

**DETERMINANTS OF WINNING PROSPECTS OF  
POLITICAL CANDIDATES: EVIDENCE FROM ODISHA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The thesis estimates the impact of candidate characteristics and economic and development outcomes on winning and re-election prospects of candidates respectively in Odisha for state assembly elections in the years 2009 and 2014. Using data on the background and characteristics of candidates and outcomes of the state assembly elections, we employ a logistic regression to ascertain the odds of winning with respect to the given characteristics. We find that incumbency, wealth, party affiliation, and criminal background of the candidate are significant predictors of a candidate's winning probability. Similarly, using data on election outcomes and constituency-level measures of economic activity (measured by change in intensity of night-time lights) and development indicator (measured by change in literacy rate), we make use of multinomial logistic regression to study the impact of economic and development outcomes delivered by the incumbent Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) on his/her re-election prospects. We estimate insignificant effects of the economic and development outcomes during the tenure of an MLA on his/her re-election probability, thus suggesting no significant impact of economic growth and development indicator on winning prospects of an incumbent elected official.