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MPs, CLIENTELISM, AND COLLECTIVE GOODS

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ABSTRACT

The present analysis indicates that MPs in Ghana's young democracy has begun to act on the implications of this accountability and that voters in this African country do evaluate their political leaders not only on personal and clientelistic goods but also on provision of small and large-scale collective goods. In effect and without necessarily thinking of it this way, citizens in Ghana are demanding greater impartiality not only from the bureaucracy in its implementation of public policy, but also from legislators and they use the electoral mechanism to achieve it. MPs in Ghana clearly differ in how much they provide quality of government as impartiality. It is also clear that voters in this country see the difference and put some value on impartially provided goods. To what extent pressures from voters will induce politicians in new democracies such as Ghana to further increase the quality of government rather than the provision of partially distributed personal and clientelistic goods remains to be established by future research.

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Rothstein and Teorell suggest impartiality as the inherent meaning of quality of government. Their compelling argument extends on Rothstein and Teorell (2008) and Teorell (2009) where the core conceptual meaning (Adcock and Collier 2001, Sartori 1984) of impartiality is captured by the statement *'When implementing laws and policies, government officials shall not take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law'* (Rothstein and Teorell 2008, 170; see also Teorell 2009, 13). This paper suggests two things: While these authors' conceptualization makes a lot of intuitive sense, a tribulation is the lack of attention to that quality of government is not only a matter of bureaucratic impartiality. Bad quality of government does not only arise from dysfunctionalities on the implementation side of politics and in the administrative arm of the state. It can also grow out of electoral mechanisms on the input side, and from politicians, not civil servants, acting with too much discretion in distributive politics. Secondly, and as Rothstein (2011, 15) stresses, the problem of bad quality of government is not only, or perhaps not even primarily, about corruption. The main issue is better thought of as favoritism, which is a broader phenomenon including most types of corruption but also many acts that are not corruption per se. This chapter contribution is principally to demonstrate these two points.

Legislators and (low) quality of government

In many countries, including in most developing nations, politicians play a decisive role not only by shaping whether policy treats citizens equally. Elected representatives at both local and national level are often directly responsible for governing implementation of government policies and *de facto* for important aspects of distributive politics. Added to this is expectation to perform constituency service in single-member district-based electoral systems.¹ In its various forms, constituency service often compromises the principle of impartiality and constitutes favoritism to various degrees. When a legislator convinces the executive to allocate greater educational, health, or investment resources to that particular district outside the general principles of policy, it undermines the general principle of treating all citizens equally although the benefits accrue to all inhabitants of that

¹ The extension of the law-like consequences of electoral systems first developed by Duverger (1954) and Downs (1957) have been testified by the work of scholars like Bogaards (2000), Bogdanor and Butler (1983), Lijphart (1984, 1994, 1999), Lijphart and Waisman (1996), Lindberg (2005), Mair (1990), Powell (1982, 2000), Rae (1971), Reynolds and Sisk (1998), and Sartori (1968, 1986, 1997, 2001).

constituency favoring some over others not based on a general rule but based on discretionary power even if it benefits a relatively large group.

However, there are also more narrowly defined, idiosyncratic, and hence even more adverse forms of constituency service. ‘Pork’ in the form of tax exceptions for particular local businesses, a new school or clinic for one community, tarring of a local road, digging of wells in one place rather than another, funding of one area’s soccer team, and the creation of a local-specific job-package, are examples of such ‘club goods’. Sliding down the scale, at the very bottom we find political clientelism proper in the form of individual benefits (private goods). This is the gravest form of favoritism, the worst case of infringement on every citizen’s equal treatment, and thus on the principle of impartiality. Private goods can come in the form of diverse things such as cash, a bag of rice, a job, roofing sheets, payment of hospital bills and schools fees, and assistance with the police or other parts of the bureaucracy. The last issue may be particularly damaging in some countries by compromising the functioning of bureaucracies even if the staff there are honestly trying to provide good quality of government. In whatever form, the targeted collective, club, and private goods are typically exchanged for some kind of political loyalty and therefore useful to politicians in the short term but detrimental to society and the state in the longer term when extensive and occurring repeatedly.

This reasoning leads us to expect that legislators in new democracies, particularly those with single-member constituencies, play a role in shaping the quality of government. This chapter proposes a new way of measuring the extent to which legislators (in this context Members of Parliament, or MPs) compromises impartiality by engaging in favoritism (without it necessarily being corruption) and thus affect the quality of government. It analyses the pattern of behavior of a strategically select number of MPs in Ghana, one of Africa’s new democracies.

The results show significant variation in levels of favoritism. MPs in Ghana clearly differ in how much they provide quality of government as impartiality. To what extent pressures from voters will further induce politicians in new democracies such as Ghana to increase the quality of government rather than the provision of partially distributed personal and clientelistic goods remains to be established by future research. Besides the implications for the quality of government, this variation within one and the same country, is a finding that runs contrary to much of the established litera-

ture on African politics. A significant share of the incumbent MPs prioritizes provision of collective and club goods rather than more pure favoritism.

Legislators in New Democracies

Let me start with an observation on the empirical context in which this study of Ghana is situated. For some observers, the experiments with multiparty elections since the early 1990s did not change the fundamentals of African politics. It was elections without democracy trapped in ‘an institutional legacy of “big man” rule (e.g. Ake 1996 and 2000, Bratton 1998, Chege 1996, van de Walle 2002). Diamond and Plattner (1999, 19, 32, 169) reported on ‘transitions without change’ while Cowen and Laakso (2002, 14-5, 23) saw ‘massive voter apathy’ spreading. But the fact is that never before has virtually all countries in Africa held regular multiparty (if not democratic) elections over such an extended period of time (e.g. Lindberg 2006), and never before has so many presidents relinquish power as a result of the exercise of people’s power at the ballot box (Posner and Young 2007). Even in places like the Republic of Congo, Mauritania, and Madagascar where the military has intervened in politics, multiparty elections seems to have become a ‘must’. Around 20 countries are now democracies and many of the rest are generally more democratic today than ever before. By implication, there is a body of politicians with more impact on the quality of government than ever before: the legislators.

The official role of legislators is typically viewed as to supply collective and public goods, such as executive oversight, or the scrutiny of legislation, or the making of public policy, or constituency representation – in short, the kind of roles with which legislators are most closely associated in the established democracies. In the eyes of many observers, part of the problem of African politics is that politicians spend too much time grabbing private rewards in the form of jobs, contracts, and kick-backs to sustain clientelistic networks, and too little time supplying public goods, or even club goods (e.g. constituency service). The conventional wisdom is that in most African countries, informal pressures to provide private goods take precedence over public and collective goods provision for politicians and bureaucrats alike. The role of the African politician as depicted in much of the literature on African politics, is about providing small ‘club’ goods to communities and private goods to supporters, the former by means of formal or informal relations with government minis-

tries and external donors, the latter by means of informal, sometimes illicit, sometimes ethnic, personalized and clientelistic networks.

While there is just emerging a small literature on legislatures and legislators (e.g. Barkan 2009), it seems clear that in their day-to-day roles MPs face a variety of formal and informal institutional pressures to supply public, collective, as well as private goods. For example, the present author's recent explorative research in Ghana (Lindberg 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Weghorst & Lindberg 2009), suggests that MPs are subject to very strong contradictory pressures to supply both collective and private goods. These pressures take the form of powerful informal institutional expectations about the role of the MP as source of 'club' and personal goods, expectations which will not change overnight.

Pressures and the strategic situation for candidates varies, for example with the level of competition. In safe havens, candidates of the incumbent party face no real threat of being 'thrown out' by the electorate in the national polls. Rather, the pivotal events are the primary elections. In Ghana to date, only party constituency executives and party polling station executives have been allowed to take part in primaries and this group consists of around one hundred individuals per constituency. Hence, we would expect candidates to be held accountable much more closely by the local party executives than by ordinary people in these areas. For candidates from the dominant party, the following election campaigns are more or less exclusively about mobilization: that is, bringing out the vote for the party's presidential candidate.² Candidates can be relatively sure (with a probability equal to the percentage of votes the party normally receives in that area) that an individual voter is going to vote for them and their presidential candidate if the voter just makes the effort to go to the polls. Hence, there is less need for either individualized, that is highly targeted and thus private goods through clientelistic networks, or for monitoring and other enforcement activities. Club goods for the communities and/or collective goods for the constituency should therefore be a preferred electoral strategy.

The situation is different in a highly contested constituency in conditions of general poverty as is the case in much of Africa. While communities within such constituencies that are strongholds for

² The extent to which safe havens exist in African countries varies widely both between countries and between different regions in the same country, as do turnout rates in general. In some countries mobilization is a major issue in virtually all constituencies (e.g. Mali with an average turnout in national elections typically hovering around 30 %), but on average turnout has been relatively high (67% in elections judged to be credible by international and local elections observers) in Africa's national elections since 1989 (Lindberg 2009c, 30).

a specific candidate may be treated in much the same way as safe havens, most areas are not. In a contested constituency competition typically centers on the swing voter. Candidates will seek to identify potential swing voters and their preferences to be able to target clientelistic, private goods to them in ways that make monitoring and enforcement possible. This of course creates significant demands on candidates in terms of organization but they have little choice given relatively limited financial assets. Whatever little they have available must be targeted in the most efficient way possible. Everything being equal, we would expect a higher incidence of clientelistic practices in contested constituencies where the outcome of the election is unknown.

Not enough is known about how effectively MPs manage the different demands of formal and informal institutions, or about the circumstances that lead to better outcomes in terms of the quality of government. Yet, before a cause and effect analysis is possible, one must effectively map out the 'lie of the land' with regards to how MPs actually behave in terms of resource allocation. In this regard, we still know very little. This chapter advances our knowledge regarding how much of private, collective and public goods MPs actually provide – in the eyes of their constituents.

Measuring Impartiality among MPs

While views on the proper role of the legislator may vary, from the point of view of impartiality the preferred situation is arguably one in which MPs focus most of their time, energy and resource on the provision of public, and to some extent collective goods rather than on distribution of club and in particular private goods in clientelistic networks. The question is if there is meaningful variation between MPs in new democracies in this respect and, if so, whether this can be measured systematically and in a reliable fashion. Unless these two conditions are fulfilled, the next step of assessing which factors promote the preferred situation is effectively impossible. My limited empirical goal is to first suggest a method and then show the results of a measurement strategy relying on survey responses that could in principle be replicated anywhere. How much of various types of goods do MPs in fact supply? Is there substantial variation among MPs' impartiality?

A fruitful way of gauging MPs' behavior can be based on evaluations made by ordinary citizens in their constituencies as reported in survey responses. This method is far from perfect but nonetheless has some advantages. Indicators of actual behavior would be the most preferred measure but

for practical purposes it is not feasible. Activities of executive oversight, for example, are mostly not recorded in any formal sense in new democracies apart from questions on the floor of the house. Certain committees (including the public accounts committee) may have begun to play an important role in oversight in Ghana as increasingly in other new democracies and a systematic measurement of individual MPs' contributions to those could potentially be conducted. Access to closed committee meetings would be an issue however, and even if not, there would be a substantial risk that the measurement (being present) would affect the subjects' behavior. MPs' other efforts such as visits to ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) are not documented in any systematic fashion; neither are constituency-level inspections of ongoing projects and activities that is part of executive oversight.

Legislative activities are equally shrouded in obscurity in many new democracies. Beyond the attendance register and the Hansard's record of statements or amendments made on the floor during debates, the activities (or lack thereof) of individual MPs in the legislative process are typically not registered. When it comes to constituency service, as well as taking care of constituents in their role of what Ghanaians typically describe as being the 'father/mother of the constituency' (Lindberg 2010), there are virtually no indicators that could even function as proxies. Hence, a behavioral approach would necessitate recording of primary data by way of effectively shadowing individual legislators from morning to night over a given period. Even if this is doable in principle, it would be prohibitively expensive, methodologically questionable, and hence not feasible in more than a very limited number of cases.

As part of a larger project and in order to create a dataset for further analysis of MPs-citizens accountability relationships, ten out of Ghana's 230 constituencies were selected for intensive surveying of citizens' perceptions and attitudes.³ Ghana is a presidential democracy with single-member constituencies and single plurality rules for elections to legislative office, and has a stable two-party system. There are a few smaller parties that usually win two to four seats. The ten constituencies were selected based on a number of variables that we expect to be important in terms of representativeness as well as for variation on the dependent variable. I cannot claim that the selected constituencies are representative of the total universe of 230 constituencies, but as evidenced by earlier

³ For further discussion of the methodology used for the selection of the constituencies, including considerations of Ghana's political history, see Lindberg and Morrison (2005, 2008) and Weghorst and Lindberg 2011.

research (Lindberg and Morrison 2005, 2009) these ten constituencies capture much, if not all, of the variation in terms of citizens- representative accountability relationships.

The sampling procedure involved first stratifying constituencies in the 2008 elections by Ghana's ten regions. Then, since a computer generated, random selection procedure could lead to selection of extreme outliers, one constituency was strategically selected from each of the ten regions by weighting a number of both quantitative and qualitative indicators in order to ensure a representative selection of constituencies as far as possible. The ten constituencies were divided approximately equally between incumbents from each of the two main parties. For each of the main parties, we also selected one safe haven constituency, defined as one in which the party has consistently won 70 percent of the votes or more in the elections since 1996⁴ as well as constituencies that used to be close to safe havens but have become swing constituencies. We also wanted to sample the behavior of the largest minor party, also representing a long-standing northern tradition in Ghanaian politics. In making these selections we made a conscious effort also to get as much geographical variation as possible, as well as a rural-urban spread and ethno-linguistic representation. Once the ten constituencies were, a random sample of potential voters (everyone above the age of 18) was drawn using a two-stage procedure following the Afrobarometer Survey Methods (2009). This generated a sample of 160 respondents in each constituency and a total sample of 1,600 potential voters.

Performance of the MPs in terms of quality of government was measured using a battery of questions where citizens were asked to evaluate the incumbent MP in their constituency. The performance in terms of collective goods was measured with two questions: one asking how well, or how badly the incumbent had been doing in terms of executive oversight ('monitoring the president and his government'); and the other question asking about the incumbent's legislative performance ('making laws for the country'). Club goods performance was measured by a question asking how well or how badly the respondents thought the incumbent had done over the past years in terms of constituency service ('delivering community and constituency development'), while private goods performance was measured by a question asking how well or badly the incumbent had done in terms of 'providing personal assistance'. In all cases the respondents were given the options: 'very badly, badly, neither bad nor well, well, and very well'. The calculation of constituency means as well as percentages, rating the incumbent in terms of the bad/very bad, or well/very well ratings and pro-

⁴ The first legislative election in November 1992 was boycotted by the opposition after disagreements over the fairness of the presidential elections held earlier the same year.

ducing rankings out of these measures (as displayed in Table 1), is relatively straightforward.⁵ The ordering of the constituencies are done by rank order on provision of collective goods.

Table 1: MPs' performance in selected constituencies

Constituency	Type	Collective Goods			Club Goods			Private Goods		
		Performance	Rank	Category	Performance	Rank	Category	Performance	Rank	Category
		(0=Low)	(1=High)		(0=Low)	(1=High)		(0=Low)	(1=High)	
Tamale C	Intermed.	2.81	1	High	2.48	1	High	2.15	2	High
	<i>N</i>	(.082)			(.110)			(.119)		
Ho West	Safe	2.67	2	High	2.36	3	High	2.08	3	Medium
	<i>N</i>	(.061)			(.095)			(.114)		
Kwabre East	Safe	2.41	3	High	1.86	5	Medium	1.88	6	Medium
	<i>N</i>	(.071)			(.110)			(.113)		
Bolgatanga	Contested	2.52	4	High	2.43	2	High	2.59	1	High
	<i>N</i>	(.084)			(.094)			(.092)		
Jaman S	Intermed.	2.32	5	High	2.04	4	Medium	1.93	4	Medium
	<i>N</i>	(.056)			(.074)			(.079)		
Akim Swedru	Safe	2.04	6	Medium	1.60	8	Low	1.14	10	Low
	<i>N</i>	(.086)			(.104)			(.105)		
Evalue-G.	Intermed.	1.78	7	Low	1.29	9	Low	1.21	9	Low
	<i>N</i>	(.085)			(.107)			(.104)		
Ablekumah S	Contested	1.97	8	Low	1.83	6	Medium	1.61	7	Low
	<i>N</i>	(.096)			(.108)			(.129)		
Kpone/Kat	Intermed.	1.88	9	Low	1.62	7	Low	1.91	5	Medium
	<i>N</i>	(.106)			(.116)			(.122)		
Cape Coast	Contested	1.57	10	Low	1.20	10	Low	1.22	8	Low
	<i>N</i>	(.092)			(.111)			(.117)		
	Total	2.20			1.87			1.76		
	<i>N</i>	1343			1,502			1,260		
	Chi2/Anova-F	25.15			19.83			19.99		
	<i>p</i>	.000			.000			.000		

* Calculated as means of performance along the 2 public goods dimensions if missing values are 1 or 0; analyzed using Anova; values in brackets are standard errors; significance is F-value.

Source: Author's survey data 2008

Table 1 presents a both surprising and predictable picture. It is surprising both that we find that some MPs are at least perceived to provide substantial amounts of collective goods and that there is such a variation across the measures, given the prevailing consensus on clientelistic strategies in the literature on African politics. It is predictable that MPs who are investing more heavily in collective goods provision (targeting larger groups of individuals) spend less on provision for small groups

⁵ Each measure runs from 0 to 5 with 2 as the midpoint. The rank ordering is self-explanatory. Average ratings clearly above 2 are ranked as 'High', around 2 as 'Medium', and ratings clearly below 2 as 'Low'.

and especially individual benefits. They may either be forced to do this given limited resources, or just decide to pursue a different strategy. But the picture is still incomplete without accounting for clientelism proper.

Measuring and producing an equivalent measure of clientelism is a little more tricky. Clientelism is a socially less acceptable practice and there is a risk of underreporting. It is also uncertain which indicators more truthfully measure it. Rather than arguing for one particular indicator as better than others, it seems reasonable to accept that political clientelism can take different forms for different individuals. The objective here is to find a reasonable way of comparing the pervasiveness of clientelism in different parts of Ghana, and in constituencies with different levels of competition.

The survey included a series of indirect and direct questions about the present state of clientelistic practices as well as comparisons with previous elections.⁶ After extensive analysis and comparison of each of these as well as composite measures based on additive and multiplicative aggregation (see the online appendix), it became obvious that the relative ranking of the ten constituencies remains essentially unchanged regardless of measure. In other words, it became clear that measuring the extent of clientelism was far less complicated than expected and not at all particularly dependent on choice of measure. This in itself is a significant and important finding. It is true that indirect measures result in higher reported levels of clientelism than direct measures and thus studies using one or the other cannot be compared to each other. But the pattern of reporting is consistent across different types of areas in Ghana at least, and hence, the differences between constituencies in terms of how widespread political clientelism remain stable regardless of measure.

⁶ First we had a battery of questions in the survey using a 'normalization' protocol derived from criminology in order to counteract tendencies of underreporting socially less acceptable practices. The initial questions purposely treat clientelism as something that would be normal, showing that the interviewer speaks about it openly. The initial questions ask what the respondent thinks about clientelism in general – in this context Ghana – with subsequent questions moving down to the constituency, the local area, people the respondent knows, family and friends, then the respondent. Selecting the five most direct of these questions as separate measures, and then calculating the average response rate indicating clientelism was one way to calculate an index measure. The first question asks if the respondent perceives that more people 'got small chops' during the elections campaign in 2004, compared to the 2000 campaign. 'Chops', and 'to chop', are local and universally understood expressions denoting clientelistic exchanges. The second question asks if the respondent personally knows more people who got something in clientelistic exchange in 2004, compared to 2000, and the third question is the answer to whether the respondent was engaged in a clientelistic exchange. To be precise, these questions indicate whether the respondent witnesses and is subject to attempts to establish clientelistic exchanges. We cannot tell whether each such attempt of a politician or his/her party worker to create political loyalty by distribution of personalized goods is successful or not. But assuming that some portion of attempts are successful and that this rate of success is relatively constant across these constituencies, measuring attempts to establish clientelistic relations should be a useful proxy for actual clientelism. Even so, we must be aware that the data are likely to overestimate the prevalence of *successful* clientelism. The final two questions, asked in August 2008, pertain to expectations about the prevalence of clientelism in the upcoming 2008 election campaign.

In the end, the analysis showed that the most intuitive measure of the extensiveness of political clientelism also performed the best in terms of capturing the overall variation between the different measures. The chosen measure combines the response rate of yes-answers to the question of whether the respondent knows anyone who was involved in political clientelism (i.e. measuring the extension of individuals indirectly observing clientelism) and multiplies it by the average number of individuals that respondents said they knew who had de facto 'got something' in the clientelistic exchange involving the incumbent MP as patron. The resulting measure is an effective proxy for actual extension of clientelism in a particular constituency.

Table 2: Clientelism in selected constituencies

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Did You Personally Know Anyone Who Got 'Small Chops' in 2004?</i> "Yes"	<i>How Many Did You Know That Got 'Small Chops' in 2004? (>100 set at 100)</i> (Harmonic Mean)	<i>Clientelism Index**</i>	<i>Clientelism Rank</i> (1 = least)	<i>Clientelism Category</i>
Jaman S	Intermediate	38%	4.44	1.69	1	Low
Kwabre East	Safe	33%	6.37	2.10	2	Low
Ho West	Safe	62%	3.5	2.17	3	Low
Evalue-Gwira	Intermediate	33%	7.01	2.31	4	Low
Kpone/Kat	Intermediate	53%	4.9	2.60	5	Medium
Akim Swedru	Safe	51%	5.87	2.99	6	Medium
Bolgatanga	Contested	50%	6.96	3.48	7	Medium
Tamale C	Intermediate	55%	8.58	4.72	8	High
Ablekumah S	Contested	50%	11.1	5.55	9	High
Cape Coast	Contested	69%	8.6	5.93	10	High
	Total	49%	6.4	3.14		
	<i>N</i>	1,147	1,414	1,147		
	<i>Chi2</i>	F=58.308	F=5.33			
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000			

** Index = mean of how many known to have gotten 'small chops' x share of sample who knew at least one person
Source: Author's survey data 2008

Table 2 reports on the means and significant differences of means across the ten constituencies and provide the index score, as well as the rank order of the constituencies.⁷ The final column translates the rank ordering into three main categories: Low, medium, and high levels of clientelism. Again we

⁷ The rationale for using the rank order is that no matter how well justified these index scores may be, there is a substantial amount of uncertainty in the measures and the interval measures probably give an undue impression of precision. It would be intellectually dishonest to treat them as known entities that can be analyzed using methods such as regression analysis designed for precise measures. But we can be much more certain about the position of the constituencies relative to each other (even if we know little about the distances between them), and therefore the relative ranking position is used as the main measure for the analysis.

find both significant variation and the surprising fact that some politicians in Ghana actually are *not* engaging that much in clientelistic exchanges. In four out of the ten constituencies, the averages result in a categorical 'low' on provision of clientelism while only three end up in the 'high' category. But how does the picture look like if we put the findings from Table 1 and Table 2 together?

Quality of governing: expected variation and puzzles

Table 3 displays the results of measuring MPs performance from provision of collective goods that are part of a high quality of government, to pure clientelism proper which is an extreme part of favoritism and the opposite to high quality of government.

At the top off the table we find four positive cases where incumbent MPs focus on the provision of collective and club goods for groups of citizens, while they then can afford, or just decide, to spend less time and money on private goods and clientelism. The four constituencies with a positive but expected relationship show an interesting pattern. First, two out of the three selected safe havens are found in this group suggesting that low levels of competition can relieve MPs from an absolute need to engage in private goods provision on a larger scale in order to get reelected.

It may also be that these MPs are forced to spend so much on their primaries where it is de facto decided who will become MP, that they are simply forced to focus on the less expensive strategy of collective goods provision during the official election campaign. It may be exaggerated by the pressure on them to mobilize (rather than persuade) party supporters to turn out in larger numbers on election day in order to strengthen the support for the party's presidential candidate in the simultaneous executive poll. From a candidate's rational perspective, this makes sense. In a safe haven, the candidate is guaranteed to win, so using limited resources on expensive clientelistic strategies in order to improve the vote return from say 76 to 82 percent should be considered waste. These resources will have much higher marginal utility if saved until the election season is over and can be invested in either small scale club goods for communities or private goods for individuals – in both cases delivering on election promises and signaling in symbolic terms that he/she is 'taking care' of the constituents. So according to this reasoning, the candidate should spend as close as possible to zero on the official campaign.

However, if the party's presidential candidate would not win, this implies a huge loss of resources available for constituency service and also patronage, especially in poor African countries such as Ghana where state resources are decisive. This makes it rational for the candidate to use some personal funds in order to enhance the chances of the party winning or retaining executive power. Yet, the stakes will not be as high for a candidate in a safe haven as in a competitive constituency. Safe haven voters tend to be less elastic in their vote choice and more forgiving of the fact that their representative cannot bring home 'pork' and provide clientelistic goods when out of power, compared to voters in swing constituencies. In the end, candidates in safe havens are unlikely to face serious challenges to their reelection in the next election even if their party's presidential candidate is defeated.⁸

It is different for candidates in contested constituencies, whose reelection is much more likely to be dependent on having the access to pork, patronage and resources for clientelistic networks that is provided by being the party in power. In the end, the outcomes, in terms of balancing and prioritizing between provision of collective and private goods and the level of clientelism in these constituencies, are consistent with the expectations from the theory discussed above. Yet, correlation is not causation, as we know. In order to validate these claims about the causal mechanisms involved, we need to investigate at least one of these cases more closely by means of political ethnography.

In any case, the empirical relationship corroborates expectations from the literature on clientelism and vote buying regarding the trade-off between different strategies. The logic is based on the assumption that MPs have constraints on time and resources and need to prioritize. A strategy based on provision of collective and club goods would then necessitate less emphasis on provision of private goods and clientelistic relationships. Public goods take time for the legislator that detracts from the capacity to engage too much in direct private goods provision. In Ghana, the MPs not only lobby state ministries, agencies, and departments (MDAs) for development projects for their communities but also contribute financially directly for bore holes, school buildings materials, construction of markets, scholarship schemes for gifted students to go on to secondary school, sanita-

⁸ One constituency in the group of 'good cases' – Bolgatanga, held by one of the small parties (PNC) – is interesting. It is a contested area where PNC's hold on the seat is very tenuous. We would thus have predicted a higher level of spending on clientelism than we see. A likely explanation for the relatively lower levels of private goods provision and clientelism in this case is that small parties simply tend to be very poor. While it is possible for an MP from a small party to get some development projects approved by MDAs in exchange for loyalty when it comes to voting in the legislature, they do not have access to big party coffers, kick-backs from contracts, and other sources of income that can be used to sustain clientelistic networks.

tion projects, and so on. Some of the funds come from what is known as the MPs' share of the Common Fund, the Ghana Education Trust fund, and in recent years debt relief from the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries agreement.⁹ But MPs routinely use large sums of their personal funds as well in order to meet demands for club goods of this nature. Hence, the more a legislator spends on public and club goods, the less time and resources will be left over to invest in private goods and clientelistic relationships. That is not to say that one should expect legislators to spend their time and money exclusively on collective and club goods. Most, if not all, of them can be expected to pursue mixed strategies and that is also what the data indicates. In all the ten constituencies analyzed here, incumbent MPs do just that and the differences reflect relative emphasis.

Then follows four mixed or negative cases that more or less mirror the positive cases. There is an unexpected instance with one safe haven constituency (Akim Swedru) where the incumbent has engaged in more private goods provision and clientelism (although less pronounced in the latter case) than seems necessary given the safe haven nature. It is less strongly a safe haven than the other two, however, and that may explain the somewhat mixed picture in this case. Two others are hotly contested constituencies, which is exactly where we would expect a more pervasive clientelism. The last is a semi-contested constituency that has been targeted by the other party as one constituency they would try to take, hence a need for the incumbent to respond by increasing the amount of private goods and clientelism in order to make swing voters change their vote. The outcome once again tallies with theoretical expectations.

⁹ The Common Fund consists of 7.5% of state revenues that are distributed to local governments in the 110 districts. Districts typically enclose two or three constituencies and an MPs in such a constituency have spending authority over a 5% share for community development purposes. Currently, MPs can use the equivalent of about \$34,000 annually from this source. In addition, when in the last few years Ghana became declared a "Heavily Indebted Poor Country" (HIPC country), the same formula was applied generating another about \$9,000 per year per MP for developmental projects in line with the HIPC guidelines. In contrast with the expectations on MPs from constituents in general, and supporters in particular, these sums do not amount to much. See Lindberg 2009a.

Table 3: Categorical comparison

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>QoG</i>			<i>→</i>	<i>Favoritism</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
		<i>Collective Goods</i>	<i>Club Goods</i>	<i>Private Goods</i>	<i>Clientelism</i>		
Ho West	Safe	High	High	Medium	Low	Positive (Expected)	
Kwabre East	Safe	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Positive (Expected)	
Bolgatanga	Contested	High	High	High	Medium	Positive (Expected)	
Jaman S	Intermediate	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Positive (Expected)	
Akim Swedru	Safe	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Mixed (Unexpected)	
Ablekumah S	Contested	Low	Medium	Low	High	Negative (Expected)	
Kpone/Kat	Intermediate	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Negative (Expected)	
Cape Coast	Contested	Low	Low	Low	High	Negative (Expected)	
Evalue-Gwira	Intermediate	Low	Low	Low	Low	Puzzle 1	
Tamale C	Intermediate	High	High	High	High	Puzzle 2	

Note: For the first three types of goods (collective, club, and personal), white cells marked with 'High' indicate that the evaluation of the MP in that constituency is significantly better than a neutral response (the mean of 2.0 indicates a neutral response, i.e. that the incumbent has done neither badly, nor well in the provision of these goods). Cells with the text 'Medium' in bold indicate that the average response is statistically indistinguishable from the neutral position, and grey cells with the text 'Low' indicates that it is significantly lower or worse. Since the measure for clientelism does not have such easily identifiable anchor points, the division into categories have been created by inspecting the distribution in Table 2 and using a reasonable judgment to find meaningful differences.

We end with two real puzzles. For one constituency (Tamale Central), the results indicate that the MP is providing relatively high levels of everything across the board, and in the other (Evalue-Gwira), it is the opposite – the incumbent is apparently doing very little of anything. There may be purely idiosyncratic reasons for these two puzzles and, once again, there may be as yet uncovered but theoretically relevant reasons. The Tamale case is particularly interesting, however. The incumbent got reelected in the last elections and this raises several interesting issues. Why did the incumbent feel the need to pursue an across-the-board strategy? Has the incumbent found innovative ways of combining these strategies or even allowing for private goods provision to somehow assist in the provision of club and collective goods in the eyes of the citizens? These are questions that should be answered in the future using more in-depth data.

Thus, in eight out of the ten constituencies, we find more or less the expected pattern where incumbents who pursue a strategy more oriented towards provision of collective and club goods give

much less emphasis to giving personal assistance and gifts and engaging in political clientelism, and the reverse.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the contours of a new empirical method of measuring political strategies employed by legislators in single-member district systems using survey data. It could in principle be replicated on a cross-national basis. Building on established theories of clientelistic politics and incentives created by differing level of competition in poor, new democracies, the analysis also shows significant variation in the quality of governing: Favoritism in the form of clientelism and the provision of private goods varies greatly. This variation, within one and the same country, is a finding that runs contrary to much of the established literature on African politics, especially the finding that four out of ten (almost half) of the incumbent MPs prioritize collective and club goods, associated with more programmatic strategies that per definition are more impartial, in their activities as MPs seeking reelection.

Facing the issue of provision of goods, whether in a principal-agent or a collective action situation, the MPs are exposed to pressures from both informal and formal institutions to which they respond. MPs can act in good or bad ways so as to create reactions from groups, change expectations among them, and thus at least in part shape the pressures to which they are subjected in the future. While idiosyncratic actions by individual MPs can be just that, it is also reasonable to consider their behavior to be in part a response to a set of incentives, disincentives, and norms that can be systematically assessed. A first step in this process is to measure how MPs actually behave – how they govern not only in the legislature or at party headquarters but also and perhaps more importantly, at the local level in the eyes of their constituents.

The informal side of the MP-citizens relationship in Ghana has a significant potential for making the agent (MP) act in accordance with the interests of the principal (citizens) to make them more impartial. For example, office holders feel the need to speak on the floor of the House and bring knowledge of their constituency and the people's needs to bear on issues under debate, if pressured to do so. With increased information and civic education, this could potentially be a tool of effectuating democratic responsiveness, furthering programmatic platforms that lead to a greater provision

of collective and public goods, and making policy better adapted to the needs of constituents. If legislators are pressured to spend more of their time, energy and scarce resources on such collective goods this creates greater (by no means perfect!) impartiality. Since resources for legislators are typically extremely scarce, this may lead to a double gain since they will be forced to reduce the equivalent sum of time and resources spent on favoritistic strategies.

Similarly, that office holders are also held to task for community development efforts and the informal institution of being a 'father/mother' of the constituency, could come to play an enhancing role in making it a primary concern of MPs to bring local development to their communities. While such goods are far removed from pure public goods, they are at least impartial with respect to the 'club' of citizens living in a particular area. Goods and services are not either impartial or not, they are typically more or less impartial and club goods are more impartial than pure private goods and clientelistic exchanges.

Based on explorative fieldwork Lindberg (2009b, 2010) found examples of how the office of the MP in Ghana had developed a distinct hybrid character consisting of a combination of the fairly standard formal expectations, and the informal norms of being a 'father/mother' of the constituency who provides private goods and some amount of small 'club' goods for communities (e.g. roofing sheets for the school, a public toilet, and so on). The hybrid configuration of the MP's office puts enormous pressures on office holders to be responsive to constituents' needs and priorities and has also brought into play traditional tools of shame, collective punishment of the family, and loss of prestige and status as methods of sanction. In this sense, the accountability relationship between MP (agent) and citizens (principal) is in many ways even stronger than standard democratic theory would have us to believe. This is just to point out the possibility of achieving better quality of government as impartiality by what we may consider unconventional means in various settings. The principle of impartiality as the meaning of quality of government may be best conceptualized as a universal norm (Rothstein 2011; see also the first chapter of this volume), but the means to achieve it may differ greatly.

The present analysis indicates that MPs in Ghana's young democracy has begun to act on the implications of this accountability and that voters in this African country do evaluate their political leaders not only on personal and clientelistic goods but also on provision of small and large-scale collective goods. In effect and without necessarily thinking of it this way, citizens in Ghana are de-

manding greater impartiality not only from the bureaucracy in its implementation of public policy, but also from legislators and they use the electoral mechanism to achieve it. MPs in Ghana clearly differ in how much they provide quality of government as impartiality. It is also clear that voters in this country see the difference and put some value on impartially provided goods. To what extent pressures from voters will induce politicians in new democracies such as Ghana to further increase the quality of government rather than the provision of partially distributed personal and clientelistic goods remains to be established by future research.

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APPENDIX

Sampling and Aggregation

Three constituencies reflecting safe-havens for the two dominant parties in their geographical strongholds Ashanti region for the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and Volta region for the National Democratic Congress (NDC) respectively were chosen. Ho West in the Volta Region, a stronghold of the NDC, was split in two for the 2004 election so in the second round, both these constituencies were sampled to ensure consistency over time. Kwabre, in the heartland of the Ashanti region, on the other hand, is considered a National Patriotic Party (NPP) stronghold. Akim Swedru in the Eastern region is another safe haven chosen to capture that region but also to reflect the fact that the NPP have almost double the number of safe havens compared to the NDC. Besides being safe havens, each of these constituencies has a diverse population of urban and rural residents engaged in trading, farming and education. These three were selected because they were very representative of the regions (c.f. Lindberg and Morrison 2005). Next, three competitive districts, in which the two dominant parties were equally competitive, as neither had a clear majority or power had alternated between them, were also selected. The Central region and the Greater Accra region have been contested regions for both parties in several elections. Both Cape Coast and Ablekumah South had been an NPP constituency over the last three election cycles but with radically decreasing margins and both were eventually lost to the NDC in 2008. Both have a combination of fishing, farming, trading, and small-scale cottage industry communities, and a mixture of urban and rural communities. Ablekumah South is also one of the most populous constituencies in the country and provide a fairly good cross-section of residents in the capital. The last competitive area was Bolgatanga in the far north of the country. In addition to contributing to geographical representation of the country and inclusion of some minority ethnic groups from the North, it is a constituency where one of the small parties has won a seat in the past. During the time of the survey, the PNC was holding the seat although it was lost to the NDC in the 2008 election. In addition to the six constituencies above, four semi-competitive constituencies were selected. Kpone-Katamanso lies on the outskirts of the Accra/Tema metropolitan area with a mixed population of various occupations ranging from farmers to traders and citizens who work in the city but live outside is a more rural community compared to Ablekumah South constituency. Evalue-Gwira is located in the Western region and a traditional strong-hold of the CPP, which is the party with the strongest his-

torical link to the country's founding father Kwame Nkrumah, but has become increasingly competitive over the years. Jaman South is located in Brong-Afaho region and while somewhat competitive, is still relatively safe for the NPP. Tamale Central constituency in the Northern region is also relatively competitive but has been comfortably won by the NDC.

Once the ten constituencies were, a random sample of potential voters (everyone above the age of 18) was drawn using a two-stage procedure following the Afrobarometer Survey Methods (2009). First, a random selection of 16 electoral areas was drawn from the polling station register (with distance rule applied to ensure geographical spread within each constituency). The final stages of sampling were guided by Afrobarometer protocol where surveyors identify an interval of households to survey (survey every *n*th household determined by the day of the month) and within the household, random selection of respondent from a assembled list of members in the household above the age of 18.