

# Extortion, Civic Action, and Political Participation among Guatemalan Deportees\*

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## Abstract

How does extortion affect political and civic engagement? Extortion is both a form of victimization and a type of economic hardship, yet existing literature is inconclusive about how both phenomena affect public participation. We argue that extortion as an economic shock will increase grievances, thereby increasing engagement. In contrast, extortion as victimization will prompt fear of crime, thereby depressing engagement. Using novel survey data from migrants deported to Guatemala by the U.S. government, we leverage the quasi-random experience of extortion during migration to test this theory. We find that extortion has a strong positive effect on both civic action and protest after deportation. The results suggest that this effect is mediated partly by increased economic hardship. These findings demonstrate that extortion experienced while migrating has long term financial consequences for deportees which may ultimately shape their reintegration into their home countries.

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*“Migrating is very hard. I’d tell others not to go, to keep striving here in our country. I’d ask them not to make the decision to migrate because [extortion] happened to me, I lost money, and now things are complicated for me because of the American Dream.”*

– Deportee 5, Group 2

## 1 Introduction

How does extortion affect political and civic engagement? Extortion, which uses the threat of violence to extract money from victims, is widespread in Latin America. 7% of Guatemalans reported being extorted in 2019 (LAPOP, 2019), and rates in the region are frequently higher: 19% in Mexico and up to 75% in El Salvador (Dammert, 2021). Yet, we know little about how extortion impacts engagement with political and civic institutions.

Extortion is a form of exposure to violence as well as a form of economic hardship. However, the effects of both victimization and economic insecurity on citizen engagement are unclear. Economic shocks may generate grievances or anger, thereby increasing turnout, or they may reduce the resources required to engage in politics (e.g. Brady et al., 1995; Burden et al., 2017). Similarly, people exposed to violence may be more pro-social and more politically engaged (e.g. Bateson, 2012; Bauer et al., 2016), or they may lose faith in governmental institutions and participate less in civic life (e.g. Collier and Vicente, 2014; Ley, 2018). Therefore, the study of extortion is relevant not only for understanding direct effects on engagement but also for further untangling the broader impacts of economic shocks and violence on civic participation.

Extortion – and the economic shocks and violence it entails – is usually endogenous to the environment in which these experiences occur. For example, violence and economic coercion are more likely to occur in places with high crime rates, and local criminal networks may also shape how and to what degree one is willing to take civic action. In this study, we leverage unique data from Guatemalan deported migrants to isolate the effect of extortion on citizen engagement and to probe whether extortion works through an economic or a violence pathway. Deported migrants are a unique population for this inquiry because extortion occurs outside their home environment. Deportation involuntarily moves individuals, changing their local political and behavioral context so that it is distinct from where the extortion occurred. Furthermore, extortion as experienced by coyote-using migrants in this analysis is quasi-random, allowing us to better isolate the causal relationship between extortion and citizen engagement.

We argue that extortion shapes citizen engagement through two distinct and contradictory mechanisms. On one hand, extortion contributes to citizen *dis*engagement by increasing fear of crime. On the other hand, extortion serves as a negative economic shock which increases engagement. To test this argument, we collected survey data from over 1,000 Guatemalans deported from the U.S. immediately upon their return to Guatemala as well as 1 and 6 months later. We also conducted a series of qualitative interviews to better assess the quantitative results.

We find evidence of two distinct, competing mechanisms linking extortion and civic/political behaviors. Extortion damages respondents' economic conditions, and economic difficulty is correlated with higher civic action and political participation. Additionally, extortion predicts greater fear of crime upon return to Guatemala, and such fear is correlated with higher civic engagement as well. The mobilizing effect of perceived economic hardship is statistically more robust as a mediator, especially for apolitical civic engagement. More precisely, our data show a direct, positive relationship between extortion and interest in a range of public actions, including attending community meetings, volunteering, and protest.

Deported migrants' level of engagement in politics and civil society after forced repatriation has implications for the health of their home communities and democratic institutions. Only limited data exist on deportees' reintegration into civic life in their home countries, despite large numbers of migrants deported annually from the United States to Latin America and from Europe to North Africa, the Balkans, and the Middle East.<sup>1</sup> Prior studies have analyzed the effects of remittances on local politics (Danielson, 2017; Ley et al., 2022) and have examined the role of diasporas in funding conflict (Godwin, 2018), but little has been written about the political influence of these migrants once they are deported back home. Nevertheless, understanding the political engagement of returnees has significant policy implications, including for migration cycles.

## 2 Theory: Extortion and Political Behavior

We theorize that extortion is a form of victimization which will depress engagement by increasing fear of crime. At the same time, extortion is a grievance-generating economic shock which will increase engagement. Here, the term "economic shock" means an unexpected loss of assets, and "victimization" refers to the experience of violence or a credible threat of violence to self or family. We define "citizen engagement" as encompassing both political and civic activities which citizens undertake to influence their government and their broader

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<sup>1</sup>For example, in 2019 and 2020, the United States' Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency deported over 450,000 people (ICE, 2021a,b). The European Union issued deportation orders for over 533,000 people in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016).

community. In examining both political and civic engagement, our work aligns with [Boulding and Holzner \(2021\)](#)'s analytical approach.

Extortion is widespread through much of Latin America ([Dammert, 2021](#); [LAPOP, 2019](#)). Extortion of migrants is particularly widespread and salient (e.g. [Heidbrink, 2019b](#); [Vogt, 2013](#); [MSF, 2017](#)), raising questions of how lingering economic debt and trauma from violence affect reintegration and citizen engagement after return to one's home country. Analytically, extortion experienced while migrating offers two methodological opportunities. First, it primarily occurs in a different location from the political participation of returnees, allowing us to address the endogeneity that often confounds such analyses. Additionally, whether one is extorted while migrating is quasi-random, as we discuss in more detail below, which improves causal inference over purely observational studies.

## 2.1 Victimization and Political Engagement

Although there is little research on how migrant exposure to violence affects political participation, there is a wide range of research (with mixed findings) on the relationship between victimization and political participation more broadly. This literature considers violence or the threat of violence in the context of both crime and armed conflict. Some research suggests that people exposed to violence will be more politically engaged ([Bellows and Miguel, 2009](#); [Bauer et al., 2016](#); [Bateson, 2012](#); [Sønderskov et al., 2020](#)). Scholars have suggested a range of explanations, including individual growth and activation following trauma ([Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004](#); [Blattman, 2009](#)), anger ([Ditton et al., 1999](#)), and the social affirmation of in-group membership ([Schuessler, 2000](#); [Dorff, 2017](#)). Conversely, other research suggests that victimization has a negative effect on political participation; victimized individuals lose faith in government institutions and withdraw from public life ([Collier and Vicente, 2014](#); [Ley, 2018](#); [Coupé and Obrizan, 2016](#)). One possible reason for these contradictory results is the potential confounding role of the context in which victimization occurs. Another explanation is that political and civic engagement are in fact distinct, and the experience of violence may have different effects on action within and outside the political sphere. We posit a novel mechanism tying victimization to depressed citizen engagement: fear.

While there is work showing that migrants vote less than their native counterparts (e.g. [Shaw et al., 2000](#); [Cassel, 2002](#); [Garcia, 2011](#); [OECD, 2018](#)) and research demonstrating that internal migrants participate less in formal and informal networks ([Akarca and Tansel, 2015](#); [Gay, 2012](#); [Gaikwad and Nellis, 2020](#); [Villamizar Chaparro, 2021](#)), there is little evidence concerning 1) the political and civic participation among deportees after return to their

country of origin or 2) how variation in violence experienced while migrating affects such participation. As such, we turn to a consideration of how victimization affects non-political migrant outcomes. Experiencing abuse while migrating is predictive of depression and alcohol dependency (Altman et al., 2018). Among those individuals who experienced victimization during the migration process, such as being robbed or attacked, 21% are at risk for PTSD (Perreira and Ornelas, 2013). This is true not only in Central American migrants, but in migration populations around the world. For example, one meta-analysis of 113 articles confirms that exposure to violence during migration affects mental health; the most frequent consequences include post-traumatic stress disorder (Kirmayer et al., 2011). PTSD is closely tied to anxiety (Torres, 2020). Beyond migration, fear follows crime victimization in general (e.g. Skogan, 1987; Walklate and Mythen, 2007). Thus, one of the most important mental health consequences of experiencing violence is increased levels of anxiety.

We theorize that victimization from extortion is correlated with increased fear of repeated crime among deportees. We follow Gabriel and Greve (2003) in defining fear of crime as a “disposition (trait) [which] describes my tendency to experience fear of crime in certain situations” (p. 601). As such, fear of crime varies across individuals. A series of studies in diverse contexts have shown a correlation between victimization and fear of crime (Mesch, 2000; Dammert and Malone, 2003; Singer et al., 2019).

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

Among the situations individuals will avoid out of fear of crime are those entailing political or civic engagement. Indeed, both depression and anxiety are politically demobilizing (Weber, 2012; Young, 2019; Burden et al., 2017; Landwehr and Ojeda, 2021). For example, when triggered to consider stressful life experiences unrelated to politics, individuals without a history of participation in politics are less likely to turn out to vote (Hassell and Settle, 2017). Overall, we hypothesize that those deportees who were extorted during the migration process will suffer from higher levels of fear of crime than other deportees; this fear will predict citizen disengagement.

## 2.2 Economic Hardship and Political Engagement

While extortion has psychological effects, it also has economic consequences. However, like the literature on victimization, research into the relationship between economic shocks, limited economic resources, and political engagement is inconclusive. On the one hand, people with fewer resources are less able to engage in politics. Yet, negative income shocks may prompt grievances against the government, leading to increased political engagement.

Those who face economic insecurity or who grew up economically disadvantaged are less likely to participate in politics compared to people who are more socioeconomically prosperous (Blais, 2006; Schlozman et al., 2013; Smets and van Ham, 2013; Ojeda, 2018).<sup>2</sup> At the individual level, the resource model of civic engagement provides one explanation: time, money, and civic skills provide the resources required to engage in politics (Brady et al., 1995). Poverty, for example, increases the opportunity costs of political participation as well as the number of tasks competing with political issues for attention (Rosenstone, 1982). Because deportees who have been extorted are likely to be less socioeconomically prosperous than deportees who have not, this model suggests that victims of extortion will be less likely to participate in politics.

However, another literature focused on grievance suggests that people experiencing negative economic shocks may be more motivated to participate politically. For example, increased unemployment rates in the United States are correlated with higher turnout (Burden and Wichowsky, 2014; Cebula, 2017). These effects may vary across race and ethnic groups (Huyser et al., 2018) as well as region (Boulding and Holzner, 2021). Aguilar and Pacek (2000) similarly argue that macroeconomic downturns in developing nations increase turnout, in particular among those who are most affected i.e. lower-status voters. In a test of the grievance mechanism, Rhodes-Purdy et al. (2021) find that economic crises prompt anger.<sup>3</sup>

One author summarizes the distinction between these two literatures thus: “structural economic disadvantage unambiguously demobilises individuals, [whereas] the deterioration of economic prospects instead increases political activity” (Kurer et al., 2019, p. 866). Given this distinction, we suggest that the literature on negative economic shocks better captures the situation extorted deportees face. Deportees are on average socioeconomically disadvantaged, regardless of whether they have been extorted or not. They have left their home countries, frequently in search of better jobs, and then they were forcibly deported. Extorted deportees, however, have suffered from an additional and unexpected deterioration

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<sup>2</sup>An exception comes from Boulding and Holzner (2021), who argue that resource constrained individuals in Latin America tend to participate in politics at higher rates than their wealthier counterparts.

<sup>3</sup>In contrast, Hall et al. (2021) find that counties affected by larger increases in foreclosure in the United States had lower turnout.

of their economic prospects. This economic shock will increase citizen engagement.

## 2.3 Expectations

In summary, extortion should affect deportees’ political and civic engagement. This effect may work via two distinct – and potentially counteracting – mediators. On one hand, extortion as a form of victimization should increase fear, which depresses citizen engagement. On the other hand, extortion creates increased economic hardship, which increases citizen engagement. These arguments can be formally hypothesized as follows:

- *Hypothesis 1a (Extortion to Increased Fear of Crime)*: Deportees extorted while migrating are more likely to fear crime compared to deportees who were not extorted.
- *Hypothesis 1b (Extortion to Increased Economic Hardship)*: Deportees extorted while migrating are more likely to experience economic hardship than those who were not extorted.
- *Hypothesis 2a (Fear of Crime Mediator)*: Extortion’s positive effect on fear of crime will lead to lower citizen engagement.
- *Hypothesis 2b (Economic Hardship Mediator)*: Extortion’s positive effect on economic hardship will lead to higher citizen engagement.

If fear and economic hardship both mediate the relationship between extortion and political engagement, a final hypothesis should concern which mechanism plays a larger role. However, we have no prior reason to believe that one mechanism is more or less important than the other. Thus, we explore this issue empirically.

## 3 Context: The Migration Experience

In 2019, ICE deported more than 267,000 individuals from the United States. Of these, almost 55,000 migrants were deported from the U.S. to Guatemala, a 12-year high (ICE, 2021a). More generally, Guatemala has received 18% of migrants deported from the US since 2018, second only to Mexico (Abuelafia et al., 2019). These large numbers of deportations make it crucial to understand how and when deported migrants are able to reintegrate into their “home” societies and political systems, often after years abroad.

A range of macro-level conditions in Guatemala have contributed to emigration to the United States, including socioeconomic difficulties, violence associated with transnational organized crime, and rampant corruption (e.g. Jonas and Rodríguez, 2015; Bermeo, 2018;

Abuelafia et al., 2019). The journey can be dangerous, and many migrants from Central America suffer extortion, assault, kidnapping, and/or rape during the journey (e.g. Leyva-Flores et al., 2019; Abuelafia et al., 2019; Infante et al., 2012; Slack et al., 2018). A cross-sectional study of over twelve thousand migrants in transit through Mexico to the United States suggests that nearly a third of migrants from Central America report experiencing violence, including not only physical violence but also psychological and sexual violence, during the journey (Leyva-Flores et al., 2019).

One particularly prominent form of violence against migrants is extortion. Heidbrink (2019b) finds that, of 50 youths and families who had migrated from Guatemala, nearly 90 percent incurred debt to fund their migration. The migrants do not always consent to paying. In Mexico, criminals kidnap migrants in order to extort money from their families (Vogt, 2013). When the migrants do not reveal familial contact information, many are physically abused (MSF, 2017). While migrants may start the route with coyotes who are recommended to them, these coyotes may hand off migrants to others along the route. Additionally, throughout the journey migrants may be targeted by gangs or other predatory groups. In our qualitative interviews, returnees discussed extortion during migration: they were required to pay more often or sooner in the journey than they had initially agreed upon, held in a location until they paid additional money, and/or had their family members in Guatemala threatened until additional money was paid.

Although little work has been done on the topic of Guatemalans' reintegration into civil society after deportation, studies from other countries shed light on the issues faced by deportees. Many returnees lack social networks in their country of origin and are more closely tied to the country from which they were deported (Ruben et al., 2009; Kanstroom, 2012; Slack, 2019; Caldwell, 2019). Financially, debt incurred during migration can fuel cycles of migration, deportation, and re-migration for deportees (Schuster and Majidi, 2013; Heidbrink, 2019a).

## 4 Research Design: Data and Methods

### 4.1 Deportee Survey

We employ data from an original survey of recent migrants deported from the United States and returned to Guatemala.<sup>4</sup> Beginning in October 2019, we partnered with RTI International and Te Conecta, a Guatemalan NGO, to implement a face-to-face survey of newly arrived deportees at the Air Force airport in Guatemala City. This airport is the main

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<sup>4</sup>The project was approved by (identifiable information) University's IRB, protocol 2020-0075.

arrival point for deportees sent to Guatemala and typically receives 3-5 planes of deportees 4-5 days per week. The first stage of the survey was implemented upon returnee arrival and was conducted from October 2019 and March 2020. After that, COVID-19 made in-person data collection impossible; follow-up surveys were conducted by phone. To initially recruit respondents, our survey team greeted deportees after they had been processed and as they were leaving the airport. Enumerators were instructed to randomly select individuals to approach with information about the study and not to select based on any observable characteristics. In practice, this meant selecting approximately every fifth deportee. This methodology gives us confidence that we obtained a reasonably representative sample of deportees, as do demographic similarities between our data and official ICE data tracked by Syracuse University’s TRAC Immigration. For example, 11 percent of Guatemalans deported from 2004 to 2020 were women, and 8 percent of our sample were women.<sup>5</sup> We interviewed 1,357 deportees upon their arrival to the country, and respondents were offered 50 Quetzales, equivalent to about 6.50 USD, to participate in the first survey round.

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

Additionally, we conducted 18 semi-structured phone interviews with deported migrants from our survey sample. These interviews covered the deported migrants’ experiences after their return to Guatemala as well as the migration experience itself. The goal of these interviews was to provide more detailed process tracing for mechanisms linking extortion (or lack thereof) and downstream behaviors in Guatemala. To recruit interview participants, we divided all survey respondents for whom we had contact information and who reported using a coyote<sup>6</sup> into four different groups. These groups were created along two theoretically

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<sup>5</sup>Many other characteristics of deportees are withheld by ICE.

<sup>6</sup>87% of all respondents; we did not have extortion survey data for respondents who did not use a coyote, see below.

important dimensions: (a) their intention to remigrate and (b) whether they experienced extortion. From each of these four groups, we selected a random sample of respondents and interviewed between 4 and 5 respondents per group. Interviews lasted on average 30 minutes, and participants were compensated with 50 Quetzales of phone credit. For more information about the final number of interviews from each group of migrants, see Table A1. For a full list of questions used in the semi-structured interviews, see the Appendix.

It is important to briefly discuss a few ethical considerations, given the vulnerability of the population on whom this research focuses and the sensitive nature of some of the questions. Firstly, it was essential to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents. Thus, upon completion of the surveys, non-identifiable data was stored in encrypted form on an Amazon Web Services S3 server; only principal investigators on the project were able to download the data for decryption and analysis. Furthermore, all identifiable contact information for respondents was collected offline using paper and pencil and then stored in an encrypted database separate from the survey answers. Once transferred to the encrypted database, the pen and paper versions of the contact information was destroyed. Similarly, all qualitative interview recordings were made on devices without internet connectivity, they were deleted once transcripts were completed, and all identifiable information has been removed from the transcripts. Secondly, we took measures to ensure that respondents were not coerced into taking the survey. Participants were able to skip questions and stop the surveys/interviews at any point, though they only received compensation if they completed a given survey. Given literacy rates, enumerators provided written copies of consent forms but also read the consent script out loud. The compensation provided to respondents was reasonable and appreciated, according to field notes, and was not so large that it placed participants at undue risk by carrying large volumes of money in Guatemala. Finally, COVID-19 posed ethical issues to continuing in-person surveys. Thus, once COVID-19 became a threat, we ceased all in-person surveys and conducted all remaining surveys exclusively by phone.

Our key independent variable, “Extortion,” measures whether respondents (or their families) were forced to pay additional smuggling fees beyond what they had originally agreed to pay coyotes to reach the U.S. For respondents who traveled to the U.S. multiple times, this question was asked specifically in regard to their most recent journey. This question was only asked to the 87% of respondents who used a coyote at some point in their migration journey.<sup>7</sup> While migrants who do and do not use coyotes differ in systematic ways, such as indigeneity and age (see Appendix Table A4), we focus our analysis exclusively focuses on the majority of respondents who did use a coyote, of whom 17% experienced extortion.

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<sup>7</sup>We cannot assume that migrants who did not use a coyote did not experience extortion from some other criminal actor, but their experience is sufficiently distinct that we focus on coyote-using migrants only here.

10% of coyote-utilizing migrants were extorted en route to the U.S., while the remaining 7% were extorted after crossing the border. This question was asked during our baseline survey upon arrival and therefore is unlikely to have primed respondents when answering questions about their economic circumstances or citizen engagement (key outcome variables) in our follow-up surveys months later.

We draw on several survey measures to construct a standardized summary index measuring deportees’ degree of economic hardship. Following Anderson (2008), we construct a standardized inverse covariance index. The “Economic Hardship Index” uses information from respondents’ monthly income, unemployment status, ratings of their current economic situation (“Econ Rate”), and economic hardship since returning to Guatemala (“Hardship”). We collected each of these at 1- and 6-month post-arrival survey waves. For all measures, higher values indicate more negative or difficult economic situations. We construct indices such as this to avoid problems stemming from comparisons of multiple outcome variables.

To conceptualize fear of crime, we use a set of questions asked in the second and third survey waves about actions taken by respondents since their deportation out of *fear of being a crime victim*. The behaviors include: avoiding leaving their homes by themselves, avoiding using public transit, preventing children from leaving the house, feeling the need to move to a different neighborhood, changing their job or place of study, or obtaining a weapon for personal security. For our main analysis, we use the count variable “Fear of Crime” (ranging from 0-6) summing the number of fear items the respondent selected.

We measure civic action and political engagement using two separate indices. Index items measured respondent likelihood (on a 5-point scale) of taking different types of action in the coming year. For the civic action index, we track three behaviors: participating in community meetings, volunteering, and mentoring youth. We thus analyze civic action as a simple 3-item average “Civic Index.” Separately, we also analyze a “Political Index” constructed as the average response on 3 key types of behavior indicative of political engagement: protest, affiliating with a political party, and voting.<sup>8</sup>

We include a range of control variables across our regression models, including a binary measure of whether respondents left assets in the United States, binary measures indicating whether respondents have at least one child in the United States or in Guatemala, highest level of education completed, a binary variable indicating whether the respondent was last apprehended at the border, a log of the number of years in the United States, and employment status. We also control for the degree of migrants’ social integration in the locality to which the deportees returned: the number of family and friends which migrants report living

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<sup>8</sup>Though we include voting because it is a conventional measure of political behavior, it is important to note that elections in our survey context in Guatemala would not occur for another three or four years (in 2023). It may therefore be a weaker indicator of actual voting intent.

nearby at the time of the follow-up survey. We also include various demographic variables. “Indigenous” refers to whether respondents’ mother tongue is anything besides Spanish. We also include a variable indicating whether respondents have visible tattoos because of affiliations between gangs and tattoos in Guatemala. Finally, we control for survey round. The 1- and 6-month follow-up surveys straddled the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, so this control variable also captures any changes in the dependent variable that may be linked to the pandemic, such as an overall lower interest in (or expectation of) civic/political engagement. Summary statistics for all variables can be found in Table A2.

In terms of social desirability bias, the U.S. and Guatemalan governments already knew that respondents had crossed borders without the required documentation, and they had thus been deported. As a result, respondents had little to hide in discussing their migration experience. It is possible, however, that respondents were hesitant to admit that they had been victimized. This would be likely if the perpetrators had ties to Guatemala and could threaten deportees for speaking about the extortion. However, our concerns about this are limited given the openness of interviewees in discussing their victimization experiences during migration as well as mentioning victimization experienced by people they know. Further, under-reporting of victimization would bias the analysis against finding results.

## 4.2 Randomness of Extortion

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

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

Migrants could theoretically reduce the likelihood of victimization by selecting “good” coyotes before they begin their journey. However, migrants do not always have the capacity

to gauge the trustworthiness of coyotes because of the networked structure of the coyote business. Additionally, many migrants travel to border towns on their own and then contract coyotes there (Spener, 2009). Migrants who connect with coyotes at borders are “in effect, giving themselves over to fate” (Spener, 2009, p. 179). Our qualitative work also shows that it is unusual for the same coyote to take people from Guatemala all the way into the US border. For example, one respondent (Group 1 Interview 2) emphasizes how dangerous bus stations in Mexico are for migrants due to the frequency of kidnapping there.

Even as our interviewees recommend that new migrants know the coyotes with whom they leave Guatemala, their broader advice for avoiding extortion is limited and underscores extortion’s frequency, randomness, and unavoidability. Two interviewees specifically say that putting oneself in God’s hands is the best suggestion they have to avoid extortion. Others say,

- “All the routes are the same... dangerous” (Group 1 Interview 2)
- “It’s common for you to be extorted, robbed. [...] You can’t prevent it” (Group 4, Interview 2)
- “I haven’t heard of anything [to avoid extortion]” (Group 4 Interview 1)
- “There is no good recommendation.” (Group 2 Interview 5)

Table 1 below provides support for the randomness of extortion by showing that the “extortion” and “non-extortion” samples of respondents are well-balanced upon reentry to Guatemala. Among migrants who used a coyote in our broader sample, there is not a statistically significant difference between individuals who were extorted and individuals who were not in terms of their age, ethnicity, education completed, children (in Guatemala and in the United States), deportation from the U.S. border or not, number of years spent in the United States, or tattoos. However, it appears that women were slightly more likely to report extortion during the migration journey. This difference is substantively small, though, and only significant at the 90% confidence level. It is important to take this difference with a grain of salt, given that very few of the deportees in our sample were women (8%). Additionally, the extortion group has a slightly higher mean number of past migration trips (1.77) compared to the non-extortion sample (1.62).

**Table 1:** Extortion During Migration - Arrivals

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)
	No Extortion	Extortion	Difference
Age	30.98 (9.476)	30.99 (8.962)	0.009 (0.734)
Indigenous	0.387 (0.487)	0.437 (0.497)	0.050 (0.038)
Female	0.075 (0.263)	0.111 (0.314)	0.036+ (0.021)
Highest Education	6.262 (4.481)	6.764 (4.479)	0.502 (0.350)
Married	0.297 (0.457)	0.256 (0.438)	-0.040 (0.035)
Children in GT	1.198 (1.589)	1.241 (1.655)	0.043 (0.125)
Children in U.S.	0.406 (0.942)	0.518 (1.226)	0.112 (0.078)
Detained at Border	0.659 (0.474)	0.615 (0.488)	-0.044 (0.038)
Years in U.S.	4.398 (5.949)	4.392 (5.865)	-0.006 (0.474)
Number of Migrations	1.622 (1.090)	1.774 (1.084)	0.152+ (0.085)
Have Visible Tattoos	0.084 (0.277)	0.076 (0.266)	-0.007 (0.022)
Observations	924	199	
+ $p < 0.10$ , * $p < 0.05$ , ** $p < 0.01$			

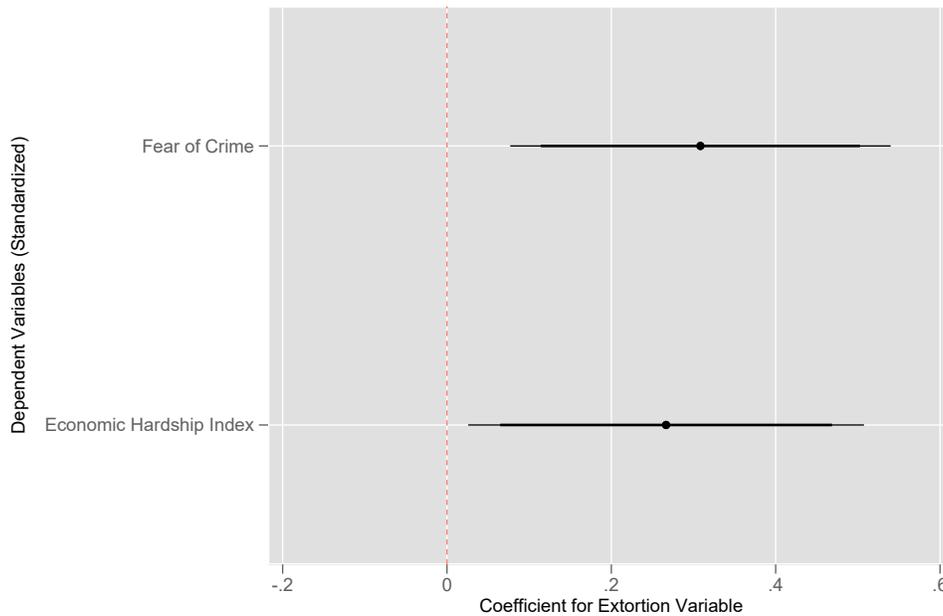
Similarly, since much of our later analysis relies on follow-up surveys with migrants, we consider the possibility that non-random survey attrition could lead to imbalance in extortion experiences. Table A3 shows that most observable variables remain balanced when we consider the restricted follow-up sample only. However, the sample experiencing extortion (64 respondents) does have slightly higher proportions of women and a higher number of children in the US, when compared to the non-extortion sample (275 respondents), and those experiencing extortion were less likely to be detained at the border. To help account for this non-random attrition, we control for each of these variables (as well as other factors) in our later regression analysis.

## 5 Results

First, we explore extortion’s effect on the two conditions theorized to affect civic and political actions: economic hardship and fear of crime. We test our expectation that extortion will cause both increased fear of further crime victimization (H1a) and greater economic hardship (H1b) using OLS regression models. The effects of extortion on these outcomes are shown in Figure 1. Full numerical regression results can be found in Table A5.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>It is important to note that migrants who were extorted were no more likely to be educated or indigenous; both of these variables may proxy for pre-migration socioeconomic status (Table 1).

**Figure 1: Extortion Predicts Poor Outcomes: Fear of Crime and Economic Hardship**



**Note:** Y-axis displays dependent variables. DVs are on standardized scale. Estimates are OLS regression coefficients for the extortion variable on each DV (95% and 90% confidence intervals).

As Figure 1 demonstrates, we find a statistically significant positive relationship between extortion and both fear of crime and economic hardship. First, the results indicate that extortion causes higher levels of fear of crime; respondents who experienced extortion report levels of fear 0.3 standard deviations higher than respondents that were not extorted. This amounts to taking roughly 0.45 more avoidant behaviors due to a fear of crime.

Respondents who experienced extortion also report levels of economic hardship 0.28 standard deviations greater than respondents that did not suffer from extortion. The qualitative interviews echo this; respondents frequently and openly expressed their concerns about debt repayment and lack of economic opportunities in Guatemala. When asked about what has been hardest for them upon reentry to Guatemala, interviewees almost unanimously cited a lack of work as the biggest challenge. Larger debts from the migration journey compounded this stress. For example, Interviewee 5 from Group 2 was held by coyotes in a house in Mexico, and their family in Guatemala was threatened until the coyotes were paid (more and sooner than initially agreed upon). The deportee took out a loan at 10% monthly interest, which still is not paid off. This individual explained, “sometimes one can’t even sleep, thinking about how there’s a payment due tomorrow but there’s no money.”

We include a series of robustness checks in the Appendix. We find a positive impact of extortion on fear of crime using a negative binomial model for our unstandardized count

variable and a logistic regression model for a binary dependent variable (Table A6). We also show models for each dependent variable used to construct the economic hardship index (Table A6). In addition to our economic hardship index, we also show that extortion is related to deportees’ perceptions of reintegration barriers upon arrival in Guatemala: Column 7 in Table A6 shows that respondents who suffered extortion report that they expect debt to be a larger barrier to reintegration.<sup>10</sup>

## 5.1 Extortion’s Effect on Engagement

We now examine both direct and indirect effects of extortion on citizen engagement. First, we find a large direct effect of extortion on both civic and political action (Figures 2 and 3). For civic action (community meetings, volunteering, and mentoring), extortion during migration correlates with a desire to take civic action that is 0.2 points higher on a 5-point scale. This direct effect is equivalent to an increase of about 0.25 standard deviations on the civic action index. The direct effect of extortion on political participation is of similar magnitude but weaker significance: 0.25 units on a 5-point scale, or about 0.22 standard deviations (significant at the 90% level).

The weaker results for the political action outcome may be partly due to how political participation is measured: the overall direct effect of extortion on political participation is almost exclusively driven by the index’s “protest” component. Extortion has a positive and statistically significant effect on protest, and virtually no effect (in magnitude or significance) on political parties or voting (see Table A9). Interestingly, protest is a form of political action outside the existing political system, while voting and joining parties – the other two index items – are actions within the existing system. This raises the question of whether extortion drives interest in institutional change but also disillusionment with the existing political process.

Our qualitative interviews provide some insight into the difference in coefficient strength between engagement with politics and other forms of civic engagement. Some extorted deportees have less desire to remigrate due to financial constraints or trauma. Consequently, they talk about what they want to do to improve their home communities now that they are staying. Yet, even those who are invested in their communities (helping neighbors, going to community meetings, etc.) are generally apathetic toward local politicians. For example, one returnee indicates that he is an active member of his community and explains, “I am a taxi driver and I always help people at any hour” (Group 1, Interview 2). Yet he also notes that “from politicians, you can never get any help.”

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<sup>10</sup>This survey question on debt was asked during our arrival survey but not during follow-up waves.

Next, we turn to mediation analysis to test whether extortion mobilizes via economic hardship or crime victimization. We follow the approach described in Imai et al. (2010) to estimate both the Average Causal Mediation Effect (ACME) of extortion via our hypothesized mediators. Before presenting the results below, we discuss the assumptions required for identifying these estimates as causal effects in our study.

Estimating causal effects from mediation analysis requires the strong assumption of sequential ignorability. Sequential ignorability requires, first, that our “treatment” variable (extortion) is independent of the potential outcomes of both the mediating variables (fear and economic hardship) and the political/civic engagement outcomes (conditional on observed pre-treatment covariates). Given the quasi-random nature of extortion, we believe this is a reasonable assumption. Second, however, sequential ignorability also requires the observed mediators to be independent of all potential outcomes conditional on the treatment and pre-treatment covariates. This is a more difficult assumption to meet in our context since both fear of crime and economic hardship are likely to be affected by factors other than migration journey victimization. We therefore interpret our estimates of mediation effects as more suggestive than causal.

We conduct a separate mediation analysis for the two mediators, fear and economic hardship. Figure 2 presents estimates of ACME and ADE for extortion and the “fear of crime” mediator. The left panel shows effects on the civic action index outcome, while the right panel displays effects on the political action index.<sup>11</sup> We find very little evidence of any causal mediation effect for extortion via fear on either civic or political action. The point estimates for the ACME are near zero and not significant when looking at either action index. This challenges our expectation that fear acts as a demobilizing force – in this case, fear of crime appears to have little relationship at all with citizen engagement.

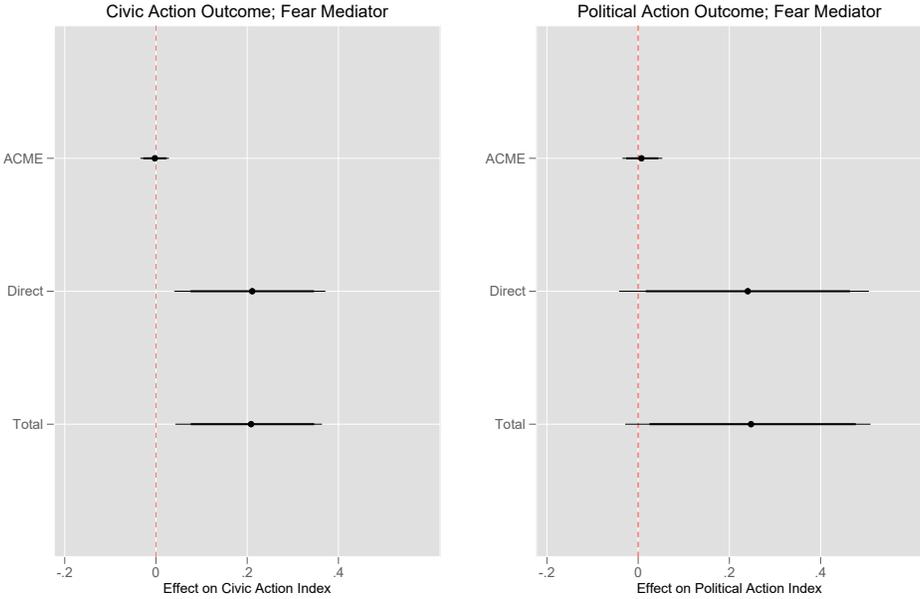
By comparison, Figure 3 plots the results of the mediation analysis using economic hardship as the mediator.<sup>12</sup> For the civic action outcome, we do find a suggestive positive ACME of 0.02, but it is only significant at the 85% level. The mediated effect is relatively small compared to the ADE of extortion on civic action, representing about 9% of the total effect. Finally, the ACME is estimated to be near zero for political participation.

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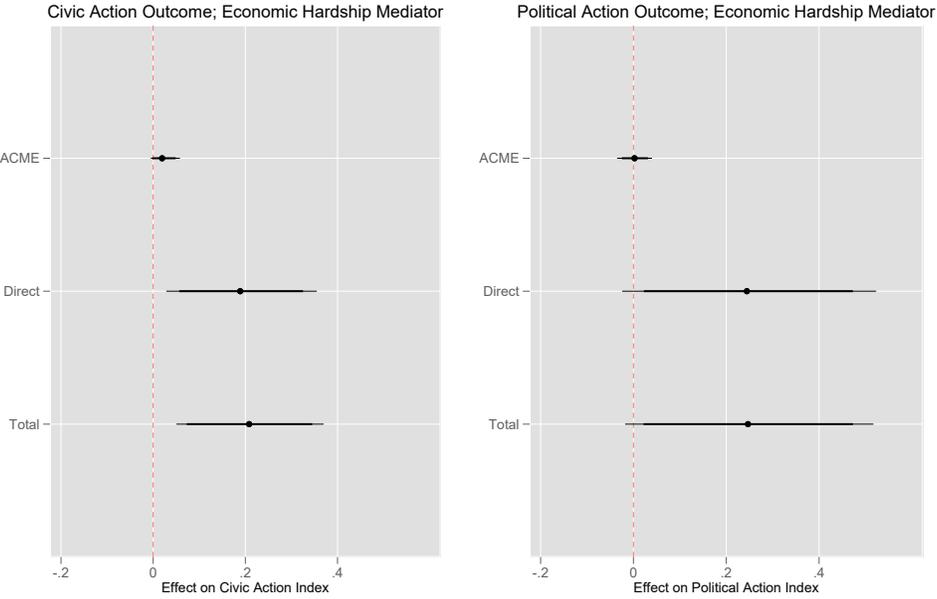
<sup>11</sup>Full regression models are presented in Table A7.

<sup>12</sup>Full regression models are presented in Table A8.

**Figure 2: Mediation Analysis: Extortion and Fear of Crime on Citizen Engagement**



**Figure 3: Mediation Analysis: Extortion and Economic Hardship on Citizen Engagement**



**Notes:** Mediation effects computed over 2000 simulations using the “mediation” package in Stata. Models are OLS regressions. Plots show 90% and 95% confidence intervals.

Broadly, the results visualized in Figures 2 and 3 indicate that, for Guatemalan migrants, economic shocks experienced hundreds of miles away predict increased interest in civic action and protest after deportation back to their home country. This effect appears robust across our main outcomes.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, this positive correlation between extortion and engagement does not appear to generalize to another common type of victimization – assault – which does not have the same direct economic consequences. Regressing the civic and political indices against a dummy variable for migration journey assault shows no correlation (see Table A10). This is one indication that an economic-grievance mechanism may be more powerful than a fear-based one.

Our qualitative evidence further suggests the importance of the link between extortion, economic hardship, and civic engagement. Migrants who were extorted expressed a stronger determination to improve life in their Guatemalan communities, sometimes linked to an aversion to trying to remigrate and a renewed focus on home communities. Despite widespread disaffection with political parties and national political systems (likely contributing to the weaker political effects seen in our analysis), respondents talked about civic engagement outside of the traditional political system: volunteering labor for a potable water project (Group 2, Interview 5), helping single moms or the elderly (Group 2, Interview 3), etc. For some, a sense of frustration related to migration victimization, lingering debt, and an ongoing lack of employment opportunities fuel a determination to pursue change. Multiple respondents use the word “luchar” in describing this focus, which translates broadly to striving, struggling, and/or fighting for change. For example, one individual who was extorted said, “there is no work, and we have very low economic status, and for this reason it is difficult to continue onward. But we have to fight, to hope” (Group 1, Interview 1). This attitude may help explain why extortion increased interest in protest but not other components of the political participation index.

In summary, our study demonstrates that extortion has strong *direct* effects on civic action, as well as direct effects on economic hardship and fear of crime. In turn, economic hardship predicts downstream civic action amongst Guatemalan deportees. However, we find only weak evidence that the effects of extortion on engagement are mediated through our hypothesized mechanisms. It is possible that fear of crime doesn’t mediate the relationship because the violence occurred in a distinct location; further research should explore the extent to which victimization contributes to fear of additional similar victimization (i.e.

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<sup>13</sup>Since we are testing multiple hypotheses related to the extortion variable, we report Romano-Wolf corrected p-values for our main outcomes in Table A11. The Romano-Wolf correction helps to control the familywise error rate (FWER). More details on this procedure can be found in the Appendix. Overall, while the adjusted p-values are slightly larger, as we would expect, our results on fear of crime, economic hardship, and civic action remain statistically significant at the 95% level and political action remains significant at the 90% level.

extortion on the migration journey) versus creating a more generalized sense of fear. While the pathway through economic hardship to civic action is most supported in our analysis, the direct effect of extortion on civic action is much larger than the mediated effect. Thus, alternative mechanisms, including cognitive or emotional ones, should be explored in further studies.

## 6 Conclusion and Implications

How does extortion experienced during the migration journey affect the political and civic participation of deportees? Because the extortion of migrants occurs in a distinct location from the environment in which victims are participating politically as deportees, our study can distinguish the impact of extortion on civic engagement from potentially confounding factors related to the context in which victimization occurs. We find that extortion has a significant direct effect on increased citizen engagement, especially when such action occurs outside strictly political spaces. Economic hardship exacerbated by extortion may mediate some of this effect. Qualitative evidences suggests that extortion deters remigration and increases a desire to build community, even amid dissatisfaction with political institutions.

We also explore extortion’s potentially oppositional psychological and economic effects. We find that extortion increases both fear of crime and economic hardship. Negative economic assessments are correlated with higher civic interest, although fear is not strongly correlated with changes in civic engagement.

The results from our analysis provide insights for policymakers and programs working to support displaced persons. Additionally, given the volume of migration to the United States from Central America and deportation from the United States back to Central America, it is crucial to understand the impact that forcibly relocating migrants has on deportees’ interactions with their “home” communities and the prospects for stable governance there.

Our data show that the experience of extortion has a lasting financial effect on migrants. Information campaigns in sending communities might educate potential migrants and their networks about the true financial cost of migration, which with extortion can be higher than expected or originally quoted by coyotes. Such information would enable households to make more informed decisions, more accurately incorporating the risk and cost of extortion into their migration decision. In addition, our results highlight a vicious cycle: economic hardship is a main driver of migration through Mexico to the U.S., and extortion – particularly for deported migrants – compounds and extends economic need.

In one sense, these results are promising for the community reintegration of deported migrants: higher economic need and/or issue salience seems to motivate individuals to be-

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

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

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## 7 Appendix

### 7.1 Question language from survey instrument

*All questions are asked in waves 2-3 unless otherwise noted.*

#### **Extortion**

*If used coyote on most recent migration trip:*

Coyotes, people who work with coyotes, and other individuals who transport people to and within the United States may use threats or other intimidating acts to make you feel too afraid to try to leave. At any stage during your most recent trip to the U.S., did any of the following happen to you?

You/your family were required to pay more smuggling fees than originally agreed or bad things would happen to you or your family

#### **Fear (Any and Count)**

*Fear Any: 0 if none selected, 1 if 1+ selected*

*Fear Count: Count variable 0-6 of items experienced*

Out of fear of being a crime victim, since you arrived back in Guatemala:

- Have you avoided leaving your home by yourself at night?
- Have you avoided using public transportation?
- Have you prevented children from leaving the house?
- Have you felt the need to move to a different neighborhood out of fear of crime?
- Since you arrived, have you changed your job or place of study out of fear of crime?
- Since you arrived, have you obtained a weapon for personal security?

#### **Economic hardship**

Your economic hardship in Guatemala is: low difficulty, medium difficulty, high difficulty

#### **Economic rating**

In general, how would you rate your current economic situation? Would you say that it is very good, good, neither good nor bad, bad or very bad?

#### **Debt Barrier (Wave 1 ONLY)**

I want to ask you about some challenges that you may experience with your return to Guatemala. Please indicate how strongly you think these issues may impact your life. A response of 1 means that you expect it to have no impact and a score of 10 means it will be extremely difficult. (Paying outstanding debts)

#### **Civic and Political Actions**

There are many ways of getting involved in one's community. Do you think you will or will not do each of the following in the coming year? [Answers on 5-pt scale: (1) I definitely

won't; (2) I probably won't; (3) I'm feeling about 50/50; (4) I probably will; (5) I definitely will]

- Attend a community meeting [civic]
- Volunteer with a local organization [civic]
- Mentor young people around here [civic]
- Participate in a peaceful protest [political]
- Affiliate with a political party [political]
- Vote in a future national election [political]

## 7.2 Qualitative Interviews

In order to more deeply contextualize the mechanisms of our main results, we conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with deportees that used a coyote for crossing into the US. We divided these individuals in four groups based on their intentions to remigrate and their experience of extortion. We then randomly selected ten from each group to contact by phone with the goal of interviewing between 4 and 5 people per group. The final number of interviewees per group can be found in Table A1. Given the COVID-19 restrictions, we conducted all of these interviews by phone. The interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes, and participants were compensated with 50 Quetzales of phone credit. Group 1 individuals were extorted and intended to remigrate, group 2 respondents were extorted and did not intend to remigrate, group 3 interview subjects were not extorted and intended to remigrate, and group 4 individuals were neither extorted nor intended to remigrate.

**Table A1:** Number of Interviews per group

		Extorted	
		Yes	No
Intent to Remigrate	Yes	4	5
	No	4	5

### 7.2.1 Semi-Structured Interview Questions, English

1. First of all, can you please tell me a little about what it has been like to reestablish yourself in Guatemala? What has gone well for you and what has been challenging?
  - How easy or hard is it to get by financially since you returned from Guatemala? (Why? Can you give examples?)
    - Do expenses from the U.S. or the migration journey make your economic situation easier or more difficult? Can you give examples?

- How does your economic situation affect how you feel about the future? Why?
    - Do these feelings affect whether you want to stay in Guatemala or return to the U.S.? How so?
  - There are different ways that we all experience stress. Stress can make us more emotional, more forgetful, and more likely to make mistakes. Stress also may make it harder to sleep or to make healthy choices. To what extent do you feel stress these days, and in what ways? (Why? Examples?)
    - Is your economic situation a source of stress? Why?
    - Does this stress affect whether you want to stay in Guatemala or return to the U.S.? How so?
2. Now, I'd like you to think back to your migration experience getting to the U.S. I know that this journey can sometimes be very difficult in many different ways. Can you tell me a little about what was easy or hard about the journey? What parts of your experience would you like people in the U.S. to be aware of?
- Did you consider using a coyote on the journey? If so, what made you decide to use one or not?
  - If you did use a coyote, was it someone familiar to you or people you know, or was it a stranger? On what parts of the journey did you use a coyote?
  - In our research, we have seen that some returnees were tricked or taken advantage of by coyotes. In your experience or the experience of people you know, do you think this is common? What kinds of experiences have you heard of like this?
3. How safe or unsafe do you feel in your community these days? Why do you feel that way?
- How do your feelings about community safety affect the ways you are (or are not) active in your community? Why?
  - (ask if some level of discomfort or fear) What kinds of actions would you like to take if you felt more comfortable or established in your community? Are there programs, meetings, or organizations you would like to be more involved in? Why?
4. Are there ways in which your migration experience has changed who you are today? For example, are there ways you are stronger and more confident? Are there ways you are more cautious or skeptical?
5. If you could tell other Guatemalans thinking about going to the U.S. how the journey may affect them long-term, what would you say? What should they be prepared for, and how can they best move past any negative experiences they might have?

## 7.3 Summary Statistics

**Table A2:** Summary Statistics

	Obs	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Extortion	510	0.20	0.40	0.0	1.0
Assault	510	0.07	0.25	0.0	1.0
Civic Action Index	507	4.51	0.88	1.0	5.0
Attend Community Meeting	507	4.45	1.18	1.0	5.0
Volunteer with Community Org	509	4.48	1.13	1.0	5.0
Intend to Mentor Youth	509	4.61	0.94	1.0	5.0
Political Action Index	502	3.54	1.14	1.0	5.0
Attend Peaceful Protest	510	3.27	1.75	1.0	5.0
Affiliate with Party	507	2.82	1.78	1.0	5.0
Intend to Vote	505	4.51	1.19	1.0	5.0
Econ Summary Index	510	-0.01	0.70	-2.1	1.2
Econ Rating (Very Bad=5)	509	3.40	0.90	1.0	5.0
Economic Hardship	510	2.21	0.75	1.0	3.0
Monthly Income	508	2.01	1.19	1.0	8.0
Unemployed	509	0.52	0.50	0.0	1.0
Fear of Crime (Count)	510	1.94	1.46	0.0	6.0
Fear of Crime (Any)	510	0.78	0.41	0.0	1.0
Female	510	0.13	0.33	0.0	1.0
Age	510	30.95	9.16	19.0	63.0
Indigenous	510	0.37	0.48	0.0	1.0
Highest Education Completed	510	6.98	4.48	0.0	17.0
Visible Tattoos	510	1.94	0.24	1.0	2.0
Children in US	510	0.22	0.42	0.0	1.0
Children in GT	510	0.50	0.50	0.0	1.0
Assets Left in U.S.	510	0.13	0.34	0.0	1.0
Years in US	510	4.24	5.65	0.0	29.0
Local Social Network	510	2.81	0.43	1.0	3.0
Detained at Border	510	0.65	0.48	0.0	1.0
Debt Barrier	1047	7.13	3.30	1.0	10.0

## 7.4 Attrition and Balance

**Table A3:** Extortion During Migration - Follow-Up Respondents Only

Variable	(1) No Extortion	(2) Extortion	(3) Difference
Age	30.651 (9.001)	30.672 (8.805)	0.021 (1.244)
Indigenous	0.342 (0.475)	0.391 (0.492)	0.049 (0.066)
Female	0.102 (0.303)	0.188 (0.393)	0.086+ (0.045)
Highest Education	7.091 (4.436)	6.781 (4.565)	-0.310 (0.619)
Married	0.284 (0.452)	0.250 (0.436)	-0.034 (0.062)
Children in GT	1.167 (1.497)	1.031 (1.247)	-0.136 (0.202)
Children in US	0.335 (0.870)	0.547 (1.022)	0.212+ (0.125)
Detained at Border	0.684 (0.466)	0.531 (0.503)	-0.152* (0.066)
Years in US	4.252 (5.690)	4.446 (5.611)	0.194 (0.788)
Number of Migration Trips	1.542 (0.884)	1.688 (0.941)	0.146 (0.124)
Have visible tattoos	0.069 (0.254)	0.047 (0.213)	-0.022 (0.034)
Observations	275	64	339

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

## 7.5 Use of coyote

**Table A4:** Using Coyote to Attempt Entry

Variable	(1) No Coyote In	(2) Coyote Into US	(3) Difference
Age	32.42 (10.176)	30.95 (9.324)	-1.470* (0.661)
Indigenous	0.293 (0.456)	0.401 (0.490)	0.108** (0.034)
Female	0.082 (0.275)	0.080 (0.271)	-0.002 (0.019)
Highest Education	7.000 (4.861)	7.034 (4.442)	0.034 (1.110)
Married	0.254 (0.436)	0.288 (0.453)	0.034 (0.031)
Children in GT	1.266 (1.804)	1.199 (1.575)	-0.066 (0.113)
Children in US	0.328 (0.955)	0.434 (1.012)	0.106 (0.070)
Detained at Border	0.704 (0.458)	0.642 (0.480)	-0.062+ (0.034)
Years in the US	4.609 (6.990)	4.384 (5.927)	-0.225 (0.447)
Number of Migrations	1.664 (0.901)	1.645 (1.104)	-0.019 (0.074)
Have visible tattoos	0.094 (0.292)	0.084 (0.278)	-0.010 (0.020)
Observations	256	1,063	

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

## 7.6 Regression Tables

**Table A5:** Extortion Predicts Poor Outcomes: Fear and Economic Hardship

	(1)	(2)
	Fear of Crime	Econ Hardship Index
Extortion	0.31** (0.12)	0.27* (0.12)
Female	0.20 (0.14)	0.32* (0.16)
Age	0.02* (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)
Indigenous	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.02 (0.10)
Highest Education Completed	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Visible Tattoos	-0.28 (0.20)	-0.25 (0.21)
Children in US	0.17 (0.12)	0.20 (0.13)
Children in GT	0.09 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.13)
Local Social Network	-0.12 (0.10)	0.12 (0.13)
Years in US	-0.07* (0.03)	-0.07** (0.03)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.12 (0.14)	-0.18 (0.17)
Employed	-0.28** (0.09)	
Detained at Border	0.06 (0.11)	-0.19+ (0.11)
Round 3	0.34*** (0.07)	0.16* (0.07)
Constant	0.25 (0.53)	-0.58 (0.65)
Model	OLS	OLS
Observations	510	510

Robust standard errors clustered by respondent.  
Standardized DVs for each model.

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A6:** Extortion Predicts Poor Outcomes: Economic and Safety

	(1) Fear (Count)	(2) Fear (Binary)	(3) Income	(4) Unemployed	(5) Hardship	(6) Econ Rating	(7) Debt Barrier
Extortion	0.23** (0.08)	0.77* (0.34)	0.18 (0.12)	0.23 (0.27)	0.21+ (0.11)	0.25* (0.12)	0.84*** (0.23)
Female	0.14 (0.09)	0.93 (0.58)	0.30+ (0.16)	0.58+ (0.32)	0.27+ (0.14)	0.06 (0.17)	0.31 (0.38)
Age	0.01* (0.00)	0.03 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.03 (0.02)	0.01* (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Indigenous	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.19 (0.27)	0.07 (0.09)	-0.45* (0.22)	0.15 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.10)	0.73*** (0.20)
Highest Edu	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.02+ (0.01)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.04+ (0.02)
Visible Tattoos	-0.19 (0.13)	-0.25 (0.61)	-0.01 (0.26)	-0.35 (0.48)	-0.13 (0.15)	-0.37* (0.17)	-0.55 (0.37)
Children in US	0.12 (0.09)	0.58 (0.39)	0.20 (0.14)	0.47+ (0.27)	0.14 (0.11)	0.02 (0.13)	0.05 (0.28)
Children in GT	0.08 (0.09)	0.02 (0.30)	-0.27* (0.14)	-0.30 (0.25)	0.13 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.12)	0.36 (0.24)
Local Social Network	-0.10 (0.07)	-0.40 (0.31)	0.13 (0.12)	0.14 (0.25)	0.12 (0.10)	0.01 (0.13)	
Years in US	-0.05* (0.02)	-0.01 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.06* (0.03)	-0.07* (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.05)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.09 (0.11)	0.45 (0.43)	-0.20 (0.20)	-0.23 (0.31)	-0.17 (0.14)	-0.02 (0.16)	0.04 (0.31)
Employed	-0.22** (0.07)	-0.61* (0.24)					
Detained at Border	0.05 (0.09)	0.50+ (0.28)	-0.06 (0.11)	-0.27 (0.23)	-0.21* (0.10)	-0.08 (0.12)	0.64** (0.23)
Round 3	0.26*** (0.05)	0.66** (0.22)	0.05 (0.07)	0.07 (0.17)	0.35*** (0.08)	-0.06 (0.07)	
Constant	0.84* (0.36)	1.47 (1.56)	-0.32 (0.69)	-0.36 (1.29)	-0.76 (0.51)	-0.18 (0.57)	7.50*** (0.85)
Model	Negative Binomial	Logit	OLS	Logit	OLS	OLS	OLS
Observations	510	510	508	509	510	509	1047

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by respondent

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A7:** Extortion and Fear of Crime Mediation Analysis

	(1) (Mediator) Fear of Crime	(2) (Outcome) Civic Act Index	(3) (Mediator) Fear of Crime	(4) (Outcome) Pol Act Index
Extortion	0.31** (0.12)	0.21* (0.08)	0.33** (0.12)	0.24 <sup>+</sup> (0.14)
Fear of Crime		-0.01 (0.05)		0.02 (0.06)
Female	0.20 (0.14)	0.00 (0.15)	0.19 (0.14)	0.01 (0.19)
Age	0.02* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Indigenous	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.10)	0.15 (0.12)
Highest Education Completed	-0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Visible Tattoos	-0.27 (0.21)	0.22 (0.24)	-0.29 (0.20)	0.07 (0.27)
Children in US	0.18 (0.12)	0.10 (0.11)	0.16 (0.12)	0.08 (0.16)
Children in GT	0.09 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.09)	0.07 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.14)
Local Social Network	-0.12 (0.10)	0.07 (0.09)	-0.14 (0.10)	0.29* (0.13)
Years in US	-0.07* (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.07* (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.12 (0.14)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.13)	-0.06 (0.19)
Employed	-0.28** (0.09)	-0.00 (0.09)	-0.28** (0.09)	0.06 (0.11)
Detained at Border	0.06 (0.12)	-0.00 (0.09)	0.08 (0.11)	-0.14 (0.14)
Round 3	0.34*** (0.07)	0.11 (0.08)	0.34*** (0.07)	-0.23** (0.09)
Constant	0.23 (0.54)	3.40*** (0.54)	0.33 (0.52)	2.38*** (0.70)
Observations	507	507	502	502

Robust standard errors clustered by respondent

All models are OLS Linear Regressions

Column 1 is first-stage model for civic outcome in Column 2

Column 3 is first-stage model for political outcome in Column 4

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A8:** Extortion and Economic Hardship Mediation Analysis

	(1) Mediator Econ Hardship Index	(2) Outcome Civic Act Index	(3) Mediator Econ Hardship Index	(4) Outcome Pol Act Index
Extortion	0.19* (0.09)	0.19* (0.08)	0.18* (0.09)	0.24+ (0.14)
Econ Hardship Index		0.10 (0.06)		0.01 (0.08)
Female	0.23* (0.11)	-0.02 (0.15)	0.23* (0.11)	0.00 (0.19)
Age	0.02** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Indigenous	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.07)	0.15 (0.12)
Highest Education	-0.00 (0.01)	0.02+ (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Visible Tattoos	-0.15 (0.15)	0.24 (0.24)	-0.17 (0.15)	0.07 (0.27)
Children in US	0.14 (0.09)	0.08 (0.10)	0.14 (0.09)	0.08 (0.16)
Children in GT	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.00 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.14)
Local Social Network	0.08 (0.09)	0.07 (0.09)	0.09 (0.09)	0.28* (0.13)
Years in US	-0.05** (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)	0.03 (0.03)
Assets Left in U.S.	-0.12 (0.12)	0.00 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.19)
Detained at Border	-0.13+ (0.08)	0.01 (0.09)	-0.12 (0.08)	-0.14 (0.14)
Round 3	0.11* (0.05)	0.10 (0.07)	0.11* (0.05)	-0.23** (0.09)
Constant	-0.45 (0.45)	3.44*** (0.53)	-0.42 (0.45)	2.43*** (0.70)
Observations	507	507	502	502

Robust standard errors clustered by respondent

All models are OLS Linear Regressions

Column 1 is first-stage model for civic outcome in Column 2

Column 3 is first-stage model for political outcome in Column 4

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A9: Extortion and Engagement Items Disaggregated**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Comm. Meeting	Volunteer	Mentor Youth	Protest	Affiliate Party	Vote
Extortion	0.27*	0.26*	0.09	0.44*	0.20	0.09
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.15)
Female	0.01	-0.03	0.02	0.20	-0.12	-0.05
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.19)
Age	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Indigenous	-0.02	-0.22 <sup>+</sup>	-0.07	-0.01	0.25	0.20
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.12)
Highest Education	0.01	0.01	0.02*	-0.00	-0.02	0.02
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Visible Tattoos	0.17	0.23	0.27	-0.02	0.01	0.21
	(0.31)	(0.32)	(0.17)	(0.33)	(0.38)	(0.33)
Children in US	0.14	0.04	0.12	-0.11	0.27	0.09
	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.09)	(0.23)	(0.25)	(0.16)
Children in GT	0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.20	0.19	-0.08
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.21)	(0.22)	(0.14)
Local Social Network	0.04	0.17	0.01	0.43*	0.27	0.14
	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.16)
Years in US	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.12*	-0.01	-0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Assets Left in U.S.	0.02	-0.16	0.11	-0.22	0.18	-0.14
	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.28)	(0.29)	(0.21)
Employed	-0.08	0.01	0.06	0.23	-0.09	0.03
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.12)
Detained at Border	0.01	-0.05	0.03	-0.24	-0.14	-0.03
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.14)
Round 3	0.28**	0.13	-0.08	-0.57***	-0.16	0.05
	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.09)
Constant	3.43***	3.09***	3.68***	2.30*	2.03 <sup>+</sup>	2.82***
	(0.74)	(0.73)	(0.55)	(0.97)	(1.07)	(0.82)
Observations	507	507	507	502	502	502

Robust standard errors clustered by respondent

All models are OLS Linear Regressions

<sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A10:** Assault Not Correlated with Engagement

	(1)	(2)
	Civic Action Index	Political Action Index
Assault	0.07 (0.16)	0.17 (0.22)
Female	0.04 (0.14)	0.04 (0.19)
Age	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Indigenous	-0.10 (0.09)	0.12 (0.12)
Highest Education Completed	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Visible Tattoos	0.24 (0.24)	0.07 (0.27)
Children in US	0.12 (0.10)	0.07 (0.16)
Children in GT	0.01 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.14)
Local Social Network	0.06 (0.09)	0.30* (0.13)
Years in US	0.01 (0.02)	0.03 (0.03)
Assets Left in U.S.	0.01 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.19)
Employed	-0.02 (0.08)	0.05 (0.11)
Detained at Border	-0.03 (0.09)	-0.17 (0.13)
Round 3	0.12 (0.07)	-0.21* (0.08)
Constant	3.47*** (0.53)	2.36*** (0.69)
Model	OLS	OLS
Observations	522	517

Robust standard errors in parentheses, clustered by respondent

+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A11:** Romano-Wolf Adjusted p-values for Extortion Variable

	Model p-value	Resample p-value	Romano-Wolf p-value
Civic Action Index	0.012	0.015	0.043
Political Action Index	0.077	0.072	0.072
Econ Summary Index	0.011	0.023	0.043
Fear of Crime	0.009	0.011	0.043

Note: We calculate Romano-Wolf p-values using the “rwolf” package in Stata. We conduct 1000 bootstrap replications to estimate the resampled p-values across our main dependent variables: civic action, political action, economic hardship, and fear of crime. All standard errors calculated with clustering at the respondent level. All models include battery of controls: Female, Age, Indigenous, Highest Education, Visible Tattoos, Children US, Children GT, Assets in US, ln(Time US), Employment (for non-econ DVs), Detained at Border, Round 3 dummy