

The Power of Societal Dynamics on Impeachment: The Interrelated Forces of the Brazilian Upper-Middle Class on the Removal of Dilma Rousseff

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Research Puzzle & Questions

Q1- What are the forces that lead to impeachment?

Q2- Why did Brazil's Congress remove a president from power based on an administrative infraction, largely accepted to be an unimpeachable crime?



CASE SELECTION

Why Brazil?

- 208 million citizens impacted
- 2nd Brazilian impeachment since Collor de Mello's 1992 impeachment
- Re-established democracy in 1988 after 21 years of dictatorship

Why Rousseff's Impeachment?

- Questionable legal basis
- Few predicted this impeachment
- Within context of global decline of democracy



RESEARCH METHODS & SOURCES

- Process Tracing
 - Upper-Middle Class in Brazil Under Worker's Party (2002-2016)
- Media Content Analysis
 - *Veja* Magazine Covers (1991-2018)
- Congressional Content & Discourse Analysis
 - Chamber of Deputies impeachment proceedings
- Public Opinion Polling
 - Datafolha Polling of Approval Ratings Across Economic Class
- Comparative Analysis Between Economic Indicators & Approval Ratings
 - GDP Growth (World Bank) & Approval Ratings (Datafolha)



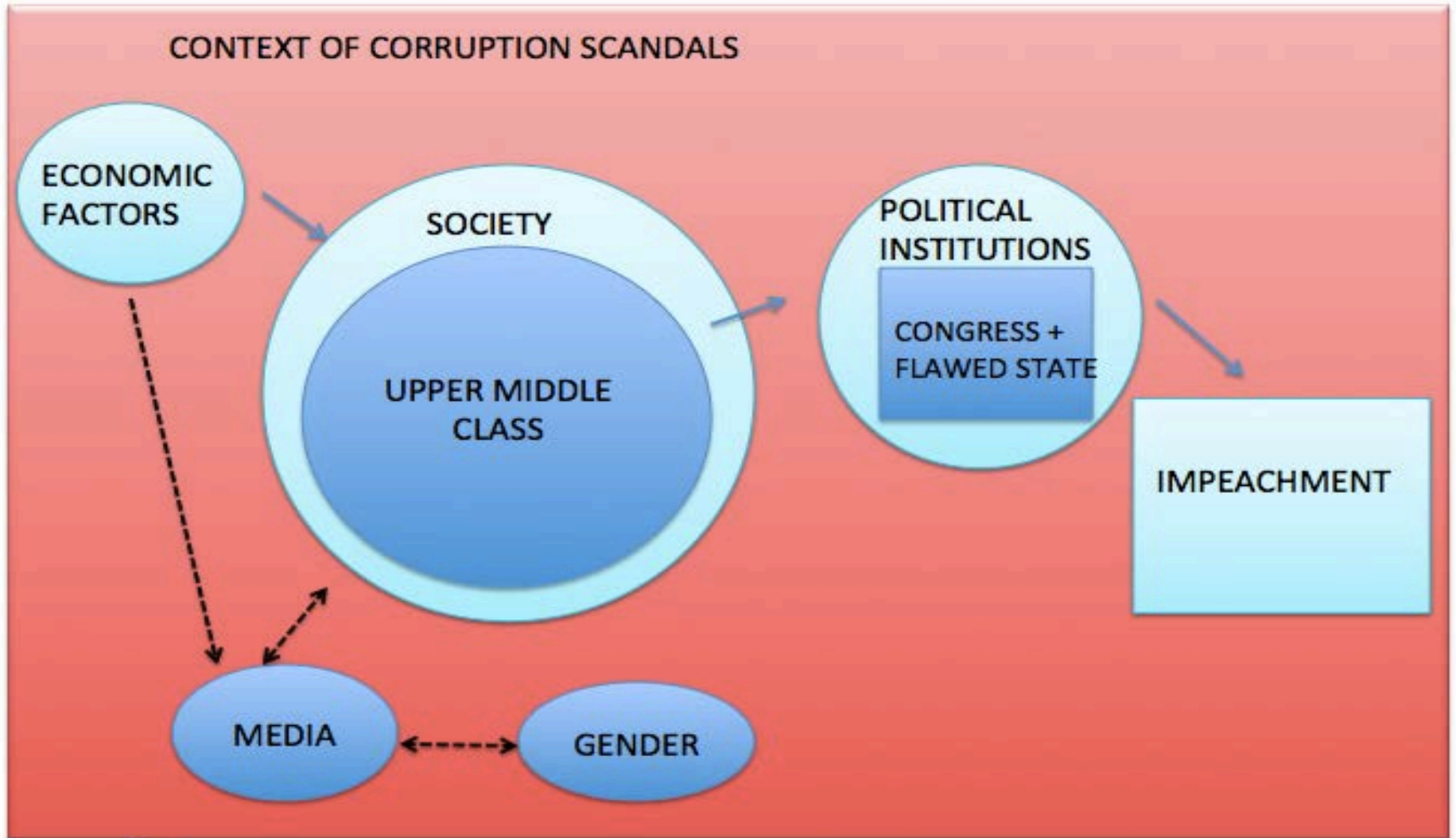
EXISTING EXPLANATIONS FOR IMPEACHMENT

- Democracy At Work
- Corruption Scandals
- Media
- Gender (Rousseff specific)
- **Economic Crisis**
- **Flawed Institutional State/ Political (Brazil specific)**
- **Societal Factors: Upper-Middle Class's Changing Attitude**



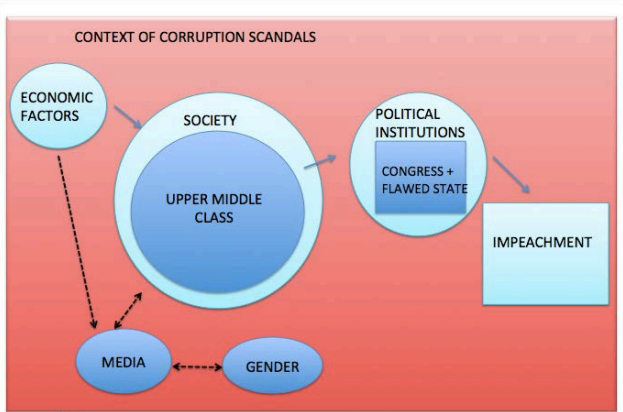
But how do these theories work in relation to each other?

FINDINGS



Model occurring within the context of corruption scandals which impacts every aspect

CONCLUSIONS

Common Wisdom	My Contribution
Impeachment = Democracy at work	Sometimes impeachments ≠ democratic at work, especially if one group has disproportionate influence
Societal dynamics play a limited role in impeachments.	Societal groups and shifting attitudes can be a central and interrelated factor.
Rousseff's impeachment was the result of a singular force. <i>E.g.</i> <i>Media → Impeachment</i> <i>Middle Class → Impeachment</i> <i>Economic Factors → Impeachment</i> <i>Flawed Institutional State → Impeachment</i>	A comprehensive & holistic model that examines how different forces were deeply interrelated.  <p>Model occurring within the context of corruption scandals which impacts every aspect</p>

THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

- Latin America: Disillusionment towards Pink Tide governments
- Impeachment can be destructive for young democracies
- Impeachment by segments of elite ≠ democracy at work
- Consider interrelated forces for better impeachment predictions
 - Understand causes → Determine legitimacy → Develop policy and theory to preserve democracy within global decline

Research Method	Changing Attitude of Upper-Middle Class	Economic Crisis	Flawed Institutional State
Process Tracing	X		X
Media Content Analysis	X	X	
Congressional Content and Discourse Analysis	X	X	X
Public Opinion Polling	X	X	X
Economic Indicators and Public Polling	X	X	