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The Impact of Selective Violence on Participation: The Killing of Politicians in Colombia

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Abstract

How does armed conflict impact political behavior? Multiple studies have investigated if victims of wartime violence differ from non-victims in whether, and how, they participate politically. Although this research has focused on different forms of violence, no study has investigated the impact of selective violence against politicians or candidates. This is an important omission as in most weakly institutionalized democracies warring sides often use violence against political leaders to influence the electoral process. This form of violence could be one of the most consequential for participation as it affects both the supply- and demand-side of democracy. The researchers use an original dataset of almost 2,000 killings of local politicians in Colombia to estimate the impact of this type of violence on turnout in recent decades. Taking municipalities where killing attempts failed as a comparison group, they find that political killings significantly decrease turnout within each electoral cycle. Their study shows that political killings have important effects on local democracy and calls for more research on selective forms of violence.

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1 Introduction

Does civil war violence impact political behavior? The answer to this question has critical implications for our understanding of the dynamics of civil wars, the relationship between violence and elections, and the enduring legacies of these conflicts. While researchers have made significant contributions by comparing victims and non-victims of various types of violent events, several unanswered questions and conflicting findings persist (Price & Yaylacı, 2021). In this paper, we aim to address two important gaps in the literature by focusing on the effect of selective violence against politicians on political participation.

First, existing research on the effects of civil war violence on political participation has predominantly focused on the consequences of *indiscriminate* violence, where victims are not deliberately targeted by perpetrators. This focus has been driven by a methodological advantage: if targets can be assumed to be randomly selected, any differences in political participation between victims and non-victims can be attributed solely to victimization, rather than to characteristics that might make certain individuals more prone to being targeted.[1] Implicit in this literature is the assumption that, by investigating the behavioral effects of one type of violence, we can gain insights into the broader impact of violence. The focus on indiscriminate violence is therefore considered to be methodologically convenient and substantially inconsequential.

A large literature has demonstrated that in addition to *indiscriminate* violence, warring sides can use selective violence, whereby they attack specific individuals (e.g. suspected collaborators with enemy forces (Kalyvas, 2006) or individuals who disobey rules established by the armed actor (**?**)). Belligerents can also engage in "collective or group targeting", where victims are selected due to shared attributes such as ethnicity, political affiliation, or occupation (Balcells & Stanton, 2021; Gutiérrez-Sanín & Wood, 2017; Steele, 2017)[2]. By sending a clear message about the higher risk that certain identities, professions, or behaviors pose, selective and collective violence can change individuals' beliefs about the political and social world around them, thereby affecting their behavior. For example, a central claim in the literature on the causes of violence against non-combatants is that selective

[1] As noted by Bauer et al. (2016), most studies employ one of three approaches: (1) using of local or individual fixed effects to control for structural attributes of localities and regions, with the assumption that victimization *within villages* is mostly indiscriminate; (2) including pre-war attributes of localities as controls to account for local confounders, under the assumption that targeting within villages is random; and (3) studying victims of forms of violence that are likely to be indiscriminate, such as raids or bombings. A few studies have focused on forms of violence that are not indiscriminate, such as **?**, who investigate the effects of violence against XXXX

[2] Different authors use different terms to refer to these forms of violence. Throughout the paper, we use the terminology that Balcells and Stanton (2021, p. 48) use in their review of the literature on violence in civil war: selective, collective, and indiscriminate

and indiscriminate violence impact behavior in distinct ways because each communicates different messages to civilians (Kalyvas, 2006; Wood, 2003). Recent work has also contended that indiscriminate violence is more likely to lead to fear, prejudice against groups associated with perpetrators, and support for internal cohesion and external segregation than selective violence (Schutte, Ruhe, & Linke, 2022). Other scholars have tentatively suggested that selective and indiscriminate violence may have different effects on victims' partisan support (Balcells, 2010) and level of trust towards others in their community (Cassar, Grosjean, & Whitt, 2013). If selective, collective, and indiscriminate violence do impact behavior differently, generalizing to violence as a whole what we learn about indiscriminate violence alone can be misleading.

A second gap in the literature is the omission of a type of collective violence that is widely used in many civil wars precisely to influence political behavior: violence against politicians. Although extant research has examined various types of violent events, ranging from specific acts like killings, bombings, or raids (e.g. Blattman, 2009; Gilligan, Pasquale, & Samii, 2014) to indexes that capture multiple forms of violence (e.g. Bellows & Miguel, 2009; Voors et al., 2012), no study has investigated the impact of civil war violence specifically targeting politicians.

This is an important omission. From Iraq to Sri Lanka, India, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Peru, and Colombia, the coexistence of civil war and democracy has been characterized by the instrumental use of violence to shape the democratic process (Arjona & Chacón, 2013; Birnir & Gohdes, 2018; Condra, Long, Shaver, & Wright, 2018). Violence against politicians can be one of the most consequential forms of selective violence for political participation since it can dramatically change the pool of candidates or office holders, erode trust in democracy, reduce political competition, and subsequently reduce the likelihood of voters feeling represented by a candidate. It can also create fear and apathy among the population. At the same time, violence against politicians can trigger strong emotions, such as outrage, indignation, and hatred, which can motivate people to take action.

To contribute to filling these gaps in the literature, we investigate the impact of selective political murders on voter turnout. Building on studies of wartime violence as well as insights from scholarship on political participation, we develop hypotheses on the potential effects of wartime violence against politicians on voter turnout both during the war. We test these hypotheses with an original dataset of killings of municipal council members and mayors in Colombia. Our dataset is based on all the political homicides reported between 1980 and 2022 in various sources and includes both candidates and incumbents. In order to identify the effect of violence, we compare municipalities where killing attempts failed with those where such attempts succeeded, within each electoral cycle. Our identification strategy relies on

the assumption that the success of a killing attempt is as-if random (Jones & Olken, 2009), a highly plausible assumption supported by available evidence, as we discuss in Section 5. By comparing municipalities where killings failed with those where they did not, we are able to address the difficulty involved in identifying the causal effect of selective violence. Specifically, this strategy allows us to estimate a lower bound, given that failed attempts potentially also impact the population.

We find that political assassinations have a negative contemporaneous effect on turnout. This suggests that selective and indiscriminate violence may have different effects, indicating that the results of studies using indiscriminate forms of violence may not generalize to other forms of violence. We also consider the potential heterogeneous effects by the type of victim (candidate for office or elected politician), as well as the intensity of other types of violence in the locality. Overall, our results are stronger in models in which the victims are candidates in the most conflict-prone municipalities.

The paper makes several contributions to the growing literature on the effects of civil war violence on political participation. First, our results challenge the emerging consensus on the positive effects of wartime violence on post-war political participation and reveal the importance of investigating how various aspects of violence may influence its impact on individuals. Second, to the best of our knowledge, we are the first to examine the impact of violence directed against politicians—a common phenomenon in weakly institutionalized democracies.[3] This is also the first study to focus on the effects of *collective* violence on participation using an empirical strategy which does not rely on the assumption that targeting was indiscriminate or that we can control for its correlates. Instead, we leverage a random process that determines whether a violent event results in victims or not.

We start by situating our study in the literature. We then turn to our theoretical expectations about the effect of political assassinations on political participation. We then briefly describe the Colombian armed conflict and wartime elections. We then turn to introducing the data and our empirical strategy. We conclude with a discussion of our results and the implications for future research.

2 Literature review

Several studies have investigated the effect of civil war violence on various forms of political participation, including attending protests and demonstrations, signing petitions, joining

[3]The only similar study is Ley (2018), which focuses on violence against activists and politicians by drug trafficking organizations in Mexico.

community organizations, and voting in elections[4]. Most of these studies compare victims with non-victims within local communities, while a few compare victimized communities with similar populations that were not impacted by the same kind of violence. In terms of the type of violence, existing research has mostly focused on specific events, such as bombings and raids, or employed indexes that aggregate various forms of violence (e.g. Bellows & Miguel, 2009; Voors et al., 2012). Finally, while some focus on the impact of indirect exposure—i.e. those living in a community impacted by violence—others restrict their study to direct exposure, which involves having loved ones who were victimized.

Overall, these studies have yielded mixed results. While most have found that victims (or victimized communities) tend to participate more in politics, there are some instances where violence has been associated with reduced political participation. Furthermore, a few studies find different effects on distinct forms of participation such as voting, joining civil society organizations, or participating in demonstrations. For example, in their study of the Ugandan civil war, De Luca and Verpoorten (2015a) find that violence has a positive effect on the frequency of political discussion and meeting attendance but no effect on turnout. Litchfield, Douarin, and Gashi (2021) find that displacement has different effects on attending demonstrations and turnout and that those effects are mediated by gender.

Results on turnout, the focus of our study, are also inconclusive. While most studies examining *postwar* turnout have found that victims (or their loved ones or communities) are more likely to vote than non-victims (e.g. Bauer et al., 2016; Bellows & Miguel, 2009; Blattman, 2009; Shewfelt, 2009), some studies have failed to find evidence of an effect. For instance, De Luca and Verpoorten (2015b) find no effects, and Litchfield et al. (2021) only find a positive effect on women. In another study, Barclay Child and Nikolova (2020) observed that individuals who reported that they or their families were directly impacted by violence during World War II were more likely to report voting. However, they found no correlation between objective data on violence and higher turnout at the electoral district level.

Recent studies have also investigated the strategic use of insurgent electoral violence. While some find that violence reduces participation (**??**), others find that the effect depends on the type of perpetrator (Gallego, 2018) or the type of violent event. For example, Coupé and Obrizan (2016) found that physical damage reduced turnout in Eastern Ukraine, whereas other forms of violence did not. Similarly, Condra et al (2018) find that the Taliban in Afghanistan strategically used violence around elections to depress turnout and undermine the national government, but try to minimize civilian casualties (which could undermine their own popular support).

[4]See (Bauer et al., 2016) and (Moore, 2022) for two meta-analyses of this literature

Regarding mechanisms, the positive impact of violence on political participation is often attributed to post-traumatic growth and the expressive value of participation, while studies reporting negative effects highlight the role of apathy, fear, anxiety, and decreased trust on the democratic process (see e.g., XX).

In order to make sense of these contradictory findings, a few studies have sought to investigate the heterogeneous effects of violence. Some works have focused on the attributes of the victim (or the victim's loved ones or community), considering factors such as the combatant status of the victim (whether they are combatants or non-combatants) (Alacevich & Zejcirovic, 2020), gender (García-Ponce, 2017; Hadzic & Tavits, 2019; Litchfield et al., 2021), age (Malasquez & Salgado, 2021), and wealth (Freitag, Kijewski, & Oppold, 2019). Others have explored the characteristics of the violence itself, including its intensity, the type of event (Cassar et al., 2013; Coupé & Obrizan, 2016; Litchfield et al., 2021; Vélez, Trujillo, Moros, & Forero, 2016), and the identity of the perpetrator (Malasquez & Salgado, 2021). A few papers have also delved into the importance of the local social context for the persistence of war memories (Villamil, 2021).

Investigating these heterogeneous effects further is necessary to advance this research agenda and reconcile the contradictory findings, as a few authors have noted (e.g. Barclay Child & Nikolova, 2020; Bauer et al., 2016; Coupé & Obrizan, 2016; Ley, 2018; Malasquez & Salgado, 2021; Price & Yaylacı, 2021). Particularly important is the study of the effects of selective forms of violence, which is prevalent in civil wars and may have different effects than indiscriminate violence. The overwhelming focus on indiscriminate violence makes paying attention to selective violence even more urgent.

3 The effect of targeted killings

We investigate the effects of political assassinations, defined as the targeted killing of candidates, elected officials, or former elected officials. In many civil wars, armed actors use violence to influence elections. In Afghanistan, for instance, insurgents and rival candidates have used tactics such as assassinations, kidnappings, and intimidation to influence elections (**?**). Similarly, Peru's resurgent guerrilla group "Shining Path" (*Sendero Luminoso*) has reportedly threatened mayors and other local authorities, and boycotted elections in recent years.[5] In Sri Lanka, both the Tamil Tigers and the People's Liberation Front reportedly engaged in violence against political candidates and their supporters.[6] Even smaller insur-

[5]See for example "Perú pide ayuda a EE UU ante el rebrote de SenderoLuminoso." *El Pais*, October 12, 2012.

[6]See for example "Election Campaign in Sri Lanka Closes With a Flurry of Violence." *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1989.

gent groups, like the DLDF militia in Mt. Elgon, Kenya, used violence against candidates competing against the group's favored candidates ((HRW)", n.d.-b). In Iraq, between 2003 and 2005, various insurgent groups had already killed between dozens and hundreds of public servants and political party officials ((HRW)", n.d.-a, p. 62).

We focus on turnout at the local level because there is great subnational variation in the occurrence of political assassinations within any civil war where elections are held. In addition, we expect this form of violence to have a greater impact on those whom targeted politicians represented—or sought to represent.

How can political assassinations impact political participation? The mechanisms that have been proposed to explain the negative and positive effects of violence in general are also likely to be triggered by political assassinations. When a politician is killed, citizens may experience a range of emotions such as fear and grief, and the traumatic event can create a sense of insecurity and apprehension, leading to apathy and a withdrawal from political activities and a decrease in participation. However, political assassinations can also have positive effects. As with other forms of violence, political assassinations can awaken emotions such as anger and a desire for justice or retribution, which can lead individuals to actively engage in political participation as a way to express their outrage and seek redress for their grievance. Individuals may also feel a strong sense of moral duty to partake in righteous action in response to the assassination of a political figure, along the lines of what (Wood, 2003) calls moral agency.

But political assassinations can also impact political participation through unique mechanisms that are specific to this form of violence. When a candidate, standing elected official, or former politician is killed, both the demand- and supply-side of the democratic process can be affected, impacting citizens' desire to vote. Regarding the demand-side, violence against politicians entails a direct attack on the democratic process. Political assassinations can erode citizens' beliefs about, and trust in, democracy. Witnessing candidates being targeted and prevented from running for office can lead voters to see the act of voting as futile and even a sham, which makes them less willing to vote. At the same time, voters can feel anger and indignation and the desire to act, either to support their preferred candidate among those running for office or to symbolically express their commitment to democracy and desire to fight back.

On the supply side, political assassinations can limit competition as potential candidates face a higher risk for participating in the democratic process and are deterred from running for office. As political competition is reduced, voters are left with fewer options and the space for representation shrinks. Citizens can in turn be less willing to vote because they do not feel that candidates represent them.

Taken together, these potential effects of political assassinations on participation lead to two general hypotheses:

H1a: Localities where political assassinations occur are likely to exhibit comparatively lower turnout.

H1b: Localities where political assassinations occur are likely to exhibit an increase in voter turnout.

The effects of violence against politicians, whether positive or negative, can continue to shape turnout in the post-conflict stage. The duration of these effects is influenced by several factors that shape individuals' beliefs about the quality of local democracy. We identify three key factors: the success of demobilization processes, the emergence of new political or criminal armed organizations, and the extent to which state agencies and government authorities follow the rule of law.

The success or failure of demobilization processes plays a crucial role in shaping citizens' beliefs about the effectiveness of the peace process and the possibility of real local democracy. If demobilization processes are successful, instilling confidence in the cessation of violence, individuals are more likely to expect elections to be fair and representation to be possible, and they are more prone to vote. Conversely, if demobilization efforts falter and combatants return to arms, engaging in renewed violence, it undermines citizens' trust in the peace process and the prospects for lasting democracy.

New non-state armed actors, whether political or criminal, can target localities for territorial control or for illicit economies. These armed groups often rely on violence as a means to assert their authority, perpetuating a sense of insecurity and undermining trust in the democratic institutions that are meant to ensure safety and political representation. These actors are also likely to employ violence against politicians specifically to advance their interests for the reasons discussed earlier in this section. Such violence signals the return or continuation of war dynamics that undermined democracy, making it hard for citizens to believe in the possibility of real democracy in their community. The same mechanisms triggered by wartime violence are likely to be activated, leading to either higher or lower turnout.

Turning to the behavior of state actors, it is also instrumental in shaping citizens' perceptions of the quality of local democracy. When state authorities fail to guarantee the rights of all political forces or engage in violence and repression, it reinforces skepticism towards the democratic process. Such actions are likely to undermine citizens' trust in the state's commitment to free and fair elections, triggering the same negative or positive effects on their decision to vote.

In sum, in contexts where violence continues due to failed demobilization, the presence

of new armed actors, or state repression, citizens are less likely to believe in the post-conflict democratic process. In these circumstances, the effects of political assassinations on electoral turnout, whether negative or positive, can persist in the post-conflict stage.

In the remainder of the paper, we investigate empirically whether citizens respond to the assassination of local politicians by going to the polls or, rather, abstaining from participating in elections. We also explore whether these effects tend to be short-lived or long lasting.

4 Elections and Political Violence in Colombia

4.1 Context

Despite being considered a country with a well-functioning democracy, especially in comparison to other Latin American countries, Colombia is also characterized by high levels of violence against both politicians and civilians (Acemoglu, Robinson, & Santos, 2013; **?**; **?**). In a context of an irregular civil war and competitive elections, armed groups have deliberately sought to influence electoral outcomes through various strategies and with distinct goals, especially at the local level (Gallego, 2018) .

The ongoing conflict can be traced back to the 1960s when, soon after a civil war between the two traditional political parties ended, dissidents from the Colombian Liberal party formed insurgencies. Among these, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) became the largest and more powerful. Both groups described themselves as popular liberation movements seeking to bring about social justice and an end to the control of the traditional parties.

In the 1970s, these groups began to expand into new areas of the country. They started to move from poor and mostly rural and isolated places to areas that were closer to the main cities. By the late 1990s, about three fourths of all Colombian municipalities had some form of presence of either of these organizations (Echandia, 1999). To sustain this expansion and their survival, they relied on substantial resources from extortion, kidnapping, and illicit crops (Echandia, 1999; Vélez, 1999).

This growth, both in terms of their geographical expansion and scope of activities, affected the interests of local elites in several regions of the country, particularly in the north. Hence, in the early 1980s, reacting to the expansion of the guerrillas and to non-violent rural mobilization for land (cite Perez, Zamosc), local elites began to form local paramilitary forces (Ronderos 2014, Romero). Although a few were self-defense groups organized by peasants, most were set up by large landowners, cattle-raisers, emerald-traders, and drug traffickers (Romero, 2003). At first, these paramilitary groups operated separately in different areas

of the country.[7] They financed their operations with a combination of taxes on economic activities in areas under their control, voluntary and forced regular payments by locals, and drug trafficking. In addition, these groups created strong ties with local and regional political elites (see e.g., Lopez 2010). The emergence of paramilitarism and the growth of drug cartels intensified violence and Colombia became one of the most violent countries in the world.

Paradoxically, the escalation of the conflict coincided with efforts to deepen democracy through a series of decentralization measures in the late 1980s, which were crystallized in a new constitution in 1991 (cite Falletti 2010). As part of these efforts, in 1988, Colombians elected for the first time their mayors, who had until then been directly appointed by the president. Yet, the decentralization of political power and of economic resources made local officials and candidates a target of armed actors.

As part of their efforts to control territory and populations, armed actors deployed wide ranging strategies. They regularly threatened and killed candidates and their supporters, sabotaged electoral days in some regions, and even directly influenced the electoral outcome by coercing voters to support their preferred candidates. Violence against government authorities intensified and peaked in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Mayors and candidates became usual targets, specially around elections. For instance, a study from 1993 reports 133 homicides and 434 kidnappings linked to the elections, affecting 211 municipalities—-a fourth of the country. In that year, the FARC interfered with the electoral process in one third of municipalities. In 2000, there were 114 homicides and 133 kidnappings in 157 municipalities (FSD 2007). In 2003, 50 candidates were unable to contest the elections: 32 candidates were killed, while 17 were kidnapped and 6 survived attacks.[8] In 2007, 29 candidates were assassinated and in 2011 the number increased to 41. In addition, 88 candidates were threatened, 23 survived attacks and 8 were kidnapped.[9].

Despite overwhelming qualitative evidence connecting civil war dynamics of territorial control to violence against politicians and government officials, there is not a systematic account of the severity of this type of violence, how it has varied through time and across municipalities, or how it interacts with other forms of violence.

[7] By the late 1990s, most paramilitary groups united under an umbrella organization called the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC).

[8] Clarin Newspaper http://old.clarin.com/diario/2003/10/26/i-02102.htm

[9] http://www.abc.es/20111031/internacional/abcp-candidatos-asesinados-elecciones-locales-20111031.html

4.2 A new dataset of killings of politicians

To further understand the impact of selective violence agaist local public officials, we constructed an original dataset of political assassinations in the last four decades. We included killings and killing attempts of candidates in all mayoral and municipal council elections, standing mayors and council members, and former mayor and council members. This information was collected from several sources. First, we coded the events reported in a bulletin of human rights violations that has been published by the Center for Research and Popular Education (CINEP), a non-partisan organization which specializes in producing systematic reports on various aspects of the Colombian conflict.[10] This bulletin collects reports from local organizations, as well as events reported in the media, on human rights violations, and is one of the most recognized source on events of political violence in Colombia.

In addition, we verified the information with several additional sources that included the date and location of events, as well as the name and political position of the victim, including the following: dataset of political killings by the Federacion Colombiana de Municipios, dataset of political violence compiled by the Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales-IEPRI of the Universidad Nacional, officials records of the National Police, official records of the Observatorio de Derechos Humanos of the Vice-President's Office, the information of the National Movement of Victims of the State (MOVICE) and the Mission of Electoral Observation (MOE). We also used partisan publications including the reports "Acabar con el Olvido" by the Colombian Livestock Foundation (FUNDEGAN), "Union Patriotica, Expedientes contra el Olvido", which includes a list of all UP activists murdered, and "El Precio de ser Liberal", which includes a list of all Liberal Party members who had been assassinated until 1998. We looked for information on each event, coded the date, municipality where it took place, all the political positions (mayor or council member) the person run for or held, the political party the person was affiliated with, and whether sources identify any alleged perpetrator. For every event, we verified with at least one media source confirming the information.[11]

Our dataset includes a total of 1,814 assassinations during the period 1980-2022.[12] Figure 1 shows the total number of local politicians killed per year. Some were current, former or aspiring mayors, others were current, former or aspiring council members, and others had

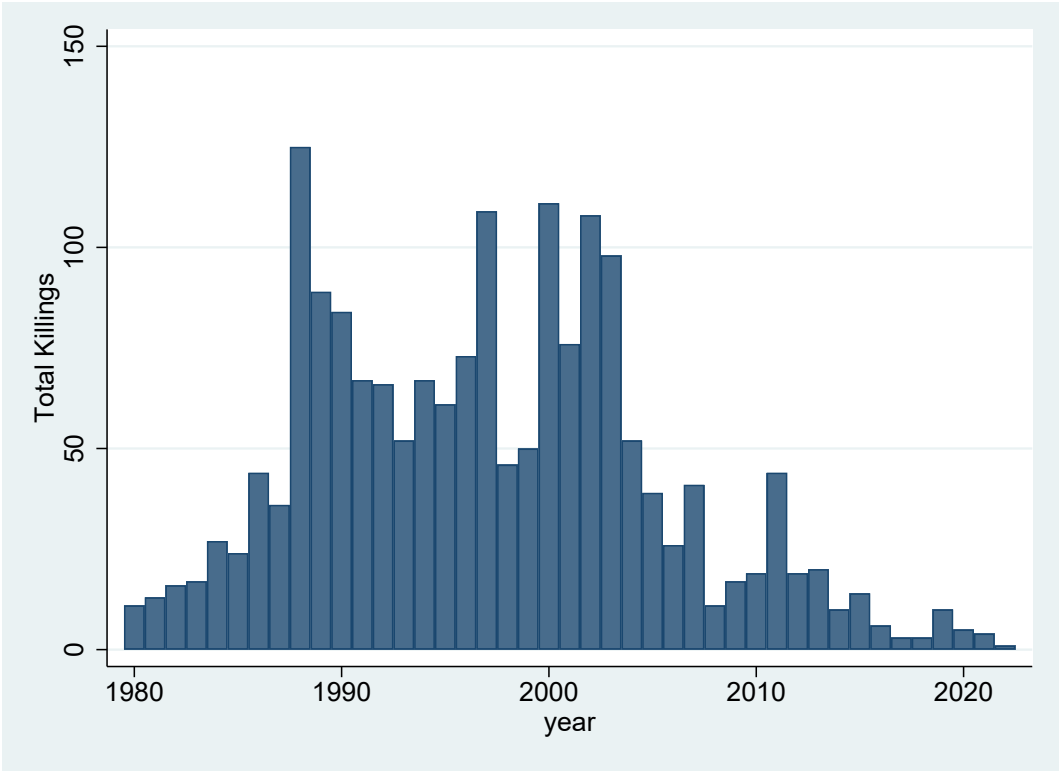
[10] The publication containing the political killings was called *Justicia y Paz* from 1987 to 1995, and *Noche y Niebla* thereafter.

[11] Although the problems for accurately measuring violence are well known (**?**), it is highly unlikely that the killings and killing attempts of candidates and current public officials go unnoticed in the national media.

[12] We have some cases for the pre-1980 period yet we believe that information is less reliable and far less complete than the post-1980 records.

held or pursued both posts at some point in their lives.[13] As Figure 1 shows, there are two "waves" ofassassinations, one that peaks in 1988 (year in which 125 killings are registered) and a second one that peaks in 2000-2002. Our data also demonstrates that starting in the early 2000s this type of violence declined substantially.

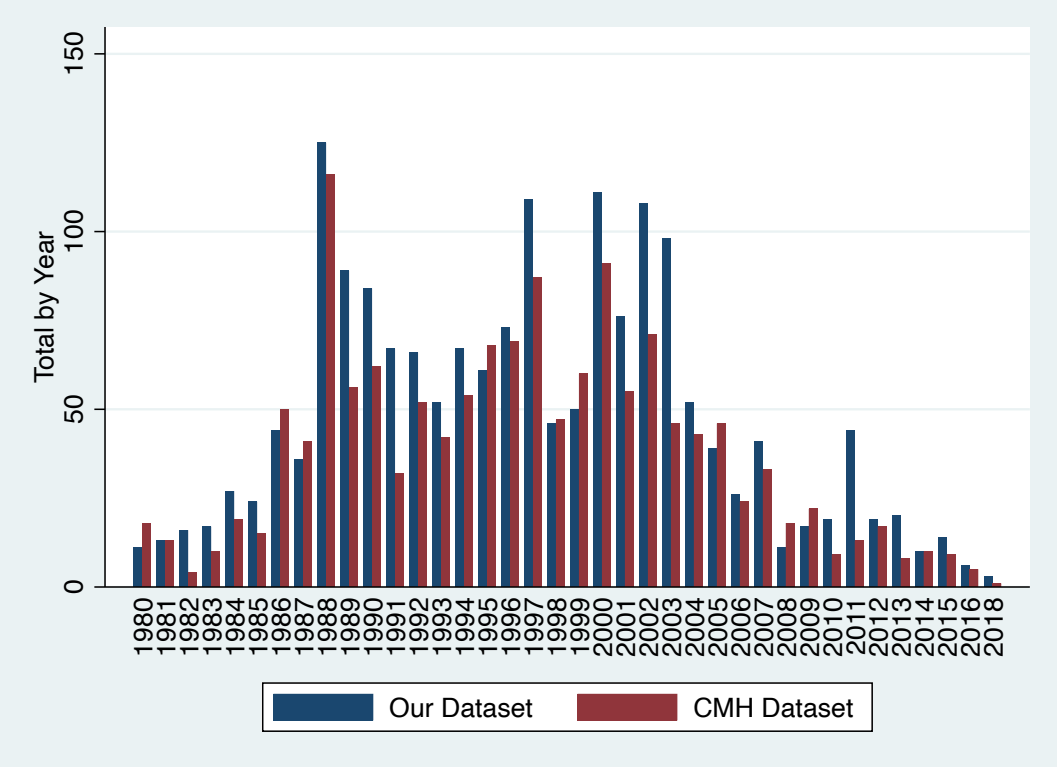
Figure 1: Local Politicians Killed in Colombia 1980-2015



Our dataset of violence against politicians is more complete than existing datasets. Contrasting with recent information compiled by Centro Memoria Historica (CMH), an official institute in charge of perserving the history of the conflict, we find that while the temporal trends follow a similar pattern we include more cases for almost all the years in the sample (See Figure 2). This gives us confidence in our data collection procedure as the CMH dataset is considered official and the most comprehensive available. More recently, as part of the peace process of 2016, the Truth Commission reported a total of 1,352 victims accounting for both candidates and public officials (de Roux et al, 2021, p.18). In comparison, we were able to collect information on a total of 1,814 assassinations. Furthermore, our dataset, unlike any other that we know of, also includes failed killing attempts, which allows us to have a plausible control group to estimate the causal effects of political killings.

[13]According to our records, 177 acting mayors and 922 acting municipal councilors were assassinated during the period 1975-2022.

Figure 2: Comparison of Dataset with CMH



5 Research Design

Our main estimating model takes the form

$$y_{it} = \beta d_{it} + \gamma X_{it} + v_t + c_{ij} + \epsilon_{it},$$

where d_{it} is a dummy variable for whether or not there is a murder in municipality i during the election cycle t, X_{it} is a vector of time-varying controls, v_t is an election fixed effect, c_{ji} is a department fixed effect, and ϵ_{it} is an error term.

Our main dependent variable is the electoral participation in local elections. Specifically, we use the official data from the national electoral commission (*Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil*) to calculate the total number of votes in mayoral races. As a proxy for the eligible voting population we use the population over age 18 from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE).[14] Using this information we calculate the turnout in each mayoral race between 1990 and 2019. This includes nine different elections (1990, 1992, 1994, 1997, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019). Using the exact date of each, we add the

[14]Data on the exact number of voters registered in each locality is only available for the more recent period. To make the turnout measure consistent across time we use adult population as a proxy for voters registered in each electoral cycle.

total number of assassinations of politicians occurring between each electoral cycle.

Given the strategic nature of selective violence against politicians, identifying the parameter β poses many challenges. For instance, the expansion of an armed group to a municipality could lead to an increase of political assassinations and other forms of violence. To identify these effects, we treat each murder as a successful attempt and use the municipalities that experienced a failed attempt in the same period as a control group. The key assumption in our estimation is that conditional on having an assassination attempt (failed or successful), its success rate is independent of the unobserved factors explaining turnout. That is, conditional on having one attempt, the likelihood of success of each attempt is assumed to be exogenous to future political outcomes. Under this assumption, we can identify the impact of each killing.

Our empirical strategy exploits the fact that killing attempts sometimes fail, and that this failure does not seem to follow any systematic pattern. To substantiate our assumption, we randomly selected ten failed killing attempts and looked for qualitative information about them. We found that in none of the cases the victim was saved by the protection of state forces or community collective action. Rather, in all cases the person managed to escape or was wounded but survived, or the attacker missed his target. Moreover, we found several cases of both successful and failed attempts where the victim had asked the state for protection but did not receive it. In one occasion, several council-members were killed at a house located only a block away from the police station—they had relocated there after receiving threats, hoping that the proximity to the police would offer protection.[15]

To further assess the validity of our approach, we tested for balance on key covariates: our data show that municipalities where killing attempts have failed do not differ from municipalities where they succeed in their rurality, distance to a departmental capital, state capacity, income level, pre-existing social capital, and presence of illicit crops. In Table 1 we present a set of pre-determined characteristics across the two samples and test for balance.[16] Variables are balanced if the variance ratio lies between 0.5 and 2 (Rubin (2001)).

First, the level poverty across municipalities is very similar, 55% in treatment and 58% in

[15]It is important to note that impunity levels in Colombia have been traditionally very high. Even despite the lower levels of violence that the country has experienced in the last decade, a recent study found that Colombia has the third highest level of impunity in the world (among countries that report data). Colombia's Attorney General (Fiscal General), stated in 2016 that Colombia had an impunity level of 99%. El Colombiano, 2016. "Colombia, el tercer país con mayor impunidad en el mundo." April 21. http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/colombia-el-tercer-pais-con-mayor-impunidad-en-el-mundo-MA1763493.

[16]Data on poverty, the number of public officials, civil organizations, and income in 1995 come from *Fundacion Social*, a Colombian NGO that collected detailed data on various characteristics of municipalities in 1995. Out of a total of 1,103 municipalities, *Fundacion Social* collected data for 1,019 of them (Social, 1998). Data on coca crops in 1999 come from the official SIMCI registry.

the control group respectively. State capacity, which is potentially crucial for the protection of local authorities, is measured by the number of public officials (normalized by municipal population). As shown, municipalities in the two samples had very similar public officials rates. Municipalities having failed attempts are on average richer and have more coca plantations, yet these differences are not significant. Lastly, we use geographical measures, such as distance to the departmental capital and altitude. In all measure we accept the null of balance.

Table 1: Balance on pre-determined observables, c., 1995

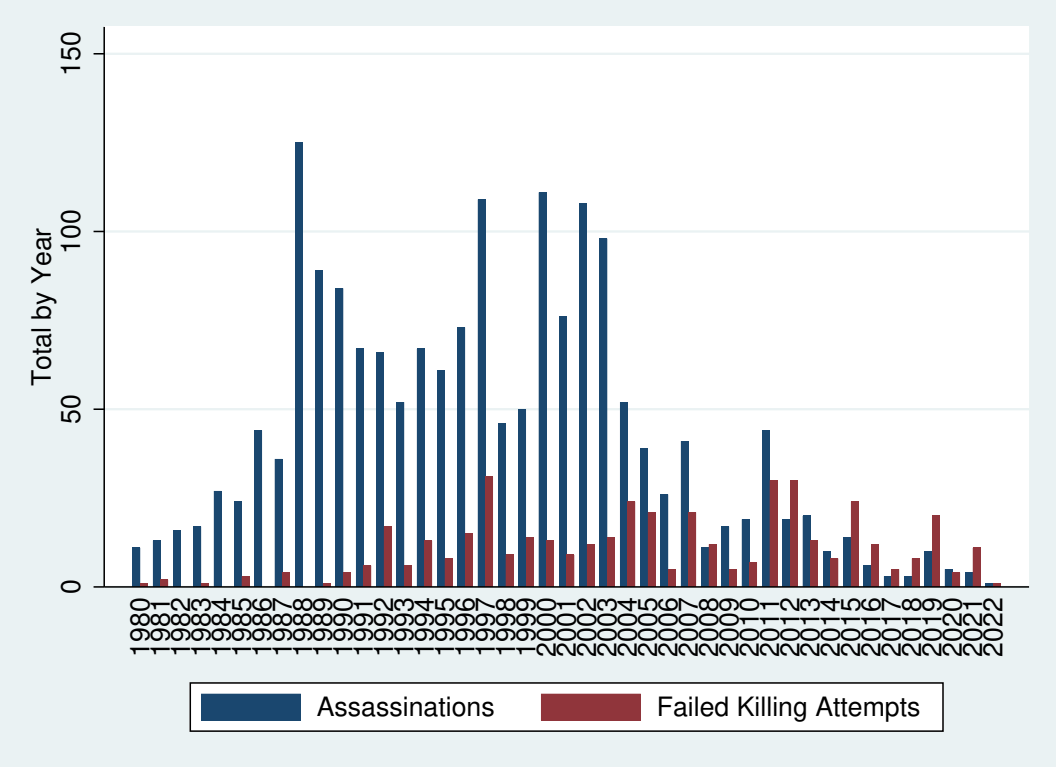
	Treated		Control		Balance	
	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	Std-diff	Var-ratio
Poverty Index	55.11	131.47	58.05	161.65	-0.24	0.81
Public Officials (per 1000)	1.94	3.30	2.20	5.91	-0.12	0.56
Civil Organizations (per 1000)	651.32	120463.40	574.72	105247.50	0.23	1.14
Income per capita	72.35	1663.84	80.49	2835.30	-0.17	0.59
Coca presence (dummy)	0.11	0.10	0.22	0.17	-0.30	0.56
Distance to Dep. Capital	126.56	9056.62	116.73	15447.80	0.09	0.59
Altitude	1113.32	633013.90	958.47	747426.90	0.19	0.85

Both quantitative and qualitative evidence suggest that attempts rarely fail due to the effective response of state authorities or community members and seems independent from other factors associated with turnout. Rather, violent attempts fail or succeed due to mere luck.

By comparing municipalities where killing attempts failed with those where they succeeded, we identify the impact of killings on electoral participation and various attributes of local governments.[17] In sum, we condition each model to approximate a "most similar comparison" setting. Namely, we treat murders as successful attempts and use failed attempts as a comparison group. [18]

[17] Our identification strategy is similar to **?**, although they seek to identify the effect of removing a national leader on regime change and civil war onset. Our focus on subnational candidates and elected officials in multiple elections allows us to create a more refined control group.

[18] Formally, our identifying assumption is that $E(d_{it} \times \epsilon_{it} | X, \phi_{it} = 1) = 0$, where ϕ is an indicator function for the presence of attempts.



6 Results

6.1 Contemporaneous effects

To estimate the effects of selective violence on turnout, we use a panel taking lagged political assassinations as the main independent variable. Table 2 presents the estimated effects on our voter turnout measure for all mayoral elections between 1988-2019.[19] In all the specifications, we use robust standard errors.

For comparison, in columns 1 to 4 we first present the estimations using the complete sample (which includes municipalities with no attempts/killings). Column 1 presents a simple bivariate regression which indicates a negative association between killings and participation. In columns 2-4 we include a set of time-varying controls and election fixed effects. Controls include population and the percentage of the population living in urban areas. We present the results first including departmental fixed effects (2), municipality fixed effects (3), and municipality specific time-trends (4). As seen, the magnitude of the coefficient on violence decreases but remains highly significant and negative. These results are robust to clustering standard errors at the department level (see Appendix Table 7).

In columns 5-7 we present our preferred specification where we restrict the sample to

[19] Our panel is not evenly spaced as earlier elections occurred every two years. In 1997 the mandate was expanded to three years and in 2007 to four years (current system). In total, we include eleven elections.

only include municipalities that had either a political assassination or a failed killing attempt. That is, the coefficient of interest shows the effect of political assassinations using as a control group the municipalities that had one killing attempt in the same period, excluding cases with more than one killing attempt. Column 5 presents the results of a bivariate regression, column 6 includes controls and department fixed effects and lastly, column 7 includes municipality fixed effects. The results are robust to these changes in the specification. The point estimate of the most restrictive model (column 7) of -0.058 (s.e.=0.01) is highly significant and implies a decrease in turnout of almost 6% associated with each killing. Relative to the mean turnout in the period, this effect represents a decline of more than 10 percentage points.[20]

Table 2: Selective Violence and Local Turnout, 1990-2019

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician = 1	-0.042***	-0.022***	-0.019***	-0.017***	-0.100***	-0.097***	-0.058***
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.012)
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	-	-	No	Yes	-
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	-	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
R Squared	0.0212	0.0212	0.534	0.399	0.743	0.0342	0.372
Mean Dependent Variable	0.6				0.54		

SE in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Overall R Square displayed except for model (4) which presents adjusted R square.

Our results are robust to different specifications and coding (See appendix which appendix . They are robust when we exclude from the analysis municipalities with more than one assassination or more than one failed attempt. We also exclude municipalities that experienced both an assassination and a failed attempt in the same period (See Appendix with Robustness Checks).

6.2 Heterogeneous Effects

To further understand the effects of selective violence and unpack the mechanisms, we explore the potential heterogeneity of the "treatment" across detailed characteristics of the events.

[20] We also estimate the effect for the restricted sample using municipality-specific time trends. The results are shown in Table 8 but are not included here because it is not clear how this restrictive model interacts with our identification strategy.

First, we focus on heterogeneous effects arising by the type of victim. More specifically, we explore whether there are differential effects when the target of violence is a candidate or the victim is an acting incumbent. If the goal of the violence is to shape voter behavior, we expect effects to be larger - suppress turnout at a higher degree - when the victim is running for office.

Table 3: Effects of Assassinations of Politicians In Office and Candidates on Local Turnout, 1990-2019

			Full Sample			Restricted Sample	
Model Specification:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician in Office = 1	-0.102***	-0.025***	-0.023***	-0.018***	-0.090***	-0.112***	-0.066***
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.014)
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	735	735	735
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	465	465	465
Adjusted R Squared	0.0187	0.534	0.399	0.743	0.0366	0.375	0.397
Assasination of Candidate = 1	-0.056***	-0.025***	-0.021***	-0.024***	-0.101***	-0.102***	-0.030
	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.042)
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	236	236	236
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	196	196	196
Adjusted R Squared	0.00165	0.533	0.395	0.743	0.0632	0.411	0.212
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	-	-	No	Yes	-
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	-	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Mean Dependent Variable			0.6			0.54	

SE in parentheses

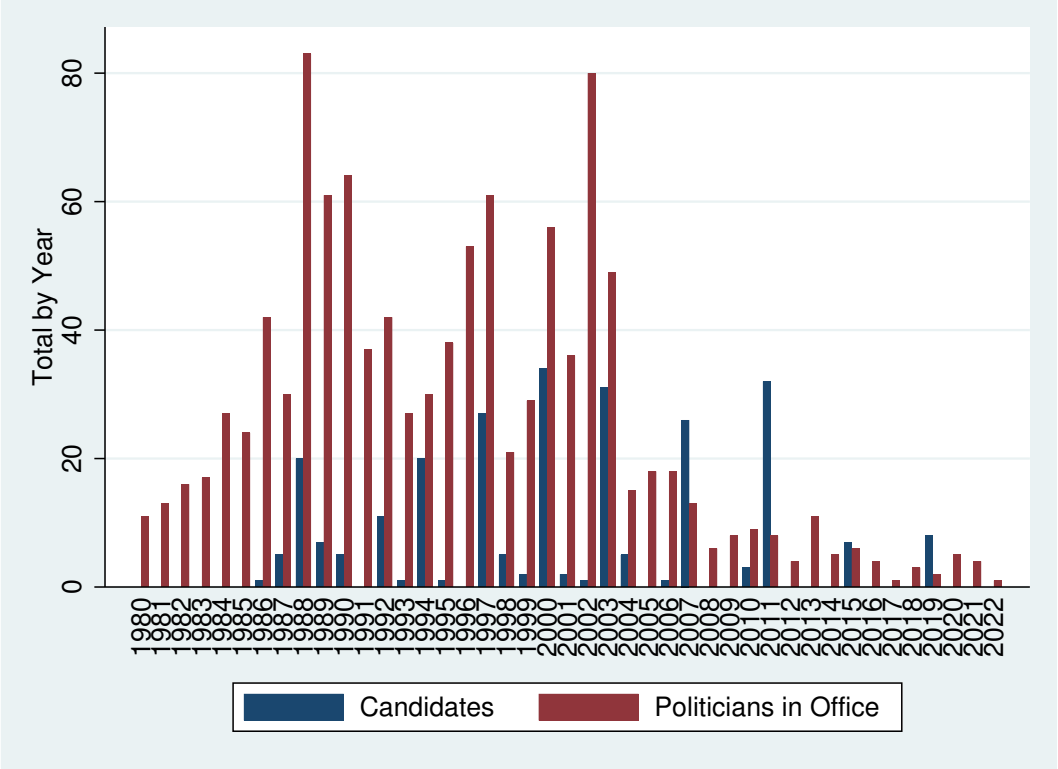
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Overall R Square displayed except for models (1) which presents adjusted R square.

Consistent with this expectation, we find that the impact of violence is generally higher for cases where candidates where the targets. Table 3 shows that for some models the effect of violence is substantially higher when we take only the murder of candidates. For instance, in the most demanding specification (models in column 7), the difference in the magnitude of the effect between politicians and candidates killed is 3-fold (7.1% vs. 2.3%).

A second source of heterogeneity comes from the intensity of the violence. Do higher levels of victimization lead to even more decreased turnout? To explore whether this is the case, we use the total number of victims and interact it with our main treatment variable. Table **??** shows that an additional death caused decreases turnout by about 2 percentage points (ranges depending of the model specification between 0.12 and 0.25). That is, higher levels

Figure 3: Assassinations of Politicians: Candidates and in Office



of violence are associated with further decreases in turnout. For the average municipality in the restricted sample this implies a reduction in turnout of approximately XX percent.

Table 4: Effects of Assassinations of Politicians on Local Turnout by Intensity of Violence, 1990-2019

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician = 1	-0.009	-0.003	-0.002	-0.002	-0.033*	-0.066***	-0.065***
	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.020)	(0.016)	(0.015)
Assasination of Politician = 1 * Number of Victims	-0.025***	-0.014***	-0.013***	-0.012**	-0.040***	-0.025***	-0.023***
	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	-	-	No	Yes	-
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	-	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.0242	0.535	0.401	0.744	0.0553	0.174	0.380
Mean Dependent Variable			0.6			0.54	

SE in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Overall R Square displayed except for models (1 and 4) which presents adjusted R square.

A third source of heterogeneity could come from contextual differences of the conflict. We explore heterogeneity of context by exploring different periods (pre 2007 and 2007 - 2015). The effects seem negative for both but we have way less violent events and attempts in the second period and so we loose significance.

This shows that violence against politicians has an added effect EVEN when we have violence in the municipality associated to the armed conflict. We can mention that some studies have found that guerrillas tend to suppress turnout and paras promote vote for certain candidates. We cannot look into this becasue data on perpetrator are not reliable but our results show that conditional on that violence, we still see a negative effefct. This means that if paras ARE promoting voting, the effect of killings of candidates has a huge negative effect. In the case of guerrillas, both effects would be negative.

6.3 Heterogeneous effects in municipalities with and without violence from non-state armed actors

Civil way dynamics have varied extensively sub-nationally within Colombia which means that the presence of non-state armed actors and their use of violence are concentrated in some regions of the country. In this section, we first explore whether the effects politicians' assassinations differed by whether or not they occurred in municipalities experiencing violence from non-state armed actors (AUC, ELN, FARC) between elections. Table 5 displays the results of estimating models that include a dummy variable of Non-State Armed Actor violence and its interaction with the treatment (assassination of politician). Like the main table, we estimate models for all of the municipalities (1 to 4) and then only within a sample restricting the control group to only include municipalities with an attempt against a politician (5 to 7).

$$y_{it} = \beta_1 d_{i,t} + \beta_2 d_{it} * ArmedActor_{i,t} + \beta_3 ArmedActor_{i,t} + \gamma X_{it} + v_t + c_{ij} + \epsilon_{it} \qquad (1)$$

The findings of the restricted models (5 to 7) suggest that there are important heterogeneous treatment effects of politicians' assassinations in municipalities conditional on whether non-state armed actors committed other violent acts. While the effect of an assassination on turnout is negative for municipalities without non-state armed actors violence, this effect reverts and becomes positive in municipalities that also experienced violence from non-state armed actors. The striking difference suggests that the effects of violence against politicians is conditional on other forms of violence being present. That is, in the case of Colombia, sub-national variation in civil war dynamics seems to also impact how voters respond to

violence.

Table 5: Effects of Assassinations of Politicians on Local Turnout by violent presence of non-state armed actors, 1990-2019

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician =1 | non-State Armed Actor violence==1	-0.057***	-0.014***	-0.011**	-0.006	-0.155***	-0.154***	-0.153***
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Assasination of Politician =1 | non-State Armed Actor violence==0	0.016*	-0.012*	-0.015**	-0.018**	0.115***	0.108***	0.114***
	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.019)
Assasination of Politician =0 | non-State Armed Actor violence==1	0.023***	-0.019***	-0.017***	-0.022***	-0.062***	-0.054***	-0.055***
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.017)
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.00955	0.536	0.407	0.797	0.0468	0.172	0.395
Mean Dependent Variable	0.6				0.54		

SE in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Even though there is evidence of both insurgent and counter-insurgent forces attempting to influence elections through various channels, existing accounts show that groups differed in the specific strategies deployed. Leftist insurgents often attempted to hinder voter turnout as a means to disrupt and sabotage electoral politics (Gallego, 2018; **?**; **?**). Conversely, right-wing counter-insurgents aimed to diminish electoral competition by supporting non-traditional right-wing third parties and through explicit alliances with candidates (Acemoglu et al., 2013; **?**).

These differences across groups call for a deeper examination of the effects of violence targeting politicians in regions of the country depending on the armed actor contesting or controlling the territory through violence. To test this, we estimate similar models to those presented in Table 5 but separately for each non-state armed actor. Surprisingly, the findings shown in Table 12 in the appendix below suggest that there are not large differences when considering interactions with each group. Perhaps the most notable finding is that the effects seem to be larger in magnitude for both FARC and AUC when compared to ELN.

We are cautious about the findings by groups because a lot of the violent actions of non-state armed actors cannot be confidently attributed to a specific actor.

7 Exploring mechanisms

8 Conclusion

Our study presents the first investigation of the systematic effects of political assassinations on electoral participation. Using an original dataset on killings of mayors and municipal council members in the last four decades in Colombia, we find that municipalities exposed to this type of violence exhibit lower levels of turnout in the short run. On average we find that one additional killing reduces turnout by approximately 5 to 10

By isolating the negative causal effect of political killings in the Colombian context, our results suggest that research on the legacies of civil war need to take into account the potential heterogeneous effects of violence. In particular, the form of violence and the context in which it takes place can be of great importance. Our results also call for more research on the political consequences of violence beyond social and political behavior. Moving forward, considering factors such as the repertoire or form of violence, the target, the intensity or frequency of events, or the specific context in which affected individuals engage in political participation (Price & Yaylacı, 2021), may be needed to have a more complete understanding of the heterogeneous political effects of wartime violence.

More generally, our study illustrates the potential pitfalls of developing a research agenda around causal identification without giving equal weight to theory development. While the emphasis on research designs that allow for causal identification is important, developing and testing hypotheses when opportunities for strong identification are elusive is also essential to collectively build sound explanations of complex social and political phenomena. Although the literature on the legacies of civil war violence has made invaluable contributions, the emphasis on indiscriminate violence could lead to misleading conclusions about violence as a whole. Identifying the effects on political participation is not enough–we need to investigate how the democratic process, the functioning of governance, and the relationship between citizens and their representatives are transformed by violence.

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Appendix

8.1 Robustness Checks

Table 6: Operationalization of Variables and Municipalities into Treatment and Control

Type of Violence	Identification	Municipalities in Treatment	Municipalities in Control
Selective Violence: Assassination of Politicians	Time-Varying Controls + (Department FE, Municipality FE, Municipality Trends)	Municipalities with at least one Assassination	Municipalities without Politician Assassinations
	Restricted to Municipalities with at least one killing or one attempt (With and without Department Fixed Effects, Time-Varying Controls)	Municipalities with at least one Assassination	Municipalities with Killing Attempt without Assassination (*Main operationalization deletes municipalities with both, robustness without deleting in Appendix)
Indiscriminate Violence: Landmine Explosions with Victims	Department Fixed Effects, Municipality Fixed Effects, Municipality Trends, Time-Varying Controls	Municipalities with at least one fatality	All other municipalities.
	Department Fixed Effects, Municipality Fixed Effects, Municipality Trends, Time-Varying Controls	Municipalities with at least one fatality or one injuries	All other municipalities.
	Restricted to Municipalities with at least one killing or one attempt (With and without Department Fixed Effects, Time-Varying Controls)	Municipalities with at least one Assassination	Municipalities with Injuries Attempt without Assassination (*Main operationalization deletes municipalities with both, robustness without deleting in Appendix)

Table 7: Table 2 with Errors Clustered at the Department Level

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician = 1	-0.042***	-0.022***	-0.019***	-0.017***	-0.100***	-0.101***	-0.097***
	(0.011)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.0212	0.534	0.399	0.795	0.0342	0.158	0.372
Mean Dependent Variable	0.6				0.54		

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 8: Municipality Specific Time Trends for Restricted Sample

	(1)
Assasination of Politician = 1	-0.025
	(0.018)
Controls	Yes
Department FE	No
Election FE	Yes
Municipality FE	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	Yes
Observations	905
Adjusted R Squared	0.93
Mean Dependent Variable	0.54

Table 9: Long Term Effects With Same Identification Strategy

(a) Violence Before 2003

	Full Sample		Restricted Sample (*)		Full Sample		Restricted Sample (*)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Before 2003)	-0.056***	-0.011***	-0.031	-0.001				
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.021)	(0.016)				
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Before 2003 - Weigthed by time)					-0.385***	-0.068**	-0.172	0.048
					(0.037)	(0.029)	(0.134)	(0.102)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	1,099	1,099	96	96	1,099	1,099	96	96
Adjusted R Squared	0.091	0.601	0.024	0.732	0.090	0.600	0.017	0.733
Mean Dependent Variable	0.71		0.64		0.71		0.64	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

(b) Violence Before 2003 Removing Municipalities With Violence After 2003

	Full Sample		Restricted Sample (*)		Full Sample		Restricted Sample (*)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Before 2003)	-0.052***	-0.015***	-0.032***	-0.023***				
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.012)	(0.008)				
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Before 2003 - Weigthed by time)					-0.365***	-0.098**	-0.203**	-0.133**
					(0.050)	(0.038)	(0.082)	(0.056)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	724	724	273	273	724	724	273	273
Adjusted R Squared	0.076	0.578	0.023	0.657	0.073	0.577	0.020	0.654
Mean Dependent Variable	0.71		0.68		0.71		0.68	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 10: Medium Term Effects With Same Identification Strategy

(a) Violence between 2003 and 2015

	Full Sample		Restricted Sample		Full Sample		Restricted Sample	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Between 2004 and 2015)	-0.048***	-0.008**	-0.039***	-0.019**				
	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.013)	(0.009)				
(Between 2004 and 2015 - Weigthed by time)					-0.145***	-0.017	-0.118***	-0.061**
					(0.018)	(0.013)	(0.038)	(0.027)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	1,099	1,099	156	156	1,099	1,099	156	156
Adjusted R Squared	0.064	0.600	0.051	0.732	0.057	0.599	0.061	0.734
Mean Dependent Variable	0.7		0.66		0.7		0.66	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

(b) Violence between 2003 and 2015 Removing Municipalities with Violence Before 2003 or after 2015

	Full Sample		Restricted Sample		Full Sample		Restricted Sample	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Between 2004 and 2015)	-0.041***	-0.011**	-0.024	-0.011				
	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.022)	(0.018)				
(Between 2004 and 2015 - Weigthed by time)					-0.104***	-0.018	-0.038	-0.020
					(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.060)	(0.048)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	677	677	56	54	669	669	54	54
Adjusted R Squared	0.042	0.554	0.022	0.825	0.026	0.549	0.008	0.824
Mean Dependent Variable	0.72		0.69		0.72		0.69	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 11: Short Term Effects With Same Identification Strategy

	NOT REMOVING VIOLENCE BEFORE 2015				REMOVING MUNICIPALITIES WITH VIOLENCE BEFORE 2015			
	Full Sample		Restricted Sample		Full Sample		Restricted Sample	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Assasination of Politician = 1 (Between 2015 and 2019)	-0.060***	-0.031**	-0.083	-0.120***	-0.068**	-0.027	-0.082	-0.073
	(0.021)	(0.014)	(0.062)	(0.039)	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.095)	(0.000)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	1,099	1,099	45	45	517	517	15	15
Adjusted R Squared	0.008	0.600	0.040	0.859	0.009	0.533	0.054	1.000
Mean Dependent Variable	0.73		0.7		0.73		0.7	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 12: Effects of Assassinations of Politicians on Local Turnout by violent presence of non-state armed actors by Group, 1990-2019

(a) FARC

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician =1 | FARC violence==1	-0.045***	-0.012***	-0.009**	-0.005	-0.127***	-0.127***	-0.126***
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Assasination of Politician =1 | FARC violence==0	-0.004	-0.021***	-0.024***	-0.027***	0.084***	0.075***	0.080***
	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.023)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Assasination of Politician =0 | FARC violence==1	0.017***	-0.025***	-0.024***	-0.026***	-0.058***	-0.043**	-0.039**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.0118	0.537	0.409	0.798	0.0394	0.161	0.381

(b) ELN

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician =1 | ELN violence==1	-0.043***	-0.021***	-0.018***	-0.015***	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	0.646***	1.331***	1.326***
Assasination of Politician =1 | ELN violence==0	0.006	0.005	-0.001	-0.001	0.063***	0.045*	0.049**
	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Assasination of Politician =0 | non-State Armed Actor violence==1	-0.008	-0.025***	-0.021***	-0.024***	-0.041*	-0.024	-0.025
	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.020)
					-0.111***	-0.110***	-0.106***
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.0242	0.537	0.404	0.796	0.0371	0.159	0.375

(c) AUC

	Full Sample				Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Assasination of Politician =1 | AUC violence==1	-0.047***	-0.021***	-0.018***	-0.015***	-0.110***	-0.111***	-0.108***
	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Assasination of Politician =1 | AUC violence==0	0.013	-0.002	-0.008	-0.008	0.092***	0.076***	0.086***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.024)
Assasination of Politician =0 | AUC violence==1	0.040***	-0.025***	-0.022***	-0.025***	-0.027	-0.014	-0.017
	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.022)
Observations	11,041	11,041	11,041	11,041	1,208	1,208	1,208
Number of codemun	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,101	605	605	605
Adjusted R Squared	0.0134	0.535	0.401	0.796	0.0416	0.165	0.385
Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Department FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Election FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Municipality Time Trends	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Mean Dependent Variable			0.6			0.54	

SE in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1