Political Endorsements and Cross-Ethnic Voting in Africa

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ABSTRACT

Can political endorsements convince citizens to transcend ethnic divisions to vote for candidates from different ethnic groups? Despite the important role that endorsements play in facilitating coalition formation in multiethnic societies, there is little systematic understanding of whether or how explicitly cross-ethnic endorsements can affect voter evaluations of candidates. We hypothesize that voters are more likely to support non-coethnic candidates when endorsements from their coethnics provide information about a candidate's expected distributive behavior in office. To assess this claim, we conduct a randomized experiment in Kenya, where violence often accompanies political competition between ethnic groups. We use simulated radio news segments to experimentally manipulate the ethnic relationship among voters, candidates, and endorsers. We find that endorsements issued by coethnics significantly increase voters' support for candidates from other groups. We find evidence suggesting that improved perceptions of candidate credibility as well common interest between voters and candidates may account for such cross-ethnic voting.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper examines one of the most enduring claims about voter behavior in multiethnic societies: ascriptive loyalties so strongly determine individual vote choice once ethnic cleavages become politically salient that democratic elections can be reduced to "an ethnic head count" (Horowitz 1985, 196). A large body of scholarship has established that voters—whether driven by innate affective attachment, divergent communal preferences, or the imperatives of zero-sum competition—prefer to support coethnic candidates without regard to party ideology or incumbent performance, especially when control of state resources are at stake (Rabushka and Schepsle 1972; Lijphart 1977; Rothschild 1981; Norris and Mattes 2003). If ethnic voting can be considered a stylized fact in multiethnic democracies, it is because scholars have repeatedly shown its occurrence over time across a range of national and institutional contexts, including Latin America (Van Cott 2005; Madrid 2012), South Asia (Chandra 2004; Wilkinson 2006) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Wantchekon 2003; Berman et al. 2004).

Despite longstanding claims regarding the prevalence of ethnic voting in multiethnic societies around the world, politicians in those same countries also win votes from other ethnic groups by securing endorsements from the politicians representing them. In Malaysia's parliamentary elections, the prime minister of the National Front, the ruling party dominated by ethnic Malays, regularly ensures his party's continued hold on power after securing the endorsement of politicians representing the country's Chinese and Indian minorities. In racially polarized Guyana, an Afro-Guyanese candidate of the opposition People's National Congress, won the 2015 presidential election with the endorsement of the Indo-Guyanese leader of the Alliance For Change. After decades of civil war fought along ethnic lines, the candidate of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, a largely ethnic Sinhalese party, won a tight race in the 2015 presidential election after securing the endorsement of the leader of the Tamil National Alliance, which represents the country's ethnic minority.

In the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, where ethnic voting is widely assumed to be a defining feature of elections, candidates for office routinely seek out the endorsements of politicians from other ethnic groups. Since the return to multiparty politics across the region in the early 1990s, not only have incumbents sought reelection with the support of politicians from multiple groups, but cross-ethnic endorsements among opposition politicians have also occurred in over one-third of national elections; half of those alliances have resulted in executive alternation (Arriola 2012, 8). For example, in Nigeria, where ethnic identities divide the electorate, Muhammadu Buhari, the ethnic Fulani candidate of the opposition All Progressives Congress, defeated the incumbent in the 2015 presidential election after being endorsed by political leaders representing Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups.

Scholars focused on African countries, in particular, have begun to accumulate evidence to suggest that identity alone is insufficient to account for patterns of voting behavior (Posner and Simon 2002; Basedau et al. 2011; Weghorst and Lindberg 2013; Long and Gibson 2015). In Mali, Dunning and Harrison (2010) show that cross-cutting social cleavages can attenuate coethnic favoritism when voters evaluate politicians. In Ghana, Hoffman and Long (2013) find that voter evaluations of party performance are more important determinants of vote choice than ethnicity, and Ichino and Nathan (2013) show that voters residing in areas dominated by another ethnic group are less likely to vote for the party that represents their own group. In Uganda, both Conroy-Krutz (2013) and Carlson (2015) show that voters condition their preferences over candidates based on their performance in delivering public goods.

We contribute to this emerging literature on voter behavior in multiethnic societies by focusing on the role of political endorsements. Politicians who compete in elections where voters are divided by socio-cultural cleavages often must seek out the endorsement of politicians from other groups in order to become viable candidates (Arriola 2012; Koter 2013), but the causal effects of such endorsements on voter behavior have yet to be convincingly established. In this paper, we investigate the microfoundations of cross-ethnic endorsements by asking: How do endorsements affect a voter's evaluation of non-coethnic candidates? Does the identity of the endorser affect a voter's willingness to support a non-coethnic candidate? Can the type of appeal contained in an endorsement influence a voter's assessment of a non-coethnic candidate?

To answer such questions, we unite insights from research showing how ethnicity functions as an informational heuristic for voters (Chandra 2004; Birnir 2007; Ferree 2011) and how political endorsements enable low-information voters to assess their political options (Popkin 1991; Lupia 1992). We begin from the premise that voters engage in ethnic voting because, lacking other sources of information, they take a candidate's ethnic identity to be a predictor of distributive behavior once in office. This is a particularly important consideration in countries where state resources are channeled through personalized clientelistic relationships. Candidates may use cross-ethnic endorsements to publicly signal their intent to distribute resources across ethnic cleavages. If voters accept endorsements issued by their coethnic politicians as credible sources of information, then they may positively update their expectations about a non-coethnic candidate's promises to undertake non-discriminatory resource distribution after the election. We thus hypothesize that voters are more likely to vote for a non-coethnic candidate who is endorsed by one of their own coethnic politicians.

We test this hypothesis through an experimental design that estimates the effects of endorsements on voter evaluations of candidates, including their willingness to vote for a noncoethnic candidate and their assessment of such a candidate's likelihood of engaging in ethnic favoritism. We conducted the randomized experiment in Nakuru County, Kenya. This site provides an appropriate context for examining cross-ethnic voting because electoral mobilization in this region has historically followed ethnic lines among members of the Kalenjin and Kikuyu ethnic groups. Such mobilization during election campaigns has also resulted in political violence between these groups (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights 2008). The experiment employed simulated radio news segments modeled after actual media coverage of political campaigns in Kenya to manipulate the ethnic relationship among voters, candidates, and endorsers as well as the content of the endorsement. The experimental manipulation of ethnicity was subtle: only the last name of the candidate and the endorser was randomized to be either Kalenjin or Kikuyu.

Consistent with our expectations, we find evidence that political endorsements issued by coethnics can positively affect voter evaluations of non-coethnic candidates.¹ Voters are significantly more likely to report being willing to vote for a non-coethnic candidate after hearing an endorsement from one of their own coethnics. The magnitude of this effect is large enough to offset the expected preference for coethnic candidates in certain circumstances. Regarding the mechanisms potentially underpinning cross-ethnic endorsements—credibility, common interests, and knowledge—we find evidence that for the important role of credibility: voters who hear their own coethnics endorse a candidate from a different group believe that

¹ For research transparency, the hypotheses and the methods for this experiment were registered in on the Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) registry under protocol ID 20151116AA.

candidate to be more trustworthy and dependable. We also find suggestive evidence for the role of common interests in that voters appear to believe that endorsed politicians are more likely to represent the broader interests of the constituency as a whole and less likely to favor their own groups. We find no evidence that endorsed politicians are considered more knowledgeable or competent by voters. Finally, we find that the type of appeal contained in an endorsement— public goods versus private goods—has no significant impact on voter evaluations of candidates.

The findings presented in this paper have direct implications for our understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of ethnic voting. These findings appear to challenge an important strand of theorizing that focuses on the social psychological basis for ethnic mobilization. Associated with Horowitz (1985) in particular, this view suggests that voters are motivated to engage in ethnic voting due to the sense of self-esteem and elevated status felt when one of their own holds office. Yet, if voters weigh such psychological benefits over other considerations when assessing candidates, it seems unlikely that they would be so easily swayed by the material promises implied in cross-ethnic endorsements, as we find in this study. Our findings do not overturn the psycho-social mechanism, but they raise questions about the extent to which such considerations are decisive for voters.

Our findings also provide insight on the potential for democratic stability in multiethnic settings. Little experimental research has been conducted in the field to examine how "real world" interventions might help to mitigate inter-group conflict and prejudice (Paluck and Green 2009). Yet, while some scholars attribute democratic instability to ethnic diversity under the assumption that politically activated groups will resort to violent means to secure their share of power (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972; Snyder 2000), politicians in many countries pragmatically use cross-ethnic endorsements to forge electoral alliances. If institutionalized over time, cross-ethnic endorsements may eventually lead to the formation of durable coalitions among politicians representing different ethnic constituencies. Since democracy is more likely to survive when such conditions hold, scholars should seek to better understand how cross-ethnic endorsements are negotiated among politicians, conveyed publicly, and interpreted by voters.

In what follows, we first elaborate on the role of endorsements as informational cues for voters in multiethnic societies. In subsequent sections, we describe the research design and present the experimental results in detail. We then conclude by discussing the implications of our findings for the presumed psycho-social foundations of ethnic voting as well as the potential for political moderation in multiethnic societies.

CROSS-ETHNIC ENDORSEMENTS AS INFORMATIONAL CUES

Ethnicity is politically informative in multiethnic societies because it is the basis on which politicians are often expected to channel resources to voters. As documented extensively by scholars of multiethnic societies, politicians rely on ethnicity to secure themselves a stable base of political support (Bates 1974; Posner 2005). They cultivate and retain such a base through personalized clientelistic relationships that facilitate access to public services as well as individual favors (Banégas 1998; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Nugent 2007). In this way, voters have come to expect coethnic politicians to campaign for their support by making promises about their distributive behavior in office (Schaffer 1998; Nugent 2001; Wantchekon 2003; Bratton et al. 2005).

The problem for politicians who compete in ethnically divided societies is that their distributive promises are likely to be perceived as cheap talk by non-coethnic voters. Voters

expect only their coethnic politicians to follow through on distributive promises because their shared identity provides norms of reciprocity to induce compliance as well as sanctioning mechanisms to punish those who defect (Ekeh 1975; Miguel and Gugerty 2005; Habyarimana et al. 2009). By contrast, when lacking such social ties, voters are likely to perceive a non-coethnic politician as being more likely to engage in the kind of favoritism that will leave them frozen out of future resource distribution (Bratton and Kimenyi 2008).

To overcome the resistance of non-coethnic voters, candidates for office can attempt to make their distributive promises more credible by securing the endorsement of politicians from those groups. Cross-ethnic endorsements, meaning a politician from one group endorses a candidate from another group, can alleviate the informational constraints that voters otherwise face when assessing candidates in an ethnically segmented society. Since voters are less likely to have reliable information about candidates who do not belong to their own ethnic group, endorsements can provide them with the information necessary to approximate voting with complete information (Lupia 1994).

Endorsements can be especially effective in providing relevant information in the kind of low-information conditions found in many multiethnic societies (Chandra 2006; Ferree 2011). Lacking comprehensive knowledge about candidates or issues, voters may tend to look to those who have the incentive to possess correct information and base their voting decisions on their endorsements (Kuklinksy et al. 1982; McKelvey and Ordeshook 1986; Popkin 1991; Lupia and McCubbins 1998). Moreover, given the limited scope of campaigning in clientelistic political systems—candidates for office compete on the basis of distributive promises rather than complex policy platforms—political endorsements are more likely to be effective because their cues are readily accessible and already activated in voters' minds (Chaiken et al. 1989; Zaller 1992; Kuklinski and Quirk 2000; Lau and Redlawsk 2001). Voters accustomed to the nature of clientelistic politics require little explanation to understand the implications of a cross-ethnic endorsement, namely, the likelihood that a politician will distribute widely across ethnic groups rather than favor her own.

Endorser Identity: The Role of Coethnicity Bias

We hypothesize that a voter should be more willing to express support for a non-coethnic candidate who is endorsed by one of their own coethnic politicians. We arrive at this expectation by drawing on previous research showing that voters who think endorsers share their values and interests are also more likely to believe that they themselves would make a decision like the endorser's if they had complete information. Such a belief frees voters from the burden of having to acquire costly information on multiple candidates and instead allows them to rely on cues conveyed through endorsements (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Huckfeldt et al. 1995; Grossman and Helpman 1999). In this framework, voters can infer what benefits are to be gained under the leadership of different candidates by simply looking at who is endorsing them.

Voters are likely to place greater trust in information relayed through endorsements from coethnic politicians who they perceive as acting on behalf of group interests. Such expectations typically emerge in ethnically or racially divided societies where voters believe that their individual life chances are linked to their group identities (Dawson 1994; McConnaughy et al. 2010; Gichohi 2016) and their feelings of group solidarity shape vote choice (Tajfel 1981; McClain et al. 2009). When voters maintain these types of affective and behavioral ties to group

identities, they are likely to follow coethnic politicians who are thought to represent their collective interests.

Endorsements in multiethnic settings derive their force from the fact that voters are likely to place greater stock in information sources that share their biases (Taber and Lodge 2006; Iyengar and Hahn 2009). Reflecting the insight of Calvert (1985) on the value of biased information, a voter—uncertain about which candidates will deliver on promises—can seek to increase the likelihood of choosing the superior candidate by relying on information from sources known to share her perspective. Endorsements from coethnic politicians serve precisely such a function by enabling the voter to acquire the information needed to avoid making a costly mistake.

Biased information sources, as Calvert (1985) underscores, are especially valuable to voters when endorsements go against a voter's own priors. An endorsement from a trusted source that challenges a voter's intuition is likely to be interpreted as a particularly strong signal that she should reconsider her preferences over candidates. Updating is likely to occur because individuals tend to pay closer attention and are more likely to invest in learning when confronted with incongruent information that interrupts normal cognitive associations (Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus et al. 2000). In this respect, the voter who hears a coethnic politician endorse a non-coethnic candidate should be more likely to update her priors about that candidate precisely because she has received a piece of information from a trusted source that is incongruent with their shared world view.

Focusing on the informational properties of endorsements helps to explain why certain types of political endorsements are unlikely to influence how voters perceive a candidate. Voters are unlikely to be swayed by an endorsement from a non-coethnic, for example, because they will not necessarily believe that the endorser's interests are aligned with their own, particularly if they have strong expectations of ethnic bias in redistribution. Likewise, voters are unlikely to be swayed by any endorsement in support of a politician who is already a coethnic of the voter. In this instance, the endorsement is unlikely to provide the voter with any new information about a candidate's expected distributive behavior in office. The voter simply expects such a politician to favor her in redistribution because they are coethnics.

Endorsement Mechanisms: Credibility, Common Interests, and Knowledge

How exactly does an endorsement affect voters' perceptions of non-coethnic candidates? We draw on existing literature to identify three mechanisms by which a cross-ethnic endorsement might moderate voters' evaluations of competing candidates.

The first mechanism is based on candidate credibility. We expect candidates who receive cross-ethnic endorsements to be perceived as being more credible, meaning believable or dependable as a political leader. Voters are more likely to follow endorsers they consider to be trustworthy, which is typically employed in the literature as a proxy for credibility (Druckman 2001; Morin et al. 2012; Botero et al. 2015). Because coethnicity often delimits relationships of trust in ethnically divided societies, voters may be expected to automatically perceive non-coethnic candidates as less dependable or honest. In this respect, a cross-ethnic endorsement may provide additional information that compels voters to update their priors about the nature of a non-coethnic candidate's personal qualities. A candidate who is perceived to have political allies from different groups may be viewed as less likely to engage in discriminatory redistribution and therefore more trustworthy.

The second mechanism concerns common interests between voters and candidates. We expect candidates who receive cross-ethnic endorsements to be perceived as having greater interest commonality with non-coethnic voters. The literature indicates that voters generally follow the signal of an endorsement when they believe that the endorser shares their interests (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Boudreau 2009). In a multiethnic electorate, voters may be persuaded that they have common interests with a non-coethnic candidate because the endorser, a coethnic, wants the same outcome as they do, namely, secured access to state resources for their group. A coethnic's endorsement may thus induce voters to update their perception of a non-coethnic candidate's future redistributive behavior.

The third mechanism is premised on the presumed knowledge of the candidates. We expect candidates who receive cross-ethnic endorsements to be perceived as being more knowledgeable. Voters may follow the endorsement of those who they believe to have the expertise required to evaluate a candidate or policy (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Huckfeldt 2001; Lupia 2016). By extension, voters may have a preference for candidates who are thought to have the knowledge necessary to govern effectively. If voters follow the advice of coethnic endorsers not only because they are coethnics, but also because they are elites who have superior information regarding the qualities of different candidates, then they may also perceive the endorsed candidate to have better or more knowledge than the alternatives.

Endorsement Appeals: Public Goods vs. Private Benefits

The logic employed by an endorser to justify her support of a candidate may further affect how voters perceive non-coethnic candidates. While the existing literature on clientelistic politics suggests that politicians often invoke promises of materialistic benefits to court voters, there is disagreement on whether different *types* of materialistic appeals might be more or less effective in achieving these goals. One strand of this research has found that campaign appeals that emphasize private benefits for individual voters are more effective in generating political support (Stokes et al. 2013; Lindberg and Morrison 2013). However, more recent research indicates that collective, local public goods such as roads, schools, and water are important factors in a voter's calculus (Conroy-Krutz 2013; Weghorst and Lindberg, 2013; Carlson 2015; Harding 2015). Despite this disagreement, with the exception of a handful of studies, very rarely has the efficacy of the two different types of materialistic appeals been examined in tandem (Wantchekon 2003; Weghorst and Lindberg 2013). For the purpose of our study, we follow Wantchekon (2003) in hypothesizing that endorsements framed around more private, clientelistic benefits are likely to be more effective in changing candidate evaluations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Empirical Context: Nakuru County, Kenya

The experiment was conducted in Nakuru County, Kenya, because the location fulfills conditions that ensure both external and internal validity. National politics in Kenya are generally acknowledged by country experts to be highly ethnicized (Throup and Hornsby 1998; Ajulu 2002; Long and Gibson 2015). Ethnic divisions were already evident at the time of independence in 1963, when the country's major ethnic groups allied with different parties to compete for power. While representatives of most groups eventually coalesced under the banner of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the competition for state-controlled resources

continued to play out along ethnic lines. This became particularly apparent upon the death of Jomo Kenyatta, the country's founding president and an ethnic Kikuyu, in 1978. Some of Kenyatta's coethnic allies sought to block Daniel arap Moi, the vice president and an ethnic Kalenjin, from assuming the presidency by changing the constitution, but their gambit ultimately failed. As president, Moi was perceived as redirecting resources away from the Kikuyu in favor of his own coethnic Kalenjin. With the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1992, ethnicity again became a primary mobilizing platform for new opposition parties. Kikuyu politicians were among the first to organize opposition parties to challenge Moi in subsequent elections.

Nakuru County is a mirror of national politics. The county is home to several ethnicities, but the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu ethnic groups are the two largest and the most likely to field candidates for county offices. The Kalenjin-Kikuyu divide in Nakuru not only reflects the larger cleavage that structures national Kenyan politics, but local historical legacies stemming from competition over land have exacerbated political tensions between the two ethnic groups. Both Kalenjin and Kikuyu politicians have been implicated in fomenting ethnic clashes in nearly every election since the return of multiparty politics. After the 2007 election, for example, ethnically targeted violence resulted in over 60 people being killed in Nakuru and hundreds more being injured (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights 2008).²

Despite the county's experience with violent ethnic politics, cross-ethnic endorsements in electoral politics are not completely unknown to its voters. At the national level, inter-ethnic alliances have become a feature of elections. In 2013, presidential candidate Uhuru Kenyatta, a Kikuyu, selected William Ruto, a Kalenjin, to be his vice presidential running mate. At the local level, Kenya's 2010 constitution devolved powers to elected county governments, empowering governors with significant discretion over the distribution of resources in their jurisdictions. County governors now directly control at least 15% of total government revenue in Kenya (Cheeseman et al. 2016). In this way, the county governor is the local equivalent of the national president—a political actor who can channel resources to his coethnics or distribute them across groups. Nakuru politicians have apparently sought to mitigate such concerns by forming multiethnic coalitions that resemble those at the national level. At the time of the experiment, the governor of Nakuru County was a Kikuyu and his deputy was a Kalenjin.

Experimental Design: Simulated Radio Segment

To measure the effect of political endorsements on voters' evaluations of candidates, we presented a simulated radio news segment embedded in a large-scale survey of respondents recruited in Nakuru County. Respondents were limited to members of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin ethnic groups of legal voting age. The news segment presented respondents with a fictitious candidate announcing his candidacy for the governorship of Nakuru County in the upcoming 2017 election.³ To enhance the realism of the treatment, the audio news clip was modeled and edited to closely mirror typical coverage of Kenyan election campaigns in popular media

² The Kikuyu migrated to the area following resettlement programs initiated by the post-independence government (Lynch 2011). The indigenous Kalenjin actively resisted Kikuyu resettlement on their lands (Cohen and Atieno-Odhiambo 2004). As a result, campaign rhetoric in the region often emphasizes Kikuyu occupation of land and the need to return it to its rightful Kalenjin owners (Kanyinga 2009, 109).

³ Kenya's 2017 general elections were more than a year away when the study was conducted, but candidates announcing their intention to compete well in advance is not out of the ordinary in Kenya. In fact, at the time of the study, numerous candidates had already declared their intention to challenge sitting governors across Kenya, including multiple announcements against the incumbent governor of Nakuru County, Kinuthia Mbugua.

outlets.⁴ The audio clip included an introduction by a news presenter, a brief campaign speech by the candidate at a political rally, and an endorsement made by a participant at the rally.⁵ It also included real-world sound effects such as theme music to cue the respondent to the program's beginning and end, clapping and cheering during the candidate's speech at the rally, and street background noise during the endorser's statement.⁶

The endorser presented in the news segment is a Member of the Nakuru County Assembly (MCA), which is an elected position for the county legislature. While politicians at all levels make endorsements, we opted for an MCA rather than a member of parliament (MP) because voters might be more likely to know the name of their local MP. It is possible that constituents know MCAs from their own local wards, but it is highly unlikely that they would be able to correctly identify all of the MCAs in the Nakuru County Assembly.

The experimental manipulation involved varying the information embedded in the news segment regarding the identity of the candidate and endorser as well as the content of the endorsement. Per convention, we manipulated the ethnic relationship between the respondent vis-à-vis the candidate and endorser by varying the candidate's last name and the endorser's last name (Dunning and Harrison 2010; McCauley 2014). Last names in Kenya convey information about an individual's ethnicity. For the candidate, we either used Mwangi, a Kikuyu name, or Koech, a Kalenjin name. These two names are the two most common last names found for each group in the voter registration list of Nakuru County used in the 2013 elections. For the endorser, we used Njoroge, a Kikuyu name, or Korir, a Kalenjin name, which were the second most common names in the same voter list for each respective ethnic group

One concern with the subtle priming of ethnic relationships using last names is whether respondents can accurately perceive the ethnic identities of the individuals portrayed in the news segment. Successful priming is critical to our study, since we are interested in how an individual's *perception* of her ethnic ties to the candidate and endorser shapes her evaluation of the candidate. To verify that these perceptions were sufficiently manipulated, we included questions asking respondents to identify the ethnicity and name of the candidate and endorser within the radio news. We only asked these questions after subjects had completed answering the questions related to our treatment. Subjects identified the ethnic identity and name of both the candidate and endorser with nearly perfect accuracy. Despite having only been primed of the identity of the candidate and endorser during the treatment—as well as choosing from 15 ethnic categories—respondents correctly identified the ethnicity and name of the individuals in the news segment more than 90 percent of the time.⁷ Respondents identified candidates at a slightly better rate than endorsers, but these differences are statistically indistinguishable. These high rates likely reflect the political salience of ethnic categories in Kenya.

⁴ The scripts for the radio news treatments are found in supplementary Appendix B.

⁵ We opted for an audio rather than a video treatment to minimize the possibility that experimental results would be subject to heterogeneity induced by the perceived difference in the delivery of treatments. To ensure that each of 12 treatments were delivered in a consistent manner, we took care in having the actors record the audio with a similar tone and pace throughout. The result is that the fully edited audio recordings are all within two seconds in length of each other. The exceptions are those recordings for which the non-endorsement script was much shorter by design. We also attempted to ensure that the actors did not have accents in English or Kiswahili that would cue the respondents to infer information on their ethnic identities other than through our treatment.

⁶ An audio clip of the simulated news segment will be included in the replication files.

⁷ See supplementary Appendix C for the manipulation check.

Additionally, we varied the content of the endorsement. In one version, the endorser emphasizes the ability of the candidate to deliver local public goods such as roads, schools, and water. In a second version, the endorser emphasizes the candidate's willingness to distribute more targeted private benefits and services such as the payment of school fees, medical bills, and wedding and funeral costs. Our experimental design is thus a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design with an additional four control conditions in which we omitted the endorsement for the candidate entirely or included the endorsement without disclosing the last name of the endorser. This yielded a total of 12 treatment and control conditions, which are graphically presented in Figure 1.

[FIGURE 1 HERE]

FIGURE 1. Experimental Design: Subjects Assigned to Treatment and Control Conditions



The post-treatment survey asked respondents about likelihood that they would vote for the gubernatorial candidate they heard in the news segment on a scale from 1 to 7. They were also asked about the candidate's likability, trustworthiness, the accuracy of the candidate's evaluation of the county's problems, the candidate's likely job performance if elected into office, and the candidate's likelihood of exhibiting ethnic favoritism. Similarly, respondents were asked to evaluate the endorser's likability, trustworthiness, and whether the endorser is qualified to make judgments about the candidate. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics on the outcome variables measured in the post-treatment survey. The average likelihood of voting for the candidate is 4.58, pooled across all treatment and control conditions, with a standard deviation of 1.51.

[TABLE 1 HERE]

	Danga	Maan (SD)
Vallable	Range	
Main outcome: vote intention	1 – 7	4.58 (1.51)
Candidate attributes		
Likability	1 – 7	4.70 (1.41)
Trustworthiness	1 – 7	4.46 (1.47)
Candidate's assessment of current leaders correct	1 – 7	5.23 (1.40)
Candidate's assessment of county's problem correct	1 – 7	5.35 (1.39)
Candidate will do a good job if elected	1 – 7	4.39 (1.53)
Candidate will take care of the needs of my tribe	1 – 7	4.04 (1.60)
Candidate will favor his tribe over others	1 – 7	4.46 (1.54)
Candidate's loyalty will primarily lie with all people in the county, regardless of tribe	1 – 7	4.61 (1.38)
Candidate's loyalty will primarily lie with people in his own tribe	1 – 7	4.36 (1.51)
Endorser attributes		
Likability	1 – 7	4.88 (1.32)
Trustworthiness	1 – 7	4.56 (1.39)
Qualification of person to make an assessment about the candidate	1 – 7	4.13 (1.61)
Person's daily life experiences are like yours	1 – 7	3.38 (1.82)
Person's economic situation is like yours	1 – 7	2.60 (1.66)

TABLE 1. Describling Statistics on Outcomes (Pooled	TABLE 1	. Descriptive	Statistics	on Outcomes	(Pooled
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The audio clip and post-treatment survey were carried out using electronic tablet devices in respondents' homes. Upon consent, respondents were exposed to a randomly selected recording that contained one of the 12 treatment and control conditions.⁸ The probability of assignment into the experimental conditions was equal across all conditions. Once respondents listened to the audio clip of the news segment, they answered a battery of questions related to their opinions of the candidate, their own political participation in the area, and other demographic information. Following the administration of the post-treatment survey, respondents were debriefed about the fictitious nature of both the candidate and endorser portrayed in the audio clip. Respondents received a mobile phone airtime voucher worth 100 Kenyan shillings (~\$1.10 US) after completing the interview as compensation for their time. After each successful interview, enumerators skipped a predetermined number of households and repeated this process until the day's target was reached.

Respondents were recruited within Nakuru County to vary their urban and rural conditions: Nakuru Town, Gilgil, Njoro and Elburgon/Molo.⁹ Nakuru Town is one of Kenya's largest cities, while the other others are predominately rural in nature. A total of 1,806 interviews were completed across the four study sites over a period of 21 days in November 2015: 1055 (58%) of these were completed in urban Nakuru Town, and the remaining 755 (42%) were completed in the rural areas in the outskirts of Nakuru and Gilgil, Njoro, and Elburgon/Molo. The sample was ethnically 76% Kikuyu and the remaining 24% was Kalenjin; 52% was female.¹⁰

Respondents were recruited by a random-walk protocol modeled after the Afrobarometer protocol for household survey sampling.¹¹ Within each location, estates were chosen at random after listing them in pairs and randomly choosing which would be sampled.¹² After the estates were identified, enumerators started from previously selected landmarks and executed a random walk protocol to identify households where interviewing would begin. In each household, enumerators followed the Kish grid method to determine which individual, over the age of 18, would be interviewed. After the respondent was identified, they were administered a short screening questionnaire that determined eligibility. Only those who were of voting age, residents of the county, and either Kalenjin or Kikuyu were eligible to participate in the experiment, pending their consent.¹³

⁸ Individuals had the option to have the instrument and the audio clip administered either English or Kiswahili.

⁹ A map of the area is found in supplementary Appendix D.

¹⁰ The ethnic proportions in the sample are roughly equal to the ratio of Kalenjins and Kikuyus in the 1989 Kenyan census of Nakuru District, which was the last Kenyan census to be released with ethnic demographic data. The slight over-representation of women (52%) in the sample is a consequence of the prevalence of female single-individual households in Nakuru Town.

¹¹ For extremely rural locations in Molo/Elburgon, a random-walk protocol was infeasible due to the large distances between households. In these locations, enumerators were instructed to interview a respondent after every 300 meters of walking in a designated direction from the preselected departure point.

¹² For Nakuru Town, an official list of estates was secured from the Nakuru County Office of Planning. For Gilgil, Njoro, and Elburgon/Molo, the list of estates was collected by surveying a number of local residents prior to sampling.

¹³ Individuals had the option to opt out of the experiment after going through the screening questionnaire.

EXPERIMENTAL ANALYSIS

How do political endorsements affect voter evaluations of both coethnic and noncoethnic candidates? In accordance with our pre-analysis plan, we take an intention-to-treat analysis approach, where we simply compare the average responses among respondents *assigned* to each treatment and control condition. By doing so, we intentionally disregard the fact that some of our respondents did not comply with the treatment, that is, they did not receive the treatment manipulation as we intended. While this creates the possibility that the results presented here are underestimates of the treatment effect, we take the high compliance rates reported in the previous section as reason to expect that our substantive findings will remain unchanged even if we account for non-compliance and calculate the complier average causal effect (CACE).¹⁴ While the findings presented here do not adjust for multiple hypothesis testing, they do indicate whether the results survive a Benjamini-Hochberg (1995) false discovery rate correction at a FDR of 0.05. References hereafter to coethnic or non-coethnic relationships of both the candidate and the endorser will always be with respect to the respondent.

Endorser Ethnicity Effects

The first part of our analysis examines the effects of endorser ethnicity on candidate evaluations. Table 2 presents the average candidate evaluations for both the coethnic and non-coethnic candidates by the ethnic relationship between the endorser and respondent, pooling across the type of appeal.¹⁵ Assignment to an endorsement issued by a coethnic of the respondent has almost no discernable effect on the respondent's evaluation of her coethnic candidate: the difference in the evaluations between a *coethnic candidate* endorsed by a coethnic versus a non-coethnic are statistically indistinguishable from zero.

[TABLE 2 HERE]

Assignment to an endorsement issued by a coethnic of the respondent has a statistically significant and large positive effect on the respondent's evaluation of a *non-coethnic candidate*: the mean evaluation of a non-coethnic candidate with a coethnic endorsement (4.56) is almost 0.5 points larger than the mean evaluation of the non-coethnic candidate with a non-coethnic endorsement (4.07) (p<0.0001). This result suggests that an otherwise indifferent voter would be more likely to vote for the non-coethnic candidate after hearing an endorsement by a coethnic. Given that our experimental estimates for candidate coethnicity effects (presented in Table A4 in the appendix) range from 0.37 to 0.82 on a 7-point scale, the effect of a coethnic endorsement on a non-coethnic candidate is substantively large.

¹⁴ The complier average treatment effect is presented in our appendix. Given that our compliance rate exceeded 90%, there is no substantive change in the size of the effect when we restrict our analysis to the compliers.

¹⁵ The outcome is measured on a seven-point Likert scale, which is less likely than a five-point scale to encourage respondents to engage in satisficing (Osgood et al. 1957). The seven-point scale has also been shown to be more accurate, easier to use, and a better reflection of a respondent's true evaluation (Finstad 2010).

Coethnic Candidate	Non-Coethnic Candidate
4.92 (0.08)	4.56 (0.09)
4.89 (0.08)	4.07 (0.09)
0.03 (0.11)	0.49*** (0.12)
NO	YES
0.437	0.000
0.486	0.001
	Coethnic Candidate 4.92 (0.08) 4.89 (0.08) 0.03 (0.11) NO 0.437 0.486

Table 2. Endorser Ethnicity Effects: Support for Coethnic and Non-Coethnic Candidates

Cells report average answers to the question, "On a scale from 1 to 7 ... how likely are you to vote for the candidate?" Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard two-tailed t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For the multiple testing adjustment, we use the Benjamini-Hochberg correction at an FDR level of 0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Shaded columns denote statistical tests specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

Are the effects of a coethnic endorsement of a non-coethnic candidate enough to counteract presumed ethnic favoritism when voters evaluate candidates? If candidate evaluations for a non-coethnic candidate endorsed by a coethnic endorser were indistinguishable from evaluations of a coethnic candidate, it would bring us a lot closer to the possibility that a voter might decide to cross the ethnic divide and vote for a non-coethnic candidate. While the coethnic endorsement for a non-coethnic candidate narrows the gap in candidate evaluations more than half way, the data presented in Figure 2 suggest that differences do persist: the differences in mean evaluations of coethnic candidates are around 0.3 points higher than a non-coethnic candidate with a coethnic endorsement. These differences are statistically significant at p<0.01 without corrections for multiple testing.¹⁶

[FIGURE 2 HERE]

Although these results suggest that favoritism for a coethnic candidate persists even with the political endorsement from a coethnic, the data presented in Figure 2 also identify conditions under which evaluations of a non-coethnic candidate with a coethnic endorsement reaches statistical parity with that of a coethnic: the differences in candidate evaluation are statistically indistinguishable from zero once we compare a non-coethnic candidate with a coethnic endorsement or a coethnic endorsement and either a coethnic candidate without any endorsement or a coethnic candidate endorsed by an individual of unknown ethnic origin.¹⁷

The fact that we can identify certain conditions under which voters are indifferent between a non-coethnic candidate and a coethnic candidate is especially meaningful given the contentious nature of inter-ethnic relations in Nakuru and Kenya more generally. During the implementation of the project, both Kalenjin and Kikuyu respondents often made critical or derogatory statements about outgroup members or the outgroup itself. For example, one Kikuyu respondent in Njoro who claimed to be a former ward councilor said that "Kalenjins cannot be trusted under any circumstances," while a Kalenjin respondent from Elburgon claimed that "Kikuyus are greedy people. Look at how their governor is doing. He is stealing from us." In such a context, our finding that coethnic endorsements can appreciably improve the evaluation of a non-coethnic candidate is noteworthy because it emerges in a context where voters are not perceived as being open to politicians from other groups.

Since our main outcome of interest is measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale, we subjected our findings on the effects of endorser ethnicity to a series of robustness checks with non-parametric tests, as shown in Table 2.¹⁸ Both the two-sample Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which is known to be highly conservative when used for discrete distributions (Conover 1972), support the findings from our parametric tests: coethnic endorsements only have a strong effect on improving the evaluation of a non-coethnic candidate; it has no effect on a voter's evaluation of a coethnic candidate.¹⁹

¹⁶ These differences retain statistical significance after the FDR correction for multiple testing at an FDR of 0.05.

¹⁷ See also Table A3 in the supplementary appendix.

¹⁸ The standard two-tailed t test would suffice if we can regard the seven-point outcome as an interval scale where the means are well-defined. The non-parametric tests based on the ranks and medians would be more appropriate should our outcome measure not be treated as an interval scale.

¹⁹ A tabular presentation of the aforementioned results is included in supplementary Appendix A. Table A1 presents results for the coethnic candidate analyses and Table A2 the results for the non-coethnic candidate analyses.



FIGURE 2. Mean Candidate Evaluations of Coethnic and Non-Coethnic Candidates by Endorser Coethnicity

The figure reports the point estimates for the mean of each treatment condition. The thick and thin lines represent the 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals for the means, respectively. The difference in means using a standard two-tailed t-test of the two conditions for the non-coethnic candidate is statistically significant at p<0.001 and survives the Benjamini-Hochberg FDR corrections for multiple hypothesis testing at an FDR of 0.05.

The persistence of coethnic bias shown in Figure 2 further suggests that these findings are not merely the product of social desirability. Satisficing, namely, choosing the middle option on a Likert scale, can result from social desirability as respondents make an effort not to displease the enumerator (Garland 1998). Yet, the clear preference of voters for their own coethnic candidates makes clear that this is not the case in our sample. These findings also show no evidence of motivated reasoning among respondents exposed to the cross-ethnic scenario. Despite being presented with new information that might challenge their notions about political relationships, respondents do not appear to reject the possibility that their politicians or they themselves would support a candidate from another group.

Mechanisms for Cross-Ethnic Endorsements

The post-treatment survey included questions on various candidate and endorser attributes. While our research design does not give us full inferential leverage in identifying the mechanisms through political endorsements affect candidate evaluations, it does provide strong evidence toward that end. If our theoretical argument is to hold—that a coethnic's endorsement of a non-coethnic candidate provides voters with important cues on the extent to which the candidate will favor his own ethnic group in redistribution—we should be able to observe corresponding differences on related questions asking respondents about the perceived likelihood of the non-coethnic candidate exhibiting coethnic favoritism.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, we find suggestive evidence for specific mechanisms by which cross-ethnic endorsements lead voters to update their perceptions of candidates. We find support for a credibility mechanism. A non-coethnic candidate with an endorsement from a coethnic is considered much more trustworthy than a non-coethnic candidate with a non-coethnic endorsement. The differences in the evaluation of these two attributes range from 0.3-0.4 points and are statistically significant at the p<0.01 level. We also find evidence for a common interest mechanism. Respondents are more likely to believe that the non-coethnic candidate's loyalty would primarily lie with the people of the county and not his coethnics when endorsed by a coethnic. Figure 3 shows that we find no evidence for a knowledge mechanism. A non-coethnic candidate with an endorsement from a coethnic is not considered to have any greater competence. There is no statistically significant difference across the two conditions on whether the candidate is perceived to accurately assess the problems faced by the county.

[FIGURE 3 HERE]



FIGURE 3. Perceived Candidate Attributes (Difference in Means)

The figure reports the difference in means between a non-coethnic candidate endorsed by a coethnic versus a non-coethnic endorser using a two-tailed t-test. The hollow circle represents the point estimate for the difference in means with the thick and thin lines representing the 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals for point estimates, respectively.

Why would a coethnic endorser's word of support reduce respondents' fear of being excluded from redistribution if a non-coethnic candidate were to be elected to office? Responses to questions regarding qualities of the endorser offer important clues to this question. Our endorser-specific findings suggest that differences in the evaluation of the non-coethnic candidate can be traced back to the extent to which the respondents trust and identify with the person issuing the endorsement. Figure 4 presents the two-tailed difference in means test on respondent evaluation of the *endorsers*—coethnic versus non-coethnic—introduced in the simulated radio segment. Once again, we find support for the credibility mechanism: respondents are more likely to deem the coethnic endorser more trustworthy than the non-coethnic endorser. We also find evidence for interest commonality as a mechanism. Respondents are more likely to believe that the economic situation of the coethnic endorser is similar to their own when compared to the non-coethnic endorser. We find no support for the knowledge mechanism, as respondents do not seem to believe that the coethnic endorser is any more qualified to evaluate the candidate. Taken together, the similarity in results between Figures 3 and 4 is striking.

[FIGURE 4 HERE]



FIGURE 4. Perceived Endorser Attributes (Difference in Means)

The figure reports the difference in means between a coethnic endorser and a non-coethnic endorser using a two-tailed t-test. The hollow circle represents the point estimate for the difference in means with the thick and thin lines representing the 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals for point estimates, respectively.

Causal Mediation Analysis of Credibility, Common Interests, and Knowledge

The analysis thus far demonstrates that our treatment affected voter evaluations of some of the candidate attributes we posited as causal mechanisms, but it does not allow us to formally examine the degree to which these mechanisms mediate the relationship between our treatment and outcome. We therefore implement a mediation analysis using the methodology proposed by Imai and Yamamoto (2013). Increasingly adopted as best practice in the statistical analysis of causal mechanisms, causal mediation analysis requires the specification of an intermediate variable that mediates the causal relationship between the treatment and outcome variables (Imai et al. 2011). If one accepts strong assumptions regarding sequential ignorability, the method allows for the identification of the Average Causal Mediation Effect (ACME) across multiple mediators that may or may not be causally related to each other. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 3.

[TABLE 3 HERE]

			Causal Me	echanisms		
	Credibility		Common Interests		Knowledge	
	Mediators	Mediators	Mediators	Mediators	Mediators	Mediators
	Independent	Dependent	Independent	Dependent	Independent	Dependent
ACME	0.2314	0.2055	0.2441	0.0766	-0.0107	-0.001
	(0.06, 0.41)	(0.05, 0.36)	(0.13, 0.37)	(0.02, 0.13)	(-0.09, 0.07)	(-0.01, 0.01)
ADE	0.2533	0.2804	0.2410	0.4098	0.4960	0.4867
	(0.08, 0.43)	(0.11, 0.45)	(0.01, 0.46)	(0.17, 0.64)	(0.26, 0.73)	(0.25, 0.73)
Total Effect	0.4847	0.4856	0.4852	0.4856	0.4853	0.4856
(ATE)	(0.25, 0.72)	(0.24, 0.73)	(0.24, 0.72)	(0.24, 0.73)	(0.24, 0.73)	(0.24, 0.73)
<u> </u>			(() 0) (-)			

Table 3. Causal Mediation Analysis

Cells report the average causal mediation effect (ACME), average direct effect (ADE), and average treatment effect (ATE) from causal mediation analysis, as presented by Imai, Tingley, and Yamamoto (2010). The first row of each cell corresponds to the point estimate, while the second row of each cell reports the 95% confidence interval for the point estimate.

We provide a graphical presentation of the mediation analysis in Figure 5. In the plots on the left-hand side, we present the results from the mediation analysis when we assume no interaction between our three mechanisms (or mediators). As the point estimates for the AMCE at the top of each plot suggests, both credibility and common interest seem to be strong mediators of our treatment effects: the AMCE for both of these mediators are around 0.24 and account for roughly 48~50% of the total estimated treatment effect (0.49). On the other hand, the knowledge mechanism does not appear to mediate the relationship between our coethnic endorsement treatment and vote intention: we fail to reject the null that the AMCE for knowledge is statistically distinguishable from zero.

[FIGURE 5 HERE]

The above results rest on the assumption that each mechanism is independent of other mechanisms underlying our treatment effect. This assumption may not be entirely plausible if increased levels of credibility induced by our treatment also shape voter perceptions about whether the candidate shares their interests and vice versa. To account for this possibility, we conduct the mediation analysis using the method proposed in Imai and Yamamoto (2013) by explicitly allowing for the interaction between our mediators. The results are presented in the right-hand side of Figure 5. The AMCE for the credibility mechanism only shifts slightly to 0.2, or around 40% of the total estimated treatment affect (0.49) when we allow for the interaction between mediators. The AMCE for the common interest mechanisms, however, drops sharply when we allow for the interaction, from 0.24 to 0.07, or around 14% of the treatment effect. While the AMCE still remains statistically significant at p<0.05, the size of the mediation effect declines to slightly more than a quarter than previously reported. The results for the knowledge mechanism remain unchanged with an AMCE statistically indistinguishable from zero.



FIGURE 5. Causal Mediation Analysis of Credibility, Common Interests, and Knowledge

Subgroup Analysis for the Endorser Ethnicity Effects: Urban vs. Rural Samples

One concern that may arise from the preceding analysis is the possibility that there are heterogeneous treatment effects across different subgroups of the data, and that these particular subgroups are driving our main findings. Endorser effects may, for example, only emerge among respondents in the urban sample from Nakuru Town, since urban environments create contexts where individuals of various ethnic groups reside and interact with each other on a day-to-day basis. Prolonged exposure to other groups may mitigate any tendencies for in-group favoritism and out-group hostility. By contrast, ethnic groups in rural areas are often geographically clustered with little opportunity for sustained inter-group contact.

The possibility of heterogeneous treatment effects is especially relevant in the context of Nakuru County because its urban and rural areas not only differ in terms of local ethnic geography, but also on one crucial historical dimension that could affect our treatment effects: the level of cross-ethnic violence between Kalenjin and Kikuyu ethnic groups during the 2007 post-election violence. Relatively rural areas in our sample, including Molo/Elburgon, Njoro, and the outskirts of Gilgil along the Nakuru-Naivasha corridor were reported to have been hotspots of ethnic clashes in late December of 2007 and early 2008 (Anderson and Lochery 2008). While Nakuru Town witnessed some sporadic events of street fighting during the period, the intensity and forms of these conflicts were quite divergent from the brutality of the attacks in the rural areas.

Despite the real potential for heterogeneous treatment effects, the main effects of coethnic endorsements on non-coethnic candidates largely hold when we disaggregate the full sample to urban and rural samples. Figure 6 presents results from the disaggregated analysis: the top and bottom panels in Figure 6 are analyses conducted on the urban and rural samples, respectively.²⁰ While there are differences in effect sizes, the main finding first presented in Figure 2 is replicated in the disaggregated samples: coethnic endorsements matter in altering evaluations of non-coethnic candidates, but not coethnic candidates. In line with our expectations, the difference in mean evaluations for a non-coethnic candidate across the two endorsement conditions (coethnic versus non-coethnic endorser) is much larger in the urban sample (0.56, p<0.001) than in the rural sample (0.39, p<0.05).

In the urban sample, the effect of a coethnic endorsement on a non-coethnic candidate is large enough to make respondents indifferent between him and a coethnic candidate with either type of endorsement. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between either of the coethnic candidate conditions and the non-coethnic candidate with coethnic endorsement condition includes zero. The increased intergroup contact and cross-cutting interactions of urban settings may allow coethnic endorsements to serve as a stronger persuasive tool in inducing voters to cross ethnic lines in voting for a non-coethnic endorsement for a non-coethnic candidate is still statistically significant at the p<0.05, the endorsement does not come close to making respondents indifferent between a coethnic candidate and a non-coethnic candidate.

[FIGURE 6 HERE]

²⁰ See also Table A5 in the supplementary appendix.



FIGURE 6. Subgroup Analysis: Urban vs. Rural Samples

The figure reports the point estimates for the mean of each treatment condition. The top and bottom panels present data from the urban sample and rural sample, respectively. The thick and thin lines represent the 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals for the means.

Appeal Effects

Beyond manipulating the ethnic identity of the candidate and the endorser, the radio segment heard by respondents also varied the type of appeal made by the endorser. We sought to examine whether voters would be more receptive to endorsements that contained a public goods or a private goods appeal because the related literatures often make claims about both types of redistribution. If ethnic voting is partially driven by a sense of shared communal interest, then voters might be expected to prefer candidates who pledge to bring about local development and deliver public services. Conversely, if ethnic voting is driven by an individual instrumental rationale, then voters might prefer the private benefits facilitated by a candidate's clientelistic relationships.

Figure 7 presents the average candidate evaluation of coethnic and non-coethnic candidates by the type of endorser appeal, pooling across the ethnicity of the endorser. Even with the relatively large sample size, we are unable to detect any difference between the appeal type conditions: the average difference between a coethnic candidate endorsed with a public versus a private goods appeal is -0.07 with a p-value of 0.558. The absolute size of the average difference between a non-coethnic candidate endorsed by a public goods appeal versus a private goods appeal is slightly larger at 0.12, but this difference is not statistically significant at p<0.1.

How can we account for this null finding? One possibility goes back to the strength of the endorser coethnicity effects. Given that the news segment administered the endorser coethnicity treatment simultaneously with the appeal type treatment, the strength of the endorser coethnicity prime may have been large enough to swamp any importance respondents would attach to the content of the appeal. It may be the case that the content of an appeal may matter for voters, but the nature of our factorial research design prevented us from detecting the effect. Follow up studies may seek to examine the unadulterated effect of these appeals without intrusion of overwhelming factors of vote choice such as coethnicity.

[FIGURE 7 HERE]



FIGURE 7. Evaluations of Coethnic and Non-Coethnic Candidates by Appeal Type

The figure reports the point estimates for the mean of each treatment condition. The thick and thin lines represent the 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals for the means, respectively.

CONCLUSION

We have used experimental methods to provide a baseline for understanding the role of political endorsements in facilitating cross-ethnic voting in multiethnic societies. To understand the full impact of such endorsements, future research on this topic should examine more nuanced dimensions that lie outside the scope of this paper. For example, while our experimental design had a locally elected politician endorse a politician running for higher office, the electoral arena is characterized by several types of endorsements—e.g., a national politician endorsing a local politician or a local politician endorser's status may affect the extent to which a voter is willing to consider cross-ethnic voting, especially when material benefits are at stake. Relatedly, our study examined only a limited number of endorsement appeals by focusing on public goods versus private benefits. In reality, though, politicians invoke many different logics to convince their followers to vote for one candidate or another. An endorser might, for instance, invoke national pride or inter-ethnic harmony to persuade voters to support a candidate from another group.

The paper's findings have broader implications for the study of conflict and cooperation in multiethnic societies. Previous research has emphasized the role of elite manipulation in generating conflict, as politicians seek to advance their electoral interests by stoking fear and resentment among coethnics (Snyder 2000; Wilkinson 2006). Yet, the cooperative results seen in our experiment on cross-ethnic endorsements are, at heart, also based on elite manipulation. If political bargains among elites are central to bridging ethnic cleavages, more research is required to identify the conditions in which they are more likely to occur. The examples cited in the introduction to this paper suggest that war (Sri Lanka), rivalry (Nigeria), marginalization (Guyana), and exclusion (Malaysia) are insufficient to prevent elites from arranging cross-ethnic endorsements.

It should be noted, however, that the regular arrangement of cross-ethnic endorsements may not necessarily lead to the decline of ethnicity's importance in elections. Politicians may continue to have incentives to prime the electoral salience of ethnicity as long as they are able to derive direct benefits such as minimizing competition from other politicians or deriving rents by brokering votes in exchange for appointments. In this regard, attenuating the power of ethnic identity in voting behavior is more likely to follow structural changes associated with the decline of the clientelistic politics through which ethnicity typically operates.

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Table A1. Endorser eth	Table A1. Endorser ethnicity effects: support for a coethnic candidate						
	Public goods appeal (1)	Private goods appeal (2)	Appeal type pooled (1) + (2)				
Coethnic endorser (3)	4.92 (0.12)	4.92 (0.12)	4.92 (0.08)				
Non-coethnic endorser (4)	4.82 (0.12)	4.96 (0.10)	4.89 (0.08)				
Difference in means (3) – (4)	0.11 (0.16)	-0.05 (0.16)	0.03 (0.11)				
Significant after FDR correction	NO	NO	NO				
Rank sum test (p-value)	0.343	0.864	0.437				
K-S test (p-value)	0.745	0.970	0.525				

APPENDIX A. TABULAR PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS

Cells report average answers to the question, "On a scale from 1 to 7 ... how likely are you to vote for the candidate?" Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard two-tailed t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For the multiple testing adjustment, we use the Benjamini-Hochberg correction at an FDR level of 0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Shaded columns denote statistical tests specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

Table A2. Endorser ethnicity effects: support for a non-coethnic candidate						
	Public goods appeal (1)	Private goods appeal (2)	Appeal type Pooled (1) + (2)			
Coethnic endorser (3)	4.59 (0.11)	4.52 (0.13)	4.55 (0.09)			
Non-coethnic endorser (4)	4.15 (0.12)	3.98 (0.13)	4.09 (0.09)			
Difference in means (3) – (4)	0.44** (0.16)	0.54** (0.18)	0.49*** (0.12)			
Significant after FDR correction	YES	YES	YES			
Rank sum test (p-value)	0.003	0.002	0.000			
K-S test (p-value)	0.023	0.088	0.001			

Cells report average answers to the question, "On a scale from 1 to 7 ... how likely are you to vote for the candidate?" Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard two-tailed t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For the multiple testing adjustment, we use the Benjamini-Hochberg method at an FDR level of 0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Shaded columns denote statistical tests specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

Comparison Condition	Difference in means	Significant after FDR adjustment	Rank sum test (p- value)	K-S test (p-value)
1. Coethnic candidate, coethnic endorser : (T1+T2) – (T5+T6)	0.37** (0.12)	YES	0.001	0.008
2. Coethnic candidate, non-coethnic endorser : $(T3+T4) - (T5+T6)$	0.34**	YES	0.010	0.114
3. Coethnic candidate, no endorsement : T9 – (T5+T6)	0.12	NO	0.290	0.147
 4. Coethnic candidate, no endorser ethnicity⁺ : T11 – T5 	0.25 (0.16)	NO	0.053	0.837

Table A3. Comparison of other treatment conditions to the non-coethnic candidate, coethnic endorser condition (T5+T6)

Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard two-tailed t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For the multiple testing adjustment, we use the Benjamini-Hochberg correction at an FDR of 0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. All tests in this table are specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

⁺For this test, we limit the comparison of T5 to T11 because we do not have a control condition with a coethnic candidate, an endorser whose ethnicity is unknown, and a private goods message.

Table A4. Candidate ethnicity effects						
	Pure control (No Endorser) (1)	Endorser unknown (2)	Coethnic endorser (3)	Non-coethnic endorser (4)	Endorser type pooled (3) + (4)	
Coethnic candidate (5)	4.67 (0.14)	4.84 (0.12)	4.92 (0.08)	4.89 (0.07)	4.90 (0.06)	
candidate (6)	4.02 (0.14)	4.38 (0.11)	4.55 (0.08)	4.06 (0.09)	4.31 (0.06)	
Difference in means (5) – (6)	0.65*** (0.19)	0.46** (0.16)	0.37** (0.12)	0.82*** (0.12)	0.60*** (0.04)	
Significant after FDR adjustment	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Rank sum test (p-value)	0.000	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.000	
K-S test (p-value)	0.007	0.004	0.745	0.000	0.000	

Cells report average answers to the question, "On a scale from 1 to 7 ... how likely are you to vote for the candidate?" Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard two-tailed t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Shaded columns denote statistical tests specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

Table A5. Endorser ethnicity effects: support for a non-coethnic candidate						
	Urban Sample:			Rural Sample:		
	Na	akuru Town (N=7	10)	Excluding	j Nakuru Town	<u>(N=508)</u>
	Public goods appeal (1)	Private goods appeal (2)	Appeal type Pooled (1) + (2)	Public goods appeal (3)	Private goods appeal (4)	Appeal type pooled (3) + (4)
Coethnic endorser (5)	4.69 (0.16)	4.64 (0.16)	4.67 (0.11)	4.47 (0.16)	4.27 (0.21)	4.40 (0.12)
Non-coethnic endorser (6)	4.24 (0.18)	4.00 (0.16)	4.11 (0.12)	4.04 (0.16)	3.95 (0.22)	4.00 (0.13)
Difference in means (5) – (6)	0.45 (0.24)	0.64** (0.23)	0.56*** (0.16)	0.43 (0.22)	0.32 (0.30)	0.39* (0.18)
Significant after FDR adjustment	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Rank sum test (p-value)	0.025	0.004	0.000	0.048	0.285	0.028
K-S test	0.081	0.134	0.006	0.458	0.984	0.275

Cells report average answers to the question, "On a scale from 1 to 7 ... how likely are you to vote for the candidate?" Differences-in-means are assessed using a standard t test with estimated standard errors reported in parentheses. ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05. We also report p-values from the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney rank sum test and the two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Shaded columns denote statistical tests specified in the pre-analysis plan registered with EGAP under ID 20151116AA.

APPENDIX B. TREATMENT SCRIPTS FOR NEWS segment

1. Public Goods Appeal

(1) Kisima: This is the news in brief. I am Beatrice Kisima. Today, aspiring candidate for county governor in Nakuru County, [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH], addressed a large rally in preparation for upcoming elections. During the rally, he spoke of his political qualifications and his plans for the county.

(2) Candidate: I am a proud member of this community, but I have had enough of our elected politicians not doing enough. Our current leaders have repeatedly failed to deliver on their promises. This is why, today, we must take action together. If you elect me as governor, I will bring the change this community needs.

(3) Kisima: We listened to reactions from [WILLIAM NJOROGE / WILLIAM KORIR], who attended the rally.

(4) Endorser: My name is [WILLIAM NJOROGE / WILLIAM KORIR], and I am an MCA of the Nakuru County Assembly. I am very happy that the candidate came to speak about issues that affect us all deeply in this county. I especially like [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH]'s promise to bring development like new roads, better schools, and better access to water because these things will help our community to live better. I hope this county will come together and vote for [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH] because he is a true leader. We do not want any other candidate.

(5) Kisima: The early announcement of [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH] for the governor's race highlights how competitive the next elections are expected to be.

2. Private Goods Appeal

(1) Kisima: This is the news in brief. I am Beatrice Kisima. Today, aspiring candidate for county governor in Nakuru County, [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH], addressed a large rally in preparation for upcoming elections. During the rally, he spoke of his political qualifications and his plans for the county.

(2) Candidate: I am a proud member of this community, but I have had enough of our elected politicians not doing enough. Our current leaders have repeatedly failed to deliver on their promises. This is why, today, we must take action together. If you elect me as governor, I will bring the change this community needs.

(3) Kisima: We listened to reactions from [WILLIAM NJOROGE / WILLIAM KORIR], who attended the rally.

(4) Endorser: My name is [WILLIAM NJOROGE / WILLIAM KORIR], and I am a member of the Nakuru County Assembly. I am very happy that the candidate came to speak about issues that affect us all deeply in this county. I especially like [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH]'s promise to help you and me with our children's school fees, our medical bills, and our expenses for weddings and funerals because these things will help our families. I hope this county will come together and vote for [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH] because he is a true leader. We do not want any other candidate.

(5) Kisima: The early announcement of [STEVEN MWANGI / STEVEN KOECH] for the governor's race highlights how competitive the next elections are expected to be.

APPENDIX C. MANIPULATION CHECK

TABLE C1. Rate of Correct Ethnic and Name Identification				
	Ethnicity	Name		
Candidate	97%	97%		
	(1758/1806)	(1751/1806)		
Endorser	95%	94%		
	(1159/1219)	(1149/1219)		



