Why do Voters Elect Authoritarian Leaders?
Competitive Authoritarianism under Hugo Chávez

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Defense Date: Tuesday, April 5th, 2022

Abstract:

Authoritarian leaders are able to assume and sustain power via a wide array of mechanisms that typically entail a large degree of coercion and manipulation. Although the question of authoritarianism and how it manifests itself is an important one with critical implications in the modern world, there is perhaps an even more fascinating question, that asks how leaders with authoritarian tendencies are able to harness public support and get elected through electoral processes. This thesis aims to present potential explanations as to why voters elect authoritarian leaders, with a focus on Hugo Chávez, former president of Venezuela. For the entirety of Chávez's time in office, he was able to maintain strong popular support despite policies that mirrored those of some of the most autocratic leaders in history, including extensive media censorship, nationalization of some of the most prominent industries in the country, and the complete political upheaval of judicial entities (to name a few examples.) Still, Chávez was able to continue appealing to large swaths of the Venezuelan populace up until his untimely death in 2013. This paper will analyze two possible sources of Chávez's popularity: his appeals to populism and his anti-West rhetoric. Both categories will guide my hypotheses and ultimately elucidate the phenomenon of competitive authoritarianism, and why and how it has gained prominence, specifically in last two centuries.

Introduction

  Why do voters elect, re-elect, and support authoritarian leaders? To answer this question, I utilize the case of Venezuela, and specifically Hugo Chávez's massive electoral success in elections between 1999-2013. My objective is to engage existing literature to attempt to illustrate a more comprehensive picture of why, when given the choice, voters opt for leaders with autocratic tendencies. The case of Hugo Chávez and his allure to the masses is a paradigmatic example of this phenomenon, and it will shed light on the mechanics of voter behavior and electoral, or participatory, authoritarianism. This study draws on preexisting data from LAPOP's AmericasBarometer. By focusing on two questionnaires from two different years, one from 2007 and one from 2012, I compare responses and draw conclusions about the underlying factors that contributed to the enticing nature of Chávez's authoritative persona.

  I found that individuals in officially democratic countries who vote for leaders with autocratic inclinations do so for mainly economic factors. Autocrats are able to garner popular support more frequently and with more intensity when their subjects are under duress of some sort, and in the case of Venezuela, economic turmoil has been the status quo for decades. As exemplified further along in this thesis using questionnaires that surveyed samples of the Venezuelan population on two separate years during Chavez's time in office, those who negatively perceived both their own personal economic situation, as well as that of the country as a whole, were less likely to support Chávez in any capacity. Additionally, manifestations of hostility against the West, and skepticism of the international community, showed a positive correlation with support for Chávez. As I will discuss in greater depth over the course of this paper, both findings support my hypotheses, and help elucidate potential explanatory factors for competitive authoritarianism, as demonstrated by Chávez in Venezuela.

This study has important implications for the study of democracy and authoritarianism. Electoral authoritarianism is not necessarily a new phenomenon, although it has only recently started to garner attention from the political science community. The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have witnessed a massive wave of leaders exhibiting autocratic tendencies while still functioning within a democratic institutional framework. Assuming that democracy is the normative ideal and preferred form of governance, the increased fragility of democratic countries is cause for concern. Such fragility is oftentimes sustained by false signaling of leaders who take advantage of vulnerable constituencies who have expressed discontent with political, social, and economic institutions in their countries. Hugo Chávez's strategic campaign reliance on platforms such as populism and the elevation of the ordinary citizen in tandem with the confrontation of the powerful, existing Venezuelan elite, is a paradigmatic example of this phenomenon. For this reason, the success of Chávez makes for an optimal case study in the analysis of why and how authoritarian leaders are able to gain legitimacy, traction, and success within democracies.

Making Sense of Competitive Authoritarianism

Existing literature provides insight into the deterioration of democratic regimes and the rise of authoritarian leaders. In his study on popular autocrats, Martin K. Dimitrov offers an analysis on competitive authoritarianism through the lens of public support for what he calls "popular autocrats." Dimitrov demonstrates that when autocrats are able to harness public support, they are less likely to resort to the use of "brute force," and are generally prone to successfully maintaining their position of authority, whereas "unpopular autocrats" face higher risk of being unseated. (Dimitrov, M.K. 2008). In establishing themselves as popular figures,

tyrannical as they might be, popular autocrats can pulverize dissent before it has the opportunity to truly emerge. The question of course remains, why are these leaders actually able to garner public support? Dimitrov offers the example of Vladimir Putin, who was massively popular during his first two terms in office, largely due to his spoken commitment to social welfare spending. The parallels in this case to Chávez are undeniable.

Dimitrov underscores three main channels through which rulers pursue popular support: "economic populism, anti-Western nationalism, and media-muzzling" (Dimitrov, 2008). These are the three sets of arguments that I consider in this literature, although I only test the former two in my data analysis below. The first two strategies are applicable within the case of Chávez's rise to power and the Venezuelan public's enthrallment with him, and the last one (media muzzling) is applicable within the case of Chávez sustaining power once being elected. He utilized populist sentiment, perhaps above all else, to appeal to the large fraction of the population that had fallen victim to political and economic corruption and the suffocating disparities between them – the ordinary people – and the Venezuelan elite. Lucan Way's arguments in "The Real Causes of the Color Revolution" also hold relevance within this case, as Venezuela's political apparatus, more specifically, the centralization of the economy and the domination of a single-party government, was instrumental in consolidating Chávez's success (Way, 2008). Still, Dimitrov's research is more useful in attempting to analyze popular support for Chávez, as opposed to his ability to propel democratic breakdown by way of both international and domestic mechanisms, as described by Way.

The tools that Chávez used to advance his success were evidently interrelated. His appeals to populism were directly linked to the anti-imperialist sentiment he put at the forefront of his political persona. Without his careful manipulation of the media, he would not have been

effective in disseminating these sentiments to the public in such a calculated, strategic fashion, as I will discuss in more depth further along this essay. Sagarzazu and Thies explore the relevance of oil prices within the timeline of Chávez's bouts on the West, and analyze two hypotheses, one that assumes that during periods of high oil prices, Chávez was more likely to vocalize Anti-Western rhetoric, and one that assumes the opposite (Sagarzuzu & Thies, 2018). Chávez's utilized the media as an indispensable tool during specific economic stages, to circulate a specific antagonistic perception of the West. This perception pertained to economic pursuits and oil, in his attempt to further consolidate his public image as a man of the people, hostile to elitism, and vehemently opposed to imperialism. The remainder of this literature review will closely analyze these complemental, interdependent variables in order to ultimately paint a comprehensive picture of Chávez's magnetic allure to the masses despite, and perhaps even (indirectly) attributed to his authoritarianism. The objective is to utilize these variables that have already been discussed thoroughly in existing literature in order to devise an even more complete depiction of the resilience of competitive authoritarianism.

An Appeal to Populism

Scholars have expressed curiosity regarding the rise of the populist left in Latin America that gained traction in the late 1990s and early 2000s. For the purposes of this study, I will use Mitchell Seligson's definition of populism, which draws a distinction between common misconceptions mistaking any and all "charismatic, personalistic leaders" as proponents and representations of populism. The definition he provides follows the criteria that there must be perceived inadequacy with the framework of Liberal Democracy, and the antagonization of the institutions within it, specifically the legislature and the courts. The final defining trait of

Seligson's conception of populism is that these institutions are not only insufficient and anachronistic, but antithetical to the "will of the people." (Seligson, 2007). Such a definition is consistent with the case of Chavismo, as his attacks on the political infrastructure in Venezuela were marked tactics in his campaign for office.

For the purposes of this research, it is important to discuss the relationship between populism, and specifically the left-wing populism found in Chávez's political image, and authoritarianism. Obviously, populism is not limited to one side of the ideological spectrum, and it can and historically has found momentum in both right and left-wing politics. Hugo Chávez, Donald Trump, and Jeremy Corbyn all share one fundamental attribute: they are all self-identified populists. Still, the strands of populism each respective leader has chosen to champion differ largely from one another. To some extent, the basic premise is consistent: populism, on both sides of the aisle, aims to return some semblance of power to the people, at the expense of the powerful, wealthy elite that traditionally have occupied positions of influence across the board. Chávez's populism is best defined by sociologist Torcuato Di Tella, as a political movement that appeals predominantly to the working class, but that functions in a top-down fashion and characterizes itself as removed from elitist institutions (Di Tella, 1997). Di Tella goes onto state that this brand of populism is not solely propagated by working class individuals, but also by members of society who are "anti-status quo." This is especially prevalent in the case of Chávez, as electoral data has shown that his voter base contains a surprising number of middle-class voters. Chávez not only was alluring to the poor voter, but also to middle-class voters who were frustrated with the corruption and elitism of former status-quo Venezuelan politics.

Venezuela is only one country among many in Latin America that experienced a notable shift in governance. However, as Seligson points out, the manifestation of this transition is not static across the countries in which it came to fruition. In some Latin American countries, such as Brazil and Chile, the leftist governments of the early-mid 2000s were supportive of maintaining strong ties with the US and were advocates of free trade. Here we find a departure from the leftism exhibited by Chávez in Venezuela, which was replete with an onslaught of aggression towards the West and specifically former President George W. Bush (Seligson, M. A., 2007). The thorough discussion of populism is indispensable in outlining Chávez's rise to power because it accentuates the origins of his credibility among the Venezuelan populace. Although Chávez's voter base has experienced a plethora of change since the 1990s when he first emerged on the political scene as a legitimate candidate for presidency, it is no secret that in its beginnings, his base was versatile, including a wide variety of demographics. The common denominator among his supporters was a distaste for institutional politics which had been tainted by elitism, including multiple incidents in which former presidents embezzled and misused hundreds of millions of Bolivars that were intended to fund welfare programs. This aversion was far from restricted to one particular segment of the population. It transcended class lines and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Populism has proved to be an effective vehicle for autocracy as it allows leaders to feign benevolence within an anti-establishment persona. This is largely agreed upon among scholars, who contend that there is an undeniable positive correlation between the rise of autocratic rulers and the rise of populism. Benedek describes populism as a phenomenon that gains traction when leaders prescribe it as the antidote for the shortcomings of a democratic society. In the case of Venezuela and Chávez's Bolivarian Revolution, there were calls for the confrontation of the

corrupt, oligarchic politicians that had represented the functional governmental entities in

Venezuela until 1998 (Benedek, 2021).

The concept of populism and its positive impact on Chávez's success channels two

factors: resentment among Venezuelans geared towards corrupt institutions, as well as the power

of charisma. Caitlyn Andrews-Lee argues that at the forefront of Chávez's initial triumph was

the personalistic charm he managed to convey to the public (Andrews-Lee, 2019). Although

other scholars also cite his charismatic capacity as influential, they present it as working

alongside, or in tandem with other, more concrete factors, such as Chávez's ability to capture and

address the many grievances that had developed for decades among Venezuelan citizens existing

outside of the elite minority. This is why the Trojan Horse description of populism is so

important to the analysis of Chávez's accumulation of power; he was able to exploit real,

legitimate injustices being experienced by Venezuelans – the institutionalization of unlivable

minimum wages, misappropriation of large amounts of government funds, and the privatization

of the oil industry that benefited few at the expense of most, to name a few – as a means to

further his underlying, autocratic agenda, ergo the Trojan Horse analogy.

In regards to the specific facets that defined the failure of Venezuela's existing

institutions, Cannon cites three broad categories first introduced by Jurgen Habermas's

'legitimation crises' model: "the economic, the administrative (the political,) and the

sociocultural" (Cannon, 2014). Habermas's legitimation crises model provides a solid base for

understanding the duress under which the Venezuelan public was operating when Chávez

challenged the standing institutions. Economically speaking, the Resource Curse, a phenomenon

explained by a country's reliance on a singular resource, profitable as it may be, to sustain its

entire economy. Studies have shown time and again that countries that have an abundance of

natural resources, and whose economies are solely dependent on these resources, are more likely to be authoritarian (Dimitrov, 2008). The case of Chávez is illustrative of this on multiple levels, as described by Cannon (Cannon, 2014).

The genius behind Chávez's brand of populism was in part attributed to his uncanny ability to frame the nationalization of the economy, and more specifically, of PDVSA (the state oil company) as directly related to his push towards socioeconomic reform. His welfare projects, including increases in minimum wage, housing subsidization, and accessible healthcare, were in large part funded by oil revenues. He followed through on the promises that he built his platform on at first, but Chávez was hardly well-versed in the intricacies of the oil industry. His primary intention was to push out any potential opposition in PDVSA, namely, the technocrats who had previously managed the company, whose main goals had been to reinvest a large part of the company's profits and replace them with loyalists who would funnel all of the earnings to the government as a means to finance his social spending. Johnson details how Chávez's resource dependence and doubling down on the centralization of PDVSA was a telltale sign of his autocratic penchant, and how the resource curse oftentimes catalyzes and sustains autocracy. Citizens are less likely to question government spending when the funds are coming from extractive industries as opposed to their own taxation (Johnson, 2018).

The populist angle helps shed an important light on the fact that at the time of Chávez's ascension to presidential office, public opinion was replete with dissatisfaction and outright desperation with and at the institutions that had failed to provide economic stability. History has repeatedly shown that desperate times typically call for desperate measures, and that a charismatic leader with the vocalized intention to bring prosperity and opportunity to a deprived citizenry holds the power to establish autocratic rule on exploitative grounds. Venezuela is not

the first and certainly will not be the last country to exemplify the tendency for autocratic rulers to latch onto a societal threat – perceived or real – in order to amplify their popularity. Maxwell discusses the trajectory of the Philippine descent into authoritarianism as President Rodrigo Duterte preyed on the overwhelming fear of crime in the Philippines as he established himself as a populist candidate with tough-on-crime policies, to garner public support (Maxwell, 2018). The parallels to Chávez highlight a Machiavellian reality; a vulnerable populace will oftentimes fall victim to a manipulative leader with ulterior motives. Chávez harnessed the anxieties of Venezuelan citizens surrounding economic turmoil and the lack of a functional welfare infrastructure, and in turn managed to establish himself as a sort of benevolent dictator.

In theory, politicians with populist policies entrenched in their public agendas, cater most consistently to disadvantaged populations on the periphery of society. In the years of interest for the purposes of this study, 2007 and 2012, the rates of household poverty and extreme household poverty were 33.4% and 9.5% in 2007, respectively, and 29% and 8.2% in 2012, respectively (Romero, 2021). In the years Chávez was in office, instituting policies that specifically aimed at tackling poverty and combating the massive wealth disparities in the country by implementing welfare programs across the board, both poverty rates saw decreases. 2013 was the first year in which they sharply inclined, following the death of Chávez and the election of his successor, Nicolas Maduro. Poverty is just one measure that presumably correlates to an affinity for a populist infrastructure, which Chávez put at the forefront of his political persona.

H1: Voters who seek policy measures and institutional manifestations of populism, are more likely to vote for Hugo Chávez, and for leaders with autocratic tendencies in general.

Anti-West Rhetoric

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The appeal to populism is perhaps the broadest and most all-encompassing variable that existing literature has relied upon to explain Chávez's success among his constituents. Moreover, the success of authoritarian rulers operating within de-facto democracies in general. The next two variables that I will discuss – anti-west/US rhetoric and media control and manipulation – are extensions of much of what I have previously addressed in the section dedicated to populism but are important factors in their own right that warrant their own attention.

There is not nearly as extensive a repertoire of existing literature on the subject of anti-west/anti-imperialist rhetoric as a mechanism employed by Chávez in his pursuit of electoral support than there is on the subject of populist appeal. Sagarzazu and Thies offer one of the leading analyses on Chávez's use of anti-imperialism. They present time-series rhetorical analysis of Chávez's weekly television series, *Aló Presidente*, to substantiate the claim that Chávez was more likely to employ this rhetoric at times in which oil prices were high (Sagarzazu & Thies, 2018). This analysis will provide insight into and highlight the linkage between Venezuela's "petrostatehood," the hostilities Chávez expressed against the United States, and the popular support he acquired as a (presumed) result of both. Sagarzazu and Theis informs much of the material discussed in this section. Dimitrov's "Popular Autocrats" remains at the core of the discussion, as he proposed the tripartite explanation for competitive authoritarianism that has and continues to guide this essay.

Chávez was notorious for espousing antagonistic sentiment against the US, specifically against former president George W. Bush, calling him a "donkey," "the devil," and a "genocidist," to list a few examples. What characterizes this resentment and what does it have to do with the success of Chavismo? Anthony Peter Spanakos fits nicely into the comprehensive picture of the interaction between anti-elitism and anti-US imperialism. Chávez stressed the

"need to reclaim the country from an elite who sold out the country, making it a 'colony' of the United States…" (Spanakos, 2008).

Rafael Caldera, the President prior to Chávez, ruled under the Christian Democratic movement, was not emblematic of the corruption that had enveloped Venezuelan politics during the decades before Chávez's election. He was President for two, non-consecutive terms, the first in the 1970s and the second in the 1990s immediately preceding Chávez, and his leadership was largely defined by the relative stability he brought compared to his predecessor and successor, Carlos Andres Perez. Although Perez and Caldera had strikingly different styles of leadership and exhibited contrasting commitments, they both, at one point or another, expressed support for a "strategic friendship" with the US (Hermann, 2010). Hermann contextualizes the rise of Chávez as reactionary to the previous administrations' affinity for maintaining a pro-West, pro-neoliberal identity. The relationship was probably more strategic than ideological, as Venezuela provided the US with consistent oil sales, and in return, the US did not antagonize Venezuela in a similar fashion to other countries in the region, such as Chile and Guatemala. Chávez saw an opportunity in that the elite seemed more inclined to maintain positive relations with the US than to bring stability to their own country. He wasted no time to strike the iron while it was hot, pushing for the need to reclaim Venezuelan identity and defy US hegemony.

It is important to note that while there is validity and situational evidence for the positive relationship between anti-imperialism and competitive authoritarianism, there is also evidence to the contrary. An example would be the relationship between former US president Donald Trump and the Philippines' president, Rodrigo Duterte. The two have portrayed themselves as having an amicable relationship, which opposes the theory that autocratic leaders will latch onto anti-imperialist rhetoric. This example is especially pertinent, as Duterte is a member of PDP-Laban,

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a left-wing socialist party that shares common ground with Chávez's own political alignments. Other pieces of literature, such as Florian Bieber's "Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans," argue against the perceived reliance of a (competitive) authoritarian regime to utilize anti-Western rhetoric. Bieber asserts that this tactic is only used as a last resort, and that regimes defined by competitive authoritarianism will attempt to maintain support from surrounding Western actors. This example was evidently referring to the Western Balkan countries and their efforts to stay on good terms with the EU and the United States, however, this objective was steeped in the need for economic support, which one could argue is applicable in the case of Venezuela, which has been enduring economic crisis for over two decades (Bieber, 2020).

H2: Voters who harbor Anti-West sentiments, including a lack of trust in the US armed forces, are more likely to vote for Hugo Chávez, and for leaders with autocratic tendencies (outside of the Western hemisphere,) in general.

There is certainly a research gap in the existing literature concerning the question of how anti-imperialism fits into the electoral prospects of an autocratic candidate such as Chávez. The remainder of this thesis will seek to fill this gap and further understand whether it is a variable that holds significance in regard to the question at hand.

Media Control and Manipulation

The third and final variable addressed by Dimitrov is "muzzling the media." Analyzing this component last is not inadvertent, as it represents the culmination of the other two variables; populist appeals as well as attacks against Western imperialism are elucidated and "manufactured" by the media (Dimitrov, 2008). The legitimacy of an autocratic leader is often

contingent on how that leader is portrayed by the press. As is characteristic of most autocratic regimes, the press is usually not a discretionary entity that is at liberty to publicize what it sees fit, and many times, what is true. Florian Bieber states that these regimes typically do not attempt to enact formal changes to exercise control over the public. Moreover, they tend to be averse to making legal or constitutional changes that might evoke feelings of enmity among the population. Instead, they rely on media manipulation and the nationalization of media outlets in order to exercise "informal" control (Bieber, 2020).

When Chávez assumed office in 1999 after emerging victorious in the '98 elections, he was confronted with a "governability crisis," a phenomenon described by Guillermo O'Donnell in his explanation of the origins of bureaucratic authoritarianism. O'Donnell posits that when a government is experiencing chronic turmoil, political actors will feel inclined to centralize power as a means to deal with the crisis (O'Donnell, 2021). When they do so, they oftentimes venture into authoritative practices and lose public support. However, they rely on the justification of their actions as a necessary remedy for the volatility their country has experienced. Javier Corrales and Michael Penfold integrate O'Donnell's work by applying the theory to Chávez's initial years in office, in which there was very obviously a crisis of governance—the remnants of previous administrations that had left economic and sociopolitical havoc in their wake. By 2004, Corrales and Penfold point out that Chávez had achieved relative stability, at least on the surface. He had managed to decisively defeat his opponents in four consecutive elections and hardly faced any resistance within any governmental agencies or entities. Chávez managed to achieve this impressive lack of opposition, not because it did not exist, but because he had taken innumerable measures to crowd out opposition and continue to concentrate power. Chávez's original platform had promised to return a democratic voice to the masses, but by the early

2000s, his political apparatus was defined by unbridled aggregation of executive power. By 2007, Chávez secured a grant from the National Assembly allowing him "enabling powers" of presidential decree. The appointment of loyalists to all political and bureaucratic offices worked in conjunction with Chávez's crackdown on and privatization of media outlets, so as to avert any potential resistance (Corrales & Penfold-Becerra, 2007).

Out of all of the discussed variables, extensive influence over the media is perhaps the factor that suggests that with the exception of his initial election in 1998, there is a significant possibility that Chávez was not, in actuality, a favorable candidate among the majority of the population. The manipulation of the media skewed the perception of Chávez's public success. Chávez was able to engineer his public image in whichever way he saw fit. He actively squashed any dissent, in part by investing more than $40 million in refurbishing the state-owned television outlet as well as the government news agency. In addition, he created a plethora of local news and television stations that were guided by strict censorship policies and espoused state-sponsored propaganda. (Corrales & Penfold-Becerra, 2007).

The implications of Chávez's control and ownership of all media platforms extended beyond the suppression of critical voices. An important objective for him was to build his cult of personality and establish himself within the domain of what sociologist Max Weber coined "charismatic authority" in his tripartite model of authority. Weber defined charismatic authority as "resting on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person…" Chávez fits the Weberian notion of charismatic authority, as he was able to capture the minds and hearts of a nation under duress, promising the elimination of corrupt political practices, a redistribution of wealth, and a government that will be for the people. All of these promises were made in conjunction with a deeply charismatic personality

and a desire to establish "deep, unmediated, emotional bonds with his followers" (Andrews-Lee, 2019). There is no better representation of the diffusion of this omnipotent, prodigious persona he ascribed to himself than *Aló Presidente,* his own TV show, in which he would address the country for 4-6 hours on a weekly basis, reminiscent of Kennedy's fireside chats. The apparent intention was similar to Kennedy's, in that he aimed to engage in a conversation with his constituents, a conversation which entailed agenda-setting and the discussion of matters that Chávez presented as salient. The difference, of course, was the undeniable ulterior motive – exhibiting Chávez as a godlike figure immune to criticism. Carlos de la Torre attributes great importance to the media not only as a vehicle for subjugation of the opposition, but as a requisite tool in the construction of Chávez's charismatic personality, as opposed to Corrales and Penfold, who treated the media as more of an afterthought in relation to other variables contributing to Chávez's concentration of power.

H3: Hypothesis?

Research Design and Data

  To reiterate, the focus of my research centers around the following question: *Why do voters, when given the choice, gravitate towards leaders with authoritarian tendencies?* This is the broadest version of my research question; however, I am interested in utilizing the case of Hugo Chávez's massive electoral success during his years in office as my guiding case study.

  All of the data utilized in this thesis is preexisting, meaning that it was previously collected, and my intention has been to interpret the data in relation to the question I am interested in asking and ultimately answering. I have exclusively used data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), a research institute dedicated to collecting and

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disseminating information on public opinion and perceptions of political institutions. More

specifically, I have employed the AmericasBarometer. LAPOP facilitates these

AmericasBarometer surveys in the majority of Latin American countries on an annual or semi-

annual basis, asking questions pertaining to democracy and the stability (or lack thereof) the

respective country's political infrastructure and leader(s.)

For the purposes of my study, I have chosen to analyze the LAPOP AmericasBarometer

questionnaires from two years: 2007 and 2012.[1] Ultimately, I selected 2007 and 2012 because

the questionnaires from years prior did not include enough questions that were of interest to this

particular research.

Research Design and Operationalization of Variables

For this project, I have chosen to use multiple regression models, both linear and logistic,

to analyze the relationship between my dependent variables, one of which is categorical, and one

of which is ordinal, and my independent variables. For my logistic models, in order to provide a

clearer understanding of the coefficients and their meaning, I provide the odds ratio, which

quantifies the odds associated with the independent and dependent variables. More on this can be

seen below in the data and analysis section.

As discussed in a preliminary manner above, the dependent variable in this study is voter

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[1] In addition to the questionnaire, each year that LAPOP conducts an AmericasBarometer survey, technical
information is provided which outlines the survey process for that respective year, as well as the details of the
samples selected. The efforts to collect data for the 2007 survey were guided primarily by Mitchell A. Seligson and
were conducted by Centro de Investigaciones en Ciencias Sociales (CISOR.) The 2012 survey was conducted by
Vanderbilt University with DATANALISIS directing field work efforts. Both surveys garnered ample support and
backing from a plethora of sources, including but not limited to, Princeton University, UNDP, and IADB. The
sample used in the survey was self-weighted, meaning that each individual in the sample was selected randomly
from the population of interest (Venezuelan citizens living in the country, over the age of 18,) with the same
probability of being selected. The 2007 and 2012 surveys were similarly designed in most aspects; in both, the
country was stratified into different regions (six for the 2007 survey and eight for the 2012 survey.) The main
departure from the 2007 design found in 2012 was that it went further and sub-stratified the regions into
municipalities and districts in order to integrate an even more comprehensive illustration of the population in the
sample. Both survey years surveyed nearly the same number of respondents (1,510 in 2007 and 1,500 in 2012,) with
an ± 2.5 estimated margin of error in 2007 and a ± 2.53 estimated margin of error in 2012.

approval for Chávez: a categorical variable displaying whether or not the respondent voted for

Chávez in the previous election (1= voted for Chávez, 0= any other response, excluding

nonvoters.) In the data below, this variable is coded as "voteChávez." The second variable, titled

"Chávezsupport," is ordinal and measures voter approval asks respondents to rank Chávez's

accomplishments in office. The options range from "very good" to "very bad," with "neither

good nor bad" as the middle ground value.

Independent variables include measures of appeals to populism and anti-west rhetoric.

Under the category of "appeals to populism" are the following variables: "corruption," which is a

value under a broader variable found in both the 2007 and 2012 questionnaires that asks

respondents which issue they believe is the most pressing in the country. The corruption variable

functions as a nested statement, meaning that for the purposes of this study, I have recoded it to

include the following responses under the umbrella category of corruption: corruption,

politicians, and bad government. This is consistent for both the 2007 and the 2012 data. Also

under the classification of "appeal to populism" is the next nested statement, similarly grouping

responses from the survey questions asking respondents what they believe to be the most

pressing issue facing the country, titled "economic crisis," which includes the following

responses: economy (problems with it/crisis of) inflation/high prices, and inequality. Utilizing

the nested statement for these variables allowed me to observe multiple responses under a

broader generalization, as many of the values in this specific variable in the questionnaire had

overlap and would perhaps highlight similar conclusions about voter behavior. Both "corruption"

and "economic crisis" have been recoded into dummy variables, and in the tables, corruption

indicates those respondents that answered that they believed the most pressing issue in the

country was any one of the values under the nested "corruption" variable. The same is true for the nested "economic crisis" variable.

The importance of the economic angle of Chávez's allure to voters could not be understated. For this reason, the next two independent variables, titled "idio2" and "soct2" in both the 2007 and 2012 datasets, were of crucial to my findings. For the purposes of this paper, they have been renamed as "Personal Economic Situation" and "General Economic Situation," respectively. "General Economic Situation," or "soct2" in the datasets, asked how respondents viewed the economic situation in the country compared to how it had been twelve months prior, possible values include: (1) better, (2) the same, or (3) worse. "Personal Economic Situation," or "idio2" in the datasets, asks an almost identical question. However, instead of inquiring about the economic state of the country as a whole, it asks about the respondent's personal economic situation compared to twelve months prior. The possible values are the same as those in soct2. It was especially interesting to analyze the regression models that included these two variables alongside the next three independent variables: Candidate Qualities, Party Affiliation, and Government Plan. Similar to the corruption and economiccrisis variables, these were taken from a variable in the dataset, coded as "vb8," and turned into dummy variables. The question at hand asks respondents what their most important reason for voting in the previous election was. The values included the candidate's attributes, the candidate's party affiliation, or the candidate's government plan. I felt this was an insightful variable selection as it sheds light on the fact that as a populist leader, Chávez relied heavily on his appeal to the people. He additionally made a plethora of promises about facilitating economic rehabilitation with a plethora of welfare programs. As such, these variables, coupled with the aforementioned economic variables, accentuate how Chávez might have been able to expand his voter base by appealing to both the

poor population that had interests in the dimension of populism that seeks to reduce inequality, as well as to more middle- class populations that exhibit anti-elite/status quo sentiment. Notably, these variables (Party Affiliation, Government Plan, and Candidate Qualities) only exist in the 2007 data.

Moving onto the second category that divides the independent variables being observed: anti-west rhetoric. The 2007 survey did not contain any questions related to potential anti-west rhetoric, however, there were two variables of interest in the 2012 dataset. The first, an ordinal variable titled "mil3," asks respondents to rank their confidence or trust in the US Armed Forces on a scale of 1-7, 1 being "not at all," and 7 being "very much." The second variable in this category is a categorical variable titled "venvb10," which simply asks if respondents are in agreement or disagreement with the participation of international observers in Venezuela's presidential elections.

Analysis and Results

My data was split up between two different years, 2007 and 2012. In regard to the nature of the variables I selected, I aimed to have them fall into two different categories that might help explain voter proclivity for Chávez: appeals to populism and anti-west rhetoric. It should be noted that a potential shortcoming in my results is highlighted by that fact that certain variables in the 2007 dataset were not included in the 2012 dataset, and vise-versa.

Analysis: 2007

In the 2007 data, my findings only could have supported H1, as there was no available survey data that engaged with the focus of H2. Moreover, appeals to populism as a potential

explanatory variable for the dependent variable, voting or not voting for Chavez, was the main focus for this section.

Out of the selected independent variables that represented appeals to populism, there were a few that stood out as they expressed an affirmative correlation between my dependent and independent variables. The way respondents perceived their economic situations, both personal and general, showed statistically significant correlations with voting for Chavez.

Table 1 exclusively observes the economic situation variable. The odds ratio table found directly below Table 1 contains the values that are the most indicative of the correlation between the two variables; the asterisks indicate statistical significance. Those who perceived their economic situation as being worse than twelve months prior presumably would be more likely to favor Chávez's welfare programs and populist agenda. For this reason, this variable is illustrative of the appeal to populism dimension. As seen in table 1 and the odds ratio table below it, both values that represented a perceived worsened economic situation (Personal Economic Situation [Worse] as well as General Economic Situation [Worse,] had a statistically significant negative correlation with the dependent variable, voteChávez. An individual who responded that either their personal economic situation or the general economic situation in the country was worse at the time of the survey than it was twelve months prior, yielded an odds ratio below 1, meaning that when the dependent variable goes from 0 to 1 (voting for Chávez as opposed to anyone else,) there is decreased odds of perceiving the economic situation as being worse. In simpler terms, those who responded that their economic situation or that of the country as a whole had improved, were more likely to vote for Chávez, as they presumably linked their economic success with populist programs implemented by Chávez.

Table 4 controls for other independent variables, such as perception of corruption as a pressing issue, candidate qualities, the candidate's government plan, and the candidate's party affiliation. Still, even with these control variables, the economic situation variable continues to show statistically significant correlations with the dependent variable. The other variables under the category of appeals to populism expressed statistically significant correlations on their own, but when alongside control variables, such statistical significance was lost. For example, perception of corruption and economic crisis as pressing issues both were negatively correlated with voting for Chávez, table 2 shows that both findings have statistical significance. The same is true in tables 3a and 3b. Those who responded that the main reason for the vote was attributed to the candidate's government plan or the candidate's personal qualities were more likely to vote for Chavez. The candidate's party affiliation, on the other hand, had no statistically significant correlation with the dependent variable, which was consistent with H1, as the candidate's personal attributes as well as their plan for office are functions of populism. As Lucan Way proports in his discourse on populism, a politician's appeal to the public is an indispensable instrument in constructing a populist image and ultimately exerting autocratic control, as is characteristic of Chávez.

As part of H1, I had inferred that voters who responded that the main reason for their vote was either the qualities of the candidate (Candidate Qualities) or which programs they planned to implement in their term (Government Plan) were going to be more likely to vote for Chávez or express approval for him. This was an important element of H1, as it could help shed light on voters who were not necessarily voting for Chávez due to appeals to populism as related to economic issues, but more so in response to Chávez's anti-establishment persona. Table 5 is designed to explore this component of H1; it observes the economic situation variable alongside

the vote reason variable. The conclusion is that in the appeals to populism category, the most

(consistently) important appeal to populism, in relation to voting for Chávez, is the perception

that he has contributed to bettering the economy, both on a micro and macro level.

2007 Data:

Dependent Variable, categorical: voteChávez

Independent Variables: Appeal to Populism

Table 1: Economic Situation, Personal and General

voteChávez			
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.81	0.76 – 0.85	**<0.001**
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	0.07	0.00 – 0.13	**0.045**
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.08	-0.15 – -0.01	**0.022**
General Economic Situation [Better]	0.09	0.02 – 0.15	**0.008**
General Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.31	-0.38 – -0.25	**<0.001**
Observations	968		
R^2 / R^2 adjusted	0.215 / 0.211		

Odds ratios:

Personal Economic Situation **[1 Better]**	1.07*
Personal Economic Situation **[2 Worse]**	0.92*
General Economic Situation **[3 Better]**	1.09*
General Economic Situation **[4 Worse]**	0.73*

Table 2: Most Pressing Issues

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.77	0.74 – 0.80	**<0.001**
Corruption	-0.11	-0.21 – -0.02	**0.017**
Economic Crisis	-0.17	-0.29 – -0.04	**0.008**
Observations	969		
R² / R² adjusted	0.012 / 0.010		
Odds ratios			
Corruption			0.89*
Economic Crisis			0.845*

Table 3a: Reason for Vote: Candidate's Governmental Plan vs. Candidate's Party Affiliation

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.72	0.66 – 0.77	**<0.001**
Government Plan	0.06	0.00 – 0.13	**0.047**
Party Affiliation	0.01	-0.13 – 0.15	0.878
Observations	950		
R² / R²adjusted	0.004 / 0.002		
Odds ratios			
Government Plan			1.07*
Party Affiliation			1.01

Table 3b: Reason for Vote: Candidate's Qualities vs. Candidate's Party Affiliation

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.78	0.75 – 0.81	**<0.001**
Candidate Qualities	-0.06	-0.13 – -0.00	**0.047**
Party Affiliation	-0.05	-0.18 – 0.08	0.427
Observations	950		
R² / R²adjusted	0.004 / 0.002		
Odds ratios			
Candidate Qualities			.94*
Party Affiliation			.95

Table 4 – Appeal to Populism, all variables

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.84	0.79 – 0.89	**<0.001**
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	0.06	-0.01 – 0.12	0.082
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.09	-0.16 – -0.02	**0.010**
General Economic Situation [Better]	0.08	0.02 – 0.15	**0.014**
General Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.31	-0.38 – -0.24	**<0.001**
Corruption	-0.06	-0.14 – 0.03	0.183
Economic crisis	-0.08	-0.20 – 0.03	0.152
Candidate Qualities	-0.04	-0.10 – 0.01	0.129
Party Affiliation	-0.02	-0.14 – 0.09	0.685
Observations	924		

	R² / R² adjusted	0.229 / 0.222

Odds ratio

Table 5: Reason for Vote and Perception of Economic Situation

Predictors	voteChávez		
	Estimates	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.83	0.72 – 0.95	**<0.001**
Candidate Qualities	-0.01	-0.13 – 0.11	0.875
Government Plan	0.02	-0.09 – 0.14	0.678
General Economic Situation [Better]	0.08	0.02 – 0.15	**0.009**
General Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.31	-0.38 – -0.25	**<0.001**
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	0.05	-0.02 – 0.11	0.152
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.09	-0.16 – -0.03	**0.006**
Observations	903		
R² / R² adjusted	0.233 / 0.228		

Odds ratios

Candidate Qualities	.99
Government Plan	1.02
General Economic Situation [Better]	1.08*
General Economic Situation [Worse]	.73*
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	1.05
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	.91*

The 2012 data was more extensive and holistic than the 2007 data, as it encompassed more variables, both independent and dependent, and tested both H1 and H2. The data is split up between the two categories of interest, appeals to populism and anti-West rhetoric, as well as the two dependent variables, one categorical and one ordinal. The categorical variable, voteChávez, is the same one that was observed in the 2007 data. The ordinal variable, Chávezapproval, measures approval for Chávez on a continuous scale, as discussed in more depth in the section on operationalization of variables. Overall, the voteChávez dependent variable proved to be more effective in gauging relationships between the independent variables and support for Chávez. Such relationships displayed more consistent statistical significance and emphasized points that were more pertinent to the questions I have asked and the hypotheses I have presented. For this reason, the majority of the correlations I will be discussing in this section pertain to the voteChávez variable; the bulk of the data that includes the Chávezapproval variable can be found in the appendix.

One of the more interesting findings from 2012 in contrast to 2007, was that unlike in 2007, where respondents who indicated that they perceived economic crisis as being the most pressing issue in the country, were less likely to have voted for Chávez, the opposite was true in 2012. This sheds light on a very important potential shift from 2007 to 2012. I speculate that in 2007, respondents were more likely to attribute the faults of the economy to Chávez, meaning that if they believed it to be in weak condition, the chances were that they ascribed the blame to Chávez and his policies or lack thereof. By 2012, indicating that economic crisis was the most pressing concern in the country was positively correlated with voting for Chávez. Such a change

could indicate that by 2012, Chávez had already established himself as the antidote for the economy's ailments consistently and thoroughly enough for voters to actually believe it. At this point, if respondents said that they believed the economy was in dire conditions, they might have truly believed that Chávez was the only potential solution. This is evidently just a speculation, as exploring this shift requires a more in-depth observation on the specific economic and political factors that were defining of Chávez's final year in office. It does, however, engage with a point I have referred back to multiple times: authoritarian leaders are typically effective in creating smoke screens that mislead the public. In 2012, prior to the recession that hit Venezuela in 2013, Chávez was likely viewed as the saving grace for the possible impending downfall, not as the cause.

Undoubtedly, the findings from the 2012 data were less straight-forward than those from the 2007 data. Perhaps the most telling of the variables was one of the two used to measure the anti-West rhetoric category- trust in US Armed Forces. Table 9 shows the relationship between the ordinal US Armed Forces variable (measured on a scale of 1-7,) and the categorical voteChávez variable, and more than half of the values showed a statistically significant negative correlation between voting for Chávez and trusting the US Armed Forces. The majority of the values in the table show that there is a negative correlation between trusting the US Armed Forces and voting for Chàvez; as indicated in the odds ratios table, rating trust in the US Armed Forces anywhere from 3-7 is associated with decreased odds of voting for Chávez. This supports H2, which infers that harboring negative sentiment, in any form, towards the West, in this case the US, will result in a higher likelihood of supporting Chávez.

Interestingly the use of the second, ordinal dependent variable, Chávezapproval, yielded significantly different results even when using the same independent variables. Notably, the odds

ratio functions differently when observing the effects of independent variables on an ordinal dependent variable, rather than a categorical one, such as the one used in the 2007 data. Since approval for Chávez is ranked on a continuous scale, from "very good" to "very bad" with "neither good nor bad" as the middle ground, each increase from the first to the last is associated with either a decrease or increase in the odds of the independent variable. In the case of the Economic Situation variable, which was strongly suggestive of correlations with the dependent variable in the 2007 data, the same independent variable showed correlations with almost no statistical significance when observed alongside the new, ordinal dependent variable. Still the correlations showed that as decreased approval for Chávez was associated with a decreased likelihood that the respondent would perceive either their own economic situation, or that of the country as a whole, as being worse than twelve months prior, which supports H1.

Increasing from 0 to 1 for economic crisis, meaning that a respondent answered that they do believe economic crisis is the most pressing issue in the country, is associated with decreased odds that someone will rank their approval of Chávez lower. In other words, a respondent considering economic crisis as the most pressing issue is positively correlated with approving of Chávez, which presents a potential source of discord in H1, which would assume that the perception of economic crisis as being the most pressing issue in the country would display a negative association with approval of Chávez. Especially considering the year this data originated in, respondents presumably viewed the economic situation in the country as directly related to the policies and leadership of Chávez, who had been in office for over a decade. This might speak to a source of misunderstanding that I have previously highlighted- Chávez's supporter base largely entailed middle class voters, not exclusively, or almost entirely, lower-class or impoverished voters.

A potential explanation for the aforementioned findings would be that Chávez not only garnered support from those seeking a leader who could rectify the economy and implement welfare programs. He largely relied on middle class voters who might have felt that the economy was suffering, but that believed that Chávez might not have been at fault. These voters could have represented a segment of society, a significant one, at that, that believed Chávez's leadership was important for reasons outside of economic factors, but still within the realm of populism, such as his distaste for elitism and the status quo of politics. There is unfortunately not enough data included in this specific study to draw meaningful conclusions pertaining to this assumption, however, it presents a potential remedy for the shortcoming of H1 that could be observed in future studies.

2012 data

Dependent Variable, Categorical: voteChávez

Independent variables: Appeals to Populism

Table 7: Most Pressing Issue

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.55	0.50 – 0.60	**<0.001**
Corruption	-0.03	-0.23 – 0.18	0.800
Economic Crisis	0.45	0.12 – 0.78	**0.007**
Observations	464		
R^2 / R^2 adjusted	0.016 / 0.012		

Odds ratios:

Corruption	.83
Economic Crisis	1.57*

Independent Variables: Anti-west Rhetoric

Table 8: Approval of International Observers in Domestic Presidential Elections

Predictors	voteChávez		
	Estimates	CI	p
(Intercept)	0.95	0.81 – 1.09	**<0.001**
Approval of International Observers (yes)	-0.24	-0.39 – -0.10	**0.001**
Observations	342		
R² / R² adjusted	0.030 / 0.027		

Odds ratio:

Approval of International Observers (yes)	.78*

Table 9: Trust in US Armed Forces

Predictors	voteChávez		
	Estimates	CI	p
(Intercept)	0.86	0.76 – 0.96	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [2]	0.08	-0.03 – 0.20	0.158
Trust in US Armed Forces [3]	-0.22	-0.35 – -0.10	**0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [4]	-0.64	-0.79 – -0.49	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [5]	-0.41	-0.68 – -0.15	**0.002**
Trust in US Armed Forces [6]	-0.22	-0.46 – 0.02	0.074
Trust in US Armed Forces [7]	-0.41	-0.68 – -0.15	**0.002**
Observations	342		
R² / R² adjusted	0.304 / 0.292		

Odds ratios:

Trust in US Armed Forces [2]	1.08
Trust in US Armed Forces [3]	.80*

Trust in US Armed Forces [4]	.53*	
Trust in US Armed Forces [5]	.66*	
Trust in US Armed Forces [6]	.80	
Trust in US Armed Forces [7]	.66*	

Dependent Variable: Ordinal, Chávezapproval

Independent variables: Appeals to Populism

Table 11: Most pressing issue

	Chávezapproval		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	2.47	2.34 – 2.60	**<0.001**
Corruption	0.13	-0.49 – 0.74	0.682
Economic Crisis	-0.81	-1.59 – -0.02	**0.045**
Observations	342		
R^2 / R^2 adjusted	0.012 / 0.007		

Odds ratios
Corruption	1.13	
Economic Crisis	**.44***	

Conclusion

This study has been both revealing and elusive, in that certain conclusions have certainly been reached pertaining to the explanatory factors for competitive authoritarianism in Venezuela during Chávez's time in office, but we are also left with areas where the data fell short and

questions have remained unanswered. The findings highlight the relationship between Chávez's use of populist sentiment and his ability to attract popular support. They additionally supported, to some extent, that the resentment experienced by many Venezuelan citizens against Western countries and institutions was directly and positively related to support for Chávez, as exemplified by voting for him. One area that was addressed and discussed in the literature review, but not in the data and analysis sections, was that relating to media manipulation. The degree to which state-exercised media control influenced Chávez's success rates is more relevant in a discussion regarding how authoritarian leaders sustain power once elected, which is equally important, and merits its own focused study.

Ultimately, this project accentuated the mechanisms Chávez relied on in order to garner popular support over the course of his time in office. Unsurprisingly, the economic factors were perhaps the ones that informed my hypotheses the most. Leaders with autocratic leadership tendencies are more likely to thrive in countries that have experienced and continue to experience socio-economic turmoil. The findings in this particular study substantiate such claims in the discussion of Chávez, however, the lay the foundation for observing similar phenomena in other countries experiencing similar trajectories in their governmental institutions.

Appendix

Table 3c: Reason for Vote: Candidate's Qualities vs. Candidate's Governmental Plan

	votechavez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.73	0.60 – 0.85	**<0.001**
votecandidate	-0.01	-0.15 – 0.13	0.878
votegovplan	0.05	-0.08 – 0.18	0.427
Observations	950		
R^2 / R^2 adjusted	0.004 / 0.002		

Odds ratios

Candidate Qualities   0.99

Government Plan   1.05

Table 6: Economic Situation:

	voteChávez		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	0.48	0.09 – 0.87	**0.016**
Personal Economic Situation [Same]	-0.02	-0.38 – 0.33	0.898
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	0.12	-0.25 – 0.48	0.527
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.03	-0.40 – 0.33	0.850
General Economic Situation [Same]	0.10	-0.26 – 0.45	0.593
General Economic Situation [Better]	0.34	-0.03 – 0.70	0.068
General Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.09	-0.45 – 0.26	0.607
Observations	464		

R² / R² adjusted   0.135 / 0.124

Odds ratios:

Personal Economic Situation **(Same)**   .98

Personal Economic Situation **(Better)**   1.12

Personal Economic Situation **(Worse)**   .97

General Economic Situation **[Same]**   1.1

General Economic Situation **[Better]**   1.4

General Economic Situation **[Worse]**   .91

Independent variables: Appeals to Populism

Table 10: Economic Situation, personal and general

Predictors	Chávezapproval		
	Estimates	CI	p
(Intercept)	2.46	1.55 – 3.36	**<0.001**
Personal Economic Situation [Same]	-0.53	-1.32 – 0.27	0.194
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	-0.68	-1.50 – 0.15	0.107
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.10	-0.92 – 0.72	0.810
General Economic Situation [Same]	0.30	-0.62 – 1.22	0.519
General Economic Situation [Better]	-0.25	-1.18 – 0.69	0.605
General Economic Situation [Worse]	1.10	0.18 – 2.02	**0.020**
Observations	342		
R² / R² adjusted	0.286 / 0.274		

Personal Economic Situation [Same]   .58

Personal Economic Situation [Better]   .50

Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	.90	
General Economic Situation [Same]	1.35	
General Economic Situation [Better]	.77	
General Economic Situation [Worse]	3.0*	

Table 10: Economic Situation, personal and general

	Chávezapproval		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	2.46	1.55 – 3.36	**<0.001**
Personal Economic Situation [Same]	-0.53	-1.32 – 0.27	0.194
Personal Economic Situation [Better]	-0.68	-1.50 – 0.15	0.107
Personal Economic Situation [Worse]	-0.10	-0.92 – 0.72	0.810
General Economic Situation [Same]	0.30	-0.62 – 1.22	0.519
General Economic Situation [Better]	-0.25	-1.18 – 0.69	0.605
General Economic Situation [Worse]	1.10	0.18 – 2.02	**0.020**
Observations	342		
R² / R² adjusted	0.286 / 0.274		

Dependent Variables: Anti-west Rhetoric

Table 12: Approval of International Observers in Domestic Presidential Elections, categorical variable

	Chávezapproval		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	2.18	1.81 – 2.56	**<0.001**
Approval of International Observers (yes)	0.31	-0.10 – 0.71	0.135
Observations	342		

	R² / R² adjusted	0.007 / 0.004

Odds ratios

Approval of International Observers (yes)	**1.36**

Table 13: Trust in the US Armed Forces

	Chávezapproval		
Predictors	*Estimates*	*CI*	*p*
(Intercept)	1.50	1.26 – 1.74	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [2]	0.52	0.24 – 0.81	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [3]	1.37	1.06 – 1.69	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [4]	2.43	2.06 – 2.80	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [5]	1.72	1.07 – 2.37	**<0.001**
Trust in US Armed Forces [6]	0.95	0.36 – 1.55	**0.002**
Trust in US Armed Forces [7]	2.17	1.52 – 2.82	**<0.001**
Observations	342		
R² / R² adjusted	0.414 / 0.404		

Odds ratios

Trust in US Armed Forces [2]	1.68*
Trust in US Armed Forces [3]	3.94*
Trust in US Armed Forces [4]	11.36*
Trust in US Armed Forces [5]	5.58*
Trust in US Armed Forces [6]	2.59*
Trust in US Armed Forces [7]	8.76*

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