

Participatory Democracy as Electoral Base-Building: The Uses of Binding Participatory  
Institutions by Political Parties in Latin America

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## 1) Introduction

### Primary Research Question

Binding participatory institutions (BPIs)<sup>1</sup> are key participatory institutions in Latin America that allow ordinary citizens to participate directly in decisions about the allocation of public resources. Their widespread implementation, however, depends on the support powerful institutional backers with strong incentives to support them. I argue that an important reason political parties are willing to invest resources in BPIs is the promise of reaping electoral benefits from them. In separate work I examine the political conditions under which parties are likely to view BPIs as a potential electoral vehicle. In the present study I focus specifically on the ways in which parties incorporate BPIs into their electoral strategies.

BPIs have played an important role in the electoral strategies of many political parties in Latin America since the 1990s. The Brazilian Worker's Party's leveraged participatory budgeting assemblies to signal its commitment to clean governance and deepening democracy to potential voters frustrated by the corruption and clientelism characteristic of traditional Brazilian political parties (Samuels 2004; Keck 1995). The Bolivian National Revolutionary Party (MNR), too, attempted to use BPIs as a mechanism for bolstering its electoral support in rural municipalities during a decentralization process that would privilege urban-oriented regional politics where the party had less political influence (O'Neill 2005; Montambeault 2008). But while BPIs offer a range of tools parties can use to bolster their chances of electoral success, to date we know relatively little about the precise mechanics of how they employ these tools. While research has been conducted demonstrating that participatory institutions can have a positive electoral effect on the vote share of the incumbent party (Handlin 2016), to date no work has examined which particular voter groups are being targeted through participatory institutions, or how they are being targeted. Further, no work to date has examined how and to what extent party identification and voter behavior among different voter groups are affected by engagement with BPIs. Answering these questions is essential for understanding the electoral strategies parties employ with respect to participatory institutions, and how those strategies fit into the broader landscape of electoral strategies.

### Theory

I argue that BPIs offer parties a unique opportunity to identify and increase party identification and their vote share among weak supporters, while also helping to increase voter turnout, strengthen ideological commitment and increase electoral work among core supporters. I argue BPIs are more effective in allowing parties to identify and engage weak supporters than other mechanisms available to them because weak supporters are more likely to participate in community organizations compared to partisan political activities, and they tend to view BPIs as

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<sup>1</sup> I define BPIs as avenues of direct and regular citizen participation of a binding (rather than consultative) nature in decisions around the allocation of public resources. BPIs, which must be open to participation by any adult member of a given community (usually a neighborhood or village), typically exist at the municipal or sub-municipal level – though occasionally they are scaled-up to higher levels of government.

community organizations – rather than as partisan political organizations. Unlike opposition supporters, however, weak supporters are open to crediting the party when they believe it is responsible for some positive outcome in their lives. Consequently, once weak supporters become active in BPI activities, parties have a set of effective tools at their disposal to increase weak supporters' identification with the party. First, parties can take credit for positive experiences weak supporters have through BPI activities, be it the receipt of some material benefit and/or the receipt of some non-material benefit such as increased sense of personal political efficacy. Second, parties can use regular contact in BPI spaces between weak supporters and party militants to strengthen weak supporters' ideological commitment to the party.

Secondarily, I argue that even if parties could engage weak supporters through mechanisms other than BPIs, doing so would be less efficient and generate less sustainable effects than engaging these supporters through BPIs. Specifically, I argue that parties will often be able to increase party identification among weak supporters by taking credit for positive experiences they have participating in BPI activities, even in the absence of the receipt of material benefits. That is, party identification can increase as a result of receiving non-material benefits such as feeling a sense of community or an increased sense of political efficacy. Consequently, increasing party identification among weak supporters through this mechanism is particularly cost-effective. In turn, regular contact between weak supporters and party militants can also generate sustained identification with the party even in the absence of sustained receipt of material benefits, making it too a highly-efficient mechanism for increasing party identification among weak supporters.

Traditional clientelist relationships between parties and voters depend on the ongoing provision of some material benefit in exchange for votes. In the case of BPIs, by contrast, even if individuals initially decide to participate in order to access a given service the BPI can provide them, the mechanisms described above (taking credit for positive BPI experiences and reinforcing the party's ideological orientation among weak supporters through BPI activities) are efficient tools parties can use to strengthen their support among weak voters, even in the absence of sustained material benefits. Thus, I argue that through their BPI activities weak supporters will be more likely to support the party in future elections, even in the absence of ongoing material inducements and/or monitoring. This both decreases electoral uncertainty faced by the party as well as decreases the party's future vote-buying/electoral monitoring costs.

I also argue that parties engage core supporters through BPIs. BPIs may be most uniquely-suited to appeal to weak supporters compared to other organizational forms with which parties might experiment, but it would make little sense for parties to not also take advantage of the opportunity BPIs offer to increase voter turnout, strengthen ideological commitment, as well as increase party-related volunteering among its core supporters. At the same time as parties signal to weak supporters that BPIs are community organizations open to all, I argue they will also signal to core supporters that the principal objective of BPIs is to further the political agenda of the party, and that the role of opposition supporters in BPI activities should be minimized. This offers core supporters a compelling reason to stay engaged with party activities between elections, thereby increasing the propensity of core supporters to engage in electoral activities (both voting and volunteering) during the next electoral cycle.

Finally, while the focus of this study is the electoral uses of BPIs by political parties, this is far from the only objective motivating parties to implement BPIs. Indeed, I also explore a range of alternative motivations that I hypothesize exist simultaneously to electoral motivations, including the use of BPIs to mobilize core supporters during moments of political crisis, to identify and resolve community problems, and in some cases even to build the infrastructure for a new participatory-democratic political system to replace existing institutions of representative democracy.

### **Empirical Strategy**

I test my theory of the ways parties incorporate BPIs into their electoral strategies and the effects of these strategies on party identification, voter behavior and electoral work through two original surveys in Venezuela. First, I survey 600 elected leaders of Venezuelan BPIs (*voceros*) from all 24 Venezuelan states. Second, I conduct a nationally-representative survey of 1200 Venezuela adults, oversampling for individuals who have participated in BPIs. The BPIs I study in Venezuela are known as Communal Councils (henceforth CCs). In the surveys I test a range of hypotheses related to BPIs and electoral strategies: do BPI leaders use BPIs to engage weak and core supporters of the governing party? If so, what are the mechanisms they use to identify these voters, what are the techniques they employ to induce supporters to participate in BPI activities, and what are the mechanisms through which they attempt to increase party identification/voter turnout among supporters? I focus specifically on whether CC leaders affiliated with the ruling *Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela* (henceforth PSUV) simultaneously emphasize that CCs are community organizations that serve everyone in a given neighborhood (and not just supporters of the PSUV) *and* that CCs are controlled by and serve the political objectives of the PSUV. Where this seemingly contradictory combination is present, I argue parties have an opportunity to access and increase party identification among weak supporters, who prefer to participate in non-partisan community organizations compared to party organizations, but who are nonetheless open to crediting political parties with benefits generated through community organizations.

I also examine whether parties believe CCs have the capacity to increase voter identification among weak supporters more efficiently and sustainably than alternative electoral strategies by asking a battery of questions assessing the relative importance of material vs. non-material inducements parties offer to CC participants, as well as the relative importance of material vs. non-material inducements in CC activities compared to other electoral strategies parties pursue. Note that even if this hypothesis is not supported, my primary hypothesis explaining the value of BPIs to political parties may still hold. This hypothesis is intended only to explore the potential mechanisms by which parties attempt to increase voter identification among weak supporters through BPIs.

To examine whether and how parties engage core supporters through the CCs, I ask PSUV CC leaders if they seek to engage core supporters through CC activities, and whether they consider CCs more important for defending the Bolivarian Revolution than for electoral purposes. Finally, to test the relative importance of CCs within parties' broader electoral strategies, I ask CC

leaders what types of electoral work they perform outside of CCs and which they consider most important. Outside of the survey, I also pose these questions to a snowball sample of top PSUV national officials.

To test whether CCs bring weak supporters into regular contact with the governing party to a greater extent than alternative mechanisms the party could employ (such as party meetings and redistribution programs), I conduct a survey experiment consisting of an invitation to a community meeting, one hosted by the local CC and the other hosted by the PSUV. This allows me to assess whether weak supporters are more likely to attend CC events compared to party-sponsored events. I also include a range of questions testing the mechanisms that cause weak supporters to participate in CCs at a higher rate than party-sponsored activities, focusing particularly on whether weak supporters view CCs as community organizations open to all and believe them to be less-politicized than alternative institutions through which the party might access weak supporters (specifically party organs and Social Missions).

In turn, to assess whether and how BPI participation increases party identification among supporters, I include a range of questions examining whether participants view the PSUV more favorably as a result of their CC participation, and if so, why. Next, to examine whether BPIs are capable of more efficiently generating party support compared to other mechanisms available to parties (clientelism, Social Missions, etc.), I ask questions examining the relative importance of material vs. non-material inducements in increasing weak supporters' positive opinions of the party. I expect that non-material inducements will be significant factors in increasing PSUV party identification among weak PSUV supporters through CCs, and consequently that CCs offer a cheaper and less contingent means of increasing electoral support relative to electoral strategies focused primarily on the distribution of material benefits. To reiterate, however, even if this hypothesis is not supported, my primary hypothesis explaining the value of BPIs to political parties may still hold, since this secondary hypothesis only explores the mechanisms that increase party identification among PSUV supporters, not whether CCs increase party identification among supporters or why CCs are more effective in bringing PSUV supporters into contact with the party than alternative mechanisms. I also explore alternative mechanisms to explain how BPIs increase party identification among PSUV supporters.

Finally, I include questions to estimate the effects of BPI participation on voter turnout and electoral support for the PSUV for every presidential election since 2006, as well as questions asking respondents which factors were most important in their vote choice in each election. I expect that BPI participation will have a positive effect on PSUV vote share among weak PSUV supporters, and that it will increase voter turnout among both weak and core PSUV supporters. It is important to note that even if my theory with respect to the PSUV's electoral strategy within CCs is not supported by the data, it is still possible that the data will support my hypotheses regarding the electoral effects of CCs among weak supporters. It could be the case that many PSUV activists are primarily focused on building the Bolivarian Revolution through CCs and not at all on electoral factors, but that their actions nevertheless generate increased support for the PSUV among weak supporters. This is because for PSUV activists, revolution entails transforming the entire society, which includes PSUV and non-PSUV members alike. As a

result, activists will report that CCs serve the whole community *and* that the CCs must serve the political objectives of the PSUV. Since I argue that it is this apparently contradictory combination of simultaneously depoliticizing and politicizing CCs that allows them to generate increased PSUV identification among weak PSUV supporters, even if the PSUV is not intentionally using the CCs to increase party identification among weak supporters, this may nevertheless be an unintended consequence.

## 2) Survey Design

I sample 1800 individuals, divided into clusters of 6 individuals (2 *voceros*, 2 ordinary CC participants, and 2 people who have never participated in a CC). I sample clusters of 6 people according to these quotas in each of 300 neighborhoods across Venezuela.

Neighborhoods are stratified according to the standard of living of their residents. There are 4 standard of living levels in urban areas (AB, C, D, EF), and 3 in rural areas (C, D, EF).<sup>2</sup> Neighborhoods are selected according to the population size of urban centers classified into 9 types and rural centers classified into 4 types.

The 9 urban types cover 73% of the population, the 4 rural types cover 27%. The 1800 interviews are distributed according to this proportion: 1512 in urban areas, 288 in rural areas. The 1512 urban interviews are divided into 252 neighborhoods across 4 standard of living levels, and the 288 rural interviews are divided into 48 neighborhoods across 3 standard of living levels.

### Sampling Distribution of Urban Neighborhoods

Urban neighborhoods are sampled such that each row in the table below contains an equal number of respondents from each of the 4 standard of living levels (AB, C, D, EF). For each row the number of neighborhoods sampled is set as a multiple of 4 (corresponding to the 4 standard of living levels).

| Type of Urban Population Center                                     | % National Population | % Urban Population | Neighborhoods Sampled |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>North-Central Urban Population Centers</b>                       |                       |                    |                       |
| 1 Principal population center: Caracas                              | 10.6                  | 14.5               | <b>36</b>             |
| 2 Secondary population centers: Valencia, Maracay                   | 9.1                   | 12.5               | <b>36</b>             |
| 3 9 additional population centers outside major population centers  | 8.6                   | 11.8               | <b>28</b>             |
| <b>Urban Population Centers in the Interior</b>                     |                       |                    |                       |
| 4 5 primary populations centers                                     | 17.9                  | 24.5               | <b>64</b>             |
| 5 5 secondary populations centers                                   | 4.9                   | 6.7                | <b>20</b>             |
| 6 10 additional population centers outside major population centers | 2.5                   | 3.4                | <b>8</b>              |

<sup>2</sup> See Cisor (2018) for an explanation of these standard of living levels.

**Outside Major Urban Population Centers**

|   |  |      |      |           |
|---|--|------|------|-----------|
| 7 | 5 population centers with more than 300,000 residents            | 4.2  | 5.8  | <b>20</b> |
| 8 | 15 population centers with between 100,000 and 300,000 residents | 10.2 | 14.0 | <b>36</b> |

**Smaller Urban Population Centers**

|   |   |      |       |            |
|---|---|------|-------|------------|
| 9 | 21 population centers with between 14,000 and 100,000 residents | 5.0  | 6.8   | <b>20</b>  |
|   |   | 73.0 | 100.0 | <b>252</b> |

**Sampling Distribution of Rural Neighborhoods**

Rural neighborhoods are sampled such that each row in the table below contains an equal number of respondents from each of the 3 standard of living levels (C, D, EF). For each row the number of neighborhoods sampled is set as a multiple of 3 (corresponding to the 3 standard of living levels).

| Type of Rural Population Center | % National Population  | % Rural Population | <b>Neighborhoods Sampled</b> |           |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Rural Population Centers</b> |  |                    |                              |           |
| 10                              | 52 population centers with between 20,000 and 40,000 residents | 5.3                | 19.6                         | <b>9</b>  |
| 11                              | 88 population centers with between 10,000 and 20,000 residents | 4.1                | 15.2                         | <b>9</b>  |
| 12                              | 147 population centers with between 5,000 and 10,000 residents | 15.4               | 57.0                         | <b>27</b> |
| 13                              | <b>Peri-urban Population Centers</b>                           | 2.2                | 8.2                          | <b>3</b>  |
|                                 |  | 27.0               | 100.0                        | <b>48</b> |

**Sampling of Neighborhoods within each of the 13 Population Types**

Each of the 13 population types described above is distributed across the seven macro-regions of Venezuela and the following number of neighborhoods is sampled in each macro-region, proportional to the population of each region:

| <b>Macro-Region</b> | <b>% National Population</b> | <b>Neighborhoods Sampled</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Northwest           | 20.3                         | 48                           |
| North-Central       | 33.3                         | 100                          |
| Andes               | 8.5                          | 26                           |

|                       |            |            |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| East                  | 8.8        | 27         |
| Central-West          | 9.9        | 30         |
| Guayana and the South | 6.2        | 18         |
| Los Llanos            | 17         | 51         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b> | <b>300</b> |

Municipalities are chosen at random (proportional to population size) within each macro-region, stratified by population type. In each randomly-sampled municipality, neighborhoods from which to sample 6 individuals are chosen at random, based on an available list of neighborhoods compiled by CISOR, with quotas ensuring equal numbers of individuals from each economic stratum are sampled in each municipality. For logistical and cost reasons, if the chosen neighborhood is inaccessible due to security concerns/transportation difficulties and/or unwillingness to cooperate with survey enumerators, it will be substituted for a neighborhood of similar size, chosen at random.

Finally, within each selected neighborhood enumerators will select two *voceros*, two participants who are not *voceros* (either current or past participants) and two people who have never participated in a CC. Individuals will be randomly selected according to these quotas, and a 50/50 gender quota will be imposed upon the non-*vocero* and non-CC participant groups. If the only individuals available in a given house do not correspond to the desired gender, the survey enumerator will pass to the next randomly selected house. If there are multiple persons home from the correct gender, the individual with the most proximate upcoming birthday will be selected.

### **Weighting of the Dataset**

Once the interviews have been carried out, weights will be constructed based on the 2011 Venezuelan census (the most recent data available), and 2014 data on the distribution of CCs from the Venezuelan government to ensure accurate country-level statistics can be generated from the data. Weights are generated for each respondent according to participation in a CC and economic strata, yielding a nationally-representative dataset.

### **Auditing/Quality Control**

Survey supervisors in each region of the country conduct a daily review of all completed surveys, taking note of high rates of missing data and unusual responses. In cases where the supervisor has reason to doubt the accuracy of information collected from a given respondent, they will follow up by phone with the respondent to ensure the collected information is correct. Additionally, supervisors conduct a random phone audit of 10-15% of respondents to ensure enumerators visited the assigned house and assigned individual within each house. Finally, the length of each survey is recorded by enumerators, after which supervisors check to ensure all surveys are being completed in a reasonable frame (supervisors also ask respondents in random phone audits approximately how long the survey took to complete).

### 3) Research Questions and Hypotheses

#### a) Operationalizing Core and Weak Supporters

Before detailing the research questions and hypotheses to be tested in this study, a note on terminology: I refer often to weak and core PSUV supporters. The essential idea here is to distinguish between what Bratton et al (2012) call sincere vs. strategic partisans, that is, individuals who support a given party “out of deep attachment or ingrained habit” (Bratton et al 2012: 32), vs. those who only support the party when it performs well in office. Since I argue that the PSUV seeks to increase the number of sincere partisans through CCs in order to decrease its future costs of maintaining political support among strategic partisans, it is important to develop operationalizations that allow me to accurately assess distinctions between these types of voters.

I therefore operationalize core vs. weak supporters categories in two ways, one stricter than the other. First, a weak PSUV supporter is an individual who voted for the PSUV in the most recent presidential election but is not a member of the party, and a core supporter is an individual who is a member of the PSUV (there should be few, if any cases where party members do not report having voted for the PSUV president candidate in the most recent presidential election). This is a reasonable proxy for distinguishing between core and weak supporters in the case of Venezuela, because not only is the process for party membership not particularly demanding (PSUV 2014), but party membership is often a basic expectation for core PSUV supporters, affording them the right, for instance, to participate in PSUV primary elections (Morgan 2018). Further, party identification with the PSUV has been quite high by both regional and historical Venezuelan standards (Morgan 2018; Dosek 2017), with the party boasting more than 7 million members (the total electorate is around 19 million) as early as 2009 (PSUV 2009). Nonetheless, employing this operationalization amounts to a very strong test of my hypotheses about the effects of party strategies on core vs. weak supporters, because, for example, individuals who cast their votes for President Nicolás Maduro in 2018, despite the country’s grave economic and political crises, may be sincere partisans, despite not being member of the PSUV.

Given that this is a particularly high standard for assessing weak PSUV support, and given that party self-identification is generally less-reliable than vote choice (Thomassen and Rosema 2006), this operationalization may obscure important variance between core and weak PSUV supporters. Consequently, I also include a less-demanding operationalization of weak supporters for which an individual is coded as a weak supporter if they are not a member of the party or have not voted for the PSUV once in past presidential elections. These are voters who are more likely than not to support the PSUV (and hence are not swing voters), but who, by virtue of their one-time defection, cannot be considered sincere PSUV partisans. For instance, many voters supported the PSUV in every presidential election during the Hugo Chávez’s presidency, but decided to not continue doing so once the country’s economic situation began to deteriorate significantly in 2014. The corresponding definition for core supporters using this operationalization is an individual who has voted for the PSUV in each previous presidential election.

It is important to note that since the survey asks respondents about past voting behavior and party membership since 2006, for my time-series analyses individual respondents may be weak PSUV supporters for some years under study and core supporters for others. Consequently, a single respondent may have been a weak supporter in the past and may not be one today, or vice versa. For instance, if an individual reports having voted for Hugo Chávez in the 2006 and 2012 presidential elections, and being a member of party for 10 years (that is, beginning in 2008), according to my strong operationalization of weak PSUV supporters, that individual would be considered a weak PSUV supporter between 2006 and 2008, and a core supporter thereafter.

Finally, please note that in order to limit the complexity of my hypotheses, I treat individuals who report being members of one of a number of smaller parties that form part of the PSUV electoral coalition - *El Gran Polo Patriótico* – as core supporters of the PSUV, and I treat core and weak supporters of Chávez’s political movement before October 2007 – *El Movimiento V República* – as core PSUV supporters, even though the PSUV was formally established in October of 2007.

### **b) Party Strategies and CCs: Core Hypotheses**

In this study I examine both the strategic orientation of political parties with respect to CCs, as well as the effects of CC engagement on the behavior of CC participants. Consequently, I divide my primary hypotheses into 1) hypotheses assessing party strategies with respect to CCs, and 2) hypotheses assessing the effects of CCs on participant behavior. I first enumerate my hypotheses with respect to party strategies:

I first explore whether CCs play a significant role in the PSUV’s electoral strategy. There are many possible reasons the PSUV could have decided to direct substantial resources to the CCs, from simply using them as a means of identifying and resolving community problems, to using them as a means of mobilizing core supporters to defend the government during moments of political crisis, to employing them as a means of building the infrastructure for a new apparatus of socialist governance to replace the existing form of representative government that existed in Venezuela at the time, etc. Thus, it is not obvious that the CCs will in fact be used by the PSUV to achieve electoral objectives. Further, it is important to note that even if there is evidence that the PSUV uses CCs for electoral objectives, it likely also uses them simultaneously for a range of non-electoral objectives.

- i) Hypothesis: The PSUV deliberately employs CCs to increase its vote share in elections.
  - a. Observable Implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will state that electoral work is one of the three most important functions of the CCs (q.20.7).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> It could be the case, of course, that the national PSUV’s understanding of the role CCs should play in the party’s electoral strategy diverge significantly from the understanding of the local-level PSUV leaders surveyed in this study. If this were the case, relying upon reports from local-level party leaders as a proxy for the party’s national electoral strategy would not be appropriate, since observed local-level strategies may or may not reflect the national party’s strategic orientation. Based on a range of interview with party leaders and experts on Venezuelan party politics, however, there is strong evidence to suggest that the PSUV is in fact a highly-centralized party in which,

- ii. At least 50% of PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report having been asked to carry out electoral work in the CCs by the PSUV (q. 24) or a having worked on electoral campaigns within their CC (q. 26).<sup>4</sup>
- iii. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that the electoral role played by the CCs is as great or greater than that of the role played by the CCs in defending the Bolivarian Revolution (q.40.o).<sup>5</sup>
- iv. At least 50% of PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that the CCs have party-related functions (q.22).

The next question I explore is which voter groups the PSUV attempts to engage through its work in the CCs - assuming that it employs CCs for electoral objectives. I argue that the PSUV engages weak supporters to increase their identification with the PSUV and increase the likelihood they will vote for the PSUV in future elections, while also engaging core supporters in an effort to increase their propensity to vote (discussed later in this document), to convince weak supporters to support the PSUV (discussed later in this document), as well as for several non-electoral objectives (discussed later in this document)

- ii) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to engage weak and core PSUV supporters.
  - a. Observable Implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that weak and core PSUV supporters are the two primary voter groups they target in electoral work within the CCs. (q. 27)

After establishing whether the PSUV engages PSUV supporters through the CCs, I next examine the mechanisms through which it seeks to engage weak PSUV supporters, beginning with the mechanisms through which the party identifies individuals from different voter groups.

- iii) Hypothesis: The PSUV employs systematic methods to identify different types of voters through the CCs.
  - a. Observable Implications

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generally speaking, local-level compliance with national party directives is high. As one expert explained, “there is a mandated [electoral] strategy [from national PSUV]...because of the practicalities of the electoral system candidates can verge slightly from it, so you can have some independence exhibited there, but I wouldn't presume that much of it would occur” (Correspondence with Iñaki Sagarzazu, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> While an inherently arbitrary threshold, 50% is chosen because it is high enough to demonstrate a clear national trend, and low enough to avoid yielding a false negative for this hypothesis, since there is a wide range of reasons why CC *voceros* and participants might not participate in electoral activities through their CCs, and/or why they might fail to report having done so (i.e. social desirability bias). The same logic applies to similar thresholds set throughout this document.

<sup>5</sup> Note that even if this hypothesis is not supported it may still be the case that the CCs play an important role in the electoral strategy of the party. This would be the case if, as a number of interview respondents suggested, they simply assume that building the hegemony of the Bolivarian Revolution necessarily entails work to consolidate electoral support among weak and/or core supporters.

- i. At least 50% of CC *voceros* and participants will report that communal census-taking is used to identify PSUV and opposition militants in their communities (q. 23).
  - iv) Hypothesis: The PSUV engages weak PSUV supporters by emphasizing both that CCs are open to all *and* that the purpose of the CCs is to achieve the political objectives of the PSUV.<sup>6</sup>
    - b. Observable implications
      - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will state that CCs are community organizations open to all, including opposition supporters (q. 38, q. 40.h, 40.i).
      - ii. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will state that the purpose of the CCs is to serve the whole community or that CC benefits are enjoyed by the whole community (q. 20, q. 40.l q.40.d, q.40.m, q.40.n)
      - iii. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will state that carrying out electoral work, defending the Bolivarian Revolution or building the Communal State are functions of the CCs (q. 20.6, 20.7, q.20.8).
      - iv. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants in a single CC will report that the CC is representative of and open to the whole community AND that the purpose of the CCs is to further the political objectives of the PSUV (q. 20.6, 20.7, q.20.8, q. 38, q.40.d, q. 40.h, 40.i, q. 40.l).

In turn, even if the PSUV views CCs as an important site of electoral work, it does not necessarily follow that the electoral work it carries out through the CCs serves any function that could not also be achieved through other forms of electoral work. That is, it could be the case that the electoral role of the CCs is functionally-equivalent to the role played by other electoral tools at the party's disposal, and consequently that BPIs do not offer parties a distinct electoral advantage in engaging weak supporters. To the contrary, I argue that in fact the PSUV believes the CCs play a distinct role in its electoral strategy, offering the party a means of engaging weak supporters that it could not accomplish through alternative mechanisms.

- v) Hypothesis: CCs perform a function in the PSUV's electoral strategy that cannot be achieved through other forms of electoral work.
  - c. Observable Implications

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<sup>6</sup> Note that considered independently from hypotheses 1-3, the observable implications listed for hypothesis 4 are equally-consistent with the argument that the CCs are used by the PSUV to engage weak supporters (hypothesis 4) *and* that the CCs are used by the PSUV as a means of building an alternative political and economic system (the Communal State) to replace the existing systems of representative democracy and capitalism. It is only when the observable implications for hypothesis 4 are present *and* hypotheses 1-3 are supported that the weight of evidence (Fairfield and Charman 2017) shifts decisively in favor of hypothesis 4. This does not rule out the possibility that the PSUV tries to use CCs to build the Communal State (which is likely), but it decreases the likelihood of the alternative hypothesis that the PSUV does not use the combination of stressing that CCs are open to all members of the community and that the purpose of the CCs is to further the political objectives of the PSUV to engage weak PSUV supporters.

- i. At least 50% of PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that the electoral work they pursue through the CCs is distinct from the electoral work they carry out through party organizations (*Unidades de Batalla Bolívar-Chávez*) (q.40.r).
- ii. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that the electoral role played by the CCs is as important as the electoral role played by the *Unidades de Batalla Bolívar-Chávez* outside of the CCs (q.40.p).

### c) Party Strategies and CCs: Ruling out Alternative Hypotheses

After marshalling evidence in support of my primary hypotheses about the electoral strategies parties pursue through CCs, I turn next to an examination of important alternative hypotheses that, if supported by the data, would provide evidence against one of the core hypotheses discussed above.

The first alternative hypothesis I explore is whether the PSUV seeks to engage core PSUV supporters, *and not* weak PSUV supporters, through the CCs. If this were the case, we would expect PSUV *voceros* and CC participants to emphasize the importance of excluding individuals who are not supportive of the Bolivarian Revolution from CC activities, and to deemphasize the importance of including the whole community in CC activities (as we would expect if the PSUV is engaging both weak and core supporters through the CCs).

- vi) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to engage core PSUV supporters rather than weak PSUV supporters.
  - a. Observable implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will state that they engage core supporters of the PSUV in their electoral work within the CCs and *not* weak supporters. This would be the case if q. 27.1 receives the most affirmative responses, and q.27.2 receives a negligible number of affirmative responses.
- vii) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to engage core PSUV supporters by emphasizing the CCs are spaces only open to supporters of the PSUV and/or providing benefits only to core supporters.
  - a. Observable implications.
    - i. Inverse of hypothesis 4.i.
    - ii. Inverse of hypothesis 4.ii
    - iii. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report excluding and marginalizing opposition supporters in their CCs (among individuals who responded yes to q.35, at least 50% will respond affirmatively to q.36.3, q.36.4 or q.36.5).

The next hypotheses explore the possibility that 1) The PSUV does not incorporate CCs into its electoral strategy, and 2) regardless of whether the PSUV incorporates CCs into its electoral strategy, the PSUV's electoral strategy with respect to CCs is not distinct from that it employs in other venues, such as electoral work in the *Unidades de Batalla Bolívar-Chávez* and Social Missions.

- viii) Hypothesis: The PSUV does not employ CCs to increase its vote share in elections.
  - d. Observable Implications
    - i. Inverse of hypothesis 1.ii
- ix) Hypothesis: CCs do not play a distinct role in the PSUV's electoral strategy.
  - e. Observable Implications
    - i. Inverse of hypothesis 5.i

**d) Effects of CC participation on party identification and voting behavior: Core Hypotheses**

After assessing party strategies with respect to CCs, I now turn to the *effects* of CC participation on party identification and voter behavior. Regardless of the intended role the PSUV hoped CCs would play in its electoral strategy, it is not necessarily the case that this strategy was either fully-implemented or that it had effects consistent with the PSUV's strategy. For instance, even if there is evidence to suggest that the PSUV was trying to engage weak PSUV supporters through CCs using the techniques I hypothesize above, it may or may not be the case that weak PSUV supporters react to these strategies in a manner consistent with the PSUV's expectations. Alternatively, even if it is the case that the PSUV *was not* using the CCs as a core part of its electoral strategy or was not consciously-engaging weak PSUV supporters in the electoral work it carried out through the CCs, it may still be the case that CC participation generates effects consistent with an intentional strategy by the PSUV to engage weak supporters through the mechanisms I hypothesize above. For instance, if the PSUV primarily views the CCs as a mechanism for mobilizing its base at key moments to defend the Bolivarian Revolution and not as an electoral vehicle, it may still be the case that its understanding of the CCs as community organizations representative of the whole community (and not simply as partisan electoral vehicles) inadvertently attracts weak PSUV supporters to the CCs, and in turn that these weak supporters' views of the PSUV are positively affected by their CC participation. Consequently, it is important to examine the effects of CC participation on party identification and voter behavior independently from the PSUV's intended uses of the CCs.

I hypothesize that CCs are more effective in engaging weak PSUV supporters than other mechanisms at parties' disposal because weak PSUV supporters are more hesitant to participate in overtly-partisan political activities than core supporters, and thus are more difficult for parties to reach through traditional party-oriented electoral mechanisms. Since bringing weak PSUV supporters into contact with the party is a necessary condition for increasing identification with or electoral support for the party among this group, in the following hypotheses I examine

whether CCs are in fact more effective in bringing weak PSUUV supporters into contact with the party than other mechanisms available to the party, and if so, whether the mechanism that makes them more effective is their status as community organizations representing the whole community, as opposed to partisan political spaces representing only PSUUV militants.

- x) Hypothesis: CCs are more effective in bringing weak PSUUV supporters into contact with the PSUUV than alternative mechanisms.
  - a. Observable Implications
    - i. Compared to PSUUV organizations: I include a survey experiment (q.88) that consists of a simulated invitation to an open meeting about critical community needs, and randomly assigns some respondents to receive an invitation in which the meeting is sponsored by the PSUUV and others to receive an invitation in which the meeting is sponsored by a CC. If the average likelihood of attending the meeting is greater among weak PSUUV supporters who received the invitation sponsored by a CC compared to individuals who received the invitation sponsored by the PSUUV, hypothesis xv will be supported.
    - ii. Compared to Social Missions: A larger percentage of weak PSUUV supporters who participate in their CCs will report having more contact with the PSUUV as a result of their CC participation compared with non-participants than weak PSUUV supporters who receive benefits from one or more Social Missions and report having more contact with the PSUUV compared to individuals who do not receive benefits from a Social Mission (q.43.f, q.51.d).
  - xi) Hypothesis: CCs are more effective in bringing weak PSUUV supporters into contact with the PSUUV than alternative mechanisms because weak supporters are more likely than core supporters to value participating in a community organization that is not connected to partisan politics, and CCs are perceived by weak supporters as neighborhood organizations representing the whole community that are distinct from the PSUUV.
    - b. Observable Implications
      - i. At least 50% of weak PSUUV supporters will report a preference for participating in community organizations not connected to partisan politics, and to be worried about the intervention of political parties in the activities of CCs (weak PSUUV supporters will be more likely to give positive rather than negative responses to q. 43.i and q. 43.j).
      - ii. At least 50% of weak PSUUV supporters will report that they view CCs as distinct entities from the PSUUV (q. 40.h)
      - iii. At least 50% of weak PSUUV supporters will report that they believe CCs are community organizations (q. 40.j, q. 20).
    - xii) Social Missions are less effective in bringing weak PSUUV supporters into contact with the PSUUV because they are viewed by these individuals as being more politicized than CCs.
      - iv. Observable implications

1. More weak PSUV supporters will report that they believe participation in Social Missions is more likely to be restricted based on political partisanship than participation in CCs (the average score of weak PSUV supporters for q.38 will be higher than their average score for q.39, and more weak PSUV supporters will respond negatively rather than positively to q. 51.c), and a higher percentage of weak PSUV supporters will report that they view CCs as distinct entities from the PSUV compared to those who view Social Missions as distinct entities from the PSUV (q.40.h, q.51.3)

After examining whether and why CCs are more effective than alternative mechanisms in bringing weak PSUV supporters into contact with the PSUV, I turn next to the question of whether this increased contact causes increased party identification with the PSUV among weak supporters. Finally, I test my core hypotheses relating to the effects of CC participation on voter behavior, specifically that CC participation increases weak PSUV supporters' propensity vote for the PSUV in upcoming presidential elections, that this is a result of weak PSUV supporters' identification of benefits (of whatever kind) received through their participation in a CC with the PSUV, and also that CC participation increases voter turnout among core PSUV supporters.

- xiii) Hypothesis: CCs strengthen weak PSUV supporters' identification with the party
  - c. Observable Implications
    - i. A non-zero percentage of weak PSUV supporters will report that their opinion of the PSUV improved as a result of participating in their CCs (q.44.a)<sup>7</sup>
    - ii. CC participation will have a positive effect PSUV membership. For this hypothesis I construct a time-series dataset from 2006-2018 consisting of 13 individual year-rows for each respondent. Every year-row for each individual will be identical except party affiliation (I construct a yearly party ID variable using q.73, which asks respondents how long they have been a member of a given political party) and whether they currently participate in a CC (I construct a yearly CC participation variable using q.9, q.11 and q.12, which ask respondents how low they have participated in a CC). I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, lagged party ID as the DV (lagged to address endogeneity concerns), and a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the

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<sup>7</sup> I choose non-zero in this case because evidence of *any* increased party identification among weak PSUV supporters is evidence that the CCs had an effect on party identification. This logic also applies to other hypotheses that employ this threshold.

individual and final sampling unit levels. Finally, I leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address additional possible endogeneity problems.

- xiv) Hypothesis: CC participation will have a positive effect PSUV vote share among weak PSUV supporters.
  - d. Observable implications
    - i. There will be a positive association between weak PSUV supporters' propensity to vote for PSUV presidential candidates and their participation in CCs (q.57, q.61, q.65, q.68).
      1. For each election cycle (2006, 2012, 2013 and 2018), I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regression models (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, vote choice as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.
      2. I will run a separate analysis allowing me to further investigate possible endogeneity problems by generating a dataset comprised of 4 election-years for each individual in the dataset (2006, 2012, 2013, 2018). Each individual's 4 election-year-rows will be identical except for their presidential vote choice, reason for making the presidential vote choice they made (q.57, q.61, q.65, q.68), party affiliation (q.71), whether or not they currently participate in a CC, and a binary variable capturing whether an individual began participating in a CC at some point between two presidential elections. I will employ this binary variable as the IV, a binary variable capturing whether an individual supported the PSUV presidential candidate in election X and also in election X + 1 as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the individual and final sampling unit levels. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address additional possible endogeneity problems.
- xv) Hypothesis: CC participation increases PSUV vote share among weak PSUV supporters because these voters associate the PSUV with good things the CCs have done for them.
  - e. Observable Implications



Social Missions are more effective than CCs in breaking weak supporters into contact with the PSUV, in the next assess whether the mechanism that makes them more effective is because they are perceived by weak PSUV supporters as being less politicized than CCs (by definition this cannot be true of PSUV organizations, so I do not explore this possibility).

- xvii) Hypothesis: CCs are more effective in bringing weak PSUV supporters into contact with the PSUV than alternative mechanisms.
  - a. Observable Implications
    - i. see hypothesis 10.1 above.
    - ii. see hypothesis 10.2 above.
- xviii) Hypothesis: CCs are less effective in bringing weak PSUV supporters into contact with the PSUV because they are viewed by these individuals as being more politicized than Social Missions.
  - b. Observable implications
    - i. see hypothesis 12 above.

Finally, in the following hypotheses, I test key alternative hypotheses relating to the effects of CC participation on voter behavior. I first explore the possibility that CC participation increases the propensity of *ni-ni* (swing) voters and/or opposition supporters to vote for the PSUV in upcoming presidential elections. I then explore whether CC participation increases voter turnout among *ni-ni* voters and/or opposition supporters.

- xix) Hypothesis: CC participation increases PSUV vote share among *ni-ni* voters and/or opposition supporters
  - c. Observable implications
    - i. There will be a positive association between *ni-ni* voters and/or opposition supporters' propensity to vote for PSUV presidential candidates and their participation in CCs (q.57, q.61, q.65, q.68).
      1. For each election cycle (2006, 2012, 2013 and 2018), I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regression models (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, vote choice as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.
      2. I will run a separate analysis allowing me to further investigate possible endogeneity problems by generating a dataset comprised of 4 election-years for each individual in the dataset (2006, 2012, 2013, 2018). Each individual's 4 election-year-rows will be identical except for their presidential vote choice, reason for making the presidential

vote choice they made (q.57, q.61, q.65, q.68), party affiliation (q.71), whether or not they currently participate in a CC, and a binary variable capturing whether an individual began participating in a CC at some point between two presidential elections. I will employ this binary variable as the IV, a binary variable capturing whether an individual supported the PSUV presidential candidate in election X and also in election X + 1 as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the individual and final sampling unit levels. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address additional possible endogeneity problems.

xx) Hypothesis: CC participation increases voter turnout among *ni-ni* voters and/or opposition supporters.

d. Observable implications

i. There will be a positive association between *ni-ni* voters and/or opposition supporters' propensity to vote in upcoming presidential elections and their participation in CCs (q.56, q.60, q.64, q.67).

1. For each election cycle (2006, 2012, 2013 and 2018), I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regression models (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, voter turnout as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.

2. I will run a separate analysis allowing me to further investigate possible endogeneity problems by generating a dataset comprised of 4 election-years for each individual in the dataset (2006, 2012, 2013, 2018). Each individual's 4 election-year-rows will be identical except for whether they voted, party affiliation, whether or not they currently participate in a CC, and a binary variable capturing whether an individual began participating in a CC at some point between two presidential elections. I will employ this binary variable as the IV, a binary variable capturing whether an individual did not turn out to vote in election X

and did vote election  $X + 1$  as the DV, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the individual and final sampling unit levels. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address additional possible endogeneity problems.

#### **f) Party Strategies and CCs: Secondary Hypotheses**

My central argument with respect to the electoral role of BPIs, stated above, is that BPIs offer parties a means of engaging weak supporters that is not at their disposal through other electoral tactics. This is because weak supporters are more skeptical of party organizations than core supporters, and are more likely to engage with the party through community organizations. Precisely why party identification among weak supporters increases after they have begun to participate in BPI activities is a secondary question that I explore here. I argue that the party deploys a range of tactics to increase weak supporters' identification with the party in the absence of sustained material benefits. Below, in the section on secondary hypotheses related to the effects of CC participation, I explore whether the range of non-material benefits weak PSUV supporters receive through BPI participation cause them to identify more strongly with the party.

- xxi) Hypothesis: The PSUV employs a range of non-material techniques to increase weak supporters' identification with the party through CCs.
  - g. Observable implications
    - i. Respondents will report that their CC invites PSUV officials to speak at CC events (q. 23.3)
    - ii. Respondents will report that their CC carries out ideological trainings to strengthen participants' identification with the Bolivarian Revolution (q. 23.5)
    - iii. Respondents will report that CC leaders speak with participants about the dangers of the opposition and the economic war (q. 23.7)
    - iv. Respondents will report that CC leaders speak with participants about the achievements of the Bolivarian Revolution (q. 23.8).

In next examine whether the PSUV uses CCs to increase party identification with the PSUV more efficiently than they can achieve through other means, such as Social Missions or clientelism.

- xxii) Hypothesis: material incentives play a more limited role in the PSUV's electoral work carried out through CCs compared to its electoral work in other venues.
  - h. Observable Implications

- i. PSUV *voceros* and participants will report that the role of distributing material benefits in their CC electoral work is less important than other forms of electoral work they carry out in CCs (q. 23.6 receives a smaller percentage of affirmative responses from PSUV respondents compared to other non-material benefit items in question 23 (23.4, 23.5, 23.7, 23.8)
- ii. Among PSUV CC *voceros* and participants, the role of distributing material benefits through electoral work carried out through the *Unidades de Batalla Bolívar-Chávez* will be more important than role of distributing material benefits through CC electoral work (q.85: among PSUV *voceros* who responded yes to q.86 the percentage of respondents answering “yes” is higher than the percentage of PSUV *voceros* who answer affirmatively to q.23.6).

While the focus of this study is on electoral uses of CCs by the PSUV, as noted above it is likely that this is one of several distinct motivations the party has for directing resources to CCs. I examine these possibilities here.

- xxiii) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to mobilize the community in defense of the Bolivarian Revolution.
  - i. Observable Implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that a function of the CCs is to defend the Bolivarian Revolution (q.20.6)
- xxiv) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to build an alternative political infrastructure to replace Venezuela’s existing system of representative democracy.
  - j. Observable Implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that a function of the CCs is to build the Communal State (q.20.8)
- xxv) Hypothesis: The PSUV uses CCs to help identify and resolve community problems
  - k. Observable Implications
    - i. PSUV CC *voceros* and participants will report that a function of the CCs is to solve community problems (q.20.1, q.20.3)

**g) Effects of CC participation on voting behavior: Secondary Hypotheses**

Next, I explore the mechanisms through which BPI participation increases party identification among weak party supporters. This could be through the receipt of a range of non-material benefits and/or because they receive material benefits but do not have to go through a party broker to receive them. I also examine whether BPI participation increases party identification

among weak PSUV supporters more efficiently and sustainably than other mechanisms at the party's disposal.

- xxvi) Hypothesis: CCs strengthen weak PSUV supporters' identification with the party by providing weak supporters an empowering political experience for which they credit the PSUV.
  - l. Observable Implications
    - i. Weak PSUV supporters who report that their opinion of the PSUV has become more positive since they began participating in a CC will report that they feel more respected in the community and/or that they feel more capable of affecting change in their community thanks to their participation in a CC q.43.c, q.43.d, q.43e, q.45.3 and/or q.43.4)
- xxvii) Hypothesis: CCs strengthen weak PSUV supporters' identification with the party by providing opportunities for party militants to reinforce the PSUV's ideology among weak PSUV supporters.
  - m. Observable Implications
    - i. Weak PSUV supporters who report that their opinion of the PSUV has become more positive since they began participating in a CC will report that they have received political education through their CC that reflects the ideological perspective of the PSUV (q.46 and q.47).
    - ii. PSUV supporters who report that their opinion of the PSUV has become more positive since they began participating in a CC *and* who report that their political opinions have been influenced by their participation in a CC (q.41) will respond affirmatively to q.42.1 and/or q.42.2.
- xxviii) Hypothesis: CCs strengthen weak PSUV supporters' identification with the party by creating a positive social environment for participants, for which weak supporters credit the PSUV.
  - n. Observable Implications
    - i. Weak PSUV supporters who report that their opinion of the PSUV has improved since they started participating in a CC will respond positively to q.43.b.
- xxix) Hypothesis: CC participation generates identification with the PSUV more efficiently and sustainably than other mechanisms, as CC participation is more-likely to generate non-contingent party support without recourse to the ongoing provision of material benefits than other mechanisms such as party institutions and Social Missions.
  - o. Observable Implications
    - i. A larger percentage of weak PSUV supporters who respond affirmatively to q.44 will report that their opinions of the PSUV have improved since participating in a CC because they receive non-material benefits compared to those reporting that their opinions of the PSUV have improved because they receive material benefits (q.45.1, q.45.3, q.45.4 receive more affirmative responses than q.42.2).

- ii. A larger percentage of weak PSUV supporters will report that their opinions of the PSUV improved as a result of non-material benefits received through CC participation (this is the total number of weak PSUV supporters who respond affirmatively to q.45.1, q.45.3 and q.45.4) compared to the percentage of weak PSUV supporters who report that their opinions of the PSUV improved as a result of receiving benefits from a Social Mission (number of weak PSUV supporters who respond affirmatively to 51.a).
- iii. A majority of weak PSUV supporters will respond negatively to q.51.b.
- iv. More weak PSUV supporters will respond affirmatively to 72.4 compared to 72.3 and 72.8
- v. There will be a negative association between CC participation and participation in clientelism. For this hypothesis I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, receipt of clientelistic benefit (q.74) as the DV, and a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. Finally, I leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address additional possible endogeneity problems.

The next set of hypotheses examines whether CC participation positively affects core PSUV supporter participation in PSUV electoral activities.

- xxx) Hypothesis: CC participation increases electoral work among core supporters.
  - p. Observable implications
    - 1. Core PSUV supporters who have participated in a CC will be more likely to report having worked on a PSUV electoral campaign than core PSUV supporters who have not participated in a CC (q.86). For this hypothesis I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, whether an individual reported having worked on a PSUV electoral campaign as the DV, and a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.

The following hypotheses whether CC participation positively affects the participation of core PSUV supporters in non-electoral PSUV activities.

- xxxii) Hypothesis: CC participation increases levels of party activism among core PSUV supporters.
  - a. Observable implications
    - i. Core PSUV supporters who have participated in a CC will be more likely to report having attended a party meeting (and having attended more frequently), a social movement organization meeting or a protest than core PSUV supporters who have not participated in a CC (q.2.e, q.2.h, q.2.j, q.2.l, q.2.n q3), and having attended these activities more frequently. For this hypothesis I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, party activism variables as DVs, and a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.
- xxxiii) Hypothesis: CC participation increases rates of participation in Communes among core PSUV supporters
  - b. Observable implications
    - ii. Core PSUV supporters who have participated in a CC will be more likely to report having participated in activities of their Commune than core PSUV supporters who have not participated in a CC (q.2.k), and having participated more frequently. For this hypothesis I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, Commune participation as the DV, and a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.
- xxxiiii) Hypothesis: CC participation increases levels of community organizing among core PSUV supporters
  - c. Observable implications
    - i. Core PSUV supporters who have participated in a CC will be more likely to report having participated in community association meetings than core PSUV supporters who have not participated in a CC (q.2.c, q.2.d), and having participated more frequently. For this hypothesis I will estimate logistic and multinomial logistic regressions (depending on the model) with CC participation as the IV, community organizing variables as DVs, a range of controls (discussed below), as well as individual-level fixed-effects and

clustering at the final sampling unit level. I will also leverage the distance an individual must walk from their home to their local CC meeting space (q.16) as an instrumental variable to address possible endogeneity problems.

#### 4) Controls included in regression analysis

- Trust (q.5)
- Clientelism questions (qs.74-77)
- Support for Maduro (q. 82)
- Sex (q.89)
- Age (q. 90)
- Ethnicity (q. 91)
- Education Level (q. 82)
- Number of Children (q. 94, q. 95)
- Occupational Status (q. 98)
- Income (q. 99)
- Access to Basic Services (q.97)
- Level of Political Knowledge (q.96)
- Level of CC resources (q.19)
- Pre-CC Involvement in Associational Life (q. 1)
- Presence of *Promotor Social* (q.43)
- Level of CC Administrative Competence (q.40.a)
- Level of Corruption in CC (q.43.c, q.43.g)

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