Policy Deliberation and Voter Persuasion: Experimental Evidence from an Election in the Philippines

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Abstract

In a randomized experiment in cooperation with two national parties competing in the 2013 congressional election in the Philippines, we estimate the causal effect on voting behavior of a town-hall style campaign in which candidates discuss their campaign platform with small groups of citizens. Keeping the parties' platform fixed, we find that this "deliberative" style has a positive effect on parties' vote shares compared to the status quo, in which voters play a passive role. Consistent with the parties' advocacy for underprivileged groups, we observe heterogeneous effects by income and gender. We show that the larger effect of town-hall meetings on women and poor voters arises because deliberative campaigns increase voters' attention to parties' platforms changing their attitudes on gender discrimination and poverty.

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1 Introduction

Normative proponents of a participatory approach to political decision making suggest that deliberation can lead to revelatory discussion (Gutmann and Thompson 1996; Habermas 1996; Macedo 2010). On purely instrumental grounds, deliberation may be an avenue through which individuals can reveal private information prior to collective decision making, helping voters to implement more informed choices. (Austen-Smith and Feddersen 2006; Coughlan 2000; Meirowitz 2006). Moreover, deliberative forums might provide the motivation for citizens' to actively become more informed about relevant political issues and potentially act on this information (Esterling, Neblo and Lazer (2011)). In fact, both laboratory and field work on deliberative forums have shown that policy choices can be more effective in changing policy attitudes, eliciting information and encouraging cooperation when they are chosen through deliberative settings (Ban, Jha and Rao 2012; Barabas 2004; Dal Bó, Foster and Putterman 2010; Goeree and Yariv 2011; Karpowitz and Mendelberg 2014).

In principle, if deliberative forums such as town hall meetings can increase citizens' capacity to become more informed and potentially change their behavior, then it might be in the interest of politicians to use them as an electoral strategy to persuade voters of the merits of a desired alternative. In addition, opening a debate about policy platforms could help both politician and voters uncover common interests through the revelation of valuable information.

Empirically, assessing the potential benefits of a deliberative strategy on a politician's electoral prospects is challenging, as these could be confounded with other factors that might affect both the behaviors of politicians and the opinions of citizens. Particularly, the effect that a political strategy might have on voting behavior is a function of the platform message, the communication strategy, the intrinsic traits of the politician, and the audience characteristics. Therefore, being able to disentangle what portion of the total effect in voting behavior is due to the implementation of deliberative forums implies directly manipulating the communication strategy of the campaign, while keeping fixed any other relevant variable

that might affect voting behavior. In this study, we implement such an experimental design by randomizing the assignment of town hall meetings to different voting areas, while keeping its platform content fixed.

The implementation of the experiment involved the cooperation of two national party-lists competing for representation in the legislative election of May, 2013 in the Philippines. Importantly, the two party-lists with which we collaborated claimed to represent and advocate for specific societal groups—namely women and the urban poor—emphasizing distinct legislative policies favorable to each of these groups in their campaign platforms. This allows us to measurethe response of the subset of voters that are more susceptible to the information contained in the parties' campaign platform.

Thus, analyzing this particular electoral race in the Philippinnes is important for our purposes because it allows us to focus on a type of party that distinguishes itself programatically from the mainstream political organizations that compete in the general legislative, presidential and local mayoral elections, where clientelistic practices, corruption and vote buying have been widespread in the recent past.[1]

The treatment we implement manipulates the communication strategy for each party-list platform. First, we design a deliberative campaign in which the party-list message was communicated in town-hall meetings, where voters and party representatives debated about the party-list platform and its potential implementation. The communication strategy in control villages was the "business-as-usual" campaign parties implemented elsewhere, according to which the same platforms were delivered through "one-way" communication technologies, such as the distribution of party propaganda and speeches in party rallies, with no audience participation or debate between party representatives and voters.

In the control group, we explicitly did not introduce any restriction on the communication

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[1]For example, Hicken et al. (2014) provide experimental evidence from a mayoral election in the Philippines on the effect of anti-vote-selling strategies on the prevalence of vote-buying in this context.

strategy of party-lists except that town hall meetings were not to be implemented.[2] By allowing parties to follow their natural strategy in control areas, we ensure that our results are not driven by an artificial condition imposed on politicians that could differ greatly from the way they would usually campaign.

Second, party-lists were randomly assigned to different areas and a treatment subset of these areas set up two or three town hall meetings with around 40 participants each. This random assignment allowed us to control for the effect that intrinsic party characteristics might have had on voting behavior. We do this by focusing only on the electoral prospects of a particular party-list in treatment versus control areas.

Given the deliberative campaign strategy implemented in this experiment, this paper uses the theoretical insights from the literature on deliberation and on the effects of information on voting behavior to generate empirical results on the actual effects of deliberative campaigns on voting behavior (Austen-Smith and Feddersen 2006; Coughlan 2000; Fishkin 1997; Meirowitz 2006). We posit that if town hall meetings have an impact on parties' electoral returns, it works through both the perceived effectiveness of the meeting on attendees and the indirect exposure of town-hall meetings on non-participants.

On the one hand, town hall meetings potentially allow attendees to learn about each other's preferences, beliefs, and expectations. With the information provided by both candidate and citizens during the meeting, a potential voter might update her prior beliefs about both the candidate's quality and ideology, as well as about other citizens' turnout and voting behaviors on Election Day. This revelation of information could help the treatment party-list if voters coordinate in their favor, which could happen in three ways. First, offering deliberation may distinguish the campaign strategy of treatment party-lists compared to their electoral competitors, which usually implement "one-way" communication strategies.

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[2]It is important to note here that deliberative campaigns, as the ones we designed for this experiment, were not part of the campaign strategy of any of the involved party-lists, either in past elections or prior to their agreement to cooperate with the experiment.

Second, the dissemination of information in town hall meetings from both party representatives and citizens might facilitate a better understanding about the private benefits and externalities of programmatic policies. This information in turn, might generate a better benchmark or focal point with which to evaluate politicians. Third, deliberation between candidates and voters could cause a change in attitudes and a higher degree of consensus towards those issues contained in the party's platform. This change in voters' opinions might translate into an increase in votes from those citizens whose most-preferred policy is closer to the party's platform.

On the other hand, the potential indirect exposure of town hall meetings works through its spillovers on those voters who did not attend the meetings. In this scenario, non-participants could become informed about the candidate's political platform and its posterior deliberation by the more engaged attendees who are willing to share this information with members of their social network.

Our main results show that town hall meetings have a positive effect on both official and self-reported measures of electoral support. While we do not find that deliberative campaigns drove voters to the polls as other campaign strategies, such as face-to-face voter mobilization, appear to do (Gerber and Green 2000; Green, Gerber and Nickerson 2003), we do find that, conditioning on voting, party-lists increased their official vote shares around 50 percent with respect to the control group when town hall meetings were implemented.

When we analyze potential heterogeneity on the effect of town hall meetings by treatment party-list and socio-demographic characteristics using a post-election survey, we find that the effect of town hall meetings is twice as large for women than for men when the party-list that is campaigning is the one running a feminist platform. Similarly, we find a positive and significant effect of town hall meetings only on the poor when the party-list that is campaigning is the one running the pro-poor platform.

The conditional impact of town hall meetings by party-list platform is consistent with the differential attitudes of voters towards poverty and gender inequality in treatment *ver-*

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sus control barangays (i.e., electoral units equivalent to U.S. wards). We find that voters exposed to the pro-poor platform increased their negative opinion on poverty, corruption, and inequality by 0.120 standard deviations units with respect to the control group when the party-list implemented a deliberative campaign compared to the control condition. Similarly, voters increased their disagreement with gender discrimination by 0.163 standard deviation units with respect to the control group when they were exposed to the feminist platform under deliberation.

These results confirm that deliberative campaigns are indeed an effective way of delivering a political platform content and persuading a specific group of voters by providing information that clarifies the message of the candidates and the consequences of their proposed policies.

Our analysis is closely related to the work of Fujiwara and Wantchekon (2013) and Wantchekon (2012), which provides experimental evidence, in the context of a presidential election in Benin, that programmatic platforms transmitted through a deliberative campaign reduce the perception of clientelism among voters and increase the electoral returns of the politicians who implement them.

Although these studies make an important contribution on the relevance of platform transparency and communication strategies, they are unable to isolate the effect of deliberation from that of the platform content itself. This is because, the platform content that politicians communicated to voters also changed by treatment status. Under deliberative campaigns, candidates and voters debated about a universalistic platform that emphasized the national benefits of policies, whereas under the "business-as-usual" campaign, candidates offered a mix of clientelistic goods (cash distribution, patronage, and discretionary spending), as well as universalistic policies.

By contrast, our experiment focuses on an electoral race where parties can only implement legislation in Congress and do not hold discretionary power to offer any type of particularistic spending. Thus, the legislative platform offered by parties' representatives remains fixed in

both treatment and control areas, allowing us to isolate the effect of deliberative campaigns while keeping the platform content fixed.

With a similar approach of using field experiments with the collaboration of political candidates, Casey, Glennester and Bidwell (2015) measure the impact of voters' exposure to candidates' debates on voting behavior, campaign spending, and politicians' performance in Sierra Leone. The authors find that exposure to debates results in a higher number of votes cast. Unlike our treatment that facilitates deliberation between parties' representatives and voters, they focus on the interaction between candidates from different parties and the subsequent exposure of these debates to voters.

Our paper is also related to the work of Kendall, Nannicini and Trebbi (2015), which randomized the messages of an electoral campaign in collaboration with an incumbent Italian mayor. As we do here, the authors assess the effects of different informational campaign treatments on both official and self-reported votes. Unlike our paper, their messages did not involve a deliberative setting. Instead, they manipulated the content of the messages themselves, making them either about the candidate's valence or ideology. Using a structural estimation approach with elicited priors, they provide evidence that voters seem to equally weight valence and ideology when casting their vote.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a brief background on the Filipino political system and on the party-list electoral system in which our experiment is embedded. Section 3 explains in detail the experimental design. Section 4 gives an overview of the data used to evaluate the experiment. Sections 5 and 6 report the results of the experiment on voting behavior using official aggregate and individual-level data, respectively. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2 Background and Context from the Philippines

2.1 Historical Background

Since the reinstatement of electoral democracy in 1986, the Philippines' political system has been formally composed of a presidential executive and a bicameral legislative body. Within this body, the Senate is composed of 24 members elected every six years, whereas the House of Representatives is composed of 292 members elected every three years.

The Philippines is currently divided into 80 provinces, headed by provincial governors. The next sub-national level of government is the city/municipality, which is equivalent to a U.S. city or town, headed by an elected mayor. Finally, municipalities and cities are subdivided into electoral barangays, which are the equivalent of U.S. wards, and are headed by barangay captains. These electoral units, "barangays", are the focus of our experiment's design.

In broad terms, the Philippines' historical evolution has been characterized by a legacy of extractive economic institutions and a very unequal distribution of political power. Under Spanish colonialism, the crown implemented a similar set of economic strategies as it did in the American colonies, such as the *encomienda*.[3] However, it did not establish a centralized rule as it did in Latin America, instead, leaving political control of the Philippines islands mainly to the Church.

In the early 20th century, when the U.S. replaced Spain as the colonial power, most of the Church estates were expropriated and auctioned to the local elite. As a result, the main economic institutions came to be dominated by large landowning families who controlled extensive patron-client networks in their geographic regions of influence.

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[3]This social and economic system consisted in granting a Spaniard with a certain number of indigenous people. The indigenous people were forced to give tribute and labor services, while the Spaniard was charged with converting them to Christianity (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012).

The introduction of local elections starting in 1902 by the US administration only replicated the informal economic influence of the landowning oligarchy into the political arena. Given the disenfranchisement of the illiterate, public office was immediately filled by the educated elite, who were in the most advantageous positions to win elections. The subsequent introduction of elections at higher levels of government (e.g., congressional and gubernatorial), simply expanded the influence of the landed oligarchy at the national level, consolidating a system of patronage-oriented parties.

As a consequence of oligarchical power, in both periods of Philippine democracy (i.e., from independence in 1946 to the declaration of martial law in 1972, and from the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986 until the present), political parties have been little more than shifting coalitions of dynastic politicians and their followers (Hutchcroft and Rocamora 2003). For example, in the 2010 election, approximately 50 percent of elected politicians had a relative who had previously served in office.[4] In fact, during the period between 1946 and 2010, dynastic candidates in the Philippines have enjoyed an electoral advantage of around 16 percentage points over non-dynastic candidates (Querubin 2013).

The elite persistence in the Filipino case has not only been associated with a deficit of democratic quality, but also with harmful consequences for economic growth and income distribution. Hedman and Sidel (2000) argue that political dynasties have prevented the legislation and implementation of fundamental economic reforms, as these constitutional modifications endanger their economic interests. Furthermore, the prevalence of the status quo has prevented the emergence and consolidation of political parties associated with

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[4]Probably the most famous contemporaneous example of this selective club is Benigno Aquino III, president of the Philippines since 2010. Aquino is member of one of the wealthiest and most powerful dynasties in the country. His father was a former governor and senator, and the most prominent figure of the opposition against Ferdinand Marcos' regime until his assassination in 1983. His mother, Corazon Cojuangco, was the first democratically elected president after the fall of Marcos and the assassination of her husband, Benigno Aquino II.

broader constituencies and the perpetuation of rent-seeking behavior by the political elite with narrow economic interests.

2.2 Party List Electoral System

In 1987, after the restoration of electoral democracy in the Philippines and during the tenure of the new President Corazon Aquino, a commission was appointed to draft a new Constitution to replace the prevalent one during President Marcos's regime.

The new constitution achieved many things, including reapportioning congressional districts, reducing the term lengths for members of the House of Representatives, and introducing term limits for all elected officials. In addition, and with the intention of strengthening the party system and reducing the elite monopoly of political power, the 1987 Constitution mandated that 20 percent of the lower House must be composed of representatives of marginalized societal groups such as "labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and other such sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector." (Article VI; Section 5.2). However, it was not until 1995 that the Party-List System Act became law, with the mandate that "the state shall promote proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives through a party-list system...which will enable Filipino citizens belonging to the marginalized and underrepresented sectors... to become members of the House of Representatives" (Sec. 2).

Under this system, a voter can choose one party-list via closed list and each party that receives 2 percent of the party-list vote is entitled to one seat and an additional seat for every 2 percent thereafter, for a maximum of three seats per party-list. Therefore, every three years at each House of Representatives election, voters cast two votes, one for their district representative by plurality rule and one for a national party-list.

3 Experimental Design

The campaign experiment we analyze here focuses on the party-list election that took place on May 13, 2013. In this election, 58 out of 289 congress seats were allocated for party-list representatives among more than 130 registered parties. Two party-lists collaborated in the campaign field experiment: Akbayan, Citizens' Action Party and Umalab Ka.

Akbayan is one of the most prominent party-lists nationwide and the more established of the two participants in the experiment. It has consistently won at least one seat since its foundation in 1998, and has been one of the five most successful party-lists, out of the more than 100 registered at the national level.

Founded as a left pluralist national party, Akbayan is a multi-sectoral party comprised of labor, peasants, urban poor, women, LGBT, and youth organizations. In the 2013 campaign, however, Akbayan's message focused heavily on women. This was because Akbayan wanted to capitalize on a recent high-profile legislative victory concerning reproductive rights, as well as its candidate for Senator, a well-known feminist activist.[5] In the May 2013 election, Akbayan was able to secure around 2.9 percent of the popular vote at the national level, which translated into two seats in the House of Representatives.

In contrast, Umalab Ka, although formally founded in 2003, did not participate in a party-list election until 2013. This party-list is composed mainly of urban poor organizations and informal sector workers (i.e., drivers, street vendors, and house servants). As a political organization, Umalab Ka has dealt in the past with issues such as the demolition of informal settlers dwellings, discussions with government agencies affecting the plight of the urban poor and other peripheral issues that directly affect the lives of informal laborers and other marginalized sectors in society. The primary legislative agenda of Umalab Ka includes the creation of a Magna Carta to protect workers in the informal sector.[6] In the 2013 election,

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[5]The platform and constitution of the Akbayan party-list can be found at www.akbayan.org.ph.

[6]The entire legislative agenda of the Umalab Ka party-list can be found at www.facebook.

Umalab Ka won around 0.16 percent of the national vote and therefore was not able to secure any representatives in Congress.

3.1   Sample Selection

The evaluation of the campaign experiment focuses on electoral returns, looking at both official aggregate data for each barangay and self-reported voting behavior at the individual level, with information on 39 barangays randomly selected from 13 cities/municipalities following a two-stage cluster sampling. As shown on the map in Figure 1, we randomly selected 7 out of 17 available cities/municipalities from the National Capital Region (NCR), which comprises mainly Manila City and its suburbs, and 6 cities/municipalities out of 90 available from the neighboring Calabarzon region. On average, there are 58 and 25 barangays per city/municipality in NCR and Calabarzon, respectively.[7] The randomly selected cities from both regions are shown in the upper panel of figure 2.

Second, for each city/municipality selected in its respective region (i.e., either NCR or Calabarzon), we randomly chose three barangays and assign one of these to the treatment group and the remaining two to the control group. At this second stage, and to avoid the risk of contamination between treatment and control groups, we replaced a selected barangay and resampled another from the universe of barangays at each city/municipality whenever the distance between any two selected barangays was less than 1.5 kilometers. This procedure is repeated until no proximate barangays are selected.

Finally, we randomly assigned the selected cities to each of the two party-lists involved in the experiment. The first three columns of Tables 1 and 2 present the sample of selected barangays for each city/municipality and the treatment status for both Akbayan and Umalab Ka, respectively. The lower panel of Figure 2 shows, as an example, the three randomized

com/notes/umalab-ka-partylist.

[7]NCR accounts for 49.54 percent of the population of both regions, while Calabarzon accounts for 51.46 percent.

barangays selected in the city of Baras, which was randomly assigned to Umalab Ka.
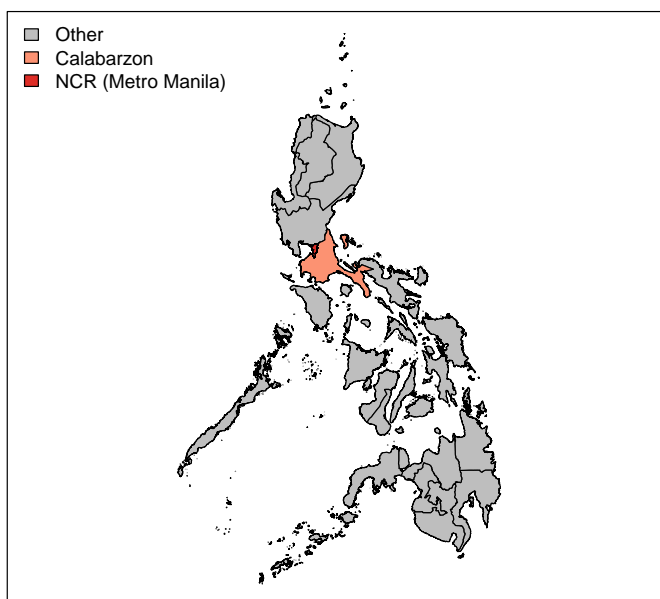

**Figure 1: Philippines Regions: NCR and Calabarzon.**

In advance of the implementation of town hall meetings, one representative from the Center for Popular Empowerment (CPE), the NGO in charge of implementing the field experiment, conducted a series of meetings with the party-list representatives to instruct them on the specifications of the protocol they had to follow in treatment barangays. It is important to note that, from the initial random selection of cities/municipalities and barangays, the research team of CPE had to make some adjustments in the field due to logistic difficulties encountered while implementing the town hall meetings.

First, in the selected cities/municipalities of Marikina and Valenzuela, the town hall meeting organizers switched one of the originally selected control barangay for the treatment barangay.[8] The reason behind this decision was that the incumbent officials associated with another party-list ("Alay Buhay") were hostile to the CPE research team and blocked the

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[8]In Marikina, town hall meetings were implemented in the originally control unit,
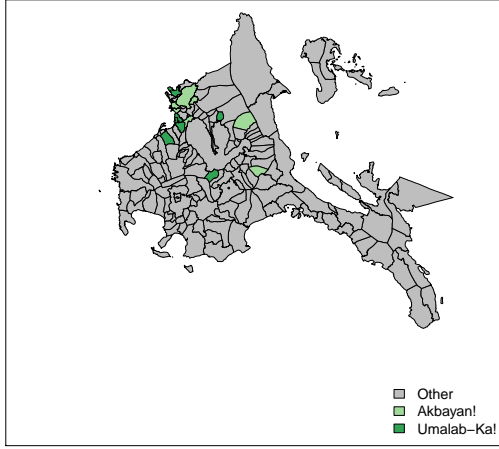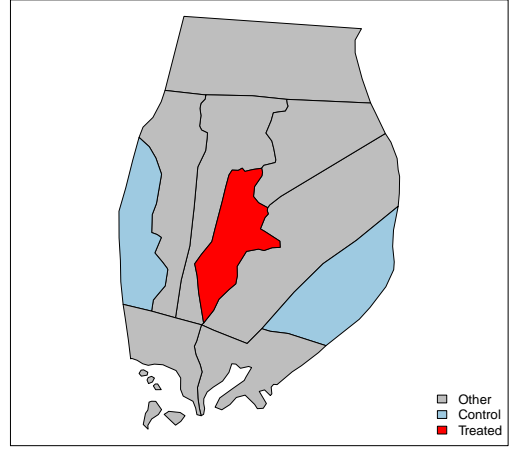
Selected Cities	Selected Barangays in Baras (Umalab Ka)

Figure 2: Experiment's Design. Sample Selection of Cities and Barangays.

implementation of town hall meetings in the originally selected treatment units. This issue made it impossible to organize and announce scheduled meetings on time at other randomized selected barangays. In these cases, both party-lists used their presence at the originally selected controls to organize the series of town hall meetings. Second, in the municipality of Luisiana, the original treatment barangay, San Roque, could not be reached by the party-list Umalab Ka given the difficulties posed by the local authorities to implement the meetings. Instead, meetings were held in the barangay San Diego/San Antonio, chosen by the party-list representatives themselves. To avoid any potential distortion of the experiment's evaluation due to this selection of barangays, section 1 in the supplemental appendix presents the main results in the paper excluding the cities/municipalities of Luisiana, Marikina and Valenzuela. These results show that the conclusions presented here remain unaltered when we exclude these cities from the analysis.

Barangka, instead of the selected treatment barangay Concepcion Dos. In Valenzuela, town hall meetings were implemented in Punturin instead of the originally selected treatment barangay Isla.

City	Barangay	Status	Turnout (National)	Turnout (PL)	Vote
Baras	Concepcion	Control	80.30	62.51	1.70
Baras	San Juan	Treated	76.13	54.83	0.78
Baras	Santiago	Control	79.98	58.81	0.00
Imus	Anabu II-F	Treated	62.30	52.75	0.13
Imus	Alapan II-A	Control	77.16	64.00	0.00
Imus	Mariano Espeleta II	Control	55.88	47.92	0.00
Los Banos	Lalakay	Treated	81.32	69.98	0.94
Los Banos	Putho	Control	83.93	68.50	0.00
Los Banos	Bayog	Control	83.64	66.86	0.00
Paranaque	Baclaran	Treated	68.04	55.55	0.16
Paranaque	San Dionisio	Control	72.81	59.81	0.06
Paranaque	B.F Homes	Control	72.75	58.54	0.18
Pasay	Barangay 191	Control	78.13	64.11	0.00
Pasay	Barangay 183	Control	72.12	62.22	0.00
Pasay	Barangay 178	Treated	73.92	59.76	0.00
Pateros	San Pedro	Control	76.66	69.79	0.00
Pateros	San Roque	Control	77.34	62.87	0.07
Pateros	San Rosario-Silangan	Treated	73.76	59.61	2.25
Valenzuela	Karuhatan	Control	77.82	68.14	0.09
Valenzuela	Isla	Control	57.91	50.10	0.00
Valenzuela	Punturin	Treated	79.63	68.83	1.36
Mean			74.36	61.21	0.37
S.D.			7.68	6.43	0.65

Table 1: Turnout for the National and Party-List Elections (Umalab Ka Barangays)

3.2   Treatment Barangays

For the barangays assigned to the treatment group, a team of one organizer from CPE along with party-list members (mainly nominees and leading officers) implemented two or three town hall meetings, each with around 40 participants, during the period between April 21 and May 9.[9] A staff of approximately four CPE representatives, along with party-list

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[9]In the case of Akbayan, the National Secretary General Conrad Castillo coordinated the town hall meeting implementation with CPE and instructed the party's nominees about the protocols to follow. In the case of Umalab Ka, National Secretary General Rosel Vargas coordinated the town hall meeting implementation with CPE, but also personally led all the town hall meetings.

City	Barangay	Status	Turnout (National)	Turnout(PL)	Vote
Luisiana	Barangay Zone VI	Control	-	65.05	11.57
Luisiana	San Salvador	Control	78.17	55.28	1.59
Luisiana	San Diego/San Antonio	Treated	82.47	62.19	10.79
Malate	Barangay 738	Treated	76.62	67.82	6.83
Malate	Barangay 190	Control	72.39	60.83	3.51
Malate	Barangay 609	Control	75.84	63.32	3.45
Marikina	Parang	Control	74.34	64.42	4.85
Marikina	Barangka	Treated	73.62	64.80	3.75
Marikina	Concepcion Dos	Control	73.83	63.99	3.91
Quezon City	Escopa 4	Control	82.25	66.86	10.56
Quezon City	Tatalon	Control	69.79	60.61	8.22
Quezon City	Payatas	Treated	72.76	59.98	4.34
Sta Maria	Cabooan	Control	-	55.24	2.68
Sta Maria	Tungkod	Treated	79.63	54.86	5.91
Sta Maria	Masinao	Control	83.92	53.33	1.47
Taguig	Hagonoy	Control	-	55.28	4.28
Taguig	Upper Bicutan	Control	55.96	45.85	3.10
Taguig	Ususan	Treated	60.36	47.92	8.06
Mean			74.13	59.31	5.49
S.D.			7.7	6.35	3.15

Note: No available general election figures for the barangays of Cabooan, Zone VI and Hagonoy.

Table 2: Turnout for the National and Party-List Elections (Akbayan Barangays)

representatives, deployed teams a week in advance of the scheduled meetings to inform potential voters door-to-door and in public areas about the location, date, and time of the town hall meetings. On average, the town hall meetings lasted between 90–120 minutes, and were divided in three stages: Introduction (10–15 minutes); deliberation (70–95 minutes); and resolution and commitment (10 minutes).

At the introduction stage, the CPE representative gave a brief explanation of the purpose of the party-list electoral system. In general, the audience was informed of the value of electing a party-list representative as differentiated from a district representative, mainly in that its objective is to give political representation to marginalized societal sectors.

Second, the party-list representative gave an introductory speech containing its platform and programmatic statement, following as a guideline a homogenous statement previously designed by the party-list officials and transmitted to its nominees. Akbayan's representative

explained the services that the party provides to its members and its legislative accomplishments. The party-list representative highlighted Akbayan's role in passing the Responsible Parenthood Law, explaining how the law would help marginalized women. At this stage, Umalab Ka representatives stated that, if elected, they would push for the creation of laws aimed at protecting the urban poor, such as legislation to address price stabilizations on basic commodities during natural disasters and laws to give job security to informal workers.

The deliberation stage usually consisted of several rounds of questions/comments, in which participants were encouraged to propose amendments to the original proposals made by the party-lists and to give new proposals that could potentially be included in the party-list platform. Town hall meeting participants had no restrictions to debate the policy proposals among themselves and with the candidates. For example, at a meeting conducted by Akbayan in the barangay of San Diego in the city of Luisiana, a young participant raised the concern that it was common for parties to make a lot of promises, but he wanted to know exactly what, if elected, Akbayan would do. The party representative clarified that, as members of Congress, they would be involved in crafting meaningful policies and would be active in the budget process as it is determined by Congress at the national level. At another meeting conducted by Umalab Ka in the barangay Santo Rosario-Silangan, a woman raised the issue of land property that affected many households in that barangay. She shared her fear that her home would be demolished, as she did not have a property title. The Umalab Ka representative emphasized that one of their main objectives, if elected, was to reform the Urban Development and Housing Act to better regulate informal settling and help women like her.

At the resolution and commitment stage, the CPE representative summarized the main proposals of the party-list and the main issues raised during deliberation. At this stage, the party-list representative made a commitment to the participants to transmit the summary report of the meeting to the party-list leaders and candidates with their suggestions and proposals.

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It is worth emphasizing that in each of the town hall meetings implemented in the treatment barangays, there was no cash or any other type of valuable gift distributed to the meeting attendees. Both party-lists only distributed flyers and attached posters and banners at the meeting locations.

3.3   Control Barangays

In those barangays assigned to the control group, there were no instructions to party-list representatives on what campaign strategy to follow. The only restriction was that town hall meetings were not to be implemented. In fact, both party-lists followed the "business-as-usual" strategy, which they have followed elsewhere to mobilize voters.

The only relevant distinction between control "barangays" and those not selected in the randomization protocol is that in the latter, we were able to monitor the presence and campaign efforts of both party-lists involved in the experiment. CPE engaged 4 field researchers to monitor the campaign strategy of party-lists at each control barangay. The reports from the field indicate that both parties deployed mobile propaganda teams using a sound system roving within the barangays asking people for their vote. In addition, party-lists followed a door-to-door campaign, in which party-list volunteers distributed propaganda materials to households.

Finally, party-lists organized public events to mobilize voters, particularly mass mobilizations or rallies. The attendees of these events consisted mainly of party members. The average size of these rallies exceeded 100 participants, notably higher than any of the town hall meetings implemented in treatment barangays. In terms of the interaction between candidate and voters, party rallies are what we call "one-way communication" campaigns, in which only party-list leaders engaged the audience about the party's platform, without the possibility for attendees to speak directly to the candidate.

4 The Data

We use two types of data for the evaluation of the field experiment. First, to quantify the treatment effect of the presence of town hall meetings on voting behavior, we use official data reported by the Philippines' Commission of Elections (COMELEC) at the precinct level, a lower level electoral unit than the barangay. With these data, we constructed barangay-level measures of party-list turnout and vote shares for the party-lists involved in the experiment. Second, to estimate heterogenous treatment effects of town hall meetings, we analyze individual-level data for treatment and control barangays using a post-electoral survey that CPE implemented two weeks after the election in a subset of cities/municipalities where town hall meetings had been implemented.[10] This survey covers standard demographic characteristics, self-reported voting behavior, town hall meeting attendance, and political attitudes for a total of 1231 Filipino citizens who reported having voted in the party-list election.

For this survey, CPE followed a "random walk" and quota sampling procedure, in which 50 respondents were selected from each sampled barangay. In control and treatment barangays, enumerators sampled households following a "random walk" starting from the Barangay's town hall in control areas and from the location of the town-hall meetings in treatment barangays. Additionally, in treatment barangays, 10 out of 50 respondents were randomly selected from the actual attendance proceedings of town hall meetings and contacted directly at the cellphone numbers they provided.

Given its non-representative sampling procedure, the post-electoral survey does not reflect the sociodemographic characteristics of potential voters at the barangay-level. For instance, while the average proportion of meeting attendees to party-list voters is around 8 percent across barangays, the survey shows that, on average, 49 percent of citizens who responded the survey reported attending to at least one town hall meeting in their respective barangay.

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[10]The cities/municipalities that were excluded from the survey analysis because CPE did not sample respondents in both treatment and control barangays are Imus, Pateros and Santa Maria.

The over-representation of meeting attendees in the survey sample, among other sampling biases prevents us from directly comparing the aggregate electoral returns to the individual-level survey responses, as the latter will over-estimate any positive effect of town-hall meeting attendance on turnout and voting compared to aggregate outcomes. Nevertheless, the information we can extract from voter responses about their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, as well as about their political attitudes ultimately makes the post-electoral survey a valuable source of information to assess under what conditions deliberative campaigns were more effective for delivering a political platform to voters.

Tables 1 and 2 present the official information on turnout and vote shares at the general and at the party-list elections for the barangays assigned to Akbayan and Umalab Ka, respectively. The turnout figures are calculated as the ratio of total voters in the election to registered voters at the barangay level. On average, turnout for the general election was around 75 percent, whereas the turnout for the party-list election was around 60 percent, which is equivalent to 80 percent of the national election.

Figure 3 presents the number of potential voters who attended at least one town hall meetings in treatment barangays as a proportion of both the number of registered voters and the party-list voters for the 2013 election at the barangay level, which were obtained from the town-hall meetings' proceedings. On average, meeting attendees accounted for 5 percent of potential voters and 8 percent of party-list voters. There is considerable variation, however, in the number of meeting attendees across barangays. On highly populated areas such as the barangays of Payatas and Ususan, meetings attendees accounted for just 0.5 percent of party-list voters, whereas in barangays like Barangay 738 or Lalakay, meeting attendees accounted for more than 25 percent of the total number of party-list voters.
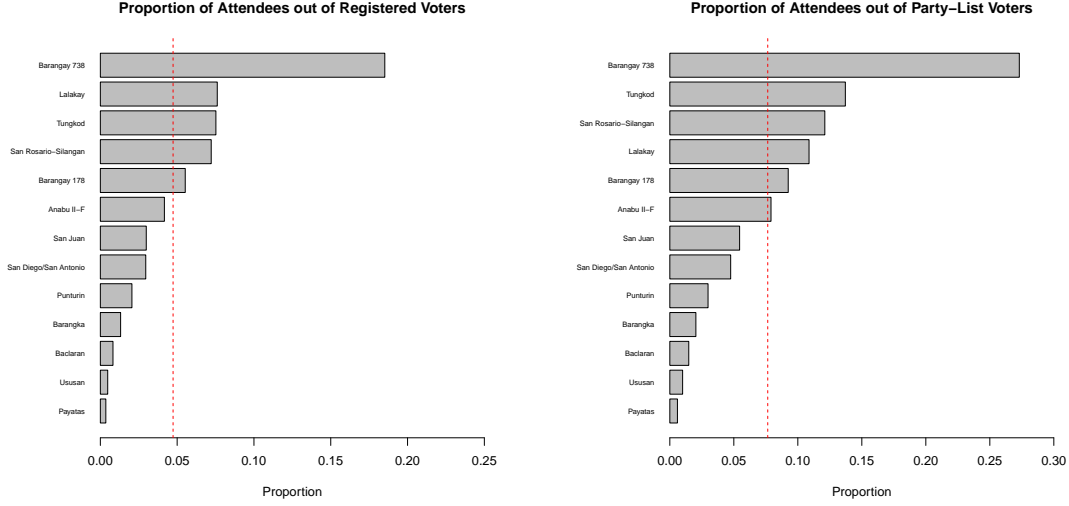
Figure 3: Proportion of Town Hall Meetings' Attendees. Number of meeting attendees is obtained from the attendance sheets CPE collected at every town-hall meeting. The number of registered voters is obtained from the COMELEC official statistics of the 2010 legislative election. The number of party-list voters is also obtained from COMELEC, for the 2013 election. The red dashed lines depict the mean attendance proportion across barangays.

5 Barangay Level Results

We evaluate the effect of the implementation of town hall meetings (i.e., treatment) on aggregate voting behavior at the barangay-level on two main electoral outcomes: party-list turnout (as a proportion of registered voters) and vote shares (as a proportion of total party-list votes) obtained from official results provided by COMELEC.

The random assignment process of the campaign treatment makes identification of the average treatment effect (ATE) of the presence of town hall meetings on aggregate electoral returns very straightforward using the following regression of the observed electoral return Y in barangay $j = 1, \ldots, J$, within city/municipality $k = 1, \ldots, K$, on a treatment dummy, T_p, that equals 1 if party $p \in \{$Akbayan, Umalab Ka$\}$ implemented town hall meetings and zero, otherwise:

$$Y_{j,k} = \beta_0 + \delta_k + \beta_1 T_p + \epsilon_{j,k}, \tag{1}$$

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where β_1 is our coefficient of interest, as it captures the ATE. The parameter δ_k captures strata fixed effects and ϵ is an idiosyncratic error term. To conduct inference, we present uncertainty estimates of the ATE under a non-parametric permutation test (Efron and Tibshirani 1994). We focus on the statistical inference under randomization or permutation resampling, as it does not rely on random sampling from a known population or on any distributional assumption of the quantity of interest, making it less sensitive to the small number of sampled barangays. Instead, we take advantage of the randomized design itself to recover the test statistic of interest directly from the data, while providing a measure about the internal validity of our experiment. This procedure computes the distribution for the null hypothesis of no "deliberation" effect for all barangays and calculates a p-value for any within-city permutation of the treatment status that we might have observed in the experiment.[11]

Before presenting the aggregate results for turnout and vote shares, Table 3 shows that the randomization of town-hall meetings succesfully achieved balance in the available pre-treatment official statistics at the barangay level. As can be seen from the large p-values under randomization, treatment and control barangays are well balanced according to barangays' population, the proportion of registered and female voters, as well as to whether the barangay is classified as urban or rural.[12]

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[11]To compute the sampling distribution under the sharp null of no effect, we draw a binary treatment assignment from the empirical distribution of the original assigned barangays without replacement. Then, we compute the difference-in-means between treated and untreated barangays. We repeat this procedure on 1000 samples, randomly shuffling the treatment status within each city/municipality. In this way, we can estimate the fraction of simulated difference-in-means that exceeds the observed difference-in-means (i.e., permutation p-values).

[12]Barangay population is in thousands. Balance for registered and female voters is estimated as a proportion of barangay population. *urban* is a dummy variable that takes the value of one if the 2010 Philippines Census denotes the barangay as urban and zero as rural.

Table 3: Pre-treatment Balance Test at the Barangay Level

	Dependent variable:			
	Population	Registered Voters	Female Voters	Urban Barangay
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ATE	2.201	−5.404	−0.028	−0.154
	p = 0.391	p = 0.815	p = 0.813	p = 1.000
Control	16.838***	53.442***	0.277***	0.846***
	p = 0.003	p = 0.000	p = 0.000	p = 0.000
Observations	39	39	39	39
R^2	0.002	0.021	0.021	0.032

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Inference for the ATE under randomization of the treatment.
Permutation p-values for ATE.

The estimates of the average treatment effects for turnout and vote shares for each treatment party-list are presented in Table 4 and graphically depicted in Figure 4 with respect to the null distribution. First, looking at the results on party-list turnout, we can see that the presence of deliberative campaigns does not mobilize voters to turn out to vote in the party-list race. However, conditional on casting a ballot, the presence of town hall meetings has a positive and statistically significant effect (p-value = .051) on aggregate vote shares when we pool both party-lists together. These results suggest that, when the entire sample of selected barangays is used, the vote shares for treatment parties increased around 1.13 percent in barangays in which party-lists implemented a deliberative campaign, compared to the baseline of around 2.36 percent with the "one-way" communication campaign. This result translates into an electoral return of a deliberative campaign of around 50 percent with respect to the control group.

When we split the sample by treatment party-list, we can see that both treatment effects are positive, although statistically significant at the 5 percent level only in the case of Umalab Ka. In particular, Akbayan was rewarded, on average, with a 1.7 percent higher vote share in treatment barangays than in control barangays. Similarly, Umalab Ka obtained an

increase of 0.65 percent in its vote share in those barangays where town-hall meetings were implemented, which represents more than a fourfold increase with respect to its vote share in control barangays (i.e.,0.15 percent). These results are not only considerable in magnitude with respect to baseline scenarios, but also politically meaningful. In the case of Akbayan, this estimated return, if extrapolated at the national level, would directly translate into an additional seat in Congress, something this party-list was not able to secure in the past election.

Table 4: Average Treatment Effect on Electoral Returns at the Barangay Level

	Dependent variable:			
	Turnout	Vote (Overall)	Vote (Akbayan)	Vote (Umalab-Ka)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ATE	-0.635	1.126^{*}	1.680	0.651^{**}
	p = 0.659	p = 0.051	p = 0.140	p = 0.018
Control	60.549^{***}	2.357^{***}	4.932^{***}	0.150
	p = 0.000	p = 0.002	p = 0.0001	p = 0.351
Observations	39	39	18	21
R^2	0.002	0.025	0.067	0.231

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Inference for the ATE under randomization of the treatment
Permutation *p*-values for ATE

The previous ATE estimates, albeit informative of the aggregate effect of town hall meetings on electoral returns, do not allow us to account for potential heterogenous effects across the selected cities/municipalities in our sample. We capture these differential effects for each party-list within city/municipality by computing the within-city expected difference in potential outcomes under deliberative campaigns with respect to the "business-as-usual" campaign, $E[Y_{j,0,[k]} - E[Y_{j,1,[k]}]$. To estimate this effect we implement the following hierarchical regression:

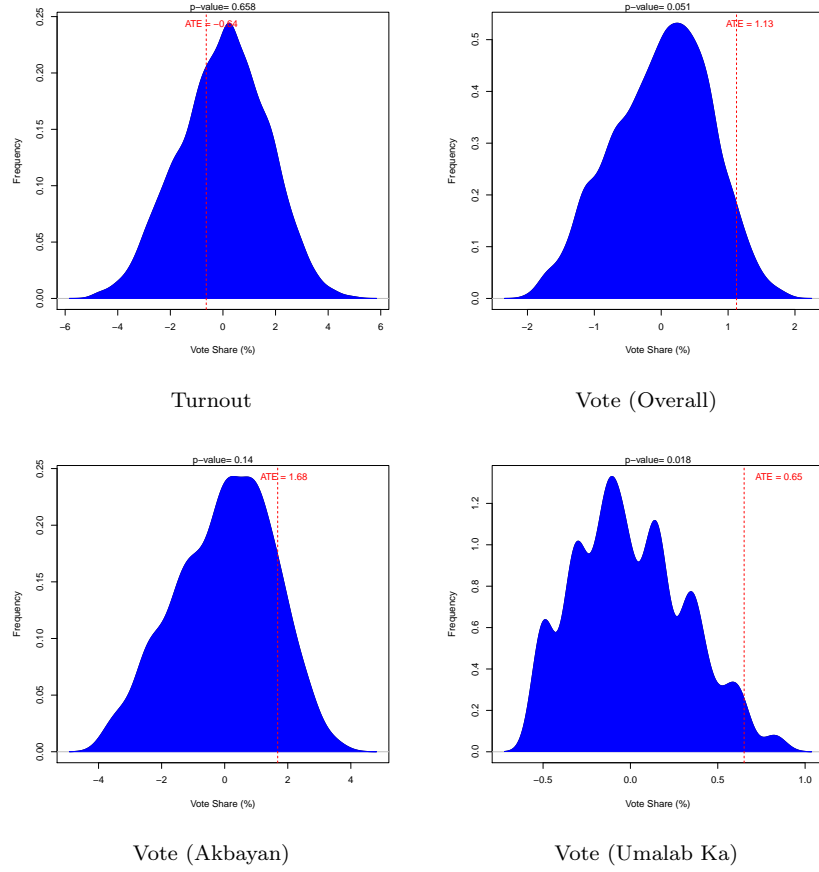$$Y_{j,k} = \alpha_{j[k]} + \beta_{j[k]}T_p + \epsilon_{j,k}. \tag{2}$$

Figure 4: Permutation Distribution for the Average Treatment Effect. The dashed red line indicate the observed ATE. The distribution is constructed from 1000 within-city/municipality resamples from the observed outcomes.

Here, $\beta_{j[k]}$ is our coefficient of interest that varies by city and ϵ denotes again an idiosyncratic error term. To provide a measure of uncertainty around each city/municipality effect, we estimate a random effects model where $\alpha_{p,j[k]} \sim N(\mu_\alpha, \sigma_\alpha)$, and $\beta_{j[k]} \sim N(\mu_\beta, \sigma_\beta)$. Under this framework, we are allowing varying treatment effects across cities/municipalities modelled as normal draws with common mean μ_β and variance σ_β^2.

The varying effects of the presence of town hall meetings on vote shares by city/municipality are presented in Table 5 and graphically depicted in Figure 5. The left panel of this figure shows the results for Akbayan cities/municipalities, whereas the right panel shows the results for Umalab Ka cities/municipalities. The black dashed line in each plot represents the average treatment effect across cities/municipalities estimated from equation (1).

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Akbayan	Control	Treatment	Difference	Umalabka	Control	Treatment	Difference
Luisiana	5.55	6.55	1.01	Baras	0.15	0.78	0.63
Malate	4.31	6.67	2.36	Imus	0.15	0.34	0.18
Marikina	4.76	6.63	1.87	Los Banos	0.15	0.90	0.75
Quezon City	6.87	6.42	-0.45	Paranaque	0.15	0.36	0.20
Sta Maria	3.73	6.73	3.00	Pasay	0.15	0.25	0.09
Taguig	4.37	6.67	2.29	Pateros	0.14	1.80	1.66
				Valenzuela	0.15	1.19	1.04
Mean	4.93	6.61	1.68	Mean	0.15	0.80	0.65
S.D.	1.12	0.11	1.23	S.D.	0.01	0.56	0.56

Table 5: Treatment Effect on Electoral Returns by City

As can be observed from these results, in all 13 cities/municipalities except one, Quezon City, the effect of deliberative campaigns is positive. Nonetheless, there seems to be important differences on the uncertainty of these effects across cities/municipalities.

For Akbayan, the presence of town hall meetings is associated with a positive and statistically significant effect (at the 10 percent level) on its vote shares in only 2 out of the 6 cities/municipalities in which this party-list implemented town hall meetings (i.e. Malate and Santa Maria). For the cities of Luisiana, Marikina, Taguig, and Quezon, the effect of town hall meetings on vote shares at the aggregate level is not statistically different from zero.

In the case of Umalab Ka, the results from this exercise indicate that the presence of town hall meetings is associated with a statistically significant increase in its vote shares in 4 of the 7 cities where this party campaigned implementing town hall meetings (i.e., Baras, Los Banos, Pateros, and Valenzuela). For the remaining 3 cities (i.e., Imus, Paranaque, and Pasay), the positive effect of town hall meetings on vote shares is not statistically distinguishable from zero at the 10 percent significance level.

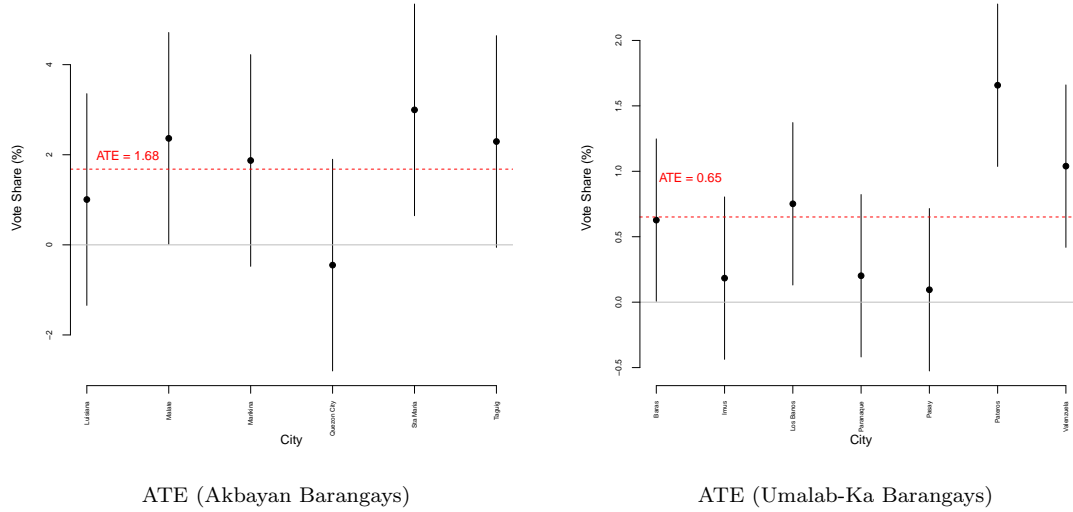ATE (Akbayan Barangays)   ATE (Umalab-Ka Barangays)

Figure 5: ATE of Town Hall Meetings on Electoral Returns by City. The black lines around each point estimate indicate 90% confidence intervals pooling uncertainty across cities/municipalities. The red dashed line depicts the ATE across cities/municipalities.

	Means Treated	Means Control	SD Control	Mean Diff	eQQ Med
distance	0.39	0.38	0.04	0.01	0.01
gender	0.61	0.60	0.49	0.01	0.00
income	0.08	0.10	0.30	-0.02	0.00
age	2.63	2.73	1.10	-0.10	0.00
religion	0.89	0.90	0.30	-0.01	0.00
status	0.65	0.72	0.45	-0.07	0.00
linguistic	0.89	0.87	0.34	0.02	0.00
education	1.31	1.30	0.46	0.01	0.00

Note: The cities of Imus, Pateros and Santa Maria are excluded.

Note: The variables gender, religion, status, and linguistic are matched exactly.

Table 6: Balanced Statistics of Pre-Treatment Covariates to Predict Treatment at the Individual Level. Values of eQQ Med around zero mean that the median empirical distribution of the variable in the treated group does not differ from the median empirical distribution of the variable in the control group.

6 Individual-Level Results
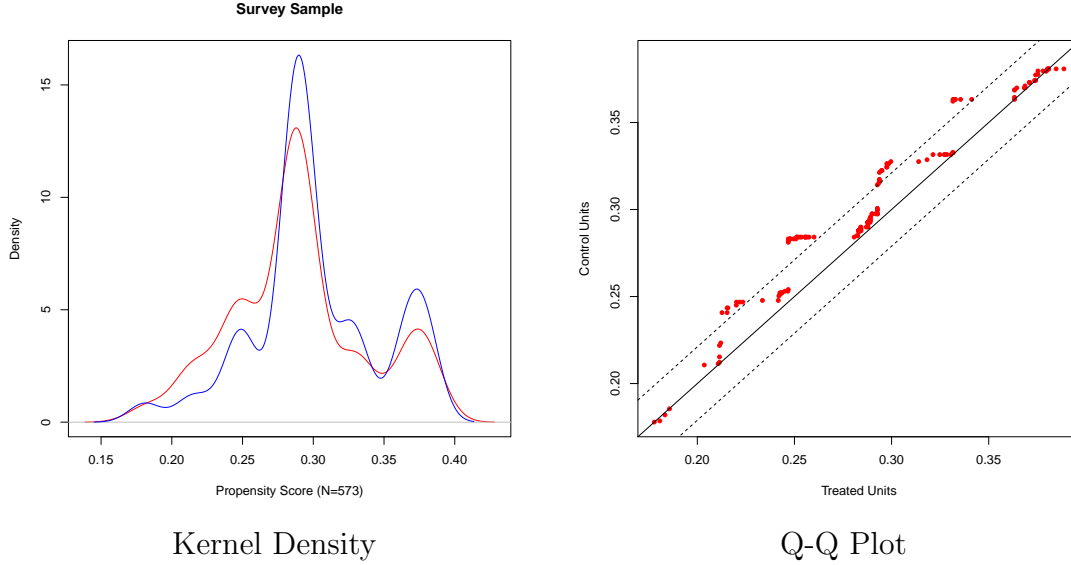

Kernel Density   Q-Q Plot

Figure 6: Kernel Density and Q-Q Plot of the Survey Sample. On the left panel, the red line depicts the density of the propensity score for individuals in control barangays, whereas the blue line depicts the density of the propensity score for individuals in treatment barangays. On the right panel, the red dots represent empirical Q-Q estimates for the survey sample. The 45-degree line indicates identical distribution and the dotted lines indicate the width of the propensity score range.

The estimates obtained from the previous analysis at the aggregate level indicate that the presence of deliberative campaigns, here in the form of town-hall meetings, is indeed an effective way to appeal to voters on Election Day, as it provides political parties with better electoral returns than traditional "business-as-usual" strategies, in which voters are mere observers of the politician's behavior during the campaign. However, these results do not give us an understanding of the type of voters who are most persuaded by the implementation of town-hall meetings, nor of the specific channels that drive these voters to support parties that implement a "deliberative" campaign.

In the remainder of the paper, we use the post-electoral survey that contains turnout and vote declarations, as well as other political and sociodemographic characteristics in treatment and control barangays to estimate hterogeneity in causal effects across different subsets of respondents and provide some evidence on the causal mechanisms behind aggregate voting

behavior.[13] The price we pay by using individual data besides the unrepresentativeness of the survey at the barangay-level, is the fact that individual outcomes are self-reported, which might misrepresent actual choices.

An important concern we are able to address regarding the individual-level data is the potential presence of pre-treatment covariate imbalance between treatment and control barangays. This problem could be a source of selection bias in our analysis that arises from different characteristics between respondents from treatment barangays with respect to those in control barangays, which might affect voting behavior, other than through the presence of town hall meetings.

To assess balance on the individual respondents of the post-electoral survey, we implement a matching estimation of respondents between treatment and control groups using sociodemographic characteristics obtained from the survey questionnaire, as detailed in section 2 of the supplemental appendix, such as *gender*, *income*, *education*, *age*, *religion*, marital *status*, and *linguistic* group.[14]

Table 6 shows balanced statistics from the empirical distribution of pre-treatment covariates such as mean and standard deviation by treatment status. It also presents the difference between the median values of the empirical distributions for each of these covariates. As one

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[13]The questions used to generate all the individual-level outcomes can be found in section 2 of the supplemental appendix.

[14]*gender* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent is female. *income* is a dummy variable that takes a value of 1 if the monthly income is above 10K pesos, and zero otherwise. *education* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if education is above a high school diploma, and zero otherwise. *age* is a categorical variable with 4 brackets, [18-29 years old], [30-39 years old], [40-49 years old], [50 years old and older]. *religion* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent is Roman Catholic. *status* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent is married. *linguistic* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent is from the Tagalog linguistic group.

can see from this summary information, the socio-demographic characteristics included do not seem to differ between respondents in treatment and control barangays.

Figure 6 summarizes the above results by estimating a propensity score of the treatment status conditional on the pre-treatment covariates.[15] This technique is helpful because if treatment and control groups have identical propensity score distributions, the pre-treatment covariates will be balanced between the two groups (Ho et al. 2007). The balance of our post-election survey can be confirmed by looking at Figure 6, which shows a very similar density of the estimated propensity score by treatment status.

6.1 Intent-to-Treat Effect of Town Hall Meetings on Voting Behavior.

The randomization of the campaign strategy makes campaign assignment, T, independent of any pre-treatment characteristics of voters from treatment and control groups. Unfortunately, compliance behavior to attend the meetings is not randomly assigned and could be affected by the treatment itself. For example, it seems reasonable to imagine a voter in a treatment barangay whose unobserved interest in the political campaigns might influence both her decision to attend a town hall meeting and her propensity to cast a vote for one of the treatment parties. In fact, for this subset of voters, attendance does not give us a measure of the informational effect of the town hall meeting as a deliberative institution.

In addition, as we already mentioned in the introduction, voters who did not attend any town hall meetings could still be influenced by their assignment if they obtain information about the meeting proceedings from engaged voters who participated in at least one meeting

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[15]We match individuals in treatment and control barangays using a "nearest-neighbor" matching technique with replacement and a probit model for the probability of treatment. That is, $Pr(T_{i,j} = 1 | X_{i,j}) = \Phi(X_{ij}\beta)$, where $Pr(T_{i,j} = 1 | X_{i,j})$ denotes the probability that respondent i in barangay j lives in a treatment barangay ($T_{i,j} = 1$) conditional on the vector of pre-treatment covariates $X_{i,j}$. $\Phi(\cdot)$ denotes the c.d.f. of the normal distribution.

and decided to share this political knowledge.

Given self selection of meeting attendees and spillover effects to non-compliers, in this section we focus on estimating the identified reduced-form intent-to-treat effect (ITT), as well as heterogeneous treatment effects of the presence of town hall meetings using the information contained in the post-electoral survey.

Let $i = 1, \ldots, N$ denote a voter in barangay j within city/municipality k where party-list p is campaigning. Then, the ITT effect with individual data is given by

$$ITT \equiv E[Y_{i,j,k}|T_p = 1] - E[Y_{i,j,k}|T_p = 0]. \tag{3}$$

To estimate expected electoral returns by treatment status, $E[Y_{i,j,k}|T_p = t]$, we use a logistic regression to account for the binary nature of individual outcomes (i.e., turnout and vote choices). We account for some of the known biases between the survey sample and the voting population, by using barangay-level counts on gender, age and town-hall meeting attendance for which respondents provide information in the survey. In particular, we use the method of poststratification (Little 1993; Park, Gelman and Bafumi 2004) in which individual estimates for each respondent type are weighted by its relative proportion in the barangay population. We generate each respondent type by considering all combinations of gender (2 categories), age (4 categories) and town-hall meeting attendance (2 categories), and then construct population counts by type. In this way, the probability of observing an individual outcome Y for respondent i in barangay j within city k, $Y_{i,j,k}$ is given by

$$Pr(Y_{i,j,k} = 1) = logit^{-1}\left(\beta_0 + \beta_{l[i]}^{party}T_p + \mathbf{X}_j'\Gamma + \delta_{l[i]}^{gender,age} + \delta_{l[i]}^{attendance} + \delta_{l[i]}^{barangay} + \delta_{l[i]}^{city}\right),$$
$$\tag{4}$$

where the coefficient of interest that captures the presence of town-hall meetings, $\beta_{l[i]}^{party}$ is allowed to change by party-list. $\mathbf{X}_j$ is a set of controls at the barangay-level that include whether the barangay is urban or rural and the population in logs. The term $\delta_{l[i]}^{var}$ corresponds

to varying coefficients associated with the generic categorical variable $var \in \{gender.age,$ $attendance, barangay, city\}$, used for poststratification. The subscript $l[i]$ indicates the type l to which the ith respondent belongs.[16] The varying coefficients have a prior distribution given by $\delta_{j[i]}^{var} \sim N(0, \sigma_{var}^2)$. We perform a Bayesian estimation via the Hamiltonian Monte Carlo method as implemented in the Stan language (Carpenter et al. 2015) and compute the posterior distribution of the ITT given by

$$\frac{\sum_{l=1}^{L} N_l(\hat{Y}_l|T_p = 1) - \hat{Y}_l|T_p = 0)}{\sum_{l=1}^{L} N_l},$$

where $\hat{Y}_l$ is the estimate of the electoral return for type l, and N_l is the size of that type in the barangay population.

Table 7: Intention to Treat Effect on Electoral Returns at the Individual Level

	Turnout	Vote (Overall)	Vote (Akbyan)	Vote (Umalab-Ka)
	Dependent variable:			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ATE (WLS)	−3.172	6.126	3.479	3.594***
	(4.074)	(5.578)	(8.289)	(1.379)
Control (WLS)	81.994***	10.345**	18.092**	0.810
	(3.099)	(4.768)	(7.677)	(0.787)
ATE (OLS)	−0.255	16.251	22.616	4.524**
	(5.721)	(10.323)	(14.293)	(2.053)
Control (OLS)	81.994***	10.345**	18.092**	0.810
	(3.099)	(4.768)	(7.677)	(0.787)
Observations	902	739	417	322
R^2	0.00001	0.040	0.055	0.020

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Note: WLS by proportion of meeting attendees per barangay
Note: Clustered Standard Errors at the Barangay level

Table ?? and Figure 7 present the average results of the effect of town-hall meetings with

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[16]For instance, $\delta_{l[i]}^{gender,age} \in \{\delta_{male,18-29}^{gender,age}, \delta_{male,30-39}^{gender,age}, \delta_{male,40-49}^{gender,age}, \delta_{male,50+}^{gender,age}, \ldots, \delta_{female,50+}^{gender,age}\}$ depends on the type of the ith respondent.
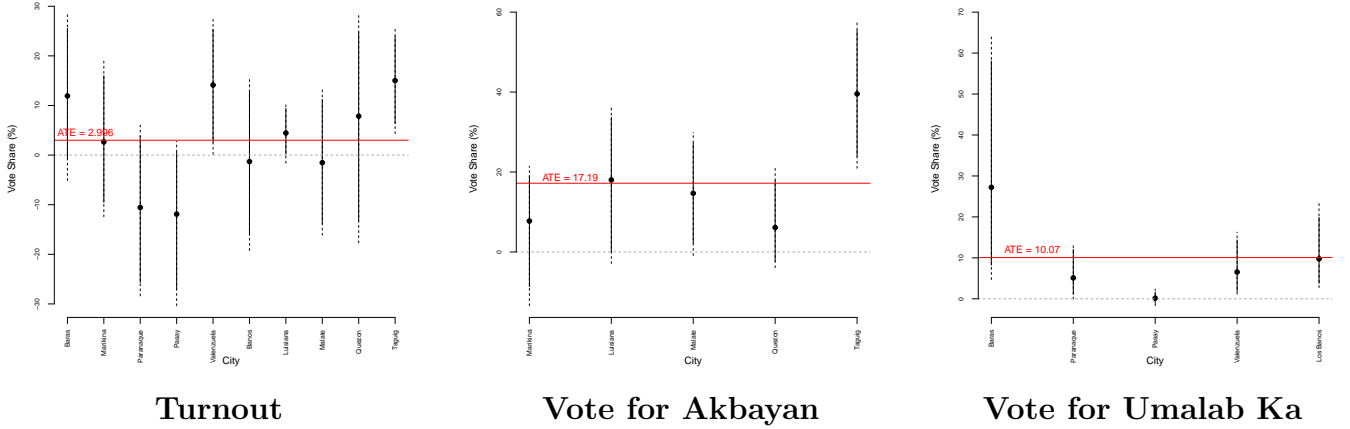
Figure 7: ATE of Town Hall Meetings on Individual Outcomes by City. The solid and dashed black lines around each point estimate indicate 90% and 95% credible intervals, respectively. The red dashed line depicts the ATE across cities/municipalities.

individual-level data and disaggregated by city/municipality, respectively. First, consistent with the aggregate evidence, we find that the propensity to turn out to vote is not significantly affected by the presence of deliberative campaigns as suggested by the 95% credible intervals that contain zero for the ATE across cities/municipalities and for the estimated effects in 8 out of 10 cities included in the sample, as seen in the left panel of Figure 7. Second, the presence of town hall meetings has a positive effect on vote choice when we pool both treatment party-lists. In particular, party-lists' vote shares increase around 1.5 times under the presence of town-hall meetings with respect to the control group. However, in the case of Akbayan, the positive effect of town-meetings is exclusively driven by Taguig City, where almost 65% of respondents in the treated barangay declared voting for Akbayan in the party-list race compared to around 13% in the control group. For the remaining Akbayan districts and consistent with the aggregate results, the effect is not statistically different from zero (with 95% credible intervals). In contrast, when Umalab Ka implements the "deliberative" campaign, reported votes shares are more than 7 times larger than in the control group (compared to five times larger using aggregate data), an effect that is given by positive and significant effects in 4 of the 5 sampled cities, with the exception of Pasay.

6.2 Heterogeneous Treatment by Income, Education, and Gender.

As we mentioned in Section 1, by fixing the platform's content that parties delivered in treatment and control barangays, we are able to assess the effectiveness of deliberation as a persuasion strategy conditional on a fixed campaign platform. To do this, we test for the presence of heterogeneous effects of town hall meetings, where the presence of town hall meetings is conditioned on the characteristics of the subset of voters at whom these platforms are aimed at.

First, we assess whether there is a differential effect of "deliberative" campaigns on informal sector workers and on the urban poor, for which Umalab Ka's platform was designed. Unfortunately, the post-electoral survey did not ask respondents to provide information on their employment status. Instead, we use their self-reported level of income as a crude proxy for informality by relying on the labor economics literature, which has consistently found that in developing countries, such as the Philippines, workers employed in the untaxed, unregulated sector, tend to have lower income than their counterparts in the formal sector (Amaral and Quintin 2006; Maloney 1999). In this way, we assess whether the presence of town hall meetings had a differential impact on the poor.

Second, we condition the effect of town hall meetings on respondents' gender to test whether the effect of deliberation is different for women, who are the primary focus of Akbayan's platform, as it mainly emphasized the rights of women in the labor force.

To obtain a differential ITT effect of town hall meetings, we estimate an interaction model of the form:

$$Y_{i,j,k} = \beta_0 + \delta_k + \beta_1 T_p + \beta_2 Z_{i,j,k} + \beta_3(T_p \times Z_{i,j,k}) + X_{i,j,k}^{\mathsf{T}}\gamma + \epsilon_{i,j,k}, \tag{5}$$

where $X_{i,j,k}$ is a matrix of pre-treatment covariates that includes income, gender, education, religion, and $Z_{j,i}$ denotes the pre-treatment conditioning variable (either income or gender).

As before, δ_k are city fixed effects and $\epsilon_{i,j,k}$ is an idiosyncratic error clustered at the barangay level.

Figure 8 graphically depicts the marginal effects of the town hall meetings conditioned by income and gender. These are obtained from estimating equation (5) with 90 percent and 95 percent confidence intervals.[17]

The upper panel of Figure 8 shows that, consistent with the platform of Umalab Ka, which emphasized policy legislation in favor of the urban poor, the effect of town hall meetings is positive and statistically significant exclusively for low-income respondents ($p-value = 0.001$). In fact, the presence of town hall meetings does not seem to exert any effect on the propensity to vote for Umalab Ka for voters with an income larger than $10,000$ pesos. In the case of Akbayan's platform, we find no differential treatment effect by income on their electoral returns, as we cannot reject the null hypothesis that the treatment effect is the same for low and high income voters when Akbayan uses a deliberative campaign to communicate its platform ($p-value = 0.36$).

The results of estimating differential treatment effects by gender are shown in the lower panel of Figure 8. We can see that, consistent with Akbayan's main message, the impact of deliberative campaigns is more than twice as large among female voters compared to men ($p-value < 0.001$). When we look at the results for those barangays where Umalab Ka was the treatment party, we find instead, higher average returns of "deliberative" campaigns for men compared to women, but with a higher level of uncertainty ($p-value = 0.09$).

Overall, the conditional effects of town hall meetings are consistent with the fact that the main recipients of the proposed policies, namely women and the urban poor, rewarded the party-lists that proposed these policies to a higher extent when these platforms were delivered through a deliberative campaign. As the platform content is the same across

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[17]All the results are robust to other non-linear specifications of the outcome variables such as logit; however, the interactive effects in these nonlinear models are less clear cut and harder to interpret visually.

treatment conditions, these results imply that the consequences of programmatic policies are better understood when voters debate with candidates, as the latter coordinate better on a policy issue compared to the case where voters just listen passively to the politician's message.

Effect by Income
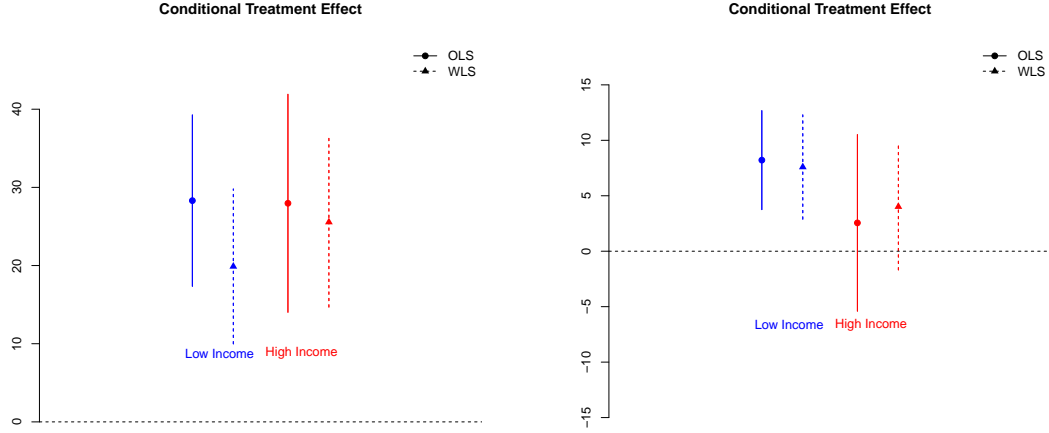
Effect by Gender
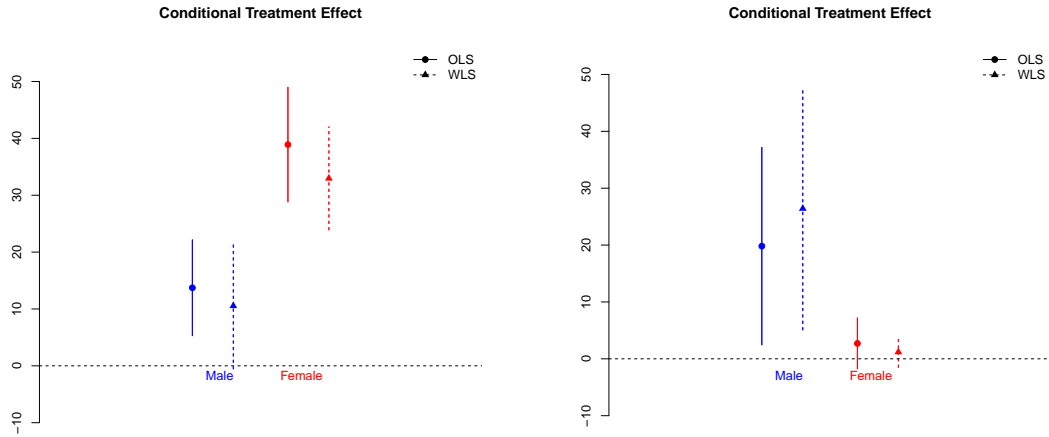
Vote for Akbayan   **Vote for Umalab Ka**

Figure 8: Marginal effect of town hall meetings on outcomes by income and gender. All estimates are based on a linear probability model with city fixed effects and clustered standard errors at the barangay level. We control for education, income, gender, marital status, religion, and linguistic group. Marginal effects are calculated as $\frac{dY_{ijk}}{dT_p} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_p Z_{ijk}$. Standard errors are calculated as $s.e.(\frac{dY_{ijk}}{dT_p}) = [var(\beta_1) + Z_{ijk}^2 var(\beta_2) + 2Z_{ijk} cov(\beta_1, \beta_2)]^{\frac{1}{2}}$.

6.3 Causal Mechanisms: The Impact of Deliberation on Attitudes about Income and Gender Inequality

Having found conditional effects of deliberative campaigns on voting behavior for the main beneficiaries of party-lists' platforms, we turn to explore whether these effects are driven by a change in citizens' attitudes regarding the issues emphasized by party-lists during the campaign. For this purpose, we use survey responses to questions on poverty and income inequality to get at the effect of Umalak Ba's platform on attitudinal change, as well as responses to questions related to gender discrimination and sexism, to assess whether Akbayan's message induced a higher awareness of these issues and changed voters' attitudes when platforms are transmitted in town hall meetings *versus* "one-way" communication devices.

To measure voters' attitudes on poverty-related issues we use a set of questions from the individual survey regarding the relevance of poverty, graft and corruption and the income gap between the rich and poor, in order to capture how intensely voters agree with the statement that each of these issues is one of the Philippines' most important problems.[18]

Voters' attitudes on gender discrimination come from a battery of questions where respondents were asked to show their degree of agreement or disagreement with respect to statements regarding gender equality, gender discrimination in the labor market, and sexual harassment towards women.[19]

To measure average treatment effects, we follow Anderson (2008) and first orient each individual outcome, so that the positive direction implies more agreement or higher coordination on the relevance of each of these issues. Next, we demean all outcomes and standardize them with respect to the control group mean and standard deviation to use a comparable

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[18]Section 2 in the supplemental appendix shows the questions used to extract these attitudinal variables.

[19]The statements used to generate these attitudinal variables can be seen in section 2 of the supplemental appendix.

scale. Since we have multiple measures for each issue, we construct summary indices in the form of standardized inverse-covariance-weighted averages of the outcomes.

These indices estimate an optimal linear combination of the individual measures to reflect a common latent factor. By pooling several measures of an issue into a single index, we obtain several advantages from this methodology: these indices are robust to overtesting; they also test for whether an issue has a "general effect"; and finally, they have more statistical power than individual-level tests.

Table 8 presents the results regarding the effects of town hall meetings on attitudes towards poverty for both Akbayan and Umalab Ka barangays. The results for Akbayan, presented in the upper panel of this table, show that voters' attitudes towards poverty and corruption are largely unchanged when Akbayan implements town hall meetings compared to control areas. In fact, survey respondents in treatment barangays think that the income gap between the rich and the poor is less of a problem than respondents in control barangays. This effect is summarized based on the index that combines information from the three indicators (column (1)). The null effect is consistent with the platform content of Akbayan's campaign, which relegated poverty to a second-order issue, and instead, stressed women empowerment and gender equality as their main messages.

By contrast, we find evidence of a strong positive general effect of town-hall meetings on poverty-related attitudes when Umalab Ka is the party-list campaigning. Column (1) of the lower panel of Table 8 suggests that the presence of town hall meetings increases voter coordination on poverty-related issues by 0.120 standard deviations with respect to the control average of .109 (p-value < 0.05).

The above results, together with the positive treatment effects on voting behaviors of the poor and least educated voters, suggest that deliberative campaigns were more successful in transmitting the message of Umalab Ka, based on the welfare of the poor and the informal workers compared to "one-way" communication technologies, whereas, as expected, overall attitudes towards poverty were not significantly influenced when Akbayan used deliberative

campaigns to communicate its feminist platform.

Table 9 displays the results of estimating the effect of town hall meetings on attitudes towards gender discrimination. As in the case of poverty-related issues, we split the sample into Akbayan and Umalab Ka barangays. In this case, if deliberative campaigns increase voter coordination we should expect a positive treatment effect. As we can see in the upper panel of this table, the results for Akbayan are consistent with this expected effect. Based on the evidence of the summary index (column (1)), the presence of town hall meetings increases coordination on gender-related issues by 0.163 standard deviation units (p-value< 0.01). The attitudes that contribute most to the observed positive effects are discrimination towards women and harassment. When we look at differential attitudes by treatment status in those barangays where Umalab Ka campaigned, we find no significant impact of town hall meetings on voters attitudes towards gender-related issues based both on the summary index and on any of its individual components.

This evidence, along with the electoral returns from women's votes for Akbayan, is consistent with the fact that, when compared to communication strategies based on the delivery of party propaganda and rally speeches, the "deliberative" campaign is better able to coordinate voters on gender-related issues. This attitudinal change, in turn, increased the voting numbers of women, who were the main beneficiaries of Akbayan's proposed policies.

In contrast, the null effects of town hall meetings on gender attitudes in cities/municipalities where Umalab Ka campaigned are expected given that Umalab Ka presented and discussed a platform focused exclusively on the class divide, in particular on the income gap, without any distinction by gender.

Together, these results suggest that exposure to town hall meetings led to substantial improvements in voter knowledge and coordination on those issues emphasized by party-lists during the campaign. Voters acted on Election Day based on this increased knowledge and attitudinal change by selecting the candidate that offered a platform closer to their preferred policy.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Index	Poverty	Corruption	Income Gap
	Akbayan Treatment:			
ATE (WLS)	0.001	−0.002	0.274	−0.250
	(0.289)	(0.295)	(0.253)	(0.277)
Control (WLS)	−0.210	4.112***	4.069***	4.452***
	(0.809)	(0.821)	(0.803)	(0.766)
ATE (OLS)	0.177	0.190	0.327	−0.015
	(0.205)	(0.209)	(0.202)	(0.186)
Control (OLS)	−0.001	4.534***	4.473***	4.459***
	(0.165)	(0.161)	(0.175)	(0.153)
City FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-treatment Vars.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	382	400	400	388
R^2	0.129	0.097	0.113	0.130
	Umalab Ka Treatment:			
ATE (WLS)	0.123***	0.116	0.110	0.119
	(0.043)	(0.103)	(0.106)	(0.087)
Control (WLS)	−0.184	4.209***	4.531***	4.382***
	(0.228)	(0.318)	(0.251)	(0.254)
ATE (OLS)	0.116***	0.066	0.130	0.128*
	(0.042)	(0.091)	(0.084)	(0.078)
Control (OLS)	0.098	4.679***	4.539***	4.529***
	(0.065)	(0.077)	(0.060)	(0.075)
City FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-treatment Vars.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	391	393	394	396
R^2	0.080	0.080	0.054	0.038

Note: *$p<0.1$; **$p<0.05$; ***$p<0.01$
Standard Errors clustered at the barangay level.
Note: The cities of Imus, Pateros and Santa Maria are excluded.
Pre-treatment controls include gender, income, age, religion,
marriage status, linguistic group, education, news, news.fam, news.others, and pol.discussion.
Note: WLS by proportion of meeting attendees per barangay.

Table 8: Intention to Treat Effect on Attitudes on Poverty

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Index	Equality	Discrimination	Harassment
	Akbayan Treatment:			
ATE (WLS)	0.412***	0.622***	0.525***	0.223
	(0.120)	(0.100)	(0.092)	(0.234)
Control (WLS)	0.008	−0.252	−0.352**	0.392**
	(0.058)	(0.182)	(0.166)	(0.198)
ATE (OLS)	0.188*	0.280	0.193	0.139
	(0.101)	(0.197)	(0.217)	(0.152)
Control (OLS)	0.008	−0.252	−0.352**	0.392**
	(0.058)	(0.182)	(0.166)	(0.198)
City FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-treatment Vars.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	413	416	415	418
R^2	0.105	0.196	0.166	0.197
	Umalab Ka Treatment:			
ATE (WLS)	0.061	0.252**	0.227	−0.129
	(0.065)	(0.112)	(0.147)	(0.188)
Control (WLS)	−0.025	0.050	0.053	−0.107
	(0.031)	(0.103)	(0.127)	(0.150)
ATE (OLS)	0.034	0.233**	0.264*	−0.208
	(0.073)	(0.113)	(0.157)	(0.214)
Control (OLS)	−0.025	0.050	0.053	−0.107
	(0.031)	(0.103)	(0.127)	(0.150)
City FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-treatment Vars.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	386	399	399	390
R^2	0.034	0.047	0.078	0.061

Note: *$p<0.1$; **$p<0.05$; ***$p<0.01$
Standard Errors clustered at the barangay level.
Note: The cities of Imus, Pateros and Santa Maria are excluded.
Pre-treatment controls include gender, income, age, religion,
marriage status, linguistic group, education, news, news.fam, news.others, and pol.discussion.
Note: WLS by proportion of meeting attendees per barangay.

Table 9: Intention to Treat Effect on Attitudes on Gender

7 Conclusion

We present deliberative campaigns as a political strategy that can provide higher electoral returns to self-interested politicians. This practical impact is in addition to the normative arguments about deliberative institutions that have been emphasized elsewhere, such as their effect on the quality of democracy through the active engagement of citizens in decision making.

We show that, when it comes to the polls, the average voter rewards the deliberative campaign with a meaningful increase in electoral returns. We find that deliberative campaigns can be an effective way of communicating a political platform, making it more persuasive to voters. The mechanism behind these positive effects is that voters in deliberative town hall meetings are better able to coordinate on the issues emphasized by politicians compared to "one-way" communication campaigns. The attitudinal change brought about by policy deliberation in town hall meetings influences the voting choices of the main party-lists' beneficiaries.

Future work should focus on understanding the informational effects of town hall meetings by systematically analyzing its meeting proceedings. We need to disentangle whether the informational effects of deliberative campaigns arise mainly because voters acquire meaningful political knowledge from debating with politicians about the platform content (i.e., vertical communication) or because voters engage each other and acquire information about other voters that persists until election day (i.e., horizontal communication).

In addition, further research should trace more carefully the process of information sharing and voting contagion from attendees to other potential voters and, more precisely, attempt to understand the channels through which meeting attendees share this information. Finally, we need to identify the social networks of attendees and estimate the differential indirect effects of town hall meetings as a function of the characteristics of these active meeting participants.

A   Appendix

Table 10: Complier Average Casual Effect On Electoral Returns

	Dependent variable: Electoral Returns			
	Turnout	Vote (Overall)	Vote (Akbayan)	Vote (Umalab-Ka)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
CACE	−2.235	0.921	0.372	0.616*
	(2.606)	(1.352)	(2.026)	(0.302)
Assignment	−1.816	0.749	0.279	0.539*
	(2.084)	(1.105)	(1.538)	(0.275)
Control	61.082***	2.425***	5.368***	0.162
	(1.356)	(0.703)	(1.013)	(0.163)
Observations	39	39	18	21
R^2	−0.012	0.025	0.026	0.231

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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