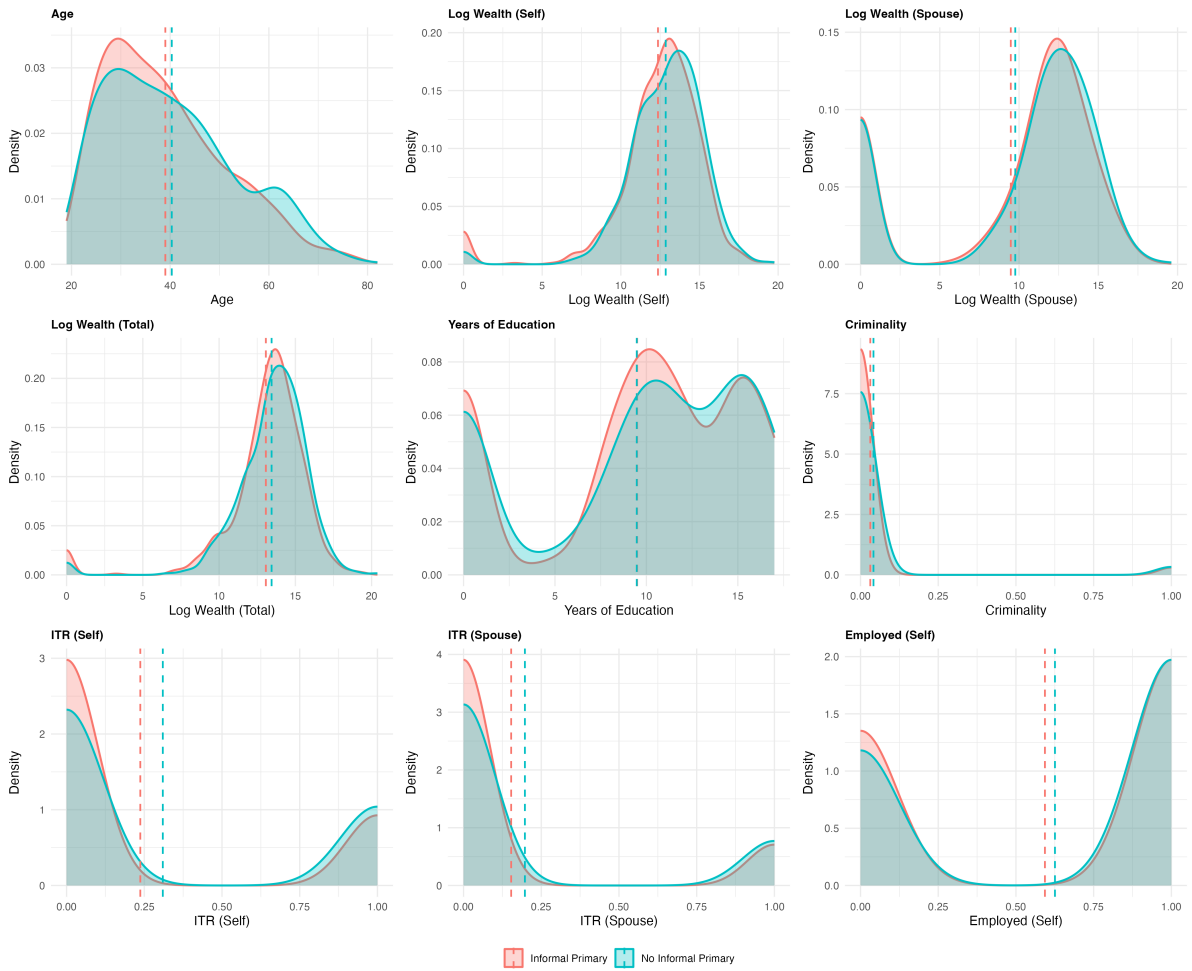


Figure SI.2: Variable Distributions by Occurrence of Informal Intra-Party Primary

Distribution by Quota vs Non-Quota Wards

Dashed lines show group means

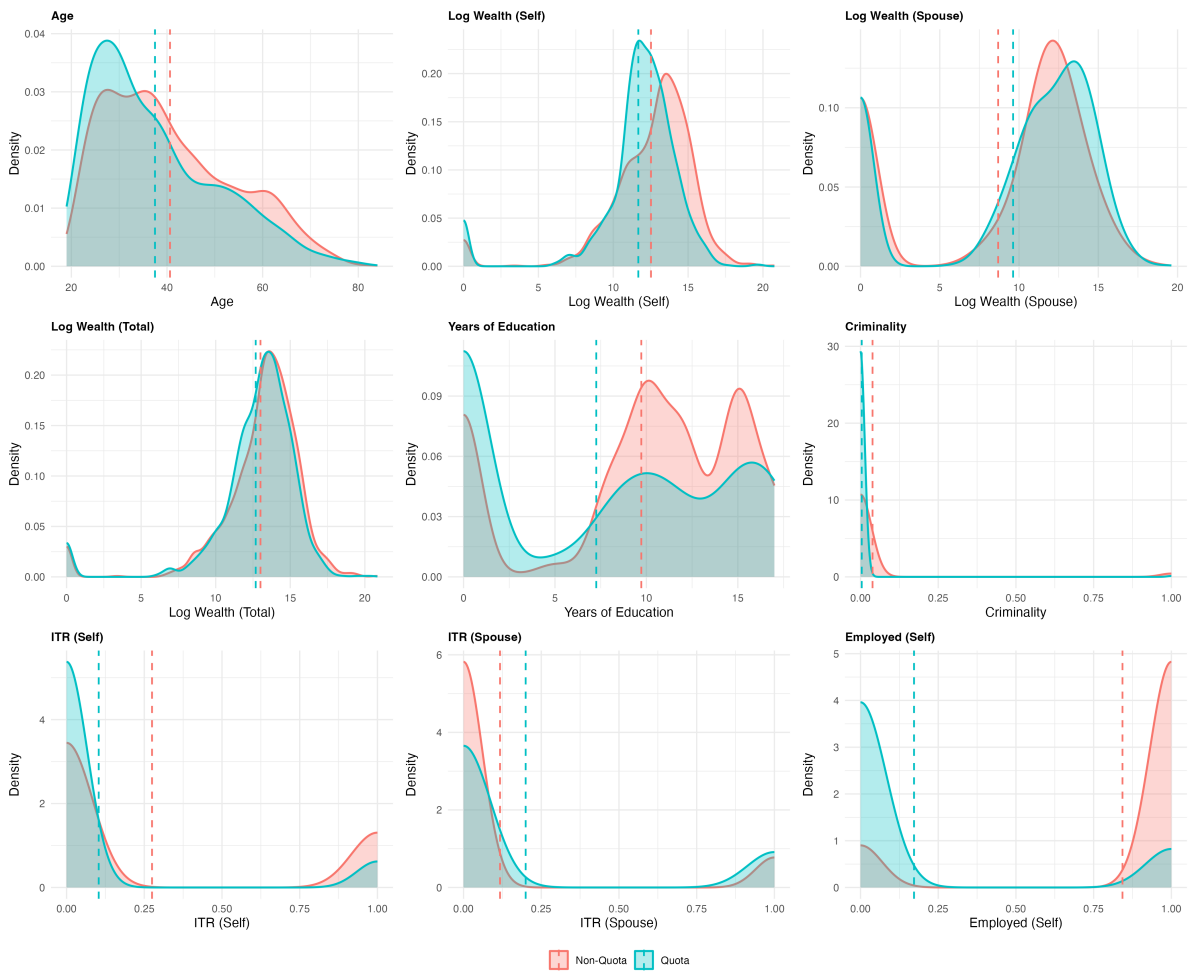


Figure SI.3: Variable Distributions by Gender Quotas

E Robustness Checks: Predicting Informal Primaries

Table SI.5: Predicting informal primaries (pooled, party x ward)

	Logit (contested)	Poisson (n aspirants)
Own party vote share, 2014/15 (0-1)	0.964 (1.166)	-0.061 (0.381)
Own party seat share, 2014/15 (0-1)	0.374 (0.579)	0.256 (0.191)
ULB voter turnout, 2014/15 (0-1)	-0.148 (1.128)	-0.291 (0.428)
Seat-share HHI, 2014/15	-1.885** (0.614)	-0.643** (0.232)
Res: General (Woman)	-0.216*** (0.050)	-0.077*** (0.012)
Res: OBC	-0.001 (0.056)	-0.014 (0.016)
Res: OBC (Woman)	-0.272*** (0.078)	-0.141*** (0.024)
Res: SC	-0.032 (0.068)	-0.003 (0.022)
Res: SC (Woman)	0.013 (0.083)	-0.031 (0.026)
Res: ST	-0.085 (0.137)	-0.078+ (0.044)
Res: ST (Woman)	-0.343 (0.226)	-0.156+ (0.084)
Party = INC	0.134 (0.107)	0.031 (0.035)
Num.Obs.	10391	10391
Std.Errors	by: ULB	by: ULB

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

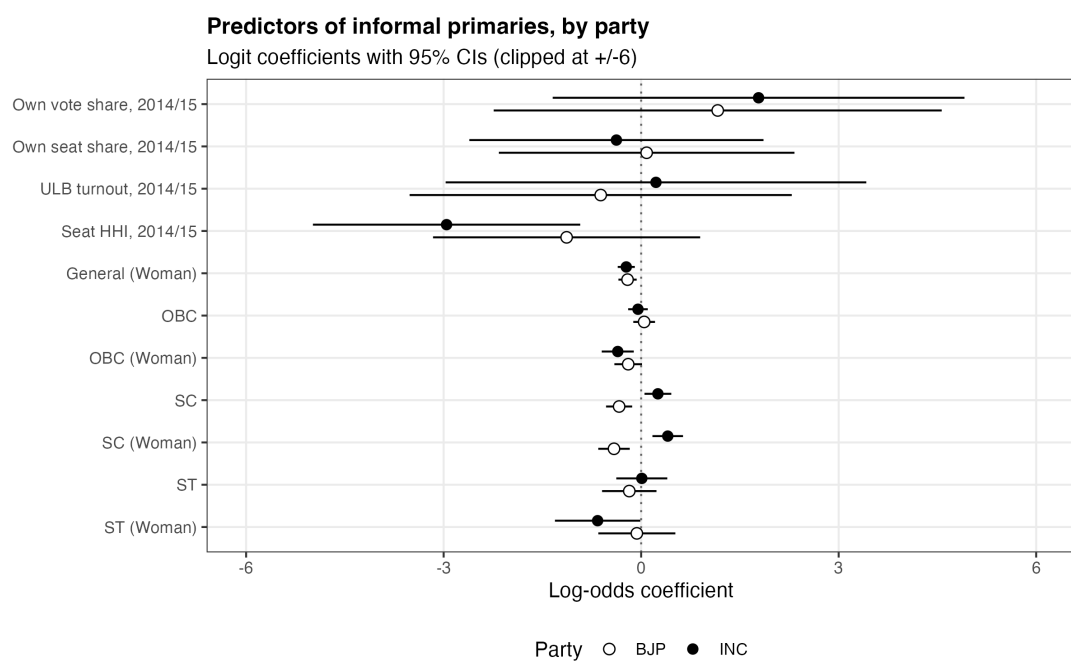


Figure SI.4: Predicting Informal Primaries by Party

Table SI.6: Predicting informal primaries by party

	BJP	INC
Own party vote share, 2014/15 (0-1)	1.163 (1.734)	1.784 (1.594)
Own party seat share, 2014/15 (0-1)	0.083 (1.144)	-0.376 (1.139)
ULB voter turnout, 2014/15 (0-1)	-0.614 (1.479)	0.225 (1.628)
Seat-share HHI, 2014/15	-1.132 (1.034)	-2.955** (1.035)
Res: General (Woman)	-0.207** (0.071)	-0.226*** (0.066)
Res: OBC	0.046 (0.084)	-0.048 (0.076)
Res: OBC (Woman)	-0.197+ (0.107)	-0.355** (0.124)
Res: SC	-0.335*** (0.101)	0.254* (0.104)
Res: SC (Woman)	-0.412*** (0.122)	0.404*** (0.118)
Res: ST	-0.180 (0.211)	0.010 (0.197)
Res: ST (Woman)	-0.065 (0.298)	-0.661* (0.330)
Num.Obs.	5148	5243
Std.Errors	by: ULB	by: ULB

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

Table SI.7: ULB-level robustness: share of contested wards with informal primary

	Share of wards with primary (OLS, party x ULB)
Own party vote share, 2014/15 (0-1)	0.397 (0.242)
Own party seat share, 2014/15 (0-1)	0.053 (0.133)
ULB voter turnout, 2014/15 (0-1)	-0.055 (0.265)
Seat-share HHI, 2014/15	-0.466*** (0.120)
Party = INC	0.021 (0.023)
Num.Obs.	312
R2	0.070
R2 Adj.	0.055
Std.Errors	by: ULB

+ p <0.1, * p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

F Women's Reservation and Informal Primary Occurrence

Table [SI.8](#) reports the pooled effect of women's reservation on the probability that a party holds an informal primary, corresponding to the top panel of Figure [3](#). Column 1 is the unadjusted difference in means, column 2 adds ULB and party fixed effects, and column 3 replaces the fixed effects with controls for the previous cycle's competitiveness. The three estimates are nearly identical. Table [SI.9](#) reports the disaggregated reservation-category estimates (bottom panel of Figure [3](#)).

Table SI.8: Women's Reservation and Informal Primary Occurrence (Linear Probability)

	DIM	OLS Adjusted	OLS Adj. + Controls
Women Reserved (Quota)	-0.046*** (0.010)	-0.044*** (0.008)	-0.044*** (0.011)
Own Vote Share (t-1)			0.178** (0.088)
Own Seat Share (t-1)			0.113** (0.051)
Turnout (t-1)			-0.016 (0.077)
Seat HHI (t-1)			-0.452*** (0.050)
Num.Obs.	13148	13148	10109
R2	0.002	0.193	0.011

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Linear probability models at the BJP/INC party-ward level; the outcome is an indicator for an informal primary. CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. Column 1 is the unadjusted difference in means; column 2 adds ULB and party fixed effects; column 3 replaces ULB fixed effects with the previous cycle's competitiveness and party fixed effects.

Table SI.9: Informal Primary Occurrence by Reservation Category

	Pr(Informal Primary)
Reserved: General (Woman)	-0.052*** (0.010)
Reserved: OBC	-0.004 (0.012)
Reserved: OBC (Woman)	-0.068*** (0.016)
Reserved: SC	-0.023* (0.013)
Reserved: SC (Woman)	-0.007 (0.016)
Reserved: ST	-0.039 (0.028)
Reserved: ST (Woman)	-0.138*** (0.044)
Num.Obs.	13148
R2	0.194

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Linear probability model at the BJP/INC party-ward level with ULB and party fixed effects; CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. Each coefficient is relative to General (unreserved) wards.

G Number of Aspirants and Candidates by Quota Status

Table SI.10 reports the difference in the number of distinct aspirants competing for a party ticket between quota and non-quota wards, on the extensive margin (all party-wards) and the intensive margin (party-wards with an informal primary). Table SI.11 reports the difference in the total number of nominations filed per ward.

Table SI.10: Number of Aspirants Competing for a Party Ticket by Quota Status

	N Aspirants (All)	N Aspirants (Primary)
Quota	-0.117*** (0.016)	-0.147*** (0.029)
Non-Quota (Mean)	1.752	2.784
Num.Obs.	13883	5680
R2	0.218	0.161

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

CR2 standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the ward level. ULB fixed effects included. Observations are at the party-ward level (population). ‘All’ includes all party-wards; ‘Primary’ includes only party-wards with an informal primary.

Table SI.11: Number of Nominations Filed per Ward by Quota Status

	Nominations per Ward
Quota	-1.054*** (0.063)
Non-Quota (Mean)	6.693
Num.Obs.	7475
R2	0.407

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Cluster robust (CR2) standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the ward level. ULB fixed effects included. Observations are at the ward level.

H Ward Competitiveness: Turnout and Victory Margin

Table SI.12 reports the ward-level regressions of voter turnout and the winning margin on an indicator for any informal primary in the ward, quota status, and their interaction, corresponding to Figure 4.

Table SI.12: Ward Competitiveness by Primary and Quota Status

	Turnout (%)	Victory Margin
Any Primary	0.661*** (0.223)	-0.035*** (0.005)
Quota	-0.385 (0.280)	0.008 (0.006)
Any Primary $\times$ Quota	-0.655* (0.348)	-0.004 (0.008)
Num.Obs.	7491	7527
R2	0.591	0.073

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Ward-level OLS with ULB fixed effects; CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. Turnout is in percentage points; victory margin is the winner's vote-share margin over the runner-up.

I Party-Driven Screening

Tables SI.13 and SI.14 correspond to the left and right panels of Figure 5: the first compares official nominees to the aspirants they beat within primary wards, the second compares nominees selected with versus without an informal primary. Table SI.15 reports the electoral-outcome regressions behind Figure 6, and Table SI.16 reports the rejection and withdrawal rates that weigh against the dummy-candidacy account.

Table SI.13: Nominee vs. Aspirant Traits in Primary Wards

	Age	Log Wealth (Self)	Log Wealth (Spouse)	Log Wealth (Total)	ITR (Self)	ITR (Spouse)	Criminality	Years Education	Employed
Official Nominee	-0.223 (0.920)	0.726*** (0.213)	1.109*** (0.387)	0.819*** (0.188)	0.066** (0.026)	0.041 (0.026)	0.020 (0.014)	-0.422 (0.419)	0.016 (0.028)
Num.Obs.	795	727	724	723	742	744	795	717	681
R2	0.152	0.245	0.207	0.263	0.304	0.197	0.118	0.217	0.356

* p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
CR2 SEs clustered at ward level. ULB and party fixed effects. Party aspirants in primary wards only.

Table SI.14: Nominee Traits: Primary vs. Non-Primary Wards

	Age	Log Wealth (Self)	Log Wealth (Spouse)	Log Wealth (Total)	ITR (Self)	ITR (Spouse)	Criminality	Years Education	Employed
In Primary Ward	-1.822** (0.916)	0.070 (0.198)	0.341 (0.379)	0.139 (0.181)	-0.033 (0.029)	-0.016 (0.028)	-0.000 (0.013)	-0.241 (0.421)	-0.034 (0.035)
Num.Obs.	1267	1185	1185	1184	1203	1205	1267	1167	1102
R2	0.122	0.207	0.213	0.233	0.227	0.133	0.114	0.174	0.223

* p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
CR2 SEs clustered at ward level. ULB and party fixed effects. Official nominees only.

Table SI.15: Population-Level Electoral Outcomes: Primary $\times$ Quota

	Winner	Vote Share
Primary	0.074*** (0.011)	0.018*** (0.004)
Quota	0.009 (0.008)	0.014*** (0.004)
Primary $\times$ Quota	0.009 (0.018)	0.006 (0.006)
Num.Obs.	13881	13879
R2	0.043	0.183

* p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. ULB and party fixed effects. Party-ward level.

Table SI.16: Rejection, Withdrawal, and Acceptance Rates by Quota and Primary Status

Ward Type	Primary	N	Rejected (%)	Withdrawn (%)	Accepted (%)
Non-Quota	Non-Primary	5739	3.2	1.1	94.7
Non-Quota	Primary	11318	61.7	0.5	35.0
Quota	Non-Primary	2866	2.3	0.5	96.7
Quota	Primary	4636	59.7	0.4	37.1

J Candidate-Driven Dynamics

Table [SI.17](#) reports the aspirant-level hedging regression behind Figure [7](#), and Table [SI.18](#) reports the rebellion regression among rejected aspirants behind Figure [11](#).

Table SI.17: Hedging by Aspirant: Primary $\times$ Quota

	Hedged
In Primary	0.237*** (0.007)
Quota	0.002 (0.006)
In Primary $\times$ Quota	0.014 (0.010)
Num.Obs.	24421
R2	0.288

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. ULB and party fixed effects. Aspirant (individual) level; party aspirants only. Outcome is an indicator for filing under more than one party or as both a party candidate and an independent.

Table SI.18: Rebel Independent Candidacy Among Rejected Aspirants

	Rebel Rejected
Quota	0.027*** (0.010)
Num.Obs.	9972
R2	0.160

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level. ULB and party fixed effects. Sample is rejected party aspirants (individual level); outcome is an indicator for re-contesting as an independent.

K Gendered Implications

Table SI.19 reports the effect of women’s reservation on aspirants’ socioeconomic traits, separately within primary wards and across the whole sample of party aspirants (Figure 8). Table SI.20 reports the nominee-over-aspirant premium estimated separately in non-quota and quota wards (Figure 9). Table SI.21 reports the difference between hedgers and non-hedgers estimated separately by quota status (Figure 10), and Table SI.22 reports the equivalent pooled hedging $\times$ quota interaction.

Table SI.19: Effect of Quotas on Aspirant Socioeconomic Traits

	Primary Wards	Whole Sample
Age	−3.063** (1.261)	−4.952*** (0.768)
Log Wealth (Self)	−0.974** (0.372)	−1.100*** (0.186)
Log Wealth (Spouse)	−0.212 (0.615)	0.168 (0.344)
Log Wealth (Total)	−0.589* (0.346)	−0.619*** (0.170)
ITR (Self)	−0.188*** (0.045)	−0.226*** (0.028)
ITR (Spouse)	0.038 (0.046)	0.081*** (0.027)
Criminality	−0.039** (0.019)	−0.054*** (0.011)
Years Education	−1.493* (0.751)	−1.758*** (0.430)
Employed	−0.674*** (0.049)	−0.697*** (0.024)

Each cell is the coefficient on a women’s-reservation (quota) indicator from a separate regression of the row trait on quota status, among party aspirants (non-independent filers). CR2 standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the ward level; ULB and party fixed effects. N ranges from 681 to 795 (primary wards) and 1,552 to 1,792 (whole sample). * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table SI.20: Nominee Premium over Aspirants by Quota Status

	Non-Quota Wards	Quota Wards
Age	1.499 (1.157)	-2.781* (1.457)
Log Wealth (Self)	0.781*** (0.223)	0.590 (0.430)
Log Wealth (Spouse)	1.261** (0.484)	1.062* (0.631)
Log Wealth (Total)	0.804*** (0.216)	0.835** (0.343)
ITR (Self)	0.086** (0.037)	0.038 (0.032)
ITR (Spouse)	0.056* (0.033)	0.026 (0.045)
Criminality	0.038* (0.021)	-0.013 (0.009)
Years Education	-1.056** (0.462)	0.731 (0.814)
Employed	0.003 (0.033)	0.008 (0.049)

Each cell is the coefficient on an official-nominee indicator from a separate regression of the row trait on nominee status, estimated separately within non-quota and quota primary wards. CR2 standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the ward level; ULB and party fixed effects. N ranges from 420 to 499 (non-quota) and 261 to 296 (quota). * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table SI.21: Hedger vs. Non-Hedger Traits by Quota Status

	Non-Quota Wards	Quota Wards
Age	-1.647 (1.417)	-0.788 (1.786)
Log Wealth (Self)	-0.398 (0.353)	-1.243** (0.590)
Log Wealth (Spouse)	0.855 (0.602)	-0.343 (0.883)
Log Wealth (Total)	-0.343 (0.340)	-0.938 (0.589)
ITR (Self)	-0.043 (0.054)	-0.064 (0.047)
ITR (Spouse)	0.006 (0.044)	-0.019 (0.051)
Criminality	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.021 (0.014)
Years Education	-0.749 (0.619)	1.092 (1.005)
Employed	-0.097** (0.042)	-0.079 (0.064)

Each cell is the coefficient on a hedger indicator from a separate regression of the row trait on hedging status, estimated separately within non-quota and quota primary wards. CR2 standard errors in parentheses, clustered at the ward level; ULB and party fixed effects. N ranges from 420 to 499 (non-quota) and 261 to 296 (quota). * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table SI.22: Hedger Traits: Hedging $\times$ Quota Interaction

	Age	Log Wealth (Self)	Log Wealth (Spouse)	Log Wealth (Total)	ITR (Self)	ITR (Spouse)	Criminality	Years Education	Employed
Hedger	-1.269 (1.306)	-0.275 (0.357)	1.080* (0.579)	-0.231 (0.340)	-0.047 (0.050)	0.006 (0.042)	-0.039* (0.022)	-0.341 (0.618)	-0.093** (0.042)
Quota	-3.312** (1.474)	-0.611 (0.392)	0.276 (0.691)	-0.328 (0.383)	-0.192*** (0.054)	0.045 (0.052)	-0.042** (0.020)	-1.816** (0.874)	-0.681*** (0.055)
Hedger $\times$ Quota	1.132 (2.067)	-0.895 (0.637)	-1.621 (0.986)	-0.637 (0.629)	0.022 (0.065)	-0.024 (0.065)	0.020 (0.024)	0.910 (1.093)	0.041 (0.070)
Num.Obs.	795	727	724	723	742	744	795	717	681
R2	0.159	0.253	0.201	0.255	0.320	0.187	0.125	0.223	0.573

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

CR2 SEs clustered at the ward level (or HC2 where clustering fails). ULB fixed effects. Party aspirants in primary wards only.