The price of respect: The role of status and belonging in clients' evaluations of clientelism

Pre-Analysis Plan

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1) Introduction

When considering the client's point of view, most mainstream political science literature on clientelism focuses on the material aspect of the clientelistic exchange. The clearest example of this is the standard model of the demand for vote buying from the citizen side. The benefit of clientelism for the client are material goods which the poor value particularly strongly (Dixit and Londregan 1996; Stokes et al. 2013). The non-material aspect of the exchange typically focuses on the cost of giving up one's preferred political choice. Recent work on other types of clientelism, such as (Nichter 2018) work on relational clientelism, also tends to focus on material needs fulfilled by clientelism.

However, literature with an ethnographic focus emphasizes the importance of non-material aspects of the exchange, such as rituals and the social messages (meaning) exchanged (Auyero 1999; Piliavsky 2014). One non-material aspect of clientelism that is starting to receive attention is dignity and respect. Paller (2014) provides ethnographic evidence from Ghana showing that the pursuit of respect underlies both sides of the clientelistic relation. Patrons seek to accumulate, not only or primarily material wealth and political power, but prestige and respect. For clients as well, receiving respect and dignity is important to their evaluation of clientelism. Kao, Lust, and Rakner (2018) provide evidence from focus groups that poorer individuals view attempts by politicians to buy their vote as undignified, and resent them. To date, this research has been mainly qualitative, based on ethnographic data and on focus groups.

This project seeks to advance the research agenda on non-material aspects of clientelism demand in general, and of dignity/ respect in particular, using a vignette experiment. We have two main objectives.

1. To estimate the monetary value of dignity in a clientelistic exchange for the potential client.
2. To understand which aspects of the clientelistic relation are associated to respect and dignity for the client. We focus on the belonging and status implications of clientelistic relations.

2) Explanation of core hypotheses

We build on two types of social psychology theories in order to theorize the role of dignity in clientelistic exchanges. In particular, we focus on the potential for clientelistic relations to signal or embody more or less **belonging** and more or less **status**. First, social psychology literature on fundamental human motivations argues that the need to belong and the need to pursue status are "basic human needs"; i.e. they conferred evolutionary advantages in terms of survival and reproduction; and they enlist cognitive resources, have strong affective implications, and guide behavior fundamentally and universally (M. R. Leary and Baumeister 2017; Anderson, Hildreth, and Howland 2015). Second, psychology theories on interpersonal dispositions (T. Leary 2004) model interpersonal attitudes along two similar dimensions of status and belonging, in particular one capturing dominance, power, status and the other capturing friendliness, warmth, love.

Clientelistic relations have a strong bearing on both dimensions. In particular, two of the most relevant attributes of clientelistic relations are: being hierarchical and being personal. From the client's point of view engaging in these types of clientelistic relations implies accepting a subordinate position (low status) in exchange for a personal association (belonging) with a powerful social actor.

Thus, our main hypothesis is that clientelistic exchanges performed in a way that signals high status (or does not signal low status) and high belonging are valued more highly that exchanges without those signals. We will consider four different types of exchanges with different combinations of status/ equality and belonging/ warmth: (warm & equal), (warm & non-equal), (non-warm & equal), and (non-warm & non-equal). Our main hypothesis is:

H1. Potential clients value more (i.e. require less material compensation to accept) clientelistic exchanges that signal more status and belonging for the client.

Whereas our theoretical framework implies that people in general value status and belonging, people differ in how important subordination and belonging are for them. This leads to interpersonal differences in the value attached to the two components of dignity. Our second set of hypotheses relate to this.

H2a. Heterogeneous effects for people with different interpersonal disposition towards dominance/ status. People with greater interpersonal disposition towards dominance/ status display greater differences in valuations of clientelistic exchanges that signal more vs. less status.

H2b. Heterogeneous effects for people with different interpersonal disposition towards belonging/ warmth. People with greater interpersonal disposition towards belonging/ warmth display greater differences in valuations of clientelistic exchanges that signal more vs. less belonging.

H1 implies a partial preference ordering of clientelistic exchanges in terms of status and warmth: (warm & equal) "preferred to" (warm & non-equal) and (non-warm & equal) "preferred to" (non-warm & non-equal). But we do not have expectations regarding the comparison between (warm & non-equal), which we may term paternalistic, and (non-warm & equal), which we may term business-like. However, given heterogeneity in interpersonal dispositions, we hypothesize that people with dominance/ status disposition will tend to prefer

business-like exchanges relative to paternalistic ones, whereas people with belonging disposition will tend to prefer paternalistic exchanges relative to business-like ones. The strong versions of this hypothesis are:

H3a. (non-warm & equal) "preferred to" (warm & non-equal) exchanges for people with dominance/ status disposition.

H3b (warm & non-equal) "preferred to" (non-warm & equal) exchanges for people with belonging/ warmth disposition

A weaker version of H3a and H3b makes the differences between (non-warm & equal) and (warm & non-equal) for dominance/ status disposition people and belonging/ warmth disposition relative instead of absolute:

H3c (warm & non-equal) is more "preferred to" (non-warm & equal) for people with belonging/ warmth disposition relative to people with dominance/ status disposition

3) Experimental Manipulation

Our experimental manipulation corresponds to a vignette experiment in which the respondents are asked to evaluate clientelistic exchanges that differ in the degree of status and warmth conveyed towards the client.

In the vignette-experiment the respondents are confronted with a single vignette describing a vote-buying attempt. Respondent are asked to put themselves in the position of the citizen who is approached by a broker. The vignettes presented to the respondents vary in two dimensions: First, the degree of the client's status (equal vs subordinate) and secondly, the warmth of the interaction (warm vs. non-warm) between the client and the patron/broker. The scenarios are created as 2x2 combinations of both dimensions:

Each respondent is presented one of the following scenarios:

Intro: Please imagine the following situation: It is election time and you are walking in the street.				
	Scenario 1	**Scenario 2**	**Scenario 3**	**Scenario 4**
Status (1 & 3 high, 2 & 4 low)	A campaigner walks towards you with a greeting and tells you that his candidate needs help	A campaigner waves at you from a distance and signals you should come near. He says that he knows that times are rough, and people like you are	A campaigner walks towards you with a greeting and tells you that his candidate needs help	A campaigner waves at you from a distance and signals you should come near. He says that he knows that times are rough, and people like you are

		struggling		struggling
Warmth (1 & 4 high, 2 & 3 low)	He says "I would like to offer you a gift as a sign of appreciation and I would be really grateful if you could support my candidate with your vote"	He says "I want to propose you a deal. I pay you some money and you vote for my candidate"	He says "I want to propose you a deal. I pay you some money and you vote for my candidate"	He says "I would like to offer you a gift as a sign of appreciation and I would be really grateful if you could support my candidate with your vote"

4) Measurement of core variables

4.1 Outcome Variables

After being presented the vignettes, respondents answer some follow-up questions which serve as manipulation checks. These questions center on the feelings of the respondents after imagining the situation.

Conjoint Follow-up questions: How well do the following statements describe your feelings about the situation? Answers on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is the statement does not describe my feelings at all, to 5, the statement describe my feelings very well

question/ statement
I felt looked down on
I was treated in a respectful manner
I was treated in an unfriendly way.

The main outcome variable is the price a respondent demands for her or his vote under the circumstances given in the vignette. This is covered by the outcome variable "vote_price". It is measured by a simply question which follows the manipulation checks. To assess the price of the vote, we ask the respondents if they would be inclined to accept the offer depicted in the vignette and if they would vote for the politician for a certain amount of money. This amount starts with 50 Rand (10 TDN/ about 3 Euro) and is successively increased in predefined steps (200R/40 TND, 1000R/200 TND, 10000R/2000 TND). Increasing continues until the respondent accepts the offer, or declines the final offer.

4.2 Variables for heterogeneous effects

According to our hypotheses, we assume that respondents will react differently to the vignettes, depending on their character traits; i.e. they will accept lower offers when feeling treated according to their personal disposition.

To measure the relevant character traits, we use the Circumplex Scales of Interpersonal Values (CSIV) developed by (Locke 2000). The CSIV measures interpersonal attitudes along the two dimensions of agency (dominance, power, status) and communion (friendliness, warmth, love) and uses eight categories to further subdivide these principal components (see Figure XY below Source Locke 2000: 250).
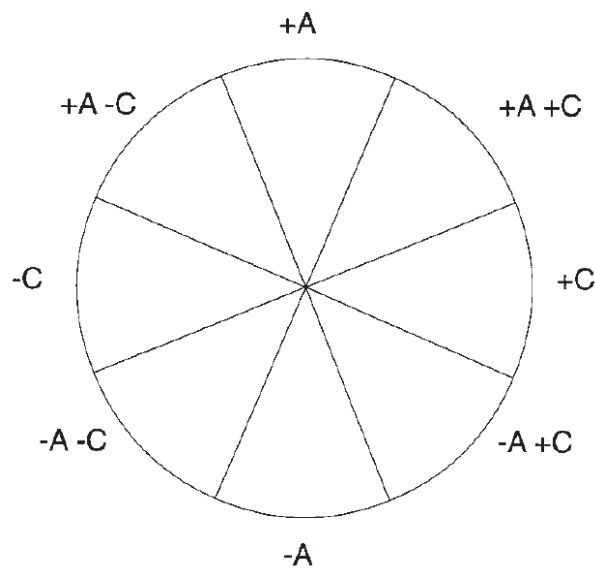

FIGURE 1   The interpersonal circumplex. +A = Agentic; +A+C = Agentic and Communal; +C = Communal; –A+C = Submissive and Communal; –A = Submissive; –A–C = Submissive and Separate; –C = Separate; +A–C = Agentic and Separate.

The advantage of CSIV over other scales for similar purposes, like the circumplex scale developed by Alden, Wiggins, and Pincus (1990), is that it is relatively short but still reliable. It uses only eight questions (one per category). Respondents are asked to rate different statements on their preference in the interaction with others on a five-point scale. These are presented to the respondents in the following form:

Introduction: Now, I am going to read a couple of statements to you about you interacting with others. For each statement, please tell me how important this is to you on a scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (extremely important)		
Agentic (+a)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That They acknowledge when I am right	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .

Agentic and Seperate (+a-c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That I keep the upper hand.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
Separate (-c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That They not know what I am thinking or feeling.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
Submissive and Seperate (-a-c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That I don't say something stupid.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
Submissive (-a)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That I don't make them angry.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
Submissive and Communal (–a+c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That They like me.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
communal (+c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That They show concern for how I am feeling.	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .
agentic and communal (+a+c)	When Interacting With Others It Is Important That They respect what I have to say	1 (not important), 2 (mildly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), 98 (refuse) .

5) Analysis

The analysis is straightforward. Suppose S_i represents dislike of status orientation of individual i and B_i belonging orientation of individual i, as measured by the CSIV above. Consider dummy variables W_i and E_i capturing whether individual i got a warm and/ or an equal vignettes exchange Ei. Call Y_i the outcome variable of interest (and assume that it is signed so that higher values of Y_i imply more value attributed the clientelistic exchange). We simply regress:

$Y_i = a1 * W_i + a2 * E_i + eps_i$

Then, H1 implies a1, a2 > 0

For H2, we regress:

$Y_i = (b2 * E_i + c2 * W_i) * B_i + (b3 * E_i + c3 * W_i) * S_i + eps_i$

Then H2a implies c2 > 0 and b3 > 0

For H3, consider only the (equal & non-warm) and the (non-equal & warm) vignettes:

Yi = W_i * (d2 * Bi + e2 * Si)

Then hypotheses 3a, b, and c, imply d2 > 0, e2 < 0 and d2 > e2, respectively

We will undertake the analysis with and without controls. Controls include dummies for neighborhood wealth, views on politicians, on the civic duty of voting, and closeness to a political party.

It is possible that warm and equal exchanges are prefered, not by their non-material value, but because they modify expectations regarding what the politician might give in the future, as in Kramon (2017). We check this using questions on these expectations. As part of the post-treatment manipulation questions, we also ask: How well do the following statements describe your views about the situation?

I think the candidate would help me if I had a problem.
I think this candidate would improve the situation of the community.

We will perform regressions as those to test H1 using these two questions as outcome variables. If coefficients appear positive, we will then use mediation analysis as in Imai et al. (2011) to estimate the the extent to which effects for our key outcome variable operate through these expectations.

6) Fieldwork Partners and Samples

Fieldwork and data collection in Tunisia and South Africa will be implemented by local service providers. The surveys will take place in the metropolitan areas of Tunis (January/ February 2019) and Cape Town (December 2018). Sample size is 300 for each country . All participants in the survey are of lower income, as we assume that we find higher prevalence of clientlistic experiences within this group and that the views of respondents experiencing clientelism are particularly relevant for this study. To ensure some variation in socio-economic status among participants, each country-sample is supposed to consist of three sub-samples. These sub-samples consist of a) very poor residents (in SA residents of an informal settlements); b) low income residents of a formal settlement and c) more affluent lower middle class members (100 respondents each). We stratify data collection in these three samples. Interviews are face-to-face and responses are recorded on tablets.

In South Africa, data collection is executed by Ikapadata. Interviews in Cape Town are conducted in English and isiXhosa in Khayelitsha. Three types of neighborhoods in Khayelitsha with different living standards were identified (in consultation with ikapadata). In each EA, 18 respondents are interviewed.

In Tunisia, data collection is implemented by ELKA consulting. The Tunis survey will be conducted in Tunisian Arabic and will take place in Hay Ettadhamen (cité de la solidarité) which offers the same income gradation as in South Africa.

We received ethical clearance for this project from the University of Duisburg-Essen's ethics' committee.

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