PARTISANSHIP AND QUESTION-WORDING EFFECTS
EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE FROM LATIN AMERICA

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Abstract   The existing literature suggests that partisanship in Latin America is relatively weak. However, these findings have been based largely on a survey methodology that systematically underestimates partisanship. This study provides caution about measuring party identification when it is framed in a short-term time horizon and includes a filter question—as most comparative surveys do—since this tends to result in an underestimation of levels of partisanship in the region. In turn, surveys that rely on a question wording that is more consistent with early theories of voting behavior show that the proportion of voters who self-identify with a political party is larger than the literature assumed. The findings of this paper have broader implications for studies in comparative politics. They suggest that the existing literature on parties and party systems has underestimated the ability of political parties in Latin America to recruit and create strong linkages with the electorate.

The conventional wisdom in comparative political behavior, particularly in Latin America, posits that in new democracies, party roots in the electorate tend to be weaker (Baker, Ames, and Renno 2006; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006; Samuels 2006). Analyzing data from comparative surveys conducted in the region, this study examines the extent to which levels of partisanship might be artifacts of question wording. Specifically, it examines the extent to which partisanship varies as a function of survey items that rely on a filter question (Schuman and Presser 1981) and is framed in a short-term time horizon as

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most comparative survey studies do,[1] rather than in a long-term time horizon as proposed by early theories of voting behavior (Campbell et al. 1960; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008).

Against this backdrop, this paper first presents an overview of the survey research literature and the study of partisanship in American politics. The next section presents testable hypotheses, as well as observational survey data that suggest that major comparative surveys tend to underestimate levels of partisanship in the region. The subsequent sections analyze which features create this dampening effect on party identification and present the results of survey experiments conducted in Latin America providing evidence how question wording shapes the outcome. The last section discusses the implication of these findings for the literature on political parties in Latin America and elsewhere.

Partisanship and Survey Research Methodology

As the most important variable for understanding individual-level electoral behavior, partisanship traditionally has been conceived as a psychological attachment that is developed relatively early in adulthood. This enduring attachment does not merely come and go with election cycles or campaign ephemera; it is highly stable and constitutes the screen through which citizens make sense of the political world (Campbell et al. 1960; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008).

Scholars of voting behavior highlight the importance of partisanship for individual electoral behavior because partisans tend to behave in a rather different way compared to nonpartisans. Partisans are more likely to be more informed (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), participate in politics and elections (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008), and report more stable electoral attitudes and behavior throughout political campaigns (Campbell et al. 1960; Zaller 1992). This partisan behavior is not confined to partisans in advanced industrial democracies like the United States; partisans in new democracies in Latin America also behave in a similar way. Latin American partisans tend to be more experienced, more informed, more attentive, and more engaged (Lupu 2015). Moreover, at the aggregate level, partisanship gives regularity and stability to electoral competition and, more broadly, helps stabilize the party system (Converse 1969; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Lupu 2015). Partisanship thus offers an important characterization

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1. This paper compares original data about party identification with the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) data. Latinobarómetro uses very similar wording but measures partisanship during fewer years and for fewer countries. The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) conducts electoral surveys in only four Latin American countries: Mexico (data referred to in subsequent sections of this paper), Argentina, Brazil, and Peru.

of both the way voters behave at election time and the way a party system evolves and institutionalizes.

A clear measurement of partisanship—the focus of this study—should not only offer an accurate estimate of the proportion of partisan voters in a particular party system, but also allow a clear conceptual differentiation from voting behavior (Sanders, Burton, and Kneeshaw 2002). This means that partisanship is not defined in terms of voting behavior, but constitutes an exogenous variable, which strongly affects respondents' attitudes and voting behavior. From this perspective, party identification can potentially change in the long term, but mostly as a result of major party realignments and party system breakdowns, and not as part of the flow of politics.

Research in American politics has found that the party identification survey question is susceptible to question-wording effects. In other words, the choice of words or the structure of a particular question can affect the results of the survey (Borrelli, Lockerbie, and Niemi 1987). For example, Abramson and Ostrom (1991) show that when the party identification question is framed in a long-term time horizon—for example, the wording used by the American National Election Studies (ANES): "*Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?*"—more voters identify as partisans than when it is framed in a short-term time horizon (e.g., Gallup framing: "*In politics, as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?*"). The short-term wording does not allow a clear conceptual difference between party identification and voting behavior and is very responsive to voters' short-term economic and political evaluations. This is why electoral studies that use the short time horizon have found party identification to be less stable over time. However, these findings are mostly driven by the wording of the party-identification survey question and not by the apparent instability of respondents' partisan allegiances over time (Abramson and Ostrom 1994).

Moreover, studies in American politics have highlighted how the structure of the question makes some voters less likely to self-identify as partisans. For example, Blais et al.'s (2001) study on partisanship finds that relying on filter questions makes respondents less likely to self-identify as partisans even though many of them think of themselves as close to a political party. Instead of directly asking the question (e.g., *Do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?*), filter questions inquire first if voters identify with a political party; if the respondent answers "yes," the interviewer asks a follow-up question, asking with which political party the respondent most closely identifies. As suggested by Blais et al. (2001), filtering makes it "too easy" for respondents to say "no," and this tendency might be particularly important regarding topics in which a negative response is socially desirable (e.g., self-identifying as "independent" might be socially desirable; see Keith et al. 1992; Krupnikov and Klar 2016). These findings speak to broader literature in American politics that has found that leaners

(who initially do not identify as partisans) hold partisan opinions that may be even more partisan than those who report they weakly identify with a party (Petrocik 2009).

Likewise, survey research studies highlight that, while filtering might be necessary when surveys analyze obscure topics (filtering avoids having respondents who do not have an opinion be pushed by the interviewer to take a position on a given topic), it might have an undesirable outcome in less obscure topics: It significantly increases "no" responses even when respondents have a formed opinion (Schuman and Presser 1981; Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuckfarber 1983). Moreover, in some cases, respondents may become bored or find the interview getting too long, thus increasing their tendency to choose the response option that does not prompt any follow-up questions (e.g., survey burden effect;[2] Eckman et al. 2014).

In comparative studies, particularly those involving Latin America, most of the literature has assumed that few voters tend to identify with a political party (e.g., Samuels 2006; Lupu 2015). When comparing across countries (or across surveys within a country), it is vital to note how the party identification question was asked since it has important implications: As noted before, levels of partisanship offer a characterization of the way a party system evolves, makes roots in society, and institutionalizes. In Latin America, one common feature of these studies is their reliance upon comparative survey studies that frame partisanship in a short-term time horizon and include a filter question (e.g., Do you identify with a political party? Yes/No). While this question wording is used in numerous election studies (see table 1), this survey method strategy

Table 1. Question wordings in different election studies

Survey	Party identification wording
ANES	Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?
British Election Study	Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, or what?
German Election Study	Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?
Italian Election Study	Is there a party (or political movement) that you feel closer to?
French Election Study	In general, is there a party or a political movement that seems closer to you than others?
Australian Election Study	Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as Liberal, Labor, National, or what?

2. With later filter questions, respondents may select the response option that does not trigger the follow-up questions in order to shorten the interview (Eckman et al. 2014).

taps a different aspect of partisanship—lacking a long-term component that does conceptually differentiate between party identification and voting behavior—which results in an underestimation of partisanship in electoral surveys. While the paper is focused primarily on Latin America, its findings generalize to other world regions in which electoral studies have used a similar survey strategy to measure partisanship.

Review of Polls: Filtering and Time Horizon

Figure 1 presents the level of partisanship in Latin American party systems according to the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), the most comprehensive public opinion project covering Latin American countries. LAPOP surveys are the source of the highest-quality comprehensive survey data on parties in Latin America. and this data has been used in the most important studies analyzing political behavior and party systems in the region. Although there is important variation, on average, only one in three Latin American voters reports party identification, which represents a lower proportion of partisans compared to more advanced, industrialized democracies (Samuels 2006; Lupu 2015).

When measuring party identification, the LAPOP wording—similar to the Gallup wording—tends to emphasize a short-term time horizon: "*Do you currently identify with a political party? IF YES: Which political party do you identify with?*" This particular survey method strategy, emphasizing
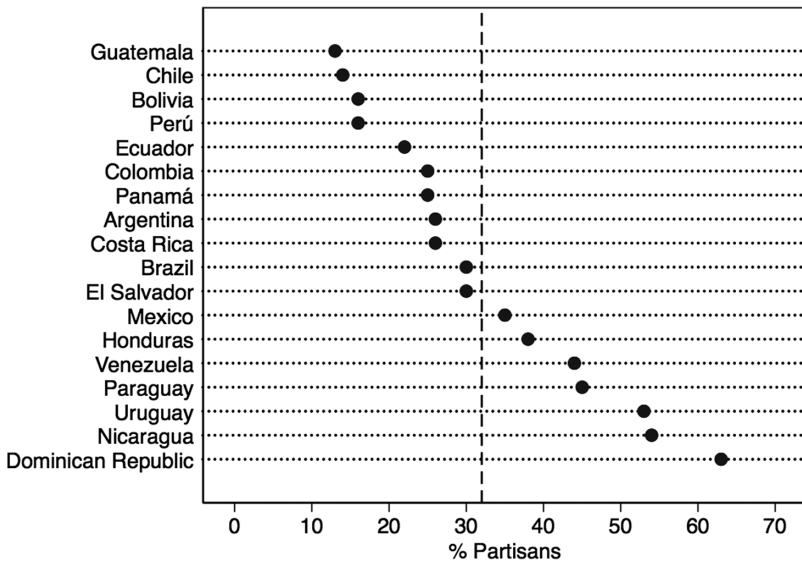

Figure 1. Level of partisanship in Latin America (2012). Source: LAPOP (2012).

"currently," seems to invite the respondent to think along the lines of short-term identification to a political party, which as previous studies suggest, might be more responsive to voters' short-term economic and political evaluations. Although LAPOP is not an electoral survey, its studies have coincided with other survey projects conducted during the same period of time in a given country, so it is possible to compare their results. For those purposes, figure 2 presents levels of partisanship in Mexico during the last presidential (2006 and 2012) and legislative campaigns (2015) based not only on LAPOP data, but also on the Mexico Panel Surveys (Lawson et al. 2007, 2013) as well as national electoral polls[3] conducted during the same period of time (Appendix A presents the exact question wording in English and Spanish).

According to LAPOP, less than half of the electorate self-identify with a political party. Moreover, partisanship in Mexico declined between 2006 and 2012, from 49 percent to 35 percent (a decrease of 14 percentage points[4]).
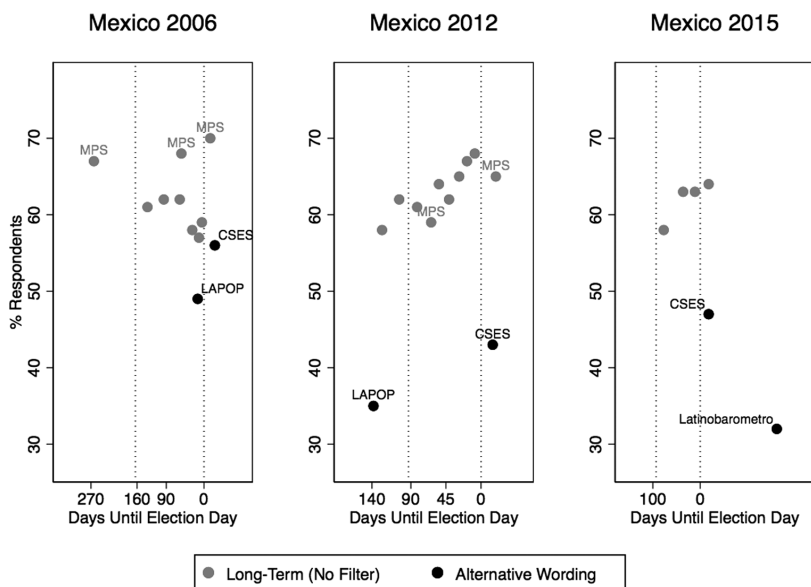

Figure 2. Proportion of partisans across electoral cycles. No label = Electoral polls measuring PID with a long-term time horizon, without filtering. Table A1 in the supplementary data online reports % for each category (partisan, nonpartisan, and don't know).

3. The survey research firm BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asocs conducted the 18 national electoral polls during the 2006, 2012, and 2015 campaigns. Each survey had an average sample of 1,200 respondents. This polling firm also conducts the National Electoral Study (CSES) in Mexico.
4. LAPOP tends to underestimate partisanship at the beginning of the campaign. A plausible interpretation might be related to LAPOP's time horizon, which seems more responsive to short-term events. At the beginning of the campaign, when respondents are not yet immersed in the campaign and partisanship has yet to be activated, the gap between LAPOP and other studies is

Table 2. Different wordings in the 2006, 2012, and 2015 campaigns (Mexico)

Survey	PID wording
LAPOP	(1) Do you *currently* sympathize with a political party? IF YES: (2) Which political party do you sympathize with?
Mexico Panel Surveys	*Generally*, would you consider yourself panista, priista, or perredista?
National Electoral Polls	*Regardless of the party you vote for*, would you consider yourself panista, priista, perredista, or any other political party?

However, when comparing LAPOP data with the alternative measures, the interpretation is slightly different. Data from the Mexico Panel Surveys, as well as national electoral polls (in gray), report that two-thirds of the electorate self-identify as partisans, and this rate has tended to be fairly stable during the last 10 years in Mexico (2006–2015). What factors account for this difference?

A possible interpretation of this variation relates to the particular wording of questions. The Mexico Panel Surveys and the national electoral polls follow a different survey research strategy compared to LAPOP. These surveys frame partisanship as a long-term attachment, and their wording conceptually differentiates between voting behavior and partisanship (see table 2). As opposed to the emphasis on the word "currently" in the LAPOP version, the phrasing "in general" seems to broaden the time reference inviting respondents to think of a long-term partisan attachment. Moreover, in the case of the national electoral polls ("*regardless of the party you vote for*"), the question wording explicitly invites the respondent to differentiate between voting behavior and partisanship as proposed in early theories of voting behavior.

However, while it is possible that time horizon explains the variation on the percentage of voters who self-identify with a political party, observational data cannot establish cause and effect. In light of this discussion, the first hypothesis predicts:

> *H1 (Time Horizon): Respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan when the party identification question is framed in a short-term time horizon.*

Figure 2 also reports data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)—collaborative, cross-national survey research data collection—conducted

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larger (2012). As election day approaches, the campaign seems to activate partisanship among voters, and the gap between LAPOP and other studies narrows (2006). However, with only two data points, this observation is only tentative.

by election study teams around the world. The CSES National Electoral Studies also report an unstable estimate of partisanship across elections (a decrease of 13 percentage points between 2006 and 2012) and underestimate the proportion of partisans compared to alternative measures—particularly during the 2012 and 2015 elections. Even though the CSES frames party identification in a long-term time horizon ("*regardless of the party you voted for in the last election*"), it follows a similar strategy to LAPOP when relying on a filter question and asks whether a respondent sympathizes with a political party (see table 3).

In order to evaluate the effect of filtering on the probability of self-identifying with a political party, the 2015 National Electoral Study (CSES, 2015) conducted during the midterm election in Mexico included two different wordings throughout the same interview.[5] While they share a similar time horizon, they differ in the inclusion of a filter question (see table 3). When a filter question was included, 48 percent of respondents declared a party identification.

Table 3. Connection between PID and vote choice (Mexico 2015) [*N* = 1,200]

	Mexico CSES wording (filter): Regardless of the party you voted for in the last election, do you sympathize with any particular political party? IF YES: Which party?	Alternative wording (no filter): Regardless of the party you vote for, do you consider yourself panista, priista, perredista, verde-ecologista, Morena, or any other political party?
% Partisans	48% [*N* = 581]	63% [*N* = 764]
Support for copartisan candidate	89% [*N* = 581]	95% [*N* = 764]
[Sample *N* = 764]	56%[a] [*N* = 764]	95% [*N* = 764]

Note.—Online Appendix A3 reports % of partisans, nonpartisans, and don't know.

[a]A total of 257 respondents failed to self-identify as partisan with the CSES wording but did identify as partisans with the alternative wording (without filtering). That means that with the CSES measure, 56 percent of partisans supported their copartisan candidate. However, the connection between party ID and vote choice of the remaining partisans remains unknown since they fail to self-identify as partisans with the CSES measure.

5. Ideally, it would be better to include each question wording in a split-sample experiment. However, since it was not possible to exclude the traditional CSES measure from any part of the questionnaire, both wordings were included. The alternative measure was located in the first part of the questionnaire (ninth question), so it is unlikely that the higher estimation of partisans is driven by a potential activation of partisanship as the interview unfolds. The traditional CSES measure was the 23rd question of the survey interview (and several battery questions that counted as a single question were included between both measures). In the next section, instead of having two measures of partisanship asked during the same interview, I discuss the association between the different wordings and political attitudes (e.g., presidential approval) relying on an experimental design. The results do not differ: While turning out different results in terms of percent of voters who identify as partisans, the two different question wordings are strongly connected to presidential approval.

When the filter question was not included, and the interviewer directly asked respondents about their party identification, 63 percent was willing to declare their party identification. In other words, filtering seems to contribute to a 15 percent gap between estimates of the proportion of partisans.

The 2015 CSES allows us to analyze the connection between partisanship (with two different wordings) and other variables such as vote choice. Table 3 shows that different measures of partisanship—while turning out different results in terms of percent of voters who identify as partisans— do not differ much on the connection with vote choice (e.g., the percentage of voters that supported their copartisan candidate during the 2015 midterm campaign). For both measures, researchers may conclude that the connection between party identification and vote choice is strong: 95 percent of partisans voted for their copartisan candidate (88 percent in the case of the traditional CSES measure). However, if we rely on the CSES measurement, it is only possible to measure the connection between party identification and vote choice among a subset of partisans, since a fourth of partisans (23 percent, or 14 percent of the sample, $N = 237$) failed to self-identify as partisan when asked with the traditional CSES wording (even though we know they are partisan with the unfiltered wording since the two measures were included in the same interview). In other words, with the filter, some respondents are mischaracterized as independents. Equally importantly, we lose important pieces of information about the way partisanship informs voters' electoral behavior.[6]

However, as in the previous case, observational data cannot establish cause and effect. In light of this discussion, the second hypothesis predicts:

> *H2 (Filter question): Respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan when the party identification question includes a filter question.*

When the question wording includes a filter question, the mechanism behind the lower rates of partisanship is unclear. While prior studies suggest that filtering makes it easier for respondents to say "no" (Blais et al. 2001), it is not clear if it is driven by respondents' survey-taking behavior or the fact that the response options (e.g., parties) are listed explicitly. On the one hand, due to survey fatigue,[7] respondents may be more inclined to reply "no" to the filter

6. Online Appendix A2 presents the connection between the different measures of partisanship and other political attitudes (e.g., presidential approval and retrospective evaluation of the economy). Regarding of measure of partisanship, proincumbent voters hold a positive connection while opposition voters hold a negative connection.

7. Testing a survey burden effect ideally would include several filter questions throughout the interview. However, it was not possible to add several filter questions in the questionnaire (testing if, with later filter questions, respondents may select the response option that does not trigger the follow-up questions). For that reason, hypothesis 2a tests respondent's survey fatigue by placing the party ID question either near the beginning of the survey (second questions) or at the end

question hoping to finish the survey interview as soon as possible. On the other hand, given that the unfiltered version includes the list of potential parties with which voters might self-identify, it is plausible that respondents might have an easier time choosing an option explicitly referred to by the interviewer. This effect would be consistent with evidence from the survey research literature comparing open-ended and closed-ended questions: Respondents are more likely to select an option when it is explicitly included in the survey question (Schuman and Presser 1981). For those purposes, this study considers the following two secondary hypotheses:

> *H2a (Survey Taking-Behavior Effect): As a result of survey fatigue, respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan.*
>
> *H2b (Explicit Options): When the partisan options are not explicitly listed by the interviewer, respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan.*

Finally, this study considers an alternative hypothesis. One plausible interpretation of the variation of results among survey projects might be driven by the variation of the conceptualization of partisanship: an "identification" or an "attachment."[8] In some survey projects, the question asks respondents if they "sympathize" with a political party (LAPOP), while other projects ask respondents if they "consider" themselves "panista, priista, or perredista" (e.g., similar to the ANES when asking if respondents consider themselves to be "Republican" or "Democrat") or "identify" as "panista, priista, or perredista" (Mexico Panel Surveys). In this particular case, there are no clear expectations about the effect of each conceptualization of partisanship. In light of this discussion, the last hypothesis of this study is the following:

> *H3 (Conceptual Difference): As a result of a conceptual difference of partisanship, respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan.*

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(last question but before sociodemographic questions). If filtering makes respondents more likely to say "no" due to survey fatigue, respondents who receive the party ID question by the end of the interview should be more likely to underreport partisanship than those respondents who are inquired at beginning of the interview. As opposed to other types of surveys (e.g., Mechanical Turk), respondents in the studies reported in this research do not have incentives to stay or continue the interview to get money.

8. Figure 2 also presents data from Latinobarómetro. Its 2015 study estimates that only 32 percent of the Mexican electorate identifies with a political party (a gap of 30 percentage points vis-à-vis long-term measures that avoid filtering). The wording strategy also includes a filter question, although it does not frame their survey question along any particular time horizon. Instead, the question inquires if the respondent "feels closer" to any political party.

Methods

This paper presents original data from nationwide survey experiments in omnibus surveys conducted in Argentina, Panamá, and Honduras (the full details of their survey methodology appear in Appendix B), which represent cases with levels of party identification around average for the region, according to LAPOP data (26, 40, and 45 percent, respectively; the mean of the region is 35 percent, according to LAPOP 2014). In Honduras and Panamá, the survey experiments were fielded face-to-face by the polling firm Borge y Asociados and each survey had a sample of 1,000 respondents. Each sample was divided into three randomly assigned groups, which vary the wording of the party identification question. In Argentina, the polling firm Isonomía conducted a telephone survey experiment (CATI System) and had a sample of 1,200 respondents. Randomization guarantees that all of the treatment groups in the sample were identical on average for both observable and unobservable characteristics. Accordingly, any systematic difference in the answers to each of the party identification questions provides an estimate of the differing impact that the alternative wording has on respondents' probability of declaring their party identification. The treatments appear balanced across observed covariates, as shown in Online Appendix A4.

In particular, the survey experiment randomly varies the inclusion of a filter as well as the time horizon of the question (table 4). Given the LAPOP's importance as the major comparative survey in the region, the first treatment relies on the LAPOP wording, which is framed along a short time horizon and includes a filter question. The second treatment constitutes an intermediate version, which includes a filter question but is framed in a long-term time horizon. The third treatment relies on the alternative wording included in the 2015 CSES survey as well as in the electoral polls conducted in Mexico, which mirrors the ANES wording by excluding a filter question and framing the question in a long-term time horizon (see table 4 for question wordings). The difference between the first and second treatments estimates the impact of the time horizon (H1), while the difference between the second and third treatments estimates the impact of filtering on the probability that a respondent will declare party identification (H2).

In addition, this paper presents original data from a nationwide telephone survey experiment conducted in Mexico. The survey was conducted by the polling firm BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asocs with a sample of 2,223 respondents (CATI System). The survey experiment was divided into six treatment groups in order to understand why the filter question makes respondents less likely to self-identify as partisan as well as testing the alternative hypothesis of this study (see Online Appendix A5). The party identification question was included as the second question of the interview. In the rest of the interview, survey respondents were asked about their opinion about political events in Mexico.

Table 4. Self-declared partisans across treatment groups

Country	Treatment 1. Short-term (with filter): Do you currently sympathize with a political party? (YES/NO) Which political party do you identify with?	Treatment 2. Long-term (with filter): Regardless of the party you voted for in the last election, in general, do you sympathize with any particular political party? (YES/NO) Which party?	Treatment 3. Long-term (without filter): Regardless of the party you vote for, would you consider yourself [LIST OF PARTY ID] or any other political party?
Panamá 2016	44% [$N = 333$]	55%** (**+11**) [$N = 338$]	67%** (**+23**) [$N = 341$]
Honduras 2016	35% [$N = 336$]	42%* (**+7**) [$N = 334$]	56%** (**+21**) [$N = 346$]
Argentina 2016[a]	35% [$N = 604$]		54%** (**+19**) [$N = 605$]
Mexico 2017[b]	16% [$N = 801$]	26%** (**+10**) [$N = 197$]	38%** (**+22**) [$N = 607$]
Average difference		+9	+21

Difference between treatment 1 and the other treatments in parentheses. Table A7 in the supplementary data online reports % for each category (partisan, nonpartisan, and don't know). Table A8 in the supplementary data online includes the translation in Spanish.

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$ (statistical significance compared to treatment 1)

[a]In Argentina, the survey interview only included two treatments because of budget considerations.

[b]Party identification in Mexico has decreased after the 2015 legislative election. According to the Buendía & Laredo polling firm in Mexico, partisanship decreased sharply by the end of 2015, coinciding with major corruption scandals that the incumbent government faced. In 2016, partisanship decreased significantly after the Mexican government stopped subsidizing oil prices. These sharp declines were driven mostly by the decline of identification with the PRI, according to the same data source.

Results

Table 4 presents the mean response to each treatment condition. Comparing across each treatment, the data support Hypotheses 1 and 2, showing that voters do not declare partisan identification equally. The LAPOP version (treatment 1) tends to underestimate the proportion of partisans in every case (Panamá, Honduras, Argentina, and Mexico). For example, the difference between wordings 1 and 2 is, on average, 9 percentage points, while the difference between the LAPOP version and the long-term version without filtering is, on average, 21 percentage points. The differences are sizable and not due to random chance ($p < 0.01$; see Online Appendix A6).

Similar to the observational data reported in the last section, I analyzed the connection between the different wordings and political attitudes (e.g., presidential approval) in Mexico. The measures of partisanship—while turning out different results in terms of percent of voters who identify as partisans— do not differ much on their relationship with presidential approval (see Online Appendix A2).[9] Consistent with the previous section, the question filters lead to mischaracterizing some respondents as independents, therefore losing important information about the way partisanship informs voters' political attitudes.

While the time horizon explains the difference between treatments 1 and 2, it is not clear what drives the underestimation of partisanship when a filter question is included. It is possible that voters are less likely to self-identify as partisan due to a respondent's survey-taking behavior. However, it is also plausible that the structure of the question makes it easier for respondents to self-identify as partisan since the options are explicitly listed by the interviewer. To test both mechanisms, the following treatments isolate these two elements.

The first treatment includes a question wording that explicitly lists the partisan options (see table 5). The second treatment shares the same question structure—including the time horizon—but excludes the list of partisan options. While it is not possible to directly measure respondents' tendency to shorten the interview, this study follows an indirect strategy and focuses on respondents' survey fatigue. If such a survey-taking behavior effect exists, respondents will be less likely to self-identify as partisan at the end of the survey interview than they would at the beginning. For those purposes, respondents that are part of the third treatment are inquired about their party identification at the beginning of the survey, while those that are part of the fourth treatment are asked about their party identification at the very end of the survey interview.

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9. Vote choice was not available since the surveys were conducted during a non-electoral season.

Table 5. PID and filter questions

Explicit options	Survey-taking behavior
Treatment 1 (*N* = 203) (Explicit Options) Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally *identify* yourself as a panista, priista, perredista, green, Morena, or any other political party?	Treatment 3 (*N* = 206) (Beginning of the survey interview) Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally *consider* yourself as a panista, priista, perredista, green, Morena, or any other political party?
Treatment 2 (*N* = 197) (No Options) Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally identify with any political party?	Treatment 4 (*N* = 197) (End of the survey interview) Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally *consider* yourself as a panista, priista, perredista, green, Morena, or any other political party?

NOTE.—Table A9 in the supplementary data online includes the translation in Spanish.

Figure 3 illustrates the probability of self-identifying as partisan based on multinomial logistic models (DV = partisan, nonpartisan, and don't know), the results of which are detailed in Online Appendix A10. Respondents are more likely to self-identify as partisan when options are explicitly listed than when they are not; the difference between both treatment groups is 12 percentage points (38 percent vs. 26 percent, $p < 0.01$). However, respondents are not
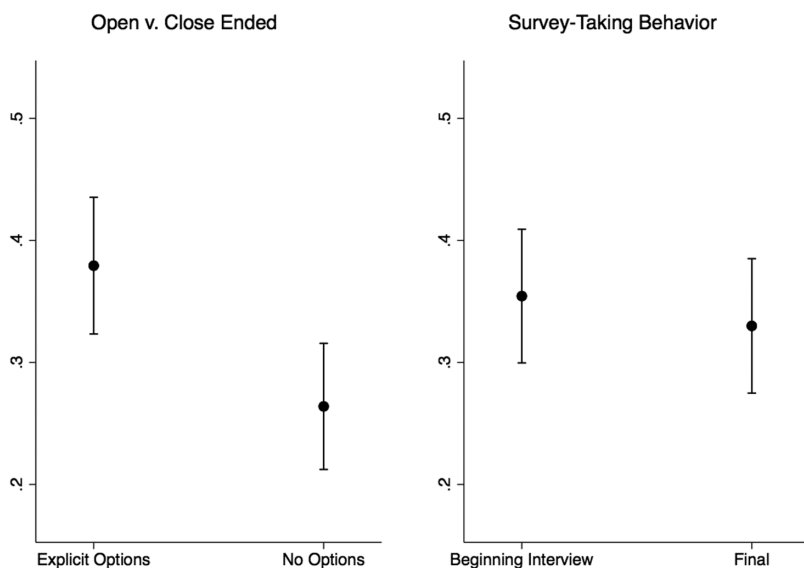

Figure 3. PID and filter questions. Dependent variable = probability of self-identifying as partisans; CIs = 90 percent.

Table 6. PID conceptualization

Treatment 1 (*N* = 203)	Treatment 2 (*N* = 607)	Treatment 3 (*N* = 415)
Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally *identify* yourself as a panista, priista, perredista, green, Morena, or any other political party?	Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally *consider* yourself as a panista, priista, perredista, green, Morena, or any other political party?	Regardless of the party you vote for, do you normally sympathize with the PAN, the PRI, the PRD, the Green Party, Morena, or any other political party?

significantly less likely to answer the party identification question when it is located at the end of the survey than when it is located at the beginning (a difference of 3 percentage points, *p* > 0.10). These results, overall, suggest that filtering does make respondents less likely to self-identify as partisan and that this underestimation is driven by the structure of the question that makes it easier for respondents to choose their partisan option (since they are listed explicitly)—and not by an apparent tendency to move on in order to finish the survey interview.

Finally, as advanced earlier, question wording in comparative surveys is not consistent in how partisanship is measured. There is a conceptual distinction since in some cases partisanship is measured as an identification and in some other cases as an attachment (or sympathy). To evaluate if those conceptual distinctions explain variation in the probability of self-identifying as partisan, three additional treatment conditions were included in the survey experiment as reported in table 6: Neither the time horizon nor the structure of the question change; only the verb included in the question wording changes: "consider yourself," "identify yourself," and "sympathize with."

Figure 4 reports the probability of self-identifying as partisan based on multinomial logistic models (see Online Appendix A11 for additional details). Respondents do not seem to be responsive to question variation, as the differences between treatment conditions are statistically insignificant. In other words, the evidence presented in this study suggests that filtering has a substantive negative effect on the probability of respondents self-identifying as partisan, and this effect is not driven by respondent's survey-taking behavior or the variation on the conceptualization of partisanship.

Discussion

This study provides caution about the use of filter questions and wordings that frame partisanship in a short-term time horizon. Based on survey data conducted in four countries in Latin America, this study makes the case that electoral surveys should rely on measurements that are more consistent with
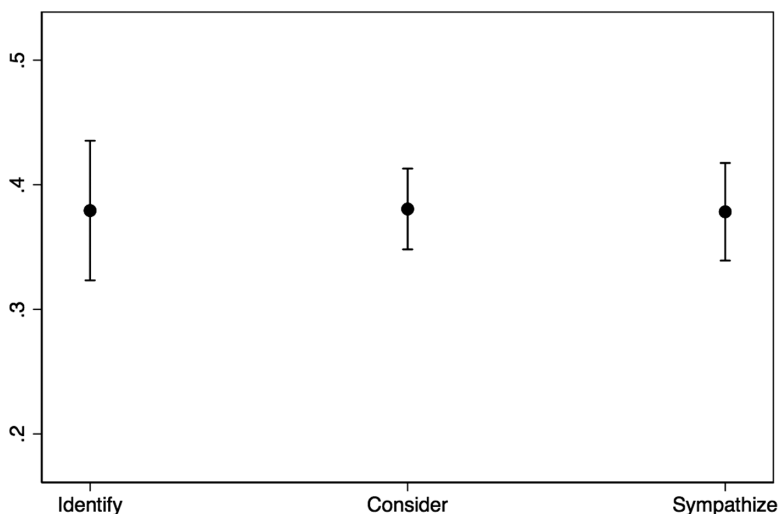
Figure 4. Conceptualization of partisanship. Dependent variable = probability of self-identifying as partisans; CIs = 90 percent.

early theories of partisanship that conceptually distinguish between voting behavior and partisanship. These findings have important implications for survey research literature on Latin America and elsewhere. Election studies around the world use a similar survey strategy to measure partisanship and may be underestimating the percentage of voters who identify with a political party. This study encourages further replication of this analysis. However, the logic of the findings of this paper, based on experimental and nonexperimental evidence, is sufficiently compelling that it would be extremely surprising if question wording does not play any role in the rest of Latin America and elsewhere.

The findings of this paper also speak to broader literature on, for example, campaign studies. Wordings that rely on short-term partisanship might lose valuable information when analyzing, for example, partisan behavior at campaign time. During political campaigns, as a result of the campaign information flow, voters become increasingly capable of connecting their partisanship to vote intention (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Gelman and King 1993). Voters become enlightened as election day approaches, activating their precampaign predispositions, which constitutes the most important mechanism of campaign influence on voter behavior (e.g., campaign activation; Gelman and King 1993). In such contexts, researchers identify voters who defect from their partisanship when supporting a candidate of an opposite party or support their copartisan candidate. However, if some partisans are not willing to self-identify as a consequence of question wording, it is impossible

to evaluate the connection between partisanship and vote choice as highlighted in this study.

The findings of this research also contribute more broadly to the literature in comparative politics (e.g., the political parties literature). In the case of the Mexican party system, it was puzzling that while electoral data reported low levels of electoral volatility compared to the region's average (Mainwaring 2018), major comparative surveys pointed out that only between a third and up to half of the electorate declared party identification (LAPOP 2006 and 2012; Latinobarómetro 2015). As this study finds, an alternative wording—in line with the original conceptualization of party identification as a long-term identification—reveals data that are more consistent with the way the Mexican party system has evolved since the nation's transition to democracy: a party system with a high proportion of partisans (two-thirds of the electorate) and low levels of electoral volatility.

Future studies may also consider alternative explanations of the conditions under which respondents are less likely to reveal their party identification due to questionnaire design effects. It is plausible that respondents' survey-taking behavior analyzed in this paper may affect voters in comparative surveys (LAPOP, CSES, and Latinobarómetro, among others), which are usually longer than most electoral polls. These studies include comprehensive modules limited not only to electoral behavior, but also to broader attitudes about democracy and the party system. Respondents in these surveys may be more likely to choose answers that shorten the interview, particularly when the structure of the question allows them to be let off easily.

Appendix A

Wordings in English and Spanish

Survey	English	Spanish
CSES (2006, 2012 and 2015)	Regardless of the party you voted for in the last election, in general, do you sympathize with any particular political party? IF YES: Which party?	Independientemente de por cuál partido votó en la elección pasada, en general, ¿simpatiza usted con algún partido político en particular? SÍ: ¿Con cuál partido?
Alternative CSES measure (2015) and Electoral Polls (2006, 2012, and 2015)	*Regardless of the party you vote for*, would you consider yourself panista, priista, perredista, or any other political party?	Independientemente por el partido por el cual usted vota, usted se considera panista, priista, perredista o de algún otro partido?

Appendix A. *Continued*

Survey	English	Spanish
LAPOP 2006 and 2012	Do you currently sympathize with a political party? IF YES: Which political party do you sympathize with?	¿En este momento, simpatiza con algún partido político? SÍ: ¿Con cuál partido político simpatiza usted?
LATINOBARÓMETRO 2015	Is there any political party you feel closer to than others?	¿Hay algún partido político hacia el cual se sienta usted más cercano que hacia el resto de los partidos?

Appendix B. Survey Methodology

Argentina 2015:
Survey Firm: Isonomía; Field Dates: 12/10–17/2015; Mode: Omnibus Face-to-Face; Sampling Universe: Nationally Representative of Adults (18+), $N = 1,201$; Sample Design: Multistage random sample; AAPOR Response Rate: N/A.

Panamá 2016:
Survey Firm: Borge y Asociados; Field Dates: 06/20–25/2016; Mode: Omnibus Face-to-Face; Sampling Universe: Nationally Representative of Adults (18+), $N = 1,012$; Sample Design: Multistage random sample; AAPOR Response Rate: 63 percent.

Honduras 2016:
Survey Firm: Borge y Asociados; Field Dates: 06/26/2016–07/07/2016; Mode: Omnibus Face-to-Face; Sampling Universe: Nationally Representative of Adults (18+), $N = 1,016$; Sample Design: Multistage random sample; AAPOR Response Rate: 50 percent.

Mexico 2017:
Survey Firm: BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asociados; Field Dates: 06/20/2017–07/11/2017; Mode: Telephone (CATI System); Sampling Universe: Nationally Representative of Adults (18+) with landline telephone, $N = 2,223$; Sample Design: Random-digit dialing; AAPOR Response Rate: 34 percent.

Supplementary Data

Supplementary data are freely available at *Public Opinion Quarterly* online.

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