

At What Cost? Power, Payments, and Public Support of International Organizations

Ryan Brutger & Richard Clark*

January 14, 2021

Abstract

As the U.S. disengages from international organizations (IOs), doubts exist about the future of the liberal international order. Yet, scholars have rarely examined what drives support of IOs from the world's largest donor. We contend that citizens weigh elite cues about the financial burden associated with U.S. leadership of these organizations against the influence that funding affords the U.S. over policymaking. Moreover, we argue that political ideology is a powerful moderator – conservatives should respond more positively to rhetoric about the influence the U.S. possesses over IOs and more negatively to cues about the financial costs of such leadership. A survey experiment administered to a sample of Americans offers support for the core theory, but also counterintuitively reveals that conservatives respond less negatively to the costs of IO membership, while liberals dislike U.S. dominance of IOs, as it erodes perceived fairness.

Keywords: international organizations, power, public opinion, global governance

*Ryan Brutger is Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley (Email: brutger@berkeley.edu). Richard Clark is Ph.D. Candidate, Columbia University (Email: rtc2124@columbia.edu) and incoming Assistant Professor of Government, Cornell University. We thank Don Casler, Lindsay Dolan, Noel Johnston, Julia Morse, Tyler Pratt, Felicity Vabulas, and Noah Zucker for helpful comments on previous drafts. We also thank participants at the 2020 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association for constructive feedback. All remaining errors are our own.

The rise of China, coupled with surging anti-multilateralism in the Western world, has led some to question the staying power of the liberal order.¹ Indeed, multilateralism is increasingly contested,² and polling from the Chicago Council shows that Americans' feelings toward IOs have been deteriorating for some time.³ Between 2002 and 2008, net favorability ratings for the United Nations (UN) declined by 26 percentage points.⁴ Net favorability ratings for the World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Bank likewise declined by 15 and 7 percentage points respectively. Additional polling suggests that this trend has continued in recent years, with a February 2020 Gallup poll finding that 54 percent of Americans believe the United Nations is doing a poor job compared to 43 percent who say it is doing a good job. Similarly, Mutz (2020) finds that only around 26 and 29 percent of respondents trust the World Bank and WTO respectively.

Moreover, an important body of research shows that politicians have strong reasons to care about public opinion of international bodies like the UN and use IOs strategically to achieve their policy objectives. For instance, Voeten (2005) finds that politicians may seek UN Security Council force authorizations to increase the perceived legitimacy of U.S. military activities.⁵ Furthermore, U.S. President Donald Trump has eschewed bodies like the WTO and World Health Organization (WHO),⁶ reviving earlier efforts by conservatives to reduce American funding to international organizations. For instance, Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole threatened UN funding in 1995 unless

¹See e.g. Ikenberry (2011); Voeten (2020). Though some argue that the system can accommodate rising states (Brooks and Wohlforth, 2008).

²Morse and Keohane (2014). Also see Tallberg and Zürn (2019) on the legitimacy crisis faced by many IOs, Pratt (2020) on the creation of competitor IOs, and von Borzyskowski and Vabulas (2019) on IO exit.

³See Copelovitch and Pevehouse (2019); Voeten (2020); Kaya, Handlin and Gunaydin (2020).

⁴Data comes from the Chicago Council's *Worldviews 2002* Report and *Global Views* poll for the other years. Respondents were asked to rate their feelings toward IOs, with 100 meaning very warm and 0 meaning very cold. The net favorability is generated by subtracting the share of responses less than 50 from the share of responses over 50.

⁵Also see Chapman (2009); Grieco, Gelpi and Reifler (2011).

⁶See <https://wapo.st/2SZBeCo> for an overview.

the UN reformed to benefit the U.S. by scaling back controversial peacekeeping operations.⁷

Given that international organizations (IOs) are thought to be an important pillar of the U.S.-led liberal order,⁸ these trends have generated uncertainty about the future of American leadership.⁹ Moreover, while public opinion of IOs may often be latent, concerns about the costs of IO membership and lack of influence can be activated to generate widespread public opposition. For example, in the negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), some countries were especially concerned about their lack of influence, with street protests erupting in Malaysia and the Vice President of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) emphasizing his party was against it “because we fear that, if we sign it, it is as if we are signing off our independence.”¹⁰ These latent concerns can be triggered by cues, as demonstrated by a large literature in American politics showing how elite cues can mobilize domestic publics around certain issues and shape broader political attitudes.¹¹

Despite its importance, scholars have rarely examined how citizens in the U.S., as the biggest donor to liberal IOs, evaluate their governments’ support of such organizations. Existing work focuses more on the question of whether and how IOs can confer legitimacy on activities and agreements, and it is heavily situated in the security realm.¹² We build from this literature with a focus on public support for funding of IOs, though we also examine how perceived legitimacy, fairness, and trust of IOs can function as mediators. We focus on this quantity of interest for three reasons.

⁷See <https://wapo.st/3jrktDh>.

⁸See Johnston (2008); Ikenberry (2011).

⁹See Putnam (1988), who shows that politicians account for domestic preferences when negotiating internationally.

¹⁰<http://bit.ly/2LogeEF>.

¹¹Zaller (1992); Lenz (2012).

¹²See e.g. Chapman (2007); Fang (2008); Chapman (2009); Greenhill (2020). Though see Crow and Ron (2020) on public opinion of human rights organizations in recipient countries, and Dellmuth, Scholte and Tallberg (2019) on perceptions of IO legitimacy.

First, while public concern for legitimacy, fairness, and trust of IOs matters – as we show in later analysis – we are particularly concerned with whether there is support for concrete policy actions like cutting or maintaining funding for IOs, which can determine whether an IO remains vibrant,¹³ or whether a country eventually exits the IO.¹⁴ Moreover, American political rhetoric on IOs tends to focus explicitly on the issue of funding. For instance, in January 1995, Bob Livingston (R-LA) said the following: “The rest of these countries are going to have to pony up. They’ve got to pay their share.”¹⁵ Similarly, in December 2018, President Trump criticized Germany for paying less into the NATO budget than the U.S. – “All we ask is that you pay your fair share of NATO.”¹⁶ Second, while public support is often latent, it can be used strategically to undermine the funding of IOs or the implementation of IO efforts.¹⁷ Last, while our primary focus is on the public, recent scholarship finds that in 162 paired elite-public experiments, elite and public responses were in the same direction in 98.1 percent of cases.¹⁸ This suggests that elites and the public are likely to respond similarly to concerns about the costs and influence of IO membership, which is consistent with our analysis of our survey results and elite rhetoric on the subject.

Therefore, in this paper, we address the following questions: What drives American public support of international organizations? More specifically, how do U.S. citizens assess their government’s funding of IOs? We suggest that the domestic public evaluates IO funding through two powerful, but countervailing lenses that are often utilized by opinion leaders.

First, Americans have reason to support IOs over which their country retains substantial formal and informal influence. This is because U.S.-dominated liberal IOs tend to fight for norms and objectives that Americans value, including democracy and liberalization. It should then be no

¹³See Gray (2018).

¹⁴See von Borzyskowski and Vabulas (2019).

¹⁵<https://wapo.st/3jrktDH>.

¹⁶<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1071387078901030913>.

¹⁷For example, the NRA and its members led an effort to oppose a UN arms control treaty (<http://wapo.st/2LmAbLU>).

¹⁸Kertzer (2020).

surprise that U.S. allies and friends receive more World Bank loans¹⁹ with fewer and less stringent policy conditions attached²⁰ and faster disbursement.²¹ More generally, these organizations have been used to diffuse American liberal norms and ideas,²² and American politicians commonly utilize language emphasizing these advantages. High levels of influence also alleviate concerns that IOs undermine U.S. sovereignty, a worry regularly voiced by Democrats and Republicans alike.²³

For these reasons, we argue that Americans ought to support greater funding of IOs when informed that their government holds influence in these organizations. Moreover, we argue that those individuals whose core values prioritize relative dominance of their in-group over others and those who have more negative views of international cooperation *ex ante* are more likely to approve of IOs when they discover that the organizations pursue their country's goals. We expect this to manifest in conservatives reacting more favorably to their country's influence in IOs, whereas liberals are more likely to view such influence as inconsistent with egalitarian values and therefore relatively unfair.²⁴

Second, though influence allows the U.S. to advance its interests, it also carries substantial costs. This is because the most powerful countries in an IO tend to also be the primary institutional donors. Again looking at the World Bank, the U.S. provides the most funds of any member. Similarly, the U.S. is the largest contributor to the UN; it provided about \$10 billion in 2018.²⁵ Moreover, political leaders like Trump have lamented inequality between American contributions

¹⁹Andersen, Hansen and Markussen (2006).

²⁰Clark and Dolan (2020).

²¹Kilby (2009); Kersting and Kilby (2016).

²²See Johnston (2008); Ikenberry (2011).

²³Jones (2018).

²⁴For related work on how ideology and elite rhetoric shape public attitudes toward the international order, see Lee and Prather (2020).

²⁵<http://on.cfr.org/3odpzs>.

to international causes and the contributions of others.²⁶ Such complaints reflect the concerns of the public and are consistent with Drezner's findings that Americans are more supportive of IOs when they facilitate burden-sharing.²⁷ We argue these attitudes will be strongest among conservatives, since providing large sums of public funding to IOs contradicts their preferences for small government and equal contributions across countries. We therefore contend that Americans – particularly conservatives – should oppose IOs when informed that participation is costly, as when the U.S. is a major institutional donor.

Focusing on two prominent IOs spanning security and economics, we field a survey experiment to a diverse sample of U.S. citizens to test this theory.²⁸ Respondents are presented with a vignette that describes U.S. participation in either the World Bank or UN. The experiment allows us to test respondents' baseline attitudes toward the IOs, with our primary focus on attitudes about funding. We then assess how responsive those attitudes are to different rhetorical strategies politicians use to discuss IOs. Specifically, we measure how attitudes change when respondents are exposed to information about their country's financial contributions to the IOs and the high levels of influence the U.S. maintains in them.

Our study finds that the cost treatment plays a significant role in shaping attitudes. The main effect of informing the public about the United States' contributions to IOs is to dramatically decrease respondents' desire to contribute. Surprisingly, the negative effect of the cost treatment manifests primarily amongst liberals as opposed to conservatives. Diagnostic tests show that this is not the result of a floor effect for conservatives. Thus, we further explore this counterintuitive finding in the results section. We also find that the influence treatment plays an important and positive role in shaping public attitudes, but only for conservatives – this accords with our theoretical expectations, as conservatives support IOs when they achieve national goals. Liberals, in contrast,

²⁶See <https://cnn.it/3cuIKx4>. Also see <https://reut.rs/2T2tvnk> on Brazilian President Bolsonaro, who has made similar statements.

²⁷Drezner (2008).

²⁸Our sample is representative based on education, income, gender, and age.

respond negatively to the influence condition. Mediation analysis suggests that this is because liberals perceive U.S. influence to infringe on the fairness of IOs.

Power, Payments, and Public Opinion of IOs

Powerful member states tend to have substantial control over policymaking in IOs, which is repeatedly emphasized in political speeches. For instance, in 1998, President Clinton said the following on UN funding: “If the United States expects to continue to exercise a leadership role in a way that benefits our own people in the 21st century, we have got to pay our UN dues and fulfill our responsibilities.”²⁹ U.S. influence in IOs is so pervasive, in fact, that U.S. military documents describe the Bretton Woods institutions as “unconventional weapons” that the U.S. utilizes to coerce policy changes like democratization and economic liberalization in target states.³⁰ Given that the U.S. is often able to advance its interests through IOs, domestic publics should be more likely to approve of their country’s participation in these organizations when informed about such influence. This logic is consistent with a growing literature that emphasizes public concern for enhancing the position of their national in-group through foreign policy,³¹ and the public’s focus on getting a better deal than other countries.³²

Although we expect the public to generally react positively when informed that their country has greater influence in IOs, we further propose that some subsets of the population are more susceptible to this logic than others. Specifically, we argue that those individuals whose core values prioritize relative dominance of their in-group and those who have more negative views of international cooperation *ex ante* are more likely to approve of IOs when they discover that IOs pursue their country’s goals. Our theory of heterogeneous reactions to IO influence stems from a growing literature on the microfoundations of foreign policy attitudes. While it is generally under-

²⁹<https://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/03/18/cq/foreign.policy.html>

³⁰<https://bit.ly/3aMvna5>

³¹Mutz and Kim (2017).

³²Brutger and Rathbun (2020).

stood that individuals' core values shape their domestic political attitudes, Rathbun (2007) finds that "the underlying structures of domestic and foreign policy attitudes are virtually identical." In other words, the same values that shape individuals' social interactions and domestic political preferences also shape attitudes toward foreign policy. For example, attitudes toward hierarchy and dominance, specifically the "belief that the United States is and should be superior to others in an international hierarchy," drives what is often labeled "militant internationalism."³³ This preference for maintaining one's position of dominance stems from the dimension of individuals' core values known as self-enhancement, which emphasizes enhancing one's own interests and relative success.³⁴

In the political context, social dominance is strongly correlated with conservatism and is one of the strongest predictors of conservative beliefs.³⁵ The connection between self-enhancement values, ideology, and foreign policy is emphasized by Brutger (2020), who shows that the ideological distribution of such values shapes the public's reactions to international negotiations, with conservatives strongly preferring when their country exerts greater influence in the negotiations. Our expectation is therefore that conservatives will react much more favorably to their country's influence, which secures the national interest and reinforces the relative dominance of their country over others. By contrast, liberals are more likely to be high in self-transcendence values that prioritize the welfare of the global community and egalitarianism.³⁶ This suggests that liberals should not respond as favorably to their country's influence over IOs as conservatives. Indeed, given that liberal ideology embraces equality,³⁷ we expect that liberals will believe it is unfair when one country exerts a great deal of influence in an IO. For these reasons, we expect to see liberals and conservatives diverge in their reactions to information about their country's influence in IOs, with

³³Rathbun (2007).

³⁴Schwartz (2012).

³⁵Hiel and Mervielde (2002).

³⁶Rathbun (2007).

³⁷Jost (2017).

conservatives supporting such influence and liberals viewing it as unfair.

Hypothesis 1a: *Respondents should be more supportive of funding IOs when exposed to information that their country is afforded special influence over IO policymaking.*

Hypothesis 1b: *Conservative respondents should react more favorably than liberals when exposed to information that their country is afforded special influence over IO policymaking.*

While powerful state influence over IOs is pervasive, it also comes at a substantial financial cost to such states. Indeed, powerful member states are often asked to contribute the most to IOs, as the U.S. does at prominent institutions including NATO, the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF.³⁸ Given that politicians often discuss these financial burdens of IO membership,³⁹ we expect concerns about the financial impact of U.S. involvement in IOs to be salient for many Americans.

However, we again suggest that cost concerns will be more pervasive for some than others. Specifically, we argue that conservatives should react more negatively to the costs of IO contributions. Because conservatives are more likely to prefer small government, large contributions to IOs are especially unappealing to them. Moreover, numerous examples suggest that conservatives believe the U.S. unjustly bears the financial burden of IOs. Indeed, these themes are consistently reflected in the rhetoric advanced by high-ranking Republicans. For example, in 1998 when Republican congressmen blocked a bill reauthorizing American funding for the UN, Rep. Helen Chenoweth (R-ID) said, “I just don’t think that we owe them money for always engaging our forces in peacekeeping...We pay an inordinate amount into the UN.”⁴⁰ Rep. J.C. Watts (R-OK) agreed: “They have a pretty substantial debt with us.”⁴¹ At both the elite and mass level, we thus

³⁸As these examples suggest, the U.S. is the largest contributor to organizations with various institutional design features. This logic then is not specific to any one voting scheme or governance framework.

³⁹See e.g. Trump on the WHO: <https://cnn.it/3cuIKx4>.

⁴⁰<https://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/03/18/cq/foreign.policy.html>.

⁴¹Ibid.

expect that conservatives are more concerned about the costs of IO contributions, and will react more negatively than liberals to information about the costs of IO membership.

Hypothesis 2a: *Respondents should be less supportive of funding IOs when exposed to information about the financial costs of their country's IO membership.*

Hypothesis 2b: *Conservative respondents should react more negatively than liberals to information about the financial costs of their country's IO membership.*

Our framework contributes to several important strands of literature. To start, we are among the first to propose a theory of public approval of IOs in the United States.⁴² Second, because IOs function as the backbone of the liberal world order, we also speak to existing debates over the sustainability of the U.S.-led order.⁴³ If publics are unwilling to support IOs even when their country receives substantial benefits from its membership and leadership, then it may be difficult for the U.S. to continue in its multilateral leadership role. Third, and relatedly, our findings have implications for work on the effects of state power on policymaking in IOs. A large literature shows that when countries hold substantial power in an IO, their preferences are felt in even diffuse policies.⁴⁴ We test whether this leads domestic publics to more strongly support funding IOs, or whether they are more concerned about the associated contribution costs. Last, by examining how ideology interacts with public opinion of IOs, we build on existing research probing the connections between conservatism, hierarchy, and foreign policy attitudes.⁴⁵

⁴²Though see Kaya, Handlin and Gunaydin (2020) on European support for the IMF and Edwards (2009) on developing country support for economic IOs.

⁴³See Brooks and Wohlforth (2008); Ikenberry (2011).

⁴⁴See e.g. Stone (2011); Clark and Dolan (2020); Clark (2020).

⁴⁵See Rathbun (2007); Brutger and Rathbun (2020).

Data and Research Design

To test our theory of public support for IOs, we use a survey experiment to examine how the public forms its opinion of IOs and how these processes and opinions vary across different portions of the population.⁴⁶ Our survey experiment is designed to isolate the causal effect of different types of information on attitudes toward IOs, namely the World Bank and UN, and to examine the heterogeneous effects of our treatments on subsets of the population where our theory predicts divergent responses.

Our study focuses on the World Bank and UN for several reasons. First they are prominent IOs to which the U.S. is the largest donor and over which the U.S. possesses substantial formal and informal influence. Second, U.S. funding of both organizations has been publicly threatened by Trump and other Republican leaders over the years.⁴⁷ Third, the World Bank and UN differ in ways that are compatible with our theoretical framework. In particular, they span security and economics, with the UN primarily authorizing the use of military force and conducting peacekeeping while the World Bank promotes economic development through concessional lending. Because security is often perceived to be higher stakes, and prominent UN resolutions receive extensive media coverage, public awareness of the UN is likely to be higher than for the World Bank. In fact, a Gallup poll from July 2005 indicated that only 58 percent of Americans had ever heard of the World Bank while 73 percent of respondents were aware of the UN. Therefore, while respondents' priors are likely fairly weak for both IOs, we expect them to be especially weak for the World Bank. This means that opinion should be malleable in both contexts, though perhaps more so for the World Bank.⁴⁸

Our study was fielded in July 2020 on a national sample of about 1,875 American adults

⁴⁶The experiment was approved by the Institutional Review Board at [UNIVERSITY REDACTED] under protocol [NUMBER REDACTED].

⁴⁷See e.g. <https://wapo.st/3jrktDH> and <https://reut.rs/3iR3T7b>.

⁴⁸See Guisinger and Saunders (2017) on elite cues and international issues.

using the survey firm Dynata.⁴⁹ The sample was recruited based on population targets drawn from census populations for gender, age, household income, and education, which yielded a diverse and broadly representative sample.⁵⁰ We also confirmed that the sample is balanced on observable characteristics across treatments.⁵¹ Each respondent was presented with a vignette about an IO, with the specific organization randomly assigned as either the UN or World Bank. Each respondent was then randomly assigned to either the control condition, or a treatment where they were presented with information about U.S. influence in the organization or the financial costs of membership. This experimental design allows us to test the relative effect of messaging about the influence and costs of IO membership on public attitudes toward IOs. Importantly, because we do not attribute the information to a politician or other opinion leader, our treatment is relatively weak, and our results should be conservative.⁵²

The full text of the experiment for each IO is presented in Appendix §2. Below, we present the full wording of the United Nations vignettes. Across all conditions, the respondent is first told what the goals of the IO are, as stated in core documents from the organization.⁵³ Respondents assigned to the control condition are only shown these goals.

The United Nations' stated goals are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights.

In the treatment conditions, respondents read the same goals from the control condition *and* are randomly assigned to either the *influence* or *costs* treatment, which are consistent with the types of costs and influence emphasized in political rhetoric. For each IO, we used actual levers

⁴⁹For examples of publications in leading political science journals using Dynata (SSI) studies, see e.g. Brutger and Kertzer (2018); Bush and Prather (2020).

⁵⁰For descriptive statistics and respondents per treatment, see Appendix Tables A3 and A4. For respondent screening procedures, see Appendix §2.1.

⁵¹See Appendix Table A1.

⁵²See Brutger et al. (2020), which shows that salient cue-givers can generate larger treatment effects.

⁵³We specifically make use of IO mandates from their founding documents and websites.

of influence and reported costs and contributions to the IO, so the experiment does not employ deception, but instead randomly varies the information shared with respondents. The wording in the vignettes mirrors that found in news coverage of U.S. involvement in the UN.⁵⁴

Influence Treatment

The United States plays a particularly important role at the United Nations. The U.S. has a permanent seat on the organization's Security Council, and is one of only five countries to have a veto in the Security Council. This allows the U.S. to exert a great deal of influence on the United Nations' most important decisions.

Costs Treatment

The United States is the largest financial contributor to the United Nations. In recent years, the U.S. provided around \$10 billion to the institution. Moreover, these contributions represented roughly one-fifth of the United Nations' total budget.

After reading this information about the IO, respondents were then asked to respond to a series of questions about the IO, the order of which was randomized across respondents. Most importantly for our analysis, respondents were asked – “Do you believe the United States’ funding for the [United Nations *or* World Bank] should increase, decrease or stay the same?” – with response options recorded on a five-point scale. Respondents were also asked to evaluate how much they trusted the IO to do what is right, the legitimacy of the IO, and the fairness of the IO’s decisions. These measures allow us to assess how attitudes toward the IO shift when exposed to messaging about the costs and influence of IO membership, compared to the baseline in the control. Last, the survey asked respondents a series of demographic questions and a battery of questions to measure political conservatism. We use these variables to test for the predicted heterogeneous effects of our theory across subsets of the population.

⁵⁴News coverage similarly juxtaposes discussions of U.S. influence with cost considerations – see e.g. <https://nyti.ms/3e7vK15> and <https://wapo.st/2Y3R9CC>.

Results

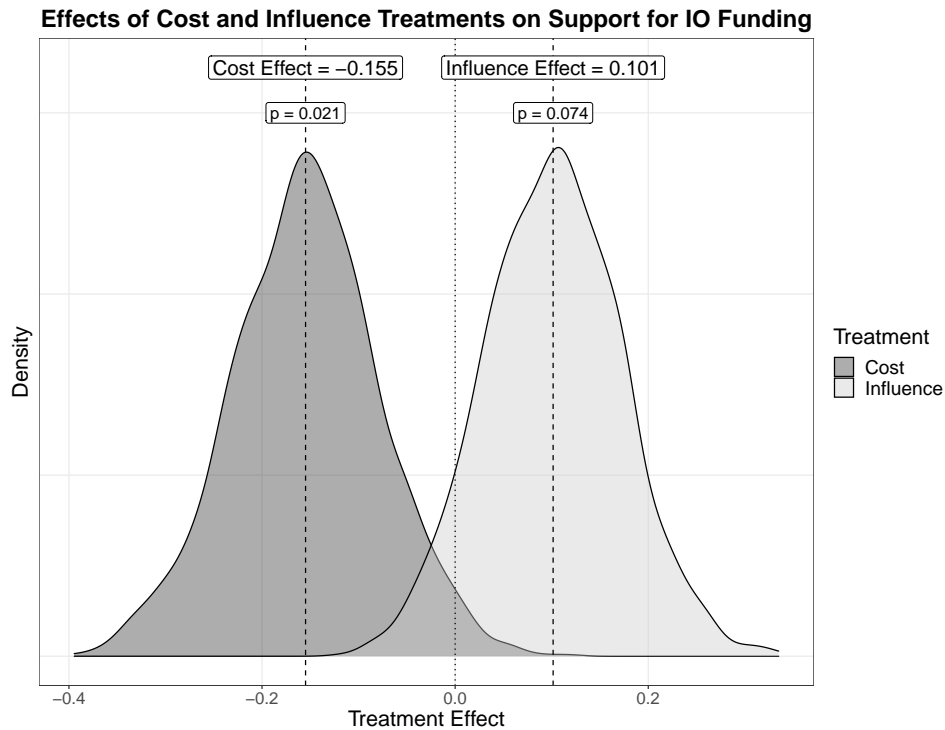


Figure 1: Figure 1 shows the bootstrapped distributions of average treatment effects from 1,500 draws. Support for IO funding is measured on a five-point scale, with higher values associated with increased funding.

We begin our analysis by testing the main effects of our cost and influence treatments on respondents' attitudes toward IO funding. We present the results of our main effects in Figure 1. As expected, the cost treatment results in a significant decline in the level of preferred funding for the IO (-0.155, $p = 0.021$), which corresponds to 7.5 percent more respondents believing that the United States should decrease funding to the IO. Our results highlight the responsiveness of the public to information about the costs of membership and that the critical language elites use about the costs of IOs can have a significant affect on public attitudes toward IOs.

Also in line with our theory, we find that the influence treatment is associated with a positive shift in the funding score (0.101, $p = 0.074$), though the effect is only marginally significant. Notably, the effect from the cost treatment is about 50 percent larger than the effect from the influence treatment, which suggests that the cost language has a stronger impact on respondents

overall. Nonetheless, the generally positive reaction that respondents exhibit toward the influence treatment suggests that it may behoove politicians that are in favor of international cooperation to employ such language.

We also treated a set of respondents with both the influence and cost conditions in order to test whether their effects are primarily additive or countervailing.⁵⁵ The results can be found in Appendix Table A5. The effect of the joint cost and influence treatment fails to achieve statistical significance in the aggregate and for each IO in isolation. Moreover, the coefficients themselves are close to zero. These results suggest that the influence and cost treatments may cancel each other out when presented in tandem.

While these results highlight the ability of messaging about the costs and influence of IO contributions to shape public opinion, they overlook theoretically and substantively important variation within the public's response to information about IOs. To test the more specific predictions of our hypotheses, we now incorporate political conservatism into our analysis. Hypothesis 1b proposed that conservatives should react more favorably to the influence treatment than liberals, while Hypothesis 2b proposed that conservatives would react more negatively to the cost treatment. We present the results of a series of models where we interact conservatism with each treatment in Table 1.⁵⁶ The conservatism variable captures respondents' self reported political ideology on a seven-point scale ranging from "extremely liberal" to "extremely conservative" with higher values corresponding to more conservative respondents. For ease of interpretation, we re-code the conservatism variable on a 0-1 scale for the regression analysis, and we present the different treatment effects for the UN and the World Bank broken down by liberals and conservatives in Figure 2.

The conservatism results demonstrate that conservatives have a lower baseline preference for funding IOs. However, when we look at the interaction between conservatism and influence, clear divergences emerge. Consistent with Hypothesis 1b, conservatives respond more positively to the influence treatment, especially in the World Bank condition. When we subset respondents

⁵⁵We randomized whether respondents who received this treatment received the influence or cost condition first.

⁵⁶These results also hold when we include socio-demographic covariates (Appendix Table A6).

Table 1: **Effect of Ideology and Cost and Influence Treatments on Support for IO Funding**

	Aggregate	United Nations	World Bank
Cost:Conservatism	0.746*** (0.244)	0.688** (0.333)	0.857** (0.363)
Influence:Conservatism	0.559** (0.255)	0.351 (0.359)	0.806** (0.368)
IO cost	-0.529*** (0.154)	-0.597*** (0.214)	-0.475** (0.222)
IO influence	-0.196 (0.155)	-0.050 (0.222)	-0.355 (0.218)
Conservatism	-1.246*** (0.179)	-1.168*** (0.239)	-1.375*** (0.274)
Observations	1,365	704	661

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1 Note: The aggregate model includes IO fixed effects.

into liberals and conservatives,⁵⁷ as shown in Figure 2, liberals have a slightly negative response to the influence treatment (panels b and d), whereas conservatives have a more positive response. In line with our theory, this suggests that liberals may value a more equal distribution of power within IOs. Importantly, the difference in treatment effects between the two groups for the World Bank is substantively and statistically meaningful (0.538, $p = 0.011$). Results are weaker, though generally consistent, for the UN (0.321, $p = 0.105$) – we attribute this result to the relatively weaker priors that respondents likely hold about the World Bank relative to the UN, since the UN receives much greater attention in the media. On the whole, these results are consistent with our contention that conservatives are more skeptical of funding IOs, but they are much more likely to support doing so if they know their country possesses substantial influence in the IO. Liberals, meanwhile, may prefer a more egalitarian distribution of power in IOs.

⁵⁷In the subset analysis, each respondent is coded as liberal if they selected “slightly liberal,” “liberal,” or “extremely liberal” with conservatives coded in the corresponding manner.

We next consider how conservatism affects respondents' reactions to the cost treatment, with the expectation from Hypothesis 2b that conservatives should be less supportive of funding IOs when exposed to the cost treatment. As Table 1 shows, we find that the interaction between the cost treatment and conservatism is positive and significant for the aggregate sample as well as each IO. This shows that conservatives respond less negatively to the cost treatment than their liberal counterparts. These differences are highlighted in Figure 2, which illustrates that conservatives have almost no reaction to the cost treatment for the UN (panel a) and respond somewhat positively to the cost treatment for the World Bank (panel c). In contrast, liberals respond much more negatively to the cost treatment, and the difference in treatment effects between liberals and conservatives is statistically significant for both IOs (though more so for the UN), as Figure 2 shows. We further unpack this counterintuitive result at the end of this section.

To better understand why liberals and conservatives react differently to the cost and influence treatments, we conduct two sets of analyses that employ our additional post-treatment measures. These measures consist of three potential mediators that the IOs literature and opinion leaders alike have emphasized – trust in the IO, perceived legitimacy of the IO, and perceived fairness of the actions of the IO.⁵⁸ Chaudoin, Livny and Gaines (2019) show that the ordering of mediator questions can affect mediation results – as such, we randomized the order of our post-treatment questions. We first test the direct effects of our treatments on these potential mediators, which are shown in Table 2.⁵⁹ We then analyze to what extent the treatment effects of cost and influence on support for funding are mediated through these mechanisms.

The effects of the cost and influence treatments on the fairness, legitimacy, and trust of the IO variables yield two key takeaways. The first is that the cost treatment does not have a significant effect on any of these measures, nor does it have much of an interaction effect with conservatism on the mediators. This may seem surprising at first, but it is consistent with respondents focusing

⁵⁸See e.g. Mutz (2020) on trust in IOs, Hurd (1999); Tallberg and Zürn (2019) on legitimacy, and Brutger and Rathbun (2020) on fairness in international economic policy.

⁵⁹Once again, we re-scale the seven-point conservatism variable to a 0-1 scale for ease of interpretation.

Figure 2: Support by Treatment and IO

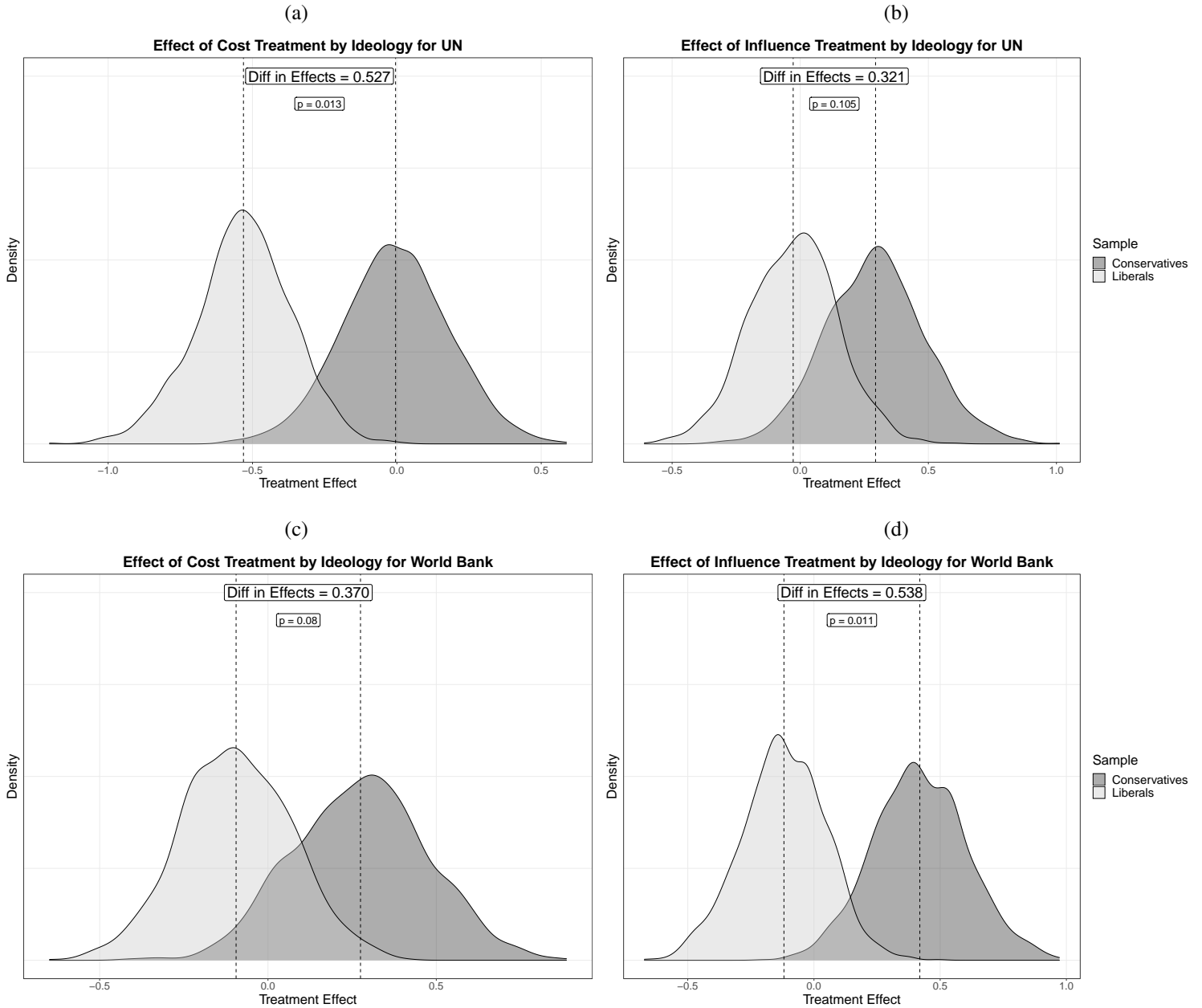


Figure 2 shows the bootstrapped distributions of average treatment effects from 1,500 draws for liberals and conservatives. Respondents are coded as liberal if they choose “slightly liberal,” “liberal,” or “extremely liberal” on our conservatism measure, and conservatives are coded in the corresponding manner. Because we use coarser measures of liberalism and conservatism, the results differ slightly from those in Table 1.

on the costs to the U.S. as opposed to how the IO functions. Given that the cost treatment is about U.S. contributions to the IO, as opposed to information about how the IO functions or the actions it takes, it makes sense that individuals' perceptions of the IO itself did not change significantly due to the cost treatment.

Table 2: Effect of Treatments and Ideology on Potential Mechanisms

	IO fairness	IO legitimacy	IO trust
Cost:Conservatism	0.406* (0.242)	0.234 (0.255)	0.389 (0.256)
Influence:Conservatism	0.781*** (0.252)	0.614** (0.266)	0.556** (0.267)
IO cost	-0.176 (0.152)	-0.021 (0.160)	-0.129 (0.161)
IO influence	-0.413*** (0.153)	-0.260 (0.161)	-0.182 (0.162)
Conservatism	-1.183*** (0.177)	-1.265*** (0.187)	-1.119*** (0.187)
Observations	1,369	1,368	1,367

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1 Note: The models includes IO fixed effects.

In contrast to the cost treatment, the influence treatment has a strong positive interaction effect with conservatism for each of the potential mechanisms, as is shown in Table 2. When considering the effect of the influence treatment on perceptions of fairness, legitimacy, and trust of the IO, those who are more conservative are significantly more likely to respond to the treatment with higher ratings for all three mechanisms. These results highlight the importance of maintaining influence in the IO in order for conservatives to believe the institution is fair, legitimate, and trustworthy.⁶⁰ These results demonstrate that the influence treatment has countervailing effects on

⁶⁰Notably, the average fairness, legitimacy, and trust values are much higher for liberals than conservatives. Specifi-

liberals and conservatives, which highlights the politically divisive consequences of emphasizing power and influence in IOs for the American public.

To assess how each of the mechanisms discussed above shapes Americans' funding preferences for IOs, we conduct mediation analysis.⁶¹ A more detailed discussion of our mediation analysis and its limitations is included in the Appendix §4. For our purposes we are interested in looking at which of the mechanisms plays a significant role in shaping funding preferences, and how perceptions of IO fairness, trust, and legitimacy may differentially influence liberal and conservative IO funding preferences. We plot the main quantity of interest – the average causal mediation effect (ACME) – for each treatment condition in Figure 3.

As is shown in panel (a), fairness plays a large role in mediating the effect of the influence treatment for liberals. Indeed, 65.7 percent of the total effect is mediated through fairness, which has an ACME of -0.099 ($p = 0.032$). In contrast, each of the mechanisms has a positive mediation effect for conservatives, with trust in the IO having the largest ACME of 0.189 ($p = 0.005$). These results provide further support for our theory that a country's influence in an IO plays a major role in shaping perceptions toward IOs, and that those perceptions in turn affect the public's willingness to contribute to IOs. Specifically, liberals believe it is less fair when their country wields greater influence in IOs, and thus the influence treatment does not positively affect them. In contrast, conservatives believe IOs to be more trustworthy and legitimate when their country has greater influence, which generates greater support for funding IOs amongst conservatives.

One possible interpretation of these findings is that liberal respondents are only averse to U.S. influence in IOs because President Trump was in office at the time that we conducted our study. Conservatives, in contrast, could be particularly enthusiastic about Trump influencing the UN and World Bank. However, we do not believe Trump to be driving our results. If liberals were concerned about Trump exerting influence over IOs, we would expect all three mediation variables

cally, liberals average 3.64, 3.45, and 3.91 out of five for fairness, trust, and legitimacy respectively, while conservatives average 3.10, 2.91, and 3.23.

⁶¹See Imai et al. (2011).

Figure 3: **Mediation Effects for Influence and Cost Treatments**

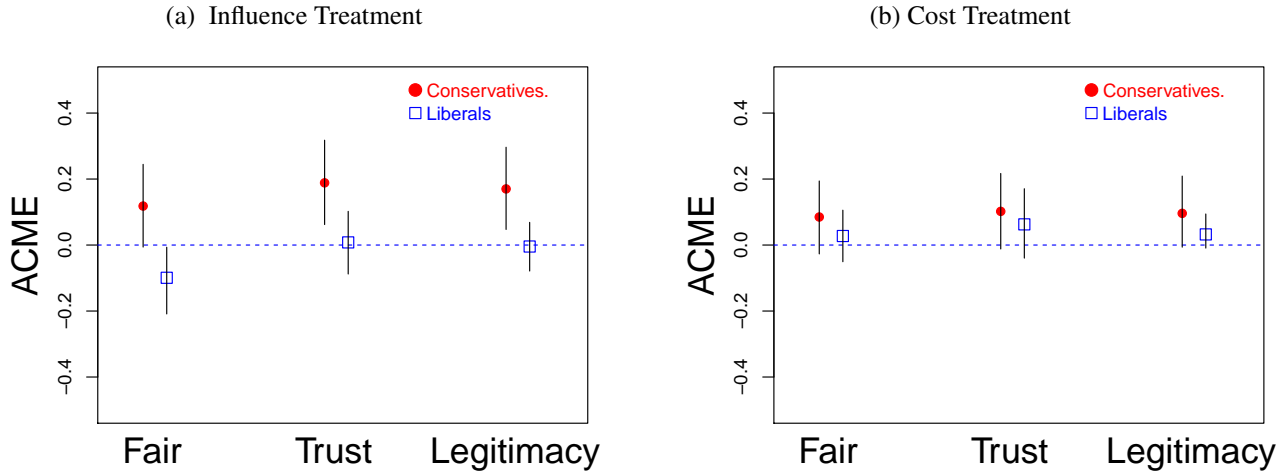


Figure 3 plots the Average Causal Mediation Effects (ACME) from a series of mediation models in which the effect of each treatment on support for funding the IO is broken down by political conservatism. Analysis was conducted using the `mediation` package by Tingley et al. (2014), and includes controls for income, education, gender, age, cooperative internationalism, national superiority, attitudes toward globalization, and party.

– fairness, trust, and legitimacy – to achieve similar results for the influence treatment. Instead, only fairness is negative and statistically significant in Figure 3. As such, we conclude that liberals prefer that the U.S. not possess disproportionate influence over IOs regardless of the identity of the leader because doing so would infringe on organizational fairness. This accords with our theoretical discussion of how those with more liberal ideology are more likely to embrace norms of equality.⁶² While the mediation results help us understand the divergent effects of the influence treatment on liberals and conservatives, they provide fewer insights regarding the divergent effects of the cost treatment. We further consider why the effects of the cost treatment are contrary to our second set of hypotheses in Appendix §4.1.

Conclusion

In this paper, we examine whether, how, and which citizens are responsive to cues about the financial costs versus the influence gained from funding IOs. We find that political conser-

⁶²Jost (2017).

vatism functions as a powerful lens through which respondents interpret information about IOs. Specifically, we show that conservatives respond more positively than liberals to both the cost and influence cues, as they prefer that the U.S. have greater leverage and influence over IOs. This is because they perceive U.S.-dominated IOs to be more legitimate, fair, and trustworthy. Liberals, in contrast, prefer that the U.S. not disproportionately control IOs, as doing so erodes their perceived fairness of the institutions.

Our findings carry important implications for multilateral discourse and policymaking. Indeed, we show conservatives become no less supportive of IOs after receiving information about the costs of U.S. funding of these organizations. If anything, conservatives sometimes respond positively to such rhetoric. While counterintuitive, recent trends in public opinion of trade seem to follow a similar pattern. President Trump has often lamented the trade deficit that exists between the U.S. and other nations. However, public approval of trade among conservatives has increased to record levels under Trump. In fact, as of October 2019, 87 percent of republicans polled by the Chicago Council indicated that they believed trade was good for the U.S. economy. This represents a 36 percentage point increase since Trump took office. Our findings suggest similar dynamics may be at work when it comes to public opinion of IOs.

Future research might probe whether similar mechanisms apply in contexts outside of the United States. A nascent literature has begun to examine public opinion of international bodies like the IMF and international courts, with a special focus on Europe.⁶³ Therefore, existing work has focused largely on Western donor states and IOs. Other potential powerful donor states of interest might then be Japan and China, which exercise influence over IOs like the Asian Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank respectively.

⁶³See Kaya, Handlin and Gunaydin (2020); Voeten (2020) respectively.

References

- Andersen, Thomas Barnebeck, Henrik Hansen and Thomas Markussen. 2006. “US politics and World Bank IDA-lending.” *The Journal of Development Studies* 42(5):772–794.
- Brooks, Stephen G. and William Curti Wohlforth. 2008. *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Brutger, Ryan. 2020. “The Power of Compromise: Proposal Power, Partisanship, and Public Support in International Bargaining.” *World Politics* . Forthcoming.
- Brutger, Ryan and Brian Rathbun. 2020. “Fair Share?: Equality and Equity in American Attitudes towards Trade.” *International Organization* . Forthcoming.
- Brutger, Ryan and Joshua D Kertzer. 2018. “A dispositional theory of reputation costs.” *International Organization* 72(3):693–724.
- Brutger, Ryan, Joshua D. Kertzer, Jonathan Renshon, Dustin Tingley and Chagai M. Weiss. 2020. “Abstraction and Detail in Experimental Design.”
URL: <https://bit.ly/3juYJ0A>
- Burleigh, Tyler, Ryan Kennedy and Scott Clifford. 2018. “How to screen out VPS and international respondents using Qualtrics: A protocol.” *Available at SSRN 3265459* .
- Bush, Sarah Sunn and Lauren Prather. 2020. “Foreign Meddling and Mass Attitudes Toward International Economic Engagement.” *International Organization* 74(3):584–609.
- Chapman, Terrence L. 2007. “International Security Institutions, Domestic Politics, and Institutional Legitimacy.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(1):134–166.
- Chapman, Terrence L. 2009. “Audience Beliefs and International Organization Legitimacy.” *International Organization* 63(3).
- Chaudoin, Stephen, Avital Livny and Brain Gaines. 2019. “Survey Design, Order Effects and Causal Mediation Analysis.”. Working Paper.
URL: http://www.stephenchaudoin.com/cma_cgl.pdf
- Clark, Richard. 2020. “Pool or Duel? Cooperation and Competition Among International Organizations.” *International Organization* . Forthcoming.

- Clark, Richard and Lindsay Dolan. 2020. "Pleasing the Principal: U.S. Influence in World Bank Policymaking." *American Journal of Political Science* . Forthcoming.
- Copelovitch, Mark and Jon C. Pevehouse. 2019. "International Organizations in a New Era of Populist Nationalism." *Review of International Organizations* 14(2):169–186.
- Crow, David and James Ron. 2020. "Do Global Publics View Human Rights Organizations as Handmaidens of the United States?" *Political Science Quarterly* 135(1):9–35.
- Dellmuth, Lisa Maria, Jan Aart Scholte and Jonas Tallberg. 2019. "Institutional sources of legitimacy for international organisations: Beyond procedure versus performance." *Review of International Studies* 45(4):627–646.
- Drezner, Daniel W. 2008. "The Realist Tradition in American Public Opinion." *Perspectives on Politics* 6(1):51–70.
- Edwards, Martin S. 2009. "Public Support for the International Economic Organizations: Evidence from Developing Countries." *Review of International Organizations* 4(2):185–209.
- Fang, Songying. 2008. "The Informational Role of International Institutions and Domestic Politics." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2):304–321.
- Gray, Julia. 2018. "Life, death, or zombie? The vitality of international organizations." *International Studies Quarterly* 62(1):1–13.
- Greenhill, Brian. 2020. "How Can International Organizations Shape Public Opinion? Analysis of a Pair of Survey-Based Experiments." *The Review of International Organizations* 15:165–188.
- Grieco, Joseph M., Christopher Gelpi and Jason Reifler. 2011. "Let's Get a Second Opinion: International Institutions and American Public Support for War." *International Studies Quarterly* 55(2):563–583.
- Guisinger, Alexandra and Elizabeth Saunders. 2017. "Mapping the Boundaries of Elite Cues: How Elites Shape Mass Opinion across International Issues." *International Studies Quarterly* 61(3):425–441.
- Hiel, Alain Van and Ivan Mervielde. 2002. "Explaining conservative beliefs and political preferences: A comparison of social dominance orientation and authoritarianism." *Journal of Applied*

- Social Psychology* 32(5):965–976.
- Hurd, Ian. 1999. “Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics.” *International Organization* 53(2):379–408.
- Ikenberry, John G. 2011. Crisis of the World Order. In *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press pp. 1–32.
- Imai, Kosuke, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley and Teppei Yamamoto. 2010. Causal Mediation Analysis Using R. In *Advances in Social Science Research Using R*, ed. H. D. Vinod. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Imai, Kosuke, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley and Teppei Yamamoto. 2011. “Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Studies.” *American Political Science Review* pp. 765–789.
- Johnston, Alastair Ian. 2008. *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000*. Princeton studies in international history and politics Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.
- Jones, Bruce. 2018. “American Sovereignty Is Safe From the UN.” *Foreign Affairs* .
- Jost, John T. 2017. “Ideological asymmetries and the essence of political psychology.” *Political Psychology* 38(2):167–208. doi: 10.1111/pops.12407.
- Kaya, Ayse, Sam Handlin and Hakan Gunaydin. 2020. “Populism and Voter Attitudes Toward International Organizations: Cross-Country and Experimental Evidence on the International Monetary Fund.”. Political Economy of International Organization Annual Meeting 2020.
URL: <https://bit.ly/3hqfdXy>
- Kersting, Erasmus K and Christopher Kilby. 2016. “With a little help from my friends: Global electioneering and World Bank lending.” *Journal of Development Economics* 121:153–165.
- Kertzer, Joshua D. 2020. “Re-Assessing Elite-Public Gaps in Political Behavior.” *American Journal of Political Science* .
- Kilby, Christopher. 2009. “The political economy of conditionality: An empirical analysis of World Bank loan disbursements.” *Journal of Development Economics* 89(1):51–61.

- Lee, Melissa and Lauren Prather. 2020. "Selling International Law Enforcement: Elite Justifications and Public Values." *Research and Politics* Forthcoming.
- Lenz, Gabriel S. 2012. *Follow the Leader? How Voters Respond to Politicians' Policies and Performance*. Chicago studies in American politics Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Morse, Julia C. and Robert Keohane. 2014. "Contested Multilateralism." *Review of International Organizations* 9(4):385–412.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2020. "Institute for the Study of Citizens and Politics Panel Study, 2016-2020." **URL:** <https://asc.upenn.edu/research/research-centers/institute-study-citizens-and-politics>
- Mutz, Diana C and Eunji Kim. 2017. "How Ingroup Favoritism Affects Trade Preferences.." *International Organization* 71(4):827–850.
- Pratt, Tyler. 2020. "Angling for Influence: Institutional Proliferation in Development Banking." *International Studies Quarterly* . Forthcoming.
- Putnam, Robert D. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization* 42(3):427–460.
- Rathbun, Brian C. 2007. "Hierarchy and Community at Home and Abroad: Evidence of a Common Structure of Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs in American Elites." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(3):379–407.
- Schwartz, Shalom H. 2012. "An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values." *Online readings in Psychology and Culture* 2(1):2307–0919. 10.9707/2307-0919.1116.
- Stone, Randall W. 2011. *Controlling Institutions: International Organizations and the Global Economy*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
- Tallberg, Jonas and Michael Zürn. 2019. "The Legitimacy and Legitimation of International Organizations: Introduction and Framework." *Review of International Organizations* pp. 581–606.
- Tingley, Dustin, Teppei Yamamoto, Kentaro Hirose, Luke Keele and Kosuke Imai. 2014. "Mediation: R Package for Causal Mediation Analysis." *Journal of Statistical Software* 59(5).
- Voeten, Erik. 2005. "The Political Origins of the UN Security Council's Ability to Legitimize the

- Use of Force.” *International Organization* 59(3):527–557.
- Voeten, Erik. 2020. “Populism and Backlashes against International Courts.” *Perspectives on Politics* 18(2):693–724.
- von Borzyskowski, Inken and Felicity Vabulas. 2019. “Hello, Goodbye: When Do States Withdraw from International Organizations?” *Review of International Organizations* 14(2):335–366.
- Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge [England] ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Supporting Information for “At What Cost? Power, Payments, and Public Approval of IOs”

January 14, 2021

*Ryan Brutger is Assistant Professor, University of California, Berkeley (Email: brutger@berkeley.edu). Richard Clark is Ph.D. Candidate, Columbia University (Email: rtc2124@columbia.edu) and incoming Assistant Professor of Government, Cornell University. We thank Don Casler, Lindsay Dolan, Noel Johnston, Julia Morse, Tyler Pratt, Felicity Vabulas, and Noah Zucker for helpful comments on previous drafts. We also thank participants at the 2020 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association for constructive feedback. All remaining errors are our own.

Contents

1	Descriptive Statistics	3
2	Survey Instrument	5
2.1	Respondent Screening	5
2.2	Vignettes	5
2.3	Dependent Variables	5
2.4	Other Variables	6
3	Supplemental Analysis	7
3.1	Floor and Ceiling Effects	9
4	Mediation Details	9
4.1	Counterintuitive Results	10

1 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Difference
Conservatism	0.0060
Income	0.0015
Education	0.0050
Age	-0.0012
Populism	0.0029
Male	0.0002
College educated	0.0017

Table A1: **Balance Tests (Influence Treatment)**. The standardized mean difference between the groups that received the influence treatment and those who did not is reported for each covariate. These are calculated using the `coba1t` package in R, which uses ATT weights generated via logistic regression for a weighting-by-the-odds balance analysis. Any difference of 0.1 or less in absolute value is typically considered balanced; all of our differences fall well under this threshold.

Variable	Difference
Conservatism	0.0044
Income	0.0107
Education	-0.0021
Age	0.0048
Populism	0.0156
Male	0.0065
College educated	-0.0018

Table A2: **Balance Tests (Cost Treatment)**. The standardized mean difference between the groups that received the cost treatment and those who did not is reported for each covariate. These are calculated using the `coba1t` package in R, which uses ATT weights generated via logistic regression for a weighting-by-the-odds balance analysis. Any difference of 0.1 or less in absolute value is typically considered balanced; all of our differences fall well under this threshold.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
IO trust	1381	3.08	1.16	1.00	5.00
IO legitimacy	1382	3.50	1.17	1.00	5.00
IO fairness	1383	3.29	1.09	1.00	5.00
IO funding	1379	2.87	1.11	1.00	5.00
Liberal-conservative	1369	0.55	0.29	0.00	1.00
Income	1369	3.39	2.19	1.00	9.00
Education	1362	3.67	1.61	1.00	8.00
Age	1358	49.20	17.00	18.00	90.00
IO cost	1388	0.35	0.48	0.00	1.00
IO benefit	1388	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
Populism	1369	3.95	0.81	1.00	5.00
Male	1370	0.46	0.50	0.00	1.00
College educated	1362	0.50	0.50	0.00	1.00

Table A3: Descriptive Statistics.

IO	Cost	Influence	N
UN	No	No	233
UN	Yes	No	256
UN	No	Yes	230
World Bank	No	No	210
World Bank	Yes	No	226
World Bank	No	Yes	233

Table A4: Number of Respondents by Treatment Condition.

2 Survey Instrument

2.1 Respondent Screening

Following the practices outlined by Burleigh, Kennedy and Clifford (2018), we implemented techniques to block respondents from participating if they could not verify they were located in the U.S. or they were using a Virtual Private Server (VPS) to mask their location. We also had respondents answer a free response question unrelated to our study, which we used as an attention check. Respondents who wrote gibberish or who entered text that was unrelated to the question were removed from the sample, which resulted in 6.8 percent of the sample being excluded.

2.2 Vignettes

World Bank Control: The World Bank's stated goals are to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in a sustainable way.

World Bank Influence: The World Bank's stated goals are to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in a sustainable way. The United States plays a particularly important role at the World Bank. The U.S. is traditionally responsible for selecting the organization's President and is the only country that retains veto power over changes to the Bank's structure. Additionally, the World Bank treats allies and friends of the U.S. more favorably than other countries.

World Bank Cost: The World Bank's stated goals are to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in a sustainable way. The United States is the largest financial contributor to the World Bank. In recent years, the U.S. provided around \$1 billion dollars annually to the institution. Moreover, its contributions represented roughly one-fifth of the total resources available to the Bank's primary lending body.

UN Control: The United Nations' stated goals are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights.

UN Influence: The United Nations' stated goals are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights. The United States plays a particularly important role at the United Nations. The U.S. has a permanent seat on the organization's Security Council, and is one of only five countries to have a veto in the Security Council. This allows the U.S. to exert a great deal of influence on the United Nations' most important decisions.

UN Cost: The United Nations' stated goals are maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights. The United States is the largest financial contributor to the United Nations. In recent years, the U.S. provided around \$10 billion to the institution. Moreover, these contributions represented roughly one-fifth of the United Nations total budget.

2.3 Dependent Variables

- How much do you trust the [World Bank *or* United Nations] to do what is right?

- Always
 - Most of the time
 - About half of the time
 - Some of the time
 - Neither
- To what extent do you perceive the [World Bank *or* United Nations] to be legitimate or illegitimate?
 - Very legitimate
 - Somewhat legitimate
 - Neither legitimate nor illegitimate
 - Somewhat illegitimate
 - Very illegitimate
 - To what extent do you perceive the actions and decisions of the [World Bank *or* United Nations] to be fair or unfair?
 - Very fair
 - Somewhat fair
 - Neither fair nor unfair
 - Somewhat unfair
 - Very unfair
 - Do you believe the United States’ funding for the [World Bank *or* United Nations] should increase, decrease, or stay the same?
 - Increase a lot
 - Increase a little
 - Stay the same
 - Decrease a lot
 - Decrease a little

2.4 Other Variables

- Conservatism: measured on seven-point scale from “Extremely liberal” to “Extremely conservative”
- Income: Measured on a nine-point scale where 1 corresponds to \$0-\$25,000 and nine corresponds to \$200,000 +

3 Supplemental Analysis

Table A5: Effect of Both Cost and Influence Treatments on Support for IO Funding

	Aggregate	United Nations	World Bank
IO cost	-0.156** (0.073)	-0.236** (0.104)	-0.066 (0.102)
IO influence	0.104 (0.073)	0.152 (0.106)	0.060 (0.101)
IO cost and influence	0.019 (0.102)	-0.039 (0.150)	0.058 (0.140)
N	1854	932	922

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1 Note: The aggregate model includes IO fixed effects.

Table A6: Effect of Ideology and Cost and Influence Treatments on Support for IO Funding with Controls

	Aggregate	United Nations	World Bank
IO cost	−0.510*** (0.153)	−0.557*** (0.211)	−0.477** (0.222)
IO influence	−0.190 (0.154)	−0.073 (0.219)	−0.360 (0.218)
Conservatism	−1.215*** (0.178)	−1.138*** (0.235)	−1.333*** (0.274)
College educated	0.183*** (0.063)	0.176** (0.089)	0.201** (0.088)
Income	0.034** (0.014)	0.080*** (0.022)	−0.004 (0.019)
Male	−0.048 (0.059)	−0.158* (0.086)	0.037 (0.082)
Cost:Conservatism	0.748*** (0.244)	0.657** (0.329)	0.878** (0.363)
Influence:Conservatism	0.555** (0.254)	0.448 (0.354)	0.782** (0.369)
Observations	1,357	701	656

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1 Note: The aggregate model includes IO fixed effects.

3.1 Floor and Ceiling Effects

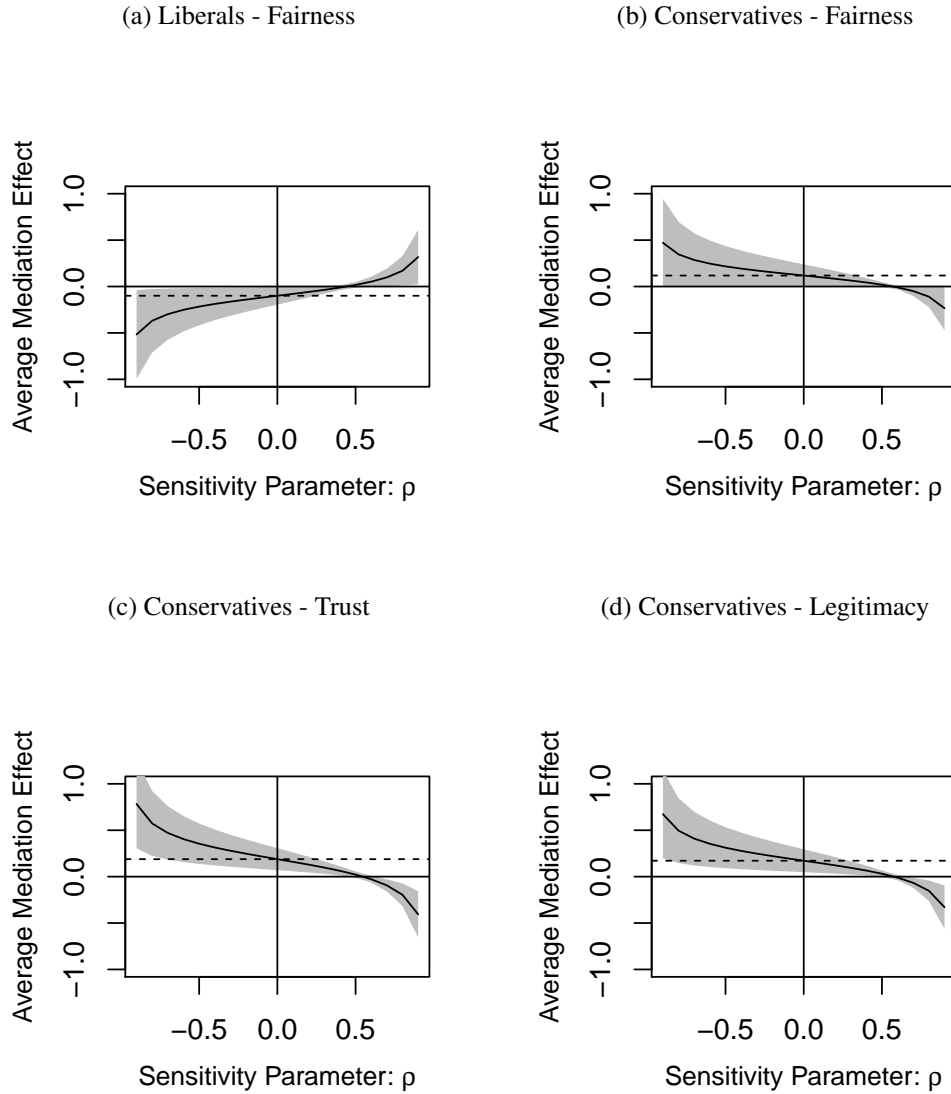
Here we examine whether the divergent effects of the cost treatment across the ideological spectrum could be driven by liberals and conservatives having such distinct baselines, that they differentially experience ceiling or floor effects. For example, if conservatives have an extremely low baseline level of support for IO funding, then a floor effect for the cost treatment could prevent support from declining further. However, this does not appear to be the case when we look at the data. The IO funding variable is measured from -2 to 2 and the averages for both liberals and conservatives in the control condition fall between -0.50 and 0.50, providing sufficient room for movement amongst both groups. While conservatives do have a lower baseline preference for IO funding, their average response is closest to “stay the same,” leaving sufficient room for them to move toward decreasing funding “a little” or “a lot” in the cost treatment. Thus, we conclude that ceiling and floor effects are not responsible for the divergent effects across the ideological spectrum.

4 Mediation Details

The mediation analysis presented in this paper is implemented using the R package by Imai et al. (2010), which uses a potential outcome framework to evaluate how much of the effect of the treatment travels through the mediator of interest. Under a given set of assumptions, this allows us to measure the average causal mediation effect (ACME), the average direct effect (ADE), and the total effect of the treatment. The results of the mediation analysis, displayed in Figure 6 of the paper, demonstrate that perceptions of fairness, trust, and legitimacy play an important role in mediating the effect of the influence treatment on support for funding the IO.

Because the mediation analysis relies on a sequential ignorability assumption, which is a strong assumption that may be violated by unobserved variables that affect both the mediator and the outcome, we conduct sensitivity tests to determine the robustness of our mediation results to violations of this assumption. While we control for observed pretreatment variables – income, education, gender, age, cooperative internationalism, national superiority, attitude toward globalization, and party – there are potential unobserved confounding variables that could violate this assumption. The sensitivity results show that the results are robust to a range of values for ρ .

Figure A1: **Sensitivity Tests for Significant Mediation Effects from Influence Treatment**



4.1 Counterintuitive Results

One potential explanation is that the different baselines of liberals and conservatives result in floor and ceiling effects that could explain the divergent effects of the cost treatment. We address this concern in the Appendix §3.1, and do not find that the data supports such an explanation. Next we examine the possibility that the cost treatment, which informs respondents that the U.S. is the largest financial contributor to the IO, may induce some participants to believe their country is also the most influential state within the IO. For conservatives who infer greater influence is associated with greater contributions, the positive effect of increased influence would offset the direct effect of concerns about increased spending. Indeed, we see suggestive evidence of this in Table 2, where there is a positive, though insignificant, interaction effect for conservatism and the

cost treatment on the fairness, legitimacy, and trust variables for conservatives. This positive sign is consistent with the positive effect yielded by the influence treatment, but it is likely offset by the direct effect of conservatives opposing larger financial outlays. In contrast, liberals, who are predisposed to have higher levels of support and trust for IOs, may oppose increased contributions precisely because they believe it corresponds to greater U.S. influence, which they believe is unfair. As shown in Table 1, those furthest left on the ideological spectrum increasingly oppose funding IOs when the US has greater influence, and thus may react negatively to the inferred influence that goes along with increased contributions.