WHAT EXPLAINS VOTER TURNOUT IN LATIN AMERICA? A TEST OF THE EFFECT OF CITIZENS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Research on electoral participation at the individual level in Latin America remains scarce. Most previous studies have focused on the institutional determinants of cross-country differences in aggregate levels of turnout. This study provides an empirical examination of the individual-level factors that impact citizens' propensity to vote in the region. I assess the link between citizens' affection for political institutions and turnout using recent survey data from 18 Latin American countries from 2004 to 2014. Using logistic models I show that trust in elections, satisfaction with democracy, and respect for institutions have a significant effect on voter turnout in individual countries. Specifically, trust in elections remains the strongest predictor of turnout among the variables of interest. The analysis also confirms the importance of socio-demographic variables in explaining voter turnout across the region.

The research and writing of this thesis
is dedicated to everyone who helped me along the way. Especially my mom, thank you for the unconditional support. Also, I would like to thank my advisor, Mark Jones, for providing invaluable comments and guidance throughout this project, and to Ernesto Calvo for his helpful comments.

Many thanks,
AGUSTINA HAIME

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INTRODUCTION

Cross-national studies of turnout among the advanced industrial countries are extensive. These have focused primarily on the impact of institutional variables (Powell, 1986; Jackman, 1987; Jackman and Miller, 1995), rarely looking at individual-level data to understand the factors that impact citizens' participation in elections. Comparative research on electoral participation in Latin America at the individual level is also scarce (Carlin and Love, 2015). Over the last decade, several scholars have studied the determinants of the cross-country differences in electoral participation in the region (Fornos et al. 2004; Pérez-Liñán, 2001; Dettrey and Schwindt-Bayer, 2009), but have mainly relied on aggregate data and have focused on the effect of institutional and contextual factors such as registration procedures, compulsory voting laws, and concurrent presidential and legislative elections.

During the last years, comparative studies in the advanced industrial democracies have started to focus on the effect that citizens' attitudes and perceptions towards political institutions have on electoral participation (Birch, 2010; Cox, 2003; Grönlund and Setala, 2007). However, this type of research in Latin America still remains limited. The purpose of this study is to extend the knowledge about the individual-level determinants of electoral participation. In order to do this, I assess the link between citizens' affect for political institutions and turnout using recent survey data from 18 Latin American countries from 2004 to 2014. I also evaluate the impact of socio-demographic characteristics on the likelihood of going to the polls. In this way, the article sets out to contribute to the comparative research dealing with individual level electoral participation in Latin America, while testing if the same variables that explain variation in voter turnout in the United States and Western Europe are also good predictors of this variation in the

region. In addition, I set out to find a general pattern in the variables that explain voter turnout across Latin American countries.

I find evidence that the individual incentives to vote across the region are driven mainly by socio-economic attributes, while citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards the political system remain significant in individual countries. In particular, the article demonstrates that in some countries, citizens who have higher levels of trust in elections, respect for political institutions and satisfaction with the democratic system have a higher likelihood of voting. Trust in election remains the strongest predictor among these variables. In addition, my analysis shows that across the region older, educated and employed citizens are more likely to vote, and that women have a higher propensity to vote than men. Furthermore, party identification is one of the most important determinants of turnout across the countries. However, I find little support for the expectation that citizens with higher income tend to vote more.

The thesis proceeds as follows. The first section summarizes the main theoretical approaches that have tried to explain voter turnout in the comparative literature. In the second section, I set out the theory and the expected hypothesis. In addition, I describe the data set and the variables as well as the method used in the empirical analysis. In the third section, I report and analyze the empirical results and the final section concludes and suggests avenues for further research.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO VOTER TURNOUT IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The importance of voter turnout for democratic stability and the overall health of democracy has motivated a large literature that tries to understand why voter turnout varies across countries (Powell, 1982, 1986; Teixeira, 1992; Lijphart, 1997). Existing cross-national research has focused on the effect of two main groups of variables: institutions and socio-demographic characteristics.

Institutional explanations

Comparative aggregate-level research has established that institutional variables are the strongest determinants of variations in voter turnout. Institutional and political context explanations focus on the effect of electoral rules and the structure of the political system on voters' decision-making calculations about whether to vote. The electoral system (Blais and Carty, 1990; Franklin, 1996; Radcliff and Davis, 2000), the electoral cycle (Dettrey and Schwindt-Bayer, 2009; Fornos et al., 2004), compulsory voting laws (Blais et al., 2003; Fornos et al., 2004; Hirczy, 1994; Jackman, 1987; Jackman and Miller, 1995; Pérez-Liñán, 2001; Power and Garand, 2007), unicameralism (Fornos et al., 2004; Jackman, 1987; Kostadinova and Power, 2007; Pérez-Liñán, 2001), district magnitude, the disproportionality of the electoral system, nationally competitive districts and party fragmentation (Fornos et al., 2004; Jackman, 1987;

Kostadinova and Power, 2007; Lehouq and Wall, 2004; Pérez-Liñán, 2001) have all been linked to voter turnout.

As regards compulsory voting, the theoretical expectation is that it should increase the costs of non-voting, generating incentives to show up at the polls. This relation has been confirmed by most studies of turnout in Western democracies (for a review of the studies see Blais, 2006). Unicameralism should also lead to higher rates of turnout because citizens will have greater perceptions of the decisiveness and the efficiency of their vote. This is because under a "strong" bicameral system where both chambers have equal constitutional powers, and where the upper chamber has a distinctive basis of election (Lijphart, 1984), laws have to be discussed and approved in both chambers, so one of the chambers can act as a veto player. As a result, "elections for the lower house play a less decisive role in the production of legislation" (Jackman, 1987: 408), and citizens should have less incentives to vote. However, the findings about the impact of unicameralism on turnout are mixed (Blais, 2006).

The causal mechanism linking the electoral system to voter turnout remains unclear (Blais, 2006). On the one hand, it has been argued that proportional representation (PR) -with high average district magnitudes- should have a positive effect on voter turnout due to the higher amount of competitive districts. In contrast, in majority systems with single-member districts, most districts remain uncompetitive (Cox, 2014). The argument has been that in competitive districts parties should have more incentives to mobilize the electorate, so countries with a higher number of this type of districts should be expected to have higher overall rates of turnout, as

party mobilization will be greater. Studies have for the most part confirmed this hypothesis (Blais and Carty 1990; Jackman 1987; Jackman and Miller 1995; Franklin 1996; Radcliff and Davis 2000).

In addition, PR should have a positive effect on turnout due to the disproportion in the translation of votes into seats in majority-type electoral systems. It has been argued that high disproportional systems will punish minor parties, so supporters of these parties would have less incentives to turnout (Jackman and Miller, 1995). Furthermore, an unequal translation of votes into seats could diminish voters' sense of political efficacy, increasing their belief that their vote is of no importance, and leading them to abstain from voting (Blais and Dobrzynska, 1996).

On the other hand, PR should have a negative effect on voter turnout due to the higher number of parties that it fosters in comparison to majority systems. Almost all of the empirical research has found a negative correlation between the number of parties and turnout (Jackman, 1987; Blais and Carty, 1990; Blais and Dobrzynska, 1998; Radcliff and Davis, 2000), except for Latin America, where there seems to be no relationship between both variables (Pérez-Liñán, 2001; Fornos et al., 2004).

It has been claimed that multipartism should be inversely related to turnout since the composition of the government after the elections will likely be made out of a coalition of parties. As the government is not identified before the election (Shugart and Carey, 1992; Shugart, 2001; Powell, 2000), voters are less likely to feel efficacious because they perceive that they are not directly selecting their government, and thus have fewer incentives to vote. As a

result, multiparty systems are thought to obscure the link between voters' actions and the outcome of the election. This argument is, however, largely focused on parliamentary systems' experience with coalition governments; majoritarian presidential systems could provide higher pre-election identifiability (Mainwaring and Shugart, 1997; Powell, 2000). In addition, a higher number of parties could also lead to greater choices presented to voters and, hence, more options for them to choose from on election day.

Concurrent elections in presidential systems have been linked to increasing voter turnout (Dettrey and Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). This is due to two main reasons: they reduce the costs of voting because citizens can go to the polls one time rather than having to make two trips to the ballot box, and they clarify the policy implications of the vote. The former refers to the reduction in the physical costs of voting. The latter has to do with the fact that concurrent presidential and legislative elections increase the likelihood of majority government, where the winning party will be supposedly better able to implement its policy agenda through Congress. Thus, voters should be able to distinguish more clearly the policy consequences of their vote for President, increasing the perceived benefits of voting.

Specifically for Latin America, there are mixed findings of the effect of institutional variables on voter turnout. Pérez-Liñán (2001) finds that neither multipartism, unicameralism, electoral disproportionality, the type of electoral district (whether it is competitive or not), nor compulsory voting are significant predictors of voter turnout. On the contrary, Fornos et al. (2004) findings suggest that turnout is determined primarily by unicameralism, compulsory

voting, and concurrent legislative and executive elections, which have significant positive effects. Kostadinova and Power (2007) also find an effect of institutional variables on voter turnout in the region: unicameralism, disproportionality, district magnitude, and concurrent elections are all significant predictors of participation in elections.

Socio-demographic explanations

Cross-national as well as nation-specific studies relying on survey data have concluded that the "resource model" of political participation is a strong predictor of citizen's political involvement. The model developed by Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995) argues that participation is driven by time, money and civic skills, and that these resources are distributed unequally across socio-economic groups. Those citizens with higher socio-economic status (SES) are more likely to acquire and have a wider range of resources that allow them to better bare the costs of voting and are, thus, more likely to show up at the polling booth (Almond and Verba 1963; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). These individuals tend to have larger amounts of time to participate in politics and are better informed than less educated and poorer citizens. Therefore, individuals with higher income and higher-status jobs are more likely to participate in politics (Verba and Nie 1972; Rosenstone 1982). Education is also closely associated with participation (Blais 2000; Burden 2009; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980) as a core predictor of socio-economic status and civic skills.

Research on conventional political participation in the developed world has also found that age is associated with turnout (Lane, 1959; Strate et al., 1989; Jankowski and Strate, 1995): as citizens transition into adulthood, they become more involved with public affairs, more connected with their communities and develop a greater sense of civic duty, which increases their incentives to participate. In addition, as older citizens become inserted in social networks, their behavior is monitored and scrutinized by others, increasing the costs of not voting. Gender has also been linked to voter turnout: it has been argued that men have more resources and, thus, are more likely to turnout than women. However, recent comparative research suggests that the gender gap has gradually disappeared and that it is usually women who turnout at higher rates than men (Desposato and Norrander, 2009; Lehouq and Wall, 2004).

In addition, comparative and within country studies have found that party identification increases the probability of voting (Campbell et al., 1960; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Blais, 2000; Green et al., 2002): identifying with a political party reduces the costs of voting, because it serves as a decision short-cut when voters are trying to choose between different electoral options (Campbell et al., 1960; Downs, 1957). Furthermore, it has been argued that citizens who identify with a political party obtain a higher expressive benefit when voting, so they have a higher motivation to do so (Achen and Sinnott, 2007).

A -not so new- explanation

Even though the conventional wisdom holds that institutions outperform other variables in explaining variations in voter turnout, a growing comparative literature has been focusing on the psychological determinants of why people vote. These studies look at citizens' political attitudes such as trust in institutions, and have its roots in the works of Almond and Verba (1963), Inglehart (1997) and Putnam (1993). These authors argued about the effect of attitudinal variables such as trust and efficacy in explaining citizens' political engagement. Studies on the American electorate had also explored the relation between cultural attitudes and turnout as early as in the 1970's. The claim of these early studies by Citrin (1974) and Miller (1980) was that there was no direct causal link between attitudes of trust in government and the decision to vote (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). Hetherington (1999) found that trust in the political system had an impact in participation for the period 1968-1996, but its effect was on voter choice rather than on turnout. His findings suggest that high trust was associated with voting for the incumbent government when there were only two candidates running, while it had no effect when three candidates were competing. Declining trust helped to explain the large degree of third-party success, since those citizens with low trust in government were more willing to vote for candidates that promised change.

Other studies have suggested that distrust, instead of trust, encourages participation among those who are politically interested (Luks, 1998), those who are dissatisfied with the policies of

the current administration (Craig and Maggiotto, 1981), those who are highly educated (Citrin, 1977) and those who trust opposition leaders (Nilson and Nilson, 1980).

More recently, a growing comparative literature has been focusing on the psychological reasons of why people vote, examining citizens' political attitudes such as trust in elections, in Parliament, and satisfaction with democracy. As regards trust in elections, Birch (2010) analyzes the relationship between perceptions of electoral fairness and turnout in 31 countries between 1996 and 2002 using survey data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project. Her findings provide evidence in favor of a positive relation between confidence in the electoral process and voting. Norris (2012) also explores the relationship between citizens' trust in electoral institutions and participation in elections. Using data from the 6th wave of the World Values Survey for the period 2010-2012, the author finds evidence about the positive impact that citizens' perceptions of electoral integrity have on turnout: "those with more faith in the process proved more willing to cast a ballot" (Norris, 2012: 13).

Trust in Parliament has also been found to have a positive effect on turnout. Cox (2003) studies the association between political trust and voter turnout among member states of the European Union and finds that turnout in the 1999 European Parliament election was strongly correlated with confidence in political institutions, in particular with trust in the European Parliament. Grönlund and Setala (2007) study how citizens' evaluations of the political system and its actors affect their propensity to vote using data from the first round of the European Social Survey (ESS), collected simultaneously in 22 countries during 2002-2003. They find that

citizens who trust parliament turn out more than citizens who are distrustful of this institution, and that satisfaction with the way democracy works also increases the probability of voting. When citizens distrust parliament and are dissatisfied with the democratic system, voting is no longer considered a meaningful way to influence political outcomes. Hadjar and Beck (2010) have similar findings. These authors analyze the determinants of non-voting in 24 European countries using data from the 2006 European Social Survey. They find that citizens with lower trust in parliament and with a lower satisfaction with politics have a higher likelihood of not voting.

On the other hand, Belanger and Nadeau (2005) study the effect of political trust on individual vote choice in Canada using data from the Canadian Election studies and, in line with Hetherington (1999), find that this variable has a significant effect: the incumbent party benefits from political trust, while third parties mostly benefit from distrust. Booth and Seligson (2005) focus, instead, on the effect of political legitimacy on different forms of conventional and non-conventional participation in Costa Rica using a 2002 national survey. The authors find a positive and significant relationship between support for regime institutions and the most conventional form of participation: voting.

However, few studies have analyzed the impact of citizens' attitudes towards political institutions on turnout in Latin America. The first article to address this issue was McCann and Dominguez (1998) who studied the effect that perceptions of electoral fraud and corruption among Mexican citizens had on electoral participation and electoral outcomes, using national

public opinion surveys conducted between 1986 and 1995. Their findings provide evidence regarding the negative impact of citizens' perceptions of electoral fraud on their likelihood of turnout: the greater the expectation of fraud, the lower the likelihood of voting. Only those who believed that the electoral process was not fraudulent and that their vote would make a difference for the electoral result were more likely to turnout.

More recently, an article by Cantu and Garcia-Ponce (2015) also focuses on the perceptions of electoral fairness among the Mexican electorate. However, this article does not seek to explain the impact of citizens' attitudes towards the electoral process on turnout but rather the variables that help to understand how these perceptions come about. Using three nation-wide pre- and post- electoral surveys for the presidential election of 2012, they find evidence of partisan effects on attitudes towards the electoral process. Supporters of the incumbent party have lower levels of confidence on the integrity of the electoral process once they learn that their preferred candidate lost, whereas the discredit about this process among supporters of a party that has never won the elections remains consistent over time.

Carreras and İrepoğlu (2013) explore the impact of trust in elections on voter turnout going a step further and doing a cross-national comparison between Latin American countries. Using data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project for the year 2010 the authors find a positive and significant effect of this variable on turnout, especially in countries without compulsory voting laws. In countries where voting is mandatory, the effect of perceptions of

electoral fairness on turnout is weaker as citizens have incentives to vote in order to avoid sanctions.

While all the aforementioned studies established a positive relation between citizen's affection towards political institutions and participation, research has also found that voters turn to the polls in order to express their dissatisfaction with these institutions. Power and Garand (2007) study the determinants of invalid voting in Latin America from 1980 to 2000 and find that political discontent increased the likelihood that citizens spoiled their ballots. In addition, a recent study by Ezrow and Xezonakis (2014) looks at the over-time relationship between satisfaction with democracy and voter turnout within 12 European countries over the period 1976-2011. They find that voter turnout actually increases with lower levels of satisfaction.

In sum, while comparative aggregate-level research has established the predominance of institutional variables for explaining variations in voter turnout, there is a growing literature on electoral participation in the advanced industrial democracies that has been focusing on the effect that individual-level attitudes and perceptions towards the political system have on turnout. However, this type of research in Latin America still remains scarce.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Data and hypotheses

In order to study the impact of citizens' attitudes towards democratic institutions on voter turnout I use data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP)[1] for 18 countries for the period 2004-2014. Table 1 presents the countries, the years for which survey data is available for each one of them, and the total number of respondents for each country included in the study.

The surveys administered by LAPOP focus on issues dealing with democratic values and behaviors. One of the main advantages of using these surveys is their broad comparability: the same questions are asked to respondents in different countries, facilitating a comparative analysis. Another advantage is that their sampling process maximizes the representativeness of the sample of respondents in each country.[2]

The unit of analysis is the individual respondents of each country for each wave of the survey. This means that I will estimate regressions for each of the 18 countries included in the sample, and within each country for each year in which a survey was administered. In this way, I will be able to have a better understanding of the longitudinal relationship between the main

[1] The dataset for the surveys of every country can be found at: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/free-access.php

[2] The sample for the surveys is obtained through multistage stratification by country and then sub-stratification within each country by major geographic region. Within each primary sampling unit, the respondents are selected randomly. The selection of respondents also applies quotas for sex and age at the household level. More technical information about each survey can be obtained in the website of the Latin American Public Opinion Project: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.php.

independent and dependent variables within each country, and about the presence of any regional patterns in this relationship. In addition, within each country there will be a high control for the various economic, cultural and institutional variables that could affect turnout.

Table 1. Countries and years included in the study

Country	Survey Years	N		Country	Survey Years	N
ARGENTINA	2008 - 2010 - 2012 - 2014	3,965		**ECUADOR**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	13,240
BOLIVIA	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	14,568		**EL SALVADOR**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	7,686
BRAZIL	2007-2008-2010-2012-2014	8,247		**GUATEMALA**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	6,967
COLOMBIA	2004-2005-2006-2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012-2014	12,506		**HONDURAS**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	8,072
COSTA RICA	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	6,658		**NICARAGUA**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	7,803
VENEZUELA	2007-2008-2010-2012-2014	4,962		**PANAMA**	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	7,965
CHILE	2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	5,526		**PERU**	2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	5,919
URUGUAY	2007-2008-2010-2012-2014	6,031		**GUYANA**	2006-2009-2010-2012-2014	6,792
MEXICO	2004-2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	7,728		**PARAGUAY**	2006-2008-2010-2012-2014	5,193
Total		70,191		**Total**		69,637

The dependent variable in the analysis is self-reported voter turnout in presidential elections. This variable is measured in the surveys through the following question: *"Did you vote in the last presidential elections of (year of last presidential elections)?"*. **Turnout** is a dichotomous

variable measuring if respondents voted in the last presidential elections: 1= yes, voted; 0= no, did not vote.

One of the limitations with using survey data to measure turnout is that most of the times the proportion of respondents who report voting is greater than those who actually voted. It has been argued that this is due to the fact that non-voters are motivated to give a socially desirable response. Voter validation studies in the United States that match a respondents reported turnout against the official election records have confirmed the existence of this bias towards over-reporting, especially due to a great number of non-voters who claim to have voted (Clausen, 1968; Karp and Brockington, 2005; Selb and Munzert, 2013; Silver et al. 1986). While I am aware of this limitation in the data, I was unable to match respondents' reported turnout against the official elections records with the information I have, so I will proceed with the use of self-reported turnout as my dependent variable.

The main independent variables in the analysis are **trust in elections, respect for institutions**, and **satisfaction with democracy**.[3] The first variable was constructed on the basis of the following question: "*To what extent do you trust elections in this country?*" The second variable was constructed on the basis of the following question: "*To what extent do you respect*

[3] I conducted bivariate correlations between all of the variables for each country and each survey year and none of the coefficients was higher than 0.5. Thus, because they are not highly correlated it is valid to use all of them as independent variables of the study. I also considered including more variables in the study such as trust in Congress, trust in the President, and trust in political parties but these were highly correlated (coefficients higher than 0.5) with trust in elections.

the political institutions of (country)?" All of these variables are measured with an ordinal scale from 1 to 7, where a code of 1 corresponds to "not at all" and a code of 7 corresponds to "a lot".

Finally, information for the variable satisfaction with democracy was obtained from the following question: "*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in (country)?*" Responses were given based on a 1 to 4 scale, where 1 indicates "very satisfied" and 4 "very dissatisfied". The scale was recoded into 1="very dissatisfied" and 4="very satisfied".

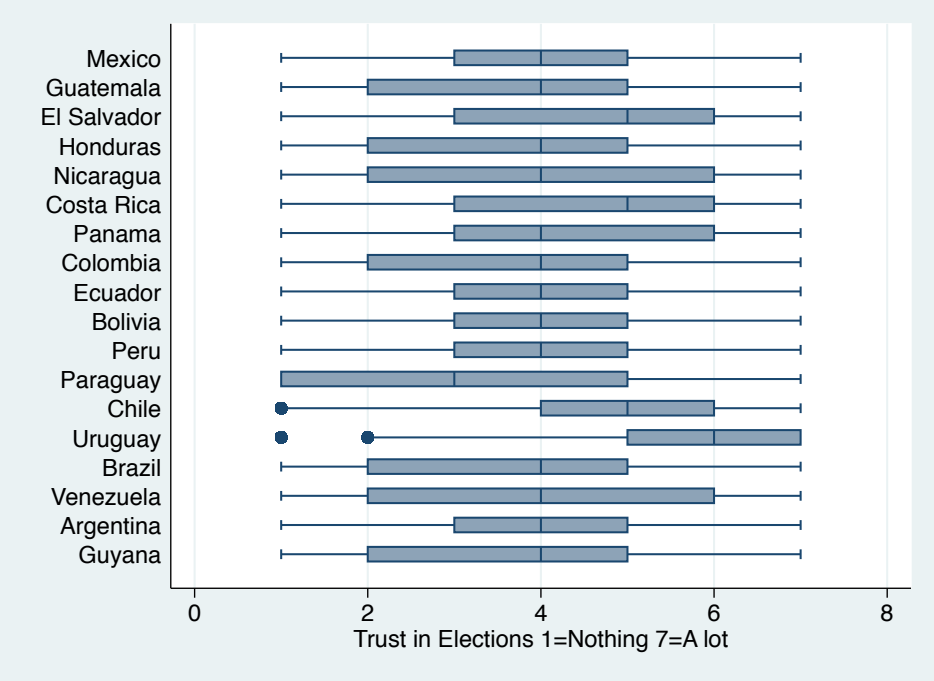

Figure 1. Distribution of Trust in Elections

Note: The boxes plot the percentages of the respondents for every category of trust in elections in each country and for all survey years. The vertical lines inside the boxes indicate the median level of trust in elections in each country.

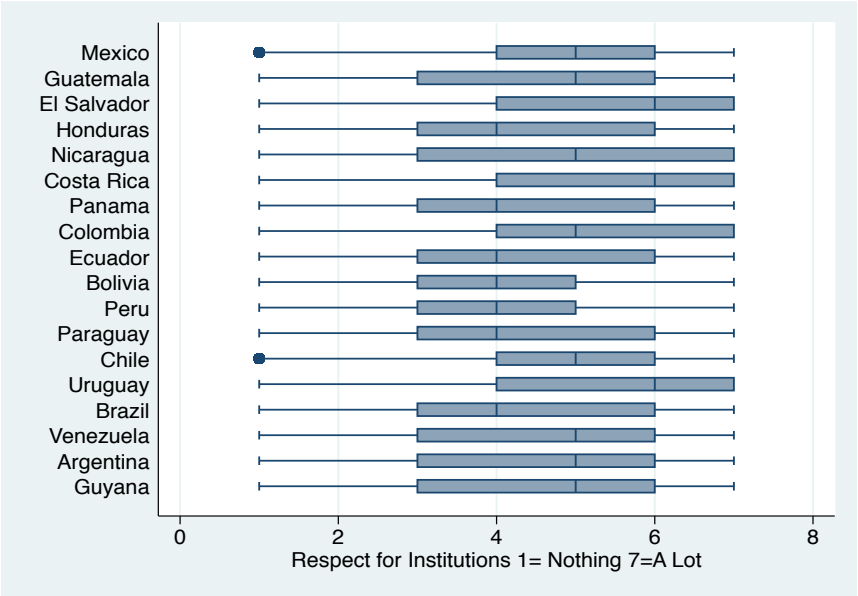

Figure 2. Distribution of Respect for Institutions

Note: The boxes plot the percentages of the respondents for every category of respect for institutions in each country and for all survey years. The vertical lines inside the boxes represent the median level of respect for institutions in each country.

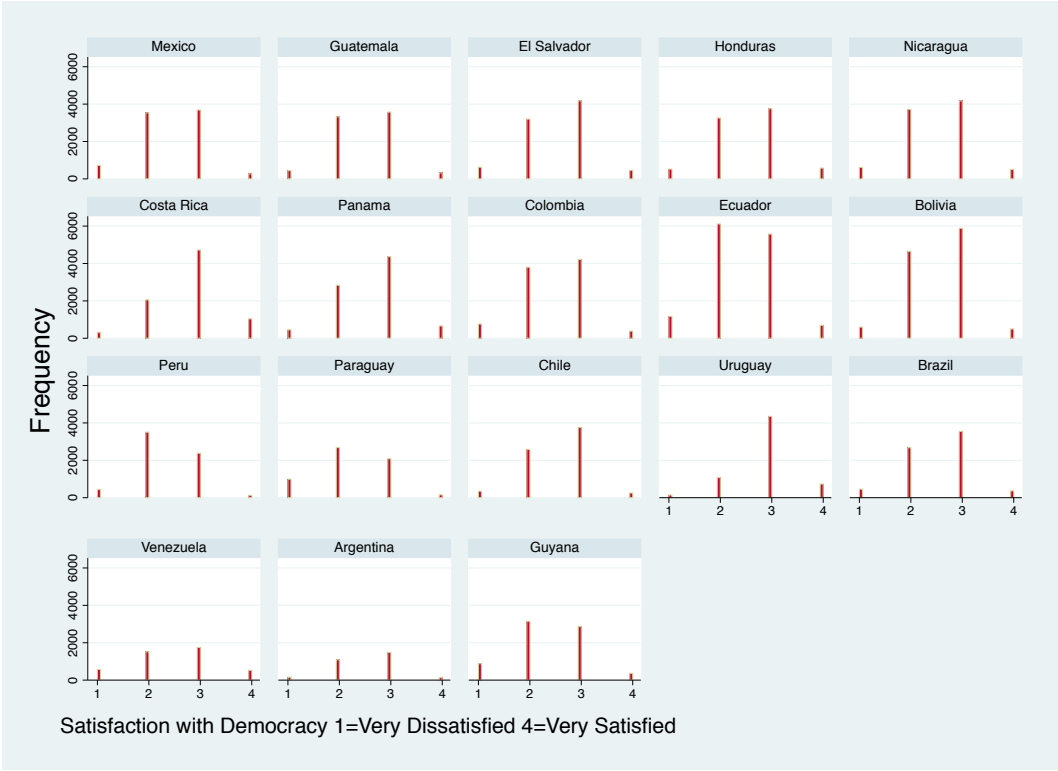

Figure 3. Distribution of Satisfaction with Democracy

Figures 1 to 3 present the distributions of the independent variables for the 18 countries in the analysis. The boxplots and histogram represent reported trust and satisfaction levels for all the years in which the survey was administered in each of the countries. The boxes in the boxplots indicate the positions of the upper and lower quartiles of the respondents in each country, and their interior consists of 50% of the distribution. The vertical line inside the boxes represents the median level of trust in elections and respect for institutions in each country. The lines

(whiskers) outside the boxes represent the maximum and minimum values of both variables reported by respondents in each country. In the period covered by the data respondents in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Chile exhibit consistently high levels of trust in elections and respect for institutions. Paraguay is, on average, the country with the lowest level of trust in elections. As regards satisfaction with democracy, the variable is distributed similarly across countries; there is no country with overall high levels of satisfaction with democracy (4th category), and most of the respondents fall between the 2nd and 3rd category in every country.

My expectation is that higher levels of trust in elections, respect for institutions and satisfaction with democracy will lead to an increase in voter turnout through citizens' sense of political efficacy. This is due to the fact that affection towards political institutions should increase citizens' sense of political efficacy. Political efficacy refers to "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e. that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties" (Campbell et al. 1954: 187). In other words, it refers to citizens' beliefs that their action – in this case, voting - can influence the outcome of political decisions – in this case, the result of the election and the direction of policies that will be enacted as a result (Craig and Maggiotto 1982). When citizens have high levels of trust in the electoral process and respect for institutions of the political system, they will therefore feel more politically efficacious and believe that institutions are responsive to their actions.

If we assume that citizens derive a benefit from "affirming their efficacy in the political system" (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968: 28), the benefit they derive from voting will outweigh

their perceived costs (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968). As a result, they will have more incentives to turnout (Almond and Verba, 1963; Craig and Maggiotto, 1982; Finkel, 1985; Riker and Ordeshook, 1968). An increased sense of political efficacy will help citizens overcome the constant suspicion that their participation is hopeless, as they will instead believe that their vote makes a difference in the outcome of the election. In turn, if citizens perceive that elections are not a trustworthy instrument through which they can impact the election results, the costs that they perceive from showing up to the polls might outweigh their perceived benefits, preferring to stay at home on election day. Because citizens feel less politically efficacious, their electoral participation will likely decrease (Abramson and Aldrich, 1982; Shaffer, 1981). As Birch (2010) claims: "If voters fear that polls are corrupt, they have less incentive to bother casting a vote; participating in a process in which they do not have confidence will be less attractive, and they may well perceive the outcome of the election to be a foregone conclusion" (Birch, 2010: 1603).

In sum, I have three main testable hypotheses concerning the effects of the various forms of affection towards political institutions on turnout. All else being equal, I expect that:

H1: "*Citizens who have higher levels of trust in elections will be more likely to vote*"

H2: "*Citizens who have higher levels of respect for institutions will be more likely to vote*"

H3: "*Citizens who have higher levels of satisfaction with democracy will be more likely to vote"*

I also include a series of control variables[4] that have been shown in previous research to have an effect on electoral participation. First, it is possible that the age of the respondents has an impact on their likelihood of turnout (Lane, 1959; Strate et al., 1989; Jankowski and Strate, 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). **Age** is a variable that measures the age of the respondents in each survey, dividing it into five cohorts. I expect that, other things equal, older people who have a greater sense of civic duty and are more aware of public affairs will turnout more than younger people.

Second, I include a dummy variable that measures the **gender** of the respondent (1=male). My expectation regarding this variable is that in Latin America, women will turnout more than men. Even though it has been argued that men have more resources than women and thus have higher rates of electoral participation, recent research in the region suggests that the gender gap has been gradually disappearing and that women have higher turnout rates than men (Carreras and Castañeda Angarita, 2013; Lehouq and Wall, 2004; Seligson, 2002).

Additionally, I incorporate a series of control variables corresponding to the resource model of participation: **employment status**, **income** and **education**. Employment status is a dummy variable that measures if respondents were employed or unemployed at the time of the survey (1=employed). Income is a categorical variable that measures the decile into which the respondents' household monthly income fits. Education is also a categorical variable that measures whether the respondents had no education (0), primary school (1), secondary school

[4] More information about the operationalization of these variables can be found in the Appendix.

education (2), or achieved a higher education (3). Following the expectations of the resource model of political participation, I hypothesize that citizens with jobs, a higher income and a higher level of education are more likely to turnout (Leighley and Nagler, 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980) since they have more resources to bare the costs of voting than citizens with a lower socio-economic status.

Finally, I include a variable that measures whether respondents **identify with a political party** (1=yes). My expectations are in line with previous research: citizens who have a party identification will be more likely to vote, other things being equal, than those who do not. This could be due to the expressive benefits that they receive from voting for their favorite party (Green et al., 2004), to the decrease in the costs of voting as a result of the cues that party labels provide to citizens (Downs, 1957), or to the fact that people who strongly prefer certain political outcomes are more likely to participate in politics (Rosenstone and Hansen, 2002).

Modeling turnout in Latin America

In this article, I use data from LAPOP to explore the determinants of voter turnout in 18 Latin American countries from 2004 to 2014, and to test my three main hypotheses. I suggest that voter turnout is a function of a series of attitudinal variables, socio-economic variables, and individual resources. In order to test my hypotheses, I estimate logistic regression models for each country and each year in which the survey was administered to have a better understanding of the longitudinal effect of the three main independent variables on turnout. The use of logistic

regressions is appropriate since the dependent variable of interest – voter turnout – is dichotomous.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

In the tables below, I provide estimates of the coefficients from the logit models together with the corresponding standard errors. Since these models are nonlinear, the estimates only provide information about the direction and the statistical significance of the relationships between each independent variable and the dependent variable of interest. The size of the substantive impact of any one variable (but not its direction) is a function of the value at which the effect is evaluated as well as the values of all the other variables in the model. Thus, I also report some interpretation of substantive effects in order to understand better the impact of the main independent variables.

Table 2.1. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Argentina

	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	-0.041	-0.038	0.052	-0.009
	(0.056)	(0.045)	(0.095)	(0.052)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.321*	0.042	-0.078	-0.149
	(0.138)	(0.108)	(0.239)	(0.152)
Respect for Institutions	0.024	-0.007	-0.087	-0.088
	(0.051)	(0.044)	(0.095)	(0.052)
Party Identification	0.665**	0.505*	0.608	0.961***
	(0.214)	(0.220)	(0.386)	(0.249)
Education	0.462***	0.355**	-0.363	0.313
	(0.138)	(0.124)	(0.281)	(0.170)
Income	-0.018	0.081	0.195**	0.018
	(0.035)	(0.044)	(0.066)	(0.022)
Age	0.128	0.424***	0.059	0.518***
	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.127)	(0.079)
Gender	0.032	-0.514**	-0.688*	-0.264
	(0.180)	(0.158)	(0.331)	(0.202)
Employment Status	1.102***	0.469**	0.832*	0.933***
	(0.183)	(0.167)	(0.343)	(0.207)
_cons	-1.396**	-0.902*	1.794	-0.555
	(0.506)	(0.419)	(1.050)	(0.610)
N	952	995	486	864

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.2. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Guyana

	2006	2009	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.034	0.075*	0.215***	0.111	0.02
	(-0.047)	(-0.033)	(-0.046)	(-0.073)	(-0.042)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.208	-0.0726	-0.158	0.181	0.069
	(-0.136)	(-0.083)	(-0.107)	(-0.168)	(-0.113)
Respect for Institutions	0.064	0.031	-0.029	0.017	-0.0000213
	(-0.056)	(-0.035)	(-0.049)	(-0.075)	(-0.044)
Party Identification	1.647***	1.129***	1.289***	0.996**	0.838**
	(-0.327)	(-0.228)	(-0.209)	(-0.32)	(-0.261)
Gender	-0.107	-0.598***	-0.568***	0.045	-0.378*
	(-0.178)	(-0.12)	(-0.163)	(-0.233)	(-0.169)
Age	0.284**	0.824***	0.719***	0.309**	0.776***
	(-0.094)	(-0.057)	(-0.0744)	(-0.102)	(-0.075)
Income	-0.012	0.012	-0.082	0.028	-0.003
	(-0.048)	(-0.030)	(-0.043)	(-0.029)	(-0.018)
Education	0.201	0.0813	0.0359	0.490*	0.278
	(-0.151)	(-0.097)	(-0.141)	(-0.212)	(-0.152)
Employment Status	0.401	0.577***	0.687***	-0.057	0.549**
	(-0.231)	(-0.123)	(-0.172)	(-0.243)	(-0.171)
_cons	-1.127*	-1.539***	-1.346**	-1.634*	-1.772***
	(-0.561)	(-0.362)	(-0.499)	(-0.763)	(-0.525)
N	875	2058	1058	559	1121

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.3. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Venezuela

	2007	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.140**	0.060	0.069	0.254*	0.166*
	(0.054)	(0.059)	(0.039)	(0.116)	(0.0671)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.104	0.225	0.066	-0.099	-0.053
	(0.130)	(0.129)	(0.099)	(0.251)	(0.178)
Respect for institutions	-0.047	0.044	0.026	-0.006	-0.101
	(0.053)	(0.057)	(0.037)	(0.113)	(0.062)
Party Identification	1.176***	1.166***	0.832***	0.852*	1.493***
	(0.248)	(0.248)	(0.160)	(0.355)	(0.290)
Gender	-0.228	-0.427*	-0.194	0.131	0.088
	(0.198)	(0.217)	(0.140)	(0.418)	(0.241)
Age	0.570***	0.590***	0.672***	1.745***	0.390***
	(0.102)	(0.102)	(0.0673)	(0.235)	(0.115)
Income	-0.030	-0.013	0.124**	-0.070	0.0297
	(0.040)	(0.064)	(0.040)	(0.054)	(0.029)
Education	0.516***	0.613***	0.292**	0.955**	0.606***
	(0.151)	(0.175)	(0.112)	(0.327)	(0.175)
Employment Status	0.554*	0.545*	0.476***	0.930*	0.149
	(0.239)	(0.215)	(0.143)	(0.413)	(0.253)
_cons	-1.562*	-2.507***	-3.065***	-5.947***	-0.929
	(0.637)	(0.657)	(0.431)	(1.269)	(0.701)
N	753	852	1236	424	1093

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.4. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Uruguay

	2007	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.009	-0.044	0.115	0.179	0.096
	(0.094)	(0.067)	(0.082)	(0.102)	(0.066)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.601*	0.186	0.230	-0.018	0.614***
	(0.262)	(0.174)	(0.220)	(0.285)	(0.172)
Respect for Institutions	0.0597	-0.003	-0.077	-0.016	-0.066
	(0.092)	(0.060)	(0.078)	(0.091)	(0.059)
Party Identification	-0.421	-0.0861	0.241	0.390	-0.063
	(0.329)	(0.223)	(0.250)	(0.320)	(0.209)
Gender	-0.406	-0.440	-0.691**	-0.467	-1.047***
	(0.349)	(0.229)	(0.256)	(0.325)	(0.231)
Age	1.101***	1.468***	0.727***	1.155***	1.521***
	(0.174)	(0.121)	(0.105)	(0.157)	(0.108)
Income	0.191*	-0.016	0.047	0.005	-0.023
	(0.081)	(0.042)	(0.051)	(0.044)	(0.024)
Education	0.531	0.460*	0.381	0.390	0.002
	(0.285)	(0.191)	(0.205)	(0.250)	(0.173)
Employment Status	0.334	1.031***	0.769**	0.554	1.419***
	(0.417)	(0.228)	(0.255)	(0.327)	(0.241)
_cons	-3.768***	-2.862***	-1.215	-2.566*	-4.087***
	(1.013)	(0.663)	(0.803)	(1.017)	(0.666)
N	635	1290	1321	635	1319

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.5. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Peru

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	-0.049	0.021	0.013	0.045	-0.014
	(0.089)	(0.066)	(0.060)	(0.104)	(0.061)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.211	0.001	-0.120	0.239	-0.075
	(0.229)	(0.170)	(0.144)	(0.229)	(0.160)
Respect for Institutions	0.010	0.029	-0.013	-0.006	-0.081
	(0.086)	(0.063)	(0.054)	(0.097)	(0.063)
Party Identification	0.051	0.376	0.121	0.008	0.458
	(0.315)	(0.293)	(0.224)	(0.417)	(0.269)
Gender	-0.024	-0.340	-0.366	-0.304	-0.533*
	(0.303)	(0.217)	(0.191)	(0.317)	(0.221)
Age	0.505***	1.268***	1.285***	0.848***	1.118***
	(0.145)	(0.123)	(0.098)	(0.156)	(0.106)
Income	-0.019	-0.131**	-0.0176	-0.008	0.017
	(0.075)	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.045)	(0.023)
Education	0.842***	0.774***	0.924***	0.321	0.484**
	(0.241)	(0.175)	(0.151)	(0.247)	(0.167)
Employment Status	1.214***	0.811***	1.001***	0.229	0.574**
	(0.318)	(0.217)	(0.191)	(0.329)	(0.220)
_cons	-0.602	-2.126***	-3.445***	-1.177	-1.663**
	(0.943)	(0.645)	(0.583)	(0.959)	(0.626)
N	838	1298	1262	606	1029

Standard errors in parentheses
NA = Question not Asked
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.6. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Paraguay

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.091	0.003	0.068	-0.066	0.021
	(0.052)	(0.060)	(0.044)	(0.059)	(0.040)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.080	-0.025	0.067	0.110	-0.177
	(0.120)	(0.134)	(0.126)	(0.160)	(0.116)
Respect for Institutions	0.045	-0.083	0.053	0.036	0.064
	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.044)	(0.056)	(0.039)
Party Identification	0.330	0.0121	0.276	-0.169	-0.340
	(0.174)	(0.217)	(0.166)	(0.229)	(0.174)
Gender	1.329***	1.084***	0.910***	1.300***	0.718***
	(0.112)	(0.110)	(0.0842)	(0.128)	(0.083)
Age	0.0995*	0.0537	-0.00961	-0.018	0.018
	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.017)
Income	0.339*	0.487**	0.448***	0.818***	0.639***
	(0.140)	(0.151)	(0.121)	(0.158)	(0.118)
Education	NA	1.032***	0.843***	0.841***	0.563***
		(0.186)	(0.164)	(0.205)	(0.162)
Employment Status	NA	0.707**	0.503**	0.455	0.375*
		(0.223)	(0.170)	(0.242)	(0.179)
_cons	-4.230***	-3.502***	-3.617***	-4.670***	-2.161***
	(0.525)	(0.539)	(0.514)	(0.700)	(0.466)
N	819	819	1003	617	1057

Standard errors in parentheses
NA = Question not Asked
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.7. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Panama

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.076*	-0.068	0.117*	0.0816	0.169*	0.091
	(0.036)	(0.064)	(0.047)	(0.0530)	(0.070)	(0.049)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.038	-0.345*	-0.108	-0.005	-0.094	0.054
	(0.098)	(0.146)	(0.0903)	(0.132)	(0.173)	(0.118)
Respect for Institutions	-0.024	-0.012	-0.021	0.016	-0.161**	-0.086
	(0.036)	(0.064)	(0.044)	(0.053)	(0.061)	(0.051)
Gender	-0.0181	-0.339	-0.541***	-0.332*	-0.444*	-0.241
	(0.141)	(0.234)	(0.153)	(0.162)	(0.219)	(0.162)
Age	1.265***	0.588***	0.831***	0.732***	0.656***	1.306***
	(0.080)	(0.112)	(0.071)	(0.0819)	(0.091)	(0.086)
Income	-0.000415	-0.024	0.017	-0.056	0.067	0.017
	(0.0432)	(0.083)	(0.047)	(0.049)	(0.037)	(0.018)
Education	0.498***	0.355*	0.333**	0.307*	-0.167	-0.007
	(0.118)	(0.160)	(0.124)	(0.137)	(0.180)	(0.141)
Party Identification	NA	1.116***	1.388***	1.514***	2.215***	1.499***
		(0.326)	(0.180)	(0.234)	(0.313)	(0.170)
Employment Status	NA	0.784***	1.084***	0.626***	0.705**	0.862***
		(0.216)	(0.161)	(0.163)	(0.228)	(0.171)
_cons	-3.018***	0.334	-2.416***	-1.494*	-1.198	-3.435***
	(0.459)	(0.619)	(0.455)	(0.583)	(0.673)	(0.507)
N	1527	809	1356	1381	661	1356

Standard errors in parentheses
NA = Question not Asked
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.8. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Nicaragua

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.023	-0.014	-0.010	0.078*	0.104**	0.118***
	(0.039)	(0.044)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.035)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.003	-0.173	-0.077	-0.090	0.179	0.013
	(0.110)	(0.123)	(0.096)	(0.098)	(0.118)	(0.110)
Respect for Institutions	0.017	0.027	-0.051	-0.044	-0.009	-0.024
	(0.039)	(0.046)	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.036)
Gender	-0.0203	-0.0635	-0.193	-0.311*	-0.102	-0.136
	(0.157)	(0.197)	(0.144)	(0.147)	(0.163)	(0.144)
Age	0.825***	0.408***	0.444***	0.801***	0.478***	0.560***
	(0.087)	(0.081)	(0.067)	(0.073)	(0.067)	(0.060)
Income	-0.005	0.061	0.003	0.071	-0.011	0.005
	(0.035)	(0.049)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.022)	(0.014)
Education	0.266*	0.139	0.377***	0.185	0.583***	0.277**
	(0.108)	(0.123)	(0.096)	(0.099)	(0.100)	(0.089)
Party Identification	NA	1.032***	1.115***	0.750***	1.359***	0.755***
		(0.173)	(0.154)	(0.141)	(0.157)	(0.137)
Employment Status	NA	0.581**	0.554***	0.447**	0.381*	0.151
		(0.217)	(0.145)	(0.147)	(0.165)	(0.146)
_cons	-1.075*	-1.087*	-0.678	-1.577***	-2.078***	-1.789***
	(0.436)	(0.506)	(0.399)	(0.388)	(0.454)	(0.422)
N	1046	778	1303	1326	1502	1365

Standard errors in parentheses
NA = Question not Asked
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.9. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Honduras

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	-0.023	-0.004	-0.050	0.171***	0.033	0.107**
	(0.0363)	(0.0498)	(0.0615)	(0.0475)	(0.0593)	(0.0361)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.0964	0.192	-0.036	0.0974	-0.246*	0.088
	(0.0944)	(0.122)	(0.140)	(0.0895)	(0.116)	(0.098)
Respect for Institutions	0.061	0.0149	0.084	0.016	0.061	-0.068
	(0.037)	(0.0470)	(0.053)	(0.0470)	(0.054)	(0.035)
Gender	0.251	0.0298	-0.715***	0.202	-0.544**	-0.0922
	(0.139)	(0.163)	(0.206)	(0.141)	(0.211)	(0.145)
Age	0.764***	0.323***	0.860***	0.258***	0.403***	0.332***
	(0.070)	(0.085)	(0.086)	(0.059)	(0.075)	(0.062)
Income	-0.055	0.105*	0.030	-0.064	-0.006	-0.020
	(0.037)	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.038)	(0.026)	(0.0159)
Education	0.350**	0.151	-0.0690	0.239*	0.0624	0.247*
	(0.123)	(0.140)	(0.148)	(0.104)	(0.113)	(0.104)
Party Identification	NA	0.923***	2.267***	1.287***	1.354***	0.806***
		(0.176)	(0.177)	(0.131)	(0.184)	(0.141)
Employment Status	NA	NA	1.205***	0.434**	0.534**	0.101
			(0.207)	(0.142)	(0.196)	(0.145)
_cons	-1.796***	-0.743	-2.524***	-2.131***	-1.260*	-0.561
	(0.401)	(0.501)	(0.496)	(0.411)	(0.506)	(0.374)
N	1229	1206	1103	1360	626	1381

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.10. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Guatemala

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.069	0.059	-0.031	0.009	0.151	0.047
	(0.037)	(0.051)	(0.0454)	(0.045)	(0.082)	(0.039)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.029	-0.057	-0.143	0.0417	-0.184	-0.042
	(0.103)	(0.131)	(0.130)	(0.110)	(0.179)	(0.120)
Respect for Institutions	0.006	-0.036	0.094*	0.00972	0.235**	-0.111*
	(0.040)	(0.054)	(0.044)	(0.0443)	(0.072)	(0.044)
Gender	0.359*	0.247	0.117	0.325*	0.0139	0.0524
	(0.141)	(0.175)	(0.177)	(0.152)	(0.246)	(0.153)
Age	0.357***	0.642***	0.360***	0.820***	0.302**	0.815***
	(0.068)	(0.088)	(0.075)	(0.075)	(0.111)	(0.074)
Income	0.004	0.059	-0.029	-0.005	0.095**	0.034
	(0.029)	(0.053)	(0.044)	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.018)
Education	0.404***	0.335*	0.526***	0.449***	0.054	-0.099
	(0.115)	(0.137)	(0.131)	(0.120)	(0.183)	(0.096)
Party Identification	NA	0.749**	0.948***	0.479*	1.055*	0.299
		(0.239)	(0.256)	(0.198)	(0.432)	(0.239)
Employment Status	NA	0.942***	1.054***	0.812***	1.049***	0.584***
		(0.258)	(0.178)	(0.162)	(0.238)	(0.157)
_cons	-1.176**	-2.549***	-1.070*	-2.762***	-1.825*	-1.108*
	(0.413)	(0.521)	(0.482)	(0.476)	(0.739)	(0.446)
N	1018	750	1035	1143	569	1251

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.11. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in El Salvador

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.0525	0.114*	0.069	0.096*	-0.016	0.104**
	(0.036)	(0.046)	(0.038)	(0.044)	(0.058)	(0.038)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.0122	-0.055	-0.039	-0.009	0.169	-0.002
	(0.101)	(0.121)	(0.096)	(0.109)	(0.157)	(0.104)
Respect for Institutions	0.040	0.023	0.028	-0.004	-0.077	-0.057
	(0.036)	(0.046)	(0.037)	(0.044)	(0.060)	(0.039)
Gender	-0.129	-0.066	-0.525***	-0.234	-0.025	-0.083
	(0.137)	(0.174)	(0.144)	(0.145)	(0.222)	(0.147)
Age	0.436***	0.517***	0.881***	0.518***	0.759***	0.351***
	(0.066)	(0.082)	(0.066)	(0.067)	(0.098)	(0.061)
Income	0.041	0.023	0.038	-0.017	-0.026	0.026
	(0.039)	(0.042)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.034)	(0.017)
Education	0.468***	0.221	0.281**	0.491***	0.063	0.176
	(0.106)	(0.117)	(0.097)	(0.102)	(0.159)	(0.104)
Party Identification	NA	0.706***	1.050***	0.543***	0.866***	0.588***
		(0.178)	(0.143)	(0.158)	(0.238)	(0.141)
Employment Status	NA	0.215	0.540***	0.408**	0.605**	0.329*
		(0.189)	(0.145)	(0.148)	(0.221)	(0.150)
_cons	-1.151**	-1.609**	-2.662***	-1.295**	-1.553*	-0.877
	(0.417)	(0.530)	(0.384)	(0.461)	(0.671)	(0.451)
N	1301	865	1430	1430	568	1285

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.12. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Ecuador

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	-0.015	0.051	-0.021	0.025	0.185*	0.004
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.092)	(0.073)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.255**	0.078	0.190	-0.103	0.240	0.189
	(0.090)	(0.094)	(0.105)	(0.117)	(0.218)	(0.174)
Respect for Institutions	-0.040	-0.044	0.012	-0.007	0.015	-0.022
	(0.036)	(0.033)	(0.040)	(0.049)	(0.089)	(0.075)
Gender	-0.180	0.057	-0.347*	-0.235	-0.420	-0.477*
	(0.132)	(0.127)	(0.151)	(0.171)	(0.306)	(0.236)
Age	0.776***	1.010***	0.237***	0.136	0.364*	0.235*
	(0.0669)	(0.0708)	(0.0622)	(0.0706)	(0.146)	(0.105)
Income	0.031	-0.054	-0.002	-0.029	-0.023	0.080**
	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.053)	(0.046)	(0.029)
Education	0.595***	0.500***	0.377***	0.316*	0.392	0.167
	(0.104)	(0.105)	(0.112)	(0.123)	(0.215)	(0.185)
Party Identification	NA	NA	0.553**	0.0782	0.812	0.934***
			(0.208)	(0.225)	(0.496)	(0.258)
Employment Status	NA	NA	0.911***	0.757***	0.959**	0.630*
			(0.153)	(0.173)	(0.311)	(0.246)
_cons	-0.214	-1.517***	0.107	1.648**	-1.016	0.192
	(0.407)	(0.392)	(0.432)	(0.526)	(0.946)	(0.769)
N	2508	2420	2592	2474	599	1235

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.13. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Costa Rica

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.177***	0.142**	0.044	0.047	0.096	0.0629
	(0.037)	(0.048)	(0.035)	(0.039)	(0.058)	(0.045)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.0332	0.322*	0.103	0.225*	-0.212	-0.141
	(0.105)	(0.134)	(0.091)	(0.097)	(0.163)	(0.128)
Respect for Institutions	0.035	-0.006	0.134***	-0.042	0.036	0.036
	(0.038)	(0.050)	(0.039)	(0.043)	(0.059)	(0.047)
Gender	-0.491***	-0.503*	-0.306*	-0.138	-0.543*	-0.278
	(0.131)	(0.217)	(0.141)	(0.172)	(0.243)	(0.167)
Age	0.472***	0.263**	0.464***	0.954***	0.409***	0.207**
	(0.056)	(0.086)	(0.059)	(0.076)	(0.091)	(0.069)
Income	0.061*	0.051	0.021	0.079*	0.039	0.015
	(0.028)	(0.042)	(0.031)	(0.037)	(0.033)	(0.019)
Education	0.133	0.405**	0.394***	0.214	0.411*	0.366**
	(0.106)	(0.139)	(0.104)	(0.119)	(0.163)	(0.125)
Party Identification	NA	0.491*	0.747***	1.375***	1.291***	1.763***
		(0.195)	(0.156)	(0.153)	(0.270)	(0.155)
Employment Status	NA	-0.0374	0.248	0.168	-0.248	0.124
		(0.324)	(0.141)	(0.172)	(0.238)	(0.171)
_cons	-1.537***	-1.864**	-2.639***	-4.113***	-1.195	-1.319**
	(0.406)	(0.605)	(0.432)	(0.464)	(0.613)	(0.477)
N	1392	730	1242	1058	498	1076

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.14. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Chile

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	NA	0.087	0.145	-0.070	0.244***
		(0.052)	(0.083)	(0.090)	(0.055)
Respect for Institutions	0.0593	-0.008	0.006	0.016	0.055
	(0.055)	(0.051)	(0.079)	(0.079)	(0.051)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.323*	0.049	-0.166	0.069	0.122
	(0.158)	(0.131)	(0.209)	(0.191)	(0.128)
Gender	-0.308	-0.246	-0.436	-0.401	-0.153
	(0.214)	(0.186)	(0.268)	(0.255)	(0.181)
Age	1.483***	1.519***	0.109	1.523***	0.700***
	(0.134)	(0.095)	(0.133)	(0.143)	(0.078)
Income	0.013	0.021	-0.006	0.048	-0.005
	-0.057	(0.036)	(0.054)	(0.039)	(0.021)
Education	0.0916	0.188	-0.065	0.160	0.545***
	(0.209)	(0.161)	(0.214)	(0.247)	(0.157)
Employment Status	NA	0.304	0.717*	0.414	-0.130
		(0.185)	(0.285)	(0.262)	(0.182)
Party Identification	1.056***	0.929***	1.046*	1.357***	0.921**
	(0.269)	(0.220)	(0.526)	(0.410)	(0.285)
_cons	-4.384***	-4.583***	1.863	-4.252***	-3.988***
	(0.685)	(0.574)	(0.959)	(0.933)	(0.615)
N	696	1193	1105	622	980

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.15. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Brazil

	2007	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.046	0.036	0.052	0.0614	0.067
	(0.052)	(0.047)	(0.034)	(0.0688)	(0.049)
Satisfaction with Democracy	0.097	0.288*	0.162	-0.294	-0.124
	(0.140)	(0.123)	(0.096)	(0.191)	(0.114)
Respect for Institutions	0.0129	-0.016	0.024	0.0686	-0.044
	(0.0523)	(0.047)	(0.035)	(0.0685)	(0.049)
Party Identificaation	0.815***	0.248	0.268	0.462	0.760***
	(0.236)	(0.207)	(0.140)	(0.285)	(0.171)
Gender	-0.563**	-0.210	-0.246	-0.105	-0.354*
	(0.207)	(0.176)	(0.132)	(0.261)	(0.147)
Age	0.318**	0.237**	0.738***	0.549***	1.794***
	(0.102)	(0.0724)	(0.0622)	(0.127)	(0.088)
Income	0.313**	0.0280	-0.064	0.0334	0.0129
	(0.102)	(0.0529)	(0.039)	(0.0340)	(0.020)
Education	0.468***	0.417**	0.269*	0.176	0.511***
	(0.126)	(0.140)	(0.113)	(0.240)	(0.105)
Employment Status	-0.142	0.555**	0.706***	0.164	0.775***
	(0.267)	(0.181)	(0.133)	(0.274)	(0.150)
_cons	-1.336*	-0.653	-1.530***	0.001	-4.240***
	(0.615)	(0.505)	(0.405)	(0.808)	(0.499)
N	884	1218	2109	652	2248

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.16. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Bolivia

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	NA	NA	-0.010	0.105	0.017	0.068
			(0.037)	(0.0555)	(0.047)	(0.049)
Satisfaction with	-0.023	-0.064	0.0270	-0.074	-0.0119	-0.124
Democracy	(0.084)	(0.121)	(0.079)	(0.115)	(0.106)	(0.114)
Respect for Institutions	-0.008	-0.051	-0.009	-0.018	-0.019	-0.044
	(0.034)	(0.051)	(0.036)	(0.054)	(0.043)	(0.049)
Gender	-0.0603	0.299	0.0418	0.0400	-0.412**	-0.354*
	(0.112)	(0.166)	(0.113)	(0.152)	(0.137)	(0.147)
Age	1.299***	0.321***	0.968***	0.492***	1.245***	1.794***
	(0.065)	(0.079)	(0.059)	(0.073)	(0.080)	(0.088)
Income	0.022	0.012	-0.015	0.060	0.005	0.013
	(0.046)	(0.070)	(0.035)	(0.044)	(0.018)	(0.020)
Education	0.694***	0.304**	0.754***	0.290**	0.609***	0.511***
	(0.084)	(0.112)	(0.082)	(0.112)	(0.105)	(0.105)
Employment status	0.499***	-0.0821	0.486***	0.487**	0.698***	0.775***
	(0.113)	(0.173)	(0.114)	(0.155)	(0.140)	(0.150)
Party Identification	NA	NA	0.479***	0.358*	0.0833	0.760***
			(0.129)	(0.165)	(0.193)	(0.171)
_cons	-3.333***	1.175*	-2.987***	-0.365	-2.425***	-4.240***
	(0.347)	(0.510)	(0.378)	(0.505)	(0.455)	(0.499)
N	2578	2032	2315	2297	2290	2248

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.17. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Mexico

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.077	NA	-0.003	0.081*	0.069	0.071
	(0.042)		(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.066)	(0.047)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.083	-0.136	-0.032	-0.074	0.067	0.019
	(0.109)	(0.114)	(0.110)	(0.097)	(0.164)	(0.113)
Respect in Institutions	0.007	0.110*	0.050	0.079*	-0.066	-0.043
	(0.043)	(0.045)	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.065)	(0.045)
Education	0.228**	0.243**	0.163	0.556***	0.367*	0.303*
	(0.086)	(0.092)	(0.088)	(0.114)	(0.186)	(0.126)
Income	0.036	0.066	-0.009	-0.020	0.055	-0.012
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.033)	(0.020)
Age	0.994***	1.292***	0.573***	0.968***	0.993***	0.669***
	(0.081)	(0.092)	(0.070)	(0.075)	(0.111)	(0.075)
Gender	-0.0709	-0.380*	-0.381*	-0.526***	-0.852***	-0.144
	(0.141)	(0.152)	(0.167)	(0.155)	(0.251)	(0.161)
Party Identification	NA	0.647***	1.146***	0.609***	1.160***	0.338
		(0.151)	(0.192)	(0.165)	(0.243)	(0.183)
Employment Status	NA	NA	0.307	0.258	0.723**	-0.284
			(0.168)	(0.157)	(0.250)	(0.169)
_cons	-1.971***	-3.219***	-1.013*	-2.978***	-3.368***	-1.069*
	(0.461)	(0.485)	(0.427)	(0.441)	(0.703)	(0.456)
N	1341	1197	1241	1295	589	1126

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Table 2.18. Logit Model examining the Determinants of Voter Turnout in Colombia

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2014
Trust in Elections	0.055	0.079*	0.139***	0.034	0.153***	0.101*	0.142***	0.081	0.181**	0.065
	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.060)	(0.041)
Satisfaction with Democracy	-0.075	0.0154	0.177	-0.031	0.013	0.039	0.0186	0.109	-0.316*	-0.031
	(0.094)	(0.099)	(0.098)	(0.096)	(0.100)	(0.098)	(0.103)	(0.109)	(0.138)	(0.097)
Respect for Institutions	-0.014	0.023	-0.065	-0.019	0.074	0.016	0.021	0.024	-0.015	-0.038
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.055)	(0.035)
Gender	-0.124	0.350**	0.057	-0.191	-0.187	-0.224	-0.259	-0.427**	-0.311	-0.441**
	(0.132)	(0.131)	(0.129)	(0.139)	(0.151)	(0.145)	(0.142)	(0.147)	(0.191)	(0.138)
Age	0.759***	0.827***	0.361***	0.533***	0.685***	0.837***	1.020***	0.718***	0.394***	0.927***
	(0.070)	(0.071)	(0.065)	(0.068)	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.071)	(0.079)	(0.067)
Income	-0.025	-0.049	-0.032	0.0757	-0.124**	-0.083	0.029	0.020	0.052*	-0.051**
	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.046)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.026)	(0.017)
Education	0.389***	0.447***	0.353***	0.174	0.436***	0.419***	0.156	0.389***	-0.0173	0.461***
	(0.110)	(0.112)	(0.105)	(0.115)	(0.115)	(0.108)	(0.113)	(0.112)	(0.134)	(0.110)
Party Identification	NA	NA	0.799***	1.210***	0.692***	0.450**	0.449**	0.889***	0.207	0.419**
			(0.153)	(0.169)	(0.168)	(0.167)	(0.145)	(0.178)	(0.225)	(0.146)
Employment Status	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.334*	0.488***	0.572***	0.462**	0.282	0.515***
					(0.155)	(0.148)	(0.145)	(0.149)	(0.198)	(0.144)
_cons	-1.591***	-2.699***	-2.010***	-1.580***	-2.640***	-2.792***	-3.546***	-2.700***	-0.823	-2.468***
	(0.412)	(0.423)	(0.412)	(0.404)	(0.461)	(0.435)	(0.464)	(0.470)	(0.571)	(0.402)
N	1201	1196	1105	1078	1099	1154	1219	1209	584	1293

NA = Question not Asked
Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Taken together, the results from the above tables show that the affect variables account for variation in voter turnout in all of the countries (at least for one of the survey years), except for Bolivia, Peru and Paraguay. Trust in elections has the highest explanatory power throughout the region, remaining statistically significant in 11 of the 18 countries and with an effect in the expected direction. Specifically, the variable is significant in Guyana (2009 and 2010), Venezuela (2007, 2012 and 2014), Panama (2004, 2008 and 2012), Nicaragua (2010, 2012 and 2014), Honduras (2010 and 2014), El Salvador (2006, 2010 and 2014), Ecuador (2012), Costa Rica (2004 and 2006), Chile (2014), Mexico (2010) and Colombia (2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2012).

Table 3 summarizes this information. As hypothesized, in these countries, citizens who perceive that elections are a trustworthy instrument of the democratic system are more likely to go to the polls. This finding is in line with previous studies (Birch, 2010; Carreras and İrepoğlu, 2013).

Table 3. Total years in which Trust in Elections is statistically significant in each country

Country	Possitive coeff.(years)		Negative coeff.(years)	
	Signif.	Non Signif.	Signif..	Non Signif.
ARGENTINA		1		3
BOLIVIA		3		1
BRAZIL		5		
COLOMBIA	6	4		
COSTA RICA	2	4		
VENEZUELA	3	2		
CHILE	1	2		1
URUGUAY		4		1
MEXICO	1	3		1
ECUADOR	1	3		2
EL SALVADOR	3	2		1
GUATEMALA		5		1
HONDURAS	2	1		3
NICARAGUA	3	1		2
PANAMA	3	2		1
PERU		3		2
GUYANA	2	3		
PARAGUAY		4		1

Note: Countries in which Trust in Elections is statistically significant are highlighted

Table 4. First Differences in predicted probabilities for a change in Trust in Elections from "not at all" to "a lot"

Country	Year	Diff. In Pred. Prob.
EL SALVADOR	2006	0.14 (0.03 - 0.24)
	2010	0.09 (0.01 - 0.18)
	2014	0.12 (0.03 – 0.20)
COSTA RICA	2004	0.20 (0.12 - 0.29)
	2006	0.20 (0.12 - 0.28)
VENEZUELA	2007	0.16 (0.06 – 0.26)
	2012	0.11 (0.01 – 0.26)
	2014	0.10 (0.23 – 0.17)
NICARAGUA	2010	0.09 (0.01 – 0.16)
	2012	0.08 (0.03 – 0.14)
	2014	0.14 (0.06 – 0.22)
HONDURAS	2010	0.24 (0.11 – 0.36)
	2014	0.11 (0.04 – 0.18)
GUYANA	2009	0.08 (0.01 – 0.14)
	2010	0.23 (0.14 – 0.32)
GUATEMALA	2004	0.10 (0.01 – 0.19)
	2012	0.16 (0.03 – 0.30)
PANAMA	2004	0.07 (0.00 – 0.14)
	2008	0.14 (0.04 - 0.22)
	2012	0.16 (0.01 – 0.28)
ECUADOR	2012	0.08 (0.00 – 0.17)
CHILE	2014	0.28 (0.15 – 0.40)
MEXICO	2010	0.09 (0.004 – 0.18)
COLOMBIA	2005	0.10 (0.01 – 0.20)
	2006	0.20 (0.08 – 0.30)
	2008	0.20 (0.09 – 0.29)
	2009	0.13 (0.03 – 0.24)
	2010	0.19 (0.09 – 0.30)
	2012	0.25 (0.09 – 0.39)

Note: 95% CI´s in parentheses

To have a better understanding of the substantive effect of this variable, Table 4 lists simulated differences in predicted probabilities[5] of voting for each country and year in which the variable was significant[6], while all other variables are held constant at their typical values. The effect of the variable ranges between 7% in Panama (2004) and 28% in Chile (2014).

Figure 4 illustrates this. In Panama, in 2004, citizens with the lowest possible value of trust in elections had, on average, a probability of turnout of 0.79, while citizens with the highest possible value of trust in elections had, on average, a probability of turnout of 0.86. In turn, in Chile (2014) citizens with no trust in elections had, on average, a likelihood of voting of 0.58, while those with the highest possible trust in the electoral process had a probability of turnout of 0.86.

[5] The differences in predicted probabilities for this study were estimated using the Clarify package (Tomz, Wittenberg and King, 2001) for Stata.

[6] The predicted probabilities were calculated for a change in trust in elections from "not at all" to a "lot" while all other variables are held constant at their mean or modal (for dichotomous variables) values.

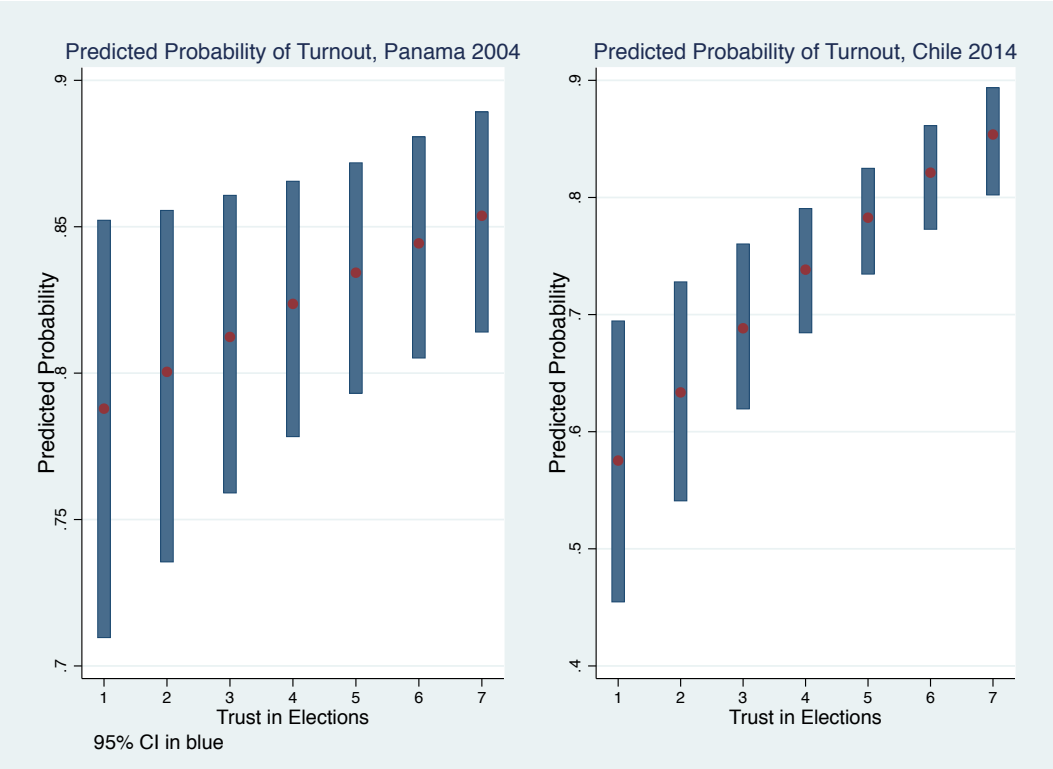

Figure 4. Predicted Probability of Turnout for different values of Trust in Elections, Panama 2004 and Chile 2014

In Colombia the variable has a statistically significant effect for the highest amount of years (6) of all of the countries. In 2012 the effect is very big: the difference in the predicted probability of voting between people with the highest possible value of trust in elections and citizens with no trust at all is 25%. This impact on the likelihood of voting is considerable, since a difference of that magnitude could change the electoral fortune of one of the presidential

candidates if their supporters show up at the polls, or in turn, if it is those supporting the opposition who increasingly vote. In 2006, 2008 and 2010 the effect of the variable is also considerable (around 20%), while for the rest of the years the difference in predicted probability is closer to 10%.

As regards the second independent variable - respect for institutions-, its coefficient is statistically significant in only four of the countries: Panama (2012), Guatemala (2008, 2012 and 2014), Costa Rica (2008) and Mexico (2006 and 2010). However, this variable has mixed effects: while in Panama and Guatemala (in 2014) it has an unexpected negative sign, in Costa Rica, Mexico and Guatemala (for the other 2 years), it has the expected positive effect.

Table 5 summarizes this information. Thus, while in some countries the results support my theoretical expectations concerning the effect of respect for institutions on voter turnout, in others they suggest that citizens might be using their vote as a means of showing their lack of respect towards institutions.

In Panama, where the variable has a negative coefficient, trust in elections has a statistically significant and positive coefficient for the same year. One possible explanation for these opposite effects could be that respondents are not consistent in their answers: while they might claim that they have high trust in elections, they might also be answering that they have low respect for institutions. On the other hand, it could be the case that both variables are in fact capturing different perceptions from the electorate, and that they have independent impacts on turnout (Birch, 2010).

Table 5. Total years in which Respect for Institutions is statistically significant in each country

Country	Possitive coeff. (years)		Negative coeff. (years)	
	Signif.	Non Signif.	Signif..	Non Signif.
ARGENTINA		1		3
BOLIVIA				6
BRAZIL		3		2
COLOMBIA		5		5
COSTA RICA	1	3		2
VENEZUELA		2		3
CHILE		4		1
URUGUAY		1		4
MEXICO	2	2		2
ECUADOR		2		4
EL SALVADOR		3		3
GUATEMALA	2	2	1	1
HONDURAS		5		1
NICARAGUA		2		4
PANAMA		1	1	4
PERU		2		3
GUYANA		3		2
PARAGUAY		4		1

Note: Countries in which Respect for Institutions is statistically significant are highlighted

Table 6. First Differences in predicted probabilities for a change in Respect for Institutions from "not at all" to "a lot"

Country	Year	Diff. In Pred. Prob.
COSTA RICA	2008	0.18 (0.08 - 0.28)
MEXICO	2006	0.12 (0.03 - 0.22)
	2010	0.09 (0.001 - 0.18)
GUATEMALA	2008	0.13 (0.01 - 0.26)
	2012	0.21 (0.08 - 0.35)
	2014	-0.12 (-0.20 - -0.02)
PANAMA	2012	-0.17 (-0.30 - -0.04)
Note: 95% CI´s in parentheses		

Table 6 shows the simulated first differences in the predicted probability of voting for a change in respect for institutions from "not at all" to "a lot", for all of the countries and survey years in which the variable was statistically significant, while all other variables are held constant at their mean or modal (for dichotomous variables) values. The effect of this variable ranges between a decrease in the likelihood of turnout of 17% in Panama (2012) and an increase of 21% in Guatemala (2012).

Figure 5 illustrates the predicted probability of voting for different values of respect for institutions in Guatemala in the year 2014, when the variable has a negative effect. Now, it is citizens who have lower levels of respect for institutions who have a higher probability of showing up at the polls on election day. On average, a citizen with no respect for institutions has a predicted probability of voting of about 0.78, whereas a citizen with the highest possible level of respect for institutions has, on average, a predicted probability of going to the polling station of 0.66.

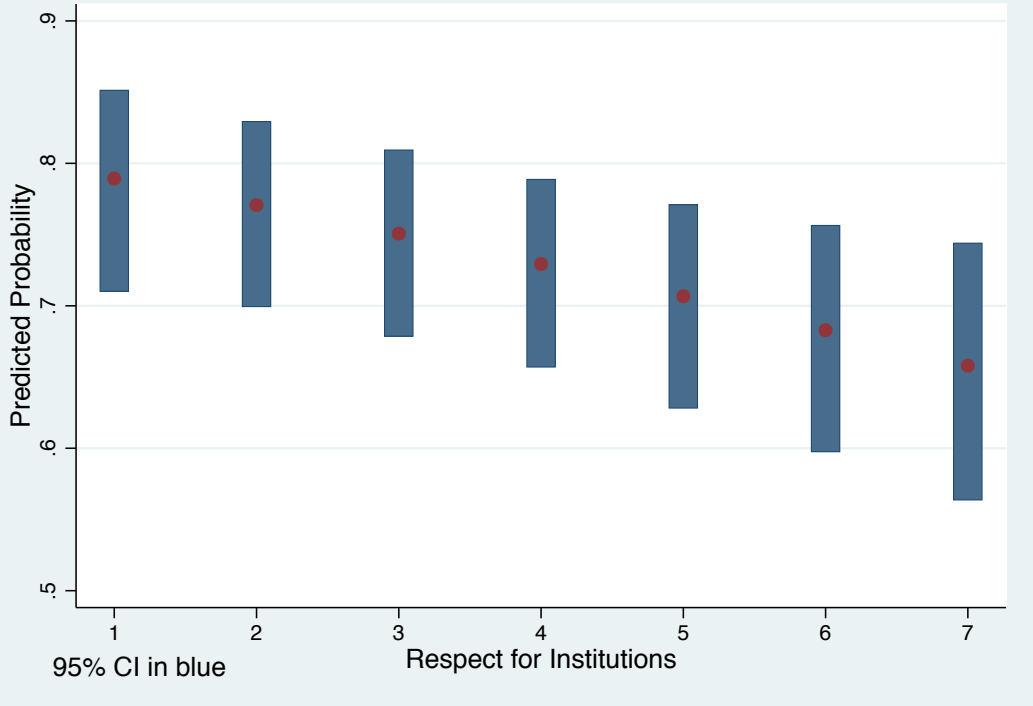

Figure 5. Predicted Probability of Turnout for different values of Respect for Institutions, Guatemala 2014

Satisfaction with democracy also has mixed effects on voter turnout: in five of the nine countries in which the variable is statistically significant (Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Brazil and Chile) its coefficient is positive, while in the other four (Panama, Ecuador, Honduras and Colombia) it is negative. The variable is statistically significant only for a few of the survey years: Argentina in 2008, Uruguay in 2007 and 2014, Panama in 2006, Honduras in 2012, Ecuador in 2004, Costa Rica in 2006 and 2010, Chile in 2006, Brazil in 2008 and Colombia in 2012. These results provide further support to the fact that elections might be working as

mechanisms by which citizens are expressing their discontent and dissatisfaction towards the political system: holding everything else constant, those who are more dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Panama, Ecuador, Colombia and Honduras, have a higher probability of turnout than those who are satisfied with the *status quo*.

Table 7. Total years in which Satisfaction with Democracy is statistically significant in each country

Country	Possitive coeff. (years)		Negative coeff. (years)	
	Signif.	Non Signif.	Signif..	Non Signif.
ARGENTINA	1	1		2
BOLIVIA		1		5
BRAZIL	1	2		2
COLOMBIA		6	1	3
COSTA RICA	2	2		2
VENEZUELA		2		3
CHILE	1	3		1
URUGUAY	2	2		1
MEXICO		2		4
ECUADOR		4	1	1
EL SALVADOR		2		4
GUATEMALA		2		4
HONDURAS		4	1	1
NICARAGUA		3		3
PANAMA		1	1	4
PERU		2		3
GUYANA		3		2
PARAGUAY		3		2

Note: Countries in which Satisfaction with Democracy is statistically significant are highlighted

Table 8. First Differences in predicted probabilities for a change in Satisfaction with Democracy from "not at all" to "a lot"

Country	Year	Diff. In Pred. Prob.
ARGENTINA	2008	0.14 (0.03 - 0.26)
BRAZIL	2008	0.10 (0.02 - 0.19)
COLOMBIA	2012	-0.22 (-0.38 - -0.03)
COSTA RICA	2006	0.22 (0.05 - 0.40)
	2010	0.16 (0.02 - 0.29)
URUGUAY	2007	0.10 (0.01 - 0.25)
	2014	0.13 (0.05 - 0.22)
ECUADOR	2004	-0.07 (-0.13 - -0.02)
CHILE	2006	0.16 (0.04 - 0.28)
HONDURAS	2012	-0.18 (-0.33 - -0.001)
PANAMA	2006	-0.13 (-0.24 - -0.02)

Note: 95% CI´s in parentheses

Table 8 presents the difference in predicted probabilities of voting in each of the countries and years in which satisfaction with democracy was significant, when all other variables are held at their mean or most frequent values. The simulated predicted probabilities reveal that the effect of this variable is between -22% in Colombia (2012) and 22% in Costa Rica (2006).

Figure 6 shows the predicted probability of turnout for different values of satisfaction with democracy in Costa Rica, where the effect of the variable is highest. As expected, all else equal, as the level of satisfaction with democracy increases, the probability of turnout increases in both 2006 and 2010. In the former, citizens with the lowest possible level of satisfaction with democracy have, on average, a 0.49 probability of voting, while individuals with the highest

possible level of satisfaction have approximately a 0.71 probability of voting. In 2010, the magnitude of the effect – while still big – is lower. Citizens very dissatisfied with democracy have, on average, a 0.33 probability of turnout, while those with the highest possible level of satisfaction have a 0.49 probability.

Something that should be pointed out is that in Colombia and Panama where the variable has a negative effect on the likelihood of turnout, trust in elections has a positive and significant effect in that same year. This could be indicating that something else besides affection towards political institutions might be driving the level of trust that people have in the electoral process. Maybe citizens feel that institutions are more responsive and trustworthy when the party of their preference is in power. Thus, it could be the case that citizens that have positive attitudes towards the incumbent government have higher overall trust in the electoral process, independently of their level of satisfaction with the democratic system.

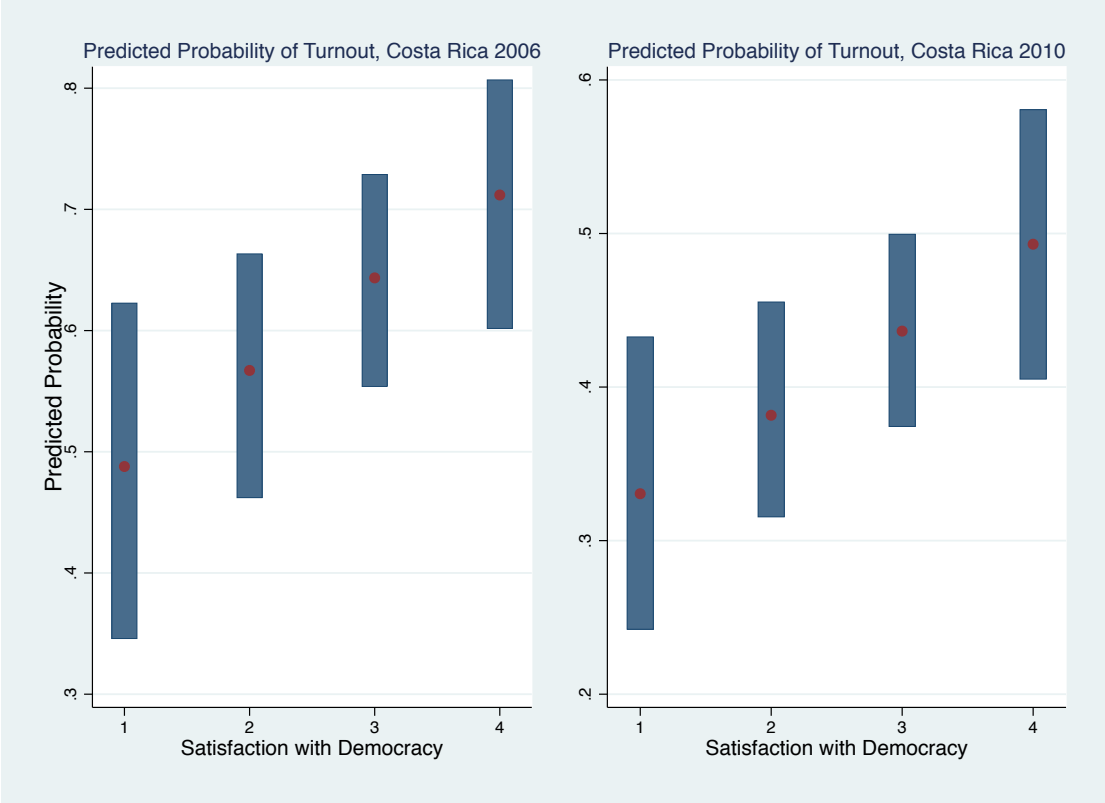

Figure 6. Predicted Probability of Turnout for different values of Satisfaction with Democracy, Costa Rica

Turning now to the control variables, as expected, citizens with a job and with higher education levels also have a higher probability of turnout across the region. On the one hand, education is significant in all of the countries and in the expected direction: in three of them (Paraguay, Bolivia and Venezuela) for all of the survey years, and in six of them for almost all of the survey years (Peru, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, Brazil and Mexico). These results support my theoretical expectations concerning the importance of resources for participation. On

the other hand, employment status is significant in all of the countries and in the expected direction, except Costa Rica. In Argentina, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Panama, the variable is significant for all of the survey years, providing strong support for the hypothesis that citizens with a job have higher turnout rates in these countries.

The results, however, provide scant support for the hypothesis that people with higher income tend to vote more across the region. This could be due to the fact that the item used in the survey is not a good measurement of the socio-economic level of the individuals in each country.[7] In addition, it could be the case that most of the impact of the variable is already absorbed by other indicators of socio-economic status such as education and occupation. The variable remains significant in 11 of the countries[8], but for most of them only for one year, with the exception of Colombia in which it is significant three years and Paraguay where it is significant all years. In Peru, and Colombia (for two out of the three years) the variable is wrongly signed, suggesting that citizens with higher income levels have a lower probability of turnout than those with lower income.

As expected, party identification is a strong predictor of turnout across the region: it is significant in 15 of the 18 countries and its coefficient is in the expected direction in all of the

[7] In order to account for this possibility, I also measured income using the possession of a car by the respondent and run all of the models again. However, the variable still remained a weak predictor of turnout across the countries.

[8] These countries are: Argentina (2012), Venezuela (2010), Uruguay (2007), Peru (2008), Honduras (2006), Guatemala (2012), Ecuador (2014), Costa Rica (2004 and 2010), Colombia (2008, 2012, 2014), Brazil (2007), and Paraguay (from 2006 to 2014).

cases. In 8 of the countries[9] it was significant in each of the years in which the survey was conducted. These results are in line with recent cross-national research in the region (Carlin and Love, 2015; Carreras and Castaneda-Angarita, 2013) and with most of the comparative research on individual-level turnout (Smets and van Ham, 2013). The only three countries in which the effect is not statistically distinguishable from zero consistently throughout all of the years in which the survey was administered are Uruguay, Peru and Paraguay.[10] In addition, as expected, the youngest citizens are less likely to vote than the rest of the population. Age is the strongest predictor of turnout and the most consistent across the region: it is significant and in the expected direction in all of the countries and for all the survey years, except in Argentina where it is only significant two years (2010 and 2014), Paraguay where it is only significant for a year, and Ecuador and Chile where it is significant for all of the years except one. This confirms the findings of previous studies in the region (Carlin and Love, 2015; Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita, 2013; Carreras and İrepoğlu, 2013).

Finally, gender is significant in all of the countries except Chile and, as hypothesized, in 15 of them the coefficient of the variable is negative: women have a higher probability of voting than men. This provides evidence against the existence of a gender gap in participation across the region. However, it is important to point out that the variable was a strong predictor of turnout

[9] These countries are: Guyana, Venezuela, Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Chile.

[10] I estimated the models for these countries without including Satisfaction with Democracy to see if this variable was driving the effect of party identification. In Uruguay and Peru the variable still remained statistically insignificant across all of the survey years. However, in Paraguay it was statistically significant for all of the years in which it was included in the survey.

for just one year in four of the countries (El Salvador, Peru, Venezuela and Nicaragua). Paraguay is the only country where the variable was statistically significant for all survey years. It could be argued that this higher probability of turnout among women is the result of the increasing representation of women in government offices throughout the region. However, this effect should not be overestimated, as empirical evidence supporting this relationship is mixed (Desposato and Norrander, 2009; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer, 2010; Schwindt-Bayer, 2011).

Examining better the effect of trust in elections on turnout

The above analysis indicates that trust in elections is the strongest predictor of turnout among the independent variables of interest: it is significant in 11 countries and always in the expected direction. To have a better understanding of the effect of this variable, Table 9 presents the coefficient estimates from a logistic model that pools all the data of all the countries and years together, with the corresponding standard errors clustered by country.[11] Model 1 only incorporates trust in elections as a predictor, while Model 2 also includes the individual-level control variables. However, both models exclude the other two independent variables. Even though both models have heterogeneity problems, this is the best way to present a summarized version of the results for all countries and years.[12]

[11] There are strong reasons to believe that the errors are correlated inside each country and by not clustering them, the estimates of the variance-covariance matrices will be inefficient.

[12] I also estimated other model specifications and the results remained robust. These alternative models can be found in the appendix.

Table 9. The effect of Trust in Elections on Voter Turnout in Latin America. Logistic Regression, pooled data

	Model 1	**Model 2**
Trust in Elections	0.089***	0.071***
	(0.015)	(0.013)
Age		0.053***
		(0.004)
Gender		-0.279***
		(0.041)
Employment Status		0.604***
		(0.049)
Party Identification		0.642***
		(0.085)
Education		0.395***
		(0.085)
Income		-0.010
		(0.013)
Constant	0.848***	-1.966***
	(0.129)	(0.206)
N	141,689	90,281

Notes: Standard Errors clustered by country are shown in parentheses
*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Taken together, the results from Table 9 show that trust in elections is a significant predictor of voter turnout in Latin America and in the expected direction. As Model 2 indicates, the variable remains statistically significant after accounting for the effect of individual socio-demographic variables. As hypothesized, citizens who perceive that elections are a trustworthy instrument of the democratic system are more likely to go to the polls. This finding is in line with previous studies in the region (McCann and Dominguez, 1998; Carreras and İrepoğlu, 2013). In addition, as expected, employment status and education have a positive and statistically significant effect: citizens with a job and with higher education levels have a higher probability of turnout across the region. These results support the theoretical expectations concerning the importance of individual resources for participation.

Party identification has a statistically significant effect on turnout across the countries and its coefficient is in the hypothesized direction. Furthermore, age also has a statistically significant effect and in the expected direction: older citizens are more likely to vote. The results again provide scant support for the hypothesis that people with higher income tend to vote more across the region. As argued previously, this could be due to the fact that the item used in the survey is not a good measurement of the respondents' socio-economic level. Furthermore, it could be the case that most of the impact of the variable is already absorbed by other indicators of socio-economic status such as education and occupation.

Finally, gender has a statistically significant and negative coefficient. Because of the way the variable is coded (1=male) a negative coefficient indicates that, as hypothesized, women tend to have a higher likelihood of turnout than men, as the results in the previous section also showed.

Table 10 summarizes the results from the logistic regressions examining the effect of trust in elections on voter turnout for each of the individual countries.[13] Since the models are nonlinear, the estimates only provide information about the direction and the statistical significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Thus, to have a better understanding of the substantive effect of trust in elections on turnout, Columns 2 to 7 include first differences in predicted probabilities for each wave of the survey[14] (with the corresponding 95% confidence intervals in parentheses), and indicate whether the variable was statistically significant or not. In addition, the last two columns summarize the lowest and highest effect of the independent variable in each country.

[13] The results of the regressions including the control variables for each country and each wave of the survey can be obtained upon request to the author.

[14] These were calculated using the Clarify software (Tomz, Wittenberg and King, 2001) in Stata. I estimated the first differences in the predicted probability of voting for a change in trust in elections from "not at all" to "a lot" for each survey year, while all other variables were held constant at their mean values.

Table 10. The effect of Trust in Elections on voter turnout in Latin America. Summary of results

Country	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	Min Effect	Max Effect
Argentina	NA	NA	0% (-.089 - .08)	-2% (-.11 - .056)	1% (-.05 - .06)	-2% (-.094 - .058)	-2%	1%
Bolivia	QNA	QNA	-1% (-.07 - .056)	5% (-.001 - .090)	1% (-..035 - .052)	2% (-.033 - .068)	-1%	5%
Brazil	NA	NA	3% (- .021 - .096)	**5% (.005 - .096)**	4% (-.014 - .086)	2% (-.031 - .064)	2%	5%
Chile	NA	QNA	9% (-.007 - .189)	**7% (.006 - .149)**	7% (-.025 - .172)	**30% (.179 - .406)**	7%	30%
Colombia	5% (-.026 - .137)	**18% (.086 - .275)**	**20% (.106 - .298)**	**21% (.119 - .299)**	**20% (.103 - .289)**	7% (-.034 - .168)	5%	21%
Costa Rica	**23% (.149 - .309)**	**23% (.15 - .304)**	**10% (.017 - .182)**	7% (-.037 - .167)	8% (-.008 - .174)	5% (-.028 - .151)	5%	23%
Ecuador	-1% (-.045 - .033)	2% (-.0155 - .062)	1% (-.033 - .044)	1% (-.020 - .050)	3% (-.016 - .088)	-1% (-.048 - .035)	-1%	3%
El Salvador	5% (-.012 - .12)	**13% (.034 - .230)**	**8% (-.000 - .157)**	**9% (.013 - .157)**	6% (-.030 - .152)	**11% (.04 - .19)**	5%	13%
Guatemala	**9% (.012 - .178)**	3% (-.081 - .15)	1% (-.069 - .085)	4% (-.052 - .133)	**13% (.045 - .209)**	3% (-.040 - .110)	1%	13%
Guyana	NA	**7% (.007 - .140)**	NA	**19% (.109 - .269)**	7% (-.012 - .141)	3% (-.049 - .098)	3%	19%
Honduras	1% (- .063 - .075)	3% (-.036 - .089)	-3% (-.16 - .095)	**25% (.124 - .357)**	11% (-.003 - .226)	**10% (.03 - .165)**	-3%	25%

Notes: NA= Survey not Administered
QNA= Question not Asked
Cells in bold indicate that trust in elections is statistically significant; 95% CI's are shown in parentheses

Table 10 (cont'd)

Country	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	Min Effect	Max Effect
Nicaragua	3% (-.043 - .091)	-1% (-.106 - .08)	-1% (-.086 - .060)	6% (-.018 - .125)	**10% (.049 - .153)**	**14% (.069 - .211)**	-1%	14%
Panama	6% (-.003 - .119)	-5% (-.132 - .028)	**12% (.036 - .199)**	**7% (.006 - .152)**	3% (-.056 - .118)	5% (-.028 - .134)	-5%	12%
Paraguay	NA	**14% (.040 - .24)**	-4% (-.158 - .062)	10% (.006 - .184)	-3% (-.130 - .064)	4% (-.033 - .107)	-4%	14%
Peru	NA	-2% (-.072 - .031)	-0.20% (-.044 - .036)	-0.40% (-.068 - .056)	2% (-.039 - .074)	-2% (-.076 - .035)	-0.4%	2%
Uruguay	NA	NA	-1% (-.033 - .031)	3% (-.009 - .092)	4% (-.001 - .098)	**6% (.011 - .130)**	-1%	6%
Venezuela	NA	NA	**7% (.006 - .135)**	**10% (.018 - .183)**	**12% (.033 - .219)**	**4% (.001 - .079)**	4%	12%
Mexico	5% (-.014 - .126)	NA	1% (-.056 - .086)	**10% (.023 - .187)**	5% (-.043 - .145)	5% (-.038 - .129)	1%	10%

Notes: NA= Survey not Administered
QNA= Question not Asked
Cells in bold indicate that trust in elections is statistically significant; 95% CI's are shown in parentheses

As Table 10 shows, trust in elections remains a significant predictor of voter turnout in 14 of the 18 countries included in the study, and in all of them in the expected positive direction. Thus, by eliminating the other two independent variables from the model, the impact of trust in elections across the region increases. Its effect presents variation both within and between countries throughout the years. Specifically, the effect of the variable ranges between a minimum of 4% in Venezuela (2014) and a maximum of 30% in Chile (2014).

The results seem to indicate that the effect of trust in elections on turnout is contingent on compulsory voting.[15] Argentina, Peru and Ecuador, where the variable is not statistically significant, have compulsory voting laws that are enforced. Furthermore, in Brazil and Uruguay, where the variable is statistically significant only one year and its effect exhibits less variation across the years, voting is mandatory and enforced as well. Mexico and Paraguay, where the variable is statistically significant only one year, also have compulsory voting laws.[16] In addition, in Colombia, Venezuela, and El Salvador, where voting is not compulsory, the effect of trust in elections is statistically distinguishable from zero for almost all or all survey years. Thus, citizens' confidence in the electoral process remains a stronger determinant of turnout in countries where voting is not mandatory.

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[15] In addition, I estimated a mixed-effects logistic regression including an interaction term between trust in elections (an individual-level variable) and compulsory voting (a country-level variable). The coefficient for the interaction term was negative and statistically significant, indicating that the effect of trust in elections on voter turnout is higher in countries without compulsory voting laws. These results can be found in the appendix.

[16] Costa Rica and Honduras also have compulsory voting laws but they are not enforced and the effect of trust in elections on the likelihood of turnout remains high.

These findings are in line with the literature on voter turnout in Latin America (Carlin and Love 2015; Fornos et al. 2004; Pérez-Liñán 2001), which has shown that countries where voting is compulsory and sanctions for non-voting are enforced, turnout tends to be higher. When voting is compulsory, the explanatory power of trust in elections decreases, as voting "is easy, common, and legally coerced" (Carlin and Love 2015: 51) and voters become less dependent on their internal motivation to vote. In turn, when voting is voluntary, citizens have to rely more heavily in this internal motivation in order to show up at the polls and the impact of citizens' confidence in the electoral process is stronger. In addition, in their study of the impact of trust in elections on voter turnout in Latin America for the year 2010, Carreras and İrepoğlu (2013) also concluded that "trust in elections is a much stronger predictor of electoral participation in countries where compulsory voting laws do not exist" (Carreras and İrepoğlu 2013: 617).

CONCLUSION

In this study, I explore the relevance of citizens' attitudes and perceptions towards political institutions for explaining electoral participation in Latin America. Specifically, I analyze the impact of trust in elections, satisfaction with democracy, and respect for institutions. The empirical results do not show that these variables are uniformly better at explaining turnout in the region than socio-demographic characteristics, but they have a significant effect on voter turnout in individual countries. The analysis reveals that trust in elections is the strongest predictor of turnout among the independent variables of interest: it is significant in 11 countries and always in the expected direction. The empirical results indicate that this variable has a significant effect on voter turnout across the region and throughout the years, especially in those countries without compulsory voting laws.

The study also shows that satisfaction with democracy and respect for institutions have mixed effects: in some cases they increase the likelihood of voting, but in others they act in the opposite direction. I provide an alternative explanation for these results: citizens use elections as a way of engaging in the political process, to express their discontent, lack of respect and their dissatisfaction with the political system. This finding is in line with Power and Garand's (2007) study, which argues that political discontent matters for invalid voting in Latin America. In addition, recent work by Cantu and Garcia-Ponce (2015) in Mexico shows that citizens with low evaluations of electoral integrity still show up at the polling station. In a region where voting is compulsory in most of the countries, citizens with lower levels of affection towards political

institutions do not necessarily abstain. Instead, they can show up at the poll booth and spoil their ballots or choose to vote for the opposition candidate. Future studies could, thus, look at the effect that discontent has on vote choice.

The analysis also reveals that the individual level socio-demographic variables that explain voter turnout in the industrialized world have explanatory power in Latin America as well. As expected, older, educated and employed citizens have higher probabilities of voting. And, as hypothesized, women tend to vote more than men across the region. Age, a proxy for the level of political experience of citizens, is the strongest predictor of turnout and the most consistent across the region. In addition, party identification is also one of the most important predictors of voter turnout. However, contrary to the expectations of the resource model of participation, there is little evidence that citizens with higher income tend to vote more in the region. This could be due to the fact that other variables like employment status and level of education might be driving the effect of socio-economic status on participation. Altogether, these findings challenge the conventional wisdom on electoral participation in the region which argues that "voter turnout in Latin America is largely driven by institutional and political process variables, with socioeconomic variables having a surprisingly small effect" (Fornos et al., 2004: 934).

Given that the results indicate the need to take into account citizens' trust towards the electoral process for explaining variations in turnout, further research might also examine the determinants of this trust in the region. When the party that citizens prefer is in power, they might feel that institutions are more responsive and trustworthy. In line with this, Cantu and

Garcia-Ponce (2015) find evidence of partisan effects on attitudes towards the electoral process in the 2012 Mexican presidential elections. Supporters of the incumbent party had lower levels of confidence on the integrity of the electoral process once they learned that their preferred candidate lost, whereas the discredit about this process among supporters of a party that had never won the elections remained consistent over time. Thus, it could be the case that the questions about citizens' attitudes and perceptions towards political institutions in the LAPOP survey are capturing attitudes towards the incumbent government. In other words, citizens' attitudes towards the incumbent government could be a strong predictor of their level of trust in the electoral process. There is a question in the LAPOP survey that measures the former: "*speaking in general of the current administration, how would you rate the job performance of (name current president)*?". The answers are coded in a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "very good" and 5 is "very bad". Future studies could thus estimate the relation between perceptions of government performance and trust in elections. In fact, I estimated an ordered logit model in Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela with trust in elections as the dependent variable and government performance as the main independent variable together with individual socio-demographic covariates. This gave statistically significant results across all of the years in which the survey was administered for these countries.

The results of the present study have an important policy implication. Given that trust in the electoral process has a significant impact on voter turnout, governments and nongovernmental organizations throughout the region should focus on the quality of the electoral process if their

goal is to increase electoral participation. In countries where this process has already started, governments should continue in this direction. In others, politicians should focus their efforts in combating electoral malpractices and introducing the necessary institutional changes to guarantee free and fair elections. This is an important task if governments are committed to improving the quality of the vote and of democracy in the region.

APPENDIX

Operationalization of Control Variables

Variables	Survey Items
Age	Recoded into 1= 16-23; 2= 24-33; 3= 34-48; 4= 49-64; 5= 65 and older
Gender	Recoded into 1 = male, 0 = female
Employment Status	How do you mainly spend your time? Are you currently: 1) Working? 2) Not working, but have a job? 3) Actively looking for a job? 4) A student? 5) Taking care of the home? 6) Retired, a pensioner or permanently disabled to work 7) Not working and not looking for a job? Recoded into 1= working (options 1&2), 0= not working (all other options)
Education	How many years of schooling have you completed? Scale from 0 to over 18. Recoded into 0= no education, 1= primary school, 2= secondary school, 3= higher education
Party Identification	Do you currently identify with a political part? Recoded into 1= yes, 0= no
Income	Into which of the following income ranges does the total monthly income of this household fit, including remittances from abroad and the income of all the working adults and children? [Deciles based on the currency and distribution of the country, and updated throughout the survey years for each country] 0= no income, maximum category varies by country

Table 11. Robustness Checks: Alternative Model Specifications

	Model 1 (Random Effects logistic regression)	**Model 2 (Logistic regression w/dummy variables for country)**	**Model 3 (Logistic regression w/dummy variables for country and year)**
Trust in Elections	0.063*** (0.005)	0.063*** (0.005)	0.062*** (0.005)
Age	0.054*** (0.001)	0.054*** (0.001)	0.054*** (0.001)
Gender	-0.282** (0.019)	-0.282*** (0.019)	-0.283*** (0.019)
Employment Status	0.591*** (0.019)	0.591*** (0.019)	0.589*** (0.019)
Party Identification	0.764*** (0.021)	0.764*** (0.021)	0.765*** (0.021)
Education	0.334*** (0.014)	0.334*** (0.014)	0.330*** (0.014)
Income	-0.007** (0.003)	-0.007** (0.003)	-0.003 (0.003)
Constant	-1.936*** (0.131)	-2.035*** (0.058)	-2.083*** (0.061)
N	90,281	90,281	90,281

Notes: Standard Errors in parentheses.
Estimates of the year and country dummies are not reported but are available upon request to the author
*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 12. Determinants of Voter Turnout in Latin America. Mixed-Effects (Random Intercept) Logistic Regression.

Variables	Random Intercept Model
Trust in Elections	0.090*** (0.013)
Age	0.055*** (0.004)
Gender	-0.285*** (0.044)
Employment Status	0.599*** (0.050)
Party Identification	0.748*** (0.081)
Education	0.361*** (0.032)
Income	-0.007 (0.011)
Country-Level variable: **Compulsory Voting**[17]	 0.663*** (0.077)
Compulsory Voting * Trust in Elections	-0.043** (0.015)
Constant	-2.514*** (0.165)
Random Effects intercept	0.101*** (0.00779)
N	9,0281

Notes: Standard Errors clustered by country are shown in parentheses.
*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

[17] This variable measures whether voting is compulsory (1) or voluntary (0) (International Idea).

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