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## Citizen Assessments of Clientelistic Practices in South Africa

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### **Abstract:**

After two decades of intensive political science research on clientelism we still know little on how citizens perceive and evaluate clientelism. Yet, citizen evaluations matter for the persistence of clientelism as they determine the cost of clientelistic electoral strategies for politicians. This paper studies how citizens and clients understand and evaluate different forms of clientelism in South Africa. We conduct focus groups in low income urban and rural areas in KwaZulu Natal. Cluster analysis identifies five distinctive exchange types across groups. Two of them resemble vote-buying forms of clientelism, two relational types, and one a coercive type of clientelism. Vote-buying exchanges are evaluated pragmatically but the other types are universally seen in negative terms. The coercive type is seen as unlawful whereas the relational types, where the value of the goods that clients receive is generally higher, are seen as stirring distributional conflict. Views on clients also vary across types. Clients in vote-buying and coercive clientelism tend to be described as victims, whereas clients in relational types are seen as egoistic. These findings suggest that citizens in communities where clientelism is prevalent have a highly differentiated view on different types of clientelism and the actors involved in it.

### **Keywords**

Clientelism, typology, agency, developing countries.

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## Introduction

After two decades of intensive political science research on clientelism we still know little on how clients - or citizens in communities where clientelism is prevalent - perceive and evaluate clientelism.<sup>i</sup> While much research has been dedicated to understanding the clientelistic strategies of parties and the role of brokers, comparably little research has been dedicated to clients. Yet, citizen evaluations are important for the persistence of clientelism, in at least two ways. First, because clientelism is an exchange and as such, requires not only a patron willing to offer some good for political support but also a citizen willing to engage in this exchange;<sup>ii</sup> the evaluation of clientelistic exchanges by prospective clients is critical to understand whether clientelism is worthwhile from a politician's perspective. Second, the normative evaluations of clientelism by citizens in general (including non-clients) also matters: if most citizens consider clientelism unacceptable, this should decrease the attractiveness of clientelistic electoral strategies.

At present, two types of literature offer insights into citizen or client views on clientelism. The first is survey research that typically focusses on normative evaluations of clientelistic exchanges, asking whether engaging in clientelism is seen as "justified" or "acceptable".<sup>iii</sup> The second literature offering insights into this topic is the ethnographic literature on clientelism. This literature focusses more directly on the client experience of the exchange and provides insights into how clients view the exchange and what types of settings might lead to positive or negative evaluations.<sup>iv</sup>

These works suggest that clientelism tends to be evaluated differently depending on the characteristics of the exchange. The survey literature shows that citizens evaluate clientelism badly but that their normative evaluations are "conditional"; i.e. depend on the characteristics of the exchange. When judging clients, citizens differentiate between how needy these clients are; when judging patrons, citizens differentiate between patrons that use positive vs. negative clientelistic inducements.<sup>v</sup> The ethnographic literature depicts the different evaluations of clients engaged in very different types of clientelistic exchange. Auyero describes rather positive and affective attitudes of clients engaged in personal and highly frequent relationships, whereas other studies, such as Lazar, highlight instead highly pragmatic or cynical views on a vote-buying type of exchange that is seen as an opportunity to get something out of elections.<sup>vi</sup>

This paper investigates how different types of clientelism are evaluated by citizens by analyzing focus group discussions on clientelism in South Africa. Our analysis pushes forward our understanding of citizen evaluations of clientelism in three ways. First, we seek to uncover the evaluations of the sum of the clientelistic exchanges that citizens are exposed to. Previous work has tended to focus on a specific type of clientelism at a time or a selected few. The clientelism literature has recently started to consolidate different types of clientelism beyond vote-buying - such as relational, collective, and coercive - that vary in the types of goods patrons and clients exchange as well as in the welfare implications for clients.<sup>vii</sup> We study citizen evaluations of these and other types emerging organically from the focus group discussions.

Second, we investigate the drivers underlying these normative evaluations of clientelism. A negative evaluation of clientelism could be driven by many factors, including social norms, perceptions of democracy, inequality aversion, distributional conflict, or simply the fact that a person would like to be a client but has not been targeted. In turn, a positive view could be driven by a perception of economic inclusion through clientelism, affection

for the patron, or needs for insurance, among others. These potentially different motives have important consequences implications for designing accountability programs as they suggest different avenues for priming the undesirability of clientelism. Yet, existing literature is largely silent regarding the importance of these different drivers.

Third, we study whether citizens evaluate differently patrons and clients or whether they “blame” them equally. Gonzalez-Ocantos et al and Mares and Young ask for the acceptability of clients and patrons, respectively but not for the full view of both actors involved in the exchange. However, whether citizens blame patrons and/ or clients is not a trivial question. Blaming the patrons for the exchange could lead to more critical attitudes towards these practices and greater demands for accountability whereas blaming the clients could rather lead to more social conflict around the distribution of public resources.

Our focus groups are conducted with citizens with close experiences of clientelistic exchanges in three low income urban and rural areas in the KwaZulu Natal province in South Africa. While not representative, we believe our sample is of general interest. The South African case is helpful for exploring different forms of clientelism because of its combination of democratic elections, a very high incidence of poverty and inequality and an active state. These characteristics make it an ideal breeding ground for clientelistic offers and demands. Within South Africa, Kwazulu Natal features historically more political competition than most places and includes areas that were neglected Bantustans under Apartheid as well as parts that belonged to the South African state. We conduct our focus groups in three different types of areas: rural, urban informal and urban formal areas. These locations represent a cross-section of environments that are paradigmatic of the different contexts where diverse clientelistic exchanges usually take place around the world. We conducted six focus groups, three in each type of location. Our use of focus groups is directed toward learning about subjective experiences and attitudes in a social setting.

The focus groups discussions provide ample information of experiences or observations of clientelism as well as of views on the exchange and those involved in it. We use cluster analysis to understand distinct types of clientelism in terms of goods, characteristics of patrons and clients and evaluations. We identify five clusters based on the perceptions of our FGPs. Two clusters are standard vote-buying clusters, characterized by precarious voters being targeted with small goods in exchange for either their vote or rally attendance. Two other clusters conform more to relational types, although of a high level of either effort or connections from clients. In these clusters, higher quality goods are exchanged on both sides, such as insurance jobs and housing from the patron side and campaigning and loyalty from the client’s side. The fifth cluster is a form of coercive clientelism where ward councilors threaten to withhold access to government services and goods to citizens.

Views on clientelism in our focus groups are predominantly negative and at best pragmatic. Most participants explain their negative stance towards clientelism with the negative effects it has on their own access to state resources such as housing, jobs, or infrastructure. It appears that a high level of needs combined with limited state resources generates distributional conflict and creates divisions between those who “benefit from voting” and those who don’t. Other rationales behind negative evaluations included procedural and moral reasoning typically found in anti-vote buying campaigns.

The vote-buying clusters were the only types that were more likely to attract pragmatic evaluations (alongside negative ones). All other types were seen as uniformly negative, the relational ones as stirring welfare competition and the coercive one as being unlawful. These different rationales for negative views these types come together with blaming different people for the exchange. The relational high-quality goods exchange that is seen as stirring distributional conflict is associated with a view of clients being egoistic whereas in the other exchanges' clients tend to be seen as victims and patrons as selfish.

These findings provide insights into the perceptions of clientelism in communities that are strongly affected by the phenomenon. They show that citizens have a highly differentiated view of the different types of clientelistic exchanges they experience or observe. The findings also make a case for the type of approach pursued in this paper. Our qualitative, inductive, approach allows us to get a complete picture of the forms of clientelism and to unpack rationales behind negative evaluations of clientelism. Combining this with a non-interpretive approach to data analysis allows for a transparent and systematic discussion of findings. Cluster analysis, in particular, allows for a more systematic analysis of our data than would be the case in ethnographic work, leading to important findings, such as the one that the target of blame varies across types of clientelism.

## **1. Clientelism in South Africa**

Since the first democratic elections in 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) has been dominating national and local elections in South Africa. Since then, a series of subsequent governments have invested strongly in decreasing poverty. Basic services have been rolled out, and social policies have focused on extending social grants, such as the old age pension and the child support grant, on which an increasing number of the population depends to make ends meet. These policies have decreased poverty, but extremely high unemployment rates among the general population (around one quarter) and the youth (around one third) as well as very low service levels for 90 per cent of South Africans in 1994 imply that access to state resources remains a key issue for many South Africans. High levels of needs and the rollout of grants, public work programs, social policies (e.g. housing) together with an important role for decentralized institutions (municipalities, ward councilors) in distributing/ giving access to these resources point toward ample opportunities for clientelism in local politics.<sup>viii</sup>

The extent to which these opportunities transform into actual clientelism is unknown. Typically, the generally low level of competition in a party system that is so clearly dominated by one party should translate into lower levels of clientelism.<sup>ix</sup> However, the ANC's dominance in elections mostly changes the locus of competition, which strongly concerns securing ANC nomination; there are many reports of patronage by different party factions.<sup>x</sup> More consequential for clientelistic offers to citizens would be political competition surrounding the nomination for ANC Ward Councilors who are selected by the local party base or general electoral competition in more competitive wards.<sup>xi</sup>

How these forms of competition are linked to clientelism in South Africa has, to date, not been studied extensively. Most attention has been paid to individual vote-buying either through the distribution of food parcels to core supporters or more generally before elections.<sup>xii</sup> However, offers of vote-buying appear fairly low in South African elections - with about 5% of citizens receiving such offers compared to more than a quarter in Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, or Benin, among others.<sup>xiii</sup> Besides vote-buying, different studies explore particular aspects of clientelism. For example, De Kadt and Larreguy show how traditional leaders function as electoral brokers by trading votes of rural populations

against policy.<sup>xiv</sup> Some qualitative studies have also documented examples of other types of clientelism, such as forms of collective clientelism pursued by clients with political capital, partisan allocation of jobs or training opportunities, or how citizens refrain from criticizing local politicians in order to remain eligible for the distribution of public goods and services.<sup>xv</sup> Besides these, there is some more conceptual work, reflecting on the notion of clientelism in the South African context.<sup>xvi</sup>

In sum, there are numerous examples of different forms of clientelism in South Africa, but none of these studies considers more than one form of clientelism in a locality or explores directly the citizen or client perspective on these exchanges.

## **2. Data and Context**

We collected data through focus group discussions in different locations in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN).<sup>xvii</sup> KZN was created in 1994 as a merger of the Zulu Bantustan of KwaZulu and Natal Province. As the Bantustans did not receive much investment into basic services and education from the Apartheid state, its rural areas are very undeveloped and offer few economic opportunities. Until the implosion of the Inkatha Freedom party in the 2014 elections, the level of political competition was much higher in KZN than in other South African provinces which might have cemented clientelistic linkages and approaches to electoral politics.

We aimed to recruit individuals that could be “potential clients” and either have experienced clientelism firsthand or personally know people who have rather than recounting stories they had heard about in the media. We selected areas with a high incidence of poverty for recruitment, a client characteristic mentioned in a substantial share of the literature.<sup>xviii</sup> We conducted six focus groups with a total of 41 participants; the groups in informal as well as formal, township, settlements took place in Durban; the rural ones in Ndwedwe. The groups were recorded and transcribed in full for the coding. All groups recounted first (where the respondents themselves or close relationships had engaged in clientelistic exchanges or received clientelistic offers) and second hand (further removed from the respondents, or stories about people in a neighboring community) experiences of clientelism.

Three factors are noteworthy about our focus groups participants and the areas from which they come.<sup>xix</sup> The first is that they are typical of struggling citizens in middle income countries, with high levels of unemployment and incidence of poverty (“gone without food”) and mostly insufficient basic services (see table 1 below). As such, their experiences and views can be seen as representing those of similar citizens in other countries. The second is their very high dependence on government social grants, such as the child support grant or the old age pension. Almost all participants live in households in which at least one member receives a social grant. This makes them representative poor South Africans where most poor households receive one of these grants. It also implies that they have a direct connection to the state and interact with its administration. Third, across all groups, perceptions of politicians are extremely negative, with between two thirds and all FGP members believing that politicians don’t care “about people like me” or “communities like mine”. These survey responses are indicative of the general political disaffection that dominates the focus groups discussions. They also mirror general attitudes in South Africa where, according to the latest round of the Afro Barometer Survey, around two thirds of respondents have little or no trust at all in local councils.

Table 1: Characteristics of Groups and Locations

	urban formal (Kwa-Mashu M Section)	urban informal (Mayville - Cato Crest)	rural (Ndwedwe- Ogunjini)
<i>Location Characteristics</i>			
Unemployment rate	41%	48%	82%
no improved sanitation	1%	74%	73%
Election results 2016	ANC: 83%	ANC: 66%, DA: 20%	ANC 66.16; Inkatha 23.56
<i>Respondent Characteristics</i>			
Social Grants	100%	100%	79%
Matric	66%	55%	29%
gone without food	1%	55%	36%
<i>Respondent Attitudes</i>			
Politicians don't care about people like me	87%	100%	71%
Politicians don't care about communities like mine	67%	82%	64%
Worried about future	67%	64%	86%
<i>Accounts of Clientelism in Group</i>			
Personal Accounts	23	5	18
Second Hand	19	38	25
Number of Participants	15	11	15

We used different clientelistic scenarios to introduce a potentially sensitive topic carefully, make the concept more tangible for participants, and ensure that the discussion would not be restricted to food parcels (the most mediatized form of clientelism in South Africa). The three scenarios were developed from ethnographic literature on clientelism.<sup>xx</sup> The first is a standard vote-buying scenario in which a citizen votes for a candidate in exchange for small goods. The second scenario describes a longer term, more affective relationship. The patron acts as a problem solver for the client whereas the client supports the patron politically out of gratitude and respect.<sup>xxi</sup> The final scenario describes an exchange in which clients coordinate their vote choice in exchange for service delivery in their area. In this case, particularistic goods are local public goods that are delivered irrespective of rules that might specify delivery based on needs and efficiency. Instead, they are provided because a neighborhood supports a specific candidate in the elections.<sup>xxii</sup>

The focus group discussions centered around the local expressions of these scenarios, additional clientelistic practices participants had experienced or heard about, their views of these specific forms of clientelism as well as those engaged in them. Additionally, we also explored how citizens in these communities make electoral choices. The discussion mostly served to encourage participants to elaborate on points or anecdotes.<sup>xxiii</sup>

We use a descriptive bottom-up coding approach to analyze the groups. We focused on 1) the general evaluation of clientelism, including differentiation between personal experience or second hand stories, 2) the types of goods that were exchanged and the characteristics and views on clients and patrons related to these, and 3) context factors like general views about politicians, voting rationales, and the nature politics in South



Africa. Each statement in which a participant was talking about clientelism or their views on politics was made an excerpt. To this excerpt, codes representing what was being said, e.g. “client goods: voting”, or “view on clientelism: negative”, was attached. In our dataset, each excerpt is one observation and each individual code a variable that can either take the value 1 (excerpt mentions this good or belief) or 0 (code not mentioned).<sup>xxiv</sup>

### 3. Types of Clientelism in South Africa: Vote-buying, relational, and coercive

The focus groups reveal the existence of a variety of clientelistic exchanges and strong differences in how these exchanges are evaluated on patrons and clients (see Table B.1 in the Appendix for frequencies of key codes in each group). To understand which types of clientelism coexist in South Africa, we first identified different exchanges in the transcripts. Each part of a transcript, in which focus group participants were discussing a particular example was labeled with a unique “exchange number”. In total, we identified 36 exchanges, ranging from a minimum of four different exchanges (rural female) to a maximum of eight (informal female) per group. We subsequently excluded all exchanges containing less than three excerpts as we judged that these had too little detail to be useful for the analysis. This leaves a total of 27 exchanges.

We use cluster analysis to identify whether these 27 exchanges form distinct types of clientelistic exchanges with common characteristics across the different groups. We use hierarchical clustering, a method suitable when there is no a priori information on the number of clusters that there may be. Hierarchical clustering groups observations according to a pre-specified distance measure and forms groups from the “bottom up”, i.e. starting with one cluster per observation and grouping increasingly distant observations, i.e. clusters. We identify five core clusters.

Table 2 shows the codes that characterize each cluster. In particular, the table shows the items that are present in at least 50% of the exchanges in a cluster. At the minimum each cluster is defined by the goods that are exchanged but most clusters provide additional characteristics, such as the demographic characteristics of patrons or clients, or whether there is coercion or targeting. To connect these clusters directly to types discussed in the current literature on clientelism, we have organized them into vote-buying types, relational types, and a coercive type. In contrast, no collective clientelism cluster emerged from the groups.

*Table 2: Characteristics of Exchange Types*

	Vote Buying Types		Relational Types		Coercive type
	Cluster 1: Food & Gifts	Cluster 2: Rallies	Cluster 3: Campaigning	Cluster 4: Allegiance & Loyalty	Cluster 5: Policy Coercion
<b>Patron Good</b>	Food & gifts	Food & gifts	Jobs	Access to government services; insurance	Access to government services
<b>Client Good</b>	vote	Attend rallies	Campaigning	political allegiance; loyalty & friendship	turnout, votes
<b>Client Characteristics</b>	Elderly, precarious	-	-	well connected	precarious
<b>Patron characteristics</b>	Ward Councilor, Organizations		(Candidates for) Ward Councilor	Ward Councilor, Organizations	Ward Councilor
<b>Coercion</b>	-	-	-	-	Withdrawal of benefits
<b>Targeting</b>	Yes	-	-	-	-

### *Vote-buying Types*

Clusters 1 and 2 are typical vote-buying exchange type. In cluster one food or smaller gifts are exchanged for votes. This type is pursued both by individuals and organizations. Clients were described as elderly, precarious, and directly targeted by vote-buying offers. From the FGPs, it appeared that close to election time, campaigners approached voters whom they knew to be particularly poor with food vouchers or small sums of money. Although it was not explicitly stated that these offers were to be matched with a vote, FGPs felt that this was self-understood. This exchange type appears more common in urban environments.

“P1: It was going to be elections [...] They said I should register for food because I was the only one left at home with children and [...] we then went and registered our names and we were told that a day will come where we will go and collect food. The day arrived and we went to collect food, and after that, after elections, it never happened again [...].

F1: Did you see that there was an expectation that you will vote for them after taking this parcel? How did you see it?

P1: I saw it as something that will help. [...] As the person will be in power, will help the community, [especially] those that are poor. [...] It was never put like that “that we must vote for him/her” because we already knew that he/she was going to be in power, so he just did it like that [...].

P1: [And] We saw him/her as a right person, so we voted them in [to office]. (formal, women, P1, 0:27:48-0:29:51).

The second vote-buying cluster (cluster 2) was only mentioned in two groups, namely the urban informal male and the urban formal female. This is a more low-key exchange where the clients provide manpower for the rallies (sometimes even shuttled to them by bus) and, in exchange get food and alcohol, t-shirts, and entertainment.

“P1: During campaigns they bring us some entertainment, good music and we get to dance a little

P4: And on those campaigns they make sure that there is food because they know that in this community if you do an event and don't cater for people the attendance will be very bad, but if there is food people come in numbers so they use food to attract people.

P5: they also know that our community likes entertainment, we really like entertainment more especially if there is booze we come in numbers” (informal, men, P1, P4, P5, 1:06:12-1:07:14).

This is a type of clientelism that has been described in various qualitative studies in Latin America where citizens join rallies of often various political candidates in a pragmatic approach to obtain the goods that are distributed at these events.<sup>xxv</sup>

### *Relational Types*

The two clusters that appear to be closest two relational types of clientelism come in two versions. In cluster 3, campaigning for candidates is exchanged for jobs. In this exchange, clients often take the initiative and offer to do unpaid campaign work in the hope that this will pay off if the candidate is successful. These jobs are either short-term public sector/ public works jobs or come from companies with whom councilors have special connections. Patrons are individuals - ward councilors or candidates for that office. This exchange type was evenly distributed across contexts.

"P4: The other things that are happening even now in the organization that I am working under, we went out and volunteered. We worked as volunteers and that person won in the elections and became a ward councilor, and he promised to look after those who campaigned for him, so we then campaigned and did door to door campaigns, and now I am currently working under him.

F: So you started working before the elections?

P4: Yes I started by volunteering before the elections. [...]

F: So that is how you got inside?

P4: Yes

F: Even now you still have the job

P4: Yes even now I am working" (formal, men, P4, 0:44:35 - 0:45:00).

The second relational type, cluster 4, allegiance and loyalty, contains an exchange between more powerful clients who have strong ties to patrons. Clients offer loyalty and friendship and political allegiance to the patron, usually the ward councilor in exchange for services (mostly RDP houses) and generalized insurance, implying that the clients could get privileged access housing and jobs. FGPs described what appeared to be an "inner circle" of people connected to the ward councilor.

"P2: If you are close to me and I am a councilor obviously you benefit from me there are many people who benefit in those relationships, they get jobs from the councilor, they get tenders and some hold more than five positions within the municipality just because they are close and loyal to the councilor" (informal, women, P2, 00:54:23).

P4: If you are close/ friends with the councilor it's very rare that you don't get anything that you want [...] as long as you are close to the councilor you get it. If I'm not close to the councilor then I don't get anything" (informal, women, P4, 0:55:21).

### *Policy Coercion*

Cluster 5 describes an exchange where the patron is identified as the Ward Councilor who gives access to government services in exchange for votes and turnout. The item "access to government services" includes a variety of services, such as proofs of residence, child support grants, or eligibility for public jobs- goods to which the citizens are entitled to but for which ward councilors can facilitate or hinder access. This implies that citizens do not get positive inducements but rather have to support the patron in gain access. FGPs reported that when they ask for such services, patrons often ask for their ID cards to check whether the person had voted and to deny them services if they had not.<sup>xxvi</sup>

"Some of us vote only because we are forced by some situations, like old age pension, child support grant, smart card ID's, because before you apply for any of these things there's a letter that is needed which you should get from your councilor. So what used to happen when you get to the councilor's office they used to check your ID to see if you vote, so most people vote because they are scared

that they may not get the letter from the councilor and ultimately they won't get social grant, so most people vote just to have that stamp that shows that you vote which opens all doors" (informal, women, P1 0:12:53).

"Maybe you want to open a bank account, you need to start at the councilor's office to get a councilor's letter, so they normally ask why you did not vote, and that they will not be able to write a councilor's letter for you. Because they can see that there is no stamp in your identity document" (rural, men, P7 0:43:55).

In this cluster, focus group participants also mentioned that they practice self-censorship with respect to the ward councilor for fear of losing access to services:

The community is scared to come together and discuss issues they are not happy about. Even if they are not happy with the councilor, they rather keep quiet about it" (informal, men, P2, 2:41:49).

Cluster 5 is the only cluster that is characterized by coercion in form of threats of or actual withdrawal of benefits. We therefore interpret this as a type of coercive clientelism that is akin to a form that Mares and Young have recently described as "policy coercion" in Eastern Europe.<sup>xxvii</sup> In the South African version, this exchange type takes the form of coercive "turnout buying"; as the dominance of the ANC is not contested in many areas, the main problem is not to convince the people to vote for the "right" party but to go to vote at all.<sup>xxviii</sup> Councilors in the dominant party context know that most people would naturally support them but are too disaffected to turn out. This exchange type is most present in the more precarious rural and urban informal groups.

In sum, the cluster analysis shows the coexistence of different types of clientelism in our setting, ranging from once-off vote-buying exchanges, over relational types with more interaction and links between clients and patrons, to coercive clientelism where citizens have to give political support to gain access to goods on which they depend.

#### **4. Evaluations of Clientelism, Patrons, and Clients**

Focus group participants experience, or have heard of, most of the range of clientelistic types described in the general literature on the topic. How do they evaluate clientelism in general, the different types of clientelism and the actors involved in it?

##### *General Evaluations*

We start by looking into the overall evaluation of clientelism. As Table 3 shows, the view on clientelism is overwhelmingly negative. There are only two positive mentions and ten pragmatic ones, relative to 51 negative evaluations of clientelism.

Pragmatic statements portray clientelism as a business-like quid-pro-quo exchange in which both parties gain something. Paradigmatically, a male FGP from a formal settlement framed electoral clientelism in the following way:

"they will ask if we know it is voting time, and they will give us R200 and say ANC.... You see they are campaigning with something in hand. And I mean, because you've received something your mind is changed – perhaps you had another political party in mind" (formal, men, P3, 1:24:27).

Such pragmatic attitudes were sometimes accompanied by participant's expectations that clients are in a good position to cheat patrons, by taking benefits without keeping their end of the bargain.

"a person can bring a [food] parcel for you here; you eat and finish it. But because you know which organization you are voting for and the person you trust [...] I do not see a problem. [...] they cannot go with you, you are alone [in the voting booth]" (formal, women, P3, 0:45:40).

The large amount of negative evaluations is in line with available survey evidence on clientelism in which such evaluations also predominate. In contrast, there is little research into what drives this overall negative judgment. The focus groups show that different considerations may underlie negative evaluations. We identified four types of rationales. The first (most mentioned) argument is that clientelism stirs distributional conflicts in already pressured communities. Clientelistic actors are perceived to ignore grievances, or even fuel distributional conflicts - thereby undermining solidarity within the community. Following Mares and Young, we call this rationale for negative evaluations "welfare competition".<sup>xxix</sup> The following two statements illustrate this view:

"It's painful [to see] that there are people who benefit from voting whilst we also vote but we don't benefit in any way. We feel unimportant and it means our votes just go down the drain, there is no progress" (rural, women, P6, 1:17:48).

"If someone comes to me and say he'll build me a house if I vote for him, that's crime, because at the end of the day, we [have] people who live in the shacks for many years. What I've observed is that development does go to people, but it comes in a discriminating form. Our councilors give first preference to their people, and the people who campaign for them" (informal, men, P1, 2:15:32).

Importantly, these statements suggest that underlying the negative evaluation in this case is not that clientelism is unacceptable as such; the key is that participants feel excluded from the distribution of resources.

*Table 3: Overall Evaluations of Clientelism, Patrons, and Clients*

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Number of Mentions</b>
<i>View of Clientelism:</i>	
positive view	2
pragmatic view	19
negative view	51
Of which: distributional conflict	25
Of which: unlawful	14
Of which: morally wrong	10
Of which: Unfulfilled promises	10
<hr/>	
<i>View of Patrons</i>	
exploits clients	19
selfish	26
unreliable	22
<hr/>	
<i>View of Clients</i>	
Victim without choice	38
Egoistic	10

Second, clientelism is judged as unlawful; it undermines the formal practices in both administrative procedures (esp. eligibility criteria), and political choice (voting decision, selection of candidates).

"It's actually doing something illegal [...] it is a white collar crime "  
(informal, men, P5, 00:12:54).

This, in turn, is seen as leading to worse outcome as better quality, more deserving people are not considered, or likely to be successful to become a candidate:

"[T]hey do buy people to vote for the candidate of their choice. [...] Whereas, there are people out there in the communities who work hard for the community, but when it comes to elections, they don't consider those people" (informal, men, P2, 2:01:22).

Third, clientelism is seen as morally wrong as it is exploitative. As a female FGP in an informal settlement stated:

"it doesn't look like a good relationship because one is always begging the other [one], because they are in need of something. I think it is not right, because the one begging will feel obliged to stay, because they have a lot to lose. So I think it's not right at all. Most people get into such relationship because of being desperate" (informal, women, P1, 1:35:03).

Whereas the first three rationales underlying negative judgments are related to negative externalities for society, the last argument comes from within the clientelistic exchange logic. Several participants described clientelistic offers as deceptive or empty promises by patrons. Politicians "lure" citizens to support them with their vote, or even to campaign for them<sup>xxx</sup> (informal, female, P1, 0:14:21) but then do not follow through with their part of the deal. This connects to notions of deep and widespread mistrust in politicians generally; a topic which participants across all groups frequently discussed unsolicited.

These negative evaluations carry over in different ways to clients and patrons. Citizens never refer to patrons in positive or affective language as sometimes described in ethnographic studies of clientelism. Instead, patrons are described in unfavorable terms across the board: selfish, exploitative, and unreliable (making promises they don't keep). Views on clients appear more nuanced. Sometimes, clients were seen as victims without a choice and being taken advantage of by the patron. In other instances, however, clients seen as "well-connected" to politicians were referred as egoistic or opportunistic.

### *Evaluating Different Types of Clientelism*

The overview showed a predominantly negative view of clientelism. Does this imply that the types of clientelism we identified through cluster analysis are morally equivalent and uniformly bad from the perspective of FGPs or do they make distinctions? Table 4 below displays evaluative criteria that were present in at least one third of the exchanges.

The one striking similarity across clusters is indeed that most of the exchange types were evaluated negatively – the only exception being the attending-rallies cluster where pragmatic evaluations predominated. In all likelihood, a survey would report that citizens

in our settings dislike clientelism and would be less likely to elect politicians making such offers.

However, our analysis shows that some clusters are associated with different rationales behind negative evaluations and different views on patrons and client. The negative evaluation in the policy coercion cluster is associated with the assessment that this unlawful behavior – an assessment which makes sense given that it involves denying access to goods citizens are entitled to. In contrast, the negative judgement of the campaign and loyalty clusters, came together with the view that these forms of clientelism stir distributional conflicts.

These different views on clientelism are likely to originate at least in part in perceptions of the motives of patrons and clients. Most patrons were seen as selfish and sometimes exploitative, but the judgement of the client varied strongly across cluster. Clients in coercive clientelism and vote-buying tended to be seen as victims, whereas clients in relational clusters were perceived to be egoistic. The perception that clients are victims is generally in line with how the literature thinks about clients – as precarious voters who are forced to trade their votes for short term material gains. At the most, clients might sometimes be condemned on the grounds that they do not fulfil their civic duty.

*Table 4. Evaluations of Different Types of Clientelism*

	<b>Vote Buying Types</b>		<b>Relational Types</b>		<b>Coercive Type</b>	
	<b>Cluster 1: Food &amp; Gifts</b>	<b>Cluster 2: &amp; Rallies</b>	<b>Cluster 3: Campaigning</b>	<b>Cluster 4: Allegiance &amp; Loyalty</b>	<b>Cluster 5: Policy Coercion</b>	
<b>Overall on Type</b>	<b>Negative Pragmatic</b>	<b>pragmatic</b>	<b>Negative</b>	Negative	<b>Negative</b>	
<b>Rationale behind negative evaluation</b>			<b>Stirs distributional conflicts</b>	Stirs distributional conflicts	<b>unlawful</b>	
<b>View on Patron</b>	Unreliable Exploits clients Selfish			Selfish	Exploits clients Selfish	
<b>View on Client</b>	Victim without choice		egoistic	egoistic	<b>Victim without choice</b>	

Note: characteristics in bold were mentioned in more than 50% of exchanges in this cluster, other characteristics were mentioned in at least one third of the exchanges.

The view of clients as egoistic is more surprising and deserves discussion. Egoistic clients were those in the relational clusters - campaigners and loyal clients. An important origin of the negative evaluation of the clients in these cases was the perceived high value of the goods they receive and the fact that citizens felt that they needed and deserved the same goods.

“They end up being the ones who are getting things that are supposed to come to us. What is supposed to come to us ends up going to them and their families. So you see there is more for them and we get nothing but we are the ones who voted.” (women, formal, P7 0:52:44)

In essence, this suggests that it is the logic of welfare competition that leads to perceptions of egoistic clients in relational clusters.

An additional important observation is that this type of clientelism generates important divisions in communities between clients who are either well-connected to the councillor or campaigning and the rest of the community that feels betrayed by them.

“I think being in that relationship makes one have no friends, real friends. If we are friends and there I am with councillor ‘living the life’ and yet I know my friends are struggling. We were struggling together, and they know I was a nothing together with them. They’ll start hating me and I’ll always have to watch my back and avoid them, because I have committed myself to such relationship with the councillor. I’d be ashamed to be seen by them ‘living the life’ and I wouldn’t enjoy that life because I’ll feel that I have to hide from my poor friends. It’s not right” (women, informal, P1, 1:37:18)

“P7: Sometimes it is bad for them [the campaigners], because they end up being hated by people. They go around campaigning something which is not there. [...] It is like they are spreading a propaganda, they told that we will do this for people, and at the end of the day they do not do it. So this backfires on them because we will go back to them and say you promised us this and how come we are not getting this? [...]

F1: So we are saying that they end up finding themselves in danger because they go to communities promising people things that will not happen, at the end they are the only one getting them, and that causes problems in the community and they end up for them the person who is campaigning?

P5, P6, P4, P7: Yes! [*all the other participants nodding*]

F1: Ok, P6 you were part of that corner that was very vocal

P6: Yah well yah they are the only ones benefiting, they eat alone, they work alone” (women, formal, P4, P5, P6, P7, 0:52:44-0:53:43).

This suggests that evaluations of clientelism are driven by two factors. One is directly tied to the benefits of the exchange. The more clients are seen to benefit from opportunities or public goods that FGPs felt they should also be entitled to (such as public jobs or RDP houses), the higher the social costs in terms of dislike and mistrust from the community. The second factor that appears to matter is proximity to the patron. Essentially, those clients who are seen as benefiting via proximity to the patron come to be viewed as belonging to the circle of local political elites whom people felt highly negative about, rather than to the community.

## 5. Conclusion

We have analyzed focus groups discussions on clientelism in various locations of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Focus group discussions were transcribed, manually coded,



and subject to a cluster analysis. Our analysis has uncovered a variety of clientelistic exchanges that these citizens face and non-trivial ways in which these exchanges are evaluated. Our results need to be considered with care since our evidence comes from only six focus groups conducted in a specific province of South Africa. However, our locations have been purposefully selected to potentially cover many different types of clientelism present around the world. South Africa displays a combination for wealth, poverty, and social programs that make it an ideal breeding ground of different types of clientelism; the province of KwaZulu-Natal has a history of political competition that makes the presence of clientelism more likely in the South African context; and the focus groups were conducted in a cross-section of environments (rural, urban informal, and urban informal) where diverse forms of clientelism usually take place. Thus, we believe that our findings can be of some generality and contribute to our understanding of clientelism in South Africa and beyond.

On clientelism in South Africa, our findings give insights on the “full” range of clientelism that is to be found in the country. We document the existence of local manifestations of vote-buying, relational and coercive forms of clientelism. On the prevalence of “policy coercion” in South Africa, our findings also echo results from an existing case study. This study notes the prominent role of ward councilors in distributing local public resources and utilizing them as a political leverage toward civil society organizations.<sup>xxxix</sup> Our study shows that this extends to councilor-citizen relations and suggest that negative inducements are likely to be an important part of clientelism in South Africa.

Beyond the South African context, the findings in this paper offer insights for the broader literature on clientelism as well as for political interventions to decrease clientelism. The generally negative views of clientelism, patrons, and politicians directly mirror views found in survey research on clientelism. Our focus groups offer some potential reasons as to the origin and implications of these evaluations. A first important insight in this regard is the different reasons underlying an overall negative judgment. Anti-vote buying campaigns have traditionally used moralistic arguments, but such campaigns are argued to be ineffective as this does not match “how the poor themselves experience” vote buying.<sup>xxxix</sup> More recent anti-vote buying campaigns offer a mix of plain moral and rather elaborate procedural arguments. <sup>xxxix</sup> Being a version of what we label ‘unlawful’, the procedural rationales argue that vote buying undermines the rightful electoral process, leading to worse candidates being elected. The same line of argument is implied in educational material published by South Africa’s Independent Electoral Commission (IEC 2013).<sup>xxxix</sup> Moral and procedural arguments were certainly important in our findings but the most important rationale against clientelism was based on welfare competition/distributional conflict arguments. This suggests that more effective campaigns could focus on the idea that resources should be shared and that clientelism misallocates public resources.

Second, our findings about perceptions of clients and patrons in different types of clientelism relate directly to the persistence of clientelism and client welfare. Blaming the patrons for the exchange could lead to more critical attitudes towards these practices and greater demands for accountability whereas blaming the clients could rather lead to more social conflict around the distribution of public resources. Our findings show that citizens attributed blame depending on how much clients appeared to benefit from the exchange. Clients receiving scarce, valuable, goods (especially jobs and housing) were seen as egoistic and were both envied and despised whereas clients receiving small goods or experiencing policy coercion were seen as victims without choice. When clients were benefitting, community members appeared to be much more incensed about the actions of the clients than those of the patrons suggesting that in such cases, clientelism creates divisions in the community between those who are included in “high quality” clientelistic

exchanges and those who are not. This suggests that relational forms of clientelism are likely to persist as the divisions they generate prevent collective action whereas coercive or vote-buying types might generate more unified rejection of such practices.

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<sup>ii</sup> Simeon Nichter, *Votes for Survival: Relational Clientelism in Latin America*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Miquel Pellicer et al., “Poor People’s Beliefs and the Dynamics of Clientelism” (GLD working paper, no 12, 2017).

<sup>iii</sup> Ezequiel Gonzalez Ocantos, Chad Kiewiet Jonge, and David W. Nickerson, “The Conditionality of Vote-Buying Norms: Experimental Evidence from Latin America,” *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 1 (2014): 197–211; George Towar Ikbal Tawakkal et al., “Consistency and Vote Buying: Income, Education, and Attitudes about Vote Buying in Indonesia,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 17, no. 3 (2017): 313–29; Burhanuddin Muhtadi, “Buying Votes in Indonesia: Partisans, Personal Networks, and Winning Margins” (The Australian National University (Australia), 2018).

<sup>iv</sup> This is a vast literature, for a systematic review, see Miquel Pellicer et al., “Clientelism from the Client’s Perspective: An Empirically Grounded Conceptual Framework,” *SPIRe Working Paper*, School of Politics and International Relations, University College Dublin, 14 (2019).

<sup>v</sup> Gonzalez Ocantos, Jonge, and Nickerson, “The Conditionality of Vote-Buying Norms: Experimental Evidence from Latin America”; Mares and Young, *Conditionality and Coercion: Electoral Clientelism in Eastern Europe*.

<sup>vi</sup> Javier Auyero, “From the Client’s Point (s) of View’: How Poor People Perceive and Evaluate Political Clientelism,” *Theory and Society* 28, no. 2 (1999): 297–334; Javier Auyero, “The Logic of Clientelism in Argentina: An Ethnographic Account,” *Latin American Research Review* 35, no. 3 (2000): 55–81; Sian Lazar, “Personalist Politics, Clientelism and Citizenship: Local Elections in El Alto, Bolivia,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 23, no. 2 (2004): 228–243.

<sup>vii</sup> Miquel Pellicer et al., “Clientelism from the Client’s Perspective Nichter, *Votes for Survival*; Mares and Young, *Conditionality and Coercion: Electoral Clientelism in Eastern Europe*; Jessica Gottlieb, “Explaining Variation in Broker Strategies: A Lab-in-the-Field Experiment in Senegal,” *Comparative Political Studies* 50, no. 11 (September 2017): 1556–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017695336>.

<sup>viii</sup> Fiona Anciano, “Clientelism as Civil Society? Unpacking the Relationship between Clientelism and Democracy at the Local Level in South Africa,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 2017, 0021909617709487; H. J. Dawson, “Patronage from below: Political Unrest in an Informal Settlement in South Africa,” *African Affairs* 113, no. 453 (October 1, 2014): 518–39, <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adu056>; Laurence Piper and Claire Bénit-Gbaffou, “Mediation and the Contradictions of Representing the Urban Poor in South Africa: The Case of SANCO Leaders in Imizamo Yethu in Cape Town, South Africa,” in *Mediated Citizenship*, ed. Bettina von Lieres and Laurence Piper (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 25–42, [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137405319\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137405319_2); Laurence Piper and Bettina von Lieres, “The Limits of Participatory Democracy and the Rise of the Informal Politics of Mediated Representation in South Africa,” *Journal of Civil Society* 12, no. 3 (July 2, 2016): 314–27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2016.1215616>.

<sup>ix</sup> Susan Stokes, “Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina,” *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 03 (2005): 315–25.

<sup>x</sup> Mcebisi Ndletyana, Pholoana Oupa Makhalemele, and Ralph Mathekga, *Patronage Politics Divides Us: A Study of Poverty, Patronage and Inequality in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Real African Publishers, 2013).

<sup>xi</sup> Ndletyana, Makhalemele, and Mathekga; Eva Wegner, “Local-Level Accountability in a Dominant Party System,” *Government and Opposition* 53, no. 01 (January 2018): 51–75, <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2016.1>.

<sup>xii</sup> Claire Bénit-Gbaffou, “Up Close and Personal’--How Does Local Democracy Help the Poor Access the State? Stories of Accountability and Clientelism in Johannesburg,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 46, no. 5 (2011): 453–64; Victoria Graham, Yolanda Sadie, and Leila Patel, “Social Grants, Food Parcels and Voting Behaviour: A Case Study of Three South African Communities,” *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 91, no. 1 (2016): 106–35; Leila Patel et al., *Voting Behaviour and the Influence of Social Protection: A Study of Voting Behaviour in Three Poor Areas in South Africa* (Johannesburg, South Africa: Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg, 2014); see also media reports, Karl Gernetzky, “Piglets Meant to Pay off at Polls, Says ANC,” June 2013.

<sup>xiii</sup> Peter Sandholt Jensen and Mogens K. Justesen, “Poverty and Vote Buying: Survey-Based Evidence from Africa,” *Electoral Studies* 33 (March 2014): 220–32, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2013.07.020>.

<sup>xiv</sup> Daniel De Kadt and Horacio Larreguy, “Agents of the Regime? Traditional Leaders and Electoral Clientelism in South Africa,” *Dept. Work. Pap., Dept of Polit. Sci., Massachusetts Institute of Technology*, 2015.

- xv Ndletyana, Makhalemele, and Mathekga, *Patronage Politics Divides Us*; Luke Staniland, “‘They Know Me, I Will Not Get Any Job’: Public Participation, Patronage, and the Sedation of Civil Society in a Capetonian Township,” *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 66, no. 1 (2008): 34–60; Mondli S. Hlatshwayo, “The Expanded Public Works Programme: Perspectives of Direct Beneficiaries,” *TD: The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 13, no. 1 (2017): 1–8.
- xvi Anciano, “Clientelism as Civil Society?”; Fiona Anciano, “Decolonising Clientelism: ‘Re-Centring’ Analyses of Local State–Society Relations in South Africa,” *Politikon* 45, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 94–111, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589346.2018.1418214>.
- xvii The focus groups were conducted by a South African moderator in isiZulu and video recorded. They were translated and transcribed into English and coded by at least two authors. Group size ranged from a minimum of five to a maximum of eight participants. The discussions lasted for about 2 hours.
- xviii Susan Stokes, “Political Clientelism,” ed. Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, *Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 604–27; Susan Stokes et al., *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Valeria Brusco, Marcelo Nazareno, and Susan Stokes, “Vote Buying in Argentina,” *Latin American Research Review* 39, no. 2 (2004): 66–88.
- xix The socio-economic characteristics of the locations are drawn from the 2011 population census.
- xx The focus group guidelines with the wording of all scenarios is in Appendix A. All scenarios were presented as taking place in Latin American countries but use goods that are relevant in the South African context (e.g. Old Age Pension).
- xxi For examples, see Auyero, “‘From the Client’s Point (s) of View’: How Poor People Perceive and Evaluate Political Clientelism”; Ariel Wilkis, “Money, Morality, and Politics in the Slums of Buenos Aires,” *Horizontes Antropológicos* 22, no. 45 (June 2016): 49–76, <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832016000100003>; Tina Hilgers, “‘Who Is Using Whom?’ Clientelism from the Client’s Perspective,” *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 15, no. 1 (2009): 51–75.
- xxii This scenario is mainly inspired by Gay’s work. see Robert Gay, “The Broker and the Thief: A Parable (Reflections on Popular Politics in Brazil),” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 1999, 49–70. Similar examples have been described in Enrique Desmond Arias, “Trouble En Route: Drug Trafficking and Clientelism in Rio de Janeiro Shantytowns,” *Qualitative Sociology* 29, no. 4 (December 12, 2006): 427–45, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-006-9033-x>; Jessica Gottlieb, “Explaining Variation in Broker Strategies: A Lab-in-the-Field Experiment in Senegal,” *Comparative Political Studies* 50, no. 11 (September 2017): 1556–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017695336>.
- xxiii Katherine E. Ryan et al., “Focus Group Evidence: Implications for Design and Analysis,” *American Journal of Evaluation* 35, no. 3 (2014): 328–45.
- xxiv References to focus group transcripts are given in this format: site (rural, informal-urban, formal-urban), gender, speaker ID (P1 – P9) and time stamp.
- xxv Paula Muñoz, “An Informational Theory of Campaign Clientelism: The Case of Peru,” *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 79–98; Sian Lazar, “Personalist Politics, Clientelism and Citizenship: Local Elections in El Alto, Bolivia,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 23, no. 2 (2004): 228–243.
- xxvi ID cards get stamped at the polling station to prevent multiple voting. This practice enables politicians to check whether someone has voted.
- xxvii Isabela Mares and Lauren E. Young, “The Core Voter’s Curse: Clientelistic Threats and Promises in Hungarian Elections,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 2018, 0010414018758754; Isabela Mares and Lauren Young, *Conditionality and Coercion: Electoral Clientelism in Eastern Europe* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming); See also Simeon Nichter, “Political Clientelism and Social Policy in Brazil,” in *Clientelism, Social Policy, and the Quality of Democracy*, ed. Diego Abente Brun and Larry Diamond, 2014, 130–51 for Brazil.
- xxviii The notion of turnout buying comes from Simeon Nichter, “Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot,” *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 01 (2008): 19–31.
- xxix Mares and Young, *Conditionality and Coercion: Electoral Clientelism in Eastern Europe*.
- xxx We take this to be clientelism, as these are promises for personal benefit, contingent on political support. The already referenced statement reads: “They lured the old lady. She believed she’ll get a new house. She even packed everything hoping to move into a new house. But she had to unpack and continue to stay in her shack” (informal, female, P1, 0:14:21).
- xxxi Staniland, “‘They Know Me, I Will Not Get Any Job.’”
- xxxii Frederic Charles Schaffer, “Clean Elections and the Great Unwashed,” *Vote Buying and Voter Education in the Philippines*. Paper at the Center for International Studies at MIT, 2005, 8.
- xxxiii Carine M. Asutilla, “Anti-Vote-Buying Campaign Kicks off in Cebu,” *ABS-CBN News*, April 28, 2013, <https://news.abs-cbn.com/focus/04/28/13/anti-vote-buying-campaign-kicks-cebu>; Gian C. Geronimo, “Concerned Groups Launch Anti-Vote Buying Campaign,” *GMA News Online*, February 13, 2013,

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<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/294800/concerned-groups-launch-anti-vote-buying-campaign/story/>.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> IEC, *Becoming a Good Citizen. Electoral Democracy Toolkit for Teachers Grade 10-12* (Independent Electoral Commission South Africa, 2013).



## Appendix

### Appendix A. Focus Group Guidelines

#### Explorative Focus Groups on Citizen Perspectives on Clientelism in South Africa

##### Section A. Focus Groups Sequence

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Take consent
- 3) Three scenarios (see below) will be described to Focus Group Participants (FGPs), FGPs will be asked to indicate whether they feel this happens not at all, a little, or a lot in their area.
- 4) After this, the most prevalent two scenarios will be chosen for the FG discussion.
- 5) In case the FGPs have no knowledge of any of the scenarios or cannot relate to them at all, alternative questions will be discussed (see below).
- 6) Mini-Survey with each individual participant

##### Section B. Focus Group Content

###### Section B.1 Scenarios

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###### Introduction:

**We want to talk about citizenship and how people make choices around voting. We are going to talk about different experiences that you may have heard about or seen in your community. Please do not feel compelled to share anything that is personal about yourself or about which you feel uncomfortable.**

###### Framing of Scenarios:

**Here are three stories from Brazil and Argentina about how people decide who to support in elections. We will tell you the three stories – after each story please think about how much you feel something like this happens around here.**

###### Scenario 1: Angela (vote buying)

**Angela is a 23-year-old woman who lives in Sao Paulo in Brazil. Before the elections, she was offered a bag of groceries by Gabriel who is a candidate in the local elections. As a result, Angela will give her vote to Gabriel in the elections.**

*[Note: This is the classical vote buying scenario. A voter receives a small favour (a gift, some assistance, a one-day job) in exchange for electoral support.]*

###### Scenario 2: Pedro (“traditional” clientelism)

**Pedro is a 65-year-old man who lives in Buenos Aires in Argentina. Last year, he had a problem with his old age grant. Pedro asked Elaine who is the leader of a local party branch to help him. Elaine solved this problem and Pedro now gets his grant every month. Pedro knows he could turn to her again for help if he had a problem like this one. Because he is grateful to Elaine and**

**respects her, Pedro always goes when Elaine asks him help with some work at the party office and follows her advice on who he should support in the election.**

*[Note: This is different from the first scenario in that Pedro and Elaine have a personal relationship that extends beyond the elections. In scenario 1 the exchange is very short-term and pragmatic.]*

### Scenario 3: Maria

**Maria is a 30-year-old woman who lives in a neighborhood in Sao Paulo that has problems with housing. For this local election, she decided with many other people in her neighborhood that they will vote for Pepe. The reason for this is that Pepe promised that if enough people from Maria's area support him, he will make sure that they will get good housing first (before other neighborhoods will get it).**

*[Note: The important thing in this scenario is that Pepe promises to get them housing if they vote for him not because they are those who need it the most, or where it would be more efficient to start. It is important to emphasize the difference from a candidate who would promise to get them sanitation because of some rule (e.g. because they are the most needy).]*

After each story ask respondents: **“Does something like this happen around here?”** (make sure they don't get stuck with the details (e.g. the fact that it is housing the third story whereas in their area it's toilets, or that the important person in story 2 heads a local party branch)

Make them indicate on the tablet if this happens **never, rarely, sometimes, very often.**

Choose the two most prevalent scenarios for further discussion.

If people say none of this ever happens please move on to **Section B.4**

## **Section B. 2. Questions about Scenarios**

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*By scenario, please ask the following questions:*

*[Note: we want to make sure that these topics are covered- but if people talk about them without being prompted there is no need to go question by question.]*

**“Let's talk a little bit more about how Maria (Pedro/ Angela) chose who to support in elections. Some of you said that something like this also sometimes happens around here.”**

### **1. Could you give examples of how this works around here?**

*[Note: encourage as precise examples as possible, where people dwell on what was done what and how. Real existing people (or parties) should not be named to not expose anybody for practices conceived as inappropriate or even illegal.]*

#### **1.1. Prompts/ Follow ups:**

**1.1.1. What was the situation like**

**1.1.2. Do you know someone personally?**

**1.1.3. Was it self-understood or explicit that an exchange about help or goods for political support was taking place?**

*Note: If FGPs came up with their own examples/ "corrected" our scenarios, the following questions should refer to these 'real-world' examples not anymore to Angela, Pedro, or Maria.*

**2. Can you say something about what type of person would vote in this way and why?**

**2.1. Prompts/ Follow ups:**

- 2.1.1. Do you think poor people are more likely to vote in this way than rich people? Or people who experience big problems, like losing their job?**
- 2.1.2. Are the young more likely to vote in this way than the old?**
- 2.1.3. Are people who are unhappy about politics more likely to vote in this way than those who feel positive about it?**
- 2.1.4. Are there other important characteristics of a person who would vote in this way?**
- 2.1.5. Why would someone NOT do vote in this way? What type of person would never to this?**

*[Note: here, we want to understand what would FGPs perceive to be costs and benefits for these exchanges; make sure to also include those people's opinions who don't know anyone personally. We want to understand how people describe the profile of someone who would take part in this exchange in terms of personal circumstances]*

**3. How do you feel about this way of voting and the people who do it?**

**3.1. Prompts/Follow ups:**

- 3.1.1. How do you feel about what people are getting out of this way of voting?**
- 3.1.2. Do you feel they have to give up something?**
- 3.1.3. How do you feel about people who vote in this way?**
  - 3.1.3.1. Do you rather feel they are victims or that they are making sure they get something out of the elections?**
- 3.1.4. How do you feel about candidates who make offers like this?**
  - 3.1.4.1. Are they nice people who care about the community or are they exploiting people's needs?**

*[Note: here, we want to understand how people evaluate these forms of clientelism; is it (and the people who engage in it and offer it) good or bad socially and/or morally; is it something that takes away agency or do people feel that at least this is a way of getting some form of benefit from elections, etc.]*

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*Now take a refreshment break and go back to the top of section B.2 and ask same questions about the second chosen scenario*

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### Section B.3

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*Question(s) about political choice [after the two scenarios have been discussed with the above questions, if there is still time]*

#### **1. How do people decide whom to support in elections?**

##### **1.1. Prompts/ follow ups:**

**1.1.1. How much do people think about who to support in elections?**

**1.1.2. Why are they supporting a party?**

**1.1.2.1. Do people care more about the programme or about the people?**

**1.1.2.2. Do people know the programme?**

**1.1.2.3. How important is it whether a party or person has done something for the community in the past?**

**1.1.2.4. How important is it whether a party or person has done something for a particular person in the past)**

**1.1.3. Do people trust politicians when they make promises?**

*[Note: we want to understand what type of model people have in mind when they make their choice- do they see elections as a moment of democratic empowerment, as an opportunity to get a piece of the pie, as a moment to affirm their ideology, other reasons?]*

1

### Section B.4

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*Questions about political choice [if people cannot relate to the scenarios at all, please ask these questions directly]*

#### **1. How do people decide whom to support in elections?**

##### **1.1. Prompts/ follow ups:**

**1.1.1. How much do people think about who to support in elections?**

**1.1.2. Why are they supporting a party?**

**1.1.2.1. Do people care more about the programme or about the people?**

**1.1.2.2. Do people know the programme?**

**1.1.2.3. How important is it whether a party or person has done something for the community in the past?**

**1.1.2.4. How important is it whether a party or person has done something for a particular person in the past)**

**1.1.3. Do people trust politicians when they make promises?**

*[Note: we want to understand what type of model people have in mind when they make their choice- do they see elections as a moment of democratic empowerment, as an opportunity to get a piece of the pie, as a moment to affirm their ideology, other reasons?]*

#### **2. How do electoral campaigns work around here?**

##### **2.1. Possible Prompts/ Follow-ups:**

**2.1.1.1. Are politicians and parties present in the area in election times - do they also come when there are no elections?**

**2.1.1.2. What are they doing? Big rallies, or other things**

- 2.1.1.3. How are they trying to convince people to vote for them?
- 2.1.1.4. Do parties engage persons or organizations that are important locally?
- 2.1.1.4.1. What type of things do you think they are promising to this these persons or organizations who help them getting access locally?

[Note: we want to find out, how FGPs are affected by election campaigns. Prompts: In how far? Do they engage locals? If so, what do they want (e.g. voters, campaigners, or locally important persons as multipliers)? What do they offer/promise in return?]

3. Come back to the scenarios but ask questions 2 and 3 in section 2 above using the stories (i.e. about Maria/Angela/Pedro), e.g. What type of person do you think Angela is (is she poor, etc. )

## Appendix B. Tables & Figures

**Table B.1 Descriptives**

	(1) Formal Male	(2) Formal Female	(3) Informa l Male	(4) Informa l Female	(5) Rural Male	(6) Rural Female	(7) Total
<i>Experience:</i>							
personal	8	15	2	3	1	17	46
hearsay	8	11	22	16	12	13	82
<i>Client Goods:</i>							
vote for patron	7	13	11	7	4	7	49
turnout	0	9	3	2	4	9	27
political allegiance	0	2	2	1	5	11	21
attend rally	1	2	4	0	0	0	7
campaign for patron	8	6	5	6	11	4	40
loyalty, friendship	0	0	3	8	0	0	11
party activism	5	2	0	1	0	0	8
<i>Patron Goods:</i>							
access to gov services	0	9	7	3	8	23	50
food, gifts	9	13	11	7	4	0	44
help, insurance	3	0	1	2	1	0	7
jobs	3	3	4	8	7	8	33
service delivery	4	5	9	8	1	0	27
transport polling station	1	2	0	2	1	2	8
<i>View of Clientelism:</i>							
positive view	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
pragmatic view	4	7	1	0	0	7	19
negative view	6	11	12	13	1	8	51
negative: distributional	1	5	9	5	0	5	25

conflict							
negative:	1	2	0	5	1	1	10
morally wrong							
negative:	1	4	0	5	0	0	10
patron							
deception							
negative:	3	4	3	2	0	2	14
unlawful							
<i>Client</i>							
<i>Characteristics:</i>							
client elderly	4	1	1	7	1	3	17
client service	0	3	0	1	1	3	8
depr.							
client	8	11	8	6	6	4	43
precarious							
client well-	1	0	6	7	2	3	19
connected							
client	2	3	0	0	0	3	8
disillusioned							
client egoistic	9	6	0	15	6	2	38
client initiative	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
client targeted	1	9	3	5	1	0	19
client victim	1	2	5	1	0	1	10
<i>Patron</i>							
<i>Characteristics:</i>							
patron ward	4	3	6	7	18	8	46
counc.							
patron	8	5	4	2	1	2	22
organization							
patron exploits	4	5	0	9	0	1	19
clients							
patron selfish	3	5	3	12	2	1	26
patron	6	7	0	8	1	0	22
unreliable							
patron favors	1	1	1	2	5	5	15
own sups							
Observations	39	60	44	55	42	52	292

Figure B.1 Dendrogram

Figure B.1 shows the dendrogram associated to our cluster analysis. This shows the clusters as “fruits” hanging from increasingly central branches, where each individual “fruit” is an exchange discussed in one focus group (the labels in the figure describe the specific exchange, for instance UIM2 corresponds to the 2nd exchange discussed by the Male Urban Informal group). The dendrogram shows a several sensible number of clusters that might be chosen and we choose, somewhat arbitrarily, five.

