

## DO CAMPAIGNS MATTER (IN NEW DEMOCRACIES)? CAMPAIGN INTEREST, VOTE CHOICE, AND SURVEY SATISFICING<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Based on data from presidential campaigns and original data from gubernatorial campaigns in Mexico, this paper finds that the proportion of respondents who provide consistent answers to the vote intention questions during the same survey interview increases as the campaign unfolds and interest in the campaign grows. These voters are less likely to connect their vote choice with their political predispositions and have a disproportionate likelihood to change their vote choice throughout the campaign. This gives the impression that campaigns are more consequential than they are, when, in fact, vote shifts are a function of voters' increased motivation to engage in a survey interview.

**Keywords:** campaigns, voting behavior, surveys, Latin America, Mexico

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This research analyzes why elections in new democracies report a significant proportion of voters who change their vote choice by focusing on respondents' survey-taking behavior during campaigns. Based on data from presidential campaigns and original data from gubernatorial campaigns in Mexico, this paper finds that the proportion of respondents who provide consistent answers to the vote intention questions during the same survey interview increases as the campaign unfolds and as interest in the campaign grows. This behavior is explained because voters may be uninterested and unengaged in a survey interview, particularly at the beginning of a campaign. This is what the survey research literature refers as "survey satisficing," when respondents are not sufficiently motivated and devote little or no effort to generate answers quickly on the basis of little thinking but still offering an answer so that the survey can move on (Enns and Richman, 2013; Vanette and Krosnick, 2014). These voters who satisfice also exhibit behavior that is significantly different from the behavior of respondents with consistent answers: 1) they report lower levels of interest in the campaign, 2) they are less able to connect their political predispositions to vote choice, and 3) they have a disproportionate likelihood of changing their vote preference.

This paper contributes to the campaigns literature by pointing out a different mechanism by which campaigns matter. Previous research has primarily focused on the ability of voters to base their vote choice on the fundamentals over the course of the campaign (Gelman and King, 1993) or voters' susceptibility to persuasive campaign messages (Lawson and McCann, 2005; Greene, 2011 in comparative studies). The findings of this paper suggest that some voters appear to be respondents unmotivated to engage in the survey interview. This paper also contributes to the debate of why new democracies, particularly in Latin America, report a significant proportion of voters who change their vote preference throughout the campaigns. While survey taking behavior can affect campaign studies in any part of the world,

voters may be less likely to engage in electoral surveys in less institutionalized party systems<sup>3</sup> where electoral competition is less stable, new parties tend to appear in each election cycle, and voters have weaker partisan attachments (Mainwaring, 2016). In those contexts, voters may be less familiar with partisan options taking them more time to engage with the campaign events.

### Survey-Taking Behavior and Campaign Effects

The conventional wisdom in American Politics has posited that campaigns have “minimal effects” since few voters change their declared candidate preference throughout the campaign, and forecasting models can predict aggregate election outcomes well in advance of the campaign with few aggregate long-term variables. According to this literature, since party identification is strong, most voters are immune to persuasive campaign messages (Campbell et al., 1960; Zaller, 1996). Most studies find that, on average, campaigns cause less than a 5% margin shift in American presidential elections (Bartels, 1993; Finkel, 1993; Holbrook, 1996). In fact, recent research suggests that most vote swings are mostly a result of sample composition and not changes in voters’ opinions (Gelman, Goel, Rivers and Rothschild, 2016). According to this literature, campaigns play a major role enlightening voters and providing information to support the candidate in line with their preexisting political predispositions –the so-called campaign “fundamentals” (Gelman and King, 1993; Kaplan, Park and Gelman, 2012, among others).

In contrast, most studies in comparative political behavior, particularly in Latin America, argue that voters in

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<sup>3</sup> A party system is institutionalized when “actors develop expectations and behavior based on the premise that the fundamental contours and rules of party competition and behavior will prevail into the foreseeable future” (Mainwaring, 1999: 25). In more institutionalized systems, “political actors accord legitimacy to parties, party systems are stable, parties have strong roots in society, and party organizations matter” (25).

new democracies are more persuadable and show little resistance to campaign messages. Since party systems are young and partisan cues and roots in the electorate tend to be weak, campaign fundamentals (such as voters' partisan attachments) are weaker and campaigns play a more crucial role (Lawson and McCann, 2004; Baker, Ames and Renno, 2006; and Greene, 2011). For example, Greene (2011 and 2015) finds that in Mexico campaigns significantly affect voters' choices since 34% of the electorate shifted their vote intention during the 2006 and 2012 presidential elections.

This research presents a complementary explanation from what we know about campaign effects, particularly in Latin America, focusing on respondents' survey-taking behavior. While the survey research literature points out that respondents not always provide carefully thought-out answers about their attitudes and behavior (Krosnick, 1991), an interesting pattern emerges in panel surveys used in academic research. Most studies analyzing campaign effects rely on panel surveys (e.g. American National Election Studies, Mexico Panel Survey, Brazilian Panel Survey, etc.), which only include one vote intention question in their survey instrument. Because of that it is difficult to test the consistency of voters' answers and analyze how crystallized their vote intention is throughout the survey interview. However, as the literature on survey research warns, respondents in many cases might be distracted or just disinterested in the survey interview. Krosnick (1991) theorized this behavior in his seminal research suggesting that respondents may not be sufficiently motivated to provide optimal responses or high-quality data since the survey interview represents an important cognitive effort for little reward (Vanette and Krosnick, 2013). In terms of survey research methodology, respondents might be "satisficing" interviewers by generating answers quickly on the basis of "little thinking" but still offering an answer so that the survey can move on (Vanette and Krosnick, 2013). This

omission might be especially relevant at the beginning of a campaign, when the low salience of the election can determine survey respondents' disposition to provide meaningful answers. Wilson and Hodges (1992) refer to this problem as the "file drawer" model. Researchers sometimes treat people as if they keep their attitudes on relevant issues in "mental files" that can be opened at any time and could provide meaningful answers at any time. Nonetheless, voters may suffer from a lack of attitude crystallization (Schuman and Presser, 1981) since they may not be motivated to take the survey questions seriously. In other words, what the literature has highlighted as the "enlightened" effect of political campaigns, in some cases, might be a function of voters' motivation to answer the interview. Voters are still enlightened by the campaign but not in the way the literature tends to understand the mechanism: instead of providing information to support the candidate in line with their preexisting political predispositions, political campaigns can increase campaign interest making voters more likely to take the survey questions seriously (thus, engaging with the survey interview and relying on the campaign fundamentals throughout the interview).

In American Politics, Enns and Richman's (2013) study represents an important exception in the campaigns and elections literature with an indirect attempt to identify voters who satisfice in presidential elections. While pointing out the difficulty to directly identify respondents who satisfice, they rely on respondents' self-reported care for which party wins the election as a proxy of survey satisficing.<sup>4</sup> In particular, they find that voters who care about the election tend to rely more on the campaign fundamentals. Based on these findings, they argue that the ability to base preferences on the fundamentals does not change over the course of the campaign; what changes is the number of respondents who care about the campaign.

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<sup>4</sup> "Do you care a good deal which party wins the 2000 presidential election?"

My work coincides with Enns and Richman (2013) when arguing that some of what has been attributed to campaign effects is actually a function of whether respondents are motivated to answer the survey interview. This study aims to identify which voters are satisficing without relying on proxy variables that might be correlated with vote intentions (e.g. partisans might care more which party wins the election). Moreover, in addition to testing if respondents who are motivated to satisfy the survey request are more capable of connecting “fundamentals” to vote intention, this study also examines if these voters are more likely to change their vote preference, which constitutes a direct test of how consequential survey satisficing is in the study of campaign effects. Finally, this study relies on two different electoral cycles and type of elections –presidential and gubernatorial campaigns– in order to exclude the possibility that this relationship is a unique characteristic of a particular election.

The fact that some voters just do enough to satisfy the survey request over the course of the campaign has important substantive implications and provides a complementary explanation from what we know about campaign effects. If respondents are providing inconsistent answers, their ability to connect what the literature has called campaign “fundamentals” to their declared vote intention is lower than assumed (Enns and Richman, 2013). For example, a respondent who is disinterested in the survey interview would be unable to relate his/her retrospective assessment of the national economy to vote intention, thus, ratifying/punishing the incumbent for a good/bad economic performance (Key, 1996; Fiorina, 1981). Similarly, a respondent who just “does enough” to satisfy the survey interview would be unable to connect his/her ideological or issue orientations to the candidate in line with his/her political predispositions. Likewise, respondents who satisfice would be less likely to vote for the candidate who is consistent with their partisan allegiances. In this context, the first

hypothesis of this paper is focused on the substantive implications when voters satisfice offering minimally acceptable responses so that the survey can move on:

H1: Respondents who satisfice are less likely to connect their vote choice to the campaign fundamentals.

Moreover, if respondents are uninterested to answer the survey interview, it is also plausible that what the literature considers as campaign effects is a function of voters' engagement in a survey interview. A plausible interpretation of the high proportion of voters who change vote preference may be that, at the beginning of the campaign, respondents are not reporting their candidate preference since they are not interested in the campaign. In contrast, by the end of the campaign, when their levels of interest have increased, respondents are more likely to provide their vote choice. The answers provided at this later stage might not match their initial answer to the survey interview when the respondent was satisficing. In light of this discussion, the second hypothesis of this paper proposes that respondents who satisfice are more likely to switch their vote intention throughout the campaign.

H2: Respondents who satisfice at the beginning of the campaign are more likely to switch their vote choice as the campaign unfolds.

### **Who Satisfices? Campaign Interest and Survey Inconsistency**

According to the survey satisficing theory, respondents may satisfice in a series of ways. For example, one possible manifestation of satisficing is respondents' tendency to choose the "don't know" option in order to avoid thinking about the question (Krosnick, 1991; Oppenheim, 1992). Other examples include agreeing with statements without fully evaluating both sides of a question (Campbell, et al.,

1960), non-differentiation in using rating scales (Lavrakas, 1987), the impact of order response, particularly when respondents settle for the first plausible response option they identify (Schuman & Presser, 1996), and the inconsistency of questionnaire responses (Achen, 1975; Converse & Markus, 1979; Feldman, 1989). In this paper, I focus primarily on respondents' lack of consistency in the course of a single survey interview, particularly in regards to the vote choice survey question.

To identify survey satisficing, this research avoids what the survey research literature has defined as the "automatic activation" problem (Weisberg, 1996; Wilson and Hodges, 1992) in which it is assumed that survey questions automatically activate a relevant attitude—in this case, vote intention. In contrast, I assume that there is no perfect way to measure a concept or behavior. Because no single question is able to fully capture them, it is necessary to rely on multiple questions that attempt to get at these concepts. By including more than one vote intention questions throughout a single interview it is possible to discern the crystallization and consistency of respondents' declared vote intention.<sup>5</sup>

In particular, this study relies on two vote intention survey questions that are inquired over the course of a single interview. The first question inquires which candidate the respondent would vote for. In this particular case, the interviewer does not explicitly mention which the candidates and parties are:<sup>67</sup>

*Who would you prefer to be the next president of the Republic?*

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<sup>5</sup> To measure vote intention, I do not include questions with the exact same wording throughout the questionnaire since voters may be reluctant to continue the survey interview if they perceive that exactly the same question is asked several times (respondents would feel tested by the survey interview). To avoid this perception, I base my analysis on vote choice questions with alternative wordings and structure.

<sup>6</sup> The complete list of wordings appears in Table A1 of the Appendix.

<sup>7</sup> In this question, respondents can either declare partisan preference or candidate preference.



The second question is the vote intention survey question commonly used by electoral polls and panel surveys.<sup>8</sup> In this case, respondents will receive a ballot in which they can see the name and party logos, and respondents choose accordingly. It is worth mentioning that both questions were included in the first part of the questionnaire before the survey instrument contaminates the respondent's answers to the vote intention questions.<sup>9</sup>

*Elections to elect the President of the Republic will be held in July. Which party or candidate would you vote for if elections were held today?*

In order to detect survey satisficing, this study identifies those voters who provide inconsistent answers to the vote intention questions. I consider that respondents satisfice when any of the following three conditions are met: 1) when a respondent declares support for candidate A in the first question, but supports candidate B in the second question; 2) when some respondent answers that s/he will vote for "none" of the candidates in one question but declares a candidate preference in the second question; and 3) when some respondent answers "don't know" in the first question but declares a candidate preference in the second one.

Figure 1 displays the percentage of survey inconsistency in the 2006 and 2012 presidential elections in Mexico based on data from 14 face-to-face national surveys con-

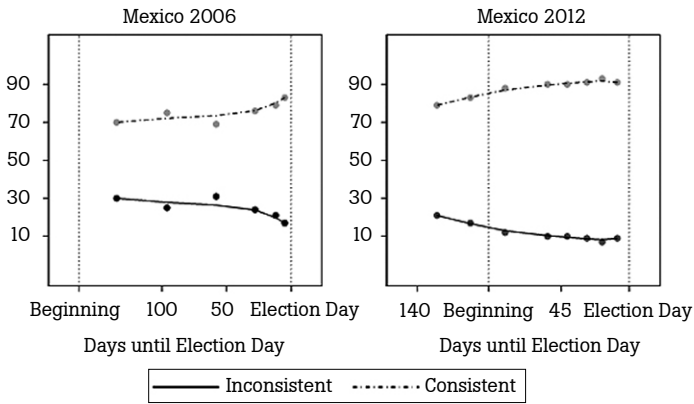
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<sup>8</sup> If the interview is face-to-face respondents will receive a ballot in which they can see the name and party logos. The respondent will choose the party and candidate whom s/he will vote for. If the interview is administered by telephone, the interviewer will mention explicitly the candidates and parties they are running with.

<sup>9</sup> Although it is plausible that the location of the two vote choice questions could have affected voters' responses (e.g. activated respondents' vote choice) it is worth noting that in 2012, when voters' inconsistency registered the lowest level, the two vote choice questions were inquired one after the other one. In contrast, when some questions were located between the two vote choice questions (e.g. voters' political information and candidate evaluations), and it is expected to decrease survey satisficing, the proportion of voters with inconsistent answers was higher (2006 and 2015). In other words, the location of the two vote choice questions does not seem to affect respondents' survey-taking behavior.

ducted between the beginning and the end of each campaign. As expected, there was a decline in the number of respondents who provided inconsistent answers to the vote intention survey questions as the campaigns progressed. At the beginning, when the election was not salient yet and voters had not been exposed to high levels of campaign information, a sizable portion of the electorate satisfied (26 and 18 percent, respectively.) As election day approached, the proportion of respondents who satisfice decreased to 18 and 8 percent, respectively.<sup>1011</sup>

**Figure 1.**  
**Survey Inconsistency in Presidential Campaigns in Mexico**  
**(% respondents)**



<sup>10</sup> An additional third group provided “don’t know” responses to both vote choice questions (an average 10% over the course of the 2006 and 2012 presidential campaigns). I exclude this category from subsequent analysis since this paper primarily focuses on respondents that declare a candidate preference in at least one of the vote choice survey questions.

<sup>11</sup> Survey satisficing was stronger during the 2006 presidential election. Two elements might have affected survey-taking behavior during the 2012 presidential election. First, one of the major presidential candidates ran again in the 2012 (e.g. leftist candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador), which might have helped voters achieving crystallized preferences in earlier stages of the campaign. And second, the 2012 campaign was shorter than the 2006 presidential election, which might have encouraged voters to pay attention to campaign events at earlier stages. While the 2006 campaign began in January and lasted 6 months, the 2012 campaign began in April and lasted three months.

Table 1 displays the results from logistic regressions based on pooled electoral data collected during the 2012 presidential campaigns and confirm that survey inconsistency decreases as the campaign unfolds even when controlled by additional variables (e.g. partisanship, campaign interest,<sup>12</sup> and socioeconomic variables): the higher number of days until election day (natural log), voters are more likely to declare inconsistent vote intention ( $p < .01$ .) This trend is consistent with the literature on survey research methodology that has found that the number of respondents who satisfice tends to decrease as election day approaches (Banducci and Stevens, 2015).<sup>13</sup> Likewise, in addition to the proximity to the election, non-partisans, voters who report less interest in the campaign, and voters with lower levels of education are more likely to report inconsistent preferences. These results are also consistent with the survey research literature, which finds that survey satisficing is more prevalent among less-sophisticated respondents (Krosnick, 1987).

**Table 1.**  
**Respondents Who are More Likely to Satisfice**

	Logistic Regression Models		
	DV: 1 Satisficing 0: Consistent		
	2012		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
INTEREST in Campaign	-0.38*** (0.03)	-0.95*** (0.15)	-0.75*** (0.16)
DAYS Until Election day (ln)		-0.16 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.14)

<sup>12</sup> Campaign Interest: "How much attention are you paying to the electoral campaign: very much, some, not much, not at all?" This survey question was only included in the 2012 electoral polls.

<sup>13</sup> Banducci and Stevens (2015) test respondents' propensity to give consistent answers across a range of questions: trust in five different institutions –from the police to the United Nations– and assessments of trust, fairness, and helpfulness of people.

Interest X DAYS (ln)		0.15*** (0.04)	0.11*** (0.04)
Partisans			-1.31*** (0.34)
Partisans X DAYS (ln)			0.11 (0.08)
Education			-0.08** (0.04)
Age			-0.00 (0.00)
Female			-0.02 (0.07)
Constant	-0.55*** (0.11)	0.06 (0.56)	0.47 (0.59)
Observations	9,131	9,131	9,116
Pseudo R-sq	0.02	0.04	0.06

Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

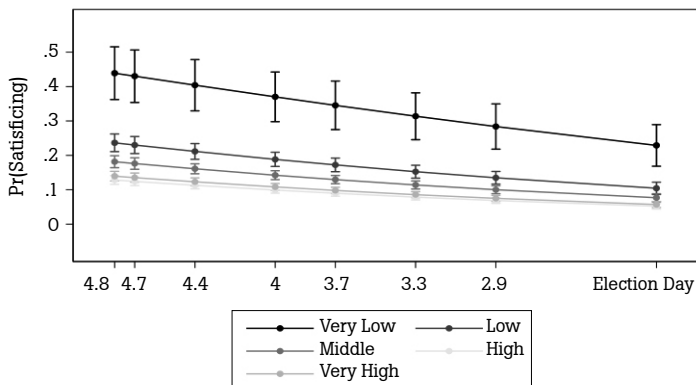
Table 1. The table displays results from logit models. The dependent variable is a dichotomous measure that takes on the value of 1 if the respondent satisfices and 0 if provides consistent answers.

Source: Pooled data from the 2012 presidential electoral polls.

These models also allow identifying that campaign interest appears to be the mechanism that affects voters' likelihood of satisficing, and this effect is conditional on the proximity of the election (*INTEREST X DAYS (ln)*): as election day approaches, the proportion of voters who report consistent answers to the vote intention questions increases ( $p < .01$ , Figure 2). Moreover, we also know, based on the data from the 2012 presidential campaign, that the proportion of voters who report low levels of interest decreases throughout the campaigns (from 20 percent to 11 percent), which also contributes to decrease the proportion of survey inconsistency. It is worth noting that partisanship has an effect on the likelihood of satisficing but it is not conditional on proximity to the election; the effect of partisanship remains constant throughout the campaign (the interaction is not statistically significant). The models do not include data from the

2006 presidential election since campaign interest was not consistently included in the questionnaires.

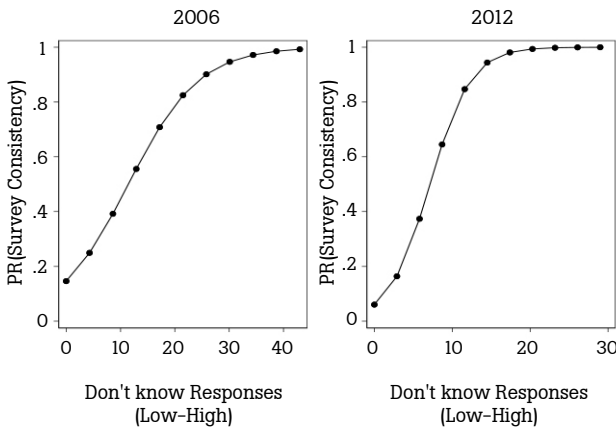
**Figure 2.**  
**Campaign Interest and Survey Satisficing (Mexico 2012)**



To be sure that survey inconsistency is, in fact, a proxy of survey satisficing, this study also tests the association between survey inconsistency and “don’t know” answers. DK answers constitute another measure commonly used by the survey research methodology literature to test survey satisficing: the number of times the respondent answers “don’t know” throughout the survey interview captures respondents’ level of engagement with the interview (the higher number of don’t knows, the lower the level of engagement). Figure 3 shows that the number of “don’t knows” is a strong predictor of respondents’ inconsistency to the vote intention question (Table A2 in the Appendix reports the complete logistic models). For example, in 2006, if a respondent replied “don’t know” 15 times or more during the same interview (of 43 questions per interview, on average), that respondent was very likely to provide inconsistent answers to the vote intention questions. In 2012, if a respondent replied “don’t know” 10 times or more during the same interview

(of 30 questions per interview, on average), that respondent was very likely to provide inconsistent answers. In other words, providing a disproportionate large proportion of “don’t know” answers is highly predictive of survey inconsistency. Tables A3-A4 of the Appendix replicate the results reported in this paper using a latent variable that captures both measures of satisficing. The results do not differ substantially.<sup>14</sup>

Figure 3.  
Survey Consistency and “Don’t Know” Answers



An alternative explanation of the results of this section relates to the wording of the two vote intention survey questions. The first question asks whom the respondent “would like” to have as president, which can be a proxy for expressive voting since it inquires a broad preference (“Who would you prefer”). In contrast, the second question explicitly narrows the focus of the answer to vote choice (“Which party or candidate would you vote for if elections were

<sup>14</sup> I also analyzed the length of the survey interview (minutes) when the information was available. The length of the survey interview was not associated with the number of don’t knows ( $p=-0.03, p=-0.06$ ) or with vote choice consistency ( $p=-0.01, p=-0.03$ ).

*held today?*). To be sure that question wording is not driving the different answers, this study conducted an original telephone survey during the 2015 gubernatorial election in Mexico (two Mexican states: Michoacán and Nuevo León). Both studies included two vote intention questions in the same interview. The first one reads as follows, which avoids an expressive voting interpretation of the question:

*"On June 7th elections to choose governor of the State will be held. If elections were held today, which candidate or political party would you vote for? (VOLUNTARY)"*

The second question relies on the following question.

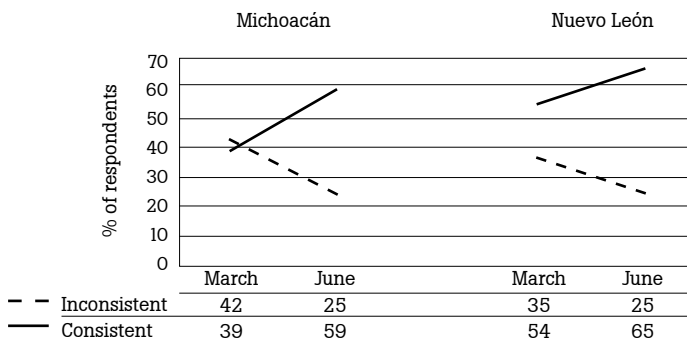
*"Between the following candidates for governor: Candidate A of the Party A, Candidate B of the Party B and Candidate C of the Party C... Which candidate would you vote for?"*

As Figure 4 shows, survey satisficing is not driven by question wording and is not a phenomenon limited to presidential elections or specific electoral cycles. Figure 4 presents the estimates of respondents who satisfice in gubernatorial elections in Mexico based on an original panel survey conducted in two Mexican States during the 2015 electoral cycle: Michoacán and Nuevo León. It is worth mentioning that the percent of survey satisficing at the beginning of the campaigns is significantly higher than its counterpart in presidential elections (42% and 35%, respectively). This might be the result of gubernatorial elections being less salient than presidential elections and/or offering a less intensive information environment compared to presidential elections. As in the case of presidential elections, the proportion of survey satisficing decreases in both states (25%).

When testing the hypotheses of this paper I consider alternative explanations. First, it is plausible that satisficing could be a function of partisanship –the most important predictor of vote intention stability at the individual level

according to the literature on voting behavior. Following this logic, partisan voters would be more inclined to provide consistent answers, while independents –due to their lack of attachment to parties– would be “shopping” and declaring inconsistent candidate preferences during the survey interview. Second, the analysis also considers political information, particularly candidates’ name recognition, as an alternative hypothesis. It is plausible that voters who provide inconsistent answers to the vote intention question are driven by lack of information. For example, if voters do not know the name of the major candidates competing in the election, it is possible that they will not display a candidate preference in the first question, but once they hear the name of the candidates during the survey interview, they will be able to declare their vote intention in the second question. In this scenario, the variable driving voters’ inconsistency is not disinterest in taking the survey interview but their lack of information.

**Figure 4.**  
Survey Inconsistency in Gubernatorial Campaigns in Mexico  
(% of respondents)



Third, this study also considers that satisficing might be a function of the strength of respondents’ declared vote intention, particularly at the beginning of the campaign. In this scenario, this apparent uncertainty would explain why



respondents prefer one candidate in some moments of the questionnaire, only to prefer another candidate in other parts of the questionnaire. The next sections will present a brief overview of the Mexican Party System as well as the empirical strategy employed to test the hypotheses of this paper.

## Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections in Mexico

Mexico has a fairly institutionalized party system for the average of the region (Mainwaring 2018)<sup>15</sup> that presents puzzling findings when the literature has studied campaign effects in presidential elections. As previously discussed, while in American presidential elections only a small proportion of the electorate changes its vote intention, at least a third of the electorate switch its declared vote intention in Mexican presidential campaigns (Greene, 2011 and 2015). These findings are puzzling since Mexico has fairly strong parties and party labels, with high levels of electoral stability in both presidential and legislative elections (Mainwaring, 2016). In fact, up until 2012, more than 80% of the vote share was captured by the three major parties in Mexico: the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the National Action Party (PAN), and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). In addition, the Mexican party system has one of the highest rates of party identification in Latin America at both the national and subnational level,<sup>16</sup> since two thirds of the electorate identify with a political party, and has remained stable since the begin-

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<sup>15</sup> In the 1990–2015 period, the Mexican system, along with Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, and Chile, registered almost perfect stability in the main contenders in Latin American presidential elections. When interparty electoral competition and stability of parties' ideological positions are added, Uruguay, Mexico, and Chile constituted the most stable systems in Latin America (Mainwaring, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> At the subnational level, Michoacán and Nuevo León report high levels of party identification according to the panel surveys: 50% and 60%, respectively, without considering leaners.

ning of Mexico's transition to democracy. Given this context, theoretically we would expect fewer vote shifts than the literature has found.

The fact that an important proportion of the electorate satisfices during survey interviews, particularly at the beginning of the campaign, can provide an answer to this puzzle. Table 2 presents the profile of voters who satisfice providing inconsistent answers, and those who provide consistent answers. Data from original panel surveys conducted during the gubernatorial elections in Mexico in 2015 allows us to identify the proportion of respondents who switch their vote choice at later stages of the campaign and partisanship levels. As previously advanced, voters who satisfice are significantly more likely to change their vote choice (e.g. among voters who satisfice, 57% change their vote choice throughout the campaigns). This behavior is explained because, according to the argument of this paper, some voters switch their initial vote choice as a function of their increased motivation to engage in a survey interview. The descriptive statistics also show that both voters who satisfice and voters who provide consistent answers have a considerable proportion of partisans (e.g. among voters who satisfice, 47% self-identify as partisans), which suggests that satisficing is not exclusively a function of partisanship.

**Table 2.**  
**Profile of Voters Who Satisfice and Don't Satisfice**

	Voters who satisfice	Voters who provide consistent answers
Change vote choice	57%	28%
Partisans	47%	67%

Source: 2015 Gubernatorial Panel Survey.

## Empirical Strategy and Data

In order to test for the satisficing effect, I rely on both cross-sectional and panel data surveys. To test hypothesis 1, the analysis includes pooled data conducted throughout the 2006 and 2012 presidential elections in Mexico (six and eight electoral polls<sup>17</sup>, respectively). For hypothesis 2, the analysis is based on a panel survey, which provides direct evidence of change by comparing the same respondents at different times. The 2006 and 2012 Mexico Panel Surveys (Lawson, Chappell et al., 2006 and 2013) only include one vote choice survey question, which makes it difficult to test respondents' consistency. Instead, I rely on an original two-wave telephone panel survey conducted during the 2015 gubernatorial campaigns in two Mexican states.<sup>18</sup> These panel surveys include two vote choice questions, which can allow identify which voters are satisficing.

As previously mentioned, respondents will be considered to satisfice if s/he provides inconsistent, contradictory answers to the vote choice questions included in the interview. Hypothesis 1 proposes that voters will be able to connect the campaign "fundamentals" with vote choice, but this effect will be conditional on survey satisficing. In order to test the conditional relationship, I based my analysis on respondent's *PARTY IDENTIFICATION*<sup>19</sup> and *PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL*.<sup>20</sup> In addition, Table A7 and A8 of the Appen-

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<sup>17</sup> BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asocs., Mexican polling firm, conducted the 14 national electoral polls during the 2006 and 2012 presidential campaigns. Each survey had an average sample of 1,200 respondents (pooled data from 2006: N=7,200 and pooled data from 2012: N=10,200).

<sup>18</sup> BGC Beltrán, Juárez y Asocs. conducted the two telephone panel surveys in Michoacán and Nuevo León. The first wave was conducted on March (N=1,600) and the second wave was conducted the week before election day (June 2015). Table A5-A6 of the Appendix presents a detailed explanation of the attrition rate. First and second waves in both gubernatorial elections appear to be balanced in terms of demographic variables.

<sup>19</sup> *Regardless of which party you vote for, do you normally think of yourself as panista, priista or perredista or from any other political party?*

<sup>20</sup> *"Do you approve or disapprove the way (NAME PRESIDENT) is doing his job as President" (1=Approve; 0=Disapprove)*

dix also report results using a composite measure of voters' *POLITICAL PREDISPOSITIONS*, which combines partisan strength<sup>21</sup> and presidential approval.<sup>22</sup>

Hypothesis 2 proposes that survey satisficing represents a major predictor of respondents who change their vote choice, which is measured if the respondents changed their declared vote intention between the first and second wave of the panel survey (*VOTE CHOICE CHANGE*<sup>23</sup>). I also control for alternative hypotheses in order to exclude the possibility that other variables are driving the results. In addition to partisanship (partisan/independent), the analysis control for an additive index that measures if the respondents know the name of the major candidates competing in the election (*NAME RECOGNITION*<sup>24</sup>). The models also test the strength of respondents' declared vote choice (*VOTE CERTAINTY*). To do that, I created an index to measure how certain the respondents are about their declared vote intention. In particular, I rely on the following question, which was asked for each major candidate competing in the election:

*"Using a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means that it is not likely and 10 means very likely, how likely are you to vote for...(CANDIDATE NAME) so s/he can be the next governor of the state?"*

For example, in the case of a respondent that declared a preference for the PAN, I calculated the difference between the self-reported likelihood of voting for the PAN and voting for the PRI. I also calculated the difference between the self-reported likelihood of voting for the PAN and voting for

<sup>21</sup> Based on the follow-up question for voters who declare party identification: *How much (do you identify): Not much? A lot?*

<sup>22</sup> This index reduces measurement error and controls for potential survey satisficing when respondents' answer both the party identification and presidential approval questions.

<sup>23</sup> *VOTE CHOICE CHANGE*: 1=If vote choice change between the first wave and second wave 0=No change. The analysis is based on the vote choice question that explicitly shows/refers who the major candidates competing in the election are.

<sup>24</sup> *I am going to read you a list of people. Before I mentioned their names, have you heard of (NAME)?*

the PRD. I added those differences and rescaled the index between 0 (very uncertain) and 1 (very certain). I followed the same strategy for the likelihood of voting for the PRI and PRD candidate.

$$\text{Vote Choice Certainty (PAN)} = [ \text{Pr (PAN)} - \text{Pr(PRI)} ] + [ (\text{Pr (PAN)} - \text{Pr(PRD)}) ]$$

$$\text{Vote Choice Certainty (PRI)} = [ (\text{Pr (PRI)} - \text{Pr(PAN)}) ] + [ (\text{Pr (PRI)} - \text{Pr(PRD)}) ]$$

$$\text{Vote Choice Certainty (PRD)} = [ (\text{Pr (PRD)} - \text{Pr(PAN)}) ] + [ (\text{Pr (PRD)} - \text{Pr(PRI)}) ]$$

The analysis also includes several control variables that might affect the likelihood of voters switching their vote intention throughout the campaign. I control for *CAMPAIGN INFORMATION* to make sure that my results are not driven by voters' exposure to campaign messages. This additive index is based on open-ended questions that asked the respondent to correctly identify candidates' policy proposals<sup>25</sup> and the campaign slogans of each major candidate.<sup>26</sup> I also control for *TV AD EXPOSURE*,<sup>27</sup> based on self-reported media exposure to TV ads, and an index of *CAMPAIGN CONTACT* measuring if the respondent has been contacted by a campaign representative or by mail from each candidate running in the gubernatorial election. These additive indices range from 0 (low level) to 1 (high level). Finally, I also control for respondents' *POLITICAL INFORMATION* based on three questions of general knowledge about the party system.<sup>28 29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *I will read some policy proposals that candidates have proposed in the current campaign. Based on what you know or have heard, which candidate proposed to (PROPOSAL)?*

<sup>26</sup> *Based on what you know or have heard, which candidate has the following campaign slogan? (SLOGAN)*

<sup>27</sup> *Do you remember watching any campaign ad on TV of a political party in the last weeks? From which parties?*

<sup>28</sup> *"What is the name of the current governor of the state (VOLUNTARY)?"*, *"How many chambers does the Mexican Congress has? (VOLUNTARY)?"*, and *"How many years does a deputy term last in Mexico? (VOLUNTARY)?"*

<sup>29</sup> *SATISFICING, PARTISAN, NAME RECOGNITION, VOTE CERTAINTY, and POLITICAL INFORMATION* were measured in the first wave of the panel survey. While

Each model presented in this paper controls for socio-demographic variables such as *AGE*, *EDUCATION*, and *FEMALE* to confirm that these variables are not driving the results.

## Results

Hypothesis 1 proposes that voters who satisfice are less able to connect their political predispositions –the campaign “fundamentals”– to their declared vote intention. Table 3 displays results from a multinomial logistic regression based on pooled electoral data collected during the 2006 and 2012 campaigns in Mexico. The dependent variable of each model is the declared vote choice (PAN, PRI, PRD) in which PAN is the base category since it was the incumbent party in both the 2006 and the 2012 electoral cycles. Hypothesis 1 focuses on the moderating role that satisficing plays regarding the effect of the campaign fundamentals on vote choice (the bivariate relationship between *SATISFICING* and *VOTE CHOICE* is reported in Appendix A9 and A10).

In order to assess the “satisficing” effect, there are two important things to take from the coefficient estimates of Table 3. The first interaction terms examine if the effect of *PARTISANSHIP* on *VOTE CHOICE* is conditional on survey satisficing. The second battery of interaction terms tests if the effect of *PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL* on *VOTE CHOICE* is moderated by survey satisficing. The results displayed in Table 3 confirm the first hypothesis of this paper: the effect of the campaign “fundamentals” on vote choice throughout the campaign in both the 2006 and the 2012 presidential elections is moderated by survey satisficing. The signs are in the expected direction and have a *p* value that achieves statistical significance by any conventional threshold ( $p < .01$ ).

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*CAMPAIGN INFORMATION*, *TV AD EXPOSURE*, and *CAMPAIGN CONTACT* were measured in the second wave.

**Table 3.**  
**Conditional Effect of Survey Satisficing on the connection**  
**between Campaign “Fundamentals” and Vote Choice**

Multinomial Logistic Regression (Base Category DV = PAN)				
	2006		2012	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD
Satisficing	-0.47** (0.24)	-1.35*** (0.21)	-0.92*** (0.24)	-0.72*** (0.25)
PAN	-2.54*** (0.22)	-3.11*** (0.16)	-2.68*** (0.12)	-4.20*** (0.25)
PAN X Satisficing	1.65*** (0.32)	1.19*** (0.31)	1.40*** (0.29)	2.20*** (0.47)
PRI	3.76*** (0.18)	0.16 (0.20)	3.72*** (0.17)	-0.35 (0.24)
PRI X Satisficing	-1.13*** (0.30)	0.12 (0.34)	-2.88*** (0.30)	-0.65 (0.43)
PRD	0.30 (0.50)	3.94*** (0.33)	-0.12 (0.41)	4.48*** (0.33)
PRD X Satisficing	1.07 (0.67)	-1.62*** (0.51)	1.04 (0.64)	-2.90*** (0.57)
Pres. Approval	-1.97*** (0.17)	-2.16*** (0.15)	-1.60*** (0.11)	-1.96*** (0.13)
Approval X Satisficing	0.82*** (0.26)	1.12*** (0.24)	1.32*** (0.26)	1.06*** (0.29)
Education	-0.33*** (0.05)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.23*** (0.05)	-0.14*** (0.05)
Age	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Female	0.08 (0.11)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.18** (0.08)	-0.51*** (0.10)
Constant	2.27*** (0.32)	2.58*** (0.28)	2.59*** (0.26)	1.98*** (0.30)
Observations	5,522	5,522	8,280	8,280
Pseudo R-sq	0.51	0.51	0.58	0.58

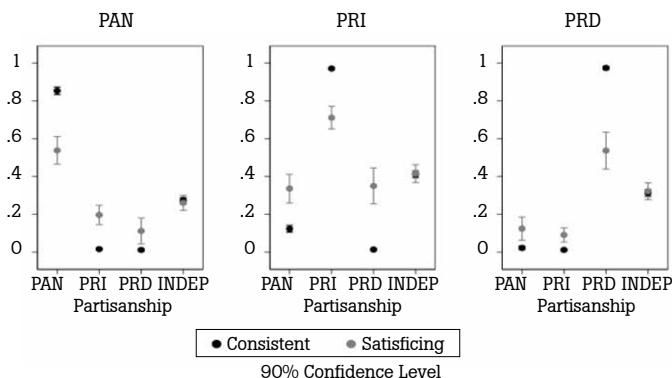
Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

Table 3. The table displays results from a multinomial logit model. The dependent variable is categorical (PAN, PRI, PRD). The base category is PAN. The base category for *PARTISANSHIP* is Independent.

Source: Pooled data from 2006 and 2012 electoral polls.

Figure 5 converts the logit coefficients for the models of the 2012 presidential election into predicted probabilities of voting for the three major candidates across partisan groups. The black dots display the probability when the respondent provides consistent answers and the gray dots display the probability when the respondent satisfices. In these figures we see evidence that respondents who satisfice display a weaker connection between partisanship and vote behavior. For example, in the case of voting for the PAN, voters who self-identify with the PAN and provide consistent answers have an 84% probability of voting for that party, while voters who satisfice have a probability of 56%, a difference of 28 percentage points. The difference is 26 and 42 percentage points in the case of voting for the PRI and PRD, respectively, among their partisan voters. In other words, satisficing weakens the connection between partisanship and vote choice, making voters who satisfice more likely to declare support for an alternative that is inconsistent with their partisanship.

Figure 5.  
Connection between Partisanship and Vote for the... (2012)  
Partisanship X Satisficing

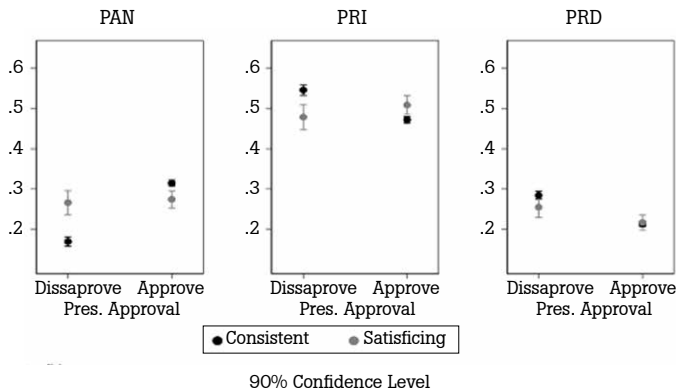


With regards to the second interactive terms (*APPROVAL X SATISFICING*), Figure 6 converts the logit coefficients for the



models of the 2012 presidential election into predicted probabilities of voting for the three major parties while controlling for partisanship. The satisficing effect is statistically significant and in the expected direction, although it tends to be less strong than that of partisanship. For example, voters who approve the incumbent PAN president and provide consistent answers have a 32% probability of voting for the PAN, while voters who satisfice have a probability of 26%, a difference of 6 percentage points. The difference is 8 and 4 percentage points in the case of respondents who disapprove the incumbent and vote for the PRI and PRD. Overall, these models provide evidence that survey satisficing affects the impact that the campaign fundamentals exert on vote choice.

**Figure 6.**  
**Connection between Presidential Approval and Vote for the...**  
**Presidential Approval X Satisficing**



Hypothesis 2 proposes that voters who satisfice at the beginning of the campaign are more likely to change their vote preference, giving support to the notion that satisficing increases the proportion of respondents who changes their vote preference. Table 4 displays the results from logistic regressions based on an original panel survey conducted

during the gubernatorial campaigns in two Mexican states. The dependent variable is coded as 1 if there is any substantive change in respondent's vote preference (e.g. shift from political party "A" to "B" between the first and second wave). It does not include changes from non-response/don't know to a candidate preference (or viceversa). *SATISFICING* displays a positive relationship and has a  $p$  value that achieves statistical significance ( $p < .01$ ). In fact, when *PARTISAN* is added to the model, considered by the literature as the most important predictor of vote choice stability, *SATISFICING* remains statistically significant. In other words, survey satisficing represents a strong predictor of voters' likelihood to switch their candidate preference throughout the campaign.

*SATISFICING* also remains significant even when controlling for candidates' name recognition and vote intention strength. In the first case, knowledge about the name of the major candidates does not achieve statistical significance. However, as expected, the strength of respondents' vote intention does represent a strong predictor of switching vote preference throughout the campaign ( $p < .01$ ). These findings also confirm that *SATISFICING* is not a function of voters' lack of political information or the certainty about their declared vote intention. In addition, the models also control for additional variables that might explain why voters switch their candidate preference. For example, voters who were directly contacted by campaigns –either by a candidate representative or by mail– are more likely to switch their vote. This is consistent with the voter mobilization literature that has found that direct appeals to voters tend to be consequential on voters' preferences. In a similar way, voters with high levels of campaign information are less likely to switch their candidate preference, since they reinforce their pre-campaign predispositions with the incoming information flow.

**Table 4.**  
**Change vote preference and Survey Satisficing**

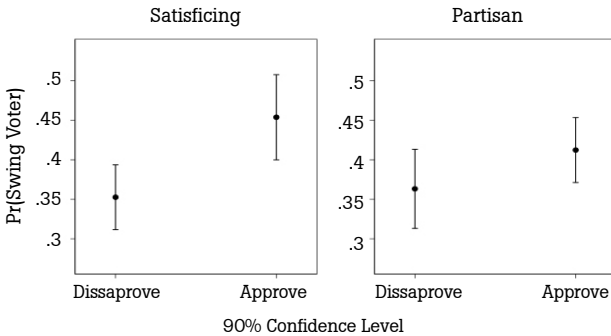
	Logistic Regression					
	DV: 1 Change vote preference 0: No change					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Satisficing (1st Wave)	0.71*** (0.18)	0.69*** (0.20)	0.47** (0.21)	0.44** (0.21)	0.42* (0.22)	0.46** (0.22)
Partisan		0.23 (0.20)	0.22 (0.20)	0.23 (0.20)	0.18 (0.21)	0.23 (0.22)
Vote Choice Certainty			-1.16*** (0.33)	-1.15*** (0.33)	-1.28*** (0.35)	-1.26*** (0.35)
Candidates (Name Recognition)				-0.25 (0.17)	-0.19 (0.18)	-0.17 (0.19)
Interest Campaign					0.14 (0.11)	0.12 (0.11)
Campaign Info					-0.85* (0.46)	-0.97** (0.47)
Campaign Contact					1.62*** (0.61)	1.59*** (0.61)
TV Ads Reception					-0.22 (0.41)	-0.22 (0.42)
Female						-0.30 (0.20)
Age						-0.01 (0.01)
Education						0.03 (0.05)
Constant	0.71*** (0.18)	-0.83*** (0.19)	-0.19 (0.26)	0.49 (0.53)	0.24 (0.58)	0.52 (0.69)
Observations	528	471	471	471	466	466
Pseudo R-sq	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.07

Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Source: 2015 Panel Survey conducted during Gubernatorial Campaigns.

Finally, Figure 7 converts the logit coefficients of the sixth model into predicted probabilities of changing vote preference and highlights the substantive difference between *SATISFICING* and partisanship. For example, survey inconsistency is associated with a 0.15 (on scale ranging from 0 to 1) increase in the probability of changing vote choice throughout the campaign. In contrast, being *PARTISAN* has a weak substantive effect (0.03) that fails to achieve statistical significance.

Figure 7. Probability of Switching Vote Intention  
Pr (Changing Preference)



## Discussion

The findings of this paper are consistent with previous research that highlights the uncertainty that characterizes the beginning of a political campaign (Gelman and King, 1993; Enns and Richman, 2013). From this perspective, political campaigns play a major role activating pre-campaigns underlying predispositions allowing the voter to support the candidate in line with their political preferences. Nonetheless, this paper finds that much of the uncertainty in the early stages of political campaigns is motivated by respondents' survey-taking behavior. These findings are relevant to the campaigns literature because it means that the ability of some voters to base their vote choice on the fundamen-

tals does not exclusively explain voters' tendency to switch their vote intention throughout the campaign. Instead, vote intention shifts are also driven by voters' levels of engagement during a survey interview.

This paper offers an explanation to the question why elections in Latin America –particularly in Mexico– report a substantial proportion of voters who change their vote choice based on respondents' survey taking behavior. Future studies may consider alternative explanations, for example, if the field date of the first wave of the panel survey affects the likelihood of respondents to satisfice. For instance, most comparative literature on campaign effects in Latin America has relied on the Mexico Panel Surveys. In the case of the 2006 presidential election, the first wave of the panel survey –that serves as the baseline to estimate vote choice– was conducted during the second week of October when the nomination process had not finished yet (e.g. the primaries of the incumbent party (PAN) –and the eventual winner of the presidential election– did not finish until November of 2005). The presidential campaign, in fact, did not begin until January of 2006, which coincides with the period in which the major news outlets began conducting national polls. Conducting the first wave of the panel survey before the actual campaign begins could have overestimated the proportion of voters who change their vote preference. As research on American politics suggests, early polls have limited explanatory power since voters do not know much about the candidates and have not spent time thinking about them in an electoral context yet (Wlezien and Erikson, 2004).

In a similar way, future studies should also pay attention to the field date of the last wave of the panel survey. For example, the second and last wave of the 2012 Mexico Panel Survey was conducted after election day. Previous studies have found that post-electoral studies tend to overestimate support for the candidate who won the election due to a bandwagon effect. In other words, voters tend to

align their vote choice to the winner regardless of whether they actually support that candidate. In order to minimize a potential bias that could affect voters' response to the vote choice questions, future studies should consider conducting the last wave a few days before election day.

An implication of this paper is that studies in Latin American political behavior might be overestimating the influence of political campaigns on voting behavior since most studies have overlooked voters' answer crystallization and consistency throughout a survey interview. This is problematic because the baseline of most studies (e.g. panel surveys) –vote intention estimates at the beginning of the campaign– would be based on the analysis of respondents who are uninterested in the survey. In turn, the answers provided at a later stage of the campaign might not match their initial answer to the survey interview. This is why voters who satisfice have a disproportionate likelihood of switching their vote choice through the campaign and gives the impression that campaigns are more consequential than they are. Instead, vote shifts are a function of voters' increased motivation to engage in a survey interview.

Finally, the results reported in this paper may be conservative. Although the Mexican party system does not reach the levels of stability that characterize other countries in the region, like Chile or Uruguay, it is a fairly institutionalized party system. If this study is replicated in a weakly institutionalized party system, voters may be even more likely to satisfice since there are higher levels of uncertainty at the onset of the campaign since new parties tend to appear in each election cycle, party roots in society are weak, and parties are more delegitimized (Mainwaring and Scully, 1999; Mainwaring, 2016). Voters' engagement in survey interviews may be lower since they are not familiar with the partisan options at the ballot, particularly at the beginning of a political campaign.

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## Appendix

**Table A1.**  
**Vote Choice Questions – Complete Wording**

	Voluntary	Structured
2006 Presidential Election (Face-to-face)	Who would you prefer to be the next president of the Republic? (VOLUNTARY)	Elections to elect the President of the Republic will be held in July. Which party or candidate would you vote for if elections were held today? (SHOW BALLOT)
2012 Presidential Election (Face-to-face)	Who would you prefer to be the next president of the Republic? (VOLUNTARY)	Elections to elect the President of the Republic will be held in July. Which party or candidate would you vote for if elections were held today? (SHOW BALLOT)
2015 Gubernatorial Election (Telephone)	On June 7th elections to choose governor of the State will be held. If elections were held today, which candidate or political party would you vote for? (VOLUNTARY)	Between the following candidates for governor: Candidate A of the Party A, Candidate B of the Party B and Candidate C of the Party C...Which candidate would you vote for?

**Table A2.**  
**Respondents' Vote Choice Consistency and Don't Knows**

Logistic Regression Models				
DV: 1 : Satisfice 0: Consistent				
	2006		2012	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Don't Knows (Low-High)	6.54***	6.57***	7.49***	7.49***
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Age		0.00		-0.00*
		(0.00)		(0.00)
Female		0.19***		-0.07
		(0.06)		(0.07)
Education		0.05		-0.00

		(0.03)		(0.04)
Constant	-1.81***	-2.14***	-2.84***	-2.59***
	(0.04)	(0.17)	(0.05)	(0.21)
Observations	6,249	6,232	9,166	9,151
Pseudo R-squared	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.14

Source: Pooled data from 2006 and 2012 presidential electoral polls.

**Table A3. Latent Variable  
Latent Variable (proxy of survey satisficing)**

Conditional Effect of Survey Satisficing on the connection  
between Campaign "Fundamentals" and Vote Choice  
Multinomial Logistic Regression (Base Category DV = PAN)

	2006		2012	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD
Latent Variable	-0.86**	-2.42***	-1.54***	-1.28***
	(0.42)	(0.38)	(0.40)	(0.42)
PAN	-2.55***	-3.19***	-2.74***	-4.25***
	(0.22)	(0.17)	(0.12)	(0.26)
PAN X Latent	2.76***	2.19***	2.44***	3.61***
	(0.56)	(0.56)	(0.51)	(0.85)
PRI	3.78***	0.08	3.84***	-0.28
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.18)	(0.24)
PRI X Latent	-1.82***	0.51	-4.92***	-1.29*
	(0.54)	(0.61)	(0.53)	(0.76)
PRD	0.42	4.02***	-0.11	4.63***
	(0.51)	(0.35)	(0.43)	(0.34)
PRD X Latent	1.50	-3.02***	1.60	-5.32***
	(1.20)	(0.95)	(1.13)	(1.04)
Pres. Approval	-2.03***	-2.24***	-1.70***	-2.02***
	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.13)
Approval X Latent	1.57***	2.05***	2.41***	1.83***
	(0.46)	(0.43)	(0.44)	(0.50)
Education	-0.02***	-0.00	-0.01*	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age	0.07	-0.15	-0.19**	-0.51***
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.10)

Female	-0.32*** (0.05)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.23*** (0.05)	-0.14*** (0.05)
Constant	2.27*** (0.32)	2.70*** (0.28)	2.63*** (0.27)	2.01*** (0.31)
Observations	5,522	5,522	8,280	8,280
Pseudo R-sq	0.51	0.51	0.58	0.58

Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table A3. The table displays results from a multinomial logit model. The dependent variable is categorical (PAN, PRI, PRD). The base category is PAN. The base category for *PARTISANSHIP* is Independent.

Source: Pooled data from 2006 and 2012 electoral polls.

**Table A4. Latent Variable  
Latent Variable (proxy of survey satisficing)**

Vote Choice and Survey Satisficing Logistic regression DV: 1 Change vote preference 0: No change						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Latent (Satisficing)	1.29*** (0.30)	1.23*** (0.33)	0.91** (0.40)	0.84** (0.40)	0.78* (0.41)	0.88** (0.42)
Partisan		0.01 (0.17)	0.22 (0.20)	0.22 (0.20)	0.18 (0.21)	0.23 (0.22)
Vote Certainty			-1.16*** (0.33)	-1.15*** (0.33)	-1.29*** (0.35)	-1.27*** (0.35)
Candidates (Name Recognition)				-0.24 (0.17)	-0.18 (0.18)	-0.16 (0.19)
Interest Campaign					0.14 (0.11)	0.12 (0.11)
Campaign Info					-0.83* (0.46)	-0.95** (0.47)
Campaign Contact					1.62*** (0.61)	1.58*** (0.61)

TV Ads Reception					-0.21 (0.41)	-0.22 (0.42)
Female						-0.31 (0.20)
Age						-0.01 (0.01)
Education						0.03 (0.05)
Constant	1.29*** (0.30)	1.23*** (0.33)	0.91** (0.40)	0.84** (0.40)	0.78* (0.41)	0.88** (0.42)
Observations	676	591	471	471	466	466
Pseudo R-sq	0.02	0.2	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.07

Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

Table A4. The table displays results from a logit model.

The dependent variable is a dichotomous measure that takes on the value of 1 if the respondent changes vote choice and 0 if otherwise.

Source: 2015 Panel Survey conducted during Gubernatorial Campaigns.

**Table A5.**  
**Attrition rate in second wave**

Second wave interview status	Michoacán	Nuevo León
Complete interview	39%	45%
Incomplete interview	2%	2%
Made an appointment but did not answer	22%	22%
Respondent does not live in that house anymore	11%	9%
Did not answer the phone	10%	8%
Telephone out of service	4%	5%
Did not accept the second interview	2%	3%
Did not accept a second interview (since first wave)	7%	3%
Answer machine	1%	2%
Telephone - Busy	2%	1%

**Table A6.**  
**Demographic variables (Wave 1 and Wave 2)**

	Michoacán		Nuevo León	
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 1	Wave 2
Female	50%	54%	51%	55%
Age				
18-25	11%	8%	11%	9%
26-40	20%	18%	18%	16%
41-60	46%	48%	40%	43%
61+	23%	25%	32%	42%
Income (minimum wage)				
0 - 1 MW	8%	5%	4%	3%
1 - 3 MW	26%	24%	20%	18%
3 - 5 MW	13%	15%	11%	12%
5 - 7 MW	3%	6%	4%	3%
7 - 10 MW	10%	8%	10%	13%
10+ MW	5%	6%	14%	14%
Education				
None	13%	13%	9%	9%
Elementary	16%	15%	13%	13%
Secondary	19%	21%	19%	23%
High School	24%	23%	24%	24%
College	28%	28%	36%	32%

**Table A7. Composite Score of Political Predispositions  
Conditional Effect of Satisficing on the connection  
between Campaign “Fundamentals” (Composite Score 0-100)  
and Vote Choice**

	Multinomial Logistic Regression 2006 Presidential Campaign					
	Base= PAN		Base= PRI		Base= PRD	
	PRI (1)	PRD (2)	PAN (3)	PRD (4)	PAN (5)	PRI (6)
Satisficing	-1.10*** (0.27)	-1.83*** (0.23)	-0.55*** (0.20)	-0.65*** (0.19)	0.07 (0.18)	0.42* (0.23)
PAN (0-100)	-6.10*** (0.34)	-6.77*** (0.28)				
PAN (0-100) X Satisficing	3.36*** (0.49)	3.12*** (0.44)				
PRI (0-100)			-7.76*** (0.35)	-3.35*** (0.20)		
PRI (0-100) X Satisficing			3.51*** (0.51)	1.41*** (0.37)		
PRD (0-100)					-7.16*** (0.37)	-2.96*** (0.30)
PRD (0-100) X Satisficing					3.50*** (0.56)	2.43*** (0.50)
Education	-0.32*** (0.06)	-0.15*** (0.05)	0.48*** (0.05)	0.32*** (0.04)	0.23*** (0.05)	-0.07 (0.06)
Female	0.02 (0.13)	-0.09 (0.10)	-0.16 (0.11)	-0.29*** (0.09)	0.07 (0.11)	0.03 (0.13)
Age	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.02*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)
Constant	3.28*** (0.38)	3.49*** (0.31)	-0.25 (0.30)	-0.12 (0.25)	-0.03 (0.29)	0.11 (0.34)
Observations	3,115	3,115	3,059	3,059	2,781	2,781
Pseudo R-squared	0.27	0.27	0.19	0.19	0.23	0.23



**Table A8.**  
**Composite Score of Political Predispositions**

Multinomial Logistic Regression 2012 Presidential Campaign						
	Base=PAN		Base=PRI		Base=PRD	
	PRI	PRD	PAN	PRD	PAN	PRI
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Satisficing	-1.35*** (0.27)	-1.23*** (0.28)	-0.77*** (0.21)	-0.33 (0.22)	-0.70*** (0.26)	-0.19 (0.24)
PAN (0-100)	-5.47*** (0.21)	-6.93*** (0.26)				
PAN (0-100) X Satisficing	3.74*** (0.47)	3.65*** (0.57)				
PRI (0-100)			-6.56*** (0.25)	-3.00*** (0.17)		
PRI (0-100) X Satisficing			4.96*** (0.51)	2.59*** (0.45)		
PRD (0-100)					-7.04*** (0.29)	-4.04*** (0.19)
PRD (0-100) X Satisficing					3.94*** (0.65)	2.10*** (0.50)
Education	-0.27*** (0.05)	-0.18*** (0.06)	0.25*** (0.05)	0.12*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.06)	-0.06 (0.05)
Female	-0.15* (0.09)	-0.54*** (0.11)	0.23** (0.09)	-0.28*** (0.08)	0.55*** (0.11)	0.32*** (0.09)
Age	-0.01** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)
Constant	3.46*** (0.29)	2.97*** (0.33)	-0.42 (0.28)	-0.60** (0.25)	0.65** (0.32)	1.73*** (0.27)
Observations	3,939	3,939	5,331	5,331	3,562	3,562
Pseudo R-squared	0.24	0.24	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.20

**Table A9.**  
**Conditional Effect of Satisficing on the connection**  
**between Campaign “Fundamentals” and Vote Choice**

Multinomial Logistic Regression (Base Category DV = PAN) 2006 Presidential Campaign						
	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Satisficing	0.27*** (0.08)	-0.34*** (0.08)	0.28** (0.12)	-0.37*** (0.11)	-0.47** (0.24)	-1.35*** (0.21)
PAN			-1.94*** (0.15)	-2.86*** (0.14)	-2.54*** (0.22)	-3.11*** (0.16)
PAN X Satisficing					1.65*** (0.32)	1.19*** (0.31)
PRI			3.47*** (0.15)	0.13 (0.16)	3.76*** (0.18)	0.16 (0.20)
PRI X Satisficing					-1.13*** (0.30)	0.12 (0.34)
PRD			0.99*** (0.32)	3.54*** (0.25)	0.30 (0.50)	3.94*** (0.33)
PRD X Satisficing					1.07 (0.67)	-1.62*** (0.51)
Pres. Approval			-1.63*** (0.13)	-1.77*** (0.11)	-1.97*** (0.17)	-2.16*** (0.15)
Approval X Satisficing					0.82*** (0.26)	1.12*** (0.24)
Education			-0.33*** (0.05)	-0.16*** (0.04)	-0.33*** (0.05)	-0.15*** (0.04)
Age			-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Female			0.08 (0.11)	-0.15 (0.09)	0.08 (0.11)	-0.15 (0.09)
Constant	-0.34*** (0.04)	0.07** (0.03)	2.01*** (0.30)	2.26*** (0.26)	2.27*** (0.32)	2.58*** (0.28)
Observations	5,764	5,764	5,522	5,522	5,522	5,522

Pseudo R-squared	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.51	0.51
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Table A9. The table displays results from a multinomial logit model. The dependent variable is categorical (PAN, PRI, PRD). The base category is PAN. The base category for *PARTISANSHIP* is Independent.

Source: Pooled data from 2006 electoral polls.

**Table A10.**  
**Conditional Effect of Satisficing on the connection**  
**between Campaign “Fundamentals” and Vote Choice**

Multinomial Logistic Regression (Base Category DV = PAN) 2012 Presidential Campaign						
	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD	PRI	PRD
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Satisficing	-0.17*	-0.08	0.03	-0.08	-0.92***	-0.72***
	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.14)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.25)
PAN			-2.49***	-3.82***	-2.68***	-4.20***
			(0.10)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.25)
PAN X Satisficing					1.40***	2.20***
					(0.29)	(0.47)
PRI			3.20***	-0.61***	3.72***	-0.35
			(0.13)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.24)
PRI X Satisficing					-2.88***	-0.65
					(0.30)	(0.43)
PRD			0.37	4.03***	-0.12	4.48***
			(0.30)	(0.26)	(0.41)	(0.33)
PRD X Satisficing					1.04	-2.90***
					(0.64)	(0.57)
Pres. Approval			-1.39***	-1.76***	-1.60***	-1.96***
			(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.13)
Approval X Satisficing					1.32***	1.06***
					(0.26)	(0.29)
Education			-0.23***	-0.15***	-0.23***	-0.14***

			(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age			-0.01**	0.00	-0.01*	0.00
			(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female			-0.19**	-0.51***	-0.18**	-0.51***
			(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.10)
Constant	0.63***	-0.10***	2.48***	1.89***	2.59***	1.98***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.26)	(0.30)	(0.26)	(0.30)
Observations	8,563	8,563	8,280	8,280	8,280	8,280
Pseudo R-squared	0.00	0.00	0.56	0.56	0.58	0.58
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Table A10. The table displays results from a multinomial logit model. The dependent variable is categorical (PAN, PRI, PRD). The base category is PAN. The base category for *PARTISANSHIP* is Independent.

Source: Pooled data from 2012 electoral polls.