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DEMANDING RECOGNITION:
A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF POLITICAL CLIENTELISM

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Abstract
Despite increasingly programmatic politics and competitive elections, political clientelism remains an enduring feature of African politics. More so, while politicians rarely deliver on political promises, citizens continue to demand and participate in patron-client relations. While moral economy and instrumentalist accounts offer insight into the puzzling persistence of political clientelism, we offer an additional framework based on demands for social recognition. Beyond expectations of materialist exchange or the performance of cultural norms, citizens expect their political leaders to recognize them as dignified human beings and members of a bounded identity group. Drawing on evidence from three diverse African contexts – urban Ghana, rural Senegal, and coastal Kenya – we argue that citizens engage in political clientelism as a vehicle for demanding three dimensions of social recognition: (1) to be seen and heard by leaders, (2) to be respected as agents in the political process, and (3) to be politically included and protected from harm. By providing new insights into the enduring logics of clientelism, citizen strategies amidst unequal power relationships, and the role of emotions in democratic politics, we aim to reconcile existing approaches and bring them into a more unified framework.

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Clientelism – the exchange of contingent benefits for political support[1] – remains an enduring feature of African politics, despite rising urbanization,[2] increasingly programmatic politics[3] and competitive elections.[4] While conventional explanations tend to focus on the interests and incentives of parties and politicians, recent research shows how citizens reinforce clientelist ties,[5] using these relationships to demand more accountable governance.[6] The persistence of clientelism in Africa remains puzzling, however, because it is rarely monitored[7] and does not clearly affect electoral victories.[8] Moreover, while citizens are often well-aware of the costs of clientelism,[9] they continue to engage in clientelist relationships even when their demands are rarely met.

We argue that an important yet overlooked feature of client participation in patron-client relations – and one that helps explain clientelism's persistence - is the demand for social recognition. Social recognition is the reciprocal expectation that people are recognized 'as moral persons and for their social achievements.'[10] Indeed, while conventional theories of clientelism

[1] Allen Hicken, 'Clientelism', *Annual Review of Political Science* 14 (2011), pp. 289–310.
[2] Noah Nathan, *Electoral politics and Africa's urban transition: Class and ethnicity in Ghana* (Cambridge University Press, 2019); Author 2 Reference.
[3] Jeremy Horowitz, *Multiethnic democracy: The logic of elections and policymaking in Kenya* (Oxford University Press, 2022); Robin Harding, 'Attribution and accountability: Voting for roads in Ghana', *World Politics* 67, 4 (October 2015), pp. 656–89.
[4] Jaimie Bleck and Nicolas van de Walle, *Electoral politics in Africa since 1990* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).
[5] Miguel Pellicer et al., 'Poor people's beliefs and the dynamics of clientelism', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 33, 3 (2021), pp. 300–332.
[6] Portia Roelofs, 'Beyond programmatic versus patrimonial politics: Contested conceptions of legitimate distribution in Nigeria', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 57, 3 (2019), pp. 415–36; Anne Pitcher, Mary Moran, and Michael Johnston, 'Rethinking patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism in Africa', *African Studies Review* 52, 1 (2009), pp. 125–56; Author 2 Reference.
[7] Sarah Brierley and Eric Kramon, 'Party campaign strategies in Ghana: Rallies, canvassing and handouts', *African Affairs*, 119, 477 (October 2020), pp. 587-603. Allen Hicken and Noah Nathan, 'Clientelism's red herrings: Dead ends and new directions in the study of nonprogrammatic politics', *Annual Review of Political Science* 23, 1 (2020), pp. 277–94.
[8] Jenny Guardado and Leonard Wantchékon, 'Do electoral handouts affect voting behavior?', *Electoral Studies* 53 (2018), pp. 139–49.
[9] Keith Weghorst and Staffan Lindberg, 'What drives the swing voter in Africa?', *American Journal of Political Science* 57, 3 (2013), pp. 717–34.
[10] Axel Honneth, *Disrespect: The normative foundations of critical theory* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007), 71.

pertain primarily to material exchange, we aim to enrich our understanding of the patron-client relationship by calling attention to its non-material dimensions. Citizens seek out politicians who present themselves as advocates for a particular group of voters, who recognize the legitimacy and imperative of their claims, and who promise to restore their dignity and voice in the political sphere.[11] Thus, while citizens do make material demands on politicians, we suggest that citizens use the patron-client interface as a way to demand social recognition as well, both as individuals and members of bounded identity groups.

Specifically, we argue that citizen engagement in political clientelism can provide a vehicle for demanding three dimensions of social recognition: (1) to be seen and heard by leaders, (2) to be respected as agents in the political process, and (3) to be included and protected from harm. All three dimensions are rooted in understandings of citizenship and belonging in the polity. Importantly, and as with materialist exchanges, citizens understand social recognition as a contingent practice. That is, they expect leaders to bestow social recognition – by listening, showing concern, or creating time – in exchange for their support.

We aim to make three specific contributions. First, we theorize social recognition as an alternative logic, in addition to material incentives and moral economy approaches, that can help explain the persistence of patron-client relationships in the face of rampant *non*-delivery of promised material benefits. To be clear, we are not arguing that social recognition is a constitutive part of clientelism, but rather that citizens often *embed* demands for recognition in their relationships with patrons. Second, we demonstrate how participation in clientelist relations can be a powerful strategy for citizens to gain decision-making power and demand respect as

[11] Irene Bloemraad et al., 'Membership without social citizenship? Deservingness and redistribution as grounds for equality', *Daedalus* 148, 3 (2019), pp. 73–104.

political agents. Third, by uncovering citizen agency in patron-client exchanges, we consider the emotional side of democratic politics. When citizens do not feel recognized, individuals may experience a deep sense of political betrayal, disillusionment with democracy, and anger—feelings that do not always correspond to a citizen's material well-being or receipt of goods.

In what follows, we detail our theory of social recognition and its relationship to clientelism on the continent. We illustrate our theory with evidence from urban Ghana, rural Senegal, and coastal Kenya, using each case to illustrate one of the three dimensions detailed above. With multi-party elections as an important scope condition, we show how similar demands for social recognition play out across countries with distinct historical and institutional features, suggesting that social recognition is a durable companion to the clientelist relationship. The paper concludes with a discussion of the argument's implications for our understanding of clientelism and democratic practice on the continent.

Social Recognition and Clientelist Politics

Our argument builds on two dominant approaches to the study of clientelism. Instrumentalist accounts focus on the ways that politicians distribute selective and programmatic goods in exchange for political support, focusing primarily on the strategies politicians use to win elections and signal the credibility of their commitments.[12] Other studies focus on the logic of voters, suggesting that citizens use clientelism to secure livelihood goods amidst contexts of scarcity.[13] These accounts predict that clientelism will decline as citizens become less vulnerable

[12] Eric Kramon, *Money for votes: The causes and consequences of electoral clientelism in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2018).
[13] Simeon Nichter, *Votes for survival: Relational clientelism in Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2018).

to adverse economic shocks,[14] or when politicians have few incentives to keep voters under-resourced and dependent.[15]

Moral economy accounts, by contrast, emphasize the importance of social relations and repertoires of reciprocal obligation.[16] While early work in this vein saw clientelism as being built on social ties embedded in a pre-modern form of governance,[17] recent moral economy theories show how competitive elections have fueled contingent material exchange as a way for politicians to gain symbolic capital through 'acts of benevolence'[18] so that citizens can debate virtuous behavior.[19]

We acknowledge the utility of these arguments but suggest that they miss an important practice enabled by the patron-client exchange. Notably, while the hope for material benefits motivates voters to engage in clientelism, citizens simultaneously use these exchanges to demand that their leaders recognize their humanity, dignity, and right to a certain standard of living. The targeted distribution of a good or service can symbolize this act of recognition, but recognition does not require a material component. For example, citizens might feel recognized simply by being given the time and space to voice their concerns or air grievances.

Our argument is thus twofold: first, the patron-client relationship can satisfy not only the material demands of citizens but can establish the norms and practices to have their emotional or psychic demands acknowledged as well. Second, social recognition can occur even when

[14] Gustavo Bobonis et al., 'Vulnerability and clientelism', *American Economic Review* 112, 11 (2022), pp. 3627–59.
[15] Javier Auyero, *Poor people's politics: Peronist survival networks and the legacy of Evita* (Duke University Press, Durham, 2000); Hicken, 'Clientelism.'
[16] Steffan Schmidt, *Friends, followers, and factions: A reader in political clientelism* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1977).
[17] James Scott, 'Patron-client politics and political change in Southeast Asia', *American Political Science Review* 66, 1 (1972), pp. 91–113.
[18] Paul Nugent, 'Banknotes and symbolic capital', in Basedu, Erdmann and Mehler (eds) *Votes, Money and Violence: Political parties and elections in sub-Saharan Africa* (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 2007).
[19] Nic Cheeseman, Gabrielle Lynch, and Justin Willis, *The moral economy of elections in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021).

material demands are not met. Notably, it is often *the process – rather than the outcome* – of demanding benefits, played out through face-to-face interactions between politician and citizens, that constitutes the act of social recognition. Hence, even when politicians fail to distribute goods, citizens still seek social recognition, providing the invisible glue that can help maintain clientelist networks.

Importantly, clientelist exchanges do not necessarily involve social recognition. Indeed, in many scenarios they are distinct phenomena. Yet we suspect that citizens themselves often see a blurred line between the two. In democracies where clientelism pervades political life, it is at the patron-client interface that average citizens are best positioned to seek recognition. In these contexts, we see social recognition as being rooted in a contingent exchange: clients are more inclined to support politicians who bestow recognition, and to withdraw support from politicians who fail to do so. To clarify further, we also see the concept of social recognition is distinct from representation, which implies an institutionalized act of 'standing for.'[20] Social recognition does not require that patrons relay citizen demands into other fora because it is the act of listening that is critical.

Our theory of social recognition builds partly on scholars such as Habermas and Honneth, each of whom emphasize the centrality of dignity and respect in the practice of democratic politics. We also follow the lead of scholars like Auyero, who suggest that political clientelism is a system that institutionalizes demands for recognition in the practices of daily life, providing a mode through which citizens assert claims to dignity and respect.[21]

Specifically, we suggest that political clientelism offers citizens a chance to demand that their leaders recognize their capacity for agency, which Taylor explains as an 'essential aspect of

[20] Hannah Pitkin, *The concept of representation* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1972).
[21] Auyero, *Poor people's politics*, 180–81.

a human beings' sense of self.'[22] Social recognition is thus a key feature of human dignity, with its denial evoking a deep sense of loss capable of generating moral injury.[23] One implication is that when patrons fail to recognize or fulfill demands for social recognition, citizens may experience this failure as disrespect, which can manifest in feelings of shame, anger, indignation, and disillusionment with democracy, along with changes in voting behavior.[24]

Broadly, we argue that clientelism establishes a set of norms, practices, and relations that can allow citizens to demand social recognition from their leaders. We identify three dimensions by which they do so. First, citizens engage in political clientelism to feel seen and be heard by their leaders; to communicate and deliberate with their representatives. In his influential theory of communicative action, Habermas introduces an emancipatory sphere of action – the public sphere – where individuals enter communicative relationships with others to overcome domination.[25] The ideal patron, then, is one who elevates or restores the voice of those who feel sidelined or otherwise voiceless. The dimension is hardly unique to African politics. For example, in a 2016 campaign speech, Donald Trump declared, 'It's going to be a victory for…the factory worker…A victory for every citizen and for all of the people whose voices have not been heard for many, many years. They're going to be heard again.'[26]

Through this process of communication, individuals reach understandings of morality and justice, and engage in political decision-making free from domination. While we are

[22] Taylor 1985 in Elisabeth Wood, *Insurgent collective action and civil war in El Salvador* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003).
[23] Honneth (2007, p. 202) suggests that individuals seek recognition as equal members of society through a long process of securing human freedom.
[24] Taylor summarizes: 'Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being' (Charles Taylor, 'The politics of recognition', in Gutmann (ed), *Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992), 25).
[25] Jurgen Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (MIT Press, Cambridge, 1989).
[26] Cited in Michèle Lamont, Bo Yun Park, and Elena Ayala-Hurtado, 'Trump's electoral speeches and his appeal to the American white working class', *British Journal of Sociology* 68, S1 (2017), pp. S153–80.

agnostic as to whether these communicative relationships are truly 'emancipatory' or public, we suggest that many individuals across Africa understand their participation in political clientelism to be a vehicle to communicate with their leaders as they seek political voice and a feeling of agency.

In this regard, clientelist connections facilitate citizens' social recognition from leaders by enacting the norms of communication and deliberation that sustain patron-client relations. More so, face-to-face contact and personal connections with government representatives can provide a pathway toward defending one's dignity and overcoming the humiliation and alienation that characterize many features of political life across and beyond Africa. Yet because clientelism is based partly on demands for dignity and respect, followers may interpret a leader's failure to listen as a serious form of disrespect. In such scenarios, citizens may do more than shift their support, as instrumentalist accounts suggest, but react emotionally as well – out of anger, disappointment, or humiliation.

Secondly, clientelism offers citizens a venue to demand respect as political agents. This is true for citizens as voters, but it is particularly pronounced among political activists and low-level brokers who seek to gain social recognition for their political work from patrons and clients alike. In this way, participation in clientelist politics can provide a sense of 'pleasure in agency' – a 'positive effect associated with self-determination, autonomy, self-esteem, efficacy, and pride.'[27] When individuals attempt to engage in brokerage with political patrons, they exert agency in the political process as they seek to improve conditions for their communities or develop their own sense of self-efficacy. Through these efforts, individuals seek respect and dignity as well as choice in their political worlds. This provides avenues for social recognition

[27] Wood, *Insurgent collective action and civil war in El Salvador*, 235.

for a class of local political entrepreneurs, who derive pleasure from acting as players in the political field.

A third dimension of social recognition is the demand for inclusion in the polity as rights-bearing citizens and protection from harm. In many contexts, but especially precarious and insecure ones, citizens rely on their patrons to secure basic social and political rights, like protecting property rights,[28] providing employment, and securing basic services. The failure of leaders to protect such rights – seen as necessary to live a dignified life – can create feelings that leaders are not protecting them from harm. This claim is similar to the argument that economic vulnerability drives clientelism.[29] Our theory of social recognition, however, emphasizes the importance of leaders demonstrating care and concern – beyond or in addition to actually providing goods and services that mitigate vulnerability.

Social recognition is, therefore, a mechanism to claim rights to social citizenship,[30] including goods from the state, rights to land and property, political and civil protections, as well as the right to dignity. Even though clientelism's reciprocal exchanges often take on a private dimension, citizens articulate the demand for goods and services in moral terms that highlight the state's obligation to deliver. This forms part of an emerging discourse that situates claims for basic services, like toilets[31] or electricity[32], within a broader narrative about social citizenship. These three dimensions are summarized in Table 1.

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[28] Author 1 reference.
[29] Bobonis et al., 'Vulnerability and clientelism.'
[30] T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and social class* (Polity Press, 1950).
[31] Brenda Chalfin, 'Public things, excremental politics, and the infrastructure of bare life in Ghana's city of Tema', *American Ethnologist* 41, 1 (2014), pp. 92–109.
[32] Lauren MacLean et al., 'The construction of citizenship and the public provision of electricity during the 2014 World Cup in Ghana', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 54, 4 (2016), pp. 555–90.

Table 1: Three Dimensions of Social Recognition

Dimension	*Expectation of social recognition*	*Absence of social recognition*	*Potential Outcomes*
Feeling seen and heard (*Example: Ghana*)	Leaders take time to listen to constituent concerns.	Leaders do not visit/listen to communities.	Feeling forgotten & voiceless.
Respect as political agents (*Example: Senegal*)	Leaders recognize the hard work and sacrifice of low-level brokers.	No acknowledgement of brokers work/sacrifices.	Feeling disrespected & exploited.
Protection & inclusion *(Example: Kenya*)	Leaders recognize 'the right of the citizen to a minimum standard of civilized living.'[33]	Leaders harm or fail to protect constituents (e.g., selling land; 'failing to feed').	Feeling betrayed & dehumanized.

Importantly, the theory we have outlined here is not an endorsement of clientelism. Rather, in a structural context of inequality and powerlessness, participation in clientelism provides an avenue for citizens to pursue recognition as dignified human beings – as much as it offers an opportunity to seek clientelism's core attributes of material benefits or fulfilling social norms. We highlight, however, that leaders often fall short in supplying such recognition. These unmet expectations can contribute to a range of emotional responses, including anger, disillusionment, and resentment, that can have serious repercussions for the consolidation of democratic politics and political stability, a point we return to in the conclusion.

Research design and methods

We develop these theoretical insights from ethnography, interviews, and focus groups conducted over several years of field research in Ghana, Senegal, and Kenya.[34] All three

[33] Marshall, 1950.
[34] See methodological appendix for details on data collection and a discussion of the diverse methods employed across cases.

countries have established histories of competitive, multi-party elections, and widespread clientelism.[35] Senegal has long been upheld as an exemplar of a clientelist state, with a politicians' viability dependent on their ability to cultivate personalized bases of power. Brokers around the country try to block votes in an effort to signal community deservingness of patronage spoils.[36] Clientelism remains similarly entrenched in Ghana, one of the continent's most robust democracies.[37] In our third case of coastal Kenya, citizens engage in patronage politics to secure land claims, constituting a claim to citizenship. Citizens view the failure of leaders to protect their land as failure to protect their livelihood and dignity, which many residents view as political betrayal.

Important differences exist across the cases as well. First, while Ghana provides a case of strong party institutionalization, it is arguably much weaker in Senegal and Kenya.[38] Second, while coastal Kenya and rural Senegal are relatively ethnically homogeneous, urban Ghana, and Accra in particular, is ethnically diverse. Finally, while Kenya and Ghana are former British colonies, Senegal is a former French colony. We point out these similarities and differences to suggest that across distinct country contexts, the demand for social recognition emerges as a salient and consistent feature of clientelist exchanges. Table 2 summarizes these factors.

[35] Ghana has had relatively free, fair, and competitive elections since 1996. Kenya has had multi-party elections since 1992, though marked by violence. Senegal has held multi-party elections since the 1970s with the first party turnover in 2000.
[36] A distinctive feature of Senegalese clientelism is the role played by the country's prominent Sufi brotherhoods, which have traditionally served as both broker and patron, linking state to society and vice versa (Linda Beck, *Brokering democracy in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008)).
[37] Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai and Sam Hickey, 'The politics of development under competitive clientelism: Insights from Ghana's education sector', *African Affairs* 115, 458 (2016), pp. 44–72.
[38] Author 3 Reference.

Table 2: Case Comparison

	Regime Type	*Degree of Party Institutionalization*	*Ethnic diversity*	*Colonial heritage*
Urban Ghana	Multi-party democracy	Strong	Diverse	English
Rural Senegal	Multi-party democracy	Weak	Homogenous	French
Coastal Kenya	Multi-party democracy	Moderate	Homogenous	English

Our comparative case design deviates from standard approaches to controlled comparisons that aim to test causal relations. In contrast, we see our primary exercise as one of theory development. Drawing on our three cases of Ghana, Senegal and Kenya, we focus on developing a conceptual framework for understanding why we see similar demands for social recognition emerge in these diverse contexts.[39] In what follows, we use each country as a primary case for one of our three dimensions of social recognition articulated, but we see all three dimensions in each of our cases. They should thus not be thought of as distinct 'types' of social recognition specific to one country or another, but rather, interlocking components that vary in salience across contexts.

Urban Ghana: Feeling Seen and Heard

Political clientelism opens up spheres of communication and personal engagement between politicians and their constituents, creating space for citizens to exercise political voice and expression. Across the continent, citizens meet politicians at their homes and private offices, eat with them, and discuss personal challenges at community hang out spots. Citizens value

[39] Mala Htun and Francesca Jensenius, 'Comparative analysis for theory development', in Simmons and Smith (eds), *Rethinking comparison: Innovative methods for qualitative political inquiry* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021).

sitting down with their politicians, discussing frustrations and needs, and offering suggestions to improve politics. These are important opportunities for citizens to demand that leaders hear their concerns and serve their interests. These private conversations are more than political signaling[40] or adjudicating competing values of virtue.[41] Instead, the practice of listening constitutes an act of recognition that the politician respects and cares for the citizen as a human being, highlighting the importance of the relational exchange between them.

Becoming a member in a politicians' patronage network can provide a source of dignity, or high standing characterized by nonhumiliation and noninfantilization.[42] As one Ghanaian youth leader explained, 'The youth do not want money. We do not even want jobs directly from the MP. We want the MP to lobby for us. To make a call for us. To connect us with those who matter.'[43] Voters want their leaders to take the time to seriously consider their needs, assist them with their daily challenges, and make the effort to help them.

These demands are often characterized as patronage goods, but Ghanaians' constant utterances that 'we are all human beings' suggests that citizens' understandings of patronage extend beyond material goods. In this way, clientelistic practices provide a means for urban Ghanaians to demand respect and treatment as dignified human beings. This is especially important for newcomers to the city. One migrant explained that when he came to Accra, he felt that he didn't 'belong here' because the 'constituencies are created for indigenes.'[44] But entering the patronage networks of the local leader gave him the chance to voice his opinions. This process of integration encouraged migrant residents to demand that leaders are 'on the ground to

[40] Kramon, *Money for Votes*.
[41] Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis, *The moral economy of elections in Africa: Democracy, voting and virtue*.
[42] Josiah Ober, 'Democracy's dignity', *American Political Science Review* 106, 4 (2012), pp. 827–46.
[43] Author 2 Interview, Ga Mashie, Accra, 18 January 2012.
[44] Author 2, Interview, Ga Mashie, 24 August 2022.

understand' our 'aspirations and frustrations.'[45]

Leaders are expected to engage in these interactions or risk being accused of ignoring' the needs of or forgetting their constituents – both serious marks of shame. Youth often hang around when they expect a 'big man' to come through the community. They hope for *nokofio*, or something small.[46] But the small gift is also a show of gratitude and respect for support and hard work. For many of these youth, political patrons are more than material providers: they are mentors. 'He is my boss,' one resident explained with reference to the local opinion leader, despite not literally employing him.[47] But these mentors are often accused of neglecting their duties once they gain office. As one resident said about the new MP with a tinge of sadness and resignation, 'He is too busy for me right now.'[48]

Engaging in face-to-face practices of clientelism enable leaders to overcome accusations of selfishness and absence. Face-to-face communication then, is not merely a way to secure material goods or reciprocate loyalty, but rather, a way to voice interests and share ideas, providing citizens 'the pleasure of agency' in negotiating power imbalances in otherwise precarious settings. As one leader explained, 'When I started my job, people had wrong intentions of my work. They would attack me. But meeting [face-to-face] with residents gives me the chance to respond.'[49] Understanding these practices as demands for social recognition opens up the possibility for a negative emotional response if these demands are not met: a deep sense of loss, moral injury, and disrespect. This is particularly important for populations who often feel overlooked or even abandoned by the state.

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[45] Author 2, Interview, Nima, 22 August 2022.
[46] For a discussion of the culture of corruption in daily African politics, see: Daniel Smith, *A culture of corruption: Everyday deception and popular discontent in Nigeria* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2010).
[47] Author 2, Interview, Ga Mashie 16 June 2012.
[48] Author 2, Interview, Ga Mashie, 16 June 2012.
[49] Author 2, Interview, Nima, 22 August 2022.

Citizens voiced this desire to be seen and heard across our three cases. Take, for example, how rural Senegalese interviewees speak of campaign visits by national-level politicians. These visits are interpreted locally as confirmation of a village's worth and membership to the national community, and village chiefs report great pride that prominent politicians came 'all the way' to their villages.[50] Citizens value these personal visits, in part, because the act of a leader taking time to travel to a given village to discuss, listen and share, demonstrates that they recognize and care for the needs of constituents. In coastal Kenya, meanwhile, frustration over leaders who do not listen has shaped a sentiment that 'sometimes there has to be violence for the government to listen.'[51]

Rural Senegal: Demanding Respect as Political Agents

The second dimension of social recognition that we identify is a demand for respect as political agents. Drawing on the case of rural Senegal, we focus on the ways in which low-level brokers, notably village chiefs and local politicians, engage in patron-clientelism as a vehicle to earn respect and recognition as political agents, particularly in their own communities.[52]

Interviews with low-level brokers across rural Senegal illustrate the ways in which rural intermediaries attempt to garner help and recognition for their communities through their tenuous relationships with the center. Local brokers report with pride when they have personally met party elites, often detailing their efforts to welcome these officials – organizing large receptions,

[50] For a discussion of the symbolic importance of presidential visits, see Cédric Jourde, ''The president Is coming to visit!': Dramas and the hijack of democratization in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania', *Comparative Politics* 37, 4 (2005), pp. 421–40.
[51] Author 1 Interview, Kwale, KinondoA5, 13 November 2012.
[52] Beck, *Brokering Democracy in Africa*. In contrast to the common depiction of brokers as politically nimble intermediaries, surprisingly few low-level brokers in Senegal claim strong relationships with national political figures. A minority do report lucrative relations with patrons, most notably citing ties to prominent Sufi religious leaders as the central state continues to deploy patronage to maintain and expand electoral support in communities' home to powerful marabouts.

copious meals, and speeches by an array of local dignitaries. Through these interactions, rural communities seek to signal not only their support, but their value as citizens and voters.[53] Yet, the ability of low-level rural brokers to make demands on the center is complicated, often limited to electoral periods, when national politicians traverse the countryside, or when brokers themselves travel to Dakar. Politicians' inaccessibility is widely remarked upon; as one village chief quipped, 'My deputy thinks he can solve our problems around a table in Dakar.'[54]

A large part of the frustration of local brokers is their perception that they do substantial, but largely unacknowledged, work on behalf of national parties. As one rural mayor described his relationship with his area's deputy to the National Assembly: 'The real deputy is the mayor,' emphasizing that '*we [mayors]* live among the population.'[55] Rural brokers report feeling that they carry out their end of the bargain – delivering votes and coordinating locally when politicians need them – only for national actors to be largely unresponsive when brokers attempt to relay community needs and sentiment upwards, rendering their efforts to exercise voice on the part of their communities unheard or unacknowledged. This generates intense disappointment. 'The central government uses rural areas,' stated one mayor categorically, 'they come with promises, but we never see them after the election.'[56] Politicians know exactly what rural communities need – projects, jobs and services – but 'once on the road, before even leaving our forest, they have already forgotten us.'[57] Patrons, in other words, do not respect local brokers' efforts as political agents.

[53] See Dominika Koter, *Beyond ethnic politics in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2016).
[54] Author 3 Interview, Kaffrine Region, 25 April 2013.
[55] Author 3 Interview, Ziguinchor Region, 8 July 2013.
[56] Author 3 Interview, Kaffrine Region, 23 April 2013.
[57] Author 3 Interview, Tambacounda Region, 26 March 2013.

Understanding these practices as demands for social recognition provides a theoretical apparatus for making sense of the negative emotional responses' local actors report when their requests for assistance are not met: a deep sense of loss, moral injury, and disrespect. This is well-illustrated by the sense of abandon that many rural opinion leaders describe after investing considerable energy campaigning for national parties with the hope that it will benefit their communities. Take for example, one mayor in rural Louga Department who had – to the surprise of many – won his local government for the party of newly elected President Macky Sall in the 2014 local elections. Despite paying for much of his campaign himself, the governing party, the *Alliance pour la république*, did nothing for his administration. 'I should not thank the President,' the mayor argued passionately, 'the President should thank those who got him elected.'[58] It was not so much the personal cost that he had born – his car broke down, his horse died – the mayor stressed, but rather his sense of loss for what he thought he would gain: respect and recognition from a powerful politician who would appreciate and acknowledge his work and sacrifice by taking his community's needs seriously. The mayor's complaint had material dimensions – Sall's government had not showered him with resources to distribute – but a core dimension was about not being recognized for the time and effort he expended on Sall's behalf. At minimum, President Sall could visit the constituency, the mayor suggested, to support the mayor's local political and developmental efforts.

This second dimension of social recognition is supported in the case of urban Ghana as well, where 'foot soldiers' and political activists seek recognition from politicians and citizens alike. One local political activist reported sharing information 'from the grassroots' with the big shots in the National Democratic Congress because it enabled him to continue his work as a

[58] Author 3 Interview, Louga Region, 18 February 2016.

social worker and because it made him feel that he was helping to 'keep the peace' in an otherwise poor and historically violent context. Similarly, another party worker in a migrant neighborhood explained that he made as many 'friends' in the city as possible; he became a respected leader in his neighborhood by engaging in patronage politics. Exiting from political clientelism would have prevented him from the recognition he needed to become a leader in his hometown. He placed demands on the politicians 'at the top' in order to gain recognition for his followers—a migrant group which had been historically marginalized in Ghanaian politics. In the rapidly changing environment with multiple authority structures and possibilities for personal empowerment, political activists seek to exert their political agency and stake citizenship claims on an otherwise distant state.

Coastal Kenya: Demanding Protection and Inclusion

Our third dimension of social recognition is rooted in a demand for patrons who care for the needs of clients and protect them from harm. We suggest that citizens use clientelist relations to demand a minimum standard of living – or social citizenship. Drawing primarily on evidence from coastal Kenya, we illustrate the dynamics of this third dimension by looking at how demands for land rights constitute a claim to citizenship and inclusion in the Kenyan state.

Importantly, this demand is partly material: households need access to land and tenure security to accumulate wealth and provide for their families. But the demand for land is more than a livelihood good; it is a demand to belong to a political community, defined by the boundaries of a local community and the Kenyan state. As one respondent in Kilifi remarks, 'The government knows who is the rightful owner. But it pretends not to notice that even if I

don't have a title deed, I have equal rights too.'[59] The demand for leaders to recognize claims to full citizenship rights, including the protection and enforcement of property rights, is rooted in the area's pervasive land tenure insecurity. By government estimates, 78 percent of residents in Kwale and 60 percent in Kilifi, lack title deeds.[60]

We can trace this tenure insecurity and demand for land to the Arab-Swahili slave trade and British colonial rule. The slave trade led to the first wave of land dispossessions, while colonial rule institutionalized land rights along racial lines, excluding most Coastal residents from the right to own land. With few avenues to secure rights to land, residents entered tenancy relationships with landlords and ex-masters. Norms of political patronage have developed in this context of racialized and highly unequal relationships: between the master/slave or landlord/squatter.[61] At independence in 1963, Coastal residents looked to chiefs and parliamentarians as new sources of political power and patronage. Clientelist relationships have evolved as one of the few mechanisms for citizens to demand citizenship rights and recognition from the state. Citizens expect leaders to assist them in acquiring title deeds, while advocating for a re-distribution of land that privileges the rights of locals over so-called outsiders. The right to land security – a marker of belonging – is fundamental to citizen understandings social and political citizenship.

Yet from the perspective of many residents, political leaders have failed on these accounts. While many coastal Kenyans have pursued patronage relationships to secure their land and elevate their status above that of squatter, the patron rarely meets these expectations. As local patrons continue to fail, residents describe a new image of the patron, not as a 'big man'

[59] Author 1 Interview, Kilifi, Kijipwa-1, 20 November 2012.
[60] 'Kwale: First County Development Plan' (2013); 'Kilifi first county development plan.'
[61] James Brennan, 'Lowering the Sultan's flag: Sovereignty and decolonization in coastal Kenya', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50, 4 (2008), pp. 831–61.

who can provide, but as a figure who is opportunistic (exploiting voters to get to parliament), deceitful (making false promises), compromised (acting as broker to national-level elites), and predatory (taking land). Citizens describe feeling exploited and betrayed: patrons exploit the precarious positions of their followers to secure power and wealth while betraying promises to protect, turning their backs on the pain, and suffering of followers: they do not re-settle squatters or evictees, help young people secure jobs, or help followers acquire title deeds. A group of elders in Likoni remark, 'The government want[s] us as servants. That's why they are not treating us as equals.'[62] Embedded in this narrative is a desire that leaders treat them as equal members of a polity rather than tenants or slaves whose labour they can extract, and whose livelihoods they can dismiss. For some residents, this enduring exploitation shifts their political preferences. But for others, it motivates desires for more dramatic political change, helping to explain calls for secession as a way to end regional exploitation and a master-slave or landlord-tenant model of politics.

The theme of exploitation is linked closely to the narrative of betrayal and deception. Feelings of betrayal manifest as a patron's inability or unwillingness to protect followers from harm—failure to satisfy the contingent exchange. One Kilifi resident remarks, 'Government leaders did not protect me. They favored the rich man. The government does not care about poor people.' He adds that leaders should compensate residents 'and not evict [them] like animals.'[63] These comments relay the pain of being treated as sub-human; as not worth saving or protecting. This frustration is echoed in the comments of a Kwale resident: 'The perpetrators of these [evictions] are our own leaders; they don't stand up for us...'[64] Here again, it is not only material

[62] Author 1 Interview, Likoni (Focus Group), 2 December 2012.
[63] Author 1 Interview, Kilifi, Kijipwa-2, 20 November 2012.
[64] Author 1 Interview, Kwale, Ramisi-3, 12 November 2012.

benefits that residents seek, but a leader who advocates, even if unsuccessfully, on behalf of followers. Another Kilifi resident remarks, 'There is nobody who is safe here regarding land. I live by the grace of God.'[65] Without political patrons who can protect them from harm, residents must rely 'on the grace of God' or on their own collective defiance. This defiance is evident in the remarks of a Likoni resident: 'Let the government bulldoze our families, let them bury us here. But we shall not leave. Let's wait and see if it will listen to the rights of one [wealthy landlord] versus thousands of people.'[66]

In some cases, the charge is not only that patrons fail to protect but are actively involved in inflicting harm. For example, in the Mombasa neighborhood of Likoni, a respondent describes how his local leader proposed a low-cost housing development. 'People were evicted and compensated 20,000 Kenyan shillings (175US$) each, but we thought it was an idea that would benefit us in the long run, so we agreed.'[67] Five years later, not a single community member owns a home in the estate. For many residents, this represents the ultimate act of betrayal, encompassing both a failure to protect, but also a willingness of leaders to harm supporters in order to profit. When speaking about being evicted, a respondent underlies this sense of betrayal, exclaiming: 'I never saw him when my house was torched, what kind of an MP is he?'[68] His remarks underlie the additional expectation that even if leaders cannot prevent harm, they should at the very least, recognize when supporters have suffered harm. A retired nurse, also from Kilifi, emphasizes this expectation: 'People are crying. And when someone is crying, you have to ask, 'why are you crying? What is the matter with you?' That person will tell you, 'I am crying

[65] Author 1 Interview, Kilifi, Kijipwa-7, 20 November 2012.
[66] Author 1 Focus Group Interview, Likoni-12, 2 December 2012.
[67] Author 1 Interview, Likoni (3), 2 December 2012.
[68] Author 1 Interview, Kilifi, Kijipwa-7, 20 November 2012.

because you [the leader] are doing this to me.''[69] Her comments convey the expectation that a good patron should show empathy, while demonstrating her conviction that the callous ambivalence of political patrons causes suffering.

Like failing to 'feed' one's followers,[70] citizens interpret the intentional refusal to protect or care as violating the patron-client contract. Followers provide support and votes. But in exchange, they expect their leaders to protect, or at the very least, to care about their misfortune. This failure represents a form of disrespect: a refusal to recognize the dignity and humanity of one's followers—to be reduced to 'animals' as a respondent above remarks. Social recognition requires that even if the patron is unable to prevent an eviction or provide a title deed, he or she must demonstrate concern and empathy.

We observe demands for such 'carework' across our cases. In Senegal, for example, a village chief recounted proudly that after a devastating fire in a compound in his village, the new mayor paid to replace the destroyed huts with cinder-block houses. The move won the chief's support: 'If all mayors were like [*ours*], there would be no opposition [party support] at all in the department of Kebemer,' he boasted. In urban Ghana, populations call patrons on their personal phones to protect their communities from the all-too-common evictions that characterize the city's infrastructure boom. Politicians often rush to the scene to demonstrate care and concern.

Conclusion

We have presented many examples of material and non-material demands that citizens make. For scholars of African politics, these examples should sound familiar: people demand clientelistic benefits but are often disappointed when patrons do not deliver. Certainly, Africans

[69] Author 1 Interview, Kilifi, Kijipwa-WM, 25 November 2012.
[70] Michael Schatzberg, *Political legitimacy in middle Africa: Father, family, food* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2001).

seek to benefit materially from their relationships with patrons. But this should not obscure the demands for social recognition embedded in these relations. In this way, our argument is consistent with Young, who uses Afrobarometer data to show that being offered a gift or being in direct contact with one's parliamentarian does not improve voter evaluations of parliamentarians in Kenya and Zambia. Instead, what seems to matter is the amount of time that the MP spends in the constituency as well as whom they visit and assist, echoing our focus on citizen desires to be heard and recognized.[71]

What is especially puzzling is that citizens continue to seek out and and invest in clientelistic relationships, despite parties and politicians who continually fail to deliver material benefits. Even though citizens know that politicians are unlikely to deliver materially, the demand for social recognition helps explain why they continue to engage in clientelist politics. At best, participation in patron-client relations bestows a sense of voice, agency, and belonging. However, the failure of politicians to meet citizen demands for social recognition are consequential as well. We highlight two critical dimensions in particular.

First, clientelism relies on the availability of local brokers, whose legitimacy for both national parties and voters rests on their social embeddedness. Yet, local brokers risk overselling candidates if they put too much hope in politicians who ignore them. One village chief in Senegal emphasized the local reputational costs borne by brokers: this can 'diminish one's influence because everyone wants something from you and expects you to deliver … but if you cannot do it, people will start to think you are less powerful and less influential.'[72] Similar dynamics are at play in urban Ghana, where leaders and politicians gain reputations by linking citizens to jobs, contracts, and other opportunities. This can lead brokers to seek social

[71] Daniel Young, 'Is clientelism at work in African elections?'*Afrobarometer Working Paper n.102*, 2009.
[72] Author 3 Interview, Louga Region, 19 February 2016.

recognition in new forums. In Senegal, for example, the rapid proliferation of political parties enabled the willingness of brokers to strike out with political entrepreneurs.[73] Rural elites often see new parties as an opportunity to have a more direct connection to new patrons who will remember and reward their early supporters. This dynamic is also apparent in Ghana, where groups try to capture the attention of their higher-ups in order to be acknowledged and recognized by party leaders. Both examples reflect the degree to which brokers, as political middlemen, pursue legitimacy as political agents, the consequences of which can encourage party proliferation while undermining broker credibility. Whether one views these changes as a boon or a bane for politics in the region, they likely carry significant – yet largely unknown - consequences.

Second, uncovering the role of social recognition in patron-client dynamics provides new evidence of shifts in citizen loyalties. The perception that national politicians are not loyal and that they use rural citizens can generate a more concerning political tension. This resentment is especially obvious in coastal Kenya. Rather than the iconic 'big man' who can protect loyal supporters, citizens cast their leaders as predatory, opportunistic, untrustworthy, and neglectful. While it is not uncommon for citizens to feel disappointed in their patron, the particular failure or weakness of patrons in coastal Kenya may help explain why citizens are considering new forms of political organization. One of the clearest manifestations of a rejection of status quo politics is the call for secession, articulated through the refrain, *Pwani si Kenya*—the Coast is not Kenya, an amplified version of the tendency of interviewees in Senegal's restive south to claim that the country's material wealth goes to those 'in Senegal,' rendering their own region by implication *not* Senegal, and reinforcing simmering regional resentment. In Kenya, this call has also

[73] Catherine Kelly, *Party proliferation and political contestation in Africa: Senegal in comparative perspective* (Springer, 2019).

provided citizens with a language to express frustration and assert power over a political process that has largely excluded them. There is also evidence that coastal residents are retreating from electoral politics, with rates of voter turnout markedly lower than other regions of the country.[74]

At the extreme, the perceived denial of social recognition may feed into violent forms of political protest and collective action. If citizens no longer feel that they can rely on traditional political patrons to protect their land and livelihood—to recognize their citizenship claims—they may consider alternative forms of political and moral authority. In particular, scholars and policy analysts have noted the ability of Al-Shabaab—an Islamist insurgency group based in Somalia—to use local grievances as a recruitment strategy along Kenya's Coast.[75] By exploiting feelings of marginalization and neglect, Al-Shabaab frames jihad as a way to re-claim land and power from the Kenyan state and other 'disbelievers' (i.e., Christian settlers).[76]

In all three cases, we see that patron-client relations affect citizens' emotions in a way that may not be legible to existing theories of clientelism. African citizens in all three of our cases articulated a sense of moral injury over the failure of their leaders to listen, make time, and demonstrate concern or appreciation. Our theory of social recognition provides a reinterpretation of clientelism's ubiquity in the face of non-delivery, therefore, precisely because it recognizes how clientelism enables a broader set of political practices as citizens seek moral recognition as an adjacent goal for their relationships with patrons. Through the lens of social recognition, we gain new insight into why these relations endure, when they break down, and what the ensuing consequences might be.

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[74] Average voter turnout across the coast countries of Mombasa, Kwale, and Kilifi in each general election was 69% in 2013 (national average: 86%), 65% in 2017 (national average 79%), and 49% in 2022 (national average 65%).
[75] Tricia Bacon, 'This is why Al-Shabab won't be going away anytime soon', *Washington Post*, July 6, 2017; David Anderson and Jacob McKnight, 'Understanding Al-Shabaab: clan, Islam and insurgency in Kenya', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 9, 3 (2015), pp. 536–57.
[76] This narrative was particularly evident in the Al-Shabaab attack on Mpeketoni—a Kikuyu settlement along Kenya's north Coast. Al-Shabaab released a video calling for Jihad to re-claim land.

It is in clientelism's decay that we see the most pernicious effects for the democratic project. When citizens do not feel recognized by their political leaders, they may speak about political leadership with a deep sense of political betrayal, disappointment, and disillusionment with their leaders and democracy itself.[77] These emotions may be strongest in the Kenyan case, but they simmer beneath the words of rural Senegalese and urban Ghanaians as well. If clientelism is a means of political communication and claim-making in a polity, then a persistent feeling of being unheard and unrecognized can explain why a 'politics of resentment' emerges among certain communities.[78] Citizens might withdraw from formal politics and participate in parallel governance structures instead. This retreat from multi-party politics is not easily explained by a failure of material delivery alone, but rather, is rooted in a failure of leaders to recognize the rights and dignity of citizens.

[77] Marcel Paret, *Fractured militancy: Precarious resistance in South Africa after racial inclusion* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2022).
[78] Echoing Kathy Cramer, *The politics of resentment* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2016)

Methodological Appendix

"Demanding Recognition: A New Framework for the Study of Political Clientelism"

Contents

Ethics Statements

We draw on Asiedu et al. (2021) to address six areas of ethical concern for each of our field sites.

Ghana

1. Role of researcher with respect to implementation. Author 2 actively designed and implemented the project as part of their doctoral dissertation; this includes securing grant funding, hiring and training research assistants, and participating in all fieldwork (2011-12; 2022). Informed consent was obtained from all focus group participants conducted in 2012 (*irb details to be included upon publication)*.

2. Potential harms to research participants or research staff from data collection. There was very minimal risk to the participants in the study. Ghanaians actively and freely discuss political affairs, and took the initiative in telling researchers about the challenges they face and how politics works in their neighborhoods. They enthusiastically participated in the research. Community members constantly mentioned that they want researchers to come and examine how politics work in their communities. There is a lot of misinformation in the media and public discourse about how they live and about politics at the grassroots. There is also very little understanding about how poor communities differ from one another; residents know it but policymakers often treat all the communities in the same way. Participants were very excited to explain how citizen motivations shape politics in their country. All data was stored on an online data storage protection program that was encrypted with password protection. Only the researcher had access to this data, and individual responses were not made public. Respondents answered questions in a public, safe place.

3. Financial and reputational conflicts of interests. None.

4. Intellectual freedom. There were no contractual limitations on the authors' ability to report results.

5. Feedback to participants. Author 2 participated in a series of dissemination workshops with local stakeholders. These for a were in partnership with the Center for Democratic Development—Ghana in 2012, 2016, and 2019.

6. Foreseeable misuse of research results. Author 2 does not foresee any misuse of results. Participants in the study are not at risk of negative consequences for participating in the study, and the conclusions from the study are unlikely to affect local politics in the country.

Senegal

1. Role of researcher with respect to implementation. Author 3 actively designed and implemented the project as part of their doctoral dissertation; this includes securing grant funding, hiring and training research assistants, and participating in all fieldwork (2012-13, February/March 2016, February/March 2017). Informed consent was obtained from participants (*irb details to be included upon publication)*.

2. Potential harms to research participants or research staff from data collection. The research posed minimal risk to participants, all of whom can be considered local elites (ranging from elected officials to village chiefs to local civil society members and central government officials posted in local areas). Questions related to their professional lives and local political events. Of course, some questions did lead respondents to reveal potentially sensitive information, such as local elected officials telling me they buy votes for elections. Since Author 3 did not directly pose questions on these topics, respondents only volunteered this information when they were comfortable doing so. Data were stored on a password-protected computer with all paper copies of interview notes/survey instruments destroyed after they were digitized.

3. Financial and reputational conflicts of interests. None.

4. Intellectual freedom. There were no contractual limitations on the author 3's ability to report results.

5. Feedback to participants. No formal feedback mechanism was planned. Published work from the project has been deposited at the Ministry of Education and the West African Research Center in Dakar.

6. Foreseeable misuse of research results. Author 3 does not foresee any potential misuse of results. The most sensitive questions asked during the course of research pertained to local government social and political relations, but because published material from the project (including in this paper) is almost exclusively anonymized at the respondent and community level, Author 3 does not believe that repercussions for individual respondents are likely.

Kenya

1. Role of researcher with respect to implementation: Author 1 designed and implemented the project as part of their doctoral dissertation. This includes securing research funding, hiring and training research assistants, and conducting (alongside research assistants) all interview and other fieldwork (May 2012-May 2013). IRB details will be included upon publication.

2. Potential harms to research participants or research staff from data collection: The research posed minimal risk to participants. While the topic of interviews was indeed sensitive, the author took a variety of precautions to ensure that respondents were not re-traumatized, and that their privacy was protected. The author interviewed individuals in the privacy of their residence and ensured that no one else (e.g., village elder or chief) was within earshot during the interview. Risks were especially low for respondents in the Coast region – which serve as the basis for the Kenya section of this article, given that most areas had not experienced election violence within the last decade (if at all). The author gained informed consent before proceeding with any interview, and respondents were assured that their participation was completely voluntary. Respondents were never asked to provide their name. All interviews were recorded orally using an audio recorder on tablet, which was encrypted and stored on a password protected computer.

3. Financial and reputational conflicts of interests None.

4. Intellectual freedom There were no contractual limitations on the authors' ability to report results.

5. Feedback to participants: The author did not provide any direct ways for participants to offer feedback on the project. The dissertation and published book are stored with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Nairobi, per the terms of the affiliation agreement.

6. Foreseeable misuse of research results: Author 1 does not foresee misuse of research results. There are no individuals named in the research and thus it would be difficult to use the research to harm a participant or particular community.

Data Collection Strategies

This paper employs qualitative data drawn from three separate researchers and field sites. Below, we detail the data collection strategies employed for each case study.

Case 1: Ghana

The Ghana case study draws on four rounds of original data collection conducted between 2011-2015 and 2022.

Ethnographic research in three neighborhoods of urban Ghana, August 2011-August 2012

Overview: Over the course of one year, August 2011–2012, Author 2 conducted ethnographic research in Ga Mashie and Old Fadama in Accra, and multiple neighborhoods in Ashaiman. Ethnography is the "immersion in the lives of the people under study."[79] The ethnographic research is part of a larger comparative study on political accountability and public goods provision in poor African neighborhoods. This research method helps uncover the process of politics, the informal networks that underlie political arrangements, and the spontaneity in decision-making that shapes institutional pathways. The author visited at least one of the case study communities on a daily basis. The author ate meals with residents and leaders, observed community meetings, visited the private offices of politicians and chiefs, participated in party rallies, and attended ritual events. By interacting with community residents and leaders daily, he gained crucial insights into their motivations and incentives – as well as their emotions and habits. The author documented empirical observations in field notes.

Author 2 spent most of his time with local political activists (often called "foot soldiers" in Ghana), community opinion leaders, traditional authorities, and ordinary citizens. He visited dozens of community meetings, and carried out formal and informal interviews, and a series of focus groups. In all, 127 interviews serve as the empirical frame for this study.

Data Collected: Interviews were open-ended and conducted in English. Some interviews were conducted in Twi, Ga, Dagbani, and Hausa, with the help of a research assistant. Interviews were not recorded. The author collected information about political accountability, party politics, development of the city, history of the political parties, partisan agendas, and ethnic narratives. The author conducted additional interviews in June 2016.

Focus groups conducted in 2012

Focus groups supplemented the ethnographic and interview data. Author 2 used a "snowball" sampling strategy to recruit participants because representative lists were not available and required respondents who had a basic understanding of associational and political life. Recruiters targeted community leaders in one series of groups (10 total) to ask about the political history of

[79] Lisa Wedeen. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13:225-72.

the neighborhood, while targeting ordinary residents (16 total) to uncover the different ways that individuals participate in politics. Recruiters selected participants who varied along gender, age, ethnicity, and political party lines. Recruiters targeted working class men and women including petty traders, students, fishermen, drivers, healthcare workers, and the unemployed. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 72, with the mean age of 39.

The first series of focus groups were conducted in ten communities and asked local leaders how residents hold them to account, the developmental and political challenges facing the community, and how the community grew over time. Focus groups were conducted in Ashaiman-Taabo, Ashaiman-Tulako, Agbogbloshie, Chorkor, Ga Mashie, King Shona, Avenor, Abuja, ECOMOC, and Old Fadama. The interviews were conducted in Twi and Ga and translated into English. They lasted approximately two hours each. Snacks and drinks were also provided.

The second series of focus groups consisted of 16 groups in 10 different neighborhoods. Focus groups were conducted in Old Fadama (3), Agbogbloshie, Ga Mashie (2), Nima (2), Abuja, Chorkor, Ashaiman-Valco Flat, Ashaiman-Taabo, Ashaiman-Tulako (3), and King Shona. Each group consisted of 6-7 residents of each community; 102 residents participated in total. In Old Fadama and Ashaiman-Tulako, Author 2 varied ethnic composition of the groups because he inducted from ethnographic immersion that ethnic divisions play an important role in community affairs. Therefore, he conducted one focus group with all members of the Dagomba ethnic group, one with entirely non-Dagombas, and one with three Dagombas and three non-Dagombas. Similarly, in Nima and Ga Mashie Author 2 varied the composition along the lines of age: one group with youth and another group with elders. Each group lasted approximately three hours and participants were compensated 10 cedis (~$7) for their participation. Snacks and drinks were also provided. The group interviews were conducted in Twi, Ga, Hausa, and Dagomba.

Focus Group Participants – by employment

Student	15%
Trader/Businessperson	30%
Independent/Informal worker	24%
Community worker/volunteer	11%
Fishermen	9%
Other	10%

Key informant interviews in 2022

Author 3 conducted 34 key informant interviews with local leaders and community activists in Nima-Maamobi and Madina in August 2022. These interviews substantiated the claims drawn from earlier fieldwork, and confirm that these clientelist practices are still an institutionalized feature of Ghanaian politics today.

Case 2: Senegal

The Senegal case study draws on three rounds of original data collection conducted between 2013-2017.

Highly structured interviews conducted between February and July of 2013.

Overview: Between February and July of 2013, highly structured interviews were conducted with local elected officials and party leaders and village chiefs as part of a larger research project on local government performance. In total, the interviews cover fifty-six rural communities, spread out over fourteen departments in ten of Senegal's thirteen regions (excluding here the region of Dakar, which is heavily urban). This totaled 332 interviews.

Sampling: A set of fourteen zones were purposively chosen to obtain balance on a number of characteristics, centrally precolonial characteristics, distance from Dakar, economic structure, population density and geographic spread across the country. Within each of these fourteen zones, one department was randomly selected. Subsequently, two arrondissements were chosen randomly in each department and, in turn, two rural communities in each arrondissement. Within each rural community, the Rural Council President (PCR) and a randomly selected rural councilor and four to five randomly selected village chiefs were interviewed. Random sampling was done by assigning a number to each official village and randomly drawing four numbers (within the range of possible villages). In the event that the chief was unavailable (due to illness, voyage or, at times, age), the next closest village was chosen. An exception this was if a village had a 'delegated' chief, for example, a chief who works in Dakar may delegate a brother or nephew to fulfill duties while he is away. All interviews were conducted by Author 3 or a research assistant in the language of the respondent's choice.

Data Collected: The interview questionnaire asked respondents a range of questions about the history of their village and rural community, their experiences accessing social services, their evaluations of the economy and their local and central government officials as well as a battery of questions on political attitudes and personal demographics. Interviews were highly structured, asking respondents a pre-determined list of questions that were mixed between closed and open-ended formats. Open-ended answers were recorded as stated by respondents. Notes were taken throughout and at the end of interviews as well of relevant commentary made by respondents. To ensure the anonymity of respondents, respondents are identified only by their position, department, and date of the interview.

Case Studies conducted in February and March of 2016

Overview: Case studies of four local governments were conducted in February-March of 2016. Approximately forty in-depth interviews were conducted with village chiefs, local politicians, and party leaders as well as local development agents.

Sampling: Cases were chosen from on-the-line cases from a large-N regression (described in Author 3 reference). The fluidity of these interviews resulted in a less rigid method of identifying respondents. Though always interviewing the local government secretary, mayor, the adjoint-mayor and local development agents, selection of village chiefs and councilors for interviews engaged in convenience sampling.[80]

Data Collected: Interviews were open-ended. Questions focused on individual's political life I was able to dig deeper into particular controversies that I had learned about or ask more follow-up questions than possible in the more structured first round of data.

Case Studies conducted in February and March of 2017

Overview: More comprehensive case studies of three local governments were conducted in February-March of 2017. In total, 46 interviews were conducted in Kebemer Department, 65 in Koungheul Department and 49 in Koumpentoum Department.

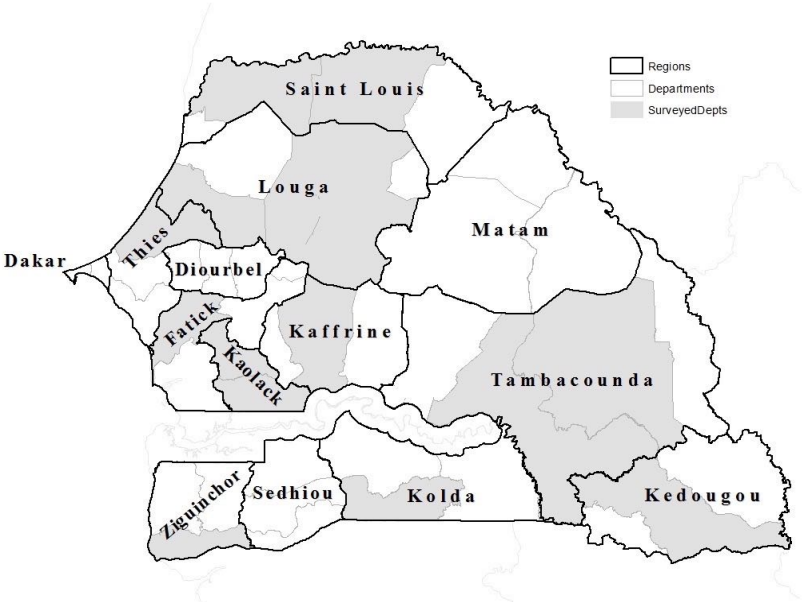
Sampling: Cases were likewise chosen from on-the-line cases from a large-N regression (again described in Author 3 reference). Because the model identified several potential cases, the final selection was chosen so as to make the cases comparable on other dimensions, notably ethnic and religious composition, the nature of economic activity and the level of social service access at the onset of decentralization in 1996. Most importantly, the local governments under study have nearly identical histories of partisan alignment with the central state and are proximate to, but are not themselves home to, higher-level government seats. Within each case study, an attempt was made to interview all village chiefs (maximum response rate was ~98% with non-response due entirely to travel or time constraints), the mayor and community secretary, local associational group leaders and a large number of local government councilors.

Data Collected: Interviews were open-ended. Interview questions asked about the history and demographics of the community, local political life, and each interviewees social network connections with others in their community as well as their interactions with central state officials and politicians.

The geographic coverage across these three research trips is displayed in Figure A1 below.

[80] For example, if a village chief from a zone was present at a weekly market, we choose to interview him without randomly selecting one village from among a set in a given area of the community.

Figure A1: Research Locations



Case 3: Kenya

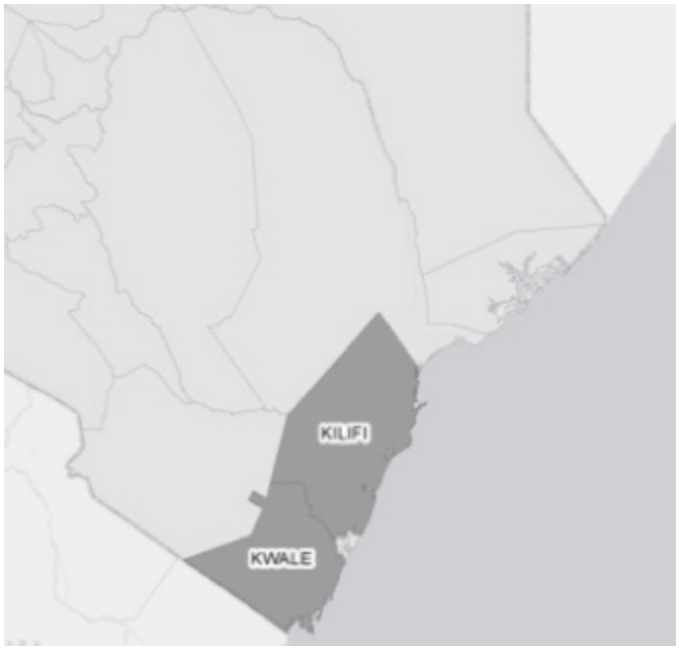
Overview: The case study on Kenya's coast region draws from a larger project on land rights and election violence in Kenya that Author 1 conducted from June 2012-April 2013. In total, Author 1 interviewed 230 Kenyan residents living on settlement schemes and Land Buying Companies (LBCs) and conducted 19 focus groups with youth and elders of these farms and communities. However, this article draws specifically from 52 individual interviews and five focus groups with community youth and elders that the author collected across three counties of Kenya's Coast region: Kilifi, Mombasa, and Kwale.

Sampling: Author 1 selected cases from a list of recorded settlement schemes: one in Likoni (Mombasa County), two in Kwale County, and one in Kilifi County. The author strategically selected each of these settlement schemes based on variation in: 1) Date of settlement scheme allotment, 2) date of formal registration, 3) ethnic composition, 4) number of settled households, and 5) salience of land grievance. The selection of respondents was not random. Village elders (or designated community leaders) escorted the author though the interview process and hence, could potentially influence the selection of respondents. Selection was based partly on the respondent's willingness to speak and whether they were near the home. Respondents were never asked to provide their name. The average length of an individual interview was approximately 45 minutes (ranging from 25 minutes to 90 minutes). To protect the privacy of the respondent, the author conducted interviews in the privacy of a respondent's residence. Village escorts were never present during the actual interview. Author 1 also held focus groups in each community. She organized focus groups by age-sets: youth (18-35 years) and elders.

Data Collected: The author relied on a highly structured interview questionnaire that included a list of 38 open-ended questions. In addition to biographical data, the questionnaire asked respondents about their access and rights to land (including challenges in accessing and securing land), the history of the settlement scheme, attitudes about the rights and land claims of other ethnic communities, views about ancestral and statutory land rights, perceptions of political leaders, the state, and its role in managing and administering land rights, views of the political mobilization process, and fears of political violence. The author conducted interviews in Swahili or English. All interviews were recorded using an audio recording device on a smart phone or tablet and were later translated and transcribed by a Kenyan research assistant. Focus group discussions followed a very similar questionnaire that the author used for individual interviews. The format of the focus group helped facilitate discussion around each question while helping to identify the beliefs, opinions, or narratives that were widely shared and those that were more idiosyncratic. Focus groups included 8-15 people and lasted on average of 1.5 hours each.

The counties included in the case study are illustrated in the map below.

Figure A2: Research Locations



Darkly shaded areas show the counties where Author 1 conducted interviews for the Kenya case study.

Implications of Cross-Case Methodological Strategies

As detailed above, the comparisons we make across cases are based on distinct data sources. While Author 2 blends insights from ethnography, focus groups and interviews, Authors 1 and 3 rely more heavily on open-ended and structured interviews. A priori, we have no reason to think that this introduces any specific bias, though it might shape the strength of our data for any given dimension of social recognition. For example, Author 2's use of ethnography plausibly created more opportunities to observe quotidian shaming of politicians. We are hesitant to draw strong conclusion on this front, however; not only did Kenyan and Senegalese research subjects openly shame their politicians in interviews, but we find evidence of all three dimensions of social recognition across the three country contexts, suggesting that methodological differences are not predisposing us to see or miss distinct dimensions. Still, we would flag that the practices and themes we identify would be hard to observe with methods that are further removed from citizens' quotidian experiences with clientelism. In this way, what is similar about our methodological strategies is the extensive dialogue with local actors that they draw upon, a factor that is arguably quite important in our development of the framework.

Works Cited

Asiedu, E., Karlan, D., Lambon-Quayefio, M., and Udry, C. (2021). A Call for Structured Ethics Appendices in Social Science Papers. Working Paper 28393, National Bureau of Economic Research.