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Policy Research Working Paper 10020

Extortion and Civic Engagement among Guatemalan Deportees

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WORLD BANK GROUP
Social Sustainability and Inclusion Global Practice
April 2022

Abstract

How does extortion experienced during the migration journey affect the civic engagement of deported migrants returned to their home country? More broadly, how does extortion affect political participation? Little is known about either the political behavior of returnees or about how coercive economic shocks experienced during migration affect subsequent levels of political participation. More broadly, existing literature on how victimization affects political participation is inconclusive, particularly when combined with existing work on economic insecurity. Studying deported migrants and the quasi-random experience of extortion helps address the endogeneity that often confounds these analyses. This approach isolates the impact of extortion on political action from potentially confounding factors related to local security or corruption. Using a novel dataset concerning Guatemalan migrants returned to Guatemala by the U.S. government, this paper finds that extortion has a direct, positive relationship with multiple forms of civic action, and that, at least in this context, the mobilizing effects of economic hardship outweigh the potentially demobilizing effects of fear of crime.

This paper is a product of the Social Sustainability and Inclusion Global Practice. It is part of a larger effort by the World Bank to provide open access to its research and make a contribution to development policy discussions around the world. Policy Research Working Papers are also posted on the Web at http://www.worldbank.org/prwp. The authors may be contacted at edenny@ucmerced.edu.

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Produced by the Research Support Team

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Keywords: Deported migrants, Political Participation, Extortion, Migration, Guatemala.
JEL codes: D72, D74, O15

*This paper was commissioned by the World Bank Social Sustainability and Inclusion Global Practice as part of the activity "Preventing Social Conflict and Promoting Social Cohesion in Forced Displacement Contexts." The activity is task managed by Audrey Sacks and Susan Wong with assistance from Stephen Winkler. This work is part of the program "Building the Evidence on Protracted Forced Displacement: A Multi-Stakeholder Partnership". The program is funded by UK aid from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), it is managed by the World Bank Group (WBG) and was established in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The scope of the program is to expand the global knowledge on forced displacement by funding quality research and disseminating results for the use of practitioners and policy makers. This work does not necessarily reflect the views of FCDO, the WBG or UNHCR.

1 Introduction

How does extortion affect political behavior? Extortion not only is a form of economic hardship; it also can be a form of traumatic victimization. Yet, existing literature has reached mixed conclusions about the relationships between political engagement and both economic hardship and victimization. For example, socioeconomic shocks may generate grievances and lead to increased turnout, or they may reduce participation because people have fewer of the resources required to engage in politics (e.g. Brady et al., 1995; Burden et al., 2017). Similarly, some research suggests that people exposed to violence will be more pro-social and thus more politically engaged (e.g. Bateson, 2012; Bauer et al., 2016). On the other hand, victimized individuals may lose faith in governmental institutions and participate less in public life (e.g. Collier and Vicente, 2014; Ley, 2018). In the aggregate, these studies may have varied results partly because of the difficulty disassociating traumatic experiences, whether related to violence or economic costs, from the economic and security environment in which the traumatic experiences occur. This environment can itself influence or correlate with unobserved factors shaping victim behavior. For example, violence and economic coercion are more likely to occur in places with high crime rates, and local criminal networks may shape how and to what degree one is willing to take civic action.

In this paper, we leverage unique data from Guatemalan deported migrants to disentangle the effect of extortion on political behavior from the potentially confounding local context in which extortion occurs. Deported migrants are a unique population for this inquiry because deportation involuntarily moves individuals, changing their local political and behavioral context so that it is distinct from where the extortion occurred. Furthermore, we show that extortion experienced by coyote-using migrants is quasi-random. Thus, we use the variation in experiences of extortion during the migration journey among individuals returned to Guatemala by the U.S. government to better isolate the relationship between extortion and civic engagement. We argue that extortion affects multiple processes that have opposite relationships with migration. On one hand, extortion increases social disengagement from fear of crime, which corresponds with decreased political participation and party identification. However, at the same time, extortion serves as a negative economic shock, and more negative economic assessments correspond with greater political engagement.

In addition to our theoretical contribution to the literatures on victimization, socioeconomic status, and political engagement, this paper also provides valuable insights into the political behavior of deported migrants, an important topic on which little data exist. In 2019 and 2020, the United States' Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency deported over 450,000 people (ICE, 2021a,b). Prior studies have analyzed the effects of remittances on

local politics (Danielson, 2017) and have examined the role of diasporas in funding conflict (Godwin, 2018), but little has been written about the political influence of these returnees once they are sent back home. Yet, understanding the political engagement of returnees has significant policy implications. For example, it is plausible that newly returned individuals come home with a desire to galvanize local and national politics in order to change the same conditions that initially pushed them away from their country of origin. However, it is also possible that such individuals decline to participate in politics because they are linked more strongly to the country they migrated to and may plan to try to return to in the future. As such, the political engagement of returnees has implications for migration cycles.

We focus on the case of Guatemala, which has received 18% of migrants deported from the US since 2018, second only to Mexico (Abuelafia et al., 2019). Guatemalan migrants frequently suffer extortion, kidnapping, violence, and death during their journey to the U.S. (e.g. Vogt, 2013; Heidbrink, 2020). In order to better understand the returnee experience, we collected survey data from over 1,000 Guatemalans deported from the U.S. immediately upon their return to Guatemala as well as 1 and 6 months later. We also conducted a series of interviews to better assess the results from our quantitative results.

We find evidence of two distinct, competing mechanisms linking extortion and civic action. First, we show that extortion increases respondents' negative assessments of their personal economic conditions in Guatemala; such negative economic assessments are correlated with higher civic action. Second, we show that extortion predicts a greater likelihood of fear-induced avoidance behaviors upon return to Guatemala, and we demonstrate that higher fear of crime correlates with lower civic engagement. Overall, while these two mechanisms drive behavioral predictions of political engagement in opposite directions, we find that the mobilizing effect of perceived economic hardship is larger and more statistically robust. More precisely, our data show a direct, positive relationship between extortion and interest in a range of forms of civic action, including protest, attending community meetings, party identification, and volunteering. The strength of this finding is surprising, given that lower economic resources often correlate with lower political engagement. We suggest that, while chronic economic hardship may be demobilizing, extortion represents an economic shock, and the change in well-being it causes motivates greater political action. This argument is consistent with other studies that find both economic losses and rising inequality mobilize other populations. [1]

We begin by providing background information concerning the Guatemala context, the migration journey, and the deportee experience. Next, we discuss relevant streams of lit-

[1]Supplemental information and analyses are available in the online appendix: `https://ucmerced.box.com/s/altfznqnx5z8280757jl85vdutryp3z2`

erature for our theory-building and then present the relevant hypotheses. After describing our data and survey methods, we demonstrate that the experience of extortion is quasi-random among migrants who rely on coyotes to enter the U.S. Then, we show that there is a direct, positive relationship between extortion and civic engagement among returnees. To better understand the causal mechanisms and connect our work to existing literature, we present findings linking extortion to both fear of crime (demobilizing) and economic hardship (mobilizing). We conclude with a discussion of results and their policy implications.

2 Context: The Migration Experience

In 2019, ICE removed more than 267,000 individuals from the United States. Of these, almost 55,000 migrants were deported from the U.S. to Guatemala, a 12-year high (ICE, 2021a). These large numbers of deportations make it crucial to understand how and when deported migrants are able to reintegrate into their "home" societies and political systems, often after years abroad. In this section we briefly summarize the context in which Guatemalans migrate to and are deported from the United States.

Qualitative and policy studies suggest that a range of macro-level conditions in Guatemala have contributed to emigration to the United States from Guatemala, including socioeconomic difficulties, violence associated with transnational organized crime, and rampant corruption (Jonas and Rodríguez, 2015; Cohn et al., 2017; Bermeo, 2018; Abuelafia et al., 2019; Cheatham, 2019; Meyer and Taft-Morales, 2019). Our own qualitative works also pinpoints economic difficulties and the lack of opportunities in Guatemala as drivers of intentions to remigrate. Regardless of the reasons for migrating, the journey can be a dangerous undertaking. It is common for migrants from Central America to suffer assault, kidnapping, bribery, and/or rape during the journey (Leyva-Flores et al., 2019; Abuelafia et al., 2019; Vogt, 2012; Infante et al., 2012; Hagan, 2012; Slack et al., 2018). In fact, more than two thirds of people leaving the Northern Triangle via Mexico are victims of violence while in transit, and at least one in three women suffer some form of sexual assault before arriving to their destination (MSF, 2017). Similarly, a cross-sectional study of over twelve thousand migrants in transit through Mexico to the United States suggests that nearly a third of migrants from Central America report experiencing violence during the journey (Leyva-Flores et al., 2019). In summary, violence during migration is prevalent on migration routes to the United States, and there is an element of randomness in one's exposure to violence.

While migration victimization takes many forms, one particularly prominent one is extortion. One scholar finds that, of 50 youths and families who had migrated from Guatemala, nearly 90 percent incurred debt to fund their migration (Heidbrink, 2019b, p. 266). But

migrants do not always consent to paying. For example, a study of migrants in Mexico notes that criminals kidnap migrants in order to extort money from their families (Vogt, 2013). When individuals being extorted will not reveal the information about their families, many are abused in an effort to force them to reveal contact information for family members (MSF, 2017). We also find in our interviews that some individuals are denied food and water or are held in a place until they pay additional money, potentially as a result changing coyotes en route. Overall, extortion during migration frequently involves both violence and familial indebtedness.

It is important to note that illegal migration in other parts of the world involves similar abuse. For example, individuals fleeing to Europe experience physical, sexual, psychological, and verbal abuse (Dempsey, 2020). UNHCR estimates that thousands of people die and go missing at sea on this journey to Europe (UNHCR, 2020). Similarly, research in MSF clinics in Serbia suggests that more than a quarter of refugees had experienced violence during their journey (Arsenijević et al., 2017).

Although little work has been done on the topic of individuals returning to Guatemala after deportation, studies from other areas of Latin America and the world more broadly can shed light on many of the issues faced by individuals forced to return to their birth country via deportation. For example, in a study of life after forced deportation to Mexico, Slack (2019) finds that returnees are easy targets for violence because they often do not have strong social networks in their country of origin and are more closely tied to the United States. Some scholars have even called individuals deported from the United States with strong ties to that country "deported Americans" (Caldwell, 2019) or the "new American diaspora" (Kanstroom, 2012). Indeed, in a study of rejected asylum seekers who did not obtain residence permits to six different countries, Ruben et al. (2009) conclude that returnees who were able to develop social contacts in their countries of origin were more successful on their return. Employment and independent housing were also helpful. Beyond establishing social ties, deportees face other challenges. For example, research on deported Afghans and deported Salvadorans indicates that debt can fuel cycles of migration, deportation, and re-migration (Schuster and Majidi, 2013; Heidbrink, 2019a). As such, many deported migrants face extensive challenges once they return to their home countries, on top of the challenges which forced them to leave that country in the first place, violence which they may have experienced while migrating, and the deportation experience. Understanding deportees' political engagement in their home country is crucial for conceptualizing re-integration and re-migration.

3 Theory: Extortion and Political Behavior

This project integrates migration into the study of victimization and economic hardship, two literatures that often have divergent and inconclusive expectations about political behavior. While existing literature is inconclusive regarding the relationship between victimization and political participation, many of the mechanisms explored in existing studies do not cleanly map onto deportees. For example, it is unclear why victimization experienced in Mexico would affect returnees' levels of confidence in the Guatemalan government. Thus, we propose a novel mechanism tying victimization to depressed political action: fear of experiencing further crime. At the same time, extortion is different from other forms of victimization in that it has economic consequences as well as psychological ones. We argue that increased economic hardship as a result of extortion will increase political engagement. In other words, extortion has two opposing effects on political participation: it increases engagement by serving as an economic shock but decreases engagement by increasing victims' fear of crime.

Why focus on extortion when there are many forms of victimization which returnees may have experienced and which may shape their political participation in their country of origin? For example, the reasons that the individual fled his or her country in the first place may shape his or her behavior upon return return. However, the relationship between experiences in one's country of origin and political participation once returned to that country is likely endogenous. Another form of victimization relevant for returnees is the experience of deportation itself. However, given that all returnees have been forcibly returned to their country of origin, there is insufficient variation to examine the impact of deportation in a causal fashion. Victimization experienced while migrating, in contrast, offers two methodological advantages: it primarily occurs in a different location from the political participation of returnees, and it is unpredictable. We discuss the randomness of victimization in more detail below in Section 4.2. We focus on extortion rather than other forms of victimization experienced while migrating, such as kidnapping, because qualitative research discussed above suggests that extortion is a particularly common and salient form of violence experienced by migrants (e.g. Heidbrink, 2019b; Vogt, 2013; MSF, 2017).

3.1 Victimization and Political Engagement: Existing Work

Although there is little research on how migrant exposure to violence affects political participation, there is a wide range of research (with mixed findings) on the relationship between victimization and political participation more broadly. Victimization refers to both crime and wartime violence. On one hand, some research suggests that people exposed to

violence will be more politically engaged. For example, after civil wars, individuals who have personally experienced wartime violence vote at higher rates as well as more frequently engage in other forms of civic and political participation (for a summary, see Bauer et al., 2016). Similarly, research by Bateson (2012) and Sønderskov et al. (2020) suggests that people who have been recently victimized by crime are more civically and politically engaged. While most studies focus on individual victimization, research by Bellows and Miguel (2009) indicates that individuals whose households experienced more intense wartime violence are more likely to be politically engaged.

The causal mechanisms underlying this relationship between victimization and political participation are not clear, especially given that existing work has explored both crime and violence, which may have distinct effects on behavior. Nonetheless, scholars have suggested a range of explanations, including individual growth and activation following trauma (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004; Blattman, 2009), anger (Ditton et al., 1999), and the social affirmation of in-group identity (Schuessler, 2000; Dorff, 2017). On the other hand, other research suggests that victimization has a negative effect on political participation; victimized individuals lose faith in government institutions and withdraw from public life (Collier and Vicente, 2014; Ley, 2018; Coupé and Obrizan, 2016). One possible reason for these contradictory results is the potential confounding role of the context in which victimization has occurred.

Yet, deportees are distinct from these broader populations examined in existing literature, and many of the mechanisms which may explain the relationship between victimization and political engagement in general do not seem to apply to this population. Regarding confidence in government, as noted above, the victimization that deportees experienced during the migration journey occurred in a different location than their country of origin to which they have been deported. In the context of Guatemalan migrants, the violence they experience during migration primarily occurs in Mexico. It is unclear why migrants would lose faith in one government as a product of violence committed in a territory under the control of another government. Secondly, post-traumatic growth requires major life crises which rupture people's assumptions about their world. The forms of migration violence experienced by deportees, in contrast, are one source of trauma in a series of traumas, including those which forced the migrants to leave their homes in the first place and those which force them to return to the countries they fled. For example, it is frequently exposure to violence or large-scale conflict which initially prompt people to leave their home countries (e.g. Apodaca, 1998; Davenport et al., 2003), and the case of Guatemala migration to the United States is no different (e.g. Bermeo, 2018; Abuelafia et al., 2019; Meyer and Taft-Morales, 2019). Furthermore, all deportees have by definition been deported; migrant detention and repatriation have significant mental health consequences for many individuals (Steel et al.,

2006; von Lersner et al., 2008). Lastly, in terms of arguments grounded in political participation as the affirmation of in-group identity, it is not clear what identity deportees could be affirming unless they left their home country because of persecution on the basis of identity. Deportees are a relatively small segment of any country's population, do not typically know each other, and often arrive in small groups. In place of these possible mechanisms discussed by other scholars, we posit one novel mechanism tying victimization to depressed political participation – fear – and one novel mechanism tying extortion specifically to increased political participation – economic shock.

3.2 Victimization and Fear in the Context of Migration

There is an extensive literature which shows that migrants tend to vote less than their native counterparts (e.g. Shaw et al., 2000; Cassel, 2002; Garcia, 2011; OECD, 2018). Internal migrants also participate less in formal and informal networks, and turnout declines in areas with larger proportions of migrants (Akarca and Tansel, 2015; Gay, 2012; Gaikwad and Nellis, 2020; Villamizar Chaparro, 2021). However, there is little literature on 1) the political participation among migrants who are deported to their country of origin or on 2) how variation in violence experienced while migrating affects political participation. We theorize that victimization such as extortion is correlated with increased fear among deportees. Furthermore, this fear is politically demobilizing.

What are the psychological impacts of migration journey violence? Experiencing abuse while migrating is predictive of depression and alcohol dependency (Altman et al., 2018). Among those individuals who experienced victimization during the migration process, such as being robbed or attacked, 21 percent are at risk for PTSD (Perreira and Ornelas, 2013). This is true not only in Central American migrants, but in migration populations around the world. For example, one meta-analysis of 113 articles confirms that exposure to violence during migration affects mental health; the most frequent consequences include post-traumatic stress disorder (Kirmayer et al., 2011). PTSD is closely tied to anxiety (Torres, 2020). More broadly, a great deal of research suggests that fear follows experiencing crime in general (e.g. Skogan, 1987; Walklate and Mythen, 2007). Thus, one of the most important mental health consequences of experiencing violence is increased levels of anxiety.

We argue that these mental health consequences of victimization affect political engagement. Some emotions, such as anger, mobilize voters (Valentino et al., 2009, 2011). In contrast, both depression and anxiety are politically demobilizing (Weber, 2012; Young, 2019; Burden et al., 2017; Landwehr and Ojeda, 2021). For example, when triggered to consider stressful life experiences unrelated to politics, individuals without a history of participation

in politics are less likely to turn out to vote (Hassell and Settle, 2017). Therefore, we hypothesize that those deportees who were extorted during the migration process will suffer from higher levels of anxiety than other deportees and therefore will be more disengaged with politics.

In a non-medical context, one way to evaluate respondents' levels of anxiety is to consider whether they avoid everyday activities out of fear. There is grounding for this approach in Psychology. More specifically, according to appraisal models of emotions and judgement/decision making, fear and sadness are both correlated with pessimistic estimates of risk and thus risk-aversion (e.g. Keltner et al., 1993; Lerner and Keltner, 2001; Lerner et al., 2015). Fear in particular leads to lowered risk tolerance and behavioral avoidance among a wide range of individuals (Druckman and McDermott, 2008; Cohn et al., 2015; Campos-Vazquez and Cuilty, 2014; Guiso et al., 2018). Thus, individuals who are suffering from elevated levels of anxiety will be more risk averse and will avoid a range of situations out of fear. This fear, we argue, will depress their political engagement.

3.3 Economic Difficulties and Political Engagement

While extortion may have emotional effects on migrants, it may also have have economic consequences. However, like the literature on victimization, research into the relationship between economic shocks and provides is inconclusive. On the one hand, according to socioeconomic models of mobilization, people with fewer resources are less able to engage in politics. On the other hand, negative shocks to income may prompt grievances against the government and thus increased political engagement.

A range of evidence suggests that those who face economic insecurity in the present or who grew up economically disadvantaged are less likely to participate in politics compared to people who are more socioeconomically prosperous (Blais, 2006; Schlozman et al., 2013; Ojeda, 2018). At the individual level, the resource model of civic engagement provides one explanation. This theory suggests that time, money, and civic skills are all conducive to political participation because they provided the resources required to engage in politics (Brady et al., 1995). Poverty, for example, increases the opportunity costs of political participation as well as the number of tasks competing with political issues for attention (Rosenstone, 1982). While much work on the resource model has focused on the United States, one meta-analysis examining a range of cross-national studies suggest that the theory has explanatory power in a wider range of contexts (Smets and van Ham, 2013). Because deportees who have been extorted are likely to be less socioeconomically prosperous than deportees who have not been extorted, this literature suggests that victims of extortion will be less likely

to participate in politics.

At the same time, people experiencing negative economic shocks may also be more motivated to participate politically. For example, Burden et al. (2017) argues that a worsening economy prompts citizens to seek policy solutions via political participation; they find that higher county-level unemployment rates are correlated with increased turnout. Similarly, Cebula (2017) finds that a one percentage point higher unemployment rate is correlated with a one percent higher turnout rate. These effects may vary across race and ethnic groups (Huyser et al., 2018). In developing countries, Aguilar and Pacek (2000) similarly argue that macroeconomic downturns increase turnout in particular among those who are most effected i.e. lower-status voters. Rhodes-Purdy et al. (2021) have investigated the microfoundations of the relationship between economic downturns and grievance; using a range of survey experiments, the scholars find that economic crises prompt anger. However, at least one study has concluded that negative economic shocks actually lead to depressed turnout. More precisely, Hall et al. (2021) find that counties affected by larger increases in foreclosure in the United States were less likely to turn out.

One author summarizes the distinction between these two literatures on socioeconomic status and socioeconomic shocks as follows: "structural economic disadvantage unambiguously demobilises individuals, [whereas] the deterioration of economic prospects instead increases political activity" (Kurer et al., 2019, p. 866). Given this distinction, we suggest that the literature on negative economic shocks captures the situation extorted deportees are facing more precisely than the broader literature on socioeconomic status. Structurally, deportees are for the large part all socioeconomically disadvantaged regardless of whether they have been extorted or not. They have had to flee their home countries, and then they have been forcibly uprooted from the place they had settled. They do not enjoy privileged socioeconomic status in either their countries of origin or the countries they migrated to. While these difficulties are shared among most deportees, extorted deportees have suffered from an additional and unexpected deterioration of their economic prospects compared to those who have not been deported. Therefore, we hypothesize that extortion will be correlated with a more negative economic situation and thus with increased political engagement.

3.4 Expectations

In summary, extortion should influence deportees' civic engagement via two distinct – and potentially oppositional – mechanisms. On one hand, extortion as a form of victimization should increase fear and depress civic engagement. On the other hand, extortion as a form of economic loss should increase interest in civic action. These arguments can be formally

hypothesized as follows:

- *Hypothesis 1 (Extortion to Fear):* Deportees who were extorted while migrating are more likely to avoid a range of situations out of fear in their origin country compared to deportees who were not victims of such abuse.
- *Hypothesis 1a (Extortion to Economic Hardship):* Deportees who were extorted while migrating are more likely to experience economic hardship in their origin country than those who were not extorted.
- *Hypothesis 2 (Fear to Engagement):* Deportees avoiding activities in their origin country because of fear are less likely to be politically engaged compared to those who are not avoiding activities out of fear.
- *Hypothesis 2a (Economic Hardship to Engagement):* Deportees who experience economic hardship in their origin country are more likely to be politically engaged than deportees who do not experience economic hardship.

If fear and economic hardship both mediate the relationship between extortion and political engagement, a final hypothesis should concern which mechanism plays a larger role. If the emotional consequences of extortion are larger than the financial ones, extortion should be correlated with decreased rather than increased levels of political engagement. However, we have no prior reason to believe that one mechanism is more or less important than the other. Thus, any conclusions about the overall relationship between extortion and political engagement is exploratory.

4 Research Design: Data and Methods

4.1 Deportee Survey

We employ data from an original survey of recent migrants deported from from the United States and returned to Guatemala ("deportees" or "returnees"). The project was approved by Duke University's IRB in protocol 2020-0075. Beginning in October 2019, we partnered with RTI International and Te Conecta, a Guatemalan NGO, to implement a face-to-face survey of newly arrived deportees at the Air Force airport in Guatemala City. This airport is the main arrival point for deportees sent to Guatemala and typically receives 3-5 planes of deportees 4 or 5 days per week. The first stage of the survey was implemented upon arrival and was conducted from October 2019 and March 2020. After that, COVID-19 made in-person data collection impossible. To initially recruit respondents for a survey, our survey

team greeted deportees after they had been processed and as they were leaving the airport. Enumerators were instructed to randomly select individuals to approach with information about the study and not to select based on any observable characteristics. In practice, this meant selecting every fifth deportee or so, given that so many left the airport at the same time. This methodology gives us confidence that we obtained a reasonably representative sample, as do demographic similarities regarding gender between our data and official ICE data tracked by Syracuse University's TRAC Immigration. More precisely, 11 percent of Guatemalans deported from 2004 to 2020 were women, and 8 percent of our sample were women. However, we are not able to more thoroughly compare our sample's demographic characteristics to official records because many other characteristics of deportees are withheld by ICE.

Respondents were offered 50 Quetzales, equivalent to about 6.50 USD, to participate in the survey. Upon survey completion, respondents were offered an additional 50 Quetzales to provide information for a follow-up survey. We interviewed 1,357 deportees upon their arrival to the country. Respondents who chose to provide contact information during the first round of the survey were contacted for a 1-month follow up as well as a 6 month follow up. The follow-up surveys were conducted over the phone, and respondents who completed these surveys received a phone balance credit of at least 50 Quetzales for each survey. Phone surveys continued through October of 2020, and we collected a total of 645 follow-up surveys across the two waves, with 210 respondents interviewed in both follow-up waves. Questions relevant to our analysis here were primarily asked in rounds 2 (1-month followup) and 3 (6-months followup). We pool round 2 and round 3 results, and all regressions utilize robust standard errors clustered by respondent. The multi-wave survey contains a wide variety of questions covering topics ranging from demographics to experiences in the United States and Guatemala; specific wording for relevant survey questions is included in the online appendix.

Additionally, we conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with deported migrants from our original sample. To recruit interview participants, we divided all baseline survey respondents who reported using a coyote to migrate into four different groups depending on what we theorize to be two important dimensions of variation: (a) their intention to remigrate and (b) whether they experienced extortion. From each of these four groups, we selected a random sample of respondents and interviewed between 4 and 5 respondents per group. Interviews lasted on average 30 minutes, and participants were compensated with 50 Quetzales of phone credit. For more information about the final number of interviews from each group of migrants, see Table A1.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the specific variables used in the analyses below, it is important to briefly discuss a few ethical considerations, especially given the vulner-

ability of the population on whom this research focuses and the sensitive nature of some of the questions. Firstly, it was essential to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents. Thus, upon completion of the surveys, non-identifiable data was stored in encrypted form on an Amazon Web Services S3 server; only principal investigators on the project were able to download the data for decryption and analysis. Relatedly, all identifiable contact information for respondents was collected offline using paper and pencil and then stored in an encrypted database separate from the survey answers. Once transferred to the encrypted database, the pen and paper versions of the contact information was destroyed. Similarly, all qualitative interview recordings were deleted once transcripts were completed, and all identifiable information has been removed from the transcripts. Secondly, we took measures to ensure that respondents were not coerced into taking the survey. Participants were able to skip questions and stop the surveys/interviews at any point, though they only received compensation if they completed a given survey. Given literacy rates, enumerators provided written copies of consent forms but also read the consent script out loud. The compensation provided to respondents was reasonable and appreciated, according to field notes, and was not so large that it placed participants at undue risk by carrying large volumes of money in Guatemala. Thirdly, COVID-19 posed ethical issues to continuing in-person surveys. Thus, once COVID-19 became a threat, we ceased all in-person surveys and conducted all remaining surveys exclusively by phone.

Given the sensitive nature of the questions, it is also important to briefly discuss potential social desirability bias. The survey did not include any indirect questions to empirically evaluate the extent of this issue, although we can theorize about it. The U.S. and Guatemalan governments already knew that respondents had crossed borders without the required documentation; the returnees had been deported as a result. Thus, they had little to hide in discussing their migration experience. It is possible, however, that respondents were hesitant to admit that they had been victimized. This would be especially likely if the perpetrators had ties to Guatemala and could threaten them for speaking about the extortion. However, our concerns regarding this point are low given the openness shown by our interviewees in discussing their victimization experiences during migration as well as mentioning other forms of victimization experienced by people they know.

Our key independent variable, "Extortion," measures whether respondents (or their families) were forced to pay additional smuggling fees beyond what they had originally agreed to pay coyotes to reach the U.S. For respondents who traveled to the U.S. multiple times, this question was asked specifically in regard to their most recent journey. The experience of extortion was only assessed for the 87% of respondents who used a coyote at some point

in their migration journey.[2] While migrants who do and do not use coyotes differ in systematic ways, such as indigeneity and age (see Online Appendix Table A3), we focus our analysis exclusively focuses on the majority of respondents who did use a coyote, of whom 17% experienced extortion. Over half of these people (10%) were extorted en route to the U.S., while the remaining 7% were extorted after crossing the border.

To measure perceptions of economic difficulty, we primarily use a 5-point scale where respondents rated their current economic situation ("Bad Econ"), collected in the 1- and 6-month post-arrival survey waves. For this measure, higher values indicate more negative assessments of one's economic situation. We use two other variables as robustness checks in the main tables detailing our results. First, in the initial survey wave, respondents reported the degree to which needing to pay outstanding debts poses a challenge to their reintegration in Guatemala on a 10-point scale ("Debt Barrier").[3] In addition, respondents in waves 2 and 3 rated their level of economic hardship as low, moderate, or high ("Econ Hardship"). We also examine more objective indicators of economic hardship, monthly income and unemployment (see Table A6).

To conceptualize fear, we use a set of questions asked in the second and third survey waves about actions taken by respondents since their deportation out of fear of being a crime victim. The behaviors include: avoiding leaving their homes by themselves, avoiding using public transit, preventing children from leaving the house, feeling the need to move to a different neighborhood, changing their job or place of study, or obtaining a weapon for personal security. For this analysis, "Fear Any" is a binary variable which indicates whether the respondents answered any of these six questions affirmatively. "Fear Count" is a 0-6 count variable summing how many of the items the respondent selected. Finally, as a robustness check, we use a measure of perceived threat of violence to the respondent and their family ("Violence"), which is measured as low, medium, or high.

To measure political behavior, we ask respondents their likelihood of taking different types of action in the coming year (5-point scale). We focus on four key types of behavior indicative of civic engagement: protest, community meetings, and volunteering. We analyze these measures separately and as a 3-item "Civic Index." Voting, a more conventional measure of political behavior, is not included in the index because national elections would not occur until 2023. Therefore, asking about voting intent within the coming year was not a meaningful question for respondents. In addition to our civic action items, we also measure

[2]Thus, we cannot include in our analysis those respondents who did not use a coyote to enter the U.S., since we should not uniformly assume that they did not experience extortion from some other criminal actor during the journey.

[3]Our sample is larger for this analysis since this dependent variable was asked at the arrival baseline survey.

interest in joining a political party, which represents less of a concrete action and more of an expression of partisan political interest.

We include a range of control variables, including a binary measure of whether respondents left assets in the United States, binary measures indicating whether respondents have at least one child in the United States or in Guatemala, years of education, a binary variable indicating whether the respondent was last apprehended at the border, a log of the number of years in the United States, and employment status. We also include various demographic variables. The variable "Indigenous" refers to whether respondents' mother tongue is anything besides Spanish. We also include a variable indicating whether respondents have visible tattoos because of affiliations between gangs and tattoos in Guatemala. Finally, we control for survey round. The 1- and 6-month follow-up surveys straddled the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, so this control variable also captures any changes in the dependent variable that may be linked to the pandemic, such as an overall lower interest in (or expectation of) civic engagement.

4.2 Randomness of Extortion

We argue that extortion suffered while migrating is a quasi-random experience. Qualitative evidence concerning migration through Mexico as well as a quantitative analysis of balance within our sample support this argument.

Violence, including extortion, can happen to any migrant regardless of their income. Put simply, as one scholar writes, "there is no subgroup that seems to be particularly at risk among deportees... kidnapping occurs simply because one is a migrant" (Slack et al., 2018, p. 196). Another suggests that individuals of any income can be kidnapped for the purpose of extorting money from their families; the kidnappers "know that their families will send money even if they cannot afford to" (Vogt, 2013, p. 764). Indeed, Vogt (2013) argues that violence along the migration trail is viewed by many migrants as a necessary evil, where its risk is high enough to become expected. Finally, one study of over 12,000 migrants traveling through Mexico to the United States suggests that years of schooling, having children, and having entered the U.S. previously are not correlated with the likelihood of experiencing violence. (Leyva-Flores et al., 2019). Thus, random chance plays a significant role in who experiences victimization during migration.

One potential way in which migrants can reduce the likelihood that they will be victimized is by selecting "good" coyotes. More precisely, migrants may try to work with coyotes who have good reputations in their hometowns. However, migrants do not always have the capacity to gauge the trustworthiness of coyotes because of the networked structure of the

coyote business as well as because many migrants travel to border towns on their own and then contract coyotes there (Spener, 2009). Indeed, migrants who connect with coyotes in this way, at borders, are "in effect, giving themselves over to fate" (Spener, 2009, p. 179). Our qualitative work also shows that it is unusual for the same coyote to take people from Guatemala all the way into the US border. Usually, there are changes in the people guiding; sometimes, these new guides are the ones who extort the migrants. For example, one respondent emphasizes how extremely dangerous points of the trip are at bus stations in Mexico, where there are many kidnappers. Coyotes are known to recruit migrants at Mexican bus stations (Spener, 2009). Even as interviewees recommend that new migrants know the coyotes with whom they leave Guatemala, the advice they are able to provide beyond that is limited. For example, one interviewee indicates that the best way to protect oneself from abuse is to "be obedient so that they don't mistreat you," thus suggesting that migrants are frequently unable to know in advance which coyotes will be the least likely to victimize them.

Table 1 below provides support for the randomness of extortion by showing that the "extortion" and "non-extortion" samples of respondents are well-balanced upon reentry to Guatemala. Among migrants who used a coyote in our broader sample, there is not a statistically significant difference between individuals who were extorted and individuals who were not in terms of their age, ethnicity, years of education in Guatemala (prior to migration), having children (in Guatemala and in the United States), deportation from the U.S. border or not, the number of years spent in the United States, or whether they have visible tattoos. However, it appears that women were slightly more likely to be extorted during the migration journey. This gender difference between the non-extortion and extortion sample is small, though, and only significant at the 90% confidence level. This suggests that people may be targeted for extortion not because they have the most money but rather as a result of more generalized prejudice against women. It is important to take this difference regarding gender with a grain of salt, however, given that very few of the deportees in our sample were women (8%). Additionally, the extortion group has a slightly higher mean number of past migration trips (1.77) compared to the non-extortion sample (1.62).

Similarly, since much of our later analysis relies on follow-up surveys with migrants, we consider the possibility that non-random survey attrition could lead to imbalance in extortion experiences. Table A2 in the appendix shows that most observable variables remain balanced when we consider the restricted follow-up sample only. However, the sample experiencing extortion (64 respondents) does have slightly higher proportions of women and a higher number of children in the US, when compared to the non-extortion sample (275 respondents), and those experiencing extortion were less likely to be detained at the border. To help

account for this non-random attrition, we control for each of these variables (as well as other factors) in our later regression analysis.

Table 1: Extortion During Migration - Arrivals

Variable	(1) No Extortion	(2) Extortion	(3) Difference
Age	30.98	30.99	0.009
	(9.476)	(8.962)	(0.734)
Indigenous	0.387	0.437	0.050
	(0.487)	(0.497)	(0.038)
Female	0.075	0.111	0.036+
	(0.263)	(0.314)	(0.021)
Years Education in GT	6.244	6.623	0.379
	(3.646)	(3.708)	(0.286)
Married	0.297	0.256	-0.040
	(0.457)	(0.438)	(0.035)
Children in GT	1.198	1.241	0.043
	(1.589)	(1.655)	(0.125)
Children in U.S.	0.406	0.518	0.112
	(0.942)	(1.226)	(0.078)
Detained at Border	0.659	0.615	-0.044
	(0.474)	(0.488)	(0.038)
Years in U.S.	4.398	4.392	-0.006
	(5.949)	(5.865)	(0.474)
Number of Migrations	1.622	1.774	0.152+
	(1.090)	(1.084)	(0.085)
Have Visible Tattoos	0.084	0.076	-0.007
	(0.277)	(0.266)	(0.022)
Observations	924	199	

$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

5 Results

First, we use a linear model to explore the direct relationship between extortion and political behavior, with a particular interest in civic engagement. Table 2 shows that extortion positively predicts interest in civic acts of protest, community meeting participation, and volunteering, all significant at a 95% confidence level. On a 5-point scale, individuals who experienced extortion say they are 0.25-0.4 points more likely to take these actions in the coming year compared to those who were not extorted. The relationship is similarly positively signed for joining a political party, although it is not statistically significant. The

correlation between extortion and civic engagement is robust to controlling for the degree of migrants' social integration in the locality to which the deportees returned (see Table A4).[4]

Our qualitative interviews provide some insight into the difference in coefficient strength between engagement with political parties and other, more significant, forms of civic engagement. Even deported migrants who are active in their communities, for example by helping neighbours and going to community meetings, are more likely to be apathetic toward local politicians. For example, one returnee indicates that he is an active member of his community and explains, "I am a taxi driver and I always help people at any hour." Yet he also notes that "from politicians, you can never get any help." This difference between attitudes toward the community and politicians may explain the weaker relationship between extortion and interest in political parties.

Broadly, the results in Table 2 indicate that for Guatemalan migrants, economic victimization experienced hundreds of miles to the north predicts increased interest in civic engagement after deportation back to their home country. This finding is interesting in itself, as migrants in our survey also cited significant concerns about the barriers they experience to reintegration. Interestingly, this correlation between extortion and civic engagement does not appear to generalize to another relatively common type of victimization – assault – which does not have the same direct economic consequences (Table A5). This is the first indication that the economic-grievance mechanism may be more powerful than the fear-based one. In the next section, we explore possible mechanisms which may explain why extortion, in particular, is positively related to civic engagement.

[4]Specifically, we control for the number of family and friends which migrants report living nearby at the time of the follow-up survey. While this factor is also significant and positively related to the civic action index and protest, its inclusion does not change the effect of extortion on civic engagement.

Table 2: Extortion Predicts Higher Civic Engagement

	(1) Civic Index	(2) Protest	(3) Community Mtg	(4) Volunteer	(5) Party
Extortion	0.94**	0.42*	0.26*	0.25*	0.17
	(0.32)	(0.20)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.22)
Detained at Border	-0.10	-0.13	0.02	-0.03	-0.09
	(0.32)	(0.19)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.20)
Round 3	-0.14	-0.56***	0.28**	0.15+	-0.14
	(0.24)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.14)
Female	0.15	0.19	0.00	-0.05	-0.09
	(0.50)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.26)
Age	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	-0.00
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Indigenous	-0.21	0.01	-0.02	-0.22+	0.26
	(0.32)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.19)
Years of Education	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.02
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Tattoo	0.37	-0.07	0.16	0.20	0.05
	(0.78)	(0.33)	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.38)
Children in U.S.	-0.02	-0.18	0.13	0.01	0.23
	(0.41)	(0.23)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.25)
Children in G.T.	-0.18	-0.19	0.02	-0.01	0.27
	(0.32)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.22)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.20	-0.10	0.03	-0.15	0.27
	(0.39)	(0.27)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.29)
ln(Time in U.S.)	0.17*	0.12*	0.02	0.03	0.00
	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)
Employed	0.12	0.22	-0.08	-0.00	-0.12
	(0.28)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.17)
Constant	10.67***	3.58***	3.60***	3.69***	2.73**
	(1.66)	(0.79)	(0.64)	(0.62)	(0.90)
Observations	513	516	513	515	513

Standard errors in parentheses
Robust standard errors clustered by respondent
$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

5.1 Mechanisms

Here, we explore the two possible pathways discussed above through which the experience of extortion may affect political behavior: economic hardship and fear of crime. First, we test our expectation that extortion will cause both worse economic hardship and increased fear of further crime victimization. It is important to note that migrants who were extorted were no

more likely to be educated or indigenous; both of these variables may proxy for pre-migration socioeconomic status (Table 1). Indeed, we assert that extortion is quasi-random.

We find a significant positive relationship between extortion and multiple operationalizations of both our economic and fear measures (Table 3). In terms of economic well-being, respondents who experienced extortion say their current economic situation is worse, they experience more financial hardship, and they are more worried that debt is a significant barrier to their reintegration in Guatemala.[5] The qualitative interviews echo this; respondents frequently and openly expressed their concerns about debt repayment and lack of economic opportunities in Guatemala. Although interviewees spoke more about financial than psychological difficulties, the empirical results in Table 3 indicate that extortion predicts higher levels of fear; extortion is correlated with a binary variable measuring avoidant actions taken out of fear, a count of the number of actions taken out of fear, and perceived threat of violence.

We include a series of robustness checks in the online appendix for these mechanism results. Column 3 of Table 3 uses a binary dependent variable, and the coefficient remains significant in a logit model (Table A7). Next, we examine whether extortion is related to more objective economic indicators, monthly income and unemployment, in Table A6. We find a strong negative relationship between extortion and subsequent monthly income, though we do not find a significant result for unemployment. Finally, since we are testing multiple hypotheses related to the extortion variable, we report Romano-Wolf corrected p-values in Table A8.[6] Overall, while the adjusted p-values are larger, as we would expect, our results for extortion remain statistically significant at conventional levels for the civic action index and the fear of crime variables. However, the results for the individual civic actions and economic outcomes are now on the margins of standard significance levels, with p-values just above 0.10.

[5]The number of observations for Model 3 is higher since this debt outcome was measured at arrival rather than during follow-up surveys where attrition reduces our sample size.

[6]The Romano-Wolf correction helps to control the familywise error rate (FWER). More details on this procedure can be found in the online appendix.

Table 3: Extortion Predicts Poor Outcomes: Economic and Safety

	(1) Bad Econ	(2) Econ Hardship	(3) Debt Barrier	(4) Fear Any	(5) Fear Count	(6) Violence
Extortion	0.23*	0.16*	0.84***	0.11**	0.48**	0.20*
	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.23)	(0.04)	(0.17)	(0.09)
Detained at Border	-0.08	-0.15*	0.64**	0.07	0.07	-0.05
	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.23)	(0.04)	(0.17)	(0.07)
Round 3	-0.06	0.26***		0.09**	0.48***	0.14*
	(0.07)	(0.06)		(0.03)	(0.11)	(0.06)
Female	0.02	0.16	0.31	0.13*	0.33	0.08
	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.38)	(0.05)	(0.21)	(0.11)
Age	0.02***	0.01+	-0.00	0.00+	0.03*	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Indigenous	-0.02	0.15*	0.73***	-0.04	-0.10	0.02
	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.20)	(0.04)	(0.15)	(0.07)
Years of Education	0.00	-0.00	-0.04+	-0.00	-0.01	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Tattoos	-0.32*	-0.12	-0.55	-0.02	-0.38	0.01
	(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.37)	(0.08)	(0.29)	(0.14)
Children in U.S.	0.00	0.09	0.05	0.09+	0.29	0.11
	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.28)	(0.05)	(0.18)	(0.09)
Children in G.T.	-0.01	0.12	0.36	0.00	0.12	-0.07
	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.24)	(0.05)	(0.16)	(0.08)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.01	-0.14	0.04	0.07	-0.17	0.21*
	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.31)	(0.06)	(0.20)	(0.10)
ln(Time U.S.)	-0.06*	-0.04*	-0.25***	-0.01	-0.11*	-0.06**
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.02)
employed	-0.35***	-0.19**		-0.09*	-0.38**	-0.16*
	(0.09)	(0.07)		(0.04)	(0.13)	(0.07)
Constant	3.44***	2.06***	7.50***	0.58**	1.68*	1.44***
	(0.38)	(0.28)	(0.85)	(0.19)	(0.68)	(0.32)
Observations	515	516	1047	516	516	512

Standard errors in parentheses
Robust standard errors clustered by respondent
$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Next, we examine whether economic hardship and fear of crime predict changes in civic action. Overall, we find some tentative evidence supporting a model of mobilization based on economic grievance. Table 4 shows that more negative assessments of one's economic situation predict greater interest in civic action, significant at 95%. While coefficients for each type of political behavior are positive, the overall result in Column 1 regarding the

index of civic engagement appears most strongly driven by the relationship between economic hardship and protest, which is significant at the 90% level. The results are robust to using the "Econ Hardship" variable instead, where hardship estimate is statistically significant for the overall index at the 95% level, although in this case we find a significant relationship in the volunteering model rather than the protesting model (Appendix Table A10). Finally, we again examine the robustness of these findings when correcting for multiple hypothesis testing. Tables A9 and A11 show that the Romano-Wolf adjusted p-values are just outside standard significance levels for these economic variables on the civic index outcome. The relationship between economic hardship and volunteering does remain significant ($p \leq 0.598$).

The relationship between fear of crime and civic action is negative but weaker (Table 5). Although the model coefficients for fear are consistently negative, there is no overall significant relationship between changing one's behavior out of fear of crime and civic engagement. We also do not find a significant relationship for any of the constituent variables of our index in columns 2 to 5. This suggests that, when people make behavioral choices to avoid risk of crime victimization, it does not have a large impact on other forms of civic participation. We find a similar null result when modeling perceptions of violence in Guatemala rather than fear of crime (Appendix Table A12).

We use mediation analysis[7] to explore whether economic and fear factors mediate the direct positive relationship between extortion and civic action. Of course, extortion is not assigned with perfect randomness, and our mediators do not conform to the sequential ignorability assumption, so results from mediation analysis are suggestive at best. Analysis finds some support for both pathways, with the average conditional mediated effect (ACME) just short of 90% significance in both models. For the economic pathway, economic hardship mediates about 7% of the overall relationship between extortion and civic action. Fear attenuates the positive direct relationship between extortion and civic action by about 6%.

Thus, in summary, we find suggestive evidence that extortion affects civic action through economic hardship (mobilizing) and fear (demobilizing). In this case, the economic pathway appears stronger, leading to an overall positive relationship between the experience of extortion and interest in civic action. However, since our results on these mechanisms are only marginally significant at conventional levels and generally do not survive corrections for multiple hypothesis testing, we interpret mediation effects with caution and highlight the importance of additional research in this area.

[7]Using the "mediation" Stata package

Table 4: Worse Economic Situation and Civic Engagement

	(1) Civic Index	(2) Protest	(3) Community Mtg	(4) Volunteer	(5) Party
Bad Econ	0.35*	0.17+	0.07	0.10	0.04
	(0.17)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.10)
Detained at Border	-0.17	-0.13	-0.01	-0.04	-0.08
	(0.33)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.21)
Round 3	-0.11	-0.55***	0.29**	0.16+	-0.14
	(0.24)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.14)
Female	0.25	0.24	0.03	-0.02	-0.07
	(0.51)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.26)
Age	0.01	-0.00	0.01	0.01	-0.00
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Indigenous	-0.16	0.05	-0.00	-0.21+	0.29
	(0.31)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.19)
Years of Education	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.02
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Tattoo	0.52	0.08	0.19	0.26	0.16
	(0.79)	(0.34)	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.38)
Children US	0.03	-0.15	0.15	0.03	0.26
	(0.42)	(0.23)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.26)
Childrent GT	-0.14	-0.17	0.03	0.00	0.28
	(0.32)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.22)
Assets	-0.13	-0.05	0.05	-0.13	0.28
	(0.40)	(0.27)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.29)
ln(Time in US)	0.18*	0.13*	0.02	0.03	0.01
	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)
Employed	0.26	0.28+	-0.06	0.03	-0.10
	(0.29)	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.17)
Constant	9.61***	2.89**	3.39***	3.33***	2.48*
	(1.78)	(0.88)	(0.68)	(0.67)	(0.96)
Observations	512	512	512	512	509

Standard errors in parentheses
Robust standard errors clustered by respondent
$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5: Fear of Crime and Lower Civic Engagement

	(1) Civic Index	(2) Protest	(3) Community Mtg	(4) Volunteer	(5) Party
Fear of Crime (Any)	-0.45	-0.14	-0.19	-0.11	-0.26
	(0.34)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.21)
Detained at Border	-0.18	-0.14	-0.00	-0.04	-0.08
	(0.33)	(0.20)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.20)
Round 3	-0.09	-0.55***	0.30**	0.16+	-0.11
	(0.24)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.14)
Female	0.32	0.26	0.06	-0.00	-0.03
	(0.51)	(0.26)	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.26)
Age	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	-0.00
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Indigenous	-0.18	0.04	-0.01	-0.21+	0.29
	(0.32)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.19)
Years of Education	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.02
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Tattoo	0.42	0.03	0.17	0.23	0.15
	(0.77)	(0.33)	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.37)
Children US	0.11	-0.12	0.17	0.05	0.27
	(0.41)	(0.23)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.25)
Children GT	-0.13	-0.16	0.03	0.01	0.28
	(0.32)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.22)
Assets	-0.10	-0.04	0.06	-0.12	0.31
	(0.40)	(0.27)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.29)
ln(Time in US)	0.15+	0.11*	0.01	0.02	0.00
	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)
Employed	0.09	0.20	-0.10	-0.01	-0.14
	(0.29)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.17)
Constant	11.09***	3.57***	3.76***	3.76***	2.75**
	(1.65)	(0.80)	(0.64)	(0.63)	(0.89)
Observations	513	513	513	513	510

Standard errors in parentheses
Robust standard errors clustered by respondent
$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

6 Policy and Program Implications

Because the extortion of migrants occurs in a distinct location from the environment in which victims are participating politically as deportees, we can distinguish the impact of extortion on civic engagement from potentially confounding factors related to the context in which victimization occurs. We explore extortion's potentially oppositional psychological and economic effects. On one hand, extortion is a form of victimization which increases fear, and fear is known to depress political engagement. On the other hand, extortion serves as a negative economic shock which increases political participation. We show that extortion is correlated with both a greater likelihood of fear-induced avoidance behaviors in Guatemala and negative assessments of personal economic conditions. Here, higher levels of fear are correlated with lower civic interest, whereas negative economic assessments are correlated with higher interest in civic engagement. Although we find suggestive mediation effects for both pathways, the economic pathway in this case is larger and more robust, leading to an overall positive relationship between extortion and civic action. The results from our analysis of deported migrant data provides insights for policymakers and programming staff working to support displaced persons. We discuss takeaways from our analysis first related to the migration experience itself and then to the reintegration experience after deportation.

It is well-known that migration routes to the United States through Mexico are dangerous; however, our survey work enables us to quantify some of the negative experiences of the migration journey. Of the 1123 Guatemalan deported migrants who agreed to take our baseline survey, 17% experienced extortion during their last journey to the United States (extortion either in Mexico or after crossing the border into the United States). Furthermore, 8% of respondents were held against their will or without their identification documents, and 7% experienced assault. With limited economic opportunity and high violence experienced by would-be migrants living in Northern Triangle countries, large numbers of Guatemalans and other Central Americans will continue to attempt this migration journey despite its dangers. These statistics about migrants' adverse experiences underscore a need for more sustainable and humanitarian migration policies in receiving countries like the U.S. and Mexico. Such policies may include more pathways for legal migration or the pursuit of asylum, stronger prosecution of actors who engage in abuses against migrants, and economic support to strengthen job opportunities and community safety in home countries.

Nearly 1 in 3 (29%) of the deported migrants we surveyed reported a traumatic experience on their last migration attempt.[8] This suggests that large numbers of U.S.-bound

[8]It is also important to remember that the vast majority of our respondents are male, meaning that our data may under-represent the prevalence and impact of gendered victimization more likely to affect women.

migrants may experience long-term trauma from the journey. For example, our results show that extortion correlates with higher rates of fear upon return to Guatemala. Such insights indicate that policymakers and migrant support services should consider how to address migrants' lasting mental health needs. We found in our qualitative interviews that respondents were often reluctant or challenged when asked to talk about lasting mental health impacts of the migration journey, suggesting that trauma support and mental health resources may need to begin with basic familiarization and destigmatization of mental wellness conversations. Only with this groundwork would trauma-support programming successfully recruit and support migrants suffering from the lasting psychological effects from migration-related trauma.

Furthermore, our data show that the experience of extortion has a lasting financial effect on migrants, making this experience related but distinct from other migration-related trauma from a policy perspective. Compared to other coyote-using migrants, deportees who experienced extortion reported worse economic conditions and were more likely to cite debt as a substantial barrier to reintegration. Information campaigns in sending communities might educate potential migrants and their networks about the true financial cost of migration, which with extortion can be higher than expected or originally quoted by coyotes. Such information would enable households to make more informed decisions, more accurately incorporating the risk and cost of extortion into their migration decision. In addition, our results highlight a vicious cycle: economic hardship is a main driver of migration through Mexico to the U.S., and extortion – particularly for deported migrants – compounds and extends economic need. Addressing economic insecurity at its root would both affect initial migration as well as deported migrants' level of hardship upon return.

Given the volume of migration to the United States from Central America as well as the high volume of deportations from the United States back to Northern Triangle countries, it is crucial to understand the impact that forcibly relocating migrants has on deportees' interactions with their "home" communities and the prospects for stable governance there. We find that the experience of extortion, despite downstream demobilization effects from increased fear, predicts higher civic engagement among deported migrants. Extorted deportees are significantly more interested in volunteering, attending community meetings, and participating in peaceful protests, as compared to similar deportees who did not experience extortion. Our results suggest that greater economic adversity and discontent mediate this relationship.

In one sense, these results are promising for the community reintegration of deported migrants: higher economic need and/or issue salience seems to motivate individuals to become more civically active. This presents an opportunity for initiatives seeking to strengthen

democratic norms and institutions – particularly if the newly engaged returnees are able to feel efficacious in their heightened community engagement. On the other hand, initial higher levels of engagement may lead to lingering resentment and discontent if underlying economic stressors are not addressed. Programs that seek to promote social cohesion and civic engagement among migrants and returnees would benefit from considering underlying motivations for participation; if economic hardship is reduced, programming may need to include more outreach, education, and alternative motivations to achieve higher levels of engagement. The results also suggest that one particular challenge for such policies and programs is to encourage trust in politicians. For example, our qualitative work indicates that while returnees often want to engage more in community affairs and community improvement, the interviewees still felt apathy towards politics and local politicians, seeing them as corrupt. Thus, programming that tries to reduce negative bias toward the Guatemalan local governments is essential, especially because local politicians could generate incentives for local deported migrants to engage more in available reintegration programming.

Other papers in this series offer evidence that the patterns of behavior we see in Guatemala extend to other displacement environments. Multiple studies in Colombia shed light on how internal displacement affects community engagement and social conflict elsewhere in Latin America. Tellez and Balcells (2021) find that, in conflict-affected households, displacement significantly increases economic hardship. Similar to our work, they find that despite having less income and being more food- and housing-insecure, displaced persons are more interested in civic engagement and show higher levels of social cohesion. They are more supportive of collective action and paying taxes; they are more likely to have helped solve a local problem; and they are more likely to have attended community, women's, and political party meetings. These similar results help validate our findings, especially given that Tellez and Balcells (2021) measure past behavior while we ask about future intent.

Vinck et al. (2021) also find that displacement in Colombia correlates with higher interest in voting and participation in civil society. In their study, they assess this relationship across multiple country contexts, and their results are even stronger for Iraq, the Philippines, and Uganda, where trust, personal agency, and ability to meaningfully contribute to the community are also correlated with displacement. The relatively more limited results for Colombia suggest that institutional factors may interact with displaced persons' motivations for civic engagement. If so, creating environments higher in trust and fostering channels for safe and effective advocacy may be important in shaping deportees' choices about civic action. Allen et al. (2021) find that returned refugees have lower perceptions of community cohesion in Burundi, which may highlight the importance of social ties in deportees' community reintegration. The majority of our deportee sample planned to return to communities where

they had social ties, which may mitigate some of the feelings of lower community cohesion and peacefulness reported in the Allen et al. study, although it is possible that deportees who have been outside their "home" country for extended periods may have more difficulty reintegrating even into known social networks.

In this paper, we find evidence that economic hardship is a motivating factor in civic engagement among deported Guatemalans. However, the mobilizing power of economic hardship – particularly hardship induced through traumatic experiences like extortion – raises a challenging question. When policies seek to reduce economic hardship and migration traumas like extortion, this may also reduce returnees' motivating factors to become civically engaged. Initiatives to promote social cohesion and peaceful democratic participation will benefit from considering (and studying) what alternative structures or messaging can encourage active, constructive community engagement by deported, displaced, and resettled groups, particularly if and when their immediate economic needs are addressed.

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