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Does Corruption Information Inspire the Fight or Quash the Hope? A Field Experiment in

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Does Corruption Information Inspire the Fight or Quash the Hope? A Field Experiment in Mexico on Voter Turnout, Choice and Party Identification

Retrospective voting models assume that offering more information to voters about their incumbents' performance strengthens electoral accountability. However, it is unclear whether

incumbent corruption information translates into higher political participation and increased support for challengers. We provide experimental evidence that such information not only decreases incumbent party support in local elections in Mexico, but also decreases voter turnout and support for the challenger party, as well as erodes partisan attachments. While information clearly is necessary to improve accountability, corruption information is not sufficient because voters may respond to it by withdrawing from the political process. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of our findings for studies of voting behavior.

May 01, 2014