

Appendix

Keywords used to identify democratic institutions and political opponents

As described in the main text, we use two methods to identify references to democratic institutions and political opponents in the *mañanera* transcripts: a keyword search and an LLM-based classification of individual referenced by López Obrador. For the former approach, we use the following set of keywords and their semantic variations, acronyms, and abbreviations:

- **Democratic institutions:** Secretaría de Gobernación, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, Secretaría de Marina, Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional, Policía Federal, Secretaría de Trabajo, Ejército, Fuerza Aérea, Fuerzas Armadas, Armada, Secretaría de Desarrollo Social, Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes, Secretaría de Energía, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, Secretaría de Educación Pública, Secretaría de Salud, Secretaría de Economía, Secretaría de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural, Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social, Secretaría de la Función Pública, Secretaría de Cultura, Secretaría de Turismo, Secretaría de Seguridad y Protección Ciudadana, Ejército, Guardia Nacional, Procuraduría General de la República, Fiscalía General de la República, Comisión Federal de Electricidad, Petróleos Mexicanos, Comisión Nacional del Agua, Comisión Nacional de Seguridad Nuclear y Salvaguardias, Instituto Nacional Electoral, Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres, Instituto Nacional de la Juventud, Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos, Comisión Nacional para la Protección y Defensa de los Usuarios de Servicios Financieros, Comisión Nacional del Sistema de Ahorro para el Retiro, Juez, Corte, Consejero, Poder Judicial, Magistrada/o, Consejo de la Judicatura, Congreso, Senado, Cámara de Diputados, Diputada/, Senador/a, Ministra/o, Banco de México, Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación, Auditoría Superior de la Federación, Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, Instituto Federal de Telecomunicaciones, Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, Unidad de Inteligencia Financiera, Procuraduría Federal del Consumidor, Servicio de Administración Tributaria, Instituto Nacional de Transparencia, Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos Personales, Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social
- **Political opponents:** Partido Acción Nacional, Partido Revolucionario Institucional, conservador/conservadurismo, PRIAN

Validating the text classifier

To identify whether López Obrador’s mentions of democratic institutions and political opponents in the *mañanera* transcripts are criticisms or not, we employ a text classifier using the GPT-4o large language model. We benchmark that classifier against a validation set of 1,000 randomly selected, human-coded sentences from the corpus and find that it performs fairly well, yielding a 79% accuracy rate with 78% sensitivity and 79% specificity.

This performance is imperfect, most likely because classifying a statement as a criticism or not is an inherently subjective task. The errors in classification could potentially bias the conclusions we draw from the text data. To assess this possibility, we conduct a simulation-based sensitivity analysis. We calculate the false positive and false negative rates in the validation set, computing each rate separately for statements mentioning democratic institutions and those mentioning political opponents. Using these rates, we randomly sample proportional sets of sentences and flip their classifications from positive to negative or vice versa. We then compute our two main quantities of interest: the ratio of trash-talking statements to polarization statements, and the degree of overlap between the two. We replicate this procedure 1000 times.

The results of this exercise are depicted in Figures A.8 and A.9. As shown in Figure A.8, we find that classification error seems to induce only minor fluctuations in the ratio between trash-talking and polarization. Across each of the 1000 simulations, the ratio departs from the true value we observe by a maximum of 0.02. Most importantly, in no simulation does the count of polarization statements exceed the count of trash-talking statements.

We next assess whether classification error could lead us to underestimate the overlap between trash talk and polarization (Figure A.9). To the contrary, we find a lower degree of overlap between trash-talking and polarization in all simulations than in our estimate. If anything, this exercise suggests, we may be *overstating* the prevalence of mixed rhetoric. All together, this analysis suggests that classification error, while a real concern, is unlikely to threaten our conclusions. Rather, López Obrador appears to employ trash-talking as a distinct strategy from polarization, a strategy he turns to more often than he attacks his political opponents.

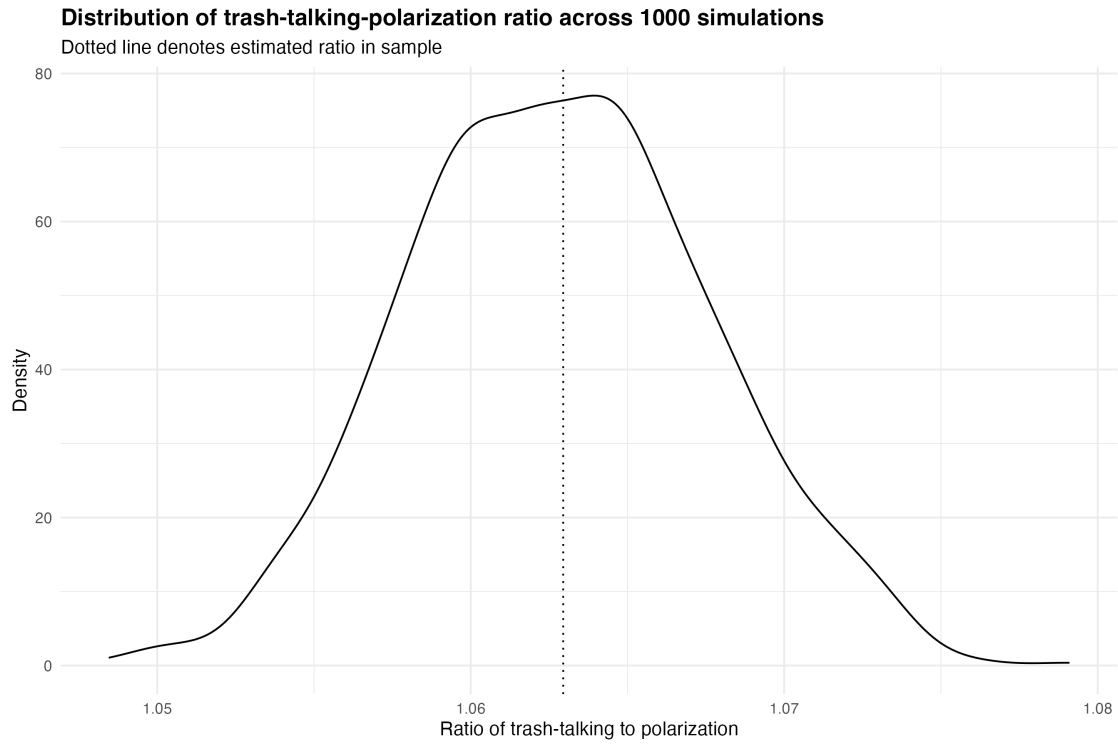


Figure A.8: Sensitivity analysis (ratio)

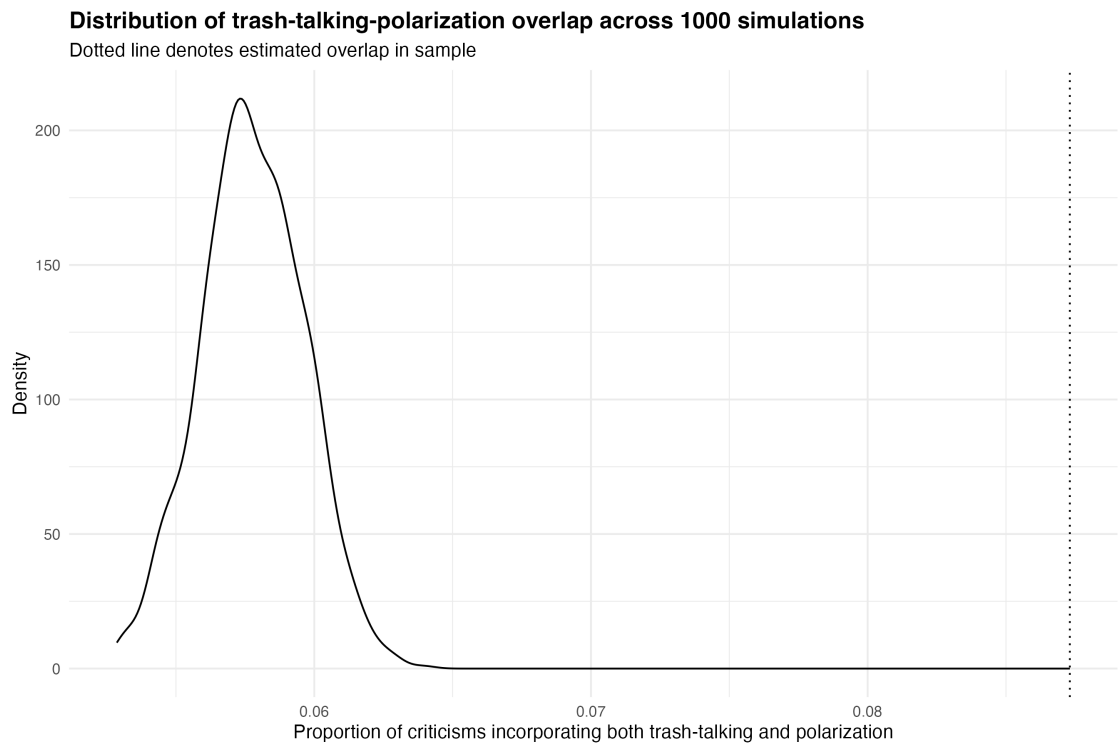


Figure A.9: Sensitivity analysis (overlap)

Balance Across Treatment and Control Groups

A total of 1501 respondents were assigned to the trash-talking treatment and 1500 to the control condition. The differences in standardized means between treatment and control are below a threshold of 0.1.

Table A.1: Differences in Standardized Means Between Control and Treatment Groups

Covariate	Type	Unadjusted Difference
Gender (Male)	Binary	−0.0007
Age	Contin.	−0.0310
Socioeconomic Level	Contin.	−0.0202
Political Interest	Contin.	−0.0319
Presidential Approval	Contin.	−0.0158
Region 1 (Pacífico)	Binary	0.0002
Region 2 (Norte)	Binary	0.0236
Region 3 (Bajío)	Binary	−0.0469
Region 4 (Centro)	Binary	−0.0212
Region 5 (D.F.)	Binary	0.0640
Region 6 (Sureste)	Binary	−0.0124

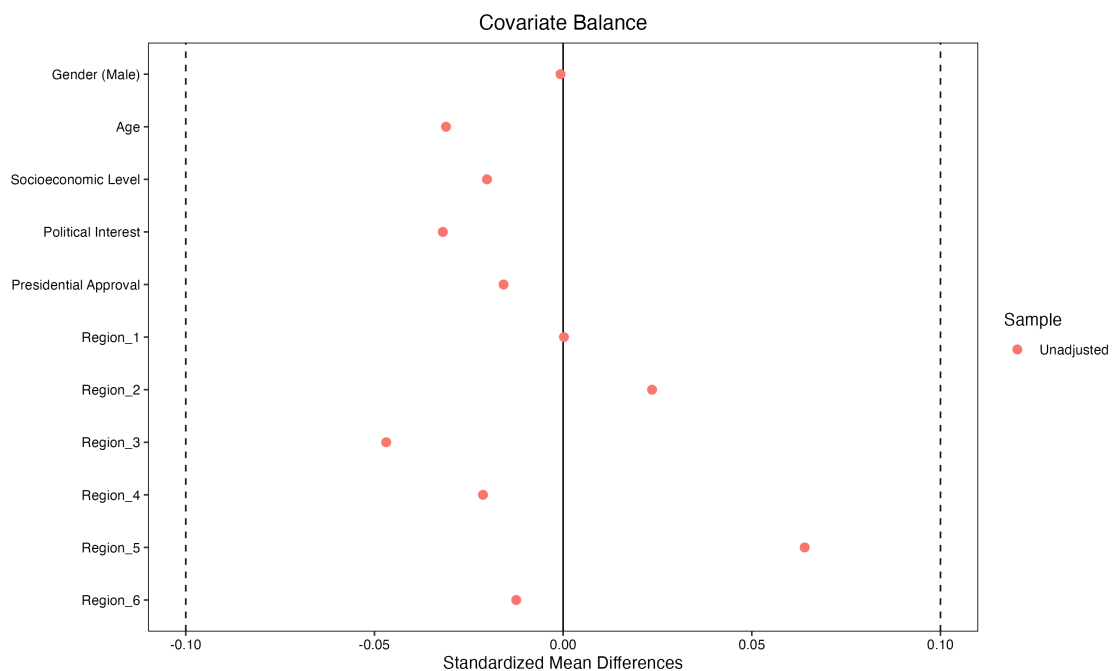


Figure A.10: Balance Plot

Treatment Effects on Pooled Sample

Table A.2: Average treatment effects on democracy outcomes

<i>Dependent variables: Democracy outcomes</i>					
	Anti-democratic index (1)	Fire judges (2)	Disobey justice (3)	Institutional nihilism (4)	Less power to institutions (5)
Treatment	0.18*** (0.03)	0.20*** (0.05)	0.22*** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.04)	0.12* (0.05)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	3001	3001	3001	3001
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
RMSE	0.91	1.25	1.20	1.16	1.30

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.3: Average treatment effects on democracy outcomes with covariates

<i>Dependent variables: Democracy outcomes</i>					
	Anti-democratic index (1)	Fire judges (2)	Disobey justice (3)	Institutional nihilism (4)	Less power to institutions (5)
Treatment	0.19*** (0.03)	0.20*** (0.04)	0.23*** (0.04)	0.18*** (0.04)	0.13*** (0.04)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	3001	3001	3001	3001
R ²	0.37	0.27	0.18	0.08	0.33
Adj. R ²	0.36	0.26	0.18	0.08	0.32
RMSE	0.73	1.08	1.09	1.12	1.07

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Treatment Effects by Partisanship

We estimate the treatment effects on the pooled sample, on MORENA supporters, on nonpartisans, and on supporters of opposition parties (PAN, PRI, PRD). We also include estimates for non-MORENA supporters, grouping together nonpartisans and supporters of opposition parties.

Anti-democratic index

Table A.4: Conditional Average treatment effects on anti-democratic index

<i>Dependent variable: Anti-democratic index</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.18*** (0.03)	0.23*** (0.04)	0.12 (0.06)	0.24** (0.08)	0.17*** (0.05)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01
RMSE	0.91	0.72	0.84	0.93	0.92

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.5: Conditional Average treatment effects on anti-democratic index with covariates

<i>Dependent variable: Anti-democratic index</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.19*** (0.03)	0.23*** (0.04)	0.15** (0.05)	0.19** (0.06)	0.18*** (0.04)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.37	0.10	0.31	0.44	0.41
Adj. R ²	0.36	0.09	0.29	0.42	0.40
RMSE	0.73	0.70	0.71	0.71	0.72

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Fire Judges

Table A.6: Conditional Average treatment effects on fire judges outcome

	<i>Dependent variable: Fire judges</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.20*** (0.05)	0.26*** (0.06)	0.14 (0.08)	0.23* (0.10)	0.18** (0.06)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
RMSE	1.25	1.13	1.14	1.18	1.18

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.7: Conditional Average treatment effects on fire judges outcome with covariates

	<i>Dependent variable: Fire judges</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.20*** (0.04)	0.26*** (0.06)	0.18** (0.07)	0.18* (0.08)	0.19*** (0.05)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.27	0.06	0.29	0.36	0.34
Adj. R ²	0.26	0.04	0.27	0.33	0.33
RMSE	1.08	1.11	0.98	0.97	0.97

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Disobey Justice

Table A.8: Conditional average treatment effects on disobey justice outcome

	<i>Dependent variable: Disobey justice</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.22*** (0.04)	0.26*** (0.06)	0.09 (0.08)	0.35*** (0.10)	0.20** (0.07)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01
RMSE	1.20	1.13	1.15	1.18	1.20

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.9: Conditional average treatment effects on disobey justice outcome with covariates

	<i>Dependent variable: Disobey justice</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.23*** (0.04)	0.25*** (0.06)	0.13 (0.08)	0.29** (0.09)	0.21*** (0.06)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.18	0.05	0.15	0.25	0.22
Adj. R ²	0.18	0.03	0.13	0.22	0.21
RMSE	1.09	1.12	1.08	1.05	1.07

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Institutional Nihilism

Table A.10: Conditional average treatment effects on institutional nihilism outcome

<i>Dependent variable: Institutional nihilism</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.17*** (0.04)	0.21*** (0.06)	0.17* (0.08)	0.15 (0.11)	0.16* (0.07)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
RMSE	1.16	1.07	1.13	1.27	1.22

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.11: Conditional average treatment effects on institutional nihilism outcome with covariates

<i>Dependent variable: Institutional nihilism</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.18*** (0.04)	0.21*** (0.06)	0.20* (0.08)	0.10 (0.10)	0.17** (0.06)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.08	0.05	0.07	0.16	0.11
Adj. R ²	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.13	0.10
RMSE	1.12	1.05	1.11	1.19	1.16

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Less power to Institutions

Table A.12: Conditional average treatment effects on less power to institutions outcome

<i>Dependent variable: Less power to institutions</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.12* (0.05)	0.19** (0.06)	0.06 (0.08)	0.25* (0.11)	0.14* (0.07)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Adj. R ²	0.00	0.01	−0.00	0.01	0.00
RMSE	1.30	1.10	1.18	1.23	1.23

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.13: Conditional average treatment effects on less power to institutions outcome with covariates

<i>Dependent variable: Less power to institutions</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.13*** (0.04)	0.18** (0.06)	0.11 (0.07)	0.19* (0.09)	0.15** (0.05)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.33	0.06	0.29	0.39	0.35
Adj. R ²	0.32	0.05	0.27	0.37	0.34
RMSE	1.07	1.08	1.01	0.98	1.00

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Percentage Increases Between Control and Treatment

Table A.14: Experimental Condition Means and Percentage Increase. Pooled Sample. N=3001.

	Control Mean	Treatment Mean	Percentage Increase
Anti-Democratic Index	2.89	3.07	6.2%
Firer Judges	2.66	2.85	7.4%
Disobey Justice	2.75	2.97	8.2%
Institutional Nihilism	3.22	3.39	5.4%
Less Power to Institutions	2.93	3.05	4.2%

Table A.15: Experimental Condition Means and Percentage Increase. MORENA respondents. N=1398.

	Control Mean	Treatment Mean	Percentage Increase
Anti-Democratic Index	3.26	3.49	7.0%
Firer Judges	3.10	3.37	8.5%
Disobey Justice	3.06	3.31	8.4%
Institutional Nihilism	3.41	3.62	6.1%
Less Power to Institutions	3.48	3.66	5.3%

Table A.16: Experimental Condition Means and Percentage Increase. Nonpartisans. N=801.

	Control Mean	Treatment Mean	Percentage Increase
Anti-Democratic Index	2.74	2.86	4.2%
Firer Judges	2.40	2.54	5.8%
Disobey Justice	2.72	2.82	3.5%
Institutional Nihilism	3.21	3.38	5.3%
Less Power to Institutions	2.63	2.69	2.2%

Table A.17: Experimental Condition Means and Percentage Increase. Opposition partisans. N=540.

	Control Mean	Treatment Mean	Percentage Increase
Anti-Democratic Index	2.15	2.39	11.3%
Firer Judges	1.86	2.09	12.2%
Disobey Justice	2.03	2.37	17.1%
Institutional Nihilism	2.71	2.86	5.4%
Less Power to Institutions	1.99	2.24	12.4%

Table A.18: Experimental Condition Means and Percentage Increase. Non-MORENA. N=1341.

	Control Mean	Treatment Mean	Percentage Increase
Anti-Democratic Index	2.50	2.67	6.8%
Firer Judges	2.18	2.36	8.1%
Disobey Justice	2.44	2.64	8.2%
Institutional Nihilism	3.01	3.17	5.5%
Less Power to Institutions	2.37	2.51	5.8%

Corruption Perceptions within the Judicial Power

Table A.19: Conditional average treatment effects on corruption perceptions within the Judicial Power

	<i>Dependent variable: Corruption perceptions within the Judicial Power</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.01 (0.08)	0.26* (0.11)	−0.18 (0.16)	−0.20 (0.21)	−0.19 (0.13)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adj. R ²	−0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.00	0.00
RMSE	2.23	2.05	2.32	2.49	2.40

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.20: Conditional average treatment effects on corruption perceptions within the Judicial Power with covariates

	<i>Dependent variable: Corruption perceptions within the Judicial Power</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.02 (0.08)	0.28** (0.11)	−0.16 (0.16)	−0.26 (0.21)	−0.17 (0.13)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.05
Adj. R ²	0.03	0.07	0.01	0.06	0.03
RMSE	2.20	1.98	2.31	2.41	2.36

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Emotional Reactions on Pooled Sample

Table A.21: Average treatment effects on emotional reactions

<i>Dependent variable: Emotional reactions</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Angry	Optimistic	Scared	Nervous
Treatment	0.68*** (0.05)	-0.27*** (0.04)	0.32*** (0.04)	0.20*** (0.04)
Controls	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	3001	3001	3001
R ²	0.07	0.01	0.02	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.07	0.01	0.02	0.01
RMSE	1.26	1.18	1.19	1.15

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Emotional Reactions by Partisanship

Feeling Angry

Table A.22: Conditional Average treatment effects on feeling angry

<i>Dependent variable: Feeling angry</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.68*** (0.05)	0.78*** (0.07)	0.65*** (0.09)	0.47*** (0.12)	0.58*** (0.07)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.07	0.09	0.06	0.03	0.05
Adj. R ²	0.07	0.09	0.06	0.03	0.05
RMSE	1.26	1.22	1.26	1.33	1.30

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Feeling Optimistic

Table A.23: Conditional Average treatment effects on feeling optimistic

<i>Dependent variable: Feeling optimistic</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	−0.27*** (0.04)	−0.29*** (0.06)	−0.23** (0.08)	−0.36*** (0.10)	−0.28*** (0.06)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
RMSE	1.18	1.16	1.11	1.16	1.13

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Feeling Scared

Table A.24: Conditional Average treatment effects on feeling scared

<i>Dependent variable: Feeling scared</i>					
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.32*** (0.04)	0.29*** (0.06)	0.45*** (0.08)	0.10 (0.11)	0.31*** (0.07)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.02
Adj. R ²	0.02	0.01	0.03	−0.00	0.01
RMSE	1.19	1.14	1.18	1.25	1.22

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Feeling Nervous

Table A.25: Conditional Average treatment effects on feeling nervous

	<i>Dependent variable: Feeling nervous</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.20*** (0.04)	0.18** (0.06)	0.30*** (0.08)	0.13 (0.10)	0.23*** (0.06)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.01
RMSE	1.15	1.08	1.16	1.21	1.19

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Mediation Analysis

For different partisan groups, we assess whether the treatment effect on the anti-democratic index is mediated through (i) corruption perceptions, and (ii) feeling angry. We run the mediation analysis on MORENA supporters, on nonpartisans, and on supporters of opposition parties. We also include estimates for non-MORENA supporters, grouping together nonpartisans and supporters of opposition parties.

In Tables A.26 and A.27, we estimate the total, average direct (ADE), and average causal mediation effects (ACME) of the trash-talking treatment on the anti-democratic index relative to the control group via the “mediation” package in R.

We find evidence that for MORENA sympathizers, the treatment operates through increasing corruption perceptions and anger. For nonpartisans and opposition partisans, the treatment effect is not channeled through increased corruption perceptions. Among nonpartisans, there is evidence for the anger mechanism. For opposition partisans, the anger average causal mediation effect is in the expected direction, although not statistically significant.

Table A.26: Causal Mediation Analysis on Anti-Democratic Index. Mediator: Corruption Perceptions.

	MORENA	Non-partisan	Opposition partisan	Non-MORENA
ACME	0.02** (0.00, 0.03)	-0.01 (-0.03, 0.01)	-0.02 (-0.05, 0.01)	-0.01 (-0.03, 0.00)
ADE	0.21*** (0.14, 0.28)	0.17*** (0.07, 0.26)	0.21*** (0.09, 0.32)	0.19*** (0.11, 0.27)
Total Effect	0.22*** (0.16, 0.30)	0.16*** (0.05, 0.25)	0.19*** (0.07, 0.3)	0.18*** (0.10, 0.26)
Num. obs	1398	801	540	1341

Note: The total, average direct (ADE), and average causal mediation effects (ACME) of the trash-talking treatment on the anti-democratic index relative to the control group. Controls include age, gender, socioeconomic level, political interest and presidential approval. Each column corresponds to a separate mediation analysis. 95 % confidence intervals estimated with a nonparametric bootstrap with 1000 simulations. Signif. codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘ ’ 1.

Table A.27: Causal Mediation Analysis on Anti-Democratic Index. Mediator: Feeling Angry.

	MORENA	Non-partisan	Opposition partisan	Non-MORENA
ACME	0.07*** (0.05, 0.10)	0.03* (0.00, 0.06)	0.01 (−0.01, 0.04)	0.02* (0.00, 0.04)
ADE	0.15*** (0.08, 0.22)	0.13** (0.03, 0.23)	0.18** (0.06, 0.31)	0.16** (0.07, 0.24)
Total Effect	0.22*** (0.15, 0.30)	0.16*** (0.06, 0.25)	0.19*** (0.07, 0.32)	0.18*** (0.10, 0.26)
Num. obs	1398	801	540	1341

Note: The total, average direct (ADE), and average causal mediation effects (ACME) of the trash-talking treatment on the anti-democratic index relative to the control group. Controls include age, gender, socioeconomic level, political interest and presidential approval. Each column corresponds to a separate mediation analysis. 95 % confidence intervals estimated with a nonparametric bootstrap with 1000 simulations. Signif. codes: 0 ‘***’ 0.001 ‘**’ 0.01 ‘*’ 0.05 ‘.’ 0.1 ‘ ’ 1.

Strong Leader Question

After exposure to the treatment, we asked respondents the following question: Having a strong leader in the government, even if the leader bends the rules to get things done. Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad, or very bad as a form of government for our country?

We find no effect of the trash-talking treatment on this outcome. Unlike items in the anti-democratic index, this question is not explicitly related to the judiciary and political institutions. A reason why López Obrador's attacks on the judiciary did not affect responses could be that subjects interpreted this outcome as unrelated to the judiciary and political institutions.

Table A.28: Conditional average treatment effects on strong leader outcome

	<i>Dependent variable: Having a strong leader</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.03 (0.04)	0.02 (0.05)	0.12 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.11)	0.05 (0.06)
Controls	No	No	No	No	No
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	0.00	-0.00	-0.00
RMSE	1.13	1.00	1.06	1.24	1.15

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table A.29: Conditional average treatment effects on strong leader outcome with covariates

	<i>Dependent variable: Having a strong leader</i>				
	Pooled (1)	MORENA (2)	Non-partisan (3)	Opposition partisan (4)	Non-MORENA (5)
Treatment	0.03 (0.04)	0.01 (0.05)	0.16* (0.07)	−0.10 (0.10)	0.06 (0.06)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3001	1398	801	540	1341
R ²	0.18	0.06	0.16	0.20	0.18
Adj. R ²	0.18	0.05	0.14	0.17	0.17
RMSE	1.02	0.98	0.99	1.13	1.05

Note: Controls include age, gender, socio-economic level, political interest and presidential approval.

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Survey Instrument

English

1. In general, how interested are you in politics?
 - Not interested at all
 - Not very interested
 - Somewhat interested
 - Very interested
2. How would you describe the current economic situation in the country?
 - Very bad
 - Bad
 - Neither good nor bad
 - Good
 - Very good
3. Regardless of your political position, do you approve or disapprove of the way in which President Andrés Manuel López Obrador is conducting his government?
 - Disapprove a lot
 - Somewhat disapprove
 - Neither approve nor disapprove
 - Somewhat approve
 - Approve a lot
4. Attention Check 1
5. Did you vote in the 2018 presidential election?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
6. (If YES in the previous question) Which candidate did you vote for in the July 1, 2018 Presidential Election? [Randomize order of response categories]
 - Andrés Manuel López Obrador
 - Ricardo Anaya
 - José Antonio Meade
 - Jaime Rodríguez Calderón

- Margarita Zavala
7. Did you vote in the 2021 federal elections, in which the Chamber of Deputies was renewed?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
8. (If YES in the previous question) Which party did you vote for in the legislative elections of 2021? [Randomize order of response categories]
- MORENA
 - PAN
 - PRI
 - PRD
 - Partido Verde
 - Movimiento Ciudadano
 - Partido del Trabajo
 - Other
9. Of the following political parties, which of them do you most identify or sympathize with? [Randomize order of parties]
- MORENA
 - PAN
 - PRI
 - PRD
 - Partido Verde
 - Movimiento Ciudadano
 - Partido del Trabajo
 - Other
 - None
10. (If subject selected a party in the previous question) Do you feel very close to this party, a little close, or not very close?
- Very close
 - A little close
 - Not very close

11. The concepts of left and right are used to summarize in a very simplified way what people think about many topics. Please place yourself on the following scale ranging from 1 to 10 where 1 represents the left and 10 represents the right.

- 1-10 scale
- Don't know

12. People use different sources for news and information about politics. While some like to read newspapers, others say they prefer to watch television or use internet resources. How often do you follow political news?

	None	Once a month or less	2-3 times a month	Once a week	2-3 times a week	Everyday
Newspapers (Online editions included)						
Television (Online streaming included)						
Internet resources (websites, blogs, online-only channels, social networks such as Facebook or Twitter)						

13. Attention Check 2

14. We are interested in your reaction to statements made by politicians recently. Please read through the following statement carefully.

Respondents in the **treatment** group will be presented with the following text:

At a recent morning conference, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said: “Good morning. It is important to bear in mind the responsibilities of the Judiciary. The Constitution of Mexico formally establishes that there are three Powers: the Executive represented by the president; the Legislative personified by deputies and senators, as well as the Judicial branch which is made up of judges, magistrates and ministers.

However, the sad reality is that the judiciary today is riddled with inefficiency and corruption. It is taken over by white-collar crime and organized crime. Judges and magistrates are often influenced by money and grant protection to criminals. They are not people characterized by honesty. The judiciary is rotten. We have one of the world’s priciest judicial systems and one of the most inefficient. We’re wasting citizens’ taxes on a broken system. The judicial power needs reform.”

Control group respondents will see the following text:

At a recent morning conference, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said: “Good morning. It is important to bear in mind the responsibilities of the Judiciary. The Constitution of Mexico formally establishes that there are three Powers: the Executive represented by the president; the Legislative personified by deputies and senators, as well as the Judicial branch which is made up of judges, magistrates and ministers.

The Judiciary is responsible for ensuring that justice is delivered; they are the ones who must always be on the lookout. The Judiciary, the Supreme Court, the Judicial Council, address this matter. Their job and basic function is to assure justice. There are public ministries and judges, and magistrates and ministers, who are the ones who decide who is guilty and who is not guilty. The various judicial bodies, with their specific roles, contribute to the functioning of the judiciary power.”

15. Having a strong leader in the government, even if the leader bends the rules to get things done. Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad, or very bad as a form of government for our country?
- Very good
 - Good
 - Neither good nor bad
 - Bad
 - Very bad

16. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The president should have more power over institutions such as the Judicial Power, INE, and the Central Bank.					
The President should be able to fire judges who oppose him					
The President should obey court rulings even when they go against his government					
We cannot fix the problems in our political institutions, so we need to tear them down and start over					

17. How widespread do you think corruption is in the Judicial Power in Mexico? Please select your answer on a 10-point scale. 1 means “not widespread at all,” and 10 means “very widespread.”

- 1-10 scale

18. (If Treatment == Control) Below you can see a series of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Thinking about the statements of Andrés Manuel López Obrador that “the judiciary is responsible for ensuring that justice is delivered”, indicate to what extent you feel each emotion. Read each word and then select the appropriate answer.

(If Treatment == Trash talking) Below you can see a series of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Thinking of the statements by Andrés Manuel López Obrador that “the judiciary today is riddled with inefficiency and corruption”, indicate to what extent you feel each emotion. Read each word and then select the appropriate answer.

	Very slightly/Not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a lot	Extremely
Afraid					
Angry					
Enthusiastic					
Hopeful					

Spanish

- ¿Cuán interesado está usted en la política?
 - Nada interesado
 - Poco interesado
 - Algo interesado
 - Muy interesado
- ¿Cómo calificaría usted la situación económica actual del país?
 - Muy mala
 - Mala
 - Ni buena ni mala
 - Buena
 - Muy buena
- Independiente de su posición política, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma en que el presidente Andres Manuel López Obrador está conduciendo su gobierno?
 - Desaprueba mucho
 - Desaprueba algo
 - Ni aprueba ni desaprueba
 - Aprueba algo
 - Aprueba mucho
- Attention Check 1
- ¿Votó usted en la elección presidencial de 2018?
 - Sí
 - No
 - No sabe
- (Si contestó Sí en la Pregunta Anterior) ¿Por cuál candidato votó en la elección presidencial de 2018? [Randomize order]
 - Andrés Manuel López Obrador

- Ricardo Anaya Cortés
 - José Antonio Meade Kuribreña
 - Jaime Rodríguez Calderón
 - Margarita Zavala
7. ¿Votó usted en las elecciones federales de 2021, en las que se renovó la Cámara de Diputados?
- Sí
 - No
 - No sabe
8. (Si contestó Sí en la Pregunta Anterior) ¿Por cuál partido político votó en las elecciones federales de 2021, en las que se renovó la Cámara de Diputados? [Randomize order]
- MORENA
 - PAN
 - PRI
 - PRD
 - Partido Verde
 - Movimiento Ciudadano
 - Partido Humanista
 - Otro
9. De los siguientes partidos políticos, ¿con cuál de ellos se identifica más o simpatiza más usted? [Randomize order]
- MORENA
 - PAN
 - PRI
 - PRD
 - Partido Verde
 - Movimiento Ciudadano
 - Partido Humanista
 - Otro
 - Ninguno
10. (Si contestó un partido en la Pregunta Anterior) ¿Qué tan cercano se siente usted a ese partido político?
- No muy cercano

- Algo cercano
 - Muy cercano
11. Los conceptos de izquierda y derecha son útiles para resumir de una manera muy simplificada lo que piensa la gente en muchos temas. Por favor ubíquese a sí mismo en la escala siguiente que va de 1 a 10 donde 1 representa a la izquierda y 10 representa a la derecha.
- Escala 1-10
 - No sabe
12. La gente se informa a través de distintos medios de comunicación. Mientras que algunos leen el periódico, otros prefieren mirar televisión o informarse por internet ¿Con qué frecuencia sigue las noticias por cada uno de estos medios de comunicación?

	Nunca	Una vez al mes	Dos o tres veces al mes	Una vez a la semana	Dos o tres veces a la semana	Todos los días
Periódicos (periódicos on-line incluidos)						
Televisión (servicios on-line incluidos)						
Internet (blogs, Facebook, Twitter, páginas web)						

13. Attention Check 2
14. Estamos interesados en su reacción a declaraciones hechas por políticos recientemente. Por favor, lea atentamente el siguiente fragmento.

Respondents in the **treatment** group will be presented with the following text:

En una reciente conferencia mañanera, el presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador dijo:

“Buenos días. Es importante tener en cuenta las responsabilidades del Poder Judicial. La Constitución de México formalmente establece que hay tres Poderes: el Ejecutivo representado por el presidente; el Legislativo, personificado por diputados y senadores; así como el Judicial, que es integrado por jueces, magistrados y ministros.

Sin embargo, la triste realidad es que el Poder Judicial de hoy está plagado de ineficiencia y corrupción. Está tomado por la delincuencia de cuello blanco y la delincuencia organizada. Los jueces y magistrados a menudo se ven influenciados por el dinero y otorgan amparos a delincuentes. No son gentes caracterizadas por la honestidad. El Poder Judicial está podrido. Tenemos uno de los sistemas judiciales más caros del mundo y uno de los más ineficientes. Estamos desperdiciando los impuestos de los ciudadanos en un sistema roto. El Poder Judicial necesita una reforma.”

Control group respondents will see the following text:

En una reciente conferencia mañanera, el presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador dijo:

“Buenos días. Es importante tener en cuenta las responsabilidades del Poder Judicial. La Constitución de México formalmente establece que hay tres Poderes: el Ejecutivo representado por el presidente; el Legislativo, personificado por diputados y senadores; así como el Judicial, que es integrado por jueces, magistrados y ministros.

El Poder Judicial se encarga de que se imparta justicia, son los que deben de estar siempre pendientes. El Poder Judicial, la Suprema Corte, el Consejo de la Judicatura, atienden este asunto. Su trabajo y su función básica es que haya justicia. Existen ministerios públicos y jueces, y magistrados y ministros, que son los que deciden quién es culpable y quién no es culpable. Los distintos órganos judiciales, con sus roles específicos, contribuyen al funcionamiento del Poder Judicial.”

15. ¿Usted diría que es muy bueno, bueno, malo o muy malo tener a un líder fuerte en el gobierno que consiga resultados, aunque no cumpla del todo con las reglas para gobernar nuestro país?

- Muy bueno
- Bueno
- Ni bueno ni malo
- Malo
- Muy malo

16. Por favor dígame si usted está muy de acuerdo, de acuerdo, ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo, en desacuerdo o muy en desacuerdo con cada una de las siguientes afirmaciones:

	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo
El presidente debería tener más poder sobre instituciones como el Poder Judicial, el INE (Instituto Nacional Electoral) y el Banxico (Banco de México)					
El presidente debería poder despedir a los jueces que se oponen a él					
El presidente debería obedecer las decisiones judiciales, incluso cuando perjudican a su gobierno					
No podemos arreglar los problemas en nuestras instituciones políticas, necesitamos derribarlas y empezar de nuevo.					

17. ¿Qué tan extendida piensa usted que está la corrupción en el Poder Judicial en México? Indique su respuesta en esta escala. El 1 significa “nada extendida” y el 10 significa “muy extendida”.

- Escala 1-10

18. (If Treatment == Control) A continuación, puede ver una serie de palabras que describen diferentes sentimientos y emociones. Pensando en las declaraciones de AMLO que acaba de leer que “el Poder Judicial se encarga de que se imparta justicia”, indique hasta qué punto siente cada emoción. Lea cada palabra y luego seleccione la respuesta apropiada.

(If Treatment == Trash-Talking) A continuación, puede ver una serie de palabras que describen diferentes sentimientos y emociones. Pensando en las declaraciones de AMLO que acaba de leer que “el Poder Judicial de hoy está plagado de ineficiencia y corrupción”, indique hasta qué punto siente cada emoción. Lea cada palabra y luego seleccione la respuesta apropiada.

	Nada	Un poco	Moderadamente	Bastante	Extremadamente
Asustado					
Enojado					
Optimista					
Nervioso					