Presumed Media Influence and Strategic Voting in the Egyptian Parliamentary Elections 2011

Shaima’a Z. Zoghaib

Cairo University, Egypt

Abstract

This study investigates the effect of presumed media influence on others on strategic voting versus sincere voting in the first parliamentary elections after the 25th of January revolution. Drawing on a two-stage survey of 455 Egyptians aged 18 to 77 and randomly selected from two governorates; the first stage governorate is Giza (one of the governorates of the second phase of elections) and the second stage governorate is Qalubiya (one of the governorates of the third phase of elections), the study takes into account the effect of different potential political, demographic and media variables on strategic voting. The political variables include political interest, political participation, political affiliation, political efficiency and political cynicism. The demographic variables include gender, education, age and governorate. The study also investigates the effect of exposure to both traditional and new media. The findings shed light on the significance of political cynicism, education level, reading newspapers and presumed media influence on strategic voting. Implications of the findings are discussed.

Key words: Strategic voting, Presumed media influence, Elections, Egypt

Introduction

More than six decades of survey research have convincingly demonstrated how little attention citizens pay to politics. For instance, voters cannot recall basic political facts (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1991), they do not have a solid understanding of ideological abstractions (Converse, 1964) and they fail to recognize the names of their elected representatives (Neuman, 1986).

This limited information does not prevent people from making reasoned choices or decisions based on accurate predictions about the consequences of a given decision (Lupia and McCubbins, 1998, p.18). Although comprehensive knowledge is beyond their reach, the public
may overcome confusion by relying on a variety of sensible and mostly adaptive shortcuts. Heuristics are therefore judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways of organizing and simplifying political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute, yet yielding dependable solutions even to complex problems of choice (Sniderman et al., 1991: p.19). The numerous possible heuristics include party identification (Downs, 1957), the media (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987), interpersonal influence (Beck et al., 2002), social relations (Huckfeldt, 2001), or the political environment (Kuklinski et al., 2001).

The role of media in politics began to be more prominent due to what Political communication scholars point to as a process of “mediatization” of politics, which is characterized by an “increasing intrusion of the media in the political process (Mazzoleni and Schulz, 1999, p. 248). The “mediatization” of modern politics is evident both in terms of its outcomes for the political world and in terms of the interaction of politicians with the demands of media routines (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991).

Politicians recognize the significance of news and entertainment media for their reelection. It is claimed that, in the age of mediatization, voters are unlikely to vote for someone they do not know enough about, mostly from media (Just et al., 1996). Hence, political actors are likely to compete for media coverage because they believe that media coverage influences the public (Cohen, J. et al., 2008), and advances their political agendas (Becker and Kosicki, 1995).

An increasingly influential line of research on media effects suggests that some of the effects of news media on society take place because people perceive media as influential. Consequently, this study tests this notion in the context of voting decisions. As voting is a cornerstone of democracy, understanding different patterns of voting represents an important step in the understanding of democratic processes in societies. It is proposed that voters’ perceptions regarding the influence of media will be related to their intention to vote strategically – that is, to vote for a party they favor less than their most preferred option, otherwise they will vote sincerely. If news media are perceived to persuade other voters to switch their votes, it will more likely be necessary to switch one’s vote to either conform to or counterbalance the effects of media on others (Cohen and Tsfati, 2009).

**TV News and Presumed Media Influence**
Davison (1983) suggested: “In some cases, a communication leads to action not because of its impact on those to whom it is ostensibly directed, but because others (third person) think it will have an impact on audience” (p. 1). This idea, now labeled as “The Influence of Presumed Influence” (Gunther and Storey, 2003), has been extensively revisited in recent years in various aspects of social life.

Rucinski and Salmon (1990) reported media use as a significant predictor of perceived media effects on oneself and others. Television viewing was found to be positively related to perceived effects of political messages on oneself, whereas greater newspaper exposure was positively associated with greater perceived effects on others.

Some scholars suggest that lay people believe that the effects of media on others follow the magic-bullet theory as exposure equals direct effect (Eveland and McLeod, 1999). Interestingly, many activists perceived themselves as less exposed to mainstream media compared to the average person, where research has proved the opposite as activists use more alternative media and a wider range of news sources than non-activists (Rauch, 2007).

Perceiving certain message effects on others, individuals may act in response to expected consequences of such presumed effects. Such behavioral responses could include refraining from expressing opinions that are different from the perceived opinion trend (Mutz, 1989) or moving out of a town seen as “tarnished” by the negative media coverage (Tsfati and Cohen, 2003). Such responses are labeled as “accommodating” behaviors (Sun et al., 2008, p. 259).

In most studies of the effects of presumed media influence, findings tend to be organized into two major theoretical categories: perceived influence as promoting conformity to social norms or as causing defiance of such norms (Katz, 2005). Cohen and Tsfati (2009) found that presumed media influence may simply be one of many social beliefs that form the basis upon which people consider their actions and their potential outcomes – what may be termed a coordination effect.

The self-other perceptual gap persists with regard to messages for which the valence of presumed influence is ambiguous, such as TV news, poll stories, and so on (e.g., Rucinski and Salmon, 1990). News is considered ambiguous media messages because they contain both informational benefits and risks, such as news about avian flu, which were both informative and distressing. Wei, Lo, and Lu (2008) found that the more respondents read or watched avian flu
news, the stronger the impact they perceived such news to have on self and others, reducing the self-other perceptual gap.

When Brosius and Engel (1996) compared the perceived effects of product ads, campaign ads, music radio programs and TV news, they found a significant third-person effect for TV news. However, the effect of TV news on remote others was perceived to be greater than for close others, but not significantly so. Many other TPE tests on news content reveal greater perceived effects on others than on oneself (Price and Tewksbury, 1996; Price et al., 1997; Salwen, 1998).

Past studies on media coverage of polls suggested that the public has ambivalent views. Poll-generated stories were found to be useful and informative, but they were thought to be harmful to elections (De Vreese and Semetko, 2002). Voters may perceive election news to have harmful effects on themselves and other voters when they fear that election projections reported in the partisan news media might mislead the voters and lend support to candidates opposed by themselves. Therefore, it is expected that the people will likely differentiate the negative and positive effects of polling news and perceive the effects on themselves and others differently. Wei et al. (2010) found that respondents believed others were more influenced by polling news than themselves, although the results indicate that the perceptual difference was smaller when the effects were considered positive rather than negative. They argue that the implication of this particular finding is that respondents viewed admitting being influenced by news reports about election polls as socially undesirable. This contributes to the literature by showing that message characteristics, such as ambiguous messages like polling news, triggers the self-other perceptual disparity regardless of whether the effects of such messages are viewed as positive or negative.

**Behavioral Implications of the Presumed Media Influence**

The self-other perceptual gap has implications for behavior: people tend to act on their perceptions even though the perceptions are biased. As Gunther and Storey (2003) argued, people who assume influences of media messages on audiences will adopt their behavior to accommodate with those assumptions.

Studies on the perceived impact of news reports about election polls showed that the public favored restrictions on such polls in the media (Lavrakas et al., 1991). De Vreese and Semetko (2002) found that the more voters were concerned about the influence of polls on the public in
Denmark’s 2000 euro referendum, the stronger was the support for restrictions on the publication of polls. Price and Stroud (2005) found that negative impression of polling was significantly and positively related to support for prohibiting election-night projections.

Neuwirth, Frederick and Mayo (2002) found that the joint effect of first and third person perceptions was positively associated with respondents’ behavioral intentions in civil participation such as discussions about elections and voting. Banning (2007) found that people with a greater level of third person perception would have a greater motivation to go out and vote.

In an experiment to examine the behavioral responses of subjects to political ads, Golan, Banning, and Lundy (2008) also found that the third-person perception predicted the likelihood of voting. They argued that the overestimation of political advertising effects on others motivated individuals to go to the voting stations.

Wei et al. (2010) indicated that viewing others as being more likely to be persuaded by election polling news than oneself leads to different behavioral intention. However, they found that perceived positive effects of news about polls in the 2008 Taiwan presidential election on oneself resulted in political discourse engagement, also perceived positive effects motivated civic participation in a presidential election.

In Rauch’s study (2007), participants believed that news in mainstream media disempowered other people from taking social action as they themselves did, in their lives as activists. Their seeming sense of intellectual superiority is labeled “media superiority”, which subsumes a moral judgment wherein other people are considered negligent of their responsibility to effectively inform themselves through use of diverse, alternative sources.

**Theoretical Explanations for the Self-Other Perceptual Disparity**

There’re no comprehensive explanations for the self-other perceptual disparity, but there are theoretical mechanisms such as self-serving bias (Brosius & Engel, 1996; Perloff, 1999), social distance (McLeod et al., 1997), self-categorization (Reid et al., 2007), and uncertainty reduction (Pan et al., 2005).
Ego-enhancement and individuals’ egocentric reasoning (Eveland & McLeod, 1999; Pan et al., 2005) may explain people’s unwillingness to admit being influenced by election polls in the news media. As election polls may affect the outcome, people are unwilling to admit being influenced by polling news more than others to avoid being seen as joining the bandwagon of leading candidates (Bandwagon effect) and to avoid being seen as in agreement with the rest of the electorate (The False-consensus effect). On the other hand, they believe others as more easily persuaded by election polling news than themselves because others represent pluralistic ignorance or are simply naïve (Wei et al., 2010).

Also the “exposure-is-effect” heuristic is often used in evaluating the media effect on others. Individuals tend to regard others as less aware of situational factors (such as the persuasive intent of a message) (Gunther, 1991). With regard to messages with desirable social influence, others will be seen as less likely influenced due to their insensitivity and/or lack of exposure (Sun, Pan and Shen; 2008, p. 260).

**Strategic Voting Versus Sincere Voting and Presumed Media Influence**

Strategic voters vote for a party other than their first choice because they see their preferred party as having no hope of winning. They aim to enhance the prospects of the most appealing alternative or to hurt the chances of the most disliked party (Lanoue and Bowler, 1992). On the other side, sincere voting is considered the alternative of strategic voting. “It means casting one’s vote for the most preferred candidate or party, regardless of circumstances such as the candidates’ chances of winning” (Abramson et al., 2004, p. 708).

In Blais’ et al. study (2010), they suggest a strategic model of vote choice in which the decision to support or not to support a candidate depends on two factors. The first factor is how much the voter likes the candidate: the more one likes a candidate, the greater the propensity to vote for that candidate. The second factor is the candidate’s viability, that is, the candidate’s chances of winning the election: the stronger the candidate’s viability, the greater the propensity to vote for that candidate.

However, strategic voting always figures to be limited for different reasons. First, the information requirements necessary to cast such a ballot; voters are unlikely to be attentive and informed enough to vote strategically. Second, voters are usually unfamiliar with the ballot they
confront. Without a precedent, it seems likely that voters would opt for the safest option, which would be to vote their rank-order preference. Third, the relatively brief campaign period further reduces the chance that voters had the requisite information (Shaw, McKenzie and Underwood, 2005, p. 225).

Forsythe et al. (1993) found that election histories, or the results of previous elections, enable majority of voters to coordinate on one of their favored candidates. Sequential voting may improve the information-aggregation properties of elections because later voters have observed the choices made by earlier voters and, hence, seem to have more information that enables them to take a strategic voting decision (Feddersen and Pesendorfer, 1999, p. 10574). This is the idea upon which I depend in the current study as I propose that the results of the first phase of election will be a source of information for voters.

Abramson et al. (2004) argue that for strategic voting to take place, voters must not only know whom they like, but they also must consider the strategic setting. Low expected viability of one’s most preferred candidate is what gives a strong impetus for voters to defect strategically to their second choice (p. 716).

Research has found that while most voters vote sincerely (i.e., a vote for the party or candidate that is closest to their worldview and about whom they feel most favorably (Lanoue & Bowler, 1992), others do not. Sophisticated voters (Abramson, Aldrich, Paolino, & Rohde, 1992) or “strategic voters” (Blais & Nadeau, 1996) are those who base their choice not only on their opinion of parties and candidates but also on calculations of possible outcomes.

Traditional strategic voting research has underscored the importance of information in voters’ strategic considerations. However, information about the behavior or intentions of others and their expected outcomes are necessary for strategic calculations, and media serve as primary sources of information allowing voters to assess the political climate. Voters can receive predictions from media, but they also follow public opinion polls and political advertising and they estimate the effectiveness of these on how others will vote. If media are seen as inconsequential, then it will be hard to anticipate others’ votes and less logical to vote strategically (Cohen and Tsfati, 2009).
Cohen and Tsfati (2009) indicated that presumed media influence helps explain why people vote strategically. Presumed media impact on self is a stronger and positive predictor of strategic voting than perceived impact on others. A possible interpretation is that those seriously considering their voting decisions tend to use media more reflexively when deliberating about their choices and thus may be more aware of this use. This interpretation is consistent with the fact that presumed influence on self was associated with political interest and efficacy and with less certainty in voting. This suggests that perhaps more involved respondents do not necessarily see media influence on voting as inherently negative and are willing to publicly admit such influence, compared to less involved respondents. Thus, presumed influence on self may relate to self-reports of strategic considerations through higher involvement and more deliberation.

In some political systems, strategic voting may take on more than one route and may involve motivations other than voting for viable parties or candidates. The exact direction of the influence of presumed influence in such contexts, then still remains largely unknown.

**Media Role in Strategic Voting:**

If news media are perceived to persuade other voters to switch their votes, it will be more likely to “switch one’s vote to either conform to or counterbalance the effects of media on others” (Cohen and Tsfati, 2009, p. 359).

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Strategic voting depends on the information context of the election and the characteristics of the electorate. It is likely that strategic voting is more common when the campaign and candidates draw significant news media coverage (Abramson, Aldrich, Paolino, & Rhode, 1992). This creates an information environment in which voters have the facts, or at least believe they have the facts necessary to cast a vote for a second- or even third-favorite candidate. The other related influence is the relative ability of a given electorate to acquire and process the political and contextual information necessary to cast a strategic vote. (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).
As Downs (1957) wrote, “In the absence of any information about what other voters are likely to do, the rational voter always votes for the party he prefers.” That is, if the voter cannot obtain expected vote share for the candidates, the rational voter will vote sincerely (p. 48).

On the contrary to the prevailing results, Lanoue and Shaun (1992) found that heavy media attention was associated with a lower likelihood of voting strategically.

Strategic voting depends not only on voters, but also on elite actors. As Cox recognizes, strategic voting survives in theory and practice because the process is mediated by elites. Elites point out that the race is close and that votes on weak candidates are wasted. Voters do the rest: they buy the argument and act accordingly (Cox, 1997: 90, 98).

**Strategic Voting and Rational Choice Models:**

It is natural to turn to rational choice models of expected utility maximization to study strategic voting, because these combine preferences over outcomes with expected effectiveness of voting strategies in achieving those outcomes, similar to the “instrumental” rather “expressive” formulation of choice (Abramson et al., p. 708).

At a theoretical level, rational choice models, with their emphasis on individual strategic behavior, have been prominent in addressing these issues (Lanoue and Bowler). Rational choice theory in the form of expected utility analysis is a natural model to apply since it provides a recipe for integrating the voter’s preference for candidates and beliefs about their chances of winning. In particular, expected utility theory indicates the conditions under which a voter will engage in strategic voting, that is, voting for a lesser preferred candidate in order to avoid a still worse outcome or at least decrease the probability of its occurring (Grafstein, p.513).

The strategic paradigm assumes that voters attempt to maximize their expected utility, which is based on a combination of preferences and expectations about likely outcomes (Abramson et al. 1992, 2004). Voters are short-term instrumentally rational (i.e. they care only about who wins the seats in their district in the upcoming election) (Lago, 2008). Although previous research demonstrated that strategic votes are cast for the candidate with the best chance of winning, but Abramson et al.’s model (2004) showed that voters are more inclined to vote for their preferred candidate if that candidate is more likely to be in a close race than is their second-most-preferred candidate.
Critics of the rational model argue that voting is not just an instrumental behavior, intended to get a candidate elected; it is also expressive behavior, a way for electors to psychologically identify themselves with a preferred party, an admired party leader or a general approach to politics. Equally, perhaps, voting may also be used to show protesting against current policies or leadership (Karp et al., 2002).

**Duverger’s Law and Strategic Voting across Different Electoral Systems:**

Palfrey (1989) argues that ”if your personal favorite is the least popular candidate then, regardless of your relative valuation of your second choice, with enough voters in the electorate you will be better off voting for your second choice” (p.79). This is the essence of Duverger’s law: as the likelihood of losing increases for the most preferred party, the voter should avoid wasting a vote and cast a strategic ballot for one of the parties most likely to win (Sinclair, 2005,p.15).

According to Duverger (1954), in plurality systems, where only one candidate may be elected, the psychological effect discourages voters from supporting candidates other than the two top contenders. The mechanical effects of a single member electorate vote will also increase the seats won by the two main parties and decrease those for minor parties (Blais and Carty, 1991, pp. 89-91). In contrast, in proportional representative (PR) systems, voters have less of an incentive to defect from their first preference because the threshold for gaining representation is significantly reduced. Although greatly minimized, the potential for strategic voting in PR systems still exists to the extent that the system departs from pure proportionality (Cox, 1997). Thus when electoral rules vary, as they do in mixed systems, theories of strategic voting predict that rational voters will not necessarily support the same party with each of their votes. (Karp et al., 2002, p. 3). This is what is expected to happen in the mixed electoral system in Egypt as two-thirds of the parliament seats are elected according to the ticket election system and one third of the seats are elected according to the individual election system.

However, the simple application of Duvergerian logic to mixed systems has been challenged by Cox and Schoppa (1998). They contend that the complexity of the two-vote system leads to “sticky voting” where voters who are confused will choose to vote for the same party on both ballots even when strategic incentives would suggest they should split their votes.
It’s also worth noting that Clark and Golder (2006) found that Duverger’s theory receives much weaker support when we include elections from countries that transitioned to democracy after 1989. This finding is perhaps understandable if we think that party systems in newly democratic countries take a while to reach their equilibrium. It is interesting that Duverger (1954/1963) himself took this view in regard to the emerging democracies of Central Europe, Latin America, and Africa earlier in the 20th century. By warning about the danger of confusing multipartism with the absence of (fully institutionalized) parties, Duverger was indicating that he did not expect his theory to work particularly well in new democracies. This is considered a reason to study the effect of media on strategic voting in Egypt to find if Duverger opinion applies to our transitional society or not.

**Strategic Voting in Runoff Elections:**

Most studies of strategic voting pertain to one-round plurality elections, where only very few have dealt with two-round runoff elections. The standard assumption in the literature is that the model, which asserts that vote choice does not merely reflect preferences because strategic considerations play an important role, applies more to one-round plurality elections (Blais et al., 2010).

Cox (1997) expected that strategic voting would be more unusual in runoff elections than in plurality elections. Duverger (1963) went a step further, suggesting that there is little reason to expect any strategic voting in runoff elections. In fact, Cox and Duverger were correct to argue that strategic voting is relatively rare in runoff systems, but in some circumstances it can occur. “When there is a media-rich environment with relatively informed voters, voters may make strategic considerations even in runoff contests” (Abramson et al., 2004, P. 708).

Things are more complicated when it comes to two-round runoff elections. The basic theoretical position is the Gibbard- Satterthwaite theorem, according to which no voting system is strategy proof, and so the expectation is that assessments of viability should matter in any system (Blais et al., 2010, p. 638). Duverger (1951) indicates that parties wait after the first round to make alliances. The assumption is that voters want to “vote with their heart” (vote sincerely) on the first round, because they know that they will have to “vote with their head” (and support the least unacceptable candidate) on the second round.
Cox (1997) asserts that judgments about viability matter in two-round elections. The main difference, Cox argues, is that there are two “winners” in a two-round system, that is, the top two candidates that become eligible for the final second round. The results of Blais et al. study (2010) conform to Cox’s (1997) prediction that strategic considerations come into play in two-round elections as they do in one-round contests. They indicate that the differences between the two voting systems are small, which suggests that the information requirements do not vary much between the two systems. We thus conclude that strategic considerations are almost as important in two-round as one-round elections.

**Estimates of the Occurrence of Strategic Voting:**

Neimi, Whitten and Franklin (1992) find one sixth of the electorate acted strategically, whereas Alvarez and Nagler (2000) found the figure at 7.2%. Some research makes a convincing case that measuring strategic voting must focus on those voters who have a legitimate strategic choice. Blais and Nadeau (1996), whose model predicting strategic voting drops from consideration respondents “for whom strategic voting is not an option” (p.41), argue this forcefully. In particular, respondents whose first choice appears more likely to win than their second choice have no incentive to vote strategically and are not considered by Blais and Nadeau.

**Intervening Variables:**

- Partisan Identification:

It is one of the strongest and most consistent determinants of voting behavior on ballot propositions (Bowler and Donovan, 1998; Smith and Tolbert 2001; Branton, 2003; Nicholson, 2005). The most important attitudinal factors are the direction and the strength of party loyalty. Intensity of loyalty had a very strong dampening effect on the likelihood of strategic voting. However, Lanoue and Bowler (1992) argue that under certain conditions those with very strong partisan ties may abandon their party regardless of national and constituency electoral circumstances.

Strong negative feelings about the parties and leaders may also increase the likelihood of strategic voting. “Voters may bypass their most preferred party if they wish to do damage to their most disliked party or leader” (Lanoue and Bowler,1992, p. 145). Weak partisans or non-
identifiers can split between contending parties due to short term candidate appeals, longer-term candidate incumbency effects, polling place decisions, and passions of the day. (Karp et al., 2002).

- **Education and Political Sophistication:**

There’s a widely held belief that people with higher degrees of educational attainment are more likely to vote strategically (Shaw, McKenzie & Underwood, 2005; Alvarez & Nagler, 2000; Lanoue & Bowler, 1992). Education can serve as an indirect way to estimate a voter’s expectations about the outcome of a race, particularly if party elites are putting out information that encourages the casting of a strategic vote. As strategic voting is complicated, and information costs are typically high (Cox, 1997), it makes sense that education, as a proxy for political sophistication, could affect the decision to cast a so-called sophisticated vote (Shaw, McKenzie and Underwood, 2005). Education and the main effects of political knowledge are both positive and significant, indicating that sophisticated voters are more likely to split their votes while unsophisticated voters are more likely to cast straight votes, consistent with the sticky voting hypothesis (Karp et al., 2002).

Politically knowledgeable voters are more likely to defect from their party’s candidate when the party does not invest resources into the campaign. Specifically, the probability of splitting for a voter with the highest level of political knowledge whose party candidate spends nothing on advertising is about twice as great as a voter whose party candidate is viable in the electorate. At low levels of political knowledge, campaign spending has virtually no effect on the probability of defecting (Karp et al., 2002, p. 17).

**Measures of Strategic Voting:**

Blais and Nadeau (1996) observe that studies of strategic voting seem to fall into three categories. The first set of studies measures strategic voting by response to surveys. For example, in their study of the 1987 British elections, Heath and Evans (1994) measured “tactical voting through one response to a forced-choice question, namely the response, “I really preferred another party but it had no chance of winning in this constituency” (p. 559). Lanoue and Bowler (1992) use an almost identical measure in their analysis of strategic voting. Niemi et al. (1992)
also use the respondent’s characterization of her vote to measure strategic voting but expand the set of response options that count as a strategic vote.

The second category encompasses aggregate-level analyses and is dominated by models of British elections. The common attempt here is to estimate strategic voting by looking at differences in votes for parties among various constituencies between elections (Galbraith & Rae, 1989).

Third, some studies consider both a voter’s preferences and outside measures of the candidate’s or party’s chances of winning (Abramson et al., 1992; Alvarez & Nagler, 2000; Bartels, 1988; Blais & Nadeau, 1996; Cain, 1978). “This approach tries to model strategic voting directly as the objective differences between the stated vote and the preference rankings of individuals or the subjective differences between the vote cast and a rank-ordering of the parties or candidates” (Alvarez & Nagler, p. 63).

**The New Parliamentary Electoral Law in Egypt:**

On July 7th 2011, the government approved the new electoral law 50-50 division between proportional seats and First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) seats. In late September 2011, a new division was announced, in which only one third of the seats would be elected by an FPTP vote. The election took place on three phases with two weeks separating each phase from the other. The first phase was on 28th and 29th of November and the run-off were on the 5th and 6th of December 2011. The second phase was on the 14th and 15th of January and the run-offs were held on the 21st and 22nd of December. The third phase was on the 3rd and 4th of January and the run-offs were held on the 10th and 11th of January 2012. According to the amended parliament law, eligible voters will choose two individual candidates and one party list.

The system where half the candidates must be workers or peasants is kept intact. The women quota is abandoned. The total number of members of the People’s Assembly is 508 including ten appointed members by the president or the Senior Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) in the transitional period.

**Justifications for Conducting this Study:**
The third-person effect theory is unclear regarding the perceived effects of media messages that have an ambiguous quality. Only few studies have investigated the presumed impact of media messages that are not outright negative or positive, such as news reports about elections.

This study seeks to expand the third-person effect research by applying the theory to examine a type of media message that provides useful information to voters while may also potentially harm them. Because this type of messages set them apart from clearly positive or negative messages, findings will shed light on a new context in which the self-other perceptual disparity occurs.

While it has been shown that the self-other perceptual disparity is robust across a wide range of message types, effect domains, and populations (Perloff, 2000), evidence regarding its behavioral implications is meager and mixed. As studies that examine different behaviors (e.g., Gunther, 1995; Hitchon, Chang, & Harris, 1997; Tewksbury, Moy, & Weis., 2004) do not yield consistent findings on the relationship between TPP and behaviors, this study aims at testing the linkage between exposure to election news and perceived effects of such news on self and others, and the effects of that on the voting intentions.

Testing Duverger’s law of strategic voting to find out to what extent it applies in a transitional society with a two-vote system of elections that combine the ticket electoral system and the individual electoral system.

**Research Hypotheses**

1) Strategic voting is affected by the following variables:
   a) Social background variables (gender, age, governorate, education).
   b) Political variables (political interest/ political participation/ political cynicism/ political efficiency/ party identification/ party loyalty).
   c) Media variables (TV exposure/ newspaper reading/ radio listening/ internet use).
   d) Presumed media influence (on self/ on others).

2) Sincere voting is affected by the following variables:

[15]
e) Social background variables (gender, age, governorate, education).
f) Political variables (political interest/ political participation/ political cynicism/ political efficiency/ party identification/ party loyalty).
g) Media variables (TV exposure/ newspaper reading/ radio listening/ internet use).
h) Presumed media influence (on self/ on others).

Procedure and Sample

The study was conducted in two stages; the first application was in Giza governorate which is one of the governorates of the second phase of election. The second application was in Qalubia which is one of the governorates of the third phase of elections.

The first application was conducted after the declaration of results of the first phase of elections, specifically, during the week preceding the second stage starting from the 8th till the 13th of December 2011, while the second application was after the declaration of the results of the second phase of elections, specifically during the week preceding the third phase starting from the 25th of December till the 2nd of January 2012. The aim of the timing of those two applications was to study the effect of media coverage of election results of the first phase on the electorates in Giza governorate and the effect of media coverage of election results of the second stage on the electorates of the third stage represented in Qalubia governorate.

The questionnaire included media exposure scales, social background questions and questions measuring strategic and sincere voting and presumed media effect on the self and others. The study depended on a quota sample representing different areas in the two governorates and different socio-economic levels. A one-on-one survey was conducted on 455 electorates, 50.8% of them from Giza and 49.2% from Qalubia. The age ranged from 18 till 77 years old, 59.3% were males and 40.7% were females. The sample included different educational categories; 58.7% of the sample were university graduates, 20.9% had moderate education, 11.2% had lower than moderate education, 4% were illiterate while 3.7% had post-graduate education. 91.4% of the electorates were not affiliated with any political party. Out of the 8.6% politically affiliated
voters, 48.7% belong to the Freedom and Justice Party, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood group.

Measurement of variables

Strategic voting: A single self-report question of strategic voting was used. It was worded, “Can you change your voting decision if you know that the party you intend to vote for has little chances of winning?” 89.9% reported that they would not change their mind (i.e. they wouldn’t vote strategically) while only 10.1% said they would vote strategically.

Sincere voting: It was measured by a scale of two questions as respondents were asked if they are affected by: 1) The party’s program, 2) The agreement between the party’s political inclinations and his/ hers. Response categories varied between 0 = not effective and 3 = very effective. The scale range was from zero to 6 with a mean score equals to 4.16, and a standard deviation equals to 1.65. The explanatory factor analysis showed that the two items loaded on a single factor explaining 66.5 % of the variance.

Presumed media influence: Presumed media influence on others was measured using a single survey question worded, “To what extent will other voters be influenced by news media coverage of the elections when they make up their mind about their vote?”. Response categories varied between 0 = not at all and 3 = to a great extent (M = 2.2, SD = 0.96). A similar question was asked to assess presumed media influence on self (M = 1.69, SD = 1.16).

Covariates:

Political interest: This variable was measured by the two following questions; “To what extent do you follow the election news in the media?” and “To what extent do you talk to friends about politics?” Responses categories varied between 0 = not at all and 3 = to a great extent. The scale range was from zero to 6 with a mean score equals to 4.51, SD = 1.35. The reliability of the scale equals to 0.51 according to alpha scale. The two items loaded on a single factor in an exploratory factor analysis explaining 66.9% of the variance. The correlation between the two items = 0.34 (p < 0.001).
Political participation: This variable was measured by the two following questions; “Have you participated in demonstrations or political rallies in the past year?” Response categories ranged from 0 = No; 1 = yes, once; 2 = yes, more than once, “Are you a member of a political party?” Response categories were 0 = No; 1 = yes. The items were averaged to create a political participation scale. The scale range was from zero to 4 with a mean score equals to 0. 76, and a standard deviation equals to 0.96. The two items of the scale loaded on a single factor in an explanatory factor analysis explaining 61.14 % of the variance.

Political efficiency: A single question was used that worded “To what extent you and your friends can influence government policy?” Response categories ranged from 0 = not at all to 3 = to a great extent. (M = 2.08, SD = 0.99).

Political cynicism: An additive five-point Likert-type scale composed of four items was asked to assess the attitudes towards the political system¹. The items were: (1) “Politicians care only about their personal future; they do not care about the future of the country”, (2) “I do not care who wins the coming elections.”, (3) “There are almost no differences in the positions of the major parties on the different issues”, (4) “It does not matter whom you vote for, it doesn’t really change anything”. Response categories varied between 1 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree. The scale range was from 1 to 20 with a mean score equals to 5.98, and a standard deviation equals to 3.15. The reliability of the scale equals to 5.3. The explanatory factor analysis showed that the four items loaded on a single factor explaining 42.6 % of the variance.

Decided-for party: Respondents were asked to mention the party for whom they intend to vote in the elections. 38.7% of the respondents intended to vote for the Freedom and Justice Party., 15.6 % intended to vote for El- Nour salafist party, 11.4 % intended to vote for the Egyptian bloc, 10.5 % intended to vote for El- Wasat party, 8.4 % intended to vote for New Wafd Party and 7.5% inteded to vote for El-Thawra Mostamera coalition (The coalition of continuing revolution).

Respondents were also asked “Is there a party that you find closer to your political attitudes and you would have voted for it if circumstances are different?” 22 % answered in affirmative.
News media exposure: Respondents were asked how many times a week they read newspapers, listen to the news on the radio, watch news or current affairs programs on television, and browse news sites on the Internet. The scale range was from 0 to 12 with a mean score equals to 6.68, and a standard deviation equals to 2.66. The explanatory factor analysis showed that the four items loaded on a single factor explaining 32.52% of the variance.

Social background variables: Respondents were asked about their level of education, age and governorate.

Results

General results:

- Media exposure:

  1- Exposure to TV news and talk shows: 7.5% of the respondents reported that they never watch TV news and talk shows, 14.7% reported that they watch them less than 3 days, 24% reported watching from 3 to 6 days while 53.8% said they watch TV news and talk shows every day. The mean score equals to 2.2 with a standard deviation that equals to 0.96.

  2- Reading newspapers: 22.6% of the respondents reported that they don’t read newspapers, 22.2% reported they read newspapers less than 3 days, 19.8% reported they read newspapers from 3 to 6 days while 35.4% read them every day. The mean score equals to 1.2 with a standard deviation that equals to 1.68.

  3- Internet use: 31.9% of the respondents reported that they never use the Internet, 14.9% reported they use it less than three days, 11.9% used it from 3 to 6 days while 41.3% reported they use it every day. The mean score equals to 1.6 with a standard deviation that equals to 1.3.

  4- Listening to radio: 43.3% reported they never listen to radio, 22.2% reported that they listen to radio less than 3 days, 12.1% reported they listen to it from 3 to 6 days while 22.4% listens to it every day. The mean score equals to 1.1 with a standard deviation that equals to 1.2.
Media exposure and demographic variables:

- To assess the relation between education and media exposure, one-way ANOVA was conducted. The test revealed that there are significant differences between respondents with different educational levels in media exposure as $F = 9.85$ ($p < 0.05$). The post-graduate respondents came first ($M = 8.2$), then university graduates ($M = 7.2$) after that respondents with medium education ($M = 6.1$) then those with less than medium education ($M = 5.8$) and at last came the illiterates ($M = 4$).

- Independent samples T-test revealed that there were no significant differences between males and females in media exposure level as $t = -0.06$ ($p > 0.05$).

- There were significant differences between residents of Giza ($M = 6.9$) and residents of Qalubia ($M = 6.4$) in media exposure level as $t = 2.09$ ($p < 0.05$).

- There were no significant differences between party affiliated ($M = 7.05$) and non-affiliated respondents ($M = 6.65$) as $t = 0.92$ ($p > 0.05$).

- There was a negative significant correlation between age and media exposure as $r = -0.21$ ($p < 0.001$).

Presumed media influence on self

- 25.3% reported that media coverage for election news had no effect on themselves, 12.1% reported that this coverage slightly affected them, 31.4% reported being affected by this coverage while 31.2% were very affected. The mean score equals to 1.69 with a standard deviation that equals to 1.16.

- There is no correlation between education and presumed media influence on self as chi-square = 18.496 ($p > 0.05$).

- There is a significant correlation between sex and presumed media influence on self as chi-square = 9.12 ($p < 0.05$), contingency coefficient = 0.14 ($p < 0.05$).

- There is a significant correlation between governorate and presumed media influence on self as chi-square = 8.26 ($p < 0.05$), contingency coefficient = 0.13 ($p < 0.05$).

- There’s no correlation between age and presumed media influence on self as chi-square = 9.85 ($p > 0.05$).

- There’s no correlation between party affiliation and presumed media influence on self as chi-square = 1.38 ($p > 0.05$).
Presumed media influence on others

- 8.2% reported that media coverage for election news had no effect on themselves, 13.8% reported that this coverage slightly affected them, 28.1% reported being affected by this coverage while 49.9% were very affected. The mean score equals to 2.2 with a standard deviation that equals to 0.96.

- There is a significant correlation between education and presumed media influence on others as chi-square = 42.2 (p < 0.05), contingency coefficient = 0.29 (p < 0.05).

- There is no significant correlation between sex and presumed media influence on others as chi-square = 0.38 (p > 0.05).

- There is no significant correlation between governorate and presumed media influence on others as chi-square = 0.3 (p < 0.05).

- There is a significant correlation between age and presumed media influence on others as chi-square = 25.16 (p < 0.05), contingency coefficient = 0.23 (p < 0.05).

- There is no significant correlation between party affiliation and presumed media influence on others as chi-square = 5.48 (p > 0.05).

Table (1)

Reasons for voting for a specific party:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>reasons</th>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>effective</th>
<th>Slightly effective</th>
<th>Not effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- The party’s program</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Party agrees with my political inclinations</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Personality of the party’s leader</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Choosing the party with more chances of winning</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- Choosing the party with less chances of winning</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results show that the party’s program is considered very effective for 47.7% then came the agreement between the party’s political inclinations and those of the respondents as very effective for 40.9% of the sample. The personality of the party’s leader was very effective for 26.2% while choosing the party with more chances of winning was very effective for 12.3% and at last came choosing the party with less chances of winning as very effective for 10.8%. This shows that
motives for sincere voting (the first three ones) are more important for the respondents than the motives for strategic voting (the last two ones).

**Political interest:**

- According to the test of one-way ANOVA, there are significant differences between respondents with different educational levels in their political interest level as $F = 5.86$ ($p < 0.05$). Respondents with post–graduate education came first in their political interest ($M = 5$) then university graduates ($M = 4.7$), medium education ($M = 4.3$), less than medium education ($M = 4.14$), and respondents who can only read and write ($M = 4$) and at last came the illiterates ($M = 3.2$).

- T-test revealed that there were significant differences between males ($M = 4.62$) and females ($M = 4.35$) in political interest as $t = 2.13$ ($p < 0.05$).

- T-test revealed that there were no significant differences between Giza and Qalubia residents as $t = 1.87$ ($p > 0.05$).

- T-test revealed that there are significant differences between party affiliated ($M = 5.15$) and non-affiliated ($M = 4.4$) respondents in political interest as $t = 3.2$ ($p < 0.05$).

- There’s no correlation between age and political interest as $r = -0.01$ ($p > 0.05$).

**Political participation:**

- One-way ANOVA revealed that there are significant differences between respondents with different levels of education and political participation as $F = 3.7$ ($p < 0.05$). Post-graduate respondents had highest levels of political participation ($M = 1.24$) while the illiterates had the least level ($M = 0.17$).

- T-test revealed significant differences between males ($M = 0.96$) and females ($M = 0.49$) in the level of political participation as $t = 5.25$ ($p < 0.05$).

- There were also significant differences between residents of Giza ($M = 0.90$) and residents of Qalubia ($M = 0.63$) as $t = 3.08$ ($p < 0.05$).

- There were significant differences between party affiliated ($M = 2.3$) and non-affiliated ($M = 0.62$) in the level of political participation as $t = 12$ ($p < 0.05$).
- There was a negative correlation between age and political participation as $r = -0.11$ ($p < 0.05$).

**Political cynicism:**

- To assess the relation between education and political cynicism, one-way ANOVA was conducted. The test revealed that there’s no correlation as $F = 1.537$ ($p > 0.05$).

- Independent samples T-test revealed that there are no significant differences between males and females in the level of political cynicism as $t = 0.33$ ($p > 0.05$), and also there are no significant differences between the two governorates in political cynicism as $t = 0.78$ ($p > 0.05$). Independent sample T-test revealed also that there are no significant differences between respondents affiliated with political parties and those who are not as $t = -0.68$ ($p > 0.05$). However, Pearson correlation revealed that there’s a positive correlation between age and political cynicism as $r = 0.12$ ($p < 0.05$).

**Hypotheses tests:**

To test the first hypothesis, logistic regression was conducted as the dependent variable (strategic voting) is a binary nominal variable. The variables were entered to the model on four steps; the social background variables were entered in the first step then the political variables in the second step, the media exposure variables were entered in the third step and the presumed media influence (on self / on others) were entered in the fourth and last step.

**Impact of social background variables on strategic voting**

The following predictors were entered to the model in the first step (gender, government, education and age). The overall model was not significant as the value of chi-square of the model was $7.19$ ($p > 0.05$), Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.03$. The only significant variable among the social background variables is university education as Wald chi-square = 4.41 ($p < 0.05$). The estimated coefficient ($B$) = -0.75. The odds ratio estimates ($Exp(B)$) = 0.47. This means that being a university graduate, controlling for the other variables, decreases the odds of strategic voting by 0.47.
Impact of political variables on strategic voting

To assess the impact of political variables on strategic voting, the following predictors were added to the model: political cynicism, political interest, political participation, political efficiency, party affiliation and party loyalty.

The overall model was still non-significant as the value of chi-square of the model was 17.06 (p > 0.05), Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.08$. However, political cynicism was a significant variable as Wald chi-square = 5.09 (0.05). The estimated coefficient (B) is 0.108. The odds ratio estimates (Exp (B)) = 1.1. This means that any one point increase in political cynicism increases the odds of strategic voting by 1.1

Impact of media exposure variables on strategic voting

To assess the impact of media exposure variables on strategic voting, the following predictors were added to the model: reading newspapers, listening to radio news, watching TV news and talk shows, and using the Internet.

The entry of these variables converted the model into a significant one as the value of chi-square of the model was 25.33 (p < 0.05), Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.113$, which means that this model explains 11.3% of the phenomenon. The significant variable among this group is reading newspapers as Wald chi-square = 4.6 (p < 0.05). The estimated coefficient (B) is -0.33. The odds ratio estimates (Exp (B)) = 0.72. This means that any one point increase in reading newspapers decreases the odds of strategic voting by 0.72.

Impact of presumed media influence (on self / on others) on strategic voting

To assess the impact of presumed media influence on strategic voting, the following predictors were added to the model: presumed media influence on self and presumed media influence on others. The entry of these two variables increased the significance of the model. The value of chi-square of the whole model = 30.64 (p < 0.05), Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.136$, which means that this model explains 13.6% of the phenomenon. The significant variable in this last group is presumed media influence on others as Wald chi-square = 5.05 (p < 0.05). The estimated coefficient (B) = -0.38. The odds ratio estimates (Exp (B)) = 0.68. This means that any one point increase in presumed media influence on others decreases the odds of strategic voting by 0.68.
The second hypothesis:

To test the second hypothesis, regression analysis was conducted. The variables were entered to the model on four steps as follows: the social background variables were entered in the first step then the political variables were entered in the second step, the media exposure variables were entered in the third step and the presumed media influence (on self / on others) were entered in the fourth and last step.

Impact of social background variables on sincere voting:

To assess the impact of social background variables, the following predictors were entered to the model in the first step: gender, governorate, education and age. The overall model was significant as $F = 8.6$ ($P < 0.001$). The social background variables explains 7.7% of the phenomenon of sincere voting as adjusted $R^2 = 0.077$.

The standardized coefficient (Beta) showed that the governorate variable (Giza) is significant as Beta = 0.12, $t = 2.7$, $p < 0.05$ (0.007), which means that being from Giza governorate increases sincere voting by 0.12. The other significant variable among this group is university education as the standardized coefficient (Beta) = 0.21, $t = 4.08$, $p < 0.001$, which means that being a university graduate increases sincere voting by 0.21.

Impact of political variables on sincere voting:

To assess the impact of political variables on sincere voting, the following predictors were added to the model: political cynicism, political interest, political participation, political efficiency, party affiliation and party loyalty.

The results of the regression analysis revealed that the political variables increased the efficiency of the model in explaining the phenomenon of sincere voting as adjusted $R^2 = 0.132$; the model is able to explain 13.2% of the phenomenon, $F = 7.3$, $p < 0.001$, and incremental $F = 5.74$, $p < 0.001$.

All the political variables were significant in the model except political loyalty. Controlling for the other variables, a one point increase in political cynicism decreased the level of sincere voting by 0.1 as the standardized estimate (Beta) = -0.1, $t = -2.25$, $p < 0.05$. 

[25]
Regarding the effect of political interest, the regression analysis revealed that there is a positive relationship between political interest and sincere voting, as Beta = 0.13, t = 2.67, p < 0.05. This means that a one point increase in the level of political interest increases sincere voting by 0.13.

Controlling for the other variables, a one point increase in political participation decreased the level of sincere voting by 0.11 as the standardized estimates (Beta) = -0.11, t = -2.07, p < 0.05.

The regression analysis shows also the significance of party affiliation as the standardized estimate (Beta) = 0.24, t = 2.35, p < 0.05. This means that, controlling for the other variables being affiliated to a political party increases the level of sincere voting by 0.24.

**Impact of media exposure variables on sincere voting:**

To assess the impact of media exposure variables on sincere voting, the following predictors were added to the model: reading newspapers, listening to radio news, watching TV news and Talk shows.

The results of the regression analysis revealed that the media exposure variables increased the efficiency of the model in explaining the phenomenon of sincere voting as adjusted $R^2 = 0.149$; the model is able to explain 14.9% of the phenomenon, $F = 6.32$, $p < 0.001$, and the incremental $F = 3.2$, $p < 0.05$ ($p = 0.012$).

The only significant variable among the media exposure variables is reading newspapers. Controlling for the other variables, a one point increase in reading newspapers increases the level of sincere voting by 0.15 as the standardized estimate (Beta) = 0.15, $t = 3.09$, $p < 0.05$.

**Impact of presumed media influence (on self / on others) on sincere voting:**

To assess the impact of presumed media influence on sincere voting, the following predictors were added to the model: presumed media influence on self and presumed media influence on others.

Regression analyses revealed that the entry of those two variables increased the percentage of explaining the phenomenon by the model to 15.4% as adjusted $R^2 = 0.154$, but this increase is not significant as the incremental $F = 2.13$, $p > 0.05$ (0.12). However, the whole model is significant as $F = 5.85$, $p < 0.001$. 

[26]
The significant variable in this last group is the presumed media influence on others. Controlling for the other variables, a one point increase in presumed media influence on others increases the level of sincere voting by 0.1 as the standardized estimate (Beta) = 0.1, t = 2.02, p < 0.05.

**Conclusion and Discussion**

Most studies on the third-person effect theory focused on the presumed impact of negative media messages. Only few studies focused on positive media messages and even fewer studies investigated the presumed impact of ambiguous media messages like news. This study aimed at investigating the presumed media influence of media coverage of the first Egyptian parliamentary elections after the revolution of January 25th on strategic voting.

Although Duverger (1954, 1963) did not expect his theory of strategic voting to work in new democracies and this expectation was affirmed by Clark and Golder (2006) in their study on elections in countries that transitioned to democracy after 1989, and although the electoral system in Egypt is a two-round runoff system, where Duverger (1963) and Cox (1997) expected strategic voting to be relatively rare, results revealed that 10.1% voted strategically which is considered a close percentage to that found in democratic countries. This result came in line with the Gibbard-Satterthwaite theorem that indicated that strategic voting might occur in all electoral systems and was proved in different studies (Blais et al., 2010; Cox, 1997). This result might be due to the media-rich environment and the big increase in political interest among Egyptians after the revolution.

The first hypothesis test revealed that the high level of education decreased the tendency to vote strategically. This result contradicted the findings of previous studies that people with higher levels of education were more likely to vote strategically (Shaw, Mckenzie & Underwood, 2005; Alvarez & Nagler, 2000). The results showed also that political cynicism increased the odds of strategic voting while reading newspapers decreased the odds of strategic voting.
Over and above the effect of the control variables on strategic voting, presumed media influence on others decreased the odds of strategic voting. This meant that the more individuals perceived that news media had an influence on others, the less likely that they intended to vote strategically. This result came in agreement with the study of Lanoue and Shaun (1992). This implied that when people realized that media coverage said that Islamic parties had more chances to win, and the more that people perceived this coverage would affect the voting of others to support those parties, they intended to counterbalance this effect by not voting for those viable parties, which was considered another kind of voting strategically not measured directly by this study. This kind of challenging media effect was more apparent among university graduates. This attitude was apparent also among newspaper readers as reading newspapers correlated with higher levels of education (Elvestad and Blekesaune, 2008).

On the other hand, the second hypothesis test revealed that respondents with higher levels of education, political interest, political participation and party affiliation were more willing to vote sincerely without being affected by the media coverage. Also reading newspapers and presumed media influence on others increased the level of sincere voting.

**Limitations of the study:**

- As the electoral system in Egypt follows the two-vote system as two thirds are elected according to the ticket election system and one third is elected according to the individual election system, the study should have measured the difference between strategic voting in both systems.

- The study did not investigate all motivations of strategic voting. It emphasized the motive of voting for the most viable parties as shown by media coverage and election results in previous election stages, but did not study the motive of counterbalancing or resisting the presumed media influence.

- The study did not drop from consideration respondents for whom strategic voting is not an option and whose first choice was more likely to win than their second choice.

- The study focused on voting intentions and did not measure the actual voting behavior. The study also did not compare between the voting intentions or behavior before the first round and before the second round of the same phase of election.
### Table (2)
Logistic Regression Predicting Strategic Voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wald's $X^2$</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Wald's $X^2$</td>
<td>OR</td>
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<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.643</td>
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<td>0.474</td>
<td>4.648*</td>
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<td><strong>Political Variables</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Presumed Media Influence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>On Self</td>
<td>8.63**</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>7.68**</td>
<td>0.096</td>
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<td>On Others</td>
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<td>Constant</td>
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</table>

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.001
Table (3)
Hierarchical Regression Results Predicting Sincere Voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
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<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.178***</td>
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<td>Political Variables</td>
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<td>0.080</td>
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<td>0.092</td>
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* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.001$, *** $p < 0.0001$, ^$p = 0.05$
Notes

1. The cynicism scale was adopted from Pinkleton & Austin.

References


[35]


[37]