



# An Experimental Literature Review on Democratic Erosion

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## Executive Summary

As the second of two deliverables for the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG), the Bush School of Government & Public Service Master of International Affairs Capstone Team has produced a comprehensive review of existing experimental evidence related to democratic erosion. The utility of experimental evidence for policymakers is two-fold. First, experimental designs are a rigorous way of establishing causation, or determining whether some intervention or treatment has a causal effect on an outcome of interest. Because the stakes are often high in the decisions of policymakers, rigorous evidence of what works and what does not is optimal. Second, similar to experimental designs, policymakers often seek to change the status quo by implementing an intervention or program. Thus, intervention methods tested in experimental literature may pave the ways for actual programs that policymakers could implement.

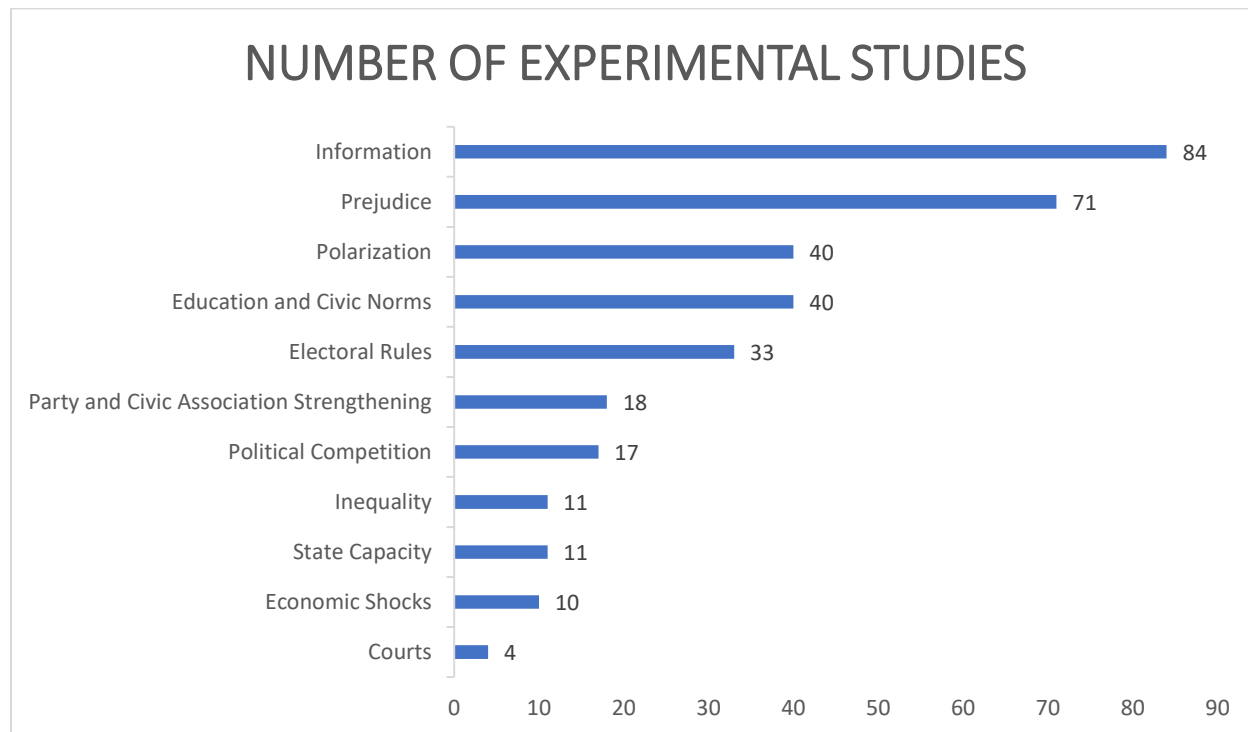
Given that the audience for this literature review is policymakers and practitioners, our ultimate goal is to produce concise summaries of the evidence along with policy recommendations. However, we also want our audience to have an accurate picture of the evidence base for these conclusions and recommendations so they can individually assess whether the conclusions we derive are applicable to their own context. Thus, we have chosen to combine two styles of systematic reviews – mapping and narrative reviews – in consultation with an expert from the TAMU libraries. In a mapping review, distinct features of each piece of evidence is documented in a systematic way, e.g. the population, the sample size, the type of treatments, so that the reader has a firm idea of the evidence base from which conclusions are drawn and what gaps exist in the literature. We combine this approach with a more traditional narrative review in order to provide a synthesis of lessons, e.g. whether certain types of treatments were successful, or were differentially successful across contexts, and policy recommendations.

Because there are many distinct areas of the literature that might have lessons for democratic erosion, the Capstone Team used existing literature reviews and literature on democratic erosion to develop ten themes. We then categorized the experimental evidence into these themes, and researched literature on the relationship of that theme to democratic governance or erosion:

1. Inequality
2. Information
3. Economic shocks
4. Electoral rules
5. Education and norms
6. Judicial structure
7. Polarization
8. State capacity
9. Party or association strength
10. Political competition

The principal target of the literature review is fully experimental studies (field, lab, or lab-in-the-field approaches), but we also included quasi-experiments such as natural experiments or regression discontinuity designs for topics that are more challenging to directly manipulate such as economic shocks. Four of the topics, inequality, economic shocks, judicial structures, and the strength of parties and civic association had limited experimental evidence, likely due to the difficulty of manipulating the variable in question.

To generate the evidence base for the literature review, the Capstone Team first conducted individual searches within each of the topics using a variety of search terms and search engines (which we have documented). Then, a librarian helped generate a more comprehensive search of all experimental literature on democracy, which resulted in over 3,000 unique studies. We used an online tool called [Rayyan](#) to sort through and categorize these studies, keeping only those that are sufficiently related to our project. We document the criteria used for excluding studies in the full report. The final number of articles per topic is pictured below.



The report is organized by topic. Each section provides 1) a table that maps the literature falling under that topic heading, and 2) a narrative summary of the conclusions from that literature and resulting policy recommendations. This was done so that each topical section could be a stand-alone product in case users were only interested in a subset of themes. Rather than reviewing the findings of each of the 10 topics here, we focus on two – Polarization and Education/Civic Norms – as an example of what is contained in the full report. See below for a brief highlight of our findings on these two topics, which we believe will be of particular interest to practitioners.

### [Polarization](#)

Social and political polarization are often present in eroding democracies. Svobik (2017) explained one reason for this is voters have such a strong preference for their favorite candidate and such a strong aversion to the opposing candidate that it is extremely costly for them to punish their preferred candidate. Knowing this, the preferred candidate has more latitude to perform poorly without getting sanctioned at the ballot box. The experimental literature on polarization comes from both programs attempting to reduce polarization and the broad set of moral psychology research led largely by Cass Sunstein and Jonathan Haidt.

We find that there are a number of interventions that seem as if they would be effective, but counterintuitively increase polarization. For example, when two groups of people that disagree on a topic collaborate or interact, rather than moderating their opinion and coming to a middle ground, they become more extreme. Each group hears their supporters' arguments, making them more convinced of their own, thus shaping an "us" versus "them" mentality. Access to more accurate information also does not help. People use motivated reasoning to find evidence that supports their claims and delegitimize evidence that is counter to their opinion. Lastly, a greater degree of education does not improve this rationalization. Education simply makes the individual better at finding arguments to support their point of view, rather than fairly weighing the evidence.

The interventions that displayed a degree of success either appealed to moral or patriotic sentiments. This created a sense that the two sides were on the same team, and thus were more likely to hear one another's opinion and moderate their own.

### Civic Education and Norms

Another key precursor to democratic erosion is public disillusionment with democracy or a decline in legitimacy of the state. While these perceptions of citizens are often rational reactions to state actions, there also exists information asymmetries in which citizens do not have full information about what the state is doing or supposed to be doing as a result of weak civic education. We investigated the evidence for whether interventions could increase civic participation and norms. There are a number of factors that impact voter participation including education level, the level of social pressure to vote in a community, a feeling of belonging to the country and the democratic system, and geographic distance to polling places. Most civic education programs were successful at increasing this form of voter participation but were ineffective at changing deep-rooted values about democracy and trust in the governance system.

The interventions that have proven to be exceptionally effective depend on their pedagogical method. Programs that use a high degree of interaction such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) are far more effective than those that simply provide information. As an example, a program in Liberia used CBT training in which individuals were asked to act out property disputes and critically reflect on why they made the choices they had made. This program was highly successful, increasing the number of disputes while simultaneously lowering the number of violent disputes. These targeted approaches to specific symptoms of erosion have been found to be more effective than general civic education programs. These interventions also have substantial spillover effects through daily social interactions and sharing of opinions, as new norms are developed in the community.

## Introduction

The production of a systematic review of experimental literature on democratic erosion was primarily motivated by the need to compensate for a lack of experimental evidence in the realm of democratic erosion. This is mainly due to the inherent nature of the phenomenon: processes of democratic erosion are an amalgamation of different structural components undertaken by leaders to systematically degrade the quality of democracy. Experimental literature is concerned with the introduction of a treatment variable into a controlled environment, with the end result being an analysis of the treatment's impact on one segment of the population in comparison to the non-treated segment – in other words, to determine causation or establish a causal effect. In the field of democracy promotion, practitioners similarly apply treatments in the form of programmatic interventions.

The idea behind a systematic review is to reduce bias when analyzing a body of literature. In a non-systematic literature review, the author is not subject to outlining their search methodology nor their methods used to choose works for analysis. For example, a researcher may hold certain biases and only choose to analyze articles based on those preferences. This shortcoming opens up the potential for selection bias, limiting the depth and overall contribution of the research itself. A systematic review aims to reduce selection bias by constructing a methodological framework of compiling literature; essentially, available literature on a subject is screened through various pre-determined criteria relevant to the research question. In summation, a systematic review allows researchers to discuss previous findings in a more reliable manner and utilize a more diverse body of literature.

Our systematic review utilized a combination of both mapping and narrative review structures. Mapping reviews entail a broad survey of the existing literature through a quantitative lens. Articles are broken down into quantifiable characteristics, such as study context and treatments, and then cross-examined with other works in the review to establish links across the literature. Mapping reviews do not necessarily emphasize results, so our systematic review incorporated a narrative component as a means to complement the quantitative links established. Narrative reviews entail a qualitative approach towards synthesizing elements across existing literature. Loosely structured, narrative reviews aim to compare results and provide concrete conclusions based on contextualized academic perspectives.



## Methodology

In the past, scholars have attempted to gain a better understanding of democratic institutions by conducting experimental studies and applying treatments in order to determine whether there was a causal relationship between two variables. This is useful for policymakers who oftentimes aim to carry out interventions to consolidate democratic institutions or counter democratic erosion but lack the resources to learn how well those interventions work. We fill that gap by reviewing existing literature for evidence on which interventions have proven effective and which have not.

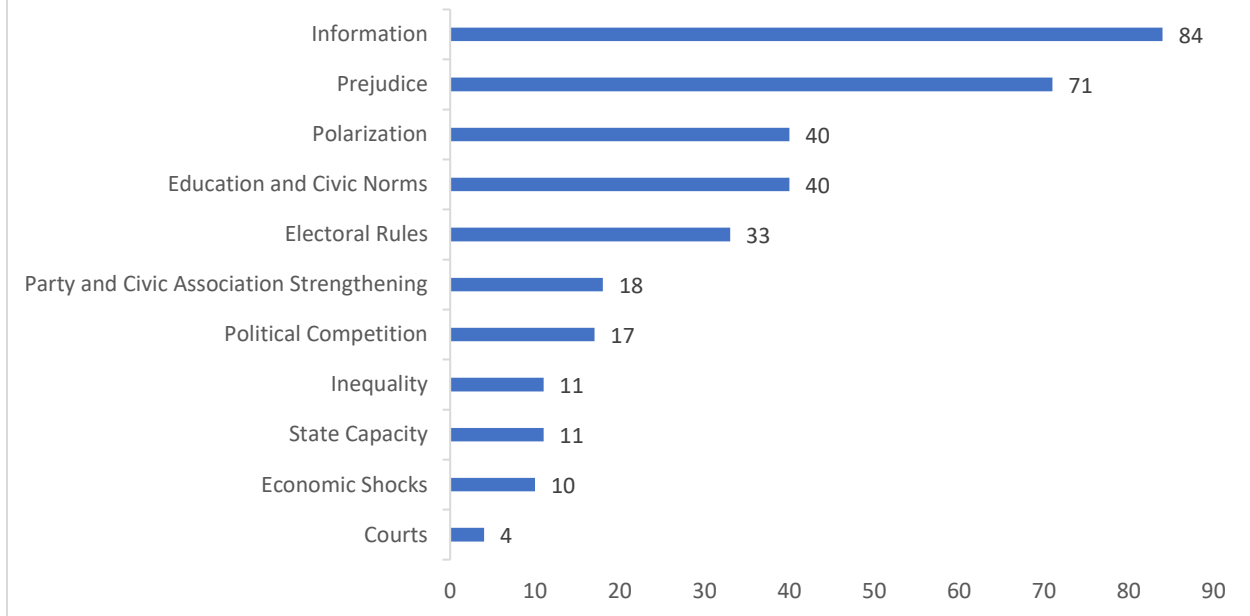
A first challenge was to identify the existing bodies of experimental literature that might be relevant to understanding democracy and its erosion but may not be explicitly about democracy. One example is literature on reducing polarization and prejudice, which are both social phenomena that we know to be related to the rise of populist parties and can eventually contribute to democratic backsliding. Thus, we first applied the use of common website search engines such as Google Scholar, as well as the TAMU Library database to identify bodies of experimental literature on democratic erosion that would assist us in better understanding causal factors that could result in backsliding. While this preliminary search elicited a broad set of studies on relevant topics, the depth of the evidence was weak. To increase our ability to capture the relevant literature, a TAMU librarian conducted a more comprehensive search across the most relevant search engines – EconLit with Full Text, Political Science Complete, Public Affairs, Public Administration, with search terms such as democracy, voting or vote, treatment and control, election, and random and experiment.<sup>1</sup>

This more comprehensive search resulted in 3,558 journal articles. We then utilized a software called Rayyan, which is an open-source systematic review application developed by the Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), to sort through all the studies and assign them to appropriate categories. The software allowed us to include the studies that were sufficiently pertinent to our research and exclude those that contained the aforementioned search terms but were either unrelated to our topic of research or did not apply experimental methodology in the analysis. This narrowed the literature to 339 articles grouped into 11 distinct categories: Prejudice, Polarization, Education and Norms, Information, Party and Civic Association Strengthening, Electoral Rules, Courts, Inequality and Democratic Breakdown, Political Competition, Economic Shocks, and State Capacity. The number of studies in each topic area is summarized in the figure below.

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<sup>1</sup> The exact parameters of the search are: KW (random\* or Experiment\* or (treatment and control\*)) OR SU (random\* or Experiment\* or (treatment and control\*)) OR TI ((random\* or Experiment\* or (treatment and control\*)) OR AB (random\* or Experiment\* or (treatment and control\*)) AND SU (election\* or voting or vote\* OR democra\*) OR AB (election\* or voting or vote\* OR democra\*) OR TI (election\* or voting or vote\* OR democra\*) OR KW (election\* or voting or vote\* OR democra\*).

## NUMBER OF EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES



With this final body of literature, we next conducted the mapping review. For each study, we coded key characteristics including sample size, unit of randomization, distinct features of the target population, number of treatment arms, country context, experiment type, types of treatments, and the experimental findings.

As a final step, we synthesized the findings across the studies within each topic area and outlined conclusions and policy recommendations. The remainder of this report is organized by topic area so that readers can select their areas of interest and read them as stand-alone pieces. Each section is organized in the same way with a report on the summary of findings, a list of policy implications, a table reporting on the mapping review, and a full reference list for the literature synthesized within that topic area.

# Results

## 1. Information

### 1.1 Summary of Findings

A survey of the experimental literature produced 84 studies related to information and democratic governance/erosion. Each of the articles strove to measure the impact of information provision and/or framing on democratic outcomes. Five overarching themes emerged from this subtopic.

#### *Information increases awareness*

Six articles demonstrated how information can increase voter awareness and better contextualize issues. Providing information on budget allocation trade-offs (West, et. al 2016, Boeri and Tabellini 2012) or the policy responses of peer governments (ben-Aaron, et. al 2017) can shift voter expectations and preferences. Educating voters on the motivations of purveyors of information may also lead to a reappraisal of said information's merit (Dowling and Wichowsky 2013). Political debates are found to be an effective way of informing voters and are proven to positively impact voters' political knowledge (Casey, et. al 2014).

The importance of increasing voter awareness is underscored by Augenblick and Nicholson's 2016 study, which found that voter reliance on decision shortcuts increases as voter options expand.

#### *Information affects interpretation*

Trends regarding issue interpretation are more nebulous, as the experimental literature is sometimes contradictory regarding the impact of interventions. With regards to the effects of news media and information, Conroy-Krutz and Moehler (2015) showed that partisan media sources can moderate citizens by exposing them to alternative perspectives. This outcome is tangentially supported by Feldman (2011), who found no evidence of opinionated news intensifying partisanship any more than non-opinionated news. The general proliferation of news sources – both opinionated and non-opinionated – is potentially worrisome however, as Iyengar and Hahn (2009) found that expanded media choices can polarize news consumers.

It is also worth pointing out the types of information that most positively affect issue interpretation. Economic information is found to be particularly impactful in this regard. De Vries, et. al (2018) found that partisan bias affects economic optimism, but the provision of economic indicator data forces individuals to adjust their perceptions. Alt, et. al (2016) shared corroborating evidence that credible new economic information, when combined with political sophistication, changes political behavior.

Greater research on cognitive biases in information prioritization and interpretation is required. While some studies suggested that individuals selectively interpret information to conform to their preconceived beliefs (Baekgaard and Serritzlew 2016), others posited that individuals rarely form opinions by ignoring less-favored sources and information (Hobolt, et. al 2013).

### *Information drives turnout*

The impact of information interventions on voter turnout is particularly pronounced. Eleven different studies demonstrated a positive effect on voter turnout through various treatments. Distribution of SMS messages (Marx, et. al 2017; Bhatti, et. al 2017), face-to-face canvassing (Davenport 2010), personally-delivered messaging (Arceneaux and Nickerson 2010), radio advertising (Panagopoulos and Green 2011; Panagopoulos and Green 2008), and letters or other mailed information (Bhatti, et. al 2018; Gerber, et. al 2010) all increased voter turnout in nonpartisan “get-out-the vote” campaigns. The content of messages in these studied varied from simple election day reminders to educational initiatives to inform citizens of candidates’ positions.

Partisan effects in driving turnout are more ambiguous. Arceneaux and Nickerson (2010) found no difference between negative and positive messages in driving turnout, while Krupnikov (2014) showed that the impact of negative messages varies depending on the time of exposure.

### *Information framing changes opinions*

The literature suggests that the context in which information is received and processed is also important. If primed to consider partisan differences, individuals may disregard the content of presidential communication and defer to their partisan identity (Harrison 2016). Information framing is a versatile strategy and can be used beyond entrenching perspectives. Issue reframing, for example, is found to change voter opinions (Rogers and Nickerson 2013).

The type of frame applied to information is also shown to impact its overall influence. More intense framing devices are shown to significantly affect the ways in which events are perceived (Han, et. al 2009). Framing information negatively can augment the perceived threat level of policy proposals (Schuck and de Vreese 2011), and threatening frames may boost support for more extreme policy options (Malhotra and Popp 2012).

### *Information shapes perceptions of politicians*

Information presents a means of fostering politician accountability, but its net effects on governmental trust are more complicated. Maier (2011) showed that support for politicians and parties decreases in the wake of scandal, but trust in institutions and rates of democratic satisfaction are unaffected. In Mexico however, corruption information was found to decrease incumbent party support, but it also decreased voter turnout and support for the challenger party (Chong, et. al 2015). Similarly, Grimmelikhuijsen, et. al (2013) demonstrated that transparency information can have negative effects on trust in government. Interestingly, the author explains the differences by which transparency information is received as the result of cultural values.

One encouraging finding relates to the impact of information fact-checking on candidate evaluation. Wintersieck (2017) showed that candidate support is bolstered

by “fact-check confirmed honesty.” Fieldhouse (2013) complemented this research in finding that fact-checks – particularly those challenging validity – influence voter assessments and acceptance of political advertisements.

## 1.2 Policy Implications

Given the at-times contradictory findings above, policy recommendations cannot be offered for each thematic area within the information subtopic. Moreover, certain themes (e.g., issue framing) may be less compatible with programmatic intervention strategies traditionally undertaken by USAID and its implementing partners. Noting these limitations, we offer the following recommendations:

- In environments where partisanship is high and/or voter turnout is low, information campaigns to circulate economic data can ameliorate these factors and increase voter awareness more broadly.
- Furthermore, candidate debates should be organized and integrated in countries to inform voters and increase their political knowledge. Debates must be followed by rigorous fact-checks to increase voter confidence in the candidates. In countries that already hold debates but lack fact-checks, investigative journalists may be trained to facilitate this process.
- Lastly, voter turnout can be increased by organizing nonpartisan get-out-the-vote campaigns. Information interventions should target countries with low political participation. Given the success of a wide assortment of strategies, interventions can be tailored to meet local infrastructural conditions and technological diffusion.

## 1.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population or subpopulation analyses	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Adkins and Castle 2014	268	individual	undergraduate students	4	United States	laboratory, survey experiments	assigned film screening	political attitudes	Popular movies can have long-term influence on political attitudes, and the effect is not moderated by political knowledge or ideology
Aker, et al. 2017	160	polling location	mobile phone coverage	4	Mozambique	<i>unclear</i>	SMS information campaign; SMS hotline for electoral misconduct; distribution of a free newspaper	voter turnout	All treatments positively affected voter turnout
Alt, et al. 2016	6000	individual	none	8	Denmark	survey experiment	varied source of unemployment forecasts and forecast itself	voter behavior	New economic information will affect political behavior when there is an interaction between credible information and political sophistication
Alvarez, et al. 2010	24500	household	residents of 44th Assembly District (California); Democrats	5	United States	field experiment	information intervention (i.e., mailer, phone call, or door-to-door canvassing, door hanger)	voter turnout	Get-out-the-vote campaign strategies work in local elections
Anderson and McGregor 2017	1498	individual	none	11	Canada	survey experiment	messages on one of five issues (the environment, the health-care system, the economy, immigrant and minority issues, and national security) with either positive or negative connotations	retrospective evaluation of politicians	The issues being focused upon during a campaign, and the partisan connotations of messages regarding that issue, impact voter opinion
Arceneaux and Nickerson 2010	6206	individual	between ages 18 and 29; Minnesota residents	2	United States	randomized field experiment	positively or negatively framed messages	voter mobilization	Personally-delivered messages can influence voting preferences, but there is no difference between negative and positive messages on voter turnout or attitudes
	63354	individual	minority voters; Los Angeles residents	2	United States	randomized field experiment	positively or negatively framed messages	voter mobilization	
Arceneaux and Wielen 2013	1006	individual	Democrat or Republican voters	4	United States	survey experiment	presentation of factual information depicting participant's party or opposing party in a negative manner	partisan evaluation	Psychological motivations influence how people evaluate parties upon receiving negative information
Augenblick and Nicholson 2016	<i>unclear</i>	voting precinct	none	<i>unclear</i>	United States	natural experiment	ballot ordering	voter behavior	Facing more choices significantly increases abstention rates or reliance on decision shortcuts (e.g., voting for the status quo or first-listed) candidate
Baekgaard and Serritzlew 2016	1784	individual	none	2	Denmark	survey experiment	performance information on public and private organizations	performance evaluation	Individuals systematically interpret information regarding the performance of institutions to fit their prior beliefs
	1416	individual	none	2	Denmark	survey experiment	comparison between two organizations with unknown sector affiliation	performance evaluation	
Banda 2014	417	individual	undergraduate students	4	United States	survey experiment	statements attributed to candidates for US Senate (no attacks, Democrat attacks Republican, Republican attacks Democrat, both candidates attack each other)	voter perception	Information cues embedded in negative campaign messages lead citizens' to judge the target as more ideologically extreme and the attacker as more moderate
Barton, et al. 2014	2900	household	Democrats	4	United States	2x2 field experiment	canvass with political pamphlet; canvass with how-to-vote pamphlet; lit-dropped political pamphlet; lit-dropped how-to-vote pamphlet	voter support for candidates	Voters are persuaded by personal contact with a candidate, which works by providing a costly signal of quality

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Bhatti, et al. 2017	47846	individual	citizens under 30 years old	4	Denmark	field experiment	timing of text message (before election day, on election, both before and on election day)	voter turnout	Sending SMS messages can yield moderate, positive effects on turnout
	92089	individual	none	2	Denmark	field experiment	message content (one focusing on social norms and one on political conflict)	voter turnout	
	54694	individual	none	2	Denmark	field experiment	receipt of text message w/ a link to a campaign video; no receipt of text message	voter turnout	
	112231	individual	none	2	Denmark	field experiment	message tone (one traditional and one informal)	voter turnout	
Bleck and Michelitch 2017	10	village	villages between Mopti and Timbuktu and mainly populated by Bambara and Peuhl ethnic groups	2	Mali	field experiment	radio distribution; flaslight (placebo) distribution	support for junta	In the wake of coup, radio exposure increased salience of national identity and willingness to delay elections, but it did not increase approval for the junta
Boeri and Tabellini 2012	1500	individual	none	2	Italy	survey experiment	provision of descriptive note on pension system prior to answering survey	political support for pension reform	Individuals who are more informed about the costs and functioning of the pension system are more willing to accept reforms
Botero, et al. 2015	801	individual	residents of four cities: Bogota, Medellin, Cali, and Barranquilla	3	Colombia	survey experiment	source of the corruption accusation (leading newspaper, NGO, lower court)	support and trust of corrupt politicians	Corruption accusations from the leading national newspaper more effective drive down levels of support and trust for corrupt politicians than identical accusations made by NGOs and the judiciary
Boudreau and MacKenzie 2015	1000	individual	residents of California	5	United States	survey experiment	receipt of party cues, policy information, both, or no information	public opinion	Citizens do not blindly follow their party when exposed to new information (i.e., efforts to inform the electorate can influence opinions)
Boudreau and McCubbins 2010	236	individual	undergraduate students	4	United States	2x2 factorial design	provision of polling information prior to answering math problem	consumption of polling information	Citizens are more likely to obtain polls when the decisions they must make are difficult and when they are unsophisticated
Boudreau, et al. 2015	41	voting precinct	residents of San Francisco	3	United States	survey experiment	information regarding endorsements (party, newspaper) that candidates received during election cycle	voter support for candidates	Voters treat political party and newspaper endorsements as signals of partisan affinity or candidate quality/viability rather than signals of candidate ideology
Brader and Tucker 2018	5000	individual	none	2	Bulgaria; Great Britain; Hungary; Moldova; Poland; Russia	survey experiment	provision of detailed party information (e.g., policy platform, incumbency status)	partisan identification	Provision of policy information and reasoning may hurt the development of partisan identities
	5000	individual	none	2	Bulgaria; Great Britain; Hungary; Moldova; Poland; Russia	survey experiment	place parties and self on an ideological 7-point scale	partisan identification	
Brown, et al. 2010	270	poll	residents of Cambridge, Ontario	3	Canada	field experiment	distribution of mail drops across polls (full, half, or none)	support for Green Party	Receipt of Green Party literature modestly affected party vote share in the constituency
Brusattin 2012	937	individual	internet users	2	Spain	survey experiment	candidate ideology (i.e., left v. right) and corresponding picture	voter support	A candidate photograph significantly influences voter behavior, and a higher degrees of political sophistication do not reduce the possible effect on a candidate's electoral prospects
Casey, et al. 2014	224	communities	none	3	Sierra Leone	field experiment	debate exposure (i.e., brief introductory video of candidates, radio report or summary of the debate, watched the entire debate)	voter knowledge	Debates yield strong positive impacts on citizen political knowledge, policy alignment, and votes cast

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Chong, et al. 2015	2360	voting precinct	municipalities in Jalisco, Morelos, and Tabasco states	3	Mexico	field experiment	type of flyer circulated (none, no corruption information, information on the total amount of resources available to the mayor and the amount actually spent)	voter turnout; voter choice; partisan identification	Corruption information decreases incumbent party support, voter turnout, support for the challenger party, and erodes partisan attachments in Mexican local elections
Chou and Lien 2010	184	individual	none	4	Taiwan	pre-test-post-test experiment	candidate profiles, poll rankings, negative political ad	voters' responses to negative political ads	Poll results positively effect voting intentions; negative political ads are best received when used by poll leaders and incumbents
Conroy-Krutz 2013	370	individual	residents of Makindye Division (Kampala District) and Bbaale County (Kayunga District)	8	Uganda	survey experiment	informative vignettes about fictional candidates	reliance on ethnic cues	Support for co-ethnics was high when ethnicity was the only distinguishing fact about candidates, but it declined when information was presented that portrayed co-ethnics negatively
Conroy-Krutz and Moehler 2015	228	commuter van	none	4	Ghana	field experiment	playing of live talk-radio (progovernment, pro-opposition, neutral stations) or no radio	partisan identification	Partisan media can moderate citizens by exposing them to alternative perspectives
Dale and Strauss 2009	8053	individual	none	5	United States	field experiment	provision of hotline information (yes/no) and text message appeal (i.e., civic duty v. close race)	voter turnout	For some voters, an election reminder can sufficiently drive them to the polls
Davenport 2010	175	apartment entrance	residents of Boston public housing developments	3	United States	field experiment	traditional canvassing appeals v. face-to-face exchanges in which canvassers distribute printed records of individual voter histories	voter turnout	Standard face-to-face canvassing increased voter turnout by about 5-8 percentage points, and the feedback intervention by approximately 15-18 points
De Vries, et al. 2018	4088	individual	none	3	Great Britain	survey experiment	information about levels of economic growth and unemployment	economic perceptions	While partisanship influences economic optimism, information about real economic changes forces individuals to adjust their economic perceptions
Dewan, et al. 2014	941	household	none	24	Canada	field experiment	exposure to different canvassers with various messages	voter intention	Simple canvassing - using either message-based or endorser-based techniques - persuades voters; individual canvasses effects are not found
Dowling and Wichowsky 2013	1213	individual	none	6	United States	survey experiment	advertisement with donor disclosure conditions or no advertisement	voter support for candidates	Voters may discount group-sponsored political advertisements when provided with more information about the financial interests funding the message
Druckman, et al. 2012	547	individual	Evanston, IL metropolitan area residents	4	United States	framing experiment	order of issue frame exposure	public opinion	Opinion stability may often reflect biased information seeking
Enyedi 2016	2502	individual	at least weekly internet users	4	Hungary	2x2 factorial design	asked to use voting application 1, 2, both, or none	voter preference change	Under certain conditions, VAAs can influence electoral behavior but not through compelling voters to switch from one party to another
Feldman 2011	423	individual	none	3	United States	survey experiment	provision of opinionated news source	attitudinal change	No evidence that opinionated news intensifies outlooks among partisans when compared to non-opinionated news
	437	individual	none	3	United States	survey experiment	provision of original balanced story or revised version with elements subtracted	attitudinal change	
Fieldhouse 2013	452	individual	none	6	England	survey experiment	exposure to negative advertisements	reaction to fact-checking	Fact-checks influence assessments and acceptance of the accuracy, utility, and tone of negative political ads; moreover, fact-checks challenging validity of advertisements' claims are more powerful than fact-checks confirming truthfulness
Fridkin, et al. 2015	1229	individual	none	3	United States	survey experiment	visuals within news story with identical information/scripts	foreign policy opinion	Citizens form significantly different foreign policy opinion when the information environment is emotionally-powerful than when it is free of emotion, even when the factual information is equal
Gerber, et al. 2009	2571	individual	Prince William County, VA residents	3	United States	field, survey experiments	provision of free subscription to either the Washington Post or Washington Times	political behavior and opinion	Newspaper exposure did not effect political knowledge, opinions, or voter turn-out



Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Gerber, et al. 2010	369211	individual	none	3	United States	field experiment	no mailing, mailing encouraging voting, mailing encouraging voting and noting individual's past voting behavior	voter turnout	Mailings noting past voting behavior strongly impacted voter turnout; effects were particularly pronounced when mailing disclosed voter's abstention in a recent election
Grimmelikhuijsen, et al. 2013	381	individual	students	4	Netherlands	survey experiment	complete information about the decision-making process; policy information that showed both sides of policy measures; information that was easy to comprehend and timely	trust in government	Transparency has a subdued and, at times, negative effect on trust in government; cultural values can affect how transparency information is received
	279	individual	students	4	South Korea	survey experiment	complete information about the decision-making process; policy information that showed both sides of policy measures; information that was easy to comprehend and timely	trust in government	
Grosser and Schram 2010	288	individual	undergraduate students	4	Netherlands	2x2 between-subjects factorial design	information about the realized level of support for each candidate and voter alliances	voter turnout	When polling data show equal support between candidates, turnout is high; when polls show unequal levels of support, turnout is low
Grossman, et al. 2014	952	subcounty village	none	3	Uganda	field experiment	cost of sending SMS to MP (i.e., full price, partial subsidy, or free)	what gets communicated to politicians	ICT is used at a higher rate than existing political communication channels by marginalized populations; subsidizing the cost of messaging increases communication by 40%, but not among marginalized communities
Han, et al. 2009	240	individual	graduate students	12	China; United States	2x2x3 between subjects factorial design	variables of familiarity (Chinese /U.S. participants), type of news (game/military-consequences), and level of intensity (control/low /high)	event perception and attitudes	Framing intensity significantly impacted the event perception of those unfamiliar with the topic, and frame type wielded a significant influence on event perception
Harrison 2016	270	individual	students	6	United States	3x2 randomized laboratory experiment	provision of paragraph describing Washington, DC elites as polarized, video clips of President Obama with or without partisan references	consumption of information	When primed to think about partisan differences, respondents disregard presidential communication content and focus on partisan identity; without a partisan prime, respondents are more likely to consider content
Hobolt, et al. 2013	222	individual	students (undergraduate and graduate), non-student residents of greater Oxford area	6	Great Britain	laboratory, survey experiments	source and positive/negative slant of two news articles (first on the economy and the second on healthcare)	public opinion	People's views are not formed by ignoring information from less-favored sources and embracing information from preferred sources
Huber, et al. 2012	623	individual	none	3	United States	experimental game	period in which participant made aware of his/her task of evaluating the allocator	performance assessment	Overweighted recent incumbent performance relative to overall performance when made aware of an election closer to event
	1003	individual	none	3	United States	experimental game	lottery results simulating random shock to income	performance assessment	Allowed an lottery unrelated to performance to influence choices
	omitted	individual	none	3	United States	experimental game	informational or hedonic questions	performance assessment	Influenced to weight recent incumbent performance over overall incumbent performance
Iyengar and Hahn 2009	1023	individual	registered voters	6	United States	survey experiment	source of news stories (Fox, NPR, CNN, BBC, or "Can't Say")	preferred news source	Expansion of new media and media choices may contribute to further polarization of news consumers
Johnson, et al. 2014	1043	individual	New Orleans, LA metropolitan area residents	2	United States	survey experiment	wording of question re: effect on people	perception of third party effect	Individuals held belief that decline of information will negatively affect the ability of others to keep up with the news

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Kalmoe 2014	412	individual	none	4	United States	survey experiment	read a violent or non-violent ad for both Candidates A and B	support for political violence	Citizens with aggressive personalities demonstrated significantly greater support for political violence, and their support doubled when they were exposed to political messages loaded with mildly-violent metaphors; moreover, younger adults showed the strongest affinity to violent metaphors
	512	individual	none	4	United States	survey experiment	read a violent or non-violent ad for both Candidates A and B	support for political violence	
	384	individual	students	4	United States	local experiment	read a violent or non-violent ad for both Candidates A and B with partisan identification	support for political violence	
Kendall, et al. 2015	95	voting precinct	none	4	Italy	2x2 factorial design	city precincts divided into four groups: first received a campaign message about valence; second a message about ideology; third a message about both valence and ideology; and, fourth received no message	votes and voter declarations	Campaigning on valence led to more votes for the incumbent, but both messages affected voter beliefs; moreover, voters receiving information on the incumbent led voters to change their beliefs regarding the opponent
Kim, et al. 2013	300	individual	undergraduate students	6	United States	2x3 factorial design	type of website (campaign v. social network) and the type of interaction (user-to-system, user-to-document, and user-to-user)	emotional response to candidates and evaluative response to campaign information	Campaign websites may shape viewers' perceptions of the election's importance more than social networking sites; moreover interactivity impacts users' emotional responses to candidates more on social networking sites than campaign webpages
Kittel, et al. 2014	134	individual	undergraduate students from Carlvon Ossietzky University	4	Germany	laboratory; within and between-subjects	baseline treatmate; party-label treatment; party chat treatment; and, all chat treatment	voter turnout	Communication between voters, whether restricted or not, makes voters much more likely to participate in elections and vote strategically
Kobayash and Yokoyama 2018	1204	individual	none	8	Japan	survey experiment	partisan-affiliated manipulation in vignettes related to a temporary staffing services law and the right to collective self-defense	policy preference formation	Under an unstable multiparty system, issue voting based on cognitive heuristics is difficult
Krause 2014	unclear	individual	residents of Guatemala City	3	Guatemala	survey experiment	news article exposure (i.e., three articles unrelated to crime or violence, two unrelated articles and one reporting a homicide, and two unrelated articles and one reporting a lynching)	support for authoritarian crime control policies	Crime reporting increases support for authoritarian crime control by lowering trust in government institutions; moreover, exposure to crime news increases self-reported victimization rates and support for presidential candidates promoting iron fist policies
Krupnikov 2014	217	individual	none	2	United States		receipt of two positive appeals about a candidate, receipt of one positive appeal and negative appeal about a candidate	voter turnout	Exposure to negative ads at a certain time can mobilize voters, but exposure at other specific times can demobilize voters
Lawrence, et al. 2010	800	individual	none	10	United States	survey experiment	randomly assigned to answer one of ten questions	public support for federal aid to urban areas	Some framing and targeting strategies do affect support for urban aid
	800	individual	none	6	United States	survey experiment	asked whether would support policy targeting different social groups	public support for federal aid to urban areas	
Mahéo 2017	389	individual	residents of low-income neighborhood in Montreal	2	Canada	survey experiment	15 to 20 minute visit to one of two websites for political information	political participation	Voting Awareness Applications (VAAs) can stimulate political engagement, but there is no significant impact on electoral participation
Maier 2011	272	individual	none	3	Germany	pre-test-post-test experiment	fake news article based on dossier affair but with fictional developments	political support	Support for politicians and political parties erodes after exposure to scandal coverage but trust in institutions and satisfaction with democracy are not affected
Malhotra and Popp 2012	904	individual	none	20	United States	survey experiment	asked to read a passage with X% chance of terrorist attack	attitudes toward antiterrorism policies	Manipulated threat information affects support for antiterrorism policies such as preemptive war and/or restricted civil liberties

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Manosevitch 2009	265	individual	undergraduate students	4	United States	controlled experiment	read article and presented with "no cue," "reflective cue," or "citizenship cue"	public awareness	Exposure to a reflective cue in news has positive effects on information-processing behavior and cognitive orientations related to the role of informed citizenry and media in democracy
Marx, et al. 2017	12160	polling station	none	3	Kenya	field, survey experiments	SMS message to encourage voting; SMS message on positions up for vote; SMS message with detailed information on Kenyan Electoral Commission	attitudes toward electoral institutions	SMS messages had a positive and significant effect on voter turnout, no effect on candidate vote shares, and decreased trust in the Electoral Commission
Merolla, et al. 2013	458	individual	students	6	United States	survey experiment	varied news articles relating to immigration (economic positive/negative, social positive/negative, national security threats, control)	political participation	Proliferation of news stories on immigration - particularly ones that highlight social costs and national security concerns - have strong mobilizing effects among Latinos and weak to no effect on Asians, African Americans, and Caucasians
	998	individual	none	6	United States	survey experiment	varied news articles relating to immigration (economic positive/negative, social positive/negative, national security threats, control)	political participation	
Milita 2017	714	individual	none	4	United States	survey experiment	provision of information	voter participation	Individuals with low issue knowledge, are risk averse, and attach little significance to the issue are likelier to abstain from voting
Miller 2010	363	individual	undergraduate students	2	United States	longitudinal experiment	scandals inserted into collection of news stories of varied issues that arose during "campaign"	voter recall	Exposure to scandalous information does not distract voters from "real issues" as often suggested by political observers
Mitchell 2012	196	individual	undergraduate students	2	United States	panel experiment	distribution of a mix of issue and character information	candidate evaluation	Findings highlight a "rapid displacement" model of information processing in which new information quickly displaces the accumulated stockpile of old information in evaluating candidates
Mullinix 2018	1122	individual	partisans	6	United States	3x2 conditional experiment	presence/absence party endorsement, endorsement alignment with traditional party stances, presence/absence appeal to civic duty	partisan motivated reasoning	When civic norms are emphasized, people ignore party endorsements and incorporate substantive policy information into forming their preferences
Oxley, et al. 2014	833	individual	none	4	United States	survey experiment	two different Presidential messages re: global warming; two different scientist messages re: global warming	concern for global warming	Perceived importance of policy problems is attitudinal and driven by both the negativity of the message and the credibility of its source
Paler 2013	1863	individual	none	2	Indonesia	experimental game	windfall and tax treatment	citizen monitoring of government	When given spending information, citizens who received tax windfalls still care as much as those receiving tax treatment re: government spending
	1863	individual	none	2	Indonesia	experimental game	quality of information on government spending	citizen monitoring of government	
Panagopoulos and Green 2008	33	cities/municipalities	populations over 30,000 with mayoral elections in November 2005; cost for radio advertising below \$111 per point	2	United States	field experiment	airing of a 60-second radio advertisements presenting a non-partisan get-out-the-vote message	electoral competition	Radio ads produced significantly more competitive elections
Panagopoulos and Green 2011	206	congressional district	none	4	United States	field experiment	frequency of 60-second radio advertisements presenting a non-partisan get-out-the-vote message	Latino voter turnout	Nonpartisan radio ads are an effective and cost-efficient way of raising Latino turnout in federal elections

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Rodriguez, et al. 2010	1023	individual	registered voters	3	United States	survey experiment	statement emphasizing the externalities of the uninsured on the insured, statement highlighting racial and ethnic disparities in health insurance coverage	voter support of tax increases for health insurance expansion	Partisan affiliation trumps issue framing in voters' motivations
Rogers and Nickerson 2013	15206	individual	Utahns	2	United States	field, survey experiments	three mailings and one phone call	voter beliefs about incumbent's positions	Independent organizations can reframe candidates
	7952	individual	Utahns	2	United States	field, survey experiments	three mailings and one phone call	vote choice	Reframing affects voter choices
Schuck and de Vreese 2009	687	individual	none	2	Netherlands	between-subjects design	"pro-EU Constitution/positive" frame or "con EU Constitution/negative" frame	voter mobilization	Higher exposure to referendum news mobilized those opposing the proposal
Schuck and de Vreese 2011	580	individual	none	4	Netherlands	2x2 between-subjects factorial design	exposure to: a broadsheet-style news story with a positive tone towards the Treaty of Lisbon, a broadsheet-style news story with a negative tone, a tabloid style news story with a positive tone towards the Treaty, and a tabloid-style news story with a negative tone	referendum support	Exposure to negative tabloid style news about a referendum proposal leads opponents to perceive the assumed consequences as more threatening
Shineman 2018	omitted	individual	residents of San Francisco	4	United States	2x2 factorial design	information treatment, mobilization treatment, both information and mobilization treatment, or no treatment	political awareness	Encouraging participation increases voter turnout and motivates citizens to become more politically informed
Sonck and Loosveldt 2010	2063	individual	none	4	Belgium	survey experiment	provision of polling information on issues A and B	public opinion	Exposure to poll information primarily affected the perceptions of collective opinion; personal opinions on political issues remained unaffected by poll information
Sudulich, et al. 2015	1854	individual	none	8	Ireland	quasi-experimental	weekly internet usage (i.e., 0 = never, 7 = daily)	voter uncertainty	Among Irish citizens, internet use as a news source led to greater electoral uncertainty in the 2011 election
Tilley and Wleziem 2008	1500	individual	none	5	Great Britain	survey experiment	information received about placement of parties	voter perception	Individuals' spectral placements of parties and themselves did change due to both political sophistication and the inherent difficulty of placing parties; this was common only among unsophisticated voters
Tyszler and Schram 2016	24	electorates	students	4	Netherlands	2x2 combinatorial design	information regarding preferences of other voters	strategic voting	Information serves as a coordination device when strategic voting does not affect the electoral chances of the plurality-preferred candidate
Veer, et al. 2010	316	individual	none	4	United Kingdom	2x2 between-subjects factorial design	manipulated questionnaires	attitudes toward ad; voting intentions	Celebrity endorsements can drive low-salience voters' intentions, but the effect is negated with engaged voters
Weber, et al. 2012	383	individual	none	3	United States	survey	sponsor of political ad (candidate, known interest group, or unknown interest group)	persuasive appeal	Ads sponsored by unknown interest groups are more persuasive (and credible) than those sponsored by candidates or known interest groups
West, et al. 2016	4171	individual	none	3	Germany	survey experiment	type of information provided	support for increased public education spending and teacher salaries	Provision of information on current spending levels and trade-offs related to budget allocation change (i.e., reduces) voter preferences on education spending
	2669	individual	public school teachers, African Americans, and Hispanics over-represented	3	United States	survey experiment	type of information provided	support for increased public education spending and teacher salaries	
Wintersieck 2017	321	individual	students	10	United States	1x3x3	fact-check of various sources added to debate footage	voter perception	Evaluations of a candidate's debate performance are improved if a fact-check confirms his/her accuracy; moreover, willingness to vote for a candidate increased with fact-check confirmed honesty

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## 2. Polarization

### 2.1 Summary of Findings

Social and political polarization are often present in eroding democracies. Svobik (2017) explains a potential mechanism linking polarization to erosion: polarized voters have such a strong preference for their favorite candidate and such a strong aversion to the opposing candidate that it becomes extremely costly for them to punish their preferred candidate. Knowing this, the preferred candidate has more latitude to perform poorly (erode institutions) without getting sanctioned at the ballot box. The experimental literature on polarization comes from both programs attempting to reduce polarization and the broad set of moral psychology research led largely by Cass Sunstein and Jonathan Haidt.

#### *Collaborations increases polarization*

We found that there are a number of interventions that seem as if they would be effective, but counterintuitively increase polarization instead. For example, when two groups of people that disagree on a topic deliberate or interact, rather than moderating their opinion and coming to a middle ground, they become more extreme. Each group hears their supporters' arguments, making them more convinced of their own, thus shaping an "us" versus "them" mentality (Schkade and Sunstein, 2010).

#### *Education and information increases polarization*

More accurate information also does not help. People use motivated reasoning to find evidence that supports their claims and delegitimize evidence that is counter to their opinion (Klar, 2014). Lastly, a greater degree of education does not improve this rationalization. Education simply makes the individual better at finding arguments to support their point of view, rather than fairly weighing the evidence (Druckman, 2013). The interventions that were successful either appealed to moral or patriotic sentiments. This created a sense that the two sides were on the same team, and thus were more likely to hear one another's opinion and moderate their own (Gaertner, et al. 2011).

### 2.2 Policy Implications

The strong tendency towards motivated reasoning and placing ourselves in in-groups and out-groups makes the reduction of polarization a very difficult task. The two types of successful interventions we've found have appealed to either moral or patriotic sentiments. This allows for the two sides that are competing on political grounds to see themselves a single in-group on either moral or national grounds. Priming these forms of common identities prior to a conversation about politics has been found to substantially reduce the amount of extremism within the group. Such primes could include an appeal to the national history or a particular value such as "liberty" or others that is known to appeal to both sides.

A more radical take-away from the literature would be that groups can easily be convinced of nearly any information given that it is in support of their in-group. Political leaders often take advantage of this tendency towards polarization, creating outcomes that are constitutional, but may not be good for the electorate. Therefore, decreasing polarization among the population may require creating a leadership

selection process that increases moderation. If leaders are moderate, citizens are also more likely to be moderate. These two interpretations of the literature are important because they entail a very different programmatic approach. The first would be designing programs that increase a sense of moral and patriotic sentiment like civic education programs, while the second would require electoral and nomination reform to create systems that select more moderate candidates.

Examples of programs for the first approach would include improving civic education. Unfortunately, as will be seen below, the evidence shows that civic education programs are fairly ineffective at changing deep-rooted values of democracy and trust in government. We have outlined some ideas for how to improve those programs below as well. For the second approach, the political science literature on candidate selection argues that direct voting in primaries often results in selection of more ideological and radical candidates. In many contexts, only the most ideological voters participate in primaries and therefore select for a more ideological candidate than the vast majority of voters. Programs that support reforms away from direct election of candidates such as a parliamentary system may decrease polarization more broadly and moderate the legislation put forward. That said, this research was not included in the experimental literature review, and more research should be done regarding these programs prior to implementation.

## 2.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population or subpopulation analyses	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Adena 2013	unclear	locality	none	2	Germany	natural experiment	they rely on the following two sources of variation in radio exposure: the variation in local radio subscription rates, available between 1931 and 1933, and in radio availability, that is, the strength of radio signal, available at every point in time during 1928–1938 for every locality, predicted using the information on the location and the power of transmitters by the irregular terrain model	electoral results, anti-semitism (as measured by the number of times anti-semitism or abuse was mentioned in a three-volume history of the Jewish People in Germany), and NSDAP membership	The effect of anti-Semitic propaganda varied depending on the listeners' predispositions toward the message. Nazi radio was most effective in places where anti-Semitism was historically high and had a negative effect in places with historically low anti-Semitism
Adida 2015	80	individual	none	3	France	lab	they exogenously expose subjects to diverse partners to determine which dimension of ethnic, religious, gender, age, or class similarity dominates	survey responses	They find that in a socio-demographically diverse district of Paris, despite expectations of secularization, religious similarity significantly predicts homophily. Moreover, we provide tentative evidence that religious homophily is taste-based
Adida, et al. 2017	1410	village	none	2	Benin	field	their experiment randomly assigns villages either to receive information about the incumbent legislative representative's performance or not to receive such information	voting behavior	voters reward good-performing incumbents only if they are co-ethnics, and punish bad performers only if they are non-co-ethnics
Ahler 2014	unclear	individual	none	2	United States	lab-in--the-field	in this design, the true positions of liberals and conservatives are provided to subjects assigned to the "tell" condition, thus manipulating beliefs by removing the ignorance. The author then presented participants assigned to the "ask" condition with two manipulable sliding 7-point scales asking their beliefs of others' opinions	respondents' estimates of others' political stances and their own political stances after the treatment	Experimental participants randomly assigned to learn the actual average policy-related predispositions of liberal and conservative Americans later report opinions that are 8–13% more moderate, on average. Thus, citizens appear to consider peers' positions within public debate when forming their own opinions and adopt slightly more extreme positions as a consequence

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Attanasi 2014	70	individual	none	2	France	lab	in the first phase, subjects participated in a variant of the Holt and Laury mechanism to elicit subjects' risk aversion. In part 1 of the second phase, each subject was asked to choose a majority threshold, included between the simple majority and unanimity, that he or she wanted to apply in a voting procedure between two alternatives, X and Y. The participants were told if they were with the majority they would get the payoff. In part 2 of the second phase, each subject was asked to guess the distribution of x-type and y-type voters in that session	voting behavior	The experimental results confirm the theoretical prediction of a positive correlation between the voter's risk aversion and the corresponding preferred majority threshold. Furthermore, the experimental results show that a voter's preferred majority threshold negatively relates to the voter's confidence about how others will vote. Moreover, in a treatment in which individuals receive a private signal about others' voting behaviour, the confidence-related motivation of behaviour loses ground to the signal's strength
Banks 2013	113	individual	none	2	United States	lab	the treatment came in two waves. Wave 1 took place in several classrooms and included a pretest questionnaire of racial and general attitude measures. Several days later, respondents were contacted via e-mail to participate in wave 2 and were told they would receive \$5 for watching ads on current events. Once at the lab, a research assistant randomly assigned subjects to one of several advertising conditions. People in the control group viewed a product advertisement, while respondents in the treatment groups viewed a political advertisement	racial policy questionnaire	They find that anger uniquely boosts opposition to racial policies among white racial conservatives. We also find that anger from an implicit racial appeal motivates racial liberals to be more supportive of racial policies
Barton 2016	2469	individual	partisan democrats	3	United States	lab in the field	households in the candidates' districts with at least one likely partisan supporter by the above criteria were randomly assigned to receive a negative letter, a positive letter or no letter	campaign contributions, voter turnout, and survey results	We find that message tone increases partisan support in ways that may help explain the persistence of negative campaigning. Negative messages are no better than positive messages at earning the candidates donations, but negative messages yield significantly higher rates of voter turnout among the candidates' partisans relative to positive messages. Positive messages, however, are not neutral relative to no message

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Bloom 2013	210	individual	religion	3	Turkey and Israel	lab	participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions. In the religious belief condition, participants were first presented with a battery of religious belief questions, then immediately asked about the items related to the support for democracy; afterwards, they answered questions on religious social behavior. In the religious social behavior condition, participants were questioned on social behavior items first, then on their support for democracy, and finally about their religious belief. In the control group, support for democracy was measured first, then both dimensions of religiosity	measures for religious belief, religious social behavior, and support for democracy were adopted from the World Values Survey (WVS)	The authors demonstrated that priming religious social behavior facilitates, while priming religious belief impedes, support for democracy, compared with a control group of no prime. These results were independent of participants' intensity of religious belief or the frequency of their religious social behavior and held for the most part across both religious affiliations and political contexts
Bos 2012	3125	individual	none	8	Denmark	survey	they randomly assigned individuals to one of the eight conditions. To gain further insight in the effects of populist style and populist rhetoric on the perceived legitimacy of (right-wing populist and mainstream) politicians, we presented respondents with one of the eight versions of a short realistic news item on one right-wing Populist Leader – Geert Wilders, the Party Leader of the Dutch right-wing populist party PVV – and one liberal Political Leader – Stef Blok, the Chairman of the Dutch liberal VVD	a direct measure of the legitimacy of both party leaders included in the analysis, which was measured with two items on 10-point scales	The results show that the effects of populist communication strategies differ for the lower educated and the politically cynical. These groups of voters are more susceptible to persuasion by the populist style of the right-wing populist party leader



Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Cason 2015	510	individual	none	7	United States	lab	participants are put in a CR game and given two communication treatments. In the Simultaneous Restrictive Communication treatment, the responders can only send a single, binary message to the other responder in their group: an "intended" choice prior to committing to an actual challenge or acquiesce decision. In the Multi-Round Sequential Restrictive Communication treatment, subjects can send a sequence of binary "intended" choice communications to their paired responder	message frequency and content	We find that the successful joint resistance rate increases almost four-fold (from 15 to 58%) when moving from more restrictive communication treatments to Rich Communication. We also find that the significant impacts of Rich Communication are driven more by the responders' ability to send free-form messages rather than the multiple and iterative opportunities to indicate intentions
Claassen 2016	999	individual	none	3	United States	survey	treated subjects either encountered a fabricated news story involving phone calls with deceptive information about polling times or one involving disappearing yard signs (the offending party was varied at random). Control subjects received no treatment	how the treated subjects felt about dirty tricks in political campaigns and about all subjects' trust in government	We find that partisans process information about dirty campaign tricks in a motivated way, expressing exceptional concern when the perpetrators are political opponents. However, there is almost no evidence that partisans' evaluations of dirty political tricks in turn color other political attitudes, such as political trust
Colombo 2018	179	individual	none	3	Scotland	lab	all subjects were exposed to a balanced set of four pro- and four contra-arguments on Scottish independence. One treatment was told to write down all of the arguments of the opposite side of their own opinion, and the other treatment group was told they would have to justify their reasoning to a group of people after the experiment	a justification paragraph written by the subjects, which was coded for integrative complexity (IC) and an argument strength rating	The expectation of accountability – having to justify one's opinion in front of unknown others – significantly enhanced integrative complexity of thinking about the issue, while inducing subjects to consider the opposite had no significant effect. Opinion strength and political knowledge did not affect the treatment effects significantly

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Conroy-Krutz 2015	1200	individual	none	4	Ghana	field	they conducted a field experiment in which tro-tros (commuter minibuses) were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. Passengers heard live talk-radio from a progovernment, pro-opposition, or neutral station, or were in a noradio control	they have five outcomes. The first measures relative support for a subject's own party as opposed to the other. The next two measure attitudes about candidates. The fourth outcome is a folded dichotomous variable that measures whether respondents said they would never vote for the opposing party "under any circumstances." The final measure is a behavioral one indicating whether a subject was inclined to display a partisan preference	They find no effect of like-minded media on polarization, but significant evidence of moderation fromcrosscutting broadcasts, indicating that rival arguments persuaded subjects. Partisan broadcasts also encouraged displays of national over partisan identity. Rather than fueling extremism, we argue that partisan media can moderate by exposing citizens to alternate perspectives
Delaney 2015	160	individual	none	4	United States	lab	individuals are put into groups to participate in a "Stakeholder Public Bad" game. Some individuals were given a public treatment and some a private treatment. In the public condition each members contributions are tracked and made available to other participants while the private condition does not track contributions	amount of contributions to the general fund	They find that subjects in the Stakeholder role willingly sacrifice social welfare. They also see both anti-social and ro-social favor trading, particularly when coalition-forming is easier. Favor trading does not change the mean level of public bad provision. People who trade favors tend to be less risk averse
Distelhorst 2014	258	political jurisdiction	none	2	China	field	the contacted government offices asking to be enrolled in a social welfare program and randomly assigned the letter an ethnically unclear name or an ethnically Muslim name	number of online responses	They find local officials were 33% less likely to provide assistance to citizens with ethnic Muslim names than to ethnically unmarked peers. We find evidence consistent with the ingroup bias interpretation of this finding and detect little role for strategic incentives mediating this effect
Druckman 2013	646	individual	partisans	13	United States	survey	framed the survey with either strong or weak framing around two topics, one experiment focused on an energy policy proposal: drilling for oil and gas. The second experiment examined immigration policy, specifically the DREAM Act, which stands for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act	stated support for drilling and support for the DREAM Act, a measure asking respondents to assess the effectiveness of the frames to which they were exposed, and a measure of their stated importance of the opinion	They find stark evidence that polarized environments fundamentally change how citizens make decisions. Specifically, polarization intensifies the impact of party endorsements on opinions, decreases the impact of substantive information and, perhaps ironically, stimulates greater confidence in those—less substantively grounded—opinions

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Druckman, et al. 2017	575	individuals	none	5	United States	lab; survey	exposure to partisan media; group discussion; group composition	7-point scale measuring support for the Keystone XL pipeline, support for increased coastal drilling, and support for opening up more federal lands to drilling	Those who watch and are impacted by partisan media outlets talk to and persuade others who did not watch
Dunning 2010	824	individual	cousinage	6	Mali	lab-in-the-field	they showed videotaped political speeches to experimental subjects. Subjects were told that the candidate in the video was a political independent who was considering launching a campaign for deputy in the National Assembly. The content of speeches viewed by all subjects was identical. The experimental manipulation consisted of what subjects were told about the politician's last name, which conveys information about both ethnic identity and cousinage ties in Mali	subjects' evaluation of the overall quality of the speech and the attractiveness of the candidate along various dimensions	They argue that the cross-cutting ties afforded by an informal institution called "cousinage" help explain the weak association between ethnicity and individual vote choice
Dylko 2018	93	individual	none	5	United States	lab	they conducted a two-part experiment, during which subjects filled out an online survey measuring their attitudes on various political issues (Part 1) and, four weeks later, browsed an online political magazine with content on the same political issues (Part 2). The experimental Web sites contained different customizability options	the web site software unobtrusively recorded exposure to pro-attitudinal and counter-attitudinal content. Immediately after the browsing session, subjects filled out another survey measuring political polarization	Their experiment showed that selective exposure mediated the relationship between customizability technology presence and political attitude polarization. They also found that user-driven customizability (technology that enables users to modify their information environment) weakened the relationship between system-driven customizability (technology that modifies users' information environment unobtrusively, without active involvement of the users) and political selective exposure
Eisen 2013	359	individual	none	3	Turkey	suvey	upon agreeing to participate in the study, subjects read a short text detailing which labeled survey they should pick based on their political party affiliation. Subjects are randomly assigned to one of the three party label conditions: no party affiliation information, the candidate is from their same party, and from a different party	voting behavior	Their findings indicate that young voters are sensitive to both partisan cues and socially supplied disagreement in forming and changing their attitudes toward political candidates. The results also show that, unlike most developing countries with weak parties, party label in Turkey is an important heuristic for making electoral choices. However, social disagreement can make political attitudes unstable. The findings suggest that Turkey presents us with a case in between the developed country voters' iron clad partisan attachment and the developing country voters' high susceptibility to socially communicated persuasive messages

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Farrar 2009	3500	individual	none	Pre-Post Surveys	United States	lab	those who agreed to participate were sent a background briefing document prepared by By the People. This document provided factual information and a balanced account of various perspectives on the two issues being discussed. Those who agreed to participate were assigned to 10 discussion groups at each site. The same two foreign policy issues were discussed at all sites. The moderators were randomly assigned to discussion groups and were given the same instructions to attend four discussions throughout the day on various topics. The two other experiments were replicas of the first with small variants	pre and post survey questions on participants' political opinions	They find only sporadic evidence of group composition effects. These results run counter to—or at least qualify—a substantial body of theory and laboratory evidence on the influence of group discussion
Funk 2010	Unclear	community	none	2	Switzerland	natural experiment	switzerland made postal voting mandatory for all districts in 1994 where previously it was voluntary to set up this system. The cantonal variation in the timing of postal voting's introduction allows for difference-in-difference estimation, which is an advantage for estimating the effect of postal voting on aggregate turnout	voter participation	Optional postal voting decreased the voting costs, but simultaneously removed the social pressure to vote. In spite of the large reduction in voting costs, the effect on aggregate turnout was small. However, voter participation was more negatively affected in the smaller communities
Gerber 2010	2348	individual	unaffiliated voters	2	United States	survey	researchers sent a mailing to a random sample of unaffiliated registered voters who, in a pretreatment survey, leaned toward a political party. The mailing informed the subjects that only voters registered with a party were able to participate in the upcoming presidential primary. Subjects were surveyed again in June 2008	party identification and opinions from post-treatment survey	Comparing posttreatment survey responses to subjects' baseline survey responses, we find that those reminded of the need to register with a party were more likely to identify with a party and showed stronger partisanship. Further, we find that the treatment group also demonstrated greater concordance than the control group between their pretreatment latent partisanship and their posttreatment reported voting behavior and intentions and evaluations of partisan figures. Thus, our treatment, which appears to have caused a strengthening of partisan identity, also appears to have caused a shift in subjects' candidate preferences and evaluations of salient political figures
Halperin 2014	161	individual	none	2	Israel	lab	participants, in their classrooms, were randomly assigned to either the reappraisal condition (N = 82) or the control condition (N = 79) and subsequently filled out a short booklet containing the study materials. The booklet contained a paragraph presented as an excerpt from an opinion piece criticizing the Arab minority in Israel, followed by an emotion questionnaire and a political intolerance scale	questionnaire for negative emotions, political intolerance, and their self-ranked religiosity	Preliminary data based on nationwide survey conducted among Jews in Israel show that the tendency to reappraise negative emotions during war is associated with more tolerant attitudes. In studies 1 and 2, we experimentally manipulated reappraisal, and this led to reduced levels of political intolerance toward Palestinian Citizens of Israel (study 1) and toward one's least-liked group (study 2). These effects were transmitted via a decrease in negative emotions in both studies, as well as by an increase in support for general democratic values in Study 2

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Harrison 2015	270	individual	none	6	United States	lab	the authors conducted randomized laboratory experiments in which respondents read information about the state of partisanship in American politics, viewed videos of President Obama, and then answered questions about issues and presidential approval. The experiment has two key manipulations: the priming level of partisan disagreement and the presence of references made to partisanship	survey responses for approval of the president, salience of the main issues the president addressed in the videos, and policy stances on the main issues the president addressed in the videos.	The results show that when participants were primed to think about elite polarization as high, presidential communication yields job-approval ratings, issue-importance ratings, and issue stances closer to the party line, compared to participants primed to think elite polarization is low or when there was no prime at all
Harrison 2015	500	individual	religion	4	United States	survey	they conduct a randomized survey experiment using the SocialSci platform, exposing religious and secular respondents to religious and anonymous primes about same-sex marriage	survey questions on support for same-sex marriage, civil unions, or neither; how they might vote on a hypothetical ballot initiative in their state legalizing gay marriage; and whether they supported the ability of gay and lesbian couples to be parents	Individuals who are religious and who are exposed to the treatment prime are more likely to say that they support marriage equality and would vote for a ballot initiative in their state that would allow same-sex marriage
Hassin, et al. 2007	53	individuals	gender	2	Israel	lab	primed with flag before responding to question	voting intention	In the control condition, high IWINS expressed very different opinions from low IWINS. Priming brought these groups closely together
	42	individuals	gender	2	Israel	lab	primed with flag before responding to question	voting intention	Priming brought both groups closer together
	46	individuals	gender; IWIN score	2	Israel	lab	primed with flag before responding to question	voting intention	Priming brought both groups closer together
	221	individuals	gender	2	Israel	lab	primed with flag before responding to question	voting data	Priming resulted in a reduced gap between high and low IWINS
Iyengar and Westwood 2014	2000	adults	race	1	United States	survey	use partisan stimuli and ask for individual categorizations	8 categorizations (4 positive, 4 negative)	Comparisons of implicit partisan and racial bias suggest that partisan identity is a relatively strong source of group affect
	1021	adults	race	2	United States	survey	select between race or party	candidate selection	Ingroup selection was stronger and the effects of academic qualifications much weaker in the partisan cue conditions
	814	adults	partisan affiliation, race, age, region, and income	1	United States	behavioral	a capsule description of the second player, including information about the player's age, gender, income, race/ethnicity, and party affiliation	financial allocations	In both versions of the game, players were more generous toward copartisans, but not coethnics
	1252	adults	partisan affiliation, race, age, region, and income	3	United States	behavioral	provision of partisan affiliation information	financial allocations	Partisanship elicits more extreme evaluations and behavioral responses to ingroups and outgroups than race
Klar 2014	379	students	partisan identification (i.e., Democrat, Republican, or leaning-Independent)	3	United States	lab; survey	social interaction in randomly assigned groups; manipulation of partisan ambivalence	7-point scale	While ambivalent or univalent partisanship is, on its own, a reliable predictor of partisan-motivated reasoning, all partisans engage in more partisan-motivated reasoning when their social settings are ideologically homogeneous, and they pursue more accuracy-based evaluations when these settings are diverse

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Klor 2009	180	individual	none	2	Israel	lab	subjects belonging to two distinct natural groups are randomly assigned gross incomes and vote over alternative redistributive tax regimes, where the regime is chosen by majority rule	vote for two differing redistribution schemes	We find that a significant subset of the subjects systematically deviate from monetary payoff maximization towards the tax rate that benefits their group when the monetary cost of doing so is not too high. These deviations cannot be explained by efficiency concerns, inequality aversion, reciprocity, social learning or conformity
Lazarev and Sharma 2015	1140	males	location, religiosity	6	Turkey	survey	questions asked	aggregated score comparing average survey responses and average amounts of liras donated	Subtle primes in the form of identity cues and minor information provision can significantly affect behavior and to some extent attitudes toward the outgroup
Levendusky 2018	1729	individuals	none	2	United States	survey	read article on strengths of Americans, write a paragraph explaining American pride, then asked various questions regarding parties	100-point feeling thermometers	Increasing American identity makes individuals more positive toward the out-party
Marcus 2008	215	individual	none	2	United States	lab	they created a website that presented users with political information designed to elicit an emotional response. Students were randomly assigned to read news stories on a contemporary issue that either challenged, or was consistent with, their convictions	they tracked how the participants used the web and their emotions about the topic through a questionnaire	When people perceive a familiar threat, they tend to be dogmatic and partisan, since they are mobilizing decisive action based on habitual behaviors and nearly instinctual perceptions that have proved their worth in similar situations. When facing a novel risk, however, people tend to become more open-minded and deliberative, since old solutions do not apply
McCauley 2014	1200	individual	religion and ethnicity	3	Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana	lab-in-the-field	treatments consisted of 5-minute radio news reports regarding local society, followed by a series of questions regarding the content of the reports. The reports were meant to subtly prime a religious or ethnic identity, and one group did not receive the reports as a control	survey questions about political preferences and identity	The author shows that group members primed to ethnicity prioritize club goods, the access to which is a function of where they live. Otherwise identical individuals primed to religion prioritize behavioral policies and moral probity. These findings are explained by the geographic boundedness of ethnic groups and the geographic expansiveness of (world) religions in the study area
Penney 2016	2,502	individual	white and visible minorities	6	Canada	survey	participants were asked about a variety of political issues related to candidates of varying combinations of a white man, white woman, Chinese man, and Chinese woman	survey responses	They find evidence of affinities along these dimensions in voting behaviour. A number of phenomena regarding these affinities and their interactions are detailed and explored. We find that they compete with each other on the basis of race and gender. Neuroeconomic metrics suggest that people who vote for own race candidates tend to rely more on heuristics than those who do not
Robinson 2016	16; 4	villages; market	ethnicity (i.e., Chewa, Tumbuk), nationality (i.e., Malawian, Zambian)	2	Malawi	lab-in-the-field; survey	primed with flag	individuals	Identification with a territorially defined nation, common to all ethnic groups, reduces the degree to which trust is ethnically bounded

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Ryan 2017	360	students	none	2	United States	randomized experiment	judged the quality of the reasoning in a paragraph that either supported or opposed the Obama administration's new rules for how the government hires contractors	7-point scale	Implicit attitudes predict judgments of indifferent subjects, where explicit attitudes dominate the responses of one-sided subjects. Results for ambivalent subjects are more difficult to characterize
	156	students	none	2	United States	randomized experiment	read a story that reported on economic news (either 'favorable' or 'disappointing') with partisan spin on responsible party	7-point scale	Implicit attitudes predict judgments of indifferent subjects, where explicit attitudes dominate the responses of one-sided subjects. Results for ambivalent subjects are more difficult to characterize
	2628	individuals	none	2	United States	telephone survey	face of Obama or McCain flashed briefly	difference among characters rated pleasantly between Presidential candidates	Implicit attitudes significantly predict vote choices made by indifferent voters, but carry about half the weight for ambivalent voters (and no weight for one-sided voters)
Samii 2013	1086	individual	professional rank-and-file members or noncommissioned officers in the national army	2	Burundi	natural experiment	among members of the incumbent armed forces (FAB), eligibility for the newly integrated armed forces was based on an age cutoff of 45 years of age. By comparing those just above and below the cutoff, the author can isolate the effects of participating in the quota-integrated military versus being demobilized	a database of interviews with Burundian soldiers from the multipurpose Wartime and Postconflict Experiences in Burundi survey	The author finds that exposure to ethnic integration decreases prejudicial behavior and is benign with respect to ethnic salience. Together, these results suggest promise in ethnic integration
Schkade 2010	63	individual	political affiliation	2	United States	lab	participants were put into groups of five conservative groups and five liberal groups, with five to seven members each. Each group met and were asked to come to a consensus on three politically controversial topics	questionnaire on political views and intensity of political views	The participants' views became more extreme after deliberation. Deliberation also increased consensus and significantly reduced diversity of opinion within the two groups. Even anonymous statements of personal opinion became more extreme and homogeneous after deliberation
Taber and Lodge 2006	126	students	gender; race; partisan affiliation	1	United States	quasi-experimental, i.e., attitudinal battery exam (survey?)	participant selection of sources	attitudes	Citizens are prone to overly accommodate supportive evidence while dismissing out-of-hand evidence that challenges their prior attitudes
	136	students	gender; race; partisan affiliation	1	United States	quasi-experimental, i.e., attitudinal battery exam (survey?)	presentation of arguments	attitudes	

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### 3. Electoral Rules

#### 3.1 Summary of Findings

Based on studies done on the electoral process within democracies, we find that the manipulation of electoral rules significantly affects the behavior of voters and consequently, the behavior of the potential holders of elective office.

##### *Changing rules to incentivize democracy*

The most common form of experimentation is to make rule adjustments to positively impact electoral turnout. For example, increasing the period of time for polling stations to remain open positively impacts electoral participation, as found by Potrafke and Roesel (2016). On the other hand, laws that establish the need for pre-registration or the creation of other barriers that make the act of voting more-costly tend to reduce electoral participation, especially for groups that have low political representation as showed by Braconnier, et al. (2017). Hoffman (2017) also suggested that making voting mandatory – punishable by small fines – has a high impact on electoral participation.

##### *Wider representativeness within electoral systems*

The electoral system significantly impacts the strategies adopted by voters, as shown by Parada (2011). Proportional representation allows voters to choose the candidate they like the most and, therefore, has a greater identity with their political positions. On the other hand, a majority representation system tends to encourage the elector to choose the candidate he dislikes least. The voter wants to ensure that his or her vote will have weight, so the voter will choose the candidate that relatively shares their political positions and that they perceive has the best chance of winning. This candidate is not necessarily the one with which the voter most closely identifies. Electoral systems that takes place in one or two rounds have a similar impact on the so-called “tactical vote.” Two round systems tend to incentivize votes that correspond with voters’ political beliefs, while single round systems incentivize strategic voting. Fauvelle-Aymar and Lewis-Beck (2009) wrote, for example, that proportional systems of representation are more protected from potential political radicalizations than other modalities.

##### *Systems of voting affects electoral turnouts*

The manner in which the vote is captured and determined matters to the voter, as shown by Fujiwara (2015). When faced with different voting modalities (i.e., electronic or paper ballot), voters tend to rely more on the paper one, although the electronic mode is the one that best captures the totality of votes and produces fewer invalidated votes for procedural errors. The experimental evidence suggests that the electronic mode is a more efficient means of capturing citizen’s votes but generates more distrust on the part of the voters.

#### 3.2 Policy Implications

There is a wide range of interventions to increase electoral turnout. The most important programs are associated with creating facilities to cast a vote, as suggested by Neiheisel and Burden (2012). Holding weekend elections, keeping polling stations open for long hours, and not requiring prior registration have all been shown to increase electoral

participation. The reform of the electoral system towards a more proportional modality tends to better capture the will of the voters and avoid the strategic voting. Furthermore, making elections more transparent, particularly with respect to counting votes, can increase voter confidence in the electoral system.

One of the best ways to ensure this is to invest in observer programs that are sent to different countries in order to achieve the minimum fairness of the elections. Promoting the constitutional vote and facilitating access to the ballot box have also proven effective.

### 3.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Andrew, et al. 2014	250	village	none	2	Afghanistan	field experiment	impact evaluation of the National Solidarity Program (NSP)	examine the effect of electoral rules on the quality of elected officials	Examine the effect of electoral rules on the quality of elected officials Found statistical significant relationship
Bassi 2015	167	people	none	3	France	lab experiment	plurality rule, approval voting, and the Borda count.	electoral behavior	Strategic behavior is found to be significantly different under each treatment (voting system). Plurality rule leads voters to play in the most sophisticated (i.e. best response), but not necessarily insincere, manner. Thus, this voting system displays at the same time the highest incidence of best responses and of sincere votes. The opposite holds for the Borda count games, where voters depart from their sincere strategy the most, without playing the best response strategy. Approval voting shows intermediate levels of sophistication and sincere behavior
Baujard, at al. 2014	2340	people	none	3	France	lab experiment	two different electoral sistemy	electoral behavior	We show that the two-round system favors candidates who elicit strong feelings, while evaluative rules favor candidates who attract the support of a large span of the electorate. These differences are explained by two complementary reasons: the opportunity for the voter to support several candidates under evaluative voting rules, and the specific pattern of strategic voting under the two-round voting rule
Bhattacharya 2011	291	people	none	2	USA	lab experiment	change the electoral rules from voluntary vote to compulsory	sincerity of votes	Voters are able to adapt the sincerity of their votes or their participation decisions to the different voting mechanisms in such a way as to make the welfare differences between these mechanisms negligible
Braconnier, et al. 2017	88	apartments	none	7	France	field experiment	canvassing visits providing either information about registration or help to register at home.	electoral turnout	Voter registration requirements have significant effects on turnout, resulting in unequal participation
Brady and McNulty 2011	<i>unclear</i>	people	none	2	USA	natural experiment	changing the location of the polling place	turning out to vote	A drop in polling place turnout of 3.03 percentage points was partially offset by an increase in absentee voting of 1.18 percentage points. Both transportation and search costs caused these changes
Bright and Lynch 2017	153	people	none	2	USA	natural experiment	new voter identification (ID) laws	electoral turnout	We find that different advertising strategies can influence the impact voter ID laws have on turnout
Burden and Neiheisel 2013	184	people	none	2	USA	natural experiment	voter registration	electoral turnout	Registration lowers turnout by about 2 percentage points
Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2003	161	villages	none	2	India	instrumental variable	reservations	effects on the political participation of women, effects of the policy on public goods provision	Did not find statistical significant relationship
Collier and Vicente 2010	267	people	none	2	Nigeria	field experiment	anti-violence campaigning	electoral turnout	We find that the campaign decreased violence perceptions and increased empowerment to counteract violence. We observe a rise in voter turnout and infer that the intimidation was dissociated from incumbents
Coviello and Gagliarducci 2017	168	cities	none	2	Italy	quasi-experiment	introduction of a two-term limit on the mayoral office in March 1993.	electoral corruption	The main result is that an increase in the mayor's tenure is associated with "worse" outcomes: fewer bidders per auction, a higher cost of procurement, a higher probability that the winner is local and that the same firm is awarded repeated auctions
Dal Bó and Rossi 2011	254	legislators	none	2	Argentina	natural experiment	different term lengths	compare the level of legislative effort of the two-year representatives to that of their four-year counterparts	There was no significant statistical find that point outs a change in the political behavior
De Jong, at al. 2008	278	people	none	4	Germany	lab experiment	(a) a paper ballot, (b) a voting machine, and (c) a voting machine with paper audit trail.	trustfulness	The paper ballot was considered to be the most anonymous way of voting, especially by female voters. The voting machine (with or without paper trail), on the other hand, was considered to be more user-friendly than the paper ballot and gave the voters more confidence that their votes would actually be processed correctly. No differences were found between the voting machine with and without paper audit trail

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Drometer and Johannes 2009	<i>unclear</i>	people	none	2	USA	quasi-experiment	the 1968 U.S. Supreme Court decision to strike down Ohio's ballot access law	political competition	Increase of likelihood of independent or third party candidates
Duffy 2013	265	people	none	2	Spain	lab experiment	compulsory and voluntary voting rules	electoral turnout	Voters adapt their decisions to the voting institution in place in such a way as to make the group decision accuracy differences between the two voting institutions negligible
Dunning and Nilekani 2013	200	people	none	4	India	natural experiment	political quotas	political insertion	We find weak distributive effects of quotas for marginalized castes and tribes, but suggestive evidence of the importance of partisanship
Fauvelle-Aymar and Lewis-Beck 2009	<i>unclear</i>	people	none	3	France	natural experiment	effects of two-round (TR) and proportional representation (PR) voting rules	electoral behavior	TR systems bring about less extremist party voting, less party competition, and perhaps less vote turnout, when compared to PR systems
Ferraz and Finan 2008	373	municipalities	none	2	Brazil	instrumental variable	public auditing	incumbent's electoral performance	Positive and significant statistical relationship
Fujiwara 2015	307	municipalities	none	2	Brazil	regression discontinuity design	electronic ballot	the number of votes that are valid	Found statistical significant relationship
Gerber, et al 2013	497	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	mailed information about protections of ballot secrecy to registered voters prior to the 2010 general election.	electoral turnout	These results suggest that although the secret ballot is a long-standing institution in the United States, beliefs about this institution may not match the legal reality
Hoffman 2017	<i>unclear</i>	elections	none	2	Austria	quasi-experiment	changes in the electoral rule over time	electoral turnout	Compulsory voting laws with weakly enforced fines increase turnout by roughly 10 percentage points
Ichino and Schündeln 2012	44	constituencies	none	2	Ghana	field experiment	assigned an observer	electoral corruption	The registration increase is smaller in constituencies with observers; within these constituencies with observers, the increase is about one-sixth smaller on average in electoral areas with observers than in those without; but some of the deterred registrations appear to be displaced to nearby electoral areas
Jaitman 2013	<i>unclear</i>	people	none	2	USA	natural experiment	compulsory voting laws	electoral turnout	Find that compulsory voting increases voter turnout by 18 percentage points (28%) and the increase is twice as much in the unskilled citizens than that in the skilled citizens
Labbé 2013	321	people	none	3	<i>unclear</i>	lab experiment	changing the system of political representation	electoral turnout	turnout is affected by the belief that one's vote counts and that over stimulation in the perception that one's vote counts does not disappear completely over time. Going beyond previous research, we also find that turnout is not higher under a proportional system than under a plurality system, as well as that beliefs about being in a pivotal position have a greater impact on turnout among the risk averse
Miller and Dassonneville 2016	460	people	none	2	Netherlands	quasi-experiment	abolition of compulsory voting	electoral turnout	Consistent evidence the voting reform led to an increase in the vote share of Dutch social democratic parties and a decrease in the vote share won by minor and extreme parties
Neiheisel and Burden 2012	570	people	none	2	USA	natural experiment	election day registration (EDR), which eliminates the closing date by permitting registration at the polls	electoral turnout	Analysis of this intervention shows that EDR did increase turnout in Wisconsin but actually decreased the Democratic share of the two-party vote for president
Otsubo 2013	<i>unclear</i>	candidates	an incumbent and a challenger	2	Alemanha	natural experiment	electoral rules that reduce campaign spendings	electoral competition	Asymmetry spending limits put the challenger at a disadvantage and tightening the limits leads to further entrenchment of the incumbent
Parada 2011	184	people	none	5	Colombia	lab experiment	four different voting rules: plurality rule, approval voting, Borda rule and majority rule with runoff elections.	electoral turnout	Predict well the aggregate outcomes under all the voting rules
Potrafke and Roesel 2016	127	people	none	2	Austrian state of Burgenland	natural experiment	opening hours of polling stations	electoral turnout	Identify the causal effect of opening hours of polling stations on voter turnout. The results show that a 10 percent increase in opening hours increased voter turnout by some 0.5 to 0.9 percentage points

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Rohini 2003	16	state	none	2	India	instrumental variable	variations in public policies towards casts	if the representation of lower caste members in political parties influences whom the public policies are directed to.	Found statistical significant correlationship
Sanz 2016	36	elections	local	2	Spain	natural experiment	closed-list proportional representation and under an open-list, plurality-at-large system	voter turnout	The results suggest that open-list systems, which introduce competition both across and within parties, are conducive to greater voter turnout
Straeten Van, et al. 2013	8,000	people	none	3	France	quasi-experiment	French voters could vote under different voting rules.	electoral behavior	Find that a substantial minority (10% to 15%) vote differently under the different systems, with 17% of the voters not voting for their preferred candidate in the one-round election, this percentage dropped to 12% in the alternative vote (first choice). Compared to the two-rounds election, at the aggregate level, the top two candidates get slightly more votes under one round, while the minor candidates obtain more first choices under the alternative vote
Uppal 2010	100	candidates for reelection for the US House of Representatives	45 states	2	USA	quasi-experiment	incubence	likelihood of being reelected	Incumbents in state legislative elections have a significant advantage, and this advantage serves as a strong barrier to re-entry of challengers who had previously been defeated. However, the incumbency advantage estimated using the RDD is much smaller than are the estimates using existing methods, implying a significant selection bias in the latter

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## 4. Political Competition

### 4.1 Summary of Findings

Political competition, in the context of liberal democracy, gauges the existence of political choice. The modern notion of democracy has shifted significantly from that of a direct system (i.e. decisions are made by the people at large) to that of a representative system (i.e. decisions are made by a subset of the population which make up a governing body). Representatives effectively act as informed intermediaries between the potentially uninformed electorate and the intricate policies which promote their collective interests. Leadership comes into play as a type of commodity: those individuals with the best policies and experience are best suited to make decisions in accordance with the general will. In the analysis of how changes to political competition can shape democratic outcomes, two themes emerge: voter perceptions of the incumbent and voter perceptions of potential challengers.

#### *Voter perceptions of the incumbent*

The electorate evaluates political candidates based on the positive and negative aspects of government decisions, driving them to either vote for an incumbent (an indicator of positive feedback) or a challenger (an indicator of negative feedback). Evaluations of Conditional Cash Transfer, or CCT, programs indicate that positive government decisions, such as efforts to reduce poverty, are reinforced with a higher vote share for the incumbent (De La O 2013 and Labonne 2013). However, multiple reelection efforts by incumbents can generate a sense of distrust due to a lack in political variation (Bøggild 2016). When vote-selling (i.e. patronage for political voice) is evident, the electorate perceives the candidate with the biggest potential payout in a more favorable light – creating a hierarchy of competition dominated generally by more politically entrenched incumbents (Hicken et al. 2015 and Imai et al. 2015).

#### *Voter perceptions of the challenger*

While political challengers take advantage of the negative aspects of government decisions in order to push for an alternative, there appear to be mixed results on voter perceptions in regard to political competition. The desire for political variation is often at odds with a collective reluctance to embrace more diverse and dynamic political leaders. On the one hand, evidence shows that a candidate's gender plays little to no role in the voter's perception of their leadership abilities when compared with ideology (Matland and Tezcur 2011). However, the risk of security shocks can often bring out negative stereotypes associated with gender (Holman et al. 2011).

### 4.2 Policy Implications

In the context of democratic erosion, a lack of political competitiveness can indicate a consolidation of power by an autocratic executive, a constrained opposition due to unitary party rule, or simply limited voter awareness. When voter perceptions are considered in increasing political competition, the implication for policymakers is to foster an environment where positive and negative government decisions are put into appropriate context. Given the limited literature available, our recommendation is that candidates should be viewed in light of their ability to stand out from the competition

pool and work to promote the well-being of the electorate. Moving beyond the available literature, potential routes toward better voter perceptions may involve grassroots campaigns designed to highlight the variety of political voice.

## 4.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population or subpopulation analyses	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Barton, et al. 2016	2369	household	none	2	United States	field experiment	positive and negative letters from candidates	voter turnout; campaign contributions	There is no evidence that negative messages about the opposition spurred more giving than the positive message about the candidate. The positive message had higher donation rates and levels, though not statistically significantly so. With respect to turnout, however, there does not seem to be a strong relative effect
Bergan 2009	143	individual	legislators	1	United States	field experiment	emails sent by activist groups	legislative voting	Grassroots lobbying by e-mail has a substantial influence on legislative voting behavior
Bergan and Cole 2014	148	individual	legislators	3	United States	field experiment	22 intended calls; 33 intended calls; 65 intended calls	legislative voting	Being targeted by constituent contacts increases the probability of supporting the relevant legislation by about 12 percentage points
Bøggild 2016	154	Individual	medical students	2	Denmark	survey experiment	partial and impartial voters	support for incumbent	Reelection efforts of a politician can depress public trust evaluations, inclination to vote for the politician, and support for its political decision
Burnett and Kogan 2015		individual	none	2	United States	survey experiment	ballot title and summaries; ballot title, summaries, and official positions from prominent interest groups	support for state ballots	The wording used to describe each measure had a substantial impact on the level of support expressed by the respondents. Support for CA Prop 8 declined by 6 percentage points ( $z = 4.64$ ) when the ballot title and summary indicated that the measure would "eliminate the right to marry"
De La O 2013	462	electoral precinct	none	2	Mexico	randomized field experiment	early enrollment and late enrollment in a CCT	voter turnout and incumbent vote share	Early enrollment in the cash transfer program led to substantive increases in voter turnout and in the incumbent's vote share in the 2000 presidential election. The experiment also reveals that opposition parties' vote shares were unaffected by the program
Gschwend and Hooghe 2008	1255	individual	none	2	Belgium	within-subject design	electoral ballot with coalitions and one without	voting for pre-electoral coalitions	There are many voters who would not consider voting for either There are many voters who would not consider voting for either coalition partner, but who are attracted to the coalition as a whole: every coalition attracts at least some voters who did not vote for either of the two constituent parties
Han 2008	166	individual	none	1	United States	field experiment	basic appeal to a political cause and disclosure appeal	support and contribution for environmental cause	Political appeals that include some self-disclosure about the person making the request triggers a liking heuristic that causes subjects to be more likely to comply with a request for action. Subjects receiving the treatment appeal are significantly more likely to donate money to support a political cause
Hicken, et al. 2015	833	individual	none	2	Phillipines	survey experiment	promise to not take money from candidates and promise to "vote their conscience" even if they took money	vote-selling	Inviting voters to promise not to accept money does substantially reduce vote-switching, with the reduction we observe coming entirely from the city council election where candidate payments are smallest. Inviting promises to vote one's conscience do not reduce vote-switching overall
Holman, et al. 2011	148	individual	none	2	United States	survey experiment	audiovisual news presentation with positive stories and another with a salience of terrorist threats	assessment of female candidates	Terrorist threats increase the expression of certain gender-trait stereotypes and negatively affect evaluations of female Democratic leaders. Republican women and/or those with strong national security experience may be able to overcome these conditions
Imai, et al. 2015	1150	individual	none	1	Mexico	survey experiment	asking whether the subject sold their vote	voter turnout and candidate approval	There exists an association between vote-selling and approval of Pena Nieto could indicate either that his campaign targeted payoffs to his supporters or that voteselling worked as intended
Karpowitz and Pope 2013	1000	individual	none	2	United States	survey experiment	preference for primary voting or caucus selection	participation in caucuses	Institutional choices are not neutral. Nominating candidates through caucuses rather than primaries not only reduces the number of participants, but also significantly affects the ideological composition of the electorate. Caucuses produce a more ideologically consistent electorate than do primaries, because policy centrists appear to avoid caucuses
Krupnikov and Piston 2015	737	individual	white adults	1	United States	survey experiment	negative ad	candidate evaluation	Subjects are not significantly more likely to punish a Black candidate for sponsoring negativity than a White candidate. Subjects with preconceived notions of Black people were more likely to punish Black candidates
Labonne 2013	17	municipality	none	2	Phillipines	randomized field experiment	CCT program implemented in all villages of a municipality versus half of villages in a municipality	incumbent vote share	In a competitive political environment, incumbent vote share is 26 percentage-points higher in municipalities where the program was implemented in all villages than in municipalities where the program was implemented in half of them. The program had no impact in municipalities with low levels of political competition
Lerman, et al. 2015	2834	individual	oversampling of black respondents	3	United States	survey experiment	biography, picture, and platform for fictional white, black, and light-skinned candidates	voter perception	Despite being less likely to support affirmative action policies, black conservatives are actually more prone to using race and skin tone heuristics in their evaluations of candidates for political office

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Matland and Tezcur 2011	303	individual	none	2	Turkey	survey experiment	similar speech transcripts with gender specific names and party affiliations attached	candidate evaluation	Candidate sex influences respondents' evaluations of areas of competence and perceptions of individual characteristics. It has almost no impact, however, on voting decisions. When it comes to voting, party support and policy stands are vastly more important than candidate gender
Revelli 2016	1133	municipality	none	1	Italy	natural experiment	2006 tax freeze	voter turnout and candidate selection	Tax limits deemphasize positional issues and make it more likely that voting in local elections occurs according to common values (signals about the competence of candidates) than to private values (ideological views), thus lowering turnout and weakening competition in local elections, but raising the chances of success of more valent candidates

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## 5. Prejudice

### 5.1 Summary of Findings

From the literature review, we were able to deduce that racial identity, gender stereotypes, and social norms all evince a strong influence on voting behavior and how voters perceive a particular candidate or political party.

#### *Politics and racial identity*

In studies like Adida, et al (2017) and Lerman, et al. (2015), individuals demonstrated a larger affinity with their own racial group and made their voting decisions accordingly. Visavalnich (2017) found that unique racial-political stereotypes confront Asian Americans. Furthermore, DellaVigna, et al (2014), found that support for nationalist parties and acts of violence were higher in Croatian villages that hosted Serbian radio stations. Aside from these two studies, the majority of research focused on racial identity issues among Caucasian American and African American individuals. There were limited studies done surrounding other ethnic groups in the United States and other parts of the world.

#### *Politics and anti-immigration sentiment*

Our findings show that, while anti-immigrant sentiment exists among voters, it is more heavily skewed towards low-skilled workers and decreases as the qualifications and skills of immigrants increases. Nevertheless, the sentiment appears to have negligible effects on voting behavior. Grönlund, et al. (2015) showed that anti-immigrant sentiments can be reduced when voters participate in constructive discussions with like-minded groups and interact in a way that encourages critical thinking.

#### *Politics and gender*

The literature shows that gender stereotypes can manifest depending on the kind of information that the public is exposed to, and that there is a causal link between voting behavior and preconceived gender beliefs. Bauer (2015) found that campaign communications activities can activate gender stereotypes and beliefs that would otherwise remain dormant, thus reducing support for female candidates. Beaman, et al. (2009) suggests that prior exposure to a female leader can help in reducing negative perceptions towards gender roles and the effectiveness of women leaders. However, a discouraging study by Mo (2015) suggested that individuals who have an explicit preference for male candidates were more likely to vote for male candidates, even after being exposed to information that the female candidate is more qualified.

### 5.2 Policy Implications

While researcher interest appears to be concentrated on race relations between Caucasian Americans and African Americans, it is important to widen this research to include other ethnic minorities as well to see if identity biases exist when treatments are applied to other ethnic groups. It would also be interesting to expand the research to ethnic groups in other parts of the world, to examine how socio-cultural conditioning towards different races might affect voting behavior.

Increasing exposure of individuals towards female/minority leaders, whether it was through critical discussions and debates or in their daily lives, appeared to be one of the most effective ways of reducing stereotypes and biases. Hence, policy makers might want to look towards increasing ways in which individuals can have better access to female leaders within the country.

## 5.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variables	Brief Statement of Findings
Adida, et al. 2017	unclear	individuals	none	1	United States	field	unclear	social identity voting	Behavioral and attitudinal data reveal that voters reward good-performing incumbents only if they are coethnics, and punish bad performers only if they are noncoethnics. Coethnics are also more (less) likely to accurately recall performance information if it is positive (negative)
Adman and Jansson 2017	290	municipalities	none	2	Sweden	field	email	ethnic discrimination among local Swedish public officials	The findings indicate disadvantageous treatment of individuals with Arabic-sounding names in terms of the informal tone of the replies, as Swedish-sounding names were replied to in a friendlier, more welcoming way
Aguilar, et al. 2015	1175	individuals	none	1	Brazil	field	survey	identity-based voting	When facing a short ballot with only a few candidates, most subjects chose candidates without regard to race or color. But when presented with a large ballot with many candidates, white and brown subjects show a significant preference for same-race candidates. Selfidentified black subjects, however, demonstrated a strong and consistent preference for black candidates regardless of choice set size
Alexseev 2015	1384	individuals	none	2	Russia	quasi	multiple regression analysis	individual attitudes toward nationalist inclusion and exclusion	Only two predictors consistently explained support for both inclusion and exclusion of migrants in Russia in both 2005 and 2013--perceived state strength and economic vulnerability
Andersen and Junn 2010	567	individuals	none	4	United States	field	photo manipulation	evaluations of Obama	The portrayal of candidates' race does affect how they are evaluated, and that this is particularly strong, in this scenario, on White Democratic voters evaluating a Black Democratic candidate
Appel 2012	94	individuals	none	2	Austria	field	propaganda	intellectual performance of immigrant adolescents	The intelligence test performance of adolescents with an immigration background decreased after they were exposed to radical right election posters whereas ethnic majority adolescents remained unaffected. The results further suggest that individuals with a strong ethnic minority identity are less vulnerable to the detrimental impact of the radical right propaganda
Armstrong, et al. 2010	127	individuals	none	2	Australia, NZ	field	photo manipulation	results of election	These findings imply that political parties should select competent-looking candidates to increase their chances of winning elections and implementing their policies
Banks and Bell 2013	113	individuals	none	2	United States	field	political ads	whites' views about race	Anger uniquely boosts opposition to racial policies among white racial conservatives. Anger from an implicit racial appeal motivates racial liberals to be more supportive of racial policies
Banks and Hicks 2016	1136	individuals	none	2	United States	field	distal pretest measurement	whites' unconscious racial bias	The findings show that the fear condition causes Whites high in implicit racism to be more supportive of voter ID laws than similar individuals in the anger and control conditions. On the other hand, fear does not cause Whites high in explicit racism to be more supportive of voter ID laws
Banwart 2010	omitted	individuals	none	2	United States	field	advertising	voters' application of belief and trait stereotypes	The results indicate that traditional trait stereotypes continue to be generated in the evaluation of female candidates, although the generation of belief (policy) stereotypes are more complicated. Whereas party affiliation influences perceptions of issue competency, vote choice also produces effects on both trait evaluations and perceptions of issue competency
Battaglini, et al. 2010	2520	individuals	students from princeton	7	United States	lab	decision-theoretic model	individuals' awareness of the swing voter's curse	Results support the equilibrium predictions of the Feddersen-Pesendorfer model
Bauer 2015	302	individuals	none	2	United States	field	survey, observational analysis	stereotype reliance	The results show that campaign communication activates stereotypes when they otherwise might not be activated, thereby diminishing support for female candidates
Beaman, et al. 2009	13210	individuals	none	2	India	quasi	survey	perceptions of female leader effectiveness and stereotypes about gender roles	Prior exposure to a female chief councilor improves perceptions of female leader effectiveness and weakens stereotypes about gender roles in the public and domestic spheres
Bell and Kaufmann 2015	330	individuals	none	3	United States	field	hypothetical description	voter evaluations of female candidates	Candidate traits, such as marital and parental status, can prime gender beliefs in the evaluative process

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Benjamin 2017	458	individuals	African Americans and Latinos	8	United States	quasi	identical newspaper articles, complete with photographs of the candidates, which differed only along the race of the candidate, the presence of a coethnic endorsement, and racial/ethnic salience.	support of out-group candidates among blacks and latinos	Black endorsements of minority out-group candidates are persuasive for Blacks, while comparable endorsements from Latinos are not as influential among Latinos
Block Jr and Onwunli 2010	789	individuals	none	2	United States	web based	name presentation	evaluation of voters	Among Republicans and conservatives, Obama's favorability ratings are generally lower when his middle name is present. Name presentation had little effect on Democrats and liberals, and moderates and independents rated the president more favorably when his middle name appeared. Regardless of party identification or political ideology, name presentation had no effect on the probability of voting for Obama
Bordalo, et al. 2016	> 20000	individuals	none	3	United States	lab	decision- maker model	stereotypes	Because stereotypes focus on differences, they cause belief distortions, particularly when groups are similar. Stereotypes are also context dependent: beliefs about a group depend on the characteristics of the reference group. In line with our predictions, beliefs in the lab about abstract groups and beliefs in the field about political groups are context dependent and distorted in the direction of representative types
Braman and Sinno 2009	54	individuals	undergraduates	2	United States	field	mock newspaper articles	political behavior of muslim candidates	Politically sophisticated respondents assume that a Muslim prosecutor who does not have a large Muslim constituency is sympathetic to Muslim terrorists, but not one with a larger Muslim voting base. Non-sophisticates attribute his behavior to such motivations regardless of the concentration of Muslims in his district
Burns, et al. 2013	2239	individuals	none	5	United States	field	frames of pain	voters' evaluations of Sarah Palin	Putatively black alias continues to be differentially treated even when the emails signal partisanship, indicating that strategic considerations cannot completely explain the observed differential treatment. Further analysis reveals that white legislators of both parties exhibit similar levels of discrimination against the black alias. Minority legislators do the opposite, responding more frequently to the black alias
Calfano, et al. 2013	200	individuals	none	3	United States	field	"broken britain" cue, "wonder working power." phrase	efficiency of God Talk	The mixed results suggest that some forms of God Talk are better than others in conveying to U.K. evangelicals that a candidate is conservative and religious without triggering the same associations by non-evangelical voters
Collins 2011	unclear	individuals	none	unclear	United States	lab	categorization model	individuals' spatial preferences	Voters move from either-or conceptions of politics that approximate directional preferences toward more detailed conceptions consistent with proximity preferences, with some cases approximating discounted proximity voting as well
Conroy-Krutz 2013	370	individuals	none	8	Uganda	field	vignettes	ethnic voting	While support for co-ethnics was high when ethnicity was the only distinguishing fact about candidates, it declined when information was presented that portrayed co-ethnics negatively vis-a-vis non co-ethnics. These results suggest that informational environments can impact ethnic voting
DellaVigna, et al. 2014	unclear	individuals	students	3	Croatia	lab	regression	anti-Serbian sentiment	The vote for extreme nationalist parties is higher and ethnically offensive graffiti are more common in Croatian villages with Serbian radio reception
Dunning and Harrison 2010	824	individuals	none	6	Mali	field	videotaped political speeches	association between ethnicity and individual vote choice	Cousinage alliances and coethnicity both positively shape voters' evaluations of candidates. Yet, due to their cross-cutting structure, cousinage ties counteract the effects of coethnic relationships. Cousinage thus plausibly contributes to the weak relationship between ethnicity and vote choice in Mali
Dunning and Nilekani 2013	512	councils	none	2	India	field	quota or no quota	political mobilization	Especially when politicians have dynamic political incentives to allocate benefits along party lines, cross-cutting partisan ties can blunt the distributive impact of ethnic quotas
Ekici, et al. 2016	548	individuals	students	3	Cyprus	field	trust game	trust and reciprocity	Cypriots have similar levels of trust towards others in general, although the two communities have different ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic characteristics
Erişen 2013	243	individuals	students	4	Turkey	field	manipulated text	turkish Political Behavior	This study shows how incidentally raised emotions on the Syria issue can influence individual attitudes on foreign policy, interest in seeking more information about the issue, and evaluations of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's performance
Erişen 2013	359	individuals	none	3	Turkey	field	party affiliation information	electoral choices	Findings from an experiment where social disagreement and candidate political party affiliation are manipulated indicate that young voters are sensitive to both partisan cues and socially supplied disagreement in forming and changing their attitudes toward political candidates. The results also show that, unlike most developing countries with weak parties, party label in Turkey is an important heuristic for making electoral choices. However, social disagreement can make political attitudes unstable

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Flores, et al. 2018	227	individuals	none	4	United States	field	vignettes	attitudes about transgender people and rights	We find our treatments have lower levels of discomfort and transphobia but have little effect on transgender rights attitudes. We further find that the impacts are stronger among Democrats than among Republicans
Fridkin, et al. 2009	722	individuals	none	2	United States	field	experimental manipulation	evaluations of candidates	Negative commercials are less effective at depressing evaluations of woman candidates, compared to male candidates
Frye 2015	1000	individuals	none	8	Ukraine	field	survey with fictional candidates	vote choice	A candidate's ethnicity and language had little impact on reported vote choice, whereas economic policy orientation toward Europe was strongly associated with vote preference
Funk 2010	unclear	individuals	none	unclear	Switzerland	natural	regression	impact of social pressure	Optional postal voting decreased the voting costs, but simultaneously removed the social pressure to vote. In spite of the large reduction in voting costs, the effect on aggregate turnout was small. However, voter participation was more negatively affected in the smaller communities. This lends support to the view that social incentives played a role for certain people's voting decisions
Gadarian 2010	Omitted	individuals	none	3	United States	natural	threat theory	foreign policy attitudes	Citizens form significantly different foreign policy views when the information environment is emotionally powerful than when it is free of emotion, even when the factual information is exactly the same. Citizens concerned about terrorism are more likely to adopt the hawkish foreign policy views communicated in threatening news stories when that policy is matched with fear-inducing cues than when it is not
Galasso and Nannicini 2013	1500	individuals	none	3	United States	survey	campaign	response of male and female voters	Negative advertising increases men's turnout, but has no effect on women. Females, however, vote more for the opponent and less for the incumbent when they are exposed to the opponent's positive campaign. Exactly the opposite occurs for males
Grönlund, et al. 2015	207	individuals	none	4	United States	field	survey	consequences of discussion in like-minded groups	The main finding of our experiment is that people with anti-immigrant attitudes become more tolerant even when they deliberate in like-minded groups. Moreover, similar learning curves are observed in both treatments
Grönlund, et al. 2017	207	individuals	none	4	United States	field	survey	democratic deliberation	The results indicate significant differences in the content of these women's media coverage and its influence on voters' attitudes
Harris, et al. 2017	1088	individuals	none	2	South Africa	list	unclear	anti-immigrant prejudice	The results show that significant prejudice toward immigrants exists among South Africans and that such prejudice is higher among the unemployed, but these sentiments do not seem to influence vote choice. The evidence suggests that the determinants of anti-immigrant sentiments due to South-South migration are distinct from South-North migration
Heerwig and McCabe 2009	1560	individuals	none	3	United States	list	unclear	positive association between educational attainment and socially tolerant attitudes	No evidence of systematic overreporting of support for a black presidential candidate among respondents with high levels of education, and note that social desirability bias declines as educational attainment increases
Hoerger, et al. 2010	57	individuals	michigan state university, 37 (65%) indicated support for Kerry, and 20 (35%) supported Bush	5	United States	field	happiness ratings, working memory, retrieval interference, subjective importance, diary manipulation	impact bias	Results showed that the perceived importance of the event and working memory capacity were both associated with an increased impact bias for some participants, whereas retrieval interference had no relationship with bias. Additionally, an experimental manipulation effectively reduced biased forecasts, particularly among participants who were most distracted thinking about peripheral life events
Hopkins 2015	1854	individuals	none	3	United States	field	news clip on immigration policy	anti-immigration attitudes	The results refute the expectation that more culturally distinctive immigrants necessarily induce anti-immigration views: exposure to Latino immigrants with darker skin tones or who speak Spanish does not increase restrictionist attitudes. Instead, the impact of out-group cues hinges on their content and related norms, as immigrants who speak accented English seem to counteract negative stereotypes related to immigrant assimilation
Hutchings, et al. 2010	539	individuals	none	3	United States	field	manipulated text	gender differences	When the racial significance of this debate is made explicit support for the Confederate flag declines, but only among women. Similarly, explicit appeals lead to lower levels of Democratic identification among men, but among women the effects are weaker and less consistent
Iyengar and Barisione 2015	3008	individuals	Italian voters	16	Italy	field	digitally altered pictures	gender and race bias in politics	No main effects of gender or race bias in political judgment. For Italian voters, party cues are by far the most powerful indicators of out-group status, and therefore the strongest predictors of candidate perception and support

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Iyengar, et al. 2013	Omitted	individuals	none	4	United States	field	vignettes	willingness to admit individual immigrants	Immigrants from professional backgrounds elicit higher levels of support than unskilled workers. The bias against unskilled workers is enlarged among immigrants accompanied by families. In comparison with occupational status and the number of family dependents, the target immigrant's cultural attributes--as measured by Middle Eastern nationality and Afrocentric appearance--prove relatively inconsequential as criteria for evaluating immigrants
Janus 2010	912	individuals	none	unclear	United States	list	unclear	restrictionist sentiments	Restrictionist sentiments are found to be more widespread among the U.S. populace than previous studies have estimated, especially among college graduates and political liberals
Klar 2013	263	individuals	none	3	United States	natural	survey	political preferences	In a competitive setting, certain rhetorical techniques dominate and drive the identities people rely on when forming preferences
Klor and Shayo 2010	180	individuals	undergraduate students that belong to either the Faculty of Social Sciences or the Faculty of Humanities at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and had no previous experience in experiments related to redistribution	2	United States	field	voting tax experiment	maximization of monetary payoffs	A significant subset of the subjects systematically deviate from monetary payoff maximization towards the tax rate that benefits their group when the monetary cost of doing so is not too high
Kobayashi, et al. 2015	3480	individuals	Japanese aged 20–75 years	1	Japan	field	survey	average citizen's willingness to grant citizenship	The results indicate that individual applicants are viewed more favorably than their groups or nations of origin, indicating a person-positivity bias. Korean workers are, ceteris paribus, viewed more favorably than workers from China
Kranton and Sanders 2017	unclear	individuals	none	2	United States	field	m-turk mechanism	groupiness	The results indicate (i) psychological notions of personality do not capture this heterogeneity and (ii) groupiness might relate to political and social contestation
Krupnikov and Piston 2015	293	individuals	none	4	United States	field	manipulated ad tone	candidate evaluations and turnout	Consistent with previous research, that respondents unfavorably evaluate candidates who decide to sponsor a negative ad, there are two important exceptions to this pattern: When the ad sponsor is Black, among White respondents who view Blacks negatively, the penalty for going negative is disproportionately large, while among White respondents who view Blacks positively, the penalty for going negative is disproportionately small
Lacina and Lee 2013	774	individuals	none	2	United States	survey	hypothetical scenarios	foreign policy opinion formation	Religious cultural cues outperformed regime type cues in determining respondents' perceptions of threat or expressions of trust, but respondents' views did not conform to maximalist claims of either the democratic peace or the clash of civilizations frameworks
Lerman, et al. 2015	1612	individuals	none	4	United States	online	manipulated photo	black voters' evaluations of political candidates' race and skin tone	Black conservative Democrats, relative to their more liberal copartisans, express a stronger preference for black candidates relative to White counterparts and prefer darker-skinned candidates relative to lighterskinned ones
Martinez and Craig 2010	279	individuals	none	2	United States	list	statements	racial antipathy toward blacks as a group in 2008	Few white voters were upset by Obama's electoral achievements, and many took some pride in his historic candidacy and election
McConaughy, et al. 2010	192	individuals	none	2	United States	field	campaign information about a city council election	political opinions and choices of Latinos	Ethnicity-based political choices among the target ingroup are not derived simply from cultural attachment to the group. Although shared language and other cultural markers may bring our attention to a possible "group" in politics, they do not necessarily carry political implications
Messer, et al. 2010	276	individuals	undergraduates, business and economics courses at Cornell University	6	United States	lab	random price voting mechanism (RPVM)	provision of public goods	Results suggest that social preferences, in particular a social efficiency motive, lead to economically meaningful deviations from selfish voting choices and increase the likelihood that welfare-enhancing programs are implemented
Meyer and Woodard 2017	unclear	individuals	none	1	United States	natural	unclear	impact of voters' racial resentment	The results show that voters who score highly on the racial resentment scale are just as likely to support a minority Republican as they are to support a white Republican

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Mo 2015	407	individuals	none	2	United States	survey	gender manipulation	calculations of voters	The propensity to pick a female candidate increases as explicit and implicit attitudes against female leadership decrease, suggesting that traditional explicit measures underestimate the effects of gender attitudes and miss a key dimension of people's preferences. Gender attitudes in the electoral process remain consequential, but have grown subtler, which is missed when only assessing people's self-reported explicit attitudes. Fortunately, the effects of voters' gender attitudes can be attenuated by candidate qualification information; however, it does not rid the effects of gender on vote choice uniformly. People who explicitly state a preference for male leaders do not respond to individuating information, even if the female candidate is clearly more qualified than her male counterpart. However, people who implicitly prefer male leaders, but explicitly state being gender-equitable respond to individuating information and tend to select the more qualified candidate regardless of the candidate's sex
Moehler and Conroy-Krutz 2016	Omitted	individuals	none	4	Uganda	field	ballot design	ethnic voting	Photographs increased ethnic voting, and our evidence indicates a priming effect, while ruling out learning as a likely alternate explanation. Subtle stimuli at the end of a campaign can affect ethnic voting in developing countries by altering identity salience
Mvukiyehe 2017	40	towns	none	2	Liberia	field	exposure to UNMIL radio	gender gaps in political participation	The results suggest that UNMIL Radio effects likely occurred through increased political efficacy of women voters in the lead up to the elections
Ranehill and Weber 2017	unclear	individuals	none	2	Zurich	lab	incentivized investment game, production task	organizational and policy outcomes	Gender difference is large relative to other voting differences based on observable characteristics and is partly explained by gender gaps in preferences and beliefs. Gender voting gaps persist with experience and in environments with varying degrees of risk
Robinson 2010	329	individuals	none	3	United States	survey	tailored design method	deliberation and tolerance	When the opposing viewpoints are attributed to a religious leader generally found outside the Christian Right social movement (a mainline Protestant), evangelicals are less tolerant than when attributed to a religious leader sometimes found within the movement (a Catholic)
Samii 2013	1086	individuals	none	1	Burundi	natural	survey	conflict between ethnic groups	Exposure to ethnic integration decreases prejudicial behavior and is benign with respect to ethnic salience
Sheagley, et al. 2017	705	individuals	none	3	United States	field	split ballots	individuals' racial attitudes	Racial attitudes are important predictors of how individuals perceive President Obama's effectiveness as well as the efficacy of related government organizations
Simonovits, et al. 2018	385	individuals	none	2	Hungary	field	perspective-taking game	ethnic prejudice	Participation in the perspective-taking game markedly reduced prejudice, with an effect-size equivalent to half the difference between voters of the far-right and the center-right party. The effects persisted for at least a month, and, as a byproduct, the intervention also reduced antipathy toward refugees, another stigmatized group in Hungary, and decreased vote intentions for Hungary's overtly racist, far-right party by 10%
Soltas and Broockman 2017	unclear	delegate candidates, vote-count observations	none	1	United States	natural	survey	taste-based discrimination against nonwhite political candidates	About 10 percent of voters do not vote for their preferred presidential candidate's delegates who have names that indicate the delegates are nonwhite, indicating that a considerable share of voters act upon racially-discriminatory tastes
Stephens-Dougan 2016	357	individuals	none	6	United States	field	campaign mailers	racial resentment	Racial resentment was primed such that white Democratic candidates associated with blacks were perceived as less fair, less likely to reduce crime, and less likely to receive vote support
Tusicsiny 2017	402	individuals	adult male marathi-speaking slum dwellers	4	India	lab-in-the-field, survey	public goods game	discriminatory attitudes towards the Muslim minority	After the treatment manipulated expectations of cooperative behavior, ethnically heterogeneous groups produced as much public goods in a public goods game as homogeneous groups. This positive experience radically reduced Hindu subjects' discriminatory attitudes towards the Muslim minority after the experiment. The effect was equally strong among voters of two extremist parties implicated in ethnic riots
Visalvanich 2017	2443	individuals	none	4	United States	survey	"low-information" scenario, "ideological" scenario, "foreign-born" scenario	fortunes of Asian candidates	These results indicate that Asian candidates in America face a set of racial-political stereotypes that are unique to their racial subgroup
Weaver 2012	2000	individuals	none	2	United States	survey	campaign literature	candidate evaluation	Afrocentric phenotype is an important, albeit hidden, form of bias in racial attitudes and that the importance of race on candidate evaluation depends largely on skin color and afrocentric features. However, like other racial cues, color and black phenotype don't influence voters' evaluations uniformly but vary in magnitude and direction across the gender and partisan makeup of the electorate in theoretically explicable ways

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Weber and Thornton 2012	562	individuals	christian identifiers	4	United States	survey	information manipulation, ad manipulation	opinions about political candidates	We find strong evidence religious traditionalism is activated when religious cues are embedded in campaign ads, but we find priming effects are reduced when participants are provided information about the candidate
Willer, et al. 2016	356	individuals	none	1	United States	field	survey	support for the Tea Party movement	White participants shown the darkened photo were more likely to report they supported the Tea Party relative to a control condition. Presenting participants with information that the white population share (Study 2) or income advantage (Study 3) is declining also led whites to report greater Tea Party support, effects that were partly explained by heightened levels of racial resentment
Wright, et al. 2017	4000	individuals	none	3	Canada	field	religious garb experiment	tolerance of Muslim accommodation	The experiments allow us to convincingly demonstrate Muslim exceptionalism. Contextual comparisons across multicultural policy regimes (Canada and the United States) and within them but across distinct political cultures (Quebec vs. English Canada) lend credence to a fairly subdued role for policy and a much larger one for political culture



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## 6. Strengthening of Party and Civic Association

### 6.1 Summary of Findings

The experimental literature on this subject points to a strong correlation between the improvement or strengthening of political parties, political mobilization and the quality of democracy.

#### *Community engagement and civil society*

The greater the incentive for people to engage in community activities, the greater the probability that the common good is prioritized by the majority of the population. Scheller (2015) wrote that increased engagement in community activities manifests as a higher level of cooperation among social actors in favor of common causes. Even small interventions are able to increase the participation in public meetings by more than 10% (Scott et al. 2013).

#### *Communication and political mobilization*

The way candidates and political parties can mobilize the electorate and engage them in an electoral contest is directly linked to how different groups can communicate their respective political messages and get the attention of the voter. Mvukiyehe and Samii (2015) studied the democratic reconstruction of Liberia and show that experiences that lead to greater interactions between different communities – as well as communities with public authorities – generate greater interest and popular participation in subjects related to public governance.

### 6.2 Policy Implications

Strengthening institutions that organize society politically is critical to avoiding the process of democratic erosion. This is especially true given that authoritarian regimes take root through the depoliticization and disengagement of large portions of the population, thus creating widespread political apathy. We also find, with greater engagement of socio-political actors, institutional quality and regime resilience are strengthened and there is a lower risk of political destabilization.



## 6.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample Size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Arnold and Freier 2015	49	cities	none	2	Germany	Quasi-experimental	lowering signature requirements on the number of observed citizen initiative petitions	likelihood initiative of petition	We find that reducing the signature requirement by 1 % point increases the probability of observing an initiative petition in a given city-year by 8-10 % points
Berganl and Cole 2015	<i>unclear</i>	Michigan State legislators	none	2	USA	field experiment	legislators are randomly assigned to be contacted by their constituents about a specific bill or to a control group	contact their legislator	Being targeted by constituent contacts increases the probability of supporting the relevant legislation by about 12 percentage points
Bohmelt 2013	145	cases	none	2	Germany	quasi-experimental	civil society lobbying	does civil society lobbying affect states' policies on climate change?	The results indicate that only business groups are likely to exert a causal influence on states' climate delegations. However, contrary to expectations, these groups appear to have enhanced states' efforts towards environmentally friendly policies
Gatso and Volla 2017	185	people	none	2	Ethiopia	lab-in-the-field common pool resource experiments	In this experimental setup, participants can either directly select a rule (direct democracy) or elect a leader who decides on the introduction of rules (representative democracy).	cooperation among the community members	It is found that both endogenous leaders elected by the community members and endogenous rules selected by the direct involvement of the participants are more effective in promoting cooperation among the community members compared to exogenous leadership, exogenous rule imposition and the baseline scenario without any of these modifications
Gerber, et al. 2010	378	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	mailing to a random sample of unaffiliated registered voters	likelihood to vote	Has caused a strengthening of partisan identity
Karens, et al. 2016	193	people	European economic students	2	Belgium, Poland, and Netherlands	laboratory experiment	adding EU brand elements to policies	trust in policies	The results show a consistent positive and significant effect of applying the EU brand to trust in the policies in all countries and for both policies included in the experiment
Lefevers, et al. 2015	163	people	none	2	Belgium	field experiment	information about political parties	whether parties can, by communicating on an issue, turn voters' perceptions of issue ownership to their advantage	Parties are unable to steal issues that are associated with another party. However, by communicating on their own issues, parties can reinforce their reputation as an associative owner but only in the short run and only if their previous ownership reputation is not overly strong
Manaf, et al. 2016	206	people	none	2	Malaysia	quasi-experimental	provide information	increased public participation in government decisions contributes significantly to the enhancement of grass-roots democracy	The findings reveal a desire on the part of local citizens to participate in their local government decision-making process

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Merilee 2010	30	cities	none	2	Mexico	field experiment	reply affirmatively to at least three questions about their ability to hold local officials accountable for their actions: Can citizens use the vote effectively to reward and punish the general or specific performance of local public officials and/or the parties they represent? Can citizens generate response to their collective needs from local governments? Can citizens be ensured of fair and equitable treatment from public agencies at local levels?	likelihood of vote patterns change public policies	Voters were able to enforce alternation in power and the circulation of elites, but not necessarily to transmit unambiguous messages to public officials or parties about performance concerns
Mvukiyehe and Samii 2015	362	people	none	2	Liberia	field experiment	(i) civic education and town hall workshops directed by non-governmental organizations in communities over nine months and (ii) security committees that brought rural community representatives into monthly exchange with United Nations peacekeepers	civic engagement	Civic education workshops increased enthusiasm for electoral participation, produced a coordinated shift from parochial to national candidates, and increased willingness to report on manipulation. A program combining the two interactions had similar effects
Ottoneil, et al. 2015	500	people	none	4	USA	field experiment	(1) no third-party punishment; (2) nonaccountable third-party punishment; and (3) accountable third-party punishment.	sensitiveness to bottom-up pressure on the part of ordinary citizens	When third-party institutions are held accountable, their propensity to fight misconduct is higher, other things equal
Panagopoulos 2013	369	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	positive reinforcement	likelihood to vote	The results suggest positive social pressure mobilizes voters
Pradhan et al. 2011	51	schools	none	4	Indonesia	field experiment	a grant plus one or a combination of three interventions: training for school committee members, a democratic election of school committee members, or facilitated collaboration between the school committee and the village council, also called linkage.	improving learning outcomes	Test scores improve in Indonesian by 0.17 standard deviations for linkage and 0.22 standard deviations for linkage+election. The election intervention alone leads to changes in time household members accompany children studying per week, but this does not lead to learning. Linkage is the most cost effective intervention, causing a 0.13 change in standard deviation in Indonesian test scores for each 100 dollars (US) spent
Rogers and Middleton 2015	18% of Oregon households in 2008	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	mail program	likelihood to vote	Results further suggest that two initiatives would have passed if not for the advocacy campaign to reject them
Scheller 2015	unclear	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	public meeting	residents' willingness to contribute to the provision of public goods	Finds evidence that participation in HOA meetings improves cooperative behavior
Scott, et al. 2013	277	stakeholders	none	2	USA	field experiment	phone call to attend public meeting	civic engagement	The attendance rate among the 108 stakeholders selected to receive the phone call was higher than among the 169 stakeholders in the control group (8.3 percent versus 4.7 percent)

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Simeone and Shaw 2017	<i>unclear</i>	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	encourages students to view internships and other civic-engagement opportunities as the first steps in collaborative projects that build long-term relationships with community partners and model how democracy works.	likelihood to engage in civiv initiatives	Significant statistical correlation
Vonnahme and Miller 2013	318	people	none	2	USA	field experiment	informations about politics	likelihood to increase confidence in the political system	The results show that candidates have a significant effect on voter confidence

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## 7. State Capacity

### 7.1 Summary of Findings

State capacity, for the purpose of this systematic review, is demonstrated through a government's ability to administer taxation policies. When a governing body can effectively levy taxes and provide commitments to the electorate that revenues are redistributed appropriately, credibility in the state's authority increases. On the other hand, a governing body which seeks to maximize wealth without commitment (i.e. levying taxes without adequate representation) sees its credibility diminish. The major themes to come out of the literature on state capacity dealt with the impact of tax information and its subsequent effect on civic engagement.

#### *Dispersion of Tax Information and Willingness*

The dissemination of tax information plays a significant role in the electorate's perceptions of state capacity. In other words, informed taxpayers are more willing taxpayers. Studies showed that support for taxation policy was indeed more prevalent when taxpayers were made aware of specific mechanisms designed to narrow the scope of tax revenue (Flores-Macías 2016). When information dissemination was used to promote the concept of accountability, voters subsequently raised their expectations of political leaders to sanctioning poor government performance (Gottlieb 2016).

#### *Compliance and Civic Engagement*

Furthermore, civic engagement was found to be a notable by-product of holding governments accountable with regard to taxation policy. Evidence showed that higher incomes and thus higher taxable incomes often feed opposition support and allow for public expression of political preferences (Blattman et al. 2016). Increased enforcement of tax collection instilled greater compliance, but this led to a positive increase in turnout for town halls for citizens to voice their demand for proper allocations and redistribution mechanisms (Weigel 2017). The relationship between compliance and civic engagement is most pronounced with citizens who have experience paying taxes. This does not imply that forcing taxation upon citizens is the best approach; rather, approaches should be geared towards emphasizing greater demands from political leaders (Martin 2013).

### 7.2 Policy Implications

Informed taxpayers are more willing to see their incomes go to the government because they have a clearer sense of how said incomes are redistributed towards public goods. This group also has the necessary level of knowledge to ascertain whether the government is acting credibly and can, if necessary, voice their displeasure through voting. The implication for policymakers, in the context of state capacity and democratic erosion, is that they should maintain a heightened sense of accountability to the taxpayer and provide the electorate with adequate information on relative performance. Noting this, recommendation include:

- Taxation policy should be outlined in a meaningful way for the taxpayer to understand tax revenue allocation across the various sectors of public goods provision. Informed taxpayers are more willing to comply with tax collection.

- Promote civic engagement programs designed to increase taxpayer awareness of governmental accountability. Taxpayers that develop high expectations will voice their support or discontent with current policies, vote accordingly for the candidates they feel will work towards proper redistribution, and ultimately help reinforce the social contract.

## 7.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population or subpopulation analyses	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Blattman, et al. 2016	535	individual	young entrepreneurs	1	Uganda	randomized field experiment	\$400 grant for a start-up enterprise	electoral turnout	Higher incomes are associated with opposition support, and we hypothesize that financial independence frees the poor to express political preferences publicly, being less reliant on patronage and other political transfers
Flores-Macias 2016	1300	individual	none	3	Mexico	survey experiment	tailored questions on taxation oversight, taxation sunset provisions, and taxation earmarks	political support for taxation	Net support – those who changed their views from opposition to support – increased from a baseline of about 17% in the control group to about 22% with civil society oversight, 24% for a sunset provision, and 24% with earmarking
Gottlieb 2016	95	commune	none	1	Mali	randomized field experiment	teaching of a civics course	electoral behavior	People in treated villages are indeed more likely to sanction poor performers and vote based on performance more often
Martin 2014	371	individual	none	2	Uganda	laboratory-in-the-field	taxation and grant treatment games	respondents' ("Citizens") willingness to punish "Leader" if the latter did not meet a certain payback threshold (accountable behavior)	The taxation treatment substantially increases Citizens' willingness to punish the Leader (i.e. through civic engagement) when their behavior was non-accountable: the average transfer threshold below which Citizens will punish increases by 13% overall, and by 30% for the subgroups with the most experience with taxation
Olken 2007	608	village	none	2	Indonesia	field experiment	audit probability and invitations to "accountability meetings"	reduction in missing expenditures	The use of the audit treatment in monitoring corruption, i.e. increasing the probability that a village was audited by the central government audit agency from a baseline of 4% to 100%, reduced missing expenditures from 27.7% points to 19.2% points. The use of the grassroots participation treatment increased accountability meeting attendance by 40%, but did not significantly lead to reductions in missing expenditures
Petterson-Lidbom 2008	288	municipality	none	1	Sweden	regression-discontinuity design	vote share of 50% or more	economic outcomes	Left-wing governments spend and tax 2-3% more than right-wing governments. Left-wing governments also have 7% lower unemployment rates, which is partly due to that left-wing governments employ 4% more workers than right-wing government
Pomeranz 2015	445734	firm	none	3	Chile	randomized evaluations	"deterrence" letter to notify firms of monitoring and possible audit, "tax morale" letter to emphasize high tax compliance rate, and "placebo" letter to notify new features on tax authority's website	declared VAT payments and deterrence of tax evasion	The deterrence letter effectively increased firms' perceived audit probability and that firms had the scope to increase their tax payments in response to heightened deterrence. This effect decreased over time. The deterrence letter increased the probability of firms declaring more sales compared to the previous year by 1.17 points, from 55.39 in the comparison group, but had no significant impact on the probability of a firm declaring more input costs compared to the previous year
Pomeranz 2015	5600	firm	none	1	Chile	randomized evaluations	preannouncement of upcoming audit leading to spillover	declared VAT of trading partners of firms	The audit announcement increased the probability of supplier firms declaring more VAT than in the previous year by 4.28 percentage points, from 52.07 percent in the comparison group. In contrast, the audit announcement did not have any significant effect on the VAT payments of downstream client firms. This suggests that firms expecting audits began demanding receipts from their suppliers as proof of their input costs. The demand for receipts created a paper trail documenting the sales of suppliers, forcing them to increase their VAT payments to avoid punishment for tax evasion
Risner and Bergan 2016	1000	individual	none	2	United States	2x2 between-subjects factorial design	payment frequency (yearly or weekly) and type of item (hedonic or monetary)	support for a tax increase	People will be more willing to support a tax increase when it is framed as a weekly message compared to a yearly message
Sy-Sahande 2017	1152	individual	none	1	Benin	survey experiment	Information related about the respondent's district voteshare for the mayor's party relative to the municipal average	political support for taxation	Respondents informed of their district's above-average voteshare for the mayor's party were more inclined to vote for clientelistic systems
Weigel 2017	431	neighborhood	none	1	DRC	survey experiment	property tax collection program	compliance and civic engagement	Of the 253 randomly assigned neighborhoods visited by tax collectors, there was an 11% point increase in tax compliance and 4.4% point increase in town hall attendance and 2.6% point increase in suggestion card submission (an act of lobbying)



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## 8. Education and Norms

### 8.1 Summary of Findings

In terms of democratic governments, civic education provides citizens with open access to information about the political system and institutions of the state. Across the board, the literature review on civic education has found that an increase in sharing of information can lead to the empowerment of ordinary citizens, as well as a deeper sense of commitment and a willingness to engage in political participation. Blattman (2014) finds that small educational programs are capable of influencing the way in which citizens resolve disputes among each other, leading to an overall decrease in violence and an increase in bargaining efficiency.

Our review of this literature suggests four factors that have significant impact on voter participation: level of education, social pressure, a sense of belonging and geographical distance. The studies have also shown that an increase in civic education has a positive correlation with political engagement and voter participation. Furthermore, a politically involved community creates societal expectations that encourage high voter participation among citizens. A deeper sense of country ties or patriotism within an individual can also promote higher levels of political participation wherein said individual feels a need to perform his/her civic duty towards their country. Lastly, convenience also plays a role in electoral participation. Individuals who were physically located far from voting booths were less likely to make the effort to turn up during elections.

The literature also suggests a limitation to civic education: while an increase in civic education can promote higher levels of civic engagement among individuals, it has little effect upon any deeply rooted values an individual may harbor. Pedagogical methods like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy have a more significant impact on treated individuals as compared to educational programs that focused on delivering information. In addition, the carried out treatments tended to have positive spillover effects on non-treated groups by spreading civic information through social interactions and sharing of opinions.

### 8.2 Policy Implications

Given the strong correlation found between educational norms and civic engagement, we clearly see the importance of developing a well-informed, politically active, and committed community. Democratic leadership programs or civic educational workshops that are more interactive in nature appear to be an effective way of increasing knowledge, skills, and the political engagement of citizens, all of which are a requisite towards creating and sustaining a strong democracy.

## 8.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Andersen, et al. 2017	575	individuals	none	3	Denmark	field	news reports exposure	political participation	For respondents who were similar to the exemplars, exposure to a news report with exemplars triggered an empathic concern and increased political participation intentions. For dissimilar respondents, exposure to a news report with exemplars decreased empathic concern, which in turn decreased political participation intentions.
Aremu 2015	1886	individuals	none	11	Nigeria	natural	survey	variations in citizenship	The study reveals that public or state university respondents are stronger along dimensions of obedience (readiness to comply with state orders and willingness to pay tax), interfaith accommodation (willingness to vote for and support candidates from another religious group), and patriotism (disposition to volunteer or sacrifice for the state) than faith-based university respondents.
Arvate and Mittlaender 2017	112	individuals	none	4	Brazil	field	voting game	voting behavior	Morality and norms are indeed crucial for a superior voting equilibrium in systems with heterogeneous politicians: while corruption always is punished, self-interest alone—in the absence of norms—leads to the acceptance and perpetuation of waste and social losses.
Bakker 2017	354	individuals	students	2	China, Netherlands	natural	threat-perception check	support to war	The comparison shows that the level of liberal norms in the democratic experimental group, although significantly higher than that in the autocratic experimental group, does not influence the support to go to war.
Ban and Rao 2008	527	village	none	1	India	quasi	regression	gender equality	Female leaders perform no differently than male leaders institutional factors matter much more for women than for men: women perform better than men in situations in which they have more political experience and live in villages less dominated by upper castes.
Bausch 2017	120	individuals	none	5	USA	field	blotto game	selection of leaders and how they deal with conflict	Counter to expectations, leaders of democratic groups were more likely than leaders of autocratic groups to select into a conflict rather than accept a negotiated settlement. Conditional on conflict occurring, democratic leaders did not mobilize more resources for war than autocratic leaders. However, democratic leaders were less likely to accept a settlement once a war was underway and they expended more effort in the last round of conflict, suggesting once they entered a war they fought for a decisive victory. Domestically, democratic leaders were punished for losing wars more often than autocratic leaders, while winning wars did not benefit democratic leaders significantly.
Blattman, et al. 2014	12000	community	community leaders and normal community members	1	Liberia	field	dispute resolution training	dispute resolution behavior	One year later, treated towns had higher resolution of land disputes and lower violence. Impacts spilled over to untrained residents.
Bush and Prather 2017	600	individuals	none	2	Tunisia	field	survey	beliefs about elections	Two important findings emerge. First, exposure to EOs' positive and negative statements produces a small but significant difference in individuals' perceptions of the election on average. Second, EOs' negative statements cause the election's main losing partisans—who may have had weak prior beliefs that the election was credible and were likely receptive to critical information—to believe the election was significantly less credible.
Casas, et al. 2017	>30000	polling booths	none		Argentina	quasi	regression	electoral outcomes	Electoral observers cause, on average, a 15% increase in the vote count for the observers' preferred party, which can reach up to 6% for some parties. This bias, which appears under various electoral rules, occurs mainly in municipalities with lower civic capital and weakens the accountability role of elections.
Collier and Vicente 2014	24	enumerated area	none	1	Nigeria	field / lab-in-the-field	town meetings, popular theater, and the distribution of campaign materials	voter turnout	We find direct effects on violence outcomes from exploring both subject-surveying and independent data sources. Crucially, we establish that voter intimidation is effective in reducing voter turnout, and that the violence was systematically dissociated from incumbents.
Dahlgard, et al. 2017	3011	individuals	none	5	Denmark	field	survey	voting intention	When voters are exposed to a news story describing either an upwards or downwards movement for either a small or large party, they tend to move their voting intentions in the according direction. The effect is strongest in the positive direction - that is, when a party experiences increased support, more follows. Consistent effects are found across two different parties for a diverse national sample in a political context very different from earlier research on the bandwagon effects.

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Dassonneville and Hooghe 2017	<i>omitted</i>	individuals	none	2	Netherlands	quasi	regression	educational inequalities	The participation gap between low- and high-educated citizens is growing This pattern is strongest in countries where turnout rates have decreased most
de Matos Vaz 2012	161	polling locations	none	4	Mozambique	field	voter education interventions	voter turnout	This paper shows that the transmission of voter education campaigns' effects does not occur through information sharing, but through sharing of opinions and pressure Furthermore, this study provides statistical evidence that social control increases voter turnout
DellaVigna, et al. 2016	13197	households	none	5	USA	field	flyer treatment	voter turnout	The experimental results indicate significant social image concerns
Duffy and Tavits 2008	<i>omitted</i>	individuals	none	2	USA	field	pivotal voter model	the likelihood that an individual votes	A higher subjective probability of being pivotal increases the likelihood that an individual votes, but the probability thresholds used by subjects are not as crisp as the theory would predict. There is some evidence that individuals learn over time to adjust their beliefs to be more consistent with the historical frequency of pivotality However, many subjects keep substantially overestimating their probability of being pivotal
Engl, et al. 2017	136	individuals	none	3	Switzerland	lab	linear public goods game	behavior in another domain, prosocial preferences and beliefs about others' behavior	The presence of an institution in one game generally enhances cooperation in the other game thus documenting a positive spillover effect. These spillover effects are economically substantial amounting up to 30 to 40 percent of the direct effect of institutions. When the institution is determined endogenously spillover effects get stronger over time, whereas they do not show a trend when it is imposed exogenously
Fafchamps and Vicente 2013	24	enumerated area / individual	none	1	Nigeria	field / lab-in-the-field	town meetings, popular theater, and the distribution of campaign materials	<i>unclear</i>	Survey on individual perception and experience of violence and on voter behavior A behavioral measure of empowerment where participants were asked to send a post card to flag a problem of electoral violence, network effects between those directly visited by campaigners and those not
Fafchamps and Vicente 2013	1149	individuals	none	2	Nigeria	field	randomized campaign	political participation and accountability	Kinship is the strongest channel of reinforcement and diffusion We also find that geographical proximity transmits simple effects on perceptions, and that chatting conveys more complex effects on behavior
Finkel 2012	1600	individuals	none	2	Democratic Republic of the Congo	lab-in-the-field	boîtes à Images sensitization sessions in which facilitators from local community-based organizations presented community audiences with a variety of images that were designed to stimulate discussion and learning about decentralization and, to a lesser extent, broader issues of political, economic, and democratic development. These sessions, lasting approximately two hours with audiences of approximately 100 individuals	political information, mobilization and empowerment	Civic education can have meaningful and relatively long-lasting effects in terms of increasing political information, increasing feelings of empowerment, and mobilizing individuals, even in contexts beset by political and ethnic violence.
Finkel, et al 2012	3600	individuals	none	2	Kenya	field	survey	emerging democracies	Participants who subsequently were affected by the violence were less likely to adopt negative beliefs about Kenya's political system, less likely to support the use of ethnic or political violence, and more likely to forgive those responsible for the post-election violence
Finkelstein, et al. 2017	652	individuals	none	4	USA	discrete choice experiment	survey	differences in perception of national security policies	Relative to other groups, liberals are more likely to view such policies as ineffective and susceptible to government abuse They also perceive a lower threat of terrorism All groups are willing to make trade-offs between civil liberties and risk of a terrorist attack However, loss of civil liberties affects liberals more than conservatives
Gerber, et al. 2008	180,002	households	none	5	USA	field	mailings	voter turnout	Substantially higher turnout was observed among those who received mailings promising to publicize their turnout to their household or their neighbors These findings demonstrate the profound importance of social pressure as an inducement to political participation
Gerber, et al. 2016	1.92 million	individuals	none	2	USA	field	self treatment mailer	voter turnout	Sending the Self mailer increases turnout by 07 points or 22% This effect is largely consistent across states, with somewhat larger effects observed in states with lower ex ante election salience

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Gine and Mansuri 2011	12	village	none	2	Pakistan	field	door-to-door	female turnout, candidate choice and party vote shares	Compared to women in control clusters, both targeted and untargeted women in treated clusters are 11 percentage points more likely to vote, and are also more likely to exercise independence in candidate choice, indicating large spillovers Data from polling stations suggests that treating 10 women increased female turnout by about seven votes, resulting in a cost per vote of US\$31 Finally, a 10 percent increase in the share of treated women at the polling station led to a 7 percent decrease in the share of votes of the winning party
Gottlieb 2016	5560	individuals	gender, local leaders, women's leader, youth leader, head of the village association, and the village assistant elected in civics course	2	Mali	field	1.) the capacity treatment provides information about local government capacity and responsibility, whereas 2.) the Capacity + Performance treatment provides the same treatment as treatment 1 with an additional component on relative local government performance	willingness to hold leaders accountable	People in treated villages are indeed more likely to sanction poor performers and vote based on performance more often.
Huang and Low 2017	386	individuals	none	1	USA	negotiation	battle of the sexes game	individual behavior	Post-election individuals are less cooperative in general, more likely to use adversarial negotiation strategies, and less likely to reach an agreement Furthermore, this is particularly driven by men acting more aggressively toward women
Kane 2017	1002	individuals	none	4	USA	survey	vignette	voter identification laws	First, Republicans tend to increase support for VID upon learning of even a miniscule amount of in-person voter fraud, but appear relatively insensitive to strategic considerations Second, Democrats' support for VID depends significantly upon which party stands to benefit from the laws, but Democrats do not appear sensitive to information about fraud
McBride 2017		individuals	none	3	USA	semester experiment	class modules	pedagogical potential	The article provides basic details of the pedagogical approach and three examples of the modules It concludes with methods for assessing the effectiveness of student-led class modules
Mvukiyehe 2017	40	towns	none	2	Liberia	field	exposure to UNMIL radio	women's access to politically-relevant information	The results suggest that UNMIL Radio effects likely occurred through increased political efficacy of women voters in the lead up to the elections
Mvukiyehe and Samii 2017	142	towns	none	3	Liberia	field	survey	gender gaps	Civic education increased enthusiasm for electoral participation, produced a coordinated shift from parochial to national candidates, and increased willingness to report on manipulation
Paluck and Green 2009	14	research site	none	2	Rwanda	field	radio program	willingness to express dissent	Although the radio program had little effect on many kinds of beliefs and attitudes, it had a substantial impact on listeners' willingness to express dissent and the ways they resolved communal problems
Panagopoulos, et al. 2017	2031	individuals	none	8	USA	field	mailings	voter turnout	Results show that county ties between candidates and voters likely boost turnout
Pasek, et al. 2008	1782	individuals	none	2	USA	quasi	student voices curriculum	political attentiveness and knowledge	The results suggest that a supplementary civics education program such as Student Voices can increase subsequent participation in politics by building long-term gains in political self-efficacy and skills in using the news media to follow government and political affairs
Pawlowski and Coates 2013	9090	individuals	members of the club hamburg sport-verein	1	Germany	quasi	regression	voter participation	Consistent with the general turnout literature, education level, marital status, household size, and distance all affect the persistence of voter participation
Samii 2015	unclear	towns	none	2	Liberia	field	unclear	electoral participation and behaviors	Civic education workshops increased enthusiasm for electoral participation, produced a coordinated shift from parochial to national candidates, and increased willingness to report on manipulation A program combining the two interactions had similar effects The security committees had negligible effects Barriers to political information and voter coordination appear to be important but resolvable problems for elections in fragile states
San Antonio 2008	Unclear	individuals	none	2	Philippines	field	surveys, interviews	students' academic achievement levels	This study reveals that the experimental group had higher levels of commitment, empowerment and trust compared with the control group after one year of implementing democratic school leadership
Settle, et al. 2017	761	individuals	california residents	2	USA	field	mailings	political participation	Results suggest that a genetic risk for negative affectivity may not in and of itself disincite a person to participate politically However, this predisposition and its associated traits do appear to heighten a person's sensitivity to their political environment

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Sondheimer and Green 2010	1943	individuals	none	2	USA	field	schweinhart analysis, i have a dream natural experiment, STAR Experiment	voter turnout	Exogenously induced changes in high school graduation rates have powerful effects on voter turnout rates These results imply that the correlation between education and turnout is indeed causal
Whiteley 2012	<i>omitted</i>	individuals	18 - 26 years old	2	UK	natural	survey	civic engagement of young people	The findings are that citizenship education had a positive impact on three key components of civic engagement: efficacy, political participation and political knowledge This suggests that the reform is likely to help offset some of the trends in civic participation among young people which have shown a sharp decline in key activities like voting and voluntary activities over time
Zheng, et al. 2017	179	individuals	none	1	China	quasi	questionnaire	political participation	The results indicated that corruption perception was negatively associated with political participation, and that life satisfaction moderated the relationship between corruption perception and political participation

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## 9. Economic Shocks

### 9.1 Summary of Findings

There were relatively few experimental studies that treated the relationship between economic shocks and democratic backsliding. One of the constraints in producing such studies is the difficulty in generating treatments that promote economic instability. Thus, most of the experimental literature is limited to quasi-experimental methods.

#### *Taxation and government accountability*

Paler (2013) finds that economic shocks show that sudden economic windfalls may prove to be a bad thing for the overall civic engagement of a state, as governments who rely on tax income rather than windfalls tend to have higher levels of accountability from its citizens. Nonetheless, implementing tax-operated budgets did not seem to encourage political participation in any other area besides government spending.

#### *Economic shocks and violence*

Sudden economic downturns can also lead to higher levels of violence and conflict, particularly in high-production regions within fragile states. Maystadt and Ecker (2014) and Dube and Vargas (2013) conclude that price fluctuations in agricultural and livestock commodities results in an increase in violence within those areas of production.

#### *Economic shocks and government response*

Healy and Malhotra (2010) found that voting behavior responds not towards the occurrence of economic shocks or natural disasters, but rather in the way that the government handles the disaster. In other words, individuals rarely blame their representatives for economic hardships that befall them as a result of natural occurrences, however governments who rise up to the challenge is likely to retain higher support of its people.

### 9.2 Policy Implications

One of the more important takeaways that we can glean is that there are higher levels of citizen monitoring when governments operate on tax income, which indicates that foreign aid programs may not be the most effective way of spreading democracy. However, other programs could be put in place to increase civic participation in activities outside government spending. In the event of natural disasters that lead to economic shocks, one of the aspects that local governments and international organizations should focus on is reducing potential conflicts within the region, given the strong causal relationships inferred between these two factors. Given the lack of available experimental literature, we might want to consider expanding our research to include non-experimental studies as well.

## 9.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
Ahmed 2013	58	countries	none	1	Cross-Country	natural experiment	regression	expenditures on welfare goods to fund patronage	Political institutions may mediate the potentially beneficial socioeconomic effects of remittance inflows
Blanco, et al. 2012	174	individual	tourists in the island of Majorca	5	Spain	field	modified dictator game	level of voluntary donations	Participants only self-impose mandatory contributions when they must choose between a high or low tax, and rarely passing the high tax. In addition, individuals who voted for a high tax and are in a group where the majority votes for the low tax conformed to their earlier vote by contributing more. Further, data supports an incomplete crowding-out of voluntary donations by the application of tourism taxes ear-marked for environmental purposes. From a policy perspective, this result supports the potential for a complementary use of taxes and voluntary donations for fundraising environmental projects in tourism destinations
De La and Ana 2013	506	villages	none	1	Mexico	randomized	randomization	electoral behavior	Experimental data show that early enrollment in the program led to substantive increases in voter turnout and in the incumbent's vote share in the 2000 presidential election. The experiment also reveals that opposition parties' vote shares were unaffected by the Mexican conditional cash transfer (CCT) program
Faricy and Ellis 2014	373	individual	none	1	United States	survey	survey	public attitudes toward social spending	support for otherwise identical social programs is generally higher when such programs are portrayed as being delivered through tax expenditures than when they are portrayed as being delivered by direct spending. In addition, support for tax expenditure programs which redistribute wealth upward drops when citizens are provided information about the redistributive effects. Both of these results are conditioned by partisanship, with the opinions of Republicans more sensitive to the mechanism through which benefits are delivered, and the opinions of Democrats more sensitive to information about their redistributive effects
Healy and Malhotra 2010	52	years	none	1	United States	natural experiment	regression	electoral outcomes	Voters appear to be rewarding and punishing government with respect to its performance in handling the disaster, as opposed to blaming the government for these natural events
Liou and Musgrave 2014	7	countries	none	1	Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Trinidad and Tobago.	quasi experiment	synthetic controls	transitions to democracy	There is little evidence that a resource curse systematically prevents democratization or that institutional quality alone determines outcomes. Nevertheless, resource income meaningfully affects outcomes and even contributes to democratization in some instances
Maystadt and Ecker 2014	<i>unclear</i>	events	none	1	Somalia	instrumental variable	regression	civil conflict incidence	Drought affects conflict through livestock price changes, establishing livestock markets as the primary channel of transmission in Somalia
Paler 2013	1863	individual	none	2	Indonesia	field	revenue & information	government accountability	The tax group was 5% more willing to monitor the budget than the windfall group. There is no indication that tax treatment increased willingness to engage in other forms of political participation. Tax treatment produced higher support for the incumbent district head. There is no evidence that the tax group reacted more strongly towards the information
Rode and Gwartney 2012	48	political transitions	none	2	Cross Country	quasi experiment	cross-sectional analysis, panel data analysis	economic freedom	The results indicate that transitions to democracy are associated with subsequent increases in economic liberalization as measured by changes in the Economic Freedom of the World index. There was also evidence that stable (long-term) democracies achieved larger increases in economic freedom than authoritarian regimes, while unstable democratic transitions adversely affected economic liberalization
Simonovits 2015	407	individual	none	8	United States	field	short stories	political behavior	Changes in voter's perceptions of the economy indeed translate into substantial changes in political support for the president

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## 10. Inequality

### 10.1 Summary of Findings

The theoretical literature argues that inequality can cause democratic erosion due to the degradation of social cohesion and the consolidation of power by a small set of elites. The greater the divide between the wealthy and the impoverished, the more the lower classes will want to redistribute wealth from the wealthy. Unfortunately, it is this wealth that allows the elites in the country to use their power and suppress these attempts. The experimental literature on inequality is limited due to the difficulty in manipulating the amount of inequality within a society. As a result, the vast majority of research on the topic uses either quasi-experimental methods including natural experiments or regression discontinuity methods and lab experiments with limited external validity. These findings covered a wide array of topics that have been included below.

#### *Affirmative action*

Affirmative action programs such as quota systems are found in lab experiments to be most effective when the affected group perceives the injustice that is being remedied and supports the solution. Balafoutas (2016) found that people are often supportive of quota systems for women, but if a quota system was created in a lab experiment that was based on arbitrary criteria, it was met with derision regarding efficiency losses.

#### *Religion and values*

A study exploited a natural experiment in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Switzerland in which a region was split into two governing structures and one government actively supported the adoption of Reformed Protestantism while the other did not. They then used a record of voting behavior on direct referenda for leisure, redistribution, and intervention. Basten (2013) found that those in the Reformed Protestantism “treatment” showed reduce support for leisure by 15%, government intervention by 7% and redistribution by 5%. Meanwhile, Klor (2010) looked at the impact of people’s beliefs on fate versus merit and opportunity-based success and found that those who believe that people gain success through their own merit are far less likely to support redistribution than those that believe fate is a greater predictor of success. These findings are further supported by the literature on earned income being used for redistribution versus a windfall allocation. When individuals are provided an amount of money – either with no explanation or via natural resources such as oil revenues – people are more likely to support the redistribution of those funds. If the money comes from earned incomes and tax revenue, people are less likely to support redistribution (Balafoutas 2013).

#### *Voting behavior*

Consistent with our findings on polarization, people are more likely to vote for redistribution if it supports their perceived in-group than if it supports out-group members. This is true of a variety of identities that have been primed in various lab experiments (Balcells 2015). Lab experiments have also been conducted to study the impact of inequality on voter’s preference for autocracy. Ryvkin and Semykina

(2017) propose that increased levels of inequality make people more willing to vote for a transition from democracy to an autocracy that promises to redistribute the wealth to lower classes.

## 10.2 Policy Implications

Due to the limited experimental evidence on the impact of inequality on democratic institutions, all policy recommendations should be taken with a degree of skepticism. In order to reduce inequality and improve social cohesion, the literature provides a number of helpful findings.

- When designing an affirmative action program to increase the representation of underprivileged people, it is important to first gain buy-in from those affected by the program. If the community does not believe that the underprivileged group truly deserves this form of representation, it seems likely that the program will be criticized.
- In addition, individuals' values will greatly impact their propensity to support these programs as well as redistribution more generally. If the money being spent is from earned income, or if the citizens believe that a person's livelihood is based more on their own merit than fate, these programs will likely lack support.
- It has also been found that people are more likely to support redistribution when it is supported by their in-group. It is possible that a greater sense of national patriotism and belonging would increase the size of the "in-group" and thus increase the degree of support for redistributive policies.
- The last finding, though only a single study, doesn't provide direct policy implications, but does increase the motivation for taking on the challenge of inequality. If there is great inequality, more people are willing to accept autocratic policies to alleviate the problem.

## 10.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population or subpopulation analyses	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Acemoglu and Robinson, et al. 2008	97	countries	none	unclear	Cross-country	instrumental-variables	N/A	N/A	No causal effect of income on democracy
Agranov 2015	228	individual	none	4	United States	lab	the experiment varies the amount of inequality and the collective choice procedure to determine tax rates	voting behavior for tax redistribution	They report four main findings. First, higher wage inequality leads to higher tax rates. The effect is significant and large in magnitude. Second, the average implemented tax rates are almost exactly equal to the theoretical ideal tax rate of the median wage worker. Third, we do not observe any significant differences in labor supply or average implemented tax rates between a direct democracy institution and a representative democracy system where tax rates are determined by candidate competition. Fourth, we observe negligible deviations from labor supply behavior or voting behavior in the directions implied by altruism or inequality aversion
Balafoutas 2013	144	individual	none	3	United States	lab	in a 2 X 2 design, they let subjects either vote on or exogenously encounter incentive settings while assigned unequal endowments are either task-determined or random	voting behavior and contribution to the group	They find that earned endwments lead to less support for redistribution and less cooperation. Subjects' voting is influenced by egalitarian and equity concerns, in addition to self-interest. Cooperation rates respond rather continuously to incentives
Balafoutas 2016	354	individual	gender, race	4	United States	lab	they experimentally investigate whether subjects vote foraffirmative action rules, against, or abstain. If approved by the vote, a quota rule is imple-mented that favors women in one treatment, but members of an artificially created groupbased on random color assignment in another treatment	voting behavior for, against, or abstain from affirmative action, and performance at completing individual and group tasks	They find that quota rules based ongender are implemented frequently and do not affect the performance of men and women in a contest. Quota rules based on an arbitrary criterion, however, are less often approved and lead to strong individual reactions of advantaged and disadvantaged group members and to efficiency losses. These results show that the effects of affirmative action policies largely depend on whether these policies are viewed favorably within the affected groups
Balcells 2015	4000	individual	none	2	Spain	field	they randomly informed some citizens of the true relative income of their region to assess the impact of this information on regional redistribution preferences	survey on preferences for redistribution	They find that citizens' learning about their region's relative position affects these preferences in a manner consistent with some of the political economy models. They also find some support for out-group concerns as an important factor
Basten 2013	unclear	municipality	religion	N/A	Switzerland	regression discontinuity	they use a Fuzzy Spatial Regression Discontinuity Design to exploit a historical quasi experiment in Western Switzerland, where in the sixteenth century a hitherto homogeneous region was split and one part assigned to adopt Protestantism	voting behavior in direct referenda relating to leisure, redistribution and intervention	They find that Reformed Protestantism reduces referenda voting for more leisure by 14, redistribution by 5, and government intervention by 7 percentage points. These preferences translate into higher per capita income as well as greater income inequality
Bursztyn 2016	2003	individual	none	4	Brazil	survey	after gathering initial opinion information, they randomized information shocks on how the local government allocated resources in the previous years. All the information shocks involved actual amounts of public spending changes that we gathered from the Brazilian Ministry of the Economy	rating of the government	Diverging from models of elite capture, our findings suggest that public education spending could be low not because the rich oppose it, but because the poor prefer that the government allocates resources elsewhere. In particular, our results are consistent with low-income voters favoring instead redistributive instruments that yield immediate gains in consumption, such as cash transfers

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent Variable	Brief statement of findings
D'Exelle 2012	124	individual	none	4	Netherlands	lab	they experimentally investigate groups where a rich representative allocates resources among poorer members, who can announce disapproval by voting for a measure hurting the representative. They examine the effect of inequality aversion by keeping information on the allocation private in one and commonly known in another condition. Further, they investigate whether casting votes publicly or secretly influences allocation and voting behavior	voting behavior	They find that disapproval rates are highest with secret voting or a commonly known resource allocation. Disapproval voting fails to stimulate representatives to appear more prosocial, but rather induces them to keep everything. Private information on the allocation and public voting leads to least disapproval and exclusion of the poorest group members from the resources
Klor 2010	180	individual	none	2	Israel	lab	subjects belonging to two distinct natural groups are randomly assigned gross incomes and vote over alternative redistributive tax regimes, where the regime is chosen by majority rule	vote for two differing redistribution schemes	They find that a significant subset of the subjects systematically deviate from monetary payoff maximization towards the tax rate that benefits their group when the monetary cost of doing so is not too high. These deviations cannot be explained by efficiency concerns, inequality aversion, reciprocity, social learning or conformity
Londregan and Poole 1996	55	countries	none	unclear	Cross-country	instrumental-variables	N/A	N/A	The democratizing effect of income remains as a statistically significant factor promoting the emergence of democratic political institutions
Rykin and Semykina 2017	228	people	47.4% female	4	USA	laboratory experiment	informations about a hipotetical democratic and autocratic regimes	voting behavior for autocracy	Democracy breakdown increases with the degree of inequality



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## 11. Courts

### 11.1 Summary of Findings

Manipulating legal systems in an experimental study is extremely complicated, making it difficult to produce research papers on the topic. From the available literature, we can observe that the training of law enforcement personnel matters. Blattman et al. (2014) shows that access to the legal system is of fundamental importance for the maintenance of social peace and avoidance of violent dispute resolution. In many low-income countries, access to courts is expensive, so one option is to invest in informal institutions to fill the gap caused by the poor functioning of formal institutions. In this way, groups of citizens trained to apply the law in courts of arbitration across rural and poor communities proved extremely efficient as instruments of social pacification. Gregoric et al. (2012) presented interesting conclusions as to how laws are obeyed due to a psychological propensity to obey norms, even in the absence of institutions that enforce those laws properly. Therefore, a political-legal order can create deep roots in society without necessarily requiring institutions that enforce the law efficiently.

### 11.2 Policy Implications

According to the existing theoretical and qualitative literature, independent courts are one of the leading instruments for protecting fundamental freedoms. As a consequence, courts are necessary both for avoiding the initial erosion of democratic institutions and preventing the concentration of power in the hands of potential autocratic leaders. Access to the legal system is also of paramount importance. One of the corollaries of the democratic rule of law is equality before the law, and this is only possible with free and fair courts. Therefore, training programs in which people lacking legal training are educated to act as mediators in conflicts can bridge the gap between lacking formal institutions and the informal institutions that exist in their absence.

## 11.3 Mapping Review

Citation	Sample size	Unit of randomization	Distinct features of target population	Number of treatment arms	Country	Experiment type	Treatment(s)	Dependent variable	Brief statement of findings
Blattman et al. 2014	246	town	none	2	Liberia	field	received training in ADR practices and norms	pacific resolution	Treated towns had higher resolution of land disputes and lower violence. Impacts spilled over to untrained residents. We also saw unintended consequences: more extrajudicial punishment and (weakly) more nonviolent disagreements. Results imply that mass education can change high-stakes behaviors, and improving informal bargaining and enforcement behavior can promote order in weak states
Gibson and Caldeira 2000	3,258	people	none	2	South Africa	experimental Survey	an adverse Court decision on a civil liberties dispute	public trustfulness	Low confidence in the judiciary on controversial issues
Gregoric et al. 2012	344	people	none	2	USA	quasi-experiment and a survey	informations about legal norms	law enforcement	Law on books' can still play a role by triggering the social norm of 'obeying the law'
Schargrodsky 2010	1800	families	none	2	Argentina	natural experiment	property titles	economic security	Entitled families substantially increased housing investment, reduced household size, and enhanced the education of their children relative to the control group

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