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POLITICAL MACHINES AT WORK
Voter Mobilization and Electoral Subversion in the Workplace

By TIMOTHY FRYE, ORA JOHN REUTER, and DAVID SZAKONYI*

INTRODUCTION

AUTOCRATS conduct semicompetitive elections in order to co-opt opponents, garner legitimacy, gather information on society, and gauge the performance of subordinates.[1] Most contemporary electoral authoritarian regimes limit their use of ballot-box stuffing and widespread repression precisely so that they can obtain these benefits.[2] How, then, do autocrats win those elections?

To be sure, autocrats increase government spending before elections in an effort to buy public support, but sharing rents with the public is costly and efficiently targeting spoils to the right constituencies is difficult.[3] Divide and conquer tactics can pit regime opponents against each other, but in many instances the opposition remains united.[4] Moreover, whatever tactic authoritarian leaders use to generate support and divide the opposition, they still face daunting collective action problems in getting voters to the polls. Just as in democracies, some authoritarian leaders rely on party organizations to mobilize voters, but many of the world's electoral authoritarian regimes lack strong ruling party organizations at the grassroots level.

[1] Magaloni 2006; Svolik 2012; Blaydes 2011.
[2] Magaloni 2006.
[3] Magaloni 2006; Wright 2011.
[4] Lust-Okar 2005; Howard and Roessler 2006.

We explore another option: the use of economic coercion to mobilize voters and thereby subvert the electoral process.[5] We develop a simple framework for identifying which firms engage in voter mobilization and which workers are targeted for mobilization. Building on the assumption that variation in workplace mobilization is driven by bargaining between rulers and employers and between employers and employees, we argue that firms that can offer votes to the autocrat at the lowest cost will be more likely to mobilize their workers, as will firms that are more vulnerable to pressure from autocrats. Similarly, workers who are especially dependent on their employers are likely to be mobilized.[6]

Using two original surveys of employers and workers conducted around the 2011 parliamentary elections in Russia, we find that the workplace is a key locus of voter mobilization for the regime. Twenty-four percent of firms in our national sample report engaging in political activity at the workplace during the parliamentary election campaign, while 25 percent of employees noted that their employers tried to influence their decision to turn out to vote. In addition, a list experiment reveals that 15 percent of respondents believed that their material standing would be influenced by their decision to turn out to vote.

We find firms in sectors characterized by immobile assets—that is, firms that are vulnerable to regulatory sanction or expropriation—are more likely to mobilize their workers. This result is consistent with existing literature on the economic bases of democratization, which argues that holders of immobile assets will subvert democracy because they fear redistribution after free and fair elections.[7] But our framework suggests an alternative interpretation—that elites in sectors characterized by immobile assets may subvert democracy because they are vulnerable to pressure by the autocrat. Distinguishing between these two interpretations with survey data is difficult, but anecdotal and observational evidence is consistent with the latter view. One implication of our framework is that autocrats in economies dominated by immobile assets may be more willing to hold elections because they are confident that employers can mobilize voters and thereby reduce the risk of electoral defeat. More broadly, by identifying the conditions under which workplace mobilization occurs in authoritarian regimes,

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[5] For recent work on the topic that we discuss later, see Baland and Robinson 2007; Baland and Robinson 2008; Ziblatt 2008; Ziblatt 2009; Mares and Zhu 2010; Ardanaz and Mares forthcoming; Leeman and Mares forthcoming. For classic works, see Gerschenkron 1962; and Moore 1966.

[6] This last line of argument is consistent with Baland and Robinson 2008; Mares and Zhu 2010; and Ardanaz and Mares forthcoming.

[7] Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006.

we contribute to the long-standing debate about the economic bases of democratization.[8]

Similarly, the economic dependence of firms on the state is a key determinant of workplace mobilization. Firms that depend on state support, such as state-owned firms and those that sell to the state, are more likely to rally their workers at election time. In addition, employees who receive significant nonwage benefits from their employers or live in company towns are especially dependent on their place of employment. This allows employers to mobilize their votes at a lower cost.

We also find that, despite the increased difficulty of monitoring turnout, firms with large numbers of workers are more likely to engage in political mobilization, as they can take advantage of economies of scale in rallying voters. This finding is at odds with much recent research on clientelism, which focuses on how political parties broker and monitor vote exchange in small-scale, rural settings.[9] Our findings suggest that the use of positive and negative inducements to influence turnout can also be prevalent in urban, industrial settings. Moreover, our findings indicate that clientelist exchange, when it is brokered by employers, can thrive in the absence of deeply embedded political parties.

More generally, our work advances the recent literature on electoral fraud in contemporary autocracies by exploring a less frequently studied means of subverting elections: the use of economic coercion to mobilize voters.[10] We also add to the discussion of elections under autocracy by demonstrating how one's occupation shapes the quality of representation in Russia's electoral authoritarian regime.

ELECTIONS AND VOTER MOBILIZATION IN AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

In recent years scholars have paid more attention to why autocrats hold elections than to how they win them. Extensive use of ballot-box fraud and repression deprive autocrats of the benefits that come with semicompetitive elections (for example, co-opting the opposition, generating information, and garnering legitimacy). As several studies have pointed out,[11] both fraud and repression are costly and many

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[8] Moore 1966; Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Ziblatt 2008; Ziblatt 2009; Mares and Zhu 2010; Leemann and Mares 2011.

[9] This finding contrasts with Stokes 2005 and Nichter 2008, but it is consistent with Ardanaz and Mares forthcoming.

[10] Hyde 2006; Myagkov and Ordeshook 2009; and Beber and Scacco 2012 all study different forms of electoral subversion.

[11] Magaloni 2006; Blaydes 2012; Wright 2011. We do not deny that many authoritarian leaders also include programmatic linkage in their mix of strategies. In Russia, Colton and Hale 2009 find that many proregime voters identify with the ideological stance of the ruling party, United Russia.

contemporary electoral authoritarian regimes do not need to engage in electoral fraud to win elections by large margins, as citizens often turn out in large numbers to vote for the regime.[12] An important question, then, is, how do autocrats win those elections without relying heavily on ballot-box fraud?

Authoritarian leaders can generate support by strategically targeting social transfers to key constituencies prior to elections, but such efforts require precise targeting and compel the autocrat to share resources broadly with society.[13] They may also bolster their position by using control over the media to influence how citizens view the regime.[14] These efforts may generate support, but support does not translate automatically into votes because the act of voting is costly.[15] Winning elections requires not only gaining supporters but also mobilizing them to vote.

In democracies and autocracies alike, political parties are the typical vehicles of voter mobilization.[16] One way that party organizations may contribute to mobilization in electoral authoritarian regimes is by helping to solve the commitment problem inherent in clientelist exchange.[17] If a political machine offers inducements to a voter in exchange for his vote, then the voter may accept the inducement but nevertheless renege on his promise to vote for the machine by voting for some other party. The secret ballot exacerbates the commitment problem because defecting voters are harder to identify, which means they cannot be excluded from future benefit streams or targeted with selective punishment.

Political parties can help resolve this commitment problem. In one of the most influential treatments of machine politics, Stokes argues that political parties with tentacle-like organizations can penetrate the social networks of voters and effectively monitor vote choice.[18] Socially embedded party cells acquire detailed information about the political inclinations of voters, allowing them to allocate inducements and monitor vote choice. This is plausible, but such an argument requires strong assumptions about the monitoring capacity of political parties. In much of the developing world, political parties lack such grassroots

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[12] Simpser 2013.
[13] Magaloni 2006.
[14] Geddes and Zaller 1989.
[15] Downs 1957.
[16] Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Aldrich 1995.
[17] Stokes 2005.
[18] Stokes 2005.

organization.[19] Indeed, the weakness of political parties in developing democracies has been loudly lamented just as scholars of advanced industrial democracies have noted the decline of grassroots party organizations in the developed world.[20]

Alternatively, authoritarian leaders can induce existing authority figures—governors, strongmen, caciques, landlords, chiefs, warlords, effendi, bosses, clan leaders, employers—to mobilize votes on behalf of the regime.[21] Mobilizing votes via the preexisting clientelist networks of patrons is less costly than building local party organizations from scratch. After all, grassroots party building comes with significant costs to regime leaders, including the possibility that a rival leader or erstwhile ally could use the party organization to challenge the leadership.[22]

Among the set of elites that can facilitate clientelist exchange, employers are especially well positioned to be effective turnout brokers. Indeed, recent works in political economy have begun to study the use of economic coercion by employers in historical settings. Baland and Robinson highlight how Chilean landlords mobilized peasants to vote for conservative parties until the secret ballot limited their ability to monitor compliance.[23] Using data from Imperial Germany, Ziblatt makes a similar argument and finds that electoral fraud was more prevalent in areas where landholding inequality was high, presumably because landlords used their leverage over tenants to subvert the democratic process.[24] Mares and Zhu build upon and reanalyze Ziblatt's data and come to quite different conclusions about the causes of electoral fraud in Imperial Germany, arguing that fraud was most likely in areas with slack labor markets where employers could exploit their workers' lack of exit options, forcing them to vote for the employer's preferred parties.[25]

These works make important contributions to our understanding of electoral subversion. Our work differs in several respects, however. While the above-cited works primarily focus on the dependence of em-

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[19] Mainwaring 1999; Hale 2006.

[20] Dalton 2002.

[21] Many of the classic works on clientelism focus on exchange brokered by such elites (for example, Lemarchand 1972; Scott 1972; and Schmidt 1980).

[22] Migdal 1988; Hale 2006; Haber 2007.

[23] Baland and Robinson 2008.

[24] Ziblatt 2008; Ziblatt 2009.

[25] Mares and Zhu 2010. In a related argument, Leemann and Mares 2011 show that opposition to the secret ballot was especially potent in districts with greater economic concentration and fewer skilled workers, whereas Mares and Ardanaz forthcoming link labor shortages in agriculture to vote shares of right-wing parties in Imperial Germany.

ployees on employers, our study examines both the employer-employee interaction and the interaction between autocrats and employers, arguing that workplace mobilization is more prevalent in settings where employers are vulnerable to state pressure. Moreover, while other works focus on historical cases of authoritarianism, we explore the topic in a modern setting. In addition, whereas existing works exploit regional or district-level variation in inequality, labor-market conditions, and landholding to identify the economic bases of autocracy, we control for these factors with region-level fixed effects and rely on survey data that directly tap the reported behavior of employers and employees. Survey data allow us to analyze a broader range of firm-specific and employee-specific variables than is typically the case.

CLIENTELIST EXCHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE

There are several reasons why employers can deliver votes for autocrats efficiently.[26] First, employers are well positioned to dole out significant selective inducements. Scholars of clientelism have noted that one way to reduce the severity of the clientelist commitment problem is to make inducements persuasive to voters. In Stokes's model of vote buying, the potential for vote buying increases "as the value of the private reward . . . relative to the value of voting in accordance to one's policy or ideological preferences increases."[27] One important implication is that when the machine can offer more to buy votes, it will be more successful at securing voter support. Conversely, the more severe the punishment the machine can threaten, the more effective it will be at mobilizing votes. In most existing models of clientelism, political party activists are the brokers who offer such selective inducements.[28] Studies that focus on positive inducements usually describe how party activists exchange petty cash or small gifts for votes.[29] With respect to negative inducements, political party activists, by virtue of their position, rarely have the ability to mete out substantial negative inducements.

Employers, by contrast, have at their disposal multiple consequential levers of influence.[30] As carrots, they can offer increases in salary or

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[26] By employers we mean individuals closely engaged with the management operations of an economic enterprise, including possessing authority over personnel decisions, contracting, and policy directives. Employers may be firm directors or owners, landlords, school principals, hospital directors, or agency heads.

[27] Stokes 2005, 321.

[28] Stokes et al. 2013.

[29] Corstange 2011; Blaydes 2011; Schaffer 2007.

[30] Baland and Robinson 2007; Baland and Robinson 2008; Robinson and Baland 2008.

benefits to those workers who vote the correct way. As for sticks, they can threaten cuts in salary or benefits, shame workers on the job, delay promotions, or dismiss workers who do not cooperate. Press reports of such threats during the 2011 parliamentary elections in Russia were widespread. To take just one example, workers at the Kolsk Mining and Metallurgical Company in Murmanskaya Oblast were required to vote with absentee ballots at work under threat of being fired.[31]

Second, employers are engaged in repeated, long-term interactions with their employees.[32] Repeated interaction mitigates the commitment problems by instilling in voters an understanding that defection will result in punishment.[33] For workers, the certainty of future interaction with management makes promises of rewards and threats of punishment more credible.

Third, employers are well positioned to monitor turnout and potentially violate the secret ballot to discover how their employees vote. From the perspective of the regime, overcoming the secret ballot is one of the most significant obstacles to successful clientelist exchange.[34] The opportunities for employers to gather information on their employees are legion. Given the amount of time voters spend at work, their vote decisions are likely to be discovered by coworkers and supervisors. What is more, employers in many countries offer housing, in-kind benefits, and social services to their employees, extending the informational reach of the employer beyond the traditional workplace. In Russia, which inherited the Soviet legacy of firm-based social provision, many enterprises provide housing, transportation, access to recreational facilities, preschool, and on-site health care to their employees.[35] Such services bind the social lives of employees to their workplace. In sum, repeated interaction and the breadth of workplace-related social interactions make it relatively easy for employers to monitor workers' political behavior.

Indeed, in a survey conducted by the authors just after the March 2012 Russian presidential elections, 33 percent of workers in Russia thought that it was possible for their employer to find out how they

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[31] "Analytical Report of GOLOS on the Elections of December 4, 2011." Moscow, Russia: GOLOS. At http://www.golos.org/asset/5878 27, accessed April 2012, chap. 8, p. 1.

[32] If sectoral incentives are especially strong, workers and employers may share similar preferences. However, even where they have similar preferences, they still face a collective action problem in mobilizing voters to the polls. Thus, employer-based coercion may still be needed even where workers and employers have similar preferences.

[33] Stokes 2005; Hicken 2011.

[34] Baland and Robinson 2008; Leeman and Mares forthcoming.

[35] Cook 2007.

voted.[36] In the 2011 Russian parliamentary elections, the Russian vote-monitoring organization GOLOS collected hundreds of reports of employers requiring employees to vote at work with absentee ballots and report back to management.[37] In one example, the head doctor at the 7th City Hospital in Bryansk asked that employees take absentee ballots and vote in the clinic attached to the hospital.[38] Employers also managed to monitor voting outside the workplace. In the republic of Marii El, representatives of the Mari Energy Company sat in the precinct recording which of their employees came to the polls.[39] In myriads of other instances, employers provided workers with transportation to the polls on election day. For example, the administration of Vologdskaya Oblast posted a video news report on its official Web site outlining how management provided free transportation to the polls for those employees of the city utility company whose work schedules overlapped with voting hours.[40] At the extremes, employers organized so-called carousels in which the firm provided transportation to voters, ferrying them to multiple voting stations over the course of the day in order to vote multiple times with absentee ballots.[41]

The above discussion suggests that co-opting employers and mobilizing voters through the workplace is a cost-effective strategy for authoritarian rulers. Regime leaders can appeal directly to employers or they can coordinate with them within the confines of an elite-based hegemonic party. Both strategies are pursued in Russia, as many business leaders are in some manner affiliated with the ruling party, United Russia. Those who are not affiliated with United Russia may also deal with party and regime leaders directly.

Anecdotes from Russia illustrate the process of how employers are coordinated and voters mobilized. In a secretly recorded video that went viral on YouTube shortly before the parliamentary elections, the mayor of Novokuznetsk, a major industrial city in Siberia, is seen addressing a gathering of the directors of the city's largest enterprises. The mayor, Valerii Smolevo, asks business leaders to encourage their workers to vote for United Russia and to discredit opposition parties.

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[36] The nationally representative survey included sixteen hundred respondents in forty-five regions and was carried about the Levada Center as part of their monthly survey of residents of Russia. Interviews were conducted face to face in the home of the respondent with 20 percent callbacks to ensure veracity. The margin of error was less than 3.4 percent.

[37] At http://kartanarusheniy.org, accessed April 27, 2012.

[38] "Analytical Report of GOLOS on the Elections of December 4, 2011." Moscow, Russia: GOLOS.

[39] At http://kartanarusheniy.org, accessed April 27, 2012. Complaint # 9044.

[40] At http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73o_hwIjcrA, accessed April 27, 2012.

[41] On carousel voting in Russia, see Bader 2013.

In this semipublic setting, Smolevo does not mention specific sanctions that enterprises would face if they fail to mobilize the vote for UR, but the message was clear to all: "We need to carry out these elections in the proper manner so it won't be painful or uncomfortable. You are all smart people; you are all directors. You saw the recent United Russia congress; you saw that, on Friday, the governor gathered a team to discuss preparations for the parliamentary elections on December 4. It's clear to everyone that United Russia should win." The video is also remarkable for the detail of Smolevo's message that enterprise directors are expected to convey to their employees: "It [UR] is the only real force, actually a ruling party, that is actually doing something real. If you look at other opponents currently in the Duma, no one should expect any sort of real help or deeds from them. Everyone should understand that. Everything that is done by the authorities in the country, and in the city, needs to be tightly connected to United Russia."[42]

Other leaked recordings have offered further insight into the specific types of pressure exerted by the authorities. In one well-known recording of a video conference between the governor of Moscow Oblast and the heads of municipal districts, the governor can be heard telling district heads that they should provide him with the "concrete names" of those enterprise directors who refuse to participate in "agitation-propaganda" efforts. One district head puts the question directly to the governor: "So I have an enterprise in my district. The Pavloposadskaya Manufaktura, led by Mr. Strulov, who organized a visit by Zyuganov [leader of the Communist opposition]. The factory has 800 employees. If you would give the order, the Ministry of Culture could put pressure on this factory because they sign protocols verifying the factory's privileged tax status." In response, Gromov can be heard replying: "[you] tell them yourself. Yourself. You need to say: they will lose their tax privileges immediately. And then they can run to Mr. Zyuganov."

Survey data from the 2011 elections in Russia show that workplace mobilization is widespread. During the 2011 election campaign, we conducted a survey of 922 Russian firms in fifteen regional capitals from at least one of Russia's eight federal districts.[43] According to the survey, 24 percent of firms reported that they had sanctioned some type of political mobilization—endorsing a specific party, inviting workers to join a political party, distributing campaign materials, providing

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[42] At http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kD4W5zAKlCg&feature=player_embedded, accessed April 28, 2012.

[43] The surveys were conducted by the VTsIOM polling organization. For details, see Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 1.

meeting space to candidates, or holding campaign events—that took place in the workplace.

Surveys of voters paint a similar picture. From December 16 to December 20, we commissioned a series of questions about voter mobilization in the workplace that were placed on a postelection survey of sixteen hundred Russian citizens carried out by the Moscow-based polling organization the Levada Center.[44] We asked employed voters: "Did your employer try to influence your decision to turn out in the December 4 parliamentary elections?" Twenty-five percent responded in the affirmative, and as Table 1 shows, the incidence of voter mobilization was much higher among government employees.

Further, 11 percent said that their employer had tried specifically to influence their choice of party. This indicates that turnout mobilization is much more prevalent than vote buying in Russia. For this reason, and because our firm survey does not provide precise measures of vote buying, we focus in this article on firm-based turnout mobilization.

The direct question above does not identify the use of inducements (positive or negative) by employers to encourage turnout among their employees. Because paying people to vote is illegal and employees may fear reprisals from employers, a direct question on inducements to vote may not yield truthful answers. To address this issue, we implemented a list experiment. We asked respondents, "How many of the following things will affect your job security, benefits, and/or income in 2012?" Interviewers emphasized that the respondent should indicate only *how many* of the items would have an effect but not to indicate the specific items. Respondents in a randomly selected control group were given the list of innocuous items in column 1 of Table 2, while respondents in a randomly selected treatment group received the same list with the addition of the sensitive item, "your decision to vote in the 2011 State Duma elections." Under randomization assumptions, similar proportions of respondents should select the innocuous items in both the treatment and the control groups, such that any increase in the mean number of items selected in the treatment group is attributable to respondents who are selecting the sensitive item. In our list experiment, the mean number of items selected in the treatment group is 1.91, compared with 1.76 in the control group for a difference in means of .15 (p = .016). This indicates that 15 percent of respondents felt that

[44] For details, see Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 2. Carried out in forty-five regions across the country, the nationally representative survey reached respondents at a large variety of settlement points in both urban and rural areas. Interviews were carried out in person at the home of the respondent, with random follow-up telephone calls, mailings, and visits used to ensure the authenticity of the responses.

TABLE 1
VOTER MOBILIZATION IN THE RUSSIAN WORKPLACE

Sector	Did Your Employer Attempt to Influence Your Decision to Vote?
Federal Government	37%
Regional and Local Government	32%
Military/Police	28%
State Enterprise	30%
Private Enterprise	22%
NGO/Social Org	11%
Other	16%
All Employees	25%

their job security, benefits, or income would be affected by their decision to turn out to vote in the 2011 elections.[45]

These activities are widespread in Russia, but do they subvert elections? It seems clear that the type of coercion and vote buying outlined above is undemocratic. But what about workplace mobilization that does not make *explicit* use of such inducements? One could argue that employers who mobilize their workers are exercising their right to free speech about politics. Moreover, where the economic fates of workers and managers in a firm are aligned, mobilization by the employer may serve to increase participation and resemble any other get-out-the-vote campaign. Indeed, in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010), the US Supreme Court expanded the scope for employers to express political views in the workplace and there is considerable anecdotal evidence that these activities increased in the 2012 presidential campaign in the US.[46]

Yet legal scholars have argued that with workplace mobilization "the real concern is the inherent power dynamics between employers and employees. An official email from the boss saying something like 'your job depends on who wins the race' could be interpreted as coercion or intimidation."[47] Thus, there are good grounds to protect employees

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[45] In a list experiment conducted by the authors just after the 2012 presidential elections, 14 percent of employed respondents thought there would be negative consequences for them if they did not turn out to vote.

[46] Secunda 2010. For example, see this recent story: http://www.cleveland.com/open/index .ssf/2012/08/coal_miners_lost_pay_when_mitt.html.

[47] Adam Skaggs from the Brennan Center for Justice, quoted at http://www.thenation.com /blog/170703/your-boss-going-mine-your-vote-more-corporations-step-coercion, accessed April 23, 2013.

TABLE 2
LIST EXPERIMENT ON CLIENTELISTIC EXCHANGE IN THE RUSSIAN WORKPLACE

How many of the following things will affect your job security, benefits, and/or income in 2012?	
Control	*Treatment*
1. your job performance	1. your job performance
2. performance of the Russian economy	2. performance of the Russian economy
3. change in trade with China	3. change in trade with China
	4. your decision to vote in the 2011 State Duma elections
Mean # Items 1.76	1.91

from even subtle forms of influence by their employers. In addition, coerced mobilization to the polls violates the citizen's right to not participate in politics in a democracy. Blomberg maintains that the "right to abstain from politics without penalty logically follows from the right to vote."[48] Finally, Stokes argues that the targeting of specific groups, such as the poor, with positive or negative inducements in exchange for their votes, robs vote sellers of their influence on policy and skews public policy in a direction that hurts those who sell their votes.[49]

The workplace is also a hub of political activity in advanced democracies like the US, with unions and employers seeking to influence workers, but the lack of legal protections in autocratic settings leaves employees and employers far more vulnerable to pressure to mobilize in support of regime goals.[50] Thus, our findings are most relevant for nondemocratic regimes.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF FIRM-BASED VOTE MOBILIZATION

There are good reasons to think that workplace mobilization is an efficient means for autocrats to win elections, and it appears that it is common practice in Russia. But clearly there is variation in the incidence of workplace mobilization across countries, regions, historical periods,

[48] Blomberg 1995, 1020.
[49] Stokes 2007.
[50] Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995, 369–91; Secunda 2010.

and workplaces. To provide insight into variation in workplace mobilization across Russian firms, we develop a simple set of arguments.[51]

Mobilizing voters in the workplace comes with costs and benefits to both the autocrat and employers. For employers, mobilizing voters on behalf of the regime puts them in the good graces of the regime, and good relations with the state translate into benefits for the firm. At the same time, firm output may be hurt if the firm's resources and time are diverted to political uses. Workplace morale may be damaged if management exerts political pressure on employees; and if management's political preferences diverge from those of the autocrat, then management incurs costs from violating their ideological principles.

For the autocrat, mobilizing in the workplace is beneficial because it brings votes. Yet it also brings costs to the autocrat who must induce employers—with state contracts, subsidies, regulatory exemptions, privileged tax policies, threats of punishment, and so on—to engage in this mobilization. There are also significant transaction costs. Identifying the firms where political mobilization will be most effective, bargaining with employers, and coordinating the vote mobilization effort across multiple firms are all costly endeavors.

Our argument begins with the premise that autocrats bargain with employers and target those who can be mobilized at the lowest cost. Consider an autocrat who makes an offer to an employer to provide a benefit (or withhold a sanction) if he mobilizes voters and an employer who must decide whether to accept the offer. The benefit promised by the autocrat must be at least as great as the costs of mobilizing or the employer will reject it. In this way, we can conceive of employers "selling" the support of their workers to the autocrat. The value of the vote to the autocrat must be greater than the cost to the autocrat of providing the benefit. Autocrats will then seek to mobilize workers in firms that place a high value on the benefits of good relations with the state and for whom the cost of mobilizing each additional worker is relatively low.

This simple framework yields several implications. First, because many types of mobilization efforts yield economies of scale, autocrats find it cheaper to mobilize voters from firms with more employees. For example, the costs of transporting an additional voter to the polls via bus (a common practice in Russia) decline with each voter until the seats on the bus are filled. Similarly, the cost per voter of contacting

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[51] Following Stokes 2005 we assume that only the incumbent regime has the ability to engage in clientelist exchange and mobilize voters in the workplace. This assumption is justified for contemporary Russia but is clearly not appropriate in many more competitive settings (for example, Corstange 2011).

a voter is lower in large firms than in small firms.[52] Thus, autocrats should favor mobilizing firms with more employees. Note that to the extent that monitoring voters and turnout is more costly in large firms, this prediction is at odds with the clientelist literature, which emphasizes that monitoring is likely to be more effective in small communities.[53] This also suggests that large "vote rich" firms have some power in bargaining with the autocrat and should receive some benefits in exchange for mobilization. So our first hypothesis is as follows.

> H1. Large firms will be more likely to mobilize workers.

Similarly, firm directors whose ideological views are easier to predict and are closer to those of the autocrat may be less costly to mobilize. Following Cox and Nichter, this suggests that autocrats should target "core" employers rather than "swing" employers.[54] Core employers whose economic fate is tied to that of the incumbent may also be cheaper to monitor, as failure to mobilize may result in loss of position, wealth, or status.[55]

> H2. Firm directors who support the ruling party will be more likely to mobilize workers.

Employers whose economic fate is more closely tied to the state have incentives to sell the votes of their workers more cheaply to the autocrat. For example, autocrats have significant leverage over the directors of state-owned enterprises, so these directors can be induced to mobilize at a low cost to the autocrat. Similarly, employers whose firms are financially dependent on the state, such as firms that sell their output to the state, can be co-opted more cheaply than other firms. Alternatively, employers who are less able to shift their lines of production (to other countries, regions, or municipalities) are more vulnerable to potential expropriation and regulatory sanction and thus more willing to offer a low price to autocrats for mobilizing workers. In addition, autocrats may induce voter mobilization by distributing various types of organizational and financial support to firms prior to elections. This leads to several hypotheses.

> H3. State-owned firms, firms that sell to the state, and firms that receive benefits from the state will be more likely to mobilize workers.

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[52] These insights accord with research on campaigning in American politics, which suggests that candidates spend less per voter in large states. Abramowitz 1988.
[53] Stokes 2005.
[54] Cox 2009; Nichter 2008.
[55] Oliveros 2012. And as we discuss below, controlling for the ideological preferences of directors is important as we attempt to examine the linkage between autocratic pressure on firms and voter mobilization.

H4. Firms in sectors characterized by immobile assets will be more likely to mobilize workers.

Yet voter mobilization is not shaped only by bargaining between rulers and economic elites. It is also determined by power relations between employers and their employees. Even where they are vulnerable to state pressure to mobilize their voters, employers vary in their capacity to deliver turnout and votes. Autocrats will target firms that can mobilize their workers at lower cost, because these firms will sell their employees' votes to the state at a lower price.

Employers can offer some inducement to their workers in exchange for turnout. This inducement may be positive (for example, increased wages) or, more likely, negative, such as a threat of withholding benefits or, in many cases, dismissal. Some types of workers may be induced to turn out at lower cost than others. Workers who are highly dependent on their firms not only for wages but also for the provision of social goods at below market price fall into this category.[56] Management has more leverage over these employees, because any disruption in relations with their employers would have severe negative repercussions for the employees. Moreover, when the firm provides workers with multiple fringe benefits, managers have a broader menu of potential inducements at their disposal.[57] This leads to our fifth hypothesis.

H5. Firms that provide their employees with significant nonwage benefits will be more likely to mobilize workers.

Similarly, employees who would have difficulty finding another job are easy targets for employers seeking to mobilize their workers. Job loss for these workers would be catastrophic, so they are likely to be highly responsive to management's inducements to vote.[58] More specifically, workers whose livelihood is dependent on skills specific to their place of work or who live in single-company towns are likely to be especially responsive to pressure from employers to engage in political activity.[59] Thus, the next hypothesis:

H6. Employees in slack labor markets are more likely to report being mobilized.

[56] For a discussion of how firms increase their leverage over employees by using these types of benefits to "attach" them to the firm, see Friebel and Guriev 2005.

[57] In addition to wage inducements, management may have the option to limit access to a vacation facility or limit access to the firm's health clinic. In Russia, many employees are reliant on their employer for goods that are hard to get elsewhere at low cost, such as housing, access to health care, child care, summer resorts, transportation, and pension premiums.

[58] Mares and Zhu 2010.

[59] This argument is similar to Mares and Zhu 2010, as a company town may be an extreme example of economic concentration.

DATA AND VARIABLES

We use two data sources to examine these hypotheses about voter mobilization. Both are surveys from the December 4, 2011, parliamentary election in Russia. The first is a survey of 922 firm directors in fifteen regional capitals conducted in November and December 2011.[60] Interviews were conducted with the firm's top management: chief executive officer, chief financial officer, or chief legal officer. These are the individuals responsible for firm operations and have the authority to carry out political activities. Our measure of workplace mobilization is a dichotomous variable that takes the value of 1 if a director reported engaging in any of the following political activities: endorsing a specific party, inviting workers to join a political party, distributing campaign materials, providing meeting space to candidates, or holding campaign events. This measure directly captures electoral subversion via workplace mobilization by asking respondents about their behavior during electoral campaigns.

We test our hypotheses using several questions from the firm survey. We measure the size of the firm by taking the logarithm of the reported number of employees. To measure firm dependence on the state we use a binary variable coded 1 if the respondent reported that the government had a minority or majority stake in the enterprise. To assess the impact of variation in asset mobility, we use the self-reported sectoral classification of the enterprise. Firms in sectors characterized by immobile assets—industry and natural resource extraction—should be more likely to mobilize voters than firms engaged in trade and services, construction, transportation, financial services, real estate, transportation, or communications.[61] We also employ two more direct measures of firm dependence on the state: a binary variable indicating whether the firm sells its products or services directly to the government and a binary variable indicating whether the firm received financial support from the federal or regional government. Almost one in eight firms reported receiving government support in 2010 or 2011. We capture the ideological preferences of the director with a question about whether the firm director supported United Russia, an opposition party, or no party at all. From this, we construct a variable equal to 1 if the firm director supported United Russia.

In the firm survey models, we measure the dependence of employees

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[60] For details on the survey, see Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 1.

[61] In the survey, directors of enterprises involved in trade and services made up the largest category of those interviewed. See Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 1.

on the enterprise with a dichotomous variable equal to 1 if the firm reported that employees received nonwage social benefits. Typical benefits include supplemental medical insurance, subsidized transportation, day care, or housing subsidies. To measure slackness in the labor market, we asked directors to tell us how difficult it was to find qualified workers. Their responses were coded on a 1–4 scale, ranging from easy to very hard. Finally, we control for the age of the firm (measured by the logged number of years in existence), as well as for its recent performance (measured by the change in volume of investment in 2011 as compared with 2007).

The firm survey paints a rich picture about workplace mobilization, but we can be more confident if the results are validated using a separate data source. Thus, we also rely on a nationally representative survey of adults conducted after the December 4, 2011, parliamentary elections. Of the 1600 respondents, 961 were employed. Of those employed, 23 percent worked directly for various levels of government or the security services, 2 percent found it difficult to report their place of employment, and 1 percent worked for nongovernmental organizations. The remaining 703 employed respondents constitute our sample.

The dependent variable in the employee survey models is an individual's response to a question about whether his or her employer attempted to influence the decision to turn out to vote in the 2011 parliamentary elections (the same question described in Table 1). This binary variable takes a value of 1 if the respondent noted an attempt by the employer to apply pressure on him/her to vote.

We construct independent variables to examine our hypotheses using responses from the employee survey. Firm size is measured with an ordinal variable on a 1–4 scale.[62] Respondents were also asked to identify the ownership structure (1 if state-owned, 0 if private) of their firm and to identify its sector when presented with a list of choices. We measure the slackness of the labor market with a dichotomous variable equal to 1 if the respondent lives in a single-company town.[63]

We also include several control variables, including the population of the settlement. Demographic control variables include age, educa-

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[62] This scale is constructed on the basis of a question asking respondents to identify whether their firm had 1–10 employees (1), 10–100 employees (2), 100–1000 employees (3), or over 1000 employees (4).

[63] In Russia, a single company town, or *monogorod*, is defined as any municipality where a single enterprise or group of interlinked enterprises provide more than 50 percent of the city's industrial output. The Russian federal government has identified 337 such towns in Russia; together they constitute more than 25 percent of the country's gross domestic product. To code this variable, we matched the place of settlement from the national survey to the federal list of *monogorod*s that was created in 2009.

tion level, total income (logged in rubles per month to achieve a normal distribution), whether the individual reported voting in the 2007 election (a binary variable), and whether an individual resides in an ethnic republic of Russia.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: EMPLOYER SURVEY

We discuss our analysis of the firm survey data first. All analyses use logit models because the dependent variable is binary. We include region fixed effects and apply heteroskedastic-robust standard errors that are clustered at the region level and report results in Table 3. Model 1 employs only predictors that are largely exogenous. As predicted, larger firms are significantly more likely to have mobilized workers. As Figure 1 shows, a director of a firm with six hundred employees is more than twice as likely as a director of a firm with ten employees to report permitting a political event in the workplace.

This finding is intriguing in light of the clientelism literature, which suggests that clientelist exchange is more prevalent in small settings and tight-knit communities because brokers find it easier to monitor compliance in those settings. Our findings remind us that autocrats consider more than just monitoring costs when they decide how to mobilize voters: they also take into account the economies of scale associated with mobilization. Moreover, it is possible that monitoring costs are mitigated by the hierarchical nature of firms, whereby directors can deploy a chain of supervisors to monitor compliance.

State-owned enterprises are also more likely to have mobilized workers in the run-up to the elections.[64] Turning again to Figure 1, we see that the probability of a state-owned enterprise holding a political event in the workplace is 38 percent, while the probability for non-state-owned enterprises is 14 percent. Autocrats have a great deal of leverage over the directors of state-owned enterprises, so these directors sell the support of their workers "cheaply."

The coefficients on the sectoral dummy variables indicate support for the hypothesis that firms with immobile assets are more likely to engage in workplace mobilization. As Figure 1 shows, firms in heavy industry are 20 percentage points more likely than firms in trade and services to engage in workplace mobilization. The coefficient on the oil and gas

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[64] There is the risk of endogeneity between ownership type and vote mobilization as autocrats may keep reliable vote mobilizers in state hands, but the great wave of privatization in Russia crested by 1996 and the rate of privatization has fallen considerably since then. This suggests some basis for considering ownership as largely exogenous to vote mobilization in 2011.

TABLE 3
EMPLOYER CAMPAIGNING—FIRM SURVEY MODELS

Variables	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model	(4) Model
Firm Size	0.06***	0.07***	0.05***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Firm Age	−0.03	−0.02	−0.03**	−0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
State-Owned Enterprise	0.13**	0.13**	0.10**	0.10***
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Investment Change in 2011	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Energy	−0.11		−0.09	−0.11
	(0.12)		(0.09)	(0.07)
Oil and Gas	0.04		−0.02	−0.08*
	(0.09)		(0.07)	(0.05)
Heavy Industry	0.18**		0.16**	0.13**
	(0.07)		(0.07)	(0.05)
Forestry	0.19**		0.14**	0.18*
	(0.07)		(0.07)	(0.10)
Light Industry	0.10*		0.05	0.07
	(0.05)		(0.05)	(0.05)
Construction	0.06		0.02	0.01
	(0.06)		(0.06)	(0.06)
Transportation	0.04		−0.03	−0.16*
	(0.05)		(0.06)	(0.10)
Communications	0.10		0.09	0.08
	(0.08)		(0.07)	(0.07)
Financial Services	0.07		0.05	0.07
	(0.08)		(0.06)	(0.08)
Real Estate	0.03		0.03	0.03
	(0.10)		(0.09)	(0.10)
Immobile Assets		0.09**		
		(0.04)		
Firm Sells to State			0.14***	0.13***
			(0.03)	(0.04)
Firm Offers Benefits to Workers			0.05**	0.07*
			(0.03)	(0.04)
Firm Receives Government Support			0.07**	0.06
			(0.03)	(0.04)
Firm Experiences Difficulties Finding Workers				−0.00
				(0.02)
Director Age				−0.00**
				(0.00)
Director Education				0.04
				(0.07)

TABLE 3 *cont.*

Variables	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model	(4) Model
Director Supports UR				0.16***
				(0.04)
Observations	751	751	706	528

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
All models use Region FE and cluster standard errors on region
Average marginal effects from Logit models
Dependent variable is binary: 1 if firm mobilized workers to vote; 0 otherwise
Model 1: basic model with Firm Characteristics
Model 2: same as model 1, with addition of collapsed Immobile Assets dummy
Model 3: same as model 1, with addition of variables that capture firm's
relationships with the state and its employees
Model 4: same as model 3, with addition of variables that capture manager and labor market characteristics

sectoral dummy is in the predicted direction but is insignificant. The imprecision of this estimate is likely due to the fact that only eleven oil and gas firms are included in the survey. Nonetheless, mobilization was much higher than average in this sector (results in the supplementary material).[65] In model 2 of Table 3, we attempt to avoid some of these
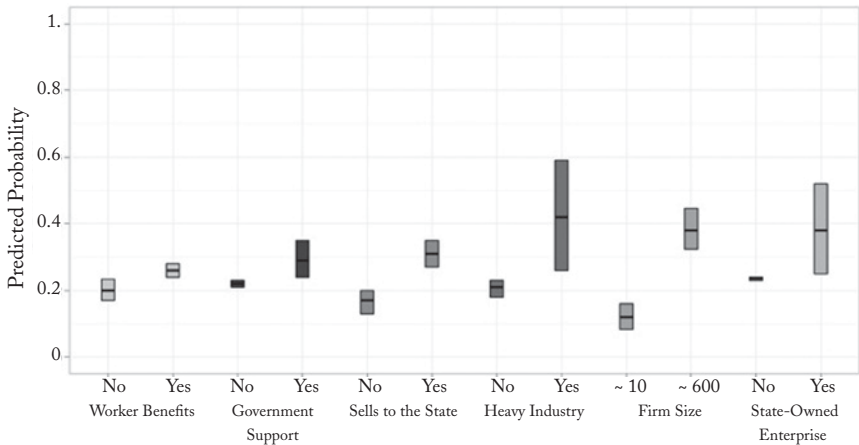

FIGURE 1
PREDICTED PROBABILITIES, FIRM-LEVEL SURVEY

[65] Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014. It is also intriguing that firms in the *Electricity* sector, which is characterized by immobile assets, are not especially likely to mobilize. This result may simply be an artifact of a small sample size (only twelve firms were in the sample). Or it may be due to a quirk of Russian political history, whereby, from 1998 to 2008, the Russian state electricity

small sample problems by replacing the disaggregated sectoral dummies with a dummy variable equal to 1 if the firm operates in a sector characterized by immobile assets (oil and gas, heavy industry, forestry, and energy), and 0 otherwise.[66] The results indicate that, ceteris paribus, firm directors were 9 percentage points more likely to mobilize in firms with immobile assets.

These findings are consistent with our argument that firms with immobile assets will be more likely to mobilize for the autocrat, because they are more vulnerable to expropriation and regulatory sanction. At the same time, however, some existing theories of democratization predict that economic elites with immobile assets will subvert democracy because they fear redistribution of their assets by the poor under democracy.[67] Under such a scenario, economic elites are independently motivated to subvert democracy, absent any pressure from the current autocrat. We accept this as a possibility but doubt that this mechanism fully explains our findings in the case of contemporary Russia. Even if enterprise directors with immobile assets were independently motivated to mobilize in order to prevent redistribution under democracy, these firm directors face a collective action problem in bringing about that result. There are thousands of firms with immobile assets in Russia, and, absent some third party to enforce compliance, many of these firms would doubtlessly elect to free ride on the vote-mobilizing efforts of other firms, rather than pay the costs of mobilization. At a minimum, the autocrat can play the role of a third party that can provide selective incentives to induce collective action by enterprise directors in subverting democracy. In sum, it seems more likely that autocrats want to assure high vote totals and induce directors in asset-immobile sectors to mobilize votes on their behalf.

In model 3 of Table 3, we add several measures of firm dependence on the state that to varying degrees are less exogenous than the indicators used in the first model. The positive and significant coefficient on *Sell to the State* indicates that firms that sell to the state are more likely to mobilize their workers. In substantive terms, a firm that sells to the state is 16 percentage points more likely to mobilize than a firm that

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monopoly, RAO-UES, was headed by Anatoly Chubais, a liberal politician and market reformer closely affiliated with the Union of Right Forces opposition party. During his tenure as chairman of RAO-UES, Chubais filled regional director positions with like-minded, liberal colleagues (Reuter 2010). These individuals were noted for independent political positions in the 2000s, and many of them were still in positions of power in regional electricity companies as of 2011.

[66] These results remain robust if we include *Light Industry* in the immobile assets category.

[67] Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006. We do not deny that owners of immobile assets may fear more democracy, but we suggest that our alternative interpretation is at least as plausible.

does not. We suspect that the decision to sell to the state is largely driven by economic reasons, but we do not rule out the possibility that firms that sell to the state also mobilize workers to ingratiate themselves with state officials—an interpretation that raises the prospect of endogeneity bias. Yet this interpretation supposes a high level of coordination among state officials in different branches of the Russian state to organize this exchange, a supposition that is at odds with much existing literature.[68]

The positive and significant coefficient on *Receives Government Support* indicates that such firms are more likely to mobilize their workforce. We see in Figure 1 that firms receiving government support are roughly 8 percentage points more likely to have engaged in mobilization activities than firms that do not receive anything. The direction of causality is again difficult to establish for these findings, but it is worth noting that firms were asked whether they received government support in 2010 and 2011, well before the State Duma election campaign had begun. In any event, this result indicates an exchange of economic benefits for political support between autocrats and employers, rather than the capture of one side by the other. More generally, these two results demonstrate the value of exploring the relationship between autocrats and employers for studies of both political mobilization and clientelism.

A variable measuring worker dependence on employers—*Worker Benefits*—is also introduced in this model. The coefficient on this variable is positive and significant: firms that provide valuable social services to workers have more leverage with which to induce employee compliance and thus are more likely to mobilize their workers to vote. Firms that offered benefits to their workers were 8 percentage points more likely to mobilize them to vote than were firms that did not provide these benefits.

In model 4 of Table 3, we add a series of variables that tap the individual characteristics of directors to account for their propensity to mobilize their workers. First, we add our measure of director partisanship. Controlling for other firm director characteristics (individual age and level of education), we find that directors who claim to support the ruling United Russia party indeed mobilize their workers at a higher rate. Older firm directors are also less likely to mobilize for the regime, perhaps indicating a greater ability to resist pressure from above resulting from accumulated connections or personal ties. Alternatively, younger directors may have longer time horizons and attach a higher value to maintaining good relations with the authorities.

[68] Easter 2012.

Nonresponse rates were higher for questions about director characteristics, so including these variables reduces the number of observations. We also added a binary variable—*Firm Experiences Difficulties Finding Workers*—indicating whether a given firm identified the problem of finding qualified workers for hire as a pressing one.[69] The coefficient is negative but not statistically significant, indicating mixed support for the claim that firm directors are more likely to mobilize workers in slack labor markets. Nonetheless, almost all of the primary variables of interest (firm size, ownership structure, asset mobility, worker benefits, and state dependence) remain statistically significant in this model.

The Workers' Point of View: Analyzing the Employee Survey

We also examined workplace mobilization from the employee's point of view and report results in Table 4. We again use a logit model with fixed effects at the "okrug" level and standard errors clustered on the primary sampling unit.[70] Overall, the findings from the survey of the mass public confirm our results from the firm survey. As model 1 shows, employees of larger firms are more likely to have experienced pressure to turn out to vote. Voters in large firms are 13 percentage points more likely than voters in the smallest firms to report that their employers pressured them to vote. Asset mobility also predicts voter mobilization in these models. Employees in the heavy industry and mining sectors are more likely to report having been pressured by their employer. We also find that respondents living in single-company towns (*monogorod*s), an indicator of dependency and of a lack of labor mobility, are more likely to be mobilized.[71] Figure 2 shows that respondents living in a *monogorod* are twice as likely to have been mobilized than those living in other types of cities (41.3 percent versus 20.2 percent). Recent literature on clientelism also predicts greater mobilization in smaller towns and settlements, as monitoring problems may be alleviated there. The evidence here supports this finding.

Notably, no other demographic characteristics are significant predictors of employer pressure on employees. The nonfinding on income

[69] This variable also resulted in the loss of many observations, leading us to include it in model 3 of Table 3 alongside manager-level characteristics.

[70] There are eight federal "okrugs" within Russia that join geographically adjacent regions into a second-level administrative structure: region-level fixed effects would be preferable, but because the individual-level survey covers only forty-five regions and the sample size in some regions was very small, including region fixed effects leads us to drop a large number of observations.

[71] This result is consistent with Ardanaz and Mares forthcoming; and Leeman and Mares forthcoming.

TABLE 4
EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGNING—INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

Variables	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model	(4) Model
Single-Company Town	0.18***	0.18**	0.18**	
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	
State-Owned Enterprise			0.01	0.08**
			(0.04)	(0.04)
Firm Size	0.04**	0.07***	0.05**	
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	
Government Employee				0.10**
				(0.04)
Opposition Supporter				0.07**
				(0.03)
Voted in 2007 Parl. Election	0.07**	0.07**	0.07**	0.05*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Heavy Industry	0.18**		0.18**	
	(0.07)		(0.08)	
Light Industry	−0.10		−0.10	
	(0.11)		(0.11)	
Oil and Gas	0.07		0.07	
	(0.09)		(0.09)	
Mining	0.20**		0.20**	
	(0.09)		(0.09)	
Utilities	−0.01		−0.01	
	(0.09)		(0.08)	
Construction	−0.02		−0.02	
	(0.07)		(0.07)	
Transportation	−0.00		−0.01	
	(0.05)		(0.05)	
Communications	−0.25		−0.26	
	(0.17)		(0.17)	
Agriculture	0.04		0.04	
	(0.12)		(0.12)	
Other Sector	0.04		0.03	
	(0.07)		(0.07)	
Immobile Assets		0.08**		
		(0.04)		
Male	−0.03	−0.04	−0.03	−0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Age	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Income	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	−0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)

TABLE 4 *cont.*

Variables	(1) Model	(2) Model	(3) Model	(4) Model
Town Size	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Lives in Republic	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.09*
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Observations	559	559	559	871

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$
Average marginal effects from Logit models
Dependent variable is binary: 1 if respondent was mobilized to vote; 0 otherwise
All models use Region FE and cluster standard errors on primary sample unit
Model 1: basic model with firm characteristics, sectors, and individual demographic information
Model 2: same as model 1, with addition of collapsed Immobile Assets dummy
Model 3: same as model 1, with addition of SOE variable
Model 4: includes government employees and individual political preferences

is particularly intriguing, given the near consensus in the literature that poor voters are more susceptible to clientelist appeals.[72] One possible explanation for why poor voters are more susceptible to clientelist appeals is that they are less mobile and thus more dependent on patrons. If such an indirect effect were at play in our data, then removing our measures of firm dependence from the model should increase the coefficient on *Income*. In the supplementary material,
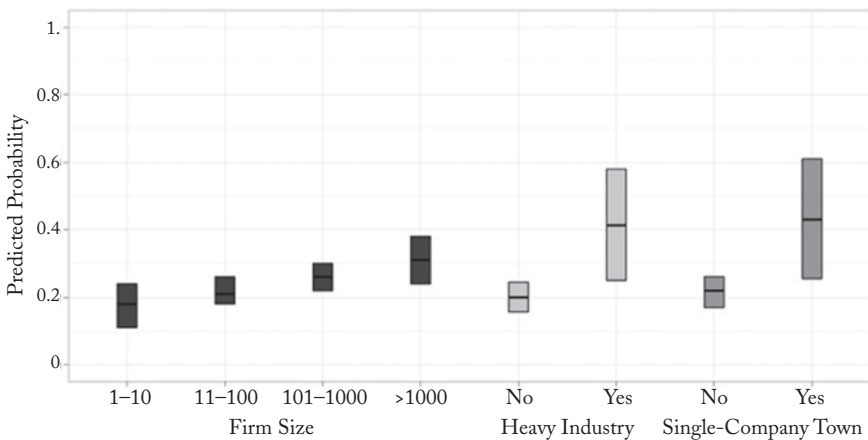

FIGURE 2
PREDICTED PROBABILITIES, INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL SURVEY

[72] Stokes 2005; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007.

Appendix 4,[73] we test for such an indirect effect and find that the effect of *Income* is not being channeled through labor mobility; the coefficient remains virtually unchanged and is not statistically significant in a model that includes only demographic controls.

Another explanation for the association between economic development and clientelism is that the marginal utility of income is higher for poor voters, which makes it cheaper for politicians to buy their votes. Our findings could be interpreted as lending support to this view, because firm managers rely more on negative inducements (for example, coercion backed by implicit or explicit threats of dismissal) than they do on the material exchange of cash for votes. In this view, we should not expect a strong association between the income of workers and workplace clientelism. What matters more, as we find, is the dependence of the worker on the firm.

While the sign of the coefficients on all sectoral dummies conforms to expectations, oil and gas and agriculture—sectors characterized by immobile assets—fall short of statistical significance. As in the firm survey models, this is likely due to the small number of workers in these sectors: only 3.4 percent of the sample works in agriculture and 2.7 percent works in the oil and gas sector. We therefore estimate a second model that replaces the sectoral dummies with a single dummy variable if the respondent works in any firm characterized by immobile assets (oil and gas, heavy industry, agriculture, and mining). The results indicate that respondents working in sectors characterized by immobile assets are 8 percentage points more likely to report that their employer encouraged them to turn out and vote.[74]

In model 3 of Table 4, we add an indicator variable for state ownership of the firm where the respondent is employed. This variable is highly collinear with the indicator variable for single-company towns and the coefficient does not achieve statistical significance when included in the same model with *Single Company Town*. We interpret the positive sign however as evidence that state-owned enterprises tend to mobilize their workers more frequently. We also find in robustness checks that dropping *Single-Company Town* from the analysis results in a positive and statistically significant coefficient on the state ownership variable.

In model 4, we expand the sample to include employees in governmental and state security sectors. Adding these variables, however,

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[73] Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 4.
[74] These results remain robust if we include *Light Industry* in the immobile assets category.

requires dropping the firm-level characteristics such as size and sector from the analysis. Confirming the descriptive impressions in Table 1, the multivariate analysis here shows that employees in both government offices and state-owned enterprises are more likely than their counterparts to have been mobilized in the private and nongovernmental sectors. We also find that opposition supporters experience greater pressure from their employers. This could be due either to greater sensitivity to employer pressure and thus a higher propensity to report coercion by their employer or to specific targeting of dissenting voters. Our data do not allow us to distinguish between these two patterns.

Caveats and Endogeneity Concerns

An alternative interpretation of our results is that voters in certain types of firms (that is, those that we identify as being sites of workplace mobilization) are more likely to turn out, because they want to support the regime. In turn, because they already have a higher latent probability of turnout, it could be more likely that they will be targeted with mobilization efforts (which makes it more likely that they will report being mobilized by their employers). While no observational research design can ever eliminate the possibility of endogeneity bias, there are several reasons why we think this interpretation is inadequate. This alternative interpretation rests on the assumption that voters who are already likely to vote are more likely to be targeted for mobilization in the workplace. This proposition seems dubious because it would be wasteful to expend resources on those who are already going to turn out. The survey evidence cited above, including our list experiment, combined with the qualitative accounts and the reports of reputable vote monitoring organizations indicate that turnout buying, vote buying, and voter intimidation are common in the workplace.

But even if those with a high turnout probability are more likely to be mobilized, there are still problems with this alternative interpretation. First, in the individual survey models, we control for whether the respondent turned out in the previous election. Thus, our findings on the link between firm characteristics and workplace mobilization are conditioned on previous turnout, which explains a large portion of the variance in turnout propensity. Second, there is little in the literature on Russian voting behavior to suggest that employees of the types of firms that we identify would be more likely to be ideological supporters of the regime. Employees of state-owned enterprises and voters employed in sectors that are dependent on the state have historically been more

likely to vote for the Communist Party of the Russian Federation than for the proregime party United Russia.[75] Furthermore, when holding ownership structure, sector, and state financial support constant, it is difficult to see why employees of large firms or those in enterprises that provide significant nonwage benefits would be more likely to turn out and vote for the regime, unless, as we argue, it is less costly for firm managers to mobilize employees in large firms and firm managers have more leverage to wield over employees in firms that provide significant in-kind benefits.

A related endogeneity concern is that employers may engage in workplace mobilization not because they feel pressure from the government (as our theory suggests) but because they have an inherent ideological preference for the current regime. Specifically, directors of state-owned firms, those that sell to the state, and those that receive financial support from the government may want to ensure the electoral well-being of the regime and thus might engage in workplace mobilization absent any overt pressure from the regime. While it is possible that state-dependent directors could exhibit an ideological preference for the regime, it is difficult to see why directors of large firms would be more likely to have this preference once government financial support, sector, and ownership structure are controlled for.

Empirically, we attempt to mitigate this endogeneity concern by controlling for the vote preference of directors in our firm models. Thus, conditional on ideological preference, we find that directors of certain types of firms are more likely to engage in voter mobilization. And while no observational design can ever fully eliminate endogeneity bias, the observational evidence at our disposal points to the conclusion that directors in the firm types that we identify are mobilizing for some reason other than ideological preferences.

Several other caveats are also in order. We have identified the advantages to autocrats of engaging in political mobilization via the workplace, but we have not explored the interaction between political parties and firms. Whether party-based and employer-based political mobilization are complements or substitutes is an open question. Our hunch is that workplace mobilization will be more attractive when autocrats lack access to well-developed, grassroots party organizations.

We have also not examined the extent to which these results are specific to contemporary Russia.[76] Systematic studies of workplace mobi-

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[75] Colton and McFaul 2003.
[76] Of course, workplace mobilization of workers was common in the Soviet period, and that may play a role in its prevalence in contemporary Russia.

lization in contemporary regimes are scarce, but there is evidence that it also occurs outside of Russia and we suspect that our arguments may have some purchase in other settings as well. We expect that workplace mobilization will be more common in countries where state-owend firms are prominent and where much of the workforce is employed in sectors characterized by immobile assets. We would also expect it to be more common in settings where workers are heavily dependent on their employers, such as countries with low levels of labor mobility and countries where social provision is handled by employers. Workplace mobilization may be less common in countries where few people are employed in the formal sector, or it may take on different forms in such settings. This question calls for further inquiry.

Finally, our findings are limited to a dominant party regime setting. We do not explore how the incentives to mobilize in the workplace may differ in the presence of dueling machines.[77]

CONCLUSION

We have found that the workplace is a key site of political mobilization in contemporary Russia. Employers are especially well placed to translate their economic power over workers into political mobilization. Indeed, as noted in the supplementary material, Appendix 5,[78] workers who were mobilized by employers reported higher rates of turnout than those who were not. To a considerable extent the quality of representation via elections depends on place of employment rather than formal political rights. Using two original surveys that directly tap voter mobilization, we have also identified the features of the workplace that make electoral subversion via economic coercion more likely. Firms that are vulnerable to state pressure, such as those with immobile assets and those that are owned by or sell their output to the state, are more likely to mobilize votes for the regime because autocrats find it easy to induce the leadership of these firms to mobilize their workers. We also find that workplace-based electoral subversion is more prevalent when the cost to employers of mobilizing workers is lower. Thus, economies of scale make workplace mobilization more common in large firms. Workplace-based electoral subversion is also more common when employees are heavily dependent on their employers, as in slack labor markets and in firms that provide significant nonwage social benefits to their employees.

[77] Ziblatt 2008; Ziblatt 2009; Mares and Zhu 2010; Corstange 2011.
[78] Frye, Reuter, and Szakonyi 2014, Appendix 5.

Our findings contribute to several bodies of research in comparative politics. First, by identifying the most common sites of workplace electoral subversion, our analysis provides some microfoundations to arguments about the economic bases of transitions from autocratic rule. Boix and Acemoglu and Robinson identify asset immobility as a key obstacle to democratization but do not provide microlevel tests of their arguments.[79] Using individual-level data, we find that firms whose assets are immobile are especially likely to attempt to subvert the electoral process via voter coercion. Yet we posit a different mechanism by which asset immobility may influence democratic transitions. Firms in sectors with low asset mobility may subvert democracy not just because they fear redistribution under democracy but also because they are vulnerable to pressure from the autocrat.

Second, we add to the recent literature on clientelism, which emphasizes the role of parties in facilitating clientelist exchange but largely overlooks the role of firms in mobilizing voters.[80] The evidence indicates that even where political parties are not deeply embedded in society, politicians can organize political clientelism by relying on employers to mobilize voters in specific economic sectors. Thus, industrialization need not reduce political clientelism. Indeed, political clientelism is likely to flourish in industrial sectors where fiscal dependence on the state is high, assets are immobile, and labor markets are slack.

Relatedly, the finding that large firms are more likely to witness electoral subversion sits uneasily with the existing literature on clientelism, which finds that clientelism is more likely in small-scale settings where personal networks can monitor voter behavior. By contrast, our findings suggest that autocrats also take into account economies of scale in mobilizing voters and therefore seek to mobilize in large firms even though monitoring costs may be higher.

Third, our work also adds to recent studies of electoral fraud in modern autocracies by exploring the use of economic coercion to subvert the electoral process. In contrast to studies of electoral subversion that explore the practice of ballot-box stuffing,[81] we highlight a different mechanism by which elections can be undermined: the use of economic pressure against employers and workers. In this respect we contribute to the emerging literature that explores how economic elites have undermined elections in a variety of historical and geographic settings.[82]

[79] Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006.
[80] Stokes 2005; Nichter 2008.
[81] Hyde 2006; Myagkov and Ordeshook 2009; Beber and Scacco 2012.
[82] Baland and Robinson 2008; Medina and Stokes 2007; Ziblatt 2008; Mares and Zhu 2010; Ardanaz and Mares forthcoming; Leemann and Mares 2011.

Taken together, these insights suggest some microfoundations for why we often see economic and political liberalization go hand in hand.[83] Economic liberalization increases the autonomy of employers from the state, raises the costs of subverting elections via voter intimidation, and thereby facilitates political liberalization. More generally, these results suggest some microlevel reasons why countries whose economies are dominated by state ownership, immobile capital, fiscal dependence on the state, and slack labor markets may be especially prone to autocratic rule.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article can be found at http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S004388711400001X.

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[83] Jackson, Klich, and Poznanski 2005; Frye 2010.

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