

Democratic Accountability Relations

Exploring Global Patterns

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Duke University, May 20, 2010

I would like to thank Yi-Ting Wang, PhD candidate at Duke University, for research assistance.

Abstract

Students of electoral democracy have conceptualized the accountability of politicians to citizens as “responsible partisan government,” a model resting on party competition as contest between rival policy programs. A new global data set, however, conceptualizes a variety of accountability mechanism and illustrates the empirical diversity of accountability relations across parties and polities. Programmatic party competition dominates only in a subset of existing democracies, while clientelistic mechanisms are prominent in others, particularly in recently founded democracies. The data generate a new agenda for the comparative study of the “quality” of electoral democracy and ultimately the trajectory and survival of democracies.

Author Biographical Information

Herbert Kitschelt is George V. Allen Professor of Political Science at Duke University. He has published widely on political parties and party systems in advanced postindustrial democracies, post-communist polities, and most recently Latin America (*Latin American Party Systems*. Cambridge University Press, 2010, co-author).

Definitions of democracy focus on electoral procedures and the circumstances of civil and political freedom that make competition for political office meaningful to citizens. There is little systematic scrutiny, however, of the quality of relations between citizens and politicians that unfolds through democratic competition. What does it mean that politicians are “responsive” to their electoral constituencies in anticipation of being held “accountable” in periodic elections?

Both normative and positive theorists of representative democracy have conceived political accountability primarily as principal-agent relationships involving policies and party programs in the mold of what the *American Political Science Association* once upon a time termed the “responsible partisan model.” Before competitive elections individual candidates for office, or bands of politicians who pool resources under the label of a party to attract support more efficiently, announce to the electorate distinct commitments to deliver benefits and (re)allocate costs of government, if elected to executive government office. These benefits and allocations affect the well-being of all voters, and thus constitute “collective goods,” or at least affect that of large sets of voters (“club goods”). Parties bundle their policy commitments in baskets (“programs”) that often can handily be stereotyped with seemingly uninformative notions such as “left” and “right” conveying different substantive meaning depending on the historical circumstances of political debate in a polity. Based on personal preferences and taking into account the track record of politicians, citizens then choose the party they reckon to deliver the highest benefit to themselves. Politicians whose past performance in office signaled incompetence to pursue voters’ preferences or who are unresponsive to voters’ preferences are thrown out.ⁱ In this ideal world, each electoral cycle of democratic politics constitutes an arc of accountability running from people’s preferences through politicians’ interest aggregation and representation, legislative choice of policy, and executive choice of policy implementation all the way to the renewed assessment of outcomes by citizens in view of (re)electing their agents at the time of the next electoral contest.ⁱⁱ

The reality of democratic politics has never fully attained the responsible partisan model in the best of circumstances. What is more, politicians' accountability and responsiveness has never been limited to programmatic responsible partisan government. Even if responsible partisan government sometimes does come close to the reality of some established democracies, it tends to be a far cry from common practice in most new democracies around the globe. Often enough democratic accountability simply fails. Politicians defect. But there are also other activities than responsible partisan governance politicians may undertake to earn the approval of citizens than programmatic policy-making. What are these modes and how do they vary across democratic polities? With the global proliferation of democracy since the 1970s, it has become important to take a step back and systematically describe and theorize alternative accountability relations.

I am reporting here on a modest effort to provide a systematic picture of global diversity in patterns of democratic accountability viewed from the perspective of the political agents, i.e. the politicians competing for electoral office: What activities do politicians undertake to appear accountable to voters? How does responsible party governance fare compared to other techniques of generating electoral approval? This train of research would have to be complemented by investigations probing into the same practices from the vantage point of voters, as electoral principals.

Democratic Accountability Relations. A Simple Menu of Options

Voters validate the accountability of politicians by reelecting them. Repeated endorsement of politicians (parties) by electoral constituencies creates a political "alignment." What induces voters to participate in a political alignment in competitive electoral democracies? Competent programmatic politics is only one way to create alignments between voters and politicians and their parties. Even if we

think of accountability as an instrumental relationship in which voters try to obtain a tangible benefit, there is another possibility, whenever politicians cannot credibly commit to deliver policy benefits: clientelism. In this case, rather than providing collective or club goods, politicians offer private, targeted benefits to individual citizens or small groups (families, street neighborhoods) in exchange for citizens' partisan support (votes, participation in rallies, campaign work, etc.). What is different from programmatic politics is not only the *scale* of goods delivered, but also the *contingency of the exchange*: Benefits ideally accrue only to those who stick to the (implicit) contract: targeted benefits, if votes are delivered. This contract was comparatively easy to enforce, as long as open ballots prevailed. Under rules of secret balloting, however, a myriad of indirect techniques have been invented to enable politicians to find out whether voters comply with the contract, involving agents such as party brokers and local notables, indirect supervision, or more generally informal networks that allow politicians to monitor voters' conduct. As a simple first check, politicians may engage in turnout policing of likely party stalwarts.ⁱⁱⁱ

Clientelism involves direct or indirect vote buying, an activity that—even if not legally permitted, but actually tolerated—is often enough expected by voters. Whereas in the general sociological literature the notion of clientelism is often used to denote long-standing relationships of entrapment in which a monopoly patron (usually a landowner) deals with impoverished clients (peasants), electoral clientelism may or may not involve the asymmetry of monopolistic supply by a hegemonic ruling party and the dispersed demand by a diffuse electorate. In contemporary electoral democracies, citizens may be dealing with situations of competitive clientelism that pit different parties and their candidates against each other, all trying to attract clients with various targeted inducements, presented in a more or less credible fashion.

Politician-voter alignments of accountability are, of course, not limited to instrumental-material relations of clientelism or programmatic policy production. In electoral choice, it is known that *affective bonds* come into play as well, and politicians may systematically nurture such bonds and play on them to solidify their grip on electorates. Physical and cultural *trait-based “descriptive” representation* invoking the likeness of language, race, ethnicity, region or gender between voters and candidates is one such affective mechanism. Politicians’ calculation is that even net of voters’ instrumental expectations that a “like” politician may deliver more instrumental benefits (policy, clientelistic goods), sameness may breed sympathy and allegiance.

As another psychological mechanism, voters may also be enchanted by the *unique personal qualities of a politician* to arouse affection, faith or loyalty in her leadership (“*charismatic” authority*), or by the affective significance of a party’s history and capacities for social integration that may be highlighted by campaigning politicians featuring parties’ symbols, rituals, and legends of struggle (*accountability through party identification*). Of course, to some extent party identification, descriptive representation or even charismatic authority of a politician may be nothing but tracers of “running tallies” (Ferejohn) that track agents’ past instrumental achievements for their constituencies and enable them to form expectations about future benefits accruing to them, if reelecting their agents. But at the same time, emotional allegiance to politicians and parties may involve a kernel of irrationality that does not dissolve into instrumental calculation.

In the global comparison of democracies, we might want to describe and compare *distinct profiles of instrumental and affective accountability as linkage mechanisms to citizens* politicians deploy in the game of partisan competition. How do such linkages vary across parties and across polities? Generating a stock of descriptive information on linkage mechanisms would constitute a prelude to a more profound investigation into the differential “qualities” of democracy that have emerged across the

globe. This investigation, in turn, would enable scholars to look into the origins of linkage profiles as well as the consequences of such profiles for the fortunes of democratic governance.

Investigating Democratic Accountability Relations. Opportunities and Pitfalls

Cross-national information about democratic accountability mechanisms has been hitherto limited to policy or programmatic accountability in affluent Western democracies and recently in post-communist Europe and Latin America.^{iv} Mostly, but not entirely limited to Western democracies, there are also comparative studies of economic voting and political business cycles, a specific mode of policy competition based on valence/competence appeals of politicians.^v Studies of clientelistic linkage, however, are typically confined to localized ethnographic field research, surveys in individual countries or small sets of countries, and qualitative comparative case studies. We are lacking a broader comparative grasp of the distribution of such accountability practices. In a similar vein, work on politicians' deployment of charismatic leadership, party symbols and identification, or descriptive identification is rare, particularly in a comparative framework.

The study on which I report makes a step to filling this void by gathering data primarily on two mechanisms of accountability, policy/program and clientelism. This focus is supplemented by a minimum of information on other linkage practices involving politicians' appeals to voters by invoking valence/competence of electoral contestants, the identification with their parties, or the recognition and admiration of their leader(s) charismatic authority.^{vi} The study conducted in 2008 and 2009 is an expert survey of more than 1,400 respondents, primarily political scientists and political sociologists with a specialization in their own country's parties, elections, and campaigns, as well as small panels of

political journalists for national newspapers covering electoral campaigns. The study covers 88 countries around the world that had at least a modicum of open party competition in the five years running up to 2008 and a minimum of two million inhabitants. The rules were bent a bit to include a few hegemonic party systems to achieve at least some coverage of the Middle East and extend coverage of Sub-Saharan Africa.^{vii}

Experts were asked to characterize attributes of partisan activities in their countries from the vantage point of politicians in a total of four subject areas:^{viii}

- *How parties are organized*: the party organizations' extensiveness, centralization, external associational and informal linkages to notables, and financial transparency.
- *How politicians provide targeted benefits to voters*: the effort made to provide targeted benefits, the kinds of benefits offered and the perceived effectiveness of such efforts to generate votes for a party.
- *How politicians can police the contingency of the clientelistic exchange*: Can parties monitor voters and, if so, can they punish defectors? Are clientelistic targeting efforts at all electorally effective for parties as a way of increasing their electorate?
- *How politicians appeal on programmatic issues*: Do parties take distinct stances on issues and, if so, on which ones? How are policies "bundled" and signaled through left-right placements?

Expert surveys of party behavior certainly generate large measurement errors, but there may be no clearly superior research tool, particularly for broad cross-national research.^{ix} At least four kinds of threats to the validity of the data collected in expert surveys stand out:

- *The expertise of the experts themselves may be limited, and differentially so.*

- *Familiarity with parties in specific national settings provides experts with divergent “anchors” to score party behavior in different countries, interpret the meaning of the scales on which they are rating parties.* Contingent upon that anchor, similar scores on the same scale mean different things for different experts, particularly when their anchor points vary across countries.
- *Experts may have trouble to pass **aggregate judgments** about the conduct of parties across their polities, as they recognize the localized diversity of party practices.* Measurement error creeps in through **data aggregation**.
- *The selection process of experts is non-random and experts may be **politically biased** for or against a party and for this reason they may strategically distort their favored and their most disliked parties’ scores.*

The survey built in a variety of safeguards to limit these distortions or at least to detect them.

Moreover, extensive validity checks are under way. Nevertheless, the considerable “noisiness” and measurement error of a global cross-national data set of expert judgments commands certain precautions in the use of and inferences drawn from the data. Broad global comparisons may be more adequate given the coarseness of the expert scores than fine-grained comparisons of otherwise similar parties and countries, particularly in the same region. Small differences between party and polity on linkage scores may result from measurement error more than be substantively interpretable political phenomena.

Empirical Patterns of Democratic Accountability Relations around the Globe.

In this brief overview, I will report only aggregate national patterns and not variance in accountability practices across individual parties, although the more disaggregate analysis promises to yield a major treasure trove of insights. In all instances displayed here, I display national scores as the

means of the parties' average scores, weighted by the electoral size of each party in the most recent national legislative election. The raw materials for this calculation, the individual parties' scores, are average scores of the expert juries that appraised each party.

Targeted Clientelistic Exchange

The survey offers experts several separate and independent ways to assess the extent to which politicians offer voters targeted private and localized club goods delivered contingently in exchange for citizens' votes and/or other party services. Experts scored parties how much effort they make to supply five different categories of targeted benefits to their voters (gifts, jobs, social insurance benefits, business procurement contracts, regulatory favors). This made possible to produce a summary index of clientelistic effort for parties and entire countries, weighted by the size of parties. The national aggregate scores of this measure correlate very highly with a question subsequently fielded in the survey where experts were asked to provide round-about judgments of parties' average efforts to provide targeted goods in a polity ($r\text{-square} = .88$).

Figure 1 depicts experts' aggregate assessment of clientelistic efforts politicians make in each country at the time of the survey (2008-9) on the horizontal axis (1-5 scale). On the vertical axis is experts' assessment of how clientelistic efforts have changed over time (1-5 scale) compared to ten years ago, with the absence of change indicated by the intermediate score (3.0 on a 1-5 scale). The figure shows that countries with clientelism scores below the global average now (2008-9: < 2.8) also had low scores ten years ago, or have seen clientelism weaken since the earlier time (Austria, Belgium, Japan). Most of the countries with low or falling clientelistic partisan efforts are postindustrial

democracies, although a few still have intermediate, albeit also declining levels of clientelism (Italy, Japan, and especially Greece).

To another group of countries now (2008-9) experts attribute intermediate to somewhat high levels of clientelistic effort, but after a decline over the past ten years. These countries tend to be located in Latin America. But most countries with above average scores now (>2.8) or very high scores now (>3.5) appear to have experienced a recent surge in clientelistic effort. This applies especially to Middle Eastern, Asian, and Sub-Saharan African party systems that tend to display high and intensified clientelism.

Post-communist Eastern Europe is the only geographical region that displays no central tendency, whether in levels or change rates of clientelistic effort. Some countries have intermediate and stable or falling clientelism, while others display high clientelism that appears to have intensified in the preceding decade.

Figure 1 about here

Where politicians make clientelistic targeting efforts, is it also effective in producing electoral votes for their parties? Figure 2 provides a tentative answer, displaying countries' expert scores on both the national aggregation of experts' scores of parties' clientelistic targeting activities on the horizontal axis and experts' judgment of how effective such efforts are for the actual electoral performance of parties. Experts see a rather tight link between politicians' clientelistic efforts and actual vote production across most regions of the world *except* in many Latin American countries, where politicians evidently make energetic clientelistic efforts, but experts judge these efforts as rather futile in generating votes.

Figure 2 about here

Further research must reveal why Latin American politicians make futile clientelistic efforts. One hypothesis has to do with social networks important for the effectiveness of contingent exchange. It

turns out that experts score parties in most, but not all (Argentina!) Latin American countries as having very weak associational networks or ties to local notables that could reduce voter opportunism and enforce contingent exchanges through (indirect) monitoring and sanctioning of defectors. Wherever parties rely on functioning networks to notables and organizational machines, however, experts suggest that their clientelistic efforts appear to pay off at the ballot box.

Programmatic Politics

The global democratic accountability data set affords a variety of ways to develop measures of programmatic party competition, but they tend to be partial measures each of which requires a fairly complicated sequence of computational steps. Ultimately a combined index will need to be assembled.^x Let us here use a rather crude, but still telling partial measure of programmatic structuration of party competition derived from experts' scores of parties' positions on a left-right dimension.

Left and right are conceptually empty vessels, filled by voters and politicians with different meaning depending on political circumstances. By associating issue positions and underlying fundamental ideological principles (e.g. about individual liberty and collective equality) with these spatial metaphors, politicians can signal to voters how parties differ and produce specific issue positions against the backdrop of an ever changing policy agenda. The parties' left-right signals thus enable even that vast majority of voters who are severe information misers devoting little time to processing political information in their daily lives to vote in an intelligent, instrumental way for the party that roughly matches its promised provision of goods to the voter's personal demand.

A minimum condition for the existence of programmatic competition among parties, then, is that experts recognize each label's left-right position in fairly unambiguous ways. If they disagree, it shows

that politicians send very noisy signals and cannot possibly hope to convey programmatic content to information miserly voters. Hence, a partial indicator of programmatic competition is experts' standard deviation of left-right scores awarded to the same party. Large standard deviations, revealing disagreement among experts on a party's true left-right position, suggest weakness or absence of efforts by a party to articulate a programmatic stance. In a similar vein, experts' non-response to the left-right scoring question may reveal that a party does not face up to the hard labor of working out a programmatic appeal. Not accidentally, for parties where experts' left-right judgments result in a high standard deviation, indicating programmatic diffuseness, the proportion of experts that refuse to provide any left-right score is also higher.

Since there are copious numbers of policy questions in the survey, ultimately we will develop composite measures of programmatic party appeals that will not primarily rely on left-right placements, but recognize the potentially multi-dimensional nature of programmatic partisan competition. But for now, let the standard deviations of experts' left-right scores for each party, aggregated to the national level and weighted by party size, serve as a partial measure of programmatic effort among politicians.

The literature on democratic accountability mechanisms implicitly or explicitly postulates a trade-off between parties' programmatic and clientelistic appeals. This may be due to the tastes of electorates who want one or the other, but do not tolerate parties that combine both linkage strategies, or due to budget constraints imposed on the efforts politicians can make to attract parties, or due to the operational incompatibility of universalistic policies and particularistic client services. Figure 3 maps parties' central tendency to make clientelistic efforts in each polity on the vertical axis and the experts' mean standard deviations' of left-right scores, on the horizontal dimension, as measure of programmatic diffuseness of parties' positions across the set of countries on the horizontal axis. It reveals a substantial, but far from perfect trade-off between clientelistic and programmatic accountability mechanisms.

Figure 3 about here

The quadrant where parties (and national party system tendencies) would be situated that rely neither on clientelism nor programmatic competition is empty. Electorally relevant parties seem to have to make some kind of effort of a clientelistic or programmatic nature or face extinction. In many countries parties predominantly operate either with clientelistic targeting (particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa) or with programmatic appeals only (especially among Western postindustrial democracies.) This speaks in favor of the trade-off hypothesis and generates a rather strong trade-off correlation ($r = .57$; r -squared = .329). But in much of Latin America, and some of the Asia-Middle Eastern region, experts report that politicians engage in *both* energetic clientelistic politics and programmatic policy appeals.

As a working hypothesis, parties in much of Latin America may in general be moving on to programmatic competition, but have not quite yet abandoned an array of increasingly ineffective clientelistic practices. Maybe their electorates have become sufficiently heterogeneous that some constituencies insist on clientelistic payoffs, while others abhor such practices. In some countries, however, this does not rule out that sometimes effective clientelism may be intertwined with programmatic competition. Parties in Argentina, Venezuela and possibly Egypt provide testimony for this combined maximization strategy.

Combining clientelism and programmatic politics requires extremely resourceful political parties. This can be achieved either through bountiful and often illegal private party finance, or through partisan patronage in the state apparatus, or through a vast state-regulated or state-owned economy that is available for party-governed resource allocation. Where the publicly regulated economy runs into difficulties and market liberalization cuts off such opportunities, the combination of clientelism and programmatic politics tends to implode.^{xi}

Even in the face of rising affluence, combinations of clientelism and programmatic politics may thus be sustainable, particularly for large governing parties, under political-economic conditions of specifically “mixed” economies. Such economies, for which import-substituting industrialization strategies of some Latin American countries, but also state-led industrialization in some West European democracies (Austria, Italy) or state-regulated industrialization in Japan are examples, often resulted from parties coming to power that initially had a strong programmatic bent to design new institutions, reallocate resources, and create a new societal compact. In the process, however, the new governing parties penetrated the economy in ways that allowed them to complement, if not substitute, strategies of programmatic electoral competition with those of clientelistic targeting of electoral constituencies.

Complex Profiles of Democratic Accountability Modes

So far, I have exclusively focused on clientelistic and programmatic modes of democratic accountability and linkage building between citizens and politicians. How about other forms of democratic accountability, such as charismatic leadership, the affective mobilization of party identity and valence competition with the competence of politicians and parties to produce collective goods? The democratic accountability survey supplies only a single question for each of these dimensions on which politicians scored parties in their polities. A factor analysis may report whether politicians combine accountability strategies into complex profiles. Table 1 reports on a varimax rotated factor analysis of the five dimensions. The factor loadings reported show the association between the five observed variables and the smaller number of unobserved factors each of which captures more than the variance of a single observed variable (Eigenvalue > 1) in the data set. The varimax rotation estimates factors that fulfill two criteria, namely that the resulting factors are orthogonal to each other (i.e. statistically

independent) and that they maximize the concentration of loadings on a minimal number of observed variables, thus facilitating the interpretation of the factors.

Table 1 about here

The computation yields two factors. The first captures the already familiar trade-off relationship between clientelistic and programmatic accountability. Where clientelist effort is strong, parties also have only vague left-right positions. In addition, the factor computation shows that politicians who use clientelistic exchange are also more inclined to rely on charismatic party leadership.

Politicians' deployment of party identification as well as appeals to valence-competence of a party, if elected to govern, load on an entirely separate second factor. Inspection of empirical cases reveals that parties with high values on the second factor tend to be older, larger, if not hegemonic parties in and out of government, with a venerable history that crystallizes an affective following. It is not by accident that high scorers on the second factor also have a slight tendency to be more clientelistic and/or reliant on charismatic authority.

An exploratory cluster analysis suggests that the two factor dimensions tend to produce four clusters of parties.^{xii} There are two types with strong use of clientelism. Type I combines high scores on both factors, i.e. powerful clientelistic efforts, charismatic authority, appeals to affective party identities, and government competence, but with tepid or no emphasis on programmatic appeals. A second type of "weak clientelists" are strongly anti-programmatic, but intermediate on everything else (charisma, valence, party ID). It is not by accident that Type I parties tend to be electorally very large (therefore "clientelistic hegemons" might be an appropriate title), whereas Type II parties tend to be electorally much more feeble. A similar division between large and small parties characterizes programmatic parties, types III and IV. Type III parties are large and supplement their programmatic commitment with mobilization through affective partisan identification and claims of strong competence to govern, while

Type IV parties constitute purely “ideological” programmatic parties without much use of other accountability mechanisms. Ideologically, type IV parties tend to be more radical than type III.

Correlates of Democratic Linkage Strategies. Accountability and Governance

As a final exploratory exercise at the boundary between a causal analysis of the data and a methodological exploration of the “construct validity” of the data, let us examine the association between electoral accountability strategies and prominent attributes of democratic polity performance frequently employed in the regime and comparative political economic literature. We would theoretically expect that more programmatic linkage strategies dominate in more affluent polities, particularly those characterized by “good governance” (rule of law, low incidence of corruption) and more inclusive social policy. These should also be the polities where citizens display greater interpersonal trust and show a stronger preference for democracy as the best form of political regime.^{xiii}

Table 2 presents simply bivariate correlations of clientelistic or programmatic linkage strategies with a variety of important attributes of contemporary democracies. Our measure of clientelistic politics is indeed very strongly related to most of these features, and in ways opposite to the correlations that emerge with programmatic linkage strategies. Clientelism is a phenomenon more prominent among poorer, less well governed and lower quality democracies. It coincides with less comprehensive welfare states. It appears in polities whose citizens show lower levels of interpersonal trust and somewhat less intense preference for democracy compared to non-democratic political regime forms.

Table 2 about here

These correlations, of course, do not imply causation. They constitute the beginning, not the conclusion, of a thorough investigation probing into the operation of democratic accountability

mechanisms across democratic polities and across different political parties within such democracies. They suggest, however, that democratic linkage mechanisms are not isolated stand-alone features of contemporary polities, but integral aspects of complex webs of relations students of comparative political regimes have tried to illuminate for years.

Democratic Accountability Relations and the Quality of Democracy

Understanding the mechanisms of democratic accountability across competitive electoral democracies around the globe adds an important component to the analysis of contemporary political regimes, their origins and their prospects. The study of democratic linkage mechanisms throws light not only on the trajectory of political regimes, but also the comparative political economy of growth and inequality. Traditional regime concepts—democracy and dictatorship—may be too coarse to gain much leverage on interesting political economy questions such as the political causes of economic development and inequality. It remains to be explored whether a more subtle characterization of democratic accountability relations within democracies will help us to spell out better the causal mechanisms that are involved in the interaction between political regime attributes and political economic processes and outcomes.

In this spirit, the study of democratic accountability mechanisms might cover at least three subject areas for which the new dataset may be useful. First, descriptively, we would want to examine how politicians organize different linkage strategies, and whole profiles of such strategies, around the electoral democracies of the world. For example, in what sorts of organizational party capabilities must politicians invest to bring about certain profiles of linkage strategies? More specifically, for the

clientelistic case, how can modes of contingent exchange be sustained in the face of opportunism and temptations to defect by both clients (citizens) and patrons (politicians)?

The two other fields for investigation made possible by the new dataset concern upstream and downstream causality of linkage mechanisms. In terms of upstream causality, what are the conditions that encourage politicians and voters to build different profiles of political linkage? The low hanging fruit here is an argument focusing on economic development. But a scrutiny of the mechanisms that translate greater resourcefulness into more programmatic effort by political parties probably will have to examine closely political-economic property regimes, democratic institutions, and cultural relations, including the ethnocultural identities that play a role in the political mobilization of partisanship in electoral democracies.

In terms of downstream causality, what are the consequences of differential profiles of democratic linkage mechanisms for economic performance, the quality of life, and ultimately the prospects of survival of electoral democracies themselves? Does the prevalence of clientelism bring about worse economic outcomes, or may it be sometimes, contingent upon political-economic constraints, the least bad political alternative in crafting bonds between political elites and masses that advances citizens' quality of life?^{xiv}

The capstone in a downstream causal analysis of democratic linkage mechanisms is how the quality of bonds between citizens and politicians affects the public perception of democracy, and ultimately even the survival and demise of democratic regimes. In this regard, the democratic accountability data set may add one element to the existing toolkit of students of political regime change and democratization.

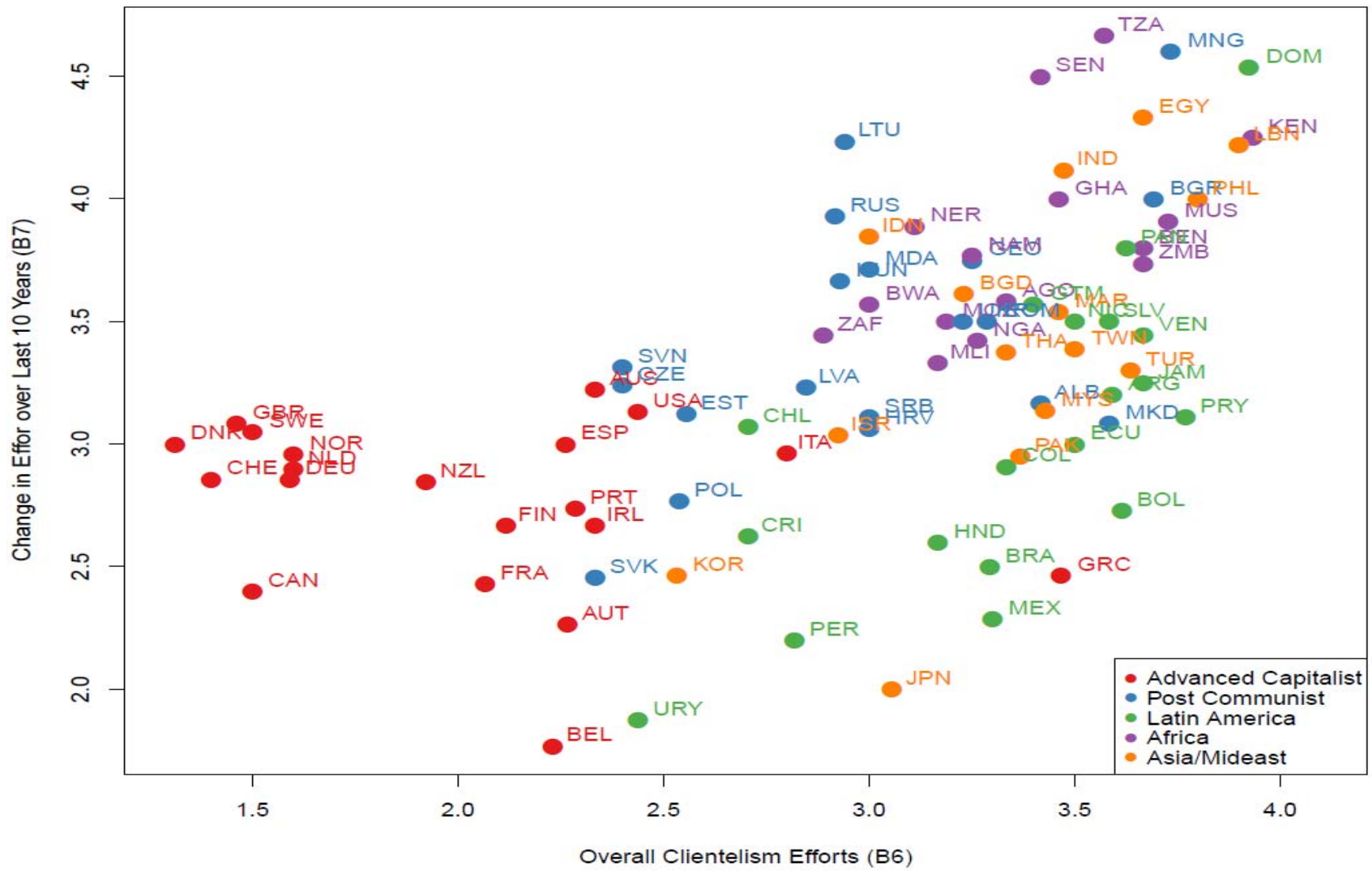


Figure 1: Parties' Clientelistic Efforts in 2008 and Change in Effort over the Preceding Decade (1998 to 2008)
($r = +.54$)

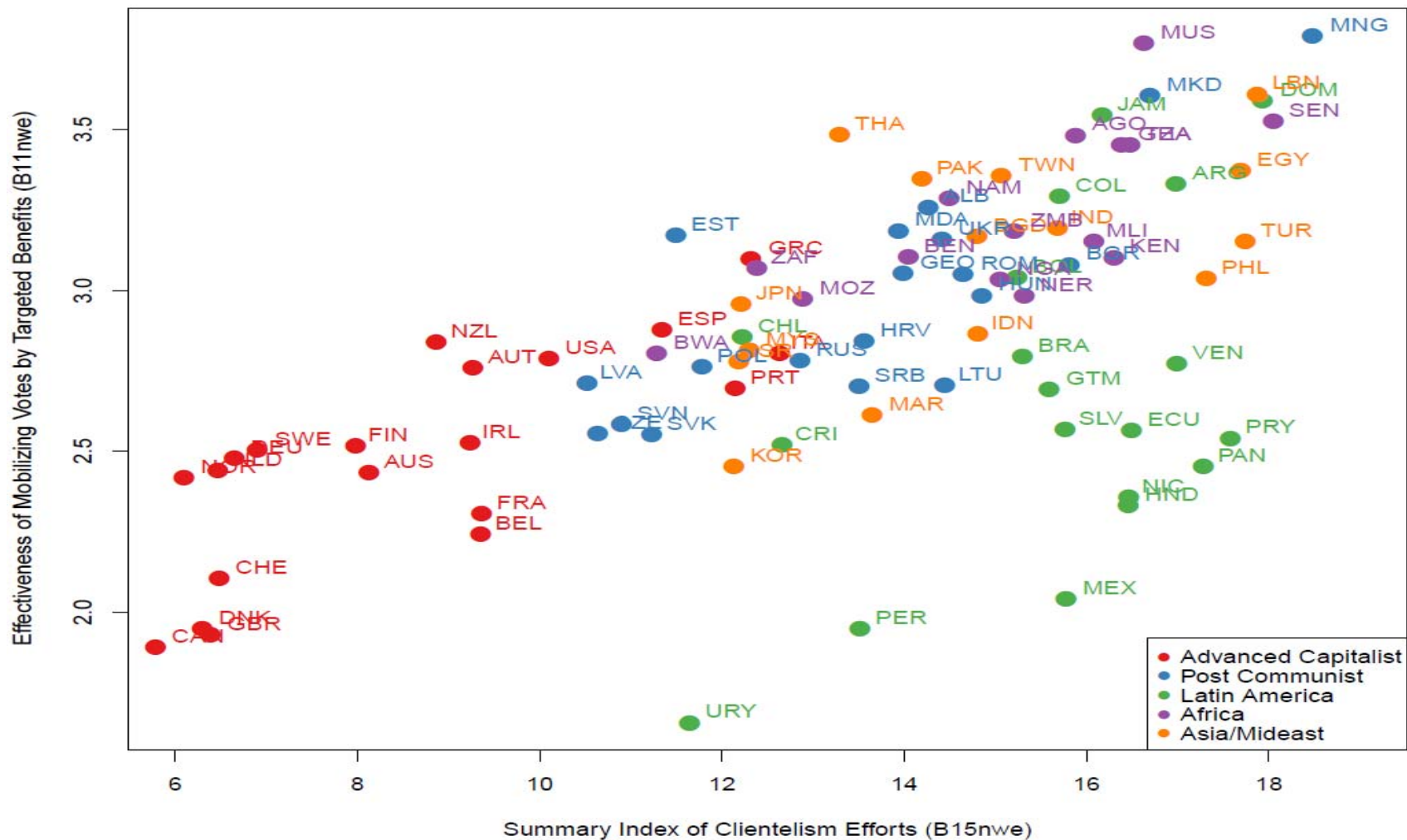


Figure 2: Clientelistic Targeting and Its Electoral Effectiveness
($r = +.63$)

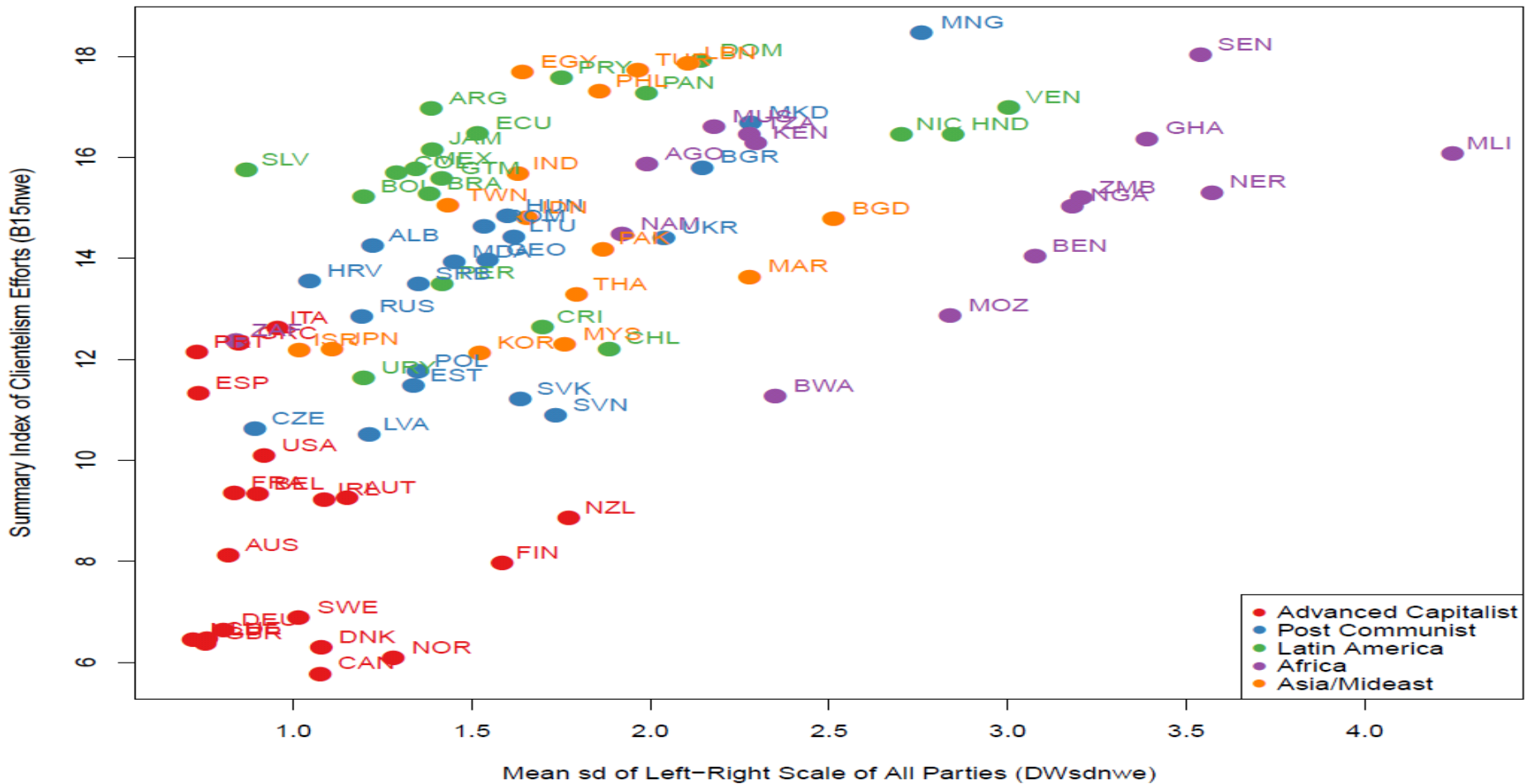


Figure 3: Trade-Off Between Clientelistic and Programmatic Party Competition
($r = +.57$)

Table 1. Profiles of Democratic Accountability.
Factor Analysis (varimax rotated) of linkage strategies

Variable name	Factor 1	Factor 2
Diffuseness of Parties' left-right placements (dwsd)	.82	-.14
Politicians' clientelistic efforts (B15)	.72	.39
Politicians' deployment of charismatic authority (E1)	.60	.30
Politicians' appeal to party identification (E4)	.18	.73
Politicians' emphasis on independent expertise and competence to govern (E5)	.01	.85
Proportion of variance captured	.317	.304
Factor Eigenvalues	1.59	1.52

Table 2. Correlates of Electoral Accountability Strategies

	Clientelistic Strategy (B15nwe)	Programmatic Strategy (DWsd inversed)
1. Per capita GDP (average most recent five years) (N=87; missing Taiwan)	-.80*	.56*
2. Quality of Democracy (Polity II) (N=74; missing: ALB, AGP, AUS, BGD, DOM, GEO, IND, LBN, MUS, MAR, PHL, SVN, TUR)	-.42*	.36*
3. Rule of Law 2006 (World Bank Governance Indicator) (N=88)	-.85*	.54*
4. Absence of Corruption 2006 (World Bank Governance Indicator) (N = 88)	-.88*	.55*
5. Inclusiveness of Social Policy (Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2008) (N=65; only developing countries)	-.47*	.57*
6. Interpersonal Trust (WVS and regional studies) (N=84; missing AGO, LBN, MUS, NER)	-.79*	.41*
7. Preference for Democracy as Best Regime (World Values Studies and Regional Survey Barometers) (N=84)	-.41*	.27*

References

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- ⁱ For a masterful treatment of democratic accountability in the United States as both a “valence” relationship of competence in the pursuit of collective goods as well as an ideological-directional relationship of satisfying the preferences of some at the expense of those of others, see Robert S. Erickson, Michael B. McKuen and James A. Stimson, *The Macro-Polity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- ⁱⁱ For an instructive effort to flesh out the responsible partisan model of democratic accountability, see G. Bingham Powell, “The Chain of Responsiveness,” *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 15, Number 4, October 2004, pp. 91-105.
- ⁱⁱⁱ For a more detailed treatment of these issues, see Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, “Citizen-Politician Linkages: An Introduction” in *ibid.*, editors, *Patrons, Clients, and Policies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 1-49. See also Simeon Nichter, “Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 102, February 2008, No. 1: 19-31.
- ^{iv} The most comprehensive study based on expert judgments of parties’ positions is Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver, *Party Policy in Modern Democracies*. (London: Routledge, 2006). A recent study covering the post-communist region is Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield, “Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems. Issue Positions and Issue Salience in 13 Postcommunist Democracies,” *Comparative Political Studies*, Volume 41, March 2009, No. 2: 280-313; Latin America has been included in Nina Wiesehomeier and Kenneth Benoit, “Presidents, Parties, and Policy Competition,” *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 71, October 2009, No. 4: 1435-47.
- ^v See Raymond M. Duch and Randolph T. Stevenson, *The Economic Vote. How Political and Economic Institutions Condition Election Results* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- ^{vi} There may be more suitable methods to study descriptive representation, for example by the under- or over-representation of politicians with certain ascriptive traits on parties’ candidate rosters.
- ^{vii} Funding for this project was supplied by the World Bank, Duke University and the Chilean National Science Foundation. The project was implemented at Duke University and the Catholic University of Santiago de Chile for the Latin American countries with a team led by David Altman and Juan Pablo Luna.
- ^{viii} In many countries, experts completed the survey online. In about a third of the total, however, the survey was administered through paper questionnaires, often in fieldwork with project affiliated researchers visiting the experts and conducting the survey in face-to-face interaction. This applies especially to Sub-Saharan Africa, but also to some countries in South Asia and the post-communist region.
- ^{ix} For a representative overview of the issues, read the special issue of *Electoral Studies*, Volume 26, 2007, Number 1.
- ^x For an effort to develop such a set of indicators of programmatic party (system) structuration at least for one region, see now Herbert Kitschelt, Kirk A. Hawkins, Juan Pablo Luna, Guillermo Rosas and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. *Latin American Party Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), especially chapters 2-5.
- ^{xi} See Herbert Kitschelt, “The Demise of Clientelism in Affluent Capitalist Democracies.” In Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, editors. *Patrons, Clients, and Policies* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 298-321.

^{xii} See Kent Freeze, Kiril Kolev and Yi-ting Wang. *National Profiles of Democratic Accountability: Tradeoffs and Complementarities between Democratic Accountability Linkages*. Paper prepared for Presentation at the 2009 Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Toronto, September 1-4, 2009.

^{xiii} For theoretical reasons to expect these associations, see Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007), fn. 3.

^{xiv} Jan Pierskalla and Marco Fernandez. *Partisan Strategies and Political Economic Performance. Do Modes of Democratic Accountability Affect Economic Fortunes?* Paper prepared for the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. Toronto, September 1-4, 2009.