

# Vote Buying and Associational Life\*

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## Abstract

This paper documents a robust positive correlation between community group participation and occurrences of vote buying attempts in Latin America. Instrumental variable estimates and results of panel data models that account for time-invariant unobserved voter characteristics indicate that a more vibrant associational life facilitates this widespread form of electoral manipulation. Contrary to the expectations derived from the traditional literature on social capital, the findings show that institutions of civic participation can potentially be exploited to increase the efficiency of electoral strategies of manipulation, reducing accountability and affecting the quality of democratic processes.

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*Before toting up the balance sheet for social capital in its various forms, we need to weigh costs as well as benefits. This challenge still awaits.*

-Robert D. Putnam<sup>1</sup>

Ever since Tocqueville's visit to America, numerous social scientists have seen civic participation as the base for a strong democracy. When people join groups or associations—proponents of a strong “civil society” note—they share ideas, engage in debates, learn about public issues, and are better able to promote social change and accountability of public officials. These ideas and others that connect civic participation to better development outcomes have justified the donation of billions of dollars to the promotion and creation of independent associations by international aid agencies.<sup>2</sup> A small group of critics, on the other hand, have noted that not all such groups are conducive to better democratic outcomes, and that in fact, elites have at times been able to amass more political and economic power by exploiting preexisting social networks. Our understanding of the mechanisms by which they have done so, however, is limited, and systematic empirical evidence illustrating how the elites coopt institutions of civic participation to undermine democracy has not been presented. This paper takes a step towards exploring these issues by focusing on the link between participation in groups by individuals and vote buying.<sup>3</sup>

The interest in vote buying is justified by the emergence of a strong market for votes that often accompanies democratization and by the persistence of these transactions in more developed democracies. Although the precise extent of manipulation and its effects are difficult to assess given the illegality of the practice, we do know that when voters are asked in surveys whether they have received bribes to influence their votes, a non-negligible fraction of these voters admits having done so. The literature gives us examples of this fraction: 15% in Mexico in 2000, 12% in Argentina in 2001, 12% in Nigeria in 2007, 25% in Kenya in 2007, and 26% in Lebanon in 2009.<sup>4</sup> These numbers should be considered a lower bound of the

extent of actual manipulation, as people may be unwilling to admit being the recipients of these benefits.<sup>5</sup>

That parties distribute benefits to such large fractions of voters is puzzling, given that in most elections where this occurs there is effective enforcement of the secret ballot. How do vote brokers manage to sustain these transactions when they cannot verify how the recipients of the bribes vote? Although vote brokers use a wide variety of strategies to circumvent the inherent commitment problems of vote buying, I argue that most of them are facilitated by the existence of a rich associational life.

The reasoning that links vote buying to civic participation starts with the simple observation that the potential effects of participation on trust, cooperation, and the spread of information that we might expect to strengthen democracy can also help less laudable enterprises. The consequences of increased participation on intra-group cooperation illustrate the point. Robert Putnam notes that associations can contribute to the stability of democracy by instilling in their members “habits of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness,”<sup>6</sup> Yet, if participation does promote cooperation and solidarity among members of any group, it can do so in particular with clientelistic networks. Consider the case described by Chin-Shou Wang and Charles Kurzman in their study on the Kuomintang campaign tactics in Taiwan: “One voter was a nephew of the broker and helped the broker to buy votes in the family of the voter’s brother and two daughters; another relative, a cousin, helped the broker deliver the vote buying money to the voter’s neighbors.”<sup>7</sup> Solidarity and the urge to cooperate with a member of their network made others more willing to accept money to vote for a particular candidate. Even more, the broker trusted her family members to help distribute bribes to other people in their own groups whom they trusted as well. In light of these observations, it is easy to understand why brokers frequently target others in their own groups, like their family members and close friends.<sup>8</sup>

Higher solidarity and cooperation among group members are not the only character-

istics of groups that make them attractive from a broker’s perspective. Groups facilitate access to information about political preferences and turnout proclivities of their members, have influential members who can be paid to convince others to vote in a certain way, hold meetings that make the distribution of bribes logistically easier, and increase the number of monitors of voting behavior. In these ways, civic participation helps overcome the commitment problems of vote buying transactions, which will lead us to expect a positive association between the incidence of this form of manipulation and a more vibrant associational life.

Survey data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) from Colombia is consistent with those expectations. Figure 1 shows that, while 13.7% of those who do not attend meetings in their communities report being offered bribes, those who attend meetings of four different types of organizations are twice as likely to receive offers.<sup>9</sup> Although this pattern was expected, it is hard to conclude from it that more civic participation facilitates vote buying. Perhaps people who are active participants in associations are simply more likely to report illicit activities because they are immersed in a high social capital environment. Another possibility is that the observed pattern is driven by unobserved characteristics of voters, like their propensity to cooperate with others (including the brokers), that are correlated with participation. Moreover, if participation does facilitate vote buying, some voters could organize in groups specifically for the purpose of increasing their chances of receiving the bribes and to improve their bargaining position with the candidates.<sup>10</sup> This would then lead us to overestimate the impact of participation on manipulation. This paper addresses these challenges using a variety of identification strategies, including instrumental variable (IV) regressions, estimations that incorporate models of the misreporting of vote buying instances, fixed effects models that account for unobserved heterogeneity at the individual level using an electoral panel, and list experiments. A strong positive association between civic participation and vote buying still holds once we account for underreporting, unobserved confounders at the individual level, and potential reverse causality.

[Figure 1 about here]

The paper proceeds with an examination of the different mechanisms behind the positive association between vote buying and participation. I find evidence that is consistent with group-targeting being used to convey information about the broker’s candidate to the bribed voters. In particular, by offering bribes to members of the same group, a candidate signals that he or she cares about the group’s needs. This provides the targeted members—especially those who are less informed about the candidates—with an incentive to vote as instructed by the broker. The findings are also consistent with the idea that members of groups are more likely to be targeted because their groups have influential members who can be paid to help increase compliance rates. On the other hand, I find no evidence in favor of participation encouraging compliance in vote buying by enhancing cooperation and generalized trust that prevent opportunistic behavior.

The main body of evidence presented here uses interviews with brokers, voters, and election monitors, and survey data from Colombia. However, the theoretical underpinnings for the empirical results are not tied to the idiosyncracies of Colombian politics. External validity is examined by taking advantage of comparable surveys carried out in other developing democracies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Although plausible sources of exogenous variation in participation used to identify the effect of participation on vote buying are not available for countries other than Colombia, there are other advantages to exploring the relationship of interest using other countries’ surveys. For Brazil, in particular, I use an electoral panel study which includes an experiment to elicit truthful answers regarding electoral manipulation. These data provide us with alternative ways to address the estimation challenges created by misreporting and unobserved voter heterogeneity. It is found that in Brazil and in all the other democracies of Latin America and the Caribbean, the association between civic participation and being offered a bribe remains.

Colombia also offers an interesting case for the study of vote buying given its long

tradition of formal democratic institutions. This long history, however, has not been sufficient to improve the Colombians' negative perceptions about their democratic process, which are informed by evidence of interference from non-state armed actors in elections.<sup>11</sup> The Colombian case is a prime example of how changes in formal institutions are not enough to attain truly democratic outcomes. How can democracy be strengthened in these cases? A popular answer among academics, aid donors, and pundits has been the promotion of participation in non-government groups, which enhances the accumulation of social capital. In this paper, I show that even if the theoretical arguments that support those policies are valid, an unintended consequence of such efforts would be to facilitate one of the most common forms of electoral manipulation.

## **The Literature on Social Capital and Vote Buying**

This paper contributes to the literature that highlights potential drawbacks from increased participation and the accumulation of social capital. Early criticisms focused on how, given the nature of some groups (e.g. gangs, drug cartels, radical political groups), participation in them could work against society's general interests and hinder cooperation by highlighting divisive social cleavages.<sup>12</sup> The theoretical mechanisms proposed here, on the other hand, focus on how, irrespective of the nature of an organization, high civic participation can be exploited to irregularly influence electoral outcomes.

The arguments most closely related to the general one advanced in this paper highlight the links between civic participation and the capture of political power.<sup>13</sup> In her seminal investigation, Berman shows how gathering information about preferences of specific groups was key to the Nazis' rise to power and how this process was greatly facilitated by the extensive network of associations in Germany. In detailed case studies from Mexico, Holzner documents how the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional,

PRI) used pre-established community networks to control information flows hindering other parties' policy efforts and allowing for the continuation of clientelistic practices. Similarly, Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson find that regions in Sierra Leone where local chiefs are less politically constrained have worse development outcomes, and, unexpectedly, that the people living there participated more actively in their communities. This paper shows evidence consistent with the general pattern that civic participation is exploited by certain political actors, but it differs from previous work by focusing the theoretical and empirical analysis on the relationship between one common form of electoral manipulation and participation.

This paper is also related to the literature that links voters' networks with clientelistic practices. The literature has emphasized how economic coercion can be used to control political behavior, and, in particular, how work contracts are exploited to influence the voting choices of employees.<sup>14</sup> This paper shows that some of the advantages of targeting benefits (or punishments) to workers also apply to other types of groups or associations. It has also been noted that vote buying is more easily sustained in the presence of tight social networks that enhance brokers' monitoring capacity, and that this explains the prevalence of clientelistic practices in rural areas and small populations.<sup>15</sup> Calvo and Murillo explore the role of networks in facilitating the distribution of handouts by focusing on the link between proximity to party activist and the propensity to receive clientelistic benefits.<sup>16</sup> Consistent with these ideas, Holland and Palmer-Rubin argue that leaders of associations are often mediators in clientelistic transactions.<sup>17</sup>

This paper contributes to this literature by exploring how participation in any group, regardless of whether party activists are members, helps brokerage. The paper provides direct statistical evidence supporting the view that parties take advantage of the presence of influential members of groups, and it explores in detail alternative mechanisms for why groups facilitate vote buying. Specifically, the paper addresses three additional ways participation sustains these transactions: by providing information about voters to brokers, by

inducing compliance by enhancing trust and cooperation among members, and by signalling candidates' genuine interest on the groups' needs through group-targeting. In addition, unlike existing work that has reported links between groups or group structure and electoral irregularities, the data used here allow us to address endogeneity concerns driven by unobserved characteristics of group participants, underreporting, and reverse causality.

## The Mechanisms

Like other clientelistic transactions, vote buying suffers from commitment problems between brokers and voters. If a broker approaches a voter with an offer to buy her vote, the broker must trust her to vote for the broker's candidate once she is in the voting booth. Since the introduction of the secret ballot, brokers have used a variety of schemes that allow for the monitoring of voting choices: voting machines that make distinctive sounds for each candidate, marked or pre-printed ballots, carbon copies of the ballots, camera phones, and even children who go inside the voting booth posing as the voter's son or daughter while actually serving as monitors.<sup>18</sup> But as more strict enforcement of the secrecy of the ballot has taken place, direct verification of voting choices—although used when possible—has given way to schemes in which brokers condition future bribes on aggregate results.<sup>19</sup> In these cases, however, the broker's promise of future payments needs to be believed by the bribed voters, which adds a new obstacle to the realization of these transactions.

Given the potential for opportunistic behavior by both brokers and voters, vote buying should be greatly facilitated by factors that increase trust, cooperation and reciprocity. Group participation can be, according to the literature on social capital, one of those factors.<sup>20</sup> On this point, Putnam states, "Networks of civic engagement embody past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template of collaboration."<sup>21</sup> If brokers are part of the same networks as the bribed voters, it is possible that vote buying transactions

would form part of these repeated interactions in which different “favors” are exchanged over time.<sup>22</sup> Higher solidarity and cooperation among members of groups can also benefit a broker even if she is not herself a member. If a broker conditions future payments to a group on her candidate’s vote totals, its members will be more likely to comply to avoid harming the rest of members.<sup>23</sup>

More generally, when some members start perceiving compliance after vote buying as beneficial to the group, they will encourage others to vote for the broker’s candidate. As a broker in Bogotá, Colombia mentioned in an interview,

In a group, when the people see that one of them is leaving [i.e. supporting another candidate], the others bring him back. [They say] Here we have done well. Here we are getting the gifts. This is a good project for us. So they try to convince those who try to leave. But with individual voters... Sure, he receives the gift and if he wants, he goes somewhere else.<sup>24</sup>

By targeting the group, the broker has aligned her incentives with those of the bribed members and, in that way, they will be very interested in preventing other members’ defection.

A rich associational life also creates opportunities for the broker to learn about her potential targets. Vote buying is often carried out in settings where there is uncertainty about voters’ individual political preferences and turnout proclivities, which is information that is critical for the broker. When a broker aims to mobilize weak supporters, she wants to identify those who would not go to the polls in the absence of inducements.<sup>25</sup> Alternatively, if the broker wishes to target weak supporters of the opponent to switch their intended votes, it is necessary for her to recognize who those voters are in order to avoid giving the payments to supporters of her candidate.<sup>26</sup> How can higher civic participation help the broker find that information? Katherine Cramer Walsh notes, “Political interaction occurs not among people who make a point to specifically talk about politics but it emerges instead from the social

processes of people chatting with one another.”<sup>27</sup> In this way, group participation offers an opportunity to exchange ideas that reveal information about voters’ political preferences to the brokers.<sup>28</sup> If voters do not participate actively in their communities, it will be harder for the broker to assess their buyability.

While groups helps brokers to become better informed about their potential targets, group-targeting can also provide information about the candidates to the voters. In the African context, Eric Kramon has argued that vote buying conveys information to voters about the politicians’ ability to engage in patronage once the candidate attains office.<sup>29</sup> A similar logic can be applied to group-targeting. Voters who belong to a group might not recognize whether a particular candidate is sympathetic to their group’s needs and preferred policies. By distributing benefits to group members, the candidate could signal that she is in fact the “group’s candidate,” who is expected to continue working on their behalf. Unlike campaign promises, the distribution of benefits during the campaign may be perceived as a costly signal that other candidates might not be able or willing to send.<sup>30</sup>

Groups can also offer potential cost-reducing benefits to brokers if they have influential members.<sup>31</sup> The mechanism is simple and is explained by a voter through an example: “In a village, they can have a soccer team. The candidate has a word with the coach... If they talk to the coach, if they have the coach, then the players will follow.” A broker can pay a higher amount to a leader of a group to convince others of the benefits of voting for a candidate. While the broker might still have to pay the followers (as recognized by the interviewee), convincing the leader to exert her influence over the other members can ensure a higher rate of compliance. Similarly, someone who participates in many different groups can influence a potentially larger set of people if he or she is paid to do so.

The mechanisms above are hardly the only ones that relate group participation to the incidence of vote buying. During conversations with voters, brokers and election monitors in Colombia, others mechanisms appeared, like the need to show egalitarian treatment: “When

you only give it to one in the group, the others are going to see this and say, why is he getting it and not us?” or simple logistical advantages: “If there is a school, and there is a meeting, it [the distribution of bribes] is easier than going one by one.”<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, we also know that active civic participation might help people become aware of the advantages of a transparent democratic process. Perhaps voters who are more involved in their communities will be less tolerant to the use of economic coercion as a tool to influence their voting choices. The question of whether increased civic participation facilitates or hinders this form of electoral manipulation seems to be one that cannot easily be answered solely on the basis of theoretical arguments. In what follows, this question is studied using data from Colombia and the findings are cross validated using comparable, although less comprehensive, surveys from other countries in Latin America.

## **Background and Information on Civic Participation from Colombia**

Colombia has maintained formal democratic institutions for most of its history. The average Polity score for the country, which assigns 10 to the most democratic country and  $-10$  to the most autocratic, has been 7 since 1956. Similarly, Freedom House has given the country an average score in its index of political rights of 2.75, on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being the most democratic, since 1973. In contrast with these numbers, negative perceptions about the quality of democratic processes are widespread. In 2007, for example, only 17.5% of respondents in a national survey answered that they completely trusted election results, and similar figures emerge when considering longer time spans.<sup>33</sup> Frequent scandals of electoral manipulation and the involvement of non-state armed actors in regional and national elections justify these perceptions. In particular, right wing paramilitaries have been especially active in influencing elections since 2001. Such involvement in politics was part of the

paramilitaries' strategy to defeat left wing guerrillas with the help of government officials in a conflict that started in the sixties and that continues to this day.<sup>34</sup>

Even though distrust of democratic institutions is common, this does not translate into one party completely dominating elections, at least not in the average municipality. In 2007, a regional election year, on average there were 3.96 effective parties and a margin of victory of 9% at the municipality level. For 2010, a general election year, those numbers are 3.1 and 17%, respectively. This is in line with the view of election monitors who think that there is competitive manipulation in most regions of Colombia.<sup>35</sup>

## Data

The data on electoral manipulation and civic participation from Colombia come from the 2007, 2010, 2011, and 2012 LAPOP surveys. These nationally representative surveys have information on 6,012 voting-age respondents and over the four years cover 81 municipalities. Table 1 includes the summary statistics on manipulation attempts, explanatory variables of interest, and baseline controls. The statistics are calculated for a sample for which these variables are available. This sample has a total of 4,463 observations.

[Table 1 about here]

Panel A presents statistics for the dependent variable and the main explanatory variables. The table shows that 16.8% of the respondents reported being offered material benefits in exchange for their political support. We also see that a fairly significant fraction of the respondents attend meetings of different types of organizations in their communities. Religious and parents' organizations are the most commonly attended. Our main explanatory variable, *Organizations*, is the number of different types of organizational meetings a given respondent reports attending. We see that, on average, a person in the sample goes to the meetings of 1.7 types of organizations in a given year.

Panels B and C present summary statistics for a set of individual and municipality-level controls. Individual controls are: age, years of education, a dummy variable for gender, a dummy variable for whether the respondent lives in a rural area, and an income variable. The income variable takes one of ten possible values which represent different ranges of household incomes and it is increasing in income.<sup>36</sup> Municipality-level controls are all determinants of vote buying that could plausibly be correlated with social capital levels. The supplemental material has a detailed description of these and other regressors used in the analysis.

## Estimating Equations and Results

I estimate linear probability models with the following equation:

$$(1) \quad \textit{Vote Buying}_{i,m,t} = \textit{Group Participation}_{i,m,t} \beta + \mathbf{X}_{i,m,t} \Gamma + \mathbf{W}_{m,t} \Omega + \epsilon_{i,m,t},$$

where  $i$  indexes individuals,  $m$  municipalities, and  $t$  years. The variable  $\textit{Vote Buying}_{i,m,t}$  takes the value of one if the respondent reports having been offered a bribe in the previous years in exchange for her vote and zero otherwise.<sup>37</sup> I use different measures for  $\textit{Group Participation}_{i,m,t}$  that include the number of types of organizations whose meetings the respondent reports attending, dummy variables for whether the respondent attended any meetings of a specific type of organization, and frequency of attendance at these meetings in a year. The coefficient  $\beta$  captures the relationship between group participation and the probability of being approached by a broker. The vectors  $\mathbf{X}_{i,m,t}$  and  $\mathbf{W}_{m,t}$  are controls at the individual and at the municipality level. To account for common shocks to all respondents in a year, such as differences in the survey questionnaire or national political events, I control for year effects in most specifications.

[Table 2 about here]

Table 2 presents ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates of  $\beta$ .<sup>38</sup> Column (1) shows that if the respondent attends meetings of one additional organization, the probability of being offered some benefit in exchange for her vote increases by 3.8%. Columns (2) through (7) examine how much attendance at meetings of a given type of organization affects the probability of being offered bribes. We see that, with the exception of religious organizations, they are all positively and significantly related to the probability of receiving an offer. These models confirm that there is a positive correlation between group participation and vote buying attempts for most of the types of organizations covered by the survey.

Column (8) simultaneously includes the dummies for attendance at the meetings of each type of organization. This model allows us to assess the independent relationship between each of them and vote buying attempts. We see that for three types of organizations—political, community, and women’s groups—the coefficient is positive and significant at conventional levels. Moreover, the magnitudes for the coefficients on professional, community, and women’s groups are similar, while the one on political organization is much larger.<sup>39</sup> This could be explained by reverse causality, an issue that will be examined later. The findings suggest that there are mechanisms common to different types of groups that make their members more likely to be targeted with vote buying offers.<sup>40</sup>

Our measures of participation have some limitations. It is possible that a given group might be considered an organization of different types which would affect the interpretation of the previous findings. For example, if a respondent is a member of a parents-teachers association of a Catholic school, she might report attending meetings of a religious organization *and* those of a parents’ organization. Ideally, we would want to have the number of different groups that the respondent is a member of, as the theoretical mechanisms that link vote buying and participation operate on a group-by-group basis. However, we only have a proxy for this variable, which is the number of different types of organizations whose

meetings the respondent reports attending. This source of measurement error would tend to underestimate the coefficient on participation.<sup>41</sup>

## **Is Participation Being Encouraged by Manipulation?**

The previous results do not necessarily give us estimates of the effect of group participation on the likelihood of being offered bribes. In particular, even if our controls are able to account for all potential confounders, and underreporting is not what explains the uncovered pattern, it is possible that vote buying attempts directly determines group participation. Vote buying, when targeted to group members, creates an incentive for voters in the community to join those groups. By doing so, voters can increase the chance of receiving the benefits, and possibly put themselves in a better bargaining position.<sup>42</sup> A more indirect channel traces the emergence of groups in the community to the lack of responsiveness of local officials who win elections through electoral manipulation. In that context, the community is forced to organize into groups to solve problems that, under other circumstances, would be handled by the government. If the previous mechanisms are at work, the OLS estimates would tend to overstate the effect of participation on vote buying.

Although there is not an ideal source of exogenous variation in group participation available, I now present results that use a promising instrument. I use an indicator of whether a family member of the respondent has been the victim of violence during the Colombian internal conflict as an instrument of participation. The dummy variable takes the value of one if any of the following incidents is reported by the respondent: the respondent has lost a family member or close relative in the conflict, a family member was forced to abandon his or her home, or a family member had to escape to a different country because of security concerns.<sup>43</sup>

[Table 3 about here]

There is now substantial evidence that shows that victimization has a positive and strong effect on political participation across different regions of the world.<sup>44</sup> Multiple mechanisms justify this association: community groups can be a source of social support for the victims, groups can effectively pressure politicians into changing policies to prevent the crimes suffered by their members, and victims may be more active in their communities to redefine or to reaffirm their identities after suffering a traumatic experience.<sup>45</sup> In this way, the proposed instrument is expected to be a good predictor of group participation. The critical assumption for using family members' victimization as an instrument is that victimization (after partialling out other regressors) does not affect the chances of the respondent being targeted with bribes through other channels different from her participation in groups. There are plausible scenarios in which this exclusion restriction might not hold, but below I undertake a number of checks that suggest that those concerns are not affecting the results.

Column 3 in Table 3 shows the instrumental variable estimates (IV) for a model that includes the baseline controls. We find a positive and significant effect of group participation on the probability of being offered a bribe. Its magnitude has noticeably increased. This could be explained by the potential negative effect of vote buying on community participation driven by disillusion in the democratic process, or by attenuation bias in the OLS estimates.

The assumption of strict exogeneity of the proposed instrument in the previous model might be too strong. Victimization of a family member can generate a number of changes for the respondent that also facilitate vote buying. First, victimization could induce displacement, and brokers might target displaced people as they are economically vulnerable. I control for whether the person was born in a different municipality, her employment status, and whether the respondent's income fell in the last two years because the person was forced to abandon her home fleeing from a conflict-affected area. Second, victimization might generate changes in interest in politics or political engagement that are not exclusively reflected in memberships in organizations. These changes in political engagement can also facilitate

the acquisition of information by brokers to select the people that they want to bribe. To alleviate these concerns, I control for indicators of interest in politics, ideology, whether the person is registered to vote, and whether she sympathizes with a political party or participated in protests. Third, victimization might affect the levels of trust that people have of others, and as mentioned earlier, brokers might try to engage in vote buying with those individuals who are more trusting given the inherent commitment problems of vote buying transactions. Reported trust in others in the community is also added as a control.

There are other challenges to the identification strategy that arise because of the nature of the Colombian conflict. Having a family member who is a victim is correlated with the presence of armed groups, and those armed groups are also directly involved in manipulating electoral results. Therefore, I control for the presence of armed groups in the municipality. Finally, if a family member was targeted with violence because of her political views, a broker might use this information to assess whether the respondent is a good target for vote buying as political attitudes and preferences could be correlated among family members. I include in the model two indicators of whether family members have been threatened with violence to induce a vote for a particular candidate or abstention. Controlling for these variables alleviates concerns that the violent incident was caused by political attitudes that are shared by family members. More generally, controlling for these variables captures unobservables that makes the respondent a good target of the same forms of intimidation. Those unobservables are likely to be similar to the factors that make the respondent more buyable.

Columns (4) and (5) show the results of the models with the described specifications. In columns (1) and (2) I include the OLS estimates with the same set of controls. The IV estimates again are much larger than the OLS ones. In models (2) and (5), I also include municipality fixed effects to control for any time-invariant unobservable at the municipality level that might make people living in that area more likely to be targeted by both violence

and electoral manipulation.

The table also shows that indirect victimization has a positive effect on the respondent's participation. The coefficient on our measure of family victimization in the first stage is significant for all IV models, which gives us confidence that the results will not be affected by weak instruments.<sup>46</sup> This result is interesting in its own right. The literature has shown that being a victim of violence affects political participation but not that this effect also exists indirectly through violent acts suffered by those close to the respondents.<sup>47</sup>

## **Underreporting of Vote Buying Offers**

Ignoring social desirability bias could lead us to draw incorrect inferences when studying vote buying. Underreporting of vote buying offers not only inhibits our ability to assess the extent of manipulation but also can give us biased estimates of the impact of a given factor on vote buying.<sup>48</sup> This occurs when the explanatory variables in the model determine whether respondents report truthfully when asked whether they have been approached by a broker. This is particularly relevant for the analysis, as higher social capital might induce truthful reporting. If that is the case, people who do not participate actively in their community would tend to underreport the occurrence of these transactions, which biases the results in favor of our theoretical expectations.

The results of the previous sections, however, are robust to two separate strategies to address misreporting. The first models the misreporting process directly when estimating our relationship of interest.<sup>49</sup> This approach extends the Logit model to account for a positive probability of having experienced a bribing attempt but not observing it in the data.<sup>50</sup> The second approach is to estimate models where the dependent variable is not affected by measurement error that is systematically related to our main explanatory variables. For this, I use the total number of vote buying transactions in a municipality as reported by election monitors. These reports come from the largest domestic election monitoring agency

in Colombia, *Misión de Observación Electoral*. The validity of this approach depends on the assumption that election monitors' misreporting, if it exists, is not correlated with the levels of community participation in the municipalities where the monitors operate. Since the monitors are independent actors in Colombia and many of them do not live in the municipalities that they monitor, I believe this is a sensible assumption. The results of both of these strategies, which are consistent with the previous findings, are reported in the supplementary material.

## Examining the Mechanisms

In this section we are concerned with the question of which mechanisms are behind the positive association between participation and vote buying. For that, I briefly summarize these mechanisms, explain how they are evaluated empirically, and present the results.

[Table 4 about here]

As noted earlier, it has been claimed that group participation fosters norms of reciprocity, which can help overcome commitment problems that lead to non-compliance in vote buying. To see whether the enhancement of trust and cooperation explains the uncovered pattern, I include in the baseline model a measure that is increasing in the trust the respondent has for others, and a variable that is increasing in the help given by the respondent to others in the community. We see in column (1) of Table 4 that our coefficient on participation changes little relative to the results of column (1) in Table 2. We also see that people who are more trusting of others are less likely to receive vote buying offers, not more. Similarly, column (2) shows that people who help others more frequently in their communities do appear to be targeted more, but that the coefficient on participation remains almost unchanged after the inclusion of this regressor. These findings are inconsistent with civic

participation enhancing trust and cooperation as the main mechanism that explains the relationship between vote buying and participation.

The models in columns (3), (4) and (5) of Table 4 evaluate whether there is an advantage to targeting well connected individuals on the grounds that they can influence more people to vote as the broker wants. If this is true, we should expect the leaders of those associations to be targeted more often. Column (3) shows that there is a positive association with leadership status, but its coefficient is only significant at the 11% level. This lack of precision in the estimates could be explained by the fact that information on leadership status is only collected in the survey for 2012, which significantly reduces the sample size. Moreover, 2012 is not an election year, which could lead voters to have more difficulty recalling their vote buying experiences.<sup>51</sup> Alternatively, if active members of their communities are sought by brokers because of their potential to influence others, we should also see that the effect of group participation should fall in magnitude after controlling for the frequency at which the respondent tries to influence others' voting choices. This is what we find in column (4). The reduction is almost 16% of the baseline coefficient, and we see that the people who engage more frequently in political persuasion are more likely to receive vote buying offers. Column(5) shows that those working for a political campaign are also more likely to be targeted and that the inclusion of this variable reduces the magnitude of the participation coefficient as well. This again supports the idea that connected individuals will be paid to influence others' voting choices in their groups.

We now examine whether group membership and group targeting helps sustain vote buying through information that they give to brokers and voters. As discussed earlier, civic participation has been hypothesized to increase the interest of members in political issues, as they are more likely to exchange ideas about public affairs. This could then help the broker identify most likely compliers given preferences or turnout proclivities. I examine how the participation coefficient changes after adding a measure of political interest as a control.<sup>52</sup>

Column (6) shows that the coefficient on participation does not change much, while the one of interest in politics is positive and significant. People who report being more engaged with political issues are indeed more likely to be targeted, but the results suggest that civic participation is not strongly associated with interest in politics.

By targeting members of the same group, a broker could also reveal information to the voters, which, in turn, induces them to comply. For instance, a voter might infer that the candidate truly cares about people like her when observing that others in her group received payments. The strength of the signal should be increasing in the number of members of the same group that are targeted. To examine this mechanism, I build a measure of the extent of vote buying in the groups that the respondent has participated in, and I add to the model an interaction of this measure with the participation variable. The measure is the average fraction of people in the municipality who attend the meetings of the same types of groups as the respondent or

$$\frac{\sum_{j=1}^6 \text{Group Participation}_{i,j,m,t} \times \text{Others' Vote Buying}_{(i),j,m,t}}{\sum_{j=1}^6 \text{Group Participation}_{i,j,m,t}},$$

where  $\text{Group Participation}_{i,j,m,t}$  takes the value of one if respondent  $i$  attends meetings of an organization of type  $j$  and zero otherwise, and  $\text{Others' Vote Buying}_{(i),j,m,t}$  is the fraction of people other than  $i$  who have been offered bribes among those who attend meetings of organizations of type  $j$  in municipality  $m$ . The model in column (6) shows that, consistent with the argument, participation in groups is associated with a higher probability of a respondent being offered a bribe and that this association is stronger the more other members of similar groups that the respondent belongs to are also targeted.

Such a pattern is also consistent with social conformity, or with a desire to help a group by complying, which makes it more likely that the payments to the group will be delivered in the future. To try to rule out these alternative explanations, it is important

to note that signalling will be relevant for those who do not have much information about the candidates. The uninformed voters will be those whose compliance will be affected by the knowledge that others in their group are also receiving bribes. Figure 2 presents the predicted probability of being targeted as a function of participation for respondents who belong to groups in which a large fraction of the members have been bribed, as well as for groups in which this fraction is small.<sup>53</sup> Here, I use the median in the sample to define which groups have a large or small fraction of members being bribed. The top figure shows the comparison for voters who follow the news rarely while the bottom figure shows the comparison for those who follow them daily. Consistent with the signalling mechanism, we can see that the difference in the estimated probabilities of being targeted between high and low group vote buying is larger for the uninformed voters than for the informed voters.

[Figure 2 about here]

It is important to note that the measure of group targeting is a crude proxy for the extent of manipulation among members of the respondent's networks, and that the previous results are only suggestive of the potential role of group-targeting as a signalling tool. Ideally, we would want to know whether other members of the respondents' groups have been bribed, but we only have information on other people surveyed who attend similar meetings as those attended by the respondent. Future work should address the limitations of this approach, possibly using more fine grained network data.

## International Evidence

The evidence presented so far comes from one country, Colombia. However, nothing in the mechanisms that connect participation in groups and vote buying is site-specific. Taking advantage of the availability of cross national surveys with similar information on political participation and vote buying, I investigate whether the main patterns found for Colombia also hold elsewhere. In particular, I use data from the 2010 Brazilian Electoral Panel Study (BEPS) and the 2010 Latin America Public Opinion Project to cross validate the previous results.<sup>54</sup>

Relative to the Colombian data, there are some advantages when exploring the relationship of interest with the BEPS. The first one is that the panel structure of the Brazilian data allows for the estimation of models in which unobserved heterogeneity at the individual level can be accounted for. This is important, as even with the full set of controls used in the previous models it is possible that participation variables are capturing voters' inherent characteristics that make them better targets of manipulation.

The first wave of the BEPS was conducted in March and April of 2010, the second on August, and the third in November right after the second round of the 2010 presidential election. Wave one was conducted as part of the 2010 Latin American Public Opinion Project and therefore shares some questions with the Colombian survey. Wave two kept some of the questions on participation in political, community, and parents' organizations, as well as information on whether the respondent reports having been offered a bribe in exchange for her vote. I use this information to estimate the parameters of a linear probability model that includes voters' effects denoted by  $\delta_i$ . The modified model is

$$\text{Vote Buying}_{i,m,t} = \delta_i + \text{Group Participation}_{i,m,t} \beta + \mathbf{X}_{i,m,t} \Gamma + \mathbf{W}_{m,t} \Omega + \epsilon_{i,m,t}.$$

The sample used to estimate the parameter in this model has only two periods that are separated by a few months, and, therefore, there would be no time variation in most of the controls for a given respondent. However, the data should capture changes in exposure to manipulation, as the survey was conducted in the months leading up to the election—the period when brokers concentrate their vote buying efforts. To estimate our coefficient of interest while allowing for the presence of the voters’ unobserved effects, I apply a first-differencing transformation which gives

$$(2) \quad \Delta \textit{Vote Buying}_{i,2} = \Delta \textit{Group Participation}_{i,2} \beta + \Delta \mathbf{X}_{i,2} \Gamma + \Delta \epsilon_{i,2}.$$

The parameters of interest are then estimated using the resulting cross section. As controls, I include in  $\Delta \mathbf{X}_{i,2}$  changes in self-reported income and employment status that occurred between March and August.

The second advantage of the Brazilian panel study is that it includes a list experiment that allows us to address concerns generated by potential misreporting of vote buying attempts in a way that is different from the two approaches adopted previously for the Colombian data. Wave three of the Brazilian study had two questionnaires. One is given to a randomly chosen group of respondents, the treatment group, and the other is given to the rest (the control group). The treatment group’s questionnaire includes the following question:

Now, I’m going to show you a card that mentions various things that candidates in all elections and their campaign workers (cabos eleitorais) sometimes do during political campaigns. I would like for you to tell me simply **HOW MANY** of the following, not which of them, happened during this year’s political campaigns:

- Candidates or their campaign workers offered you flyers, stickers, or buttons

- Candidates or their campaign workers visited your home
- Candidates or their campaign workers offered you money to campaign for them
- Candidates or their campaign workers threatened you or someone in your family
- Candidates or their campaign workers offered you money, favors, or presents in exchange for your vote.

The questionnaire for the control group on the other hand, asks the question above but leaves out the last item from the list.<sup>55</sup> Assuming that respondents do not count items in the control list in ways that depend on whether or not the sensitive item is included, a simple difference in means of the answer between treatment and control groups gives an estimate of the proportion of respondents who have been approached by brokers.<sup>56</sup> Since we are interested not in this proportion but rather on how the proportion is affected by participation, I use the Binomial EM estimator proposed by Imai for multivariate regression with lists experiments.<sup>57</sup>

[Table 5 about here]

Table 5 presents the results of the first-difference estimator in columns (2) and the results of the Binomial EM estimator in column (3). Column (1) gives the results of the linear probability model that uses as the dependent variable reported vote buying offers from wave two and basic controls from wave one. We see that the results are largely consistent with what was found with the Colombian data. Participation in meetings is associated with a higher probability of being approached by a broker.<sup>58</sup> After accounting for individual fixed effects, the magnitude of the coefficient on participation increases. The model in column (3) predicts that if the average person in the sample goes from attending the meeting of

one organization to attending the meetings of three types of organizations, her chances of receiving vote buying offers increase by 9.5%, a magnitude that is close to the predicted effect from the baseline model that uses Colombian data.

Finally, I check that the main patterns hold for other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean by estimating model (1) with the basic individual level controls using the 2010 LAPOP data.<sup>59</sup> Figure 3 shows that for all countries from the Caribbean, and Central and South America, the estimated coefficient on the number of different types of organizations whose meetings are attended by the respondent is positive and significant.

[Figure 3 about here]

The supplemental material presents the results of the models that assess the relevance of different mechanisms that account for the above relationship for this set of countries. The results are in line with those found in Colombia. In particular, I find that people who try persuade others regarding their political views and those who work for a political campaign are more likely to be offered bribes and that, as was the case earlier, there is support for the signalling mechanism when comparing the effects of participation across different levels of group vote buying for informed and uninformed voters.

## Concluding Remarks

This paper shows that people who actively participate in groups in their communities are more likely to be offered material rewards to sell their votes. This pattern holds across 20 developing democracies in the Caribbean, and Central and South America. For Colombia and Brazil, this association is not explained by misreporting of vote buying attempts, and the evidence suggests that the association could be interpreted as civic participation facilitating vote buying. As for the mechanisms behind this association, I found evidence that those

who participate more are more likely to be targeted because of their potential to influence others' voting choices in their groups. There is also suggestive evidence in favor of a signalling mechanism in which, by targeting group members, brokers convey information that increases the group's support for the broker's candidate.

While it has been observed that institutions of civic participation can be used to subvert democratic institutions, systematic empirical evidence of the potential negative effects of participation and the mechanism behind those effects has not been presented. This, perhaps, partially explains why there is still overwhelming support for ideas that place civic participation as a prerequisite for a strong democracy. While the findings of this paper seem at odds with these prevalent views, there is still much to be learned about how civic participation affects electoral processes. This paper focuses strictly on the relationship between participation and vote buying, but political parties implement a large set of electoral manipulation strategies that can potentially be facilitated by the presence of numerous and tight social networks. Electoral violence might be one of them. Just as it was the case with vote buying, threatening individuals to induce their abstention or force them to vote for a particular candidate requires previous knowledge of the target's political preferences. This information is more readily available when the victim is an active participant in her community. Also, targeting leaders with violence to force her followers into taking certain political actions is a more cost-efficient strategy than trying to influence the behavior of those who do not participate in groups or who do not follow an influential figure. Future work should examine how participation encourages or deters turnout suppression and electoral violence.

The findings of this paper also highlight the importance of the careful evaluation of democratic promotion programs which encourage civic participation and that have been undertaken by non-government agencies around the world. There is very little research at the micro-level on how effective these programs are at improving attitudes towards democracy, interest in politics, or the accountability of public officials. Moreover, the evidence presented

here suggests that such an evaluation should also include a thorough analysis of the unintended consequences of such a program, like the effect it may have on electoral manipulation. These studies together with a more comprehensive understanding of the way politicians try to circumvent formal rules to their advantage is key to designing interventions that truly favor the development of strong democratic institutions.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Putnam 1993: 36.

<sup>2</sup>Carothers and Ottaway 2000.

<sup>3</sup>Vote buying is defined as the exchange between individual voters and party operatives of excludable material benefits for political support.

<sup>4</sup> Cornelius 2004: 50; Brusco, Nazareno and Stokes 2004: 69; Bratton 2008; Kramon 2011: 1, and Corstange 2012. With the exception of the Argentinean study which focuses on two cities, these findings all come from national surveys.

<sup>5</sup>When researchers have accounted for potential underreporting, they have found dramatic increases in the fraction of voters who have received bribes. Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012.

<sup>6</sup>Putnam 1993: 89.

<sup>7</sup>Wang and Kurzman 2007*b*: 71.

<sup>8</sup>Arghiros 2001; Wang and Kurzman 2007*a*; Rueda 2014 forthcoming.

<sup>9</sup>The different types of organizations whose meetings could be attended by respondents are: religious, political, professional, community, parents' , and women's organizations.

<sup>10</sup>Chandra 2007.

<sup>11</sup>Acemoglu, Robinson and Santos 2013.

<sup>12</sup>Fiorina 1999; Putnam 2000; Rudolph 2004.

<sup>13</sup>Berman 1997; Holzner 2004, 2006, and Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson 2014.

<sup>14</sup>Baland and Robinson 2008; Robinson and Verdier 2013; Frye, Reuter and Szakonyi 2014.

<sup>15</sup>Brusco, Nazareno and Stokes 2004; Stokes 2005; Holzner 2006; Magaloni 2006, and Cruz 2013.

<sup>16</sup>Calvo and Murillo 2012.

<sup>17</sup>Holland and Palmer-Rubin 2015 forthcoming.

<sup>18</sup>Blaydes 2011; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007.

<sup>19</sup>Smith and Bueno de Mesquita 2012; Gingerich and Medina 2013; Rueda 2014 forthcoming.

<sup>20</sup>Putnam 1993, 1995; Brehm and Rahn 1997.

<sup>21</sup>Putnam 1995.

<sup>22</sup>Stokes 2005.

<sup>23</sup>Rueda 2014 forthcoming.

<sup>24</sup>Translation from Spanish made by the author. Interview conducted by the author in Bogotá, Colombia, March 2012. All original audio recordings are available upon request.

<sup>25</sup>Nichter 2008.

<sup>26</sup>Stokes 2005. Brokers could also actively seek to target supporters (Stokes et al. 2013). Regardless of the brokers' strategy for the selection of targets, groups and active civic participation have the potential to help brokers determine whether a voter is a good target.

<sup>27</sup>Walsh 2003: 35.

<sup>28</sup>For empirical evidence exploring the association between civic participation and political discussion see Anderson 2009.

<sup>29</sup>Kramon 2009, 2011.

<sup>30</sup>For a formal treatment of these ideas applied to electoral manipulation through targeted fiscal expenditures see Drazen and Eslava 2010.

<sup>31</sup>Holland and Palmer-Rubin 2015 forthcoming.

<sup>32</sup>Interviews conducted by the author in Bogotá, Colombia, March 2012.

<sup>33</sup>Survey on Political Culture 2007, National Department of Statistics, Colombia.

<sup>34</sup>For statistical evidence that shows how right-wing paramilitary presence is associated with changes in voting patterns see Acemoglu, Robinson and Santos 2013.

<sup>35</sup>Interview conducted by the author with Alejandra Barrios, head of the domestic election monitoring organization *Misión de Observación Electoral*, Bogotá, Colombia, March 2012.

<sup>36</sup>The empirical findings are similar when using dummies for quintiles of a measure of wealth as controls. That measure is the first principal component of dummy variables that take the value of one if the respondent has a given asset (television set, refrigerator, telephone line, cellular phone, automobile, motorcycle, indoor plumbing, indoor bathroom) and zero otherwise.

<sup>37</sup>For 2012 respondents were asked if in the last four years anyone had offered them material benefits in exchange for their vote, while in previous surveys the number of years in which the potential offer was made

was not specified. All results presented here are robust to taking out the 2012 year observations from the sample.

<sup>38</sup>Estimated coefficients on controls are available upon request.

<sup>39</sup>The p-value for the test of equality of coefficients on professional, community, and women's organizations is 0.82. The one for equality of the coefficients on the previous three groups plus political organizations is 0.001.

<sup>40</sup>Similar results are obtained when using as independent variables the frequency of participation for each group.

<sup>41</sup>Respondents could also be members of different groups that are considered to be of the same type. Since these considerations are likely to be random across respondents, we have a classical errors-in-variables problem.

<sup>42</sup>[Chandra 2007](#).

<sup>43</sup>Results also hold when using the sum of these incidents as the instrument.

<sup>44</sup>[Bellows and Miguel 2009](#); [Kage 2010](#); [Bateson 2012](#).

<sup>45</sup>[Jennings 1999](#); [Bateson 2012](#).

<sup>46</sup>The  $F$  statistic for the significance of the excluded instruments of the first stage is higher than 30 in all the IV estimations.

<sup>47</sup>An alternative way to check whether the results are affected by reverse causality is to exclude from the sample individuals who ask for help or favors to party members or those who attend meetings in which distribution of goods is expected. After pursuing this approach, the positive relationship between vote buying and participation remains (see supplemental material).

<sup>48</sup>[Corstange 2012](#); [Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012](#).

<sup>49</sup>[Hausman, Abrevaya and Scott-Morton 1998](#).

<sup>50</sup>For more on the properties of this estimator see [Hug 2010](#).

<sup>51</sup>However, in separate regressions that do not control for Organizations, it is found that leaders are 7.8% more likely to receive offers, a result that is significant at conventional levels.

<sup>52</sup>Note that if people are not interested in politics at all, vote buying might be easier to sustain as well, as people do not derive a large expressive gain by voting according to their preferences, but could gain some material benefit by voting against them.

<sup>53</sup>These predicted probabilities are computed using a Logit model that includes the same regressors as those used in the model in column (7) of Table 4 and in addition a triple interaction of Organizations, group

vote buying, and news exposure; and news exposure by itself.

<sup>54</sup>[Ames et al. 2013](#); [LAPOP 2013](#)

<sup>55</sup>For more details on the design of the panel study and the list experiment see [Ames et al. 2013](#).

<sup>56</sup>The fraction of people who were offered a clientelistic exchange is only five percent. [Ames et al. 2013](#).

<sup>57</sup> [Imai 2011](#).

<sup>58</sup>This pattern also holds for different types of organization as seen in the supplemental material.

<sup>59</sup>The countries included in this set all have positive Polity IV scores.

# Tables

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
<i>Panel A</i>				
Dependent and Main Explanatory Variables				
Vote Buying (Dep. Var.)	0.168	0.374	0	1
Community organization Organizations	0.235	0.424	0	1
Parents' organization	1.704	1.255	0	6
Political organization	0.418	0.493	0	1
Professional organization	0.202	0.402	0	1
Religious organization	0.123	0.328	0	1
Women's organization	0.626	0.484	0	1
0.1	0.3	0	0	1
<i>Panel B</i>				
Individual Controls				
Age	36.696	14.562	17	91
Education	9.633	4.594	0	18
Female	0.558	0.497	0	1
Income	4.239	1.924	0	10
Rural	0.262	0.44	0	1
<i>Panel C</i>				
Municipality Controls				
Average margin of victory	0.104	0.042	0.014	0.222
Local revenue (% of total)	33.74	26.565	1.039	100
Non-state armed actor presence	0.463	0.499	0	1
Population	1,559,058	2,610,882	2,726	7,467,806

Table 2: Vote Buying and Civic Participation (OLS Estimates)

Dep. Variable:	1 if respondent has been offered a bribe and 0 otherwise							
	Attends (yes/no)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Organizations	0.038*** (0.006)							
Religious organization		0.002 (0.015)						-0.009 (0.015)
Political organization			0.140*** (0.020)					0.124*** (0.020)
Professional organization				0.068*** (0.019)				0.029 (0.019)
Community organization					0.070*** (0.015)			0.035** (0.016)
Parents' organization						0.033*** (0.012)		0.013 (0.013)
Women's organization							0.087*** (0.019)	0.047** (0.021)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Municipality controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Year effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	4,463	4,463	4,463	4,463	4,463	4,463	4,463	4,463
Municipalities	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
$R^2$	0.028	0.013	0.034	0.016	0.018	0.014	0.017	0.039

Individuals and Municipality controls are listed in Table 1. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level are in parentheses. \*\*\* Significance at the 1% level. \*\* Significance at the 5% level. \* Significance at the 10% level.

Table 3: Vote Buying and Civic Participation (2SLS Estimates)

Dep. Variable:	1 if respondent has been offered a bribe and 0 otherwise				
	OLS (1)	OLS (2)	IV (3)	IV (4)	IV (5)
<i>Panel A</i>					
	Vote Buying equation results				
Organizations	0.033*** (0.008)	0.035*** (0.008)	0.212*** (0.048)	0.196** (0.084)	0.163** (0.066)
<i>Panel B</i>					
	First stage results				
Conflict family victim			0.327*** (0.038)	0.229*** (0.041)	0.255*** (0.042)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Political behavior controls	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Vulnerability controls	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Municipality controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Year effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Municipality effects	no	yes	no	no	yes
Observations	2,415	2,415	4,437	2,426	2,426
Municipalities	81	81	81	81	81

Individual and Municipality controls are listed in Table 1. Political behavior controls are: a dummy for whether the respondent has participated in a protest in the last year, levels of trust in members of the community, dummy variables for whether anyone else in the household has been threatened with violence to induce a vote or abstention, interest in politics, ideological self placement, a dummy for whether the respondent sympathizes with a political party, and a dummy indicating whether the respondent is registered to vote. Vulnerability controls are: a dummy for whether the respondent has been a victim of a crime, a dummy for whether the person was born in another municipality, a dummy for whether the household income fell because the respondent was forced to abandon her home for conflict related reasons, and employment status. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level are in parentheses. \*\*\* Significance at the 1% level. \*\* Significance at the 5% level. \* Significance at the 10% level.

Table 4: Vote Buying and Civic Participation (Mechanisms)

Dep. Variable:	1 if respondent has been offered a bribe and 0 otherwise						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Organizations	0.039*** (0.006)	0.035*** (0.006)	0.018 (0.018)	0.032*** (0.006)	0.032*** (0.006)	0.036*** (0.006)	0.016** (0.007)
Trust community	-0.022*** (0.007)						
Helps community		0.033** (0.014)					
Leader			0.063 (0.039)				
Political persuasion				0.049*** (0.008)			
Works in political campaign					0.125*** (0.026)		
Interested in politics						0.016*** (0.006)	
Organizations $\times$ Group VB							0.061* (0.032)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Municipality controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Year effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	4,365	4,450	1215	4,442	4,411	4,401	3,700
Municipalities	81	81	46	81	81	81	79
$R^2$	0.030	0.029	0.033	0.0402	0.037	0.029	0.031

Individuals and Municipality controls are listed in Table 1. The model in column (7) also includes as a control the variable Group VB by itself. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level are in parentheses. \*\*\* Significance at the 1% level. \*\* Significance at the 5% level. \* Significance at the 10% level.

Table 5: Vote Buying and Civic Participation in Brazil

	Linear models		List experiment
	First wave	First differences	
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Organizations	0.036*** (0.009)	0.087*** (0.023)	0.339* (0.188)
Individual controls	yes	no	yes
Observations	2,263	566	644
$R^2$	0.036	0.046	

The model in column (2) includes as controls an indicator for employment status and income levels but does not include other short term time-invariant individual regressors. The model in column (2) excludes from the sample individuals who report never having participated in meetings of a given group in August after reporting in April or March that they had. Standard errors clustered at the municipality level are in parentheses for models in columns (1) and (2). \*\*\* Significance at the 1% level. \*\* Significance at the 5% level. \* Significance at the 10% level.

# Figures

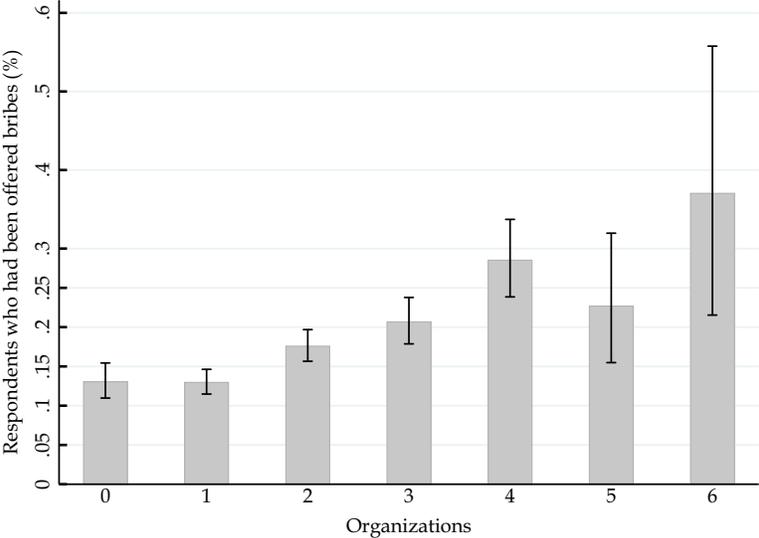


Figure 1: Vote Buying and Civic Participation in Colombia

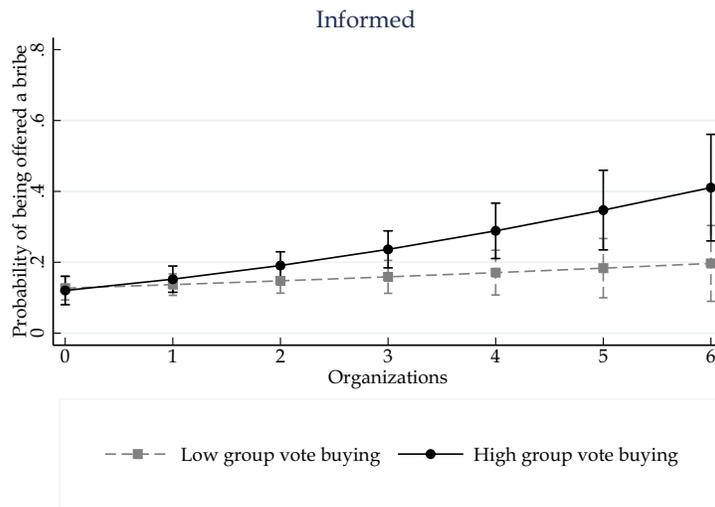
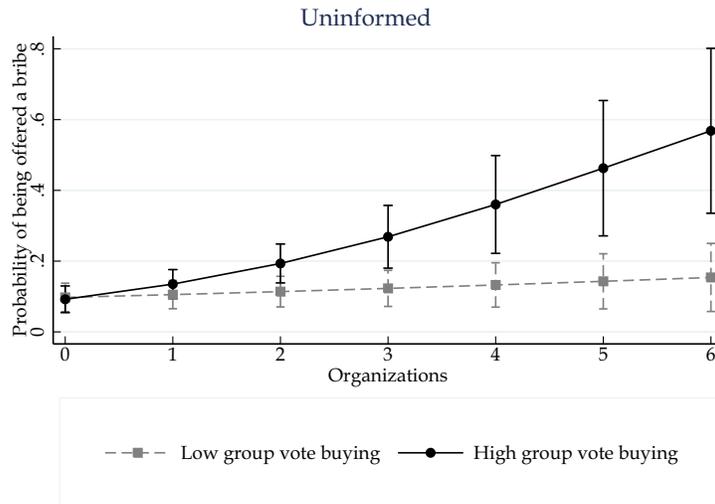


Figure 2: Signalling, Participation, and Vote Buying

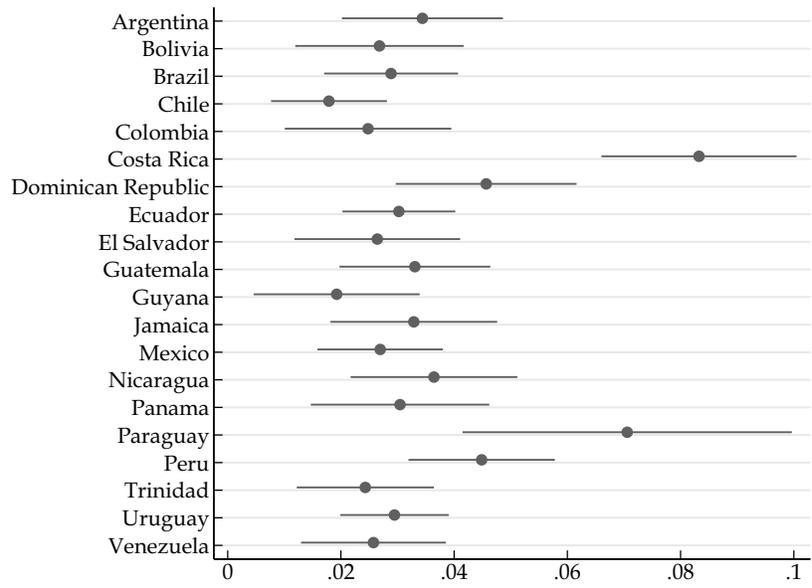


Figure 3: Vote Buying and Civic Participation in the Caribbean and Central and South America

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