Does providing corruption information reduce vote share? A meta-analysis

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Introduction

Research Question

Do voters in democratic countries hold politicians accountable for corruption?

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- Recent ARPS review (De Vries and Solaz (2017)): "Empirical evidence to date is mixed, and it often suggests that the electoral punishment of corruption is rather mild."

- Is evidence actually mixed? What have we learned from a recent explosion of experimental research on this subject?

List of experimental studies

Table 1: Field experiments

Study	Country	Treatment	Vote share
Arias, Larreguy, Marshall, and Querubin (2018)	Mexico	Fliers	Positive
Banerjee, Green, Green, and Pande (2010)[1]	India	Newspaper	Null
Banerjee, Kumar, Pande, and Su (2011)[2]	India	Canvas/Newspaper	Null
Boas, Hidalgo, and Melo (2018)	Brazil	Fliers	Null
Buntaine, Jablonski, Nielson, and Pickering (2018)	Ghana	SMS	Null/Negative
Chong, De La O, Karlan, and Wantchekon (2014)	Mexico	Fliers	Negative
De Figueiredo, Hidalgo, and Kasahara (2011)	Brazil	Fliers	Null/Negative
Ferraz and Finan (2008)	Brazil	Audits	Negative

List of experimental studies

Table 2: Survey experiments

Study	Country	Treatment	Vote share
Avenburg (2016)	Brazil	Information	Negative
Banerjee, Green, McManus, and Pande (2014)	India	Information	Negative
Breitenstein (2019)	Spain	Information	Negative
Boas et al. (2018)	Brazil	Information	Negative
Eggers, Vivyan, and Wagner (2018)	UK	Information	Negative
Franchino and Zucchini (2015)	Italy	Information	Negative
Klašnja and Tucker (2013)	Sweden	Information	Negative
Klašnja and Tucker (2013)	Moldova	Information	Null
Klašnja, Lupu, and Tucker (2017)	Argentina	Information	Negative
Klašnja et al. (2017)	Chile	Information	Negative
Klašnja et al. (2017)	Uruguay	Information	Negative
Mares and Visconti (2019)	Romania	Information	Negative
Vera Rojas (2017)	Peru	Information	Negative
Winters and Weitz-Shapiro (2013)	Brazil	Information	Negative
Winters and Weitz-Shapiro (2015)	Brazil	Information	Negative
Winters and Weitz-Shapiro (2016)[1]	Brazil	Information	Negative
Weitz-Shapiro and Winters (2017)[1]	Brazil	Information	Negative
Winters and Weitz-Shapiro (2018)	Argentina	Information	Negative

Methods

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- Independent variable: provision of information about corrupt actions of politician.
- Dependent variable: (incumbent) vote-share.
- Random assignment of information regarding incumbent corruption, followed by measurement of voting outcomes.
- Excludes experiments that inform all respondents that the politician is corrupt.
  - E.g. Compare one type of information provision (e.g. source) to another.

Analytical details

- Where there are multiple corruption treatments (e.g. varying source of information), I replicate the studies and code corruption as a binary treatment ($0 =$ clean, $1 =$ corrupt).

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- Studies that use non-binary vote choices are rescaled into a binary vote choice.
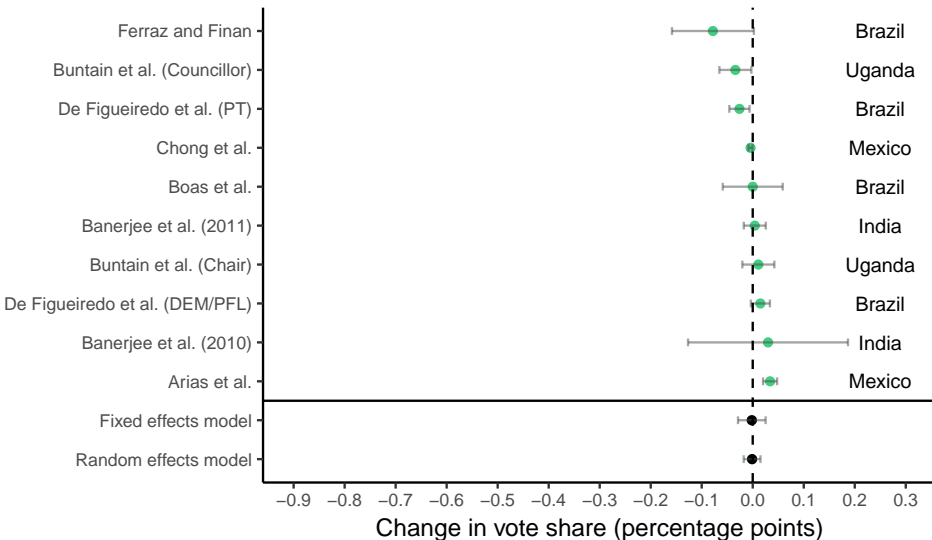
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- Studies that use non-binary vote choices are rescaled into a binary vote choice.

- Point estimates, standard errors and/or confidence intervals are not always explicitly reported (4 cases). In these cases standard errors are estimated by digitally measuring coefficient plots.
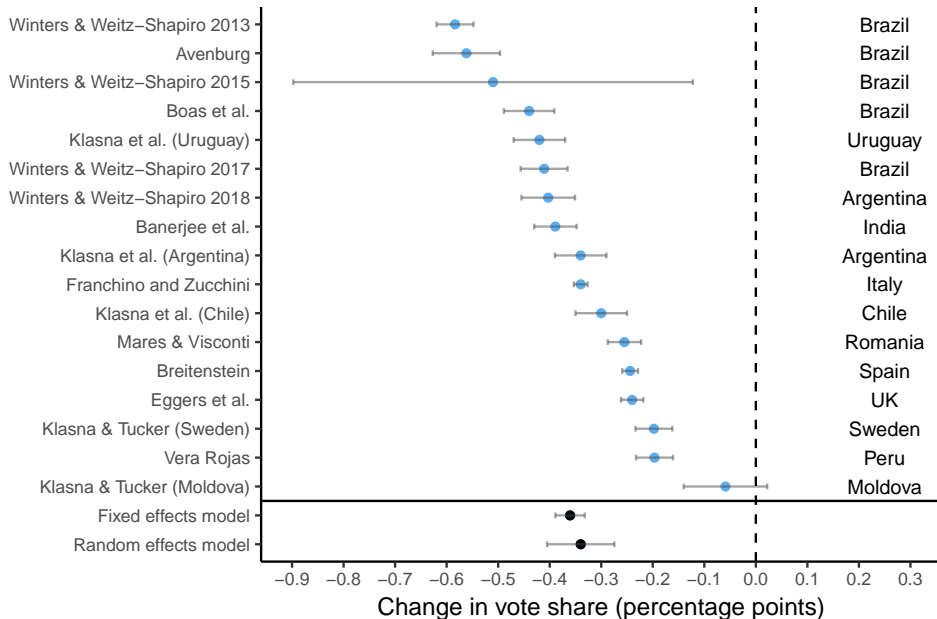
Results

Results: Field Experiments

Results: Survey Experiments

		Country
Winters & Weitz–Shapiro 2013		Brazil
Avenburg		Brazil
Winters & Weitz–Shapiro 2015		Brazil
Boas et al.		Brazil
Klasna et al. (Uruguay)		Uruguay
Winters & Weitz–Shapiro 2017		Brazil
Winters & Weitz–Shapiro 2018		Argentina
Banerjee et al.		India
Klasna et al. (Argentina)		Argentina
Franchino and Zucchini		Italy
Klasna et al. (Chile)		Chile
Mares & Visconti		Romania
Breitenstein		Spain
Eggers et al.		UK
Klasna & Tucker (Sweden)		Sweden
Vera Rojas		Peru
Klasna & Tucker (Moldova)		Moldova
Fixed effects model		
Random effects model		

Change in vote share (percentage points)

Results

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  - Fail to reject the null hypothesis of no treatment effect in field experiments.
  - Corrupt candidates punished by respondents by between 34 percentage points (random effects) and 36 percentage points (fixed effects) in survey experiments.
  - 70% of the total heterogeneity across studies can be accounted for by including a dummy variable for type of experiment.
  - Point estimate of this dummy variable (0 = survey, 1 = field) is equal to 0.33 (significant at 1% level), while the overall estimate across studies is -.34.

Discussion

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- Publication bias

- Social desirability bias

- Lack of complexity in survey experiments.

- Analyzing/interpreting results of survey experiments incorrectly.

Conclusion

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Conclusion here.

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