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Why oppose a peace agreement? The relationship between belief systems, informational shortcuts, and attitudes towards the 2016 referendum in Colombia

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Why oppose a peace agreement? The relationship between belief systems, informational shortcuts, and attitudes towards the 2016 referendum in Colombia[1]

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Abstract

On 2 October 2016, the proposed peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC) was narrowly defeated in a plebiscite that sought public approval for the deal. The "no" option received 50.2 percent of votes cast, and less than 38 percent of the electorate cast a vote. Why did the majority of voters oppose the peace agreement? In a combined survey –a face-to-face sample in Bogotá and an online sample– conducted prior to the referendum, we identify voter cleavages using the principal component analysis (PCA) method. We find three consistent dimensions with profiles reflecting whether an individual is a 1) pro-status quo citizen; 2) a conservative-right voter; and 3) a citizen with a pronounced religious identity. In addition, we not only assess voters' choices in the plebiscite based on these profiles, but also examine how these profiles may predict voters' opinions on specific aspects of, and beliefs about, the agreement. Similar results are found when we replicate the PCA exercise using data from the 2016 Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) survey. Our findings suggest that voters are heterogeneous, but that different beliefs and attitudes about the referendum clustered in specific type of voters, which in turn shaped these voters' willingness to endorse the proposed agreement.

Key Words: Colombian peace agreement, belief systems, informational shortcuts, attitudes, voter profiles.

Resumen

El 2 de octubre de 2016, el acuerdo de paz propuesto entre el Gobierno colombiano y las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) fue derrotado en un plebiscito que buscaba la aprobación pública del acuerdo. La opción del "no" recibió 50,2 % de los votos a favor, menos de 38 % del electorado participó en la elección. ¿Por qué la mayoría de los votantes se opuso al acuerdo de paz? En una encuesta conjunta – una muestra cara a cara en Bogotá y una muestra en internet– realizada antes del plebiscito se identificaron diferentes perfiles de votantes utilizando el método de análisis de componentes principales (PCA). Se encontraron tres dimensiones coherentes con los perfiles que reflejan si un individuo es un 1) ciudadano pro-status quo; 2) un votante de derecha conservador; o 3) un ciudadano con una identidad religiosa pronunciada. Además, no solo se evaluaron las decisiones de los votantes en el plebiscito en función de estos perfiles, sino que también se examinó cómo estos pueden predecir las opiniones de los votantes sobre aspectos específicos y creencias acerca del acuerdo. Se encontraron resultados similares cuando se replicó el ejercicio de PCA utilizando datos de la encuesta del Proyecto de Opinión Pública Latinoamericana (LAPOP) de 2016. Los resultados sugieren que los votantes son heterogéneos, pero que diferentes creencias y actitudes sobre el referéndum se agrupan en tipos específicos de votantes, que a su vez influyen sobre la voluntad de éstos para respaldar el acuerdo de paz.

Palabras clave: proceso de paz colombiano, sistemas de creencias, atajos de información, actitudes, perfiles de votantes

Content

1. Introduction

Many experts consider referendums problematic and even dangerous. They often reduce complex questions to a yes or no question (e.g. Stanley and Holiday, 2002); parties involved can adopt their own narratives and appeal only to emotions; and voters can see them as an opportunity to voice their discontent with issues unrelated to the question posed by the referendum (e.g., LeDuc, 2015). Yet, referendums are more popular than ever. According to Qvortrup (2018) the incidence of referendums has climbed from roughly ten per year worldwide from the 1960s to the 1980s, to approach fifty per year in the last three decades. To cite only a few high-profile examples, 2016 and 2017 saw the "Brexit" referendum on whether the United Kingdom should leave the European Union; in Hungary, an anti-immigration and refugees referendum; referendums on amending the Constitution in both Italy and Turkey; and in Colombia, a referendum that put a peace agreement with Colombia's largest insurgent group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, or Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), to a national vote.

In examining the processes by which individuals form and express political opinions, Zaller (1992) argues that *"every opinion is a marriage of information and predisposition: information to form a mental picture of the given issue, and predisposition to motivate some conclusion about it"* (p.6). Thus, theories of public opinion that try to explain the relationship between predispositions and opinion formation (Berinsky, 2007; Zaller, 1992) state that individuals hold different values, beliefs and experiences that affect their willingness to accept new information, and then to form an opinion related to a particular issue. In this sense, underlying predispositions or belief systems may have a relative influence on how citizens make decisions in a referendum.

Polls before the Colombian plebiscite predicted that the population would affirm the agreement with a comfortable 66 percent of the vote share. But surprisingly, on October 2, 2016, the proposed peace agreement was narrowly defeated, with 50.2 percent of votes cast against the accord. Less than 38 percent of the electorate cast a vote. In this article, we take up the relationship between political predispositions and voting behavior by addressing the next question: How do individuals use previously structured belief systems, such as cognitive or informational shortcuts, to shape their political preferences around the peace agreement?

In other words, our aim is to assess whether different beliefs and attitudes clustered in specific types of voters in the referendum, which in turn shaped these voters' willingness to endorse the proposed agreement.

Most research on obstacles to settlement of violent civil conflict has focused on the incentives for the main parties involved in conflict (e.g., Doyle and Sambanis, 2006; Cederman et al. 2017). We know much less, however, about what influences individual attitudes toward peace agreements. This is an important gap, for several reasons. First, there is an increasing expectation among the public that peace agreements should be subject to some kind of a popular vote (Matanock, 2017). Second, citizens' participation may contribute to peace because their "tiredness" with the conflict can influence both rebels and governments to move toward ending a conflict (Zartman, 1989; Cousens, Rothchild and Stedman, 2002; Zhukov 2013). Third, even if peace agreements are not put to a formal vote, the attitudes of civilians towards peace processes have a crucial impact on their success, particularly in democratic regimes, mainly because public support legitimizes the government's efforts to end the conflict (Newman, 2012).

Moreover, while support for agreements may be critical, it also may be subject to significant opposition. Other proposed peace agreements have faced more opposition than anticipated, suggesting that individuals have strong preferences about, and sometimes disagreement with specific content of these agreements. In Guatemala, for example, a 1999 referendum proposed four constitutional questions to settle the conflict with the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca or URNG). The proposed settlement was rejected by a narrow majority, with a turnout of just 18.5 percent (Miethbauer, 1999). Some scholars have attributed the defeat to a strong and well-organized "no" campaign, as well as to the complexity of the ballot questions, which were asked separately and not as single a yes or no question (Stanley and Holiday, 2002).

Attitudes toward peace in Colombia have received extensive study. Existing research on the Colombian plebiscite has analyzed variation in the vote according to district, to differences between urban and rural areas, and to the type of victimization and attacks by the FARC and paramilitary groups (e.g., Arjona, 2016; Fergusson and Molina, 2016; Weintraub, 2016). Scholars have also analyzed how historical violence affected vote shares in the 2014 election,

which was essentially a referendum on the peace talks due to the strong positions of candidates on the peace process (Weintraub, Vargas and Flores, 2015). Others have used existing survey data to examine how demographic characteristics are associated with differences in support for peace as an abstract concept (e.g., Liendo and Braithwaite, 2017), as well as how the specific content of the agreement (electoral provisions and reduced sentences for members of the rebel group) was likely shaped by how the rebel group was perceived by average citizens (e.g., Matanock and Garbiras-Diaz, 2016; Tellez, 2017).

Our argument here is that while voters are heterogeneous, some pre-existing political beliefs and attitudes cluster on specific types of voters, and that in turn these beliefs and attitudes shaped voters' decision to support or oppose the peace agreement with the FARC. We draw on a combined survey –including a face-to-face sample in Bogotá and an online sample– conducted prior to the referendum. Using principal components analysis (PCA), we identify three robust components with profiles reflecting whether an individual is a 1) pro-status quo citizen or a pro-government voter; 2) a right-leaning voter; and 3) a citizen with a pronounced religious identity. We not only show how these profiles predict voting intentions in the plebiscite beyond what demographic factors could predict, but also examine how these profiles may predict voters' opinions on specific aspects of, and beliefs about, the agreement.

Similar results are found when we replicate the PCA exercise using data from the 2016 Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) survey. Our findings suggest that the effectiveness of efforts to influence voters depends on their pre-existing beliefs. This suggests that the Colombian government's strategies to generate consensus around the peace process should not hinge on efforts targeted to people whose profiles suggest that they already hold very strong attitudes against it.

On the combined survey, respondents who placed in the pro-status quo profile have a higher probability of voting in favor, while being a conservative-right voter decreases the likelihood of voting yes. With regards to voters' opinions on specific aspects of, and beliefs about, the agreement, being a pro-status quo voter increases the support for the government's commitment to guarantee the political participation of the FARC, while scoring positive on the right-leaning component increases the perception of reduced sentences as a symbol of impunity.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. The second section briefly examines the context of the Colombian peace process. The third section explains the factors that help identify individual attitudes toward peace agreements, particularly in the Colombian case. The fourth section discusses the analytical framework and how expect attitudes to cluster in voter profiles. The fifth and sixth sections present the survey design and empirical analysis, respectively. The final section discusses the importance and implications of these voter profiles for the government's effort to consolidate peace in Colombia.

2. The context of the Colombian peace process

For more than fifty years, Colombia has experienced one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world –after the Palestine-Israel Conflict and India-Pakistan conflicts (Riaño-Alcalá, 2008)– leaving more than eight million victims: almost six million displaced persons, 220 thousand homicides and more than 25 thousand forced disappearances (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2012). Four major efforts to reach a peace agreement with the FARC have been launched over the last thirty years.

In 1984, the government of the President Belisario Betancur signed the agreement of "La Uribe," with the FARC. This agreement saw the FARC launch a political party, the Unión Patriotica (UP). However, in 1987, after the systematic assassination of the UP's most important political leaders, the FARC broke the ceasefire with the government and returned to war.

In the early 1990s, then-president César Gaviria initiated a dialogue with the *Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar*, a bloc formed by members of multiple leftist guerrilla groups, including the FARC, EPL, M-19, and ELN in 1987. However, after the kidnapping of the former Minister for Public Works, Argelino Durán, the government broke off negotiations.

In 1998, the former President Andrés Pastrana, a candidate at the time, met with the FARC chief, Manuel Marulanda, to open the way to what became known as the "Caguan peace process." However, in 2002 the dialogue with the FARC was broken, and the government of President Álvaro Uribe launched a military offensive against the guerrilla group.

President Juan Manuel Santos began a new peace process in 2012. After four years of negotiations, an agreement was reached between the two negotiating teams in Havana, Cuba. The agreement included six major points. The FARC would disarm and demobilize into camps set up by the UN to begin the process of reintegration into civilian life. A special jurisdiction would be created to try crimes committed during the conflict (Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz) and a truth and reconciliation commission would be created to ensure accountability for what happened, guarantee the legal security of those who participate in it, and contribute to guarantee the reconciliation and non-repetition, as essential elements of the transition to peace. The accord proposed a new approach to attack the problem of illicit crops, where the FARC not only agreed to stop drug production in areas under their control, but it gives special treatment to the weakest links in the drug trafficking chain, promoting the voluntary substitution of crops for illicit use. To improve the social and economic conditions of the rural population, the agreement seeks the eradication of extreme rural poverty and the 50% reduction of poverty in the rural areas in a period of 10 years. Then, the government promised to provide land, loans and basic services as mechanisms to close the gap with urban areas. Finally, as the main purpose of the deal was "changing bullets for votes" (President Santos, personal communication, December 13, 2013), the FARC created a new political party, which would be allocated ten guaranteed seats in Congress until 2022 as a condition to secure the implementation of the peace process.

The October 2016 plebiscite marked the first time in three decades of off and on negotiations with the FARC, that a peace agreement with the guerrilla group would be put to a vote.

3. Individual attitudes on peace agreements

There are two main theoretical approaches within the literature of political behavior and public opinion that seek to explain the behavior of voters. On the one hand, there is the ideology and the partisan identities, and on the other hand the logic of the economic vote.

3.1 Ideology and partisanship

Partisan attachment has long been known to influence opinions on specific issues (Campbell et al., 1960). For some scholars, partisanship is a type of social identity (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2004). It affects individual's personal identity and are reinforced over

individual's voting life (Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers, 2009), in which can foster a sense of belonging to a group or to an abstract ideology or value. Moreover, partisanship not only determine how people vote, but also how they assess government performance (Bartels, 2000). For example, in American politics, Cassino and Jenkins (2013) have showed that those believing Bush was complicit in the 9/11 attacks are more likely to be Democrat than Republican. However, it remains unclear whether in democracies where there is not a marked ideological difference between the political parties, citizens would use party attachment as a voting cue (Mainwaring, 1999). Mainwaring and Torcal (2006) argue that "outside the advanced democracies, more voters choose candidates on the basis of their personal characteristics without regard to party, ideology, or programmatic issues" (p. 204).

3.2 The reward-punishment voter's logic

Most theories of political and voting behavior argue that voters seek to punish or reward politicians for past or anticipated future performance (e.g., Fiorina, 1981; Jackman, 1995). From this perspective, voting intention should be influenced primarily by the citizen's perception of issues such as the state of the economy and policy outcomes. Further, citizens can be conditioned by either the institutional design of the political system (e.g., Powell and Whitten, 1993; Nadeau, Niemi and Yoshinaka, 2002) or by the style of leadership of political leaders (e.g., Ortiz and García, 2014), which makes government's responsibility for managing the economy more (or less) evident.

More recently, the retrospective voting literature has taken up new approaches to the reward-punishment logic (for a review see Healy and Malhotra, 2013). First, local economy conditions –gas prices, the housing market, and local unemployment– appear to bias people's perceptions of the national level. Reeves and Gimpel (2012) find a negative relationship between an increase in the county-level home foreclosure rate and the evaluations of the national economy. New research has challenged the assumption about rational voting, highlighting the influence of information non-related to economic or political issues on voter decision making.

Voter heterogeneity implies that different people have distinct policy preferences and priorities as well as varying levels of political sophistication (e.g., Duch, 2001). This is likely

to be even more salient in a referendum than retrospective/performance voting since individuals have to decide on complex questions with a yes or no answer. The literature is quite scant on civilian opinions of peace talks (Sahliyeh and Deng, 2003; Newman, 2012), the extent to which civilians participate in the peace process (Bell and O'Rourke, 2007), and why civilians would support peaceful procedures to resolve conflict if they suffered directly during the war (Zhukov, 2013).

3.3 Existing research on Colombians' attitudes toward peace

Existing research on Colombia has emphasized two core factors that may affect attitudes toward peace. First, drawing on the literature on conflict and political attitudes, one might expect that greater exposure to the conflict should shape individual attitudes toward a peace settlement. Reflecting the idea that the costs of conflict are made clearer to those who have experienced it, one would expect that being affected by violence should increase support for settlement. At the aggregate level, the results in the 2016 referendum indicate that areas with greater conflict activity, more combatants, and with more civilians displaced by the conflict had a higher share of "yes" votes (Arjona, 2016; Fergusson and Molina, 2016; Weintraub, 2016).

However, such aggregate relationships do not necessarily translate directly to individual attitudes. For instance, individuals who are personally more affected by conflict often appear to develop more intransigent attitudes and greater resistance to settlements. Hayes and McAllister (2001) find that individuals with conflict exposure during the Troubles in Northern Ireland were more supportive of militant activity and less supportive of disarming paramilitary groups.

Findings in the Colombian case show conflicting results. In a 2013 survey carried out by the National Center of Historical Memory (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica), Social Foundation (Fundación Social) and Los Andes University, Nussio, Rettberg and Ugarriza (2015) explore whether there are any differences in attitudes toward transitional justice mechanisms between victims and nonvictims, but they do not find statistically significant differences between the two groups. Similarly, using LAPOP survey data from 2015, Matanock and Garbiras-Diaz (2016) found no evidence that conflict exposure, as measured by self-reported victimization, had any relationship to variation in support for the peace

process. Nonetheless, Tellez (2016) found that civilians in conflict zones have stronger preferences in favor of peace negotiations, even if this might require some concessions to the guerrillas.

In trying to determine what other individual-level attributes can determine the support towards the peace accord, The Observatory of Democracy (Observatorio de la Democracia) (2016) from Los Andes University have shown that citizens most likely to give their support, are individuals interested in politics, who approve of the government of President Santos, with greater confidence in the FARC, and sympathizers of the Liberal Party or the U Party. On the other hand, the rejection of the agreement is mainly motivated by sympathy towards the Centro Democratico Party (a right-wing party). As we explain below, we not only expand on other individual-level characteristics but argue that different beliefs and attitudes clustered in specific types of voters in the referendum, which in turn shaped these voters' willingness to endorse the proposed agreement.

A second perspective argues that peace agreements are often elite deals. Through this lens, opposition to the peace agreement was driven primarily by elite competition. Matanock and García-Sánchez (2017) argue that deteriorating relations between President Santos and former President Uribe, beginning in 2011, helped drive Uribe's opposition to the peace accord, as he "called the Government insufficiently patriotic, claimed the settlement gave too many concessions to the FARC, and, ultimately, accused Santos of treason against his legacy" (p. 4). Uribe increasingly sought to undermine Santos –his former political ally who served as Defense Minister– by portraying the peace process as "unpatriotic," claiming the concessions from the FARC were "too weak," and appealing to the unpopularity of the FARC among many Colombians. Matanock and García-Sánchez (2017) provide survey evidence to demonstrate shifting attitudes toward the peace process as elite competition intensified, with Uribe supporters becoming increasingly sceptical of the peace agreement.

4. Identification of voter profiles

Existing analyses of attitudes toward the peace agreement in Colombia have focused on demographic characteristics, types of victimization, and partisanship, and pay less attention to other individual-level attributes that could affect opinions and perceptions of the accord.

We argue here that some pre-existing political beliefs and attitudes function as heuristics or decision rules[3] that help people decide whether to support or oppose political actions. Following the discussion of the importance of political heuristics in the public opinion literature (e.g., Kuklinski and Peyton, 2009), most citizens are relatively uninformed about political matters and do not possess a great deal of political information (Converse, 1964; Bartels, 1996; Boudreau and Lupia, 2011). Yet, a sizable majority make "reasonable" decisions about their political preferences.

Compelling evidence demonstrates that even those who know little about politics use structured belief systems to form policy preferences (e.g., Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1991). Citizens draw on their core values and beliefs as foundations, and use them as shortcuts to form real attitudes that allow them to infer specific policy preferences. Our argument therefore splits in two parts. Regardless of the information people possess or their level of political "sophistication", citizens use their previously structured belief systems to shape their political preferences and attitudes towards the peace agreement. They rely on their fundamental values and beliefs and use them as shortcuts to form attitudes towards the accord. However, not all the informational or cognitive shortcuts are predispositions, as we discussed below, some of the cues are product of the political situation at that time. On the second part, we suggest this characteristics and cues cluster on a smaller number of identifiable type of voters, which in turn are related to systematic differences in support or opposition to the peace process.

Yet while these heuristics enable people to make judgments in the absence of complete information, they can also lead citizens to make suboptimal or poor decisions (Druckman et al., 2009; Dancey and Sheagley, 2013). For example, psychological biases can lead to motivated reasoning, in which citizens raise the evidentiary bar for information that is contrary to their previously-held beliefs, while lowering this standard for evidence that reinforces their initial opinions (e.g., Kim, Taber and Lodge, 2010; Kahan, 2013). As Kunda (1990) argues, when people want to arrive at their desired conclusions, this determines which set of cognitive processes, beliefs, or values they use on a given occasion. In other words,

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[3] Political scientists have described heuristics as "judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways to organize and simplify political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute yet yielding dependable answers even to complex problems of choice" (Sniderman et al., 1991, p. 19).

people do not conclude whatever they want to conclude only because they want to. Rather, they search for the beliefs and rules of thumb that support their desired conclusions (Kunda, 1990).

Voters often construct a cognitive and emotional justification to confirm what they already know; if they are faced with unwanted information, they reject it. Therefore, our expectations are that we can observe clusters of pre-existing beliefs and attitudes which we interpret as certain type of voters. These individuals are "motivated reasoners," who evaluate the peace process using their existing beliefs, rather than the new information available (e.g., Redlawsk, 2002). The implications of the role of motivated reasoning, within the context of effective policy and government communication, are discussed more below.

4.1 Shortcuts to answer hard questions

Voters face the same problem in any referendum: They need to disentangle a complex policy issue into a simple yes or no question. Usually, they solve this problem by finding some informational shortcuts to answer these hard questions. But what are the shortcuts that voters could use? Citizens can follow the guidance of authority figures they trust, follow a narrative put forward by the government or other powerful political actors, or force-fit the matter into existing ideological beliefs (Lupia and McCubbins, 1998). In other words, as LeDuc (2015) explains:

> "A vote that is supposed to be about an important public issue ends up instead being about the popularity or unpopularity of a particular party or leader, the record of the government, or some set of issues or events that are not closely related to the subject of the referendum" (p. 141).

We identify at least four factors or shortcuts that affected individual preferences toward the 2016 plebiscite. First, since the plebiscite was an initiative by the national government, we expect that government performance and trust in institutions is associated with the referendum issue. Second, two of the most prominent political figures of the country were directly involved in the referendum, as former President Alvaro Uribe, and sitting President Juan Manuel Santos took opposite sides, so we expect voters to use cues from elite political and ideological divisions to decide whether to support or oppose the peace agreement.

Third, though votes in a referendum may be swayed by issues that are not closely related to the real subject, the emergence of these are often not accidental, because are actively promoted by parties involved in the referendum campaign. For example, a narrative of "gender ideology" supplanting traditional values was promoted by the religious and conservative parties in the lead-up to the vote. The fear or risk of becoming like Venezuela, with the election of a radical-left leader to become president of Colombia, was also heavily promoted due to the economic and humanitarian crisis in the neighboring country. These issues, although they were unrelated to the content of the referendum, became key informational shortcuts, allowing voters to determine how to vote.

We expand below on these cognitive shortcuts and how they cluster on a smaller number of identifiable type of voters, which in turn are related to systematic differences in support or opposition to the peace process.

4.1 Trust in institutions and perception of government

While trust in government institutions and in government performance have been operationalized as dependent variables extensively in the literature (e.g., Newton and Norris, 2000), much less empirical effort has been devoted to the study of their behavioral implications (Hetherington, 1998). Trust, in political terms, could be defined as "the judgment of the citizenry that the system and the political incumbents are responsive, and will do what is right even in the absence of constant scrutiny" (Miller and Listhaug, 1990, p.358). Hence, trust in government is an important predictor of support for government policies, even more important than partisanship or ideology alone (Hetherington and Husser, 2012).

Catterberg and Moreno (2005) state that during periods of economic crisis, for instance, governments call on citizens to have sufficient trust in economic and political institutions to accept temporary economic constraints in return for the promise of better conditions in some uncertain future. This logic applies similarly to the scenario of a peace agreement, which may have a high level of uncertainty due to the proposed change of rules. In this context, democratic stability requires people to trust government institutions enough to accept the concessions that are given to rebel groups, in exchange for securing stability through resolution of the conflict. Previous work on public opinion in the Israel-Palestine conflict,

for example, has found that Palestinians who value democratic institutions are more willing to support the peace process (Sahliyeh and Deng, 2003).

Citizens may use trust in institutions as a cue when deciding to support or oppose peace. According to Rudolph and Popp (2009), the trust heuristic is activated when people are asked to evaluate government policies under at least two conditions: that a degree of uncertainty exists about the effects of policy decisions, and that some of the outcomes of the policy are desirable, but others are not. Our expectation is that these two conditions are met for the 2016 plebiscite. People were not sure what would happen after the referendum, and even voters who intended to vote in favor of the accord did not necessarily think that every aspect of the agreement was desirable. Thus, trust in institutions translates into a matter of government credibility (Rudolph, 2017) –which was a critical matter for convincing people to vote yes. Those who trusted institutions (i.e., the judicial system, the President, and the congress) would make a prospective decision based on their willingness to accept government promises about the future consequences of the peace process. In other words, citizens who trusted in institutions were also more likely to believe government claims about the benefits of a risky decision such as a peace agreement with the FARC.

4.2 Uribe and Santos: Elite polarization around the peace process

Some scholars contend that elite-level political polarization leads to similar responses from citizens (e.g., Zaller, 1992; Abramowitz and Saunders, 1998). Voters use cues from elites' political and ideological divisions to decide whether to support or oppose a particular issue. On a survey experiment drawing on the American National Elections Survey and coded New York Times stories, Zaller (1992) showed that when political leaders agree on a policy (in this case, US invasion of Iraq in the Gulf War), citizens tend to agree as well. But if elites polarize around an issue, citizens respond in the same way.

Matanock and García-Sánchez (2017) argue the failure of the plebiscite was mainly due to the high degree of polarization around the battle of narratives between former President Alvaro Uribe and President Juan Manuel Santos. Figure 1 shows that since 2004[4] the majority of Colombians have supported a peaceful solution to end the conflict with the guerrillas. As

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[4] The Americas Barometer LAPOP survey started to collect data in 2004.

these authors demonstrate, however, support for a negotiated solution reached its lowest point in 2011. Before 2011, support was significantly above 60 percent, but support dropped as a formal rupture between Uribe and Santos became clear (Matanock and García-Sánchez, 2017). Therefore, the referendum was framed by elite polarization, in which voters used cues from elites to decide on a complex issue: whether to support the peace agreement with the FARC. In tackling this historical political issue, voters did not separate elite narratives it proved hard for voters to separate elite narratives from an objective assessment of the actual question.

Figure 1. Support for a negotiated solution to end the conflict with the guerrillas
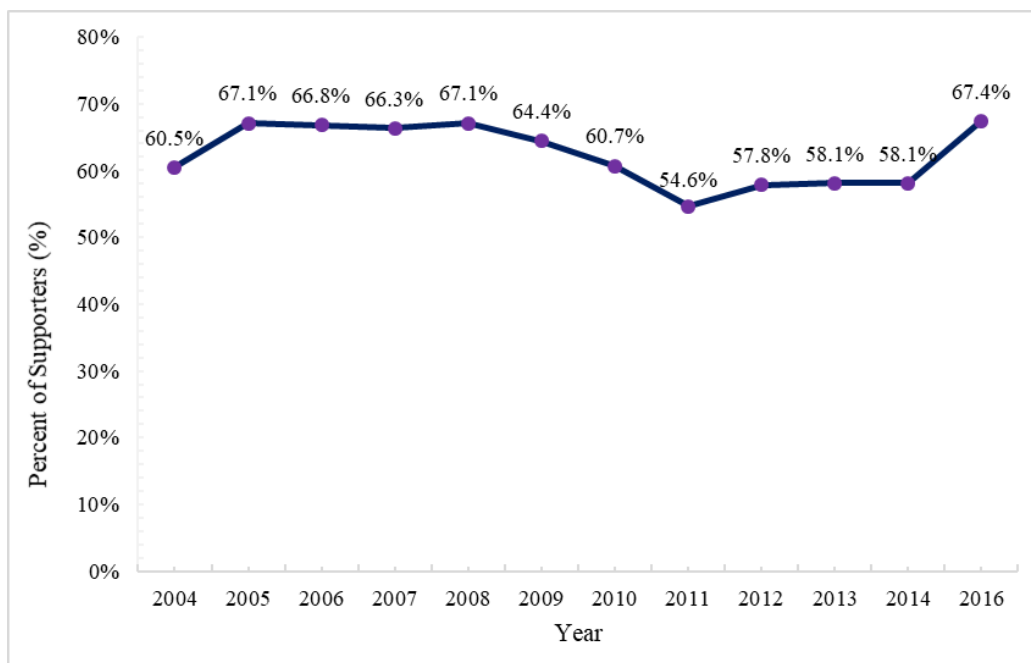
However, as Zaller (1992) explains, individuals who are more likely to follow an elite polarization heuristic are those who are placed on the extreme ends of political ideology distribution, and those with high levels of political awareness.[5] Hence, the elite polarization heuristic may only be significant for certain parts of the population. Following Matanock and García-Sánchez (2017) argument, the elite divisions are important because when elites uphold a clear picture of a public issue, they select and interpret the reality and events of the world for citizens, and those most politically attentive members of the public are likely to

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[5] Zaller's definition of awareness uses different indicators of political sophistication and attentiveness: "Political awareness is operationally measured mainly by means of a general measure of political knowledge, that is, a person's summary score across a series of neutral, factual tests of public affairs knowledge" (Zaller 1992, p. 43).

adopt the elite point of view (Zaller, 1992). But we also suggest that citizens' attitudes toward the peace settlement were not structured on a single Uribe-Santos dimension. Elite cues combined with other attitudinal informational shortcuts should cluster on more structured dimensions, allowing us to identify multiple voter profiles beyond the Uribe-Santos dimension.

4.4 Imposing a narrative: Conservative and religious attitudes toward peace

Some political analysts argue that for some of the opponents of the peace settlement, the plebiscite was not really about the peace process with the FARC.[6] Very frequently, political leaders aim to reframe a referendum in their own narratives. In the UK's debate over whether to leave the European Union, for example, the "remain" campaign framed the question as a matter of economic stability, and the "leave" campaign did the same with immigration, but neither campaign talked about the specific consequences of the parting (e.g., Hobolt, 2016). This reframing can turn referendums into contests over voters' core values, depending on the stories they find more appealing.

The most conservative political and religious sectors of Colombian society saw in the agreement an imposition of a new definition of family and gender that supported non-traditional Christian values. While the government was still negotiating with the FARC in Havana, the Ministry of Education, then headed by Gina Parody, launched an initiative to review the disciplinary handbooks to ensure they were respectful of sexual orientation and gender identity, following an order of the Colombian Constitutional Court, with nothing to do with the peace process.

However, conservative members of the Government, like Alejandro Ordoñez, the national Inspector General at the time, accused the government of promoting gender ideology in Colombian education. Likewise, he argued government was using the peace process to impose this "gender ideology."[7] Leaders of Catholic and Evangelical churches joined these criticisms, complaining that the agreements lacked any references to God. Some of these leaders also attacked the government's decision to incorporate a gender approach as a

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[6] See: https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/americas/colombian-opposition-to-peace-deal-feeds-off-gay-rights-backlash.html?_r=1

[7] To understand the context of what the conservative and religious sectors understood as "gender ideology" and actions that they claimed amounted to government promotion of this ideology, see: http://www.ideaspaz.org/publications/posts/1414

transversal and guiding principle in the peace agreement; they characterized it as "gay colonization," denouncing same-sex marriage and urging their parishioners to defend the traditional family.

The influence of doctrinal religious-conservative attitudes on political behavior in Colombia has not been studied extensively. In American politics, however, there is a good deal of evidence that political activists and voters with orthodox beliefs tend to support the Republican Party while the Democratic Party draws more support from religious liberals and secularists (e.g., Green, Guth, and Fraser, 1991; Wilcox, 1992). Layman (1997) uses data from 1980 through 1994 to show that in the US members of evangelical denominations moved increasingly toward the Republican Party and away from Democrats. Our hypothesis about conservative and religious attitudes toward the peace process, given the mobilization around "gender ideology" and a perceived threat to traditional values, is that this parallel framing worked as an informational shortcut for citizens with strong conservative-religious values and beliefs. In other words, we would expect to see specific religious attitudes clustered on a specific voter profile: voters who make decisions primarily because of conservative religious beliefs.

4.4 Venezuela's crisis: A key fear factor

According to the national survey "*Gran Encuesta Invamer*"[8] 55.4 percent of Colombians think the country is at risk of becoming like Venezuela. The "No" campaign argued that the FARC participation in political life would bring left-wing "castrochavismo," shorthand for a Venezuelan-Cuban ideological axis, to power Colombia. Moreover, Venezuela's economic and humanitarian crisis raised fears about the peace process. Venezuela is struggling through the hemisphere's worst economic problems, inflation jumped from 112 percent in 2015 to 2,400 percent in 2016, and large numbers of Venezuelans (around 600,000) have gone to neighbouring countries as refugees, the vast majority in Colombia. Hence, beyond the "castrochavismo" campaign, the possibility of becoming like Venezuela (having severe

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[8] See:
https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=http://media.caracoltv.co/Noticias/GRAN%2520ENCUESTA%2520INVAMER%25201.pdf

economic problems and irresponsible left leaders) is real to citizens to the extent that they see more Venezuelans arriving in the country as a result of the crisis.

Recent research in political psychology consistently shows that physical threat or fear is a key factor –though not the only one– in whether people hold conservative or liberal attitudes toward some policies (e.g., Napier et al., 2018). In the case of Colombia, voters were confronted with a scenario of high uncertainty, with the most important neighboring country descending into the worst economic and political crisis in memory. In such a situation, many citizens used fear as an informational shortcut to form a perception of the peace agreement. There are at least three specific fears that individuals may have experienced related to Venezuela: loss of national identity (the external threat); imposition of a dictatorship (the threat to freedom); and the institution of communism as the new economic system (the internal threat to private property) (Gómez-Suárez, 2017).

Therefore, we posit that fear of becoming like Venezuela became an emotional frame for voters to reject the peace agreement. Moreover, we expect this emotional frame to be clustered with other heuristics discussed above, such as, lack of trust in institutions –the non-credibility of government promises about the outcome of the peace process– and the elite polarization between Santos and Uribe –support for Óscar Iván Zuluaga.

5. Survey design and data

We conducted a survey prior to the 2016 referendum to identify voter profiles. The survey contains two different samples, with 335 face-to-face interviews, as well as 1050 responses to the survey collected over the internet. The face-to-face interviews were conducted the weekend before the referendum (24-25 September 2016), and the internet sample was collected the Tuesday before the referendum (27 September 2016). The surveys were administered in the historic center of Bogota (in the corridor of Carrera 7, between the Plaza de Bolivar and 26th street).[9] This area of the city is filled during the day with people who study or work there, but usually reside elsewhere.

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[9] Interviewers were instructed to balance gender and age of the respondents. Before starting the questionnaire, it was mandatory that each interviewer explain the purpose of the survey, guarantee that the answers were anonymous, that under no circumstances would the identities of respondents be revealed, and that the survey would take approximately 10 minutes.

The internet survey was administered by sharing a Google form with the survey on our personal Facebook and Twitter accounts. The form included information explaining to the respondents, before they began to answer the survey questions, the purpose of the survey and the anonymity of the answers. Therefore, our intention was not to obtain a representative sample, but to combine two different strategies to identify if polling on the internet could unveil potential attitudes people would not reveal otherwise.

The survey contains 40 questions (see appendix I for the full questionnaire). In addition to eliciting respondents' voting intentions for the peace agreement referendum, we recorded a series of standard demographic characteristics. Figure 2 displays the distribution of the survey in terms of gender, age, level of education, and *estrato* (a standardized classification of social and economic status determined by neighbourhood) (see appendix II to see the descriptive statistics separately by each sample). As shown in Figure 2, 51.70 percent of the sample is made up of women and 48.30 percent men. In the case of the face-to-face sample, 57.20 percent are men, and in the internet sample 54.5 percent are women. In the internet and the overall sample, almost 80 percent of the respondents are between 18 and 40 years old, however, the population of the face-to-face sample is, on average, younger, 67.77 are under 40 years old. In terms of level of education, in the overall sample 30 percent of the respondents completed secondary school, and 33.07 percent had some type of graduate studies. However, it should be notice that there are profound differences between the results of the two surveyed populations. In the internet sample 40.60 percent reported to had graduate education, whereas in the survey conducted face-to-face only 9.34 percent had graduate education.

For the socioeconomic *estrato*, in the overall sample the majority are from *estrato* 3 (25.20 percent) and *estrato* 4 (30.09 percent). But in the face-to-face sample 80.20 percent live in *estrato* 3 or below, while in the survey conducted by internet almost 72 percent live in *estrato* 4 or above. To sum, the population of the internet sample have a much higher level of education and live in a higher socioeconomic *estrato*. Finally, in terms of religious affiliation, Figure 3 shows that 52 percent of the respondents self-reported as Catholic, and almost 38

percent said they did not belong to any religion (the results of the separate sample are quite similar to the overall sample).

Figure 2. Distribution of the sample in terms of gender, age, level of education, and *estrato*
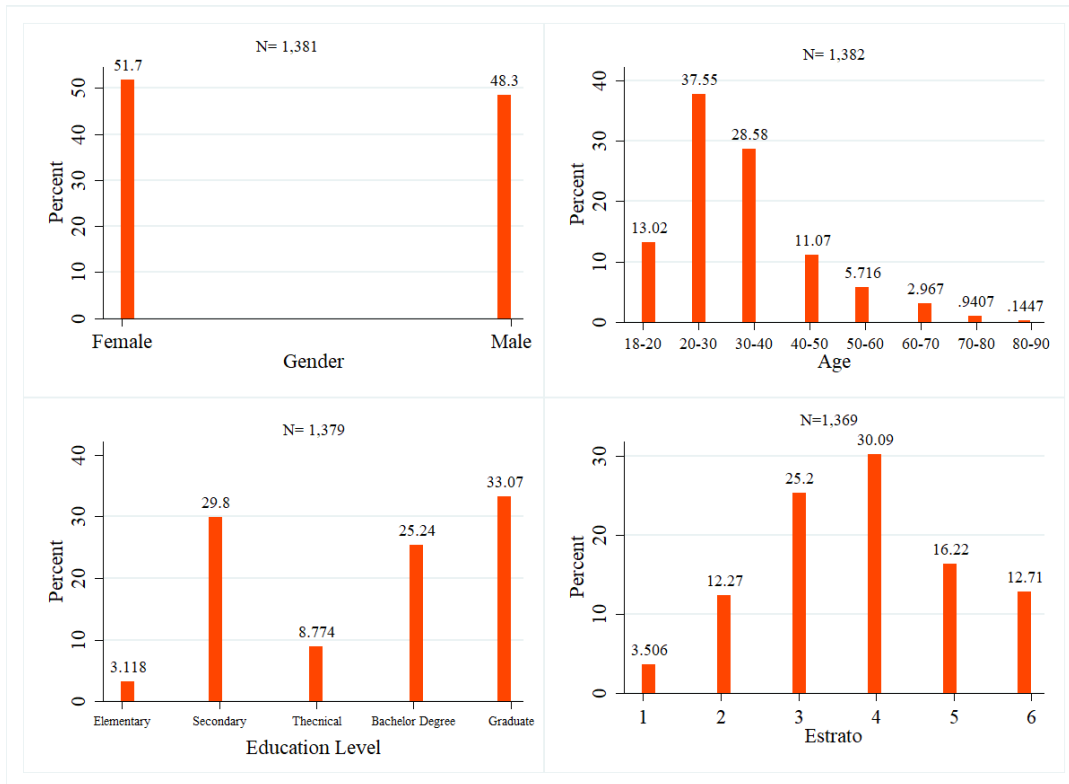
Figure 3. Self-reported religious affiliation of the respondents
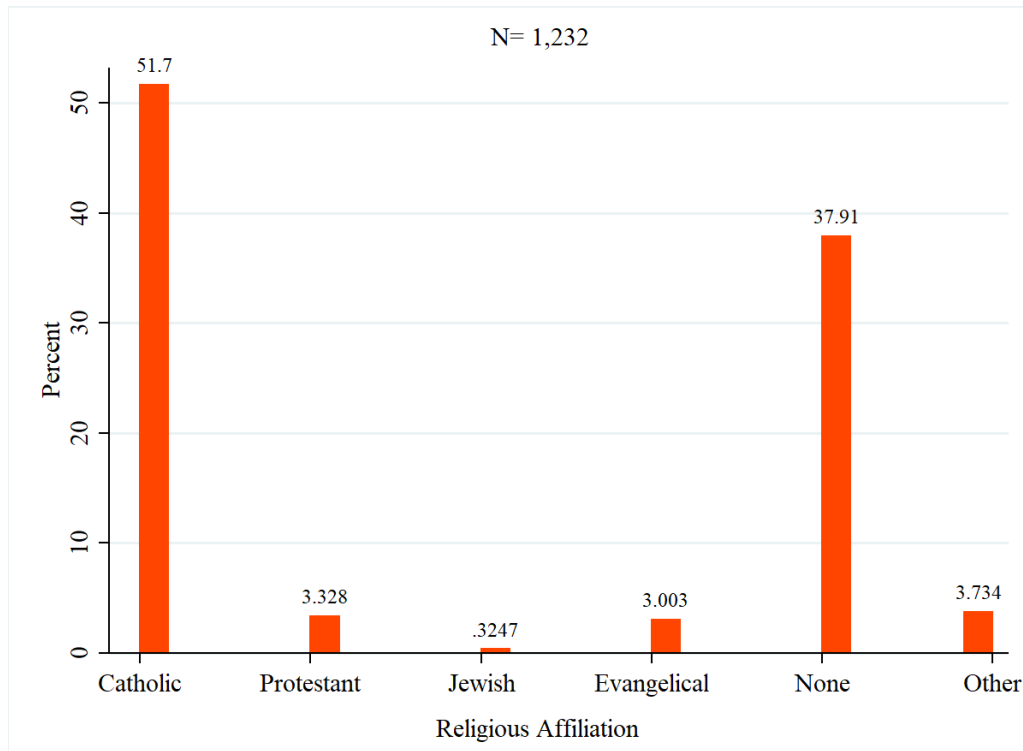
To determine political attitudes, we first asked about placement on the left-right political scale, and vote choice in the first round of the 2014 Presidential election. We then asked about the respondent's confidence in institutions (the judicial system and the President, the army, and the national police). Finally, we asked whether respondents agreed with a series of statements pertaining to religious beliefs, violence as a vehicle for justice, and foreign politics (whether Colombia could become like Venezuela). In Figure 4, we can see that most of the respondents are in the middle of the political spectrum; almost 27 percent are in t 5, in the middle of the scale from 1 to 10, and only 6.72 percent are in the combined tails of the ideological distribution.

Figure 4. Distribution on the left-right political scale, vote choice in the first round of the 2014 Presidential election, and trust in institutions
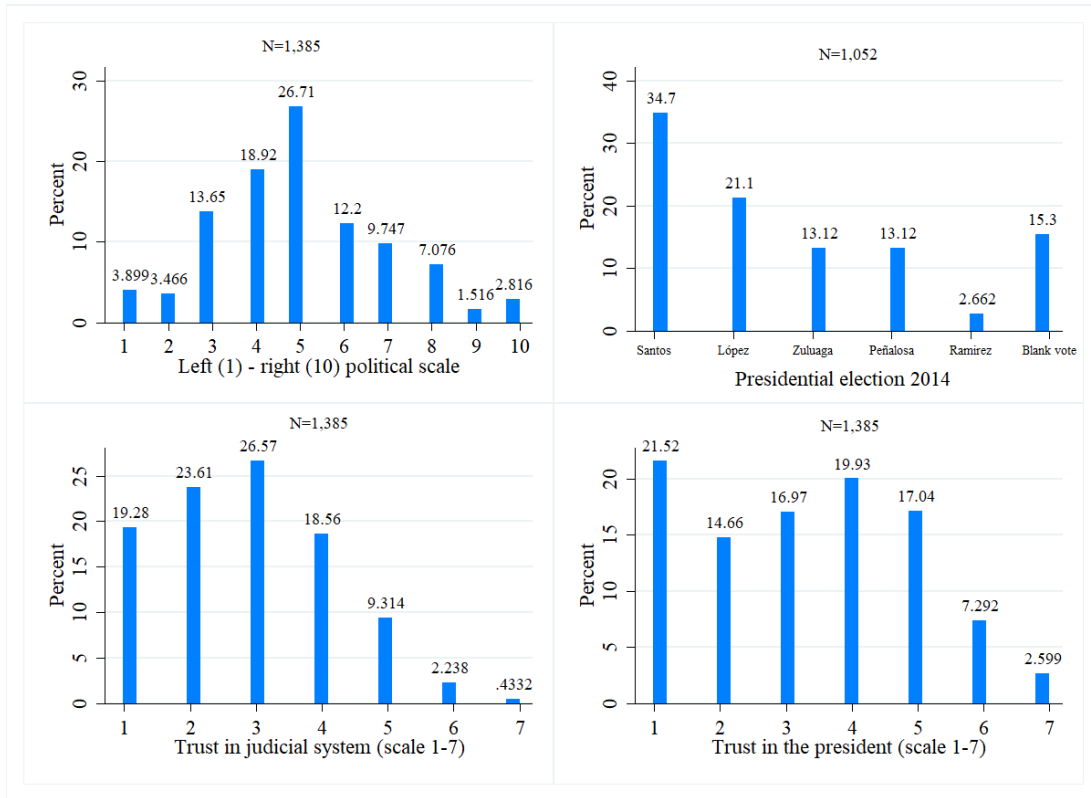
Examining vote choice in the first round of the 2014 presidential elections, 34.70 percent voted for Juan Manuel Santos, while 13.12 percent voted for the Uribe-backed candidate, Óscar Iván Zuluaga (the candidate of the right-wing Centro Democrático). With regard to trust in institutions, on a scale of 1 to 7, almost 69.5 percent of the sample had a confidence level in the justice system less than or equal to 3. For the president 47 percent of respondents reported a confidence level equal to or greater than 4. For respondents' perceptions about whether Colombia could become like Venezuela, Figure 5 shows that 77.53 did not believe Colombia could become like Venezuela, while almost 22.5 percent did (however, on the face-to-face survey, almost 42 percent of respondents said they thought Colombia could become like Venezuela).

A key element of the survey was a set of questions eliciting the respondent's agreement with specific elements of, and beliefs associated with, the implementation of the peace agreement. Regarding concessions, we asked respondents if they agreed with the FARC getting ten reserved seats in congress, and the FARC members avoiding jail time. Regarding beliefs about

the content and implications of the agreement, we asked about whether the respondent thought that the FARC would declare all their economic assets, if the FARC would effectively demobilize if the agreement was passed, whether a victory of the "no" (rejection of the peace agreement) would lead to more violence, and whether the peace agreement could not be modified after passage.

Figure 5. Perception about whether Colombia could become like Venezuela
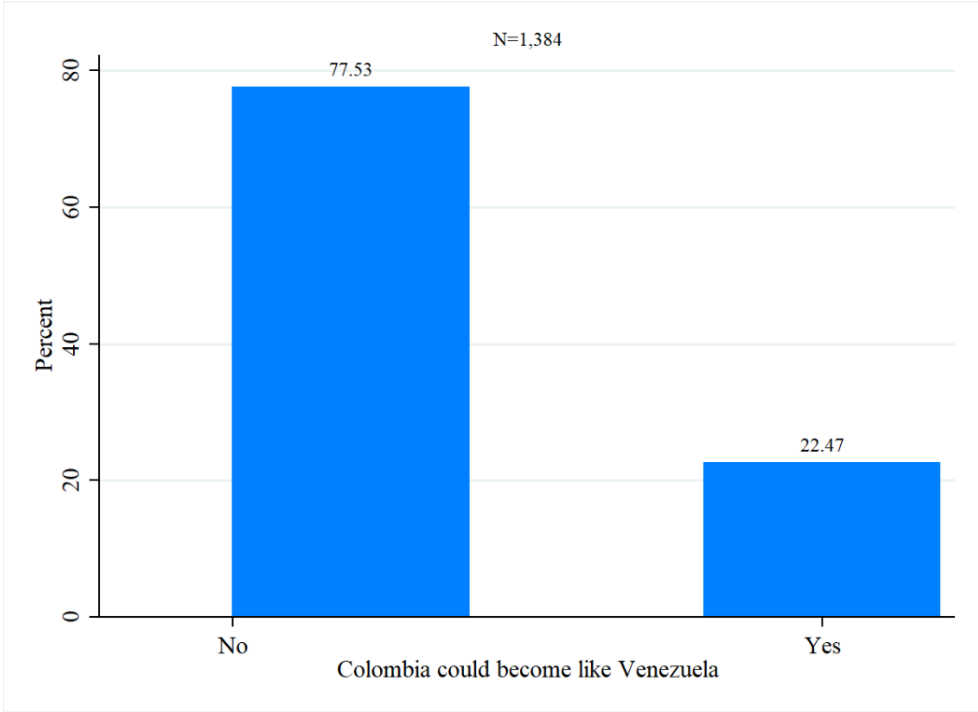
Finally, we asked a series of questions about the referendum itself, including voting intention and reasons for not voting, Figure 6 displays voter voting intention toward the plebiscite. In the combined sample, 65.5 percent said they were going to vote yes on the referendum (although of respondents to the face-to-face survey, only 48.35 percent said they were going to vote yes), and only 14.17 percent said they were going to vote no. The rest of the sample reported that they did not know (8 percent) or that they would not vote (12.29 percent).

Figure 6. Voting intention in the plebiscite
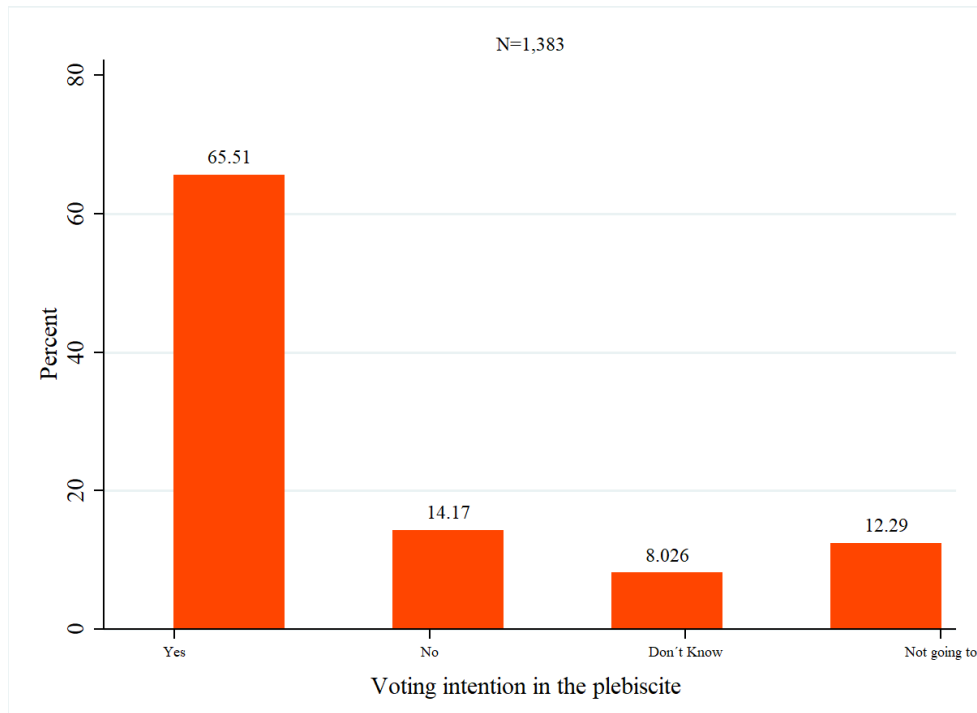
6. Empirical Analysis: Voter Profiles

We applied principal component analysis (PCA) to the behavioral items included in the survey to detect voter profiles. Rather than examining how each variable separately explains attitudes toward the peace process, we expect citizens' heuristics to cluster on different types of voters. Principal component analysis (PCA) is, in essence, a data reduction technique to examine if a larger number of variables or items can be reduced to a smaller number of components that summarize the overall variance in the data. Thus, we wanted to determine whether the dimensionality of variables could be reduced to specific voter profiles.

This is an appropriate method for identifying voter profiles. In principle, it allows us to identify components that summarize the variation in the data with the specific items that load positive or negative on the components. Since we are ultimately interested in categories of voter profiles, one might argue that some type of cluster analysis identifying discrete categories would seem a more logical approach here. However, other researches have shown that common varieties such as K-means cluster analysis are discrete approximations of the

continuous components from PCA (see Ding and He, 2004). Since the PCA factor scores retain more information in degree than the discrete classifications we use PCA here. Hence, we interpret the PCA outcome (components) as profiles or type of voters.

The analysis can be justified as evidence for more general voter profiles if the components can 1) be given a clear substantive interpretation; 2) predict vote choice; and 3) do not simply reflect idiosyncrasies of the data. We discuss each of these questions in turn. Table 1 shows the variables with significant factor loadings for the first three components from the PCA analysis, using the combined survey. We report only the factors with eigenvalues above 1, and the three factors explain jointly about 52 percent of the total change. The separate results for the internet and face-to-face samples do not differ notably (see appendix III), so we focus only on the aggregate sample here.

Table 1. Three first principal components on the survey carried out before the referendum, only items with significant loadings shown (N=1,378)[10]

Variable	Component 1: Pro-status quo	Component 2: Right-leaning	Component 3: Non-Catholic Religious
Catholic		0.4105	-0.4882
Evangelical Christian			0.8099
Left-right scale placement		0.5356	
Voted for Santos in 2014 Elections	0.3242		
Voted for Zuluaga in 2014 Elections	-0.3843		
Trust in the judicial system	0.4063		
Trust in the President	0.5387		
Trust in the armed forces		0.5552	
Colombia could become like Venezuela	-0.4377		
Eigenvalues	2.277	1.801	1.087
Proportion variance	0.2277	0.1802	0.1087

Source: Author's calculation.

By including only ten variables in the analysis (of the forty questions included in the survey), our expectation is fulfilled: different informational shortcuts are clustered into a series of clearly identifiable voter profiles.

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[10] Another variable included in the analysis was to ask respondents if they believe violence is a mechanism to obtain justice, but only variables with loads above 0.3 are shown.

We interpret the first dimension here as a pro-status quo citizen with a high degree of support for the judicial system and the president, which is reasonable, given that these citizens are more likely to have voted for the current president in the first round of the election in 2014, than for the challenger candidate, Óscar Iván Zuluaga. Moreover, we see that these respondents are much less likely to think that Colombia is at risk of becoming like Venezuela. The second profile can be interpreted as a conservative-right voter. In terms of the loading of the specific items, these respondents are much more likely to be Catholics, and they are more likely to place themselves on the right on the political scale. Compared to a pro-status quo citizen, this profile does not load highly on the items related to trust on the justice system and the president, but these citizens do have confidence in the armed forces. The third component is a more separate non-Catholic religious dimension, given there are no other variables with significant loadings. On this factor, there is a high likelihood that respondents self-report a religious affiliation as Evangelical Christians.

6.1 *Plotting the voter profiles*

We now move to examine patterns in the data to see if these profiles differ on the vote choice on the referendum. Given that the first three PCs account for 52 percent of the total variation, a two-dimensional plot with respect to these three components gives a reasonably good approximation to the relative positions of the respondents regarding their vote choice. Figure 7 plots the vote choice of the respondents with respect to the first three components (here we simply plot the yes and no answers).

Figure 7. Plot of the first three PCs for the vote choice on the plebiscite

How are you going to vote in the plebiscite?

All Sample. Number of observations = 1102
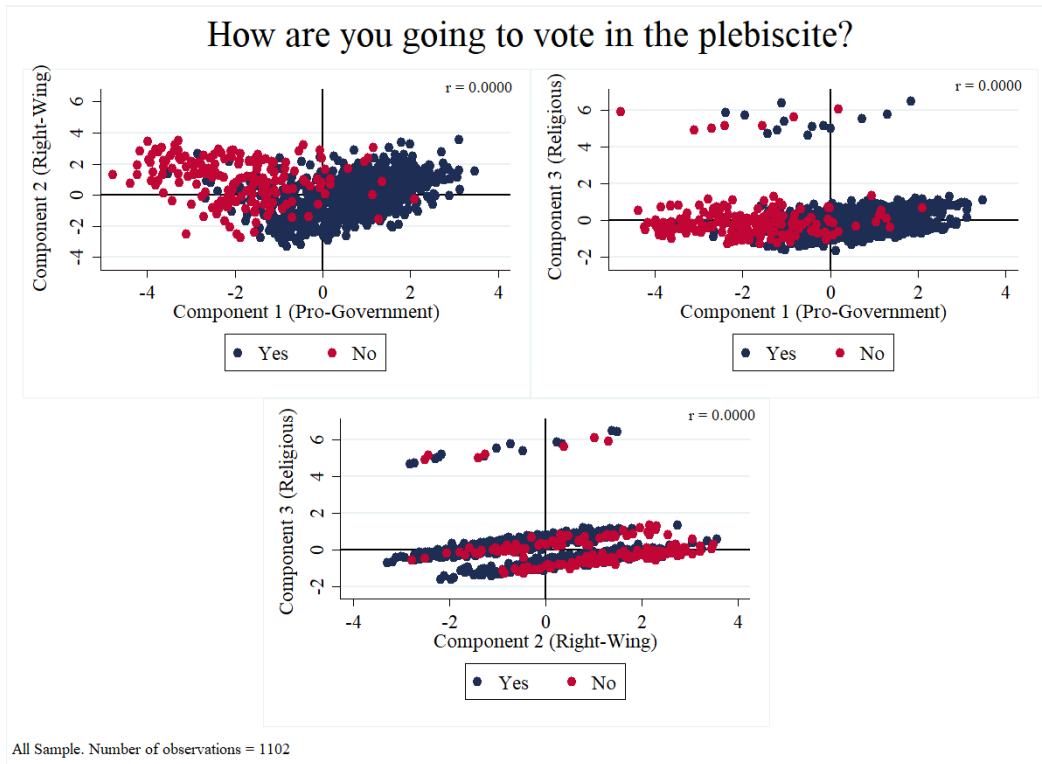
Source: Author's calculation.

When the first and second component are compared, we can confirm that, although the areas covered by the yes and no vote choice overlap slightly, the two answers largely occupy different areas of the diagram (top-left). The division is mainly in terms of the first PC (pro-government citizen) with blurred differentiation on the second PC. Therefore, the plot shows that those who had the intention of voting yes on the plebiscite have a positive score on the first PC, and those who reported that they were going to vote no have a negative score on the first component.

If the first and the third component are compared, we can attribute the main differences in the distribution of vote choice to the first PC again (top-right). Unsurprisingly, the two groups of observations corresponding to the two vote choices differ on being a pro-status quo citizen. Finally, it seems there is a perfect overlap between the second and third component or voter profile. However, it should be noted that the range of structures that may be revealed by plotting PCs (on proving a linear relationship between components) is not possible, as components are uncorrelated by construction (Jolliffe, 2002). As it can be seen in Figure 7,

the correlation coefficient between the components is 0.000, which allows us to include them as independent variables, each separately, in the regression model in the next section.

6.2 Predicting vote choice: Model and Results

Many scholars argue that, while OLS should be only used for continuous dependent variables, when the outcome is a limited dependent variable (variables that take a limited number of values), nonlinear regression models –such as *probit* or *logit* model– are better because they generate fitted values of the dependent variable (Angrist and Pischke, 2009). However, although probabilistic models do not hold some of the main assumptions of linear models that are based on ordinary least squares algorithms (e.g., linearity, normality, homoscedasticity), some other assumptions still apply such as it requires the observations to be independent of each other, in other words, statistical independence of the errors. Therefore, one advantage of the linear probability model is that these models are less sensitive to the violation of this kind of assumptions.

Moreover, previous research has shown that OLS and logistic regression analysis produced very similar results when applied to the same two data sets (e.g., Pohlman and Leitner, 2003). Since purpose of the analysis here is not predict some kind of behavior, but rather to test a relationship between variables and to classify cases on the dependent variable outcome (agreement or disagreement towards the peace accord), either model could be used (see Appendix IV for the results of the logit model). Finally, since we have two different samples it may be problematic to compare a similar model across them, because we cannot directly interpret log-odds ratios or odds ratios as effect measures in a logit model (e.g., Mood, 2010).

To see if these profiles predict the intended vote choice in the referendum, we estimate a *linear probability model*. The model is captured by:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \varepsilon_i$$

where Y_i is the estimated probability that the dependent variable equals 1. Specifically, it estimates the likelihood that a voter intends to vote yes in the plebiscite. β are the coefficients capturing the effect of the three voter profiles previously identified on Y_i, and ε_i is an error term for the observations. We also included some socio-demographic controls such as: age (the reference category are individuals who are over 50 years old), sex, educational level (the

reference category are individuals who have an educational level above secondary school), and *estrato* (reference category are individuals who live in *estrato* 4 or above).

Table 2. Linear Probability Model of Vote Choice

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)
Scores for component 1 (Pro-Government)	0.163***	0.161***	0.161***
	(-0.0058)	(0.0058)	(0.0058)
Scores for component 2 (Right-leaning)	-0.0942***	-0.0938***	-0.0940***
	(-0.00576)	(0.00571)	(0.00573)
Scores for component 3 (Non-Catholic Religious)	-0.0181	-0.0195	-0.0199
	(-0.0133)	(0.0127)	(0.0128)
Sunday 25th September		-0.0801*	
		(0.0435)	
Tuesday 27th September		0.0614**	
		(0.0301)	
Sex: Male	-0.0057	-9.43e-05	-0.00137
	(-0.0159)	(0.0157)	(0.0158)
Age: Between 30 and 50	-0.0545***	-0.0537***	-0.0532***
	(-0.0188)	(0.0185)	(0.0186)
Secondary school or below	-0.0175	0.00312	0.00365
	(-0.0203)	(0.0203)	(0.0204)
Estrato 3 or below	-0.0427**	-0.0134	-0.0146
	(-0.0175)	(0.0184)	(0.0185)
Online Survey			0.0968***
			(0.0252)
Constant	0.843***	0.782***	0.747***
	(-0.017)	(0.0353)	(0.0310)
Observations	1,094	1,094	1,094
R-squared	0.551	0.562	0.560

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Source: Author's calculation.

Table 2 reports the results of the model. In column number one, a positive score on the first component has a significant relationship with voting yes. Being a pro-status quo citizen increases the probability of voting in favor of the referendum, by 16 percent on average. On the other hand, unsurprisingly, for each additional value on the second profile the likelihood of voting in favor of the peace agreement decreases by 9 percent on average. Column number two includes fixed effects for the days the surveys were applied. The direction and strength

of the relationship between the first two components and the vote choice does not change. But, on one hand, it is observed that individuals who were administered the survey the weekend before the plebiscite, have a lower probability, 8 percent less on average, of having voted in favor. On the other, those who were surveyed the Tuesday before the referendum have a higher likelihood, 6 percent on average, of supporting the peace agreement.

However, as it was described in the prior section, the face-to-face interviews were conducted the weekend before the referendum (Sunday 25th September), and all the internet sample was collected the Tuesday before the referendum (27th September). Then, by including fixed effects of the dates, what is really being controlled is the mean through which the survey was conducted. To prove this, column three includes a dummy for whether the respondent was internet-based or in person. As can be seen, having answered the survey online increased the likelihood of supporting the peace agreement by almost 10 percent on average.

Regarding the socio-demographic controls, column number 1 shows that being between 30 and 50 years old and living in *estrato* 3 or below both have a significant and negative association with voting yes. They decrease the likelihood of supporting the peace agreement by 5 percent and 4 percent on average, respectively. Finally, we do not find that the more separate non-Catholic religious dimension has an effect on the probability of vote choice, which makes sense if we keep in mind that Evangelical Christians only account for 3 percent of the sample.

These results support our expectations about citizens using informational shortcuts to form attitudes that shape their preferences about the peace deal. Here, these types of voters are drawing on their existing beliefs to simplify their decision. Citizens who trust institutions, take Santos's cue, and do not believe in the emotional frame of Colombia becoming like Venezuela, make a prospective decision based on their willingness to accept government promises about the future consequences of the peace process. On the other hand, right-leaning voters use their existing ideological beliefs and the conservative and religious heuristics to arrive at a conclusion of opposition to the proposed peace deal.

6.3 Attitudes toward specific concessions and beliefs about the Peace Agreement

As mentioned above, a key element of the survey was a set of questions eliciting the respondents' agreement with specific concessions and beliefs associated with the implementation of the peace agreement. We estimate an *OLS model* to see how voters' profiles can explain attitudes toward specific parts of the peace agreement and seek to disaggregate what it means when some voters have a greater or lesser inclination to accept the peace agreement. The model is captured by:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \varepsilon_i$$

where Y_i captures the change on the scale of agreement separately by each of the questions related to the peace process. The scale ranges from 1 to 7, where 1 means strongly disagree or do not believe, and 7 means strongly agree or do believe (see appendix I for the full questionnaire). β are the coefficients capturing the effect of the three voter profiles on Y_i, and ε_i is an error term for the observations. We include again some socio-demographic controls such as: age (the reference category are individuals who are over 50 years old), sex, educational level (the reference category are individuals who have an educational level above secondary school), and *estrato* (reference category are individuals who live in *estrato* 4 or above).

Table 3. OLS Model: Specific concessions and beliefs associated with the implementation of the Peace Agreement

Coefficients are reported in standard deviation units

Variables	(1) Reserved seats in congress	(2) No punishment as impunity	(3) Hidden assets	(4) No modification agreement	(5) FARC would demobilize	(6) More violence
Scores for component 1 (Pro-Government)	0.363***	-0.320***	-0.121***	0.109***	0.364***	0.236***
	(0.0132)	(0.0137)	(0.0171)	(0.0202)	(0.0141)	(0.0174)
Scores for component 2 (Right-leaning)	-0.215***	0.214***	0.191***	0.00162	-0.151***	-0.156***
	(0.0159)	(0.0166)	(0.0215)	(0.0212)	(0.0159)	(0.0192)
Scores for component 3 (Non-Catholic Religious)	-0.0103	-0.000817	0.0353	0.0830***	-0.0149	-0.00898
	(0.0194)	(0.0264)	(0.0234)	(0.0244)	(0.0226)	(0.0248)
Sex: Male	0.126***	-0.00247	0.150***	0.0532	0.00243	-0.111**
	(0.0415)	(0.0448)	(0.0518)	(0.0533)	(0.0438)	(0.0498)
Between 30 and 50	-0.135***	0.0683	0.0257	-0.0189	0.0162	-0.0692
	(0.0467)	(0.0469)	(0.0548)	(0.0597)	(0.0486)	(0.0541)
Secondary school or below	-0.0898*	0.134***	-0.187***	-0.163***	0.0274	-0.0411
	(0.0481)	(0.0512)	(0.0614)	(0.0630)	(0.0527)	(0.0578)
Estrato 3 or below	-0.158***	0.239***	-0.107*	-0.0238	-0.185***	-0.119**
	(0.0454)	(0.0480)	(0.0551)	(0.0568)	(0.0477)	(0.0536)
Constant	0.0818*	-0.167***	0.0219	0.0443	0.0564	0.142***
	(0.0422)	(0.0421)	(0.0492)	(0.0539)	(0.0454)	(0.0492)
Observations	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,375	1,373	1,371
R-squared	0.419	0.355	0.118	0.045	0.364	0.187

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Author's calculation.

Table 3 reports the results of the model. The first column shows respondents' attitudes toward the political participation of the FARC in Congress. It asks them if they agree with the proposal to reserve congressional seats for the FARC candidates. Being a pro-status quo voter increases by 0.36 standard deviation units support for the government's commitment to guarantee the political participation of the FARC. On the other hand, fitting the right-leaning profile decreases support by about 21.5 standard deviation units. These results are an extension of the willingness of the first profile of voter to vote yes for the plebiscite, as we note above. Signing an agreement with a guerrilla group that waged war against the state for over fifty years means –as President Santos stated– "changing bullets for votes" (personal communication, December 13, 2013). The socio-demographic controls are all significant for this provision of the Peace Agreement. Households in *estrato* 3 or below have lower support for this concession by almost 0.16 standard deviation units.

Another important point of the Peace Agreement has to do with reparations to victims of the conflict and penalties for crimes committed by the FARC. As part of the Agreement, certain types of pardons and reduced sentences were established. To gauge how support and opposition to this provision varied by profile, respondents were asked if they believed that some members of the FARC receiving no jail time is a symbol of impunity. Column 2 displays the results for this question. Being a pro-status quo voter, who trusts the judicial system, decreases by 0.32 standard deviation units the belief that this represents impunity. Unsurprisingly, right-leaning voters see this point of the agreement as a "very large toad to swallow"; scoring positive on this component increases the perception of impunity by 0.21 standard deviation units.

The next four columns do not assess specific points of the peace process, but rather seek to evaluate citizens' opinions on some common beliefs about the consequences of the peace deal. Column number three asks respondents if they agree that the FARC have resources and assets, gains from drug trafficking, that they have not reported. Since this group financed much of its armed conflict through criminal activities, it is expected that some voters will be skeptical about the surrendered list of assets. Scoring positive on the pro-government profile reduces by 0.12 standard deviation units the perception that the FARC might be lying about hidden assets. On the other hand, right-leaning voters tended to believe that the FARC

members had not reported all their monetary benefits from drug trafficking (this profile increases agreement by 0.19 standard deviation units).

The next column contains a tricky question. From the beginning of the negotiation with the FARC, the legal formula to protect the final agreement was one of the most thorny and important issues. After several months of negotiation, it was agreed the best way to protect it from future modifications was to include the agreement as part of the "constitutional block" –a body of Colombian law that is integrated into the Constitution–. The content of the agreement would then have the same status as the Constitution, and it would not be necessary to present a bill to incorporate the rules of the agreement into the Constitution.[11]

We asked respondents to what extent they agree or disagree with the following statement: "If Colombians vote majority yes, the negotiated points of the peace agreement cannot be modified under any circumstance." Our expectations are that those voters who draw on the conservative and religious narratives for their informational shortcut (those who were afraid of the imposition of new definitions of the traditional family and gender) would agree with the "no modification belief" due to the difficulty of modifying the agreement due to its legal status in the constitutional block. Scoring positive on the non-Catholic religious profile increases by 0.083 standard deviation units the level of agreement with the fear that once the agreement was incorporated into the constitutionality block, nothing could be done to modify it.

However, it is worth noting that being a pro-status quo voter also increases the level of agreement, by about 0.11 standard deviation units. Our argument here is that this voter profile sees the "no modification belief" as a natural and minimal guarantee to secure the proposed agreement. Otherwise, what would be the incentive for the FARC to abandon their fight, if the next government in office could modify the peace agreement?

Many experts have estimated that at least 30 percent of the FARC members will choose to ignore the peace deal in order to maintain their criminal activities, such as drug trafficking (e.g., Yagoub, 2016). In column five we assess if respondents believe that the majority of the members of the FARC will demobilize. Being a pro-status quo voter increases by almost 0.36

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[11] After the proposed peace agreement was defeated, this issue became relatively less important, because the government decided to make reforms of the Constitution necessary to implement the agreement through Congress.

standard deviation units the belief that the FARC fighters would leave behind their illegal activities. On the contrary, being a right-leaning citizen and living in a household in *estrato* 3 or below decreases this belief in 0.15 by and 0.183 standard deviation units, respectively.

Finally, four months before the vote, Santos, as part of a strategy to persuade voters, warned that there was information indicating that the FARC guerrillas would begin an urban war if a peace agreement was not reached.[12] Therefore, we asked respondents if they believed there would be more violence if the plebiscite was defeated. Column number six shows that pro-status quo voters did perceive Santos' warning as a real threat. Scoring positive on this component increases agreement with this belief by 0.24 standard deviation units. Interestingly, men, compared to women, did not fear that the conflict would intensify if the agreement was defeated (being a man decreases agreement by 0.11 standard deviation units).

7. Other data sources: LAPOP Survey

We argue above that the value of the PCA exercise also depends on stability, and our confidence in these profiles would be strengthened if we could show that they also appear in other data sources. To examine this, we turned to the LAPOP survey. The closest wave of this survey was carried out between August and October of 2016 (see appendix V for the questions included in the PCA). This is a national representative survey that asks about opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions regarding structural and recent of the institutions and the functioning of the Colombian Government.

Table 4 provides the results for a PCA of the overlapping items. We find very similar components in this survey. This strengthens our confidence that the voter profiles we identify pertain to more enduring attitude-behavioral profiles. The first three PCs represent 58 percent of the total variation, very similar to the cumulative proportion of the profiles of our set of data, which accounts for 52 percent of the variance. As with the results that we report above, we interpret the first factor as representing pro-status quo citizens. Although the LAPOP

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[12] See "Santos advierte que FARC comenzaría una guerra urbana si no se firma la paz": https://noticias.caracoltv.com/colombia/santos-advierte-que-farc-comenzaria-una-guerra-urbana-si-no-se-firma-la-paz

survey does not contain any questions related to Venezuela, this profile is more likely to trust the justice system and the president, and less likely to have voted for Zuluaga.

The second component here is a religious profile. As in the last previous PC analysis, this factor does not have significant loadings on other items; it shows us a Catholic, non-Evangelical-Christian citizen. The third dimension is a right/conservative voter. Once again, these respondents are more likely to place themselves on the right on the political scale and to have trust in the armed forces. Moreover, such a citizen is more likely to respond positively to Uribe, given that voting for the challenger Zuluaga (endorsed by Uribe in 2014) loads highly on this factor.

Table 4. Three first principal components of LAPOP survey, only items with significant loadings shown[13] (N= 724)

Variable	Component 1: Pro-status quo	Component 2: Catholic	Component 3: Right-leaning
Catholic		0.6776	
Evangelical Christian		-0.6464	
Left-right scale placement			0.3637
Voted for Santos on 2014 Elections	0.5097		-0.3582
Voted for Zuluaga on 2014 Elections	-0.4466		0.4526
Trust in the judicial system	0.4210		0.3399
Trust in the President	0.5029		
Trust in the armed forces			0.5203
Eigenvalues	2.232	1.62	1.368
Proportion variance	0.2481	0.1801	0.1521

Source: Author's calculation.

8. Conclusions

In this article we have shown that our survey's respondents cluster in clear behavioral or attitudinal characteristics. The analysis of the PCs allows us to identify three clear voter profiles: 1) a pro-status quo citizen; 2) a conservative-leaning voter; and 3) a self-reported non-Catholic voter. Similar results are found when we replicate the PCA exercise on the 2016 LAPOP Americas Barometer survey. We demonstrate that respondents who reported trust in

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[13] Another variable included was if respondents approve or disapprove of taking justice into their own hands, but only variables with loads above 0.3 are shown.

the judicial system and the President, and who do not believe Colombia could become like Venezuela in the near future, are more likely to endorse the peace agreement. On the other hand, unsurprisingly, those who score positive on the second component, the conservative right-leaning voter profile, are less likely to vote yes on the referendum. Finally, although we identify a clear religious non-Catholic profile, we do not find evidence that this component predicts the vote choice of the respondents.

In addition, we assess how voter profiles align with attitudes toward specific concessions and beliefs about the agreement. Those who score positive on the pro-status quo profile are more willing to accept the FARC political participation and grant some kind of concession in terms of justice. An interesting result is that those who rely on the conservative and religious cues perceived the proposed agreement as a threat because of the non-possibility of renegotiating the terms of the deal.

We argue that these voters' profiles show that they are "motivated reasoners." They use some pre-existing political beliefs and attitudes that function as heuristics or decision rules that help them decide whether to support or oppose the proposed peace agreement. Thus, there are a number of implications for understanding the role this type of voter plays in government strategies to persuade and convince citizens to change their beliefs to correspond to the policy outcomes that governments expect.

Traditionally, government communication is based on the paradigm of science communication, which assumes that "increased communication and awareness about scientific issues will move public opinion toward the scientific consensus and reduce political polarization around science-based policy" (Hart and Nisbet, 2012, p.701-702). Many governments base their strategies on the premise that, if they use media and education programs to show citizens the benefits or consequences of policy outcomes, then the inherent quality of their claims will persuade and convince them to change their opinions (for a review, see Lupia, 2013). However, our findings suggest that, since voters need to disentangle a complex policy issue into a simple yes or no question (particularly in highly polarized contexts), and as a consequence are more likely to interpret information in ways that reinforce their views and beliefs, governments should not make efforts to generate consensus around an issue where some types of voters hold very strong attitudes against it.

Even further, empirical evidence has shown that when people are faced with counterintuitive information, the common reaction is a boomerang effect (for a review, see Byrne and Hart, 2009); in other words, a message that is strategically constructed to generate consensus around an issue may end up provoking more dissenting views. While our empirical evidence is limited to Colombia, it suggests that the salience of similar issues related to the effectiveness and consequences of peace agreements should lead governments to concentrate their efforts on communicating their desired policy outcomes to voters who do not hold such strong pre-existing beliefs and attitudes.

However, this conclusion raises a number of normative questions in terms of the implications in public policy and democracy. If motivated reasoning leads citizens to ignore substantive information, and governments simply decide to concentrate their efforts on communicating their desired policy just to a few specific groups of the population, there is risk of not generating equal channels of communication and representation with those who oppose the Peace Agreement with the FARC. In other words, this case has implications for the democratic competition, where despite the fact that the majority of the population decided not to support the agreement, the government took the necessary actions to overrule the will of the majority. In the end these actions can undermine the credibility and the trust in government.

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10. Appendix I: Full Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. Where were you born?

   _____

2. Age
   (01)   15 to 20
   (02)   20 to 30
   (03)   30 to 40
   (04)   40 to 50
   (05)   50 to 60
   (06)   60 to 70
   (07)   70 to 80
   (08)   80 to 90

3. Gender **[DO NOT ASK, WRITE IT DOWN]**:
   (00) Male
   (01) Female

4. What educational level did you complete?
   (01)   Primary
   (02)   Secondary
   (03)   Technical school
   (04)   University
   (05)   Graduate school

5. What would best describe your employment situation?
   (01)   Work in the private sector
   (02)   Work in the public sector
   (03)   I have my own business
   (04)   Student
   (05)   Other
   (06)   None

6. What is your economic stratum (*estrato*)?
   (01)   1

   (02)   2
   (03)   3
   (04)   4
   (05)   5
   (06)   6

7. What is your religion?
   (01)   Catholic
   (02)   Christian
   (03)   Jewish
   (04)   Protestant
   (05)   Jehovah's Witness.
   (06)   Evangelical and Pentecostal
   (07)   Agnostic or atheist
   (08)   None
   (09)   Other

Politics and Institutions:

8. In political terms, people talk about left-wing positions and right-wing positions. On a scale of 1 to 10, what position would you be in? [SHOW SCALE TO RESPONDENT]:

Left									Right
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Did you not vote in the last presidential election? **[IF RESPONDENT SAYS SKIP QUESTION 10]**
   (01)   Yes
   (02)   No

10. Who did you vote for in the last presidential election?
    (01)   Juan Manuel Santos
    (02)   Clara López
    (03)   Oscar Iván Zuluaga
    (04)   Enrique Peñalosa
    (05)   Marta Lucia Ramírez

(06)   Voto en blanco y/o nulo

11. Did you vote in the last Congressional election? **[IF RESPONDENT SAYS NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 13]**
(01) Si
(02) No

12. Which party or political movement did you vote in the last Senate election? **[IF RESPONDENT DOES NOT REMEMBER THE PARTY, ASK HIM/HER FOR THE NAME OF THE CANDIDATE]**
(01)   Partido de la Unidad Nacional
(02)   Partido Centro Democrático
(03)   Partido Conservador Colombiano
(04)   Partido Liberal Colombiano
(05)   Partido Cambio Radical
(06)   Partido Alianza Verde
(07)   Partido Polo Democrático Alternativo
(08)   Partido Opción ciudadana
(09)   Movimiento "MIRA"

13. Who is your favorite politician?

_____

14. If the 2018 presidential elections were tomorrow, which of the following candidates would you vote for?
(01)   German Vargas Lleras
(02)   Sergio Fajardo
(03)   Alejandro Ordoñez
(04)   Claudia López
(05)   Humberto de la Calle
(06)   Gustavo Petro
(07)   Jorge Enrique Robledo
(08)   Ninguno (None of the above)

Now there are a series of questions, please give your answer according to the next scale where 1 means **not at all** and 7 **a lot**. [SHOW SCALE TO RESPONDENT]:

15. To what extent do you trust the Colombian justice system? (__)
16. To what extent do you trust the President? (__)
17. To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces? (__)

Attitudes, beliefs and values

18. Which of the following statements do you most agree with?
(01) There is life after death
(02) The most important thing is what we do in this world
(03) The most important thing is to follow the rules and beliefs of my religion
(04) The most important thing is to do good to other people

19. Do you believe that, under extreme circumstances, violence is a mechanism for obtaining justice?

(01)   Yes
(02)   No

20. Do you agree with the Government granting subsidies to people when they are unemployed?
(01) Yes
(02) No
21. Do you believe that Venezuela is a democratic country?
(01)   Yes
(02)   No
22. Do you think that in the future Colombia could be a country like Venezuela?
(01)   Yes
(02)   No

23. Of the following public policies, what do you think should be the priority of the Colombian Government?
 (01) The fight against drug trafficking
(02) Peace and the post-conflict
 (03) The fight against corruption
 (04) Economic growth

Media Consumption:

Not at all						A lot
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

24. How much daily time do you dedicate to the consumption of informative content through the media? [IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS THAT HE DOES NOT, SKIP THE QUESTION REGARDING THE FREQUENCY].

25. On a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is nothing and 4 a lot, how much credibility does it give to the

	None	15 mins	30 mins	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours
Newspapers						
TV						
Radio						
Internet						

information offered by these media?

	None (1)	Little (2)	Enough (3)	A lot (4)
Newspapers				
TV				
Radio				
Internet				

26. Of the following television channels, which are the two that you see most frequently for the consumption of informative content?

(01) Caracol Television (__)
(02) RCN Television (__)
(03) City TV (__)
(04) Canal Uno (__)
(05) Cable Noticias (__)
(06) Red más noticias (__)
(07) Regional channels (__)
(08) Other (__)

27. Of the following radio channels, which are the two that you listen to most frequently for the consumption of informative content?

(01) Caracol Radio (__)
(02) W Radio (__)
(03) The F.M. (__)
(04) Blu Radio (__)
(05) RCN Radio (__)
(06) Radio Policía Nacional (__)
(07) Other (__)

28. Of the following newspapers and / or magazines, which are the two that you read (printed or digital version) more frequently for the consumption of informative content?

(01) El Tiempo (__)
(02) El Espectador (__)
(03) Revista Semana (__)
(04) Quiubo (__)
(05) DNA (__)
(06) Metro (__)
(07) Other (__)

29. Of the following news portals, which are the two that you visit most frequently for the consumption of informative content?

(01) Las dos orillas (__)
(02) Pulzo (__)
(03) Kienyke (__)
(04) La Silla Vacia (__)
(05) None (__)

30. Of the following social networks, which are the two that you visit most frequently for the consumption of informative content?

(01) Facebook (__)
(02) Twitter (__)
(03) Instagram (__)
(04) Other (__)

Current politics and plebiscite

31. Will you vote for the plebiscite on October 2? [IF THE ANSWER IS YES, SKIP TO QUESTION 33]
    (01)   Yes
    (02)   No
32. If you answered NO to the previous question, which of these reasons best describes the reason why you will not vote?
    (01) Does not agree with the use of a plebiscite to endorse agreements
    (02) Believe that the government is giving the country to the FARC
    (03) You do not have your cedula (ID)
    (04) Not interested in politics
    (05) Other

Now, we are going to read a series of affirmations, please answer them according to the following scale, where 1 is strongly disagree (does not believe) and 7 strongly agree (if you believe) **[SHOW SCALE TO RESPONDENT]:**

strongly disagree					strongly agree	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

33. The Colombian government must guarantee ten seats in Congress to the FARC to participate in politics. (__)
34. The FARC has economic resources that have not been reported to the Colombian government. (__)
35. On October 2, if the peace agreement is defeated, there will be more violence in Colombia. (__)
36. If on October 2 the peace deal wins, the negotiated points of the peace agreement cannot be modified under any circumstances. (__)

37. The absence of prison for some members of the FARC is a symbol of impunity. (__)
38. Once the agreement is approved, the majority of the members of the FARC will demobilize. (__)
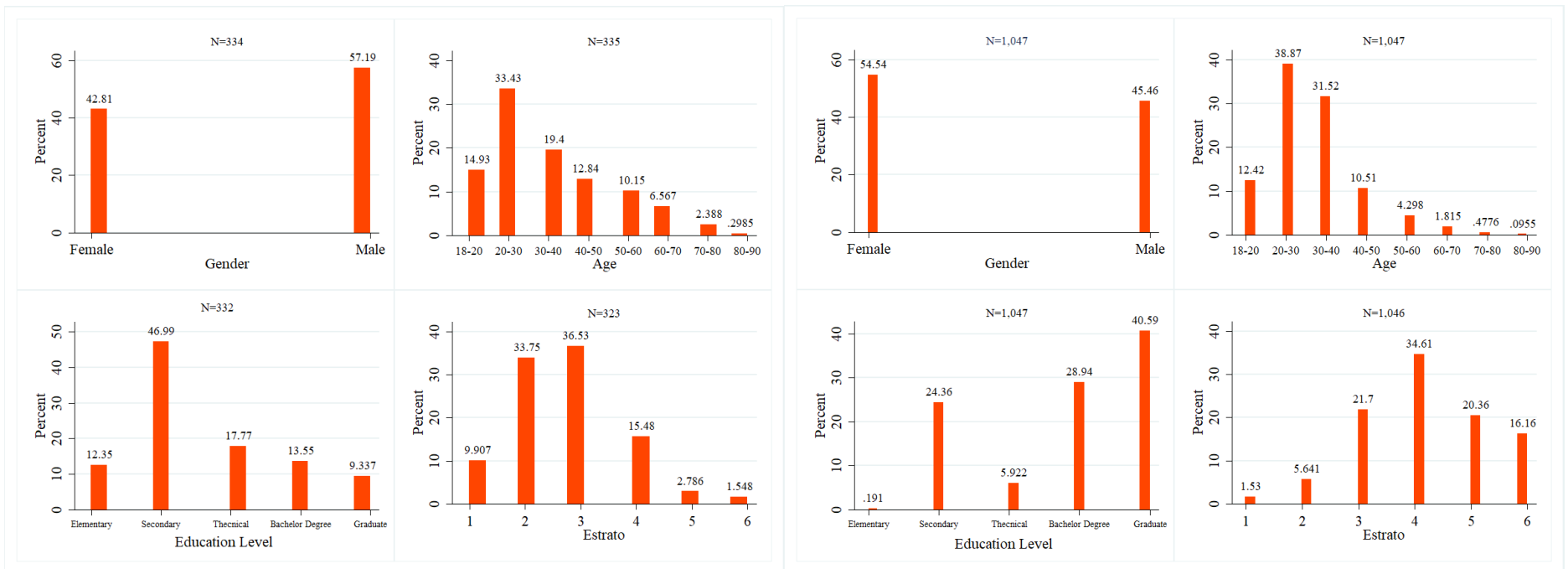
Concluding two questions:

39. ¿How are you going to vote in the plebiscite?
    (01)   Yes
    (02)   No
    (03)   Do not know
    (04)   Not going to

40. Which option do you think will win in the plebiscite?
    (01) Yes
    (02) No

48

Appendix II: Descriptive statistics separately by sample

Figure 1. Distribution of the sample in terms of gender, age, level of education, and *estrato*
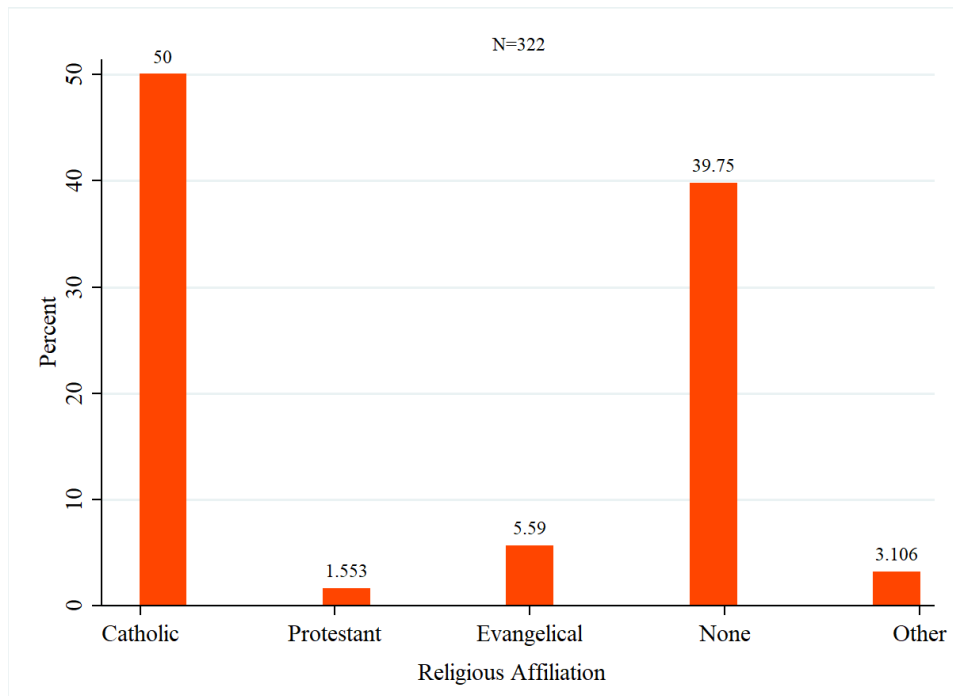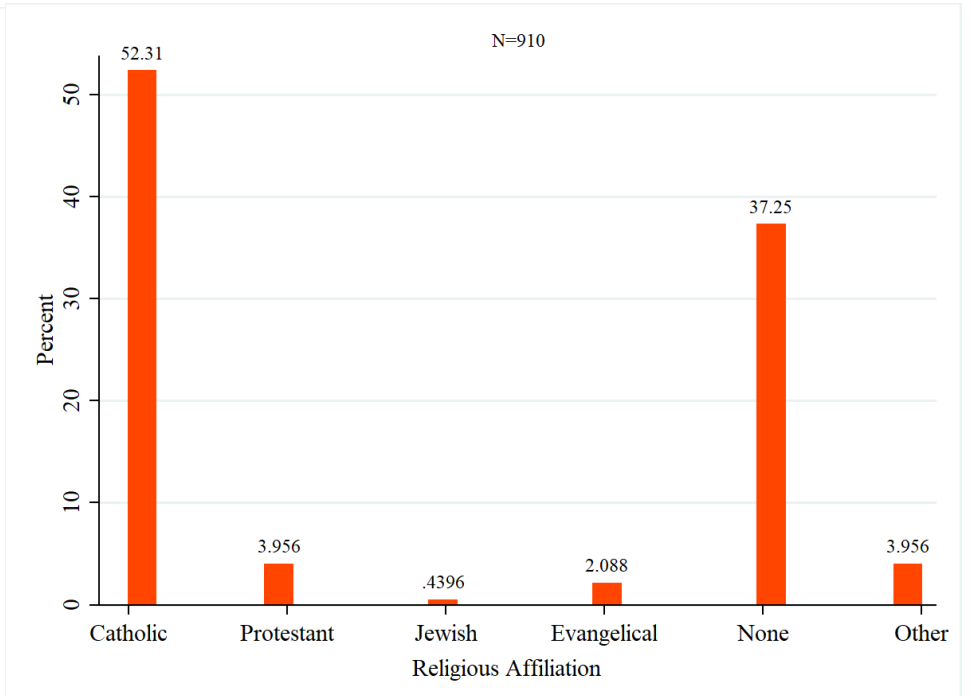
Face-to-face Sample

Internet Sample

Figure 2. Self-reported religious affiliation of the respondents

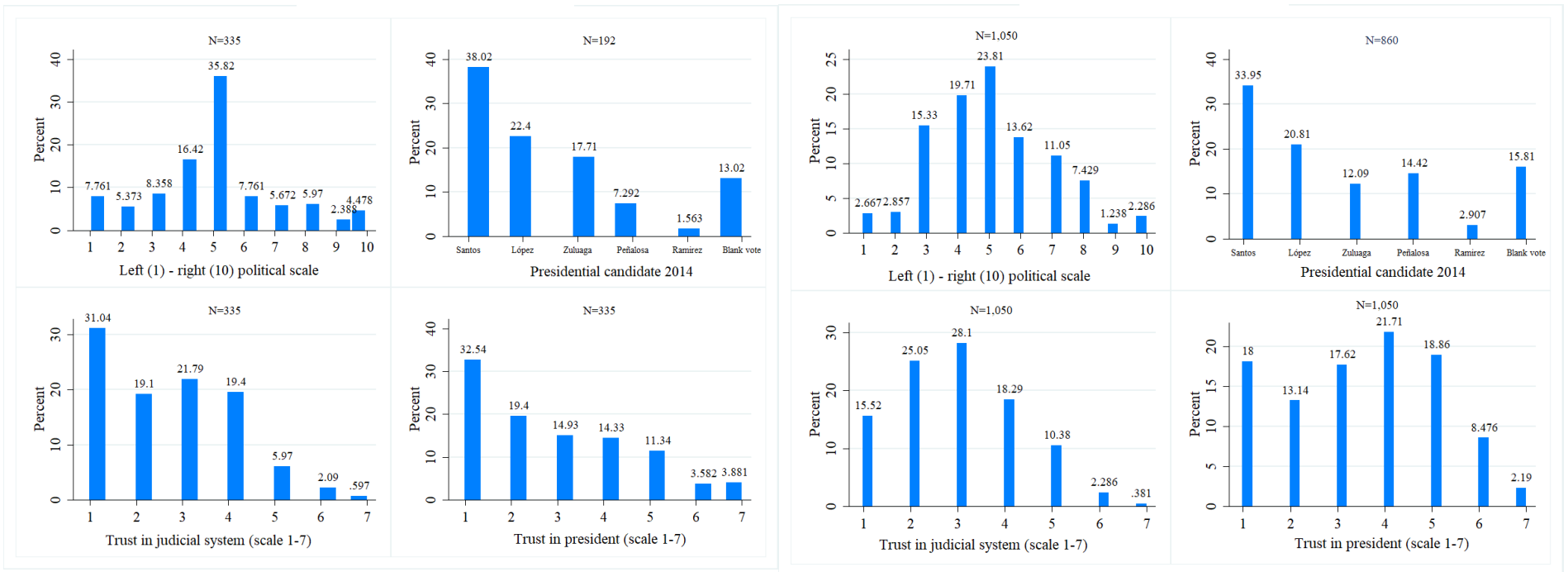**Face-to-face Sample**

Internet Sample

Source: Author's calculation.

Figure 3. Distribution on the left-right political scale, vote choice in the first-round of the 2014 presidential election, and trust in institutions
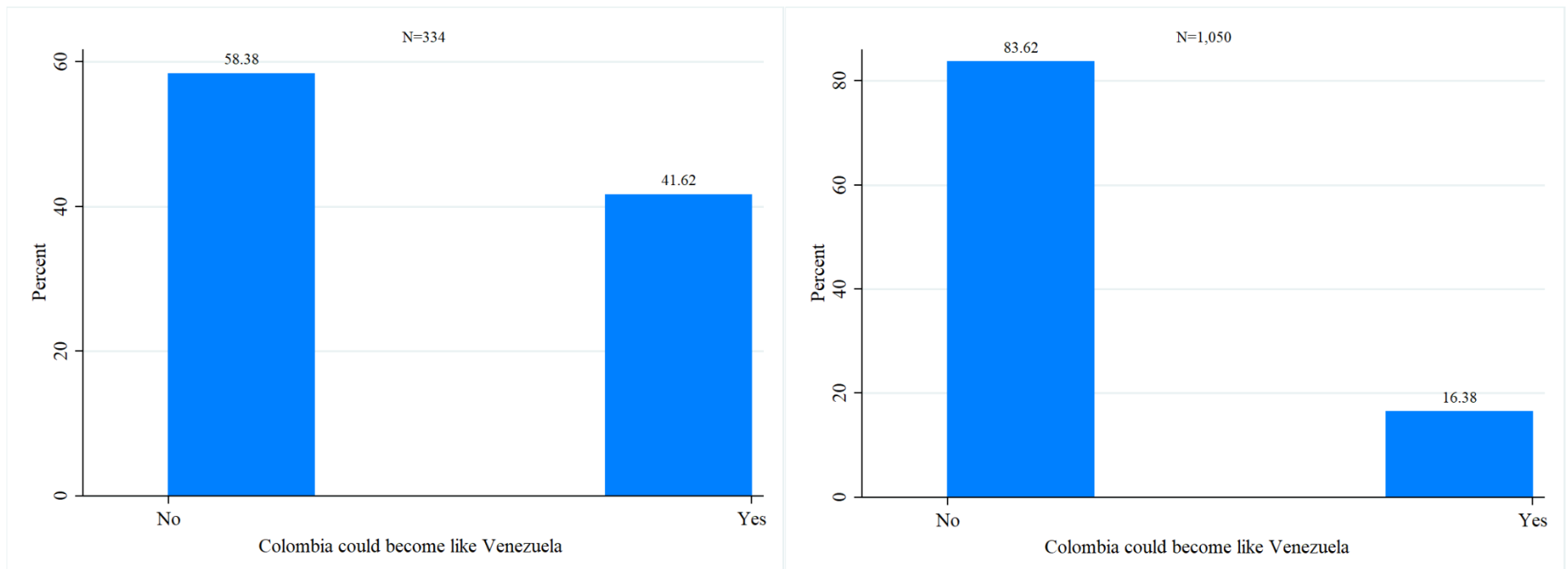
Face-to-face Sample

Internet Sample

Source: Author's calculation.

Figure 4. Perception about whether Colombia could become like Venezuela
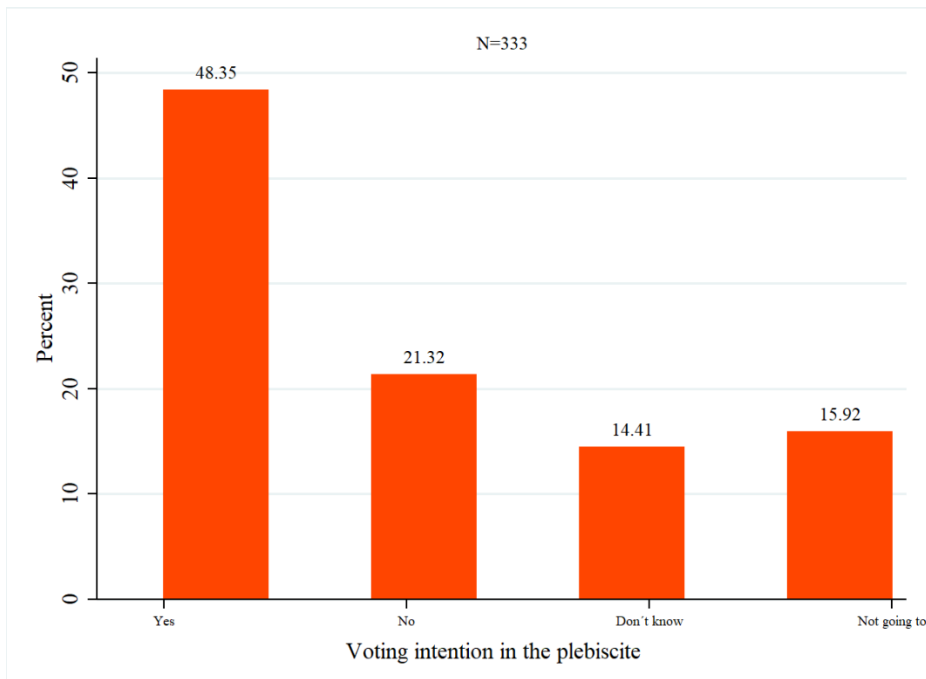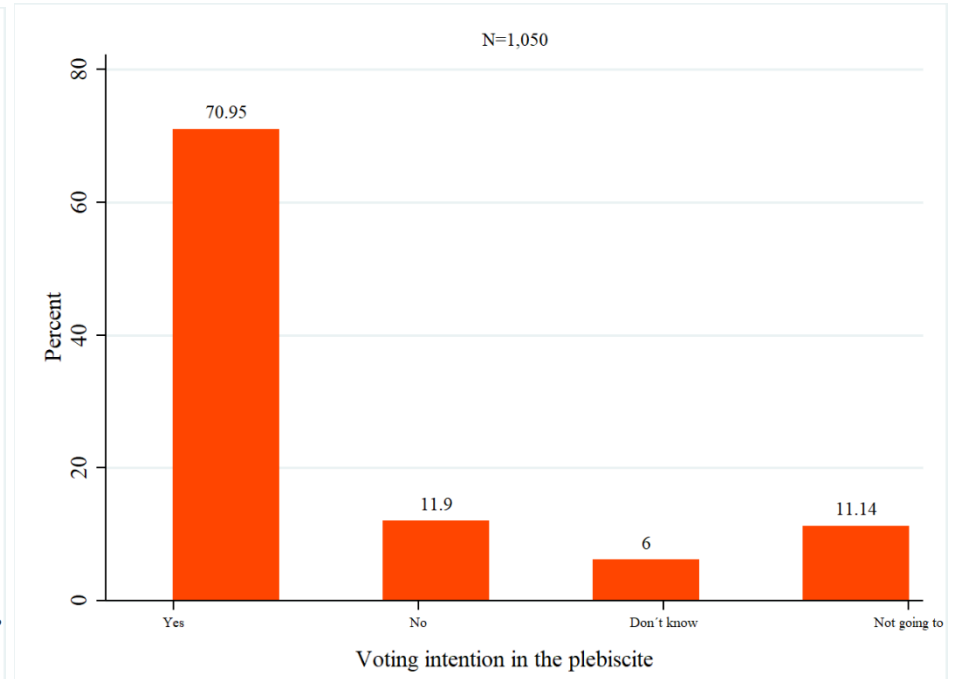
Face-to-face Sample

Internet Sample

Source: Author's calculation.

Figure 5. Voting intention in the plebiscite

Source: Author's calculation.

Appendix III: PCA Separate results from internet and face-to-face survey

Table 1. Three first principal components on the face-to-face survey, only items with significant loadings shown (N=328)

Variable	Component 1: Pro-status quo	Component 2: Right-leaning	Component 3: Non-Catholic Religious
Catholic		0.3359	-0.5415
Evangelical Christian			0.7687
Left-right scale placement		0.5559	
Voted for Santos in 2014 Elections	0.4060		
Voted for Zuluaga in 2014 Elections		0.4289	
Trust in the judicial system	0.4608		
Trust in the President	0.5647		
Trust in the armed forces		0.3519	
Colombia could become like Venezuela		0.4612	
Eigenvalues	2.056	1.715	1.175
Proportion variance	0.2056	0.1715	0.1175

Source: Author's calculation.

Table 2. Three first principal components on online survey, only items with significant loadings shown (N=1,050)

Variable	Component 1: Right-leaning	Component 2: Conservative pro-institutions	Component 3: Non-Catholic Religious
Catholic		0.3785	-0.4781
Evangelical Christian			0.7883
Left-right scale placement		0.4669	
Voted for Santos in 2014 Elections			
Voted for Zuluaga in 2014 Elections	0.4193		
Trust in the judicial system	-0.3423	0.3077	
Trust in the President	-0.5027		
Trust in the armed forces		0.6018	
Colombia could become like Venezuela	0.4576		
Eigenvalues	2.400	1.847	1.074
Proportion variance	0.2400	0.1847	0.1074

Source: Author's calculation.

Appendix IV: Results from the logit model

Table 1. Results Logit Model and Marginal Effects (ME)

Variables	(1) Vote choice	(2) Vote choice (ME)
Scores for component 1 (Pro-Government)	1.641***	0.0888***
	(0.124)	(0.00468)
Scores for component 2 (Right-leaning)	-0.827***	-0.0448***
	(0.108)	(0.00521)
Scores for component 3 (Non-Catholic Religious)	0.0280	0.00152
	(0.108)	(0.00583)
Sex: Male	-0.186	-0.0100
	(0.264)	(0.0143)
Age: Between 30 and 50	-0.651**	-0.0352**
	(0.281)	(0.0150)
Secondary school or below	-0.279	-0.0151
	(0.296)	(0.0160)
Estrato 3 or below	-0.823***	-0.0446***
	(0.277)	(0.0148)
Constant	3.385***	
	(0.315)	
Observations	1,094	1,094

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Author's calculation.

Appendix V: Questions included in the LAPOP PCA

	Questions		
Variable	**Survey prior to the referendum**	**LAPOP Survey**	**Question ID**
Religious Affiliation	What is your religion?	If you are of any religion, could you tell me what your religion is?	Q3C
Left-right scale placement	In political terms, people talk about left-wing positions and right-wing positions. On a scale of 1 to 10, what position would you be in?	Nowadays when we talk about political tendencies, many people talk about those who sympathize more with the left or with the right. According to the meaning that the terms "left" and "right" have for you when thinking about your political point of view, where would you be on this scale?	L1
Presidential Candidate in the 2014 election	Who did you vote for in the last presidential election?	Who did you vote for President in the last presidential elections of 2014?	VB3N
	Please give your answer according to next scale where 1 means not at all and 7 a lot.	On this card there is a staircase with steps numbered from one to seven, in which 1 is the lowest step and means NOTHING and 7 is the highest step and means A LOT.	
Trust in the judicial system	To what extent do you trust the Colombian justice system?	To what extent do you have confidence in the justice system?	B10A
Trust in the President	To what extent do you trust the President?	To what extent do you trust the president?	B21A
Trust in the armed forces	To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces?	To what extent do you trust the Armed Forces?	B12
Violence as mechanism for justice	Do you believe that, under extreme circumstances, violence is a mechanism for obtaining justice?	Taking justice into their own hands when the State does not punish criminals. To what extent do you agree or disagree?	E16
Colombia could become like Venezuela	Do you think that in the future Colombia could be a country like Venezuela?		

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