Pre-analysis Plan: Fault Lines

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July 11, 2015

Abstract

Models of electoral accountability typically assume a nested principal-agent problem in which voters hold their representatives accountable not only for their own actions but also for the performance of the bureaucracy. In developing countries such as Uganda, the limited capacity of elected officials at the local level means that they cannot always control the behavior of their appointed counterparts; we argue that this may have a serious impact on how well elections serve as an accountability mechanism. This paper outlines the pre-analysis plan for a survey experiment conducted with citizens in Uganda that examine how citizens allocate blame and credit for the provision of public goods at the local level and how this affects electoral accountability. The survey experiment is the third in a series of three, with the first two experiments sampling elite citizens and local government officials in Uganda, respectively. Data from the other two experiments has already been analyzed. The authors do not yet have access to the data from the survey experiment with citizens.

1 Introduction

In many democracies, government accountability works primarily through the electoral process: voters monitor elected officials, who in turn monitor bureaucrats. This implies that voters will,

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to a large extent, punish elected officials for failures of the bureaucracy. For example, President Obama has been faulted by Republican voters for the way that the IRS scrutinized certain right-wing nonprofit organizations, and George W. Bush faced repercussions for the poor state of V.A. hospitals. The literature on the allocation of blame by citizens has assumed that this kind of high-functioning environment exists, focusing mainly on how citizens assign blame between different levels of government or different parties.

Local government in Uganda looks very different from this model. While local politicians have some formal powers over bureaucrats, they are often poorly trained, poorly educated, and generally have difficulty keeping their appointed colleagues in line. This holds especially true at the sub-county level in Uganda, raising the question of how this affects the efficient provision of accountability. This project focuses on two aspects of accountability. First, how well do elections function in this kind of an environment? In particular, we consider the role of elections in selecting and keeping high-quality candidates, assuming a high degree of uncertainty over type. Second, how does this kind of blame environment affect the incentives both elected and appointed officials have to do well? We consider both the allocation of blame when performance is poor, and the allocation of credit when performance is good. We also consider non-electoral social sanctions that can also be used by citizens at the local level in Uganda.

We also examine these questions in the context of one aspect of local governments that we expect to affect accountability: whether the local bureaucrat is a local or an "outsider" who has been appointed from another area. Bureaucrats are often rotated away from their home areas to reduce the possibility of patronage. However, we argue that, in countries without strong top-down accountability structures, this policy may be detrimental to accountability.

Research Questions

Our primary research questions are:

- How do voters allocate blame and credit for government service delivery?
- Are voters cognizant of limited oversight capacity of politicians over bureaucrats?

- If so, how does this affect electoral accountability?
- How do expectations of the relative quality of politicians and bureaucrats moderate electoral accountability?
- Do asymmetries exist between the repercussions for bad performance and the rewards for good performance?
- What determines whether voters rely on formal or informal sanctions and how effective they deem them?

2 Theory and Hypotheses

We argue that local elected officials in weakly-institutionalized settings (such as Uganda) have limited control over the bureaucrats in their areas. If citizens, politicians, and bureaucrats recognize that this is the case, it may have serious consequences for electoral accountability. Part of the accountability process is that citizens must decide who deserves blame (credit) for poor (good) government performance; here we consider the quality of roads, a key local public good. Based on the decision of who deserves blame or credit, they must then mete out punishments or rewards to both elected and appointed officials. This, in turn, may affect the incentives for each type of official to perform their job properly.

We assume here that citizens use elections primarily as a form of retrospective voting in which they wish to keep "good" types and remove "bad" types from office.

This section discusses how citizens' perceptions of blame and credit operate in this type of setting, developing testable hypotheses that are tested in the survey experiments below. Note that the blame and credit hypotheses will likely form different papers.

Allocation of blame and credit

Our first theoretical claim is that, in weakly-institutionalized settings with limited political oversight over service delivery, citizens will split the allocation of blame and credit between the elected and appointed official, rather than always holding the elected official accountable for government performance.

H1: Blame and credit are split. Rather than holding the elected official accountable for government performance, citizens will split accountability between the elected and appointed officials.

Split perceived responsibility weakens electoral accountability

Split accountability, in turn, will result in citizens being less likely to hold elected officials accountable (vote them out of office) when government performance is bad. We define electoral accountability as the degree to which bad government performance (of a subcounty as a whole) translates into fewer votes for the elected official. Thus, if electoral accountability is strong, it should not matter who is actually to blame. This hypothesis is derived in part from Fearon's 1999 model, in which a noisy signal of the incumbent's type reduces accountability: poor performance is less likely to be sanctioned. We extrapolate from this a similar effect for how officials are rewarded for good performance.

H2a: Citizens will be more likely to punish poor government performance at the ballot box when they perceive the elected official to bear more responsibility.

H2b: Citizens will be more likely to reward good government performance at the ballot box when they perceive the elected official to bear more responsibility.

Citizens condition electoral accountability on blame attribution

Hypotheses 2a and 2b consider how citizens perceive responsibility for government performance. We now examine how citizens will react when they receive information about who actually deserves blame or credit; this information is incorporated into the experiments below.

H3a: Conditional on poor government performance, the probability that a politicians is voted out of office will be higher when voters have received information that the politician is actually to blame for poor performance, since this implies switching "out" a bad politician rather than an ineffective watchdog/principal.

H3b: Conditional on good government performance, the probability that a politician wins the next election will be higher when voters have received information that the politician actually deserves credit for the good performance; citizens wish to keep "good" types.

However, some previous work suggests that citizens may be more willing to punish poor behavior than reward good behavior: this is linked to theories of reference-dependent utility. This leads to the third part of H3:

H3c: Elected officials will lose more votes from poor performance than they gain from good performance.

Electoral accountability functions better when politicians are perceived to be responsible

In the Fearon model (1999), well-functioning elections will over time replace bad officials with good officials, while keeping good officials in office. However, the effect of selection on policy outcomes and public goods provision will be limited if citizens believe or know that the elected official has limited control over outcomes: this will lead citizens to be skeptical of the power of elections.

H4: Conditional on poor government performance, voters will perceive the effectiveness of threatening electoral sanctions to be higher when they have received information that the politician is actually to blame for poor performance, since the politician has full control over his/her actions but may not have full control over the bureaucrat's actions.

If this is true, it supports the hypothesis that voters assume limited oversight over bureaucrats. If it is not true, it could either be because (i) voters do not think that politicians respond to a threat because they do not believe it or do not place sufficient value on holding office / because elections are not sufficiently competitive, or (ii) because voters think that politicians do have sufficient control over bureaucrats.

Note: Hypotheses 2a and 3b rely on respondents' priors about who deserves blame/credit. Hypotheses 3a and 3b rely on their posterior beliefs once they have been told who actually deserves blame/credit. It is likely that these posterior beliefs are a combination of their prior and the information they received about who was actually responsible. This may complicate interpretation of the treatment effects.

Expectations mediate this relationship

Our second major claim is that the allocation of blame and credit will be affected by several factors. First, we argue that perceptions matter: a growing literature shows that performance relative to expectations matters more than absolute levels of performance. One way to raise expectations is through elections. Elections give citizens a sense of ownership over an elected official, and campaigns may involve making concrete promises against which citizens can measure outcomes. For this reason, elected officials may be blamed more frequently than appointed officials; this claim is in line with findings from Martin (2015).

Expectations can also be shaped by a number of other factors. In particular, Raffler (2015) has shown that appointed officials in Uganda's local government are more educated and generally have higher capacity than elected officials. This may increase citizens' expectations of appointed officials. However, while bureaucrats have the potential to do well, they may not face incentives to do so. In particular, bureaucrats vary in whether they are working in their home district, or whether they are posted to other parts of the country. A bureaucrat who is posted in his home district may face social pressures to do a good job and not embezzle funds; he may also simply have more information about what citizens in his jurisdiction need, or about how to provide goods efficiently. However, those posted in their own district may face stronger pressures to provide patronage or clientelism to their connections.

We also expect that citizens will have very low expectation of outsider bureaucrats who lack local knowledge and connections; they may also perceive these individuals as less honest. In this case the elected official may be able to control the subcounty more easily, and citizens will be more likely to blame such politicians for policy failings.

H5: In line with previous findings, citizens will have higher expectations of "insider" than of "outsider" bureaucrats.

H6: Voters are more likely to award the politician blame (credit) for poor (good) government performance when they have low expectations of the bureaucrat, i.e. when he/she is an outsider.

H7: Thus, all else equal, having an outsider bureaucrat results in an increased probability that poor (good) performance will result in electoral sanctioning (rewards).

Formal versus informal sanctions

A separate topic we plan to explore with this set of survey experiments are the role of formal and information sanctions in local accountability. In particular, we explore the use of formal and informal sanctions depending on whether the appointed official is a member of the local community or is an outsider with weaker ties to local social networks. This may matter if, in addition to proxying different expectations, certain types of bureaucrats are easier for citizens to influence directly.

The experience of India suggests that rotating bureaucrats helps accountability by insulating such officials from local social pressures and preventing the establishment of patronage networks. However, this process relies in part on a strong bureaucracy that can monitor bureaucrats from above. We argue that, without the relatively stronger top-down accountability structures in India, these gains may not be realized in Uganda due to the detrimental effects on bottom-up accountability.

If bureaucrats have local family ties and are embedded in local social networks they may have incentives to engage in patronage, but may also face social pressures to perform well. They may also have good knowledge of what local communities need, allowing them to serve the community better. In such a setting outsiders may have very different incentives. Besides lacking local knowledge and personal networks for patronage, they may be less susceptible to social pressures, and local communities may lack a way to hold them accountable. "Outsider" officials may also feel less moral responsibility towards the communities they serve. These differences will be exacerbated if elected officials have limited ability to control local bureaucrats' performance.

H8: Citizens will perceive informal social sanctions as less effective against bureaucrats who lack social ties with the community.

H9: Citizens will be less likely to use informal social sanctions as a means of holding bureaucrats accountable when bureaucrats lack local social ties. In such cases they will instead be more likely to ask higher-level officials for assistance instead.

H10: Informal sanctions (rewards) will be more likely towards the official who deserves blame (credit).

3 Political Context

Citizen perceptions of local governments in Uganda offer a good opportunity to test our theory for four reasons. First, governance is heavily decentralized. Government is divided into the national, district, subcounty and village governments. As the lowest formal unit of government, subcounties are mandated with the provision of a considerable number of public goods and services. Such a decentralized system lends itself well to study local accountability since (a) voters are plausibly more likely to be informed about and have opinions of relatively low levels of government and (b) it enables us to explore the trade-offs between formal and informal sanctioning mechanisms.

Second, officials at the subcounty are neatly divided into an elected political and an appointed bureaucratic camp. The political head of the subcounty is the LC3 Chairperson and the bureaucratic head the Subcounty Chief. The Subcounty Chief is completely separate from any customary/traditional leaders. The LC3 Chairperson presides over the elected council, with members rep-resenting different parishes. The Chairperson and other council members are elected every 5 years in partisan elections. There are no term limits. The Subcounty Chief is the administrative head of the subcounty and responsible for administering money, implementing the policies decided on by the council and providing technical advice. The Subcounty Chief oversees a small technical staff, typically consisting of 2-4 members, and is directly appointed by the administrative head of the next highest administrative and political unit, the district, i.e. the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The CAO, in turn, is appointed by a civil service commission of the central government.

Third, the legal mandates in Uganda reflects political theories of accountability: voters elect their local representatives, the council members, who are supposed to pass policy reflecting their preferences and in turn task and monitor their bureaucratic counterparts for their implementation. At the same time, this is starkly at odds with the reality, which often reflects a severe breakdown in the accountability relationship between elected politicians and their bureaucratic counterparts. Elected local politicians often have very low levels of formal education and practical experience in navi-gating the administrative system, compared to the appointed officials who are all college educated and often have spent many decades in the administrative system. Anecdotally, this imbalance creates severe problems for accountability. Finally, Uganda has a relatively open political climate, at least at the local level, in which also ordinary voters tend to speak their mind very openly.

4 Experimental Design

To test the theory introduced in Section 2 we conducted three sets of survey experiments with voters and local government officials in Uganda. The first was a set of survey experiments embedded in a larger survey of 800 elite citizens in nine Ugandan districts. Rather than using a representative sample, we focused instead on three groups of citizens who are likely to be politically active: agricultural market vendors, motorcycle taxi (boda-boda) drivers, and small shopkeepers. The second set of experiments was embedded into a survey of 2,497 local elected and appointed officials in 260 subcounties, distributed across 28 districts (out of a total of 111 districts) from all four regions of Uganda. About twelve officials per subcounty were interviewed, including the Sub-county Chief, the Sub-Accountant (a lower ranking appointed official), the LC3 Chairperson and the elected councilors who work with and under the LC3 Chairperson. Analysis has already been completed on the first two surveys.

This pre-analysis plan deals only with the third set of survey experiments, which was conducted using a cross-section of Ugandan voters from both rural and urban areas. These data have been collected, but the authors do not yet have access to the dataset. The structure of the survey was informed in part by the results of the first two surveys.

4.1 Survey Design

This section details the survey instrument, how it relates to our hypotheses, and what we expect to see if our hypotheses are correct. The basic design is similar to the previous experiments. The main survey experiment consisted of a vignette about the provision of roads in a hypothetical sub-county. The roads could either be good ("credit" condition) or bad ("blame" condition).

Figure 1, below, summarizes the treatment arms for the survey. Fifty percent of respondents saw vignettes and questions regarding the allocation of credit for good performance, while 50 percent saw questions regarding the allocation of blame for poor performance. Within each category, 50 percent of respondents saw questions in which the appointed bureaucrat, the subcounty chief (SCC), was from the same district (insider condition), and 50 percent a version in which the SCC was from another district (outsider condition). Each of these 4 treatment groups saw a vignette about the quality of roads in the subcounty, then responded with who they thought deserved the most blame or credit for the state of the roads.

Each of the 4 treatment arms was then split again: within each arm, 50 percent were told that the LC3 was actually the one who deserved the most credit (blame), and the other 50 percent were told that the SCC deserved credit (blame). Respondents in each of these 8 treatment arms then answer additional questions about the consequences of good or bad public goods provision for each official:

1. Respondents are given a set of 3 potential consequences of having good/bad roads. They are asked to pick the most (Q2) and least (Q3) likely of these to happen. For the Blame condition, these 3 consequences are randomly chosen from 5 possibilities.

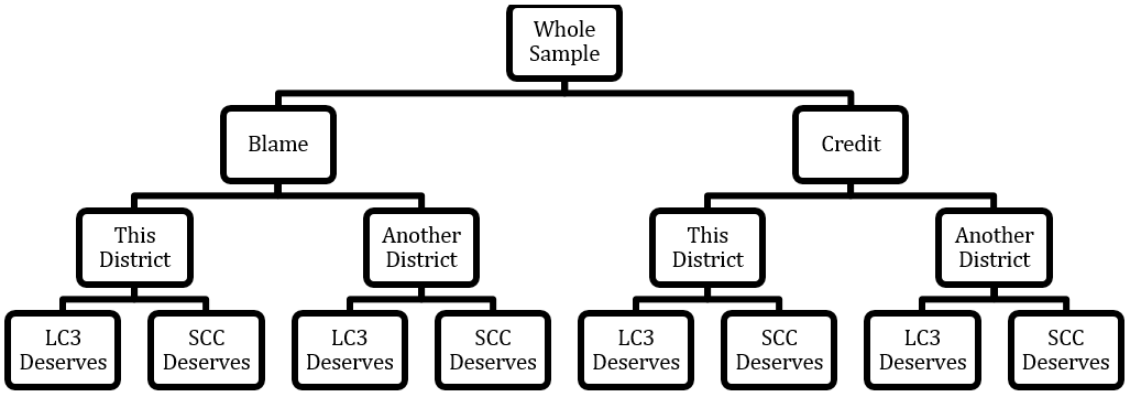
2. Respondents are then presented with 1 consequence that they are told happened. They are asked how likely it is that this will encourage good roads in the future (Q4). This measures perceived effectiveness of different options.

3. Respondents then see a set of 5 statements (there are 2 versions of these statements; assignment to a version is random) that ask for the respondent's perceptions about a particular government official: the LC3, an insider SCC, or an outsider SCC. Within each of the four

original treatment groups, 1/3 are asked about the LC3 and 2/3 about the appropriate SCC. This is Q5.

4. Finally, the respondent is presented with 1 of 3 possible questions about the ultimate consequences of the good/bad roads. This can be the electoral consequences for the LC3, the social consequences for the LC3, or the social consequences for the SCC. These questions repeat the previous treatments for blame/credit, insider/outsider, and who deserves credit or blame. This is Q6.

Figure 1: Treatment arms for citizens' survey



4.2 Sampling

The eligible population is Ugandan citizens over the age of 18. The survey experiments are part of a larger baseline survey conducted by Posner, Parkerson and Raffler for an impact assessment of a community monitoring intervention in the health sector. The survey is implemented in the catchment area of 377 government run health centers across 16 districts in Uganda. For each health center, the closest three villages within the same parish are selected. We then conduct a household listing exercise and randomly draw 40 households from the universe of households with children under 5 from each health center catchment area, rendering the total sample size for the main survey 15,080. The number of households drawn from each village is proportional to village population size. This sampling strategy was chosen in the interest of the larger field experiment.

Due to logistical considerations the survey experiment was only conducted in about half of the household surveys. In particular, it was only introduced later on once enumerators had mastered the main survey and gotten sufficiently fast to accommodate an additional module. We will test whether the characteristics of households in which the survey module was conducted differ from those where the module was not conducted.

4.3 Statistical Power

Calculations on the minimal detectable effect sizes will be conducted once we see the data and know the exact sample size per treatment group.

4.4 Assignment to Treatment

All treatment assignment is random. For each treatment arm, all participants were assigned a random number that was translated into a treatment category. Each treatment was randomized independently of all other treatments.

5 Dependent and Independent Variables

Dependent variables

ResponsibleP (prior). Indicator variable that takes the value 1 if a respondent assigns primary responsibility for the quality of service delivery to the politician, rather than the bureaucrat. In the case of poor government performance, this is the case when a respondent responds to the post-vignette question "In your opinion, who is more at fault that the roads are not maintained, the political head of the subcounty (LC3) or the bureaucratic head?" that the politician is more at fault. Similarly, in the case of good government performance this is the case when a respondent attributes credit for good roads primarily to the politician. The variable represents the respondent's prior belief about who is primarily responsible, before receiving any further information on the matter.

ResponsibleB (prior). Same as ResponsibleP, except takes the value 1 if a respondent assigns primary responsibility for the quality of service delivery to the bureaucrat, rather than the politician.

ExpectedVotes. "How do you think this situation will affect the next election, if at all? The LC3 Chair loses a lot of votes, the LC3 Chair loses some votes, there is no effect on voting, the LC3 Chair gains some votes, or the LC3 Chair gains a lot of votes." This will be coded as a 5-point Likert scale centered at zero. We will also use a binary measure which measures (for the blame condition) whether votes are lost, and (for the credit condition) whether votes are gained.

VoteEffectiveness. "Now, let's say that the citizens in that subcounty decided to threaten to vote against the LC3 in the next election. How likely is it that this will succeed in improving road maintenance?" Four-point scale from very unlikely to very likely.

Perceived quality of official (index). We asked respondents how likely they expected different type of government officials to engage in different behaviors related to different aspects of perceived quality of officials. Respondents were randomly assigned to be asked these questions about a hypothetical insider bureaucrat, outsider bureaucrat, or elected subcounty chairperson. Activities are: engaging in patronage (negative), working hard, having strong social ties within the community, having good information about the needs of the community, having control over what happens in the subcounty, employing effort to lobby for resources on behalf of the subcounty, feeling ashamed if not meeting citizens' needs, willingness to listen to citizens, embezzlement of funds if given the chance (negative), and being neutral and objective. Each question is measured on a 6-point agree/disagree scale, rescaled so that a high value implies a positive assessment in all cases. We will use these to construct an individual-level composite perception measure of a certain type of local government official.

InformalSanctions. In the blame condition, respondents will see a list of 3 (randomly drawn from a possible 5) ways citizens could try to hold officials accountable. They are then asked which of these is most likely, and which is least likely, giving us a rank-ordering of the three ("Rank variable"). These will be transformed into the following binary variables – note that this will comprise 3 observations per respondent.

1. MostLikely. Dummy for whether an action was ranked as most likely.

2. LeastLikely. Dummy for whether an action was ranked as least likely.

3. RankLikely. Variable that shows each action's rank ordering (1, 2, or 3) for how likely each action is.

SanctionEffective. For each of the options in InformalSanctions, a subset of respondents were asked how effective that strategy would be at "improving road maintenance". This is coded on a 6-point likelihood scale.

Independent variables

InfoResponsible. Indicator variable which takes the value 1 if an individual respondent was assigned to receive information that the hypothetical politicians was actually responsible for the quality of government performance.

Outsider. Indicator variable which takes the value 1 if an individual respondent was assigned to receive a vignette in which the bureaucrat is an outsider, i.e. comes from another district.

6 Analysis

All specifications except t-tests will be run with and without district fixed effects, enumerator fixed effects and a prespecified set of control variables. Control variables are: individual's level of education, age, gender, a wealth index, and an indicator variable that takes the value 1 if the respondent lives in an urban or peri-urban area. Since randomization took place at the individual level we are not clustering standard errors. Unless noted otherwise the sample is split conditional on whether government performance was good or bad in the vignette.

For ease of interpretation, our primary specification is always OLS. However, we will also run probit (for binary dependent variables) and ordered probit (for Likert scale questions) for robustness.

Below we present each of our hypotheses in turn, the specification we will estimate to test it and our expectations for the relevant parameters.

Specifications

H1: Blame and credit attribution is split. Rather than holding the elected official accountable for government performance, citizens will split accountability between the elected and appointed officials.

We predict that the percentage of respondents who blame or credit the bureaucrat for poor government performance in the absence of any information about who is actually responsible for the quality of services provided will be greater than 0.

$$ttestResponsibleB(prior) = 0$$

H2: Citizens will be more likely to punish poor government performance at the ballot box and to reward good performance when they perceive the elected official to bear more responsibility. To test this hypothesis, we will estimate the specification

$$ExpectedVote_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * ResponsibleP(prior)_i + \beta_2 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

where the subscript i indicates the individual respondent and all variables are defined as described in the previous section.

We expect, conditional on poor government performance, β_1 to be negative. Conditional on good government performance we expect β_1 to be positive. We need to control for $InfoResponsible$ since we asked about $ExpectedVote$ after the information treatment. The effect could plausibly be swamped by $InfoResponsible$ (if updating is perfect), thus we expect this to be a difficult test.

H3a: Conditional on poor government performance, the expected probability that a politician is voted out of office will be higher when voters have received information that the politician is actually to blame for poor performance, since this implies switching "out" a bad politician rather than an ineffective watchdog/principal.

$$ExpectedVote_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be negative. In the comparison group voters receive information that the bureaucrat is at fault. We do not have a pure control group.

H3b: Conditional on good government performance, the expected probability that a politician is voted out of office will be lower when voters have received information that the politician actually deserves credit for good performance, since that would imply switching "out" a good politician whom voters wish to keep.

$$ExpectedVote_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be positive. In the comparison group voters receive information that the bureaucrat deserves credit. We do not have a pure control group.

H3c: Elected officials will lose more votes from poor performance than they gain from good performance.

$$ttest : abs(ExpectedVote|Credit) = abs(ExpectedVote|Blame)$$

H4: Conditional on poor government performance, voters will perceive the effectiveness of threatening electoral sanctions to be higher when they have received information that the politician is actually to blame for poor performance, since the politician has full control over his/her actions but may not have full control over the bureaucrat's actions.

$$EffectivenessVote_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be positive. In the comparison group voters receive information that the bureaucrat is at fault. We do not have a pure control group.

H5: In line with previous findings, citizens will have higher expectations of "insider" than of "outsider" bureaucrats. This serves in part as a manipulation check for H6 and H7.

Our primary specification uses as dependent variable the constructed perception index $PerceivedQuality$. All regressions control for $InfoResponsible$ and blame vs. credit to improve precision since

$PerceivedQuality$ was measured after information treatment.

$$PerceivedQuality_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Outsider_i + \beta_2 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be negative. This specification will also be run with each component of the perceived quality index. However, we expect β_1 to be positive for the patronage component: insider bureaucrats will be perceived to be more prone to patronage, relative to outsiders.

We will also test how the LC3 compares and run this test as a simple t-test.

H6: Voters are more likely to credit or blame the politician for the quality of government performance when they have low expectations of the bureaucrat, i.e. when he/she is an outsider.

Percent attributing responsibility to P by insider/outsider treatment (t-test):

$$ResponsibleP(prior)_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Outsider_i + \gamma * X + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be positive.

H7: Thus, all else equal, having an outsider bureaucrat results in an increased probability that poor performance will result in electoral sanctioning and that good performance will result in electoral rewards.

$$ExpectedVotes_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Outsider_i + \beta_2 * Outsider_i * InfoResponsible_i + b3 * InfoResponsible_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

Expect: β_2 negative conditional on poor government performance, β_2 positive conditional on good government performance. We expect this to be a very tough test. H6 predicts that $Outsider$ status will affect blame, and H3a predicts that blame affects electoral outcomes. This implies that $Outsider$ status should directly affect electoral costs. However, it is possible that $InfoResponsible$ swamps any effect of $Outsider$, making it difficult to detect a treatment effect of $Outsider$ on $ExpectedVotes$. Thus, while we will test for such an effect, we do not consider a null result in this case to undermine our general theory.

H8: Citizens will perceive informal social sanctions as less effective against bureaucrats who lack social ties with the community.

$$SanctionEffective_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Outsider_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We will run this specification for the perceived effectiveness of imposing social sanctions on the Subcounty Chief.

We expect β_1 to be negative: sanctions (rewards) will be perceived as less effective against an outsider.

H9: Citizens will be less likely to use informal social sanctions as a means of holding bureaucrats accountable when bureaucrats lack local social ties. In such cases they will instead be more likely to ask higher-level officials for assistance instead. Note that the below specification only includes observations regarding whether bureaucratic social sanctions were most likely.

$$MostLikely_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Outsider_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be negative. Social sanctions (rewards) will be less likely when the bureaucrat is an outsider. We will also run this specification using the Rank variable.

H10: Informal sanctions (rewards) will be more likely against the official who deserves blame (credit). Note that the below specification only includes observations regarding whether bureaucratic or elected official social sanctions were most likely.

$$MostLikely_i = \alpha + \beta_1 * Info_i + \gamma * X_i + \epsilon_i$$

We expect β_1 to be positive for social sanctions (rewards) for the LC3, and negative for social sanctions (rewards) for the bureaucrat. We will also run this specification using the Rank variable.

7 Ethical Considerations

The study protocol has been approved by the IRB of Innovations for Poverty Action (Protocol #497), by the IRB of the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) (Protocol

ARC157) and by UNCST itself (Protocol # SS3559).

Informed consent. Respondents are informed of the study using Yale's informed consent template and provide informed consent to participate in the interview verbally. Respondents are informed that participation is voluntary and that they can choose not to respond to any question and to end the interview at any time. Respondents are also informed that participation in the study does not result in any direct benefits.

Data encryption. Survey data is collected through mobile phones by the enumerators in the field. No pictures or video recordings of study participants are taken. Survey data collected through the mobile phones is transferred daily to secure, password-protected computers in the IPA office, in Kampala. No records of the data is kept on the phones. Only authorized individuals have access to the data. All data collected for this study is encrypted using Boxcryptor.

No deception. No deception is used in the conduct of the study.

8 Timeline

September-December 2014: Data collection
July 2015: Registration of pre-analysis plan
July-August 2015: Data analysis

Appendix: Survey Instrument

Enumerator instructions

The blame module will give you several scenarios to ask the respondent about. The survey will automatically generate each scenario randomly and each time a few key words will be different. The scenario will change in terms of:

- *Whether the state of feeder roads which patients use to go to the hospital is good or bad*
- *Whether the subcounty chief is from the district where he serves or from another district*
- *Who actually deserves blame or credit for the poor/good conditions of the roads.*

In addition, respondents will be asked about

- *Their views of different accountability mechanisms and*
- *Their perceptions of different officials (LC3 Chairperson, a subcounty chief from the same district, a subcounty chief from another district).*

These will also vary every time you ask the survey.

Survey

Vignette 1
READ: Let me give you an imaginary example about a subcounty in a nearby district. In that subcounty, [the feeder roads are not being maintained and are in very bad condition - people cannot pass, and the sick cannot get to the health centre in time / In that trading centre, the roads are well maintained and people can get to town and the health centre easily.]

Both the LC3 chairperson and the subcounty chief have some power over roads. Both have been in office all term. The subcounty chief comes from [that same / another] district, the LC3 chairperson is from that same district. *[Note: the below only shows the questions given the blame condition (poor roads) where the SCC is from another district.]*

1a. IN YOUR OPINION, who is more at fault that the roads are not maintained – the subcounty chief who is from another district or the LC3 chairperson, who is from that same district?

1b. If indifferent: Is that slightly more the LC3 Chairperson, slightly more the SC chief, or truly indifferent?

Vignette 2
Now, say that the [LC3 Chairperson/SC Chief who is from another district/SC Chief who is from that same district] is actually at fault for the roads not being maintained, and that the community knows this.

There are a number of things that citizens could do to hold their officials accountable for poor work. I am going to read you some of them – in the example I just gave you, please tell me what you think citizens in the subcounty are most likely to do:

Blame condition: *[Each respondent sees a randomly selected 3 of the following 5 statements:]*
i. Citizens go to the LC5 Chairperson for help.
ii. Citizens go to the CAO for help.
iii. Citizens threaten to vote against the LC3 Chairperson in the next election.
iv. The LC3 Chairperson will be treated less well by the community, face personal repercussions, or face problems in his social life because of the bad roads.
v. The subcounty chief, who is from another district, will be treated less well by the community, face personal repercussions, or face problems in his social life because of the bad roads.

Credit condition: *[Each respondent sees all of the 3 following statements:]*
i. Give more votes to the LC3 Chairperson in the next election
ii. Respect the LC3 Chairperson more, so he will have better social relations with the community
iii. Respect the subcounty chief, who is from another district, more so that he will have better social relations with the community.

2. Which of these three things do you think is MOST likely to happen in the example I gave you?

3. Which of these do you think is LEAST likely to happen?

4. Now, let's say that the citizens in that subcounty decide to ..... [one of the above actions will be randomly chosen]. How likely is it that this will succeed in improving road maintenance – very unlikely, somewhat unlikely, somewhat likely, or very likely?

Now I will read you a number of statements about a [LC3 Chairperson/SC Chief who comes from another district/SC Chief who comes from that same district where he works]. We are not talking about this subcounty but in general. For each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree – strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, strongly disagree.

Treatment 1: [Half of sample sees the following 5 statements:]
5a . . . will use any opportunity to give jobs and development projects to his people, instead of thinking of the entire subcounty.
5b . . . will work hard to use limited resources efficiently.
5c . . . has strong social ties with people in the community.
5d . . . will have good information about what citizens in the subcounty need.
5e . . . has a lot of power over what happens in the subcounty.

Treatment 2: [Half of sample sees a different 5 statements:]
5f . . . will work hard to lobby the district for more resources to the subcounty.
5g . . . will feel ashamed if he or she does not work hard to meet citizens' needs.
5h . . . will listen to and respect the local citizens.
5i . . . would embezzle subcounty money if he had the chance.
5j . . . will be neutral and objective in how he allocates resources and deals with citizens.

Now, recall that in this example the roads in the subcounty are poor. While the LC3 Chairperson, who is from that same district, and the Subcounty Chief, who is from another, both have power over roads, in this case it is primarily the LC3 Chairperson who deserves blame for the quality of the roads. *[The treatment here will always match the treatment from earlier questions.]*

[Each respondent is randomly assigned to answer one of three questions:]

6a How do you think this situation will affect the next election, if at all? READ ANSWER OPTIONS OUT LOUD

1 The LC3 Chair loses a lot of votes.
2 The LC3 Chair loses some votes.
3 No effect on voting.
4 The LC3 Chair gains some votes.
5 The LC3 Chair gains a lot of votes.
22 Don't know

6b What do you think will happen to the LC3 Chairperson's relations with the community and his social life because of this situation? Will people treat him much worse, slightly worse, slightly better, much better, or about the same?

1 Much worse
2 Slightly worse
3 About the same
4 Slightly better
5 Much better
22 Don't know
88 Refused to answer

6c What do you think will happen to the Subcounty Chief's relations with the community and his social life because of this situation? Will people treat him much worse, slightly worse, slightly better, much better, or about the same?

1 Much worse
2 Slightly worse
3 About the same
4 Slightly better
5 Much better
22 Don't know
88 Refused to answer