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ABSTRACT

When Criminality Begets Crime: The Role of Elected Politicians in India*

This paper estimates the causal impact of electing criminally accused politicians and their nature of criminality on crime in India. We exploit the quasi-random variation in the outcome of close elections between candidates with and without criminal accusations to instrument the share of constituencies in the district won by criminally accused leaders. We find that a standard deviation increase in the share of criminally accused leaders in institutionally weaker states leads to a 4.3 percent increase in crime in districts, including crimes against women. The effect is more pronounced when the leaders are accused of serious crimes, indicating that seriously accused leaders have a detrimental impact on society.

JEL Classification: D72, D73, K42, O17

Keywords: crime, criminal accusations, elected leaders, close elections, India

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"Parliament should frame a law that makes it obligatory for political parties to remove leaders charged with 'heinous and grievous' crimes, such as rape, murder, and kidnapping, to name only a few, and refuse ticket to offenders in both Parliamentary and Assembly polls."

- Supreme Court of India, 2018

1 Introduction

In many parts of the world, the criminalization of politics – linkages between criminals and politicians – has become a threat to society (Kochanek, 2010; Brown, 2017; Godson, 2017). However, significant concerns arise when criminally accused individuals themselves become elected representatives.[1] This situation is further exacerbated when these representatives turn out to be charged with serious crimes such as murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, and rape.[2] While criminality in politics is prevalent in many countries, India is experiencing it on a larger scale (Vaishnav, 2017). Despite the Supreme Court of India's suggestion to the Indian Parliament to frame a law against seriously accused candidates, these candidates continue to participate and win both the Parliamentary and State Assembly elections in the country.[3,4] Addressing this requires stronger interventions, e.g., eliminating voter frictions, as it is not self-corrective (George et al., 2018). Furthermore, high share of seriously accused leaders weakens law enforcement (Kim and Lee, 2022) and, therefore, is likely to result in various socioeconomic costs to society (Rothe, 2009).

In this paper, we examine how criminally accused state legislative representatives impact the crime environment of their legislative regions. The impact of criminally accused leaders on the crime environment of the district is *a priori* ambiguous. It is widely documented that leaders with criminal backgrounds can impact crime in opposing directions,

[1] A large number of White House officials face criminal charges, and almost every prominent politician in Brazil is under criminal investigation, for example, see (Motta et al., 2017).

[2] Pakistani leaders are accused of rape, and Brazilian leaders are accused of ordering murders, for example, see (BBC News, 2020).

[3] See (Rajagopal, 2018).

[4] E.g., in the 2020 Bihar State Assembly elections in India, 68 percent of elected candidates possessed a criminal history, with surprisingly 75 percent of them accused of serious crimes (Kumar, 2018).

making this an open empirical question. One stream of research recognizes the direct or indirect support received by *mafias* from elected criminally accused politicians leading to more criminal cases in the area (Paoli, 2014). The *nexus* between mafias and politicians is a common phenomenon in regions with a weak state and judicial capacity (Williams, 2009; Acemoglu et al., 2020). In addition, areas with weaker state capacity are characterized by bottlenecks that render plans and efforts for improvements ineffective (Blattman et al., 2022).

On the other hand, the second stream of research explains the voters' decision by rejecting the "ignorant voter hypothesis". It argues that voters do not expect any support from the weak institutions of the state and, therefore, intentionally elect criminally accused politicians as they consider these leaders their *Godfathers* who can support the local community during socioeconomic distress (Vaishnav, 2017). This literature highlights that when influential politicians with extra-judicial violence (the so-called "godfathers") are in power, some criminals in the area exercise restraint resulting in lesser criminal cases. In regions with weaker state capacity, this becomes further complicated when taking into account the co-existence and an *implied competition* between *mafias* and state governing bodies (Blattman et al., 2022; Nikita et al., 2021).

We explore this question by analyzing the impact of electing a criminally accused politician on crime in their jurisdictions. In 2003, the Supreme Court of India recognized the issue of the rising share of criminally accused politicians in the country. It announced a landmark verdict that every candidate contesting an election must file an affidavit disclosing relevant background details, including criminal cases. Using the affidavits data supplied by The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and the data from The Election Commission of India (ECI), we construct a candidate-election year panel of candidate characteristics such as criminal cases, charges leveled, and the nature of those charges. We combine this data with district-level crime reports from India's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), thereby generating a district-year panel covering all state legislative assembly elections from 2005 to 2017 in India.

The main identification challenge here is the unobserved heterogeneity in voter behavior and candidate characteristics which correlate with the crime environment. For instance, a surge in criminal cases in the district might propel some voters to carefully look at the candidates' background, especially their criminal history, while voting (George et al., 2018). Another potential source of bias is that the entry of a criminally accused individual into the electoral domain might result from the crime environment of the district. We address these endogeneity issues by using a fixed-effect instrumental variables strategy. We exploit quasi-random variation in the outcome of close elections between candidates with and without criminal accusations. Specifically, we instrument the share of constituencies in the district won by criminally accused leaders with the share of constituencies in the district having criminally accused leaders who won in close elections against non-criminally accused leaders. This strategy has been used extensively in the political economy literature to study the impact of political leaders' characteristics on various outcomes (Clots-Figueras, 2012; Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras, 2014; Bhalotra et al., 2014; Nellis and Siddiqui, 2018; Lahoti and Sahoo, 2020).

The validity of this identification strategy relies on the assumption of quasi-randomness of the outcome of close elections (Lee, 2008; Eggers et al., 2015). We conduct several tests to check the internal validity of our estimation strategy, showing that close election outcomes are not manipulated, and they are uncorrelated with any pre-determined constituency level characteristics. These tests support the identifying assumption that the empirical strategy is able to adequately account for other unobserved characteristics that are correlated with criminality, and therefore, provide a better estimation of effect of a leader's criminality. Further, our estimation strategy considers the possibility that the existence of close elections in a district may not be random. To address this, the empirical specification controls for the district-level fraction of constituencies having close elections between a criminally accused and a non-criminally accused candidate and the vote margin between these candidates.

We find that leaders accused of *any* crime have a positive effect on total incidents of crime, but this effect is statistically not different from zero. However, looking at a set of

states in India with historically weak socioeconomic outcomes and institutions (referred to as BIMAROU states)[5], we find that the winning of a criminally accused politician leads to a significant increase in incidents of crime. A standard deviation increase in the share of constituencies having a criminally accused leader results in a 4.3 percent rise in the number of crimes per year in the district. The impact on all other states is small, negative, and statistically the same as zero. This result provides evidence that the impact of criminally accused leaders on the crime is positive and that it is concentrated in areas with weaker institutions and the rule of law.

While criminal charges may be imposed on politicians following the legal course, they are all not of a similar nature. Therefore, it is important to study the impact by specific nature of the criminal charges. While the charges related to murder, kidnapping, sexual assault, rape, etc., are very serious, political candidates often have other *minor* criminal charges such as protests, public tranquility violations, etc., which are different. For the leaders accused of *serious* crimes, we find that they have no discernible impact on local crime in the entire sample of states. However, looking only within the BIMAROU states, we find that a standard deviation increase in the share of *seriously* accused politicians led to a 5.8 percent increase in the annual incidence of crimes in the district. We also show that these impacts are indeed due to the seriousness of the crimes rather than the number of cases that the leaders are accused of. These findings provide evidence in favor of the literature emphasizing the nexus between criminally accused politicians, especially those accused of serious crimes, and mafias in the institutionally weak environment (Vaishnav, 2017; Berenschot, 2011).

To examine which types of crimes are impacted by the seriously accused leaders, we further divide the total number of criminal cases in the districts into three categories: Crimes against women, Gender neutral crimes, and other crimes.[6] We find that crime

[5]BIMAROU is a term for grouping the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh. These states have demonstrated weaker social and economic outcomes along with a weak rule of law and higher corruption (Prakash et al., 2019; Fisman et al., 2014).

[6]'Other crimes' includes all those crime categories that NCRB does not consistently define over the years. Consistently defined crimes are divided between 'Crimes against women' and 'Gender neutral crimes.' For details see Table 1.

against women increases in response to having a higher share of seriously accused leaders in the district; the effect is significant in the sample of all states and especially magnified in the BIMAROU states. In addition, while we do not find any impact on 'gender-neutral crimes,' we find an increase in 'other crimes,' which is concentrated only in the BIMAROU states.

The robustness of these results holds up to a range of specification tests, varying definitions of a close election, alternate measures of the main outcome variable, different definitions for classifying institutionally weak states, and falsification tests. Further, we restrict the sample to districts with a single close election between a seriously accused and a non-seriously accused or non-accused candidate. This sub-sample allows us to test the robustness of our findings using a sharp regression discontinuity design (RDD). The sharp RDD estimate shows a consistent picture; the incidence of crime increases when a seriously accused candidate wins in a close election, especially in BIMAROU states.

Our work contributes to several bodies of literature. Most narrowly, our result contributes to the literature exploring the impact of criminally accused politicians on various socioeconomic outcomes in India (Chemin, 2012; Nanda and Pareek, 2016; Prakash et al., 2019; Cheng and Urpelainen, 2019). A few studies have looked at the potential impact on crime, but the evidence has been either mixed or inconclusive (Chemin, 2012; Cheng and Urpelainen, 2019; Kim and Lee, 2022).[7] Our analysis is built on a comprehensive framework that takes into account the interplay between *the nature of criminality* of the politician and the *quality of institutions* of the state in this context. Furthermore, we use district-level panel data spanning almost a decade and employ an instrumental variable strategy that is well established in the literature to identify the causal effect in such a setting (Clots-Figueras, 2012; Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras, 2014; Nellis and Siddiqui, 2018). In particular, we carefully look into each section of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to identify the nature of

[7] Chemin (2012) uses data for 2002-2006 to estimate an OLS regression with state and year fixed effects, and finds a positive association of criminal leaders with crime outcomes. However, the analysis does not control for district-level unobserved heterogeneity or other potential confounding factors that vary over time. Cheng and Urpelainen (2019) uses an instrumental variable analysis to find no effect of criminal politicians on local law and order or perceived crime. On the contrary, Kim and Lee (2022) find a negative impact of criminal leaders on crimes; they interpret this result as evidence for suppression of crime reporting that may emanate from a weakening of law enforcement due to the influence of a criminally accused leader.

the offense committed by the political candidates. The IPC is the official criminal code of India covering all aspects of criminal law, and it acts as the primary guiding document for law enforcement. A detailed understanding of the IPC helps us identify seriously accused leaders from the pool of criminally accused leaders. Our results indicate that leaders accused of serious crimes could be more costly than those accused of any crime, especially in economically and institutionally weak states. One possible mechanism behind this result could be the *nexus* between seriously accused leaders and mafias in the weak states. Thus, our result is consistent with the suggestion made by the Supreme Court of India to the Parliament about making a law or policy to deal with seriously accused leaders (Rajagopal, 2018). More importantly, we further confirm that this suggestion is more relevant for states with weaker institutions.

We further contribute to the studies that focus on voters' preference or response towards criminally accused politicians in India (George et al., 2018; Banerjee et al., 2014). These two papers conduct randomized control trials in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (one of the BIMAROU states) that support the ignorant voter hypothesis. Our finding is consistent with these studies as we find an increase in criminal cases in BIMAROU states, which indicates the possibility of ties between *mafias* and politicians in the state. These ties could directly or indirectly result from a lack of information about criminally accused politicians to the poor voters.

More broadly, we contribute to the literature exploring the causes of the increasing crime in society (Entorf and Spengler, 2002), studies that focus on heterogeneity across Indian states while finding the impact of political leaders' characteristics (Lahoti and Sahoo, 2020; Prakash et al., 2019), literature concerned with politicians' quality based on their different characteristics (De Paola et al., 2010; Martinez-Bravo, 2017), and to the discussion on the criminalization of politics that focuses on crime in the political economy context (Paoli, 2014).

2 Background and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Political Structure in India

India is a federal republic with a bicameral parliamentary system. The Parliament of India is the national legislative body, headed by the President, comprising an Upper House and a Lower House. The Upper House, also known as Rajya Sabha or Council of States, consists of the members elected by the States and nominated by the President of India. On the other hand, the Lower House, also known as Lok Sabha or House of the People, consists of the members elected by the country's voting population. The members of both the houses, Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, are referred to as Members of the Parliament (MPs).

Like the national structure, the state legislature also comprises an Upper House, known as the Legislative Council, and a lower house, known as the Legislative Assembly. Each state is divided into several state assembly constituencies, and the voting population of each constituency elects a representative, who becomes a member of the Lower House, State Legislative Assembly.[8] The term of the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), who the people directly elect, is usually fixed at five years. They hold considerable legislative, financial, and executive powers during their term. They also have various electoral powers; for instance, one-third of the State Legislative Council members are elected by the MLAs. Besides these constitutional roles, they significantly influence the bureaucratic and social environment owing to their powers. Therefore, MLAs play an integral role in defining the public's political, economic, and socio-cultural environment.

2.2 Criminality in Indian Politics

The *nexus* between crime and politics in India has been a known phenomenon as the criminals and politicians have always sought each others' support (Berenschot, 2011). While politicians have been dependent on criminals to mobilize votes, redistribute funds, and

[8]These elections follow the "first past the post" voting system where the candidate who receives the majority votes wins.

fix the police, criminals have sought direct or indirect support from the political leaders to keep committing crimes but remain outside the law (Kim and Lee, 2022). However, some instances in the Indian political history, such as the weakening of the hegemonic Congress party and the decay in the rule of law, have pulled criminals into the political realm (Vaishnav, 2017). As a result, they have started contesting and winning the Parliamentary and Assembly elections in the country (Prakash et al., 2019). Therefore, why criminals choose to enter politics, why political parties give them tickets, and why voters prefer to elect them have become the most debatable questions in recent times.

One strand of the literature has supported the ignorant voter hypothesis as one of the main reasons behind the existence of criminals in politics (Banerjee et al., 2014). On the contrary, Vaishnav (2017) argues that it is a result of the rational behavior of informed voters. The elections and marketplace are comparable as agents work in their self-interest in both scenarios. From the supply side, the criminals, who are essentially lawbreakers, seek an opportunity to portray themselves as lawmakers to gain direct protection by holding the office. On the other hand, the demand of these criminals into the electoral domain relies on voters' demand, well-mediated by political parties (Tiwari, 2014). Criminal candidates' ability to self-finance themselves saves political parties' struggle to arrange large funds for their campaigning and, therefore, provides an incentive in the competitive electoral market (Kapur and Vaishnav, 2013).[9]

Therefore, the lack of information regarding candidates' backgrounds or any misinformation is not the only reason criminal candidates win elections; rather, there are several other reasons. First, a candidate's criminal reputation is a signal of their willingness and ability to bend the rules to protect their community's interests, especially by redistributing public sector benefits in a patronage democracy (Kitschelt et al., 2007; Wade, 1985). Second, voters often do not trust the administration; they keep seeking social insurance to protect themselves from administrative injustice. The inability, or unwillingness, of the state to address social matters or disputes may encourage voters to choose a local arbiter

[9]Criminal candidates refer to politicians who are charged in any criminal case, and the legal system has taken cognizance against them. They are not conclusively proven guilty by a court of law yet.

as their leader. Such a choice may also be based on ethnic ties to candidates and parties rather than their qualities (Horowitz, 2000; Chauchard, 2014). Third, voters may turn to these criminal leaders as their last resort if they experience some economic or personal shock in their lives (Gutiérrez-Romero and LeBas, 2020). Therefore, a notorious criminal might be an antisocial element to the police, but, to his society, he could be a local "Robinhood" or "dada" [10] who will help them stand against all the odds and, therefore, becomes the choice of the voting population.[11]

2.3 Nature of Criminality

The "politics of India" is intrinsically fabricated with the "politics of protest". This protesting environment in the country has led many politicians and activists to face minor criminal charges against them. These public tranquility violations, a regular expression of Indian politics, are qualitatively different from serious charges like murder, rape, and physical assault. The nature of criminality, reflected through the type of charges, plays a vital role in defining the identity of a criminally accused politician (Asher and Novosad, 2018). Thus, a politician accused of minor charges of protesting against the government cannot be compared to a politician charged with serious amounts of rape and murder.[12] This paper distinguishes politicians accused of serious crimes from politicians accused of any type of crime.

[10] Dada, a Hindi word, refers to the godfather for a particular section of the society.

[11] For instance, Mukhtar Ansari, an influential criminal politician in Uttar Pradesh, has himself claimed in an interview: "If someone calls me a 'mafia don,' it makes no difference. Can they name one person I have attacked from a weaker section? I have always fought against the powerful; I have taken power from them. Anyone I killed got what they deserved, but it is not like I killed a boatload of people... If anyone troubles the poor, I will murder them".

[12] For instance, Arvind Kejriwal, the Chief Minister of Delhi, was accused of an unlawful assembly during a protest in 2012. He supported the proposed bill against corruption in the Parliament during these protests. Two years later, Pappu Yadav, a politician from Bihar state, made his re-entry to the Parliament after years of imprisonment. He has more than 20 criminal cases against him, including serious charges of murder. Both the leaders are accused of criminal offenses; however, the charges against them are not similar. In the latter case, i.e., a politician accused of serious crimes can be more capable of abusing the powers and have adverse consequences on the environment than the former.

2.4 Weak Rule of Law Environment

As discussed in Section 1, there are two contradicting views about the impact of criminally accused leaders on the crime environment of the district. Both statements are based on the common premise of a weak rule of law environment.

The first view connects the existence of seriously accused leaders in the weak states with the further deterioration of law and order. This phenomenon is popularly known as "Mafia Raj" or "Jungle Raj".[13] The seriously accused leaders in these states are either well-networked mafias or are connected to the mafias, directly or indirectly taking advantage of the weak law and order and, therefore, creating an environment where more crimes can be committed easily.[14]

The second view argues that these seriously accused leaders burnish their accusations to create voters' support in the weak states. Their entry into the political domain and existence as a "Robinhood" for the particular section of society, who vote for them knowing their background, is highly dependent on the weak rule of law environment. While seriously accused leaders prefer to get elected in the weak states as they can bend the rules comfortably, voters decide to elect these leaders as they do not trust the state's weak institutions.[15] These voters consider these leaders a substitute for the weak institutions as they expect these leaders to support them during their socioeconomic distress.

Several pieces of evidence suggest that both the scenarios mentioned above are prevalent in India's institutionally weak states, such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh, known as the BIMAROU states (Prakash et al., 2019).[16] These states are also known for higher levels of corruption that enable politicians to engage in unlawful

[13]The "Mafia Raj" is a series of intimate representations of gangster politicians and their commanding and charismatic spheres of influence on the society (see (The Print, 2020; Rashid, 2020; Subramanian, 2016) for recent examples in media).

[14]For example, Lalu Yadav's reign in Bihar was often termed as "Jungle Raj" where his men operating in Nalanda, Nawada, and Patna districts regularly made it to the newspapers headlines by their unrelenting spate of kidnappings in the capital town of Patna.

[15]Approximately 25% of the elections in BIMAROU states are won by criminally accused politicians with the analogous figure of 16% in Non-BIMAROU states.

[16]The word "BIMAROU" resembles the Hindi word "Bimar", which means sick, which is an acronym formed from the names of the Indian states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh.

activities for their private gains (Fisman et al., 2014). Therefore, we incorporate this aspect in our analysis by exploring heterogeneity based on the institutionally weak "BIMAROU" states versus other states.

2.5 Elected Politicians and Crime Outcomes

The main focus of our study is on crime outcomes that can be driven by the extent of crime occurrence and crime reporting – both of which can be influenced by the politicians. The maintenance of law and order within the state comes under the scope of the respective state governments in India. This system enables the Member of the Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) – the elected politicians – to influence the crime environment and public administration responsible for crime control, including the police force and bureaucrats. The administrative machinery for maintaining law and order is primarily composed of non-politically recruited civil servants.[17] Nevertheless, politicians affiliated with the state government significantly influence the assignment of officers for specific positions, transfers across posts, and promotion prospects (Iyer and Mani, 2012). Kim and Lee (2022) show that senior police officers have shorter tenure in districts where criminally accused politicians are elected. Knowing the influence of the politicians, the top-level bureaucrats may avoid actions that clash with the interest of the local MLAs (Nellis et al., 2016). This is even more applicable for subordinate police officers who are mostly recruited within the state (Aneja and Ritadhi, 2021).

In this context, the potential impact of MLAs on *crime occurrence* may not be the same as their impact on *crime reporting*, as these two processes are different (Iyer et al., 2012). The prevailing law-and-order environment of a constituency, under the influence of an MLA, may determine whether a potential criminal commits a crime; it may also affect the victim's decision regarding whether to report the crime to the police or whether the police indeed records the crime.

[17] At the district level, the police force is headed by the Commissioner of Police (CP) or by the Superintendent of Police (SP) working with the District Magistrate (DM). These positions are part of the prestigious Indian Police Service (IPS) or Indian Administrative Service (IAS), where recruitment is done through a competitive examination.

A criminally accused MLA may weaken the ability and effort of the police force to maintain law and order in the constituency, leading to a higher rate of crime occurrence. As discussed before, the incidence of crime may also vary depending on whether there is a nexus between the perpetrator and the MLA. Even if crime occurrence increases, the MLA may influence the law enforcement priorities of the police, reducing the responsiveness of police in recording and investigating the crime. Such behavior from the police may also discourage victims from reporting crimes. Thus, the overall effect of criminally accused leaders on the number of documented crimes is ambiguous. We may observe an overall negative effect if crime reporting reduces or potential criminals who are not connected with the MLA exercise restraint. Whereas an overall positive effect on documented crime, despite the possibility of under-reporting, is likely to imply that actual crime occurrence is going up. We further explain our outcome variable, i.e., the number of documented crimes, in section 3.2.

3 Data and Variables Description

3.1 Elections Data and Treatment Variables

The data on elected politicians comes from the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). In particular, we use the state assembly elections from 2005 to 2017 to construct candidate-level data. ECI provides all the necessary information about the election, including total candidates, name and position of all the candidates, total voters, total electorate size, total votes received by each candidate, and party-affiliation details. On the other hand, ADR provides all the additional information available after the 2003 Supreme Court verdict, compiled through all the affidavits filed by candidates before contesting the election. This additional information includes education level, number of criminal cases, type of criminal charges, assets, liabilities, and many other vital details of the candidates contesting the election. Using the IPC (Indian Penal Code), we are further able to identify the candidates with *serious* criminal accu-

sations against them.[18] According to the IPC, serious offenses are defined as intention, preparation, attempt, and accomplishment of offenses against the human body.[19]

3.2 Crime Data and Outcome Variables

Data on crime comes from the *Crime in India* publication of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India from 2005 to 2018. This data consists of the number of crime cases reported by district, year, and crime categories by aggregating information from all the police stations. The flow of information starts when a cognizable offense gets recorded in a First Information Report (FIR) at a particular police station. FIR, recorded under one of the crime heads, refers to the written document prepared by police to register a complaint under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The cases recorded under all the crime heads at all police stations are compiled by the District Crime Records Bureau (DCRB), where the first round of data validation is conducted. The second round of validation is conducted by the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) after compiling data from all DCRBs before being handed over to NCRB. Our main outcome variable, Total IPC Crime, is the sum of total crime cases reported by NCRB under all the crime heads and, therefore, reported under all the sections of IPC. We later divide this variable into consistently and inconsistently reported crime categories to form new categories of outcomes out of consistently reported crime heads.[20] We divide consistently reported crime categories into Crime Against Women and Gender Neutral Crime, whereas all the inconsistent crime heads get clubbed in Other Crimes. Table 1 presents the summary statistics of the crime data showing the averages of the different categories of crime across all samples.

[18]Serious crimes refer to all the crimes reported under chapter 16 and chapter 22 of the Indian Penal Code. Chapter 16, consisting of sections 299 to 377 of IPC, refers to all the offenses against the human body, and chapter 22, consisting of sections 503 to 510 of IPC, refers to all the offenses reported under criminal intimidation, insult, and annoyance.

[19]For instance, life threat given by anonymous communication, which comes under section 507, is part of chapter 22 and homicide committed, which comes under section 299, is part of chapter 16.

[20]Consistently reported crime heads are the crime categories whose underlying IPCs have remained the same for the period under consideration.

3.3 Combined Data

State assembly elections are conducted at the constituency level, whereas the crime data provided by NCRB in its annual publication is available at the district level, which is higher than the constituency level (i.e., constituencies are nested within districts). Therefore, we aggregate our constituency level treatment variables at the district level to determine the causal impact of criminality and the nature of criminality of politicians on the crime environment of the district. For example, the main treatment variable becomes the district-level fraction of criminally accused leaders. A similar analysis at the district level has been carried out by various other studies investigating the impact of politicians' characteristics, such as gender, education, and religion, on socioeconomic outcomes in India (Clots-Figueras, 2012; Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras, 2014; Bhalotra et al., 2014; Lahoti and Sahoo, 2020; Bhalotra et al., 2021).

Once a leader is elected, the electoral term lasts for five years. Hence, we identify leaders in power in a given year and create district-level annual panel data on politicians. We merge this data with NCRB data at the district level. Moreover, all states conduct assembly elections once every five years, but at different times, i.e., the electoral cycles are not synchronized across states. Therefore, we restrict our analysis sample from 2009 onward as this is the first year after the Supreme Court verdict when data on all the variables are available for all the states. Before 2009, we had data on selected states, which cannot be referred to as fully representative data at the all-India level.[21] This results in a district-year panel of 5,134 observations. We present the summary statistics for the main variables using the district-year level data in Tables 1 and 2. We find that the average fraction of leaders accused of any crime is 0.3, while the average fraction of leaders accused of serious crimes is 0.17 in the sample.

[21] This is because data on criminality and related candidate characteristics are available from the first election that took place after the Supreme Court verdict implemented from 2004. Since election cycles are five years and asynchronous across the states, the first election post-2004 for a given state can be between 2004 and 2009. However, we get qualitatively similar results even if we include the pre-2009 data.

4 Empirical Strategy

Our objective is to evaluate the effect of criminally accused leaders, as compared to leaders who are not criminally accused, on crime outcomes in the district. We also make a distinction between leaders who are accused of *any* crime and leaders who are accused of *serious* crimes. Hence, we present two sets of estimates, each capturing either the effect of leaders accused of any crime or those accused of serious crimes. As explained in the previous section, for each district in a given year, we aggregate the constituency level information on political leaders and merge it with the data on the outcome variables. Thus, our main treatment variable is the fraction of leaders accused (or seriously accused) in a district for a given year.

In the baseline specification, we postulate that leaders in period t would affect the crime environment such that the impact would show up in period $(t+1)$.[22] This relationship is presented in the following equation:

$$C_{ds(t+1)} = \alpha_{ds} + \delta_{st} + \beta A_{dst} + \epsilon_{ds(t+1)} \tag{1}$$

where $C_{ds(t+1)}$ refers to the total crime count in-district d in state s at time $(t+1)$ and A_{dst} refers to the fraction of seats held by an accused politician in-district d in state s at time t. The time-invariant unobserved factors are captured by district fixed effects, α_{ds}, which also subsumes state-level heterogeneity. We also control for the time-varying unobserved factors at the state level by including state-specific year fixed effects, δ_{st}, which also absorbs the overall year fixed effects capturing any year-specific macroeconomic shocks. Standard errors are clustered at the district level to allow for any possible correlation between observations from the same district.

Despite the inclusion of fixed effects to control for unobservables at various levels, our

[22] We capture the immediate impact of an accused leader by considering crime outcomes in the next period $(t+1)$. This specification is similar to other studies such as Prakash et al. (2019) investigating the effect of criminally accused leaders on economic growth. We find qualitatively similar results if we consider crime outcomes at $(t+2)$.

model cannot rule out the possibility of unobserved time-varying district-specific factors that are correlated with both A_{dt} and $C_{d(t+1)}$. For instance, a sudden surge in heinous crime incidents in some districts may have propelled the voters to look carefully at the criminal record of politicians contesting the election and decide who to vote accordingly. Such unobservable district-level factors changing over time can make our treatment variable endogenous.

In the main specification, we utilize an instrumental variable approach to address the problem of endogeneity. The fraction of assembly constituency seats won by the accused politicians in a district is instrumented by the fraction of seats won by the accused politicians in close elections.[23] Following (Nellis and Siddiqui, 2018; Lahoti and Sahoo, 2020; Bhalotra et al., 2021) we define close elections as those where the margin of victory is less than 3 percent of total votes and consider alternative thresholds to define close elections as a robustness exercise. The instrument is constructed on the premise that there is no clear voters' preference in the constituency where an accused politician wins against a non-accused politician by a small margin or vice-versa. Therefore, the constituency where an accused won in a close election is ex-ante comparable to the constituency where a non-accused won in a close election as the margin of victory is arbitrarily small, implying winning has happened by chance. Therefore, the outcome of the close election is random for each constituency, and hence the average of the same at the district level can be considered random too. This quasi-random method of identification is extensively used in the literature to identify the impact of political leaders' identity on various economic and social outcomes (Clots-Figueras, 2011, 2012; Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras, 2014; Bhalotra et al., 2014; Nellis and Siddiqui, 2018; Lahoti and Sahoo, 2020; Bhalotra et al., 2021). We further examine the assumptions of this empirical strategy in a later section.

The model for the two-stage least square (2SLS) method employing this instrumental variable strategy is given below:

[23] Close elections are defined as the elections where the vote margin between the top two candidates, i.e., the winner and the runner-up, in a constituency is arbitrarily small.

$$C_{ds(t+1)} = \alpha_{ds} + \delta_{st} + \beta A_{dst} + \gamma TC_{dst} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \mu_j I_{jdst} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \pi_j I_{jdst} \times F(M_{jdst}) + \epsilon_{ds(t+1)} \quad (2)$$

$$A_{dst} = \omega_{ds} + \zeta_{st} + \lambda AC_{dst} + \tau TC_{dst} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \nu_j I_{jdst} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \sigma_j I_{jdst} \times F(M_{jdst}) + \eta_{dst} \quad (3)$$

The above two equations refer to the second and first stage of the two-stage least square specification. A_{dst} referring to the fraction of constituencies in the district where an accused politician has won the election against a non-accused politician is the main variable of interest and potentially endogenous. In the first stage presented by Equation (3), the main variable of interest is predicted by the instrument AC_{dst}, which refers to the fraction of constituencies in the district where an accused politician has won against a non-accused politician in a close election.

While we argue that the outcome of a close election is random, we acknowledge the possibility that the presence of a close election itself may not be random. For instance, a close election between the top two candidates who differ in their criminality status can depend on the number of accused and non-accused candidates in the district. Further, the incidence of close elections may also reflect the competitiveness in the political environment, which may affect the outcome variable. To address this, we include the fraction of close elections between accused and non-accused candidates in the district, TC_{dst}, as an additional control variable.[24] We also control for I_{jdst}, which is a dummy variable indicating the existence of an election between an accused politician versus a non-accused politician in the j-th constituency of a district. $F(M_{jdst})$ refers to a polynomial function of the vote-margin (M_{jdst}) between an accused and a non-accused candidate. Similar to a regression discontinuity design, we include the polynomial function of the vote margin

[24]This also ensures that the exclusion criterion is met, as after controlling for a fraction of close elections in the district, the instrument (AC_{dst}) can affect the outcome only through the overall fraction of accused leaders in the district (A_{dst}).

whenever there is an election between an accused and a non-accused politician, as given by the interaction between I_{jdst} and $F(M_{jdst})$. We consider a linear function of margin in the main regression, but in the subsequent robustness analysis, we also consider the quadratic and cubic functions of the vote margin.

This empirical strategy takes advantage of the "first-past-the-post" voting system, where the probability of winning is a function of the vote margin. If we consider the top two candidates, then the probability that a given candidate wins is a function of the difference in vote-share between the candidate and their competitor. This probability changes discontinuously at the point where the difference in vote-share (or vote-margin) is zero, i.e., one needs to have a higher vote-share than their competitor to become a winner. Considering elections where the top two contestants are an accused and a non-accused, in an arbitrarily small neighborhood around the discontinuity, the winner is determined by chance. Therefore, the discontinuous change in winning probability in a close election is essentially similar to the random assignment of treatment. In the spirit of a fuzzy regression discontinuity design, our instrumental variable strategy aggregates these constituency-specific discontinuities to exploit quasi-random variation in the treatment at the district level.

5 Validity of the Identification Strategy

We conduct various tests to check for the instrument's validity and close-election-related assumptions. For brevity and considering the main results of our study presented in the subsequent sections, we show the results of these tests mostly for elections involving seriously accused candidates in this section. However, the same tests show similar patterns for elections involving leaders accused of any crime.

5.1 Validity of the Instrument

To validate that our instrument is a good predictor of the endogenous variable, we show the first stage regression results in Table 3. Panel A presents the effect of leaders accused of any crime; thus, the endogenous variable – a fraction of seats won by accused candidates – is instrumented by the fraction of seats won by accused candidates in close elections between accused and non-accused candidates. Similarly, Panel B shows the effect of leaders accused of serious crimes; hence, the fraction of seats won by seriously accused candidates is instrumented by the fraction of seats won by seriously accused candidates in close elections between seriously accused and non-seriously accused or non-accused candidates. In both the panels, the coefficient of the instrumental variable is statistically significant at a 1 percent level in full as well as sub-samples.[25] A high first-stage F-statistics, reported along with 2SLS result in Table 3, further validates the relevance of our instrument.

In addition, we also show the graphical illustration of the first stage result for the full sample and sub-samples. We plot district-level proportions of seriously accused leaders against the victory margin between the accused and other candidates in each constituency. Figure 1, Figure A1, and Figure A2 show the fist stage illustration for all states, BIMAROU states, and Non-BIMAROU states, respectively. All three figures show a significant and discontinuous rise in the proportion of seriously accused leaders in the district when a seriously accused candidate wins a close election.

5.2 Validity of Close Election Related Assumption

We use the McCrary test (McCrary, 2008) to verify the continuity of the density of the vote margin around the threshold, i.e., when the vote margin is zero, to ensure no manipulation of outcomes of close elections. Figure 2, Figure A3 and Figure A4 plot the density of vote margin for the different samples; we find no significant difference in the density on either

[25]The coefficient of the instrument is statistically indistinguishable from 1, which is expected because an additional criminally accused leader winning a close election also implies an additional criminally accused leader in the district. However, the coefficient is not exactly one because the fraction of criminally accused leaders is also determined by some criminally accused leaders winning a non-close election in the district.

side of the threshold.

We also show continuity checks for various observable constituencies and leader-specific characteristics. For the underlying regression discontinuity design to be valid, pre-determined constituency level characteristics should not change at the threshold. Besides, to isolate the effect of a leader's criminality from other characteristics, we should not find any discontinuous change in other characteristics of leaders at the cutoff. Figure 3 considers a range of observable constituency and leader specific characteristics such as constituency type, total turnout in the election, total voters in the election, electorate size, leader's gender, age, assets, incumbency status, education, party affiliation, and ruling party affiliation. The same tests for the two sub-samples are shown in Figures A5 and A6. The graphical evidence validates no significant jump or difference in constituency and candidate characteristics between seriously accused and the non-seriously/non-accused leaders in close elections, i.e., around the cutoff. To further validate this point, we compare the average constituency and candidate level characteristics between seriously accused and other leaders from close elections in Table A1. All the differences in characteristics are statistically insignificant except for gender. We later consider the proportion of female leaders and the proportion of seriously accused leaders together in the regression to isolate the impact of a leader's gender from criminality and present the findings in Table A8. We find that the impact of a leader's criminality remains unchanged.

We further show evidence supporting the quasi-randomness of the outcome of close elections. First, we create a dummy variable indicating whether a seriously accused candidate won in a close election and regress it on the various election and district-specific characteristics (Table A2). We find that the probability of a seriously accused candidate winning in a close election is not significantly predicted by most of these variables, ruling out the strategic influence or advantage of a particular political party during an election process. A test for the joint significance of these predictors also suggests no significant association. Finally, we compare various district-level characteristics between districts with more and less numbers of seriously accused winners in close elections and find that they are comparable (Table A3).

6 Main Results

We present the main results of our study in Table 3, after estimating the 2SLS model given by Equations (2) and (3). Panel A shows the results where the leader is accused of *any crime*. For the sample with all states (column 1), the effect of a criminally accused leader on crime is positive but statistically insignificant. Column 2 shows similar results for only the BIMAROU states, where the magnitude of the estimate is 635.8, and it is statistically significant at a 10 percent level. Thus, if the fraction of constituencies with criminally accused leaders in the district increases from 0 to 1, the number of crime cases rises by approximately 636 per year, around 15 percent of the mean outcome for BIMAROU states. It also implies that a rise in the fraction of criminally accused leaders by one standard deviation (0.28) leads to a 4.3 percent rise in total crimes per year.

Similarly, panel B shows the results for the sample where the leaders are accused of serious crimes. Again, there is no statistically significant impact on the overall sample (column 1). But in BIMAROU states, the impact is 1055 (25 percent of the mean outcome), and it is statistically significant at a 5 percent level. This estimate indicates that a ten percentage point increase in the fraction of seriously accused leaders in a district results in 106 additional crime cases per year. The equivalent effect due to leaders accused of any crime is around 64; thus, our findings suggest that electing a seriously accused leader compared to a leader accused of any crime poses a bigger threat to society in terms of crime environment, specifically in states with weaker institutions. The estimate also implies that a standard deviation (0.23) increase in the proportion of seriously accused leaders results in a 5.8 percent rise in total crimes per year in the BIMAROU states. In non-BIMAROU states, the estimate is negative but statistically not distinguishable from zero at the conventional significance levels.

The findings suggest that the nature of crime and the strength of state-level institutions matter.[26] In the main specification, seriously accused politicians have been compared with

[26]Instead of classifying the BIMAROU states as institutionally weaker states, we also adopt an alternative definition by segregating states based on Human Development Index (HDI). We find that the impact of seriously accused leaders on crime is driven by states in the lowest tercile of HDI, which is consistent with

their counterparts which include both non-seriously accused and non-accused politicians. The findings may be different if we compared seriously accused with non-accused politicians. To check this, we include two treatment variables, i.e., the fraction of seriously accused leaders and the fraction of non-seriously accused leaders, in the same specification and use two instruments based on the corresponding close election outcomes. Results presented in Table A5 show a significant impact of seriously accused leaders but no significant impact of the non-seriously accused leaders in comparison with non-accused leaders. Another potential concern is that if seriously accused candidates also have more criminal cases registered against them, the effect of the nature of criminality may be confounded with the number of cases. To address this concern, we utilize the same empirical framework to estimate the effect of an alternative type of leaders who are accused of a high number (above median) of crimes irrespective of the nature of the crime.[27] Results from Table A6 show that such leaders do not have any effect on crime outcomes in the district. This finding helps us establish that the nature of criminality rather than the number of cases matters in this context. Therefore, for remaining results, we focus on leaders accused of serious crimes.[28]

Next, we explore the effect of seriously accused leaders on different types of crimes. Considering the crimes recorded with a consistent set of IPCs over the years, we create two categories: Crime against women and Gender neutral crimes. The remaining crimes are categorized as other crimes. Results presented in Table 4 show that the impact of seriously accused leaders on crime against women is significant in the overall sample and BIMAROU states. Consistent with the finding on total crimes, the effect is more pronounced in BIMAROU states. A standard deviation increase in the fraction of seriously accused leaders results in around 47 additional crimes against women, 12.6 percent of the mean number of crimes against women recorded per year. We do not find any significant effect on gender-neutral crimes. Considering the remaining crimes categorized as other crimes,

the BIMAROU classification (Table A4).

[27] Specifically, the fraction of "highly accused" leaders is instrumented by the fraction of highly accused leaders who won in close elections against non-highly accused/non-accused leaders.

[28] We also estimate the reduced form regression for the effect of seriously accused leaders on crimes. As expected, the impact is significant only in BIMAROU states. Table A7 shows this result along with the OLS estimates.

we find a significant and positive impact of seriously accused leaders.[29]

7 Robustness Analysis

We test the sensitivity of our results by considering alternative specifications of the empirical model, varying cutoffs of vote margin to define close elections, and altering the dependent variable. Further, we conducted a placebo test to show that the relationship captured in our main regression is credible. Finally, we adopt a sharp regression discontinuity design to provide additional support for our findings.

7.1 Analysis Using Sharp Regression Discontinuity Design

In this section, we follow Clots-Figueras (2012) and employ a sharp regression discontinuity design considering districts with a single close election between a seriously accused and a non-seriously accused or non-accused candidate. The main empirical strategy described in the previous section revolves around the fuzzy regression discontinuity design, where we aggregate the constituency level discontinuities in the treatment variable at the district level to construct an appropriate instrumental variable. However, restricting the sample to the districts with a single close election in an election term, we can conduct a sharp regression discontinuity analysis to identify the causal impact of electing a seriously accused leader on the crime environment of the district.

In this setting, the running variable is vote margin (M_{dst}), defined as the vote share difference between the seriously accused and the opponent candidate. The probability of a seriously accused candidate winning an election changes discontinuously when the vote margin becomes zero. Specifically, the probability of a seriously accused candidate winning an election is 1 when the vote margin is positive and 0 when the vote margin is

[29] We aggregate all the remaining crimes in the "other" category, which is slightly different from the category of "Other IPC crimes" reported by NCRB in its annual publication "Crime in India". Other IPC crimes reported by NCRB are a subset of Other Crimes reported by us. Our panel data must have consistent crime categories over the years; therefore, we deviate from the NCRB categories that are not always consistently reported.

negative. We estimate the following specification in a close neighbourhood (bandwidth) around the threshold of discontinuity, i.e., for all $M_{dst} \in (-h, h)$:

$$C_{ds(t+1)} = \alpha + \beta D_{dst} + F(M_{dst}) + \eta_{ds(t+1)} \tag{4}$$

where $C_{ds(t+1)}$ refers to the total crime count in district d in state s at time $(t+1)$; M_{dst} is the running variable; D_{dst} is the treatment dummy indicating whether a seriously accused politician is elected. By construction, $D_{dst} = 1$ if $M_{dst} > 0$, and $D_{dst} = 0$ otherwise. $F(M_{dst})$ is a continuous function of the running variable on each side of the cutoff which is zero in our setting. We estimate a local linear regression with triangular kernel and choose the optimal bandwidth (h) following algorithms proposed by Imbens and Kalyanaraman (2012) and Calonico et al. (2014).

The result of the Sharp RD analysis is reported in Table 5 for full as well as sub-samples. We show results using the optimal bandwidth estimated using the method of Imbens and Kalyanaraman (2012), referred to as IK. As a robustness check, we show results for alternate bandwidths IK/2 and 2(IK), which are respectively half and double of the optimal IK bandwidth. We also show results for optimal bandwidth suggested by the method of Calonico et al. (2014), referred to as CCT. Columns 1, 3, and 5 present results from specifications without any controls, while columns 2, 4, and 6 present results after controlling for state and year fixed effects. Similar to our main analysis, sharp RD results suggest no significant impact of electing a seriously accused politician on crime outcome for the full sample; however, the impact is positive and significant for BIMAROU states across all regressions. The effect is negative but statistically not significant for non-BIMAROU states.[30]

To compare the magnitude of the estimate from the sharp RDD with our main result, we consider that, on average, each district has around ten constituencies. Thus, an addi-

[30]The graphical representation of the sharp RD result is provided in Figure A7. It plots the average crime count in a district against the vote margin, aggregated over a set of bins whose width is 0.5 percentage points. The curves are local linear regression fitted separately on the left and right side of the cutoff using triangular kernel and optimal bandwidth suggested by (Imbens and Kalyanaraman, 2012). A clear jump in the average crime cases at the cutoff zero can be seen only in the BIMAROU sub-sample.

tional constituency with a seriously accused leader would imply around a ten percentage point increase in the district level proportion of seriously accused leaders. The first row of Table 5 shows that having an additional seriously accused leader in a district, i.e., a ten percentage point increase in the fraction of seriously accused leaders in a district results in around 176 more crime cases per year in the BIMAROU states. Hence, this impact is slightly higher than the 2SLS result, where the equivalent effect size was 106. Nevertheless, the results are broadly comparable, given that the sharp RDD is applied only to a subset of districts with a single close election involving the seriously accused candidates.

7.2 Varying Degrees of Polynomials in Vote Margins

Given that our instrumental variable strategy is based on the premise of a close-election regression discontinuity design, it is essential to check our results by considering different polynomial functions of the margin of victory, represented by $F(M_{jdst})$, in Equations (2) and (3). The main results include the linear function of the margin variable, and as a robustness exercise, we consider the quadratic and cubic polynomial functions of margin. The results are similar to our main findings, i.e., the effect remains significant in the BIMAROU states (Table A9), indicating that the instrument indeed exploits variation only in the close neighborhood around the discontinuity to justify a quasi-random assignment of treatment.

7.3 Alternative Definitions of Close Election

Our main specification refers to close elections where the margin of victory is less than 3 percent. Since the validity of our identification strategy hinges on the quasi-randomness of the outcome of a close election, it is important to test if our results remain robust to alternative definitions of close elections. Therefore, we consider bandwidths of 1, 5, 7, 9, and 11 percent vote margin. We find that the results remain significant for BIMAROU states in all the cases (Table A10).

7.4 Extreme Values and Alternate Dependent Variable

While using crime data, extreme values in the outcome can be a concern. So, we conduct a robustness check by removing the top and bottom one percentile data for each sub-sample. Results remain unchanged in Table A11. We also present the results using an alternate dependant variable, i.e., logarithm of total crimes. Noting that we are dealing with a crime count and there could be zeroes, we add 1 to the crime count and then take a logarithm. Again, the main result remains qualitatively unchanged and marginally significant, with the p-value being 0.16 (Table A11).

7.5 Placebo Test Considering Lagged Outcomes

We also conducted a placebo test to provide evidence that our main specification is not capturing a spurious relationship between criminally accused leaders and crime outcomes. We consider the lagged values of total crime as dependent variables while estimating the effect of leaders. This is a falsification exercise because a seriously accused leader in office in the current period cannot affect the crime environment of the past. This placebo test shows that indeed, there is no significant effect of seriously accused leaders in a district in time period t on crime outcomes in $(t-1)$, $(t-2)$, $(t-3)$, and $(t-4)$ (Table A12).

8 Conclusion

Different strands of literature have recognized the types of costs imposed by criminally accused leaders in society. In this paper, we estimate the impact of criminally accused leaders on the crime environment of the district. In particular, we explore the impact of seriously accused leaders in weak states where the impact is ex-ante ambiguous due to two contrasting views of the crime literature. The first view suggests that criminally accused leaders are expected to increase criminal cases in the weak districts due to their *nexus* with other criminals in the area. However, the second view suggests that seriously

accused leaders support the local voting population as this section of the population considers them their *godfathers* who would help them in the absence of strong institutions. We find that criminally accused leaders, including those accused of serious crimes, lead to more criminal cases in the district. The effect is larger when we consider seriously accused leaders indicating that seriously accused leaders could be more harmful to society. Finally, future research should attempt to deeply understand why such leaders get elected despite these large costs to the society.

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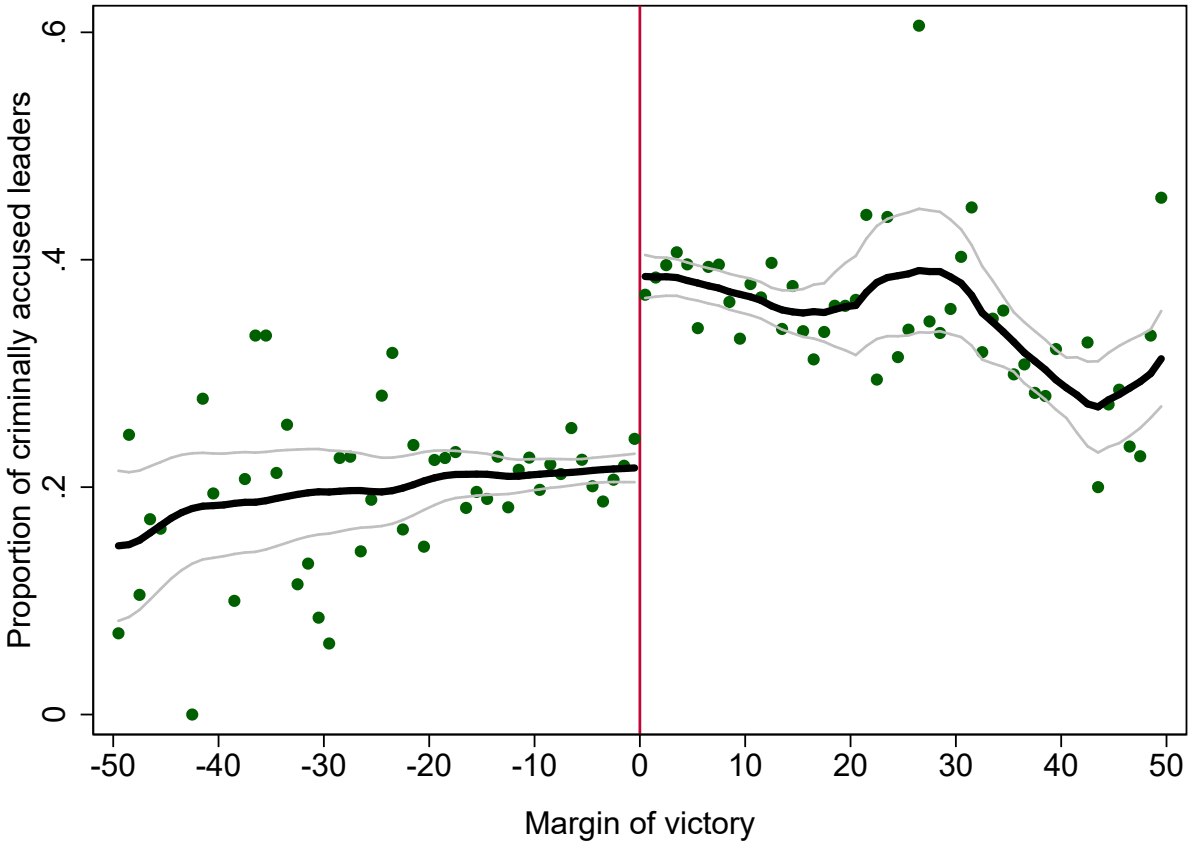
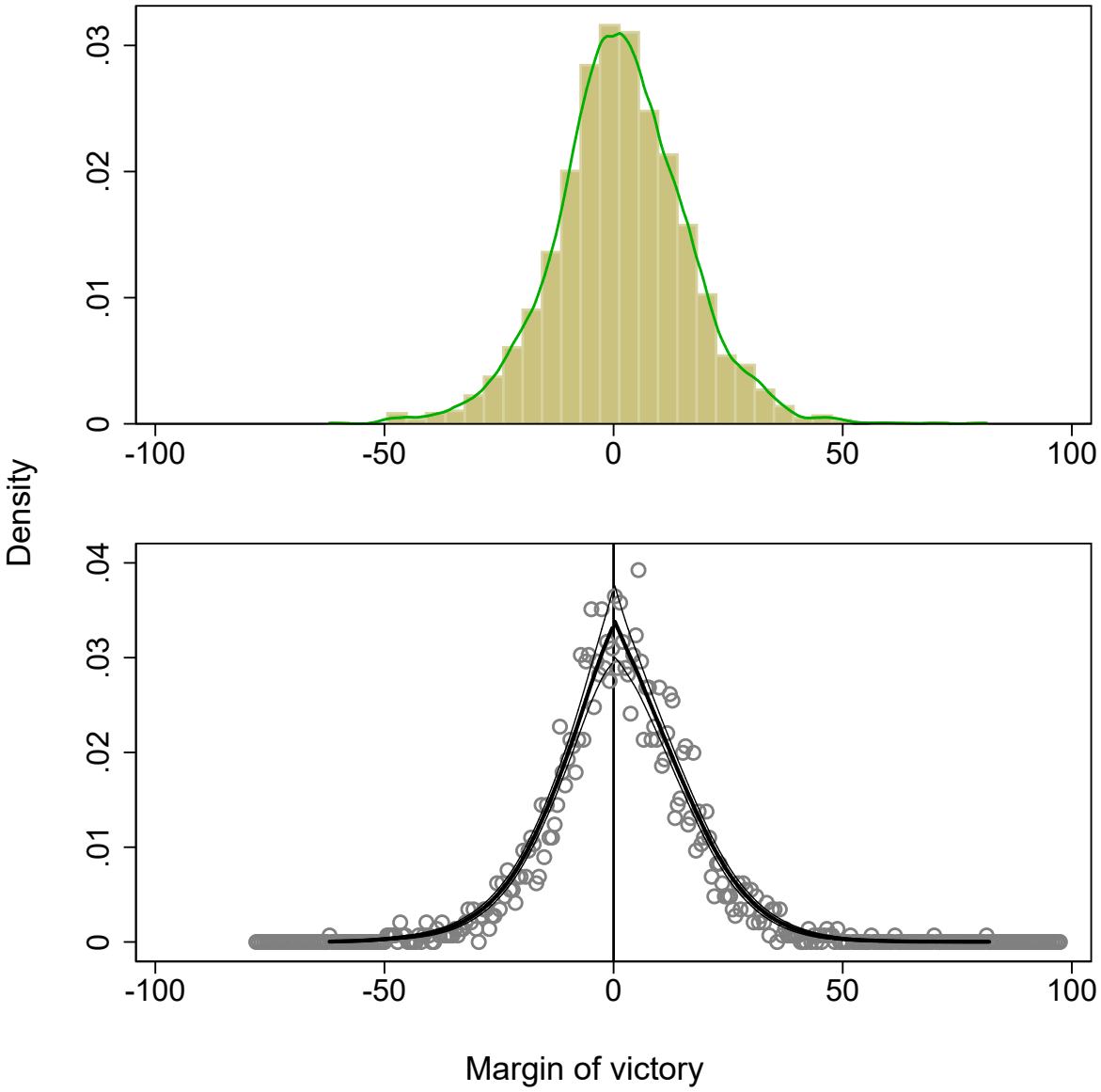
Figure 1: First Stage Illustration for Seriously Accused: All States



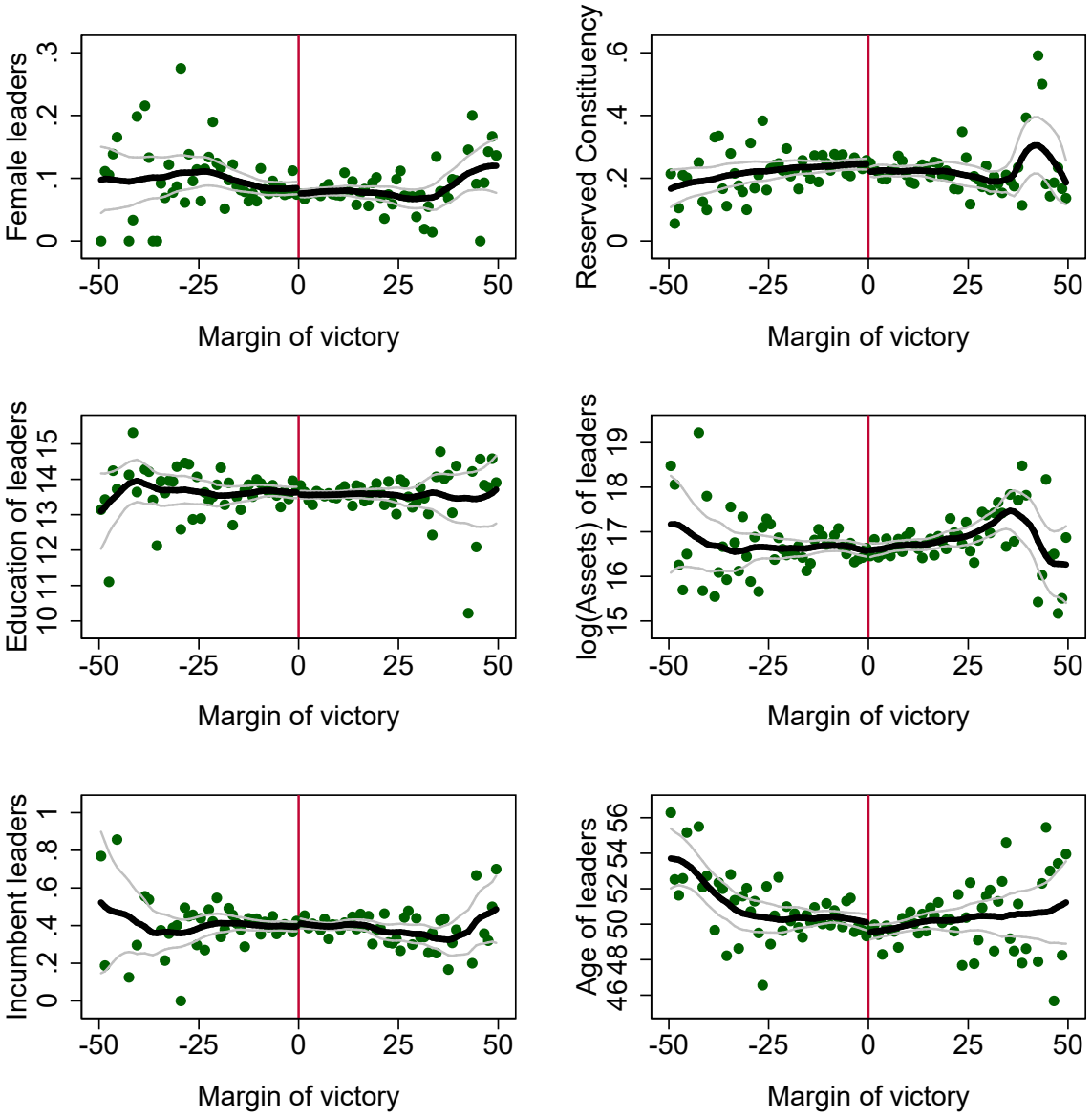
Notes: District-level fraction of seriously accused MLAs is plotted against the vote margin between politician accused of serious crime and not accused of serious crime in each constituency of the district.Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins.The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Figure 2: Continuity of vote margin for Seriously Accused : All States



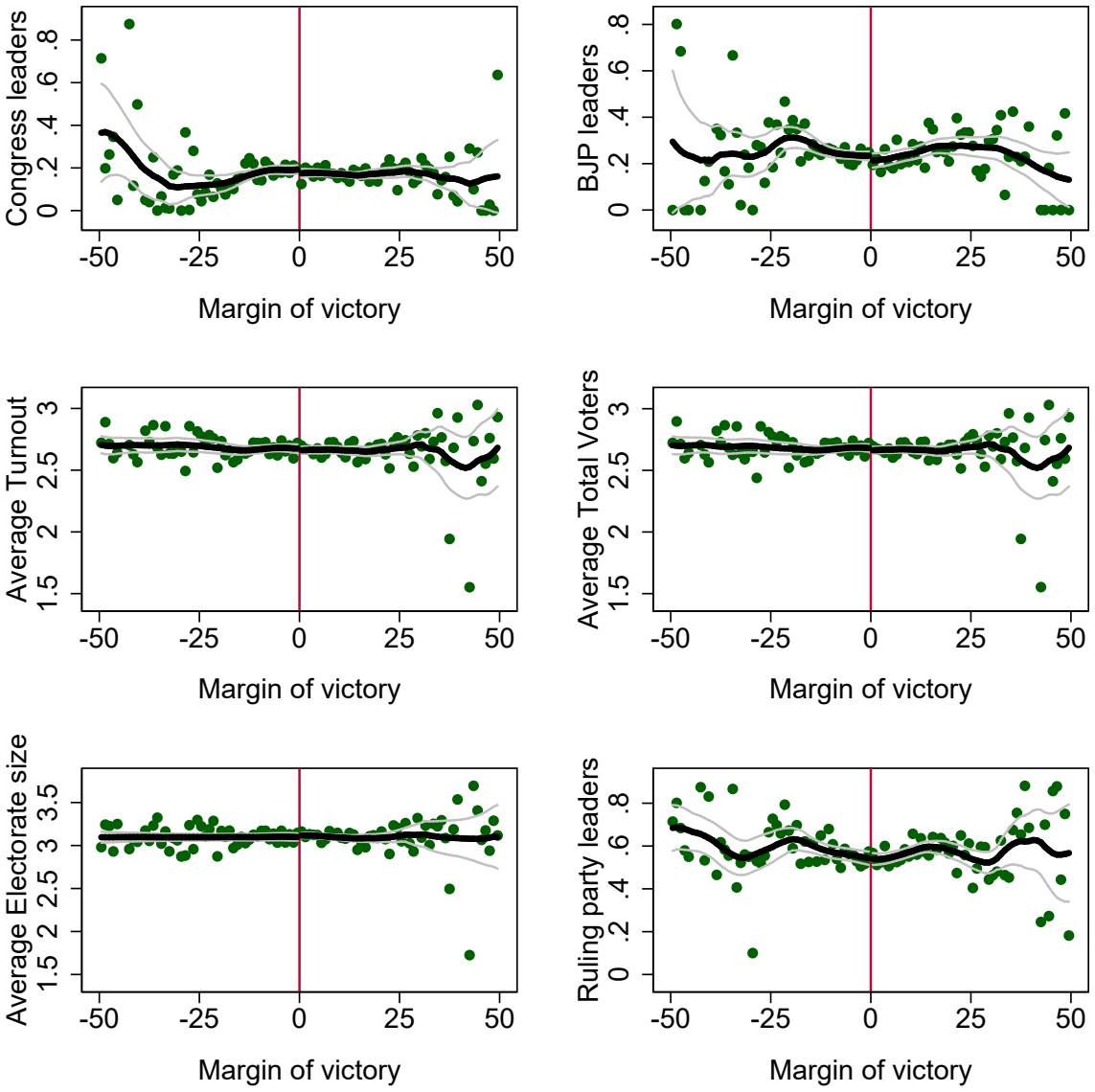
Notes: Notes: The upper panel shows the kernel density of vote margin between seriously accused and non-accused candidates. The lower panel shows McCrary's density test.

Figure 3: Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : All States



Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal). The vertical axis plots the district level average age of the constituency leaders, the fraction of seats won by female politicians,,fraction of constituencies reserved for backward sections(Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes),log of average asset of winner,Average Education Level of Winners, fraction of seats won by incumbents and Average Age of Winners. Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : All States (Continued)



Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal). The vertical axis plots Proportion of Congress Leaders, Porportion of BJP Leaders, Average Turnout, Average Total Voters, Average Electorate Size and Porportion of Leaders from state ruling party . Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Table 1: Summary Statistic of Crime Data

	Obs	Mean	SD
All States			
Total Crime	5134	4660.86	8402.04
Crime Against Women	5134	391.26	653.01
Gender Neutral Crime	5134	1173.48	4710.06
Other Crimes	5134	3096.13	4299.40
Bimarou States			
Total Crime	1914	4152.09	3653.53
Crime Against Women	1914	371.88	346.74
Gender Neutral Crime	1914	1000.90	1152.78
Other Crimes	1914	2779.31	2390.06
Non Bimarou States			
Total Crime	3220	4963.27	10217.20
Crime Against Women	3220	402.78	779.85
Gender Neutral Crime	3220	1276.05	5878.57
Other Crimes	3220	3284.44	5097.64

Source: Calculation using NCRB data. Crime against women refers to crime reported under section 376, 354, 498A, 304B and 509 of IPC which corresponds to rape, sexual assaults, cruelty, dowrydeaths and eveteasing. Gender Neutral Crime refers to the crimes reported under section 302, 307, 304, 308, 396-398, 399-402, 392-394, 397, 398, 379-382, 406-409, 435, 436, 438 and 304A of IPC which corresponds to murder, attempt to murder, culpable homicide, dacoity, dacoity preparation, robbery, theft , breach of trust, arson and death by negligence. Other Crimes refers to crimes reported in rest of the sections of IPC.

Table 2: Summary Statistics of District Level Electoral Data

	Obs	Mean	SD
For Accused:			
Fraction of seats-			
-Won by Accused	5134	0.30	0.28
-Won by Accused in close election	5134	0.04	0.10
-With Accused and Non-Accused election	5134	0.35	0.25
-With Accused and Non-Accused close election	5134	0.07	0.13
District with at least one-			
-Accused leader	5134	0.71	0.45
-Accused leader in close election	5134	0.20	0.40
-Election between Accused and Non-Accused	5134	0.80	0.40
-Close election between Accused and Non-Accused	5134	0.33	0.47
For Seriously Accused:			
Fraction of seats-			
-Won by Seriously Accused	5134	0.17	0.22
-Won by Seriously Accused in close election	5134	0.03	0.08
-With Seriously and Non-Seriously/Non Accused election	5134	0.24	0.24
-With Seriously and Non-Seriously/Non Accused close election	5134	0.05	0.11
District with at least one-			
-Seriously Accused leader	5134	0.53	0.50
-Seriously Accused leader in close election	5134	0.14	0.35
-Election between Seriously and Non-Seriously/Non Accused	5134	0.65	0.48
-Close election between Seriously and Non-Seriously/Non Accused	5134	0.25	0.43

Source: Calculation using ECI-ADR data. Close election for accused is defined as election between a politician accused of any crime and a politician not accused of any crime and for seriously accused, close election is defined as an election between politician accused of serious crime and politician not accused of serious crime(this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent.

Table 3: 2SLS Estimates of the Effect of Criminally Accused Leaders on Crimes

	Total Crime		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	All States	Bimarou	Non Bimarou
Panel A: Effect of leaders accused of any crime			
Second stage			
Fraction of seats won	257.4	635.8*	-218.7
by accused	(528.0)	(376.4)	(1142.1)
First stage			
Fraction of seats won	0.996***	1.066***	0.871***
by accused in close election	(0.0972)	(0.134)	(0.138)
First stage R-squared	0.506	0.496	0.542
First stage Fstat (on instrument)	105.1	63.14	39.61
Panel B: Effect of leaders accused of serious crimes			
Second stage			
Fraction of seats won	-141.7	1055.3**	-1684.8
by seriously accused	(617.1)	(502.6)	(1283.5)
First stage			
Fraction of seats won	0.923***	0.958***	0.877***
by seriously accused in close election	(0.103)	(0.114)	(0.186)
First stage R-squared	0.588	0.585	0.607
First stage Fstat (on instrument)	80.65	70.61	22.26
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	4152.1	4963.3
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a criminal and a non - criminal where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, district fixed effects, state specific year fixed effects, and linear function of vote margin. *** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table 4: 2SLS Estimates of The Effect of Leaders Accused of Serious Crime on Different Categories of Crime

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non-Bimarou
Outcome: Crime Against Women			
Fraction of seats won	106.7*	204.1**	29.40
by seriously accused	(62.71)	(80.96)	(78.57)
Mean of Crime Against Women	391.3	371.9	402.8
Outcome: Gender Neutral Crime			
Fraction of seats won	1.078	66.71	-183.7
by seriously accused	(125.9)	(162.1)	(179.0)
Mean of Gender Neutral Crime	1173.5	1000.9	1276.1
Outcome: Other Crimes			
Fraction of seats won	-249.5	784.4**	-1530.6
by seriously accused	(548.1)	(325.0)	(1266.0)
Mean of Other Crimes	3096.1	2779.3	3284.4
First Stage F Stat (on instrument)	80.65	70.61	22.26
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

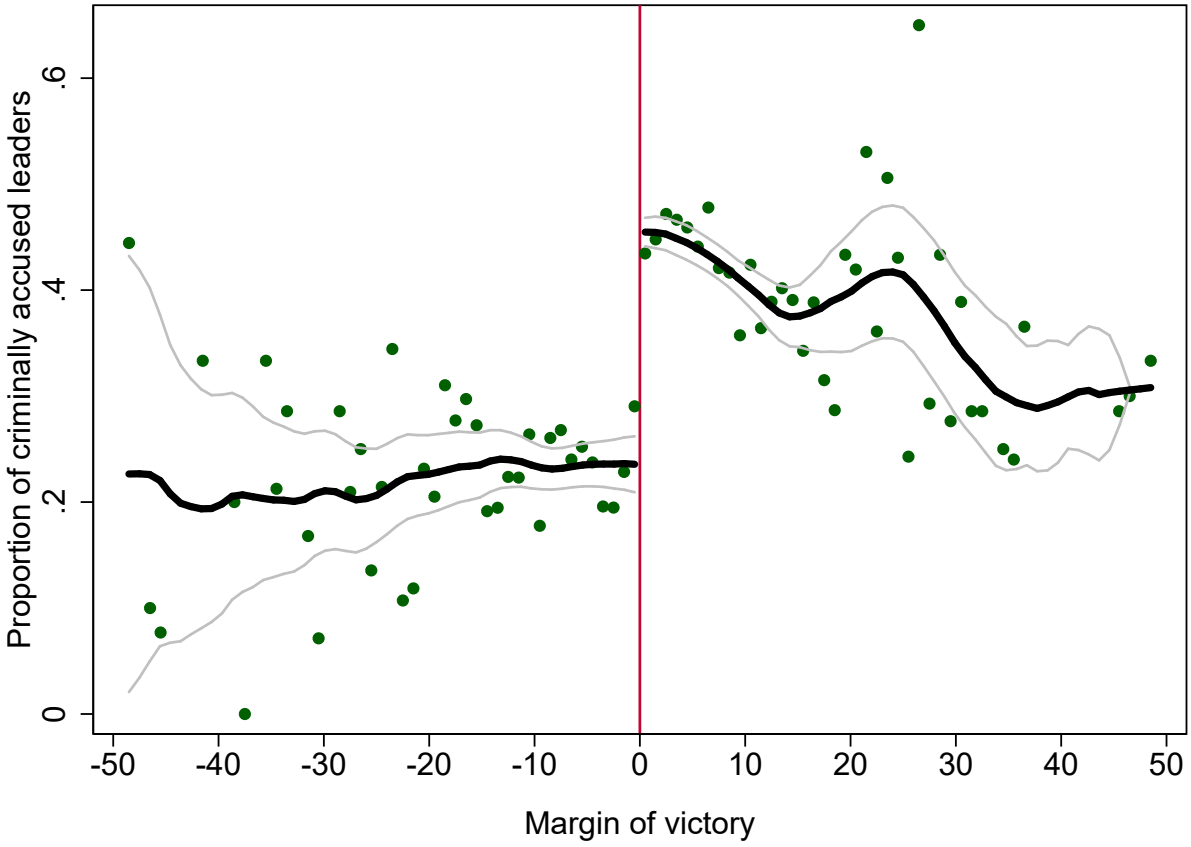
Table 5: Sharp RD Result: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime

	All States		Bimarou		Non Bimarou	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Bandwidth: IK						
Seriously Accused	288.7	650.6	1758.1***	1738.2***	-1016.9	-119.0
	(602.3)	(516.6)	(382.2)	(349.7)	(931.9)	(905.5)
Bandwidth Size	7.511	7.511	6.828	6.828	10.96	10.96
Bandwidth: IK/2						
Seriously Accused	458.0	1050.1*	1010.6***	1147.3***	-632.9	-1236.1
	(722.1)	(631.6)	(372.7)	(408.9)	(1216.3)	(1361.5)
Bandwidth Size	3.755	7.511	3.414	6.828	5.480	10.96
Bandwidth: 2(IK)						
Seriously Accused	-82.97	326.5	739.9**	868.4***	-796.5	-505.3
	(411.3)	(338.7)	(321.0)	(281.4)	(625.0)	(558.5)
Bandwidth Size	15.02	15.02	13.66	13.66	21.92	21.92
Bandwidth: CCT						
Seriously Accused	295.2	324.8	827.2*	1152.5***	-1099.3	-701.2
	(658.5)	(577.0)	(466.1)	(318.9)	(1125.4)	(1123.9)
Bandwidth Size	6.127	6.081	2.699	5.414	7.030	7.522
Observations	1245	1245	612	612	633	633
State FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Year FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. We use local linear regression and a triangular kernal to arrive at sharp RD estimates. The bandwidths are chosen by the optimal bandwidth algorithm suggested by Imbens and Kalyanaraman (2012) (IK) and Calonico et al. (2014) (CCT).

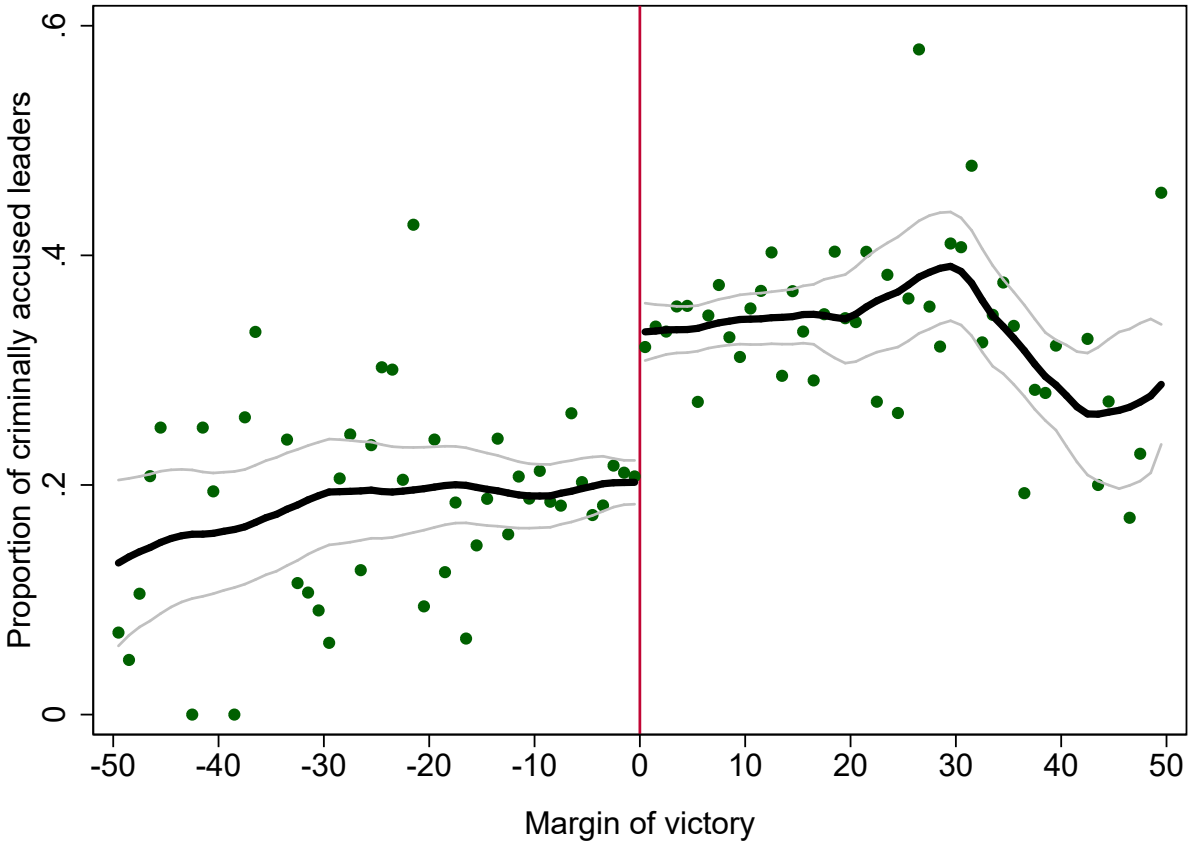
Appendix

Figure A1: First Stage Illustration for Seriously Accused: Bimarou States



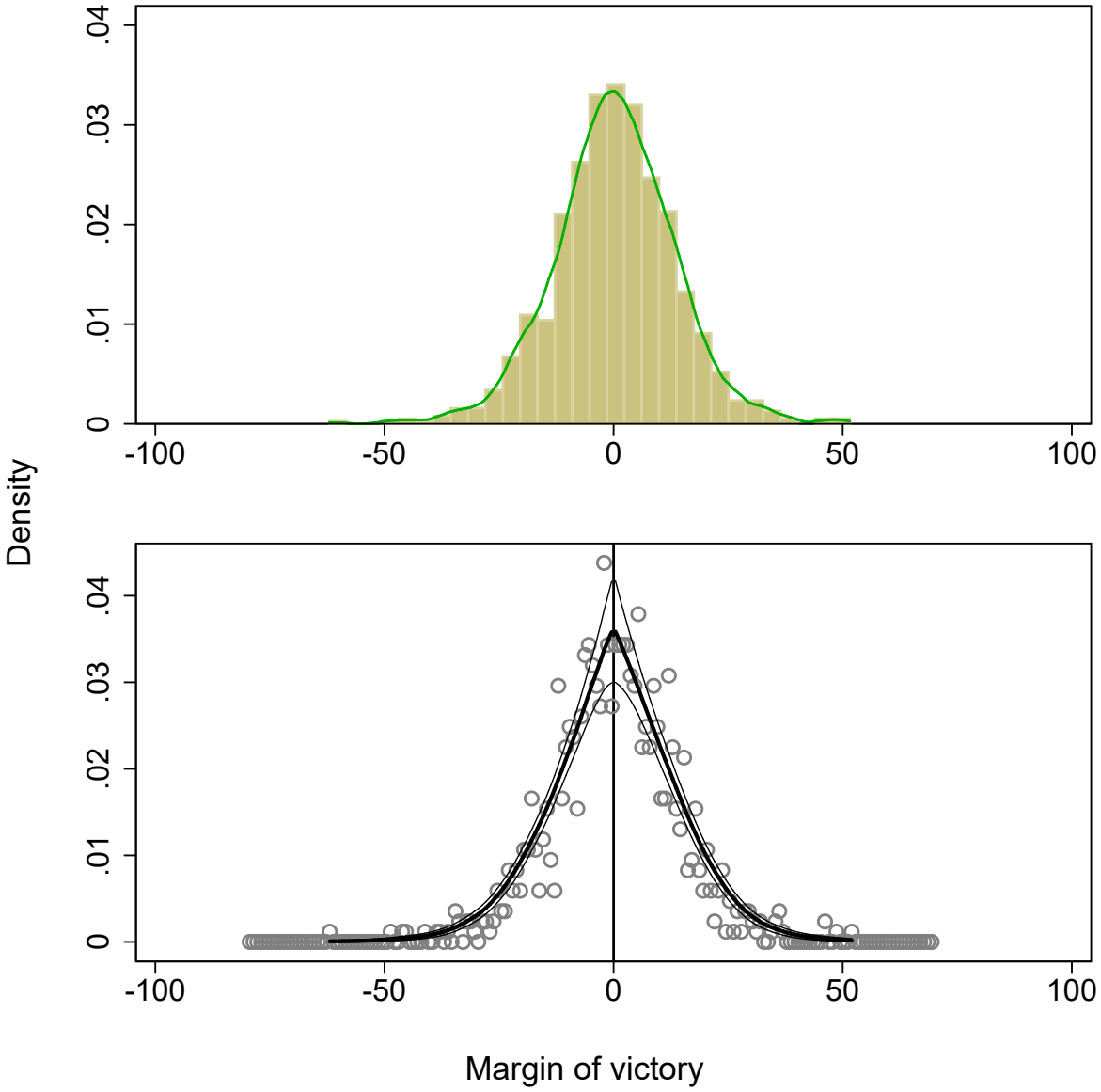
Notes: District-level fraction of seriously accused MLAs is plotted against the vote margin between politician accused of serious crime and not accused of serious crime in each constituency of the districts in BIMAROU states. Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins.The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Figure A2: First Stage Illustration for Seriously Accused: Non Bimarou States



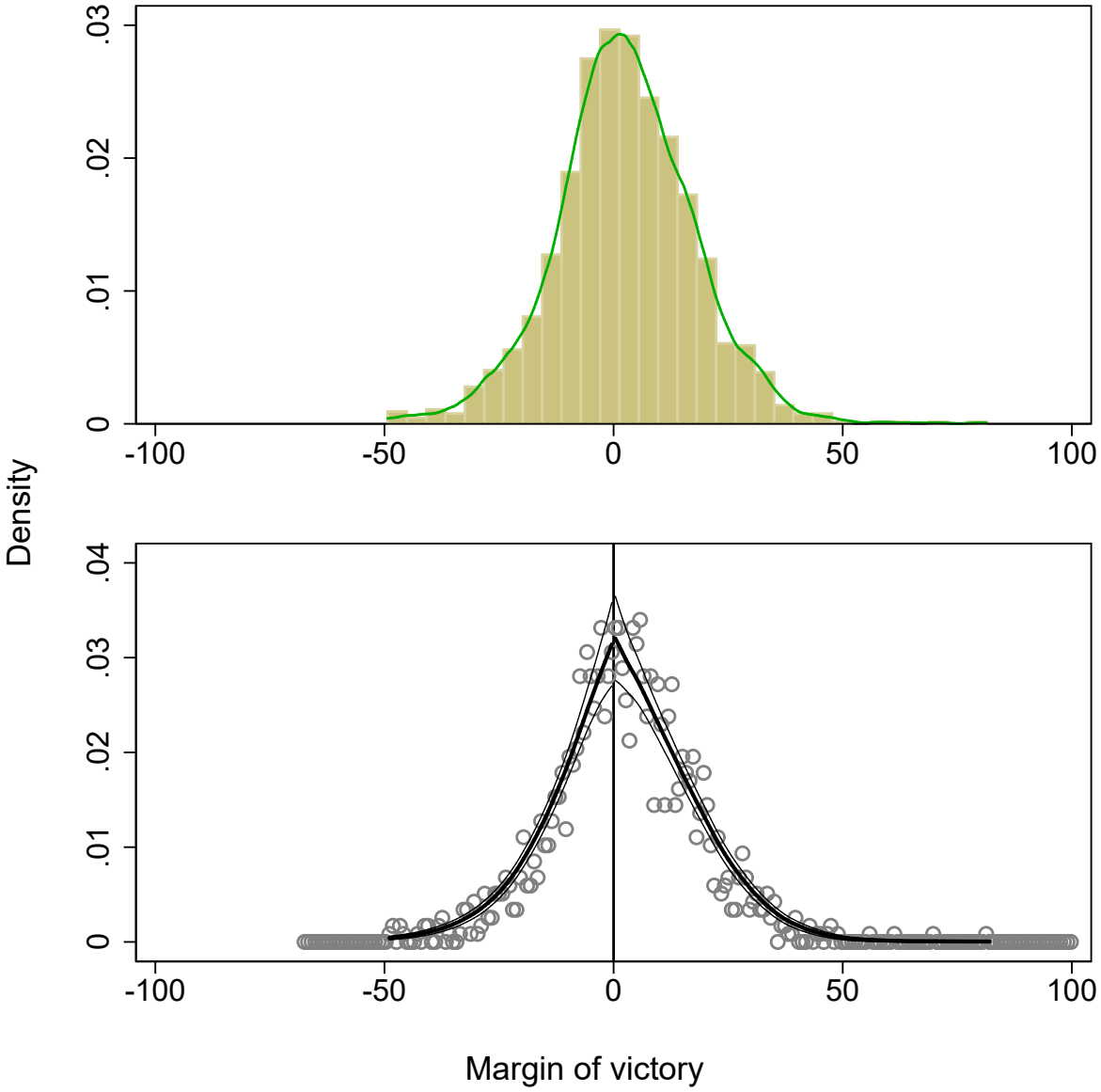
Notes: District-level fraction of seriously accused MLAs is plotted against the vote margin between politician accused of serious crime and not accused of serious crime in each constituency of the districts in Non-BIMAROU states. Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins.The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Figure A3: Continuity of vote margin for Seriously Accused : Bimarou States



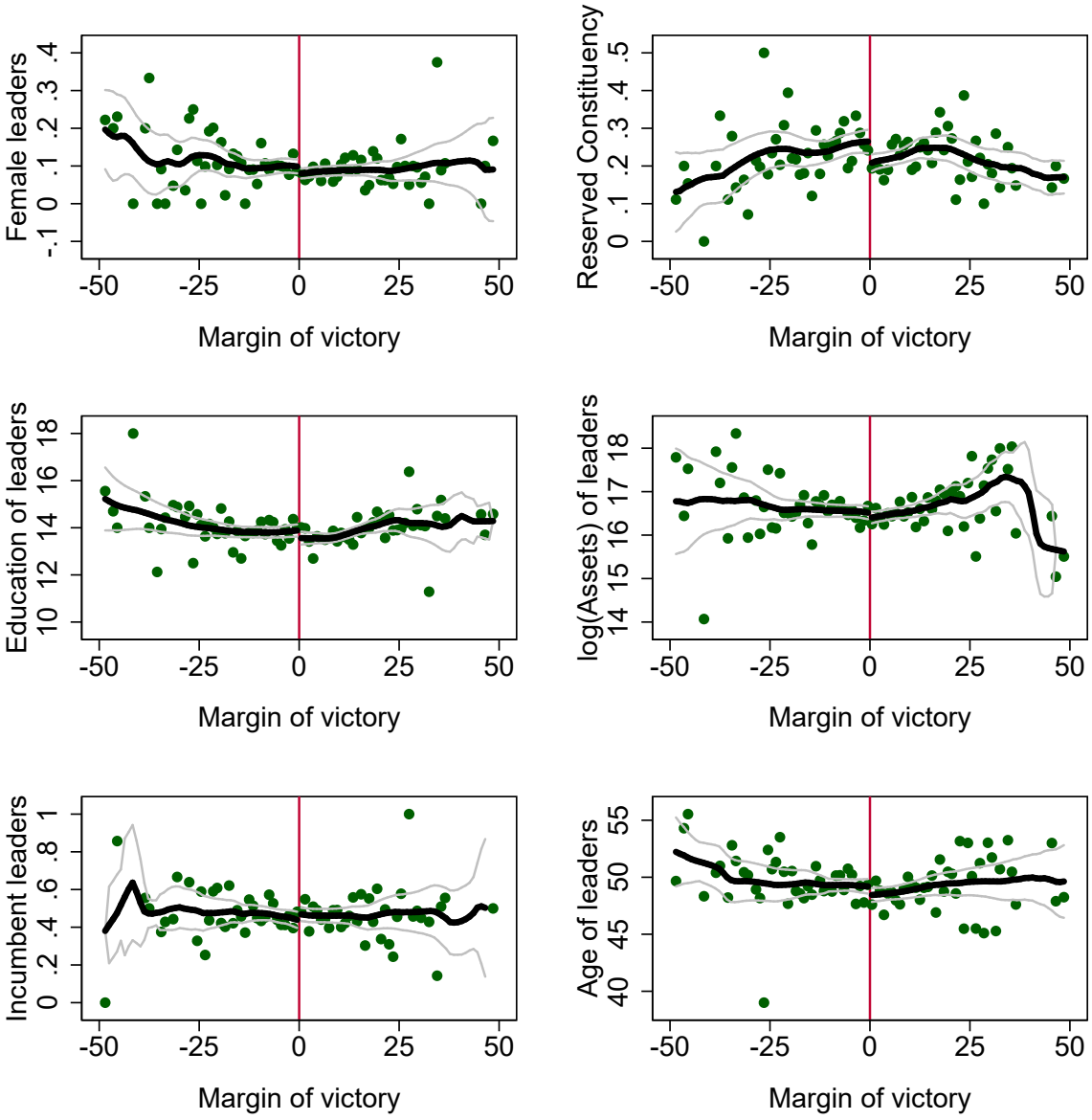
Notes: Notes: The upper panel shows the kernel density of vote margin between seriously accused and non-accused candidates in BIMAROU states. The lower panel shows McCrary's density test.

Figure A4: Continuity of vote margin for Seriously Accused : Non Bimarou States



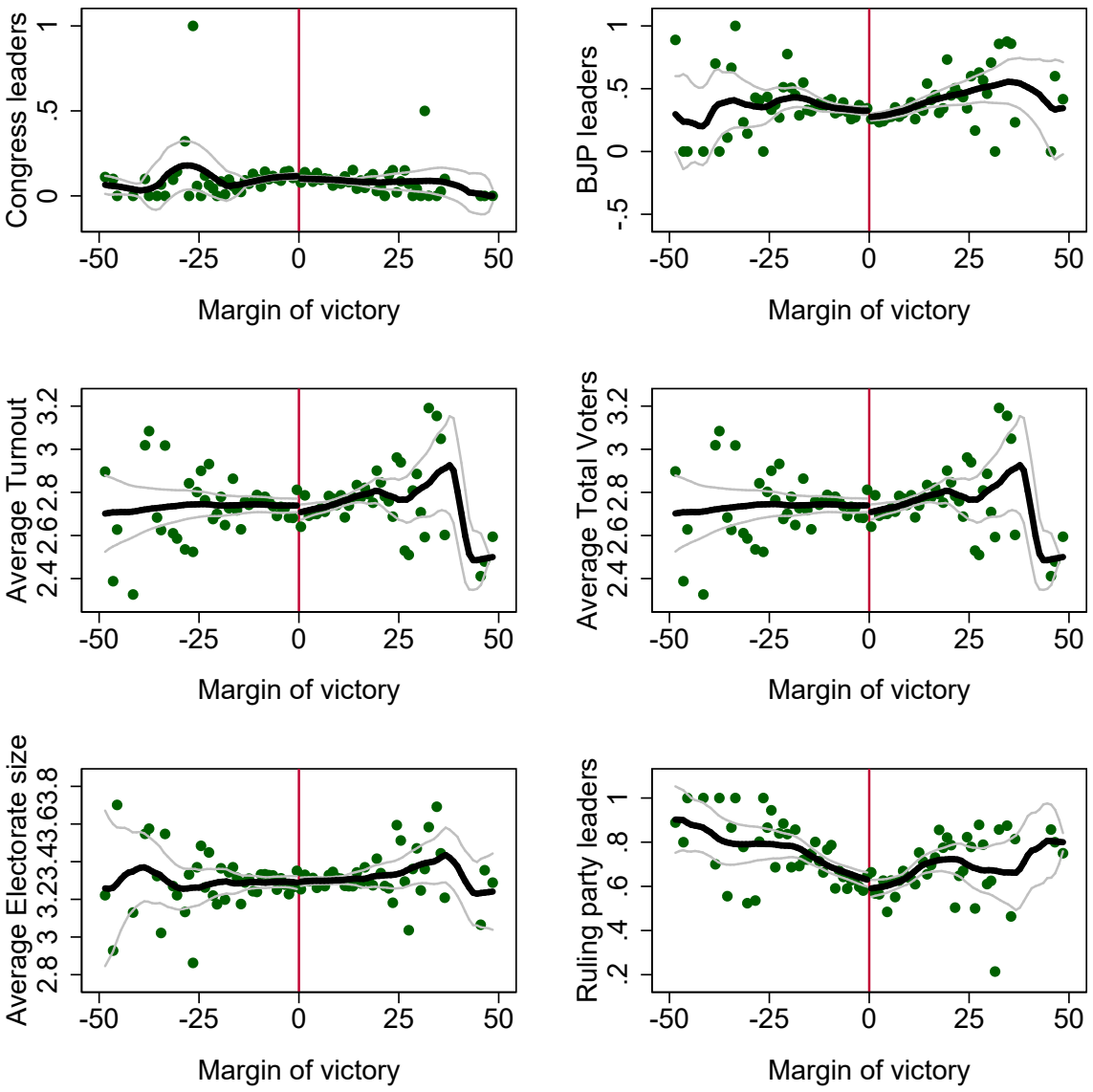
Notes: Notes: The upper panel shows the kernel density of vote margin between seriously accused and non-accused candidates in Non-BIMAROU states. The lower panel shows McCrary's density test.

Figure A5: Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : Bimarou States



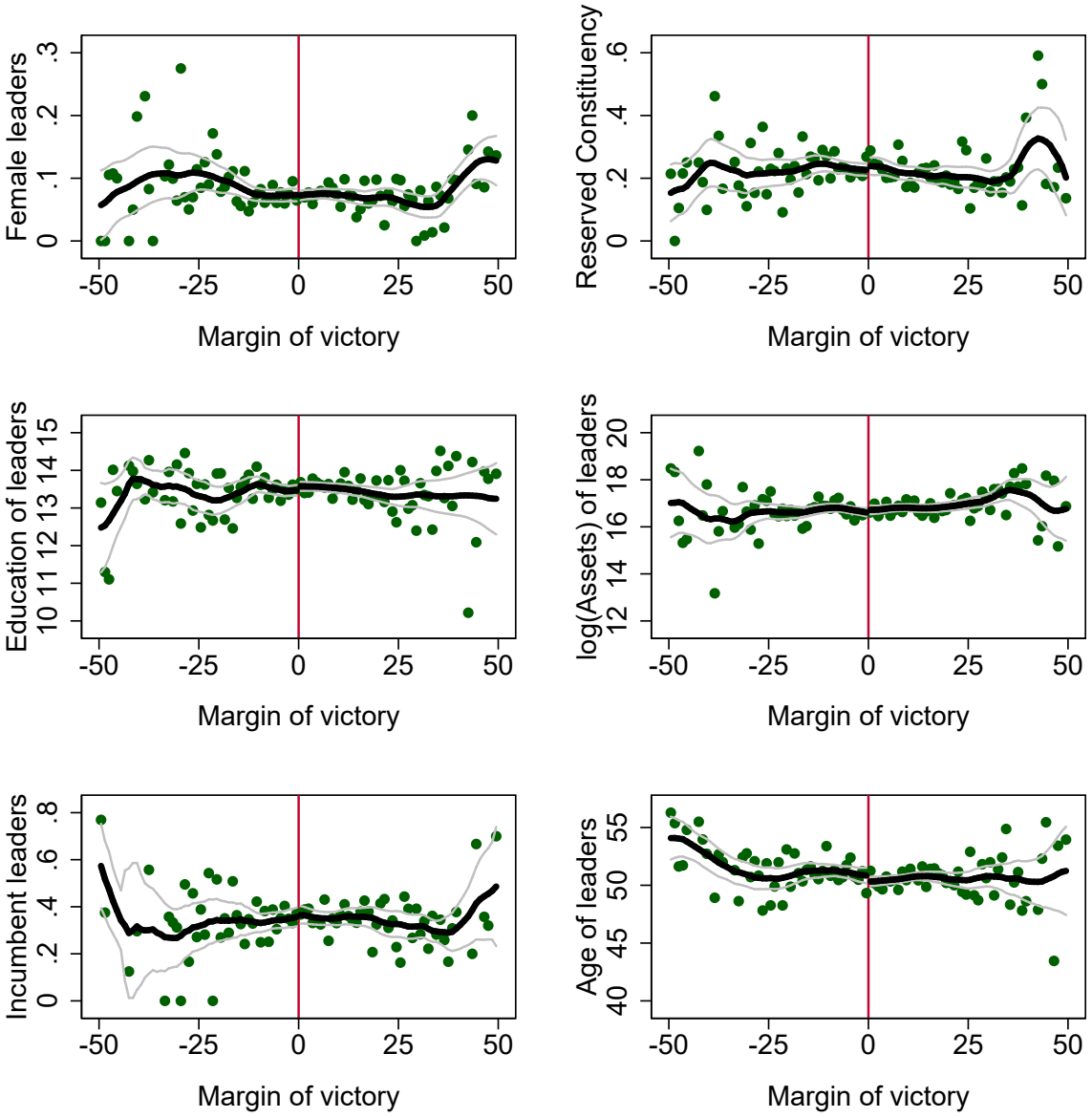
Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) in BIMAROU states. The vertical axis plots the district level average age of the constituency leaders, the fraction of seats won by female politicians, fraction of constituencies reserved for backward sections(Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes),log of average asset of winner,Average Education Level of Winners, fraction of seats won by incumbents and Average Age of Winners. Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : Bimarou States(Continued)



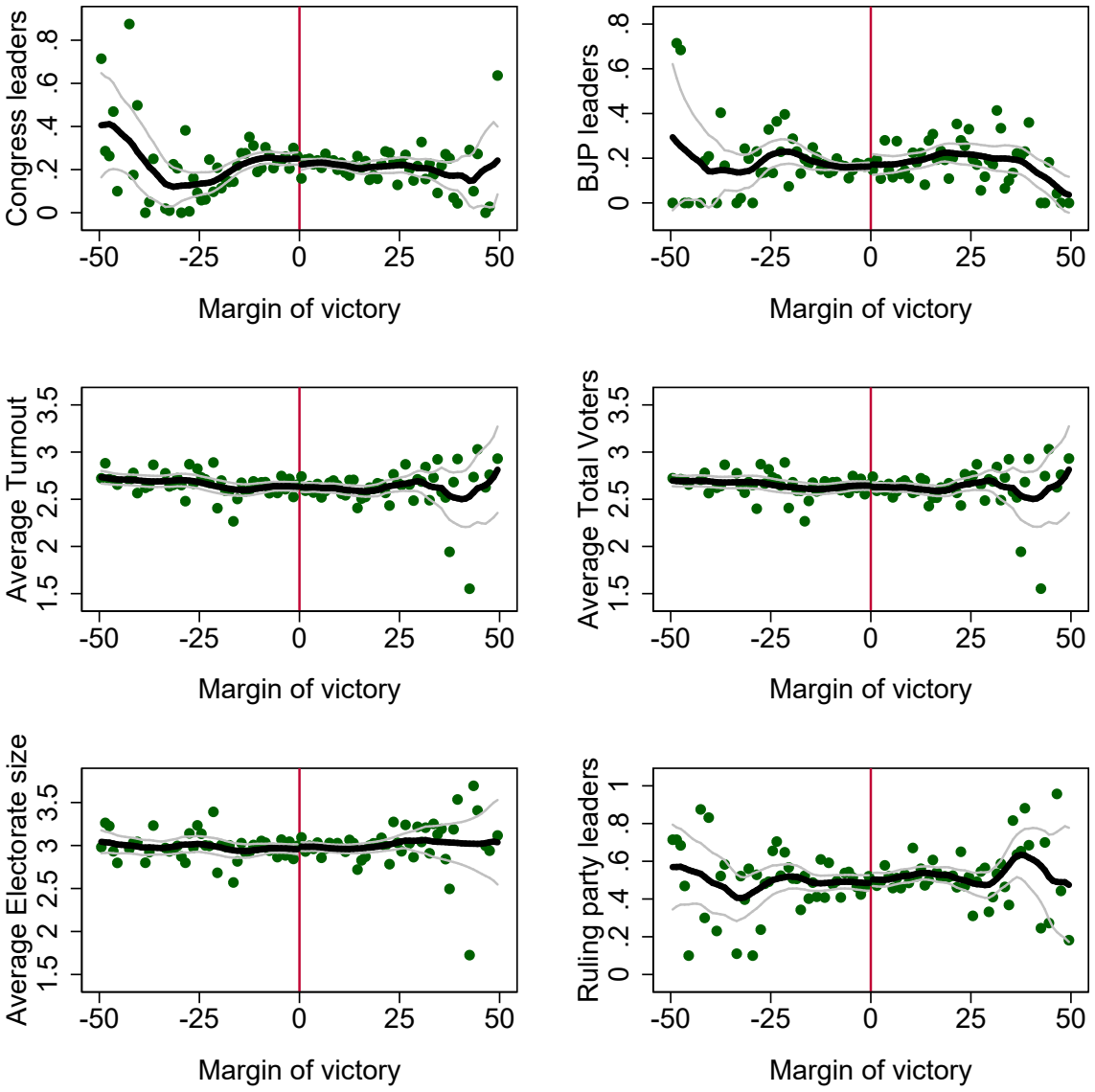
Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) in BIMAROU states. The vertical axis plots Proportion of Congress Leaders, Proportion of BJP Leaders, Average Turnout, Average Total Voters, Average Electorate Size and Proportion of Leaders from state ruling party . Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Figure A6: Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : Non Bimarou States



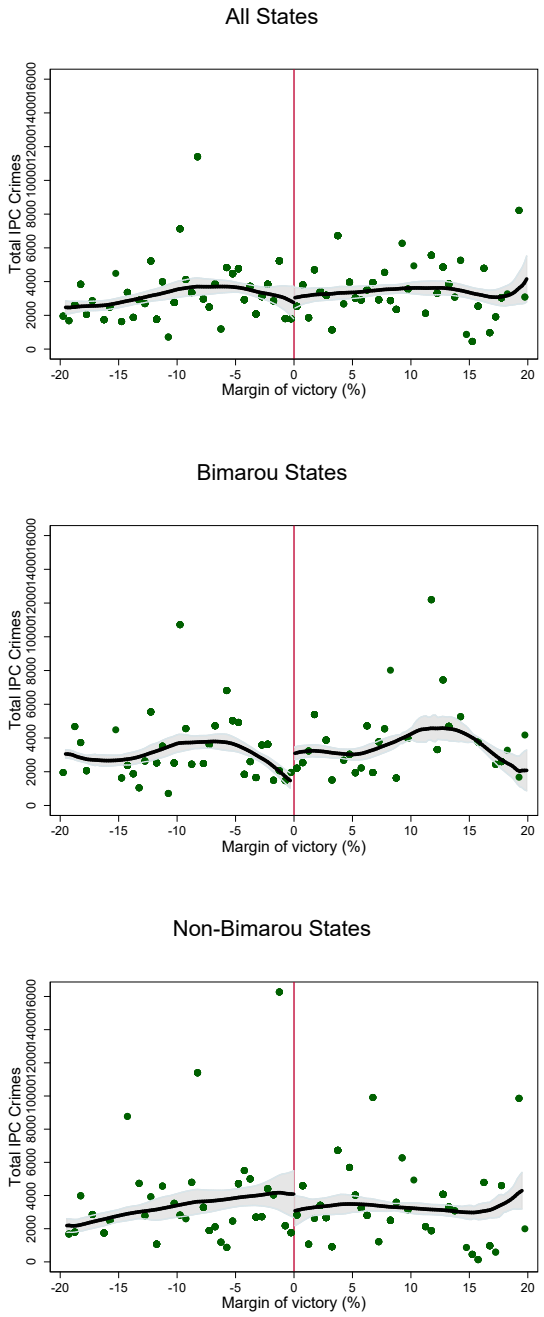
Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) in Non-BIMAROU states. The vertical axis plots the district level average age of the constituency leaders, the fraction of seats won by female politicians,,fraction of constituencies reserved for backward sections(Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes),log of average asset of winner,Average Education Level of Winners, fraction of seats won by incumbents and Average Age of Winners. Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Continuity Checks for Seriously Accused : Non Bimarou States(Continued)



Notes: The horizontal axis plots the difference in vote share between politicians accused of serious crime and politicians not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) in Non-BIMAROU states. The vertical axis plots Proportion of Congress Leaders, Proportion of BJP Leaders, Average Turnout, Average Total Voters, Average Electorate Size and Proportion of Leaders from state ruling party . Data is aggregated into 1 percentage point bins. The curves are local polynomial regressions (with 95 percent confidence intervals on each side) fitted separately for positive and negative parts of the margin of victory variable.

Figure A7: Sharp RD Illustration for Seriously Accused



Notes: The running variable is the margin of victory between a seriously accused candidate and a non-seriously accused/non-accused candidate. This analysis considers districts with a single close election between such candidates.

Table A1: Comparing candidate and constituency characteristics across close elections

	All States			Bimarou			Non Bimarou		
	Non SA	SA	Diff	Non SA	SA	Diff	Non SA	SA	Diff
Proportion of winners who are women	0.08	0.01	0.07***	0.05	0.00	0.05***	0.10	0.01	0.09***
	(0.27)	(0.09)	(0.02)	(0.21)	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.30)	(0.12)	(0.03)
Proportion of winners with basic education	0.95	0.96	-0.01	0.96	0.97	-0.01	0.94	0.94	-0.01
	(0.22)	(0.21)	(0.02)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.02)	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.03)
Proportion of winners with above average age	0.73	0.67	0.06	0.73	0.57	0.16	0.73	0.75	-0.02
	(0.44)	(0.47)	(0.04)	(0.44)	(0.50)	(0.06)	(0.44)	(0.43)	(0.05)
Proportion of winners from state ruling party	0.49	0.42	0.07	0.52	0.47	0.06	0.46	0.38	0.08
	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.05)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.07)	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.06)
Proportion of winners with above average wealth	0.13	0.16	-0.03	0.14	0.13	0.01	0.13	0.18	-0.06
	(0.34)	(0.37)	(0.03)	(0.35)	(0.34)	(0.05)	(0.33)	(0.39)	(0.04)
Proportion of winners who were incumbents	0.44	0.38	0.07	0.60	0.55	0.05	0.33	0.27	0.06
	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.08)	(0.50)	(0.51)	(0.13)	(0.48)	(0.45)	(0.09)
Average total votes received by the winner(log)	10.84	10.81	0.02	10.81	10.75	0.06	10.86	10.86	-0.00
	(0.43)	(0.41)	(0.04)	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.04)	(0.49)	(0.47)	(0.06)
Proportion of Reserved Constituencies	0.21	0.15	0.06	0.17	0.08	0.09	0.23	0.20	0.04
	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.03)	(0.38)	(0.28)	(0.05)	(0.43)	(0.40)	(0.05)
Average total voters in the constituency(log)	11.82	11.82	-0.00	11.87	11.86	0.01	11.77	11.79	-0.02
	(0.39)	(0.38)	(0.04)	(0.28)	(0.28)	(0.04)	(0.46)	(0.44)	(0.06)
Average total electors in the constituency(log)	12.25	12.30	-0.05	12.43	12.47	-0.04	12.10	12.17	-0.07
	(0.46)	(0.45)	(0.04)	(0.32)	(0.27)	(0.04)	(0.51)	(0.51)	(0.06)
Average total criminals in the constituency	8.43	9.25	-0.82	5.46	6.23	-0.78	10.87	11.55	-0.68
	(9.20)	(9.51)	(0.85)	(2.87)	(3.17)	(0.42)	(11.60)	(11.82)	(1.43)
No of winners not seriously accused in close election			233			105			128
No of winners seriously accused in close election			248			107			141
Total close elections			481			212			269

Note: SA refers to seriously accused winners in close election. Non SA refers to the winner who is not seriously accused (this also includes non-criminal).*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A2: Probability that a Seriously Accused Candidate Wins in Close Election as a Function of Constituency and District Level Characteristics

	All States	Bimarou	Non Bimarou
Congress parties contesting election	-0.177	0.0162	-0.275*
	(0.130)	(0.233)	(0.157)
Hindu parties contesting election	-0.118	-0.0324	-0.197
	(0.119)	(0.164)	(0.191)
Regional parties contesting election	-0.135	-0.0224	-0.218
	(0.160)	(0.300)	(0.189)
Left parties contesting election	-0.258*	-0.159	-0.302*
	(0.154)	(0.361)	(0.168)
Independent and Others contesting election	-0.0195	-0.0726	0.0237
	(0.182)	(0.342)	(0.222)
Prop of urban population in district in 2004-05	-4.529	2.176	-4.321
	(4.509)	(9.242)	(4.288)
Prop of female population in district in 2004-05	-82.02	-12.63	-79.05
	(92.59)	(90.58)	(88.01)
Prop of ST population in 2004-05	-14.26	-6.424	-13.26
	(16.92)	(10.51)	(16.10)
Prop of SC population in 2004-05	-2.511	8.376	-2.150
	(3.367)	(7.067)	(3.202)
Prop of OBC population in 2004-05	8.519	4.848	7.931
	(9.657)	(8.458)	(9.196)
Male primary edu completion rate in 2004-05	-4.242	7.730	-4.098
	(7.754)	(15.77)	(7.384)
Female primary edu completion rate in 2004-05	7.238	-7.546	7.012
	(9.025)	(6.220)	(8.586)
Reserved Constituency	-0.164	-0.114	-0.150
	(0.112)	(0.211)	(0.132)
F statistic	0.983	0.775	1.191
R-squared	0.587	0.554	0.647
Observations	461	209	252

*** Significant at the 1 percent level. ** Significant at the 5 percent level. * Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A3: Comparing district specific characteristics with different number of seriously accused winners in close elections

	All States			Bimarou			Non Bimarou		
	Less	More	Diff	Less	More	Diff	Less	More	Diff
Prop of urban population in district in 2004-05	0.22	0.20	0.01	0.15	0.17	-0.02	0.27	0.23	0.04
	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.02)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.02)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.03)
Prop of female population in district in 2004-05	0.49	0.49	-0.00	0.48	0.48	-0.00	0.49	0.49	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.00)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.00)
Prop of ST population in 2004-05	0.07	0.07	-0.00	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.08	0.10	-0.02
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.01)	(0.12)	(0.07)	(0.02)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.02)
Prop of SC population in 2004-05	0.20	0.21	-0.01	0.21	0.23	-0.02	0.19	0.20	-0.01
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.01)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.01)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.01)
Prop of OBC population in 2004-05	0.45	0.43	0.02	0.51	0.52	-0.01	0.39	0.35	0.04
	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.02)	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.02)	(0.24)	(0.22)	(0.04)
Male primary edu completion rate in 2004-05	0.66	0.65	0.02	0.59	0.58	0.01	0.72	0.70	0.03
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.01)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.02)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.02)
Female primary edu completion rate in 2004-05	0.50	0.47	0.03**	0.39	0.38	0.01**	0.59	0.54	0.05**
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.02)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.02)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.02)
Prop of Reserved Constituencies	0.25	0.24	0.02	0.28	0.21	0.07	0.23	0.26	-0.03
	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.02)	(0.18)	(0.11)	(0.02)	(0.25)	(0.23)	(0.03)
Prop of seriously accused winners in non-close elections	0.23	0.25	-0.02	0.24	0.31	-0.07	0.22	0.20	0.02
	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.02)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.04)	(0.25)	(0.20)	(0.03)
Prop of non-seriously/non accused winners in non-close election	0.77	0.75	0.02	0.76	0.69	0.07	0.78	0.80	-0.02
	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.02)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.04)	(0.25)	(0.20)	(0.03)
Total Seats	8.93	9.65	-0.71	6.28	6.71	-0.43	11.18	11.97	-0.78
	(8.76)	(8.43)	(0.94)	(2.58)	(2.62)	(0.42)	(11.22)	(10.50)	(1.61)
Obs with less seriously accused winner in close election			161			74			87
Obs with more seriously accused winner in close election			172			76			96
Obs with equal seriously accused winner in close election			31			17			14
Total Obs with close election			364			167			197

Note: District election years with close elections is considered as the sample. Less refers to districts with less seriously accused winners in close election. More refers to districts with more seriously accused winners in close election.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A4: First Stage and 2SLS Estimates of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime Based on HDI Classification

	(1) All States	(2) Low HDI	(3) Medium HDI	(4) High HDI
Second Stage Estimates				
Fraction of seats won by	-141.7	883.6*	329.5	-2296.2
seriously accused	(617.1)	(462.8)	(1027.1)	(2719.7)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	80.65	53.96	53.29	9.451
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	3646.1	4965.2	5992.6
Observations	5134	1977	1696	1380
First Stage Estimates				
Fraction of seats won by	0.923***	0.901***	1.099***	0.894***
seriously accused in close election	(0.103)	(0.123)	(0.151)	(0.291)
R-squared	0.588	0.546	0.689	0.708
Observations	5134	1977	1696	1380

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses.Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. States in Col 1 to 3 are divided by the terciles of HDI ranking (lowest to highest). All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A5: Comparing The Effect of Seriously Accused Leader And Non-Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non-Bimarou
Second Stage Result			
Outcome: Total Crime			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused	-179.1	1075.1**	-2363.3
	(720.7)	(512.5)	(1674.4)
Fraction of seats won by non-seriously accused	142.4	292.4	458.0
	(644.7)	(561.9)	(1132.1)
First Stage Kleibergen-Paap Wald rk F stat	40.96	27.94	8.924
First Stage Result			
Outcome: Fraction of Seats won by seriously accused			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused in close election	0.910***	0.889***	0.918***
	(0.101)	(0.114)	(0.177)
Fraction of seats won by non-seriously accused in close election	-0.107	-0.388***	0.0532
	(0.0993)	(0.133)	(0.135)
R-squared	0.607	0.606	0.636
Outcome: Fraction of Seats won by non-seriously accused			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused in close election	0.126	0.126	0.0872
	(0.100)	(0.0796)	(0.222)
Fraction of seats won by non-seriously accused in close election	1.075***	1.152***	1.003***
	(0.100)	(0.106)	(0.151)
R-squared	0.659	0.739	0.633
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious/non-serious crime and a politician not accused of any crime where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. First Stage Fstat reported with Second Stage Estimates tests for the joint significance of excluded instruments. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A6: 2SLS Estimates of the Effect of Leaders with High Number of Accusations

	Total Crime		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	All States	Bimarou	Non Bimarou
Second stage			
Fraction of seats won	-181.7	-288.8	-612.8
by highly accused	(696.3)	(374.3)	(1,417)
First stage			
Fraction of seats won	1.009***	1.087***	0.918***
by highly accused in close election	(0.113)	(0.153)	(0.154)
First stage R-squared	0.544	0.565	0.568
First stage Fstat (on instrument)	79.43	50.25	35.34
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	4152.1	4963.3
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: The main explanatory variable is the fraction of leaders with high (i.e., more than median) number of accusations, irrespective of the seriousness of the crime. Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a criminal and a non - criminal where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, district fixed effects, state specific year fixed effects, and linear function of vote margin. *** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A7: OLS And Reduced Form Estimates of The Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non Bimarou
OLS estimates			
Fraction of seats won	152.9	280.7	26.23
by seriously accused	(203.7)	(171.2)	(372.2)
Reduced Form Estimates			
Fraction of seats won	-130.8	1011.4**	-1477.0
by seriously accused in close election	(583.7)	(488.4)	(1123.8)
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	4152.1	4963.3
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. OLS regression controls for district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. Reduced form regression controls for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A8: Robustness: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader and Female Leaders on Total Crime

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non-Bimarou
Second Stage Result			
Outcome: Total Crime			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused	-209.1 (596.5)	992.9* (512.6)	-1327.5 (1147.8)
Fraction of seats won by female	-786.9 (650.2)	-1883.8* (1011.5)	50.95 (985.0)
First Stage Kleibergen-Paap Wald rk F stat	52.69	27.20	16.56
Observations	5134	1914	3220
First Stage Result			
Outcome: Fraction of Seats won by seriously accused			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused in close election	0.932*** (0.0998)	0.958*** (0.113)	0.910*** (0.178)
Fraction of seats won by female in close election	0.132 (0.109)	0.103 (0.107)	0.173 (0.177)
R-squared	0.600	0.597	0.621
Outcome: Fraction of Seats won by female			
Fraction of seats won by seriously accused in close election	-0.0341 (0.0637)	-0.0143 (0.0821)	-0.0415 (0.0671)
Fraction of seats won by female in close election	0.971*** (0.0819)	0.832*** (0.116)	1.047*** (0.0948)
R-squared	0.540	0.625	0.523
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses.First Stage Fstat reported with Second Stage Estimates tests for the joint significance of excluded instruments. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A9: Robustness: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime After Controlling for Different Polynomial Degrees of Margins

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non Bimarou
Controls: Linear			
Fraction of seats won	-141.7	1055.3**	-1684.8
by seriously accused	(617.1)	(502.6)	(1283.5)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	80.65	70.61	22.26
Controls: Quadratic			
Fraction of seats won	29.20	1047.3**	-1073.7
by seriously accused	(588.2)	(501.7)	(1232.5)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	81.72	67.70	21.88
Controls: Cubic			
Fraction of seats won	513.6	1086.6**	156.3
by seriously accused	(606.8)	(516.4)	(1300.0)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	75.68	61.44	18.70
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	4152.1	4963.3
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent.All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects. Quadratic regression in addition controls for square margin.Cubic regression in addition controls for square and cubic margin. *** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A10: Robustness: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime by Considering Different Definitions of Close Election

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non Bimarou
Vote Margin: 1 percent			
Fraction of seats won	-1285.9	4195.1*	-5295.8
by seriously accused	(1749.9)	(2406.9)	(4692.4)
First Stage F Stat (on instrument)	13.17	6.798	2.945
Vote Margin: 5 percent			
Fraction of seats won	52.90	855.1**	-731.6
by seriously accused	(449.6)	(427.3)	(795.9)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	192.7	85.68	108.4
Vote Margin: 7 percent			
Fraction of seats won	196.7	746.2**	-465.1
by seriously accused	(413.3)	(342.7)	(752.9)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	197.3	109.4	79.86
Vote Margin: 9 percent			
Fraction of seats won	-124.1	737.7**	-1193.3
by seriously accused	(456.8)	(358.0)	(848.5)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	197.9	97.17	96.87
Vote Margin: 11 percent			
Fraction of seats won	-141.7	1055.3**	-1684.8
by seriously accused	(617.1)	(502.6)	(1283.5)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	80.65	70.61	22.26
Mean of Total Crime	4660.9	4152.1	4963.3
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than the percent mentioned.All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.

Table A11: Robustness: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Total Crime After Removing Extreme Values and Considering Alternate Dependent Variable Form

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non Bimarou
Outcome: Trimmed Total Crime			
Fraction of seats won	131.3	1168.4**	-1740.4^{+}
by seriously accused	(548.0)	(455.4)	(1228.0)
Mean	4173.2	3984.3	4357.1
First Stage F Stat (on instrument)	82.22	72.16	22.53
Observations	5033	1875	3155
Outcome: Log Total Crime			
Fraction of seats won	0.0536	0.132^{+}	-0.0988
by seriously accused	(0.0794)	(0.0955)	(0.153)
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	80.65	70.61	22.26
Observations	5134	1914	3220

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent.All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.Dependent variable is trimmed at 1 percent from both the ends for each sample.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level. $^{+}$ Significant at the 16 percent level.

Table A12: Robustness: Effect of Seriously Accused Leader on Lagged Outcomes of Total Crime (from Previous Years)

	(1) All States	(2) Bimarou	(3) Non-Bimarou
Outcome: Lag1 $(t-1)$			
Fraction of seats won	205.6	430.6	-63.80
by seriously accused	(547.4)	(413.9)	(1246.0)
Mean of Lag1	4513.5	4005.2	4815.5
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	57.65	56.10	15.25
Observations	3984	1484	2500
Outcome: Lag2 $(t-2)$			
Fraction of seats won	55.46	114.1	410.6
by seriously accused	(882.1)	(550.0)	(1560.6)
Mean of Lag2	4420.7	3935.9	4708.6
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	35.69	29.56	13.83
Observations	3406	1270	2136
Outcome: Lag3 $(t-3)$			
Fraction of seats won	-261.7	-756.3	407.5
by seriously accused	(957.0)	(773.0)	(1559.4)
Mean of Lag3	4296.7	3842.3	4567.1
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	31.16	15.49	18.18
Observations	2839	1059	1780
Outcome: Lag4 $(t-4)$			
Fraction of seats won	-997.7	-655.2	-2092.9
by seriously accused	(1220.6)	(676.5)	(3088.2)
Mean of Lag4	4139.2	3682.1	4411.2
First Stage Fstat (on instrument)	30.03	11.79	34.62
Observations	2271	847	1424

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. Close election is defined as election between a politician accused of serious crime and a politician not accused of serious crime (this also includes non-criminal) where vote share margin between the winner and the runner up is less than 3 percent. Lag1, Lag2, Lag3 and Lag4 refer to Total Crime one year, two years, three years and four years before the leader is in office. All regressions control for the proportion of seats that had close election in the district, vote margin(linear), district fixed effects, year fixed effects, and state specific year fixed effects.*** Significant at the 1 percent level.** Significant at the 5 percent level.* Significant at the 10 percent level.