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DECENTRALIZATION, ECONOMIC VOTING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN
A NEW DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF MEXICO

By

Paloma Bauer de la Isla

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

DECENTRALIZATION, ECONOMIC VOTING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN A NEW DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF MEXICO

By

Paloma Bauer de la Isla

The research question that motivates this dissertation is whether new democracies develop functional mechanisms of accountability. Taking economic voting as an indicator of electoral accountability and exploring the effects of decentralization on incumbent support, I examine under which institutional conditions electorates in new democracies might become economic voters. Employing both aggregate and individual level data, the dissertation explores hypotheses about economic voting at the subnational level in Mexico. The case of Mexico is particularly well-suited to study voters' rationales in a post electoral authoritarian context, where state-level institutions are struggling to gain political and financial autonomy. The central argument is that the propensity of the electorate to become sophisticated and effectively hold elected representatives accountable is contingent upon state-level political and economic decentralization. I find that state-level factors exercise a powerful effect on electoral outcomes. Specifically, I demonstrate that state governments become more accountable to citizens with the increase of decentralization - measured by state-level financial autonomy and electoral competition.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

The broad research question that motivates this dissertation is one of accountability in emerging democracies. Taking economic voting as an indicator of electoral accountability and exploring the effects of decentralization on incumbent support, I examine under which institutional conditions electorates in new democracies might become economic voters. Specifically, by exploring the effects of political and economic decentralization on incumbent support across the Mexican states, this study seeks to assess whether and to what extent electoral accountability is taking place in a new democracy.

Does a new democracy guarantee electoral accountability? That is, does a new democracy develop those mechanisms of accountability necessary for voters to become, in the immortal words of V.O. Key (1964:568), a “rational god of vengeance and reward”? Furthermore, do voters assign responsibility to the right level of government? Are voters able to correctly distinguish between national and subnational performance when voting at the state level?

Without doubt, accountability lies at the bottom of these questions. Being a product of a number of institutional mechanisms, its importance for the success of any representative democratic regime cannot be overstated. Accountability is, however, not an immediate or automatic product of democracy, as democratic regimes can still exist without the adequate working of checks and balances that guarantee accountability (Bratton 1998). This is, I believe, an important shortcoming in some democratic regimes, and a potential danger for their consolidation, quality, and even survival. Nations where

the essential democratic institutions are in place, but where accountability to its citizens is not guaranteed, lack clearly a major component of democratic life and risk developing serious problems of governability. As argued by Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer (1998:35), “if a regime is to be fully democratic, the government of the day must be *accountable* to the electorate.” By extension, a regime lacking accountability is in danger of losing its citizens’ support and satisfaction vis-à-vis the system. Eventually, a dissatisfied and angry civil society can end up alienating itself from the system through apathy, indifference, or even through violent means. Thus, the dangers to the democratic legitimacy, stability, and durability of the system are countless (Easton 1965).

Accountability is, however, a complex issue to explore. With this research, I hope to shed light on this concept by looking at one specific component of democracy and one essential mean of accountability: elections. Elections represent the most direct link between citizens and the government, as well as the principal form of accountability. In fact, for many citizens in the world, elections are the only mechanism to connect with their government. The act of voting itself is critical in two major ways to ensure representation, accountability, and responsiveness to the citizens by political leaders. First, elections are the natural mechanism for citizens to hold their government accountable for its past performance (Schedler 1999). By voting based on a rational choice of whether to reward or punish the sitting government, voters are able to experience first-hand an act of governmental accountability. Second, the way voters elect their leaders greatly determines what kind of representation and the level of responsiveness they will experience from their government.¹ When a democracy fails to

¹ See Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin (1999).

ensure its citizens that their political participation is meaningful,² the durability and even viability of the system is put at risk. In other words, elections are the most straightforward mechanism of accountability in a democracy, and accountability is needed for a democratic regime to succeed.

What is needed for elections to be an act of accountability? Following Dahl's (1971) emphasis on contestation and participation, scholars agree on a number of factors, such as clean, periodic, and competitive elections; a competitive party system; and an interested, informed, and involved electorate. But what does it take to make these factors converge and make accountability work? Furthermore, assuming that the minimal institutional standards are in place, are citizens in a new democracy "ready" for democracy? Or, are citizens in such contexts less capable of being rational voters than citizens in old democracies?

In this project, I argue that the decentralization of political and economic powers at the subnational level can lead to make institutional mechanisms of accountability work, such as elections. When a subnational government does not depend fully on the central government for resources and political power, then elections acquire a form of "local power" – that is, subnational politicians need their constituents' electoral support and therefore elections are meaningful for a majority of voters. Thus, elections acquire different meanings, depending on the degree of decentralization attained in a given region, which will vary across nations, and more importantly in this work, even within a nation. In other words, those ideal results of decentralization that are argued to create

² Specifically, by "meaningful" I mean here that voters know that with their vote (as a majority) they can cast a government out of office.

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eventually a sophisticated electorate, such as transparency, availability of information, and political knowledge, depend on the institutional context of a given state.

The underlying logic of this argument is that electoral accountability can only exist, if those institutional arrangements designed to respond to citizens are functioning appropriately. This study addresses the specific question of whether the expected outcomes of political and economic decentralization reach the electoral arena. Ideally, decentralization is supposed to promote democracy at the grassroots level, developing hereby different mechanisms of accountability. Whether voters are able to use their voting right as an act to hold the government accountable remains an open question.

1.1 Overview of the Argument

This study looks at an assumed and indirect outcome of decentralization, electoral accountability, by means of exploring electoral choice at the subnational level in a new democracy. Ideally, citizens living in a system with working accountability, make use of elections as one way of evaluating their representatives.

Figure 1.1 shows a model of the argument that I develop in this dissertation. In the first place, effective decentralization can only take place when politicians need to take into account their constituencies for political support, and even survival. This happens when politicians depend no longer on the central government (or hegemonic party), but on local constituencies for their electoral support and political success. Effective decentralization of political and economic powers is then assumed to bring the government closer to the people, by delegating powers (political, fiscal, and/or administrative) to lower levels of government. This presumably creates, on the one hand,

a cycle of greater clarity of responsibility in which there is greater flow of information. On the other hand, it raises the levels of pluralism, electoral competition, and a state's financial autonomy vis-à-vis the central government. Alternation of power and divided governments are common at the subnational level. Overall, subnational units are more autonomous both politically and economically from the central government. This new institutional environment is expected to create changes in the governing style of subnational politicians, who depend increasingly on citizens' evaluations to retain power. The increased transparency of information and responsibility increases citizens' political knowledge and heightens their attention to public affairs. The result is a sophisticated electorate, who in turn is more likely to make an electoral choice based on performance evaluations. This, I argue, is a way of observing electoral accountability.

This model, as applied to the case of Mexico, explores the impacts of political and economic decentralization on incumbent support across the Mexican states. Specifically, the focus of this study is on the relationship between two ideal outcomes of a decentralization process—namely, electoral competition and financial autonomy—and incumbent support at the subnational level. The overall purpose is twofold: In the first place, I aim to explore whether, and to what extent, decentralization impacts electoral behavior. By using macro-level data, I find evidence that both political and economic decentralization impact electoral behavior, specifically, economic voting, at different degrees. This leads to the second overall goal, which is to further explore with micro-level data the existing variation across the states. The principal hypothesis leading this work is that as the level of decentralization intensifies, voters become more sophisticated

and thus, hold the government accountable by voting based on a performance evaluation. Overall, I find support for this hypothesis.

1.2 Contributions

This dissertation contributes to our general knowledge of the quality of new democracies in the following three ways.

a) By exploring the subnational level of politics in a new democracy, where the transition process towards democracy started at this level of government, rather than at the national, like most other studies, this dissertation contributes to the understanding of different stages and paces of the transition and deepening processes of democracy within one nation. Mexico presents an excellent case for studying the evolution of democracy at the state and local levels, which in some states started approximately 20 years before it fully reached the national arena, while others have not experienced alternation of power until today.

b) This study contributes to the broad field of economic voting, which remains placed high on the political science research agenda. The political importance and effects of economic factors sustain a lively scholarly debate that has plenty of open questions, particularly in reference to fragile economic and democratic contexts, where the study of economic voting is a particularly relevant exercise. Specifically, by exploring economic voting at the subnational level in a formerly hegemonic party system, this study contributes to evaluate the differing degrees of institutional capacity of subnational governments.

c) The third contribution refers to decentralization, a public policy that has been extremely popular in emerging democracies across the world. However, so far, most of the literature has not spent much time on exploring the link between the expected accountability mechanisms resulting from decentralization and electoral outcomes. This dissertation contributes to the research program on decentralization by exploring the potential implications of decentralization on democratization policies from the electorate's standpoint.

1.3 Research Design and Data

This dissertation employs a subnational research design to study electoral behavior across the Mexican states. The research design, which I briefly will explain here is summarized in Table 1.1. I make use of both subnational- and individual-level analyses. First, look at the question of interest within a subnational level of analysis. For this, I gathered an aggregate data set composed of a collection of macroeconomic, fiscal, and electoral indicators spanning 34 years. This cross-sectional analysis allowed me to examine different hypotheses across the 31 Mexican states and the Federal District (Mexico City) over a significant period of time. The macroeconomic data is taken primarily from Mexico's Institute of Statistics (*Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, Geografía e Informática*, INEGI). The electoral data and other socio-demographic indicators used in the dissertation were obtained from the Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral*, IFE), Center for Research for Development (*Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo*, CIDAC), Banamex (*Banco Nacional de México*), and Mexico's National Population Council (*Consejo Nacional de Población*, CONAPO).

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Second, I look at the question of interest within an individual-level analysis using survey-level data. The data used was collected by the Mexican newspaper group *Reforma*, and it is based on pre-electoral surveys collected in a sample of states. The sample of states reflects Mexico's rich subnational variability, which raises the study's generalization power. The surveys, based on face-to-face interviews, contain identical or highly comparable items, which allow both the comparability among the individual states and the use of a merged data set.

1.4 Case Selection

In this dissertation, I use the case of Mexico to test hypotheses about the presence of rational vote decisions in new democracies. Mexico makes an excellent test case for four main reasons.

a) Given that Mexico represents the prototype of a new democracy, the findings can be applied to a large number of contexts. By being a "prototype of a new democracy," I mean that the political context in Mexico is similar to that of other new democracies. For instance, Mexican voters have been traditionally unable to distinguish between subnational and national politics. As is the case in most of Latin America and other regions of the world, the Mexican executive has counted with disproportionately much more power than the other branches of government, which made national politics much more visible to the eyes of the electorate. Within such a context, it is difficult for voters to assign responsibility to the appropriate layer of government. In Mexico, subnational politics developed in the shadow of a strong presidential system and a highly centralized system of relationships between the center and subnational units—a context that is not

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uncommon in new democracies. Another trait of the Mexican system, which is shared by many other developing democracies, is that within the processes of transition and consolidation of democracy, both political institutions and civil society are struggling to become more autonomous and develop more power and credibility on their own.

b) The rich variability across the Mexican states in terms of democratic experiences is very well-suited to explore the questions of interest, such as why some contexts within a nation are more prone to produce economic voters than others, and why some governments develop different styles of governing that favor the use of accountability mechanisms, while others still show traits of authoritarianism. In sum, Mexico presents an ideal laboratory because of its variations in electoral competition levels and overall degrees of decentralization.

c) Recent and extensive use of decentralizing policies across most of the developing world call for checks on the performance of these measures. Mexico is especially well-suited to evaluate decentralizing efforts, because it is formally a federal system (among the three biggest in Latin America), which did not work as such during the one-party regime. Therefore, this study is particularly appropriate to evaluate the effects of recent efforts to decentralize power in a federal system.

d) Last, but not least, Mexico is an important case of study because of its obvious political, economic, and social importance within the region. Mexico shares with the US an array of issues, such as geographic proximity, economic relations, immigration, and security, among many others, which make it imperative to deepen our understanding of Mexico's political development.

1.5 Composition of Chapters

The dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 consists of a review of the literature related to this research. The chapter states the theoretical perspective on which the arguments of this study are built. In Chapter 3, I present the case that will be used to test hypotheses in this project, Mexico. The subsequent chapters empirically test the argument of this research. Chapter 4 makes use of macro-level data to explore this research question across Mexico's 31 states and the Federal District between 1985 and 2004, while Chapter 5 uses micro-level data in a sample of states. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the conclusions reached in this study and expands on how they might contribute to the comparative literature on electoral behavior.

Figure 1.1 Overview of the Argument

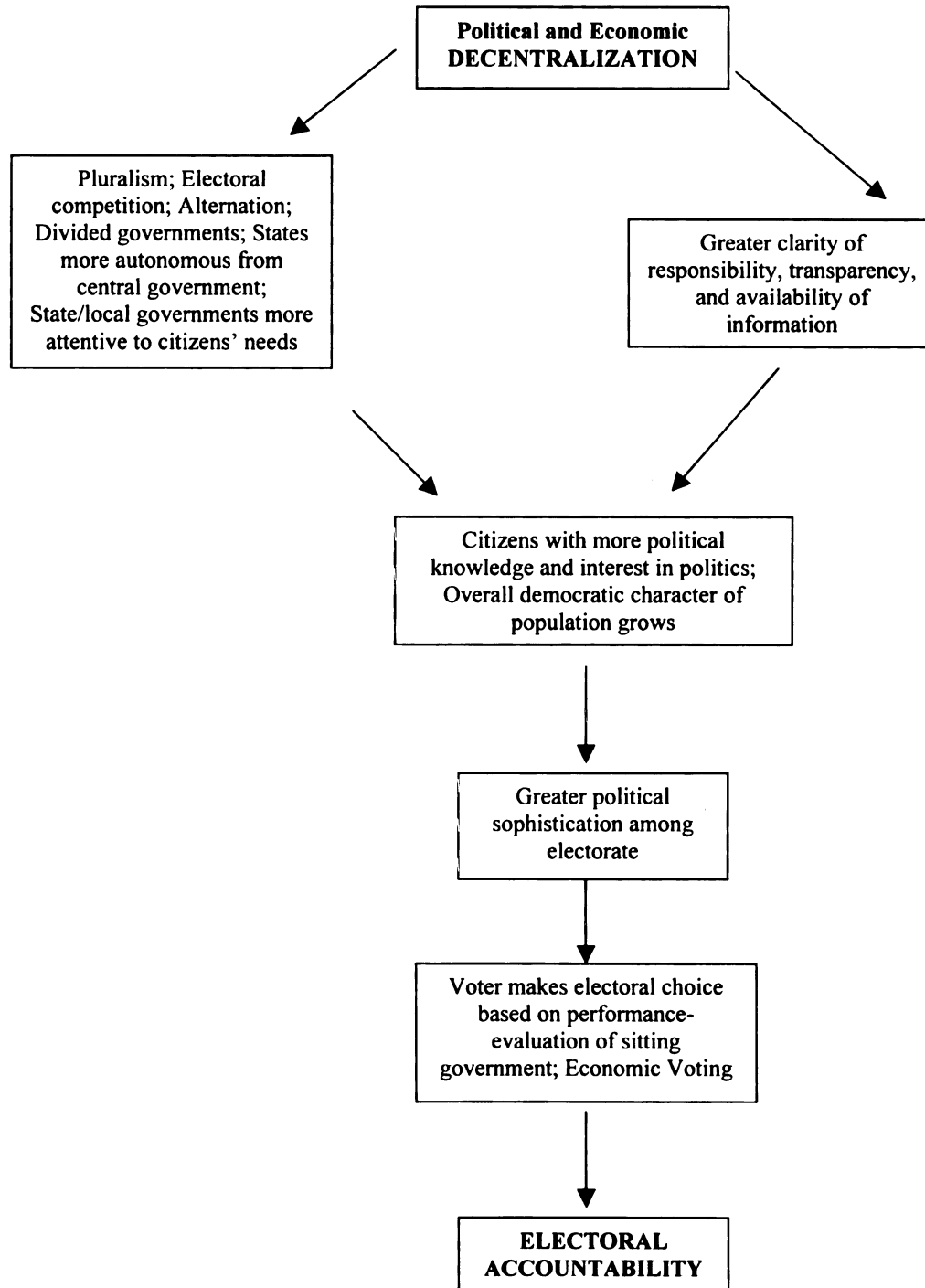


Table 1.1 Research Design

<i>Level of Analysis</i>	
Subnational	Individual
<i>Data</i>	
Aggregate	Survey
<u>Dependent Variable:</u> Incumbent Support (percentage of votes and seats in local congresses) <u>Independent Variables:</u> State-level economic performance, local financial autonomy, electoral experience under opposition, and political control variables <u>Method:</u> Cross-sectional analysis <u>Source:</u> Own data set, most indicators from INEGI	<u>Dependent Variables:</u> Individual approval and electoral support for the incumbent party <u>Independent Variables:</u> Individual assessments of subnational and individual economies, and individual control variables <u>Method:</u> Individual-level survey analysis <u>Source:</u> Pre-electoral surveys, <i>Reforma</i>

Chapter 2. Theory

2.1 Introduction

In a democratic regime, elections are the most powerful instrument for citizens to express their preferences vis-à-vis the government. In this sense, elections serve as the most straightforward method to enforce accountability. However, does an electoral democracy³ guarantee electoral accountability? That is, does an electoral democracy develop those institutional mechanisms of accountability necessary for voters to hold elected officials accountable for their performance? Assuming that elections meet all requirements necessary to be classified as clean, open, periodic, and competitive, what makes voters take reasoned electoral decisions? What leads to citizen circumspection in a new democratic regime? I argue that voters are more likely to make reasoned electoral choices when they perceive that their vote has a real chance of impacting the election either way, and that this can be achieved through appropriate decentralization of political and economic powers.

Economic voting has been shown to be strongly dependent on a context of institutional clarity of responsibility,⁴ which can vary both between and within nations (Anderson 2000; Nadeau, Niemi, and Yoshinaka 2002; Pacek and Radcliff 1995; Powell and Whitten 1993). I argue that decentralization determines partly the extent to which a context of clarity of responsibility develops. Therefore, I want to explore whether, and to what extent, decentralization indirectly leads to economic voting. The principal

³ According to Diamond, Hartlyn, Linz, and Lipset (1999:x), an electoral democracy is “a civilian, constitutional system in which the legislative and chief executive offices are filled through regular, competitive, multiparty elections with universal suffrage.”

⁴ A term developed by Powell and Whitten (1993) to explain the variability of economic voting in cross-national studies in terms of the political context (or institutional arrangements) of a given nation.

hypothesis leading this work is that as the level of decentralization intensifies, voters become more sophisticated⁵ and are more likely to use elections as a mechanism of accountability. Furthermore, this might contribute to explain some of the uneven evidence of the theory found both across developing democracies and within individual nations.

This chapter reviews the literature of economic voting, accountability, and decentralization within the broader literature on democratization. The objective of this chapter is, in addition to defining the major concepts as applied in this study, to lay out the theoretical framework on which this project is based on. The chapter is organized as follows. Next, I draw on the extensive literature on democracy to place economic voting, decentralization, and accountability in theoretical perspective. Second, economic voting is reviewed in both established and new democracies. Third, I define the concept of accountability as it is used in this project, and I discuss how decentralization is linked to elections as a means of accountability. Finally, the last section concludes with a number of testable propositions that link decentralization with electoral outcomes and accountability, and which will be empirically tested in chapters 4 and 5.

⁵ By sophisticated here, I mean that voters are able to punish or reward the incumbent administration when casting their vote at the subnational level. Throughout this dissertation, I equate sophistication with economic voting, regardless of whether it is prospective/retrospective or pocketbook/sociotropic. The general definition of economic voting followed here refers to the theory as a “reward-punish decision calculus on the part of the voter. The voter who feels better off financially (or sees the nation as a whole better off) will reward the incumbent officeholder” (Atkeson and Partin 1995:99). According to this definition, I assume economic voting to be a “theory about applied rational, i.e. *reasoning* behavior” (Dorussen and Palmer 2002:1);

2.2 Dissertation's Place within Democratization Literature

Since the “third wave” of democracy was unleashed in 1974, with the overthrow of the Salazar/Caetano dictatorship in Portugal, the number of democratic systems across the world increased in a dramatic way (Huntington 1991). Regardless of how one defines democracy,⁶ it is clear to most observers that the worldwide trend has been towards more democracy and freedom.⁷ Extensive scholarly work has both accompanied and followed up the development of democratic systems across the world. At first, this field of study was primarily concerned with questions on the conceptualization of democracy, such as defining democracy and fitting the different variants of democratic regimes into classifications of democratic regimes.⁸ Increasingly, more studies have turned to questions on the substance (or results) of democratic regimes, and a recurrent question refers to why some regimes succeed in their transition to democracy and eventual consolidation, while others fail somewhere along the way.⁹ This scholarly concern is clearly summed up by Diamond, Plattner, and Schedler in the following way: “Democracy, like so many objects of desire, is a moving target... now that these polities have reached democratic shores, often after years of intense struggle, they are discovering that they cannot just lean back, relax, and enjoy the democratic sun. Instead, they find themselves haunted by old demons that they had hoped to exorcise with democratic rule...” (1999:1).

Broadly speaking, the literature on democracy and processes of democratization has focused on the study of political institutions and political actors. Scholars of political

⁶ See Diamond (1999) for different conceptualizations.

⁷ According to Freedom House (www.freedomhouse.org), the number of “free” countries increased from 40 (or 25%) in 1975 to 89 (or 46%) in 2005.

⁸ See, for example, Collier and Levitsky (1997); Diamond (1999); Linz and Stepan (1996); Schmitter and Karl (1991).

⁹ For a recent study, see Diamond and Morlino (2005).

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institutions have focused, for example, on comparing parliamentary versus presidential systems; on the nature of representation as a result of electoral systems; and on the overall institutionalization processes (e.g., Linz 1990; Linz and Stepan 1996; Mainwaring 1993; Jones 1995; O'Donnell 1994; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Shugart and Carey 1992). Scholars studying political actors, on the other hand, explore the extent to which political elites, parties, organizations, and citizens accept democracy as the “only game in town,” and the overall role of civil society in a democracy (e.g., Booth and Richard 1998; Putnam 1993).

To a great extent, a democracy's success in consolidating¹⁰ is a function of the balance reached between institutions and political actors. As Diamond and Chull Shin so clearly explain: “Democratic consolidation will advance to the extent that the political institutions of democracy are deepened and improved to become more open, responsive, accountable, and respectful of the law *and* to the extent that democracy is seen by the mass public to be delivering the political goods it promises: freedom, justice, transparency, participation, and a predictable, stable, constitutional order” (2000:21; italicized emphasis added).

Without doubt, representation lies at the heart of the link between citizens and government. Scholars agree that in order to become consolidated, a democratic regime must succeed in developing legitimacy among political elites and citizens (Diamond 1999). Citizens are engaged when they participate according to the “rules of the game” of a democracy and when they know that their participation is meaningful to the system. As explained by Diamond, “at the level of the mass public, consolidation is indicated when

¹⁰ A regime is consolidated when a) all political actors are constrained by the rules of the game b) majority of public opinion accepts legitimacy of democracy. Definition follows Linz and Stepan (1996) chapter 2, and Diamond (1999), chapter 3.



the overwhelming majority of citizens believe that democracy is the best form of government for their country at their time” (1999:68). However, as discussed by Bratton and van de Walle (1997:11-12), “...for ordinary people – in Africa as elsewhere in the world – the challenge of democracy concerns how to obtain accountability from officials of the state.”

The quality of elections is one way of evaluating the extent to which political accountability is being institutionalized. However, “elections alone are not a sufficient condition of democracy” (Bratton and van de Walle 1997:13). In this respect, Karl (1990) warned against the dangers of falling into an “electoral fallacy”—that is, equating elections with democracy. In fact, elections can still be held in regimes where systematic abuses of political rights take place. On the other hand, it is also “not sufficient for government to be responsive to citizen desires; citizens must also be able to hold government accountable” (Gomez and Wilson 2006:127). Hence, elections can only be an indicator of a regime moving towards consolidation, when parties and political elites allow elections to serve the purpose of accountability *and* informed voters use elections in this manner. But, when does this happen?

Voters will hold the government accountable only if they believe that the rules of the game are accepted and enforced, and that there are self-enforcing restraints on the government. That is, an electoral democracy meets partially the first requirement about the balance needed in the system to consolidate—that of working political institutions. Elections, in a liberal democracy,¹¹ remain the most straightforward mechanism of political participation, but beyond meeting the minimum requirements, they serve in a

¹¹ See Diamond (1999) on the distinction between liberal and electoral democracy.

broadier meaning of representation, because political rights and civil liberties are guaranteed. In such a context, the democratic quality of citizens increases.

A growing body of theoretical work and empirical evidence suggests that a vigorous civil society is instrumental, if not vital, to the consolidation of new democracies.¹² Scholars have argued the manner in which civil society organizations and movements provide outlets of participation, and how such networks foster trust and cooperation—all of which leads to democratic consolidation. The institutionalization of elections, which link the government and civil society, lies at the heart of democratic consolidation. Ideally, beyond being open, free, competitive, and regular, institutionalized elections are used by voters to express preferences and evaluations.

2.3 Economic Voting

One way to measure whether elections are serving as a mechanism of accountability between elected officials and citizens is by exploring how much voters actually reward or punish their governments when it comes to voting or expressing approval or disapproval towards the incumbent government. Indeed, this straightforward relationship between governmental performance and citizens' evaluations has been developed as a barometer of institutional performance as seen through the eyes of the citizenry. As argued by Dorussen and Palmer, "economic voting is an instrumental act. Ideally, the electorate expresses at the ballot its preferences about proper management of the economy...Politicians who fail to heed the policy goals of the public, or who show a lack of competence in 'managing' the economy, are turned out of office. Economic

¹² On civil society and democratic consolidation, see Diamond and Plattner (1994); Foley and Edwards (1997); Gyimah-Boadi (1998); Putnam (1993); Schmitter (1997).

voting thus constitutes a mechanism of democratic accountability” (2002:1-2). Drawing primarily on the experience of developed democracies, a large number of studies have demonstrated that governmental leaders and political parties are either punished or rewarded for their economic performance at the time of elections. The responsibility hypothesis, which in its simplified form states that “voters hold the government responsible for economic events” has driven the economic voting literature (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000:114). This straightforward relationship has been extensively researched, producing hundreds of articles and books during the last decade.¹³ In fact, the field of economic voting remains one of the favorites among scholars to study voting models, partly because of the data availability and reliability, but also because efforts to test the theory have produced many other open questions. Overall, the theory lends itself to study electoral behavior from a wide array of angles.

Economic voting refers to the basic following idea, which was articulated in 1978 by Tufte (65): “When you think economics, think elections; When you think elections, think economics.” In fact, this field began being articulated a few years earlier, when Kramer (1971) concluded that the fate of an incumbent president’s party depended largely on the state of the economy. This hypothesis was further developed on the basis of rational behavior theories, which basically argue that voters follow their self-interest and are capable of thinking rationally when casting a vote. That is, according to Downs’ *Economic Theory of Democracy*, voters act rationally in politics and seek to maximize their “utility income from governmental activity” at the time they make an electoral choice (1957:37). Thus, according to the theory of economic voting, voters who base

¹³ For a complete review of the economic voting literature, see Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier (2000).

their vote choice primarily on their evaluations of the sitting government, are making a rational choice.

Scholars of economic voting have been immersed in different debates over the exact dynamics underlying the voting calculus. For instance, at the aggregate level, questions revolve around which macroeconomic indicators best explain the relationship between economics and electoral outcomes. Other questions deal with the dimension voters use to evaluate their government (pocketbook versus sociotropic), or by the timeframe they consider (prospective versus retrospective). And yet another question refers to the layer of government that voters look at when they evaluate (national versus subnational). Despite these debates, however, there is an overall consensus in the literature supporting the link between economics and elections. In short, most scholars agree that the “economy matters” on election day. Next, I briefly review the evidence found in the American context and in other Western developed democracies.

At the aggregate level, scholars who have explored the impact of macroeconomic performance on presidential approval or electoral outcomes, (e.g., Kramer 1971; Hibbs, Rivers, and Vasilatos 1982; Lewis-Beck and Rice 1992; Markus 1988; Norpoth 1984; Tufte 1978) argue that incumbent support is a function of its economic performance. Most studies using macro-level data usually link aggregate percentage support for the incumbent government with different macroeconomic indicators, such as unemployment, inflation, and economic growth rates. Although there is some disagreement in the literature as to which macroeconomic indicator has the most explanatory power, macroeconomic performance has been consistently found to be part of the voting calculus.

At the individual-level, researchers have explored the link between individual perceptions of the economy as a whole or their personal financial situation and vote choice or presidential approval (e.g., Fiorina 1978, 1981; Key 1966; Kinder and Kiewiet 1979, 1981; Kiewiet 1981). Typically, micro-level studies include, in addition to the standard indicators of individual assessments of the economy, a number of socioeconomic and political control variables, such as income and education levels, and partisan identification. Within this line of literature, there are also a number of disagreements and unresolved questions but, despite them, scholars have found overall considerable evidence in support for the economic voting argument.

The classic question of *how* citizens hold the incumbent government accountable for the performance of the economy has been answered in two main ways. On the one hand, the classic economic voting hypothesis presumes that voters assess their personal financial situation, or “pocketbook,” to make a vote choice. In fact, the pocketbook voting hypothesis lies at the core of the original theory underlying the economic voting literature. The idea that individuals “vote their pocketbooks” (Tufte 1978) originated in Downs’ (1957) research, who argued that voters make a rational decision when they vote by either rewarding or punishing the government, according to their personal experience and calculus on election day.

However, results from the pocketbook hypothesis at the individual-level have been mixed or in some cases inconclusive (Fiorina 1978; Klorman 1978; Lewis-Beck 1988). These results have led other scholars to argue that individuals are more likely to be sociotropic rather than pocketbook voters. According to the sociotropic approach, voters tend to put more emphasis on the broader state of the economy in the country, rather than

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focusing on their own personal financial well-being. For instance, Kinder and Kiewiet (1978, 1981) focused on the relationship between individual assessments of the general state of the economy and individual vote choice. Overall, they find that personal experiences are “*politically* unimportant” (1979:522). That is, according to these authors, personal (economic) problems are important to citizens, but they do not expect the government to be responsible for solving these. On the other hand, Kinder and Kiewiet find that citizens do identify the broader, collective state of the economy as politically relevant.

A different debate within the literature deals with the timeframe that voters use when they evaluate their governments. On the one hand, the classic economic voting hypothesis, following arguments developed by Downs (1957) and V.O. Key (1964), presumes that voters are self-interested and retrospective in nature. On the other hand, other scholars have put forward the argument that when individuals make a voting decision, they look at the prospects of the economy. That is, according to this line of research, voters evaluate the economy prospectively—they seek the option they perceive will benefit them the most in the future (Chappell and Keech 1985; MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1992). The well-known terms of “banker” and “peasant” introduced by MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson (1992), best illustrate the distinction between a prospective and a retrospective voter. According with this analogy, while a peasant pays primarily attention on his or her personal short-term circumstances, a banker focuses on the long-term horizon, being more sophisticated and objective in his or her decision-making process. With respect to the US, the authors conclude that “the electorate responds with the sophistication of the banker” (1992:606). Again, despite existing

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disagreements, both approaches have found sufficient support in the literature (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000:114).

Finally, yet another disagreement found in the economic voting literature, and one that is highly relevant to the question of democratic accountability, refers to whether the electorate is capable of assigning responsibility for economic performance to the appropriate level of government. That is, do electoral results at the subnational level of government respond to national economic and political trends rather than local conditions? Are the performance failures of subnational officials correctly punished by voters? The results of studies looking at both possibilities are mixed as well.

According to the referendum-voting model, which lies at the heart of the economic voting theory, electoral outcomes are a result of the incumbent presidential administration's performance. That is, the higher the approval ratings of the president (and/or the higher the levels of popular satisfaction with the state of the national economy), the higher the likelihood that the president's party (or he himself) will be reelected. Consequently, state-level political leaders are not evaluated on the basis of their own performance, but rather on that of the president's party. It is expected that, if the president's enjoys positive evaluations, his party will benefit at the state-level, regardless of the specific performance of subnational politicians.

Significant macro-level research applied to the American context suggests that voters see the President as solely responsible for national policy outcomes (e.g., Chubb 1988; Erickson 1989; Holbrook-Provow 1987; Peltzman 1987; Piereson 1975; Simon, Ostrom, and Marra 1991). On the other hand, scholars have found support for the argument that voters do look at state-level economic performance when they make a

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subnational electoral decision (e.g., Atkeson and Partin 1995; Lowry, Alt, and Ferree 1998). Micro-level data exploring this question has found mixed evidence as well. While some scholars find that voting in subnational elections reflects evaluations of national performance (Simon 1989; Stein 1990), other researchers have found that voters do distinguish between subnational and national policy responsibilities (e.g., Atkeson and Partin 1995; Carsey and Wright 1998; Howell and Vanderleeuw 1990; Partin 1995). Still other studies suggest that voters use a combination of national and state-level evaluations (King 2001; Svoboda 1995).

As shown, despite the different debates taking place in the literature, there is an overarching agreement among scholars that identifies economics as part of the decision calculus. However, researchers who have reviewed the literature (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Nannestad and Paldam 1994) agree that the theory presents a problem of “spatial and temporal instability.” In other words, the problem with the theory is that results so far exhibit variability across countries, and even within countries over time. Still other scholars argue that the economic voting theory does a poor job in accounting for individual-level differences (Duch 2001; Gomez and Wilson 2001, 2006). Moreover, the instability problems of the theory are exacerbated when it travels to new democratic settings, where severe limitations to mechanisms of governmental accountability exist (for example, extreme centralization of powers, clientelist practices, or low levels of institutionalization of party systems), and the conventional economic voting model cannot be as widely generalized among the population as it is done in advanced democracies. The next section reviews the state of the economic voting literature in new democracies.

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2.4 Economic Voting in New Democracies

Are voters in new democracies as capable as those in established democracies to hold their governments accountable? Until recently, most studies had examined economic voting in the American context and Western European democracies. This is surprising on the one hand, given the obvious electoral importance that economic issues should have in those volatile contexts of the developing world. In fact, elections represent for many citizens in developing democracies the only opportunity to express their policy preferences. On the other hand, however, it is understandable to some extent that such studies did not focus on new democracies until recently, considering the common belief that electorates in these contexts are not “highly informed, policy-oriented economic voters” (Dorussen and Palmer 2002:2). Electoral behavior in new democracies has been primarily explained by factors such as ideological propensity, presence of patron-client relationships, or socio-demographic variables, rather than by voters’ performance evaluations. Voters in these contexts are easily assumed to lack the needed conditions to be critical voters, such as access to a free press. The applicability of the theory in new democracies is also constrained by the wide variation in political and economic contexts present in new democracies, in contrast with those of advanced democracies. Data availability and reliability have been a constraint as well in exploring economic voting in fledgling democracies. But, as I detail in the next section, scholars of democratic development have increasingly applied the model to study citizen responses to the economy in new democracies. However, most of the evidence found so far is mixed or questions altogether the applicability of the model to nascent democracies. Next, I review a number of studies that have found clear evidence in support for the economic voting

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theory, and then I mention studies that have found weak or no support at all for the theory.

One of the early studies looking at the link between the economy and elections outside the context of established democracies was Remmer's (1991) analysis of 21 presidential elections in Latin America. Looking at a time period dominated by the harsh regional economic crises of the 1980s, Remmer finds an important relationship between economic conditions and vote choice. Also in Latin America, Seligson and Gomez (1989) find evidence in Costa Rica's 1986 general election. More recently, Gélinau (2002) finds support for the theory looking at Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela during the 1980s and 1990s. Specifically, he finds that economic voting is contingent on the economic (e.g., inflation, unemployment) and political (e.g., reelection, degree of decentralization) contexts. In a cross-national study, looking at elections taking place between 1988 and 1994 in 38 countries, Wilkin, Haller, and Norpoth (1997) found strong support for the retrospective voting argument. These authors argue that, despite the wide variation in political contexts across the nations included in their study, "voters around the world prove capable of practicing a standard form of economic voting. They do so by holding the major incumbent party accountable for recent economic performance" (301).

The return of former communist parties in several post-communist regimes has been a phenomenon that scholars have tried to explain with the economic voting theory. A number of studies have found support for the argument that citizens' evaluations of their nation's economic situation play an important causal role on the electoral fortunes of incumbent governments (e.g., Duch 1993; Markowski and Toka 1998; Mishler and Rose 1996). For example, Markowski and Toka (1998) found that the electoral recoveries

in the early 1990s of former communist parties in Hungary and Poland can be explained by the referendum model of economic voting. According to the findings of these authors, citizens in these countries punished the sitting governments for economic downturns by returning old communist parties back to power.

Other studies have found mixed support for the economic voting model. In a study looking at the 1998 presidential election in Venezuela, Weyland (2003) finds that, on the one hand, economic evaluations appear to have had a significant effect on President Hugo Chávez's victory, but he also finds that the candidate's personal characteristics had important effects on voters' decision to support him. Another study that finds weak support for the economic voting hypothesis looks at Zambia, where the authors find much stronger evidence in support of non-economic factors, such ethnic group membership, traditional party affiliations, and urban/rural location (Posner and Simon 2002).

A number of other works on new democracies question altogether the appropriateness of the conventional economic voting model. In a study looking at incumbent support and popular support for economic reform policies in Poland, Przeworski (1996) finds that, in contrast with the expectations of the economic voting model, higher inflation increased support for the incumbent. Similarly, looking at the 1993 parliamentary elections in Poland, Powers and Cox (1997) find that voting behavior could hardly be explained by citizens' economic evaluations. The authors find that other issues related to social legacies of the communist regime were more salient to voters. , in a study seeking to explain the replacement of incumbent promarket, prodemocracy governments with ex-communist parties in Lithuania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, Harper

(2000) finds weak support for the economic voting hypothesis. Exploring the case of Mexico, Domínguez and McCann (1996) also find that retrospective and prospective assessments of the nation's and one's own economic conditions were only marginally related to voter intentions. They concluded that partisan, institutional, and candidate assessments provided the stronger bases for the divisions in Mexican mass public opinion.

Overall, the mixed findings found in the literature of economic voting in new democratic settings suggest that voters in a transition context may not automatically respond to economic outcomes according to the conventional model, that is, by voting for the incumbent when times are good and vice versa. It appears the model must recognize that there is variability in the strength of economic voting resulting from different institutional contexts and heterogeneous populations that respond differently to economic outcomes (2001).

Taking sides with this argument, I argue that the standard economic voting model cannot be applied in the same manner across developing democracies as it is in established democracies, because new democratic settings lack often the necessary contextual conditions that enable voters to act as economic voters. Furthermore, I argue that the tendency of an electorate to cast an economic vote varies also within a nation, because the levels of democratization can vary from region to region. I want here to refer to an analogy based the following statement by Norpoth (1996:317) "there are signs that the inclination to [engage in economic voting] is hard-wired into the brain of citizens in democracies." I do not debate the claim that citizens in general might be predisposed to be economic voters. However, I take issue with the claim that they are actually engaged

economic voters in any given democratic context. I argue that in a democracy, the “switch” has to be “turned on” in order to let citizens act as economic voters. And some democracies might not have enough “voltage” to produce economic voters. In line with this argument, I defend the claim that institutional and contextual arrangements are key determinants of economic voting. Institutions, like “flow regulators,” are in charge of distributing the “energy” (be it in the form of increased information flows, trust from citizens towards the government, or governmental responsiveness, for example) which might explain the heterogeneity of economic voting in consolidating democracies. Building on this argument, I propose that decentralization can be regarded as a potential “generator” of economic voting in new democracies.

2.5 Accountability and Decentralization in New Democracies

As mentioned before, the relationship between citizens and the government is at the heart of the challenges faced by modern representative democracies. Indeed, as argued by Diamond (1999:145), “creating the formal institutions of democratic local government does not guarantee that elected officials will be open and responsive or that citizens will take the opportunity to get involved. The critical link between formal institutions of local democracy and more vibrant citizen involvement is civil society.” Diamond shows that “the growth of civil society and the decentralization of political power are parallel processes, closely intertwined in the development of democracy” (1999:145). One policy that has been enacted to address this problem in old and new democracies alike is the decentralization of powers from the center to the periphery. Decentralization’s broad purpose is to create an institutional context in which civil

society can participate more and government can respond more. In other words, one of decentralization's indirect effects should be to facilitate accountability¹⁴ from political leaders to citizens. One way for political elites, parties, and organizations to show their commitment to democracy is by fostering the deepening of democracy at the local level. "Democratic decentralization requires by definition the transfer of control to lower levels of elected government—the devolution of real authority over some aspects of the policy agenda" (Diamond 1999:149).

A popular and complex concept, which encompasses many different aspects, decentralization demands proper conceptualization. This study follows Rondinelli and Nellis' (1986; cited in Rondinelli 1989:81) definition, which states that decentralization is "the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, and the raising and allocation of resources from the central government and its agencies to field units of government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi-autonomous public authorities, or non-governmental private or voluntary organizations." Decentralization is categorized into different dimensions,¹⁵ among the most common are: political, fiscal, and administrative (Montero and Samuels 2004:3). They all share the overall goal of "the dispersion of functions and power from the center to the periphery" (Rodríguez 1997:9).

Political decentralization refers to "direct elections of state/provincial and/or local political offices" (Montero and Samuels 2004:5), and implies greater electoral

¹⁴ Here I follow Schmitter's (2004:47) definition of political accountability as a "relationship between two sets of persons or (more often) organizations in which the former agree to keep the latter informed, to offer them explanations for decisions made, and to submit to any predetermined sanctions that they may impose. The latter, meanwhile, are subject to the command of the former, must provide required information, explain obedience or disobedience to the commands thereof, and accept the consequences for things done or left undone."

¹⁵ Decentralization is categorized by various scholars in somewhat different ways. Rodríguez (1997), for example, refers to four types of decentralization: political, spatial, administrative, and market decentralization/privatization.

competition at the subnational level. When political powers are decentralized, it is assumed that both citizen participation and representative government will increase (Rodríguez 1997:9). By having more autonomy from the center, subnational politicians should depend also directly on their constituents' electoral support – this is one reason why electoral competition increases. However, and as Montero and Samuels (2004:7) warn, in practical terms, political decentralization by itself does not mean that the subnational unit is fully “decentralized.” If the state/province is politically decentralized, but lacks resources or policy autonomy, open and competitive elections become fairly meaningless. Thus, political decentralization is highly interrelated with the other two dimensions: Fiscal decentralization, which refers to the degree of autonomy subnational units have over their resources (both revenues and expenditures); and administrative (or policy) decentralization, which is defined as “the relative authority or responsibility that state/provincial and local governments have to set goals, muster resources, and administer and implement public policy” (Montero and Samuels 2004:7). Only the interplay between political power and resources can help overcome the common “overburdened and underresourced” problem (Diamond 1999:140).

Since the 1970s, decentralization has been placed high on the political agendas of many nations across the world. Each nation's individual motivations vary, but the basic argument is that decentralization increases governmental efficiency of service provisions and responsiveness at the local level (Rondinelli 1989). An overarching argument leading decentralization efforts in new democracies is that by delegating powers to lower levels of government, the central government can be prevented from preserving its authoritarian (central) grip of power. This is especially true in post-colonial Africa, post-authoritarian

Latin America, and post-communist Eastern Europe. These regions shared the commonality of tight central powers that eventually grew tainted by corruption, inefficiency, and unresponsiveness. To dilute this centralist tradition, decentralization of state power and democratization of government at the local level was adopted in many nations. Pressures and/or incentives to decentralize came from various sources, such as neoliberal reforms, international lending agencies, democratization processes, sociostructural causes, and political-institutional forces (Montero and Samuels 2004).

A number of observers of democracy have argued that decentralization processes have been key to democratic opening and furthermore, for deepening democracy. This argument rests on the assumption that the size of a political unit is directly linked with the success of its democratic system (Diamond with Tsalik 1999:117-160). That is, the smaller a country (or political unit), the greater its likelihood to sustain its democracy. This argument makes the case for devolution of power to lower levels of government through institutional arrangements such as federalism and decentralization.

According to its supporters, decentralization translates into the empowering of *local-level* actors, which develops grassroots democracy. Following Diamond (1999:121-122), *local* democracy sustains democracy in five major ways. First, decentralization *enhances* citizen's educated involvement in the democratic process. A strong *local government* facilitates citizens' participation in the decision-making and policymaking *processes*. Citizens learn hereby firsthand about the workings of the government and are *increasingly* aware of the value of democracy for the community as a whole. This *argument* is strongly supported in Putnam's study of Italy (1993), in which a strong "civic community" is found to be determinant in sustaining democracy. Second,

decentralization is thought to increase accountability and responsiveness from the government to the citizens. This argument follows the idea that the more informed and engaged citizens are in the governmental process, the more likely they are to ask their political leaders to address their needs. Overall, it has been found that citizens feel closer to lower levels of government and therefore more confident and satisfied in their capacity to influence local government in contrast with a distant national government (Diamond 1999:125-126). Third, local leaders are supposed to be more representative of the community than national politicians. Fourth, the dynamics of a local government facilitate the practice of checks and balances vis-à-vis the center. The idea is that it would be far more difficult for the central government to abuse its power, if local governments – via citizens– develop local oversight systems. Fifth and lastly, decentralization of political power means that opposition parties have a real chance of winning office. Since parties in power have a real probability of being defeated, opposition parties are more likely to accept defeat. This clearly enhances governmental legitimacy both from the parties' and voters' perspectives.

According to this view, decentralized governments are expected to increase both the institutional clarity in the political context and citizens' overall trust in the system. However, a number of empirical studies exploring this link have found inconclusive or mixed results. While some scholars (Putnam 1993; Seong 2000) have found evidence supporting the positive relationship between decentralized local governments and citizens' satisfaction with the system, other researchers have questioned whether decentralization actually results in “good” local government. As explained by Diamond (1999:132-138), decentralization presents some potential problems. First, it can lead to

the preservation or creation of “authoritarian enclaves.” Recent studies on subnational politics have demonstrated that decentralization can empower “bad” local governments as much as “good” local governments (Cornelius 1999; Fox 1994). For example, subnational populist leaders can mismanage decentralized resources in order to retain or extend their oligarchical grip of power, which leads to corruption and political patronage (Prud’homme 1995; Diamond 1999; Stepan 2000). Second, “small size may also create strong pressures for conformity and intolerance of difference” (Diamond 1999:134). Third, revenue decentralization can create greater disparities across regions. For instance, rural areas are put at a disadvantage vis-à-vis urban centers, because they do not have as many resources to generate revenues by themselves. Looking at the effects of redistributive policies within fiscal decentralization, Prud’homme (1995) has argued that far from reaching equity across regions, decentralization policies are likely to exacerbate disparities, if they are not accompanied with proper administrative checks and balances. Similarly, other studies warn against the transfer of policy authority without adequate financial support (e.g., Bahl and Linn 1994). Fourth, decentralization can lead to “waste, redundancy, and confusion” (Diamond 1999:136). For instance, services might be duplicated if the lines of responsibility are blurred. Also, if subnational actors are given extreme autonomy without major responsibility, the danger of gridlock is always there. Diamond (1999:137) refers to Brazil as an example of this trap, arguing that “it seems beyond question that the level of political decentralization in Brazil constitutes a major obstacle to democratic consolidation.”

This review suggests that the effectiveness of decentralization policies is contingent upon different factors that vary across and within nations. These factors could

be “packaged” into the following two points. a) Governments (both incumbents and opposition) need to depend on constituents’ electoral support for their survival, that is, decentralization policies have a strategic power; and b) decentralization policies have to be accompanied with adequate funding and enforcement mechanisms.

2.6 Conclusion

Drawing upon the empirical and theoretical debates reviewed above, I explore in this dissertation hypotheses about economic voting at the subnational level of government in Mexico. The broader purpose of this analysis is to explore the relevance of decentralization measures in a new democracy on subnational electoral behavior. The normative purpose is to find out whether and to what extent electoral accountability is working within a new democracy.

Extending the theory of economic voting to the Mexican context presents interesting theoretical challenges. On the one hand, given Mexico’s political and economic contexts, the presence of economic voting appears questionable. To begin with, the centralized nature of the 71-year PRI regime did not foster the development of a responsive relationship between the government and citizens. Further, the strong presidential system leaves the extent to which voters can distinguish between presidential, congressional, and moreover, subnational policy realms open to debate. The low level of institutionalization of the party system (Mainwaring 1999) and the clientelistic nature of politics (Fox 1994) suggest also important limitations to governmental accountability. Finally, the study of economic voting in the Mexican context is a challenging one, because there is no reelection of any kind. Reelection is

generally assumed to be a key element for accountability to work (Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes 1999:48).

Despite these theoretical challenges, this dissertation aims to shed light on this understudied but critical question of democratic accountability. Thus, the central argument of this study is that Mexican citizens behave as economic voters, but that their propensity to do varies with the degree of decentralization of the state they live in. Thus, voters in more decentralized states will be more likely to be economic voters. This happens, I argue, because more decentralized states will have the needed contextual conditions (institutions) that allow voters to use elections as an accountability mechanism (vertical accountability), and make politicians responsive. State-level politicians, in turn, will be more likely to develop greater autonomy from the central government and take their constituents into account, because political leaders derive their power primarily from subnational electoral support. Following Garman, Haggard, and Willis (2001), I argue that the success of decentralization depends largely on the political incentives of national-, state- and local-level authorities. Only if they derive their political power from local constituencies and they have the needed financial viability to fulfill their responsibilities, then decentralization is likely to function, increasing the levels of clarity of responsibility and, eventually, producing accountability.

Chapter 3. The Mexican Case

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the contextual framework for analyzing the Mexican case. It concentrates on the transformation of the contemporary Mexican political system. In doing so, I review the political trends that took place in Mexico's recent history. Specifically, I discuss the highly centralized one-party regime established by the PRI, in which mechanisms of accountability were seriously curtailed. I also highlight the gradual development of a series of reforms that led to the slow political liberalization of the Mexican political system. Among the major political changes that the various sets of reforms unleashed, I focus on the decentralization of political and economic powers, which so dramatically reshaped the world of subnational elections, as well as relations between the center and the periphery.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The next section draws upon history to describe the institutionalization processes that defined Mexico's (un)democratic evolution and present "difficult democracy."¹⁶ This allows exploring the nature of the post-revolutionary regime, in particular the institutionalization process that worked so well to achieve and maintain political stability, as well as steady economic development at least until the 1970s, but also to hinder the development of a competitive party system. This section looks at the resulting intergovernmental relations within Mexico's powerful presidential system, in which the figure of the president grew legitimate but not accountable to the citizens (Levy and Bruhn 2001:132). The third section reviews

¹⁶ A term coined by Vargas Llosa (2000), after Mexico formally transitioned to democracy in 2000. Earlier, Vargas Llosa had referred to the Mexican system as the "perfect dictatorship."

Mexico's political liberalization process, which led to the gradual empowerment of the opposition and, eventually, to the culmination of the democratic transition in 2000. I emphasize the high levels of variation in terms of democratic development that exist across the Mexican states. Finally, I review the literature looking at the Mexican voter, setting the stage for the empirical analyses in chapters 4 and 5.

3.2 The Hegemonic Party System

Until recently, Mexico's political system was best known for its "longest one-party rule." The PRI achieved during its 71-year rule to establish itself in such a powerful position that, for most Mexicans, the party was equivalent to the Mexican state. In this section, two institutional legacies are discussed: the PRI's one-party rule, and the centralized inter-governmental system.

Without a doubt, the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) had lasting consequences that shaped post-revolutionary politics in Mexico. Violence did not end with the end of the revolution.¹⁷ In 1917, the country was in need of some kind of peaceful mechanism to create political order and bring unity. To fill in this vacuum, a political party was formed—a party that would encompass all power factions into a strong central authority, which would in turn control the distribution of power among selected powerholders. As Mexican political historian Lorenzo Meyer so clearly stated, since its formation, the goal of the party was not electoral politics but to "administer power without sharing it" (1986:31).

¹⁷ See Meyer and Aguilar Camín (1986) for a detailed account of the immediate post-revolutionary period.

Following the founding 1929 of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, PRI),¹⁸ the government reached out to incorporate different interest groups into its structure.¹⁹ Institutionalization was the regime's principal tool to centralize power, and a huge strategic success, as Levy and Bruhn argue: "...the genius of institutionalization lay in how the regime attained such extensive control without more blatant and brutal repression" (2001:59). Among the most important groups incorporated formally and informally in Mexico's interest group structure were the military, the Catholic Church, business, peasantry, organized labor, intellectuals, and the media. Indeed, "By incorporating the organs of mobilization, the PNR controlled participation" (Klesner 1988). Corporatism, defined as "a formal relationship between selected groups or institutions and the government or state" (Camp 2003:12), was the PRI's device to channel the most influential groups' demands (the labor, agrarian, and popular sectors), enabling the government to control public demands. Thus, through a series of contract-like relationships, in which the regime provided resources and/or support to advance political careers in exchange for electoral support. The PRI managed to develop an almost incontestable control. This dynamic had serious consequences for the further development of institutions that were designed to guarantee competitive and democratic participation, but in practice were seriously weakened. Hence, the resulting regime was a stable one, because it maintained a tight base of support from a wide array of interest groups, but it was, I argue, also a regime that did not produce a culture of accountability in its citizens.

¹⁸ The PRI had two antecedents: in 1929, the party was named National Revolutionary Party (*Partido Nacional Revolucionario*, PNR), then it was shortly renamed the Party of the Mexican Revolution (*Partido de la Revolucion Mexicana*, PRM). It finally acquired its current name in 1946. For a study looking at the origins and transformation of the party, see Garrido (1989).

¹⁹ For a detailed discussion on the role of groups in the Mexican political system, see Camp (1996:125-150).

Accountability took only place in counted sets of relationships; among them perhaps the most important occurred between the president,²⁰ who personified the PRI's power, and the "revolutionary family" or leadership elite, which stemmed directly from the PRI-structure.²¹ This system was based for the most part on bargaining relations that sustained the PRI's ruling elite across the nation. In contrast with other nations, there was little overt repression; control was primarily exercised by either accepted political bargain or cooption. Therefore, even though in formal terms a system of checks and balances existed in Mexico, in practice it was overridden by an overpowering presidency, which was based on a tight unified government, high party discipline, and by having the president as the head of the party (Weldon 1997). Thus, political accountability existed *only* to regulate these often corrupted power relationships that excluded almost entirely citizens' political participation.

The processes of political recruitment and nomination became crucial in the formation and maintenance of this political elite (Camp 1980, 1996). At the very top of *the pyramid*, the president recruited candidates based on loyalty ties, and distributed them *among the* most prestigious positions within the PRI and the government in general. This *rewarding* system extended to the other levels of government; upper level politicians such as *governors* in turn secured political loyalty by recruiting lower level functionaries. *Thus, a successful* political career depended upon establishing a patron-client relationship *with a successful* political superior, because "hegemony meant that political ambition and

²⁰ Mexico's strong presidentialism has been extensively studied. See, for example, Martínez Assad (1992) and Weldon (1997).

²¹ The "revolutionary family" comprised former presidents, powerful regional and national leaders, as well as leaders of Mexico's major interest groups. These interest groups cross-cut the entire political spectrum from left to right, but still fit within the ideologically flexible "catch all" revolutionary family. The structure of this group was maintained through loyal ties to the president, fear of political defeat, and self-interest to retain power, prestige, and wealth. The resulting consensus, headed by the president, drove Mexico's political and economic development.

the attainment of office were not viable outside the party" (Díaz -Cayeros 1997). In fact, this dynamic resulted in a hierarchical network of political cliques²² through which politicians negotiated positions and guaranteed PRI's hegemony at all levels of government. This clientelist²³ system extended from the president all the way to the lower ranks of local government, and excluded the voter from any decision-making process.

Political and Economic Centralization

It has been frequently observed that Mexico "has a particularly centralist system of government, even by Latin American standards" (Nickson 1995:200). During the PRI-regime, relations between the different levels of government were determined by the highly centralized nature of Mexico's political system. Even research on subnational politics was largely understudied, and it was not until the 1990s that the exploration of subnational politics took life (e.g., Cornelius 1999; Lujambio 2000; Rodríguez 1997; Rodríguez and Ward 1995).

Politically, governors and other state-level officials represented extensions of the *president's* power. Just as described before, governors owed their political loyalty to the *president*, who directly appointed them. Therefore, the tacit agreement was that governors *would keep social and political calm* in their states. They achieved this by appointing or *nominating other* state-level officials, such as municipal presidents, making sure hereby *that their own collaborators* would in turn govern in line with the PRI. However, if a *governor was not capable* of regaining electoral support for the PRI for some reason, then

²² In Mexico, these teams or groups are known as *camarillas*, defined as "a sort of nested series of hierarchical groups under the aegis of a national or regional political leader" (Ward 1995:138).

²³ Clientelism is defined here as "a relationship based on political subordination in exchange for material rewards" (Fox 1994:153).

he was likely to be replaced. In fact, the rate at which presidents removed governors is a good indicator of the degree of intrastate conflict in Mexico (Eisenstadt 2004).

Not surprisingly, these “governing” and “electoral” styles were frequently (and increasingly) a source of conflict within states and municipalities. Governors and municipal presidents chosen by the president or by the incumbent governor were often unpopular with the general public and members of the local government (Cornelius and Craig 1991:26). Accountability mechanisms just could not develop within this closed system. The value of regions, elections and that of voters were seriously harmed.

Mexican writer Carlos Monsiváis succinctly captured this reality:

“The operation that stripped the provinces of their possibilities for proportional growth and fair treatment had several angles. Politically, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) confiscated autonomy thanks to the wiles of corporativism, the fusion of personal economic interests and administrative rights, the brutal and systematic repression of dissidence, depoliticization (in many ways the systematic exclusion of citizens from the public sphere), and misinformation via the hijacking of interpretations and gross reduction in access to news” (1992:248).

Economically, post-revolutionary Mexico evolved in a parallel manner to the political intergovernmental arrangement during this period: extremely centralized. Just as the PRI-regime managed to control subnational leaders by political means, it managed as well to centralize economic power. The adoption of import substitution industrialization (ISI) was adopted as the official model of development in the early 1940s, and it further concentrated resources in the federal government. The ISI served the PRI to limit, in a legitimate way, the authority of subnational leaders over financial matters, tightening hereby control of the center over the periphery. The pursuit of a “national goal” (industrialization) justified placing local interests to a second place. However, this was

only the official discourse. In fact, for politicians, the primary goal was to secure their own political careers. Again, the PRI secured a federal arrangement that limited local fiscal power by ensuring that local politicians could retain office, or by offering attractive careers.

Along with ISI, a nationwide tax system established in 1948 served the PRI as another tool to centralize economic power. This fiscal agreement was reached through the introduction of the national sales tax.²⁴ Mexican politicians faced a tradeoff between keeping control over financial resources and tax authority or reducing their electoral and career risks. Eventually, local politicians decided for the latter (Díaz-Cayeros 1997). The current intergovernmental fiscal arrangement of Mexico was established in 1980, with the creation of the National System of Fiscal Coordination. States “voluntarily” joined the system, giving up several taxing powers in exchange for revenue-sharing grants from the federal government. Thus, the federal government consolidated its fiscal centralization by becoming the only level of government allowed to levy taxes a wide array of issues. States still retained theoretically the capacity to collect certain taxes, however, with time, the federal government came to monopolize all sources of revenue and states grew increasingly dependent on tax revenue shares (*participaciones*), which increasingly came to constitute the most important source of local government finance (Figure 3.1).

In sum, the intergovernmental political arrangement developed by the PRI was based on a tight centralization of political and economic powers. Politically, regional politicians accepted this arrangement because it was the only way to secure their political ambitions, and because they required federal financial support to maintain their own

²⁴ For an in-depth study of Mexico’s fiscal system during the first half of the 20th century, see Díaz-Cayeros (1997).

electoral alignment. In this context, the electorate was excluded for the most part from the political realm. Economically, the states grew increasingly (and to different degrees) dependent on the federal government. Public revenues were used by the PRI as an ideological weapon. Clearly, this arrangement hindered states' capacity to manage their own resources and be responsive to local constituencies, because there was no need to do so.

3.3 Reform and Transition

Since the 1970s, the PRI was forced to gradually introduce a number of political and electoral reforms. At first, these reforms were driven by the PRI's political interest to maintain its centralized control. Unintendedly, however, it permitted opposition parties to compete effectively, which eventually favored greater autonomy for subnational governments and unleashed the democratic transition process.

Political liberalization in Mexico dates from the political opening that occurred in the early 1970s in response to increasing demands for greater democracy and representation unleashed by the student movement of 1968. In an effort to both regain its credibility and sustain its legitimacy, the PRI government increasingly experimented with reallocating power by introducing proportional representation seats in the Congress; by giving more autonomy to local governments; and by recognizing selected electoral victories of opposition parties at both the state and the local levels. As Smith (1979) emphasized earlier, the question was one of "limited pluralism;" the limits needed to be extended, without sacrificing control over legitimacy. The reallocation of power in no way meant any intention to loosen central control.

The PRI, however, miscalculated. As a result of the opposition parties acquiring sufficient strength in the Chamber of Deputies (lower house) to have a say in the policy process, major changes followed in electoral matter (see Figure 3.2). In 1989, the Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral*, IFE) was created as a completely autonomous institute in order to conduct the entire electoral process in a professional manner. The establishment of the IFE is indeed a major breakthrough in the process of Mexican democratization because it finally broke the direct link between the official party and the institution that administers elections. The previous institution for monitoring elections, the Federal Electoral Commission, was run directly by the interior secretary as part of the executive branch. The Federal Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Federal Electoral*, TRIFE) was also created in 1989 as an autonomous body capable of challenging IFE decisions.²⁵ The 1993 and 1994 electoral reforms extended the autonomy and jurisdiction of the IFE, and further decreased PRI's overrepresentation in Congress.

Measuring the Rise of the Opposition

The opposition in Mexico has been traditionally divided primarily into two parties representing both sides of the political spectrum: on the right, the National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, PAN) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, PRD) on the left.²⁶ Until the 1980s, opposition political parties were closely controlled or outlawed altogether. In fact, until 1979 only those parties that did not threaten the PRI-regime (the so-called “satellite” parties) were permitted to take part in elections.

²⁵ See Eisenstadt (2004) on the development of Mexico's electoral justice.

²⁶ For in-depth analyses of the PAN and PRD, see Mizrahi (2003) and Bruhn (1997), respectively.

To measure and distinguish among the different degrees of electoral competition taking place across the Mexican states place from 1988 onwards, I applied two indexes developed within the American context: the Ranney Index and the Holbrook-Van Dunk Index. The Ranney Index is an indicator of the degree of two-party competition in the US states. This index was developed in Ranney's (1976) *Parties in State Politics* originally published in 1965. The original measure is actually a measure of the strength of the Democratic Party in state government. It takes into account the proportion of seats won in the state House and Senate elections, the Democratic percentage in the gubernatorial election, and the percentage of the time the governorship and state legislature were controlled by the Democratic Party. These factors are averaged together over a specified period of time, yielding a measure that ranges from 0 (complete Republican domination) to 1 (complete Democratic domination). The midpoint, of course, indicates evenly divided control, or "perfect competition".

I adapted the index to the case of Mexico by using three basic dimensions:

- a) Proportion of success: the percentage of votes won by the PRI in gubernatorial elections and the percentage of seats won by the parties in the (state/local) legislature
- b) Duration of success: the length of time the parties controlled the governorship and the length of time the PRI controlled the legislature
- c) Frequency of divided control: the proportion of time the governorship and the legislature has been divided

The resulting index is a measure of control of government, with a score of 0 indicating complete control by the opposition and a score of 1 indicating absolute PRI control. The values of the Ranney party control index were calculated for two periods;

1972-1989, and 1990-2004. 1989 is taken as the limit of a one-party phase, taking the first opposition victory of a governorship as the threshold point. The results are presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. Several patterns can be identified. During the first period, no state qualified in either of the last three categories: two-party, modified one-party opposition, and one-party opposition. Only Nuevo León reached the modified-one party PRI category. The results reflect the political scenario of a hegemonic party system: the PRI had an indisputable advantage over the opposition. The scenario looks quite different during the second period. No state falls into the one-party PRI category, while 18 states qualify in the modified one-party PRI category and 12 in the two-party group, which can be considered the ideal. Only Baja California falls in the modified one-party opposition category. All two-party states had experienced opposition rule.

The utility of the Ranney index as a measure of party competition is realized by folding the scale so the two noncompetitive extremes are brought together at the low end and the midpoint becomes the high point: $1 - (\text{Ranney} - .5)$. The resulting index ranges from .5 (no competition) to 1 (perfect competition). The Folded Ranney Index is presented in Table 3.3.

Different authors have detected a number of limitations present in the Ranney index; a) The index is based exclusively on state offices and does not reflect the strength of the parties at other levels; b) the index gives more weight to some state offices than to others; the way the index is constructed, the state legislature is given much more weight than the governorship; and c) this measure of interparty competition is a “snapshot of a moving object” and does not capture change. The Hobbrook-Van Dunk Index was designed to address these limitations. It is based on district-level outcomes in state

legislative elections. When applying the index to the Mexican case, I used municipal-elections data instead.

Complete absence of competition is indicated by a score of 0 on the district-level measure. This would be a case where all candidates are unopposed. As the scale increases from 0, it indicates greater competition. Table 3.3 presents the values for both the Holbrook-Van Dunk index and the Folded Ranney index. The states are ordered according to their value on the municipal-level measure. For both indicators, higher values present more competition. The Holbrook-Van Dunk index seems to measure competition much more directly than the (Folded) Ranney index. The strongest case for face validity can be made for the municipal-level indicator. My reasoning is as follows: the Ranney index is based largely on aggregate party strength in government, not on actual election results. The only component of the Ranney index that takes into account any individual election results is the gubernatorial election component. Given that only one gubernatorial election is held every six years, it is possible that the results of this election may not represent the true degree of competition in the state. In short, the Ranney index is really a measure of party control of state government, not the competitiveness of state elections. On the other hand, the Holbrook-Van Dunk index is based entirely on actual outcomes in state legislative municipalities. Another difference is that the Ranney index is specifically oriented to two-party competition, whereas the municipal-level measure is based on overall electoral competition, regardless of the number of parties.

There is some overlap between the two indices, suggesting that southern states tend to be the least competitive and northern and center states tend to be the most

competitive. Also, both indexes (Figures 3.4 and 3.5) illustrate the enormous changes in proportions of competition across time. Both indexes coincide on the two states with the least degree of competition in the recent period: Hidalgo and Quintana Roo. According to the Folded Ranney Index, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, and Michoacán have the most degrees of competition between 1990 and 2002, while in the Holbrook-Van Dunk index the states of Aguascalientes, Jalisco, Nuevo León, Querétaro, and Zacatecas appear also among the most competitive ones. The indexes certainly exhibit the great increase in competition from one period to the next. And they also show the prevailing unevenness of competition across states. Campeche, Hidalgo, Nayarit, Oaxaca, and Quintana Roo are still remarkably behind.

Alternation and Divided Government

Mexico's unicameral state legislatures were profoundly transformed during this time as well. Just as was the case in the federal Congress, electoral reforms opened the doors of local congresses to the opposition with the installment of proportional representation (PR) seats (Figure 3.6). Shifting steadily towards pluralism, Figure 3.7 illustrates the dramatic transformations taking place in local-level politics: from complete control of seats in local congresses until 1974, the PRI counted with just below 50 percent of total of seats by 2004. Figures 3.8 and 3.9 show similar trends through different indicators of the growing presence of the opposition at the local level of government. For instance, Figure 3.8 illustrates how one party (the PRI) had a majority control²⁷ in all 32 local legislatures prior to 1988, excluding third parties from the

²⁷ Majority here means at least two-thirds of total seats.

decision-making process. By 1993, the PRI had control over 23 local legislatures, and by 1999 only over two.

The new significance of local legislatures in Mexico has been extensively explored by Ward (1995), Ward and Rodríguez (1999), and Lujambio (2000) who argue that non-PRI governments at the local level have indeed presented different styles of governing. For instance, when looking at early PAN governments in Chihuahua and Ciudad Juárez, Ward (1995:141) finds that “the *panista* administrations of 1983-96 were characterized by operations that resembled business as much as public bureaucracies. They sought to emphasize fiscal responsibility and avoided debt financing of public works... There was greater transparency in municipal financing; budgets and expenditures were posted and published regularly (an innovation that the PRI subsequently maintained.” In a different study that looks at the six Mexican states of Aguascalientes, Baja California, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Puebla, and Oaxaca, Ward and Rodríguez (1999) find evidence that local congresses are indeed exercising greater checks and balances vis-à-vis the executive branch. In general terms, they find that contexts with greater pluralism, electoral competition, and alternation of power tend to produce more responsive non-PRI state executives to local legislatures. Within this context, both government performance and voters began to matter.

Along this line, divided government became a novelty in Mexico. The first divided government took place in Baja California in 1989. Between 1989 and 1994, six more states experienced divided government, while between 1994 and 2000, fifteen more cases were added to the list. At least in their early stages, divided governments have served as an important arena of oversight at the local level, as parties have to explain, for

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example, their decision-making on legislative matters to their constituents (Ward and Rodríguez 1999; Lujambio 2000). It became clear that checks were beginning to be institutionalized through the local congress (Ward and Rodríguez 1999:700).

3.4 The Mexican Voter

So far, I have emphasized the effects of the PRI-regime on the institutions, and have shown that accountability mechanisms started only to work when elections were no longer only a ritual. That is, when politician's "political survival" and ambition (Ames 1987) did no longer depend on one party, but on citizens' electoral preferences. A crucial question to address is, within this authoritarian context, what kind of electorate developed? By reviewing the major trends of the literature on the Mexican voter, my intention is to show that the Mexican electorate was highly constrained by the authoritarian structures, and only slowly reached a level of politization that allowed voters to effectively fight for their political preferences. In this section, I organize the literature on Mexican voting behavior by making use the classification applied to the US literature on electoral behavior by Dennis (1991).

The initial phase of electoral behavior studies in Mexico corresponds to a descriptive approach. The basic question is "*how* did an individual vote?" and it hardly approaches the question of "*why*?" González Casanova (1965) is among the first authors identified within the descriptive approach. In his work, González Casanova made some observations about the PRI's electoral dominance. Following him, a significant number of descriptive studies were developed, dealing with specific federal (e.g., González Graf 1988; Martínez Assad 1992); state-level elections (e.g., Molinar 1986; Aziz Nassif 1994,

2000); and broader analyses of electoral geography (e.g., Gómez-Tagle 1989, 1992). Gómez-Tagle has been considered the most representative author of this approach with her work *La dificultad de perder* (1989), in which she follows the decline of the PRI's hegemony from 1961 to 1988. Her work does not include explicit models of electoral behavior, but her analysis makes the assumption that the interaction between big actors, such as the state and social groups explain this behavior.

More recently, descriptive studies have been advanced by more refined measurement and description instruments, such as indexes of competition (e.g., Pacheco 1986). The use of public opinion polls has also developed the state of this line of research by providing individual-level data. Political magazines, such as *Este País* (since 1991), *Nexos* (since 1989), *Etcétera* (since 1993), *Voz y Voto* (since 1993), and the newspaper group *Reforma-El Norte* (since 1994) have made extensive and intensive use of public opinion polls, producing both basic reports in newspapers and magazines of a large number of polls at the national and state levels, as well as launching important public opinion-based scholarly work (e.g., Domínguez and Lawson 2004; Moreno 2003).

The sociological approach has dominated voting behavior studies in Mexico. The most important variable used by a majority of these studies to explain the electoral bases of political parties has been the urban-rural divide (Pacheco 1986). Other authors (Molinar and Weldon 1990; Klesner 1995) considered other socioeconomic variables (such as marginalization or literacy rates) and regional variables to describe electoral behavior. One of the most representative works within this tradition is Zavala's (1991) analysis of the 1988 presidential election. He finds that variables, such as the number of miles of major highways, the ratio of individuals in the lower economic strata, and the

ratio of Catholics and professionals within the population, were some of the explaining factors of the PRI vote in 1988. He asserts that the PRI in 1988 owes its victory to the rural population, to self-employed workers, labor unions, the unemployed, and the illiterate (1991).

In Mexico, the development of the psychological approach followed to some extent the Michigan School, but introduced a very important modification: the concept of party identification was substituted by the one of political culture as axis of the explaining causal models of electoral behavior. This was due to the hegemony of a single party and the non-competitive character of the elections, which basically took away any meaning to the party identification concept. In its place, the psychological approach in Mexico sought to explain voting behavior, especially the electoral choice of Mexican voters based on a complex group of affective and psychological attitudes and predispositions encompassed in the concept of political culture.

The first research work making use of the political culture concept is the landmark study *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963). In regards to the Mexican case, the authors found that only a minority of citizens possessed a participant culture, while the great majority exhibits a parochial or subject political culture. They explain this political culture pattern as being consistent with the authoritarian tendencies that they observed in the political institutions at that time. That is, according to the authors, the Mexican authoritarianism was based on strong socio-psychological basis: the predominance of individuals with a parochial or subject political culture.

Without doubt, *The Civic Culture* is one of the most influential works in studies on Mexican politics. In fact, during the following decade, over a dozen of other works

used the database that Almond and Verba gathered. For example, Segovia (1975), in his work *La Politización del Niño Mexicano*, found also evidence supporting the theory that political culture was indeed responsible for the political structure of the country because, within an authoritarian regime, political socialization is inevitably strongly influenced by the state.

Other scholars developed the psychological approach further by leaving aside the concept of political culture and including party identification. For instance, Moreno (1993) applies directly the Michigan Model to the Mexican case. By retaking the concept of party identification, he finds that in the 1991 mid-term election the most important variable of the voter's choice was the voter's previous partisan sympathy.

Within the rational approach, an early study of this kind was undertaken by Ames (1970). Based on the assumption that governmental policies affect people's electoral choices in an unequal manner, depending on the magnitude of the individual's needs, Ames sought to explain electoral participation and vote direction from 1952 to 1967 by using aggregated state-level data. By measuring both direct (number of rank and file in each state and the benefits that the government provided) and indirect factors (such as urbanization, proximity to the US border, and the structure of the opposition), Ames intended to find a correlation between public investment and PRI electoral victories. However, he found that the indirect factors have a greater explanation power than the direct ones.

Among the many studies looking at the electoral impacts of provision of public goods, Molinar and Weldon (1994) analyze the impact of the controversial social development program Solidarity (*Programa Nacional de la Solidaridad*, PRONASOL).

The authors looked at the electoral impact of this program and clearly found that electoral and political conditions had a stronger say than poverty per se in the selection criteria. They found that public investment was greater in those states in which the PRI got a clear majority of votes in the 1988 federal elections. In these states, this study shows a clear rational relationship between voters and the PRI. The outcomes were different in states with higher opposition presence: in states where Cárdenas with the CD (*Corriente Democrática*) 1988 and the PRD 1991 were stronger, public investment was higher than in states where the PAN was stronger. Molinar and Weldon conclude that these differences are due to the different electoral bases of the opposition; while the PRD's base was similar to the PRI's, the PAN's basis was substantially different. It made therefore more sense for the PRI-government to invest more in those PRD-strong states.

Baerman (1994) makes use as well of economic arguments to explain the left vote in presidential elections between 1946 and 1988. His model uses aggregated data, including balance trade, inflation rates, and income per capita. His hypothesis states that as economic conditions worsen, Mexican voters vote left to punish the PRI, hoping that the left would improve the economic situation. His results show that Mexican voters respond indeed to such macroeconomic indicators by punishing or rewarding the PRI.

Among the first works using individual-level data, Kaufman (1971) and Coleman (1975) are important to mention. Kaufman (1971) looked at the level of material satisfaction and its relationship with political participation and support of political institutions. He found a positive relationship between both material and political satisfaction. On the other hand, Coleman (1975) found that PAN support is not

determined by a certain social class or religious group, but by voters who vote against the PRI by voting for the PAN – a strategic vote.

More recently, Domínguez and McCann (1996) represented for a long time the most important work of the rational approach. By analyzing two pre-electoral polls of 1988 and 1991 they introduced a two-step (or anti-PRI) model, which provided a rational explanation of vote choice. According to the model, voters first asked themselves whether or not they want to support the PRI. Second, if a voter decided not to support the PRI, s/he would either abstain or vote for the opposition, regardless of whether the opposing party with the highest probability of defeating the PRI coincided with the voter's ideological preferences. Thus, for a majority of voters, elections were nothing more than a symbolic plebiscite or a strategic move.

Buendía (1995) questions Domínguez and McCann (1995) model by stressing the importance of retrospective and prospective economic factors, presidential image, and risk aversion to explain the 1994 presidential vote. His evidence comes from a nationwide poll. Buendía finds that Mexican retrospective voting existed, but that it was mainly a sociotropic vote and not a sociotropic one. He also finds strong evidence about the effect of risk aversion hurting both opposition parties.

Moreno and Yanner (1995) present a comprehensive model of the 1994 election based on a preelectoral nationwide poll and an exit poll. They find consistent evidence that partisan identification was a strong predictor of the vote. Contradicting Domínguez and McCann's (1995) and Buendía's (1995) claims, they see structural factors still closely related to the direction of the vote. Their evidence regarding retrospective and, in general, rational voting is not consistent across the two data sets. In the exit poll they find

strong evidence of retrospective and issue voting, but in the preelectoral poll they only find some importance of specifically political issues.

Scholars have often tried to answer the following puzzling question: “Why was it so natural for Mexican people to complain about their government officials and then vote for them, even when democratic and institutional opportunities for a real change exist?” (Cinta 1999:174). For instance, Cinta (1999) and Magaloni (1994) look at this “fear of change” and test the role of uncertainty in Mexico’s electoral arena. They find that, for a long time, Mexican voters tended to be risk-averse. Effectively, the PRI was the party that received the worst evaluations at the national level, and nevertheless, it represented the option that received the highest number of votes. The PRI benefited from the record of its past performance, a record that while not fully satisfactory to everybody, at least guaranteed certainty about the government’s future performance.

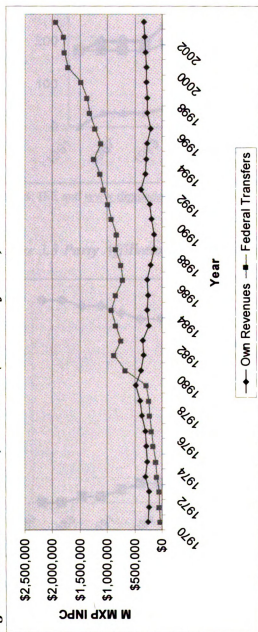
In general, researchers of Mexican electoral behavior have agreed on three basic assumptions. First, the dominant cleavage in Mexican politics has revolved around the country’s political opposition against a crumbling authoritarian regime and its electoral arm, the PRI (Domínguez and McCann 1995; Moreno 2003). The pro-government side includes the principal beneficiaries of clientelism and one-party rule in Mexico: government employees, owners of large businesses, members of the PRI’s state-corporatist organizations, and peasants in villages traditionally favored by the government. On the opposition side lie the professionals, small- and medium-sized businessmen, independent unions and peasant organizations, and other groups that have traditionally been abused by Mexico’s authoritarian system. In general, opposition voters

tend to be better educated, more engaged in politics, more urban, and younger (Moreno 2003).

Second, analysts have noted a pronounced and persistent regional cleavage that divides the country roughly in half (Klesner 1995). In the North, West, and the state of Yucatán—areas where the Catholic Church remains influential and local business elites have long opposed centralized control from Mexico City—the country’s conservative PAN constitutes the main opposition force. In the poorer, more rural South, the leftist Party of the Democratic Revolution remains the principal challenge to PRI rule. Mexico thus comprises a pair of essentially two-party systems—PRD-PRI in the South, PAN-PRI in the North. Only in the capital and a handful of provincial areas does competition regularly take on a multiparty character.

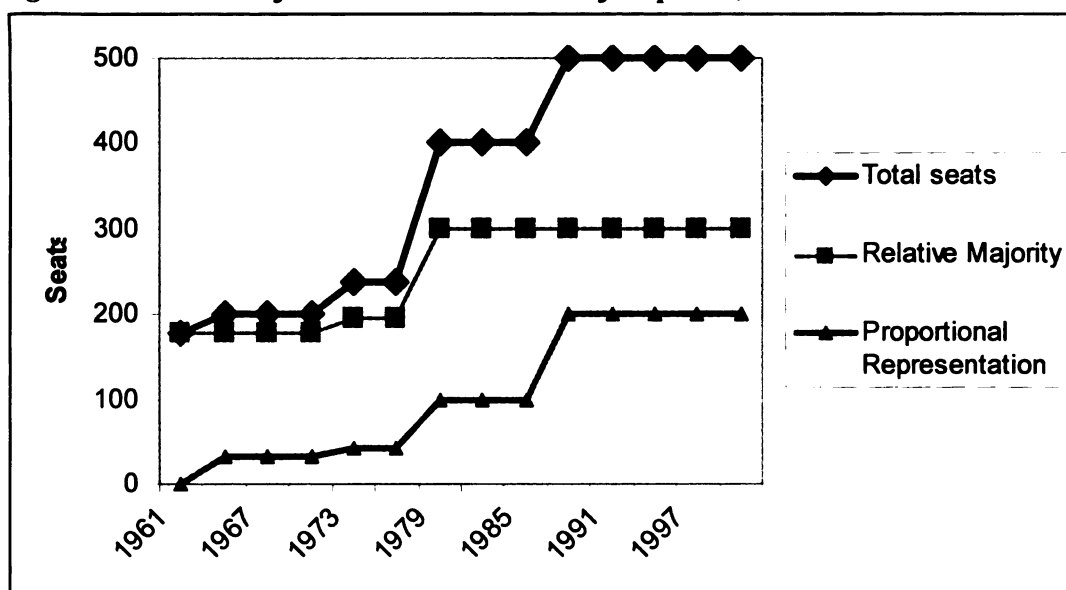
Third, scholars generally agree on the existence of a “floating” or strategic opposition vote among either the PAN or the PRD (Domínguez and McCann 1996). In the presidential elections of 1988 and 1994, for instance, the total opposition vote remained roughly the same, at least according to official figures. But the distribution of that vote among opposition parties varied dramatically. In 1988, the opposition sided primarily with leftist candidate Cárdenas, whereas in 1994 it sided with Diego Fernández de Cevallos of the PAN. This finding mirrors electoral swings in certain states, such as San Luis Potosí and Baja California, where the anti-PRI voters appeared to strategically switch between different opposition parties (Rodríguez and Ward 1995). The existence of this floating opposition vote tends to reinforce Mexico’s regional divide, and it suggests an element of rationality among Mexican voters.

Figure 3.1 States' Revenues, 1970-2003 (Millions of Pesos)



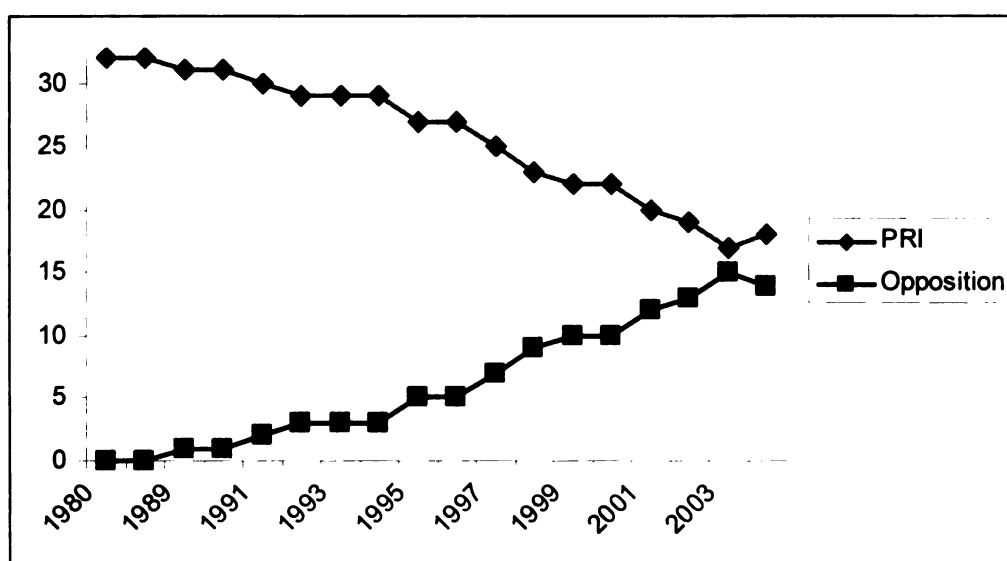
Source: INEGI.

Figure 3.2 Number of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies, 1961-2003



Sources: IFE and www.diputados.gob.mx

Figure 3.3 Party Affiliation of Governors in the 32 States, 1980-2004



Source: CIDAC www.cidac.org.mx

Table 3.1 Ranney Index²⁸ in Mexican States, 1972-1989

<i>One-Party PRI</i>		<i>Modified One-Party PRI</i>
Campeche	Puebla	Nuevo Leon
0.9737	0.9079	0.8482
Tabasco	Tlaxcala	
0.9668	0.9054	
Hidalgo	Baja California Sur	
0.9626	0.9052	
Guerrero	Estado de México	
0.9595	0.9046	
Zacatecas	Yucatán	
0.9564	0.9007	
Querétaro	Tamaulipas	
0.9551	0.8986	
San Luis Potosí	Sinaloa	
0.9434	0.8973	
Michoacán	Chihuahua	
0.9354	0.8936	
Chiapas	Baja California Sur	
0.9343	0.8918	
Morelos	Durango	
0.9321	0.8898	
Quintana Roo	Nayarit	
0.9317	0.8883	
Veracruz	Sonora	
0.9283	0.8757	
Colima	Aguascalientes	
0.9266	0.8707	
Coahuila	Jalisco	
0.9189	0.8545	
Oaxaca	Guanajuato	
0.9103	0.8539	

²⁸ The index is composed of 3 elements: a) the average percentage of the popular vote won by PRI gubernatorial candidates; b) the average percentage of the seats in the local congresses held by the PRI; and c) the percentage of all terms for governor and local congress in which the PRI had control. For each state, all 3 percentages were averaged together and carried to four decimal places.

The index has a possible range of 0 (total opposition success) to 1 (total PRI success), with .5 representing absolutely two-party competition. The resulting clusters suggest the following categories (Ranney 60):

.8500 or higher: one-party PRI

.6500 to .8499: modified one-party PRI

.3500 to .6499: two-party

.1500 to .3499: modified one-party opposition

.0000 to .1499: one-party opposition

Table 3.2 Ranney Index in Mexican States, 1990-2004

<i>Modified One-Party PRI</i>	<i>Two-Party</i>	<i>Modified One-Party Opposition</i>
Campeche	Aguascalientes	Baja California
0.7091	0.5475	0.2654
Coahuila	Baja California Sur	
0.7793	0.4956	
Colima	Chihuahua	
0.7273	0.5201	
Chiapas	Guanajuato	
0.8284	0.4488	
Durango	Jalisco	
0.6745	0.4501	
Guerrero	Estado de México	
0.7901	0.6163	
Hidalgo	Michoacán	
0.8151	0.5551	
Nayarit	Morelos	
0.6695	0.6275	
Oaxaca	Nuevo León	
0.7572	0.5091	
Puebla	Querétaro	
0.7954	0.5563	
Quintana Roo	Tlaxcala	
0.8176	0.5991	
San Luis Potosí	Zacatecas	
0.7847	0.5555	
Sinaloa		
0.7143		
Sonora		
0.7181		
Tabasco		
0.7758		
Tamaulipas		
0.7678		
Veracruz		
0.7445		
Yucatán		
0.6424		

Sources: CIDAC: http://www.cidac.org.mx/espaniol_politica_2000.htm

Table 3.3 Holbrook-Van Dunk Index²⁹ and Folded Ranney Index³⁰ in Mexican States

<i>State</i>	<i>Municipal-Level Competition</i>		<i>Folded Ranney</i>	
	<i>1970-1989</i>	<i>1990-2002</i>	<i>1970-1989</i>	<i>1990-2002</i>
Aguascalientes	24.88	55.38	0.6293	0.9525
Baja California	49.99	84.34	0.6082	0.7654
Baja California Sur	19.43	72.67	0.5948	0.9956
Campeche	4.01	45.26	0.5263	0.7091
Coahuila	21.79	55.13	0.5811	0.7207
Colima	44.23	59.18	0.5734	0.7727
Chiapas	7.98	63.54	0.5657	0.8284
Chihuahua	47.19	73.37	0.6064	0.9799
Durango	27.24	70.56	0.6102	0.8255
Guanajuato	29.72	79.46	0.6461	0.9488
Guerrero	10.42	57.53	0.5405	0.7099
Hidalgo	3.00	37.56	0.5374	0.6849
Jalisco	33.92	72.65	0.6455	0.9501
México	18.02	59.58	0.5954	0.8837
Michoacán	12.02	83.34	0.5646	0.9449
Morelos	9.7	57.87	0.5681	0.8725
Nayarit	15.14	42.04	0.6117	0.8305
Nuevo León	18.52	69.75	0.6518	0.9909
Oaxaca	10.23	46.38	0.5897	0.7428
Puebla	18.00	52.29	0.5921	0.7046
Querétaro	20.97	56.41	0.5451	0.9437
Quintana Roo	4.61	45.53	0.5683	0.6824
San Luis Potosí	22.26	61.5	0.5566	0.7153
Sinaloa	25.56	61.97	0.6027	0.7857
Sonora	29.27	69.29	0.6243	0.7821
Tabasco	8.33	58.69	0.5332	0.7242
Tamaulipas	24.07	60.89	0.6014	0.7322
Tlaxcala	14.46	58.98	0.5946	0.9009
Veracruz	13.45	59.46	0.5717	0.7555
Yucatán	15.8	70.3	0.5933	0.8576
Zacatecas	10.31	66.6	0.5436	0.9445

Source: CIDAC: http://www.cidac.org.mx/espaniol_politica_2000.htm

²⁹ The Holbrook-Van Dunk formula for statewide values of the district-level measure is: $100 - [(average\ \%vote\ for\ winners + average\ margin\ of\ victory + \%uncontested\ seats + \%safe\ seats)/4]$. A safe seat has a winning percentage of 55% or more. I used municipal council elections data. Since there are no uncontested seats in Mexico, I used only the 3 other elements of the formula, dividing by 3. As the scale increases from 0, it indicates greater degree of competition.

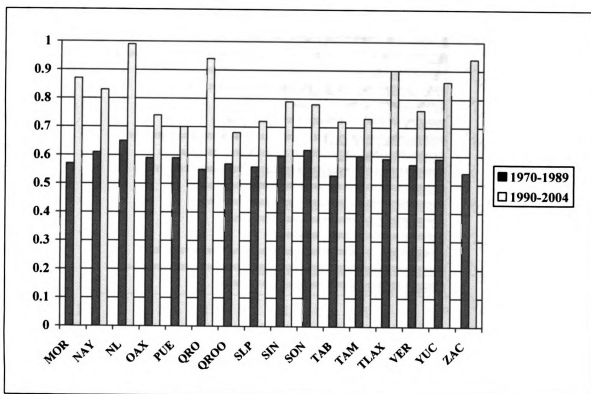
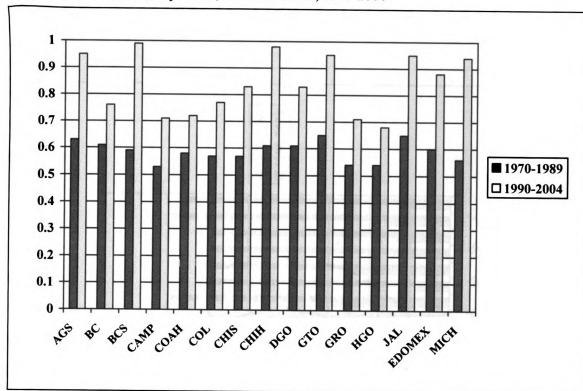
³⁰ The formula for the folded scale is $1 - (Ranney - .5)$. The resulting index ranges from .5 (no competition) to 1 (perfect competition).

Table 3.4 Experience under Non-PRI Rule, Mexican States, 1985-2004

State	Year of Alternation, Governor	Year of Alternation, Local Legislature
AGS	1998	1995
BC	1989	1989
BCS	1999	1999
CAMP		
COAH		
COL		
CHIS	2000	
CHIH	1992, 1998	1992, 1995
DGO		
GTO	1995	1997
GRO		
HGO		
JAL	1995	1995, 2003
MEX		2000, 2003
MICH	2001	2001
MOR	2000	2000
NAY	1999	1999, 2002
NL	1997, 2003	1997, 2003
OAX		
PUE		
QRO	1997	1997
QROO		
SLP	2003	2003
SIN		
SON		2000, 2003
TAB		2003
TAM		
TLAX	1998, 2004	
VER		
YUC	2001	2001, 2004
ZAC	1998	2001
DF	1997	1997, 2000, 2003

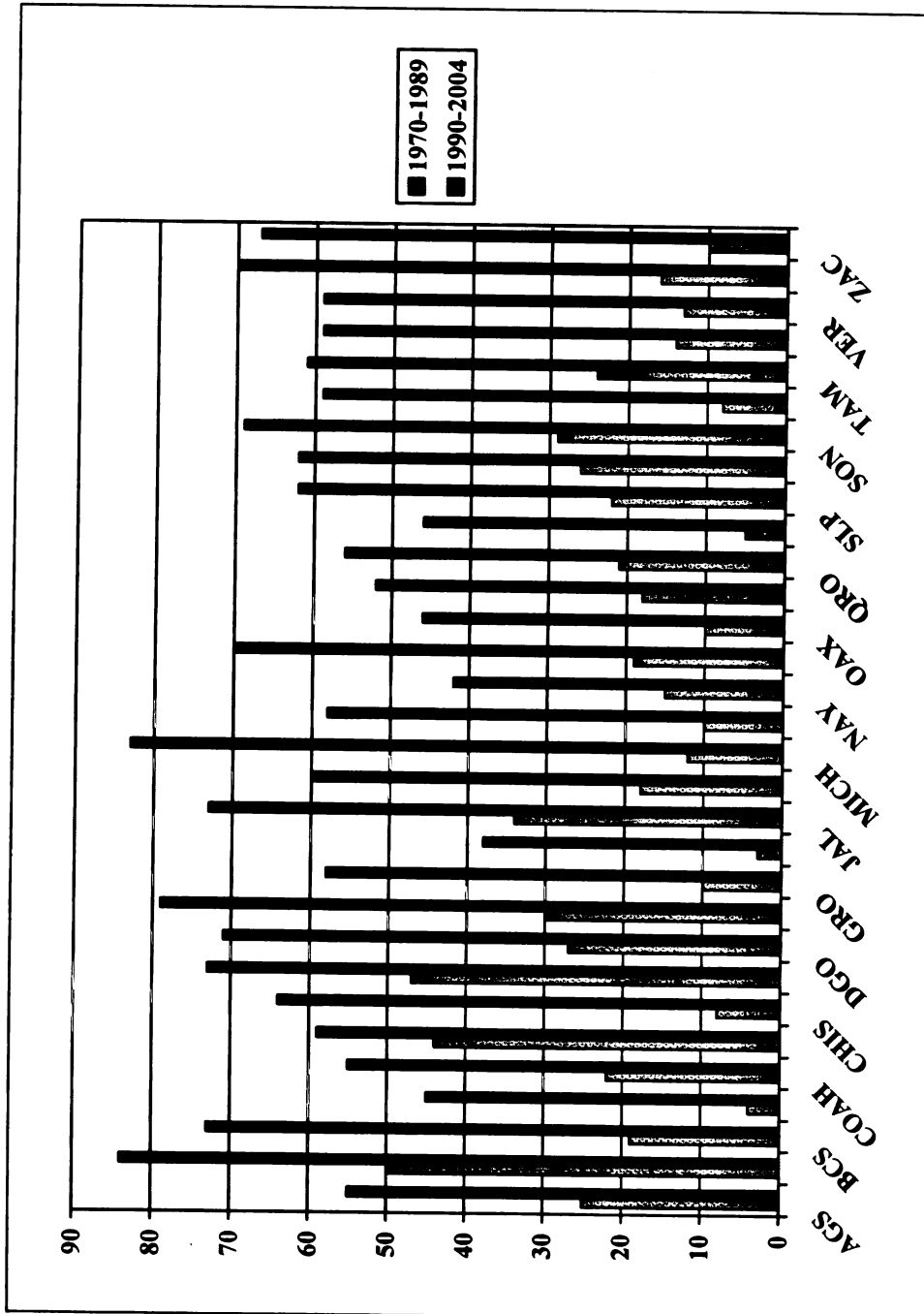
Source: IFE

Figures 3.4 Folded Ranney Index, Mexican States, 1970-2004



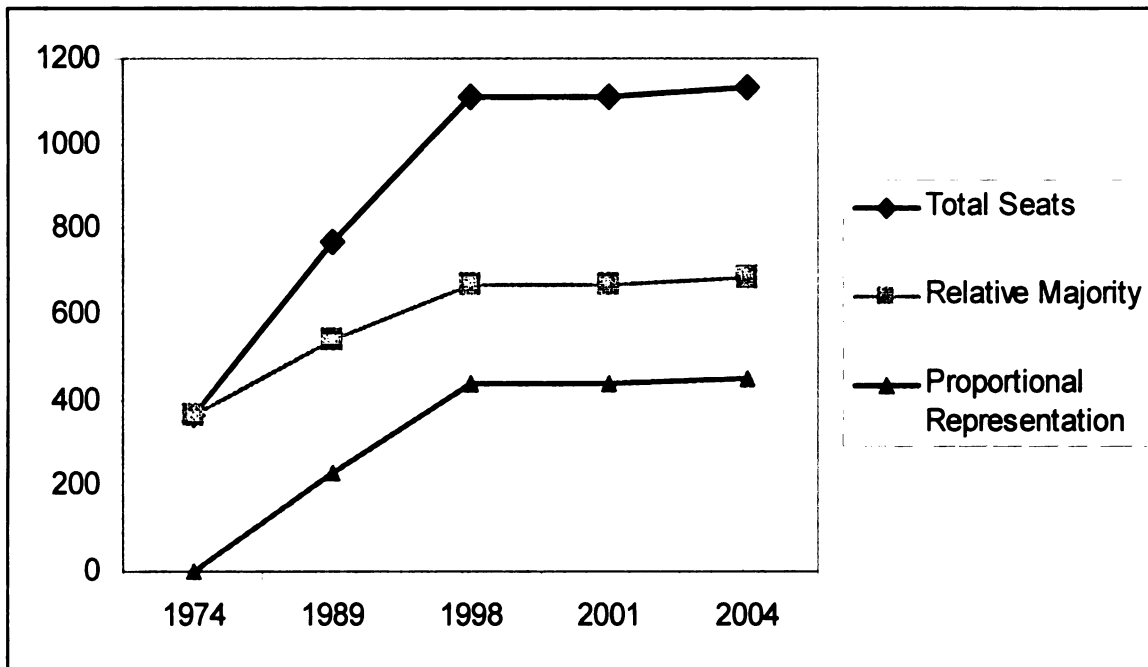
Source: Table 4.

Figure 3.5 Municipal-Level Competition (Holbrook-Van Dunk Index), Mexican States, 1970-2004



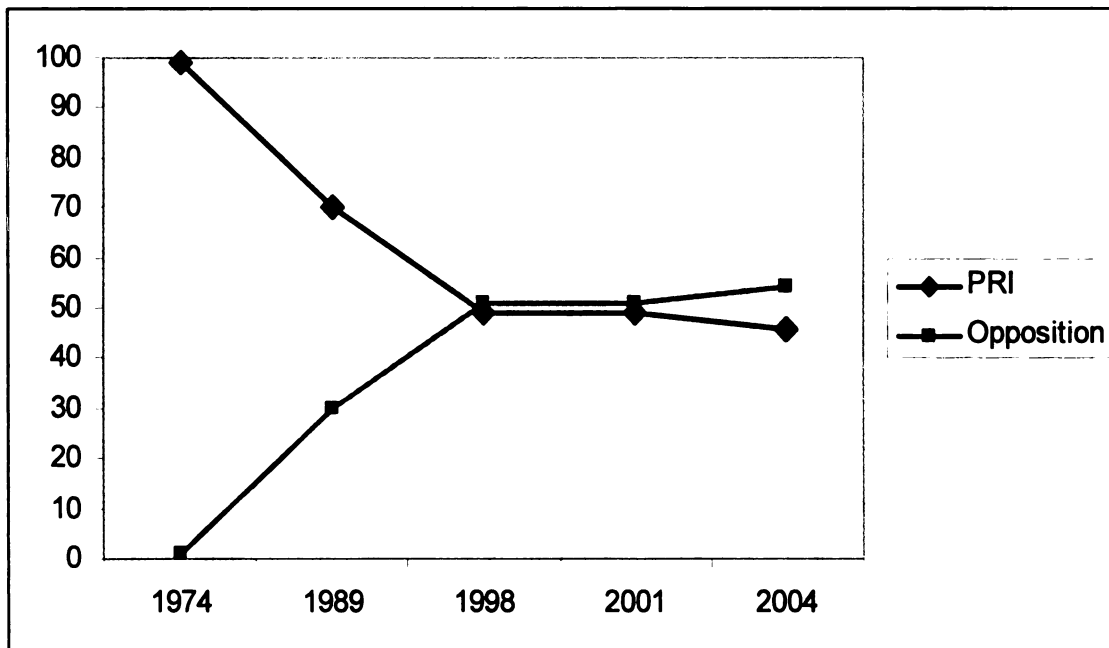
Source: Table 4.

Figure 3.6 Number of Seats in Local Congresses, 1974-2004



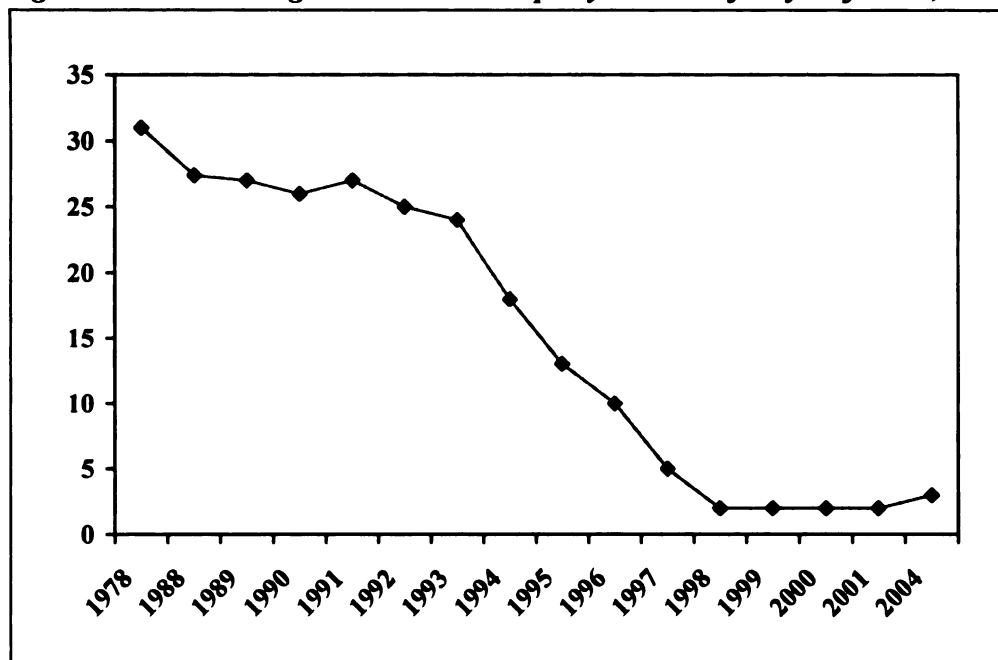
Sources: Lujambio (2000: 55); CIDAC: www.cidac.org.mx/datos/congresos

Figure 3.7 Distribution of Seats in Local Congresses (percent), 1974-2004



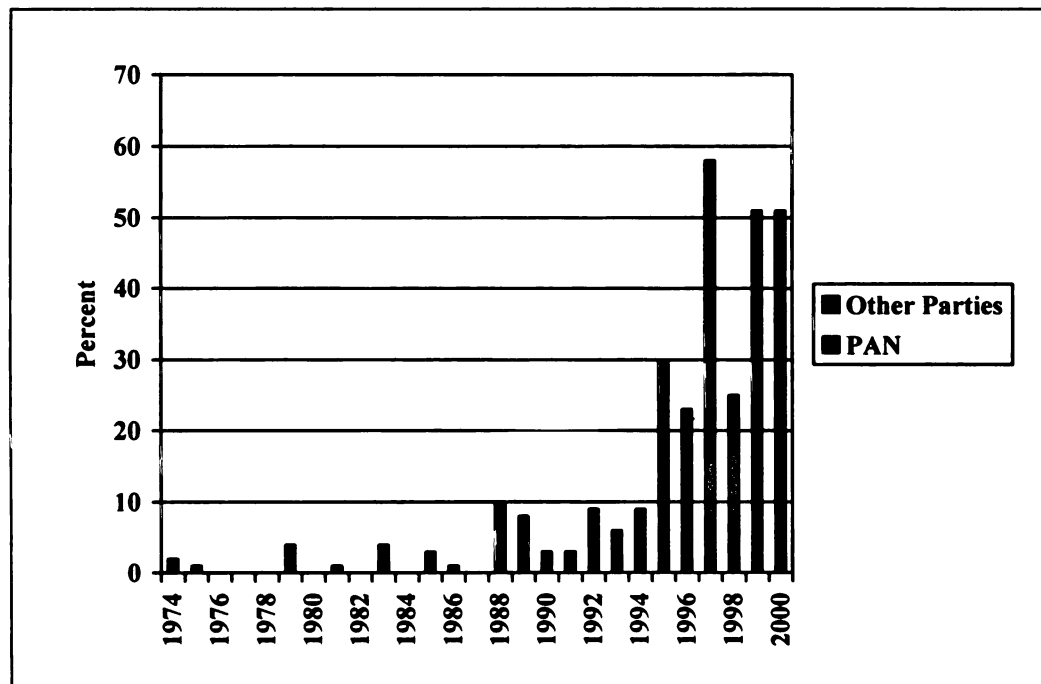
Sources: Lujambio (2000: 57); and CIDAC: www.cidac.org.mx/datos/congresos

Figure 3.8 Local Congresses where one party has a majority³¹ of seats, 1978-2004



Source: Lujambio (2000); CIDAC <http://www.cidac.org.mx>

Figure 3.9 Electoral Victories in MR Districts by Parties Other than PRI, 1974-2000



Source: Lujambio (2000)

³¹ Two-thirds of total seats.

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Chapter 4. Aggregate-Level Analysis

4.1 Introduction

As seen earlier, Mexico's protracted democratic transition started at the subnational level, however, at very different paces across states. While some state governments have experienced a relatively significant history of democratic transition, other states have not had any alter nation experience. Scholars have referred to the dangers that such "subauthoritarian authoritarian enclaves" (Cornelius 1999:3; Diamond 1999) pose for the democratic quality of the nation as a whole. Without doubt, Mexican states vary in their degree of democratization (Hiskey 2005; Hiskey and Bowler 2005; Solt 2001, 2003), and some have certainly not developed fully in democratic terms yet.

The present chapter explores the effects of macro-level data on support for the incumbent party in gubernatorial and local legislature elections in Mexico. The analysis is based on an aggregate-level data set collected for all 31 Mexican states and the Federal District covering the period between 1970 and 2004. The main observation period, however, is between 1985 and 2004, the period during which subnational politics in Mexico became competitive. During this period of time, as seen in chapter 3, Mexico underwent a series of economic and political reforms that put the democratic transition process into motion in a number of states, and eventually ended the PRI's hegemonic rule at the national level.

By looking at the effects of political and economic decentralization on voting behavior, the purpose of this chapter is twofold: First, it seeks to find out whether the straightforward relationship between economic performance and electoral results found

in the American and Western European contexts holds at the subnational level in Mexico. This goal represents the first step within the broader picture of the dissertation. The second purpose is to add a measurement (effects of decentralization) to the classic economic voting model. The overall goal is to see whether or not economic voting is taking place in the Mexican states, and measure the impact of economic and political decentralization on electoral outcomes.

The results of this chapter support the leading argument of this dissertation in five principal ways. First, the classic economic voting hypothesis is supported by the results of the gubernatorial elections models. The results show that a state's economic performance (measured by a state's annual Gross State Product or GSP growth) has explanatory power when voters make an electoral decision. Second, financial decentralization—as measured by a state's locally-generated revenues—has significant explanatory power on incumbent electoral support in gubernatorial elections. That is, a state's level of financial decentralization (measured by its financial autonomy) vis-à-vis the federal government is positively related with electoral support for the incumbent. Third, decentralization of political power—measured by a state's experience under a non-PRI administration—appears to be an important indicator of behavior at the polls. Pluralism and electoral competition—assumed to exist in contexts where the former hegemonic party is no longer dominant—appear to produce those institutional elements that lead to economic voting. In line with this argument and fourth, the results suggest that voters distinguish between their state's political institutions and those at the national level. This is very significant because it points to some degree of functioning institutional clarity in the country. Finally, this chapter finds that when accounting for state-specific

factors, the results confirm a high degree of uneven electoral behavior across the Mexican states. Specifically, the results show that the assumed effects of decentralization do not reach uniformly all states. This issue is further explored in chapter 5.

4. 2 Theoretical Considerations

As reviewed in chapter 2, the classic economic voting argument does not apply in the same manner to new democratic settings as it does in old democracies. For voters to be able to assign correctly responsibility to the respective government branch, a certain amount of clarity of responsibility is required (Powell and Whitten 1993), which can only grow under certain political conditions. Such conditions, as I argued in chapter 3, did not develop during the one-party rule in Mexico between 1929 and the 1980s. Democratic developments in the last twenty years reached the Mexican states on an uneven basis. Therefore, it is expected that some states have higher probability of meeting the conditions necessary for voters to be able to reward or punish their state government, while citizens in other states do not. In this analysis, economic voters are broadly defined as pocketbook or sociotropic voters. Both depend ultimately on how well the state is performing in the economy. Thus, if a state is performing well, its economic voters will support the incumbent party at the polls.

What explains variation in electoral choice and therefore, in levels of accountability across the Mexican states? Given the broad variation across the states on a wide number of factors, the hypotheses explored in this chapter are based on the following three assumptions.

a) Regional Economic Performance

Mexico is a nation rich in regional contrasts, and variations in economic development across its regions explains to a great extent this heterogeneity. States differ greatly according to a large number of factors, such as the ratio of its population working in the agricultural sector, ethnic composition, and overall marginalization levels. Higher rates of economic growth have been found to be correlated with higher levels of electoral competition, and therefore, with more effective government.

b) Regional Autonomy vis-à-vis the Center

As seen in chapter 3, Mexico's states grew increasingly dependent on Mexico City for resources and political instructions. As noted in a study exploring the nature of regions in Mexico, and particularly the capacity of the central government to exercise power at the local level: "The more dependent a locality becomes on outside inputs and a more sophisticated economic infrastructure, the more dependent it is likely to become on external political centers in order to get things done, such as roads built or irrigation installed." (Roberts 1992:236).

Economically, state governments control in average less than a quarter of the revenues of the federation, in contrast to the three-quarters controlled by the national government. However, states greatly differ in their levels of financial autonomy vis-à-vis the federal government. For instance, Tables 4.1 a and d present the states that, according to these indicators, are the most autonomous vis-à-vis the federal government: the Federal District, Nuevo León, Chihuahua, Baja California, and Jalisco. Conversely, Tables 4.1 b and c contain the states that depend the most from federal revenues, and those that produce the least amount of own revenues from taxes. Among the states that

appear to be the least financially autonomous are Chiapas, Guerrero, Nayarit, Oaxaca, and Tabasco. Recent studies on local politics have shown that opposition parties in power have tended to demand more autonomy from the center. For example, in a study evaluating Chihuahua's first government of alternation (1992-1998), Aziz Nassif (2000) finds that the PAN sought to distinguish itself from the PRI by an overall reorganization of financial matters, trying to bring about transparency and increasing the state's own revenues.³² It can be argued that the motivation behind this is that an opposition government in Mexico, once it finally wins the needed electoral support to gain office, it wants to retain that support at home and for this, money is needed. Therefore, opposition governments have tended to be more efficient in their public spending (Ward 1995).

Some scholars have found that democratization leads to decentralization processes. For instance, Beer (2004) finds that "as electoral competition has taken root at the state and municipal level in many areas across Mexico, democratically elected mayors and governors have begun to demand more autonomy from the central government and more control over local fiscal policy." According to this view, it is expected that increased subnational competition generates pressures for fuller political and fiscal decentralization. However, just as political power underwent a gradual (and uneven) process of liberalization, decentralization, with the aim to "centralize through decentralization" under the PRI (Rodríguez 1997), took also an uneven and slow shape across the states.

³² In fact, the *panista* administration (1992-1998) in Chihuahua managed to duplicate its own revenues (Aziz 2000:55). However, it has been argued that the government was blamed for raising taxes, and that this contributed to the PRI's recovery of the governorship in 1998.

c) Local Political Environment

Mexican states greatly differ in their political environment, which is determined by various factors. First, as I showed in chapter 3, states differ in their levels of electoral competition. States where the opposition is the weakest or almost non-existent, have been found to be fertile ground for impunity and continuing authoritarian control under the PRI (Cornelius 1999:11). In fact, some states achieved truly competitive elections³³ by the mid-1990s, while others have not done so yet. Second, and related to this last point, a state's political environment differs from another, if it has experienced alternation of power. The alternation of political parties in office is considered to be crucial for the process of democratization. In a strict sense, those that have not experienced alternation are still considered authoritarian regimes (Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi 2000). As I have argued before, if a state experiences alternation of power, the government system gains in legitimacy both within parties and citizens. As Diamond has argued: "Opposition victory at the subnational level also provides a good test of the party's platform and its performance in government. A party that is out of power can easily criticize the governing party and make untenable claims about what it would achieve if it were in office. However, if the opposition holds power at the local level, voters have an opportunity to assess its performance" (Diamond 1999:131). For instance, Rodríguez and Ward (1994; Guillén López 1995; Espinoza Valle 1999), looking at Baja California, concluded that the alternation in the governor's office led to an improved separation of powers among the three branches of government, to greater municipal autonomy, and better administered elections. The third and last factor refers to divided

³³ I mean here that the incumbent faces a realistic probability of being defeated—or that alternation has taken place.

government. In contrast with the argument found in the literature on the US system, which frequently refers negatively to the consequences of divided government (gridlock), it has been argued that divided government in Mexican local legislatures is a positive phenomenon for state-level democratization. For example, Lujambio (2000:67-72) argues that the open debates and negotiation taking place in divided governments serve indeed as educative experiences for both political parties and citizens. In sum, observers of subnational politics in Mexico, have argued that states that have competitive elections, have experienced an opposition government (and perhaps a divided government) exhibit different styles of governing that have led to the use of elections as mechanisms of accountability.

4.3 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: GSP Growth Rate

H1 proposes that states that perform better economically will show higher levels of support for the incumbent party, and vice versa.

This hypothesis follows the classic theory of economic voting, which argues that if an individual citizen is satisfied with past economic performance, s/he will approve of the president, but if not, s/he will register disapproval. Extending this individual-level mechanism to the aggregate-level, it is expected that a similar relationship will take place between macroeconomic indicators and incumbent support at the polls. It is expected that citizens will form positive (negative) assessments of their government's economic performance, if the economy is doing well (poorly), and consequently support (reject) the sitting government.

Hypothesis 2: Locally-Generated Revenues

H2 proposes that states with greater financial autonomy vis-à-vis the central government will support more the incumbent party.

This hypothesis is based on the following assumption: a state with more resources of its own—that is, financially more decentralized—develops more transparent institutions and thus, its citizens are more likely to reward the incumbent party. Greater financial autonomy generates elements that increase accountability, such as transparency, access to information, and/or political knowledge. According to this view, voters living under such conditions are more likely to support the incumbent party.

Hypothesis 3: Revenues from the Federal Government

H3 proposes that the more dependent a state is on resources from the federal government, the less support the incumbent party will get in state elections.

Ideally, rational voters will reject the notion of their state being heavily dependent on the federal government, and support instead efforts designed to develop or increase their state's financial autonomy, as autonomy means accountability. Thus, it is expected that incumbent parties will get less electoral support, the higher their total revenue depends on transfers from the federal government.

Hypothesis 4: Experience under Non-PRI Rule

H4 proposes that states with experience under a party other than the PRI rule will support less the incumbent party.

The logic behind this hypothesis is that states which have experienced rule by parties other than the long-time hegemonic party, are more likely to have voters who assign substantive content to their voting decisions than those states which have not

experienced alternation of power. Experience under a party different than the PRI means that the state has high levels of electoral competition. As discussed earlier, this kind of context is likely to have high levels of access to information and a more critical civic society. Since voters have experienced rule under a different party, they tend to be less risk-averse, and are therefore more likely to express dissidence with the incumbent party, if they disapprove of the administration's performance.

4.4 Data and Model

The central question explored in this chapter is whether greater financial autonomy and alternation of political power at the state-level lead to economic voting. Thus, the units of analysis are elections for governor and state legislatures in Mexico's 31 states (see appendix for a list of the states and corresponding years of elections included in the data set). A data set was created on a number of fiscal and political indicators, as well as economic performance variables for subnational elections taking place between 1970 and 2004. The data was drawn primarily from Mexico's Federal Institute of Statistics (*Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, Geografía, e Informática*, INEGI), Center of Research for Development (CIDAC), Banamex, and Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral*, IFE).

Dependent Variable (Electoral Incumbent Support)

In gubernatorial elections, incumbent support was measured by the percentage of votes that the incumbent party won in a given election, regardless of whether it maintained its control or not (see Figure 4.1).³⁴ In state legislature elections, incumbent support refers to the percentage of seats that the incumbent party got, also regardless of

³⁴ In the cases where a party ran in a coalition, I considered the major party.

whether it retained a majority or not. Both majority and proportional representation seats were added and divided by the total number of seats.

Independent Variables

a) State-level Economic Performance

To measure a state's economic performance, this analysis relies on a state's annual gross state product (GSP) growth rate. Growth in state-level GSP is expected to be significant and positive. The well-known argument followed here is that economic voters take into account the economic performance of the incumbent administration and will reward at the polls its positive performance. Unfortunately, no other state-level economic indicators were available.³⁵

b) Financial Autonomy³⁶

In this research, financial autonomy is measured by two dimensions:³⁷ A state's own revenues and federal transfers. First, each state's locally-generated revenues were calculated for every year. Own revenues refer to the locally-generated revenue composed of taxes, fees, patrimonial goods, and benefit fees, which were calculated by adding the figures of all four components and then obtaining the ratio vis-à-vis the total amount of revenues for the state. Per capita figures were used in the analysis. Second, each state's federal revenues were calculated for every year. Federal revenues refer to the amount of

³⁵ No state-level data for inflation rate were available. Unemployment rates are available only according to "major urban areas" (INEGI), which makes it unsuited for a state-level indicator.

³⁶ It is important to make a few notes on the methodology used to calculate most of these variables. I relied for the most part on figures published by the INEGI in different volumes of *Finanzas Públicas y Municipales (1970-2004)*. Since this information was not available in electronic form, I created an extensive database including the figures for: taxes (*impuestos*), patrimonial goods (*productos*), fees (*derechos*), benefit fees (*aprovechamientos*) and *participaciones* for the 32 states over a period of 34 years. To make the figures comparable, I first converted all into a single unit (thousands of pesos), and then applied consumer price index figures to deflate the numbers. I added taxes, patrimonial goods, fees, and benefit fees in order to get the total of locally generated revenue. To obtain per capita figures, I relied on Mexico's National Population Council's (*Consejo Nacional de Población*, CONAPO) yearly population information. Finally, I calculated an average of these numbers according to each state's gubernatorial term.

³⁷ I followed Díaz-Cayeros (2004) for the operationalization of subnational financial autonomy.

revenue sharing each state receives from the federal government. These intergovernmental transfers are composed of two figures: Unconditional federal revenue sharing (*participaciones*) and earmarked federal revenue (*aportaciones*), which means that state governments have little or no discretion over its spending. The share was also obtained vis-à-vis the total amount of revenues, and per capita figures were used in the analysis.

c) Local Electoral Environment

To consider the effects of electoral competition and pluralism, states were classified according to two categories: Those that have ever experienced rule under a non-PRI party either in the governor's office or a majority in the local legislature (Table 4.2).

Control Variables

a) Coattail Effects

To account for the effects of increased turnout and party voting in lower level elections due to concurrent elections for higher office, I include two dummy variables, Concurrent 1 (in regards to the local legislature) and Concurrent 2 (in relation to presidential elections), to measure coattail effects.

b) Divided Government

Divided 1 is a dummy variable, taking a value of one when the incumbent governor's administration is of a different party than the local legislature's major party. Divided 2 refers to divided government in relation to the president's party.

c) Fixed Effects

I used a dummy variable for each state, taking Mexico City as the baseline. With this, I intend to capture differences in vote outcomes due to state-specific factors.

d) National-level Economic Indicators

Two variables were included to control for the effects of national-level economic indicators: Annual national GDP per capita and national level annual inflation rate.

To test the above hypotheses, I estimated a series of regressions using the following general model:

$$\text{Incumbent Support}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GDP Growth} + \beta_2 \text{Own Revenues} + \beta_3 \text{Federal Revenues} + \beta_4 \text{Non-PRI Experience} + \beta_5 \text{Divided 1} + \beta_6 \text{Concurrent 1} + \beta_7 \text{Divided 2} + \beta_8 \text{Concurrent 2} + e_i$$

4.5 Analysis and Results

I applied an OLS regression model to test the effects that financial autonomy and experience under a non-PRI administration have upon support for the incumbent party. Because of my interest in capturing the effects of both the more recent decentralizing fiscal efforts and the growth of electoral competition, I considered 1985 as a threshold year and focused on the elections taking place between that year and 2004.³⁸ Generally, five gubernatorial elections (six-year terms) and twelve local congresses' elections (three-year terms) were included for each state (see Appendix A). Specifically, the data set for

³⁸ I applied the model using the data in three different time periods. First, I calculated an average per administration. A few cases in the last elections were calculated using only the data available until 2003. However, as different studies have shown, looking at the entire administration when trying to analyze voting behavior is not very accurate/reliable. I also examined the figures of the election year (Kramer 1971; Tufte 1978). In addition, I looked at the conditions of the previous year, as well as at the average of these two years (prior and election years). All three models, however, yielded similar results. I decided to focus on the one that looks at the year prior to the election, because it allows including observations from the following 2004 elections.

gubernatorial elections includes 112 observations and the local congress elections data set includes 209 cases. A case is defined as an election.

Table 4.2 presents the results for the regressions exploring gubernatorial elections. It contains two models; Model 1 is an OLS estimate, while the regression in Model 2 includes a fixed effects variable that controls for unobserved state-specific correlates of incumbent support. Overall, Model 2 confirms the first model's robustness, and provides a better fit for the model. The fixed-effects variable exposes the importance of considering the uneven impacts of the variables under study across the Mexican states. There is evidence suggesting that state-level factors related directly to decentralization are significant in explaining incumbent support.

The classic economic voting argument (H1) is supported by the results of Table 4.2. A state's economic performance appears to be an important explanatory factor in the support of the incumbent governor's party at the polls. Specifically, a percentage point of growth in a state's GSP translates into an increased support of 3.9 percent of the incumbent party. This result is very significant, because it suggests that state-level factors are included in the voting calculus, pointing specifically to a presence of economic voting at the subnational level in the Mexican context.

H2 is supported as well. The results show that locally-generated revenues are positively and significantly correlated with support for the incumbent party. This result suggests that the incumbent party benefits electorally from higher locally-generated revenues. The second indicator of state-level financial autonomy, however, federal revenue, appears significant but in the opposite direction. The results might not be that surprising, given the traditional use that federal transfers often have. In fact, this variable

has been used by other scholars (Remmer and Gélinau 2003) as an indicator of the presence of patron-client relationships between the central government and the periphery. Patronage, pork barrel, and clientelistic activities can be measured by the amount of transfers the central government gives to provinces. As discussed in chapter 3, Mexican presidents under the PRI-regime used extensively clientelistic practices to maintain a tight electoral control across all governmental levels. This indicator was expected to reflect voter's dissatisfaction (in the more decentralized, autonomous states) with their state being too dependent from the central government. On the other hand, citizens in heavily dependent and centralized states, regard resources from the federal government as necessary, and demand more of them for their development. But, they seem to never get enough of them, and thus, cast less support for the incumbent party at the polls.

Experience under the opposition is significant and in the expected (negative) direction. This result means that states that have experienced an opposition government are significantly more likely to cast less support for the incumbent. The support of H4 suggests that indeed, the experience under the opposition creates certain conditions, which contribute to more critical voters. H4 is strongly supported, and it suggests that a state that has undergone an alternation of power may have developed a mechanism that decreases support for the incumbent at the polls. As mentioned earlier, one possibility is that voters in areas without some form of opposition experience remain risk-averse and, not knowing what the opposition might look like in power, prefer to keep their familiar political arrangement intact. In contrast, in states where electoral competition is surely higher and perceived by voters as legitimate, the incumbent party tends to get a lesser

share of the votes. In this context, voters appear to perceive they have the real option to reward or punish however they wish, which points to accountability.

Among the political control variables, divided government between the governor and the president (Divided 2), is strongly significant with a negative coefficient. That is, when a state's administration is divided, the governor's incumbent party gets less votes, which confirms the prevailing explanatory power of partisan identity in Mexican politics—a concept which is assumed to be included in this variable. Divided government at the state level (Divided 1) reaches statistical significance in Model 2. In general, divided government translates frequently into conflicting interests among power factions, which constantly try to expose each other with the aim to throwing the other out of power. These dynamics often lead to gridlock. In a new democratic setting, however, divided government can be regarded as healthy to a certain degree (Lujambio 2000). This regression result suggests that divided government at the state-level affects incumbent support, just as divided government vis-à-vis the president does. It is important, because it points to the visibility of state-level institutions, which can only result from electoral competition and pluralism.

The results for the analysis of the state legislature elections are presented in Table 4.3. The results do not show support for the hypotheses 1-3, and the prevailing importance of national-level factors in explaining incumbent support in state legislature's elections is very clear. In contrast with the gubernatorial elections analysis, Divided 1 is significant in both models. A divided state administration means, according to these results, less support for the incumbent majority party in the state legislature. The importance of party identification is further supported with Divided 2, which suggests

that national-level factors have primordial importance in state congress' elections. Experience under a non-PRI rule does show significance with a negative coefficient. Overall, these results need to be analyzed in further.

4.6 Conclusion

Although the literature on economic voting presents some disagreements on the exact nature of the relationship between economic performance and public support for the incumbent, overall, presidents are believed to be punished or rewarded for their economic performance. This analysis has taken this hypothesis to the subnational level and has found significant evidence at this level across the Mexican states. The sources for the variation across the states cannot be discerned from this type of analysis, but based on the theoretical framework that the study is based on, it is possible to present some conclusions.

As shown in the preceding analysis, state-level economic performance plays an important role in incumbent support in Mexican gubernatorial elections. Economic voting appears to be taking place in gubernatorial elections. A state's economic performance entails, as discussed earlier, a wide array of factors that distinguish one state from another. Generally, states performing better economically and with experience under the opposition are more likely to gain electoral support for the incumbent government.

A state's capacity to generate its own revenues is also found to be positively correlated with the incumbent's party support in gubernatorial elections. That is, those state governments that manage to increase their economic autonomy vis-à-vis the center are rewarded with more approval at the polls. This is an important finding, because a

state's financial autonomy is a crucial indicator of the effectiveness of decentralizing policies. The general argument of this dissertation is supported hereby.

Another important finding refers to the significance of the variable controlling for a state's experience under a non-PRI administration. As discussed before, my goal was to capture the effects that an opposition party in power has on the institutional environment in a given country. Based on the assumption that such experience under the "opposition" brings about greater clarity of responsibility and thus, voters are likely to become economic voters, the findings in this chapter suggest that indeed the strength of the opposition within a state and its actual presence in government is strongly related with the way the state's population votes.

Clearly, there is a significant degree of heterogeneity within the group of Mexican states that cannot be fully accounted for by the other explanatory variables in the statistical model presented here. The next chapter looks with more detail into citizen's motivations and state-specific factors.

Table 4.1 Diverse Indicators of Financial Autonomy in Mexican States, 2004

Table 4.1a States receiving highest amount of revenues from taxes (% of GDP), 2004

DF	61.44%
TAM	32.20%
COL	31.22%
NL	16.06%
VER	11.12%

Table 4.1b States receiving lowest amount of revenues from taxes (% of GDP), 2004

CHIS	2.42%
DGO	2.77%
OAX	3.07%
GRO	3.08%
NAY	3.38%
TAB	3.88%
CAMP	3.99%

Table 4.1c States receiving highest amount of federal revenues (% of GDP), 2004

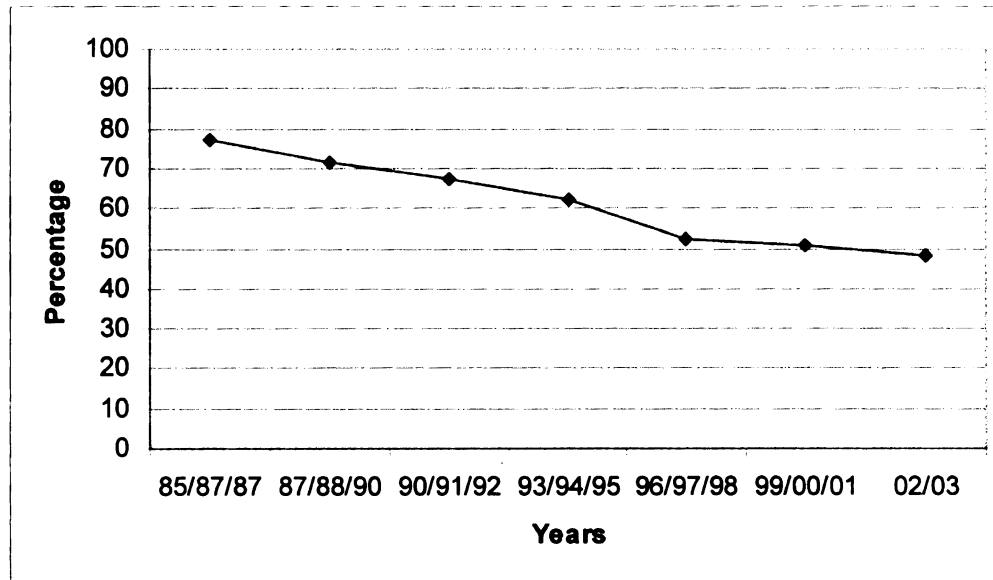
CHIS	21.86%
TAB	21.73%
OAX	18.99%
ZAC	16.99%
NAY	16.53%
GRO	15.90%
TLAX	15.52%

Table 4.1d States receiving lowest amount of federal revenues (% of GDP), 2004

DF	2.53%
NL	4.25%
CHIH	5.34%
BC	5.91%
QROO	5.92%
VER	6.47%
COAH	6.60%
JAL	6.66%

Source: <http://www.cidac.org.mx>

Figure 4.1 Total Votes for Incumbent Party, Gubernatorial Elections, 1985-2004



Source: <http://www.cidac.org>

Table 4.2 Gubernatorial Elections across Mexican States, 1985-2004

Variable	<i>Incumbent Support (% votes) OLS Coefficient (S.E.)</i>	
	Model 1	Model 2 (Fixed Effects)
GSP Growth Rate	3.553** (1.786)	3.949** (1.935)
Own Revenues	36.172** (14.200)	70.967*** (19.924)
Federal Revenues	24.075*** (7.339)	29.204*** (9.387)
Non-PRI Experience	-7.638*** (2.842)	-47.472** (20.976)
Concurrent 1	-0.472 (3.576)	-0.480 (4.844)
Divided 1	-7.859 (5.639)	-14.745** (7.216)
Concurrent 2	-4.115 (4.548)	11.080 (9.504)
Divided 2	-14.640*** (3.320)	-12.090*** (3.729)
Constant	51.242*** (6.409)	52.912*** (11.998)
N	112	112
Adjusted R-squared	0.4057	0.4403

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses.

* = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better

Table 4.3 Local Legislature Elections across Mexican States, 1985-2004

Variable	Incumbent Support (%seats) OLS Coefficient (S.E.)	
	Model 1	Model 2 (Fixed Effects)
GSP Growth Rate	-13.115*** (3.273)	-15.192*** (3.355)
Own Revenues	1.474 (6.891)	10.127 (7.609)
Federal Revenues	18.509*** (3.999)	14.650*** (4.667)
Non-PRI Experience	-6.376*** (1.612)	-30.817*** (8.206)
Concurrent 1	-1.301 (1.625)	-0.258 (1.708)
Divided 1	-13.020*** (3.143)	-13.875*** (3.274)
Concurrent 2	-0.961 (2.283)	2.304 (2.701)
Divided 2	-10.158*** (2.247)	-9.430*** (2.303)
Constant	57.825*** (2.699)	67.658*** (7.312)
N	209	209
Adj. R-squared	0.4134	0.4453

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses.

* = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better

Chapter 5. Individual-Level Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The findings of last chapter confirmed that, based on aggregate-level data, the classic economic voting hypothesis holds at the state level in Mexico. That is, macroeconomic indicators are linked to some degree to incumbent support in state-level elections across the Mexican states. Furthermore, the results show that even though the economic voting hypothesis holds across the Mexican states, it does so in differing degrees of intensity among the different subnational contexts. However, due to its nature, an aggregate-level model does not permit us to explore further this apparent variability in the strength of economic voting. In this regard, the model presents two main weaknesses. First, it assumes that the political and economic contexts across states are the same. Second, the model assumes that citizens across the states respond (or not) in the same way to their economic and political contexts when voting for their subnational leaders. In short, this macro-level model treats both context and voters as homogeneous, and does not distinguish variations between states. So, the question remains, what accounts for this variability in economic voting across the states? Under what conditions are voters more likely to use elections as an act of accountability? How rational is the Mexican voter after all?

The analysis of this chapter makes use of pre-electoral survey data collected by the newspaper group *Reforma* in the Mexican states of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Jalisco, Michoacán, Nuevo León, and Querétaro. These states make an excellent sample because they reflect the variation across states in three main ways: geographic location, economic performance, and political experiences (Table 5.1 presents the main characteristics of this

sample of states). Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to expand last chapter's findings, by switching to the micro-level analysis in order to examine more closely both the different contexts among states and individual motivations that lie behind economic voting. The advantages of such a model are numerous, including the possibility to account for multiple intervening factors such as political and socioeconomic cleavages, which are considered to be traditionally very strong in new democratic regimes.

Overall, the findings of this chapter show support for the hypotheses tested here. As expected, those states with better economic performance and direct experience under opposition governments (Jalisco and Nuevo León) show the clearest support for the theory. Citizens in Chihuahua and Querétaro, both states with experience under *panista* administrations, show clear support of the theory as well. More importantly, the results of this analysis confirm that the institutional capacity of subnational government differ among states, and it has strong effects on citizens' likelihood to be economic voters.

5.2 Theoretical Considerations

In the analysis of chapter 4, I tried to explain the presence of economic voting through diverse variables, such as a state's economic performance, a state's level of economic decentralization, and a state's local political environment. When analyzing gubernatorial elections, I found support for all three claims, which in short point to the conclusion that "institutions matter." Yet, a crucial question remains: Are the findings so far accidental or have voters learned to use elections as an act of accountability? As reviewed in chapter 3, Mexican voters were constrained by an overwhelming presidential system, by powerless and, for the most part, subservient to the federal government

subnational leaders, and by elections that were mostly just an act of formality and symbolism. I have argued that the decentralization of political and economic powers have turned elections into an act of accountability. But, what about voters? Have they learned to make well-informed decisions when deciding whom to vote for? Is perhaps their learning a product of their local context? The argument presented here is that they do, however, this propensity varies according to their state's level of political and economic powers. That is, a state that has experienced alternation of power, divided government, and is able to economically detach itself –at least to some extent– from the federal government, is more likely to have a more informed citizenry that makes use of elections in a new way.

When do performance evaluations become significant to citizens? So far, I have argued that adequate decentralization of power strengthens subnational institutions in such a way that elections take on a different meaning: they become an instrument of accountability for voters. So, the next question refers to once leaders institutionalize accountability in the act of elections, then what triggers voters to take into account performance evaluations?

Following Diamond (1999:77-93), legitimacy and regime performance are closely intertwined, particularly in the early stages of the democratization process. As democracy deepens, the legitimacy of the regime tends to depend less on performance evaluations and more on citizens' "default" commitment to democracy. This is what Diamond refers to as "intrinsic, diffuse, or unconditional legitimacy." As explained by Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi (2005:42), "performance evaluations cover at least two baskets of public goods. In one basket are *economic goods*, like jobs, incomes, assets (for example,

land), consumer products, and an array of social services; in the other basket are *political goods* including political order, civil liberties, electoral rights, human dignity, and equality before the law.” Applying Diamond’s argument to the concept of political and economic goods, the logic followed is that citizens in new democracies expect both political and economic goods at once, and once they develop an unconditional commitment to political goods, then they will support the system, and the system’s economic performance will not put this support at risk.

If I am correct in arguing that economic voting is largely a function of decentralization of political and economic powers, then it is expected that citizens living in states that have already provided them with the required political goods (or commitment to democracy) will perhaps feel more freely to express their preferences at the voting polls, because they see no threat in doing so. Conversely, citizens living in states where it is still unclear to what level political elites are committed to democracy, citizens will be less likely to use elections as a tool of accountability.

Next, I present a number of assumptions based on some specific characteristics of the states contained in the sample. On the one hand, Chiapas is a southern state, and perhaps best known to international observers for the indigenous uprising led by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), which started in 1994.³⁹ During Mexico’s recent democratic transition process, Chiapas has been considered (along with Puebla, Tabasco, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Campeche) to be fertile ground for the “survival and even strengthening of subnational authoritarian enclaves” (Cornelius 1999). With a population largely rural (57% of its active population working in agriculture, INEGI

³⁹ See Harvey (1999) for an analysis of the Zapatista Movement within Mexico’s democratic transition process.

2001) and composed by 24.7% of indigenous population (INEGI 2001), Chiapas is among the poorest states in the country. The state's socioeconomic characteristics made it a traditional PRI stronghold, which developed a large base of support among its agricultural workers. In general, the dire economic circumstances of this sector makes it particularly vulnerable to authoritarian practices and impunity exercised to maintain electoral control. In this context, struggling citizens are assumed to be particularly susceptible to clientelist and vote buying practices.

Chihuahua, just like Nuevo León, borders to the North with the US. The border itself presents unique characteristics compared to the rest of the nation. In general terms, the natural and intensive interactions taking place between both sides of the border create different environments. Politically, Chihuahua is a state with a comparatively long history of experience with the opposition.⁴⁰ In 1992 it became the third state (after Baja California and Guanajuato) to experience alternation of power when the PAN won the governor's office. Furthermore, in the next elections in 1998, the PRI managed to win back the governorship. Thus, citizens living in Chihuahua are among the minority of Mexican citizens who have experienced two alternations of power (along with Nuevo León and Tlaxcala). Citizens in this state, according to the theoretical framework that is being tested here, are expected to be aware that different parties in power offer different styles of governing, and that elections are the mechanism through which they can express which party they prefer to have in office.

The third state, Jalisco, is characterized by a large population (7% of total) that is disproportionately concentrated in Guadalajara – the third largest city in the nation (after Mexico City and Monterrey). Jalisco is largely an industrial state. It is characterized

⁴⁰ See Aziz (2000) for an in-depth account of Chihuahua's recent political history.

along with Nuevo León, by its early progress in developing an independent press, which is expected to increase citizen's awareness and information of public affairs. As seen earlier, there is a theoretical consensus on the need of an informed citizenship to improve the quality of a democracy. In addition to formal education, which is the single most important factor in improving cognitive awareness (Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005:40-41), a free media contributes to the increase of people's awareness and knowledge of public affairs. In 1995 the PAN won the governorship, and it has kept it under control until now.

Michoacán is politically best identified by being the PRD's stronghold. Founder and long-time leader of the PRD, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, is a native from Michoacán, as was his father and former Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas—who nationalized the oil industry in 1936 and is perhaps the most revered president in Mexican history. Before Cárdenas split from the PRI in 1987, he had been Michoacán's governor, so when he formed his own party (PRD in May of 1989), he could count on an already-built base of support in his native state. After a long struggle spanning over ten years, the PRD won its first governorship in 2000.

Nuevo León is the second border state in the sample. Two characteristics make this state stand out from the rest: a large, politically active business sector, and a strong, serious, and independent media. On the one hand, Nuevo León developed largely as an industrial state with the city of Monterrey as its economic center. As a result of the economic crisis the nation went through during the 1980s, a group composed primarily of small- and medium-size entrepreneurs joined forces with the PAN to fight politically against the PRI (Mizrahi 2003; Chand 2001). The PAN won eventually in 1997, and

experienced in 2003 again an alternation when the PRI won the governorship back. The other trait that characterizes the state of Nuevo León is its long history of an independent media. The newspaper group *Reforma* started here in the 1940s with the newspaper *El Norte*.

Finally, the state of Querétaro has become one of PAN's steadiest electoral strongholds. It is composed by a population largely conservative, where the Catholic Church counts with a strong presence. Since 1997, the PAN won control of both the governorship and the majority of seats in the local congress. It has kept tight control over both since then.

5.3 Hypotheses

The next set of hypotheses is divided according to the two main dependent variables, namely, approval of governor and vote for the incumbent governor's party.⁴¹

Hypothesis 1: Sociotropic Evaluations

H1A proposes that individual evaluations of the governor vary positively with evaluations of the state's economy. H1B proposes that electoral support for the incumbent governor's party will vary positively with individual evaluations of the state's economy.

Hypothesis 2: Pocketbook Evaluations

H2A proposes that individual evaluations of the governor vary positively with the respondent's evaluation of his/her own economy. H2B proposes that electoral support for

⁴¹ Vote for the incumbent majority party in local congress elections is not mentioned, it is however assumed to be included in the hypotheses related to the electoral support for governor.

the incumbent governor's party will vary positively with the respondent's evaluation of his/her own economy.

Hypothesis 1 and 2 deal with the classic economic voting variables of sociotropic and pocketbook evaluations. The expectation is that when individuals are satisfied with the economic performance of their state, they will support the sitting government, and when they are disappointed with the state's economic performance, they will punish the incumbent's party.

Hypothesis 3: In-Party

Since the objective here is to find out where, and to what extent Mexican voters are economic voters, this hypothesis rests on a counter-argument of the referendum-voting model, which builds on the premise that "the responsibility of managing the state economy is laid at the feet of the governor" (Atkeson and Partin 1995: 100). The fundamental logic of the referendum model implies that individual voters send messages to the central government when evaluating the performance of subnational leaders. However, economic voters are expected to be able to distinguish between layers of government when they assess their government's economic performance. That is, when economic voters are casting a vote at the state level, they are supposed to be evaluating their governor's administration performance, not their president's. The approach defended here assumes that voters recognize the independent policy-making role played by governors.

H3A proposes that voters living in in-party states will show less gubernatorial approval. Along the same line, H3B proposes that the probability to vote for the incumbent party decreases if the incumbent governor's party is the same as the president's party.

Hypothesis 4: Fiscal Autonomy

H4A expects gubernatorial approval to be higher in the more decentralized states. Accordingly, H4B expects that electoral support for the incumbent governor's party will be higher the more decentralized a state is.

Within a country, economic evaluations are expected to be significant in varying degrees, according to the different levels of clarity of responsibility that each state develops (Powell and Whitten 1993). Economic evaluations are expected to be significant the higher the clarity of responsibility a state has. When political conditions help voters associate the candidate of the incumbent party with the outgoing government or, to put it another way, when the context “eases the attribution of responsibility,” economic assessments should have a greater impact on incumbent vote choice. The role governors play in state and national economic management combined to their increasing level of public visibility suggests that governors should be held accountable for state economic performance, especially in the more decentralized (fiscally autonomous) states (Chihuahua, Jalisco, Nuevo León, and Querétaro). Conversely, the less decentralized states (Chiapas and Michoacán) are expected to exhibit the reverse behavior.

5.4 Data and Model

The hypotheses are explored on the basis of survey data collected by the newspaper *Reforma* in six states prior to gubernatorial elections between 2000 and 2004. Each survey was conducted on a representative sample of the population of each state through face-to-face interviews. The sample size of the six surveys ranges from 840 to 1205 respondents (Table 5.1). The assembled data set offers enough variation in

economic and political conditions across subnational units to provide a robust test of the hypotheses. As shown in Table 5.1, subnational economic performance varies from one state to another. The states included in the analysis represent about 24 percent of the country's total population and 24 percent of its GDP. It is clear that regional economic performance differs from the overall national performance, as well as across states. In addition, the data set provides two cases where the incumbent governor does not belong to the president's party (Michoacán, Chihuahua) at the time of the survey. This is especially important to test the effects of in-party.

In addition to variations across the subnational units selected for the analysis, there are important differences with respect to the six states. As observed earlier, Mexico initiated its process of political and economic decentralization during the 1980s and more so during the 1990s. However, the extent to which these processes in each individual state have led to the effective decentralization of the federal regime varies from one state to another, especially in terms of financial decentralization. Figure 5.1 shows the varying degrees of subnational capacity to generate own revenues. Within an average taken over 2000 and 2002, Chihuahua is clearly the state with the highest capacity to produce its own revenues, with subnational government revenues accounting for almost 20 percent of the state's total revenues. Comparing this sample with all states and excluding Mexico City, Chihuahua is still the most financially autonomous (national mean=11.5)

Dependent Variables⁴²

a) Gubernatorial Approval

This variable measures individual approval of the incumbent governor, as expressed by the respondent when asked to evaluate in retrospective the incumbent

⁴² The complete list of the questions used and their recoding is included in the Appendix B.

governor's job. The item could take four values: disapproves completely, disapproves some, approves some, and approves completely.⁴³

b) Incumbent Support in Gubernatorial Elections

This is a binary variable that reflects individual vote choice in gubernatorial elections. It takes a value of one when the respondent voted for the incumbent governor's party, zero otherwise. In all six states, the question used in the analysis asked respondents to cast their vote for governor in a ballot box that provided by the interviewer.

c) Incumbent Support in State Legislature's Elections

Vote choice in local legislature's elections, takes a value of one when the individual voted for the incumbent local congress' majority party, zero otherwise. Chiapas is not included in this model, because it only held elections for governor in 2000.

Independent Variables of Main Interest

a) Sociotropic and Pocketbook Evaluations

The independent variables of most interest included in the model consist of two individual retrospective⁴⁴ economic assessments: the respondent's evaluation of the economy in his or her state, as well as his or her own economic situation at the end of the incumbent administration. Fortunately, the surveys included for the most part the same questions across states.⁴⁵ The sociotropic item was measured with the question asking respondents to assess the performance of their state economy. This question had three possible answers: "improved," "remained the same," or "worsened." The pocketbook

⁴³ In the case of Chiapas, the choices were three: good government, indifferent, and bad government. In order to get four categories, the "Don't know" and "Did not respond" responses were recoded into "Disapprove some."

⁴⁴ Unfortunately, only the most recent survey, Chihuahua, included a question on prospective economic evaluation.

⁴⁵ In Chihuahua, respondents were asked to evaluate the overall condition of their state under the incumbent governor, rather than specifically the economy of the state.

evaluation was measured with the item asking respondents about their past personal situation, having the same three response choices as the sociotropic item.

b) Local Electoral Environment

In order to explain to some extent the variation across states, a state-level variable was included in the model. This dummy variable takes a value of one when the incumbent governor's party is the same as the president's party in turn, zero otherwise. It is used in interactions with the sociotropic and pocketbook variables to compare the impact of these variables on incumbent support in both in- and out-party states.

Control Variables

a) Partisan Identity

The model includes a control variable for party preferences. This variable consists of the respondent's self-declared party identification or preference. In all four states, the original question asked "Generally speaking, do you consider yourself *priista*, *panista*, or *perredista*?" which refers to each of the three major parties (PRI, PAN, and PRD). The answers included "very and some *priista*," "very and some *panista*," or "very and some *perredista*," and they were recoded into a dummy variable taking the value one if the respondent claimed to identify with the incumbent governor's political party. Traditionally, partisanship has been the most powerful predictor of vote choice in the Mexican electorate. It is assumed that the concept includes the effects of presidential approval.

b) Political Knowledge and Interest

Political knowledge is represented in this analysis by two kinds of questions. First, the respondent's level of education, which was recoded into three categories

identifying individuals with “primary level completed,” “secondary/technical level completed,” and “some university education or better.” The second indicator of political knowledge was taken from a question asking the respondent whether s/he knows when the next elections are taking place. Interest was taken from a question asking respondents how interested they are in the political campaigns going on for the next election.

c) Locality and Income

Finally, two dummy variables are included to control for the socioeconomic status of the respondents. Locality took a value of one when the respondent lives in an urban or mixed area, zero when the respondent lives in a rural area.

Income was used to control for the income level of the respondents; it was recoded into three categories identifying individuals earning “0 to 4,000 pesos”, “4,001 to 12,000 pesos”, and “12,001 & more pesos.” It is expected that individuals living in an urban area, will be more likely to vote for the incumbent party. Income is also expected to have a positive coefficient.

In order to test the hypotheses the analysis relies on an additive model of individual governor’s approval and vote choice in gubernatorial and local legislature’s elections. The general model for vote choice can be resumed as follows:

$$\text{Gubernatorial Approval}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ State Economic Performance} + \beta_2 \text{ Personal Economic Performance} + \beta_3 \text{ Partisan Identity} + e_i$$

$$\text{Incumbent Support}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ State Economic Performance} + \beta_2 \text{ Personal Economic Performance} + \beta_3 \text{ Partisan Identity} + e_i$$

5.5 Analysis and Results

The statistical analysis relies on both the ordered probit and probit regression methods. First, the results are presented separately by state for each of the three

dependent variables (Tables 5.1-5.3). Tables 5.4 to 5.6 contain the results of the merged data sets.

Table 5.2 presents the results for the model explaining gubernatorial approval. The classic economic voting hypothesis is overall consistently supported across the six states, although some variation can be observed across the states and between the two measures of economic voting. First, sociotropic evaluations are clearly the strongest in Jalisco and Nuevo León, even stronger than their respective party id coefficients. Chiapas, Chihuahua, and Querétaro also strongly support H1A, suggesting that for voters in these states, their state's economic performance is quite important when evaluating their governor's performance. Michoacán is the only state where this variable is not significant. Second, pocketbook evaluations (H2A) are statistically significant in all cases. In Querétaro, this indicator has more explanatory power than the sociotropic one. In Chiapas, Chihuahua, and Nuevo León the coefficient is clearly weaker than the sociotropic one. Partisan identity is the only variable that is consistently significant across all states.

Table 5.3 presents the results of the same model for the dependent variable of incumbent support in gubernatorial elections. The results are clearly more mixed than the one in the previous table. First, Chihuahua, Jalisco, and Nuevo León present again the strongest support for the economic voting sociotropic argument. The results in Querétaro are significant still, but weaker than in the previous cases. Again, the pocketbook coefficient is stronger than the sociotropic one. The coefficients of Chiapas and Michoacán do not reach significance in any of the cases. Second, the pocketbook

hypothesis is significant only in the cases of Nuevo Leon and Queretaro. Third, party identity remains strongly significant across all cases.

Table 5.4 presents the results of the model looking at incumbent support in state legislature's elections. Overall, this model shows weaker support for the economic voting hypothesis. Again, the economic voting hypothesis is the strongest in Jalisco and Nuevo León when observing the results for the sociotropic variable, although comparatively much weaker than in the other models. Chihuahua and Querétaro are significant as well. Michoacán, consistent with the other results, is not significant. When looking at the results for the pocketbook hypothesis, the results present weaker explanatory power for the economic voting argument. Chihuahua does not reach significance at all. Only Nuevo León and Querétaro present support for the argument. For Querétaro, consistent with the other models, the pocketbook argument appears to have stronger explanatory power than the sociotropic one. The results in Michoacán are unexpected, because the coefficient is significant but negative. Party identity remains the one variable consistently significant and the strongest.

Table 5.5 presents the first results of the merged data set for the dependent variable of gubernatorial support. The table includes the results for three models. Model 1 is the same model previously used with the individual states. The economic voting hypothesis is strongly supported in both the sociotropic and the pocketbook hypotheses across the three models. Consistent with previous results, the sociotropic hypothesis is supported clearly stronger. Model 2 includes the state-level variable *in-party* to help account for state-level factors. As discussed earlier, my intuition is that economic voters living in states where the governor belongs to the president's party, will be more likely to

approve or support less the incumbent governor, which would be a sign that such voters are able to distinguish between both layers of government. The results of Model 2 support this hypothesis. Model 3 includes an interaction term composed of the *in-party* variable and the sociotropic and pocketbook evaluations. The expectation is that economic voters living in in-party states and with positive economic performance evaluations, will be less likely to approve or support the incumbent governor. This hypothesis is supported in Model 3. Again, across all models, partisan identity is consistently significant.

Table 5.6 presents the merged results for the dependent variable of incumbent electoral support. The same three models are included here. Again, the results show consistent support for the sociotropic hypothesis across the three models. The results for the pocketbook hypothesis are more mixed. The hypothesis is supported in Models 1 and 2, but not so in Model 3. The *in-party* variable is significant and in the expected direction, as it is the case with the interaction term.

Finally, Table 5.7 presents the results for the dependent variable of incumbent support in state legislature's elections. Similarly with the results of incumbent gubernatorial result, the economic voting hypothesis is consistently supported with the sociotropic argument. The *in-party* variable is significant and in the expected direction, however, the interaction term does not reach significance.

5.6 Conclusion

The current chapter explored the relationship between individual economic assessments and gubernatorial approval and vote choice on the basis of survey data

collected in six Mexican states. Overall, the results presented in this chapter show support for the economic voting argument explored here, but to different degrees across the states.

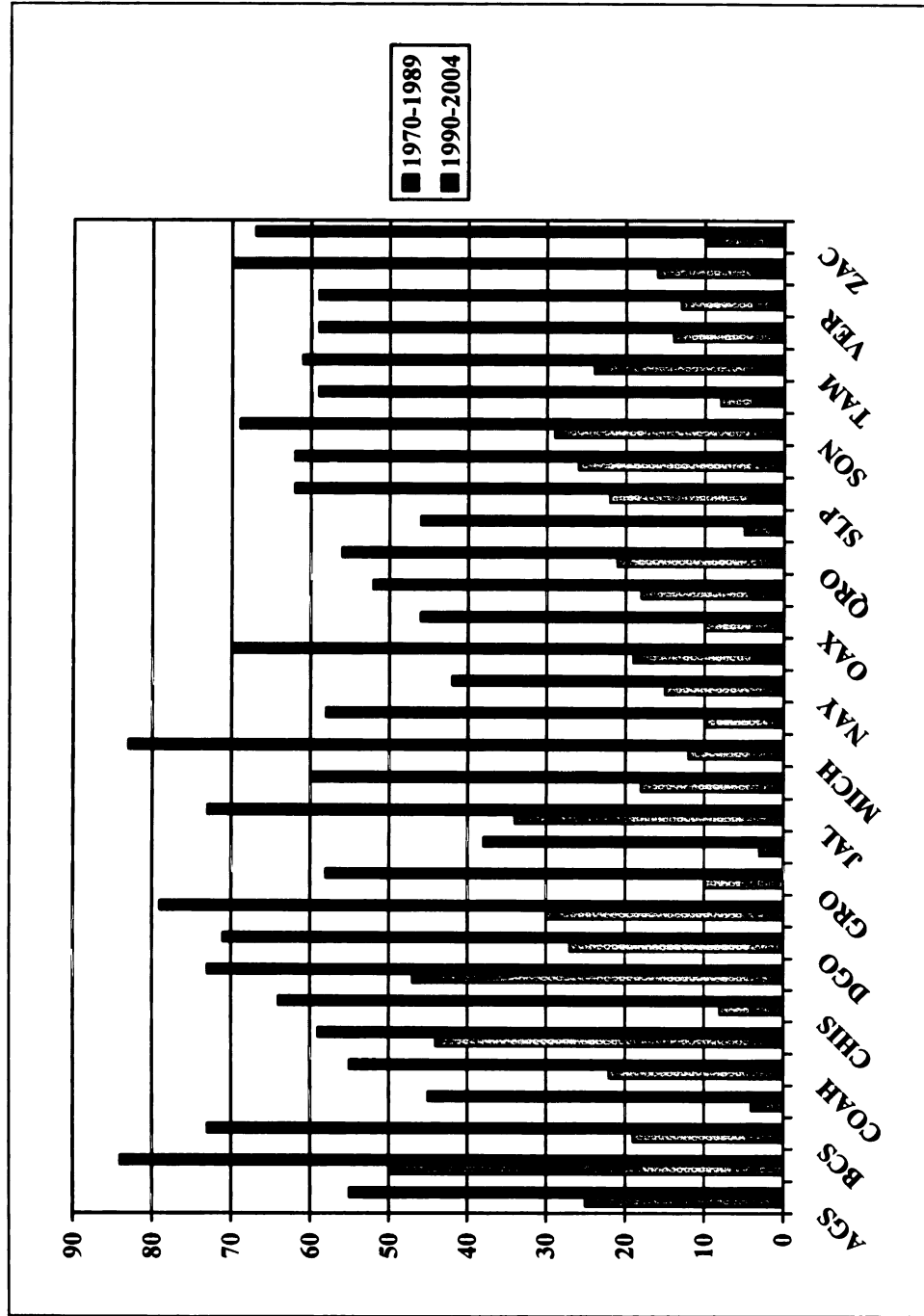
The results offer clear support for the retrospective sociotropic hypothesis. The findings suggest that governors are held accountable for state-level economic performance. More precisely, positive assessments about the state's economy increase the likelihood of approving and/or voting for the governor's party. Both variables of main interest—an individual's evaluation of state-level and personal economic performance—are found to impact differently across the states under study. The variability across the states, however, supports the theoretical expectations.

First, economic voting is clearly the strongest in Chihuahua, Jalisco, and Nuevo León, the three states that have experienced alternation of power. Both Chihuahua and Nuevo León have experienced in fact two alternations. To a lesser degree, but also consistently, citizens in Querétaro are economic voters as well.

The fact that governors are evaluated on the basis of state economic performance in Jalisco and Nuevo León, more than in the other states, suggests that political decentralization is associated with increased democratic accountability. More decentralized regimes seem to provide political incentives for good subnational economic management and public service provision. This shows that governors that manage the economy well can actually gain electoral benefits from managing their state more efficiently, while those who fail to generate good economic performance run the risk of losing support.

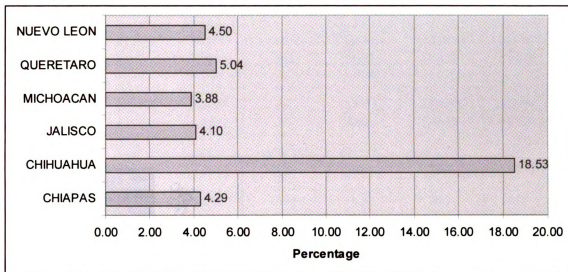
The findings of this chapter support the argument that gubernatorial approval reflects a combination of both national and state-level evaluations (Svoboda 1995; King 2001). Both dependent variables used in the analysis, gubernatorial approval and vote choice present clear evidence that national-level factors have strong explanatory power. For instance, partisan identity appears with stronger support in results for vote choice. Here, the evidence supporting the economic voting theory are weaker, but still significant in the expected states. States with higher levels of dependency on the federal government (such as Chiapas) are expected to depend mostly on partisan loyalty. The different results between approval and vote choice should be further examined.

Figure 3.5 Municipal-Level Competition (Holbrook-Van Dunk Index), Mexican States, 1970-2004



Source: Table 4.

Figure 5.1 State's Own Revenues, Average Percentage 2000-2002



Source: INEGI

Figure 5.2 Mexican States, Own Revenues (% of total state revenue), Average 1989-2003

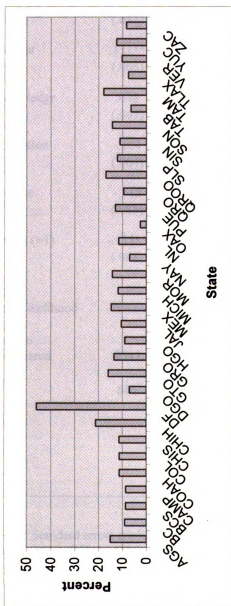


Table 5.2 Gubernatorial Approval, Selected Mexican States (Ordered Probit Analysis)

	Chiapas	Chihuahua	Jalisco	Michoacán	Nuevo León	Querétaro
State Economy	.474*** (.078)	.515*** (.055)	1.164*** (.065)	.051 (.063)	1.478*** (.145)	.182*** (.060)
Personal Finances	.195*** (.073)	.152** (.060)	n.a.	.184*** (.068)	.185*** (.061)	.448*** (.072)
Party ID	.649*** (.088)	.744*** (.083)	.479*** (.082)	.468*** (.085)	.478*** (.097)	.438*** (.097)
Interest	.131** (.065)	-.001 (.064)	-.024 (.062)	-.020 (.056)	.007 (.064)	.079 (.064)
Knowledge	.038 (.047)	.117** (.053)	.036 (.047)	-.006 (.043)	.063 (.067)	.114 (.071)
Education	-.104 (.064)	.012 (.059)	.027 (.055)	-.009 (.025)	.092* (.054)	-.027 (.061)
Income	-.112 (.083)	-.094 (.070)	.056 (.065)	-.135** (.067)	.219*** (.073)	.052 (.075)
Urban (=1)	-.185** (.088)	-.014 (.117)	.042 (.089)	.048 (.086)	-.126 (.185)	.097 (.092)
Log Likelihood	-794.09	-829.75	-763.75	-872.93	-689.88	-681.66
Pseudo R-Squared	.0911	.1374	.2519	.0262	.1422	.0957
N	840	1000	1205	1008	1200	855
Cut 1		.496 (.259)	1.139 (.235)	-.922 (.224)	2.273 (.450)	.707 (.285)
Cut 2		2.146 (.265)	3.947 (.267)	.987 (.224)	5.096 (.461)	2.824 (.298)

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better.

**Table 5.3 Vote Choice in Gubernatorial Elections, Selected Mexican States
(Probit Analysis)**

	Chiapas	Chihuahua	Jalisco	Michoacán	Nuevo León	Querétaro
State Economy	.089 (.095)	.299*** (.065)	.475*** (.061)	.092 (.086)	.519*** (.186)	.131* (.074)
Personal Finances	.067 (.095)	.088 (.072)	n.a.	-.130 (.091)	.355*** (.076)	.312*** (.088)
Party ID	1.857*** (.110)	1.477*** (.097)	1.470*** (.089)	2.039*** (.034)	2.026*** (.110)	1.531*** (.113)
Interest	.137 (.087)	.034 (.075)	.044 (.070)	.109 (.079)	.011 (.082)	.157* (.081)
Knowledge	-.068 (.062)	.054 (.064)	-.002 (.052)	.013 (.059)	.109 (.085)	-.040 (.087)
Education	-.089 (.087)	.141** (.070)	.033 (.061)	.039 (.034)	.123* (.065)	.205*** (.076)
Income	.046 (.109)	-.140* (.084)	.046 (.074)	-.252*** (.093)	.066 (.090)	.008 (.094)
Urban (=1)	-.006 (.117)	-.041 (.138)	.100 (.099)	.086 (.119)	-.056 (.234)	.074 (.115)
Constant	-1.478*** (.417)	-1.577*** (.315)	-2.21*** (.272)	-1.123*** (.302)	-3.551*** (.575)	-2.389*** (.360)
N	840	1000	1205	1008	1200	855
Pseudo R-Squared	.3369	.2585	.2772	.3493	.3804	.2747
Log Likelihood	-364.21	-513.92	-590.56	-397.62	-433.04	-392.16

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better.

**Table 5.4 Vote Choice in Local Legislature Elections, Selected Mexican States
(Probit Analysis)**

	Chihuahua	Jalisco	Michoacán	Nuevo León	Querétaro
State Economy	.274*** (.066)	.350*** (.058)	.101 (.080)	.434** (.173)	.168** (.074)
Personal Finances	.006 (.072)	n.a.	-.184** (.085)	.258*** (.075)	.302*** (.088)
Party ID	1.513*** (.096)	1.175*** (.085)	1.585*** (.101)	1.902*** (.106)	1.333*** (.110)
Interest	.037 (.075)	-.045 (.066)	.054 (.073)	-.053 (.081)	.098 (.081)
Knowledge	.043 (.064)	-.059 (.050)	.053 (.055)	.083 (.085)	.062 (.090)
Education	.004 (.070)	.012 (.058)	.040 (.031)	.127* (.065)	.167** (.075)
Income	-.103* (.084)	.086 (.070)	.008 (.085)	.001 (.089)	-.091 (.094)
Urban (=1)	.005 (.136)	.029 (.094)	.040 (.111)	.007 (.229)	.263 (.116)
Constant	-1.326*** (.315)	1.457*** (.254)	-1.214*** (.287)	-2.963*** (.541)	-2.581*** (.369)
N	1000	1205	1008	1200	855
Pseudo R-Squared	.2608	.1855	.2273	.3491	.2413
Log Likelihood	-511.90	-663.97	-474.87	-441.34	-393.96

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better.

**Table 5.5 Gubernatorial Approval, Selected Mexican States, Merged Data Set
(Ordered Probit Analysis)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
State Economy	.473*** (.027)	.463*** (.027)	.547*** (.034)
Personal Finances	.105*** (.026)	.140*** (.027)	.120*** (.042)
Party ID	.638*** (.036)	.609*** (.036)	.607*** (.037)
Interest	.009 (.025)	.036 (.026)	.025 (.026)
Knowledge	.055** (.022)	.096*** (.022)	.099*** (.022)
Urban (=1)	-.073** (.031)	.056* (.033)	.049 (.034)
Education	.004 (.017)	-.035** (.017)	-.035* (.017)
Income	-.042 (.028)	.003 (.029)	.008 (.029)
Inparty		-.439*** (.036)	-.229* (.123)
State Economy*Inparty			-.102** (.045)
Personal Finances*Inparty			.013 (.054)
N	4903	4903	4784
Cut 1	.069 (.107)	.132 (.107)	.266 (.125)
Cut 2	(2.006) (.109)	2.080 .110	2.206 (.127)
Cut 3	2.913 (.113)	3.029 .114	3.156 (.131)
Log Likelihood	-4936.98	-4863.01	-4754.53
LR Chi-Squared	852.78	1000.72	1017.43
Pseudo R-Squared	.0795	.0933	.0967

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better.

Merged data set does not include Jalisco.

Table 5.6 Vote Choice in Gubernatorial Elections, Selected Mexican States, Merged Data Set (Probit Analysis)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Sociotropic	.222*** (.036)	.211*** (.036)	.274*** (.045)
Pocketbook	.102*** (.035)	.121*** (.036)	-.054 (.055)
Party ID	1.826*** (.046)	1.813*** (.046)	1.795*** (.047)
Interest	.047 (.034)	.062 (.034)	.059* (.035)
Date	.014 (.029)	.032 (.029)	.024 (.030)
Locality	-.025 (.042)	.038 (.044)	.035 (.046)
Education	.055** (.022)	.035 (.023)	.036 (.023)
Income	-.034 (.038)	-.011 (.038)	-.011 (.039)
Inparty		-.220*** (.047)	-.562*** (.168)
State Economy*Inparty			-.107* (.062)
Personal Finances*Inparty			.300*** (.072)
Constant	-1.802*** (.144)	-1.829*** (.145)	-1.599*** (.165)
N	4903	4903	4784
Log Likelihood	-2180.90	-2169.98	-2116.74
LR Chi-Squared	1978.28	2000.12	1966.96
Pseudo R-Squared	.3120	0.3155	.3172

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1, ** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better. Merged data set includes all four states.

**Table 5.7 Vote Choice in Local Legislature's Elections, Selected Mexican States,
Merged Data Set (Probit Analysis)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Sociotropic	.238*** (.038)	.225*** (.038)	.256*** (.047)
Pocketbook	.059 (.038)	.080** (.038)	-.113** (.054)
Party ID	1.663*** (.050)	1.642*** (.050)	1.616*** (.051)
Interest	-.003 (.037)	.019 (.037)	.010* (.038)
Date	.049 (.033)	.082** (.033)	.081** (.033)
Locality	.084 (.060)	.112 (.060)	.083 (.061)
Education	.071** (.023)	.048** (.023)	.050** (.023)
Income	-.070* (.041)	-.024 (.042)	-.024 (.042)
Inparty		-.276*** (.049)	-.999*** (.202)
State Economy*Inparty			.001 (.089)
Personal Finances*Inparty			.373*** (.078)
Constant	-1.796*** (.155)	-1.865*** (.156)	-1.513*** (.173)
N	4063	4063	4012
Log Likelihood	-1880.10	-1864.58	-1831.68
LR Chi-Squared	1390.58	1421.63	1430.99
Pseudo R-Squared	.2700	0.2760	.2809

Notes: Standard errors are listed in parentheses. * = statistically significant at .1,
** = statistically significant at .05, and *** = statistically significant at .01 or better.
Chiapas is not included.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

There is an overall scholarly consensus that the Mexican democratic transition process culminated with the alternation of power in 2000, when the PRI was unseated by President Fox's PAN. Having observed these events unfold firsthand, and seeing expectations and hopes rise among citizens, the question that underlies this dissertation took form in the following way: to what extent were these national-level political changes reaching Mexican citizens?

As I have stressed so far, one of the PRI-regime's major shortcomings was its lack of responsiveness to the public. For the most part, the basic form of political participation—elections—had no real meaning to citizens, beyond being for the most part a ritual of transfer of power within the PRI. So, within this new electoral context, in which Mexico could finally be labeled an electoral democracy, did the government turn accountable to its citizens? In other words, and as I ask in the introduction of this dissertation, to what extent does the label “new democracy” guarantee working mechanisms of accountability? Without doubt, establishing effective circuits of accountability between politicians and electoral constituencies constitutes a latent challenge not only in Mexico, but in new democracies more generally.

Exploring this question by looking at the Mexican states took me invariably to hypothesize that democracy had reached citizens to different degrees, that is, state governments vary according to their individual experiences. Within different contexts, elections acquire different meanings. To the extent that state-level political leaders become autonomous from the central government, accountability increases. The different hypotheses in this study had the overall purpose to test under what conditions do

elections work as an instrument of accountability. The results support in different ways the underlying argument that elections acquire a power of accountability in function of a state's level of political and economic decentralization.

In order to undertake this type of analysis, I had to answer one prior question: Is the economy part of the voting calculus among the Mexican electorate? The macro-level analysis in Chapter 4 looks at this question, and the findings show evidence that a state's economic performance has been indeed part of the voting decision in gubernatorial elections during the last nineteen years. Once this prior question had been answered, it was possible to look at the effects of political and economic decentralization on electoral behavior. According to the expectations put forward here, both factors probed to have effects on electoral behavior. States performing better in economic terms, with higher levels of economic autonomy vis-à-vis the federal government, and with experience under a non-PRI government, probed to be more likely to have economic voters among its population, who in turn are capable of holding the government accountable for its performance on election day.

The second part of the analysis took on the task of exploring the apparent variations across the states by using micro-level data. Clearly, the results are limited in several ways, and need to be further expanded, but the findings did support in different ways the key argument of this work. Overall, the likelihood of Mexicans being economic voters depends on the political and economic contexts they live in. The results of the statistical analyses undertaken here show support for the economic voting theory, but there is visible variation in the strength of the theory across the states. One important result that came to the surface in this analysis is the distinction between approval and

vote choice. In general, the theory appeared consistently stronger in regard with approval. A reason could be that respondent's feel freer to express their opinion about the sitting government when they are "just" being asked whether they approve or not of the government's performance. On the other hand, when asked for whom they would actually vote, then voters seem to go back to "traditional" cleavages, mostly to their partisan identity. However, based on the findings of chapter 5, it is safe to say that some form of economic voting is taking place in the Mexican states, with stronger evidence in those states that are both economically better off and have experienced rule under a party other than the PRI.

These findings have different implications for the study of the quality of new democracies. First, and perhaps this dissertation's most valuable contribution, this study sheds light on the dynamics taking place at the subnational level in a new democracy. It shows that democratization reaches citizens unevenly, and that the manner in which they experience democracy is a function to a great extent of state-level factors. For one, the nature of the opposition is of crucial importance. As argued by Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes (1999:48), "Citizens have two agents, not just one: the incumbents who govern and the opposition that wants to become the government...The opposition has incentives to monitor the government and to inform (truthfully or not) voters about the performance of the incumbents." In fact, opposition parties constitute a key element in developing partisan competition, which in turn causes citizens to be more attentive to politics (Muller and Seligson 1994).

Furthermore, this dissertation joins the claim developed in different forms by scholars of Mexican politics (Cornelius 1999; Fox 1994; Lawson 2000), and which was

so clearly put by Hiskey and Bowler (2005:67) who see the local context “as a critical frontline for these struggling democracies, one where support for and engagement with a democratic system of government can either be fostered or frustrated.” In other words, it would be a mistake to see the nation through the national-level changes, and make assumptions based on such. Local politics matter, and they produce different types of electorate as well.

Second, by studying economic voting at the subnational level in a new democracy, this study contributes to the broad field of electoral behavior. Studying the way in which voters elect their leaders is essential to understanding the functioning of any democracy. This exercise becomes more relevant in nascent democracies, where voters are “learning democracy” (Anderson and Dodd 2005). The findings of this dissertation shed light on this learning process, one which is widely acknowledged but difficult to operationalize. Overall, this dissertation probes the broader applicability of the theory, but it also warns on the importance of taking into account variations in the economic and political contexts.

Finally, these findings have direct implications for the study of accountability in new democratic contexts. Both the aggregate and individual-level analyses suggested that opposition (or non-PRI) governments develop different styles of governing that involve most of the times greater communication with citizens (greater transparency and access to information). These conclusions are very positive in regard to the development of a culture of accountability, which was not fostered during the one-party regime. They suggest that accountability has greater chances of appearing and staying, when it becomes part of the political survival strategy of subnational leaders. That is, elections

will be used by voters as an instrument of accountability to the extent that subnational political leaders are in need of their local constituents—a practice that is quite new in Mexico.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. States and Election Years, Chapter 4

Table A. Gubernatorial Elections, Mexican States, 1985-2004

State	Election year	State	Election year	State	Election year
AGS	1986	HGO	1987	SLP	1985
AGS	1992	HGO	1993	SLP	1991
AGS	1998	HGO	1999	SLP	1997
AGS	2004	JAL	1988	SLP	2003
BC	1989	JAL	1995	SIN	1986
BC	1995	JAL	2000	SIN	1992
BC	2001	MEX	1987	SIN	1998
BCS	1987	MEX	1993	SIN	2004
BCS	1993	MEX	1999	SON	1985
BCS	1999	MICH	1986	SON	1991
CAMP	1985	MICH	1992	SON	1997
CAMP	1991	MICH	1995	SON	2003
CAMP	1997	MICH	2001	SON	1985
CAMP	2003	MOR	1988	SON	1991
COAH	1987	MOR	1994	SON	1997
COAH	1993	MOR	2000	SON	2003
COAH	1999	NAY	1987	TAB	1988
COL	1985	NAY	1993	TAB	1994
COL	1991	NAY	1999	TAB	2001
COL	1997	NL	1985	TAM	1986
COL	2003	NL	1991	TAM	1992
CHIS	1988	NL	1997	TAM	1998
CHIS	1994	NL	2003	TAM	2004
CHIS	2000	OAX	1986	TLAX	1986
CHIH	1986	OAX	1992	TLAX	1992
CHIH	1992	OAX	1998	TLAX	1998
CHIH	1998	OAX	2004	TLAX	2004
CHIH	2004	PUE	1986	VER	1986
DGO	1986	PUE	1992	VER	1992
DGO	1992	PUE	1998	VER	1998
DGO	1998	PUE	2004	VER	2004
DGO	2004	QRO	1985	YUC	1987
GTO	1985	QRO	1991	YUC	1993
GTO	1991	QRO	1997	YUC	1995
GTO	1995	QRO	2003	YUC	2001
GTO	2000	QROO	1987	ZAC	1986
GRO	1986	QROO	1993	ZAC	1992
GRO	1993	QROO	1999	ZAC	1998
GRO	1999			ZAC	2004
				DF	2000

Source: IFE.

Table B. State Legislature Elections, Mexican States, 1985-2004

Election State Year	Election State Year	Election State Year	Election State Year	Election State Year	Election State Year
AGS 1985	CHIH 1985	MICH 1985	QRO 1987	QRO 1987	TAM 1986
AGS 1988	CHIH 1988	MICH 1988	QRO 1990	QRO 1990	TAM 1989
AGS 1991	CHIH 1991	MICH 1991	QRO 1993	QRO 1993	TAM 1992
AGS 1994	CHIH 1994	MICH 1994	QRO 1996	QRO 1996	TAM 1995
AGS 1997	CHIH 1997	MICH 1997	QRO 1999	QRO 1999	TAM 1998
AGS 2000	CHIH 2000	MICH 2000	QRO 2002	QRO 2002	TAM 2000
AGS 2003	CHIH 2003	MICH 2003	QROO 1986	QROO 1986	TAM 2003
BC 1985	DGO 1985	MOR 1987	QROO 1989	QROO 1989	TLAX 1985
BC 1988	DGO 1988	MOR 1990	QROO 1992	QROO 1992	TLAX 1988
BC 1991	DGO 1991	MOR 1993	QROO 1995	QROO 1995	TLAX 1991
BC 1994	DGO 1994	MOR 1996	QROO 1998	QROO 1998	TLAX 1994
BC 1997	DGO 1997	MOR 1999	QROO 2001	QROO 2001	TLAX 1997
BC 2000	DGO 2000	MOR 2002	SLP 1986	SLP 1986	TLAX 2000
BC 2003	DGO 2003	NAY 1986	SLP 1989	SLP 1989	TLAX 2003
BCS 1986	GTO 1987	NAY 1989	SLP 1992	SLP 1992	VER 1985
BCS 1989	GTO 1990	NAY 1992	SLP 1996	SLP 1996	VER 1988
BCS 1992	GTO 1993	NAY 1995	SLP 1999	SLP 1999	VER 1991
BCS 1995	GTO 1996	NAY 1998	SLP 2002	SLP 2002	VER 1994
BCS 1998	GTO 1999	NAY 2001	SIN 1985	SIN 1985	VER 1997
BCS 2001	GTO 2002	NL 1987	SIN 1988	SIN 1988	VER 2000
CAMP 1985	GRO 1986	NL 1990	SIN 1991	SIN 1991	VER 2003
CAMP 1988	GRO 1989	NL 1993	SIN 1994	SIN 1994	YUC 1987
CAMP 1991	GRO 1992	NL 1996	SIN 1997	SIN 1997	YUC 1990
CAMP 1993	GRO 1995	NL 1999	SIN 2000	SIN 2000	YUC 1993
CAMP 1996	GRO 1998	NL 2002	SIN 2003	SIN 2003	YUC 1994
CAMP 1999	GRO 2001	OAX 1985	SON 1987	SON 1987	YUC 1995
CAMP 2002	HGO 1986	OAX 1988	SON 1990	SON 1990	YUC 1997
COAH 1987	HGO 1989	OAX 1991	SON 1993	SON 1993	YUC 2000
COAH 1990	HGO 1992	OAX 1994	SON 1996	SON 1996	YUC 2003
COAH 1993	HGO 1995	OAX 1997	SON 1999	SON 1999	ZAC 1985
COAH 1996	HGO 1998	OAX 2000	SON 2002	SON 2002	ZAC 1988
COAH 1998	HGO 2001	OAX 2003	TAB 1985	TAB 1985	ZAC 1991
COAH 2001	JAL 1985	PUE 1986	TAB 1988	TAB 1988	ZAC 1994
COL 1987	JAL 1988	PUE 1989	TAB 1991	TAB 1991	ZAC 1997
COL 1990	JAL 1991	PUE 1992	TAB 1994	TAB 1994	ZAC 2000
COL 1993	JAL 1994	PUE 1995	TAB 1997	TAB 1997	ZAC 2003
COL 1996	JAL 1997	PUE 1997	TAB 1999	TAB 1999	DF 1987
COL 1999	JAL 2000	PUE 2000	TAB 2002	TAB 2002	DF 1990
COL 2002	JAL 2002	PUE 2003			DF 1993
CHIS 1987	MEX 1986				DF 1996
CHIS 1990	MEX 1989				DF 1999
CHIS 1994	MEX 1992				DF 2002
CHIS 1997	MEX 1995				
CHIS 2000	MEX 1999				
CHIS 2003	MEX 2002				

Source: IFE.

Appendix B. Question Wording and Coding, Chapter 5

Variables from pre-electoral surveys collected by *Reforma* in Chiapas, Chihuahua, Jalisco, Michoacán, Nuevo León, and Querétaro.

CHIAPAS

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PRI); 0=Not Incumbent

(Entregar boleta con candidatos al entrevistado y preguntar): Le voy a entregar una boleta con los nombres de los candidatos a Gobernador. Si hoy hubiera elecciones para Gobernador del estado, ¿por quién votaría usted? (Pedir que marque su voto en la boleta y solicitar que esta se deposite en la urna)

Vote Choice in Local Legislature Elections

Not asked in Chiapas.

Gubernatorial Approval

[In general, how do you rate Governor Roberto Albores Guillén's administration?]

1. Good job
2. Poor job
3. Neither good nor bad
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Poor job, 2 + 4=Neither good nor bad, 3=Good job

En general, ¿usted considera que el Gobierno de Roberto Albores Guillén ha sido un buen gobierno o ha sido un mal gobierno?

1. Buen gobierno
2. Mal gobierno
3. Ni bueno ni malo
4. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[How do you rate economic conditions in the state compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Stayed the same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2 + 4=Stayed the same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que la situación económica del estado mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoro
4. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

[How do you rate your personal economic conditions compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Stayed the same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2 + 4=Stayed the same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación personal mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Party ID

[Do you consider yourself ...(priista, panista, or perredista)? Very much or somewhat?]

1. Very
2. Somewhat
3. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PRI) [includes "very priista" and "somewhat priista"], 0=Not Incumbent

¿Se considera usted como muy ... (PRIISTA / PANISTA / PERREDISTA) o algo ... (PRIISTA / PANISTA / PERREDISTA)?

1. Muy
2. Algo
3. No sabe/No contestó

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
5. Does not know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2+3+5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en las campañas de los candidatos a la gubernatura del estado:

1. Mucho
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatorial elections will take place in the state?]

1. Mentioned exact date
2. Mentioned incomplete date
3. Does not remember
4. Does not know

Recoded: 1 (3+4)=Does not know; 2=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Me podría decir la fecha en que se llevarán a cabo las elecciones para Gobernador del Estado, o en este momento no recuerda?

1. Mencionó fecha completa
2. Mencionó fecha incompleta
3. No recuerda
4. No sabe

Education

[What is the highest level of education you have completed?]

- 1=No formal schooling
2. Primary schooling
3. Secondary/technical schooling
4. High school/equivalent
5. University and more
6. Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

¿Hasta que año estudió usted? ¿Cuál es su último grado de estudios?

1. No tiene estudios
2. Primaria
3. Secundaria/Técnica
4. Preparatoria/Equivalente
5. Universidad o más
6. No contestó

Income

[How much money do you (and your household together) earn per month?]

1. Between \$0 and \$1,000
2. Between \$1,001 and \$2,000
3. Between \$2,001 and \$4,000
4. Between \$4,001 and \$6,000
5. Between \$6,001 and \$8,000

6. Between \$8,001 and \$12,000
7. Between \$12,001 and \$16,000
8. Between \$16,001 and \$20,000
9. Over \$21,000
10. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Between \$0-\$4,000; 2=\$4,001-12,000; 3=Over \$12,001

Entre todas las personas que viven con usted, ¿aproximadamente cuánto ganan al mes?

1. De \$0 a \$1,000
2. De \$1,001 a \$2,000
3. De \$2,001 a \$4,000
4. De \$4,001 a \$6,000
5. De \$6,001 a \$8,000
6. De \$8,001 a \$12,000
7. De \$12,001 a \$16,000
8. De \$16,001 a \$20,000
9. Más de \$21,000
10. No sabe/No contestó

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Rural]

Tipo de localidad:

1. Urbano
2. Rural

CHIHUAHUA

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PRI); 0=Not Incumbent

(Desprender boleta con candidatos a Gobernador) Con esta boleta no oficial y que es sólo para propósitos de esta encuesta, dígame por favor, si hoy hubiera elecciones para Gobernador de Chihuahua, ¿por quién votaría usted? (Pida que deposite la boleta en la urna)

Vote Choice, Local Legislature

[(Hand out ballot containing ballot for local representatives to the respondent and ask) If the elections for local representatives were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PRI); 0=Not Incumbent

(Desprender boleta para elección de Diputados Locales) Con esta boleta no oficial y que es sólo para propósitos de esta encuesta, dígame por favor, si hoy hubiera elecciones para diputados locales, ¿por cuál partido votaría usted? (Pida que deposite la boleta en la urna)

Gubernatorial Approval

[In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Patricio Martinez is doing his job as governor?]

1. Approves completely
2. Approves some
3. Disapproves some
4. Disapproves completely
5. Don't know/Did not answer

Recode: 1=Disapproves completely; 2=Approves/Disapproves some; 3=Approves completely

En general, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma en que Patricio Martínez está haciendo su trabajo como Gobernador? (Insistir: lo...totalmente o algo?)

1. Aprueba totalmente
2. Aprueba algo
3. Desaprueba algo
4. Desaprueba totalmente
5. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[In general, do you consider conditions in Chihuahua have improved, remained the same or worsened under the administration of Patricio Martínez?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2 + 4=Same, 3=Improved

En general, ¿usted considera que la situación de Chihuahua ha mejorado, sigue igual o ha empeorado con el trabajo de Patricio Martínez como Gobernador? (Insistir: ...totalmente o algo?)

1. Mejorado totalmente
2. Mejorado algo
3. Sigue igual
4. Empeorado algo
5. Empeorado totalmente
6. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

[How do you rate your own economic conditions compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same

3. Worsened
 4. Don't know/Did not answer
- Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2 + 4=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación económica personal mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Party ID

[In general, do you consider yourself priista, panista, or perredista?]

1. Very priista
2. Somewhat priista
3. Very panista
4. Somewhat panista
5. Very perredista
6. Somewhat perredista
7. Other
8. None

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PRI) [includes "very priista" and "somewhat priista"], 0=Not Incumbent

Generalmente, ¿usted se considera priista, panista o perredista?

1. Muy priista
2. Algo priista
3. Muy panista
4. Algo panista
5. Muy perredista
6. Algo perredista
7. Otro
8. Ninguno
9. No sabe/No contestó

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
5. Does not know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2 + 3 + 5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en las campañas de los candidatos a la Gubernatura del Estado?

1. Mucho
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada
5. No sabe/No contestó

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatorial elections will take place in the state?]

1. Mentioned exact date
2. Mentioned incomplete date
3. Does not remember
4. Does not know
5. Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Does not know; 2 (2+3+5)=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Sabe usted la fecha de las próximas elecciones para Gobernador de Chihuahua?

1. Sabe la fecha completa
2. Supo solo el mes y el año
3. Supo solo el año
4. No la sabe
5. No contestó

Education

¿Hasta que año o grado aprobó (pasó) en la escuela?

1. Ninguno
2. Preescolar o Kinder
3. Primaria
4. Secundaria
5. Preparatoria o bachillerato
6. Normal
7. Carrera técnica o comercial
8. Profesional
9. Maestría o Doctorado
10. No sabe/No contestó

Recoded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

Income

See Chiapas.

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Rural; 3=Mixed]

Recoded: 1=Urban/Mixed, 0=Rural

Tipo de localidad:

1. Urbano
2. Rural
3. Mixto

JALISCO

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

Le voy a entregar una boleta con los nombres de los candidatos parecida a la que se usara el día de las elecciones. Esta boleta no es oficial y solo se utilizara para propósitos de esta encuesta. Por favor marque en ella, si hoy hubiera elecciones para Gobernador de Jalisco, ¿por quién votaría usted? Solicitar que la boleta se deposite en la urna.

Vote Choice, Local Legislature

[(Hand out ballot containing ballot for local representatives to the respondent and ask) If the elections for local representatives were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

(Entregar boleta con partidos y preguntar: Si hoy hubiera elecciones para diputados locales, ¿por cuál partido votaría usted? (Pedir que deposite la boleta en la urna)

Gubernatorial Approval

[In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Alberto Cárdenas is doing his job as governor?]

1. Approves completely
2. Approves some
3. Disapproves some
4. Disapproves completely
5. Don't know/Did not answer

En general, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma como Alberto Cárdenas está haciendo su trabajo como Gobernador? (Insistir: lo...totalmente o algo?)

1. Aprueba totalmente
2. Aprueba algo
3. Desaprueba algo
4. Desaprueba totalmente
5. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[In general, do you consider conditions in Jalisco have improved, remained the same or worsened under the administration of Alberto Cárdenas?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

En general, ¿usted considera que el Gobierno de Alberto Cárdenas ha sido un buen Gobierno o un mal Gobierno?

1. Buen Gobierno
2. Mal Gobierno
3. Ni bueno ni malo
4. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

This question was not asked in Jalisco.

Party ID

[In general, do you consider yourself priista, panista, or perredista?]

1. Very priista
2. Somewhat priista
3. Very panista
4. Somewhat panista
5. Very perredista
6. Somewhat perredista
7. Other
8. None

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PAN) [includes "very panista" and "somewhat panista"], 0=Not Incumbent

Independientemente del partido por el que usted votaría, ¿con cuál partido político se identifica más?...Muy o algo?

1. Muy priista
2. Algo priista
3. Muy panista
4. Algo panista
5. Muy perredista
6. Algo perredista
7. Menciono otro
8. No sabe/No contestó
9. Ninguno

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
 2. Some
 3. A little
 4. Not at all
 5. Does not know/Did not answer
- Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2+3+5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en las campañas de los aspirantes al gobierno de Jalisco: muy, algo, poco o nada interesado?

1. Muy
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada
5. No sabe/No contestó

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatorial elections will take place in the state?]

1. Mentioned exact date
 2. Mentioned incomplete date
 3. Does not remember
 4. Does not remember/Does not know
- Recoded: 1 (3+4)=Does not know; 2=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Me podría decir la fecha en que se llevarán a cabo las próximas elecciones para Gobernador de Jalisco...o en este momento no recuerda?

1. Mencionó fecha completa
2. Mencionó fecha incompleta
3. No recuerda/No sabe

Education

¿Hasta que año o grado aprobó (pasó) en la escuela?

1. Ninguno
2. Preescolar o Kinder
3. Primaria incompleta
4. Primaria completa
5. Secundaria incompleta
6. Secundaria completa
7. Preparatoria o bachillerato incompleto
8. Preparatoria o bachillerato completo
9. Carrera técnica o comercial
10. Normal
11. Universidad incompleta

- 12. Universidad completa
 - 13. Maestría o Doctorado incompleto
 - 14. Maestría o Doctorado complete
 - 15. No sabe/No contestó
- Recoded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

Income

See Chiapas.

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Mixed; 3=Rural]

Recoded: 1=Urban/Mixed, 0=Rural

Tipo de localidad:

- 1. Urbano
- 2. Mixto
- 3. Rural

MICHOACAN

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PRD); 0=Not Incumbent

(Entregar boleta con candidatos al entrevistado y preguntar): Le voy a entregar una boleta con los nombres de los candidatos a Gobernador. Si hoy hubiera elecciones para Gobernador del estado, por quien votaría usted? (Pedir que marque su voto en la boleta y solicitar que esta se deposite en la urna)

Vote Choice, Local Legislature

(Entregar boleta para Diputados Locales al entrevistado y preguntar): Le voy a entregar otra boleta. Si hoy hubiera elecciones para diputados locales, ¿por cual partido votaría usted? (Pedir que marque su voto en la boleta y solicitar que esta se deposite en la urna)

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PRD); 0=Not Incumbent

[(Hand out ballot containing ballot for local representatives to the respondent and ask) If the elections for local representatives were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Gubernatorial Approval

[In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Víctor Manuel Tinoco Rubí is performing his job as governor?]

- 1. Approves completely

2. Approves some
3. Disapproves some
4. Disapproves completely
5. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Disapproves completely, 2=Approves/Disapproves some, 3=Approves completely

En general, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma como Víctor Manuel Tinoco Rubí está haciendo su trabajo como gobernador del estado? (Insistir): lo (aprueba/desaprueba) totalmente o algo?

1. Aprueba totalmente
2. Aprueba algo
3. Desaprueba algo
4. Desaprueba totalmente
5. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[How do you rate economic conditions in the state compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que la situación económica del estado mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

[How do you rate your own economic conditions compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación personal mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Party ID

[In general, do you consider yourself priista, panista, or perredista?]

1. Very priista
2. Somewhat
3. Very panista
4. Somewhat panista
5. Very perredista
6. Somewhat perredista
7. Other
8. None
9. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PRD) [includes "very perredista" and "somewhat perredista"],
0=Not Incumbent

Generalmente, ¿usted se considera priista, panista o perredista?

1. Muy priista
2. Algo priista
3. Muy panista
4. Algo panista
5. Muy perredista
6. Algo perredista
7. Otro
8. Ninguno
9. No sabe/No contestó

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
5. Does not know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2+3+5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en las campañas de los candidatos a la gubernatura del estado?

1. Mucho
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada
5. No sabe/No contestó

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatural elections will take place in the state?]

1. Mentioned exact date
2. Mentioned incomplete date
3. Does not remember

Recoded: 1=Does not know; 2=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Me podría decir la fecha en que se llevarán a cabo las elecciones para Gobernador del estado...o en este momento no recuerda?

1. Mencionó fecha completa
2. Mencionó fecha incompleta
3. No recuerda

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Rural]

Tipo de localidad:

1. Urbano
2. Rural

Education

[What is the highest level of education you have completed?]

- 1=No formal schooling
2. Primary schooling
3. Secondary/technical schooling
4. High school/equivalent
5. University and more
6. Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

¿Hasta que año estudió usted? ¿Cuál es su último grado de estudios?

1. No tiene estudios
2. Primaria
3. Secundaria/Técnica
4. Preparatoria/Equivalente
5. Universidad o más
6. No contestó

Income

See Chiapas.

NUEVO LEON

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

(Desprender boleta con candidatos a gobernador). Con esta boleta no oficial y que sólo es para propósitos de esta encuesta, dígame por favor, si las elecciones para Gobernador de Nuevo León fueran hoy, ¿por cuál candidato votaría usted? (Solicitar que la boleta se deposite en la urna).

Vote Choice, Local Legislature

[(Hand out ballot containing ballot for local representatives to the respondent and ask) If the elections for local representatives were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

Con esta boleta no oficial y que es solo para propósitos de esta encuesta dígame por favor, si las elecciones para diputados locales fueran hoy, ¿por cuál partido votaría usted? (Que deposite en la urna)

Gubernatorial Approval

[In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Fernando Elizondo Barragán is performing his job as governor?]

1. Approves completely
2. Approves some
3. Disapproves some
4. Disapproves completely
5. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Disapproves completely, 2=Approves/Disapproves some, 3=Approves completely

En general, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma como Fernando Elizondo Barragán está haciendo su trabajo como Gobernador? (Insistir): lo (aprueba/desaprueba) totalmente o algo?

1. Aprueba totalmente
2. Aprueba algo
3. Desaprueba algo
4. Desaprueba totalmente
5. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[How do you rate economic conditions in the state compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

En general, ¿Usted considera que la situación de Nuevo León ha mejorado, sigue igual o ha empeorado con el trabajo de Fernando Elizondo como Gobernador?

1. Mejorado totalmente
2. Mejorado algo
3. Sigue igual
4. Empeorado algo
5. Empeorado totalmente
6. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

[How do you rate your own economic conditions compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
 2. Same
 3. Worsened
 4. Don't know/Did not answer
- Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación personal mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Party ID

[In general, do you consider yourself priista, panista, or perredista?]

1. Very priista
2. Somewhat
3. Very panista
4. Somewhat panista
5. Very perredista
6. Somewhat perredista
7. Other
8. None
9. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PAN) [includes "very panista" and "somewhat panista"], 0=Not Incumbent

Generalmente, ¿usted se considera priista, panista o perredista?...muy o algo?

1. Muy priista
2. Algo priista
3. Muy panista
4. Algo panista
5. Otro
6. Ninguno
7. No sabe/No contestó

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
 2. Some
 3. A little
 4. Not at all
 5. Does not know/Did not answer
- Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2+3+5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en votar en las elecciones de Gobernador de Nuevo León de este año?

1. Mucho
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada
5. No sabe/No contestó

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatorial elections will take place in the state?]

1. Knows exact date
 2. Knows only the year
 3. Knows only the month and year
 4. Does not know
 5. Did not answer
- Recoded: 1 (3+4+5)=Does not know; 2 (2+3)=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Sabe usted la fecha de las próximas elecciones para Gobernador de Nuevo León?

1. Sabe la fecha completa
2. Supo solo el año
3. Supo solo el mes y el año
4. No la sabe
5. No contestó

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Rural]

Tipo de localidad:

1. Urbano
2. Rural

Education

[What is the highest level of education you have completed?]

- 1=No formal schooling
2. Primary schooling

3. Secondary/technical schooling
4. High school/equivalent
5. University and more
6. Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

¿Hasta que año estudió usted? ¿Cuál es su último grado de estudios?

1. Ninguno
2. Preescolar o Zinder
3. Primaria
4. Secundaria
5. Preparatoria o bachillerato
6. Normal
7. Carrera técnica o comercial
8. Profesional
9. Maestría o Doctorado
99. No sabe/No contestó

Income

See Chiapas.

QUERETARO

Vote Choice, Gubernatorial Elections

[(Hand out ballot containing candidates' names to the respondent and ask) If the elections for governor were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

(Entregar boleta con candidatos al entrevistado y preguntar): Le voy a entregar una boleta con los nombres de los candidatos a Gobernador. Si hoy hubiera elecciones para Gobernador del estado, ¿por quién votaría usted? (Pedir que marque su voto en la boleta y solicitar que esta se deposite en la urna)

Vote Choice, Local Legislature

[(Hand out ballot containing ballot for local representatives to the respondent and ask) If the elections for local representatives were taking place today, for whom would you vote? (Ask respondent to place ballot in the ballot box)]

Recoded: 1=Incumbent Party (PAN); 0=Not Incumbent

Entregar boleta para Diputados Locales al entrevistado y preguntar): Le voy a entregar otra boleta. Si hoy hubiera elecciones para diputados locales, ¿por cuál partido votaría usted? (Pedir que marque su voto en la boleta y solicitar que esta se deposite en la urna)

Gubernatorial Elections

[In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Ignacio Loyola Vera is performing his job as governor?]

1. Approves completely
2. Approves some
3. Disapproves some
4. Disapproves completely
5. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Disapproves completely, 2=Approves/Disapproves some, 3=Approves completely

En general, ¿usted aprueba o desaprueba la forma como Ignacio Loyola Vera está haciendo su trabajo como gobernador del estado? (Insistir): lo (aprueba/desaprueba) totalmente o algo?

1. Aprueba totalmente
2. Aprueba algo
3. Desaprueba algo
4. Desaprueba totalmente
5. No sabe/No contestó

State Economy

[How do you rate economic conditions in the state compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación económica del estado mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró
2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Personal Finances

[How do you rate your own economic conditions compared to a year ago?]

1. Improved
2. Same
3. Worsened
4. Don't know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Worsened, 2=Same, 3=Improved

Comparada con hace un año, ¿diría usted que su situación personal mejoró, empeoró, o sigue igual?

1. Mejoró

2. Sigue igual
3. Empeoró
4. No sabe/No contestó

Party ID

[In general, do you consider yourself priista, panista, or perredista?]

1. Very priista
2. Somewhat priista
3. Very panista
4. Somewhat panista
5. Very perredista
6. Somewhat perredista
7. Other
8. None

Recoded: 1=Incumbent (PAN) [includes “very panista” and “somewhat panista”], 0=Not Incumbent

Generalmente, ¿usted se considera priista, panista o perredista?

1. Muy priista
2. Algo priista
3. Muy panista
4. Algo panista
5. Muy perredista
6. Algo perredista
7. Otro
8. Ninguno
9. No sabe/No contestó

Interest

[How interested are you in the political campaigns going on related to the gubernatorial elections taking place in the state?]

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
5. Does not know/Did not answer

Recoded: 1=Nothing; 2 (2+3+5)=Some; 3=A lot

¿Qué tan interesado está usted en las campañas de los candidatos a la gubernatura del estado: mucho, algo, poco o nada interesado?

1. Mucho
2. Algo
3. Poco
4. Nada
5. No sabe/No contestó

Knowledge

[Can you tell me the date when the next gubernatorial elections will take place in the state?]

1. Mentioned exact date
2. Mentioned incomplete date
3. Does not remember
4. Does not know/Did not answer

Recorded: 1 (3+4)=Does not know; 2=Incomplete; 3=Complete

¿Me podría decir la fecha en que se llevarán a cabo las elecciones para Gobernador del estado...o en este momento no recuerda?

1. Mencionó fecha completa
2. Mencionó fecha incompleta
3. No recuerda
4. No sabe/No contestó

Locality

[Type of locality: 1=Urban; 2=Rural]

Tipo de localidad:

1. Urbano
2. Rural

Education

[What is the highest level of education you have completed?]

- 1=No formal schooling
2. Primary schooling
3. Secondary/technical schooling
4. High school/equivalent
5. University and more
6. Did not answer

Recorded: 1=Secondary or less, 2=Preparatory; 3=University

¿Hasta que año estudio usted? ¿Cuál es su último grado de estudios?

1. No tiene estudios
2. Primaria
3. Secundaria/Técnica
4. Preparatoria/Equivalente
5. Universidad o más
6. No contestó

Income

See Chiapas.

Appendix C. List of States

	State
AGS	Aguascalientes
BC	Baja California
BCS	Baja California Sur
CAMP	Campeche
COAH	Coahuila
COL	Colima
CHIS	Chiapas
CHIH	Chihuahua
DF	Distrito Federal
DGO	Durango
GTO	Guanajuato
GRO	Guerrero
HGO	Hidalgo
JAL	Jalisco
MEX	México
MICH	Michoacán
MOR	Morelos
NAY	Nayarit
NL	Nuevo León
OAX	Oaxaca
PUE	Puebla
QRO	Querétaro
QROO	Quintana Roo
SLP	San Luis Potosí
SIN	Sinaloa
SON	Sonora
TAB	Tabasco
TAM	Tamaulipas
TLAX	Tlaxcala
VER	Veracruz
YUC	Yucatán
ZAC	Zacatecas

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