

Abstract

In this paper, I examine the impact of multitiered government and state level party organization impact redistribute politics, particularly "swing voter" theory. This theory, which suggests that parties target swing voter when distributing pork, hinges upon the abilities of incumbents to target specific constituencies. Multitiered government create distribution barriers that further isolate swing constituencies, making them less identifiable target in specific incumbency settings, while hyper identifiable in other settings. In this paper, I test a series of hypotheses that relate to possible redistributive outcomes given incumbency arrangements.

Data and Methods

To test my hypotheses, I use a Poisson regression with data on the Projeto Bolsa Escola (PBE), a Brazilian scholarship program that distributes college funding for Brazilian students graduating high school. The choice of this data has been driven by its incredibly particularistic nature, which is conducive to the testing of the thesis. Although the PBE is delivered with a strong public good/programmatic/universal rhetoric, the program is truly particularistic. Behind the veneer of available to any who compete for it, we know that high school graduates aspiring a college education are of a particular age and economic background, thus turning the program into a precise way to target this particular demographic.