

# Populist Attitudes and Support for Democracy among Latin American Bureaucrats<sup>1</sup>

## Actitudes populistas y apoyo a la democracia entre los burócratas latinoamericanos

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### Abstract

Despite macro-level patterns that link populists in power with democratic backsliding, it is unclear how populist attitudes correlate with attitudes about democracy among individuals. Scholarship has only recently considered this issue and produced inconclusive results. Using a unique survey of Latin American bureaucrats, we investigate how populism operates among bureaucrats, a set of actors with a crucial role in democratic governance. We analyze each of three dimensions of populism separately (anti-elitism, pro-people orientation and Manicheanism). Building on recent scholarship finding that populists are dissatisfied democrats, we examine the relationship between attitudes about each dimension of populism and satisfaction with and support for democracy. We extend current scholarship

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by deploying two measures of satisfaction with democracy and four measures of support for democracy, including support for checks on the executive. We find that those scoring high on underlying dimensions of populism rate the quality of democracy lower but are not less satisfied with the system in their countries. We also find that those with pro-people attitudes consistently support democracy, including checks on the executive. Those with a Manichean outlook, in contrast, are less supportive of democracy and favor increased executive powers. These complexities suggest the need for more research on the relationship between attitudes about populism and democracy, as well as the need for understanding how attitudes among important social groups, particularly institutional actors, may differ from the overall population.

### **Keywords**

Populist attitudes, Support for democracy, Latin America, Bureaucrats

Populism has long been viewed as a threat to liberal democracy and the recent rise of populist parties and executives has motivated new research seeking to understand the connection between populism and democracy. Populists view the procedures and institutions that characterize stable democracies as impediments to true popular sovereignty and often support their dilution or even abolition in favor of more “direct” links between the government and the citizenry (Rovira Kaltwasser et al., 2017; Hawkins et. al., 2017; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018; Urbinati, 2017). A growing literature finds consistent evidence that populist leaders adversely impact the quality of democracy in countries that they govern (Houle and Kenny, 2018; Huber and Schimpf 2016; Kenny, 2020; Ruth-Lovell and Grahn, 2022; Vittori, 2022).

It remains unclear, however, the extent to which individuals approve of this decline in democracy. Recent studies suggest that voters with populist attitudes decry existing democratic deficits in their countries, perhaps leading them to support populist politicians, but that these voters prefer democratic institutions, processes and values (Zaslove and Meijers, 2023; Wuttke et al., 2023). It is thus possible that populist-led democratic backsliding is partly unwelcome, even by those who display more populist dispositions. Of course, such individuals might also welcome specific kinds of backsliding even while they claim to value democratic principles.

We seek to advance the understanding of attitudes about populism and democracy in two ways. First, we explore underlying dimensions of both populism and democracy rather than treating them as holistic concepts. Scholars define both in complex, multi-dimensional ways, but empirical examinations have often treated them as unitary concepts because measurement has lagged conceptual understandings (König et al., 2022). Scholars typically point to three dimensions of populism: pro-people orientation, anti-elitism and Manicheanism. We utilize these three dimensions to produce new hypotheses about how they might differentially impact attitudes about democracy. At the same time, we also break down democracy into a multi-dimensional concept. Unlike populism, there is no established scholarly agreement about the nature of the dimensions, though other recent scholarship has focused on examining different facets of democracy (Claassen et al., 2023). We identify four dimensions of support for democracy and theorize that different populist dimensions might have different impacts on them. We also identify two different ways to measure satisfaction with democracy.

Second, we apply the study of populism and democracy to an important new population: bureaucratic officials. Despite the attention that has been paid to citizens’ populist leanings, support for democracy or the intersection of the two, it is difficult for citizens to meaningfully influence the degree of democratic backsliding in the short term. Bureaucrats, on the other hand, play a central role in translating populist positions into policy, crafting and executing the details required for actual government action. A staunchly anti-populist or pro-democracy bureaucracy could delay or even block executive action deemed detrimental to democratic institutions

and functioning. Scholars examining the interplay between populist governments and bureaucrats in different country case studies have found a variety of outcomes, from strong bureaucratic resistance to near-complete populist remaking of the bureaucracy (Bauer et al., 2021).

Despite the importance of bureaucrats as institutional actors that potentially influence populist politicians' impact on the quality of democracy, we know almost nothing about bureaucrats' attitudes. Scholars who study bureaucrats rarely ask about their political attitudes, focusing instead on patronage systems, bureaucratic oversight, and external influences on bureaucrats (Brierley et al., 2023). We thus bring a new institutional actor to the populism-democracy research agenda. Bureaucrats can be considered political elites because their "institutional roles afford them higher levels of influence over public policy" (Kertzer and Renshon, 2022, p. 535). Studies of political elites can be quite valuable when important questions arise about whether elites may share similar patterns with the general population (Kertzer and Renshon, 2022, p. 536).

Given the dearth of prior research on bureaucratic attitudes on democracy, our hypotheses assume that bureaucrats think about populism and democracy in the same way as citizens. While bureaucrats may be considered elites in terms of their potential political influence, they are not socio-economic elites that have clearly identifiable interests distinct from "ordinary" citizens on most issues. Bureaucrats are likely to have more education than typical citizens, but they still face similar vulnerabilities to economic problems or physical insecurity and are not members of an identifiable social or cultural group that would shape their views in fundamentally different ways. Of course, bureaucrats might also differ from typical citizens by having more education and being more politically aware. They also have a professional commitment to the existing, mostly democratic, political institutions in their country. Hence, our hypotheses are preliminary and merit further investigation.

Our contribution focuses on breaking populism and support for democracy into constituent parts and investigating relationships between them. We utilize existing studies of citizens to help formulate baseline expectations about the sub-population of bureaucrats but do not seek to explicitly compare bureaucrats and citizens. Because we offer innovations in both disaggregating measures of populism and support for democracy, explicit comparisons are impossible in any case. We discuss the implications of our findings about bureaucrats in the results section by relating them to existing findings about citizens. Differences are suggestive of the need for further research into the political attitudes of this understudied population.

In 2021-22, we surveyed bureaucrats in eight Latin American countries asking about their attitudes on populism and democracy, among other topics. Recognizing that both these phenomena are complex and multi-dimensional, we explored attitudes in some detail. We broke down populism into three well-known underlying dimensions: anti-elitism, pro-people sentiments, and a Manichean (good vs. evil) worldview. Working with measures that have been validated in cross-national

surveys of citizens, we asked two questions on each dimension (Castanho Silva et al., 2020).

With respect to democracy, we are interested in the two different (yet related) issues of satisfaction with democracy and support for democracy, which Norris (2011) describes as beliefs about the supply of and demand for democracy. Scholars often treat these issues separately and considerable scholarship looks at only one of these two possible outcomes (Curini et al., 2011; Ezrow and Xezonakis, 2011; Claassen, 2020; Gidengil et al., 2022).<sup>2</sup> The essential difference between satisfaction and support can be illustrated by conceptualizing variation on the two dimensions. Individuals might think that their system fails to correspond well with democratic norms (low satisfaction, or supply) and favor more democratic practices (strong support for democracy, or demand). People in this category are “dissatisfied democrats.” Other combinations are of course possible; for example, individuals might be dissatisfied with the current democratic system and favorable to undemocratic values (dissatisfied non-democrats).

We find that the populism-democracy nexus is more nuanced than the received wisdom, or our own expectations, would suggest. First, we find that the three dimensions of populism commonly utilized in studies of voters do not yield a consistent underlying index in our sample of bureaucrats and this is reflected in dramatically different distributions of respondents for each dimension. We, thus, analyze each of the three dimensions separately.

We find that bureaucrats are relatively satisfied with their political systems, especially compared to voters, but that they have widely varying opinions on whether their country is a full democracy. We find no association between underlying dimensions of populism and satisfaction with democracy, but we do find that bureaucrats with higher scores on each dimension of populism are less likely to think their country is a full democracy. Turning to support for democracy, respondents who express more pro-people sentiments more strongly support the dimensions of democracy that we test. In contrast, we find that those with a Manichean outlook are less supportive of all tested dimensions of democracy. Associations between those with anti-elite attitudes and support for democracy are mostly non-significant.

Combining these results, we find little evidence that bureaucrats are dissatisfied democrats, in contrast to some studies of populist voters that find that voters fall into that category (Zaslove and Meijers, 2023; Rovira Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert, 2020). Pro-people bureaucrats are largely satisfied democrats and Manichean bureaucrats are non-democrats while anti-elite bureaucrats are no more or less favorable toward democracy than other bureaucrats. These complexities suggest the need for more research on disaggregated populist attitudes and fine-grained measures of support for democracy. Our results suggest that populist leaders’ threats to democracy may be moderated by the pro-democracy orientations of

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<sup>2</sup> Some use the concepts interchangeably (Armingeon and Guthmann, 2013).

some bureaucrats. At least among Latin American bureaucrats, pro-people and anti-elite bureaucrats are both less antagonistic to democracy than conventional wisdom about populism suggests and less antagonistic than those who hold Manichean views.

## Theoretical Context

Latin America has a long history of well-known populist leaders, stretching from Juan and Eva Perón in Argentina to Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador in Mexico, leading one scholar to declare, “Latin America is the land of populism” (De la Torre 2017, p. 195). Populism’s rise in various countries has been attributed to sources as diverse as party fragmentation and unstable interparty alliances (Borges, 2021) and the commodity boom (Grigera, 2017). Scholars have found populism can lead to democratic backsliding in a variety of ways, including “undermining the autonomy” of key political and judicial institutions (Arteaga Botello, 2021, p. 97) and the centralization of power, suppression of dissent and creation of affective polarization (McKay and Colque, 2021). The negative effects of populist leaders on democratic quality that are demonstrated by these case studies are bolstered by cross-national quantitative analyses showing strong correlations between populist leaders and the decline of democracy at the country level (Hawkins et al., 2023).

Populist executives, however, do not necessarily have a completely free hand to simply impose their will in dismantling democratic institutions. Indeed, while the level of democracy has dropped in Latin America over the past decade, the political systems have not declined into unfettered authoritarianism in most countries. Perhaps populist leaders prefer a middling outcome and do not wish to push further down the path away from democracy. An alternative possibility is that they have met resistance in their attempts. One plausible source of resistance is public servants, a large enough obstacle for many political leaders in Latin America and elsewhere to spend significant time and energy trying to bend them to their will, sometimes successfully (Muno and Briceño, 2021). Scholars examining bureaucrats often perceive “interactions between politicians and the bureaucracy as multifaceted and complex; regularly, they are more a matter of negotiation or collaboration than of top-down command and control” (Bauer et al., 2021, p. 5). Relatively few attempts have been made, however, to examine these dynamic government-bureaucrat relations in the context of democratic quality. One experimental approach in Brazil found that bureaucrats are quite willing to “take democratic norms into account when making decisions” through some form of non-compliance with high-level anti-democratic directives (Guedes-Neto and Peters 2021, 242).

The study of populism at a sub-national level has evolved from an early focus on the emergence of populist parties, particularly in Europe, to an emphasis on voters. Considerable scholarship has focused on how to measure populist attitudes and on both the causes and consequences of populism in the elector-

ate (Castanho Silva, 2020). Although three attitudinal tendencies have come to be considered indicative of populism—anti-elitism, pro-people orientation and Manicheism (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019)—there is no consensus on how to measure them or even whether the three dimensions cohere well if measured separately. One systematic study comparing seven populist attitude scales found only three of those scales cohere well but suggested that the lack of coherence derived mostly from poor questions rather than problematic conceptualization (Castanho Silva et al., 2020, p. 420). At the same time, some find evidence that the Manichean dimension operates differently from the other two (Akkerman et al., 2014), and others suggest modifications of a good/evil frame to tap the moral dimension of populism (Elchardus and Spruyt, 2014; Spruyt et al., 2016). A group of authors (Schulz et al., 2018, p. 322) reviewing different data sets recently concluded that a model with “three dimensions of populism is superior to a one-dimensional conceptualization in a number of ways.”

Recent scholarship examines the relationship between citizens’ populist attitudes and views about democracy. Initially, populist attitudes were theorized to threaten democracy due to the preference for direct unmediated ties to an unconstrained leader. Indeed, a robust literature finds a strong correlation at the national level between populist political leaders and a decline in democracy (Hawkins et al., 2023). Surprisingly, however, populist citizens have been found to favor democracy over other political systems and have also been found to be favorable toward democracy as a system (Zaslove and Meijers, 2023; Rovira Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert, 2020; Hawkins et al., 2018), suggesting a potential disconnect between populist leaders’ aims and their followers’ preferences.

It seems plausible that populist citizens do not oppose democracy as a regime, but believe it has been corrupted, and are therefore dissatisfied with its functioning and favor remedies believed to better empower the voice of “the people.” Satisfaction with democracy is typically understood as “an expression of short-term evaluation of system outputs, and as a useful measure of the discrepancy between democratic norms and actual processes” (Curini et al., 2011). Support for democracy, on the other hand, is conceptualized not as evaluations of the current political system but rather as aspirations, values and goals with respect to the organization of political life (Norris, 2011, pp. 31-33). New research has explicitly tested the relationship between populist attitudes, satisfaction with democracy, and support for key institutions of executive oversight as well as mediating institutions such as political parties. A few studies have found that individuals with stronger populist attitudes are in fact dissatisfied democrats: more supportive of democracy but more dissatisfied with its functioning (Zaslove et al., 2020; Rovira Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert, 2020). Such populist voters are less likely to protest, are more supportive of referendums, and are more supportive of deliberative forms of political participation compared to individuals with weaker populist attitudes (Zaslove et al., 2020). Moreover, populist voters do not necessarily reject liberal institutions in

general but do reject mediated representation through political parties and judicial oversight (Zaslove and Meijers, 2023).

Of course, these findings represent the relationship between populism and satisfaction and support for democracy among citizens. As discussed above, bureaucrats may be similar to ordinary citizens in their exposure to uncertainty and economic and social pressures. However, we also recognize that they differ from an average citizen in terms of being more highly educated, highly politically aware, and involved in policy making. We do not anticipate strong differences between citizens and bureaucrats but do posit that due to their personal involvement in policymaking they may be less dissatisfied with the way democracy works than average citizens. Even pro-people and anti-elite bureaucrats are likely to better understand and agree with the nuanced reasons why policy deviates from the will of the people.

Based on the lack of consensus in the literature on what dimensions are key to the concept of populism and on some previous studies where the dimensions do not cohere well, we proceed to develop our argument by analyzing each of the dimensions separately. While we expect the three dimensions to sometimes affect democratic attitudes in similar ways, we also develop some arguments about why the Manichean dimension may differ from the pro-people and anti-elite dimensions, depending on the outcome in question.

## Hypotheses

The first two dimensions of populism we investigate are directly related to opinions on where democracy may have purportedly gone wrong, being captured by elites and failing to give proper voice to the people. Thus, we would expect respondents holding these views to be dissatisfied with their regime in comparison to non-populists. Manicheanism, in contrast, locates the problem with a segment of the electorate. Still, we would also expect those with Manichean views to be more dissatisfied with a system that can be captured by people with (in their view) irredeemably misguided views than those with more pluralist attitudes. As a result, when it comes to satisfaction with democracy, we expect all three dimensions to point in the same direction.

### ***H1. Higher levels on each of the three dimensions of populism will be associated with lower satisfaction with democracy.***

Turning to the question of support for democracy, recent scholarship (reviewed above) has found that populist voters are in fact democrats and have been found to be highly politically aware and engaged. This heightened engagement leads us to theorize that although populists see problems with democracy, like average citizens, bureaucrats holding these views, especially if they seem remediable, are going to be less likely to blame democracy as a system. They are likely to prefer



to reform rather than discard the democratic system because they think it can be corrected, even if they are not happy with it. After all, they believe in the principles on which democracy is founded; namely, that government should represent the people and work on behalf of the people. Bureaucrats have self-selected into the political system, are socialized to its benefits, and see the positive side of government in their own jobs. For these reasons, we expect that those who are concerned about remediable flaws, as with pro-people and anti-elite populists, will exhibit more support for democracy. And drawing again on the differences across the dimensions of populism, we expect that those who view democracy's flaws as driven by a perversion of its functioning (those with anti-elite and pro-people views) as likely to be more supportive of democracy than those who view the problem as built into the electorate (those with Manichean views).

In recognition of the apparent contradiction between the finding that (at least some) populists support democracy as a system, and the conventional wisdom that populists are opposed to institutions that are considered essential to liberal democracy, we asked three additional questions about support for specific institutional features including legislative oversight, party intermediation, and popular expression of dissent. We expect populists to vary in support for these institutions and for the overall idea of democracy, depending on the underlying dimension of populism. Individuals with pro-people and anti-elite attitudes will support liberal ideas, institutions, and procedures that they view as potentially correcting the problems they see with their democracy but will oppose those that are viewed as interfering with the direct transmission of the will of the people into policy. These respondents will oppose institutional constraints on the executive which are viewed as the cause of the marginalization of the people and the insulation of elites but will support rights or procedures that empower citizen voices. Institutions that constrain the executive such as parties and legislatures, in this view, are inherently problematic, because they empower elite voice and influence that can be wielded to thwart executive implementation of the true will of the people.

***H2a. Higher levels of pro-people or anti-elitist views will be associated with more support for conceptual democracy and more support for the free exercise of dissent.***

***H2b. Higher levels of pro-people or anti-elitist views will be associated with less support for legislative oversight and party intermediation.***

The logic for those with Manichean views is more straightforward when it comes to support for democracy. Universal enfranchisement is the most quintessential feature of democracy. Those with a Manichean outlook believe that many people in this world are evil and seek to subvert the well-being of good people. Empowering evil people, as democracy inevitably requires, makes little sense in this worldview. Hence, those with Manichean views should be less supportive of all dimensions of democracy.

**H3. Higher levels of Manichean views will be associated with less support for conceptual democracy and less support for institutions of oversight and mediation, as well as free exercise of dissent.**

## Research Design

Given the plausible importance of bureaucratic actors in influencing how democracies function in the face of backsliding executives and the paucity of knowledge about public servants, we implemented a survey of them from December 2021 to March 2022 in eight important countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru. We assembled the subject pool by using Python scripts and human labor to scrape official government websites in each country and identify possible respondents. We included only national-level government employee names and email addresses for all available government agencies, excluding only security services. Where emails were unavailable, we created email addresses based on the email conventions we observed from other addresses on the website. Emails were then double-checked for duplicates and cycled through a program to check for the likelihood of success. We excluded those found to have a nonexistent domain or syntax errors, those that were disabled or those that failed to be delivered due to a dead server, a rejected attempt, a relay error or some unknown reason. We then randomly selected a sub-set of addresses and utilized the emails to send a link to the survey directly to bureaucrats. There was no incentive or reward for respondents to take the survey.

We chose the countries based on availability of names and email addresses from government websites. Many countries did not have easily accessible public-servant contact information. Our goal was to gather at least 500 responses from each of these countries; we succeeded (or nearly so) in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Panama but received fewer responses in the other three countries (Table A1). Expecting a number of our emails to bounce and many others to find their way to spam filters, we sent out email requests to 50,000 randomly selected bureaucrats in each country, followed by a reminder a few days later. For the three countries with lower response rates, we judged it better to accept the lower response rate rather than sending out repeated reminders or expanding our subject pool. We worried that the passage of time could affect answers, making it undesirable to put all the data into the same analysis. In the end, 3,704 bureaucrats answered at least one question in our survey. About 31 percent of our emails bounced, giving an average response rate of 1 percent among non-bounced emails, though this varied by country. We cannot of course claim that our results are generalizable to all bureaucrats in these countries, but a recent meta-analysis of elite sampling found that random samples of elites typically generate “consistent and unbiased estimators of population parameters” (López 2023, p. 1303). Our approach is consistent with methodological choices recommended by Kertzer and Renshon (2022),

such as reasonable sample sizes, the importance of anonymity and a focus on first contact.

Unfortunately, there is no systematic information on the population of Latin American bureaucrats, so we cannot precisely measure the ways in which our sample differs from the population. However, our sample seems consistent with common-sense expectations about demographic features of bureaucrats, as detailed in Table A1. About 55 percent of respondents report having a post-graduate degree, and less than 1 percent of respondents report having less than a secondary education degree. We observe a relatively normal distribution of ideology with a slight skew to the left. Respondents in our survey report working in a wide range of agencies, from the environment to public finance, with Public Management being the largest group, at about 12 percent of the sample, followed by Justice at nearly 10 percent. The mean amount of time respondents report working for the government is approximately 14 years, with a standard deviation of 10 years. A little more than 50 percent of respondents identify as male. Respondents were overwhelmingly hired (95 percent) rather than appointed by elected officials. Nearly two-thirds of them spend at least a little of their time supervising others, suggesting that we are not simply sampling teachers or custodians or other low-level employees. About 45 percent report taking a civil service exam. Overall, we feel confident that our sample aligns with reasonable expectations for this population.

We completed a systematic review of the recent survey work done on populist attitudes and selected a set of six questions proposed by Castanho Silva et al. (2018). We came to this conclusion in large part because of the work of Castanho Silva and others (2020) in comparing seven frequently used populism question batteries. Due to the multinational nature of our project, we prioritized the scale that tested as having the highest level of cross-national validity. In previous tests, the scale also performed well on coherence, conceptual breadth and external validity. The populism questions follow, with respondents asked to rank their views on a five-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These have been re-coded as necessary so that higher values indicate more populist attitudes. Our independent variable for each dimension of populism is the mean of the two questions listed.

## Anti-elitism

- The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.
- Government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives. (inverse coded)

## Pro-people

- Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.

- Politicians don't have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job at making policies that help those people. (inverse coded)

## Manichean

- You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.
- The people I disagree with politically are not evil. (inverse coded)

We identify two measures of satisfaction with democracy. One is a straightforward question often used by scholars about the extent to which people are satisfied with democracy in their country. The second is a question about the extent to which their country is a full democracy, with responses on a 1-10 scale, with 10 agreeing completely it is a full democracy. The specific text of these questions follows:

- In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in [respondent's country]?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: [respondent's country] is a full democracy?

These questions may capture a similar underlying dynamic, but there are some potential distinctions between the two, particularly given our sample. Bureaucrats are likely to be educated about the requirements for a full liberal democracy as well as being aware of the ways in which practical politics and policymaking in their country may depart from that ideal. Responses about agreement with a statement that the country is a full democracy may reflect variation in how important they feel those departures are. Asking about satisfaction with the way democracy works may reflect bureaucrats' feelings about their own work as part of the government or allow them to express their level of comfort with compromises with democratic ideals made for pragmatic reasons.

While public support for democracy is currently a widespread concern, efforts to measure that support are still being developed in ongoing research. Previous studies often focus on a conceptual question about democracy being the best form of government and offer a couple additional questions that focus on very rough, broad tradeoffs between democracy and alternatives, such as military rule. The difficulty is that such questions often do not capture the nature of the real-world erosion of democracy taking place in established democratic systems. A related difficulty is that people may understand very different things by the abstract term "democracy" (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005; Dalton, Shin and Jou 2007; Ferrín and Kriesi 2016). Given these challenges, we developed a battery of four questions designed to tap into different dimensions of democracy that are subject to erosion, such as the ability of anti-system demonstrators to operate without restriction or the freedom of political parties or the legislature to operate inde-

pendently and in opposition to the executive. These questions have the virtue of realism, as many executives in democratic systems have attempted to engage in such activities even though they violate important aspects of liberal institutionalized democracy. For each of these four questions respondents rank their answer on a seven-point scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Responses for each have been coded such that higher value represent more support for democracy (i.e., higher opposition to executive restrictions on other actors' behavior).

- Conceptual Democracy: Democracy may have problems, but it is better than any other form of government.
- Legislative Autonomy: When Congress obstructs the work of the president, the president should unilaterally take more power to resolve the problem.
- Political Party Autonomy: It is necessary for the progress of [country name] that our president sometimes limits the voice and vote of mainstream opposition parties, if the president deems it necessary.
- Anti-system Demonstrations: There are people who only say bad things about [country name] form of government, not just the current government but the system of government. How strongly do you approve or disapprove that such people be allowed to conduct peaceful demonstrations in order to express their views?

## Findings and Discussion

In contrast to prior results using measures of citizens' populist attitudes, our own sample produced responses that indicate that, among bureaucrats, different attitudinal dimensions of populism do not reliably correlate with each other. Cronbach's Alpha of the six questions is a mere 0.06 (far below the rule of thumb acceptable threshold of 0.60 for an index). One possibility for this poor result for a previously validated survey block is that the questions do not capture the way that bureaucrats think about the world. One of the anti-elitism questions, for example, asks whether government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives. Bureaucrats may interpret that question as referring to themselves and answer it differently than citizens would. Likewise, another question asks whether politicians have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job at helping those people. Again, it is possible that bureaucrats would think of themselves and their role in helping people when answering this question and that most citizens would not understand the question the same way. Bureaucrats would not likely consider themselves politicians, but they may see themselves as making it possible for politicians to not spend time among the people in order to do a good job. The results suggest that scholars exercise much caution when attempting to measure populist attitudes in different populations and particularly among public officials.

A second possibility, which is not mutually exclusive with the first problem, is that bureaucrats do not think about populism in the cohesive way that scholars expect. In fact, reasonable evidence exists to suggest that the underlying dimensions of populism also often do not cohere in surveys of many citizen populations (Castanho Silva et al., 2020). One reasonable response to the coherence problem is to break the concept of populism into its underlying dimensions: pro-people, anti-elitism and Manicheanism. In our survey, we had two questions to measure each of these dimensions. Within each dimension, however, responses to those paired questions still do not correlate highly with each other. At the same time, the conceptual argument is reasonably strong that each dimension cannot be further sub-divided into more dimensions. Hence, we adopt the approach of creating three separate indices and run our models with all three indices. As a robustness check, we also run our base models with each populism-oriented attitude measure individually. The results, discussed below, show that models using two separate measures for each dimension yield qualitatively similar results as putting questions together in an index for each dimension.

Figure 1: Distribution of Populism Index containing Three Dimensions

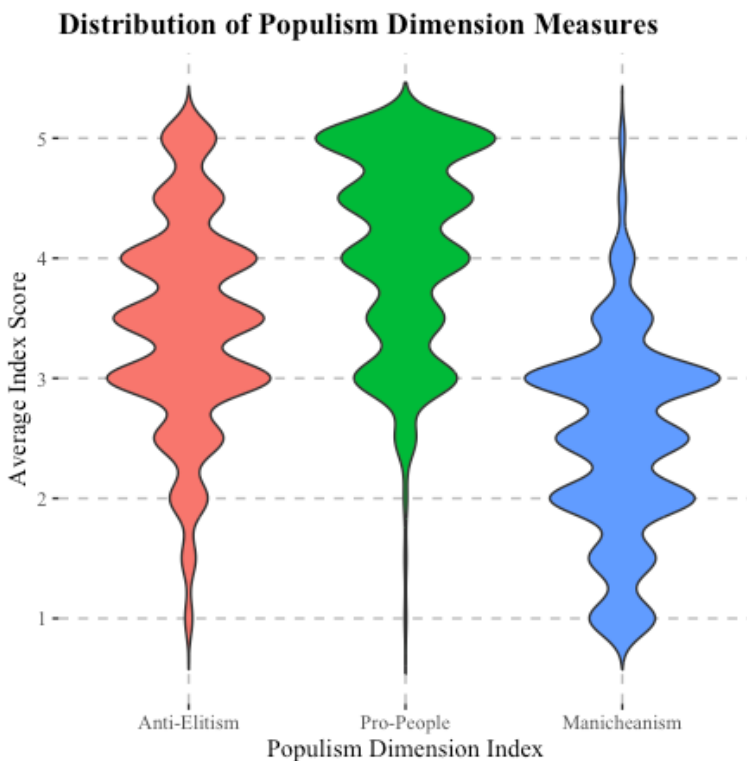
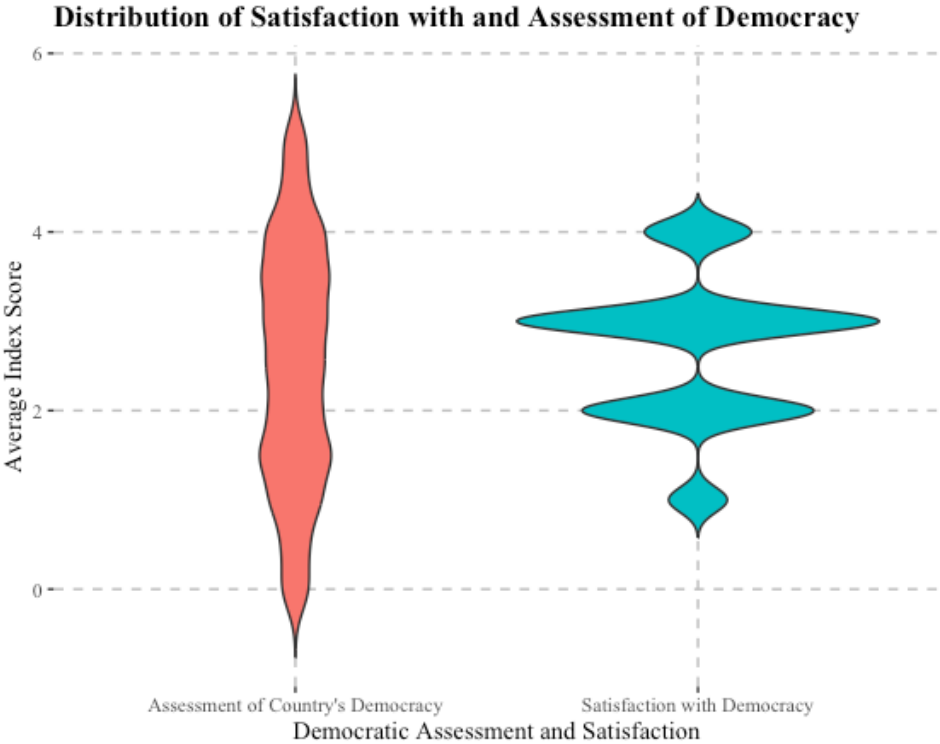


Figure 1 is a violin plot mapping the distribution of opinion for each of the three different dimensions of populism. As discussed above, each dimension of populism is measured as the average index of two questions on a scale from one to five. The anti-elite measure most resembles a normal distribution, though it is somewhat skewed toward higher values. The distributions of the pro-people and Manichean dimensions are nearly mirror images of each other, with the bulk of respondents scoring high on the pro-people dimension, but low on the Manichean dimension. The bureaucrats in our sample do not demonstrate a combination of attitudes that reflect populism as a unified concept in the way that many scholars have discussed. Rather, they adopt very different views about the different dimensions. Many tend to be quite pro-people and anti-Manichean while there is a range of opinion about anti-elitism.

Turning to our outcomes of interest, Latin American bureaucrats are, on balance, relatively satisfied with their country's democracy even though many are reluctant to say their country is a full democracy as illustrated by Figure 2. Overall, about 62% of bureaucrats are satisfied or very satisfied with their country's democracy.

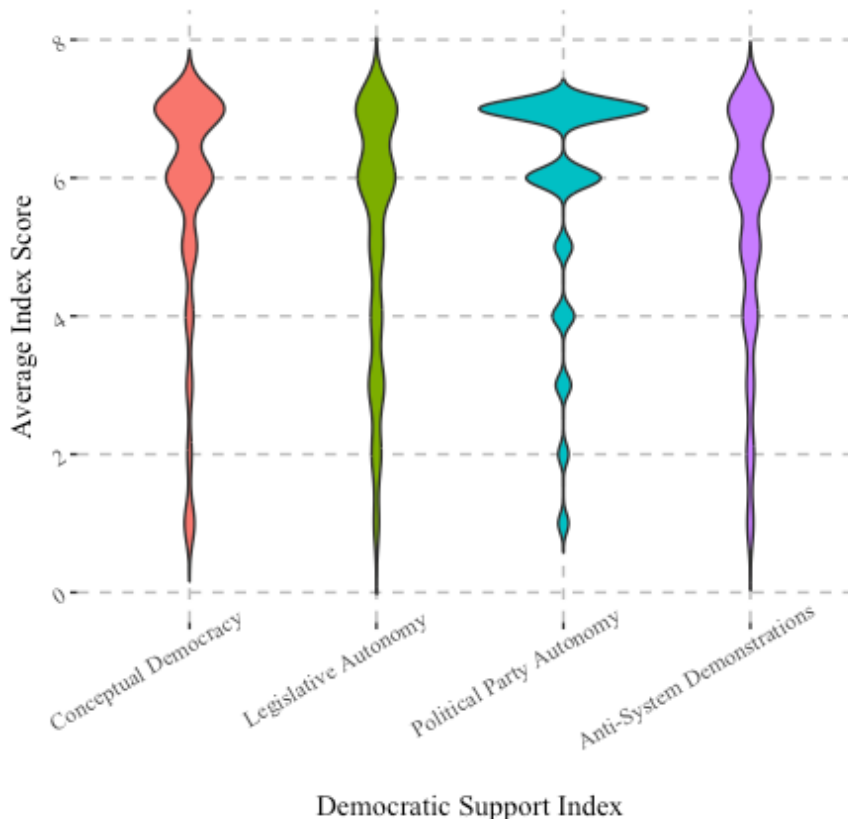
Figure 2: Assessment of Country's Democracy and Satisfaction with Democracy



This stands in contrast to the views of Latin American citizens reported in other studies. Only 43 percent of citizens said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with democracy in their country (Lupu at al., 2021). For the question of whether their country is a full democracy, the distribution is quite flat with all of the possible ten scores receiving some responses (as illustrated in Figure 2). In short, bureaucrats tend to be skeptical their country is a full democracy but, perhaps realistically, also incline toward satisfaction with what they have.

Latin American bureaucrats are also rather supportive of democracy, as seen in Figure 3. Large majorities agree or strongly agree that democracy is the best form of government and that particular features of liberal democracy are desirable: political party autonomy, legislative autonomy and the ability of anti-system demonstrations to take place. Support for political party autonomy is especially strong.

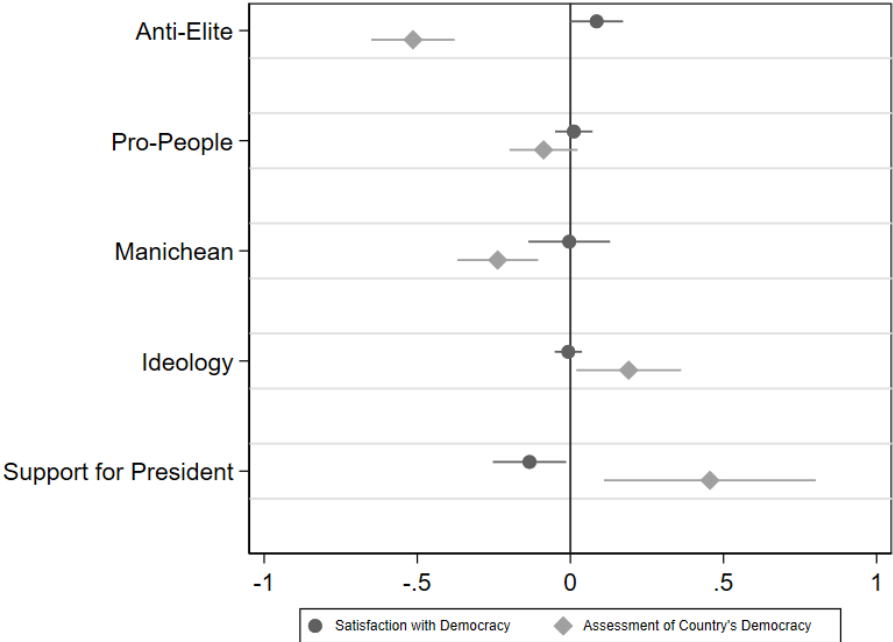
Figure 3: Distribution of Democratic Support Indices





Turning to our analysis, we find mixed evidence for the first hypothesis (Figure 4). Bureaucrats who identify with any of the three dimensions of populism are less likely to agree that their country is a full democracy. These results are statistically significant for Anti-Elite and Manichean dimensions of populism. At the same time, they are not likely to be less satisfied with democracy, a finding that differs from studies of citizens. In a sample of 11 countries in Europe and Latin America, Rovira Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert (2020) found in every one of them that populist attitudes are associated with lower satisfaction with democracy. Others have found similar results (Zaslove and Meijers, 2023). While we cannot say for certain what accounts for the absence of the widely observed relationship between populism and democratic satisfaction, bureaucrats are more intimately acquainted with the process of governance than citizens and have also attached their personal livelihoods to those processes. Bureaucrats may thus be more willing than citizens to overlook or tolerate problems with the political system, or to have more realistic expectations of what the system can deliver and how it operates. These lower expectations can result in more reluctance to express dissatisfaction. The complete results for Figure 4 can be found in appendix Table A3, with information on the control variables in Table A2.

Figure 4: Populism Measures and Satisfaction with Democracy



These results are robust to models with only one populist dimension in each model (Table A5) and to models with more extensive controls regarding workplace attributes, including ministry fixed effects, years in government employment, supervisory level, and dummy variables for political appointment and whether they took a civil service exam (A6). If we use our six individual measures of the populism dimensions in the same model, results are similar to the three-dimension models, suggesting that aggregation is not altering or obscuring individual results (Table A9). Among control variables, Support for President is worth a brief discussion, as partisanship is an important question in many studies of attitudes toward democracy. The question asks how respondents rate the job performance of the sitting president in their country, from very bad to very good. Those who support the president are more likely to think their country is a full democracy, perhaps because democracy produced an outcome they welcome. At the same time, they are less likely to be satisfied, a puzzling outcome that deserves further research because presidential supporters are often more satisfied with democracy (Anderson & Guillory, 1997).<sup>3</sup>

With respect to support for democracy, we find that the relationship between populist-oriented attitudes and support for democracy depends on the dimension of populism being discussed and on the dimension of democracy in question (Figure 5; Table A4). Our hypotheses as a whole favor breaking populism and democracy into different dimensions and we find evidence that outcomes do indeed vary by dimension. At the same time, the particular relationships we found were often but not always consistent with our hypotheses. We measure support for democracy on four dimensions, as discussed above: conceptual, legislative autonomy, political party autonomy, and allowing anti-system demonstrations.

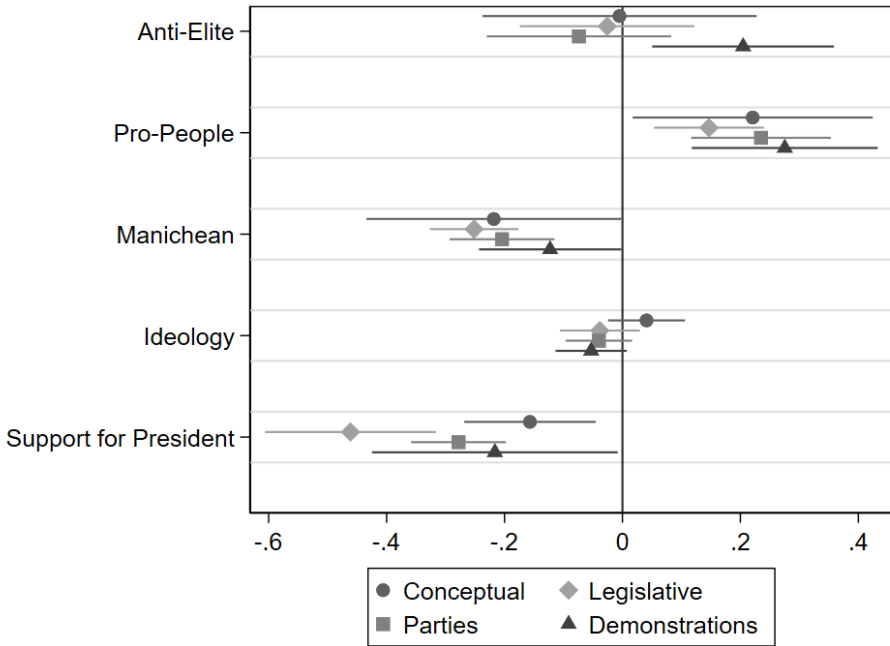
Those with pro-people attitudes are associated with more support for democracy across all four outcomes and three of those results are strongly significant. In sharp contrast, those with Manichean attitudes are associated with lower levels of support for democracy across all four outcomes. Anti-elitist attitudes are generally insignificant, but interestingly, they favor popular demonstrations, which is consistent with a view that democracy has been captured by elites. Tables A7 and A8 show that the results are robust to models that break out the measures of populism into different equations and to models that use more expansive control variables. Using the individual measures for the populism dimensions shows similar patterns to the three-dimensions model (Table A10). Support for the President is consistently negative and significant, which is consistent with existing literature showing that those who support the president are less likely to support democratic

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3 We explored the data to probe for cross-national differences that could help explain this outcome (analyses not shown). We found that in Brazil, with a well-known populist president, the relationship between presidential approval and satisfaction with democracy is positive, but in the other countries, it is negative. It is possible that individuals focus on the presidency when thinking of democracy in populist settings but on a wider set of institutions in non-populist contexts.

principles (Singer, 2018), probably because democratic institutions like legislatures and parties restrict the ability of their preferred leader to enact policy.

Figure 5: Populism Dimensions and Support for Democracy



Overall, these findings suggest that the relationships between attitudes about different dimensions of populism and democracy are complex. Respondents with high scores on any of the three populism dimensions are more likely to be skeptical of how well their country fits a democratic ideal, which certainly fits the conventional narrative about populism. At the same time, they are not likely to be more dissatisfied with that state of affairs, which does not fit the narrative. As discussed, it is possible that these results are different for bureaucrats than they would be for ordinary citizens.

When considering support for democracy, only those with Manichean beliefs express less support for liberal democracy across a variety of dimensions. That particular outcome is consistent with a narrative about a causal relationship between the rise of populism and the decline of democracy: populist leaders play on popular fears about the indifference and corruption of evil elites to gain support

for their anti-democratic efforts. Those who see the world divided into good and evil are likely particularly susceptible to these allegations.

However, the story about populist attitudes among bureaucrats turns out once again to be more complex than that. Those with pro-people attitudes, which arguably lie at the heart of populist preferences, are more supportive of democracy across a variety of democratic dimensions. Abstracting away from everyday populist rhetoric, such an observation is logically consistent in itself: for those who value people, they prefer to make the people's voices heard through legislatures, political parties, anti-system demonstrations and, in general, democracy. Still, these views are somewhat surprising given that populist political leaders tend to reject intermediary institutions like parties and legislatures because they believe they are susceptible to elite capture. Bureaucrats most attracted to anti-elitist views are prone to neither accept nor reject the concept of democracy or mediating institutions like legislatures and parties. Perhaps they see some hope for those institutions to serve the needs of the people, a hope consistent with their choice to become a public servant. Unsurprisingly, those with anti-elite orientations are more likely to favor anti-system demonstrations.

## Conclusions

This initial investigation of the relationship between bureaucrats' populist attitudes and democracy, as with much of the literature on populism, yielded mixed findings. While those with Manichean views fit the well-known populist narrative—distrust of liberal democracy—quite well, those with pro-people and anti-elite attitudes do not fit conventional wisdom at all. No underlying attitude is associated with less satisfaction with democracy although all three are associated with viewing their country as less than a full democracy. Populist bureaucrats may understand that building a full democracy is difficult and may view their democracy as a work in progress and thus are less likely to fault their existing system.

Manichean bureaucrats are less accepting of democracy as a concept and of particular checks on executive power provided by legislatures and political parties, thus favoring quintessential populist remedies that empower executives. Their association with support for anti-system demonstrators is neither positive nor negative, perhaps because they might reserve the right to engage in such demonstrations even if they do not fully endorse them in all cases.

Pro-people bureaucrats, in contrast, are more likely to endorse specific democratic institutions that check executive power. Of the three dimensions of populism, those holding pro-people views have underlying beliefs most consistent with democratic rule. While Manicheans are skeptical of anyone in power save their leaders, and anti-elite populists may view democracy as inevitably prone to elite capture, those with pro-people views are perhaps more likely to see democracy as amenable to improvement, and thus see value in institutions that have the

potential to reflect the will of the people. Anti-elite bureaucrats have no particular association with most dimensions of democracy, but they do more strongly support anti-system demonstrators, a finding consistent with their views.

These results suggest two future avenues of fruitful research. First, investigation of populist attitudes and not just support for democracy, but also support for liberal institutions of democracy among voters and elites, is key to refining our understanding of where democracy's potential vulnerabilities lie. Second, additional study of elite attitudes and how populism shapes their views of different forms of backsliding could shed new light on possible ballasts for democracy. Indeed, we found that bureaucrats in general are quite supportive of democracy, and pro-people bureaucrats exhibit attitudes that suggest they may be pro-active allies. Bureaucrats are elites with influence over implementation of executive directives, and the fact that some with pro-people attitudes are more supportive of liberal democracy suggests that at least some elites may seek to check executive overreach.

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Table A1: Demographic Descriptive Data from Survey Sample

Demographic Variable		Average	St. Dev.	Frequency	%
		45.43	11.23		
Age	Under 25			43	1.20
	25-39			1108	31.01
	40-54			1537	43.02
	55-64			687	19.23
	65+			156	4.37
	NA			42	1.17
Gender	Male			1815	50.80
	Female			1727	48.33
	Other			16	0.45
	NA			15	0.42
Education level	None			9	0.28
	Primary			24	0.74
	Secondary			238	7.31
	Post-Secondary, not University			194	5.96
	University			1006	30.91
	Post-graduate			1784	54.81
Years Employed by Government		14.35	10.23		

Demographic Variable		Average	St. Dev.	Frequency	%
Department	Agriculture			125	3.97
	Business			38	1.21
	Communication			85	2.70
	Culture/ Entertainment			41	1.30
	Defense			60	1.90
	Economy			96	3.05
	Education			684	21.17
	Energy			40	1.27
	Environment			119	3.78
	Family Services			22	0.70
	Foreign Relations			49	1.56
	Health			244	7.74
	Immigration/ Migration			16	0.51
	Infrastructure			104	3.30
	Insurance			11	0.35
	Justice			306	9.71
	Labor			34	1.08
	Legislation			38	1.21
	Public Finance			86	2.73
	Public Management			387	12.28
	Public Security			43	1.36
Science			110	3.49	
Social Development			82	2.60	
Tourism			11	0.35	
Transportation			28	0.89	
Other			292	9.27	
Appointed vs. Hired	Appointed			150	5.09
	Hired			2795	94.91

Demographic Variable		Average	St. Dev.	Frequency	%
Assessment of President's Performance	Very Bad			948	36.38
	Bad			537	20.55
	Neither Good nor Bad			625	23.92
	Good			382	14.62
	Very Good			121	4.63
Ideology	0 (Left)			90	3.58
	1			136	5.41
	2			251	10.00
	3			339	13.50
	4			287	11.43
	5 (Middle)			418	16.64
	6			246	9.79
	7			268	10.67
	8			236	9.39
	9			103	4.10
Country Economic Perceptions	10 (Right)			138	5.49
	Better			362	13.54
	Same			588	21.99
Safe	Worse			1724	64.47
	Very Unsafe			503	18.74
	Somewhat Unsafe			825	30.74
	Somewhat Safe			1045	38.93
Corruption Perceptions	Very Safe			311	11.59
	Very Uncommon			58	2.19
	Uncommon			373	14.06
	Common			1043	39.31
	Very Common			1179	44.44

<b>Demographic Variable</b>		<b>Average</b>	<b>St. Dev.</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Trust in Others	Never			209	7.20
	Sometimes			1559	53.74
	Most of the Time			1035	35.68
	Always			98	3.38
Personal Finance	Much Worse			464	16.02
	Somewhat Worse			746	25.76
	About the Same			1153	39.81
	Somewhat Better			476	16.44
	Much Better			57	1.97
Trust in Legislature	Not at All			982	34.60
	A Little			1042	36.72
	A Moderate Amount			673	23.71
	A Lot			141	4.97
Trust in Parties	Not at All			1284	45.15
	A Little			1013	35.62
	A Moderate Amount			473	16.63
	A Lot			74	2.60
Frequency of Watching the News	Never			55	1.93
	A few times a year			103	3.62
	A few times a month			182	6.40
	A few times a week			712	25.04
	Daily			1792	63.01
Took the Civil Service Exam	No			1302	43.39
	Yes			1346	44.85
	Don't know			353	11.76
Union Membership	No Available Union			247	8.20
	No			1754	58.25
	Yes			1010	33.54

Demographic Variable		Average	St. Dev.	Frequency	%
Time Spent Supervising Others	None of my time			1060	35.38
	A little of my time			596	19.89
	Some of my time			742	24.77
	Most of my time			598	19.96
Brazil Treatment	Control			235	7.55
	Treatment			203	6.06
	Not Part of the Experiment			2913	89.93
Mexico Treatments	Control			114	3.37
	Treatment One			120	3.55
	Treatment Two			91	2.69
	Not Part of the Experiment			3,117	98.08
Peru Treatments	Control			43	1.27
	Treatment One			45	1.33
	Treatment Two			35	1.03
	Not Part of the Experiment			3,263	96.37
Country	Argentina			146	4.09
	Brazil			553	15.50
	Chile			543	15.22
	Colombia			1050	29.44
	Mexico			413	11.58
	Panama			489	13.71
	Paraguay			227	6.36
	Peru			139	3.90
Other			11	0.31	

Table A2: Control Selection Justification

Control	Description	Citations
Ideology	Populist attitudes are exhibited most often by those on the ideological fringes, or those who affiliate with far-left or far-right parties. Populist attitudes also have a strong association with specific issue positions, such as socioeconomic issues. Ideology therefore may be a predictor of populist sentiments.	Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018 Singer, 2018 Stavrakakis & Katsambekis 2017 Bakker & Schumacher, 2016 Ackermann et. al, 2023 Fossati, Muhtadi, & Warburton, 2022
Support for President	Satisfaction with the executive branch/ president may be willing to sacrifice democratic principle in favor of stronger power delegation to the president. This may be an indicator of both populist sentiments and lowered support for liberal democracy.	Singer, 2018 Ruth, 2018 Aytaç, Çarkoğlu, & Elçi, 2021 Hunter & Vega, 2022 Gidengil, Stolle, & Bergeron-Boutin, 2022 Şaşmaz, Yagci, & Ziblatt, 2022
Trust in the Legislature	Populists may support executive aggrandizement (a major mechanism of democratic backsliding) due to declining trust in democratic institutions. This variable is therefore correlated with both populist attitudes and support for liberal democracy.	Mauk, 2020 Monsiváis-Carrillo, 2023 Geurkink, et. al, 2020
Personal Finance	Fluctuations in government economic performance influences support for democracy. Personal income, as a signal of financial security or insecurity and a potential signal of government economic effectiveness, may thus influence our outcomes. Personal income may also be associated with populist sentiments, our independent variables.	Claassen & Magalhães, 2022 Mudde & Rovira, 2018 Rooduijn & Burgoon, 2018 Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016
Country	Our data is comprised of data from multiple countries. The status of democracy and political situations of each of these countries is vastly different. Therefore, we used country fixed effects in our model.	Nature of the data (panel style data)
Treatments	Data comes from experimental survey data. Some respondents received a prime intended to shift their reported support for democracy. These primes are controlled for by adding treatment controls.	Nature of the data

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**Table A3: Populism Measures and Satisfaction with Democracy**

	<b>Dependent variable:</b>	
	<b>Satisfaction with Democracy</b>	<b>Assessment of Country's Democracy</b>
	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
Anti-Elite Populist Dimension	0.086* (0.037)	-0.514*** (0.057)
Pro-People Populist Dimension	0.011 (0.026)	-0.088 (0.047)
Manichean Populist Dimension	-0.004 (0.056)	-0.237*** (0.056)
Ideology	-0.007 (0.019)	0.190** (0.072)
Support for President	-0.133** (0.051)	0.456** (0.146)
Trust in Legislature	-0.148*** (0.027)	0.501*** (0.063)
Personal Finance	-0.005 (0.013)	0.029 (0.036)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.008*** (0.282)	5.157*** (1.109)
Observations	1818	1818
R2	0.294	0.255

\*p<.10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country. Controls included for treatments.



**Table A4: Populism Dimensions and Support for Democracy**

	Dependent variable:			
	Conceptual	Legislative	Parties	Demonstrations
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Anti-Elite Populism Dimension	-0.005 (0.098)	-0.026 (0.063)	-0.074 (0.066)	0.205** (0.065)
Pro-People Populism Dimension	0.221* (0.086)	0.147*** (0.039)	0.235*** (0.050)	0.275*** (0.067)
Manichean Populism Dimension	-0.218* (0.091)	-0.252*** (0.032)	-0.204*** (0.038)	-0.123* (0.051)
Ideology	0.041 (0.028)	-0.038 (0.029)	-0.040 (0.024)	-0.053* (0.026)
Support for President	-0.157*** (0.047)	-0.461*** (0.061)	-0.278*** (0.034)	-0.216* (0.088)
Trust in Legislature	0.150* (0.072)	0.088 (0.048)	-0.020 (0.048)	0.029 (0.095)
Personal Finance	-0.045 (0.023)	0.011 (0.036)	0.032 (0.026)	0.025 (0.034)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	5.592*** (0.895)	6.329*** (0.394)	6.857*** (0.425)	3.875*** (0.280)
Observations	1817	1816	1814	1814
R2	0.089	0.192	0.135	0.125

\* p< .10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country. Controls included for treatments.

**Table A5: Populism Dimensions and Satisfaction with Democracy,  
Individual Index Populism Dimensions**

	Dependent Variable					
	Satisfaction with Democracy			Country is A Full Democracy		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Anti-Elite Populism Dimension	0.062 (0.046)			-0.390*** (0.076)		
Pro-People Populism Dimension		0.018 (0.023)			-0.125*** (0.038)	
Manichean Populism Dimension			-0.017 (0.062)			-0.182* (0.081)
Assessment of President's Performance	-0.114** (0.040)	-0.119* (0.049)	-0.122** (0.047)	0.364*** (0.090)	0.421*** (0.095)	0.416*** (0.097)
Ideology	-0.009 (0.021)	-0.010 (0.021)	-0.010 (0.021)	0.209*** (0.063)	0.209** (0.072)	0.207** (0.072)
Age	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.005 (0.006)
Gender	0.065 (0.040)	0.058 (0.039)	0.062 (0.037)	-0.221 (0.118)	-0.193 (0.124)	-0.188 (0.109)
Education	0.008 (0.020)	0.008 (0.018)	0.008 (0.027)	0.039 (0.082)	0.039 (0.088)	0.007 (0.088)
Country Econ	-0.065 (0.047)	-0.069 (0.050)	-0.068 (0.049)	0.264 (0.266)	0.286 (0.274)	0.280 (0.267)
Safety	-0.012 (0.033)	-0.020 (0.032)	-0.014 (0.031)	0.138 (0.080)	0.146* (0.071)	0.140 (0.076)
Corruption	0.043 (0.023)	0.051 (0.028)	0.052* (0.026)	-0.271** (0.105)	-0.329** (0.102)	-0.322** (0.107)
Trust	-0.017 (0.031)	-0.016 (0.027)	-0.027 (0.034)	0.155 (0.101)	0.193 (0.127)	0.162 (0.111)
Personal Finance	0.003 (0.015)	-0.004 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.015)	0.046 (0.041)	0.043 (0.052)	0.050 (0.044)
Legislative Trust	-0.074* (0.030)	-0.088** (0.031)	-0.084* (0.034)	0.300** (0.096)	0.336*** (0.090)	0.356*** (0.098)

	Dependent Variable					
	Satisfaction with Democracy			Country is A Full Democracy		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Party Trust	-0.086*	-0.090**	-0.086**	0.152	0.185	0.201
	(0.037)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.119)	(0.103)	(0.108)
News Trust	-0.054*	-0.064**	-0.060**	0.267***	0.294***	0.281***
	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.056)	(0.058)	(0.057)
Income	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.076	0.079	0.076
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.041)
Brazil Treatment	0.118***	0.102***	0.116***	0.483***	0.360***	0.441***
	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.008)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.022)
Mexico Treatment 1	0.014	0.023*	0.019*	-0.578***	-0.631***	-0.631***
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.050)	(0.049)	(0.045)
Mexico Treatment 2	-0.140***	-0.143***	-0.151***	-0.009	0.025	0.013
	(0.021)	(0.023)	(0.018)	(0.058)	(0.053)	(0.054)
Peru Treatment 1	0.075	0.117***	0.123***	-0.128	-0.423***	-0.338***
	(0.041)	(0.007)	(0.028)	(0.104)	(0.047)	(0.071)
Peru Treatment 2	0.063	0.097***	0.099***	-0.057	-0.280***	-0.251***
	(0.034)	(0.018)	(0.023)	(0.045)	(0.055)	(0.053)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.156***	3.423***	3.504***	2.425*	1.208	1.268
	(0.375)	(0.274)	(0.317)	(1.035)	(0.984)	(1.002)
Observations	1,786	1,775	1,781	1,786	1,776	1,781
R2	0.313	0.309	0.307	0.286	0.277	0.275

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country \* p< .10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01

**Table A6: Populism Dimensions and Satisfaction with Democracy, extended controls**

	Dependent variable:	
	Satisfaction with Democracy	Assessment of Country's Democracy
	(1)	(2)
Anti-Elite Populism Dimension	0.049 (0.041)	-0.342*** (0.071)
Pro-People Populism Dimension	0.010 (0.029)	-0.106** (0.038)
Manichean Populism Dimension	-0.010 (0.062)	-0.203** (0.074)
Assessment of President's Performance	-0.115** (0.044)	0.362*** (0.096)
Ideology	-0.012 (0.016)	0.193** (0.072)
Age	-0.000 (0.003)	-0.009 (0.010)
Gender	0.078* (0.035)	-0.243* (0.117)
Education	0.021 (0.018)	0.027 (0.108)
Country Econ	-0.066 (0.053)	0.306 (0.266)
Safety	-0.027 (0.035)	0.127 (0.077)
Corruption	0.047 (0.025)	-0.262* (0.125)
Trust	-0.022 (0.036)	0.174 (0.120)
Personal Finance	-0.012 (0.010)	0.070 (0.044)
Legislative Trust	-0.086** (0.028)	0.293** (0.099)
Party Trust	-0.070* (0.027)	0.130 (0.142)

	<b>Dependent variable:</b>	
	<b>Satisfaction with Democracy</b>	<b>Assessment of Country's Democracy</b>
	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
News Trust	-0.056* (0.023)	0.262*** (0.041)
Income	0.002 (0.007)	0.052 (0.052)
Years Employed	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.005)
Appointed Position	0.026 (0.097)	-0.187 (0.170)
Union Membership	-0.041 (0.029)	-0.000 (0.177)
Supervisory Level	-0.026 (0.023)	0.103** (0.038)
Took Civil Service Exam	-0.047 (0.027)	0.160*** (0.041)
Brazil Treatment	0.111*** (0.009)	0.436*** (0.029)
Mexico Treatment 1	0.034*** (0.007)	-0.695*** (0.067)
Mexico Treatment 2	-0.115*** (0.025)	-0.087 (0.075)
Peru Treatment 1	0.086 (0.056)	-0.251 (0.148)
Peru Treatment 2	0.098* (0.039)	-0.049 (0.147)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Department Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.462*** (0.462)	2.765 (1.638)
Observations	1638	1638
R <sup>2</sup>	0.325	
<i>Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country</i>		* p< .10, **p<.05, ***p<0.01

**Table A7: Populism Dimensions and Support for Democracy, Individual Index Populism Dimensions**

		Dependent variable:															
		Conceptual				Legislative				Parties				Demonstrations			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)				
Anti-Elite Populism Dimension	(0.103)	0.039 (0.071)	0.039 (0.071)	-0.1010 (0.059)	-0.1010 (0.059)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)	0.254*** (0.066)				
Pro-People Populism Dimension	(0.103)	0.214* (0.103)	0.214* (0.103)	0.140*** (0.031)	0.140*** (0.031)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)	0.250*** (0.050)				
Manichean Populism Dimension	(0.087)	-0.200* (0.087)	-0.200* (0.087)	-0.191*** (0.024)	-0.191*** (0.024)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)	-0.157*** (0.033)				
Assessment of President's Performance	(0.019)	-0.155*** (0.019)	-0.157*** (0.021)	-0.155*** (0.019)	-0.426*** (0.055)	-0.419*** (0.046)	-0.429*** (0.048)	-0.222*** (0.034)	-0.214*** (0.038)	-0.224*** (0.038)	-0.202* (0.091)	-0.235* (0.092)	-0.236* (0.099)				
Ideology	(0.020)	0.039 (0.020)	0.047* (0.021)	0.032 (0.021)	-0.041 (0.026)	-0.033 (0.024)	-0.043 (0.028)	-0.050* (0.021)	-0.038* (0.019)	-0.052* (0.021)	-0.057* (0.026)	-0.047 (0.028)	-0.063* (0.031)				
Age	(0.004)	0.001 (0.004)	0.002 (0.004)	0.001 (0.004)	-0.008** (0.003)	-0.008** (0.003)	-0.008* (0.003)	-0.001 (0.004)	0.000 (0.004)	-0.000 (0.004)	-0.010** (0.003)	-0.009* (0.004)	-0.011** (0.003)				
Gender	(0.074)	0.012 (0.074)	0.005 (0.075)	0.021 (0.076)	0.183*** (0.045)	0.199*** (0.046)	0.176*** (0.048)	0.214*** (0.082)	0.220** (0.078)	0.208* (0.081)	0.223** (0.069)	0.212** (0.081)	0.219** (0.078)				
Education	(0.050)	0.075 (0.050)	0.067 (0.050)	0.063 (0.052)	0.135** (0.043)	0.131** (0.044)	0.105* (0.041)	0.140* (0.057)	0.124* (0.055)	0.117 (0.063)	0.055 (0.043)	0.047 (0.045)	0.055 (0.041)				
Country Econ	(0.081)	0.021 (0.081)	0.009 (0.083)	0.012 (0.080)	-0.143* (0.064)	-0.144* (0.062)	-0.147* (0.065)	-0.197*** (0.037)	-0.202*** (0.038)	-0.192*** (0.038)	0.001 (0.034)	-0.015 (0.040)	-0.003 (0.041)				

Dependent variable:

	Conceptual				Legislative				Parties				Demonstrations			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)				
Safety	0.066 (0.052)	0.063 (0.054)	0.052 (0.052)	0.053 (0.044)	0.054 (0.045)	0.041 (0.044)	0.089* (0.039)	0.093* (0.041)	0.082* (0.040)	0.103 (0.054)	0.107* (0.053)	0.094 (0.055)				
Corruption	0.054 (0.028)	0.058 (0.032)	0.062 (0.034)	-0.175* (0.088)	-0.161* (0.081)	-0.165* (0.081)	-0.039 (0.077)	-0.032 (0.078)	-0.030 (0.077)	0.151*** (0.033)	0.201*** (0.043)	0.192*** (0.042)				
Trust	0.127* (0.063)	0.113 (0.062)	0.101 (0.052)	0.245*** (0.049)	0.234*** (0.049)	0.230*** (0.055)	0.256*** (0.070)	0.234** (0.072)	0.236** (0.076)	0.315*** (0.048)	0.280*** (0.042)	0.286*** (0.043)				
Personal Finance	-0.048* (0.024)	-0.044 (0.025)	-0.045 (0.023)	-0.003 (0.040)	0.005 (0.037)	-0.004 (0.042)	0.023 (0.029)	0.037 (0.030)	0.025 (0.029)	0.040 (0.040)	0.045 (0.040)	0.034 (0.041)				
Legislative Trust	0.010 (0.103)	0.014 (0.097)	0.007 (0.092)	0.014 (0.053)	0.018 (0.061)	0.016 (0.061)	-0.108 (0.057)	-0.093 (0.056)	-0.106* (0.053)	-0.033 (0.083)	-0.071 (0.088)	-0.064 (0.086)				
Party Trust	0.180* (0.084)	0.183* (0.079)	0.179* (0.082)	-0.027 (0.076)	-0.039 (0.067)	-0.034 (0.076)	0.024 (0.042)	0.031 (0.038)	0.043 (0.051)	0.030 (0.077)	0.027 (0.077)	0.013 (0.081)				
News Trust	0.106* (0.052)	0.090 (0.052)	0.093 (0.051)	0.126*** (0.030)	0.121*** (0.028)	0.120*** (0.028)	0.153*** (0.046)	0.141** (0.053)	0.139** (0.049)	0.110** (0.042)	0.080 (0.044)	0.093* (0.045)				
Income	0.060*** (0.015)	0.059*** (0.015)	0.062*** (0.015)	0.078*** (0.017)	0.078*** (0.016)	0.077*** (0.018)	0.053** (0.019)	0.050** (0.017)	0.056** (0.019)	0.043 (0.025)	0.038 (0.022)	0.039 (0.025)				
Brazil Treatment	-0.171*** (0.015)	-0.162*** (0.015)	-0.160*** (0.012)	0.137*** (0.017)	0.147*** (0.014)	0.123*** (0.015)	-0.293*** (0.012)	-0.275*** (0.013)	-0.257*** (0.012)	-0.050*** (0.017)	-0.000 (0.021)	-0.058** (0.019)				
Mexico Treatment 1	-0.274*** (0.022)	-0.241*** (0.034)	-0.283*** (0.027)	0.112*** (0.023)	0.132*** (0.023)	0.098*** (0.028)	0.511*** (0.021)	0.541*** (0.017)	0.500*** (0.017)	0.098*** (0.024)	0.157*** (0.029)	0.116*** (0.025)				

Dependent variable:

	Conceptual			Legislative			Parties			Demonstrations		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Mexico Treatment 2	0.037 (0.038)	0.071* (0.035)	-0.003 (0.024)	0.218*** (0.031)	0.238*** (0.027)	0.179*** (0.031)	0.198*** (0.024)	0.243*** (0.026)	0.172*** (0.026)	0.330*** (0.030)	0.336*** (0.021)	0.279*** (0.024)
Peru Treatment 1	-0.245*** (0.060)	-0.185** (0.063)	-0.144*** (0.042)	-0.996*** (0.057)	-0.947*** (0.029)	-0.903*** (0.031)	-0.750*** (0.056)	-0.718*** (0.020)	-0.706*** (0.023)	0.014 (0.064)	0.220*** (0.053)	0.222*** (0.058)
Peru Treatment 2	0.054 (0.030)	0.088 (0.054)	0.091 (0.047)	-0.455*** (0.048)	-0.428*** (0.020)	-0.413*** (0.022)	-0.236*** (0.049)	-0.233*** (0.019)	-0.228*** (0.020)	-0.020 (0.062)	0.137** (0.047)	0.132** (0.047)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.769*** (0.625)	3.065*** (0.395)	4.552*** (0.395)	4.504*** (0.490)	3.983*** (0.305)	5.314*** (0.464)	4.676*** (0.294)	3.557*** (0.307)	5.135*** (0.453)	2.091*** (0.409)	2.171*** (0.582)	3.507*** (0.244)
Observations	1785	1775	1780	1784	1774	1779	1782	1772	1777	1782	1772	1777
R2	0.102	0.111	0.111	0.224	0.225	0.230	0.170	0.182	0.177	0.145	0.145	0.135

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country

\* p < .10, \*\* p < .05, \*\*\* p < .01



Table A8: Populism Dimensions and Support for Democracy, Extended Controls

	Dependent variable:			
	Conceptual (1)	Legislative (2)	Parties (3)	Demonstrations (4)
Anti-Elite Populism Dimension	0.030 (0.099)	0.032 (0.079)	-0.017 (0.066)	0.222*** (0.065)
Pro-People Populism Dimension	0.199 (0.107)	0.111** (0.039)	0.216*** (0.053)	0.209*** (0.061)
Manichean Populism Dimension	-0.200** (0.071)	-0.189*** (0.009)	-0.130*** (0.029)	-0.067 (0.043)
Assessment of President's Performance	-0.162*** (0.022)	-0.400*** (0.061)	-0.219*** (0.032)	-0.201* (0.084)
Ideology	0.042 (0.024)	-0.042 (0.029)	-0.044** (0.014)	-0.035* (0.015)
Age	0.003 (0.004)	0.002 (0.007)	0.006 (0.004)	-0.007 (0.007)
Gender	0.024 (0.075)	0.165* (0.069)	0.176* (0.084)	0.255*** (0.069)
Education	0.057 (0.051)	0.046 (0.046)	0.104 (0.054)	0.024 (0.058)
Country Econ	0.006 (0.094)	-0.155** (0.051)	-0.183*** (0.021)	-0.019 (0.042)
Safety	0.068 (0.053)	0.045 (0.060)	0.104* (0.045)	0.115** (0.043)
Corruption	0.066** (0.022)	-0.167 (0.099)	-0.025 (0.082)	0.146*** (0.028)
Trust	0.106 (0.077)	0.185** (0.070)	0.196* (0.078)	0.269*** (0.054)
Personal Finance	-0.020 (0.030)	0.013 (0.040)	0.051 (0.031)	0.043 (0.046)
Legislative Trust	0.072 (0.098)	0.020 (0.070)	-0.137* (0.069)	-0.036 (0.083)
Party Trust	0.182* (0.074)	-0.047 (0.065)	0.042 (0.049)	0.017 (0.072)

	Dependent variable:			
	Conceptual (1)	Legislative (2)	Parties (3)	Demonstrations (4)
News Trust	0.037 (0.050)	0.101*** (0.029)	0.117* (0.051)	0.110** (0.041)
Income	0.062*** (0.012)	0.086*** (0.019)	0.065*** (0.018)	0.054* (0.027)
Years Employed	0.001 (0.005)	-0.012 (0.007)	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.009 (0.007)
Appointed Position	0.085 (0.097)	-0.037 (0.242)	-0.089 (0.172)	0.107 (0.177)
Union Membership	-0.051 (0.047)	-0.048 (0.070)	-0.091 (0.067)	0.077 (0.058)
Supervisory Level	-0.009 (0.032)	0.033 (0.047)	-0.041 (0.031)	-0.053 (0.030)
Took Civil Service Exam	0.050 (0.092)	0.085 (0.083)	0.144*** (0.035)	0.035 (0.074)
Brazil Treatment	-0.196*** (0.022)	0.129*** (0.036)	-0.244*** (0.035)	-0.005 (0.026)
Mexico Treatment 1	-0.319*** (0.038)	0.005 (0.063)	0.446*** (0.028)	0.064 (0.046)
Mexico Treatment 2	0.006 (0.062)	0.054 (0.064)	0.124*** (0.034)	0.345*** (0.045)
Peru Treatment 1	-0.103 (0.089)	-0.965*** (0.075)	-0.813*** (0.068)	0.039 (0.093)
Peru Treatment 2	-0.098* (0.049)	-0.498*** (0.073)	-0.384*** (0.101)	-0.058 (0.105)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.285*** (.868)	4.55*** (.576)	3.944*** (.481)	1.032 (.611)
Observations	1637	1636	1634	1634
R2	0.152	0.241	0.215	0.181

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country

\* p< .10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01

Table A9: Populism Measures and Satisfaction with Democracy,  
Individual Measures of Populism

	Dependent variable:	
	Satisfaction with Democracy	Assessment of Country's Democracy
	(1)	(2)
Populism Measure 1 (Anti-Elite Dimension Measure 1)	.034 (.029)	-.22*** (.061)
Populism Measure 7 (Anti-Elite Dimension Measure 2)	.036 (.02)	-.171*** (.043)
Populism Measure 2 (Pro-People Dimension Measure 1)	-.005 (.012)	.014 (.059)
Populism Measure 3 (Pro-People Dimension Measure 2)	.014 (.019)	-.099*** (.017)
Populism Measure 4 (Manichean Dimension Measure 1)	-.024 (.027)	-.091 (.059)
Populism Measure 5 (Manichean Dimension Measure 2)	.016 (.034)	-.094* (.04)
Assessment of President's Performance	-.113** (.043)	.368*** (.085)
Ideology	-.01 (.018)	.201** (.066)
Age	.001 (.002)	-.007 (.007)
Gender	.06 (.039)	-.195 (.122)
Education	.01 (.024)	.02 (.091)
Country Econ	-.066 (.048)	.27 (.264)
Safety	-.018 (.032)	.144* (.074)
Corruption	.038 (.024)	-.257* (.113)

	<b>Dependent variable:</b>	
	<b>Satisfaction with Democracy</b>	<b>Assessment of Country's Democracy</b>
	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>
Trust	-.012 (.029)	.155 (.11)
Personal Finance	-.006 (.011)	.047 (.049)
Legislative Trust	-.074** (.028)	.274** (.091)
Party Trust	-.08* (.035)	.165 (.117)
News Trust	-.059** (.021)	.269*** (.053)
Income	0 (.006)	.074 (.045)
Brazil Treatment	.097*** (.007)	.404*** (.027)
Mexico Treatment 1	.021** (.007)	-.61*** (.044)
Mexico Treatment 2	-.138*** (.02)	-.062 (.06)
Peru Treatment 1	.08 (.051)	-.086 (.116)
Peru Treatment 2	.054 (.041)	-.011 (.064)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.179*** (.501)	3.256** (1.282)
Observations	1762	1762
R2	.314	.291

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country

\* p< .10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01

Table A10: Populism Measures and Support for Democracy,  
Individual Measures of Populism

	Dependent variable:			
	Conceptual	Legislative	Parties	Demonstrations
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Populism Measure 1 (Anti-Elite Dimension Measure 1)	.057 (.045)	-.005 (.06)	-.008 (.037)	.235*** (.06)
Populism Measure 7 (Anti-Elite Dimension Measure 2)	-.058 (.058)	.055 (.045)	-.005 (.043)	-.007 (.036)
Populism Measure 2 (Pro-People Dimension Measure 1)	.335** (.122)	-.102** (.038)	.045 (.051)	.13** (.054)
Populism Measure 3 (Pro-People Dimension Measure 2)	-.029 (.029)	.145*** (.027)	.146*** (.018)	.093** (.029)
Populism Measure 4 (Manichean Dimension Measure 1)	-.027 (.043)	-.062* (.029)	-.08*** (.016)	0 (.033)
Populism Measure 5 (Manichean Dimension Measure 2)	-.156** (.052)	-.123*** (.026)	-.063** (.024)	-.077*** (.021)
Assessment of President's Performance	-.138*** (.024)	-.419*** (.049)	-.223*** (.035)	-.196* (.083)
Ideology	.042* (.022)	-.035 (.028)	-.04* (.018)	-.045* (.022)
Age	.002 (.004)	-.007** (.003)	.001 (.004)	-.008** (.003)
Gender	.016 (.067)	.194*** (.049)	.213** (.081)	.221** (.08)
Education	.021 (.05)	.107** (.04)	.117 (.068)	.031 (.046)
Country Econ	.002 (.082)	-.151* (.065)	-.201*** (.039)	-.004 (.039)
Safety	.06 (.052)	.04 (.043)	.085* (.041)	.109* (.052)
Corruption	.058** (.024)	-.166 (.089)	-.026 (.08)	.153*** (.032)

	Dependent variable:			
	Conceptual	Legislative	Parties	Demonstrations
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Trust	.075 (.063)	.222*** (.048)	.214** (.074)	.254*** (.048)
Personal Finance	-.016 (.031)	-.009 (.038)	.032 (.03)	.054 (.04)
Legislative Trust	.019 (.105)	.024 (.062)	-.099 (.057)	-.021 (.079)
Party Trust	.174* (.086)	-.03 (.062)	.042 (.043)	.042 (.077)
News Trust	.068 (.052)	.125*** (.03)	.137** (.053)	.089* (.041)
Income	.061*** (.014)	.081*** (.018)	.054** (.018)	.035 (.022)
Brazil Treatment	-.158*** (.016)	.136*** (.017)	-.227*** (.013)	-.029 (.02)
Mexico Treatment 1	-.3*** (.025)	.12*** (.029)	.538*** (.023)	.102*** (.025)
Mexico Treatment 2	.056 (.045)	.199*** (.037)	.205*** (.027)	.368*** (.024)
Peru Treatment 1	-.175*** (.048)	-.919*** (.065)	-.658*** (.051)	.038 (.083)
Peru Treatment 2	.183*** (.046)	-.461*** (.041)	-.225*** (.039)	.013 (.073)
Country Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	3.211** (.961)	4.874*** (.444)	4.29*** (.274)	1.497*** (.296)
Observations	1761	1760	1758	1758
R2	.151	.24	.19	.171

Note: Robust Standard Errors clustered by country

\* p<.10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<0.01