

# Measuring Electoral Integrity: Electoral Officials' Perceptions of Electoral Integrity<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Elections are fundamental to democratic life, but there is an ongoing debate about how the quality of elections can be measured. This paper seeks to advance this debate by presenting new cross-national data on electoral integrity based upon the views of practitioners in 32 countries. Practitioner assessments are found to be considerably more positive than measures of electoral integrity based on expert or public opinion. This is significant for studies seeking to measure electoral integrity since other measures may produce a far more critical picture. In this paper, the drivers of electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity are then identified, revealing that higher job satisfaction and more knowledge of the area, generally lead to more positive perceptions of electoral integrity.

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<sup>1</sup> Work in progress. Please do not cite without prior permission.

## **1. Introduction**

Elections are fundamental to democratic life, but for an election to be a success, they must help to ensure political equality and popular control of government (Beetham 1994). Yet, operationalizing the ‘success’ or ‘integrity’ of an election remains a challenge for political scientists and practitioners alike. There is an ongoing debate about how the quality of elections can be measured.

This paper seeks to advance this debate by presenting new cross-national data on the levels of electoral integrity based upon the views of practitioners. Electoral officials are the government employees who are tasked with the day-to-day administration of elections. They may work for a government department or independent agency. They may report to the centralized national level, or manage elections locally. They may be involved in a variety of tasks: from registering voters, to counting ballots. While the specifics of their employment may look different, they all have in common a mission to conduct the fundamental tasks associated with elections in their country.

What benefits can we gain from asking what they think about the quality of elections? Unlike public and expert perceptions, which are commonly used in current research, electoral officials may have unique on-the-ground insights into the conduct of elections, and a better knowledge of the technical aspects of administration of which the public may be unaware. This grassroots knowledge and experience may lead to a richer picture of how elections are run. But just like other types of perceptions, electoral officials may be biased by common variables, including whether they work directly for the stage of the electoral cycle studied, or whether they work in an environment where they feel safe enough to voice their real perceptions of electoral integrity.

This paper explores the perceptions of electoral officials on electoral integrity. Firstly, it considers how practitioners evaluate elections. Which stages of the electoral cycle tend to receive the lowest and highest evaluations? Where do they see the greatest flaws and strengths? Additionally, it compares these evaluations with the same questions ask of the public and experts. Do practitioners see their elections in a more positive or negative light? Regarding what stages of the electoral cycle?

The second set of analyses turns to the predictors of these evaluations. What shapes the evaluations of electoral officials? We consider a number of potential covariates, including socio-demographic variables, experience and satisfaction at work, and country-level variables such as levels of corruption, freedom and wealth. Does using the practitioner evaluation of electoral integrity identify similar or different drivers of electoral integrity to earlier research?

The second section of this article outlines the current state of research on measuring electoral integrity, including the promises and pitfalls of gauging public and expert perceptions. Part three considers the research questions and presents a number of hypotheses that will be tested. Part four looks at the data used, drawing on the combined results of two surveys of electoral officials conducted from 2016-2017. Finally, part five considers the results of a variety of analyses aimed at better understanding the drivers of electoral officials’ perceptions. Part six concludes. The article aims to make a crucial methodological and empirical contribution to the study of electoral integrity, democratisation and comparative political systems.

## **2. Defining and Measuring Electoral Integrity**

## 2.1 Conceptualising electoral integrity

There are competing conceptualisations of electoral integrity (Birch 2011; James forthcoming-b). In fact, electoral integrity might be an ‘essentially contested concept’ in so far as it an evaluative concept which involves value-judgements over social phenomena which are complex in nature (Gallie 1955). These different concepts should be delineated first, before we look at different ways that have been used to measure electoral integrity.

At the most obvious level, making claims about electoral integrity commonly involves some recourse to *democratic theory*. Classically, there is a debate between minimalist and substantive democratic theorists who disagree on whether we should evaluate democracy, and by implication electoral integrity, by whether certain procedures are in place or by the outcome of those procedures. Dahl (1971) set out a list of procedures which are thought to constitute democracy, including the right to vote, free and fair elections, and alternative sources of information. Electoral integrity is achieved when these procedures are found to be place in a given state.

This minimalist approach to democracy has, however, been criticized for being Eurocentric. Substantive democratic theorists, such as Beetham (1994) therefore pointed towards the need to evaluate elections against whether certain principles had been achieved such as political equality and popular control of government. Birch (2011) borrows more from the latter approach, footnoting David Beetham directly, when she defines democracy as “a polity in which decisions of public policy are subject to popular control, and all members are considered equal for the purposes of exercising control” (p.14). Her definition and typology of electoral malpractices are built on this conceptualisation.

Democratic theory is not always directly used in support of conceptualisations of electoral integrity, however. The approach developed by the Electoral Integrity Project is instead to evaluate all elections according to whether they meet *international norms and standards* (Norris 2014). Norris (2014) defines electoral integrity as the adherence to “international conventions and universal standards about elections reflecting global norms applying to all countries worldwide throughout the electoral cycle, including during the pre-electoral period, the campaign, on polling day, and its aftermath” (p.12). These may draw from international agreements from organizations including the United Nations<sup>2</sup>, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe,<sup>3</sup> the Inter-Parliamentary Union<sup>4</sup> and others. Similarly, there is also a tradition that evaluates elections in terms of whether national laws are broken or upheld. Incidents of electoral fraud therefore constitute instances of electoral malpractice, whereas the absence of violations of a legal framework constitute well-run elections (Minnite 2010).

Nor is democratic theory necessarily present in the *sociological approach*, which centres on whether the norms of a particular culture are violated (Elklit and Reynolds 2002). This has the advantage of avoiding the imposition of Western standards. A final approach is for elections to be

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<sup>2</sup> Article 25, Section B of the United Nations International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (1966), Article 25, Section B, (<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>) See also an earlier document, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 21, Section 3. (<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>)

<sup>3</sup> Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Copenhagen Document (1990), Section 7.1 (<http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304>).

<sup>4</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union Declaration on Criteria For Free and Fair Elections (1994) (<http://www.ipu.org/cnl-e/154-free.htm>)

evaluated as a *public service* using frameworks from public sector management have been developed to assess elections, in a similar way to how schools and hospitals are evaluated: with criteria such as efficiency, service outputs and service outcomes deployed (James 2014a).

## ***2.2 Measuring Using Public Perceptions***

Moving from concept to operationalization, how have scholars attempted to build measures of electoral integrity amidst these contrasting definitions? One method is to use public surveys, which have long captured voters' opinions on elections in their country. These surveys can provide unique evidence as to the 'on-the-ground' reality of an election (Atkeson, Alvarez, and Hall 2015). By asking the public what they think, there is also no risk of the observer imposing Western (or non-Western) ideals upon a society and is therefore closely aligned to the sociological approach.

However, public perceptions of electoral integrity remained of limited use in cross-national study. Voters' perceptions of electoral integrity may be influenced by issues such as a lack of attention to the conduct of the election, social desirability in their responses to surveyors, self-censorship, bias based on whether their preferred party or candidate won the election, or the influence of the media or political rhetoric (Howell and Justwan 2013; Singh, Karakoç, and Blais 2012).

Additionally, there may be challenges in the cross-national comparability of these public surveys since some terms may mean different things in different context. For example, the standards by which an election is judged may be vastly different in a new democracy, compared with a long-standing democracy, where even the slightest instance of malpractice or technical error may be seen as a complete failure (King et al. 2009).

In addition to domestic studies that ask respondents about their views of elections, such as national election studies, a number of cross-national surveys probe the public's perceptions of their elections.<sup>5</sup> These include questions on the fairness of elections in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (Module 1, 1996-2001), and a battery of questions about trust in electoral institutions in the Global Barometer (2001-2008). The most recent wave of the World Values Survey (6<sup>th</sup> Wave, 2010-2014) asked perhaps the most comprehensive battery of questions regarding electoral integrity, including questions on topics such as election coverage by the media, perceptions of electoral officials, violence at the polls, and the fairness of the vote count.

When the survey results are in, what are the most common drivers of public perceptions of electoral integrity? At the individual level, one major predictor of confidence in election is whether the citizen voted for the winning party or candidate (Anderson et al. 2007; Anderson and Tverdova 2001; Moehler 2009; Sances and Stewart 2014). Voters who were disappointed to not see their preferred candidate or party get elected may assume that the election was fraudulent, in an attempt to make sense of the loss. Other socio-demographic variables have also been suggested to influence voters' confidence in elections, including a voter's level of education, gender or minority group status (especially the issue of black and Hispanic voters in the American context), although studies vary in the significance of each of these variables (Atkeson, Alvarez, and Hall 2015). These population groups may feel disenfranchised from the political system, and therefore be distrustful of elections, or even government in general.

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<sup>5</sup> For more details on these surveys, see: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (<http://cses.org/>), the Global Barometers ([www.globalbarometers.org/](http://www.globalbarometers.org/)) and the World Values Survey (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>)

Institutional variables can also help predict voters' confidence in elections, such as the proportionality of the electoral system (Birch 2008), the public funding of political parties (Birch 2008), the use of technology (Claassen et al. 2013) or polling procedures (Atkeson and Saunders 2007). Other studies have tested whether the independence of the electoral management body has an impact on perceptions of electoral integrity, with mixed results (Birch 2008; Kerevel 2009; Kerr and Lührmann 2016).

### ***2.3 Measuring Using Expert Perceptions***

Due to some of the challenges associated with using public perceptions to measure electoral integrity, many scholars have turned to surveying experts instead. Expert surveys are used in a variety of fields to capture data on concepts that cannot be directly observed, or are difficult to measure (Norris 2014). Surveys are distributed to experts (usually academics) who then provide their perceptions of the concept (in this case, electoral integrity). These data are then provided anonymously at the individual level, or (more often) compiled into a cross-national dataset.

Experts may benefit from additional knowledge about complex concepts or events. For example, the public may not be aware of a country's institutions of electoral management, whereas experts in the field of electoral integrity may know whether these bodies act impartially or not. Ideally, experts should also be less biased than the public, who base their perceptions of the quality of elections on, for example, whether their preferred candidate won. While experts are certainly not immune to these biases, they may be better able to consider specifically the questions asked, rather than base their perceptions on other issues or personal feelings, due to their additional training and cognitive skills.

However, like the use of public perceptions as a way of measuring electoral integrity, there are some important caveats to the use of expert perceptions. Research has demonstrated that experts are less consistent when asked to provide evaluative judgements (Martinez i Coma and van Ham 2015). From a more practical perspective, it is difficult to find actual experts on every country, or every time period, especially for countries where domestic experts may be limited due to small population sizes or challenges with academic freedom.

There are two noteworthy datasets that use expert perceptions to evaluate electoral integrity. The Varieties of Democracy project collects data on a variety of indicators of democracy, including electoral integrity. Data is collected for each year (with the time period covered continually growing) in each country (Coppedge et al. 2016). The Electoral Integrity Project, on the other hand, collects expert perceptions following each election on a series of indicators that follow the 11-step electoral cycle (Norris, Wynter, and Cameron 2018). These expert surveys are used in a variety of studies on issues ranging from the independence of electoral management bodies (Garnett 2017; van Ham and Lindberg 2015), to the fairness of district boundaries (Coma and Lago 2018).

A plethora of studies have attempted to determine the drivers of electoral integrity using expert perceptions (Birch and van Ham 2017; Garnett 2015; James 2017; van Ham and Garnett 2017; van Ham and Lindberg 2015). Norris (2015) identifies a variety of structural predictors of expert perceptions of electoral integrity, including economic and human development (according to the Lipset (1960) modernization theory), natural resource reliance and corruption (the resource curse), and length of time the country has been democracy. Furthermore, political institutions, including the type of electoral system, strong parliaments, and press freedom, tends to have an impact on electoral integrity. Additionally, globalization and regional influences can affect expert perceptions of electoral integrity. Like other scholars such as van Ham and Lindberg (2015) and

Norris (2015) also test the potential impact of electoral management body design, but finds that the formal model does not have an impact on expert perceptions of electoral integrity.

## ***2.4 Measuring Using the Perceptions of Electoral Officials***

The perceptions of electoral officials have been used to assess electoral integrity in a variety of settings and administrative levels. The experience of the poll worker has been gathered using poll worker surveys in the US, UK and elsewhere (Clark and James 2017). Poll worker surveys are circulated to those staff working in polling stations on the day of the election, sometimes in hard copy format, sometimes in an online format. They offer an opportunity to gather information about problems that might occur such as insufficient resources, problems with electoral fraud or potentially eligible voters being turned away. Clark and James (2017), for example, found that at the 2015 UK General Election, instances of suspected electoral fraud were very rare, but roughly two-thirds of polling stations turned away at least one voter because their name did not appear on the electoral register. Similar studies have been undertaken in the US (Burden and Milyo 2015), Mexico and Ukraine, with the focus varying to cover issues such as training, skills and worker motivations.

The perception of middle level managers have also been surveyed in national studies. Interviews and surveys with middle level managers have been undertaken to evaluate the quality of electoral management at major electoral events such as the UK Brexit referendum in 2016 (Clark and James 2016). They have been used to identify the effects of reforms. For example, the side-effects of implementation of individual electoral registration in the UK was identified using qualitative interviews in advance of implementation (James 2014a).

Since the use of this method has been limited to electoral administration and management, the drivers of electoral integrity are incomplete. Complex legislation, limited resources, public confusion about the electoral process are amongst the challenges reported by officials as making polling and electoral registration processes difficult (James 2014a, forthcoming-b), but other areas of the electoral process have not been studied.

The advantage of using the perceptions of electoral integrity is that use first hand knowledge of the electoral process, as opposed to the knowledge of citizens and experts who might be more likely to rely on second hand information where the media or the views of candidates act as cues (Vonnahme and Miller 2013). The theoretical reasoning unpinning the use of electoral officials is that workers can be thought of as street-level bureaucrats (Alvarez and Hall 2006; James 2014b; Lipsky 1980). Literature from implementation studies suggests that a bottom-up approach is needed in order for policy implementation to be successful. Policies can be seemingly well designed from above, but implementation goals can fail to succeed should local officials with front line experience not be consulted with (Durose 2011; Lipsky 1980). Durose notes that such officials have ‘local knowledge,’ which is:

‘a kind of non-verbal knowing that evolves from seeing, interacting with someone (or some place or something) over time’ (Yanow 2004, 12). As implied, this ‘knowing’ is contextual and refers to a specific setting and reflects ‘very mundane yet expert understanding from lived experience’ (Yanow 2004, 12). Front-line workers develop their ‘local knowledge’ from their own subjective interpretations or ‘readings’ of a situation. (Durose 2009, 36).

Of course, one downside is that most electoral officials may only work in one part of the electoral cycle. It may not therefore follow that an official that works in electoral registration has an overview of electoral finance – or vice versa. Public officials may also seek to game responses to surveys if they feel that the results influence the public perception of their work and may even lead to more or less resources allocated to them.

### **3. Research Questions & Hypotheses**

To summarise the article so far, the research field has therefore made considerable advances as a variety of different sources of information have been used to assess electoral integrity. However, there are at least three core deficiencies in the literature, which this article seeks to address. Firstly, research using practitioner evaluations, although of obvious use, have been limited to studies of single countries, and therefore remains an underused source of data. The collection of data at a cross-national level, as is undertaken by this article, can lead to considerable advances in knowledge about the levels of electoral integrity.

Secondly, as a result of the former problem, there have been no attempts to compare practitioner evaluations to other types of evaluations. We do not know, for example, whether public officials rate elections higher or lower than the public or experts. This is an important lacuna because if there are significant differences between them, and if one source is used over another as a dependent variable in a given study, then there could be important differences in the results.

Thirdly, there have been no attempts to assess the drivers of electoral integrity using practitioner evaluations as the dependent variable. Undertaking this kind of analysis would be a useful way of checking the robustness of studies which have relied on expert or public perceptions.

This remainder of this article therefore explores two key questions:

1. How have practitioners evaluated elections? How do these evaluations compare to other measures of electoral integrity?
2. What shapes these evaluations? Does using the practitioner evaluation of electoral integrity identify similar or different drivers of electoral integrity to earlier research?

#### ***3.1 Comparing EMB Officials, Experts, and the Public***

The first task of this article is to examine how practitioners evaluate elections. Which areas did they rate the most positive, and which did they rate the most negative? It is possible to expect two contrary hypotheses here. Firstly, one may expect that electoral officials rate the activities in the electoral cycle with which they directly work more positively [H1a]. They may have a bias to better perceive their own work. By contrast, the areas that they are not directly involved in (for example, the conduct of the media or candidates), they may view in a more negative light. According to this hypothesis we may expect to see the most positive views of activities such as the quality of voting information, registration or boundary delineation. The alternative hypothesis is that because electoral officials are immersed in these stages of the electoral cycle, they will see all the flaws associated with them, and perceive them in a more negative light [H1b].

A similar set of hypotheses may be made comparing the perceptions of electoral officials to those of experts or the general population. Once again, we may expect to see either more positive views of electoral integrity, due to electoral officials' bias towards seeing the quality of the work they do [H2a], or we may see more negative perceptions since they are aware of the flaws associated with elections in more detail than experts or the public [H2b].

### 3.2 EMB officials' evaluations

The second question this article addresses is what shapes electoral officials' evaluations of electoral integrity. In other words, which individual or country-level variables can predict the positive or negative evaluations of an electoral official? Do they match the predictors of electoral integrity found in studies that use public and/or expert evaluations as the dependent variable?

First, we control for a number of individual-level variables. *Gender and level of education* (post-secondary) are used as control variables. It was decided that asking the respondent whether they supported the winner might reduce the response rates, so this was not included in the surveys and so it cannot be tested for. The *seniority* of the respondent should also be controlled for. Senior officials might be more likely to give a positive image of electoral integrity because they want to present a positive image of their organisation. The length of *job tenure (years of experience)* should also be controlled for as newer employees may have a less detailed knowledge of electoral integrity, especially if they have not worked for a whole electoral cycle.

We might expect that a range individual level factors might affect the assessment of electoral integrity. Firstly, we anticipate that *job satisfaction* would be one of these [H3]. Studies from the human resource management literature suggests that job satisfaction is positively associated with organisational performance (Poon 2004; Saari and Judge 2004) and there is evidence that this relationship holds in the sphere of elections (James forthcoming-a). Furthermore, we can expect that the *knowledge* might affect have an effect on their assessment of electoral integrity [H4]. Lastly, whether the *official works in the area* of the electoral cycle that they are assessing might have an effect [H5]. An employee who works on regulating electoral finance, for example, might not understand the challenges involved in compiling the electoral register.

We also expect some of the country-level variables that have been noted to influence a country's overall levels of electoral integrity to likewise impact the perceptions of electoral officials. Previous research has demonstrated that *economic development* is positively related to electoral integrity (Norris 2015; Norris, Frank, and Martinez i Coma 2014). According to the Lipset (1959, 1960), greater economic resources promote higher levels of citizen participation and expectations in the quality of democratic governance. In addition, higher levels of economic development should improve the resources at the disposal of the electoral management body to administrate high quality elections. As such, we expect that the perceptions of electoral officials, like perceptions of the public or experts, to be more positive where levels of economic development are higher [H6].

A related hypothesis, tested by Norris (2015) on expert perceptions, is that reliance on natural resources may deflate perceptions of electoral integrity. Here, the causal theory is that natural resource reliance increases *levels of corruption* and thereby would decrease how impartially elections are run. As insiders to government bureaucracy, electoral officials, unlike the public or experts, are best placed to see where corruption influences the conduct of elections. Thus, levels of corruption should be a particularly strong (negative) driver of the perceptions of electoral officials of electoral integrity [H7].

Norris (2015) identifies press freedom as one major driver of expert perceptions of electoral integrity. For electoral officials too, *levels of freedom* should impact their perceptions, though they needn't rely on the press for their information. Nonetheless, by virtue of being public officials, levels of freedom in the country may have an important impact on perceptions of electoral integrity. There are two contradictory hypotheses that may be made here. Firstly, it would make

sense the perceptions of the quality of elections would be higher in countries with greater freedoms [H8a]. In these cases, key norms and standards of electoral integrity, from freedom of voters to participate and receive impartial information to the ability of candidates and parties from all political stripes to run for elections, should be present (Norris, Frank, and Martinez i Coma 2014). However, an alternative hypothesis is that in some countries that lack civil liberties and freedom, electoral officials may be more positive about their perceptions of elections if they fear that their responses may be seen by higher ranking government officials. In these types of countries, the consequences of voicing a negative perception of the quality of elections may be severe (Mattes 2008). As such, we may expect that in countries ranked partly free (according to Freedom House ratings) to have slightly more positive perceptions of electoral integrity [H8b].

#### **4. Data and Method**

Data on electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity were collected by two surveys which were conducted simultaneously in 2016-2017. The Electoral Management Survey (EMS) (James et al. Forthcoming) and the ELECT Survey (Norris, Nai, and Karp 2016) were distributed to electoral officials, defined as any employee working on national-level elections in the country, in participating countries with cooperation of their electoral management body.<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that the dataset used in this article is therefore based on only those countries and individuals who were willing to participate in the survey. In total, 2,026 employees in 52 countries provided responses. However, in 19 of these countries, less than 5 employees provided responses. Since the analysis in this article will include multi-level modelling to capture important country-level effects, responses from these 19 countries are dropped from these more complex analyses (see Appendix A).

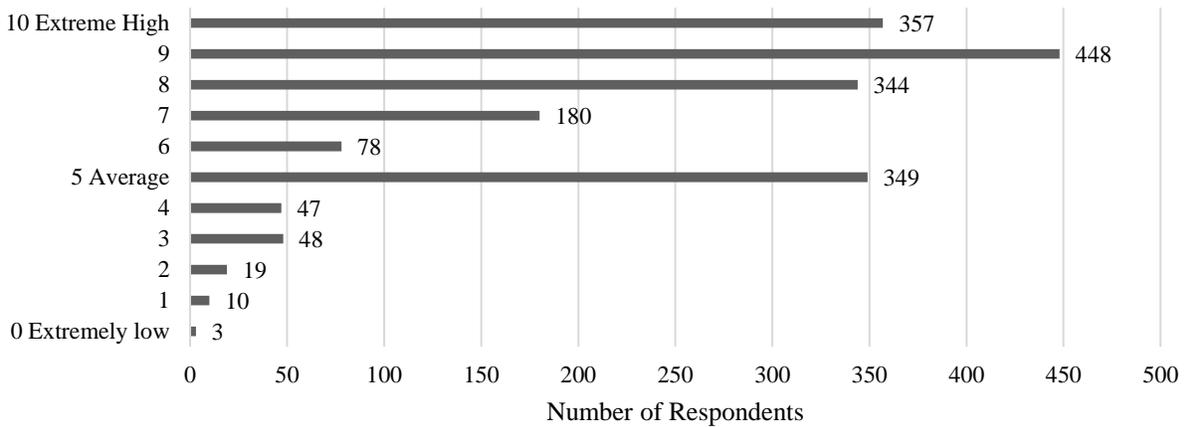
Both surveys were conducted on an online platform, and respondents were ensured confidentiality of their responses.<sup>7</sup> Each contained a similar set of questions, including information about the electoral officials' backgrounds, and perceptions of their employment. The surveys asked all respondents to rate the overall level of electoral integrity in their country's last election. The responses on total were rather high, with a mean response of 7.54 (0-10 scale), and standard deviation of 2.11 (Figure 1).

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<sup>6</sup> Attempts were made to contact and seek participation of electoral officials in all countries. See James et al. (Forthcoming) for more details about survey administration.

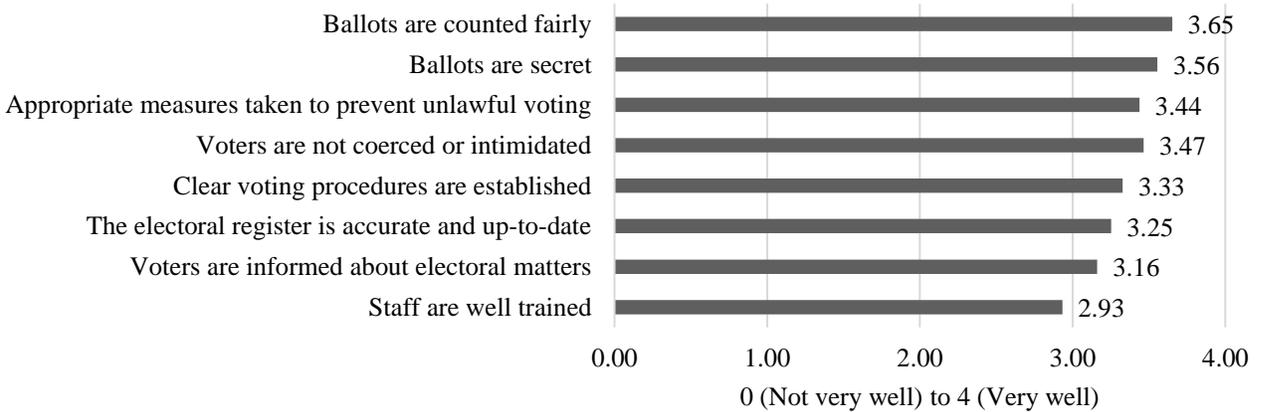
<sup>7</sup> While there was a great deal of coordination between these surveys, they were not identical. A detailed comparison of both survey texts is available upon request.

**Figure 1: Electoral Officials' Perceptions of Electoral Integrity in their Country**



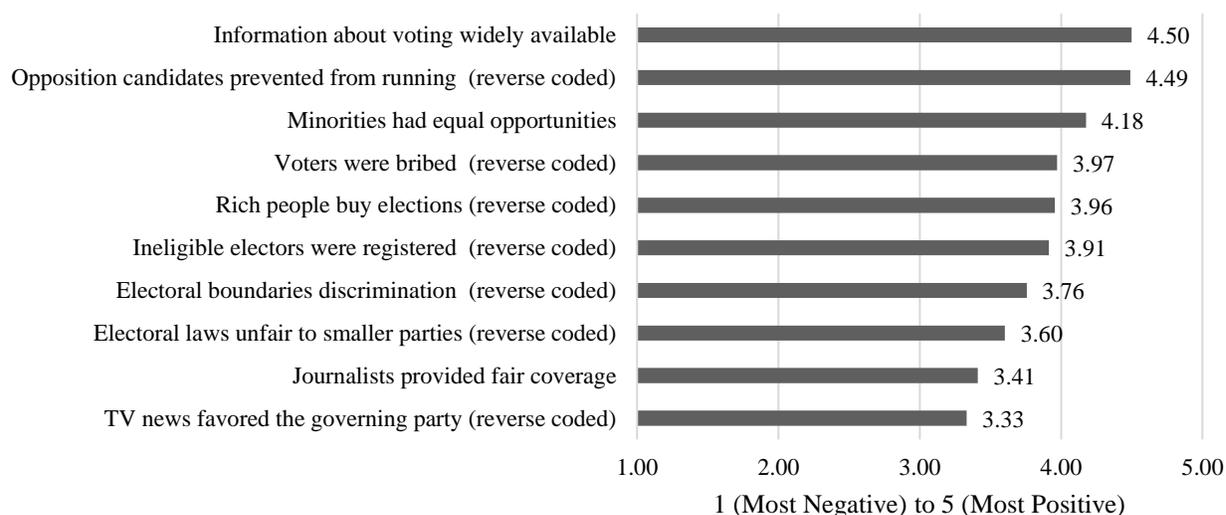
The surveys additionally contained two batteries of questions asking about electoral officials' perceptions of elections in their country. The first set of questions asked about officials' perceptions of their own organizations (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Electoral Officials views of their organizations: “How well does your organization....?” (mean of all respondents)**



The second battery of questions asked more generally about overall perceptions of the integrity of key stages of the electoral cycle (Figure 3). The responses to these questions will serve as the main dependent variables in this article.

**Figure 3: Electoral Officials’ Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (mean of all respondents)**



*Note that the responses to some of these questions were reverse-coded (see Appendix B) for ease of interpretation (high scores indicate higher levels of electoral integrity throughout).*

The questions are identical to those asked by the expert survey, the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Index (Norris, Wynter, and Cameron 2018). This dataset contains the responses of experts (normally academics in a related field) surveyed about their perceptions of an election in the month following the electoral event. The Electoral Integrity Project has produced this dataset on elections around the globe since mid-2012.

Similar questions about electoral integrity were also asked in the sixth wave of the World Values Survey (World Values Survey 2014). This international survey asks common questions to respondents from across the globe to allow for comparative research about individuals’ thoughts on a variety of issues. See Appendix B for question wording across the three surveys.

To answer the first question regarding the differences in perceptions of electoral integrity between the public, experts and electoral officials, difference of means and analysis of variance are used on the battery of questions that are common to the electoral official, expert and public surveys. To determine the predictors of electoral officials’ views, a mixed effects regression with random intercepts is used, with the individual electoral official at level 1 and the country at level 2. This allows for baseline levels of electoral integrity to vary across countries (see Appendix C for all variables).

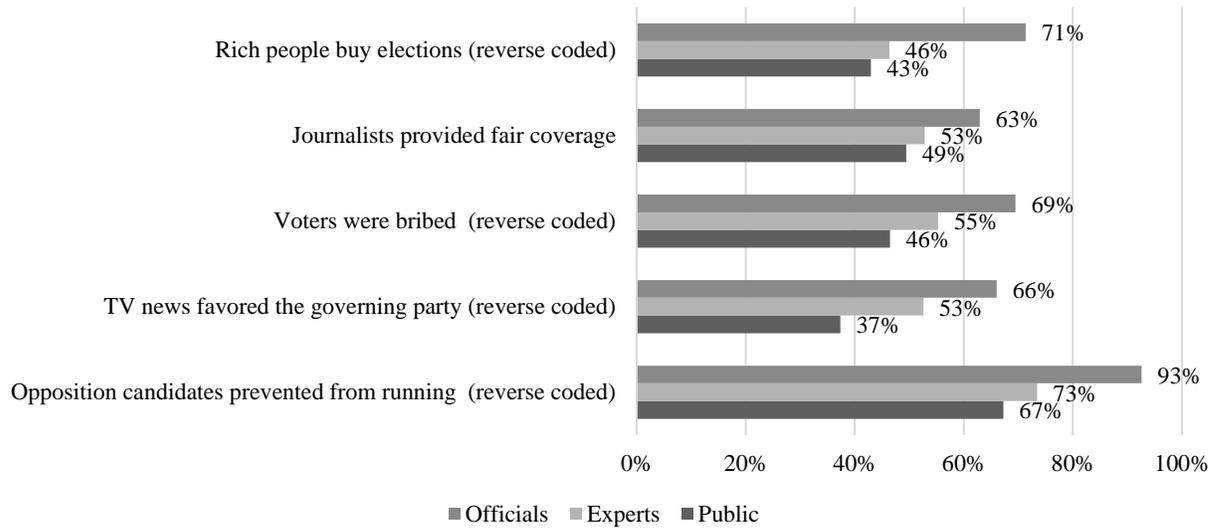
## **5. Results**

### ***5.1 Comparing Electoral Officials, Experts and the Public***

How do the perceptions of electoral officials compare with experts and with the public? Figure 1 presents the mean of public, experts and electoral officials’ responses to questions about electoral integrity in their country. Only five questions were asked of all three groups of

respondents.<sup>8</sup> The numbers reported is the percentage of respondents who stated “agree” or “strongly agree,” or “often” or “fairly often” (See Appendix B for question wording and response options).

**Figure 4: Mean Perceptions of Electoral Integrity: Comparing the Public, Experts and EMB Officials**



*Reverse coding so 0 is least positive for electoral integrity and 1 is most positive for electoral integrity*

*N: 8 countries had public, expert and officials’ perceptions*

*Data reduced to a 0 (disagree or strongly disagree, not often or not often at all) to 1 scale (agree or strongly agree, often or fairly often). Percentage who indicated they agreed or strongly agreed, all countries equally weighted.*

Only eight countries had surveys conducted for all three groups, so it is inappropriate to test an analysis of variance. Looking at the simple means, it appears that, in general, electoral officials are most positive about the integrity of elections in their country, followed by experts, and finally followed by the public. In fact, the largest differences appear to be between electoral officials and the other groups. For example, there is a 25-28 percentage point difference between electoral officials and experts and the public on perceptions of political financing (the question of whether “rich people buy elections”).

The entire battery of electoral integrity questions was asked of both electoral officials and experts. Are there statistically significant differences between experts’ and electoral officials’ perceptions? Considering at the analysis of variance (ANOVA) between electoral officials and experts in Table 1, electoral officials are consistently more positive than experts. The magnitude of this difference reaches 0.64 points (on a 1-5 scale), for the issue of minority access to opportunities. The difference between electoral officials and experts was not statistically significant, however, for two areas of the electoral cycle: media coverage of the governing party, and whether voters were bribed.

**Table 1: Comparing Electoral Officials and Experts**

Electoral Integrity Question	Contrast (Electoral Officials compared with experts)
Electoral laws unfair to smaller parties (reverse coded)	0.46 (0.19)**

<sup>8</sup> For Figure 1, the mean for each country was created, and then the mean of all eight country scores was created.

Information about voting widely available	0.38 (0.10)*
Electoral boundaries discrimination (reverse coded)	0.43 (0.20)**
Ineligible electors were registered (reverse coded)	0.56 (0.24)**
Opposition candidates prevented from running (reverse coded)	0.36 (0.17)**
Minorities had equal opportunities	0.64 (0.16)*
TV news favored the governing party (reverse coded)	0.21 (0.19)
Voters were bribed (reverse coded)	0.35 (0.29)
Journalists provided fair coverage	0.38 (0.15)**
Rich people buy elections (reverse coded)	0.57 (0.24)**

*ANOVAs (Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference)*

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

*Perceptions considered at individual level, rather than via country means.*

Why might electoral officials be more positive about electoral integrity than experts or the public? There are a number of potential reasons. Firstly, it is possible that electoral experts will see their own work on electoral management as more positive than those not directly involved in that work. Like any employee, they may be more likely to see their own work in a positive light. Likewise, electoral officials may wish for their organization to look good, and thus rate electoral integrity more positively in their country.

An alternative explanation may be that electoral officials see more of the inner workings of electoral management, and are more immune than experts or the public to hyped media stories about problems with elections. Instead, they see the numerous success stories of new registered voters, and compliance with electoral laws, that never make the news.

Finally, it is possible that electoral officials may feel pressured to evaluate the work of their organizations more positively, or be scared to tell the truth about the electoral malpractice happening. Although all respondents were assured that their responses would remain confidential, it is possible they were nonetheless concerned that their responses would be tracked by their employers. This may be especially prevalent in countries with low levels of freedom and high levels of corruption. However, it is impossible to test this directly since these countries will also naturally have lower levels of electoral integrity more generally. Thus, this potential relationship between electoral officials' perceptions, levels of freedom, and levels of electoral integrity cannot be disentangled, especially without full response from all countries. However, that there are significant differences between electoral officials' views and other measures has important methodological consequences for future studies of electoral integrity because the measure used may bring a more positive or negative evaluation.

## ***5.2 The Determinants of Practitioner Views***

Looking more closely at what determines electoral officials' views of electoral integrity, Tables 2 and 3 present the results of mixed effects models with random intercepts, using individual and country-level variables to predict an individual's perception of electoral integrity across a variety of questions. This section will report the trends that are most consistent across all indicators of electoral integrity.

[Tables 2 and 3 about here]

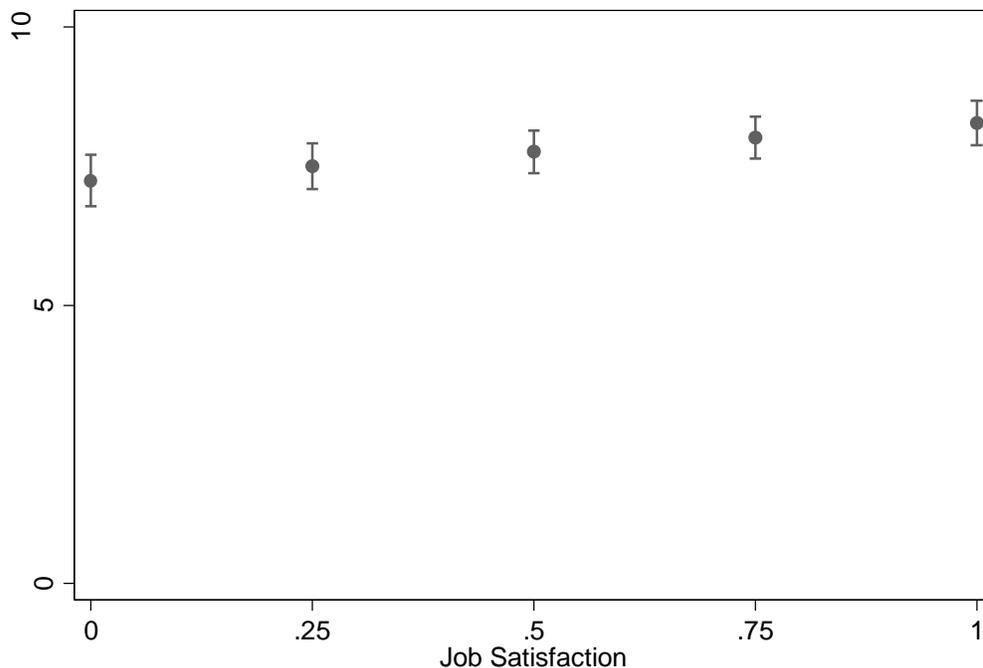
Regarding the control variables, gender was statistically significant and negative for three dependent variables: overall electoral integrity, the opposition, and whether bribes. The finding that women consider electoral integrity to be lower deserves further future study – since it might

be that some malpractices have an especially gendered nature, with such malpractices favouring male candidates and limiting female participation. Education had a positive relationship with overall electoral integrity and whether opposition candidates were able to run.

Finally, it is worth noting that the years of experience an individual had did have some positive impact on perceptions of electoral integrity, however, the magnitude of this impact was very small. Likewise, being in senior management was only statistically significant for perceptions of journalists. Thus, there is likely little to no relationship between these this variable and perceptions of electoral integrity across the board.

However, two other individual variables had more pronounced impacts on electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity. Those who were more satisfied with their job were also more likely to be positive about electoral integrity, for all indicators of electoral integrity (Table 2) and all indicators of how well they believed their organization performed (Table 3). For perceptions of overall electoral integrity, there is about a 1-point difference (on a scale of 0-10) between those with the least and greatest job satisfaction (Figure 5).<sup>9</sup> There are a number of reasons why this might be the case. Firstly, bodies that create a culture of employment where job satisfaction is high, will also be likely to achieve high levels of organizational performance, thus the model demonstrate a high level of correlation between these two variables. Additionally, employees with low job satisfaction evaluate the performance of their body lower, since they are unhappy with their employer or disgruntled with their organization.

**Figure 5: Predicted Perception of Electoral Integrity, by Job Satisfaction**

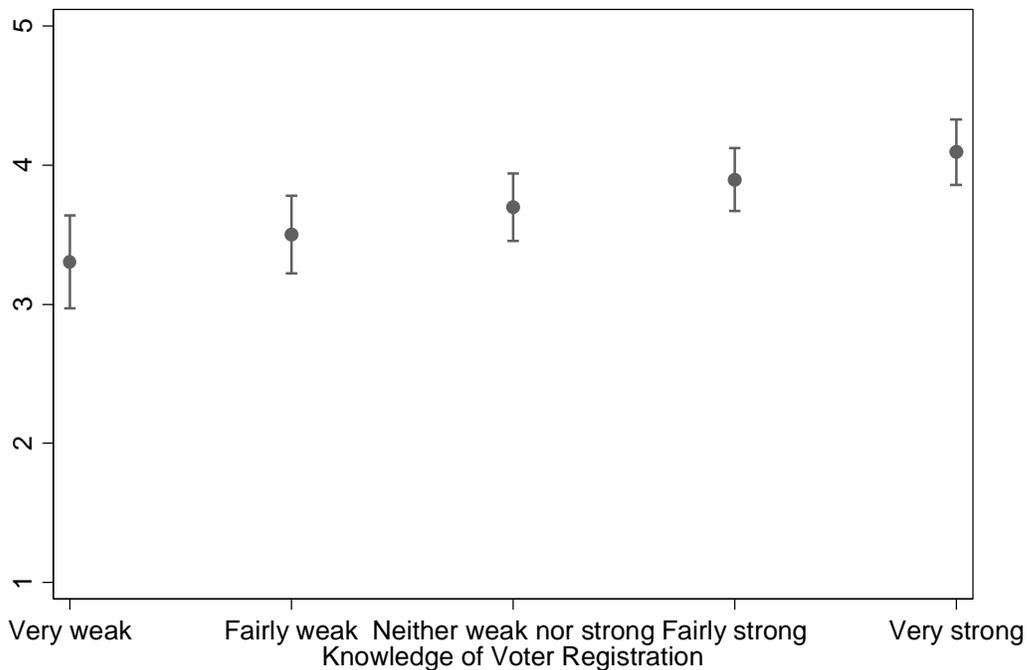


Additionally, those electoral officials who self-assessed that they were more knowledgeable about the corresponding area of electoral management tended to be more positive

<sup>9</sup> Predicted Probabilities with random effects at their theoretical mean.

about their assessments of electoral integrity in seven of ten indicators of electoral integrity (Table 2) and all indicators of how well they believed their organization performed (Table 3). For example, those who rated their knowledge of voter registration as very strong assessed that indicator of electoral integrity about 0.8-points higher (on a five-point scale) than those rated their knowledge of the area as very weak (Figure 6).<sup>10</sup> One reason for this could be that less knowledgeable employees do not understand the various aspects of the electoral cycle outside of their immediate area of responsibility and day-to-day work. They may therefore extrapolate incorrectly when they hear of problems. Additionally, this supports previous research that finds that those with more political knowledge have higher confidence in democracy (Memoli 2011) and better perceptions of electoral integrity (Norris, Garnett, and Grömping 2017).

**Figure 6: Predicted Perception of Electoral Integrity, by Knowledge of Area**



It is also interesting that there is only one instance where working in the area had a statistically significant relationship with perceptions of electoral integrity (perceptions of electoral laws). This means that generally electoral officials are no more or less positive about electoral integrity when they work on the issue.

Turning to institutional variables, there were very few instances of statistically significant impacts of Freedom House categorization, GDP or level of corruption when it came to the standard electoral integrity battery of questions. However, when looking at how electoral officials rated their own organizations, these variables tell an interesting story (Table 3). While in most instances these variables were not statistically significant, it appears that those in ‘free’ countries, or in those countries with higher GDP or lower corruption levels, had more negative perceptions of their own organizations. This may be because these respondents have more licence to critique their

<sup>10</sup> Predicted Probabilities with random effects at their theoretical mean.

organizations. If levels of freedom are low or corruption is high, respondents may feel obliged to rate their organizations highly, in case their responses are monitored. Furthermore, those in established democracies, with higher levels of freedom, higher GDP and lower corruption, may feel more critical of their organizations, since they hold them to a higher standard. Future research may consider this relationship in more detail.

## **6. Conclusion**

This article used new data from surveys of electoral officials to gain a picture of their perceptions of electoral integrity. When comparing the responses of electoral officials with experts and the public, it was evident that electoral officials had much higher ratings of electoral integrity. While this may be related to a bias to rate their own work positively, we also suspect this may be due to their unique on-the-ground knowledge of elections. Previous research, and our later section on the determinants of electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity, suggests that those who are more knowledgeable tend to have higher perceptions of electoral integrity. They may be more likely to know the full extent of any problems or disputes, or see the volume of positive work that an electoral management body is doing.

This article next considered the determinants of electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity. It finds that two key variables are strong positive predictors of perceptions of electoral integrity. Firstly, those with higher job satisfaction have better assessments of electoral integrity. This result highlights both that those who are satisfied at their employment may work better, which leads to better quality electoral administration, but also that those disgruntled employees are more likely to rate their organizations poorly.

The second key variable is knowledge of the area. By matching each area of electoral integrity with a self-assessment of the respondent's knowledge of that area, we found that those who felt they knew more about the area also had more positive perceptions of that area of electoral integrity. This highlights that additional knowledge always the respondent to see more of what is going on in the area, and thus leads to more positive perceptions. Importantly, this does not extend to whether the respondent works in the area, and thus it is not simply the respondents evaluating more highly the areas that they work on.

Thus, future scholarship should consider these two variables - job satisfaction, knowledge of the area – when studying electoral officials' perceptions of electoral integrity, since they have demonstrated to consistently impact their perceptions.

There are, of course, a myriad of other research questions now open to scholars with these new data on the perceptions of electoral officials on electoral integrity. Further research on survey bias could be used to determine under what circumstances electoral officials, or any government employees, are afraid or unwilling to give their honest opinions of their work and the work of their organizations. As mentioned earlier, disentangling whether the lack of freedom causes lower electoral integrity, or leads to lower perceptions (though it is likely a bit of both) is a difficult task.

**Table 2: Predicting Electoral Officials' Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Indicators**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	<b>Overall Electoral Integrity</b>	<b>Laws</b>	<b>Informat ion</b>	<b>Boundar ies</b>	<b>Registra tion</b>	<b>Oppositi on</b>	<b>Minoriti es</b>	<b>News</b>	<b>Bribes (reverse)</b>	<b>Journali sts</b>	<b>Finance</b>
Female	-0.53*** (0.09)	0.07 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.04)	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.07)	-0.15** (0.05)	-0.05 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.25*** (0.06)	0.13* (0.06)	-0.03 (0.07)
Years Experience	0.02*** (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)	0.01* (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
Post-secondary Education	0.56*** (0.13)	0.13 (0.09)	0.11 (0.06)	0.05 (0.10)	0.11 (0.10)	0.25*** (0.07)	-0.06 (0.10)	0.24* (0.11)	0.14 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.11)
Job Satisfaction	1.17*** (0.20)	0.75*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.09)	0.53*** (0.14)	0.46** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.38** (0.14)	0.59*** (0.15)	0.58*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.14)	0.67*** (0.14)
Senior Management	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.11 (0.08)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.09 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.06)	0.01 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.08)	0.19* (0.08)	-0.08 (0.08)
Freedom House 'Free'	-0.52 (0.52)	-0.16 (0.27)	0.05 (0.07)	0.12 (0.27)	0.03 (0.31)	-0.19 (0.16)	-0.02 (0.21)	0.03 (0.19)	-0.36 (0.29)	0.12 (0.22)	-0.32 (0.31)
GDP	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Corruption Index	0.02 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
Works in the Area		-0.07	-0.12*	0.06	-0.14	0.02	-0.09	-0.09	-0.10	-0.16	-0.08

		(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Knowledge of the Area		0.06	0.11***	0.15***	0.20***	0.07**	0.07*	0.08*	0.02	0.05	0.09**
		(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
_cons	5.57***	3.03***	3.48***	2.71***	2.16***	3.42***	3.58***	1.70***	2.04***	2.73***	1.96***
	(0.78)	(0.42)	(0.15)	(0.43)	(0.49)	(0.26)	(0.34)	(0.33)	(0.45)	(0.35)	(0.48)
Var (_cons)	0.82	0.16***	0.00	0.18***	0.26***	0.04***	0.06***	0.03***	0.20**	0.07***	0.24**
	(0.13)	(0.04)	(0.00)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.06)
Var (Residual)	2.88***	1.33***	0.66***	1.25***	1.32***	0.72***	1.28***	1.50***	1.00	1.18***	1.18***
	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
N	1734	1625	1568	1527	1453	1432	1492	1396	1277	1413	1316
N (Countries)	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32

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

Mixed-Effects Models (random intercept) with Level 1 (Individual) Level 2 (Country)

Dependent variable is generally on a scale of 1-5, except for overall electoral integrity which is on a scale of 0-10.

**Table 3: Predicting Electoral Officials' Perceptions of how well their Organization Performs Functions**

	(1) Staff Training	(2) Clear Voting Procedures	(3) Voters Informed	(4) Registration	(5) Ballots Secret	(6) No Unlawful Voting	(7) Counted Fairly	(8) Voters not Coerced
Female	0.07 (0.05)	0.01 (0.04)	0.04 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.05)
Years Experience	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Post-secondary Education	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.13* (0.07)	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.04)	0.00 (0.06)
Job Satisfaction	1.15*** (0.12)	0.58*** (0.10)	0.67*** (0.12)	0.60*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.69*** (0.11)	0.25** (0.08)	0.44*** (0.11)
Senior Management	0.09 (0.06)	0.09 (0.05)	0.08 (0.06)	0.04 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.06 (0.06)	0.05 (0.04)	0.03 (0.06)
Freedom House 'Free'	-0.37* (0.16)	-0.07 (0.13)	0.10 (0.19)	-0.32 (0.20)	-0.13 (0.16)	-0.41* (0.16)	-0.39* (0.16)	0.05 (0.10)
GDP	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Corruption Index	0.02** (0.01)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01 (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.02*** (0.00)
Works in the Area		0.02 (0.04)	-0.11 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.07)	0.10* (0.04)	0.03 (0.05)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.05)
Knowledge of the Area		0.22*** (0.03)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.24*** (0.03)	0.14*** (0.03)
_cons	1.60*** (0.25)	1.83*** (0.22)	1.88*** (0.31)	1.76*** (0.32)	2.71*** (0.27)	2.33*** (0.27)	2.80*** (0.25)	1.90*** (0.17)
Var (_cons)	0.02*** (0.01)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.02*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.00*** (0.00)

Var (Residual)	0.62*** (0.01)	0.43*** (0.01)	0.54*** (0.01)	0.48*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.47*** (0.01)	0.28*** (0.01)	0.47*** (0.01)
N	1143	1106	979	1029	1083	1087	1077	961
N (Countries)	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22

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

*Mixed-Effects Models (random intercept) with Level 1 (Individual) Level 2 (Country)*

*Dependent variable is generally on a scale of 0-4, except for overall electoral integrity which is on a scale of 0-10.*

## Appendix A: Response Rates by Country

The survey was sent to all employees either directly by the researchers or indirectly through the organization.

Country	Number of Responses	Included in Analysis (Table 1)	Included in Analysis (Table 2)
Albania	9	Yes	Yes
Belgium	3	No	No
Belize	7	Yes	Yes
Benin	9	Yes	No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	52	Yes	Yes
Brazil	1	No	No
Bulgaria	2	No	No
Burkina Faso	2	No	No
Cameroon	1	No	No
Congo, Democratic Republic of	21	Yes	No
Costa Rica	1	No	No
Croatia	529	Yes	Yes
Czech Republic	1	No	No
Denmark	34	Yes	Yes
Ecuador	13	Yes	Yes
Finland	22	Yes	Yes
Georgia	19	Yes	No
Ghana	8	Yes	Yes
Greece	1	No	No
Hungary	15	Yes	Yes
Iraq	4	No	No
Ireland	37	Yes	Yes
Kenya	1	No	No
Korea, Republic of	245	Yes	No
Kyrgyzstan	25	Yes	Yes
Latvia	1	No	No
Libya	10	Yes	No
Malawi	2	No	No
Maldives	9	Yes	Yes
Malta	16	Yes	Yes
Mauritius	12	Yes	Yes
Mexico	357	Yes	No
Moldova	17	Yes	Yes
Mongolia	5	Yes	No
Mozambique	3	No	No
Namibia	1	No	No

Netherlands	66	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	2	No	No
Norway	65	Yes	Yes
Palestine	6	Yes	No
Panama	1	No	No
Philippines	25	Yes	No
Portugal	12	Yes	Yes
Romania	11	Yes	Yes
Saint Lucia	1	No	No
Sierra Leone	1	No	No
South Sudan	3	No	No
Sweden	77	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	7	Yes	Yes
Timor Leste	3	No	No
Togo	7	Yes	No*
United Kingdom	244	Yes	Yes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>

*\*Togo didn't have more than one respondent for the 'ensuring question set' and is therefore dropped in that analysis.*

## Appendix B: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Indicators Compared

	EMS / ELECT	PEI	WVS
Electoral Integrity Variables	<p>When thinking of the last national election in your country, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <p>Response Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disagree strongly</li> <li>2. Disagree somewhat</li> <li>3. Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>4. Agree somewhat</li> <li>5. Agree strongly</li> </ol> <p>Not applicable Don't know</p>	<p>... do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <p>Response Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly Disagree</li> <li>2. Disagree</li> <li>3. Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>4. Agree</li> <li>5. Strongly Agree</li> </ol> <p>Don't know Not applicable</p>	<p>In your view, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections?</p> <p>Response Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Very often</li> <li>2. Fairly often</li> <li>3. Not often</li> <li>4. Not at all often</li> </ol> <p>Missing Unknown</p>
Electoral laws were unfair to smaller parties	agree_laws (reverse coded)	Lawsunfair (reverse coded)	
Information about voting procedures was widely available	agree_information	votinginfo info	
Electoral boundaries discriminated against some parties	agree_boundaries (reverse coded)	Bdiscrim (reverse coded)	
Some ineligible electors were registered	agree_registered (reverse coded)	Ineligible (reverse coded)	
Some opposition candidates were prevented from running	agree_opposition (reverse coded)	oppprevent (reverse coded)	V228B (reverse coded)
Ethnic and national minorities had equal opportunities to run for office	agree_minorities	minorityopp	
TV news favored the governing party	agree_news (reverse coded)	tv (reverse coded)	V228C (reverse coded)
Voters were bribed	agree_bribed (reverse coded)	bribed (reverse coded)	V228D (reverse coded)
Journalists provided fair coverage of the elections	agree_journalists	faircoverage	V228E
Rich people buy elections	agree_rich (reverse coded)	rich (reverse coded)	V228G (reverse coded)

### Data Sources:

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## Appendix C: Variables from the Electoral Management Survey and ELECT Survey

Variable	Coding
<b>Electoral Integrity</b>	Overall how would you rate the integrity of the last election in this country? 0 very low -5 average - 10 very high electoral integrity
<b>Gender</b>	0 Male 1 Female
<b>Years of Experience</b>	Years (numeric)  <u>Original Coding:</u> <i>EMN:</i> <i>For approximately how many years have you worked for this organization? If less than one write 0.</i> <i>Numerical response</i>  <i>ELECT:</i> <i>years of experience in EMB</i> <i>(Q6 is original string variable)</i>
<b>Education</b>	0 No post-secondary 1 Post-secondary  <u>Original Coding:</u> <i>EMN</i> <i>What is the highest level of education you have completed?</i> <i>0 No formal education</i> <i>1 Primary education only</i> <i>2 Secondary education only</i> <i>4 University under-graduate degree or equivalent</i> <i>5 University master graduate degree or equivalent</i> <i>6 University PhD graduate degree or equivalent</i>  <i>ELECT:</i> <i>Education, highest diploma</i> <i>1. No formal education</i> <i>2. Primary education only</i> <i>3. Secondary education only</i> <i>4. Post-secondary vocational education</i> <i>5. University under-graduate degree or equivalent</i> <i>6. University master graduate degree or equivalent</i> <i>7. University PhD graduate degree or equivalent</i>
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	Different scales are reduced to a 0-1 scale.  <u>Original Coding:</u> <i>EMN</i> <i>All things considered, how satisfied are you with your job as a whole these days</i> <i>0 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree)</i>  <i>ELECT:</i> <i>Job satisfaction: Overall</i> <i>0. Very dissatisfied</i> <i>1. Fairly dissatisfied</i> <i>2. Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied</i> <i>3. Fairly satisfied</i> <i>4. Very satisfied</i>
	Areas where you work: AREA (see below for area corresponding area)

<b>Work in the Area</b>	1 – Yes 0 – No	
	<b>DV</b>	<b>AREA</b>
	<i>Electoral laws unfair to smaller parties</i>	<i>Establishing and ensuring election laws</i>
	<i>Information about voting widely available</i>	<i>Civic education programs</i>
	<i>Electoral boundaries discrimination</i>	<i>Election boundaries</i>
	<i>Ineligible electors were registered</i>	<i>Voter registration</i>
	<i>Opposition candidates prevented from running</i>	<i>Party and candidate registration</i>
	<i>Minorities had equal opportunities</i>	<i>Party and candidate registration</i>
	<i>TV news favored the governing party</i>	<i>Regulation of campaign media</i>
	<i>Voters were bribed</i>	<i>The voting process on election</i>
	<i>Journalists provided fair coverage</i>	<i>Regulation of campaign media</i>
	<i>Rich people buy elections</i>	<i>Regulation of campaign finance</i>
	<i>Staff are well trained</i>	N/A
	<i>Voters are informed about electoral matters</i>	<i>Civic education programs</i>
	<i>The electoral register is accurate and up-to-date</i>	<i>Voter registration</i>
	<i>Clear voting procedures are established</i>	<i>Establishing and ensuring electoral procedures</i>
	<i>Voters are not coerced or intimidated</i>	<i>Voter security and prevention of electoral violence</i>
	<i>Appropriate measures taken to prevent unlawful voting</i>	<i>The voting process on election day</i>
	<i>Ballots are secret</i>	<i>The voting process on election day</i>
	<i>Ballots are counted fairly</i>	<i>The vote count and results process</i>
<b>Knowledge of the Area</b>	Strengths and weaknesses of knowledge: AREA (see below for area corresponding area)	
	0 Very weak 1 Fairly weak 2 Neither weak nor strong 3 Fairly strong 4 Very strong	
	<b>DV</b>	<b>Corresponding Area</b>
	<i>Electoral laws unfair to smaller parties (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Election Laws</i>
	<i>Information about voting widely available</i>	<i>Civic Education</i>
	<i>Electoral boundaries discrimination (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Electoral boundaries</i>
	<i>Ineligible electors were registered (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Voter registration</i>
	<i>Opposition candidates prevented from running (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Party and candidate registration</i>
	<i>Minorities had equal opportunities</i>	<i>Party and candidate registration</i>
	<i>TV news favored the governing party (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Regulation of campaign media</i>
	<i>Voters were bribed (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Campaign Finance</i>
	<i>Journalists provided fair coverage</i>	<i>Campaign Media</i>
	<i>Rich people buy elections (reverse coded)</i>	<i>Campaign Finance</i>
	<i>Staff are well trained</i>	N/A
	<i>Voters are informed about electoral matters</i>	<i>Civic Education</i>
	<i>The electoral register is accurate and up-to-date</i>	<i>Voter registration</i>
	<i>Clear voting procedures are established</i>	<i>Electoral procedures</i>
	<i>Voters are not coerced or intimidated</i>	<i>Voter security and electoral violence</i>

	<i>Appropriate measures taken to prevent unlawful voting</i>	<i>Voting process</i>
	<i>Ballots are secret</i>	<i>Voting process</i>
	<i>Ballots are counted fairly</i>	<i>Vote count</i>
<b>Senior Management</b>	1 – Senior Management 0 – Other  <u>Original Coding:</u> EMS: Which of the following best describes the level of your current occupation? 0 Senior management 1 Middle-level management 2 Policy officer/professional 3 Office and administrative support  ELECT: Level of current post 1. Senior management 2. Middle-level management 3. Office and administrative support	
<b>GDP</b>	GDP 2016 USD PPP from World Bank	
<b>Freedom</b>	Freedom House Score 0 – Partly Free 1 – Free Note: Palestine marked Partly Free No cases of ‘not free’ among the countries in this dataset.	
<b>Corruption</b>	Transparency International 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index Note: Not available for Belize (2008 score of 29 used) and Palestine (Israel value used)	

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