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Paru Shah

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Paru Shah[1]

Abstract

The ongoing underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in most levels of office continues to warrant our attention. However, scholars have only focused on what factors contribute to the electoral success of minorities, without attention to a vital precursor—the supply of minority candidates. Using data from the *Local Elections in America Project*, this study provides one of the first glimpses into the supply side of minority representation, detailing how demographic, electoral, and political factors affect the likelihood a black candidate is on the ballot, and the subsequent impact on the likelihood of a black candidate winning.

Keywords

descriptive representation, black elected officials, minority candidate supply

Introduction

By some accounts, the glass is half full. The racial and ethnic complexion of elected officials in the United States has changed dramatically over the past fifty years, with increasing numbers of blacks, Latinos, and Asians taking office. For example, the 112th U.S. Congress includes two Asian American and two Latino Senators, as well as forty-four black and thirty Latino House members. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures most recent data, nonwhite state legislators numbered above 1,000 in January 2009, comprising more than 13 percent of all state legislators. And although the first black elected to the mayor's office of a major city did not occur until 1967, today there at least 500 black mayors and 300 Latino mayors. In short, there is ample evidence that minority candidates are *winning* more elections in more places than ever before.

However, by other accounts, the glass is still empty. These same fifty years have witnessed tremendous growth in racial and ethnic minority populations, and thus, these gains in representation are interpreted as insufficient, reflecting the continued underrepresentation and perhaps disenfranchisement of racial and ethnic minorities from the political process. Indeed, as the racial and ethnic minority population edges closer to 50 percent of the U.S. population, the gap in representational disparity grows. Although accurate numbers at all levels of government are hard to ascertain,[1] data from the Gender and Multicultural Leadership project estimate the percent of black, Latino, Asian, and Native American legislators at close to 20 percent, with the majority of racial minorities serving in subnational and substate legislative offices.

What explains this gap in representation? Since passage of the Voting Rights Act, social scientists have investigated the question of why racial and ethnic minorities fail to achieve representational parity from a demand perspective—how do racial attitudes and behaviors among black and white voters restrict minority officeholding? With few exceptions (see, for example Canon 1999), none of this previous work has focused specifically on the question of minority candidate supply. That is, *how often is lack of representational parity due to the defeat of the minority candidate(s) versus the absence of minority candidates in the first place?* Answering this question is of central importance to our understanding of minority representation for a number of reasons.

First, to date the vast majority of research has examined descriptive representation focusing exclusively on inequities in representation based solely on the outcome—did a minority candidate win office, why or why not? (see, for example, Cameron, Epstein, and Halloran 1996; Casellas 2009; Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah 2010; Trounstine and Valdini 2008). Importantly, of the many answers offered up in response to these questions one

[1]University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, USA

Corresponding Author:
Paru Shah, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA.
Email: shahp@uwm.edu

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rarely, if ever, hears "because there were no minority candidates running for office." But clearly, if no minority candidate is running then the likelihood of a minority candidate winning is zero. Thus, the typical explanations of why minorities fail to achieve representational parity point to demographic, political, and electoral variables within a jurisdiction as the main culprits, although we cannot discern from these studies if these variables affect the likelihood of a minority candidate running or winning. Moreover, because these studies lack information on the racial composition of the candidates running for office, they tell us only part of the story—what factors *other than candidacy* change the likelihood of a minority candidate winning.

Second, while recent theoretical advances in political ambition and candidate emergence (see, for example, Lawless 2011; Lawless and Fox 2005; 2010) have renewed interest in what motivates likely candidates from entering the political arena, "almost no research specifically addresses race or ethnicity in the candidate emergence process at all" (Lawless 2011, 59) This research often relies on surveys of potential candidates, who can relate their desire to run for office and win but cannot tell us how often this is accomplished. Nor can this research answer the question of how minority candidate supply and electoral outcomes are related, or how demographic and institutional features of a jurisdiction affect the likelihood of this supply or outcomes of interest.

This paper advances our understanding of minority representation in two ways. First, I explicitly model the decision to enter the electoral arena by black candidates, and, conditional on this, the likelihood of a black candidate winning an election. By untying the two components of representation, I am better able to distinguish between the hurdles that affect black electoral success at the candidate entry stage and the electoral competition stage of the process. Second, I reevaluate the traditional relationships between demographic, political, and electoral determinants of minority representation across these two stages, and demonstrate that distinct mechanisms operate at each stage. The results strongly support the contention that the underrepresentation of blacks is driven by constraints on their entry onto the ballot—it takes a black candidate. The analysis in sum suggests much of what we have considered to be benchmarks in theories of minority representation, including size of the minority population and electoral structures, are more crucial at the candidate entry stage, and that we in fact know less about the second stage of representation (winning, conditional on running), than previously argued.

Below, I begin with a brief review of the literature examining the questions of why and how racial and ethnic minorities achieve electoral success, noting that data limitations have restricted our ability to ascertain how the supply of minority candidates affects the outcome. Starting with what I argue are the building blocks for a comprehensive theory of the supply-side of minority representation, I develop a number of hypotheses about how electoral, political, and demographic factors affect the supply of minority candidates, and the electoral outcomes. Using data from the *Local Elections in America Project* (Marschall and Shah 2013) for the state of Louisiana that includes candidate race information, election outcomes, and voter registration rates, I compare a traditional single-stage model of black representation with the results from a two-stage Heckman's selection model on the probability of a black candidate running for office, and the subsequent likelihood of a black candidate winning for school board, municipal, and county elections between 2000 and 2010. I conclude with implications of these findings for the more general scholarship on minority descriptive representation in the United States.

Minority Descriptive Representation: Theories and Empirical Evidence

Much of the work on minority descriptive representation begins with three premises: (1) when given the choice, minorities will select a co-ethnic candidate, (2) institutional and structural features of a legislative body can shape this voter strength, and (3) qualified and eligible minority candidates are running for office. First, if there is a single "truth" in studies of minority representation, it is that demographics are destiny. Of the more than thirty well-known studies of minority descriptive representation, everyone has concluded that size of the minority population matters (see Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah 2010 for a review of articles), and that the likelihood of a minority securing office is positively related to the size of the co-ethnic population (see, for example, Branton 2009; Krebs 1999; Meier et al. 2005). These studies suggest that the likelihood of minority representation is greatest in "majority–minority" places, or cities/districts that have a greater than 50 percent minority voting population. Second, studies implicate at-large and multimember districting practices as the cause of minority underrepresentation in elected office (see, for example, Canon 1999; Davidson and Korbel 1981; Engstrom 1987; Engstrom and McDonald 1986; Karnig and Welch 1982). In particular, at-large elections increase the costs of campaigns, dilute minority voting strength across the entire jurisdiction, and require greater numbers of "cross-over" white voters for the minority candidate.

It is the last premise—minority candidates are running in elections—that has to date been almost impossible to directly ascertain on a large scale. Data sources on local minority representation to date typically include the

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winners of elections, rather than information about the racial/ethnic composition of all local candidates who ran for public office. Previous research has thus relied on the indirect measure of minority resources—education and/or employment—as a proxy for the *likelihood of a viable minority candidate* on the ballot (see, for example, Canon 1999; Lublin 1997; Meier et al. 2005), and collapsed the two stages of the process (running and winning) to a single stage.

Focusing solely on the determinants of winning, however, is problematic on a number of levels for scholars interested in minority representation. First, we know minorities do not run in every local election. The costs of running for office, demographic patterns of dispersion and concentration across the United States, and histories of voter intimidation and disenfranchisement mean that in most elections, a minority candidate in not on the ballot. Scholars have attempted to circumscribe this issue by imposing a population threshold on the data (often 5% or 10%) minority electorate, but even under these circumstances, it is a leap to assume minority candidacy across the ballot.

Second, in focusing on winning, we cannot untangle how the local factors that shape minorities running for elected office differ from those that dictate their odds of winning or losing. Thus, in addition to the theoretical problems, collapsing this process biases our empirical estimates of how factors such as demographic and institutional variables affect the likelihood of winning office, leading to erroneous conclusions.[2] Conflating the data-generating processes of minority candidate supply and minority representation leads to an overstatement of the underrepresentation of minority representation in the United States, because all of the instances in which a minority candidate did not win are lumped together with all of the instances in which they did not run. Moreover, it ascribes the influence of independent variables to election outcomes when those independent variables might be in fact driving candidate supply.

Toward a Supply-Side Theory of Minority Representation

As noted earlier by Lawless (2011), few studies have focused specifically on blacks' and Latinos' paths to office, and thus a theory of the "supply side" of minority representation and its relationships to election outcomes is far from complete. Furthermore, the extant research is limited in a number of ways. First, the research that has explicitly examined minority candidate supply has focused solely on this first stage of the process—proportion of minority candidates—and has not examined the full process. For example, Krebs (1998; 1999) examines black candidates for Chicago's city council between 1979 and 1995, finding a relationship between open seats, black population size, party support and campaign spending, and the number of black candidates. Juenke (2006) looks at Latino candidates with local election data in California in 2004, concluding at-large elections significantly diminish the likelihood of a Latino running for local office. Branton (2009) compiled data on candidates for the U.S. House between 1994 and 2004, focusing her questions on how district and candidate characteristics affect likelihood of a black or Latino candidate running, and competitiveness in primary elections. Canon (1999) examines the black candidate supply in all House districts with at least 30 percent black population in 1972, 1982, and 1992, concluding that the creation of majority-black districts increased the number of black candidates. While each of these papers provide an important foundation for this work, they fall short of building a more generalized theory of how minority candidate supply influences outcomes.

Second, the rich line of research than centers on "potential" candidates, or persons who fit the profile of a likely candidate for office (see, for example, Fox and Lawless 2005; Lawless 2011; Maisel, Stone, and Maestas 1998), examines a very different question about the reasons why individuals decide to enter politics. Thus, while we may be able to conclude that blacks are "more likely to have seriously considered running for office and less likely never to have thought about running" (Lawless 2011, 67), we can make no conclusions as how the demographic and electoral context of a jurisdiction conditions the likelihood that these potential candidates run, or what the outcome will be once their name is on the ballot.

Rather than focus on candidate emergence at the individual level, I center this research on exploring the mechanisms that affect the two stages of black electoral success: candidate entry and electoral competition. Building upon the extant research, I examine three dimensions of determinants—demographic, electoral, and political—and hypothesize that their effects differ across the two stages in the process.[3]

Demographic Determinants

Three demographic characteristics of a jurisdiction are salient to the joint likelihood of a black candidate running and of a black candidate winning an election. The first two speak to the importance of a strong voting bloc. Who are the possible voters for a black candidate? Given the large literature linking co-ethnic population size to minority candidate success in gaining office (see Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah 2010 for a review) I expect the supply of minority candidates and their chances of winning an election to be positively tied to the size of the minority population. The vast majority of previous literature has used

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black population size in the jurisdiction, or black voting age population (18 years and older) in the jurisdiction. However, there is reason to believe this number overestimates the actual impact of the minority voter bloc. First, historically, African Americans and Latinos have registered and turned out to vote in lower numbers than their white counterparts (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Second, felony disenfranchisement laws disproportionately affect minority voters (Burch 2007). For example, in Louisiana, which has a black imprisonment rate of 2,452 per 100,000 (compared with 523 per 100,000 for whites), an estimated 6.8 percent of the black population is disenfranchised from voting (The Sentencing Project 2010). Thus, in this project I use black voter registration rates, and I expect the likelihood of a black candidate running and a black candidate winning to be positively associated with the percent black registered voters in a jurisdiction.[4]

As Thernstrom (1987) concedes, "In jurisdictions where blacks are a minority, black candidates will obviously lose if they gain no white support" (p. 234). Consequently, in addition to estimating black voter strength, in the vast number of places where the minority vote alone is not enough, scholarship points to the role white voters may play in electing minority candidates (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Bullock and Campbell 1984; Liu 2001). On one hand, given the literature on racialized and racial threat voting (Kinder 1986; Rocha and Espino 2009), I expect the pathway to office for blacks to be hindered by a sizable white population. On the other hand, the scholarship on liberal white voters maintains they may be likely coalition partners. For example, Browning, Marshall, and Tabb's (1984) seminal book on "rainbow" coalitions found the likelihood of a black mayor to be positively related to the proportion of "liberal" whites in a city.

More recent scholarship, however, has cast doubt on these findings. Using the percent of white voters with a bachelor's degree as a proxy for white liberal attitudes toward minority leadership, Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah (2010) find a negative relationship between percent of white liberal voters and the probability of a black candidate winning city council or school board seats. It may be, however, that these mixed results point to salient differences in the role white cross-over voters play across the two stages of representation. The research noted above has only examined this question as a single stage, and cannot discern if a pool of possible cross-over voters matters more for the black candidate pool or a black candidate winning the election.

The final demographic determinant is correlated to black candidate viability. In particular, resources of the black community have been identified as an important factor in helping African Americans develop strategies to achieve their political goals, mobilize more minority voters (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984), develop the leadership potential to sustain interest group activities (Giles and Evans 1985, 51), and increase the supply of qualified minority candidates (Meier and Stewart 1991). Early research (Karnig 1979) finds minority candidates are most likely to come from the middle class community, which was justification of prior research to use black employment and black education as proxies for a black candidate running in the election. Following similar logic, I hypothesize that as the size of the educated and employed black population increases, the supply of black candidates increases. In the second stage, given the established relationship between black employment and black education on voter turnout (Verba et al. 1993), I expect these indicators to be positively related to a black candidate winning an election.

Political Determinants

Three political determinants influence the joint likelihood of minority candidate supply and minority descriptive representation. The first of these examines the history of the seat in question. Given the legacy of racial discrimination and intimidation across the United States, black candidates considering running for office may be wary of entering races in which they would be the first to break through the representational barrier. Indeed, recent research by Marschall, Shah, and Ruhil (2010) suggests that in the process of attaining descriptive representation, the initial "hurdle" of attaining the first black representative is the hardest to overcome. In addition, research examining women in office points to the important low-cost informational role prior representation plays in the strategic decision making of would-be candidates, signaling the "readiness" of a jurisdiction for a minority to run and maybe win (Smith, Reingold, and Owens 2012; Windett 2011). Thus, I expect the supply of black candidates to be greater for seats where blacks have previously run for that office, and where blacks have previously held that office.

In addition, simple probability dictates a positive relationship between the number of black candidates running in a particular election, and the likelihood of a black candidate winning. It is unlikely that candidates would know everyone expected to run in a particular election, and hence, I expect the number of black candidates to only play a role in determining winning an election.

Finally, we discuss the question of incumbency. Regardless of office level or type, it is well established that incumbents enjoy high rates of reelection (Ansolabehere and Snyder 2002; Erikson 1971; Krebs 1999). This "incumbency advantage" had important consequences for the supply of candidates, and strategic candidates should see an incumbent as a formidable blockade

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to their entry into an election. However, race of the incumbent will also be important here. I expect the likelihood of a black candidate winning a seat will be depressed when a white incumbent is running but will be significantly greater when a black incumbent is running.

Electoral Determinants

The final set of variables that will affect the likelihoods of running and winning an elected seat are the institutional features of the election itself. In particular, I focus on two—timing of elections and type/level of office.[5] As scholars have noted, the scheduling of elections influences voter turnout, with "off-cycle" elections (i.e., elections not timed with statewide primaries or general elections) reporting much lower voter turnout than on-cycle elections. For example, in their analysis of 350 California cities, Hajnal and Lewis (2003) find a 25 percent increase in municipal turnouts when local elections are concurrent with statewide or federal elections. On one hand, then, I expect off-cycle elections to depress voter turnout and therefore be a deterrent to strategic minority candidates.

On the other hand, many local elections are held at off-cycle (Caren 2007) and thus minority candidates may see this as a positive opportunity. Less prestigious offices (school board, city council) require less experience and less resources to run, and historically, minorities have excelled in winning these offices: more than 90 percent of blacks and Latinos serving in elected office are in a municipal or school board seat (JCEPS, NALEO). Similarly, minorities have made inroads in legislative seats as opposed to executive seats, because the stakes for legislative seats are lower, there are more of them, and the votes needed are fewer and more concentrated. Together, these factors lead me to expect a greater supply of black candidates for school board and municipal seats than county seats, and a greater supply of black candidates for legislative seats than executive or administrative seats.

Model Estimation

The ideas set forth above lead to the conclusion that the variables most often thought to affect black electoral success may play an important, and perhaps different, role in the supply of minority candidates. This conclusion has statistical implications. The most common approach of research examining minority representation posits a one-stage model, in which the dependent variable is black winner. While these works have greatly extended our understanding of minority representation, explicitly modeling the two-stage nature of the process may yield further insights into when and if minorities are underrepresented in electoral politics. For example, truly independent factors that affect only one part of the process (e.g., winning the election) can be separated from factors that affect both parts of the process to different degrees. Moreover, some factors may influence the two stages in opposite directions: a black incumbent may decrease the black candidate supply but increase the likelihood of a black candidate winning the election.

More appropriate specifications of the two-step process of black representation reflect the first step of a black candidate running, and then the election of a black candidate among the subsample of the candidates running. Importantly, the second stage is not a random subsample, and thus, the questions examined here require a model that can correct for selection bias. In this paper, I utilize Heckman's selection model. The Heckman selection model is a two-stage model where the second stage (winning) cannot occur without the first stage occurring (running). The logic behind the selection model posits that it is possible that the same unobserved factors that contribute to the outcome in the first stage are correlated with the unobserved factors that contribute to the true outcome of interest. The first equation explains the outcome—did a black candidate win the election? The second, selection equation, uses a discrete binary model to explain whether a black candidate was on the ballot. In Heckman's model, the coefficients and parameters in both equations are estimated simultaneously through maximizing the likelihood of observing the data (Greene 1997).[6] An important parameter estimated in this model is the correlation, ρ, between the errors (nondeterministic components) in the two equations. If the correlation is significantly different than zero, the two processes are likely interdependent and the selection model is appropriate (see online supplemental materials at http://prq.sagepub.com/supplemental for more details of probit model with selection).

Data

Undoubtedly, one reason research on candidate emergence continues to lag behind research on candidate success is lack of data. For one, a comprehensive collection of elections across all levels of office at the candidate level does not yet exist, and creating such a database is a daunting task, given the large number of local, county, and state elections occurring every year. Second, and more importantly, a substantive interest in race can be a challenge, as few states ask candidates to report their race/ethnicity, and fewer still make this information available.

Using data from the *Local Elections in America Project* (Marschall and Shah 2013) gathered for Louisiana, I was able to overcome these challenges. I focus on local elections in Louisiana for two reasons. First, Louisiana is the only state that collects the racial

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identifiers of all candidates for office and makes this information public on its Secretary of State website. Thus, this is a unique opportunity to examine the supply of minority candidates across a variety of offices over time. Voter registration data are electronically available for 2000-2010, and hence, I focus this analysis on that decade. Second, I focus on local elections for a number of reasons. For one, the vast majority of research studying minority descriptive representation has examined municipal and school board elections, and thus, most of what we know regarding the likelihood of a black candidate winning elections comes from investigations of local elections. Furthermore, while blacks have run for offices at all levels of government, local offices are where the lion's share of blacks have won.[7]

Although the racial makeup of Louisiana has been in flux since 2000, the majority of racial minorities in the state are African American. Thus, for this analysis, I focus on black candidates running for subnational elections. Between 2000 and 2010, there were 6,683 local elections in Louisiana.

Dependent Variables

I have two dependent variables of interest. In stage 1, I code the election as 1 if at least one black candidate ran in the election, 0 otherwise. In stage 2, I code the election as 1 if a black candidate won, 0 otherwise.[8]

Independent Variables

Demographic variables are derived from the 2000 and 2010 Census, interpolated for all years, or Louisiana's Secretary of State website, Voter Statistics Archive. Demographic determinants are calculated at the appropriate level (parish, city, or school district),[9] and include *Percent Black Registration, Percent Black Employment*, and *Percent White's (25 years and older) with a Bachelor's Degree* as a proxy for White liberalism.[10] *Percent White Population* is included as a control and is expected to be negatively related to the likelihood of a black candidate running and a black candidate winning.[11]

The Heckman selection model requires inclusion of a selection variable that is not included in the outcome model. Given the theoretical predictions outlined above, I posit a number of the political determinants will be stage-specific. Thus, in the selection model, I include a dummy variable to capture if a *Black Candidate Ever Ran*[12] for this particular office, and a dummy variable for *Open Seat*, which indicates an incumbent is not running in this election. In the outcome model, I include the *Number of Black Candidates* running, and a variable that measures incumbency advantage is included: *Black Incumbent*.

Institutional variables—electoral structure, legislative size—are derived from the election database, or merged from data obtained from website searches. Electoral determinants are the same for both stages of the model: I include a dummy for *Off-Cycle Elections*, and controls for office type (*Executive/Administrative, Judicial*, with *Legislative* as the excluded category) and office level (*School District, Municipal*, or *County* (the excluded category)). Table 1 provides the summary statistics by stage, and the four possible outcomes investigated: black candidate did not run (column 1), black candidate did run (column 2), black candidate did run and lost (column 3), and black candidate did run and won (column 4).

Of particular note is the total number of elections in each category. Between 2000 and 2010, blacks ran in 40 percent of the school district, municipal, and county elections in Louisiana, and won more than two-thirds (68%) of these positions. Importantly, if we had looked at only the outcome, and collapsed the instances in which a black candidate did not win with those in which a black candidate did not run, it would appear that blacks are winning only 27 percent of elections (1,810 of 6,683).

Analysis and Findings

Table 2 presents the results from the Heckman selection model, along with the single probit model of black representation for comparison. The estimate for the parameter, ρ, is significant, justifying the use of the selection model.

Together, two general patterns emerge. First, the results demonstrate that many of the factors commonly included in minority representation models only influence one of the two stages. Indeed, many of the conclusions drawn from traditional one-stage models primarily distinguish between places in which a black candidate did or did not run. Second, a common theme in the results is that the single model has underestimated the effects of demographic, electoral, and political factors. By collapsing opposing influences in the two stages, it has not been possible to disentangle where forces are exerted, and substantive relationships have been masked.

Because the models are neither linear nor additive, I also calculate the marginal effects of each of the independent variables by type of determinant—demographic, electoral, or political. The results presented in Figure 1 show the relative difference in effect for the variables (all others held at their mean or mode), and illustrate quite clearly that the factors that determine minority candidate supply are different than those that determine electoral success for black candidates.

Beginning with the demographic determinants included in the model, the most surprising finding is the marginal effect for percent black registration. Although the size of

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Table 1. Summary Statistics for Heckman Model.

	Stage 1: Black Running?		Stage 2: Given a Black Candidate Ran, Did a Black Win?	
	No (0) *M* (*SD*)	Yes (1) *M* (*SD*)	No (0) *M* (*SD*)	Yes (1) *M* (*SD*)
Percent black registration	25.6 (12.9)	36.8 (14.6)	34.8 (13.0)	37.7 (15.2)
Percent white with bachelor's degree	15.1 (7.42)	17.4 (9.95)	17.5 (9.8)	17.5 (10.0)
Percent black employment	77.8 (8.1)	81.8 (8.38)	81.9 (8.77)	81.7 (8.2)
Percent white	72.9 (15.12)	56.0 (17.4)	58.9 (15.9)	54.6 (18.1)
Open seat?	0.783 (0.411)	0.766 (0.422)		
Black ever ran?	0.476 (0.499)	0.752 (0.431)		
Number black candidates running			1.22 (0.582)	1.80 (1.65)
Black incumbent running?			0.073 (0.260)	0.338 (0.473)
Off-cycle election	0.331 (0.470)	0.290 (0.453)	0.317 (0.465)	0.276 (0.447)
Executive/administrative office	0.271 (0.444)	0.210 (0.150)	0.276 (0.447)	0.240(0.427)
Legislative office	0.545 (0.497)	0.691 (0.461)	0.573 (0.494)	0.674 (0.468)
Judicial office	0.118 (0.323)	0.090 (0.286)	0.139 (0.346)	0.073 (0.260)
County level	0.421 (0.493)	0.308 (0.461)	0.331 (0.470)	0.296 (0.456)
Municipal level	0.355 (0.478)	0.494 (0.500)	0.476 (0.499)	0.503 (0.500)
School district level	0.157 (0.364)	0.190 (0.392)	0.181 (0.385)	0.122 (0.328)
N	4,052	2,631	821	1,810

the black voting bloc, long considered a touchstone force in studies of black representation, is significant across both models, the two-stage model reveals that the magnitude of effect is 10 times greater in the selection model.

How does this affect the predicted likelihood of black representation? Figure 2 examines the effect of increasing the percent of black registered voters between 0 and 50 percent for both models and shows clearly that while the single-stage model and the selection stage of the Heckman model find significant and positive effects of voting strength, the overall influence of this variable is greatly diminished in the single-stage model. Indeed, even at 50 percent black registered voters (around one standard deviation above the mean), the single-stage model is predicting only a 30 percent chance of the black candidate winning. Yet the same level of black registration predicts a greater than 60 percent chance of a black candidate running.

I find similar results for the proxy for black resources, percent black employment. In the single model, the results show no effect, but when disentangled, I find a positive and significant effect for the selection stage. A one standard deviation increase in the percent of black employment increases the likelihood of a black candidate running from 0.406 to 0.421. In other words, black resources are an important factor for shaping the size of the black candidate pool.

The findings regarding the effects of the white population are more complicated. On one hand, as predicted, the size of the white population in the jurisdiction is negatively correlated to black representation. However, as Figure 1 establishes, the effects are much more pronounced at the selection stage. Indeed, the magnitude is nontrivial: A one standard deviation increase in the white population decreases the likelihood of a black candidate running for office by .135. Thus, while the single model confirms the negative relationship, pooling the two stages of representation results in an underestimation of the negative effect.

What about the possibility of a liberal white cross-over voter? The single model posits a negative effect, confirming the more recent findings from Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah (2010) that conclude racial threat hypotheses continue to hold true, particularly in the South. But the selection model illustrates a more nuanced effect. All else equal, increasing the percent of the white population with a bachelor's degree from 17 percent (mean) to 25 percent (one standard deviation increase) raised the likelihood of a black candidate running in an election from .509 to .526, but lowers the likelihood of a black candidate winning the election from .331 to .310. These findings suggest that the inconclusive findings noted above about the role of white liberal voters may reflect the conflation of the two stages of representation. Moreover, they suggest minority candidates may envision a highly educated white population as increasing their viability, but that on election day, they are not the promised coalition partners. To be sure, these findings require additional investigation and corroboration from research specifically examining vote choice.

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Table 2. Pooled Black Representation Models, 2000-2010.

	Single Model[a]	Selection Bias Model[b]	
	Black won?	Selection equation: Black candidate ran?	Outcome equation: Black won?
	b/*SE*	*b*/*SE*	*b*/*SE*
% Black registration	0.017***	0.034***	0.007*
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.003)
% White with bachelor's degree	−0.027***	0.007**	−0.012***
	(0.006)	(0.002)	(0.004)
% Black employment	0.004	0.006***	−0.000
	(0.006)	(0.002)	(0.004)
% White	−0.011*	−0.025***	−0.011**
	(0.005)	(0.002)	(0.004)
Off-cycle election?	−0.286	−0.313***	−0.149
	(0.146)	(0.051)	(0.115)
Black ever ran?	0.918***	1.580***	
	(0.186)	(0.054)	
Open seat?	−0.033	0.673***	
	(0.158)	(0.060)	
Black incumbent?	2.358***		1.184***
	(0.177)		(0.102)
Number of black candidates running	2.440***		0.696***
	(0.086)		(0.055)
Executive seat	−0.451**	−0.246***	−0.354***
	(0.149)	(0.052)	(0.095)
Judicial seat	−0.223	−0.208**	−0.259*
	(0.207)	(0.074)	(0.130)
School district	0.129	−0.086	0.122
	(0.188)	(0.065)	(0.112)
Municipal	0.211	0.733***	0.090
	(0.153)	(0.054)	(0.197)
Constant	−4.749***	−3.240***	−1.601
	(0.537)	(0.168)	(1.222)
ρ		−.560*	
		(0.256)	
N	6683	6683	

[a]Coefficients and standard errors reported are from the single-state probit model.
[b]Coefficients and standard errors reported are from the Heckman selection probit.

Moving on to political determinants, the general pattern continues: compared with the results from the two-stage model, I find that the single model has, in general, underestimated effects. For example, in the single model, prior black candidacy for the seat increases the probability of a black candidate winning 0.051 (0.240 to 0.292). In contrast, the marginal effects of prior black candidacy in the two-stage model are much greater. As hypothesized, the effects of a black candidate running in a previous race are greater at the first stage, in the development of a black candidate supply. Specifically, the likelihood of a black candidate running when a black candidate has run before is almost five times greater than the likelihood of a black candidate running for the first time between 2000 and 2010 (0.536 vs. 0.117). The effects at the second stage are also greater than predicted by the single-stage model.

The single probit model finds null results for open seat elections, but the two-stage model clearly supports the hypothesis that an open seat would lend itself to greater probability of black candidates entering the race. Indeed, all else equal, the likelihood of a black candidate running is 0.437 when an incumbent is not running, as opposed to 0.287 when an incumbent is running. The last two political determinants are restricted to those elections in which a black candidate is running—black incumbency and the number of black candidates. Given that the single probit model includes elections in which a black candidate was

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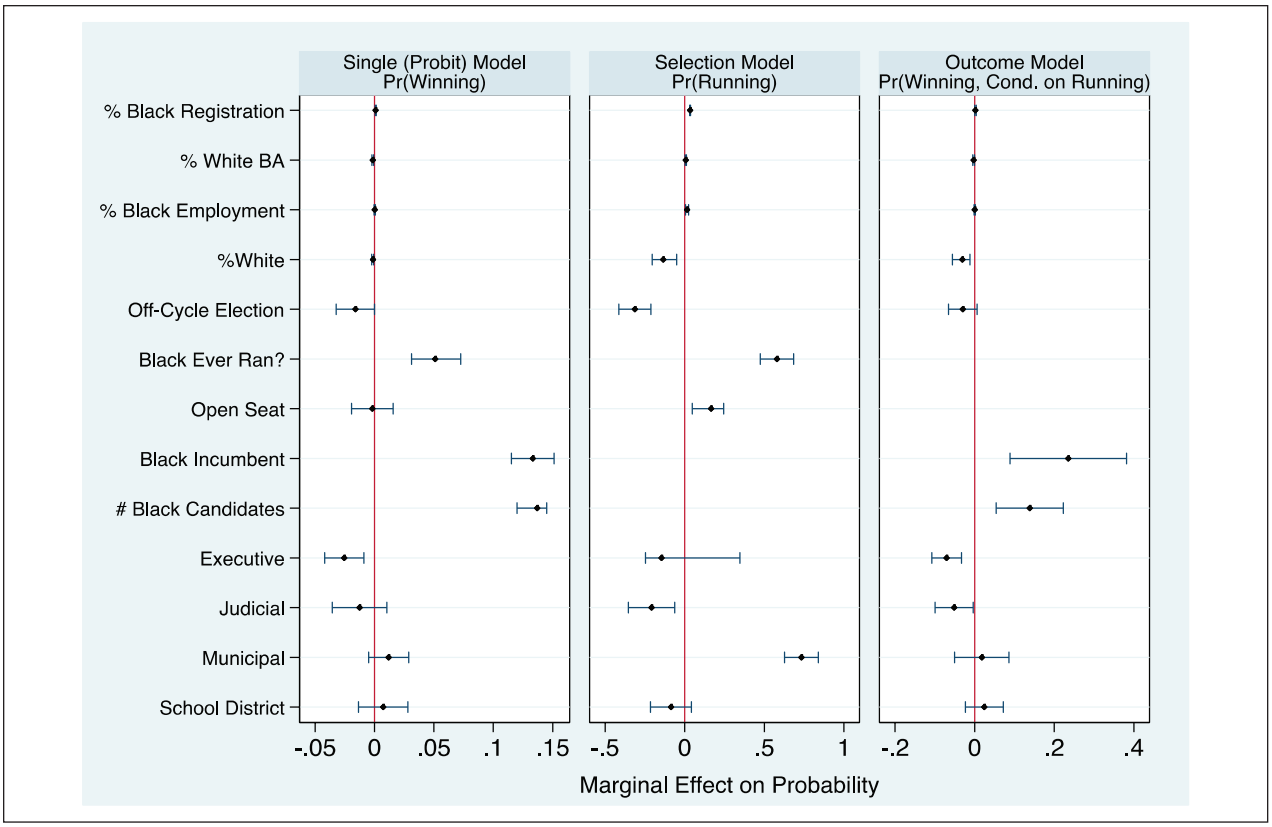

Figure 1. Marginal effects, by model.
Note. Marginal effects calculated using margins in STATA 12. Effects reported are at all other variables held at mean (continuous variables) or mode (dichotomous variables). Single (probit) model reports Pr(winning); selection equation reports Pr(running); and outcome equation reports Pr(winning, conditional, on running).

not on the ballot, it is perhaps not surprising that these effects appear substantially weaker in this model. The two-stage model, on the other hand, finds these two political determinants to be the driving force in the second stage of representation: A black incumbent increases the likelihood of black representation from 0.286 to 0.607, and increasing the number of black candidates for office from 1 to 2 almost doubles the likelihood a black candidate won (0.369 to 0.599).

Finally, I examine the marginal effects of electoral determinants: off-cycle elections and type of office on the likelihood of black representation. The single model estimates suggest that off-cycle elections hurt black representation, confirming much of the previous work investigating election timing on minority electoral success. However, as with most of the indicators included in this model, the two-stage selection bias model estimates demonstrate that these effects are contained within the first stage: does a black candidate run for election? And, the negative effects of off-cycle elections are greater when we pull apart the two parts of the process: it depresses the likelihood of a black candidate running for election 0.086 (0.355 compared with 0.442).

Given the majority of black elected officials hold legislative seats at the municipal level, I hypothesized that the likelihood of a black candidate running in these elections would be greater than those running for executive seats, or for county-level offices. The only consistent finding across both models is the negative effect of executive seats. The selection bias, model, however, concludes that the effects of these electoral determinants are dispersed unevenly across the two stages. In determining the likelihood of a black candidate running, type of seat matters, as legislative offices are significantly more likely to have a black candidate on the ballot than either executive or judicial seats. And I find at this point in the process, level of office also matters: *ceteris paribus*, the probability of a black running in a municipal election is 0.535, compared with 0.330. Once the supply has been determined, however, level of office in inconsequential, and it is only executive seats—mayor, parish president—that become unlikely for a black candidate to win.

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Figure 2. Effects of % black registration on Pr(black representation).

In sum, it is evident that the traditional one-stage approach tells part of the story, but cannot relate the finer details afforded by the two-stage selection model. In conflating the two stages of representation, and not assuring a black candidate ran for office, the one-stage model often fails to identify important relationships. Indeed, it is often when the particular determinant is only relevant in the selection stage—percent black employment, open seat, municipal elections—that I find it to be null in the one-stage model. Moreover, even in those instances in which the single-stage model parallels the findings from the selection model in terms of significance, the figures consistently demonstrate that the substantive effects are diminished.

Conclusion and Implications

Are blacks underrepresented because they are not winning or because they are not running? The results from this study offer evidence that our understanding of when and why minority candidates have failed to achieve greater numbers elected office is incomplete, and that critical differences exist between the first stage of representation—running for office—and the second stage of winning. The results presented here make three important contributions to the scholarship on minority representation.

First, the findings confirm that it takes a black candidate to run for the office to have a nonzero chance of welcoming a minority elected official, and this stage poses the highest hurdle. Indeed, as noted in the discussion of the descriptive statistics, once candidate supply is accounted for, black candidates have a greater than 50 percent chance of winning their election. Importantly, had we only examined the outcomes, the success rate for blacks would be closer to 28 percent, below the state black population average of 33 percent, continuing to contribute to the narrative of underrepresentation. But moreover, that blacks choose not to run in 60 percent of local elections is also telling. As more recent research has demonstrated (Keele, Shah, and White 2013; Juenke and Shah 2013; Shah 2013), black candidates act strategically, avoiding races where the chances of winning are low due to racial competition. In other words, minority representation continues to be a supply and demand issue.

Second, although a supply-side theory of minority representation is still nascent, this analysis examines the most commonly associated variables to descriptive representation, and confirms the proposition that that the mechanism

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underlying running for office may be significantly different than the mechanism underlying winning office. Indeed, few variables matter for both stages. For example, the determinants of a black candidate on the ballot are heavily concentrated among the political and electoral determinants—prior black candidacy, an open seat, and a municipal office. At the second, the largest drivers of success are a black incumbent and the number of black candidates running. Importantly, many of the "usual suspects" determinants of minority representation—voting strength, resources, open seat, and off-cycle elections—play a role solely in the first stage. Thus, we have been ascribing the influence of independent variables to election outcomes when those independent variables are in fact driving candidate emergence. A number of additional variables, including candidate quality and, as Lawless and Fox (2010) argue, *perceptions* of candidate quality, as well as indicators of ambition, are required to unravel this relationship further.

Finally, in comparing the results from the two-stage selection model to the single-stage model, I find that even in those instances in which both find a variable to be significant—percent black registration, or prior candidacy, for example—conflating the two stages of the pathway to representation dramatically diminishes the predicted substantive effect. That is, the single-stage model not only misspecifies the individual contributions of the variables to each stage, but reduces the overall impact of any single determinant.

Undoubtedly, research on the pathways to office for racial and ethnic minorities has been hampered by lack of data. This project capitalized on the *only* current data set that includes race of candidates running for local elections available from the *Local Elections in America Project* (Marschall and Shah 2013). To be sure, Louisiana is not an "average" state in the United States: Louisiana has the 10th largest black population in the United States (Census 2010), is covered under the Voting Rights Act because of a history of voter dilution and disenfranchisement practices, and has some unique subnational offices. However, given the large black population and history with black representation, Louisiana may in fact be a *harder* test of the differences between the single-stage and selection models. Louisiana has the second most number of black elected officials (after Mississippi), but blacks are still underrepresented in elected positions (Adegbile 2008). Moreover, recent studies have argued that Louisiana has the highest level of "overall prejudice" in the country (Elmendorf & Spencer 2013), suggesting that the hurdle of the first stage may be higher. Therefore, the findings that clearly show the limitations of the single-stage model in Louisiana provide a good basis for additional research. And, although Louisiana may be unique in some respects, the greater contribution of this paper remains: developing a larger theory of the pathway to minority office requires an understanding of both stages of representation. Moreover, the need to gather additional candidate-level data cannot be overlooked.

While this study begins to develop a unified model of the process of minority incorporation, it also raises a number of questions. First, how does this process vary for other racial groups? Is the process the same for all racial minority groups, or are there important distinctions? A recent report by the New American Leaders Project (2012) details the rise of Latino, Asian, Arab, and Caribbean candidates in the 2012 elections. Differences in population concentrations, voting registration and turnout rates, and experience with co-racial and co-ethnic representation suggest salient differences in the pathway to office that require additional examination. Second, a question that could not be answered in Louisiana is the question of racial composition of the candidates: what happens when a black candidate, Latino candidate, and white candidate all vie for the same office? How does the composition of the electorate matter? Prior candidacy? Finally, the question of candidate ambition, "What factors encourage lead minority candidates to run for office and subsequently seek higher office?" As the pathway to minority office continues to develop and change, scholars are charged with the task of developing broader theories to explain this new racial and political landscape.

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Notes

1. Data on racial minority officeholding are collected by a number of organizations, including the Joint Center on Political and Economic Studies (Roster of Black Elected Officials), the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (Directory of Latino Elected Officials). While the NALEO directory is updated every year, the JCEPS Roster is not, and thus the most comprehensive data we have for the whole United States is from 2001.

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2. Imagine, for example, two very different elections—one with no minority candidate and the other with a minority candidate. Any statistical model fit to such data will only estimate the conditional mean effects of the independent variables. This averaging, across two very different election contexts generates imprecise empirical portraits of minority electoral success. This situation is analogous to that of analyzing multiparty elections with "bias and information loss" (Katz and King 1999, 16).
3. A large body of scholarship on Latino politics concludes that some of these processes would differ for Latinos, and given my sample, I restrict this discussion to black candidates and elected officials. Future work will examine both racial/ethnic groups jointly.
4. At the second stage of representation—winning the election—I expect the salient characteristics of the black population to be black voter turnout. However, I cannot include registration and turnout in the same models due to high collinearity (.9695). I did rerun the models with black voter turnout instead of registration and found similar results (available from author upon request).
5. A third possibility would have been electoral structures—single-member district versus at-large versus mixed. Because I am looking across types of office in this analysis, and including elections for which all seats are SMD (school board) or all seats are at-large (Mayor), I exclude this variable from this analysis. Forthcoming research will address these differences in more detail.
6. I also estimated selection logit models, with similar results (available upon request).
7. In general, Louisiana's local governments are similar to other local governments across the United States, exhibiting variation in terms of electoral and institutional features (see Marschall 2010 for an overview of local elections in the United States). Louisiana has sixty-four parishes (counties), three hundred and three municipal governments, sixty-nine school districts, and ninety-five special districts. Most (forty-one) parishes are governed by a "police jury," which functions as a county commission. The other twenty-three have various other forms of government, including president-council, council-manager, parish commission, and consolidated parish/city. Parish councils range from three to fifteen members, with a mean of 9.5. Other commonly elected parish officials include sheriff and tax assessor. Each parish also elects a school board, which ranges in size from six to fifteen and has a mean of 9.6 members. While school board members typically serve six-year terms, all other parish elected officials serve only four-year terms. Municipal officials include the mayor, chief of police, and council or board of Alderman.
8. Works by Trounstine and Valdini (2008) and Lawless (2012) note important differences between black men and women, and thus future work is considering the issue of intersectionality between race and gender.
9. Although I have outcome data at the election level (i.e., Seat 5 on the City Council), I do not have demographic data at this level (precinct) over time, and thus cannot examine these questions at the election level.
10. Ideally, I would include a proportion of the white population that is Democratic for this variable, but I do not have the information broken down at the local level. Thus, I follow the long line of literature that links education to liberalism (see, for example, Glaser 1994; Tesler and Sears 2010; Weil 1985) and other empirical studies that have operationalized liberalism via a higher education proxy (Marschall, Ruhil, and Shah 2010; Rocha and Espino 2009; Shah 2010).
11. I would have included the white registered voter percentage, but this is highly correlated with the black registered voter percentage (.9213). Thus, I use the total white population as a proxy.
12. The database goes to 1989, and thus, I presume 1989 to be the start of the time frame, although I acknowledge that blacks held office prior to 1989.

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