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DISRUPTIVE PROTESTS AND BU- REAUCRATIC STRUCTURES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines why citizens in some democracies engage in disruptive political actions to a larger extent than in other countries. Our hypothesis adds to previous research that focuses on individual factors, representational issues or discontent with public sector performance to explain the occurrence of disruptive protests. We hypothesize that a more politically controlled administration introduces turbulence in democracies, especially where civil society is strong. A public administration heavily controlled by politicians, and staffed to a large extent with politically appointed individuals, allows politicians to intervene in policy implementation and favor some groups over others in terms of access to public services and employment. Such a system may induce citizens to resort to disruptive actions to express demands and grievances, and secure access to public goods. We test this argument empirically on data from 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The findings are consistent with the hypothesis.

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Introduction

Many democracies routinely experience disruptive actions at the hands of ordinary citizens, actions which can incur significant costs on commerce, on public coffers, and on individual citizens' lives. In 2013, the teachers' union in Mexico, for example, staged a massive number of protests throughout the country, some of which included blocking roads, closing toll booths, barricading a petroleum distribution center, storming public buildings and causing damage to public and private property (El País, August 29, 2013).¹ Similarly, in December 2010, disruptive protests erupted in Bolivia after the decision of President Evo Morales to reduce the subsidy on petrol. Toll booths were burnt and roads blocked, prompting Morales to withdraw the decree (El País, December 30, 2010).

The act of staging demonstrations is a fundamental democratic right, protected by freedoms of expression, assembly and association, and democratic governments should under no circumstances circumscribe citizens' right to take to the streets. However, citizens routinely employing protest tactics, and especially those expressly designed to impose high costs upon society such as violent acts against public or private property, suggests that some actors in society do not, for whatever reason, accept and adhere to the democratic rules of the game.

Some existing research attributes disruptive protest action in democracies to a failure of representative channels and bodies to channel preferences and grievances effectively, compounded by ineffectiveness in government agencies leading to inadequacies in government-provided goods and services (e.g. Tilly 2003; Machado et al. 2011). While certainly relevant, we find this explanation inordinately broad as it encompasses the entirety of the political and policy process. This paper seeks to contribute to the emerging literature that explores how institutional attributes of the state may induce turbulence, including the incidence of disruptive protests, in a political setting (Machado et al. 2011), directing attention to a rather specific organizational aspect of the state: the relationship between the political and administrative spheres (Charron et al. 2012; Dahlström et al. 2011; Evans and Rauch 1999; Gingerich 2013; Rauch and Evans 2000). The focal point in this institutional interface is the extent to which politicians have control of administrative offices and, more importantly, over the careers of individual civil servants and bureaucrats.

We argue that a bureaucracy subject to extensive political control informs the methods and procedures of the allocation of public goods and government jobs, and may therefore constitute a central component of the incentive structure for much political action in a democracy, including

¹ See Hecock (2014) for an interesting account on the teachers' union in Mexico.

citizens' propensity to stage disruptive protests. A politically controlled bureaucracy will, we argue, lead to a distribution of public goods and services that is informed by political loyalties, and access to public goods and services therefore becomes subject to one's political relevance. As disruption is one means of demonstrating relevance, we expect more disruptive protests in polities with a politically controlled bureaucracy than if public services are merely of poor quality.

The implications of these institutional arrangements for citizens' propensity to stage disruptive protests may, however, not be uniform across political contexts. Protest requires coordination and, when confrontational and disruptive, also entails risk. As citizens associations and organizations may greatly enhance citizens' ability to engage in coordinated action, we hypothesize that the polities with a politically controlled bureaucracy *and* comparatively high civil society involvement will experience disruptive protests to a greater extent than countries with a politicized bureaucracy but weak civil society.

The empirical analyses provide evidence corroborating the hypothesized patterns. Multi-level models on nineteen contemporary Latin American and Caribbean democracies show that in countries with a higher degree of political control of the bureaucracy and in which civil society is comparatively strong, there is a stronger propensity to engage in disruptive protests.

Disruptive protests: institutional incentives, participants and instigators

This analysis seeks to understand the incidence of medium-intensity protests principally aimed at government, i.e. those which aim to cause damage to private and/or public property and to disrupt social, political and/or commercial activity but do not primarily seek to harm human life (as terrorist actions). Road blocks, riots and looting exemplify the type of disruptive actions common some democracies (e.g. Arce and Mangonnet 2013; Auyero and Moran 2007). In contrast to more peaceful demonstrations, disruptive actions are generally regarded as outside the bounds of democratically legitimate modes of expression.

The reasons for engaging in such action are numerous, but mostly relate to a desire to affect an outcome. In Sidney Tarrow's words "disruption obstructs the routine activities of opponents, bystanders, or authorities and forces them to attend to protesters' demands" (1998, 96).² Why, then,

² Tarrow and others have examined the dynamics underlying a broad range of protest tactics, even those directed at corporate actors, and ranging from peaceful but obstructive sit-ins on the steps of a public building, to terrorist actions ultimately seeking to undermine the authority of the state (see also Sánchez-Cuenca and de la Calle 2009). While contentious action may share some common elements, the institutional focus and explanatory aim of this analysis

are citizens more inclined to stage disruptive protests in some political contexts than in others? The theoretical account presented here focuses on the relationship between the political and the administrative arenas of the state, as well as the role of civil society as instigators.

In a stylized depiction of democracy, the institutions of preference aggregation and policy formation can be described as principals, while bureaucratic institutions act as agents (Besley 2007; Miller 2005; Weingast and Moran 1983). As in any principal-agent relationship, this central relationship within the state must strike a balance between control and stimulus, but also a degree of separation that allows for effective oversight and corrective action. The central trade-off between control and separation accounts for the vast variation in the institutional designs that structure political offices' relationship to administrative offices between, and even within, states. With too little control, the state ceases to be a democracy, transforming into a "technocracy". Yet too much control, we argue, creates incentives for behavior in politicians, bureaucrats and citizens to act outside the democratic rules of the game and therefore may affect the functioning of democracy. In the following we will explain how these institutional issues may affect the logic of political action of citizens, both as individuals and in associations.

Institutional arrangements that allow for extensive political control over the public administration, for example, by far-reaching powers to appoint, promote, sideline or dismiss civil servants, contributes to creating an incentive structure for actors both within and outside the state, and therefore shapes what actions seem productive and effective. In democracies with administrations extensively controlled by the politicians, it is more likely that politicians will seek to influence the allocation of government resources to reward supporters (Gingerich 2013; Zuvanic et al. 2010). If the public administration becomes sufficiently politicized, electoral losers become losers not only of political power but also of equal access to the goods and employments that incumbents disproportionately channel to constituents, i.e. the electoral winners. A politically controlled administration may, in other words, induce both politicians and citizens alike to opt for clientelistic strategies, thus constraining the ability of the political system to be responsive to citizens' demands more generally.

How might a politically controlled bureaucracy affect propensity to engage in disruptive protest? When access to public goods and services becomes a political currency rather than an entitlement or societal safety net, the logic of politics and political action shifts. Competition is inherent to and also desirable in political debates and electoral contests, but when access to public goods is

require a narrower conceptualization of disruptive protest. That said, the measure employed in the analysis does not specifically tap into disruptive actions directed at the state. For this reason, we return to this broader literature below in order to identify other factors that may influence propensity to protest.

politicized, competition permeates society (Shefner 2012, 49-50). Access to public goods and services to a greater extent becomes a zero-sum game; politicians have incentives to allocate goods selectively, and one citizen's gain is another citizen's loss. Consequently, selective allocation of state resources may have a divisive effect on the electorate, turning politics into a high stakes game in which the difference between winning and losing may have a considerable impact on one's livelihood and household well-being. Engaging in disruptive political actions entails risks, not least the risk of violent clashes with law enforcement. Yet if one is faced with a game in which one must demonstrate one's political relevance in order to gain access to state resources, and disruptive protest constitutes one means of doing so (Dunning 2011, 329), then the calculus may shift in favor of such risky behavior.

In contrast, institutional arrangements that prevent politicians from interfering in the policy implementation process may to a greater extent ensure that the state serves citizens according to need rather than according to political affiliation. By constraining the opportunities for individual politicians to reward voters with material goods and services, an autonomous bureaucracy instead provides incentives for politicians to assume a more programmatic approach to politics, wooing voters with longer term policy objectives rather than short-term rewards. In democracies with a more autonomous bureaucracy, incentives to engage in disruptive protests are weaker as political relevance is not a requirement of gaining access to state resources to the same extent.

That political control of the bureaucracy may introduce bias along party lines in the allocation of government resources is well substantiated in the Latin American context. In a study comparing civil servants and agencies within and between Bolivia, Brazil and Chile, Gingerich (2013, 203-207) finds that degree of political control of bureaucracies is associated with higher levels of partisan use of state resources. These findings corroborate one of the central components in the theorized chain between politicized bureaucracies and disruptive protests.

To the extent that civil servants engage in allocating resources along partisan lines, citizens have incentives to seek to gain access to government resources by leveraging partisan sympathies and demonstrating their political relevance. Thus, citizens will be more inclined to stage disruptive protests in a polity with a bureaucracy under strong political control. However, although clearly an expression of discontent, protests are not necessarily the spontaneous and chaotic eruptions they may seem. Protest of any kind, whether peaceful or disruptive, and whether against an oppressive or corrupt regime, or in favor of human rights, present a collective action dilemma and require leadership and coordination. As Marwell and Oliver put it, "Olson's 'large group' problem is often resolved by a 'small group' solution" (1993, 54). Social movement scholars note that the solution to

the collective action dilemma of mobilization often come in the form of mobilizing organizations, who in turn mobilize their members, rather than mobilizing individual citizens (e.g. Marwell and Oliver 1993).

Moreover, disruptive protests may even at times be tacitly supported by politicians (Auyero 2007). As McCarthy and Zald write, “grievances and discontent may be defined, created, and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations” (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1215), and politicians may act as issue entrepreneurs if it serves their own ends. This is even more likely to occur when there is no clear boundary between social movements and political parties, but rather where the same actors participate in both, even when it comes to violent and illegal activities (Auyero 2007). Reflecting on a broad range of countries, Goldstone notes, “We find that the same actors, the same groups, and the same causes often simultaneously involved in social movement actions and institutional political actions” (2004, 336). Civic associations facilitate any form of mobilization, and the strong linkages between politicians and civil society, we argue, exacerbate the effects of a politicized bureaucracy.

In exploring this contention, we seek also to contribute to the exploration of why civil society at times mobilizes in a manner consistent with democratic norms of action and at others employs more violent and disruptive tactics. Several authors have pointed to failures in political parties to adequately represent citizens’ concerns (Huntington 1968), and state institutions for failing to deliver. Sheri Berman (1997; 2009) attributes, for example, civil society’s support of Fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany during the Weimar Republic to a failure of political parties to incorporate new emerging grievances (Berman 2009, 54). Boulding (2010) notes a similar pattern in the Bolivian context, showing that the incidence of protests is greater in regions with strong NGO activity, and where political competition is also lacking.

We argue that civil society associations face a different incentive structure when the administrative offices are politically controlled versus more autonomous from political influence. Administrative offices tightly controlled by politicians and parties creates an incentive for organizations, such as unions, community based organizations, and social movements to develop clientelistic bonds of reciprocity with individual politicians or political parties, as such exchanges might prove the most effective means of working toward the provision of goods and services for their own members. If organizations ally themselves with political parties’ clientelistic networks, their options for working for their members’ interests may therefore be somewhat limited if they emerge as electoral losers. As electoral winners, the primary strategy would be to pressure politicians to follow through on electoral promises. As losers, however, the most effective recourse may be to instigate

disruptive actions such as road blocks and violent riots. While spontaneously formed groups of citizens may naturally also initiate such actions, they are likely to be more common and more disruptive if civil society associations are many and strong in numbers. As mentioned above, disruptive protests need to be mobilized and organized and a strong civil society greatly facilitates efforts to organize such protests.

Civil society has in many historical and theoretical accounts been referred to as a champion of democratization, and a watchdog of public power. In order to perform such functions, civil society associations must be autonomous from political power and have as their primary aim to prod the political system to become more democratic, efficient and impartial (Oxhorn 2003). While the historical record corroborates this description of the role of civil society (e.g. the Solidarity movement in Poland, see Arato 2006; Ekiert and Kubik 1999), it also reveals considerable variation in civil society both in terms of degrees of autonomy from the state, politicians and political parties as well as willingness to use non-democratic tactics of protest and commitment to the agenda of institutional and democratic development.

In terms of autonomy and as mentioned above, considerable evidence indicates that civil society participates in party politics (Goldstone 2004), but may also be highly integrated in clientelistic networks. Neighborhood associations in Brazil (Gay 1994; Wampler 2008) as well as in Mexico (Grindle 2009) have been documented to utilize clientelistic tactics to secure goods such as street lighting, schools, and clinics. Though an organization need not completely relinquish autonomy to engage in clientelism, its capacity to monitor and scrutinize incumbents is certainly curtailed.

Moreover, civil society has engaged in actively promoting and propagating for intolerance, oppression and Fascism (Berman 2009), supporting discriminatory regimes, such as those in 1930s Germany and Italy, and segregation in 1950s United States (Armony 2004; Berman 1997; Berman 2009). During the time when many democracies collapsed in the 1960s and 70s, a number of authors suggested that strong and well organized citizens associations had a polarizing effect on society, destabilizing the political process and ultimately rendering democratic institutions asunder (Bermeo 2003).

Taken together, these findings strongly support a theoretical account that treats civil society as an organizational structure in society that may mobilize for various ends and with various means. In sum, the plausibility of the argument rests on a number of claims that are well-substantiated in previous research. Civil society adapts to the political and institutional environment, and may contribute to invigorating a viable democracy, but under other conditions also destabilizing a polity or reinforcing the logic of a clientelistic system, and consequently also exacerbating its effects.

Political institutions and protests: alternative explanations or ripple effects?

A politically controlled bureaucracy is, of course, not an isolated feature of the state's organizational structure. To the extent that the proportion of political appointees in the bureaucracy correlates with other attributes of the state structure that may affect citizens' inclination to protest, they may confound the analyses presented below.

It is important to note, however, that the degree of politicization of the bureaucracy varies considerably within the categories of new as well as more established democracies (Dahlström et al. 2012; Evans and Rauch 1999). A highly politicized bureaucracy may create opportunities for electoral clientelism, and result in bureaucratic inefficiency, and poorer service provision, and may also coincide with various forms of corruption (e.g., Dahlström et al. 2012). To the extent to which political control of the bureaucracy in fact gives rise to such unsavory consequences, and by extension incites protest, they capture alternative causal paths in the focal relationship. However, poor service provision or even the broad range of maladies that may plague campaigns and elections by no means all stem from the relationship between the political and administrative spheres of the state. As such phenomena may nonetheless *correlate* with a politically controlled bureaucracy, any attempt to understand the effects of the latter must take the former into consideration.

A number of studies have, namely, documented a link between the frequency of disruptive protests and the more general capacity of the state apparatus. A state which performs better with respect to channeling demands and grievances and providing goods and services are hypothesized to be the target of protest actions to a lesser extent than states which fall short in these respects. Machado et al. (2011, 342) argue, for example, that, “[u]nconventional forms of political participation tend to be chosen more often where institutions are of lower quality.”

.” Their study employs a broad conceptual definition of institutional strength and quality, and measure the concept with a construct consisting of indicators of congress capabilities, judicial independence, party system institutionalization, as well as bureaucratic quality. The analyses presented here seek to disentangle this effect by disaggregating these institutional components, and to the extent possible include measures to capture the various mechanisms that may be at work in Machado et al.'s findings.

Empirical evidence from a study of provinces in Peru suggests that the quality of service provision may one of the primary alternative explanations to the incidence of protest. Ponce and McClintock (forthcoming) explore the effects of the efficiency of local bureaucracies (measured as

percent of transfers from national government that are actually spent), as well as the effects of individual level satisfaction with the regional services on protest propensity. The findings suggest that efficiency of local bureaucracies as well as satisfaction with public services indeed do affect the occurrence of protest. The quality of service provision is closely related to the hypothesis being tested here. But we aim at taking the line of thinking one step farther and claim that two settings similar in terms of quality of service provision and capacity to put government funds to work would meet with different degrees of protest if one tended to grant access to these public goods and services along lines of political affiliations, while another granted universal access to citizens independent of such affiliations. In other words, even if Ponce and McClintock's (forthcoming) findings from Peruvian municipalities is completely accurate, and even if it describes a pattern that extends beyond the Peruvian context, they may be capturing a phenomenon that is more complex than one of popular discontent about government performance.

Corruption is a factor known to undermine bureaucratic efficiency and is also strongly associated with bureaucratic autonomy (Dahlström et al. 2012). Recent research has also begun to uncover evidence that corruption may give rise to lower levels of satisfaction with democracy (Dahlberg and Holmberg 2013), and even to anti-government protests (Gingerich 2009). In a study using survey data from Bolivia, Gingerich finds that citizens who had greater exposure to corruption were more likely to participate in anti-government demonstrations, though the effects differed depending on which institutions were involved. Citizens who had paid bribes to the authorities generally regarded as outside the ruling parties' patronage networks (such as the police force), showed an inclination to protest but only given high levels of exposure (several instances of bribe victimization). In contrast, corruption in institutions widely known to be linked to the then president's patronage networks to a much greater extent was linked to participation in anti-government demonstrations (Gingerich 2009, 28). Gingerich interprets the findings as one of responsibility attribution; that citizens were prompted to protest corruption in government offices known to be incorporated in the ruling parties' patronage networks, because these offices were directly linked to the authority of incumbents. Our theoretical model might suggest a different interpretation of Gingerich's findings, namely that patronage politics leads to protest to a greater extent than bribe-paying. That said, his findings do highlight the need to take into account whether protests have any systematic relationship with exposure to bribe victimization.

Finally, a number of other explanations for disruptive actions have been identified, spanning from the individual level (e.g., Schussman and Soule 2005), to social relational bonds (Tilly 2003), to political history and culture (e.g. Andronikidou and Kovras 2012; Tarrow 1998) or ideational flows,

as well as a range of economic (e.g. Arce and Bellinger 2007) and political circumstances (e.g. Boulding 2010). Several studies explore the link between economic policy and protest (Arce and Bellinger 2007), and find that waves of protest tend to follow reforms of economic liberalization (a sub-national level study in Bolivia finds a similar effect, Arce and Rice 2009). Others studies have considered the influence of the electoral system. Anderson and colleagues (Anderson et al 2005; Anderson and Mendes 2005) find, for example, that protests are more common in majoritarian than proportional systems, and that this effect is particularly strong in so called ‘new democracies’.

Research design and data

While our theoretical argument advances an institutional explanation for why disruptive protests occur, a large literature deals with individual level explanations for why people engage in such protests and political participation in general (e.g., Schussman and Soule 2005; Verba et al. 1995). In order to take these explanations into account we run multilevel models, allowing for the inclusion of both individual and country level controls.

The analyses include countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The main advantage in restricting the analysis to one region is that many parameters are held constant. This is particularly true for the Latin American democracies included in the sample that share a common colonial heritage (almost all from the Iberian peninsula), similar political systems (almost all are presidential), similar authoritarian experiences (military regimes), and similar periods of democratization and de-democratization. See Appendix A for a list of the countries included in the sample.

Measuring disruptive protests

The primary interest for this paper is to understand variations in the propensity to engage in disruptive protests. Reliable and comparable data on disruptive protests are, however, unfortunately scarce. Existing data are of two types, aggregate level data based on reports of protests in newspapers and other sources, and individual level data from surveys in which respondents indicate whether they have participated in different types of protests.

Aggregate protest data have been used in particular for analyses on sub-national protests. The sources used are various, including for example national bureaus of statistics (e.g. Arce and Rice 2009), data from the Ombudsman’s office (Ponce and McClintock Forthcoming) and national newspapers (e.g. Auyero 2007; Auyero and Moran 2007; Boulding 2010).

Up until recently the only aggregate data available on protests for a large sample of countries was the Banks Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive. The data differentiate between different

types of protests, including for example anti-government demonstrations, general strikes, and riots, which would at first glance seem of great use for the study specifically of disruptive protests. However, similar to the more recent NAVCO data set on mass campaigns, Banks data only captures major events and not smaller scale but more common disruptive protests of the type investigated here (Wilson 2013; Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). As the Banks data builds primarily on newspaper articles from *The New York Times* (Wilson 2013), it does not necessarily reflect the actual occurrence of protests but rather the extent of coverage of events in *The New York Times*.³ It may be more of use to measure large-scale protests like is done, for example, in the study of Arce and Bellinger (2007).

There are few surveys covering the extent to which individuals have actually been involved in disruptive protests. Fortunately for this study, the Americas Barometer from 2012 (LAPOP 2012) included a question (PROT7) that covers a very common type of disruptive protest, namely blocking streets or public spaces (e.g. Arce and Mangonnet 2013).⁴ While much less disruptive than, for example, arson or breaking into public buildings, it is also less incriminating and responses are therefore hopefully less biased by social desirability. Road blockades are referred to as one of the alternative political technologies and less institutionalized political actions (Scartascini and Tommasi 2012; Machado et al. 2011) and also as an example of a political action that break the law (Finkel and Muller 1998).

To our knowledge, this is the best existing survey question on disruptive protests and we think it better addresses our need than available aggregate protest data (i.e. Banks and NAVCO) because it does not capture only major events covered by international newspapers but a more quotidian form of disruptive protest. Moreover, it allows us to take individual-level explanations into account, which would not be the case with aggregate protest data.

This question is only asked to those who answered that they had participated in a general protest; demonstration or a protest march in the last 12 months.⁵ The variable, *disruptive protests*, is coded 1 for all answering in the affirmative, and 0 for those not engaging in such protests. Figure 1 shows the country level percentages for *disruptive protests*, revealing considerable variation among the countries included in the sample; the percentage ranges from more than seven percent in Bolivia to

³ For example events in the U.S. are probably covered much more than events in other countries in the Americas and therefore events in the U.S. are more likely to be in the data.

⁴ The exact formulation of the question (PROT7 in Americas Barometer) is “[I]n the last 12 months, have you participated in blocking any street or public space as a form of protest? Answers: 1) Yes, participated 2) No, did not participate. (LAPOP 2012)

⁵ Question PROT3 in Americas Barometer (LAPOP 2012).

less than one percent in Mexico, El Salvador, and Suriname. To reiterate, however, the statistical models build on this variable at the individual level.

[Figure 1 about here]

As mentioned above, the *disruptive protests* variable is created from a follow up of a question on protests in general. Numerous respondents indicated that they had participated in protests, 8.2% of all respondents, but only 2.8% of all respondents had blocked streets. In other words, 5.4% of the respondents in the sample had protested in other ways than blocking streets. It should be noted that the question on general protests captures any and all types of protest. In theory, the respondents could have participated in other types of violent protests that did not involve blocking streets like for example vandalizing public buildings. However, it is probably safe to assume that the bulk of protesters who did not block streets participated in peaceful manifestations. In the results section we compare results for these two different measures of protests, *disruptive protests* (including only blocking streets), and *other types of protests* (excluding blocking streets).

Measuring political control of the bureaucracy

To measure political control of the bureaucracy we use data from the QoG-expert survey (Teorell et al. 2012). The survey included a question that reads: When recruiting public employees, the political connections of the applicants decide who gets the job: 1=Hardly ever to 7=Almost always (Q2_b). We take the mean response for the experts for each country from the latest three waves of the survey conducted 2008–2012. This question captures political appointments, which we believe is a good indicator of the extent to which the bureaucracy is controlled by politicians. The measure provides a more contemporary indicator and covers a larger sample of countries than Evans and Rauch’s (1999) “Weberianness Scale” (including only a sample of 35 countries, 1970–1990). The International Country Risk Group (ICRG 2011) measures Bureaucratic Quality yearly since 1984 until today but the measure is an aggregate of several different indicators (including political appointments) that are not related to our theoretical argument explored here.

Political control of the bureaucracy (in our sample) ranges from 6.67 for Honduras, the highest degree of political control of the bureaucracy, to 3.28 for Brazil, the lowest degree of political control of the bureaucracy in the region.

Measuring civil society strength

Civil society has been conceptualized and measured in numerous ways. One approach measures the percentage of the workforce active in not-for-profit organizations (Salamon et al. 2003). As the

measure has fairly limited coverage (available for 35 countries) and also includes such organizations such as hospitals and schools operating on a not-for-profit basis, it is less suitable for this analysis. A second approach instead builds on the number of civil society associations registered in a region or country (Grimes and Wängnerud 2010; Grimes 2013). Grimes (2013) employs a measure of the number of development related organizations, and though available for all countries, it does not capture the full range of the types of organizations that are in all likelihood involved in the political processes examined here. We follow those who use survey data (e.g. Lee 2007) and build on individual level reporting of involvement in civil society organizations.

To measure the extent to which civil society may intensify the disruptive implications of a politicized bureaucracy, we create a variable, *civil society strength*, which is based on an index built from several questions in the Americas Barometer (LAPOP 2012). The questions belong to a battery of questions which asks respondents whether they have attended meetings of different types of organizations.⁶

The resulting measure is a simple additive index that counts the number of types of organization for which the respondents attend meetings. The index does not take into account the intensity of the individual participation in each of these organizations. As the theoretical claims under investigation here treat civil society as a collective capacity for organization and mobilization, we create a country level value for civil society strength, which is simply the country mean of individual involvement.

Our operationalization of civil society strength includes meetings of four different types of organizations; parents' associations at school (CP7), community improvement committees or associations (CP8), associations of professionals, merchants, manufacturers or farmers (CP9), and the meetings of political parties and associations (CP13). Thus countries could score between 0 and 4 on the variable *civil society strength*. Particularly, political organizations and political parties are linked to the mobilization potential in a political setting, and may be crucial for the potential of disruptive protest, as suggested in the theoretical discussion (see also Arce and Mangonnet 2013).

As a robustness check we also run our models with a broader measure of civil society strength (henceforth *civil society broad*) which in addition to the organizations included in our opera-

⁶ The introduction to these questions is the following: "I am going to read you a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me if you attend meetings of these organizations once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never (LAPOP 2012).

tionalization mentioned above also includes two additional types of organizations; religious organizations and sports and recreation groups.⁷ Country score can vary between 0 and 6 on this variable.

Figure 2 shows the variation of *civil society strength*. We can see that none of the countries reaches the top scores for the variable but that there seems to be an interesting variation, ranging from about 1.42 for Bolivia to the lowest score, about 0.45 for Costa Rica.

[Figure 2 about here]

Individual level controls

As mentioned above, we introduce a number of individual level control variables in our model. We use data from Americas Barometer 2012 for all individual level controls (LAPOP 2012). We control for the age of the respondent as it could be suspected that the propensity to protest is higher among younger people (Schussman and Soule 2005). We also control for gender and education, as well as political interest which also have been shown to be relevant predictors of protests in previous research. According to previous studies, women tend to participate less than men, more educated individuals as well as those with more interest in politics tend to participate in protests to a larger extent than less educated and less politically interested individuals (Schussman and Soule 2005).⁸ It could also be expected that those having experiences of corruption would be more prone to protest (Gingerich 2009) and therefore we include a control for whether the respondent have had to pay bribes in order to get different types of social services.⁹ As mentioned above, previous research suggests that citizens would turn to disruptive protests to express their grievances. Controlling for satisfaction with public services (including roads, public schools and health) at the individual level, as we do in this paper, is one way of addressing this issue.¹⁰ It could be expected that those individuals that are less satisfied would protest to a larger extent than those that are satisfied with the quality of public services (Ponce and McClintock forthcoming).

Furthermore and as stated above, much of previous research on protests has argued that the reason for why people take to the streets is that they do not feel they are represented in the political system and that the political system is unresponsive to the demands from the citizens (Huntington 1968; Machado et al. 2011). A question in the Americas Barometer taps nicely into this issue

⁷ The following variables in the Americas Barometer: CP6, CP7, CP8, CP9, CP13, CP21 (LAPOP 2012).

⁸ Age of the respondent is the Q1 variable in LAPOP, gender is Q2 recode so that males are 1 and females 0, education is ED, and political interest is measured using a recoded version of POL1.

⁹ An index based on EXC11, EXC14, EXC15 and EXC16.

¹⁰ Satisfaction with public services is an index created taking the mean of SDNEW2, SD3NEW and SD6NEW2.

(EFF1). The respondents are asked whether they agree or disagree with this statement: “Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?” (LAPOP 2012). The answers are given on a scale from 1–7 where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 7 indicates strongly agree. We use this question as an indicator of the perception of whether the rulers are responsive or not.

Country level controls

We control for repression by using the political terror scale with data from the U.S. State Department and economic crisis using economic growth per capita, recoded from data on GDP/capita from the UN.¹¹ For these country level controls we have taken the values for the year 2011 to reflect recent developments that may affect protest activity in 2012. Repression is expected to decrease the probability of disruptive protests (e.g. McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tilly 2003). When it comes to economic crisis we hypothesize that negative economic growth and economic crisis would lead to more discontent and therefore more protests, and that its inverse, positive economic growth, would have a negative effect on protests (e.g. Arce and Bellinger 2007).

Political competition is another factor that might be related to protests. It has been suggested that people protest more if there is less competition since they will find the electoral channels to be less efficient (e.g., Boulding 2010). We control for competition by using the latest available year, 2010, of Vanhanen’s measure of political competition.¹² Summary statistics for all variables are listed in Appendix B.

Since we have a binary dependent variable with two levels of analysis, individuals in countries, the analyses employ a mixed-effects logistics regression.¹³

Results

The multilevel models give support for our theoretical expectations. The results show that a higher degree of political control of the bureaucracy increases the propensity for disruptive protests, but only at higher levels of civil society strength.

¹¹ These variables have been accessed from the QoG-standard data set (Teorell et al. 2013).

¹² Accessed from the QoG-data set in which it is described like this: “The variable is calculated by subtracting from 100 the percentage of votes won by the largest party (the party which wins most votes) in parliamentary elections or by the party of the successful candidate in presidential elections. The variable thus theoretically ranges from 0 (only one party received 100 % of votes) to 100 (each voter cast a vote for a distinct party).” (Teorell et al. 2013, 141)

¹³ Xtmelogit in Stata.

Results for disruptive protests

Table 1 presents the results from models with *disruptive protests* as the dependent variable. Models 1–3 shows that there is no general effect of political control of the bureaucracy on disruptive protests. Similarly the other independent variable of interest here, civil society strength, does not seem to have an independent effect on individuals’ propensity to engage in disruptive protests (Table 1, models 1–3). These results indicate that the degree to which bureaucracy is controlled by politicians does not make a difference for the propensity of individuals to engage in disruptive protests. Moreover, and in contrast to Boulding’s (2010) results on general protests at the municipal level in Bolivia, a stronger civil society does not increase the likelihood of individuals participating in disruptive protests.¹⁴

[Table 1 about here]

However, the theoretical model presented in this paper indicates that the effect of political control of the bureaucracy on disruptive protests should be conditioned on the capacity of civil society to instigate such protests, i.e. how strong civil society is. In order to test this hypothesis we include a multiplicative interaction term with political control of the bureaucracy and civil society strength (Brambor et al. 2006).

These models (Table 1, models 4–6) reveal that both the interaction term and the constitutive terms are significant but since these are nonlinear models and the constitutive terms are continuous they do not show at what levels of civil society strength the marginal effects of political control of the bureaucracy on disruptive effects are indeed significant. The marginal effects are therefore presented in graph form. Figure 3 shows that the effects of political control of the bureaucracy on disruptive protests are significant when civil society strength is one or higher, in other words when the mean respondent attends meetings of at least one type of organization. At this level of civil society strength political control of the bureaucracy increases the predicted probability of disruptive protests with almost 1 percentage unit. When civil society strength is 1.4 political control of the bureaucracy increases the predicted probability of disruptive protests with almost 2.5 percentage units. Thus, the theoretical expectation, that political control of the bureaucracy will increase the propensity for disruptive protests when civil society is strong, is supported by our findings.

[Figure 3 about here]

¹⁴ Analyses show, however, that individuals attending meetings of civil society organizations are more likely to participate in disruptive protests (not reported here but available upon request).

The individual level controls all yield results in the expected direction (Table 1, models 1, 3–4, 6). Younger people are more inclined to engage in disruptive protests than older individuals. Men seem to engage in disruptive protests to a higher extent than women. Individuals with a higher education participate more in these activities, as do those with greater interest in politics. Those with experience of bribes are more prone to blocking streets (this effect is only significant at $p < 0.1$ in the models with interactions, Table 1, models 5–6) and those respondents that are more satisfied with service provision are less disposed to disruptive protests. Moreover, those respondents that think that the rulers are more responsive are less disposed to block streets (Table 1, 3–4, 6).

None of the country level controls are significant throughout the models (Table 1). The only country level control that is significant in any of the models is economic growth per capita which surprisingly, and contrary to our initial expectations, increases the propensity to blocking streets (Table 1, model 5).

It should be noted that the measure for political competition used here captures competition in elections at the national level and this could account for the insignificant effects as compared with other studies that measure political competition at lower levels such as municipal (Boulding 2010) or provincial/state elections (Arce and Mangonnet 2013). It may be the case that it is competition at the levels closer to the citizens that make a difference for whether to engage in disruptive protests rather than competition for the highest positions of the political system.

As mentioned above, we also run the models with an alternative broader operationalization of civil society strength. The main results from these analyses are similar to the ones reported (findings available upon request).¹⁵ The interaction effect is significant and the marginal effects indicate that the effect of political control of the bureaucracy is significant at higher levels of civil society strength (above 1.8). Figure 4 shows the marginal effects with the broader measure of civil society strength.

[Figure 4 about here]

Results for other types of protests

Many scholars do not differentiate between different types of protests (e.g. Machado et al. 2011; Arce and Mangonnet 2013; Boulding 2010). However, our theoretical argument is primarily related to disruptive actions and not protests in general. Therefore, we make an effort in this paper to not only analytically but also empirically differentiate between different types of protests. As mentioned

¹⁵ It should be noted that in contrast to earlier models civil society strength exerts a significant general effect on disruptive protests in some of these models (not reported here but available upon request).

above, in addition to disruptive protests, data from Americas Barometer allows us to test the argument also on a variable for other types of protests (not blocking streets), for which we assume the bulk are peaceful protests. As indicated earlier, this is an imprecise measure but could nevertheless give us an indication of whether blocking streets, our indicator of disruptive action, is something qualitatively different from other types of protests.

Table 2 shows the results keeping the same models as presented in table 1 but only replacing our dependent variable, *disruptive protests*, with *other types of protests*. These models reveal that there are indeed some interesting differences compared to previous analyses with disruptive protests.

Contrary to the previous models, political control of the bureaucracy increases the propensity for *other types of protests* in the model with both individual level controls and country level controls (Table 2, model 3). Though it should be noted that this effect is not significant in models 1 and 2. Moreover, in contrast to the models with disruptive protests, civil society strength has an independent general effect in increasing the propensity for other *types of protests* in two of the models (Table 2, models 2–3). However, this effect is not significant when only individual level controls are included in the model (Table 2, model 1).

Moreover, the interaction effect is not significant when both country level effects and individual effects are included in the model (Table 2, models 6). Thus, contrary to the findings for disruptive protests, it does not seem that the effects of political control of the bureaucracy on other types of protests are conditioned on civil society strength.¹⁶

The individual level controls for gender, education, political interest, and satisfaction with service provision yield similar results to the models with disruptive protests while interestingly the results are different for age, bribe and responsiveness (Table 2, models 1, 3–4, 6). In contrast to some of the previous models with disruptive protests the experience of bribes is not significantly related to the propensity to protest. Age is not significant in the models with other types of protests, which indicate that while younger individuals seem to be more prone to disruptive protests it does not make a difference whether you are old or young for whether you engage in other types of protests. This difference in results between disruptive protests and other protests is consistent with previous research where it is argued that younger individuals are more willing to take higher risks because they have less to lose than older people (Schussman and Soule 2005). Blocking streets presents much more of a risk to the participants than it is to peacefully take part in a manifestation.

¹⁶ It should be noted that the interaction effect is significant when the broader operationalization of civil society strength is used. However the constitutive terms are not significant in the model with both individual and country level controls. Not reported here but available upon request.

Moreover, responsiveness is not significant in any of the models with other types of protests. In contrast to the propensity for disruptive protests the degree to which individuals perceive their rulers to be responsive does not have an impact on their propensity to take part in other types of protests.

Regarding the country level controls GDP/capita growth is significant in all models with protests not blocking streets. GDP/capita growth increases the propensity to engage in protests (Table 2, models 2–3, 5–6). Also interesting to note is that contrary to the models with disruptive protests repression is significantly related to protests in two of the models (Table 2, models 2 and 3). According to these models repression decreases the propensity to protest.

[Table 2 about here]

Conclusions

The analyses uncover systematic variation in the propensity to stage disruptive protests in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The aim is to determine whether a specific aspect of the state apparatus, and in particular the relationship between the political and the administrative spheres of government, shapes the incentive structure for citizens' political actions and inclination to stage disruptive protests. The analyses suggest that a politically controlled public administration may indeed create incentives for disruptive protests but only if civil society is sufficiently strong. When politicians have considerable power over the administrative branch of government, they may be inclined to use their electoral mandate to reward their own constituents to the exclusion of other citizens, and they may also opt to recruit support and distribute rewards via the organizational infrastructure that strong civil society affords. Civil society organizations who back candidates that later prove unsuccessful in electoral contests may consequently find themselves in a lesser privileged position when it comes to access to public goods and services, and have few recourses to gain access to these services. Under such circumstances, disruptive protests may prove to be a practicable and rational option.

Studies of democratization and democratic quality have traditionally focused heavily on political parties and the responsiveness and representativeness of elected bodies. More recently, the field has begun to consider how factors such as state capacity and institutional quality may affect citizens' willingness to accept democratic government and abide by the norms and rules of the democratic process. We take this line of investigation in a somewhat new direction, adding conceptual precision to the rather broad concept of state capacity. Our definition does not aim to capture the quality of government service provision per se, but rather the institutions that are most crucial with

respect to the allocation and distribution of public resources. If highly politicized, this allocative point in the political system may create an incentive for citizens to stage protests using undemocratic tactics. The findings are consistent with these theoretical claims, and suggest that bureaucratic structures warrant continued consideration in the exploration of societal actors' acceptance of the rules of the democratic game.

The empirical results also strongly indicate that civil society may, in certain institutional environments, contribute to political instabilities and disruptive political actions. Rather than fostering civic-mindedness and participation in the formal democratic process, civil society constitutes the organizational structure to social interactions, and this relational power may be channeled into different forms of political action in different political regimes (Tilly 2003). In this sense, the findings suggest that studies of civil society can better contribute to our understanding of societal change if the characteristics of the institutional environment and the political regime are taken into account. These findings offer a concrete hypothesis regarding when civil society might be more inclined to work toward developing clientelistic relationships with politicians, and when they may be more likely to employ other strategies for serving members' needs.

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APPENDIX A

Countries included in the sample

Argentina	Honduras
Bolivia	Jamaica
Brazil	Mexico
Chile	Nicaragua
Colombia	Paraguay
Costa Rica	Peru
Dominican Republic	Suriname
Ecuador	Uruguay
El Salvador	Venezuela
Guatemala	

Appendix B.

Summary statistics

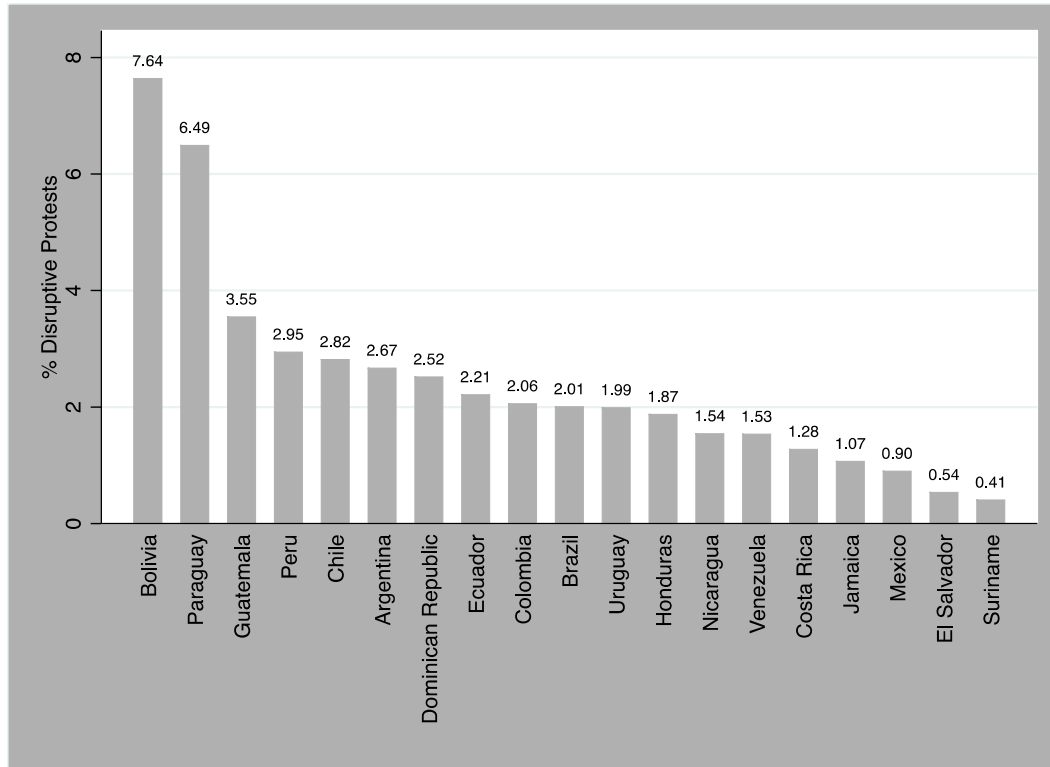
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Protests					
Disruptive protests	25759	.0280679	.16517	0	1
Other types of protests	25759	.0544664	.2269401	0	1
Political control of the bureaucracy	25759	5.358687	1.002446	3.285714	6.666667
Civil society strength					
Civil society strength	25759	.896172	.2780425	.4467354	1.421649
Civil society strength broad	25759	1.69649	.4413698	.9492318	2.427386
Individual level controls					
Age	25759	39.25886	15.56261	15	96
Gender	25759	.4963314	.4999962	0	1
Education	25759	9.30005	4.409048	0	18
Political interest	25759	2.095539	.9575564	1	4
Bribe	25759	.0301642	.1710423	0	1
Responsiveness	25759	3.34124	1.915913	1	7
Satisfaction with service provision	25759	2.524283	.5712099	1	4
Country level controls					
Repression (2011)	25759	2.762374	.6805135	1	4
GDP/capita growth (2011)	25759	3.38977	1.826208	.9090404	7.928972
Political competition (2010)	25759	49.32884	9.641686	28.4	63.6

Note: Sample from Table 1, model 6.

TABLES AND FIGURES

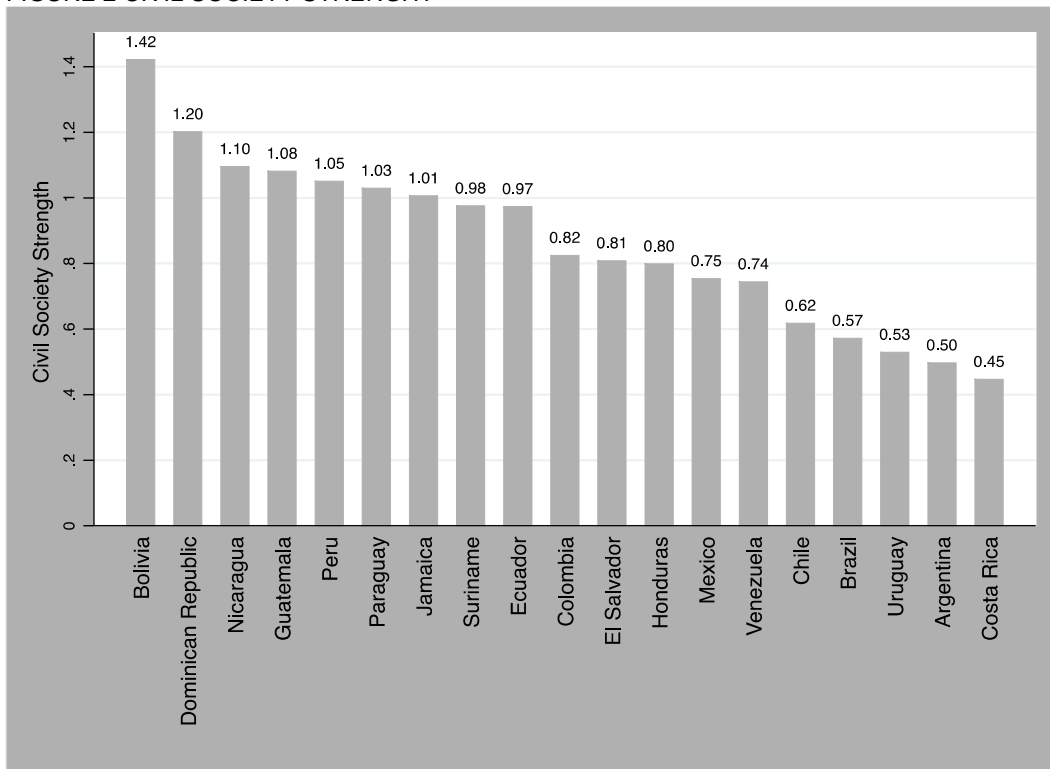
FIGURES

FIGURE 1. DISRUPTIVE PROTEST



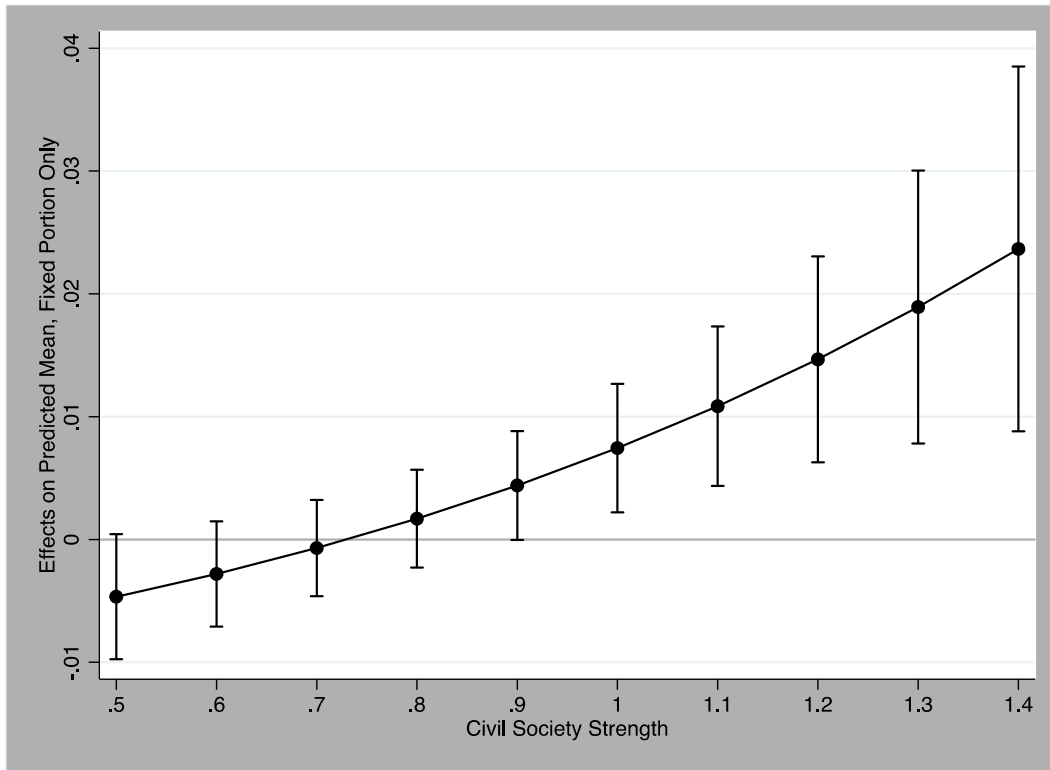
Source: Americas Barometer (LAPOP 2012).

FIGURE 2 CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTH



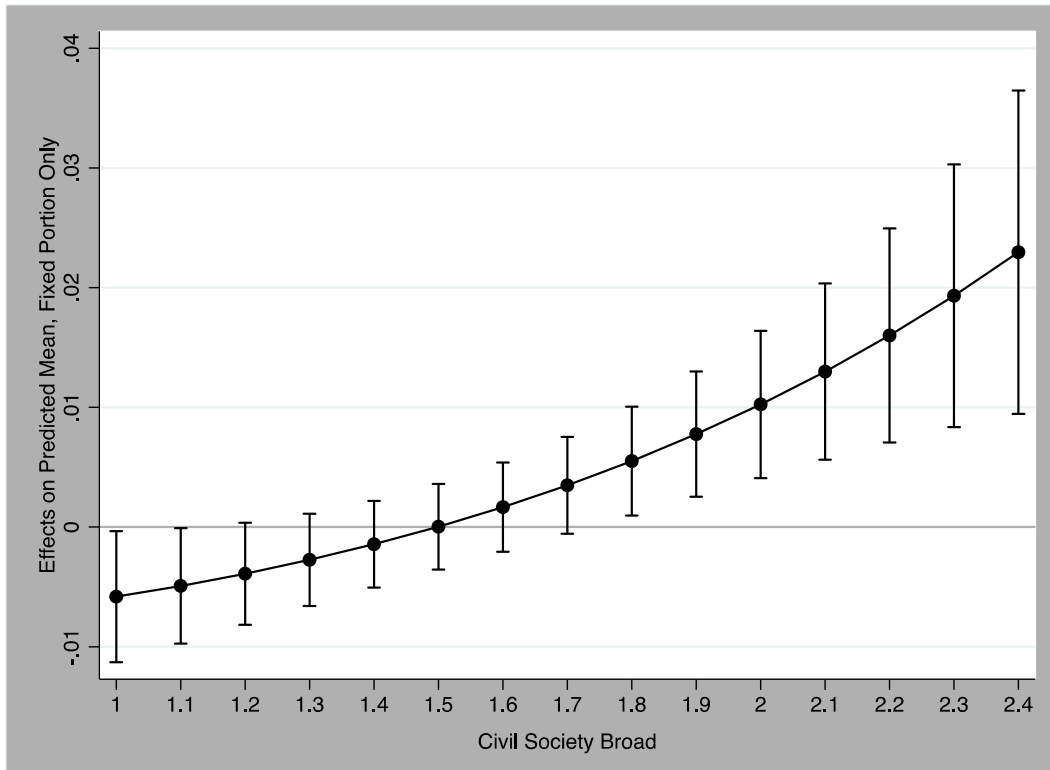
Source: Americas Barometer (LAPOP 2012).

FIGURE 3. DISRUPTIVE PROTESTS – CONDITIONAL MARGINAL EFFECTS OF POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE BUREAUCRACY AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTH



Note: The figure shows the marginal effects of political appointments on disruptive protests at different levels of civil society strength when all other variables are held at their sample mean. It is based on Table 1, model 6. 95% confidence intervals.

FIGURE 4. DISRUPTIVE PROTESTS – CONDITIONAL MARGINAL EFFECTS OF POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE BUREAUCRACY AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTH



Note: The figure shows the marginal effects of political appointments on blocking streets at different levels civil society strength when all other variables are held at their sample mean. 95% confidence intervals.

TABLES

TABLE 1. DISRUPTIVE PROTESTS

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Civil Society Strength and Political Control of the Bureaucracy						
Civil Society Strength	2.121 (1.280)	2.722 (1.684)	2.689 (1.614)	0.00267* (0.00695)	0.0000932** (0.000299)	0.000273* (0.000892)
Political Control of the Bureaucracy	1.125 (0.177)	1.092 (0.176)	1.120 (0.176)	0.416* (0.167)	0.249** (0.118)	0.299* (0.144)
Civil Society Strength * Political Control of the Bureaucracy				3.453** (1.627)	6.351** (3.601)	5.214** (3.014)
Individual level controls						
Age	0.992** (0.00275)		0.992** (0.00275)	0.992** (0.00275)		0.992** (0.00275)
Gender	1.296*** (0.101)		1.296*** (0.101)	1.295*** (0.101)		1.295*** (0.101)
Education	1.023* (0.00972)		1.022* (0.00973)	1.023* (0.00971)		1.022* (0.00972)
Political interest	1.542*** (0.0623)		1.543*** (0.0624)	1.543*** (0.0623)		1.543*** (0.0623)
Bribe	1.384* (0.224)		1.379* (0.223)	1.368 (0.221)		1.364 (0.221)
Satisfaction with service provision	0.818** (0.0583)		0.817** (0.0583)	0.818** (0.0582)		0.817** (0.0582)
Responsiveness	0.952* (0.0206)		0.951* (0.0206)	0.953* (0.0206)		0.952* (0.0206)
Country level controls						
Repression (2011)		0.893 (0.192)	0.849 (0.178)		1.415 (0.323)	1.284 (0.300)
GDP per capita growth (2011)		1.102 (0.0847)	1.080 (0.0808)		1.155* (0.0740)	1.126 (0.0739)
Political competition (2010)		0.989 (0.0160)	0.996 (0.0156)		0.990 (0.0130)	0.997 (0.0134)
<i>Constant</i>	0.004*** (0.003)	0.009** (0.014)	0.005*** (0.008)	0.749 (1.577)	6.395 (15.098)	1.727 (4.167)
<i>Individuals</i>	25759	30479	25759	25759	30479	25759
<i>Countries</i>	19	19	19	19	19	19
<i>Log-Likelihood</i>	-3048.498	-3568.973	-3047.323	-3045.520	-3564.461	-3043.713

Note: Odds ratios with standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

TABLE 2. OTHER TYPES OF PROTESTS

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Civil Society Strength and Political Control of the Bureaucracy						
Civil Society Strength	1.482 (0.690)	2.260** (0.707)	2.290* (0.771)	0.0195 (0.0420)	0.0387 (0.0706)	0.0663 (0.136)
Political Control of the Bureaucracy	1.177 (0.144)	1.181 (0.101)	1.235* (0.114)	0.616 (0.204)	0.657 (0.177)	0.742 (0.225)
Civil Society Strength * Political Control of the Bureaucracy				2.237* (0.874)	2.075* (0.671)	1.887 (0.685)
Individual level controls						
Age	1.000 (0.00192)		1.000 (0.00192)	1.000 (0.00192)		1.000 (0.00192)
Gender	1.132* (0.0639)		1.132* (0.0639)	1.131* (0.0639)		1.132* (0.0639)
Education	1.065*** (0.00741)		1.063*** (0.00740)	1.065*** (0.00740)		1.063*** (0.00740)
Political interest	1.520*** (0.0445)		1.520*** (0.0445)	1.520*** (0.0445)		1.521*** (0.0445)
Bribe	1.185 (0.166)		1.173 (0.164)	1.175 (0.165)		1.161 (0.163)
Satisfaction with service provision	0.877* (0.0451)		0.873** (0.0450)	0.878* (0.0452)		0.873** (0.0449)
Responsiveness	1.012 (0.0155)		1.010 (0.0154)	1.012 (0.0155)		1.010 (0.0154)
Country level controls						
Repression (2011)		0.787* (0.0862)	0.754* (0.0890)		0.944 (0.119)	0.883 (0.125)
GDP per capita growth (2011)		1.175*** (0.0462)	1.144** (0.0485)		1.198*** (0.0441)	1.164*** (0.0481)
Political competition (2010)		1.002 (0.00819)	1.007 (0.00886)		1.003 (0.00744)	1.008 (0.00839)
<i>Constant</i>	0.004*** (0.002)	0.010*** (0.008)	0.002*** (0.002)	0.114 (0.199)	0.132 (0.177)	0.020** (0.030)
<i>Individuals</i>	25759	30479	25759	25759	30479	25759
<i>Countries</i>	19	19	19	19	19	19
<i>Log-Likelihood</i>	-5135.954	-6034.291	-5129.034	-5133.986	-6031.905	-5127.551

Note: Odds ratios with standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.