Online Appendix for "The Limited Impact of Information on Political Accountability: Evidence from Politicians' Financial Disclosures"

Contents

A1 Salience of Financial Disclosures

Figure A1 graphs the mentions of "asset disclosures" in the written corpus maintained by Google Ngrams (`https://books.google.com/ngrams`), as a percent share of one of the most common two-word syntaxes, "to the", for the period 1980-2008.[1] The figure shows that there was about a 14-fold increase in the frequency of mentions of asset disclosures.

Figure A2 graphs the salience of asset disclosures in the English-language Indian press from the enactment of the mandatory disclosure system in 2004 until the present. We searched through 95 Indian publications available through Access World News, a media aggregation service.[2] We searched for articles mentioning a combination of "asset" and "affidavit" (the term used in India for asset disclosures). We used automated text analysis to confirm that the search returned meaningful hits, and also inspected the article titles to eliminate as many false positives as possible. The final search output included 5,301 relevant articles.[3]

The upper panel of Figure A2 shows the raw number of articles per month mentioning asset disclosures. The spikes correspond to important election months (e.g. the Lok Sabha election in 2014 and the recent Tamil Nadu election in 2016). The lower panel uses the Hodrick-Prescott filter to remove some of this recurring variation to show the stable time trend. Both panels show that the number of articles has increased manifold; the trend has increased about 7-fold since 2004.

A2 Bihar and Madhepura Characteristics

Figure A3 shows that Bihar is close to the median in terms of average wealth accumulation of state legislators. The graph ranks states in terms of average wealth accumulation among rerunning incumbents for the latest pair of elections in each state.[4] Bihar is ranked as 15th, among 31 states for which the data are available.

Table A1 compares important characteristics of the Madhepura district and the Bihar state. The data come from two sources: the Census of India, and the election Commission of India. Madhepura does not stand out compared to the rest of the state of Bihar on any dimensions shown in Table A1. Like Bihar, Madhepura is predominantly rural, with a significant proportion of the Scheduled Castes,[5] and relatively low levels of literacy and

[1] We combined the mentions of all the singular and plural variations of the words "asset disclosure" and "asset declaration."

[2] `http://www.newsbank.com/libraries/schools/solutions/us-international/access-world-news`. We chose Access World News over similar resources such as LexisNexis or Factiva because of greater coverage of news publications in India.

[3] 75 percent of the search hits came from the following publications: the Times of India, the Hindu, Hindustan Times, the Statesman, New Indian Express, United News of India, Indian Express, the Economic Times, the Pioneer, Daily News & Analysis, and the Calcutta Telegraph.

[4] State assembly elections in India are staggered, and therefore not all pairs of elections are from the same years.

[5] While no official data exists, the rest of the population consists of a variety of other groups including

development, as proxied by the share of agricultural workers ("cultivators") and "marginal" workers. Recent electoral data show that voters in Madhepura followed state-wide trends in the latest pre-experiment state elections in 2010. Candidates from the JD(U) and BJP were overwhelmingly preferred in Madhepura as well as in Bihar. While Madhepura was once known as a Yadav and RJD stronghold, this is no longer the case. Finally, and importantly, the last two rows rely on publicly available data from official pre-election affidavits (from 2010) to show that Madhpeura incumbents accumulated wealth in office at a similar pace as state legislators from the rest of Bihar.

A3 Sampling and Lab Procedures

In order to maximize the social, age and ethnic diversity of participants in our experiment, recruiters from the survey team were tasked with finding potential participants blocked by age and ethnicity at a randomly selected sample of locations. Upon arriving to a randomly selected location within a perimeter of twenty kilometers around our lab, monitors enumerated the four largest ethnic communities living at this location and then targeted an equal number of respondents from each ethnic group. Within each group, an equal number of flyers were distributed to people below and above 35 years of age. Once a potential respondent was identified, the enumerator wrote down the participant's name on two sets of invitations, giving one to the participant and keeping the other. This allowed us to match the participant with the invitation once they visited the lab. The participants were informed on the flyer that the study would entail responding to questions about "social and political issues." Upon receiving an invitation, respondents were promised 50 rupees for participating in the study, which they received after the completion of the study. Since the lab was located on the outskirts of Madhepura, and stood very close to a well-known bus station, both rural and urban voters participated in the study (23 percent of participants lived within an urban polling station). Importantly, this sampling strategy allowed the research team to sample from two different assembly constituencies (Madhepura and Singheshwar), hence ensuring that participants did not all have the same state assembly representative.

Upon arriving to the lab, the identity of the respondents was verified with the invitation cards. Once participants were cleared to participate, they were assigned to an interview room in which a short "background survey" took place privately. In this brief survey, the respondents were asked several demographic questions, including an open-ended question about their self-identified ethnicity, a response which served as the basis for a part of the ethnicity treatment we describe further below. The questionnaire for the background survey can be found in Section A11 below.

At the end of this interview, respondents were invited to wait for a few minutes in a waiting area until they could participate in a seemingly unrelated study on "political and social personalities." While they waited, the research team prepared the instrument for the second interview. During this interview, we presented each respondent with the

Brahmins, Thakurs, and Banyas as well as "backward caste" groups such as Kurmis, and Yadavs.

experimental vignettes. Following the experiment, the respondents participated in another short survey, which identifed respondents' knowledge about and involvement in politics. The post-treatment survey can be found in Section A11 below.

A4 Sample Composition and Representativeness

The 1,020 respondents who came to the lab were diverse on a host of dimensions, as seen in columns 1-2 of Table A2. It is difficult to compare the composition of our sample to the populations of Bihar and India as a whole due to poor-quality or incomparable population data. The main difficulty comes from the fact that the census collects limited information, and that the most comprehensive national surveys usually record information about the household head rather than any respondent from the household. Columns 1 and 2 of Table A2 show the means and standard deviations of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of our sample. The remaining columns show the same quantities for comparable variables based on the weighted state (columns 3-4) and national samples (columns 5-6) from the second wave of the India Human Development Survey. Our sample is quite similar to the population of Bihar in terms of education, household size, the share of Muslims, house size, and movable assets such as a refrigerator or bicycle.[6] As is known, Bihar is one of the poorer states in India, which is reflected both in our sample and in the asset summaries in Bihar.

A5 Sample Experimental Vignette

See Figure A4 below.

A6 Experimental Manipulations

In this section, we provide additional information on our experimental manipulations. Table A3 summarizes these experimental manipulations. The second column shows the text presented to the respondents. The third column shows the text that the interviewer read out to the respondents.

The fictitious politicians used as part of the experimental vignettes were presented as incumbents in other, non-neighboring districts of Bihar since some voters may know the identity of candidates in their district. Since some voters may have known the identity of incumbents from other districts immediately before the election, we ran the experiment seven months before. Our interviewers reported that the respondent may not have perceived the politicians as real in less than four percent of the cases. Our results are robust to excluding these observations.

[6]Overall, our respondents' wealth as measured by the assets listed in Table A2 is very similar to the average wealth in Bihar, although our respondents are somewhat more likely to own a vehicle and a cell phone, but less likely to own a television set.

The different possible values for the initial wealth treatment were: 5 lakhs, 8 lakhs, 45 lakhs, 85 lakhs, 2 crores and 4 crores rupees (a lakh is 100,000 rupees; a crore is 10 million rupees). These values correspond roughly to the 5th, 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, 90th, and 95th percentile of the distribution of the observed, self-reported 2010 wealth among incumbent MLAs in Bihar. To simplify the presentation of the results, we group these treatments into three categories of 2010 wealth in our analysis section below: below median, median–75th percentile, and above 75th percentile.

The values used in the wealth accumulation treatment are nominal increases. We chose to focus on nominal rather than real increases because: (a) public discussions almost exclusively focus on nominal wealth increases; (b) directing attention to real vs. nominal increases would likely confuse most respondents and complicate the experiment. We draw the values from the sample of rerunning incumbents because otherwise we cannot calculate the wealth increase. While focusing on rerunning incumbents may produce some selection bias in the values of wealth accumulation we use, it covers the same sample that the voters would likely be most attentive to if they themselves focused on wealth accumulation. Also, these estimates of wealth increase are likely downward-biased due to likely under-reporting by the highest wealth accumulators. On the party and ethnicity treatments, we deliberately do not restrict the matches between parties and groups since all four major parties – RJD, JD(U), BJP and the Congress (INC) – did in 2015 run candidates from each of these castes or religious groups.

On the randomization, all the attributes except ethnicity and the legality of wealth accumulation were randomized unconditionally and with repetition. The legality treatment was randomized conditional on the wealth accumulation treatment not being "did not increase." The ethnicity treatment was partly conditional on the respondent's stated ethnicity, according to the procedure detailed in the text. Finally, the photograph was randomized without repetition, to ensure that it would differ for each politician profile.

A7 Estimating the Treatment Effect of Co-Ethnicity

As desribed in the text, our ethnicity treatment is somewhat different from the other treatments, in that we ensured that one of the three vignettes featured a candidate with the same ethnicity as the one stated by the respondent in the pre-experiment survey. Since we are interested not in the effect of ethnicity per se, but of co-ethnicity, this choice ensured that each respondent rated at least one co-ethnic profile. For the remaining two vignettes, the candidate ethnicity was determined by a simple random draw from a list of 11 ethnicities. One might wonder if we would not also achieve a sufficient number of co-ethnic profiles by having a simple randomization for all three vignettes. Unfortunately, this is infeasible, because the number of ethnicities in Bihar, which correspond to various sub-castes, is very large. Therefore, using a simple random draw would almost certainly not give us enough co-ethnic profiles. Indeed, in our data, the respondents declared 56 different ethnicities, and as a result only around 7 percent of the two vignettes with a simple random draw featured a co-ethnic.

There are two implications of our design for the analysis of the average marginal component effects (AMCE) of co-ethnicity. The first implication is the subtle difference in the interpretation of the co-ethnicity AMCE compared to the other AMCEs. For the AMCEs of the other attributes, the average is taken over the joint distribution of all the possible combinations of the remaining attributes. This joint distribution is determined fully by the random draws in the experiment. For the ethnicity AMCE, the distribution of ethnicity over which the averages are taken is a mixture of the observed distribution of respondent ethnicity, as well as the experimentally-produced distribution of our pre-specified set of main subcastes.

The second implication of our design is in terms of the estimation of the co-ethnicity AMCE. There are two ways that a respondent can get a co-ethnic politician profile: through the co-ethnic vignette (i.e. one of the three vignettes where we ensure a co-ethnic profile), and possibly through the luck of the draw in the remaining two vignettes. To properly account for this distinction, we use an indicator variable for the co-ethnic vignette as an instrument for the actual co-ethnicity status of the politician profile. This instrument is valid. First, it is strong, because roughly 90 percent of the co-ethnic profiles are generated through the co-ethnic vignette. Second, it satisfies the exclusion restriction, because the treatment is orthogonal to all the other treatments, and hence can influence outcomes only through the actual co-ethnicity status of the politician profile.[7] The calculation of the quantities of interest for ethnicity are therefore based on the two-stage least squares estimates, but otherwise follow the same calculation as the quantities of interest for the other treatments. The results are substantively very similar if we use a simpler OLS model instead of the two-stage model. Also, the results for the other treatments are very similar if we exclude the round which featured a co-ethnic vignette, or if we estimate them separately from the ethnicity effects.

A8 Diagnostic Tests

This section reports several diagnostics tests of the validity of our experimental manipulations. Table A4 suggests that our experimental manipulations were successfully randomized. The table shows that a number of pre-treatment respondent characteristics are balanced in the conjoint experiment. The entries in column 1 represent the p-values of an F-test, from a regression of each pre-treatment characteristic indicated in the left-most column on all conjoint treatment conditions. None of the p-values in column 1 is below the conventional level of $p < 0.05$, implying that the the treatment conditions are not jointly statistically significant predictors of any of the listed pre-treatment variables. Column 2 takes a different approach, and reports the p-value of the effect of each pre-treatment characteristic on the profile rated by respondents in the conjoint experiment. Again, all p-values are greater than 0.05, implying that profiles rated did not differ systematically across respondents' pre-treatment characteristics.

[7] This changes somewhat the interpretation of the ethnicity effects, as it is confined to those respondents whose co-ethnicity with the politician was induced by the co-ethnicity vignette.

As discussed in the main text, the conjoint experiment involved respondents rating three politician profiles (or vignettes). The ordering of the profiles was randomized. Table A5 examines how much the treatment effects vary from one vignette to another, i.e. whether there are any profile order effects. The main entries in columns 1-3 report the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) for each profile separately; the entries in parentheses are the respondent-clustered standard errors. The main entries in column 4 represent the F-statistic from the test of whether the treatment effects for vignettes 2 and 3 are jointly statistically significantly different from the treatment effects in vignette 1; the entries in brackets are the p-values from this test. Overall, there are no systematic order effects, as the AMCEs for each treatment component in the conjoint experiment are similar across the three vignettes. None of the p-values in column 4 give statistically significant results at conventional levels, implying that the treatment effects are overall not statistically different from each other across the three vignettes.[8]

In addition to the order of the vignettes, the order of the profile attributes was also randomized. Similar to the diagnostic tests shown in Table A5, which compare the treatment effects across the vignettes, we can evaluate the successfulness of the attribute order randomization by comparing the treatment effects across the profile rows. As there are seven bullet points (and ten attributes) shown in each profile, we can compare seven AMCEs for each treatment component – one for each row. To keep the presentation of the diagnostic results tractable, Figure A5 compares the seven AMCEs only for our wealth accumulation attribute.[9] The left panel shows the AMCEs for each row for a politician profile with below-median wealth increase (relative to the no-increase condition). The right panel shows the seven AMCEs for a politician profile with above-median wealth increase (relative to the no-increase condition). Both panels show that the treatment effects are quite stable across rows, indicating that the position on the profile where the wealth attributes appear does not systematically affect the respondents' evaluation of the overall profile.

Because of the large number of treatment components, the concern is that some of the statistically significant AMCEs we report in the main text may have arisen simply by chance as a consequence of performing multiple comparisons. Figure A6 shows the results when a Benjamini-Hochberg multiple-comparison correction is applied (Benjamini and Hochberg, 1995). This procedure controls the false discovery rate, by ordering the p-values of all the AMCEs from lowest to highest, and designating as statistically significant only those p-values that satisfy the condition $p_k \leq \frac{k}{m}\alpha$, where k is the position in the order of each p-value, m is the number of AMCEs, and α is the target significance level. In other words, this correction makes it increasingly harder to pass a significance test as the number of tests grows. We focus on $\alpha = 0.05$. In Figure A6, the plotted dots represent the p-values of all the AMCEs shown in the main text. The full dots indicate the AMCEs that remain significant after the correction (i.e. the p-value satisfies the Benjamini-Hochberg criterion), the hollow dots

[8]There is one instance where the treatment effect based on the last profile rated is somewhat different from the first two profiles: the AMCE for a politician coming from a rich family. Our results are substantively very similar to those in the main text when we reestimate these AMCEs based only on the first two vignettes. It is therefore plausible that this different pattern may have arisen by chance.

[9]The results for the other treatment components are similar and available upon request.

indicate the AMCEs that are not statistically significant according to this correction. The top panel plots the AMCE p-values for vote intention, the middle panel for the corruption rating, and the bottom panel for the violence rating, respectively. The results show that all of our main results are statistically unchanged when the potential multiple-comparison problem is addressed. For example, all of the wealth increase AMCEs remain statistically significant at the corrected $p < 0.05$.

A9 Is the Effect of Wealth Accumulation Mitigated by Other Factors?

To test whether this is the case, we study the interaction between politician characteristics and wealth accumulation. These effects are calculated in a straightforward fashion, by adding the appropriate interaction terms to our regressions and incorporating them when calculating the AMCEs. The most theoretically relevant potential moderators in Indian politics are record in office, party and ethnicity. Accordingly, Figure A7 focuses on the interactions between wealth accumulation and these characteristics of candidates. In Table A7, we show the results for the interactions between wealth increase and the other politician attributes.

The top panel of Figure A7 first examines whether the effect of higher wealth accumulation for candidates with a good record in office (the left graph) is different than for a candidate with a bad record (the middle graph). This is not the case: the differences in the wealth increase AMCEs between the politicians with good and bad records in office (the right graph in the top panel) are close to zero and statistically insignificant, indicating that the respondents do not excuse wealth accumulation based on a candidate's record. Similar patterns emerge as we examine the interactions between wealth accumulation and partisanship (the middle panel of Figure A7). It does not matter whether the candidate is a co-partisan (the left graph) or not (the middle graph): information about wealth increases results in a lower vote probability for either type of candidate, and as with the politician's record, the difference is statistically insignificant (the right graph). Finally, ethnicity is typically mentioned as a major factor in Indian politics and an ethnically-driven voter could be lenient toward politicians who accumulate wealth in office if they share the same ethnicity. However, as seen in the bottom panel of Figure A7, we similarly do not find such interaction effects in our study. The respondents punish wealth accumulation irrespective of whether the candidate is a co-ethnic (the left graph) or non-co-ethnic (the middle graph), and the difference is once again statistically indistinguishable from zero (the right graph). In sum, there is no evidence in our data that the respondents excuse wealth accumulation of politicians based on either their record in office, party affiliation or ethnicity. We similarly do not find consistent and statistically significant interaction effects for *any* of the other attributes, such as family background, criminal charges, or the initial level of wealth (Table A7).[10]

[10]We also do not find consistent interaction effects between *respondents*' income and a candidate's wealth accumulation. See the upper panel of Table A8.

A10 Additional Results

For greater clarity, in the main text we grouped the seven initial wealth and seven wealth increase treatment conditions into three groups of each (for initial wealth, the groups are: below median, median–75th percentile percentile, and above 75th percentile; for wealth increase, the groups are: no increase, below median, and above median increase). Figure A8 shows the main results – the treatment effects on the respondents' vote intention – for all seven categories of each wealth treatment. The results are quite similar to those for the grouped treatments. While richer politicians are viewed somewhat less favorably, the initial wealth treatment effects are statistically indistinguishable from zero. Also, there is no gradient to the initial wealth effect – very rich politicians (those with the 2010 wealth of 4 crores) are not viewed differently than those with below-median initial wealth (20 lahks). The initial wealth AMCEs are also noticeably smaller in magnitude than the wealth increase AMCEs, as in the main results showed in the text. It is interesting that the wealth increase treatment effects become larger in approximately linear fashion.

Figure A9 shows the effect of wealth accumulation separately when it is presented as unsuspicious and potentially illegal.[11] As expected, when there are suspicions of illegality, information about wealth increase lowers the likelihood that respondents declare voting for a candidate. However, even when respondents are explicitly told that there is no suspicion of illegality, information about wealth increase results in a lower probability of vote. The effects are statistically significant at $p < .05$ for the ten-fold increase or greater.

As mentioned in the text, information about wealth accumulation significantly increased respondents' propensity to view the candidate as both more corrupt (left panel) and more violent (right panel). These results are shown in Figure A10.

In the main text, we reported the results for three outcomes: vote intention, and corruption and violence ratings. Here, we present the results for the "representation" rating: how good a representative the respondent thought the politician was, on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good). Figure A11 shows that the results are very similar to those for the vote intention. These results are reassuring because the vote question does not refer to real voting and thus may fail to capture respondents' true political preferences. The similarity in the results for the representation rating suggests that our experiment elicited cohesive voting intensions linked to the respondents' evaluations of the quality of representation.

We omitted the AMCEs for photograph and district attributes from the main text to avoid cluttering the presentation, given that we do not have clear theoretical priors about the direction and magnitude of potential effects. Table A6 shows the AMCEs for these attributes across the three outcomes examined in the main text. We chose six photographs of men approximately 40 years of age who can pass as members of different castes. These six photographs were randomly drawn for each profile, without replacement to avoid repetition across the three vignettes. The district in each vignette was chosen from a list of eight real districts from a different sub-region in Bihar; none of the eight districts are geographically

[11] Since this information was only provided when there was an increase in wealth, the baseline category is a 20 percent increase, rather than no increase.

very close to Madhepura, where the experiment took place. The table shows that for the most part, the AMCEs are statistically insignificant.[12] There is a consistently strong effect of a politician being from Jahanabad (relative to a politician from Banka, a district arbitrarily chosen as the base category); respondents are more likely to vote for a politician from this district and less likely to perceive him as corrupt or violent. We do not have a clear explanation for this. However, these patterns do not seem consequential for our key findings about the effects of wealth accumulation. The last two rows of Table A6 show the p-values from an F-test of joint significance of the interactions between the photograph or district treatments and the wealth increase treatments. Neither of the two sets of interactions are jointly statistically significant.

As discussed briefly in the text, there is little evidence of interactions between the wealth increase attributes and some of the other attributes. Table A7 shows the interaction effects between the wealth increase treatments and the initial wealth, family background, and criminality, respectively. The first row of each set of interactions, indicated with a bold-face caption, shows the wealth increase AMCE at the base category of the interacting treatment component (the rows indicated with "@"); the other rows represent the interaction terms (i.e. the difference from the first row) for the remaining treatment conditions for each set of attributes (the rows indicated with "×"). The first (second) column shows the interaction effects with the below- (above-) median wealth increase. The results clearly indicate that the wealth increase treatment effects do not vary significantly with the other attributes – the AMCEs for wealth increase are similar for politicians with smaller and greater 2010 wealth, for politicians with poor, middle-class and rich family backgrounds, and for politicians with and without criminal charges to their name.

A10.1 Results for Alternative Explanations

As mentioned in the main text, one potential alternative explanation for voters disliking wealth accumulation but nonetheless voting for wealth accumulators is that only wealth accumulators may be on offer, prompting voters to ignore politicians' wealth accumulation and focus on other politician characteristics. Figure A12 shows that in Bihar at least in principle this is not necessarily the case. The circles show the range in each constituency in wealth increase among candidates who ran in both 2010 and 2015 – the maximum minus the minimum wealth accumulation among all the rerunning candidates. We excluded constituencies where two or fewer candidates reran. The constituencies are sorted in increasing range on the x-axis. The horizontal dashed red lines show the multiples of the standard deviation in wealth accumulation across all the rerunning candidates in Bihar. The figure shows that close to half of the constituencies had a greater range in wealth accumulation than twice the standard deviation in wealth accumulation in Bihar as a whole; close to a quarter of constituencies had the range greater than three-times the Bihar standard deviation.

Another potential explanation discussed in the main text is that wealth accumulators may be perceived as more likely to provide clientelistic or patronage goods. Figure A13

[12] This is even more clearly the case when the multiple-testing correction is applied (Figure A6).

shows that the results for this outcome are very similar to our main results (and the results for the related "representation" rating shown in Figure A11). Therefore, our data do not seem to support this hypothesis.

We also find little evidence of an interaction between the wealth increase effects and *respondent* wealth. We measure respondent wealth with a factor score derived from the binary asset variables and the self-reported respondent income and land size (see Table A2). The top panel of Table A8 shows the interaction between the wealth increase treatments and quartiles of respondent wealth; the first row of each set of interactions shows the wealth increase AMCE for the respondents with wealth in the lowest quartile (the rows indicated with "@"), the remaining rows show the interaction terms for the higher quartiles (i.e. the difference from the wealth increase AMCE for the lowest quartile; the rows indicated with "×"). There is no consistent evidence that wealthier respondents view greater wealth increase in either a more negative or more positive light than less wealthy respondents.

As discussed in the text, the lower panel of Table A8 shows evidence that more politically knowledgeable respondents are somewhat more sensitive to wealth accumulation. We measure political knowledge as a simple sum of correct or incorrect answers to eight factual questions about politics, reproduced in Section A11 below.[13]

A11 Survey Instruments

This section replicates the background pre-treatment survey, the experimental outcome questions, the post-treatment survey, and the information survey questions about wealth and wealth accumulation.

A11.1 Demographic Pre-Treatment Survey

1. Gender (do not ask)
2. In which year were you born?
3. For how many years have you lived at your current location?
4. Are you currently married?
    1. Yes
    0. No
    98. Refuses to answer
5. Did you go to school?
    1. Yes (Go to next question)

[13]The questions tap respondents' knowledge of the name and party of their MP and MLA, as well as basic familiarity with state and national politics.

0. No (Skip next question)
99. Not sure/does not apply/no answer (Skip next question)

6. Until which class did you complete school?
    1. Class 1
    2. Class 2
    3. Class 3
    4. Class 4
    5. Class 5
    6. Class 6
    7. Class 7
    8. Class 8
    9. Class 9
    10. Class 10
    11. Intermediate (Class 11 & 12)
    12. Graduate (College or University)
    13. Post-graduate (Masters or Doctorate/Ph.D.)
7. What is your community? (As reported by the respondent)
8. Current occupation?
    1. Farmer
    2. Agricultural worker
    3. Shop-owner
    4. Government Employee (specify)
    5. Private sector job (specify)
    6. Other (specify)
9. Total Agricultural land owned by household?
    1. 0 3 bigha
    2. 3 6 bigha
    3. 6 9 bigha
    4. 9 12 bigha
    5. 12 15 bigha

6. 15 18 bigha
7. 18 21 bigha
8. 21 25 bigha
9. 25+ bigha

10. Type of House?

    1. Pucca (both wall and roof made of pucca material)
    2. Pucca-kucha (either wall or roof is made of pucca material and of other kutcha material)
    3. Kutcha (both wall and roof made of kutcha material other than materials mentioned in category 4)
    4. Hut (both wall and roof are made of grass, leaves, mud, un-burnt brick or bamboo)
    99. Not available/don't know

11. Number of rooms?

12. Number of members in household?

13. Do you or your family member have the following: Yes (1) No (0)

    a. Car/jeep/van/tractor
    b. Colour or B/W television set
    c. Scooter/motorcycle/moped
    d. Bicycle
    e. Mobile phone
    f. Electric fan/cooler
    g. Radio/transistor
    h. Pumping set
    i. Fridge
    j. Cow (enter actual number)
    k. Buffalo (enter actual number)
    l. Goat or sheep (enter actual number)

14. Total monthly household income (in rupees)?

A11.2 Treatment Outcome Questions

1. Would you consider voting for such a candidate?
    1. Yes
    2. No
    3. Don't know
2. Politicians' job is to address their constituents' problems. On a scale from 1 to 5, how good a representative do you think this politician would be in that respect?
    1. Very bad
    2. Bad
    3. Neither bad not good
    4. Good
    5. Very good
3. Politicians sometimes help some of their constituents more than they help others. On a scale from 1 to 5, how good a representative do you think this politician would be for you personally?
    1. Very bad
    2. Bad
    3. Neither bad not good
    4. Good
    5. Very good
4. On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely do you think this person is corrupt?
    1. Very unlikely
    2. Unlikely
    3. Neither unlikely nor likely
    4. Likely
    5. Very likely
5. On a scale from 1 to 5, how likely do you think this politician engages in violent activities?
    1. Very unlikely
    2. Unlikely
    3. Neither unlikely nor likely
    4. Likely
    5. Very likely

A11.3 Post-Treatment Survey

1. Which party do you usually support in elections?
    1. RJD
    2. JD(U)
    3. BJP
    4. Congress
    5. LJP
    6. BSP
    7. Other (specify)
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to say
    99. NA
2. Did you vote in 2010 (last state assembly elections)?
    1. Yes
    0. No
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to say
    99. NA (if respondent was not of voting age in 2010)
3. If yes, could you tell me which party you voted for?
    1. RJD
    2. JD(U)
    3. BJP
    4. Congress
    5. LJP
    6. BSP
    7. Other (specify)
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to say
    99. NA
4. Did you vote in 2014 (Lok Sabha elections)?

1. Yes
0. No
88. Don't know/don't remember
98. Refuses to say
99. NA (if respondent was not of voting age in 2010)

5. If yes, could you tell me which party you voted for?
    1. RJD
    2. JD(U)
    3. BJP
    4. Congress
    5. LJP
    6. BSP
    7. Other (specify)
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to say
    99. NA

6. Let me now ask you about politicians here in Madhepura. Let's start with your MLA.
    a. Can you identify the name of your current MLA for me? (Write name)
        1. Cannot identify
        2. Wrongly identifies
        3. Partially identifies
        4. Identifies correctly
        88. Don't know/don't remember
        98. Refuses to answer
    b. Can you identify his/her party? (Write party name)
        1. Cannot identify
        2. Wrongly identifies
        3. Partially identifies
        4. Identifies correctly
        88. Don't know/don't remember
        98. Refuses to answer

7. Let us now speak about your MP.

a. Can you identify the name of your current MP for me? (Write name)
    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

b. Can you identify his/her party? (Write party name)
    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

8. In general, how often do you follow news about politics in the papers or on TV?
    1. Every day
    2. Every Few days (several times a week)
    3. Once a week
    4. Once a month
    5. Almost never
    6. Never
    88. Don't know
    98. Refuses to say

9. In general, how often do you discuss news about politics with others around you?
    1. Every day
    2. Every Few days (several times a week)
    3. Once a week
    4. Once a month
    5. Almost never
    6. Never
    88. Don't know
    98. Refuses to say

10. On a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being the most), how much do you trust news about politicians in the media?

    1. Not at all
    2. Somewhat not
    3. Neither trust nor distrust
    4. Somewhat
    5. Very Much
    88. Dont know
    98. Refuses to say

11. On a scale from 1 to 5 (5 being the most), how much do you believe that accusations brought against politicians in the media?

    1. Not at all
    2. Somewhat not
    3. Neither trust nor distrust
    4. Somewhat
    5. Very Much
    88. Dont know
    98. Refuses to say

12. Who is the current chief minister of Bihar? (Write name)

    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

13. Who is the current prime minister of India? (Write name)

    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember

98. Refuses to answer

14. Which party currently holds the majority in the state assembly in Bihar? (Write party name)

    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

15. Which party currently holds the majority in the Lok Sabha? (Write party name)

    1. Cannot identify
    2. Wrongly identifies
    3. Partially identifies
    4. Identifies correctly
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

A11.4 Information Survey Questions

Let me now ask you a few questions about your views on the wealth of politicians from Bihar. Before they can register their candidacy for an election, politicians have to make a declaration of everything they own, i.e. their assets: land, houses, cars, gold, jewels, etc. So, we currently know for example about the assets that politicians declared before the 2010 elections.

1. Have you heard about these declarations before?

    1. Yes
    0. No
    98. Refuses to answer

2. Did you know that these declarations are publicly available to everyone?

    1. Yes
    0. No
    98. Refuses to answer

3. Thinking about MLAs in general (on average), what is your best guess of their total assets (including all of these things) in 2010 among the following options? (*Guide the respondent towards choosing one of the substantive options. Only if they really cannot choose from that list, use the last two options.*)

    1. 5 lakhs
    2. 8 lakhs
    3. 20 lakhs
    4. 45 lakhs
    5. 85 lakhs
    6. 2 crores
    7. 4 crores
    88. Don't know/don't remember
    98. Refuses to answer

4. Do you think the average MLA in Bihar has gotten richer since then?

    1. Yes
    0. No (Skip the next question)
    98. Refuses to answer

5. If yes, What is your best guess of approximately how much the average Bihar MLA's assets have increased since then among the following options?

    1. slightly increased
    2. increased two times
    3. increased three times
    4. increased 5 times
    5. increased 10 times
    6. increased thirty times
    88. Dont know/dont remember
    98. Refuses to answer

6. Now think about your own MLA right here in Madhepura. What is your best guess of his total assets (including all of these things) in 2010 among the following options?

    1. 5 lakhs
    2. 8 lakhs
    3. 20 lakhs

4. 45 lakhs
5. 85 lakhs
6. 2 crores
7. 4 crores
88. Don't know/don't remember
98. Refuses to answer

7. Do think your MLA has gotten richer since then?

    1. Yes
    0. No (Skip the next question)
    98. Refuses to answer

8. What is your best guess of approximately how much your MLA's total assets have increased since then among the following options?

    1. slightly increased
    2. increased two times
    3. increased three times
    4. increased 5 times
    5. increased 10 times
    6. increased thirty times
    88. Dont know/dont remember
    98. Refuses to answer

9. Of the three parties, RJD, JD(U) and BJP, for which party do you think the average MLA accumulates the most wealth?

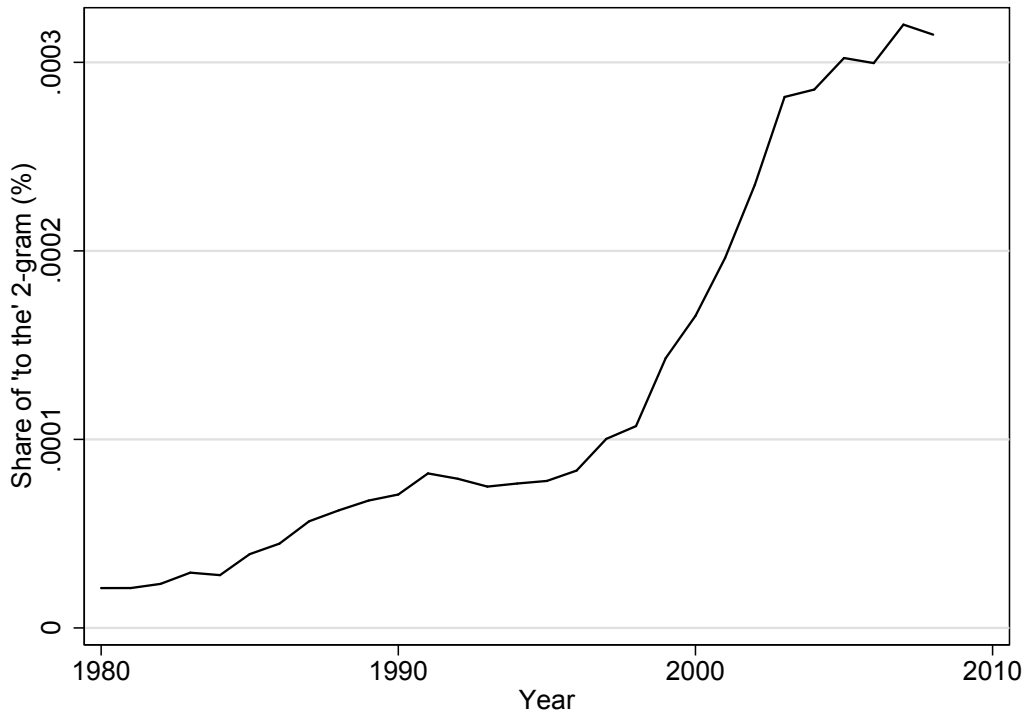
    - RJD
    - JD(U)
    - BJP

10. Tell us why you think that is the case?

References

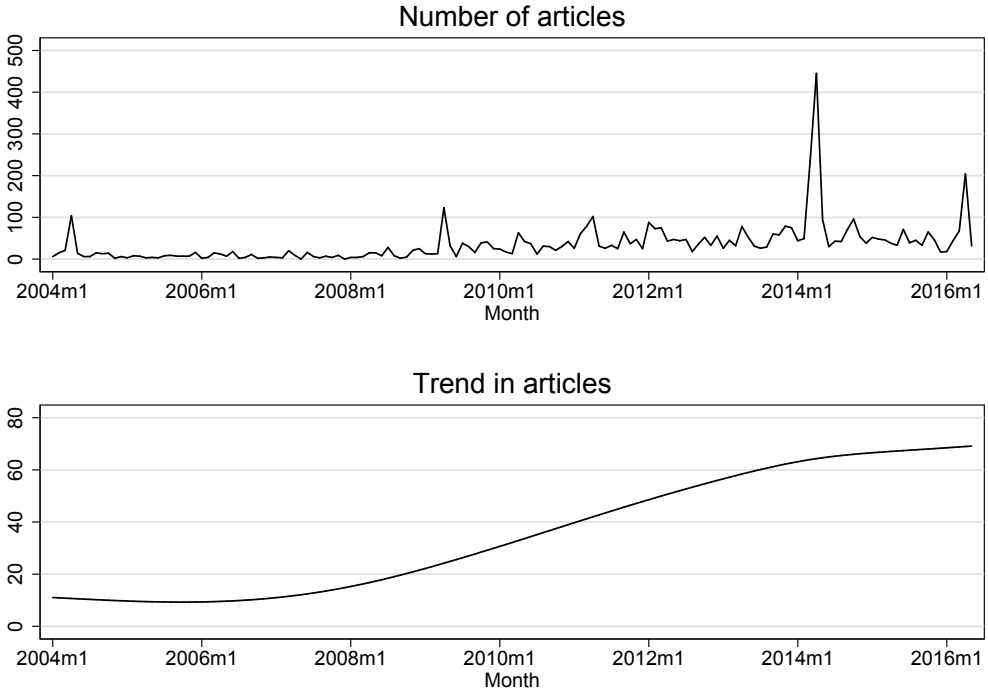
Benjamini, Yoav and Yosef Hochberg. 1995. "Controlling the False Discovery Rate: a Practical and Powerful Approach to Multiple Testing." *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series B (Methodological)* 57(1):289–300.

Figure A1: Increased salience of asset disclosures globally



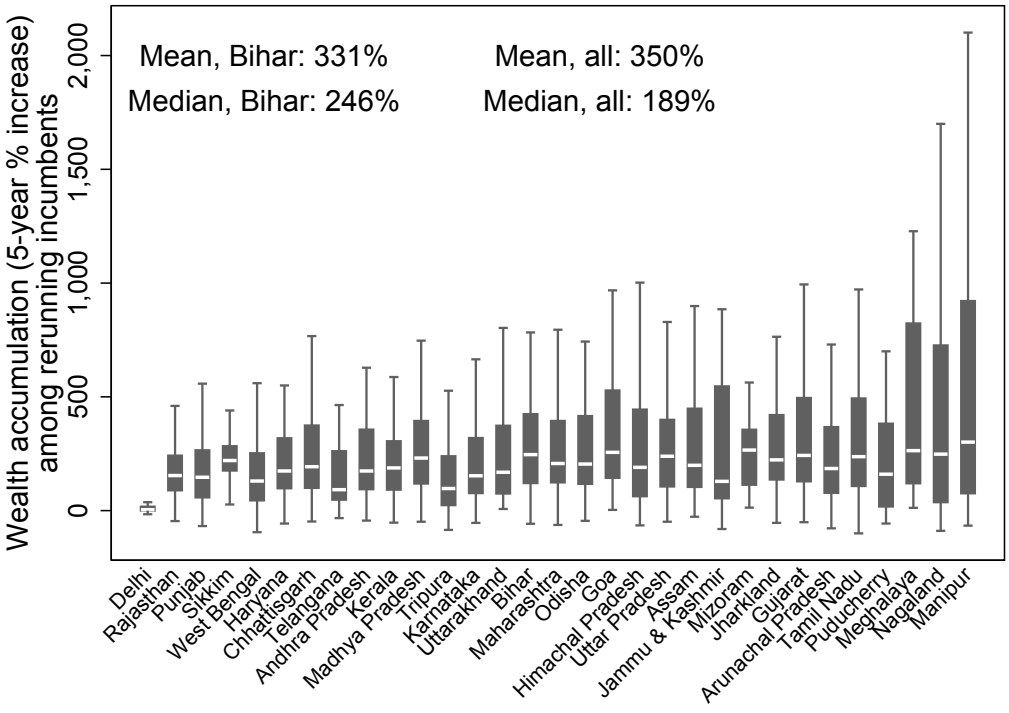
Source: `books.google.com/ngrams`.

Figure A2: Increased salience of asset disclosures in India



Source: English-language Indian sources available through Access News World.

Figure A3: Wealth accumulation among state legislators in Indian States



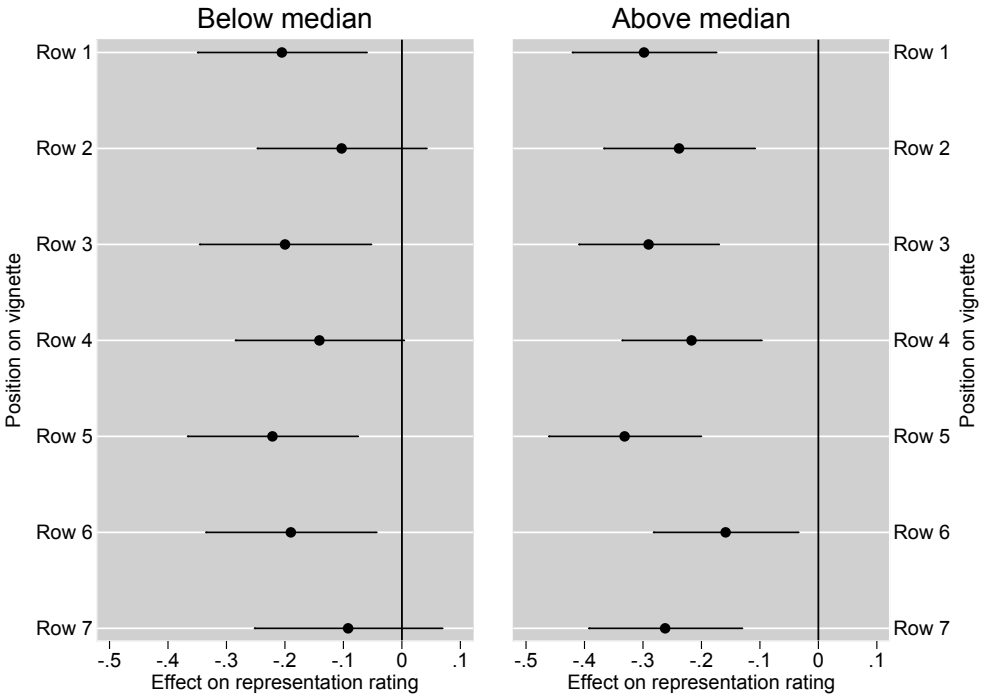
Source: `myneta.info`.

Figure A4: Sample experimental vignette

	समुदाय: भूमिहार
	विकास: बहुत कम किया
	मध्य वर्ग परिवार
	जिला: मधुबनी
	कई आपराधिक आरोप हैं
	बीजेपी
	5 लाख, थोड़ी बढ़ी 6 लाख तक, गैरकानूनी कामों का संदेह हैं

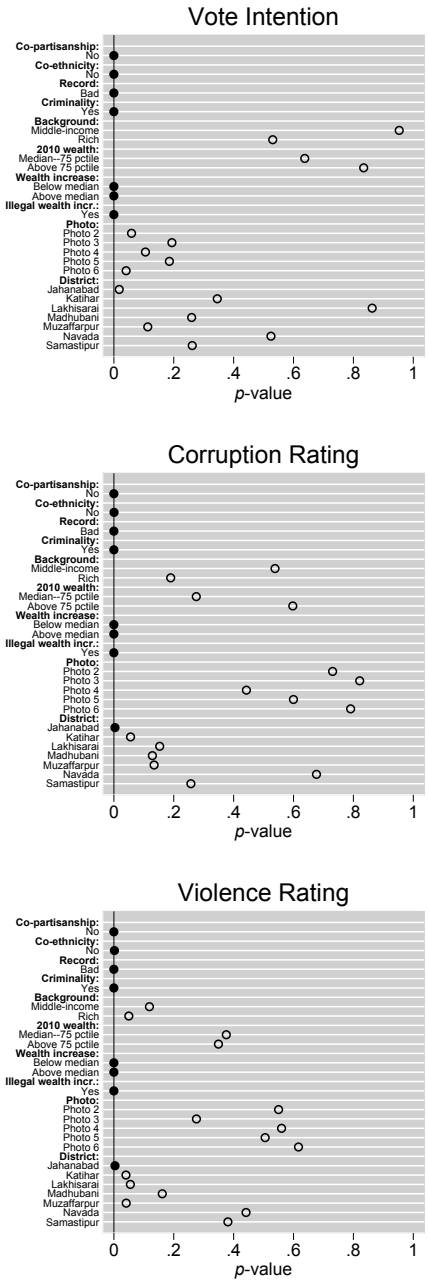
The vignette is in Hindi, as shown to the respondents. The conditions in the vignette are as follows: ethnicity – Bhumihar; record in office – did very little; family background: middle-class; district – Madhubhani; criminal charges – several; party – BJP; wealth information – 5 Lakhs, increased a little bit to 6 lakhs, suspicion of illegality.

Figure A5: Row order estimates for wealth increase effects



The left panel shows the AMCEs for each row for a politician profile with below-median wealth increase (relative to the no-increase condition). The right panel shows the seven AMCEs for a politician profile with above-median wealth increase (relative to the no-increase condition).

Figure A6: Multiple comparison corrected results



The figure shows the results of a Benjamini-Hochberg multiple-comparison correction. This procedure orders the p-values of all the AMCEs from lowest to highest, and designates as statistically significant only those p-values that satisfy the condition $p_k \leq \frac{k}{m}\alpha$, where k is the position in the order of each p-value, m is the number of AMCEs, and α is the target significance level. We focus on $\alpha = 0.05$. The plotted dots represent the p-values of all the AMCEs shown in the main text. The full dots indicate the AMCEs that remain significant after the correction (i.e. the p-value satisfies the Benjamini-Hochberg criterion), the hollow dots indicate the AMCEs that are not statistically significant according to this correction.

Figure A7: Interaction between wealth increase and record, co-partisanship, and co-ethnicity

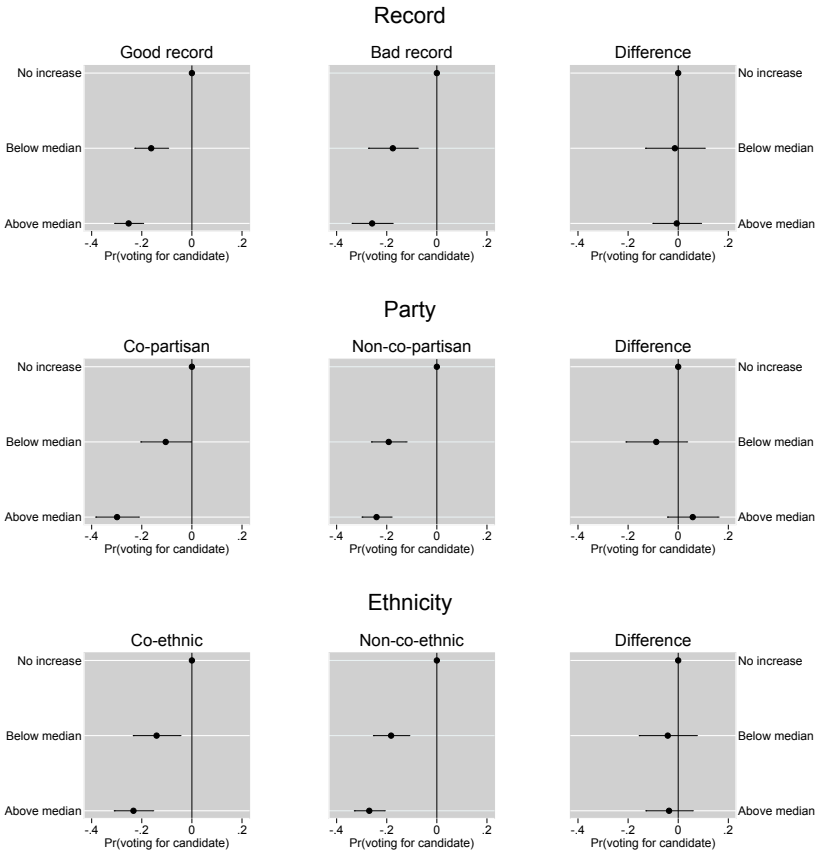
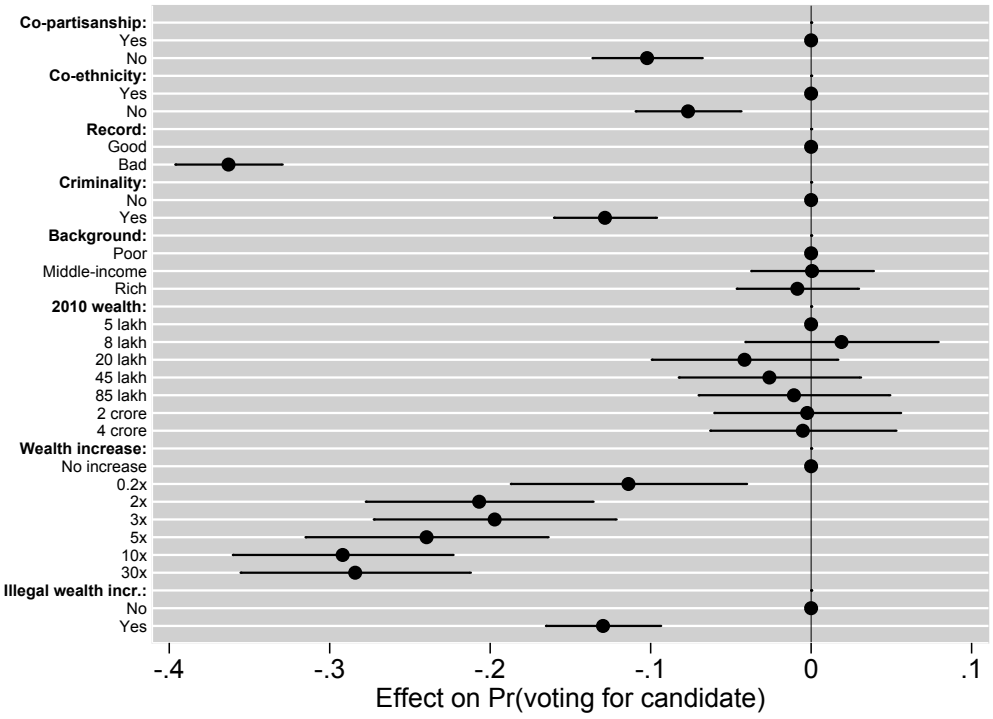


Figure A8: Attribute AMCEs with all levels of initial wealth and wealth increase



The dots are the average marginal component effects. The horizontal bars are the 95 percent confidence intervals based on respondent clustered standard errors.

Figure A9: Effect of wealth increase based on legality

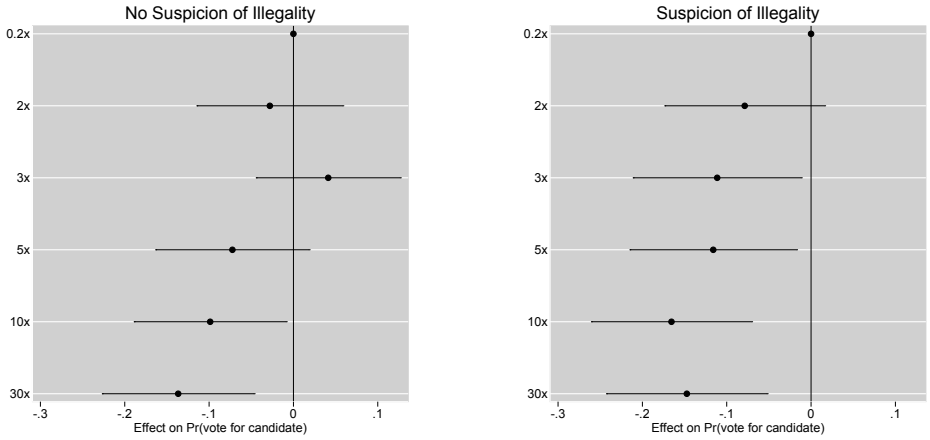


Figure A10: Candidate attribute effects on corruption and violence ratings

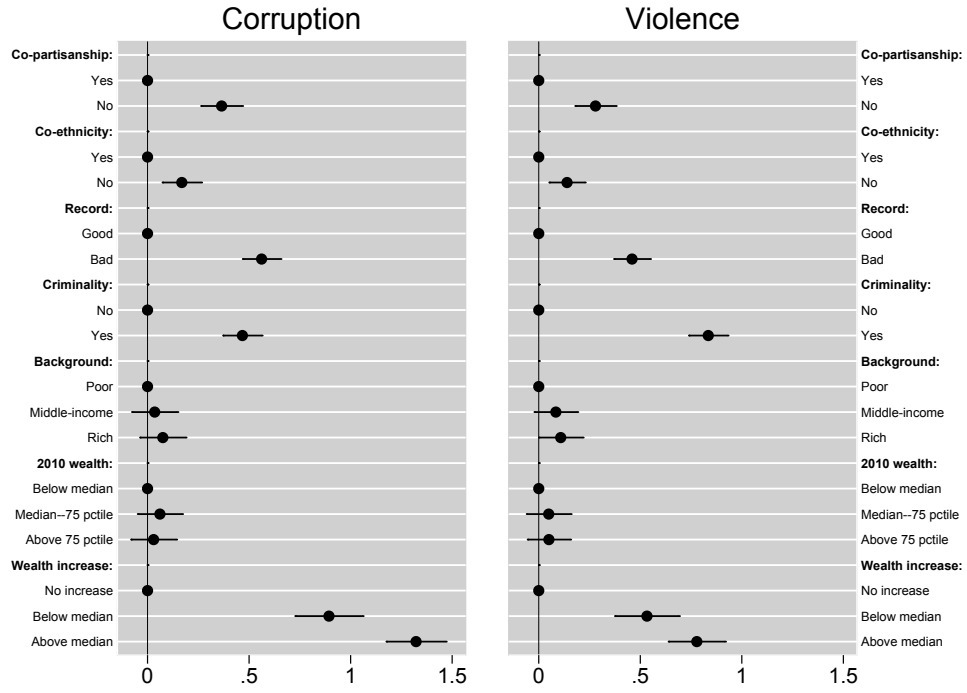
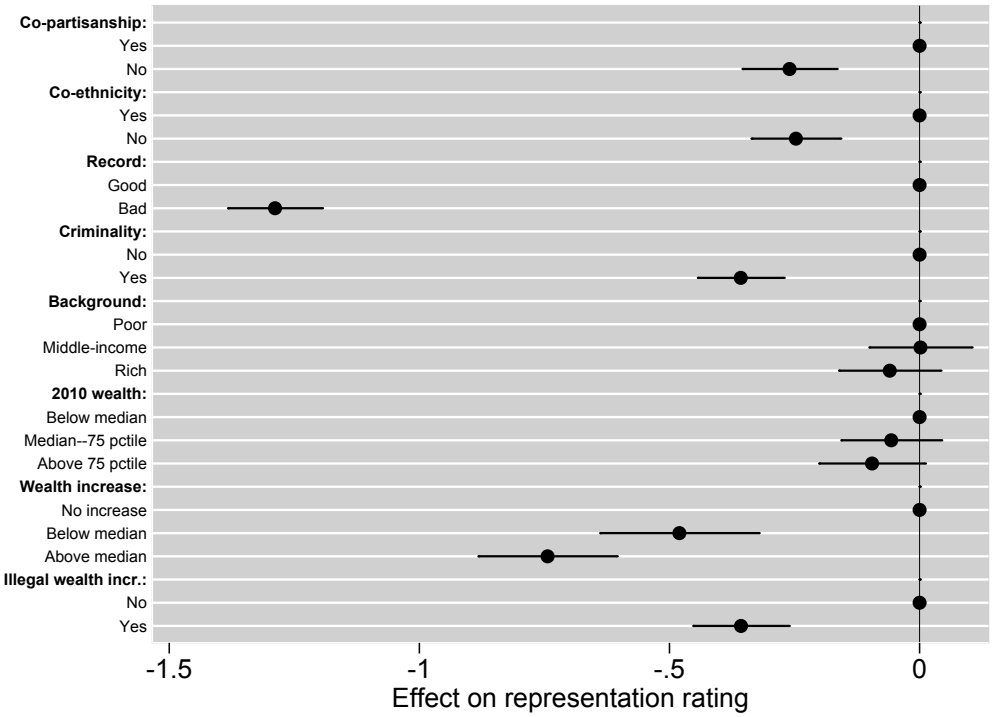
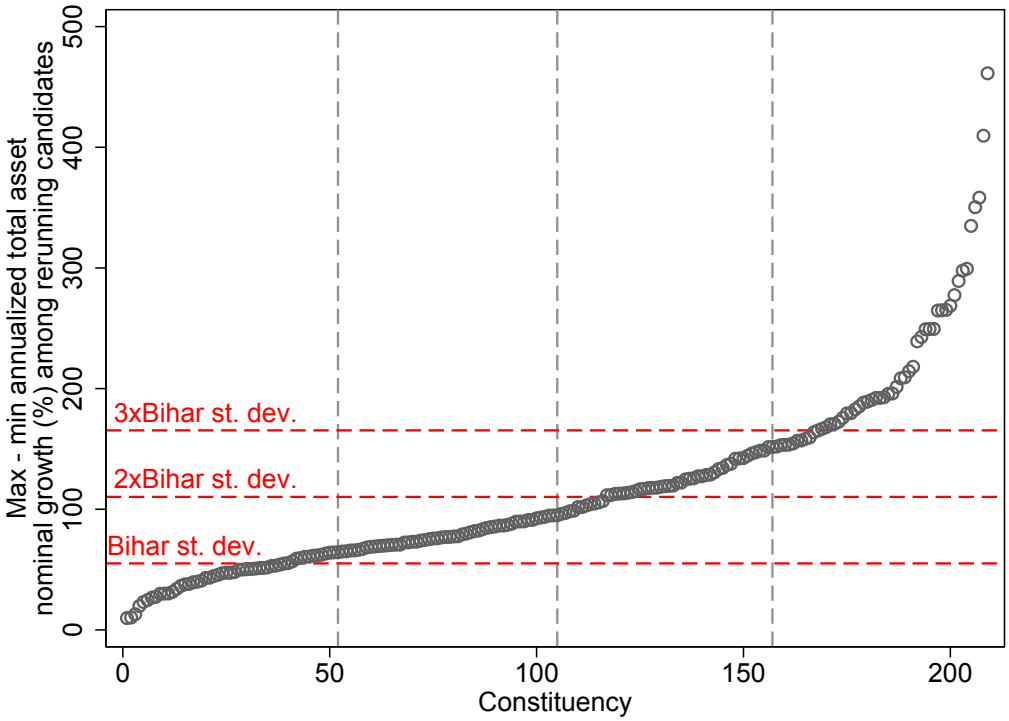


Figure A11: Candidate attribute effects on representation rating



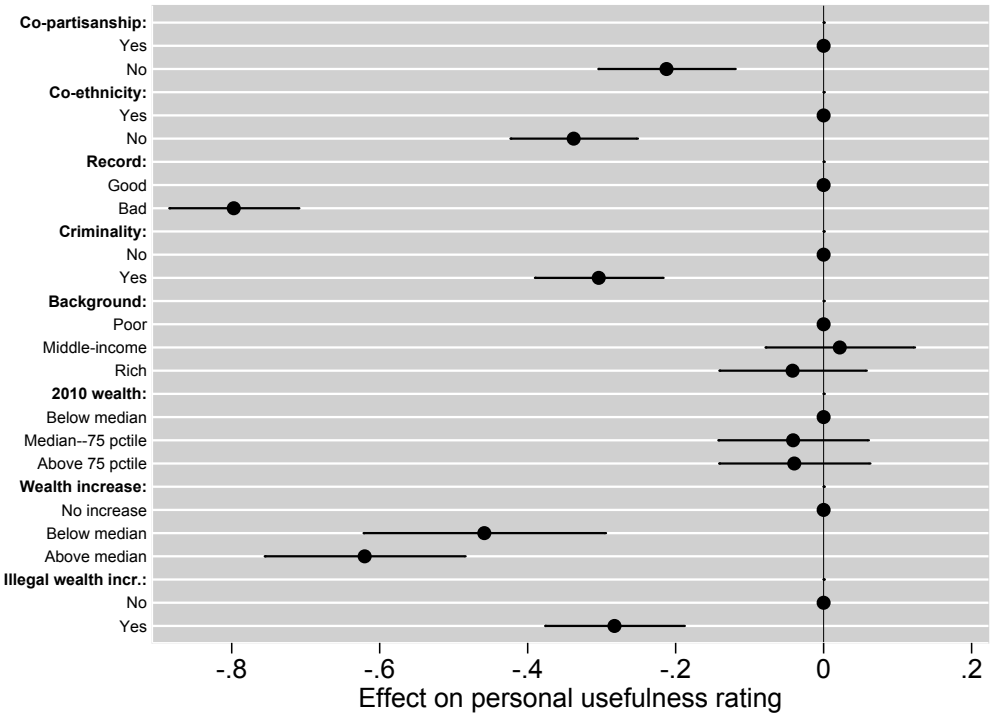
The dots are the average marginal component effects. The horizontal bars are the 95 percent confidence intervals based on respondent clustered standard errors.

Figure A12: Within-constituency range in wealth accumulation in Bihar



The circles show the range in each constituency in wealth increase among candidates who ran in both 2010 and 2015 – the maximum minus the minimum wealth accumulation among all the rerunning candidates. We excluded constituencies where two or fewer candidates reran. The constituencies are sorted in increasing range on the x-axis. The horizontal dashed red lines show the multiples of the standard deviation in wealth accumulation across all the rerunning candidates in Bihar.

Figure A13: Candidate attribute effects on personal usefulness rating



The dots are the average marginal component effects. The horizontal bars are the 95 percent confidence intervals based on respondent clustered standard errors.

Table A1: State and district characeristics

	Bihar mean	Madhepura mean
Rural population (%)°	88.7	95.6
Scheduled caste (%)°	15.9	17.3
Literate (%)°	63.8	53.8
Marginal workers (% of total workers)°	38.5	43.0
Cultivators (% of total workers)°	15.6	17.5
Seats won by JD(U)-BJP†	204/243 (84%)	3/4 (75%)
Vote share for JD(U)-BJP (%)†	39.2	45.7
Mean wealth increase (%)†	412	302
Median wealth increase (%)†	247	277

The mean and median wealth increase refer to rerunning incumbents during the period 2010-2015.
Sources:
° 2011 Census of India
† Election Commission of India

Table A2: Sample, state, and national demographics

	Survey		Bihar		National	
	Mean	St. dev.	Mean	St. dev.	Mean	St. dev.
Schooling (years)	6.35	4.90	5.22	4.86	7.12	4.47
Household size	6.05	2.64	5.55	2.57	4.86	2.38
Muslim (prop.)	0.10	0.30	0.12	0.32	0.11	0.31
Number of rooms	2.26	1.49	2.66	1.81	2.73	1.64
Car (prop.)	0.02	0.15	0.01	0.08	0.04	0.19
TV (prop.)	0.15	0.35	0.22	0.41	0.61	0.49
Motorcycle (prop.)	0.13	0.34	0.10	0.30	0.28	0.45
Cycle (prop.)	0.67	0.47	0.70	0.46	0.59	0.49
Cellphone (prop.)	0.84	0.37	0.69	0.46	0.78	0.41
Fan (prop.)	0.30	0.46	0.33	0.47	0.72	0.45
Refrigerator (prop.)	0.04	0.19	0.04	0.18	0.23	0.42
Age (years)	39.27	13.91				
Years in residence	38.05	14.91				
Urban residence (prop.)	0.23	0.42				
Female (prop.)	0.09	0.29				
House type: pucca (prop.)	0.11	0.32				
House type: pucca kutcha (prop.)	0.32	0.47				
House type: kutcha (prop.)	0.11	0.32				
House type: hut (prop.)	0.46	0.50				
Radio (prop.)	0.08	0.27				
Water pump (prop.)	0.05	0.21				
Cows (count)	0.49	0.70				
Buffalos (count)	0.22	0.54				
Goats (count)	0.38	0.82				
Yadav (prop.)	0.41	0.49				
Harijan (prop.)	0.07	0.25				
Musahar (prop.)	0.06	0.24				
Farmer (prop.)	0.23	0.42				
Shop owner (prop.)	0.06	0.24				
Government worker (prop.)	0.01	0.10				
Private job (prop.)	0.04	0.18				
Income (rupees)	6,333.62	6,979.59				

Sources: The survey statistics are from our experimental survey. The national and state (weighted) statistics are from wave II of the India Human Development Survey.

Table A3: Summary of experimental manipulations

Attribute	**Text on the vignette which respondents can see**	**What the interviewer says to respondents**
District	Random draw among: Samastipur, Lakhisharai, Katihar, Kishanganj, Muzzafarpur, Jahanabad, Nawada, Banka	"This politician was elected in 2010 in [*district name*] disrict."
Wealth at beginning of term	Random draw among: 5 lakhs, 8 lakhs, 20 lakhs, 45 lakhs, 85 lakhs, 2 crores, 4 crores	"Candidates for office are required to report their assets and the assets of their immediate family members as they declare their candidacy. At the beginning of his term in 2010, this politician had [*initial wealth amount*] rupees in assets."
Wealth accumulation during current term	Random draw among: Did not increase, slightly increased, increased two times, increased three times, increased five times, increased ten times, increased thirty times	"The wealth of this incumbent increased [*number of times*] during his term in office. Since he had [*initial wealth amount*] in 2010, he now has [*current amount*]."
Perceived legality of wealth accumulation	Random draw, conditional on wealth accumulation not being "Did not increase," among: No suspicion of illegality, suspicion of illegality	"Wealth increase is mainly due to successful business deals and real estate operations in the district, [none of which/many of which] have been deemed suspicious by the press."
Social background	Random draw among: poor family, middle-income family, rich family	"The politician hails from a [poor/middle-income/rich family]."
Record in office	Random draw among: disappointing record, good record	"According to reports in the press, he [was/was not] very active in terms of development and infrastructures and he [did/did not] do very much for his constituency."
Ethnicity	Draw between: respondent's self-reported ethnicity and other salient ethnicities in Madhepura (according to the procedure detailed in Section A7)	"This politician belongs to the [*group name*] community."
Party	Random draw among: JD(U), RJD, BJP, INC	"This politician is from [*party name*]."
Criminal charges	Random draw among: No criminal charges, several criminal charges	"This politician is [not charged in any criminal cases/charged in several criminal cases]."

Table A4: Balance tests

	Omnibus test	Profile rated
Age	0.713	0.825
Married	0.873	0.196
Years of schooling	0.146	0.061
Occupation	0.386	0.484
Household size	0.236	0.867
Size of land owned	0.347	0.816
House type	0.629	0.558
Number of rooms	0.861	0.120
Household income	0.386	0.173
Ethnicity	0.325	0.882

The entries in column 1 represent the p-values of an F-test from a regression of each pre-treatment characteristic on all conjoint treatment conditions. Column 2 reports the p-value of the effect of each pre-treatment characteristic on the profile rated by respondents in the conjoint experiment.

Table A5: Variability in attribute effects on vote intention by vignette

	Vignette 1	Vignette 2	Vignette 3	F-test
Co-partisanship				
Base: Yes				
No	-0.114***	-0.069**	-0.112***	0.677
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.030)	[0.508]
Co-ethnicity				
Base: Yes				
No	-0.053*	-0.067**	-0.098***	0.622
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.029)	[0.537]
Record				
Base: Good				
Bad	-0.339***	-0.372***	-0.366***	0.451
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.028)	[0.637]
Criminality				
Base: No				
Yes	-0.128***	-0.146***	-0.124***	0.177
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.028)	[0.837]
Background				
Base: Poor				
Middle-income	-0.002	0.053	-0.050	2.264
	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.034)	[0.104]
Rich	0.002	0.027	-0.071**	2.073
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.036)	[0.126]
2010 wealth				
Base: Below median				
Median–75 pctile	-0.025	0.012	-0.012	0.317
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.034)	[0.729]
Above 75 pctile	-0.023	0.032	0.011	0.701
	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.034)	[0.496]
Wealth increase				
Base: No increase				
Below median	-0.157***	-0.140***	-0.158***	0.042
	(0.049)	(0.053)	(0.048)	[0.959]
Above median	-0.247***	-0.193***	-0.303***	1.756
	(0.040)	(0.045)	(0.042)	[0.173]
Illegal wealth incr.				
Base: No				
Yes	-0.121***	-0.102***	-0.101***	0.213
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.036)	[0.808]

The main entries in columns 1-3 report the average marginal component effects for each profile separately; the entries in parentheses are the respondent-clustered standard errors. The main entries in column 4 represent the F-statistic from the test of whether the treatment effects for vignettes 2 and 3 are jointly statistically significantly different from the treatment effects in vignette 1; the entries in brackets are the p-values from this test.

Table A6: Photo and district effects

	Vote	Corruption	Violence
Photograph			
Base: Photo 1			
Photo 2	0.050*	-0.026	-0.044
	(0.026)	(0.077)	(0.073)
Photo 3	0.037	-0.018	-0.083
	(0.028)	(0.078)	(0.076)
Photo 4	0.044	0.059	-0.043
	(0.027)	(0.076)	(0.074)
Photo 5	0.036	0.039	-0.049
	(0.027)	(0.075)	(0.073)
Photo 6	0.056**	-0.020	-0.039
	(0.028)	(0.075)	(0.077)
District			
Base: Banka			
Jahanabad	0.072**	-0.269***	-0.265***
	(0.030)	(0.093)	(0.091)
Katihar	0.029	-0.168*	-0.179**
	(0.031)	(0.088)	(0.087)
Lakhisarai	0.006	-0.129	-0.171*
	(0.032)	(0.090)	(0.089)
Madhubani	0.035	-0.134	-0.121
	(0.031)	(0.088)	(0.086)
Muzaffarpur	0.051	-0.155	-0.194**
	(0.032)	(0.103)	(0.095)
Navada	0.020	-0.037	-0.068
	(0.031)	(0.089)	(0.088)
Samastipur	0.034	-0.097	-0.077
	(0.030)	(0.086)	(0.088)
Photo × wealth increase (F-test p-value)	0.935	0.773	0.790
District × wealth increase (F-test p-value)	0.756	0.433	0.965

The main entries are the average marginal component effects. The entries in parentheses are the respondent-clustered standard errors. The last two rows show the p-values from an F-test of joint significance of the interactions between the photograph or district treatments and the wealth increase treatments.

Table A7: Interaction between wealth increase and initial wealth, family background, and criminality

	Below median wealth increase	Above median wealth increase
2010 wealth		
@ Below median 2010 wealth	-0.201***	-0.253***
	(0.048)	(0.040)
× Median – 75th pctile	0.039	-0.035
	(0.078)	(0.063)
× Above 75th pctile	0.014	-0.035
	(0.075)	(0.063)
Family background		
@ Poor family	-0.200***	-0.297***
	(0.051)	(0.044)
× Middle-class family	-0.025	0.034
	(0.075)	(0.064)
× Rich family	0.074	0.034
	(0.076)	(0.063)
Criminality		
@ No criminal record	-0.176***	-0.277***
	(0.042)	(0.036)
× Criminal record	-0.015	0.007
	(0.063)	(0.052)

The first row of each set of interactions, indicated with a bold-face caption, shows the wealth increase AMCE at the base category of the interacting treatment component (the rows indicated with ""); the other rows represent the interaction terms (i.e. the difference from the first row) for the remaining treatment conditions for each set of attributes (the rows indicated with "×").

Table A8: Interaction between wealth increase and respondent income, and political knowledge

	Below median wealth increase	Above median wealth increase
Respondent wealth		
@ Lowest quartile	-0.264***	-0.280***
	(0.055)	(0.046)
× 2nd quartile	0.113	0.041
	(0.080)	(0.068)
× 3rd quartile	0.194**	0.077
	(0.080)	(0.069)
× Highest quartile	0.066	-0.017
	(0.085)	(0.069)
Respondent political knowledge		
@ Lowest quartile	-0.135**	-0.110*
	(0.065)	(0.061)
× 2nd quartile	0.027	-0.119
	(0.084)	(0.075)
× 3rd quartile	-0.118	-0.218***
	(0.088)	(0.076)
× Highest quartile	-0.020	-0.203**
	(0.090)	(0.080)

The first row of each set of interactions, indicated with a bold-face caption, shows the wealth increase AMCE at the base category of the interacting treatment component (the rows indicated with ""); the other rows represent the interaction terms (i.e. the difference from the first row) for the remaining treatment conditions for each set of attributes (the rows indicated with "×").