Criminality in Former Rebel-Governed Communities

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1. Introduction

During civil war, rebel groups abandon, retreat or leave from an area or territory for different reasons: from military defeat, strategy or peace settlement. Studying the processes that take place at the micro-level during armed conflict is characterized by its difficulty, it’s restrictions and limitations to data and the insecurity that comes with war. But when a rebel demobilizes, a window of opportunity opens to study what unfolded during the conflict and the effects it has on the population. More specifically, we can come to observe and understand what has happened during the time that rebels were present and what the effects their presence has had. This is ever more relevant as recent studies have pointed at the complexity of systems of governance sometimes put in place by rebels (Arjona 2017), which poses the question of whether these systems of governance have lasting effects on the population.

One year after the FARC-EP signed the peace agreement with the Government of Colombia and demobilized, violence and criminality levels are at the center of attention both domestically and to international donors. The peace agreement brought around expectations of an end to violence and the beginning of a peaceful period for Colombia. Instead, when looking at the municipalities where the FARC had been presence, violence has not disappeared and these municipalities present a wide variance in criminality. This paper is set to study this variation and proposes a mechanism to explain the influence that rebel governance may have in post-conflict theft rates. It does so by asking: Under what conditions does previous rebel control influence post-conflict crime rates?

Civil wars are a major threat to development and cause the loss of thousands of human lives, also affecting those that survive through it. Therefore, understanding the results from rebel presence can help tackle the situation and advance both development and the transition to peace. This paper will allow to better understand the complexities of peace processes, recovery and post-conflict development. In doing so we also learn more about the way that rebel groups and the population interact between each other and how the later is affected by the former. More specifically, this study will provide further understanding of the extent to which the social thread and capital of a community and a society in general is affected not only by the material losses of conflict, but also the social effects of the structures put in place during conflict.

The expanding literature on rebel governance has focused much more on typology of governance, mechanisms, social order and the use and logic of violence; therefore, this study tackles the research gap on what are the effects of rebel governance on the population. It also gives emphasis on the relation among civilians, instead of civilian-rebel relation, although the former is a function of the latter as I show ahead. Overall, this research brings together rebel governance literature and post-conflict development. Recent research has shown that war is not chaos (Arjona 2017, Kalyvas 2006). Instead, what seems to be chaos in disputed areas is in turn a struggle between the different warring parties to control and gain access to territory and information through the population (Kalyvas 2006). Likewise, what
seems to be chaos in rebel-controlled areas is in turn a complex interaction between the rebels and the population where the rebel group may impose a social order to control the population and the population responds or adapts to the rebel order (Arjona 2017). This apparent chaos but underlying order has been recently studied and research has shown that most rebel groups create systems of governance which vary in their degree of complexity, ranging from “minimal regulation and informal taxation to forming popular assemblies, elaborate bureaucracies, schools, courts, and health clinics” (Arjona et al. 2015). In fact, this process resembles that of the emergence of the modern state, which begins with an actor taxing a population in exchange for institutions and protection (Tilly 1985). As Arjona (2017) points out, the logic follows that when war weakens the existing institutions, other institutions are likely to emerge to fill such vacuum. Drawing from the rational behind Arjona’s justification for the emergence of institutions during war, we can expect that these institutions will similarly affect the population, in the same way as institutions and norms would have an effect during peacetime. In this paper I argue that it is this variation in institutions and norms that lead to an erosion of the social capital levels within community which manifest in higher crime rates.

Previous literature on social capital has argued that the cooperation promoted by social capital is fundamental for the success of government and also democracy. Although a product of a combination of "religion, tradition, shared historical experiences and other types of cultural norms”, it arises from "iterated Prisoner’s Dilemma games" (Fukuyama 2001). As an explanation to the influence of rebel social order mechanisms on social capital, I argue that such norms and behavior established during certain forms of rebel social order lead to a variation in the variables to each player in such prisoner’s dilemma games. I focus on the use of denunciation and collaboration -both governance mechanisms- as generators of insecurity and mistrust within the members of a community. The benefits offered by the rebels to those that collaborate or denounce will discourage cooperation among the population fomenting the pursuit of personal gains. Ultimately this leads to a community where households do not trust each other and where the prospects of mutual cooperation and development are sunk together with the levels of social capital. In other words, the incentives to collaborate with the rebel group and denounce each other will create a sense of distrust and erode any sense of community and cooperation. This creates confrontation among the community members and in some cases may lead to using denunciation as a means to settle personal disputes. The erosion of trust and cooperation is further reached by the arbitrary rulings of precarious rebel trial systems. Kalyvas (2006) refers to denunciation as “the politization of private life” which leads to “intimate violence”. Once the rebel group has left, this eroded social trust becomes evident in crime rates.

The selection of Colombia to study this variation seems well fit given the long-standing armed conflict that Colombia has endured. It begun in the 1960’s as a result of a turbulent decade in Colombia referred to as “La Violencia” (1948-1958). Several guerrilla groups were formed, most notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), but also the National Liberation Army (ELN), People’s Liberation Army (EPL), the People’s
Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the April 19th Movement (M19). The FARC gained prominence in the 70s and begun expanding over the Colombian territory reaching its peak in the 1990’s where estimates point that "about three-fourths of all Colombian municipalities had some form of presence of guerrilla organizations (Echandía Castilla 1999 in Arjona 2014). The extent of their presence, together with a strong state has provided academics with valuable information, including surveys and other forms of data that are less abundant in states with precarious administrations. Last, the FARC reached a Peace Agreement with the Government late 2016 to disarm and demobilize and later reintegrate into society, including political participation. Negotiations had secretly begun in 2011 soon after Juan Manuel Santos took over Colombia’s Presidency and were formalized in 2012. This opened the possibility to study the effect of rebel governance in the population after a rebel group has left the region, making it in fact a priority to peacebuilding and development policies.

Through a cross-regional analysis this research is able to demonstrate the association between years of FARC presence and post-rebel-control criminality. In order to better explore the mechanism through which the years of an armed group control over a region can influence criminality in the post-presence setting I turn to the case of Aipecito. Aipecito represents a small rural community on the strongholds of the FARC armed group in Colombia which exemplifies how rebel presence and control is built upon institutions and information control, shows information gathering mechanisms erode social capital in general and social trust specifically, and also shows levels of criminality that have become a major concern to the population. In combining quantitative and qualitative methods through a cross-regional statistical study and an in-depth illustrative case study respectively, this paper looks forward to contributing to the understanding of civil war and the micro-level processes that affect the lives of the local populations during wartime.

2. Previous Research

In this section I will cover the preceding research that has been done on the topic. First I will introduce the study of civil war and the latest patterns in intrastate armed conflict. With this I will introduce the theory of irregular war developed by Kalyvas (2006), which serves as framework for the latter work of Arjona (“2017) on rebel governance and rebel social order. Next I will revise the literature on rebel governance and last will look at wartime institutions and mechanisms used to establish and maintain rebel social order. In line with the bridging task of this study, I will then introduce social capital theory and the main foundations. I will then frame the concept of social capital under the concept of collective action. I will address what previous research has characterized as benefits and drawbacks from social capital. Last, but not least, the relation between social capital and criminality based on previous research will be presented.
Civil war, patterns and irregular warfare

The study of civil war has expanded over the last decades with the increase of intrastate conflicts, compared to interstate conflicts. This is in part due to the reduction in the start of interstate conflicts, but at the same time civil war duration has become ever more protracted with wars starting at a faster pace than wars ending (Fearon & Laitin’s 2003:78) and thus accumulating (Hegre 2004, Fearon 2004, Collier, Hoeffler & Söderbom 2004). This, together with the dramatic difference in deaths consequence of civil war and interstate wars -16.2 million and 3.33 respectively between 1945 and 1999 (Fearon & Laitin 2003:75)- explains the enormous research attention it has attracted. It also underscores the importance of understanding its dynamics and the consequences for the population, both for the international community to be able to reduce the risk of initiation and recurrence (Hegre 2004:244), and to alleviate in post-conflict situations. It is of special relevance to this research the fact that civil war duration has increased from 2 years to 15 years within the period of 1947-1999 (Fearon & Laitin 2003:78). This implies a higher probability that rebels will behave according to long-term objectives and horizons, which in turn will have further and longer lasting impact on the population as it will be showed ahead. Despite this growing literature, the concept of civil war is surrounded by confusion due to unsystematic use and its politicization. This paper takes the broader definition of civil war used by Stathis Kalyvas (2006), leaving causes, goals and motivations aside defining civil war “as armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities” (Kalyvas 2006).

Despite the extended perception of civil war or interstate armed conflict as full-fledged chaos, recent studies on civil war, violence and rebel governance (Kalyvas 2006, Arjona 2017) have shown that this is far from accurate. What may seem as chaos happens to be patterns of behavior that respond to the dynamics endogenous to irregular armed conflict. These dynamics are determined by the definition of guerrilla or irregular armed conflict, which refers to the characteristics of the confrontation in terms of military tactics. Irregular warfare is characterized by two opposing forces of different capabilities where at least one side employs guerrilla tactics. The resulting military asymmetry leads one side to approach conflict differently, away from classic battlefronts and through deception (Kalyvas 2006:67). In modern times this form of warfare has become the common norm for civil wars. As an incumbent government is challenged by rebel forces, the latter might not be able to match the numbers and capability of the military. At the same time, technological advances in military warfare, specially artillery, have forced a move away from front-to-front combat. According to Kalyvas (2006:12) irregular warfare is defined by the twin processes of segmentation and fragmentation of sovereignty: territory is divided into zones monopolistically controlled by rival actors –segmentation- and zones where these actors’ sovereignty overlaps -fragmentation-. This characterization stresses the concepts of territory, sovereignty and its fragmentation and segmentation. Sovereignty is at the core of civil war, either over the whole state or partial, and the armed contestation of sovereignty leads to multiple sovereignty and the end of such contestation marks the end of the conflict (Tilly
Building on this definition, Kalyvas' theory explains that irregular war will create a division in the territory, separating between zones under monopoly control and zones under contestation. In other words, the most characteristic property of irregular war is the “lack of frontlines” (Kalyvas 2006:87). Although one may differentiate between the areas controlled and contested, the boundaries separating each side are blurry, fluid and fragmented, and it is in these areas that monopoly of violence is contested (Kalyvas 2006). This contestation sets territory, and the population living in it, at the center of the conflict and struggle. Territory and its control, becomes especially relevant to insurgent groups as research has shown how control may be capable of overriding political preferences in favor of “support”, specially in places where the state has declined (Del Pino 1998:170; Skocpol 1979).

Another characteristic of irregular warfare -its protractedness- serves to underscore the important role that the population plays during civil war, specially in support of the economic and food needs of the insurgent group on a long term basis. In the fluidness of the contested areas, the population also allows the armed group to hide, as Mao’s “fish in the sea” underscores (Tse-Tung 2005). This has been coined as the identification problem and has been widely researched by the counterinsurgency literature. On one side, the insurgents refuse to be identified as such and at the same time the population refuses to give them away (Kalyvas 2006:). This hints at the last main factor that drives irregular warfare: information. Both warring parties will fight to gain information on the enemy’s location and strategy, setting again the population at the heart of the dispute. Furthermore, information will also be fundamental to exert control over the territory. From the perspective of the insurgent group, territory, population and information will be fundamental to sustain -at least- the fight. From the incumbent side, without the population’s help it would prove very difficult to locate the insurgents. Therefore, both sides are dependent on the population in order to sustain their military efforts but also achieve their goals. By ensuring control over a territory, some actor portraits itself as warrantor of the population’s security. Civilians should turn to those in control in order to provide security for them regardless of sympathies, a way to “maximize various benefits subject to survival constrains” (Kalyvas 2006:12).

Rebel groups, social order and institutions

Within this framework, recent research led by Arjona (2017) suggests that in trying to control the territory, the armed group time horizon will determine their interaction with the local population, whether a social contract is established or not. Establishing a social contract with the local population ensures that rebels can “maximize the byproducts of the control -such as obtaining material resources, attracting recruits and expanding their networks” (Arjona 2017:9). This maximization follows the logic of the roving versus stationary bandits (Olson 1993), where short-term horizons -when control over a population is expected to be short- favors maximizing immediate gains, leading usually to sacking or looting. In the case of long-term horizons, the rebel group will try to control the population by monopolizing themes of violence; and to ensure the continuous extractions of resources, the rebel group will promote capital accumulation -a shortened process resembling Tilly’s
(1978) historical account of the formation of the state. In line with Tilly’s account, rebels come to understand that to secure resource production they need to establish a “sustainable system of resource extraction” (Arjona 2017). Thus, taxation and security becomes necessary provisions from the rebel group in order to sustain resource production. With this, rebel armed groups begin establishing new or capturing old institutions.

Within the social order that a rebel group may establish in certain community, Arjona (2017) differentiates between broad intervention in civilian affairs -rebelocracy- and minimal intervention -aliocracy- based only on taxation and security provision where other matters are left to local actors. Regardless of which, both establish a social contract between civilians and rebels which orders their interactions. Most importantly, this allows the population to have clear expectations. Again, rebel groups’ order-setting clearly resembles state formation, from anarchy to rules and predictability; and ultimately order. This predictability derives from the constitution of order, wartime social order (Arjona 2017:22), which is built on institutions - rules, norms and practices that structure interaction (North 1990:3).

But despite all institutions and rebel social order, insurgent armed groups depend on information and the population is their main source. Coercion has proven to be incapable of securing high-quality information, and thus rebel groups need voluntary support, on top of general obedience of rules (Arjona 2017:47). Without voluntary support and the information provided by such, insurgents would fail to monitor the territory and protect themselves. There is not much that rebels group can do to promote voluntary support, except for investing on gaining legitimacy which may change the perception of the local population and the interaction towards them (Arjona 2017:56). Arjona (2017) suggests that besides other public goods, the administration of justice may be one of the relevant possible attributes of rebel governance towards gaining recognition and thus also springing civilian collaboration. Arjona’s research (2017) shows that it is much more likely that rebel groups will establish rebelocracy instead of aliocracy. Instead, Aliocracy will only spur where a combination of local conditions, communal resistance and low strategic value of the area to the rebel group conditions the armed group to give up Rebelocracy.

When rebel social order –rebelocracy- is established the armed group will come to rule and regulate all sorts of affairs: security, taxation, dispute institutions, economic activities and labor, private behavior and social interaction, political participation and democracy, and the provision of public goods. The control over these affairs will allow the rebel group to maintain a tighter control of the population, while at the same time providing legitimacy. Armed groups will specifically establish norms that tackle major concerns by the population in order to win their hearts. This is the case for example of communities where armed groups launched cleansing campaigns in order to get rid of rapists, thieves and drug addicts when the group arrives to the community (Arjona 2017:176). This shows the local population the benefits of the armed group presence and starts the process by which they win the hearts of the population. Communities will also perceive positive the provision of private goods, public order, public goods and public meetings. Soon after arriving to a community armed groups will begin to penetrate the existing institutions and expand their norms and
order. Rebel groups will then rely on willing informants to report any disobedience of rules (Arjona 2017). The existence of informants and the use of exemplary punishment will suffice to dissuade civilian resistance.

In brief, as sovereignty is challenged and civil war develops, in following guerrilla tactics the insurgents will depend on the population, both as disguise and informants, in order to advance territorially and militarily. Rebels will also try to maximize their relation with the local population, which can benefit them with taxations, goods provision as well as support. This will lead the armed actor to pursue the most beneficial relation with the population in accordance with their time expectations. This will give way to different forms of social order and also institutions and control mechanisms which affect the population at the community level. Thus the processes triggered by civil war transforms many of a society’s spheres, from economic activities to political identity through demographic patterns (Arjona 2017). Ultimately, as I will argue, this leads to changes in the levels of Social Capital.

Social capital

Social capital is a multifaceted concept which gained much attention after the publication of Putnam’s “Making Democracy Work” (1993). The concept was introduced by Coleman (1988: S98) who defined it as aspects of social structure and interaction that facilitate actions, both individual or collective. In order to understand the concept, we may turn to a rustic anecdote by Hume (1888) also used by Putnam (1993):

“Your corn is ripe to-day; mine will be so to-morrow. 'Tis profitable for us both, that I shou'd labour with you to-day, and that you shou'd aid me to-morrow. I have no kindness for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labour with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I shou'd be disappointed, and that I shou'd in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labour alone; You treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.”

This anecdote exemplifies what has been studied under the concepts of tragedy of the commons, logic of collective action and prisoner’s dilemma. What Putnam argues is that social capital allows a community or society to overcome this collective action problem. Putnam defines social capital as “the features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam 1993:167). Within this definition, trust should be understood as the key component in facilitating cooperation, which at an individual level is based on reputation but the lack of which can then be overcome through dense networks of civic engagement and strong norms that increase the costs of defection and promote reciprocity respectively (Putnam 1993). According to Coleman, social norms transfer to the collective the right to control an action mostly due to its positive or negative consequences to the collective.
In order for a norm to constitute social capital, such norm “must lead to cooperation in groups” (Fukuyama 2001) and this is usually through values like honesty, reliability, reciprocity and similar. The prevalence of such norms allows for social trust even when information is lacking that would lead to trust based on experience. On the other side, networks of civic engagement benefit social capital by increasing defection costs, strengthening norms of reciprocity and easing information flow and community belonging (Putnam 1993:173). From this first definition into social capital the connection of the concept to the processes of rebel governance described by Arjona already appears obvious. As civil war triggers processes that transform demographics, political identities and economic activities (Wood 2008; Arjona 2009; Justino 2013) it has the potential to fundamentally affect social trust, norms of cooperation, social networks and social capital in general.

**Collective action and benefits of social capital**

In understanding the concept of social capital we may think of it as an enabler that allows to overcome the collective action problem. When someone is faced with a prisoner’s dilemma or a collective action problem, what prevents the solution of such is the lack of trust on the behavior of others, doubting that the other(s) will decide to take the mutually beneficial behavior instead of the self-benefiting behavior. Social trust, instead allows to overcome this problem without the need of detailed information on previous doings and behavior of the other(s). Norms facilitate social trust by standardizing certain behaviors or traits, most importantly reciprocity but also honesty, reliability, and others; and also by externalizing the control over behavior to the collective, as explained above. Last, the networks of civic engagement strengthen such norms of reciprocity while also providing interaction and opportunities to resolve the collective action problem. Furthermore, networks and civic institutions embody the resolution of past collective action problem, thus further encouraging social trust, reducing the incentives for opportunism and broadening the sense of self-identifying oneself with the collective (Putnam 1995).

The benefits of social capital are clear at this point. As Fukuyama (2001) underlines, in economic terms social capital reduces the cost of transactions, especially as it assumes the informal version of co-ordination mechanisms like contracts and regulations. In social terms, it allows for cooperation and the resolution of the collective action problem. At the local and rural level social capital is ever more relevant, specially as the state is less present and access to opportunities and resources is lower. Social capital underscores the importance of family, friends and of those trusted and under the same shared norms and networks. These are an “asset”, as one -or a group- may turn to them in a moment of need or mere pleasure and be “leveraged for material gain” (Woolcock and Narayan 2000). It is thus clear that those communities with rich social capital will fare better in its relations outwards, counting with far more social resources to confront poverty and vulnerability and to access and seize opportunities from outside the community. But high levels of social capital have also shown to relate to benefits within the community, such as in promotion of cooperation –borrowing
money— but also in crime prevention or dissuasion. This has led to the understanding of social capital as a public good allowing for voluntary cooperation. One may think of rotating credit associations as a representative exemplification of social capital beneficial externalities (Vélez-Ibáñez 1983). But these dimensions of externalities regarding in-group and out-group perceptions, uncover what may be one of the main drawbacks of social capital. Ultimately, social capital is not inherently positive, but it depends on its purpose and intentions that will lead to positive or negative externalities. Contrary to other forms of capital, Fukuyama (2001) argues that group solidarity comes at the cost of out-group hostility. While group-belonging promotes habits of cooperation and solidarity (Putnam 1993:89), a perverse version of social capital may at the same time generate hatred and exclusion towards those outside the group or favor criminal networks (Rubio 1997). An example of this can be the Mafia in Italy but also gang dynamics in Latin America. Interestingly, an armed group may rely strongly on social capital, but it may in turn affect strongly the local population it interacts with.

**Social capital and criminality**

But despite eventual negative externalities, social capital has shown to be beneficial for democracy, development and social cohesiveness. Given the complex and engrained character of social capital at the core of social life, we may expect social capital to influence many dimensions of social life. In line with this, and by stressing the relevance of social trust in social capital, several studies have showed a relation between social capital and criminality. Research has also shown how the complexity of such relationship may influence social capital levels and vice versa. Research points at social capital inducing violence when specific to groups (gangs and similar). Instead, when spread throughout society, it encourages cooperation and facilitates development and democracy. The main arguments on the positive effects are based on how social transaction costs are lowered facilitating conflict resolution and how the resulting better organization and cooperation in a community eases overcoming the free-rider problem (Lederman et al. 2002).

The study by Lederman et al. (2002) from the World Bank was able to show that “the prevalence of trust on community members seems to have a significant and robust effect of reducing the incidence of violent crimes” (Lederman et al. 2002). Their study used national data from 39 countries covering from 1980 to 1994 looking at the incidence of social capital on violent crime. According to this study, when social capital relationships encompass all members of the society or community in this case, then “the whole society behaves as a single group in which social relationships foster individual and collective action to facilitate conflict resolution and prevent predatory behavior” (Lederman et al. 2002). This stands in contrast to the effects in promoting violence that group-specific social capital may have as in gangs, ethnic clans or closed neighborhoods.

Although with a different argument, Rosenfeld, Messner and Baumer (2001) also underline the benefits of social capital against crime. Their research highlights how anomie theory and social disorganization theory explains the negative relationship between social capital and crime. From the perspective of the social organization, the logic follows that
under weak social controls, groups loose their ability to organize and protect themselves, which also leads to mistrust and suspicion, under which predatory crime is more likely (Bursik & Grasmik 1993). From the perspective of the anomie theory, it is the anomic environment, or lack of moral order, that is conducive to selfish behavior and exploitation of others (Rosenfeld & Messner 1998). In line with the complexity and intertwined character of social capital, Rosenfeld & Messner (1998) argue the increase in violence and crime would simultaneously erode social trust.

Regardless of the anomie or organizational approach, one may understand the connection as follows: beyond personal and individual aspects, behavior is constrained by social aspects. In this case it is moral norms and also the organizational capabilities of a community. From the perspective of the rational individual, the choice to commit a crime is weighed against the benefits and constrains (Lederman et al. 2002). Such constrains can then be identified with moral thresholds or group controlled penalties. Both are thus understood as deterrents that dissuade from criminal behavior. Therefore, disorganized societies with weak moral norms will have low levels of deterrence and higher levels of crime. Based on this, we may expect as well that communities where the social order enforcers have fled, will find themselves disorganized and lacking constrains to dissuade criminal behavior.

**Positioning the study**

The previous research in general and the arguments presented above show the existence of parallel studies on civil war, rebel social order, social capital and criminality. Some studies like Arjona’s (2017) hint at how some aspect of social capital -high quality institutions- may influence the dynamics of the interactions between the population and a rebel group. Nonetheless, previous research has failed to address how does armed conflict influence post-conflict social capital and criminality. Only recently, the results on rebel governance by Arjona (2017) have opened the possibility to study how such during-conflict variation may affect criminality rates on post-conflict communities. This study bridges this gap by analyzing the rates of criminality in municipalities where there has been FARC presence compared to those that have not. The relationship proves to be very complex and given the limitations in data, an in-depth case study proves beneficial to understand the causal mechanisms. When tracing the pathway of the causal relation, social capital and its erosion presents itself as an important causal path explaining the levels of criminality.

The question of why do some post-conflict communities have higher crime rates than others hasn’t been answered by previous research. Hence, to better understand the high criminality rates in post-conflict communities, this research focuses on developing the causal story in order to understand the mechanisms and steps that take place. In this direction, some aspects need to be theorized and develop in order to understand how rebel presence and rebel social order may influence post-conflict criminality levels at the local level. First, how rebel social order is built upon information gathering mechanisms. Second, how these mechanisms together with other control mechanisms affect social capital at the community level. Last,
how the retreat of the armed group from the community unmasksthe social capital effects through criminality rates. In the next section, these theoretical propositions are developed.

3. Theory

The previous section introduced the existing theories and studies on irregular warfare, rebel governance, social capital and crime. Theories about social capital and crime haven’t been applied before to the micro-level study of civil war and this study tackles this research gap. This section addresses the theoretical gap connecting both fields of study. Arjona’s (2017) work opens the door to this research by expanding the concept of rebel governance and rebel social order. This allows for the novel study of how such social social order and norms influence the communities and population they rule over. From here on, this section will introduce the main argument bridging together these two lines of research: that rebel control and social order can have long lasting implications for the communities that have endured it. More specifically, I argue that structures of rebel governance set to impose social order and control will affect the social fabric of the population. This fabric or social capital is specifically sensitive to norms of interaction and iterative patterns of behavior. Therefore, the new or specific norms set by rebel groups in trying to control the population will disturb the communities’ social capital. Most importantly, it will affect the way the people interact with each other, among themselves. Control mechanisms put in place in rebel-controlled areas will weaken the social institutions that promote cooperation and trust within the community. Further, the specific information-gathering mechanisms will erode trust among the population, galvanizing future cooperation and eroding social capital in general.

Assumptions

I theorize that communities that have endured tighter rebel control are more likely to experience lower levels of social capital which manifest in higher crime rates. In order to develop this, the theory’s starting point rests on several assumptions. First, I assume that rebel groups behave mostly like rational actors, trying to maximize their actions towards the end goal of winning the war and immediate goal of survival. In accordance to Arjona’s (2017) theory and findings, it is assumed that rebel groups in irregular war settings are especially dependent on the local population, specially in order to ensure territorial control, resources and information. Given the relevance that the local population and its control pose for the armed groups, rebels will try to maximize their relation with the locals. Their behavior will in turn depend on whether they expect to control the territory for a long period of time or not. Differences on long-term and short-term horizons justify different patterns of behavior towards the local population. These range from stationary to roving bandits approach respectively (Olson 1993). When on short-term horizons, rebel armed groups will most likely choose to maximize their gains in a short span of time by looting. Instead, on long-term
horizons, rebel groups will promote production and capital accumulation. Furthermore, rebel groups will try to ensure order and predictability. Based on Arjona’s (2017) findings and on the rationality of the rebel groups, I assume that the best way to establish social order in a local community is by first capturing the means of violence and justice, and thus become taxators and security providers to the local population. In order to do so, the armed group will try to capture the local institutions, with special emphasis on those for conflict/dispute resolution and norm-setting. In light of Arjona’s results I also assume that in most cases the rebel will manage to impose a tight control, ruling over a wide range of affairs.

From here, I argue that the resulting norm-setting, control enforcing mechanisms and information gathering mechanisms fundamentally affect the social capital of a local community. This manifests itself once the armed group has retreated. This mechanism is based on three steps: first, resulting from the rebel control aspirations, rebel social order will be enacted on the local population. Second, the enforcing norms, information-gathering mechanisms and the reiteration of behavior will leave trace on the locals’ social capital, becoming manifest once the rebel group abandons the region and rebel social order is abolished. Last, crime rates trends should manifest the lack of social trust and cooperation which materializes in predatory behavior.

**Causal mechanism**

Rebel groups establish social order by exerting control and regulating different spheres. Arjona’s study (2017) has described how under rebel order, combatants will impose norms on and regulate the use of violence, economic activities, private behavior (such as dress codes), political behavior (vote) and public goods. Rebel groups will also collect taxation, exert the monopoly over violence and capture or substitute existing institutions for dispute resolution. As Arjona (2017) emphasizes quoting former combatants, this is not merely for ideological reasons, but a way to ensure more control over the local population. All of these control and order-setting mechanisms base their success on the cooperation of the population and the access to information by the combatants. No norm can be enforced if the rebel group is not aware of those that break it. In fact, rebel groups cannot expend much resources on controlling local populations and policing. On the contrary, rebel groups do not deploy combatants permanently to patrol the communities under their control; but rather appear every couple of days. In order to sustain such level of control and maintain the rebel social order, insurgents need to rely on informants from the local population which will *keep tabs* on the community on their behalf. In this fashion, combatants become dependent on voluntary cooperation as well as on infiltrates in the communal organizations in order to maintain control. Motivations to inform the guerrilla on cases of disobedience can be based on affinity with the the rebel group, based on survival and pragmatic reasons, or in search for benefits from favoritism by the armed group. Regardless of the motivations, the result is that the rebel group has eyes on the community and need not to be present to maintain control. In turn, the existence of informants in a community and infiltrates in the different local institutions will generate distrust among the civilians as relations will be casted with clouds
of doubt on whether the other person serves as informant for the armed group. A local community under rebel order comes to resemble a secret-police regime, which makes the local population distrust each other, become reserved and wary. This information-gathering mechanisms are fundamental to the rebel groups in order to keep tabs on the population and ensure that rules are being followed, and to be able to exert violence and exemplary punishment on those that do not follow the norms. Without accurate information, unjust punishment would turn the population against the rulers. This further underscores the importance of information and the role it plays and setting and maintaining rebel social order.

In line with existing theories of social capital and social trust erosion, I argue that two main factors that characterize rebel order have detrimental effect on the local population’s social capital. First, a combination of back-stabbing and insecurity resulting from the information gathering mechanisms that rebels rely on which affects social trust directly. Second, cooperation norms become dependent or hostage to an ulterior enforcer, the rebel group. Thus when the enforcer leaves, those norms previously put in place become devoid of meaning. In other words, the enforcing mechanisms that characterize social norms in communities with high social capital become extrinsic to the community. Ultimately, once the rebel group abandons a region the community finds itself lacking social trust and meaningful cooperation norms. Without trust to promote and re-start the cooperation cycle, and with institutions and norms emptied by the vacuum left by the guarantor or rebel driver, communities will not only show signs of low social trust and wariness, but will also struggle to overcome problems of collective action.

In sum, rebel control will put in place certain mechanisms necessary to sustain territorial control and control over the local population while maintaining its military capabilities. These mechanisms run on the delegation of monitoring to civilians with the community, who voluntarily do so without necessarily disclosing it to the community. These mechanisms will erode social and social trust through time. Therefore, longer periods of rebel control will anchor stronger feelings of mistrust based on reiterated experiences. Ultimately, when the rebel group retreats, dissolves of disarm; rebel social order is left to crumble as it lacks enforcers. With the rebel group to sustain the institutions and norms that enforced rebel social order, these will dissolve. The underlying eroded social trust and lack of social capital will result in crime and other forms of predatory behavior in the community.
Hypotheses

The theory above has presented an argument about the relationship between the concepts central to the research question (Powner 2015). In line with previous research on irregular warfare, rebel governance, social capital and criminality; it has been argued that rebel social order will influence crime rates through the erosion of the social fabric of the local population. Two hypothesis can be summed from the arguments presented above. First, we would expect to see that communities that have endured rebel social order are more likely to suffer from low levels of social capital and trust after the rebel group has left and display higher levels of criminality. Based on this:

\( H_1: \text{ Communities that have endured longer periods of rebel social order are more likely to have higher criminality rates. } \)

Last, understanding the complexities of social interaction and the multifaceted dynamics that influence social capital and its components, we may expect that the effect of rebel social order on a community’s social capital might lose strength with time, as the community interacts with its context and time allows for the reemergence of social trust, leadership or the interaction with external factors that had been sealed during rebel governance. The effect of rebel social order over a local population’s criminality is more likely to be strongest immediately after the end of rebel order and will diminish over time.

\( H_2: \text{ Communities that have endured rebel social order will show its effect after the armed group abandons the territory and will diminish over time. } \)

Scope Conditions

We can expect to observe this pattern during civil wars that are characterized by irregular warfare and guerrilla tactics. Wars that develop according to other tactics will lead to different priorities motivating the interactions of the rebel groups with the local population, or even disregarding it. Similarly, rebel groups -or paramilitary groups- that face short-term horizons will interact in a different manner with the population, not leading to rebel social order but most likely disorder, as Arjona (2017) pinpoints. Furthermore, even under cases of long-term horizons, there is a small probability that communities might be able to resist if capable of overcoming collective action problem through high quality institutions (Arjona 2017). In such cases, either lighter versions of social control or community-self-rule could take place having different effects on a community and its social fabric/capital. Therefore, one would expect to see similar patterns and consequences across different civil wars where insurgent guerrillas are capable of establishing social order across certain territories. Last, behavior and interactions between rebel groups and local population are expected to be different under urban settings.

This section has argued to explain the effect that rebel social order has on the social
fabric of the local population. I have presented the causal mechanism which has informed the two main hypotheses. The sections ahead will test these hypothesis through a combination of methods. The following section presents the research design.

4. Research Design

This research aims to provide insight on the variations of criminality in post-conflict communities based on rebel areas of control and the duration of such. Given the existing research gap and the cross-field approach bridging between fields of irregular warfare, rebel governance and sociology; this research is based on a pathway tracing approach and combines quantitative and qualitative methods. Through a quantitative analysis this paper is able to show a correlation between FARC years of presence and levels of theft at the municipality level. The quantitative analysis developed allows to observe a pattern in a large-N population of cases which strengthens the generalizability of the relation observed. Moreover, observing the pattern across a sample of 382 municipalities makes it possible to assess the level of influence that the independent variable—rebel control—has on the dependent variable—criminality. The conflict context limits the amount of data existing and the lack of more data at the community level restricts this research ability to test the causal mechanism. Instead, this study tests the causal relation through an in-depth qualitative case study. Given the lack of data available to study the relationship, an in-depth case study is the best way to trace and unpack the causal mechanisms that connects rebel order with levels of criminality. In this pathway-tracing process, this study has relied on qualitative methods which allows to identify and evaluate causal mechanisms along with temporal order (Borsché 2014, Powner 2015) and exploits the exploratory advantages inherent to case studies (Gerring 2006). Further, this study allows to link macro and micro level processes, by connecting how the interactions of rebel groups with civilians at the community level affect crime rates and post-conflict violence (Balcells and Justino 2014).

The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is beneficial to the overall objective of this paper, as it allows to identify the causal relation in a large-N study across municipalities in Colombia, whilst also enabling the identification of the steps of the causal mechanism, the pathway, traced back through the case study. In other words, the combinations of cross-regional quantitative analysis and within-case process tracing analysis allows first to observe and extrapolate the relation between the IV and DV across the sample of municipalities and to the population. Second it allows to study and unfold at a local level the causal relation that explains the relation at the cross-regional level. Ahead I will argue for the case selection, and afterwards the quantitative research design will be presented, including the model, dataset and variables operationalization.
Case selection

The selection of Colombia both for the cross-regional study and micro-level study is motivated by several reasons: variance in control patterns, data availability and the magnitude of the conflict in terms of length and casualties. The protractedness and severity of the conflict has led to wide variance in territorial control patterns. Despite the conflict lasting for over five decades, there is wide variation in the duration experienced at the municipal level. This provides with a sample where there are communities that have endured rebel group presence for more than a decade in contrast to others that may have only endured two years of armed group control, and other regions that didn’t experience any armed conflict or rebel group presence. This diversity allows for the study of the variation of the length of an armed group control over a region and its effect on the society. The existence of wide differences in the length of armed control that municipalities have experienced over the decades makes it possible to test if the crime rates of a municipality are affected by the different degrees of rebel armed presence and control. Moreover, the availability of accurate macro-level data at a municipal level in a country enduring armed conflict presents an opportunity of studying the crime rates differences between regions within a country. Since the mid-2000’s when former President Uribe developed a strong military stance against the insurgent groups, security in the rural areas of Colombia has improved allowing to obtain more reliable data from the security providing institutions. This security improvement, together with the final demobilization of the FARC also facilitated the possibility of doing field research in remote areas of Colombia previously under control by this rebel group. Last, the strengthening of the military and security apparatus since 2001 allows also for much more reliable information on armed groups actions, based on which the independent variable on territorial rebel control needs to be coded.

Therefore, the Colombian conflict characteristics makes it is possible to test statistically the hypothesis by comparing crime levels on municipalities that experienced wide variation in FARC presence, from no presence in the previous decade to hegemonic continuous presence. Furthermore, it opens the possibility to study the relation between crime rates and territorial rebel control. The next section presents an overview of the Colombian armed conflict and the territorial dynamics that are relevant to the study.

Colombia Conflict

Only recently, the FARC, part to one of the dyads that characterized the conflict in Colombia agreed to a peace settlement and disarmed and demobilized within the next seven months. This has presented an enormous opportunity in gaining insight into the Colombian armed conflict dynamics in general and also specifically through the behavior and actions developed by this group and how this may have changed the country. In order to present an overview of the conflict that is just to the research question and the processes being studied, it is important to understand certain characteristics of the armed conflict in Colombia.

In terms of armed conflict, the case of Colombia is characterized by a long-lived armed conflict and insurgency. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) codes the
beginning of the conflict between the Government and the FARC in 1964, which makes it the longest intra-state conflict recorded by the UCDP and has left over 27,000 dead (Allansson, Melander & Themnér 2017, Gleditsch, et al. 2002) and over 7 million displaced (Norwegian Refugee Council and IDMC), just second to the Syrian conflict. The dynamics of the conflict are characterized by two main insurgent groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), both forming around the decade of the 1960’s, at the end of the savage civil war between conservatives and liberals known as La Violencia (1948-1958). These insurgencies begun as peasants armed themselves to ensure protection during La Violencia. After the attack by the government on Marquetalia the FARC structure is formalized in 1964 (Brittain 2010). But it is not until the fall of the Berlin wall that these rebel groups, and specially the FARC, start expanding throughout the Colombian territory. By the 1980s there was FARC presence in 1/5th of the country (Richani 2002), and during the 1990’s FARC expanded at a higher rate than in the last three decades, spreading over more than 60 percent of the country (Brittain 2010). According to Gutierrez (2008), FARC had 20,000 members in the 19990s. This expansion culminates in 2001 with FARC controlling over 60% of the territory and with the capital Bogotá surrounded by the rebel groups. As a response to the resulting violence and insecurity, paramilitaries groups were formed in the 1980s in an attempt by landowners to protect themselves against the expansion of the rebel groups. The different paramilitary groups all merged into the United Self-Defenses of Colombia (AUC) in 1997. Several peace processes were started with between the Government and FARC but none of them was successful during the last decades of the 20th century. Pastrana’s negotiations were perhaps some of the longest and promising up to 2001 when they fell apart. Uribe’s presidency from 2002 to 2010 was characterized instead by his security policy called Democratic Security, which reinforced the fight of the Colombian State against the rebel groups by strengthening the military presence across the country. Uribe’s presidency was then continued by Juan Manuel Santos presidency which was characterized by the initiation of negotiations with the FARC, reaching of the Peace Agreement, and initiations of talks with the ELN. Overall the FARC managed to be present in more than half of the territory at the end of the expansion years. Nonetheless, with the rise of paramilitary groups in resistance, along with other insurgent groups trying to expand, many regions of Colombia have suffered from presence from more than one actor. Sovereignty in Colombia was at moments in certain regions not only dual but triple and contested. Nonetheless, the FARC has been the strongest guerrilla in the Colombian armed conflict and the territories that have only seen its presence are not scarce and will be the focus of this study. More information about the FARC and its development is given along the case of Aipecito. The next section outlines the quantitative methodology applied to test the hypothesis of higher crime rates among communities with longer record of rebel control.
5. Criminality in former rebel-controlled communities, a cross-regional study

This section presents the design employed to empirically investigate the hypothesis that more years of rebel control will predict higher criminality at the municipal level. The availability of public data in Colombia allows for a large-N study through a statistical analysis of the relation between rebel control and criminality. The existence of data at the municipal level has allowed to develop a dataset that results from the integration of different databases. This has in turn allowed to develop this innovative study that tries to study the relation between during-conflict patterns and post-conflict communal experiences. Ahead, the dataset for the cross-regional study is presented, along with the variables operationalization.

The dataset

To statistically test whether municipalities with long periods of rebel control are more likely to have higher crime rates in a post-conflict setting, this study operationalizes rebel control through a measure of FARC presence and criminality by measuring theft rates, as it will be developed ahead. The selection of the operationalization is based on data availability for the coding of rebel control. The operationalization of criminality on theft is based on the advantages of theft on capturing variation in social capital, given the complexity of factors influencing homicides. Accordingly, this study combines data from different sources in order to perform a series of linear regressions to estimate the coefficients of the years of FARC presence on the theft rates. The years of FARC presence were measured for the period 2001-2011, and theft was measure for 2012. Given the lack of front lines that characterizes irregular warfare (Kalyvas 2006), in order to better capture the territorial control aspects of the conflict the study is developed at the municipal level, the lowest level at which information is available. Municipalities are a decentralized form of administrative subdivision in Colombia and are grouped to form departments. This subdivision is equiparable to that of counties or townships in other countries, and it constitutes the fundamental territorial division of the Colombian state, both politically and administratively. By law, these must have at least a population of 25,000 in order to be conformed. Out of the 1122 municipalities that compose the territory, the sample was reduced to 382 municipalities according to the following criteria, in order to isolate the effect of rebel order on criminality. First, the municipalities that score a rural index lower of 25.1% were excluded in order to better capture the dynamics that are the focus of this research, that is rebel governance in rural areas. In turn, armed group dynamics in urban populations have been different in the case of the Colombian conflict, specially as the centralized Colombian state has always been stronger in the urban areas, which it considered its strongholds. Second, municipalities that continued to have armed presence after 2011 were also excluded from the sample. In order to measure the crime rates in communities that had suffered from rebel control, those that still endured rebel presence
would not display the same characteristics and would bias the sample. Continued presence of armed groups would have damaged the reliability of the crime reports, as reporting may be determined by the rebel group rules and also might be interfered by crime committed by the rebel groups themselves instead of only by the population. Through this exclusion I make sure that the crime rates of the municipalities included in the sample represent crimes committed by the population, and not by other armed groups. By excluding also those with any presence in 2013 I make sure that there are no municipalities in the sample where the armed group might have still been present in 2012 but gone unnoticed and manifested back in 2013. Third, those municipalities that had armed presence of any other group but FARC in the period between 2001 and 2011 were also ruled out as I tried to capture those territories that were uncontested during those years. As a consequence, only communities that had endured only FARC presence or no presence at all by rebel groups during the measurement years were included in the final dataset. By discarding municipalities with presence from other armed groups, I ensure that IV – Years of FARC – will be able to capture the hegemony or contestedness of each municipality between the armed group of interest -FARC- and the government without any external influence by other actors. Therefore, the final dataset consists of the resulting 382 municipalities from 27 departments.

With this dataset a linear regression model is built with the number of thefts committed in a municipality during 2012 as the dependent variable accounting for criminality. The independent variable is constructed from data on armed group presence to account for FARC presence. The operationalization of these variables is explained ahead. Along with the dependent and independent variable, the model includes several control variables trying to identify possible alternative explanations or confounders. Last, a third specification of this model is considered which adds an interaction term, trying to account for the influence that may have the number of years that have passed since the FARC were present in a given municipality.

**Independent variable**

The main explanatory variable “Years of FARC” accounts for the number of years that the FARC armed group has been present in a certain municipality between 2001 and 2011, both included. Based on Arjona findings, long-term horizons of an armed group in a territory will most likely lead to rebel control, thus the more years FARC has been in a municipality, the more likely that rebel social order was imposed. The data were obtained from the Centre for Studies of Economic Development (CEDE) from the University of Los Andes from the Conflict and Violence Panel within the municipal database (Acevedo and Bornacelly 2014). The municipal panel from CEDE is one of the most comprehensive databases publicly available on Colombia at the municipal level. It compiles information on general characteristics, economic performance, education, health, governance and conflict and violence. The Conflict and Violence panel includes both disaggregated data per municipality per year recording all following events: harassment of the population by an armed group, road blockades, incursions or raids into a community, assaults, offensives,
ambushes, mass killings, massacres, kidnappings, armed clashes, displacement events and other information on land conflicts as well as coca cultivation. This information is aggregated into the CEDE panel from different sources mainly: the National Police of Colombia, the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), the National Planning Department (DNP) and the Ministry of Defense.

In order to code “Years of FARC”, I relied on a dummy variable “Dummy FARC” which accounts for all the previous variables in a single municipality per year. The respective “Dummy AUC” and "Dummy ELN” were used to discard those municipalities with other armed groups presence. The dummy variable on FARC presence in turn allowed to produce the Independent Variable "Years FARC" accounting for the number of years that the FARC has been present in a municipality between 2001 and 2011. The reason for counting the years of FARC presence from 2001 to 2011 is twofold. First, 2001 is the year where the Peace Negotiations of El Cagüán between FARC and the government of Pastrana fell apart, only to be formally suspended on January 8th 2002. With negotiations just finished it can be understood that FARC resume their long-term horizons, specially in those regions where the rebel group had control. In turn, 2011 is the last year before FARC entered again a peace process in 2012 with the newly elected President Juan Manuel Santos and which would culminate with the signal of the final Peace Agreement in November 2016.

One problem with the coding of the independent variable is that it is not capable of capturing the recentness of the years of rebel group presence in respect to 2012. If a municipality has had 7 years of rebel group presence between 2001 and 2012, we would expect a different effect on the 2012 theft rates if the rebel presence had ended in 2011 than if it had ended in 2007 and four years had gone by since then. In accordance to the proposed theory, the effects on social capital by rebels’ presence should be clearest immediately after the armed group has left, contrary to years after through which the social capital level might have varied due to other uncontrolled factors. The best way to capture this is through a multiplicative interaction term, which would capture the variance in effect of the IV on the DV depending on the number of years since the last rebel group presence. In order to capture this interaction, a second independent variable is coded “Years since FARC” measuring the number of years that have passed since the last time the rebel group was coded present in a region until 2012. If the last time presence was registered is in 2011, then than municipality will be coded “0”. If last presence was in 2010, then 1 years has passed, and so on for every municipality.

**Dependent variable**

The data for the levels of criminality (theft) are also taken form the Municipal Panel from CEDE. The outcome of interest is coded from 0 to 577 indicating the total number of thefts that are accounted for in each municipality, per year -in this case 2012. This data were obtained by CEDE from the Ministry of Defense of Colombia. The category of theft is a sum of all theft to individuals, households, businesses and vehicles in 2012 for every municipality in the dataset. As mentioned before, by having excluded from the dataset those
municipalities with armed group presence during 2012 or 2013, the crimes coded can be regarded as crimes committed by the population and not by the armed groups themselves.

Control Variables

In accordance to previous literature on crime and social capital, I have considered the following control variables that might account for variance in the dependent variable. First of all, population would be a measurement that could explain differences in crime rates across municipalities, with higher population numbers leading to higher crime rates. Thus the control variable “Population” was coded, representing the official projections of the expected population for 2012 of every municipality. It was obtained from the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia (DANE) projections made out of the 2005 nationwide census in the absence of more recent measures.

The different model specifications also include the “Rurality Index” as a control variable, despite already serving as a bar for discarding urban areas. Crime should be influenced by state presence as well as police response, thus a greater rurality could predict higher crime rates by decreasing the costs of predation. On the contrary, studies on urban criminal rates point at the effects of dissociation and the greater amounts of immigration and younger populations thus expecting a negative relation. The Rurality Index measures the level of rurality of a municipality, as contrary to urban. The indicator is obtained based on the population density and distance from urban centers (de Ferranti 2005), based on geographic economy theory brought forward by Krugman (1991). The measures for Colombia used in this study were developed by UNPD and presented in their Human Development National Report of 2011. Although the indicator is built on measures from 2005, we do not expect the armed conflict to change much the rurality score of the municipalities, if not rather freeze it against development.

Poverty and education are two other variables that need to be accounted, specially in accordance to previous studies of social capital and criminality, which have shown the relation between both low level of education and high levels of poverty with crime rates. In line with previous research like the work of Cuesta (Cox 2009) on Social Capital and Crime in Honduras and Colombia, I have turned to the Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN) indicator to control for poverty. Besides data restrictions, this is a good indicator with a reduced numbers of variables feeding it, contrary to other indexes of poverty like the Multidimensional Poverty Index, which includes education measures which would be then correlated to the last control variable. This Index is calculated by the DANE based also on the 2005 census. In order to establish how the population basic needs are satisfied, the methodology looks at housing, water and sewage, children school attendance and economic dependency and produce a measure from 0 to 100% of Unsatisfied Basic Needs. This indicator is especially relevant as previous studies have shown that poverty, might be one of the predictors of crime. Along with poverty, education is considered one of the two main predictors of crime. the control variable “Education Achievement” allows to measure and evaluate the level of education of a municipality. It was obtained from the National Planning Department of Colombia (DNP)
and it is calculated based on the mean schooling of those above 15 in every household, which is considered deprived when the mean years is lower than 9. This variable is also built from the 2005 census. The variable is coded to present the percentage of the municipality population in a situation of deprivation. We would expect to see a negative relationship between the education achievement variable and the crime rates in a municipality. It is likely that the education achievement level will have changed since 2005, but no more recent data is available.

Results

This section contains the results of the linear regressions combining the different variables mentioned above. Table I presents the descriptive statistics of the variables included in the models. The number of observations is 382 but it falls to 379 because of the missing data on UBN variable.

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<th>Table I. Descriptive Statistics</th>
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<td>Theft</td>
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<td>Years of FARC</td>
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<td>Rural Index</td>
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Based on this, I focus now on the regression results to test whether this relation is sustained across a large sample of rural municipalities in Colombia as well as controlling for alternative explanations that might have had an impact on the social capital and crime rates in 2012.

Table II presents three different specifications of the model. The first specification is the baseline were all the alternative explanatory variables are regressed against the dependent variable -theft rates. In the second model specification the main independent variable – Years of FARC- is included into a bivariate additive regression. The third specification presents the coefficients of a regression including a multiplicative interaction term ("Years of FARC " x "Years since FARC"). The baseline specification shows the coefficient and their significance of the alternative explanatory variables. Both poverty (UBN) and education are shown to be statistically significant with coefficients of -0.449 and -0.684 respectively. This indicates a negative relationship between these variables and the outcome of interest. An increase in poverty or education levels should see a decrease in theft crimes. The education effect on theft behaves as expected both in significance and the direction of the relation. The coefficients from the alternative explanatory variables remain constant when including the independent variable "Years of FARC" in the second
specification. This is in accordance to the lack of correlation between the variables, which leads to expect minimal variation when including all variables simultaneously. Moreover, the specification indicates a significant, positive correlation between endurance of FARC control and the crime rates in 2012 of certain municipality. With the four control variables included, "Years of FARC" is still significant at the 99% level. The coefficient of 3.464 indicates that for every additional year that the FARC have been present in a municipality, the theft rate would increase by 3.464.

Last, the third specification shows that the inclusion of the interaction term in the model has important implications. Its inclusion changes the coefficient of "Years of FARC" by more than double (8.680), clearing the omitted variable bias in the second specification. This effect would in turn be influenced by the interaction term of -1.044. Therefore, the effect of the “Years of FARC” variable (8.680) on the theft rate is influenced

<table>
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<th>Table II. Regression Results</th>
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<td><strong>Dependent variable:</strong> Theft</td>
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Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
negatively by the increase in Years since FARC. Meaning that the effect of the “Years of FARC” on the theft rates will be reduced by 1.044 for every year that has passed since their last presence. Further, both the IV and the interaction term are significant at the 99% level, as well as the education and population control variables. Instead we can observe that the Poverty measure (UBN) loses most of its significance, remaining significant only at 90% level. Nonetheless, the coefficient of the “Years since FARC” variable gives a positive sign, which might be biased due to interdependency between both variables. The bias could also be caused by the distortion caused by presence prior to 2001 that might have endured some municipalities. Ideally, if data were available and reliable, it would be worth to expand the years of coverage accounting for FARC presence.

Discussion

From the results presented above it can be summed that “Years of FARC” presence is a good predictor of the theft rates in a community in a post-rebel setting. Nonetheless, the prediction value of the Years of FARC is conditional to time that has gone by since the last rebel group presence. This is coherent and confirms both hypotheses, understanding that the effect of the rebel control on the population, their social capital and criminality rates would be diminished as the communities and municipalities interact with different forms of governance and order after the armed group has left.

Finally, it could be argued that the relationship uncovered by the analysis is not necessarily causal. Therefore, in order to address any concerns on endogeneity or reverse causation (Cohen 2013), and to explore the steps to the causal relation, this study moves ahead by tracing this mechanism on the micro level in an in-depth case study.

6. Micro-Level evidence from Colombia: Aipecito

The results from the statistical analysis above have demonstrated a correlation between the length of armed group presence and post-rebel-control criminality. However, there is still a need to explore the nature of the relationship between the explanatory variable and the outcome of interest, to understand the causal mechanism. The best way to do this is through a case study, which could in particular explain why longer presence of a single armed group in a territory affects the levels of criminality in the post-conflict setting. The case study helps show the causal path that connects IV and DV as insurgent control of a territory with long-term horizons leads to the use of certain mechanisms of control over the population including information gathering mechanisms and capture of dispute-resolution institutions. These in turn erode social trust and social capital among the population and the retreat of the rebel’s control gives way to raise in theft and criminality.

Ahead I will first present the process-tracing design, its essence and strengths. Next I will present the data and its collection, from which I will dive into the case study of Aipecito and introduce it. Last I will expose the causal process observations that, according to the
theory and hypothesis, should be observed in Aipecito in order to trace back the proposed causal mechanism through the case. These will be discussed and weighed against alternative explanations.

**Process-tracing**

Process-tracing originated in the field of cognitive psychology, connoted by Alexander George in 1979. This tool or technique was soon applied also to the wider social sciences and redefined as “the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case” (Bennet and Checkel 2015). In accordance to the deductive theory-testing side of process-tracing, this section examines the observable implications of the hypothesized causal mechanism connecting years of rebel order and criminality; and whether the theory explains the case. Therefore, this section aims to increase the confidence in the causal significance of the correlations identified in the statistical models of the previous chapter. The use of process-tracing becomes even more relevant under data-shortage settings, as is common in the field of peace and conflict research (Layll 2015) and is also the case.

**Data and Aipecito**

This case study drives deep into the experiences of Aipecito, a *corregimiento* (municipal territorial subdivision) located west of Neiva, deep into the forested Andean range in the Colombian department of Huila, neighboring with Tolima department towards the west. Aipecito finds itself in between the high elevations that characterize the central Andean range which runs from south to north across Colombia; and the plains on the east, which characterize central Huila on the sides of the basin of the Magdalena river. Only few valleys west into the Andean range is the main FARC stronghold of Marquetalia, *corregimiento* of Gaitania, in Planadas, Department of Tolima. The relevance of Marquetalia lays on its symbolism to the guerrilla movement. It was in Marquetalia where communist leader Jacobo Prias Alape was killed in 1960, which lead to the return to arms of former communist combatants that had laid down arms after La Violencia ended. Soon after raising in arms again, the Independent Republic of Marquetalia was declared. Still informally organized as a peasant self-defense movement, a few years later in 1964 it would formalize itself as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) (Brittain 2010). As the FARC grew, the insurgents expanded, and Aipecito was soon the be controlled by them.

FARC presence would then extend in Aipecito until 2015, when alias “Pedro Nel”, head of the FARC Front 66 also known as Front “Joselo Losada” was killed in a raid in Aipecito by the military. The area was mainly under control of the front 66, which wouldn’t continue operating after the death of Pedro Nel. Extortions kept on by other fronts until late 2016. Since then, and with the later 2017 demobilization of the armed group, Aipecito has begun to transit away from rebel order.
One year after the FARC lost presence in Aipecito, as a researcher to University Carlos III and before being enrolled at Uppsala University, I was able to hold 12 interviews in the *corregimiento* with both current and former local leaders, both men and women, and local population in general. Interviews took place during two different field trips on the 12th and 13th of July and a second one from the 19th to the 22nd of July 2017. The research project and I were introduced to the community and local leaders through the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), who works in the area and monitors the Human Rights situation. Interviews were then developed following a semi-structured fashion around the personal experiences of the population under FARC rule, FARC order, cooperation and trust within the community, and major present concerns. During the whole research process, a do-no-harm approach was maintained given the sensitivity of the information and the risk of re-victimization. I was first introduced to the community at a local meeting where OHCHR explained the focus of my research to the local population. Interviewees were informed at the beginning of each interview about the project, its scope and interest. Also a confidentiality form was read, explaining that all information would be kept anonymous, asking for consent to record the interviews, and clarifying that interviewees could stop the interview or not answer any question at any point.

These in-depth interviews allowed me to gain deeper understanding of war and rebel control at the local level (Brounéus 2011). More specifically, it allowed me to better understand the experiences that the local population had endured in its daily interactions with the FARC and its rebel order, and how these may have affected the community and its social fabric. I was able to gain insights into the rebel order imposed by FARC in the region and the mechanisms used to sustain it and maintain control over the local population. The interviews also provided insight onto the perceptions of change that the community has developed. Overall, these benefited this study by deepening the understanding of the micro-process of change involved in rebel control over a community.

Based on the interviews and the experiences that the local population and leaders shared, since the FARC left in 2016 Aipecito has seen a raise in criminality, specially theft and other misdemeanors leading to a growing sense of insecurity. Is this influenced by the community’s social capital resulting from FARC rebel order? Aipecito was controlled by FARC since the first territorial expansion in the 1960s. Its transition into rebel control was smooth, as Aipecito was located within the region were the Communist party had strong support and where the independent republics had spurred. FARC soon took over and established their social order. Along the lines of what has been studied in previous research, FARC took control ruling over the political life, monopolizing the use of violence and controlling several aspects of both public and private life. At the end of the day, the armed group was also in control of exerting justice and it had permeated into the political structure of the local community, both informal but also into state structures, such as the Communal Action Council. Not only were there political structures controlled by the rebel front, but also dispute institutions. Structures established by Colombian legislation such as the Conciliation Committees (Comités de Conciliación), were ruled according to FARC norms.
instead of national law. The guerrilla also regulated alcohol consumption as well as gas, with only one store for each commodity with FARC license to commercialize. Thus, FARC had control over the political, economic and private aspects of life in the rural community. In fact, even the figure of the corregidor, administrative post that bridges between the community and the central administration and is considered the representative of the municipal mayor in the community, was influenced by FARC. The process of electing the corregidor was done through the Communal Action Council (or Junta de Accion Comunal in Spanish, JAC from here on) the lowest level of organization. The JAC propose a slate of three candidates for the municipal mayor to pick. Under FARC’s control, the rebel group oversees the selection made by the JAC, which already proposes those that will meet the FARC criteria. This is only one detailed example of how the armed group permeates the local communities, its institutions and structures. Although rebel order leaves with the last armed presence, the institutions and organizational structures are left in place as the community tries to move away into a new social order.

Analysis

This paper has argued on the relevance that rebel order and the mechanisms of information gathering -and control in general- play in upsetting social trust, leading to post-rebel criminality. In order to test the reliability and explanatory value of the theory and the causal mechanism, the following observable implications strengthen the validity of the mechanism proposed. The first observable implication is how the long presence the armed group had over Aipecito correlated to long-term horizons and to imposing rebel social order. Aipecito was ruled by FARC, who imposed their norms. The FARC have been present in this area since almost its very beginnings in the 1960’s. Aipecito is located at the beginning of the mountains that are considered safe grounds for the insurgent group, its birthplace and strongholds until its last years. This region is where the Central Joint Command of the FARC was located, with different fronts as protection rings, one of them being the front 66. Rebel social order was in place and ruled different spheres of life, from economic activities, to the movement of population. Similar to what has been seen in other regions of Colombia, no person could leave or enter without permission by the FARC. In order to be granted permission, one would need a letter of recommendation. Moreover, the armed group ruled extensively by having in place a set of norms or laws, referred to as Manual for Citizen Coexistence (Manual de Convivencia Ciudadana in Spanish). This norm-book allowed the rebel group to ensure predictability. The norms included in the Manual ruled over environmental aspects, forbidding the cut down of trees and protecting the rivers against pollution. It also legislated over agriculture production of each family, encouraging households’ orchards that would support the nutrition of the family and allow for self-dependency and subsistence to the coffee producing families. Similarly, participation in the local governance institutions was enforced to everyone over 15 years old. Transactions such as land sales were also controlled as well as the hours at which everyone should be home. This shows how the FARC behaved in the region as stationary bandits, promoting production,
capital accumulation and providing security. The insurgent group was the unchallenged security provider, being able to rule and set norms through the local institutions it controlled. One last example of this can be seen through the implementation of justice. Any confrontations were channeled through the Conciliatory Committee, the state local administration structure for dispute settling which ruled according to the Manual of Citizen Coexistence. Those disputes that didn’t find solution through the Committee, were then raised to the FARC commanders.

A second set of observable implications is that the rebel social order and the norms that is is founded upon are enforced through the local institutions. As the example to the Conciliatory Committee highlights, FARC had captured the local institutions both of dispute settling and political organization and daily regulation, such as the JAC. These institutions respond to FARC norms and report back to them. The rebel group is not present in the community daily, but rather appears or “comes down” (from the mountains) as it was referred to by the locals. Further, the combatants relied on the local institutions and on informants in the community that reported back to them at any new event. Thus, the control over the local population is sustained remotely through the collaboration of the informants and those that serve as infiltrators to the FARC within the local structures. As predicted, the rebel group, the FARC, doesn’t deploy combatants permanently to monitor the local population, but rather sets in place a system by which informants keep tabs on their own peers and report back to the rebel group if needed. As the interviews revealed, when something happened in Aipecito, FARC would come down steadily. Some even reported that “FARC new everything” that happened in the community.

Third, the theory predicted that these information gathering mechanism would create a sense of insecurity among the local population, specially spreading distrust among themselves. The fact that the local population would behave as police or spies to each other fuelled feelings of mistrust, specially as some families would have more credibility before the FARC, and thus their testimonies would stand stronger than others. Because of the nature of informants, it is logical to understand that not all persons were equal against the FARC, who trusted more its reliable confidents. This further fueled resentment and mistrust. Respondents also emphasized the authoritarian and endogenous character of the community aspects of local life in Aipecito. I was explained how FARC would enforce communal work, for example by making everyone help in fixing the main dirt road that connects Aipecito to Neiva, the capital of the municipality and of the department.

Finally, if social capital and social trust have been eroded by the rebel social order imposed by FARC –as the social trust erosion argument predicts- then examples of mistrust, lack of cooperation and crime should be relevant. In fact, this was significant and came up in almost all interviews as respondents would highlight the new problems that the community was facing. A rise in crime, theft and insecurity were some of the most salient concerns. Some respondents explained how in those days one cannot leave things unwatched by fear of having it stolen. Similarly, one cannot leave the door to the house open anymore, all of which didn’t happen under FARC rule, many would stress. According to the respondents, the
community was also lacking capacity to overcome problems of collective action, specially as “everyone is searching for their own interest”.

In sum, the case of Aipecito illustrates the role that social capital plays in the community’s crime problems and how this was affected by the mechanisms sustaining the rebel social order. Nonetheless, interviews also gave insight on the importance that alternative explanations may play in influencing crime. Among the concerns voiced by the respondents, the lack of state presence and police was also seen as problematic. The closest police station is in the neighboring corregimiento of San Luis, and with the lack of funding, personnel and limited transport means, the police is rarely capable of making it to Aipecito. Nonetheless, during my fieldwork the military was temporarily deployed, although its functions are centered at monitoring and dissuading the appearance of new armed actors. It is clear also that Aipecito suffers from a lack of state presence, which originally was conditioned by FARC presence. This suggests that the levels of social capital and trust are not the only factors or variables influencing the crime rates. Instead, the demobilization of the armed group and the consequent end of the rebel order has created a vacuum of power and order which hasn’t been filled by the Colombian state, more specifically by the Neiva municipality. Further, this emphasizes the previous existence of divided sovereignty that characterizes irregular war and highlights the important role that the state has to play even afterwards the rebel group has demobilized and peace has been signed. Arjona (2017) suggests that the establishment of rebel social order does not imply that the state is absent. Nonetheless, the case of Aipecito shows that although the state might still be present in some form –Aipecito had a functioning school and state presence through the role of the Corregidor- it is subrogated to the rebel rule becoming part of its governing structures and leaving the state presence impotent and dysfunctional.

Overall, the case of Aipecito reinforces the hypothesis on the role the presence of an armed actor during a long period of time has in predicting crime rates in after rebel control, but also stresses its interaction with levels of state presence. The presence of FARC in Aipecito during over 40 years kept the state away. The state has not managed to reach back into these rural areas west of Neiva. Moreover, this pattern observed in Aipecito is consistent with what the OHCHR in Colombia has observed across the country. In its Annual Report of 2017 (OHCHR 2018) the UN Agency underscores the relevance that state presence in rural areas plays in guaranteeing security, justice, empowering leaders and authorities; and stimulating economic development. As the report underscores, the deployment of State services has barely been initiated. Aipecito is only an example of the role that the state presence plays in explaining crime rates in post-rebel control settings. In turn, the influence of state presence on criminality is not incompatible with the role of eroded social trust. In fact, it presents the two sides of the same coin: norms of behavior and cooperation and its enforcement. Both social capital and state presence are different forms of enforcing certain norms of behavior and dissuading predatory behavior. Social capital does this from within the community and state presence does it externally through the state apparatus and security apparatus.
In conclusion, the experiences of Aipecito show the relation between rebel group order and post-rebel order crime rates. This is not only through the erosion of social capital, but also by influence of the state’s precarious presence. The observable implications seen in Aipecito thus reinforce the theory proposed hereby and also allowed to refine the causal mechanisms by explaining the two paths through which rebel presence affects social capital and state presence, and the role these play in predicting crime rates in communities recently ruled by an armed group.

7. Conclusion

This study was able to statistically show the correlation between rebel control and criminality in post-rebel-ruled communities. The study has argued the relation between the processes that take place during rebel control and rebel governance and its influence in post-conflict trends. The theory proposed underlined the role played by the governance mechanisms, specifically those of information gathering, in eroding the social capital of the communities under rebel rule which would manifest in the criminality rates once the rebel group’s rule has ended. The data limitations inherent to studies of civil war and rebel governance were overcome through the combination of a process tracing in-depth exploratory case study. The latter allowed to refine the argument and underscored the role of state presence as an alternative mechanism, in combination to the original causal mechanism of social capital erosion, both resulting from the explanatory variable of rebel control. Moreover, this research has strengthened the results from Arjona (2017) by contrasting them to the experiences of Aipecito and through the implications that have been tested in the statistical models.

Last, the results add to the existing literature and serve as an introductory bridge between rebel governance and post-conflict criminality and peacebuilding studies. Furthermore, it opens the door to further research on the combined mechanism of state presence and social capital in explaining criminality. It also presents the opportunity to study the implications that the resulting social capital and state presence may have also on democratic performance in post conflict settings.
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