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A Picture of Democracy

A Slate article highlights doctoral researchers Michael Callen and James Long's field experiment intending to explore the potential of "camera auditing" to reduce corruption in electoral process in Afghanistan. The researchers cite Duflo's [study](#), *Encouraging Teacher Attendance through Monitoring with Cameras in Rural India*, as inspiration for their work:

"If computerized balloting and transmission of results would be too expensive for a country like Afghanistan, mobile-phone technology holds much greater promise. (Besides, given the amount of corruption, any fancy election equipment would just get stolen anyway.) For improving election accountability, authors Callen and Long took as inspiration a [study of teacher absenteeism](#) in India, which showed that simply having a student photograph his teacher each morning sitting with the other students cut teacher absences in half and boosted students' test scores.

For their election study, Callen and Long applied the same camera-audit approach to crack down on a common form of election fraud."

Citing a [paper](#) headed by IPA Research Affiliate Abhijit Banerjee, "Do Informed Voters Make Better Choices? Experimental Evidence from Urban India," the article notes the growing trend toward running randomized field experiments within the social sciences, and specifically in electoral political research.

Read the full article [here](#).

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