Civic Activism, Political Knowledge and Political Participation in San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala

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Introduction

One consequence of the end of the Cold War has been the rapid increase of grassroots and other non-governmental organizations in the developing world. This has revitalized the debate on the correlation between a strong civil society, political awareness, and political participation, and their possible impact on democratization.

The interest in the power of civil society and its effects on democratization is not new. Alexis de Tocqueville was already fascinated by the strong civil society he observed in 19th-century United States. Today, in view of a sudden resurgence of interest in nation-building, both political scientists and the international donor community are concerned with the topic. If the development of a robust civil society leads to greater political awareness and political participation, then is it possible to create a more democratic society—even in countries that have weak democratic traditions—by nurturing civil society? Guatemala is an ideal place to study the reasons for and consequences of civic participation because of its limited democratic experience, its 36-year-long civil war, and a peace process that has accelerated the formation of civic associations.

Overview of the San Lucas Tolimán Civic Participation Study

The town of San Lucas Tolimán (20,000 inhabitants), located on a southern inlet of Lake Atitlán in the northwest highlands of Guatemala, is where I carried out an in-depth study of civic participation. In the summer of 2001, I began a matched-case control study of 124 pairs of luqueños (inhabitants of San Lucas). Pairs were matched by civic participation (the case group) with civic non-participation (the control group), and by gender, age, and level of education. Civic participation was determined by membership in, or leadership of, church and community associations. A few of the groups could be considered an embryonic version of interest groups or advocacy organizations.

A thirty-three-question survey was used. It focused on personal data, type of civic activity (case group only), media use, political knowledge, political participation, and political satisfaction. (See Appendix 2 for the questionnaire.) Some of the answers were quantitative; others were qualitative in nature. Respondents were also allowed to comment about questions they found interesting. Definitions and statistical methods used are detailed in Appendix 1. A p-value of 0.1 or less was used to define statistical significance of all statistical tests performed. The statistical analysis showed a significant correlation between civic activity and the summary score for political knowledge (p-value <0.01) and a significant correlation between civic activity and the summary score for political participation (p-value < 0.01). No correlation was found between being civically active and the summary score for the use of media for news purposes (p-value 0.47), and no significant correlation was found between being civically active and the summary score for satisfaction with government performance (p-value 0.72).

To begin, I will define the concept of civic participation used in this study. This concept provides a key theoretical framework for the study since social scientists vary in their definition of civic participation. Then, I will provide historical background for this study, focusing particularly on how civic participation in Guatemala changed during the civil war, while the Peace Accords were being crafted (1991-1996), and after the Accord for a Firm and Lasting
Peace was signed in December, 1996. Next, I provide discussion of the international donor community’s role in strengthening Guatemalan civil society. I will also explain why I chose to conduct this study in San Lucas Tolimán, and provide a short description of how the town fared during the civil war and why. Finally, I will explain the study and interpret its statistical results to determine their possible significance with regard to democratization, and I will talk about further studies that need to be conducted.

Defining Civil Society

In my study, I adapt Thomas Carothers’s broad definition of civil society to a small Guatemalan town:

Properly understood, civil society is a broader concept, encompassing all the organizations and associations that exist outside the state (including political parties) and the market. It includes the gamut of organizations that political scientists traditionally label interest groups – not just advocacy NGOs but also labor unions, professional associations (such as those of doctors and lawyers), chambers of commerce, ethnic associations, and others. It also incorporates the many other associations that exist for purposes other than advancing specific social or political agendas, such as religious organizations, student groups, cultural organizations (from choral societies to bird-watching clubs), sports clubs, and informal community groups. (Carothers 1999-2000, 19-20)

The reason why Carothers’s definition needs slight modification is because in a small town like San Lucas Tolimán, very few people belong to national associations such as labor unions as the town has no industries and no large businesses. Only 6.2% of civically active luqueños in the study belong to national organizations and interest groups such as the national teacher’s union, or national literacy, disabilities, indigenous rights, land redistribution, and sustainable development organizations. Instead, civically active luqueños belong to church groups or neighborhood associations that focus on improving the community. Of these local associations, several contacted municipal officials on a regular basis to inform them about the actions they wanted the government to take. Frequently the local government was not responsive. For example, local officials did not act on the important issue of potable water because, despite government decentralization, national funding is required for a project of that magnitude. On the other hand, the municipal government did address the problem of water drainage near the entrance to San Lucas. Businesses and private households located in the area that were regularly flooded during the rainy season formed an advocacy group and even physically helped install a drainage system. Without the insistence of the neighborhood water drainage association, the municipal government would, in all likelihood, not have addressed this problem.

Thus, San Lucas’s size and agrarian economic base make it a town where civic activity is most frequently organized by churches and neighborhood groups that seek infrastructural improvements, or by groups with specific interests such as environmental action, women’s issues, children’s education and adult literacy, healthcare, or indigenous culture. Many civically active citizens participate in more than one volunteer organization, and they are frequently active in more than two types of civic activity (for example, church, neighborhood improvement and
empowerment of women. Some people belong to as many as six civic organizations simultaneously.

Although advocacy even on a local level is low, its importance should not be discounted as it appears to be growing. That is why Carothers’s definition of the civic sector in society seems like the most appropriate. (For a full listing of the types of groups and associations to which luqueños belong, see Appendix 3.)

In their large, urban Central American study on civic participation, Patricia Bayer Richard and John A. Booth use Carothers’s definition of civil society and refine it by separating associations that promote social capital from civic groups that promote political capital. According to Richard and Booth, civic associations that promote social capital are the community associations that create trust, connections and reciprocity in which Putnam has such a great interest. Those that promote political capital operate on a national level and are interest groups or advocacy groups with a more direct impact on the state. The study sets out to prove that it is these groups within civil society that have a greater potential for moving the state towards democratization: “…political capital more strongly links involvement in groups and democracy than does social capital…” (Richard and Booth, 234) Richard and Booth conclude that Putnam’s work does not really show how social capital directly affects governmental institutions or their decisions, whereas their own questions on type of civic activism, political knowledge and degree of political participation “…proposed and confirmed that ‘political capital,’ or behaviors and norms that impinge on government, offer greater promise than social capital for constraining regime type and performance.” (235)

A similar study could not be applied to a small town like San Lucas Tolimán, where affiliation to national unions, interest groups, and advocacy groups barely exists. This is particularly unfortunate, since the Richard and Booth study concludes that: “One form of associational activism in particular, participation in communal activities, correlated negatively with democratic norms and campaign activism.” (235) My micro-study of San Lucas shows, however, that even associational activism is significantly correlated with more political knowledge and political participation when members of such associations are compared to those who belong to no civic associations.

Based on the large number of community associations of San Lucas, should I have used Putnam’s definition of civic participation that stresses the importance of social capital? Because of the increasing dialogue between the San Lucas community-based interest groups and municipal political authorities, I prefer Carothers’s broader definition of civic activism that includes interest groups that try to have a direct impact on government, albeit, in the case of San Lucas, only on local government rather than national government.

Let me elaborate a little further on Putnam’s enticing, yet elusive concept of social capital and its possible impact on political change—especially democratization—and show that even Putnam does not believe that increasing social capital by forming local associations will by itself lead to political change. Putnam emphasizes that institutions must change as well. If this were not the case, one would think that Putnam’s ideas would not be so enthusiastically embraced by the development community. Yet, surprisingly, many grassroots development practitioners,
including the Inter-American Foundation, are willing to focus solely on civic associations, hoping that these associations will eventually achieve the desired institutional change, instead of waiting for the institutional change to be implemented from above. (Ritchey-Vance, 3-9)

In his book *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Putnam traces civic participation differences between Italy’s north and south back to the Middle Ages and finds strong horizontal civic networks in the north and a vertical, patriarchal system in the south. It is because of this difference in civic participation, according to Putnam, that northern Italy is more democratic than southern Italy. Belonging to civic associations creates social capital, says Putnam, and this social capital “…refers to social features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks.” (Putnam 1993, 167) Putnam focuses largely on “Networks of civic engagement, like neighborhood associations, choral societies, cooperatives, sports clubs….” (173) He notes that “The denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit.” (173) Putnam values horizontal networks of civic engagement because they foster reciprocity, facilitate communication and information leading to greater trust among individuals and consequently stimulate cooperation. (173-174)

For Putnam, the key concept of social capital is trust. In the case of a developing nation where the government has been notably untrustworthy under democracy but particularly under dictatorship, we might ask how participation in small community associations of like-minded people can possibly translate into trust in government. The same could be asked about Italy’s south. Even with the creation of an active civil society, will southern Italians ever learn to trust the government? Yes, says Putnam, but there also needs to be institutional change to foster trust and democracy, which in the case of Italy came from the outside not from the grassroots community. Importantly, it is this part of Putnam’s argument that is frequently omitted. Putnam’s more than 20-year longitudinal study of Italy occurred after a radical reform of regional government was implemented in 1970 by the national government. This reform led to greater decentralization of funding and demanded greater accountability from regional governments. Putnam’s study noted an improvement in government performance as a consequence of the new political institutions, and acknowledged that the success of these new institutions also depended largely on each region’s history.

Thus, there was an overall improvement in political participation nation-wide in Italy, accompanied by great regional differences in political participation. Regions with historically strong civic organizations improved government performance far more than those historically poor in civic participation. In Putnam’s words: “Social context and history profoundly condition the effectiveness of institutions.” (Putnam, 182) Neither institutional reform nor the creation of social capital through civic associations occurs overnight. Putnam advises:

Those concerned with democracy and development in the South should be building a more civic community, but they should lift their sights beyond instant results… Building social capital will not be easy, but it is the key to making democracy work.” (185)

Richard and Booth address the effect political context has on civil society in their Central America study. What they say is correct, but, they do not seem to mention that Putnam does, in
fact, emphasize both the creation of a strong civil society and an accompanying change in political institutions.

How does political context affect civil society? While civil society may be important to developing and sustaining a well-functioning democracy, it is not independent of the context in which it occurs… The research for this chapter revealed that political repression by regimes depresses citizens’ political participation and their support for civil liberties. The authors view political repression as a critical influence on individuals’ political attitudes and behaviors. (Richard and Booth, 235)

The same type of criticism of Putnam’s trust in trust, but on a broader theoretical level, is voiced by Howell and Pearce:

The tendency to ignore the contribution of political parties, movements, distinct ideologies, and beliefs to institutional performance and democratic outcomes is a weakness of Putnam’s analysis… (Howell and Pearce, 48)

In summary, if Putnam’s theory—that social capital is produced by participating in a critical mass of civic groups, and it is the number of groups and commitment to them that will lead to greater political knowledge and participation—is true, then the type of group membership should not matter. On the other hand, Richard and Booth distinguish between social capital and political capital and conclude that political capital has a direct effect on political knowledge and political participation, while social capital has none. Carothers looks at the correlation between civic activity and political knowledge and political participation as key factors in democratization. He notes that international donors who support democratization efforts in the Third World have financially aided advocacy and interest groups since they believe that these groups could, over time, help to build democratic societies. Without minimizing the importance of civil society, Carothers says that voting and institutional change are also key elements that donors should support. Carothers and Putnam agree that societal and governmental transformation is a long, drawn-out process.

The results of the San Lucas study regarding trust in government are somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, there is no significant correlation between civic activism and the Satisfaction with Government Performance Summary Score, which could be read as a measure of trust/mistrust in government performance. Three components of this Government Performance Summary—Municipal Government Negative Performance, National Government Achievements, and Municipal Government Achievements—did not correlate positively with civic participation. However, in analyzing National Government Negative Performance, there was a negative correlation between civic activity and being critical of the government’s performance. This means that the more knowledgeable civically active group appraised national government performance somewhat more positively than the civically inactive control group.

Even this small finding of greater trust in the government by those who were civically active does not overcome the overwhelming lack of satisfaction (lack of trust) with the municipal and national government by both groups. In 2 separate questions, the case and control groups were asked if they had no opinion, were Satisfied, Medium Satisfied or Dissatisfied with the
municipal and national governments. Seventy-three cases and 73 controls were dissatisfied with
the municipal government, and 30 cases and 31 controls were satisfied. Eighty-nine cases and 74
controls were dissatisfied with the national government; only 13 cases and 13 controls were
satisfied. The rest were either medium satisfied or didn’t know. Most criticism of the government
concerned corruption, caring only about its own interests and accomplishing nothing for the
people of Guatemala. Although few people used the space allowed for comentarios, those that
did had very negative comments to make about both levels of Guatemalan government. For
example: “Los gobiernos sólo ven el beneficio para ellos mismos.” “Ellos sólo persiguen el
poder lucrativo.” “De lo político no me interesa nada. Todo son mentiras.” “No estoy satisfecho
con ningún gobierno, pues en su campaña política ofrecen y al llegar al poder no cumplen;
estando arriba se preocupan de sí mismos no de los que tienen que trabajar.” “Mucho prometen
y nada cumplen.”

There is a wide space for civic participation that lies between family life and political
participation. The narrowest definition is probably Putnam’s with its emphasis on song groups,
birdwatchers and chess associations that create social capital. This is followed by Carothers’s
definition of civil society, which I use. It includes recreational, social capital building groups, but
also adds interest groups and advocacy groups, that he says have a stronger and more direct
impact on government performance. Richard and Booth barely acknowledge the impact of social
capital on democratization, since they find political capital to be more closely correlated with
political knowledge and political participation. Finally, there are students of non-western civil
society who incorporate political parties into civic activism. (Ottaway and Carothers, 2000, 10)
Obviously, since the San Lucas study uses membership in a political party as a measure of
political participation, political parties cannot be considered a measure of civic participation. The
incorporation of political parties into civil society would be awkward in any study because the
party in power is definitely a part of the state and the one out of power may or may not have
some state participation. Thus, one would have to explore this distinction and possibly separate
parties in power from those waiting for power.

The Development of Civil Society and Democracy in Guatemala

The first democratic opening in Guatemala occurred in 1945, with the election of Juan
José Arévalo to the presidency. This began the first 10-year Guatemalan Spring. The following
president, Jacobo Arbenz, was also fairly elected in 1950. During this short period, civil society
was encouraged to organize, peasants and urban workers joined unions, and during the Arbenz
regime indigenous populations began to organize to claim their right to land ownership. In 1954,
the military overthrew Arbenz in a CIA-engineered coup. When the military came to power,
virtually all civic activity ceased.

A civil war that pitted the military government and associated paramilitary groups against
a left-wing guerrilla opposition began in 1960. The military successfully destroyed this initial
insurgency, only to see it emerge with renewed vigor in the western highlands in the 1970s. This
time the guerrillas were backed by a poor, land-hungry Mayan peasantry that had experienced
dramatic improvements during the Arbenz government, but had subsequently lost its land and
benefits under the military.
The civil war reached its peak between 1979 and 1982, when the military embarked on a scorched earth policy, burning whole indigenous villages suspected of supporting guerrillas. Torture, disappearances, mass burials, and massive internal and foreign migration occurred on a regular basis. At this time, the four major Guatemalan guerrilla groups formed the National Guatemalan Revolutionary Union (URNG). But even united, the guerrillas were no match for the military. By 1985, with the guerrillas tucked into the mountains, the military felt confident in handing over the state to a civilian government. Vinicio Cerezo, a Christian Democrat, won the election. At home, he ruled with his hands tied by a military reluctant to reach a peace agreement with the URNG. Abroad, he helped President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica in crafting a comprehensive blueprint for a process that eventually led to the peaceful resolution of all Central American internal conflicts. In 1996, Guatemala was the last Central American country to sign the Accord for a Firm and Lasting Peace.

Over the last seven years, the country has received financial support from the international community to implement the Peace Accords and to secure democracy. It has had two democratically elected presidents in succession. Unfortunately, civil war has been replaced by criminal violence. Implementation of the peace accords has been weak. Infrastructural improvements have been significant, and some refugees and displaced peoples have been resettled. The indigenous population has become more visible on the political scene and is better organized nationally despite internal linguistic and customary differences, but it still lags in political participation, education, health care and land ownership. Women have made advances, and the country is coming to terms with its bloody past. Both the Recovery of the Historical Memory Project (REHMI)— compiled by the Archbishop’s Human Rights Office (ODHA)— and the Historical Clarification Commission (headed by the United Nations) confirm the 200,000 deaths, hundreds of thousands of homeless and internally displaced persons, and the existence of mass graves. Both attribute between 90-93% of atrocities to the military and the rest to the guerrillas.

Civil society began to organize in Guatemala in the mid-1980s as the Arias peace process gave hope to Central Americans that the civil wars would eventually come to an end. With the election of Cerezo, Guatemala’s first civilian ruler in three decades, civil society began to mobilize. Many of the new civic associations in Guatemala were formed in opposition to the Guatemalan government, which, although civilian, still operated under the thumb of the military. Civic organizations worked clandestinely because the government generally viewed them as subversive organizations with ties to the URNG. (Howell and Pearce, 149-151). Civic groups appeared in the form of peasant leagues, unions, grassroots organizations and local non-governmental organizations. Many of them received substantial aid from European international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), who asked no questions about how the money was being used. Both the grassroots organizations that received the aid and the European donors were highly politicized. In addition to the anti-government and anti-oligarchic civic organizations, several civic groups were also formed to revitalize and unify the Mayan culture.

Civil society grew more robust as of 1991, when government and guerrillas began to cooperate on the peace process. By 1994, the Civil Society Assembly (ASC) was created so that civil society might have some input in the final peace accords. Because of their left-wing rhetoric, their participation in shaping the peace accords was more symbolic than real. (152)
The importance of civil society increased exponentially once the peace accords were signed in December 1996. By then, the work of civil society was above ground and associations began to receive large amounts of international foreign aid as the international community had committed $2.6 billion to help implement the peace accords. With the end of the conflict, aid changed from “solidarity aid” (Biekart 1999, 208), given largely to oppose the government, to less politicized aid.

According to Kees Biekart, European INGOs continued to have the best relationships with Guatemalan grassroots organizations, since mutual trust had developed between the grassroots and European INGOs during the civil war. (Biekart 1996, 82) American INGOs and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with little confidence in Guatemalan political parties and government, also began to channel funds to civil society with the hope of creating a stronger democratic base. USAID, eager to develop grassroots democracy, supported the creation of advocacy groups. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) worked very effectively on grassroots social and economic development, and democratization through civil society organizations. Eventually, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the largest contributor to the Guatemalan peace process, also became aware of the democracy-creating potential of civil society. Their DECOPAZ project in Huehuetenango became a model for training civil society to make decisions in a democratic fashion. Only the World Bank remained reluctant to work with non-governmental groups.

Implications for the Donor Community

How effective has the donor community been in fostering democracy in Guatemala by supporting civil society? Carothers, in Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve, focuses on U.S. aid to support democratization efforts in developing nations. Guatemala is included as one of the cases. Summarizing his findings, he says: “None of the programs has been catalytic or transformative, and many have encountered significant resistance in target institutions.” (Carothers, 1999, 317) Using 10 different case studies by various researchers, Ottaway and Carothers come to the same conclusion in Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion. They acknowledge that aid has helped many societies realize the important role of civil society in governance. But:

It is now also clear...that development of NGOs does not equal development of civil society. In many transitional countries with hundreds or even thousands of NGOs, basic features of civic democratic life—widespread participation of citizens, solid public belief in democracy, dynamic patterns of accountability and interaction between the state and the society—are still woefully absent. (Ottaway and Carothers, 308)

Ottaway and Carothers identify some of the mistakes made by the international donor community. One is their heavy focus on advocacy NGOs, with too little attention being given to free and fair elections and the creation of democratic state institutions. The second is imposing their own values and interests on the organizations they finance which frequently results in the organization’s neglect of its own country’s needs.
The Development of Civic Associations in San Lucas Tolimán

San Lucas Tolimán was founded in the mid-16th century. The population of approximately 20,000 inhabitants currently consists of 90% Cakchiquel-speaking Mayans and 10% ladinos. Nearly 70% of the population is Catholic and 30% evangelical, although this distribution is changing rapidly as more people become evangelicals.

San Lucas began to change in 1962. During Vatican II, Pope John XXIII encouraged First World priests to embrace the poor of the Third World by sending 10% of diocesan personnel to foreign missions. At the Vatican Council, Bishop Alphonse Schladweiler of New Ulm, Minnesota sat next to Bishop Angelicos Melotto, recently named to head the newly formed diocese of Sololá. Bishop Schladweiler made a commitment to Bishop Melotto to send New Ulm priests to the Guatemalan diocese. The first priest from New Ulm to come to San Lucas was Father Stan Martinka in about 1963. By 1964 Father Gregory Schaffer arrived in San Lucas, where he is still the parish priest in charge of community development and social change. (Interviews with Fr. Gregory Schaffer, July 2002 and Sister Linda Wanner, SSND, March 2003.) The presence of Fr. Schaffer has led, over the years, to the creation of a parochial education system, a free health care system, an orphanage (no longer in existence), more income for the parish through fair-wage coffee, honey and textiles coops that export directly to New Ulm, as well as a land acquisition fund, and land distribution and housing projects. (Ajcot 19-78)

The American priests rather than tourism accelerated the development of the town. Because of the town’s unspectacular views of Lake Atitlan, San Lucas had no tourism and therefore no hotels until the mid-1990s. The only visitors were wealthy Guatemalans with hillside homes in the vicinity who stored their yachts in San Lucas, and American volunteers, attracted by Fr. Schaffer’s multiple development projects.

The presence of foreign priests in San Lucas could also have had an explosive impact on the luqueños during the civil war. Frequently, the liberation theology preached by American and European priests, with its emphasis on social justice and an option for the poor, was viewed as sympathetic to socialism by the military. Therefore, during the civil war, particularly between 1979 and 1982, many foreign priests were threatened or killed by the military government. The indigenous peoples living in these communities were also tortured, murdered or driven from their towns.

San Lucas suffered far less than neighboring towns because of Fr. Greg’s diplomatic skills. He permitted guerrillas and military to use the clinic and provided both groups with provisions when they descended into the town. The orphanage, however, was used mostly by the orphans of guerrillas, which is why the School Sisters of Notre Dame associated with that project were frequently threatened by the military. On numerous occasions, the priests and nuns were asked by the military whether the luqueños had ties with ORPA (the local guerrilla group) and the answer was consistently negative. A total of 25 to 30 luqueños were killed or disappeared during the civil war. Counting the surrounding fincas and poblaciones the number rises to 125. This is a small number compared to the neighboring Tzutujil town of Santiago that lost Father Stan Rother of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and, at least, 467 people in the war. (Interview with Fr. Schaffer, July, 2002) Yet, even Santiago’s massacres pale next to those that occurred in the Quiché.
This fact is important to the study because it leads to some otherwise unexpected answers in the questionnaire. First of all, most of the case and control groups were not afraid to vote during the civil war. Secondly, respondents knew surprisingly little about the content of the Peace Accords and few knew much about why Bishop Girardi was murdered. Two of the respondents even said that answers on fear of voting or being a member of a political party during the civil war would have been quite different in the Quiché.

The other impact of having socially conscious American priests in San Lucas is their focus on helping to form numerous church associations to work on development projects. The San Lucas parish formed about 20 civic associations, all run by local citizens, advised rather than supervised by Fr. Schaffer. These church groups range from proselytizing, singing in the church choir and helping provide religious education, to church reconstruction, community development (such as bringing potable water to San Lucas, cleaning the lake, reforestation, buying land, building housing for whole communities, bringing electricity to church-built homes), improving health care, improving education, involving women in community activities, forming youth groups, indigenous culture and folklore preservation groups, and a land fund group. The Pentecostal churches that currently serve about 30% of luqueños have also created numerous civic associations. As a result of so much church-driven civic activism, community associations also mushroomed in San Lucas. In addition, because San Lucas suffered less disruption during the civil war than neighboring towns, civic associations developed earlier and survived intact, compared to areas more affected by the civil war. Therefore, civic activism in San Lucas, is probably greater than in many similar-sized towns.

Findings

This study paired civically active (case) with civically inactive (control) citizens of San Lucas for gender, age, and education. The study’s findings show that there is a correlation between civic activity and both political knowledge and political participation. (See Table 2A for a univariate analysis and Table 4 for a matched case-control logistical regression model. See also Figures 1 and 3 for further detail.)

However, the study failed to prove that civically active citizens used the media more for information purposes than the civically inactive. (See Table 2B.) It also failed to show a significant difference between the case group and the control group regarding differences in satisfaction with government performance. The one exception was that, even though both groups have a negative perception of government achievements, the civically active group judge government performance somewhat less negatively. Perhaps this is because the civically active group is more knowledgeable about government activities, evidenced by the fact that they were able to give many more examples of both the government’s achievements and failings.

Through analysis of the survey, a summary score of participants’ political knowledge was obtained. (See Table 1 for the components of the Political Knowledge Summary Score.) Table 2A shows the most significant correlations among continuous variables, which were found for the following: remembering the names of mayoral candidates who ran in the last election; remembering the objectives of the 1996 Peace Accords; identifying reasons for Bishop Gerardi’s assassination; and, examples of current Guatemalan problems. Civically active citizens provided more responses to each question than civically inactive citizens.
Table 3A shows categorical variables selected as candidates for the logistic regression model. These are: current mayor’s name remembered (odds ratio of 4.00) and current president’s name remembered (odds ratio of 3.00). The odds ratio is explained in Appendix 1. The levels just cited are high scores and are statistically significant. This shows that civically active citizens were better able to provide more correct answers to these two questions.

A summary score of case and control political participation was also obtained. Overall, the civically active and the civically inactive have low levels of political participation. However, the Summary Score for Political Participation (p-value<0.01) for the case group showed a significantly higher—though still low—level of political participation. The main difference in political participation between the case and control groups is the higher level of electoral activity by the case group. For the purposes of this study, electoral activity is defined as involvement during an election by doing at least one of the following: helping during an election, being a political candidate, campaigning for a political candidate, or educating others about the election. (See Figure 2 for the comparison.)

Electoral activity does not include voting, which is measured separately and is included in the Political Participation Summary Score. More members of the case group voted in the last election (odds ratio of 2.15) and in the last plebiscite (odds ratio of 2.85). The picture of low political participation that emerges from this survey reflects what is already known about political participation in Guatemala. Only 18.5% of all eligible voters voted in the constitutional reform plebiscite of 1999 that resulted in the defeat of a reform that would have incorporated parts of the Peace Accords in the constitution. This stands in sharp contrast to the unusually high turnout (41%) of voters in the presidential election in the same year. Nevertheless, voting in elections is the main form of political participation for Guatemalans and for luqueños.

Aside from the larger questions, the study produced some interesting observations. The study compared questionnaire results for civically active men and women. As shown in Table 5, women were far less politically knowledgeable (p-value = 0.001) than men, less politically participatory (p-value = 0.000), and less likely to use media for political information (p-value = 0.000).

In their study of civic participation in Central America, Richard and Booth had similar findings:

> Compared with men, women have significantly less political information and less positive political capital, even controlling for their organizational involvement, education, and living standard…” (Richard and Booth, 241)

The study also helped to identify why people are civically active. Each of the 124 civically active persons was asked: ¿Porqué participa usted en actividades cívicas? One hundred and fifteen responded. Seventy responded that they were committed to improving their community and helping others. Whether this means that they viewed themselves as doing the work the municipal government should have been doing can only be inferred from their responses, since the question was never asked directly. Seventeen saw civic participation as their
patriotic duty. Twelve enjoyed the social interactions that membership in civic groups provided to them. Ten viewed civic activity as an opportunity to share their knowledge with others. And, six responded that participation allowed them to learn from others. A twenty-eight-year-old woman explained her reasons: “Porque disfruto ayudar y al ayudar aprendo a ser un mejor ser humano cada día. Conozco muchas necesidades y me gusta la comunicación con diferentes tipos de personas."

Some of the civically inactive gave reasons for their lack of participation in civic activities. They cited poverty and lack of time. A forty-year-old woman noted: “Me falta el tiempo porque tengo hijos y estoy estudiando. No estoy acostumbrada de participar en actividades cívicas.”

Future Studies

The results of this study indicate the need for future investigation into a number of questions. First, it would be interesting to determine whether education increases civic activity. It would also be worthwhile to see whether those who belong to groups without social development or political objectives (such as the church choir, athletic clubs, church groups who visit the sick or who proselytize) have a lower correlation with political participation and political knowledge than those who belong to community development or interest groups. Finally, it would be interesting to compare San Lucas’s civic activism and its correlation with political knowledge and political participation to other similarly sized towns.

Conclusions

San Lucas provides a snapshot of civic participation in a seemingly typical, indigenous Guatemalan town that is somewhat different from its neighbors. Beginning in the 1960s, the presence of an American, Roman Catholic parish priest in San Lucas served as a catalyst for the formation of a robust network of civic organizations. Unlike other towns in the region, San Lucas’s civic network survived the civil war, mainly because of the skillfulness with which the local Church dealt with the guerrillas and the military. As a result, San Lucas probably has a more vibrant network of civic associations than most other towns its size. Most civic activity in San Lucas is community-based rather than linked to national organizations. In comparing a paired sample of civically active and civically inactive luqueños, the study shows that the civically active citizenry demonstrates more political knowledge and engages in greater political participation than the civically inactive population.

Does this mean that San Lucas is headed towards democracy because of its large web of local associational groups? Perhaps, but not at a fast pace. Most social scientists agree that a healthy, active, civic society is positive and this study shows, as some social scientists have already determined, that civic activism leads to greater political knowledge and political participation.

There is no doubt that it will take decades to transform Guatemala into a truly democratic society. For this to happen, many institutional changes must be made at both the national and local government level. Democracy-builders should not despair. A healthy civil society that is
well-organized and active helps promote democratization. However, it is more likely to be successful sooner when accompanied by institutional reform. All of this takes time.

**Acknowledgements**

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Bruce Thompson and Mr. Xiangke Huang of the Clinical Trials & Surveys Corp., who performed the statistical analyses for this study and assisted with the preparation of the statistical report. I thank Dr. Meir Stampfer, chair of the Department of Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, who suggested the selection of a paired-sample empirical design. I am grateful to my husband, Dr. Marc Blum, for his constant encouragement and his editorial help. I could not have completed this paper without the indefatigable assistance of Mary Beth Lennon, a former student and now director of foundation relations at the College of Notre Dame, who helped me organize my thoughts, edited my manuscript, and gave me much-needed moral support to complete what I had set out to do. I appreciate Cynthia Amerman’s help in administering the questionnaire in San Lucas. She is a student in the Masters in Social Work Program at Gallaudet University. Adela Chuc Ajanel was my primary assistant in the field. She helped administer the questionnaire, served as a Cakchiquel translator and contact person with the many people of San Lucas who are her friends. Because of her intimate knowledge of San Lucas and luqueños I nominate Adela to run for mayor of San Lucas Tolimán.
Appendix 1: A Case-Control Study to Determine the Correlation between Civic Activity, Political Knowledge, and Political Participation In San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala

A. Overview

This study was conducted to determine whether a correlation exists between civic activity, political knowledge and political participation in the town of San Lucas Tolimán, in the Guatemalan highlands. The study design called for the interview of 124 individuals who were civically active (cases) and the interview of 124 individuals who were civically inactive (controls). This particular study design follows that of a matched case-control study. Using the matched design, civically inactive (control) luqueños (inhabitants of San Lucas) were individually matched to civically active luqueños (case) by age (within a decade, eg. ages 20-29), gender, and education (maximum 3-year range). This design differs from a more traditional case-control design in which the controls would be selected at random from the population of individuals who were not civically active. Lilienfeld (1976) and Kahn (1983) provide a basic description of the two different types of studies, and the types of biases that can arise from a case-control design.

Individuals were approached and asked to participate in the study. If the individual agreed to participate, a series of questions was asked of the individual. Questions were asked in the form of a structured questionnaire that was administered to each individual. Each question was asked in the same way for the cases and controls. Four domains were addressed in the questionnaire: (1) satisfaction with the local and federal governments, (2) attention to media, (3) political knowledge, and (4) political participation. (See Appendix 2 for the questionnaire.) The answer for each question pertaining to a domain was either quantitative in nature (e.g., how many candidate names can you remember from the last mayoral election) or qualitative in nature (e.g., do you know the current president’s name). Once the questionnaire was completed the data were entered into an ACCESS database. The data were analyzed using the MEANS, FREQ, and LOGIST programs in SAS (1990). The methods for data preparation, analysis, and the results of the analyses are presented in the following sections.

B. Data Preparation

Each question was coded according to the type of response it was designed to elicit. As indicated, questions that were quantitative in nature were coded by the numeric response provided by the interviewee. If two related questions were asked to determine the number of positive and negative things that a person could think of about an issue, the number of negative responses was subtracted from the number of positive responses to provide an overall summary score. For instance, summary scores were created for the municipal detail negative question and the municipal detail positive question and for the national detail negative question and the national detail positive question.

Questions that were qualitative in nature were coded as binary (1, 0) responses with a one indicating an affirmative response to the question and a zero indicating a negative response. Qualitative variables that could be described as negative, indifferent, or positive responses or as dissatisfied, indifferent, or satisfied responses were coded as –1, 0, and 1 respectively. All of the continuous and categorical variables were assessed for their relationship to civic activity.

In addition to assessing each question for its association with civic activity, summary variables for each domain were created and assessed for their relationship with civic activity. Table 1 shows which questionnaire variables were included in each summary score. To prevent a quantitative question from over-weighting a summary score, continuous variables were re-scaled. In particular, continuous variables were coded into a binary variable with a one indicating a positive integer response and a zero indicating that a response of zero was provided. For instance, if a person could name five mayoral candidates from the last election, the variable was re-coded to a one – indicating that at least one candidate was named. If a respondent answered “I can’t remember any of the candidates in the last mayoral election,” this would be re-coded to a zero. Any response to a question that allowed a negative integer response (e.g., municipal failings, detail negative) was coded as a “−1”. Once the individual variables had been scaled to similar ranges, they were summed to obtain the summary score. While continuous variables were re-scaled for incorporation with other variables to form a summary score, the values for the original variable were used when considering the variable’s relationship with civic activity.

For certain analyses (the paired t-test, and logistic regression), the difference between the answer provided by the civically active (case), and the answer provided by the civically inactive (control) is the appropriate way to
perform an analysis to determine if a variable is related to civic activity. Thus, in preparation for these analyses, the case responses were subtracted from the control coded responses (case response–control response) to obtain the difference scores.

C. Statistical Methods

The statistical significance for the relationship of civic activity and each quantitative variable and summary score was assessed using the paired t-test which is basically a single sample t-test performed on the difference measures described above. McNemar’s (1947) test was used to test for statistical significance when assessing the relationship between civic activity and a dichotomous or polychotomous (more than two levels of responses) qualitative variable. For a yes/no response variable, the test compares pairs in which the case gives a positive response and the control a negative response to the pairs in which the control gives a positive response and the case gives a negative response. These pairs are called the informative pairs of the analysis. Under the null hypothesis, the number of pairs in these two groups should be equal. Statistical significance is assessed from the analysis of the informative pairs. The test for a polychotomous response is more complex and the reader is referred to Breslow and Day (1980, 162-189) for a discussion on how this test is performed.

The basic metric for association for a case-control study is the odds ratio. The odds ratio is a metric that measures the change in the odds of an outcome as a function of a unit increase in the value of an independent variable. As an example, let’s examine the meaning of the odds ratio for the independent variable of a binary variable indicating whether a person is politically participatory or not. The likelihood that a person will be civically active is measured by a probability p. This probability is a function of the independent variable. In this case p is a function of political participation that takes on the value of 1 if the person is politically participatory and 0 if the person is does not participate politically. The odds associated with the probability that a person is civilically inactive given that he/she is not politically participatory is odds(0) = p(0)/(1-p(0)) and the odds that a person is civically active given that he/she is politically participatory is odds(1) = p(1)/(1-p(1)). The odds ratio is the value (OR) that reflects the change between the two odds. That is: odds(1) = OR x odds(0). Thus, as the independent variable changes in value from 0 to 1, OR (the odds ratio) reflects the change in the odds that a person is civically active. For continuous variables, the natural log of the OR functions much like a beta coefficient in linear regression. Thus, if the value of the variable increases by 10, the log of the odds that a person will be civically active increases by 10. When this value is exponentiated to obtain the actual change in odds, one sees that the odds ratio is raised to a power corresponding to the value of the increase in the value of the continuous variable. Using the number of mayoral candidates remembered in the last election as an example, if the odds ratio is three for this variable, the odds of being civically active will increase by three if the person remembers one name (compared to a person who remembers no names). If the person remembers two names, the changes in the odds will be $3^2 = 9$, when compared to a person who remembers no names.

An important feature of the odds ratio is that the value of the prospective odds ratio is the same as the value for a retrospective odds ratio. This is significant in this study because the design of the study allows for the detection of variables that are related to civic activity—the most important being whether there is a relationship between political knowledge, political participation, and civic activity. Using the interchangeability of the prospective and retrospective odds ratio, one can say that if political knowledge and participation are related to civic activity, then civic activity is related to political knowledge and participation. That is one of the main hypotheses of this investigation.

Continuous and categorical variables with a significance level of at most 0.1 were selected as candidate variables for a matched case-control logistic regression model. This model was designed to determine the minimum number of independent variables associated with civic participation and to exclude independent variables which didn’t add associative power to this core group.

The logistic regression model relates the odds of being civically active to a collection of independent variables rather than a single variable. The logistic regression model is a log-linear model which means that the log of the change in the odds of being civically active is governed by a linear combination of beta coefficients and the coded responses of the independent variables. The beta coefficients are estimated by fitting the outcomes to the data, and are defined as the log of the odds ratio. In order to describe the relationship between civic activity and the independent variables in a parsimonious manner, a stepwise selection method was applied to this model. Variables with significance levels of at most 0.05 were retained in the model. Variables that were not associated with civic
activity when considered multivariately with other important variables, were eliminated from the model as part of the stepping process. Since this study had a primary hypothesis—that political participation was related to civic activity—we required at least one of the political summary scores (political activity, political participation, political knowledge) to remain in the model. The political summary score that was most significant when considered multivariately for its association with civic activity was the Political Participation Summary Score. The other two summary scores (Media and Government Satisfaction) were not statistically associated with civic activity and are excluded from the final model presentation in Table 4.

Once a basic logistic regression model was identified, effect modifiers were added one at a time to the basic logistic regression model to examine the consistency of our results. Effect modifiers are interaction terms that are designed to detect if the relationship between the questionnaire variables and civic activity is consistent among age, gender, and education subgroups. These tests were accomplished using the logistic regression model by testing that the interaction coefficient associated with the effect modifier was zero versus the alternative that it was different from zero.

The p-value was used to define statistical significance for all statistical tests performed in this analysis. The p-value simply stated is the probability under the null hypothesis, that a value as extreme or more extreme than the one obtained from the statistical test would be realized if another study of the same type as this one were performed. The null hypothesis for a paired t-test is that the difference between the case and control means is zero. The null hypothesis for McNemar’s test and logistic regression analysis is that the odds ratio is equal to one (i.e., the variable is not related to being civically active).

All statistical analysis was done using the SAS statistical analysis package (1990).

D. Results

D.1 Univariate Analyses

The analysis of the differences for the continuous variables and summary scores is presented in Table 2A and Table 2B. The mean and standard deviation (SD) and p-value are presented for each variable. Candidate variables considered by means of their statistical significance for inclusion in the logistic regression model are shown in Table 2A. Those not included are in Table 2B. Significant differences between civically active and civically inactive participants were detected in the domains of political knowledge and political participation.

Within those domains, elements of the political knowledge summary score that were individually significant were: 1) the number of names remembered of mayoral candidates who ran in the last election (mean difference 0.79, SD 1.76, p<0.01); 2) the number of points remembered about the 1996 Peace Accord (mean difference 0.47, SD 1.47, p<0.01); 3) the number of points remembered about the assassination of Guatemalan Bishop Gerardi in 1998 (mean difference 0.58, SD 2.16, p<0.01); and 4) the number of problems that afflict Guatemala that the participant could think of (mean difference 0.44, SD 1.87, p<0.01). The political knowledge summary score was significant (mean difference 0.73, SD 2.13, p<0.01).

The individual political participation variables that were significantly associated with civic activity were: the electoral activity summary score (mean difference 0.29, SD 1.39, p=0.02) and the political participation summary score (mean difference 0.56, SD 2.53, p<0.01). The number of negative things the person could think of that national government has done (mean difference -0.15, SD 0.89, p=0.07) was also selected as a candidate for the logistic model. Table 2C shows the means and standard deviations for cases and controls individually.

D.2 Categorical Data Analyses

Tables 3A and 3B present the results of the univariate analyses for the categorical variables collected and calculated from the questionnaire responses. Using McNemar’s test these variables were identified: remembering the current mayor’s name (p=0.02), remembering the current president’s name (p=0.05), voted in last election (p=0.02), and voted in last plebiscite on new constitution (p<0.01) as candidates for inclusion in the matched case-control logistical regression analysis.

D.3. Matched Case-Control Logistical Regression Model
Table 4 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis. These continuous variables were identified to be associated with civic activity: the political participation summary score (OR = 1.3, p = 0.003), the number of mayoral candidate names remembered for the last election (OR = 1.7 per name, p<0.01); the number of problems the respondent could think of that afflict Guatemala (OR = 1.3 per problem, p=0.02), and the number of negative things person can think of that national government has done (OR = 0.56 per problem, p=0.03). The first three variables were positively associated with civic activity; that is, larger values of the first three variables would indicate that a person was more likely to be civically active. The last variable was negatively associated with civic activity; larger values of this variable would indicate that a person was less likely to be civically active. No categorical variables were identified. The variables not identified in Table 4 in the multivariate model do not add associative power to the four variables identified in Table 4, even though individually they were found to be statistically significant in the univariate analyses reported in Table 2A (for Continuous Variables).

Table 4 shows the most succinct grouping of the variables shown to be statistically significant in this study. If another study were performed, it is likely that a different set of variables would be included in the final regression model. To this extent, one should evaluate the variables for the domains that they represent rather than the specific element of the domain to which they contribute. This change in the final variables that are included in a logistic regression model from study to study could be due to the power of the statistical technique being used, the relatively modest size of the sample, and the stepping aspect of the model selection.

D.4 Effect Modifiers
To study the consistency of the model across age, gender, and education subgroups, interaction terms that crossed each identified variable with the matching criteria (age, gender, and education) were added one at a time to the basic logistic regression model. No effect modifiers were identified from this analysis. This strong result means that the model was as applicable to each age, gender and education subgroup as it was to the group as a whole. In other words, the model was just as effective in distinguishing the civic activity of older women, for example, as it was for younger men.

This does not mean that members of the different subgroups had the same level of civic activity. For instance, Table 5 shows a comparison between civically active men and women with respect to the coded questionnaire answers. As can be seen from this table, women on average had lower levels of responses to the questionnaire regarding political knowledge and participation than men’s responses. When we apply lower numbers to the logistic regression equation, the likelihood of civic activity is reduced.

E. Conclusions
There is a positive correlation between political knowledge and participation, and civic activity. Elements of these summary political variables which were also found to be significantly related to civic activity are: knowing the names of mayoral candidates for the last election, voting in the last plebiscite, understanding the problems that currently afflict Guatemala, yet not being excessively negative about the things that the national government has accomplished or not accomplished in Guatemala. Although a negative perception of the government prevailed, the civically active group, which was far better informed about the problems of Guatemala, evaluated government activity less critically than the civically inactive group.

The multivariate model was not found to be different among different age, gender, and education groups.

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Appendix 1 References


Appendix 2: Questionnaire

ENCUESTA SOBRE PARTICIPACION CIVIL, CONOCIMIENTO POLITICO Y PARTICIPACION POLITICA

1) Nombre y apellidos: (Si quiere darlos)
2) Edad:
3) Sexo: a) femenino b) masculino
4) Lugar de nacimiento:
5) Ocupación o profesión:
6) Ingreso mensual:
7) Grado de educación que cursó:
8) Idiomas que habla:
9) Religión:

PARTICIPACION CIVICA

1) A qué grupos cívicos pertenece? Asociaciones, comités, clubes, agrupaciones, coros, sociedades de beneficencia, asociaciones religiosas, asociaciones recreativas, asociaciones comunitarias, asociaciones culturales, comités de vecindario, asociaciones educativas o escolares, asociaciones de mujeres, de desarrollo económico, de desarrollo de la mujer, desarrollo del niño, desarrollo de la cultura indígena, del medio ambiente, comité del agua, etc. POR FAVOR NO MENCIONAR GRUPOS POLITICOS. SOLAMENTE GRUPOS NO POLITICOS VOLUNTARIOS.

LISTADO DE GRUPOS CIVILES A LOS QUE PERTENECE:
   a) Nombre de la asociación:
   b) Actividad de la asociación:
   c) Su posición en la asociación: (líder o participante)

2) ¿Porqué participa Usted en actividades cívicas?

OTRAS ACTIVIDADES QUE DEMUESTRAN PARTICIPACION CIVICA O POLITICA:

1) ¿Cuántas veces por semana lee el diario?
2) ¿Cuántas veces por semana ve la noticias por televisión?
3) ¿Cuántas veces por semana escucha las noticias por radio?

CONOCIMIENTOS POLITICOS

1) Nombre del presidente de Guatemala:
2) Nombre del presidente anterior de Guatemala:
3) Nombre del alcalde de su pueblo:
4) Nombres de los otros candidatos para alcalde en las últimas elecciones:
5) ¿Cuáles son los tres poderes de una democracia?  
6) ¿Cuáles son los principales objetivos de los Acuerdos de la Paz del 1996?  
7) ¿Qué sabe sobre el caso del Obispo Juan Gerardi?  
8) ¿Cuáles son los problemas más serios que sufre su país hoy día?  
9) ¿Cuántos departamentos tiene Guatemala?  
10) ¿Usted está satisfecho con su gobierno: a) nacional   b)municipal (muy satisfecho, más o menos, muy desatisfecho)  
11) ¿Cuáles son los logros y fracasos del gobierno nacional? ¿Cuáles son los logros y fracasos del gobierno municipal?

**PARTICIPACION POLITICA**

1) ¿Votó Usted en las últimas elecciones presidenciales?  
2) ¿Votó Usted en el plebiscito sobre la última reforma constitucional sobre los Acuerdos de la Paz que fue derrotada?  
3) ¿Pertenece Usted a un partido político? Identifíquelo si quiere.  
4) ¿Participa Usted en alguna actividad política relacionada a las elecciones? ¿Cuál es? (ejemplos: mesa electoral, ayudante durante las elecciones, trabajador para un candidato político, candidato político, educación electoral).  
5) ¿Usted tuvo miedo de participar en las últimas elecciones?  
6) ¿Porqué votó o no votó?  
7) ¿Durante la época de la violencia tuvo Usted miedo de participar en las elecciones?  
8) ¿Durante la época de la violencia estaba Usted afiliado a algún partido político?

**COMENTARIOS:**
Appendix 3: Types of Groups to which Civically Active Luqueños Belong

**Church-related Groups:**
- Catholic proselytizer
- Evangelical proselytizer
- Visiting sick parishioners and bringing them food
- Church choir
- Church reconstruction
- Youth
- Women
- Church-related community development: land fund, building houses, land distribution, reforestation, potable water, electricity, healthcare, religious education

**Community-related Groups:**
- Nutrition
- Reforestation
- Agriculture
- Women
- Healthcare
- Children
- Children’s education
- Adult literacy
- Helping disabled
- Preserving indigenous customs and traditions
- Electric power
- Clean water
- Drainage
- Local empowerment
- Housing
- Providing food
- Community development
- Crafts promotion
- Recreation and sports
- Folklore and culture
- Village Choir
- Environmental Protection

**National Associations:**
- Sustainable development
- Literacy
- Women
- Land redistribution
- Disabilities
- Unions
- Professional Organizations
Table 1: List of Variables Calculated from the Questionnaire Data

**Media Sum** = sum (reads newspaper, watches news on TV, listens to news on radio)

**Political Knowledge Sum** = sum (remembered current mayor of San Lucas’ name, remembered current Guatemalan president’s name, remembered past president’s name, remembered at least one losing San Lucas mayoral candidate’s name from the latest election, remembered at least one branch of democracy, remembered correct number of Guatemalan departments, remembered at least one purpose of the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Accords, remembered at least one reason why Bishop Gerardi was killed in 1998, remembered at least one problem Guatemala is currently facing)

**Political Participation Sum** = sum (voted in last presidential election in December 1999, voted in last plebiscite on constitutional reform in May 1999, electoral activity, member of a political party, voted during the civil war)

**Satisfaction Sum** = sum (satisfaction with municipal government, satisfaction with national government, satisfaction with specific actions taken by the national government,* satisfaction with specific actions taken by the municipal government**)

* Satisfaction with specific actions taken by the national government = positive actions – negative actions taken by the national government.
** Satisfaction with specific actions taken by the municipal government = positive actions – negative actions taken by the municipal government.
### Table 2A: Univariate Analysis of Difference Scores Calculated between Civically Active and Civically Inactive Groups

**Continuous Variables that Were Selected for Inclusion in the Logistic Regression Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>95% CL</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Mayoral Candidates’ Names Remembered</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.48 – 1.10</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996 Peace Accords Knowledge (Peace Detail)</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.21 – 0.73</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Bishop Gerardi was Killed (Gerardi Detail)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.20 – 0.96</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Guatemalan Problems Knowledge</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.14 – 0.73</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Knowledge Summary Score</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.36 – 1.11</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Activity</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.04 – 0.54</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Participation Summary Score</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.19 – 0.92</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Government Negative Performance (Detail Negative)</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.30 – 0.01</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variables with means for difference scores that are statistically significant in differentiating members of the civically active and the civically inactive groups at the level of ten in a hundred (0.1) or better. For example, a “p-value” of <0.01 means that the result is likely to occur by chance less than once in a hundred times; a “p-value” of ≥0.02 means likely to occur by chance 2 times in a hundred. “CL” is the 95% confidence limit for the reported mean; “SD” is the standard deviation of the mean.

### Table 2B: Univariate Analysis of Difference Scores Calculated between Civically Active and Civically Inactive Groups

**Continuous Variables that Were NOT Selected for Inclusion in the Logistic Regression Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>95% CL</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read Newspaper</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-0.11 – 0.96</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch News on TV</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.62 – 0.70</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to News on Radio</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.71 – 0.69</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Question Summary Score</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>-0.79 – 1.71</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branches of Democracy</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.34 – 0.26</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Government Negative Performance (Detail Negative)</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.04 – 0.22</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Government Achievements (Detail Positive)</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.23 – 0.16</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Government Achievements (Detail Positive)</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.04 – 0.28</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Government Performance Summary Score</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.4 – 0.58</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 2A for explanation of terms. These are the variables not statistically significant at a p-value of 0.1. They are likely to occur by chance more than 10 times in a hundred, as shown by their p-values.
Table 2C: Means and Standard Deviations of Questionnaire Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Newspaper</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch News on TV</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to News on Radio</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names Remembered of Mayoral Candidates who ran in Last Election</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branches of Democracy</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996 Peace Accords Knowledge (detail)</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Bishop Gerardi was killed (detail)</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala Problems Remembered</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sum of Political Knowledge</td>
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<td>Sum of Political Participation</td>
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<td>Sum of Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction with Government</td>
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<td>Variable</td>
<td>Number of Pairs</td>
<td>Prop* of Cases Exposed</td>
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*Proportion
**Informative Pairs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of Pairs</th>
<th>Prop* of Cases Exposed</th>
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<th>Informative Pairs</th>
<th>Prop of IP** case Exposed</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>95% CI Lower Bound</th>
<th>95% CI Upper Bound</th>
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*Proportion
**Informative Pairs
Table 4: Results of Matched Case-Control Logistic Model Analysis

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<th>Parameter</th>
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<tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std Dev</td>
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<td>Watch News on TV</td>
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<tr>
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*p-value from a F-test statistic comparing distributions among the 2 groups
### Table 5 (Continued): Comparison of Questionnaire Data Between Gender Groups
Cases (Civically Active) Only

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<td>n</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p-value from a Chi-square or F-test statistic comparing distributions among the two
Comparison of Political Knowledge Summary Score Between Case and Control Group

Number of Political Knowledge Questions Correctly Answered

- Case
- Control

Percentage of Participants

Groups
Comparison of Electoral Activity Score Between Case and Control Group
Comparison of Political Participation Summary Score Between Case and Control Group

Number of Political Participation Questions Positively Answered

Case  Control

Percentage of Participants

0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

0  10  20  30  40
Interviews:


Chuc Ajanel, Adela, who has always lived in San Lucas, granted me numerous interviews and helped me collect the data. She is a school teacher in San Lucas who knows most of the residents of San Lucas and who speaks fluent Cakchiquel, Spanish and English.

Books and Articles:


