THE EFFECTS OF COMPETITIVE AND UNCOMPETITIVE CLIENTELISM ON
GENERALIZED TRUST IN LEBANON

by

PIERRE NAOUFAL

(Under the direction of Markus M.L. Crepaz)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the effects of competitive and uncompetitive clientelism on generalized trust in the country of Lebanon. Clientelism, or the exchange of votes for patronage, is common practice in Lebanon and is both uncompetitive and competitive: while some clients are ruled by a single uncontested patron that sets the price of a vote, others are ruled by competing political patrons and as a result receive generous rewards for their votes. I argue that while uncompetitive clientelism harms generalized trust because clients must compete against one another through insincere public sycophancy for their political leaders and are only seldomly rewarded, competitive clientelism boosts generalized trust as it enables clients to receive generous rewards with no need for insincere public sycophancy. I contend that the mechanism connecting different types of clientelism to generalized trust is a perception of fairness of access to patronage. Under uncompetitive clientelism, the distribution of patronage is perceived as unfair since the most insincere of clients usually receive the limited patronage distributed. On the other hand, competitive clientelism instills a perception of fair distribution of patronage. To test my argument, I rely on both observational data collected in Lebanon in 2013 and 2018 as well as experimental data collected through an online survey experiment that I implement in Lebanon in April and May of 2023. Only the observational portion of my design supports my argument. The experimental

data intended to test the causal mechanism of perception of fairness of distribution of patronage

does not support my argument. I speculate on why this might be in the concluding chapter.

INDEX WORDS: generalized trust, clientelism, Lebanon, elections, corruption

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Dedication

Recognizing the effect of the Olson cycle transformed my worldview. This dissertation is dedicated to those working to solve this conundrum.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Most observers would agree that strong inter-citizen trust is a desirable state. It is widely accepted that social trust leads to positive views of democratic institutions and a higher inclination to participate in civic life. People who are more trusting of others are also more tolerant of minorities. They are also more optimistic of their abilities to control the course of their lives. On a societal level, trust leads to economic growth, satisfactory institutional performance and lower levels of crime and corruption. And in Robert Putnam's (1993) famous words, trust is a vital component in "making democracy work". In other words, "healthy" societies cannot function without trust. For all those reasons it is crucial to understand the conditions under which trust is created and harmed.

But there is considerable disagreement on the origins of generalized trust or the extent to which others in general can be trusted. Some contend that trust emerges from cultural traits, where specific cultural behaviors lead to trusting citizens. Others believe political institutions to be primarily responsible for the creation of generalized trust. Democratic and impartial institutions establish a context where trusting a stranger is a relatively safe option. These two explanations, among others, represent opposite views. The former sees trust as created in a bottom-up process whereas the latter considers trust to be determined by top-down forces. In addition, individual-level variables can influence a person's propensity to trust others. Individuals with higher earnings and education tend to exhibit, on average, higher levels of trust (Uslaner, 2002).

In this dissertation I present a new perspective to understand the creation and destruction of generalized trust, one that is concerned with the effects exerted by the political dynamics of

clientelism, i.e. the exchange of votes for patronage. I examine the case of Lebanon, a dysfunctional democracy with widespread electoral corruption, as clientelism and bribing for political support are routine in Lebanese politics. I argue that Lebanese clients living under a single political patron (or allied patrons) tend to be generally less trusting of others because they find themselves forced to compete extensively against one another through dishonest means for access to the limited amount of patronage distributed. On the other hand, Lebanese clients living in politically competitive districts tend to be more trusting of others as they face much less of a need to compete against one another through dishonest means since political patronage is frequent and generous, but also because they perceive the distribution of patronage to be fairer. The driving variable in my causal chain is therefore the number of patrons vying for political power. It dictates the extent of inter-client competition which in turn affects generalized trust in the population at large.

To construct my argument, I rely on Corstange's (2012, 2016, 2018) seminal works on clientelism in Lebanon. However, even though Corstange's work is abundantly cited in this dissertation, my argument differs in one important aspect. Whereas Corstange (2012, 2016, 2018) examines the prevalence of clientelism in Lebanon, its effects on political participation, and the different amounts of patronage received in competitive and uncompetitive contexts, I investigate the effect of Lebanese clientelism on generalized trust. Specifically, I examine the different effects exerted by competitive and uncompetitive clientelism on generalized trust.

Corstange (2016) demonstrates that Lebanese political patrons facing no competition have a free hand in determining the cost at which they can bribe their constituents. They are guaranteed reelection as dissatisfied voters have no alternative to choose from and only receive little to no rewards for their votes. But most importantly for the argument I present in this dissertation,

Corstange (2016) also shows that there is widespread competition, specifically dishonest competition, for patronage between clients living under the hegemony of a single political party: in order to stand out from their peers, clients living in uncompetitive political contexts display insincere public affection through iconographic images of their leaders in the sole aim of accessing the scant benefits distributed. When the receipt of patronage is tied to insincerity, it alters the perception of the fairness of access to resources, which in turn exerts a negative impact on generalized trust.

Alternatively, when political patrons are not guaranteed reelection because of political competition, they are forced to outbribe their political rivals. The result is a much more content constituent who sees less of a need to compete with fellow clients for political patronage. I argue that this far more generous distribution of patronage does not harm generalized trust as clients have no need to resort to dishonest and insincere means to access benefits. I even go further by suggesting that generalized trust is reinforced in politically competitive contexts instead of simply remaining unaffected as clients perceive patronage to be distributed more fairly, void of dishonesty. The perception of the fair/unfair distribution of resources is a strong determinant of generalized trust, one that is examined in the literature (see chapter 3).

The argument I present differs from the cultural and institutional approaches to generalized trust. I rely here on the primordial desire of participants to access resources such as monetary rewards and employment among many other things, and the competition it possibly entails. When access to these resources is not guaranteed or scant, citizens view one another as a threat. The result is competition and most importantly, distrust. In situations where access to political patronage is both virtually guaranteed and generous, inter-citizen competition is no longer necessary. The result is an environment where generalized trust grows. This new paradigm does

not necessarily refute a cultural or institutional approach. It simply demonstrates that there exists yet another determining factor of generalized trust.

In addition to presenting an argument detached from cultural and institutional variables, this dissertation contributes to the literature in three ways. First, the link between clientelism and trust is understudied in the literature. Even though Putnam (1993) is one of the first to note clientelism's detrimental effects on generalized trust, and others have speculated on the negative role it plays in fostering trusting behavior, the link between the two is never empirically tested. I plan to investigate the relationship between different types of clientelism and generalized trust in Lebanon through a variety of methods.

Second, attention to potential sources of generalized trust is primarily concentrated in democratic contexts. Our understanding of how generalized trust grows in developing countries is therefore lacking (Jamal, 2007). Gaining knowledge of trust in developing settings is important for the following reasons: examining trust only in democratic contexts limits our ability to disentangle possible non-democratic sources of trust, if any even exist. Trust and democracy are intrinsically linked and there are strong theoretical reasons to believe they influence one another, making it difficult to pinpoint the direction of causality. When democracy is not a causal variable of interest, it becomes useful to examine trust in cases where democratic forces, particularly strong liberal safeguards, play a very limited role. Lebanon is a perfect example.

Third, if empirical results support my argument and various types of clientelism do affect generalized trust in different ways, the relationship between clientelism and trust is much more nuanced than what is stated in the literature. Clientelism is not always determinantal to trust. What some have called "competitive clientelism" (Lust, 2009) can be a generator of trust. Nevertheless, a word of caution is warranted here.

I am in no means suggesting that having competition between patrons in an environment rife with clientelism is as beneficial to trust as would be in a well-functioning democracy. Clientelism is still a form of corruption. No matter how beneficial to clients, clientelism is still a one-on-one exchange between a patron and his client and falls short of commitment to public good through programmatic politics. Even though inter-patron competition generates trust, it does so only for those who are already part of the clientelist network. There will always be some who are left out of clientelist exchanges. On the other hand, the rule of law that permeates democracies typically affect the entire population.

This dissertation is organized as follows: I review the literature, present my argument, build the proper context to describe the different types of clientelisms, describe my method followed by results and finally discuss conclusions and implications.

In chapter two, I review the literature on trust to establish that it is in fact associated with numerous desirable social and political outcomes, but also to show that the relationship between clientelism and trust is not well documented. In chapter three, I present my theoretical argument. I elaborate on my theoretical mechanism in explaining how competition between patrons affects inter-client competition for access to patronage which in turn affects generalized trust through the alteration of the perception of fair/unfair access to resources. In chapter four, "Between Democracy and the Market", I compare the difference between the effects of democracy on trust on the one hand, and clientelism on trust on the other. Even though in democracies and under competitive clientelism citizens and clients are usually satisfied with the services they receive, respectively, the outcomes on trust and public good differ significantly. I then move in chapter five to set the context and describe the various types of clientelism in the country of Lebanon.

I depend on a variety of methods to test my argument, from observational and experimental data, to interviewing a highly ranked Lebanese politician[1]. In Chapter six, I describe the methods and present results in chapter seven. First, I draw on observational World Value Survey (WVS hereafter) data from the sixth and seventh waves collected in 2013 and 2018 in Lebanon, providing me with observations from a year where no parliamentary elections are held (elections were cancelled in 2013 due to high political tensions) and with data collected right after the competitive 2018 parliamentary elections. I argue and demonstrate (by reviewing the literature and with an in-depth interview with a Lebanese political figure) that the distribution of patronage intensifies during election years. This within-country variation with data from a year with competitive elections and without elections, provides me with the ability to test the effect of the intensification of distribution of patronage during an election year as opposed to an absence of elections. The within country design also allows me to attenuate the effect of several socio-economic and cultural variables.

During the 2009 parliamentary election, Lebanese Christian clients were handsomely rewarded for their votes because of competition between Christian political elites. This was not the case for Lebanese Sunnis and to some extent Shiites since the former are ruled by a single political party and the latter by two closely colluding parties[2]. The political setting in Lebanon in 2018 is very similar to what is described for 2009.

The WVS data analysis supports my argument by revealing that the more Lebanese Christians believe clientelism to be prevalent in 2018 (and by extension partake in it) the more they tend to be trusting of others, on average, as opposed to Lebanese Christians who do not believe

[1] On October 28th, 2023, I interviewed a Lebanese politician whose name I keep anonymous per UGA IRB guidelines. I obtained IRB approval to interview Lebanese politicians with the condition of anonymity.
[2] I explain the complex Shiite political dynamic in Lebanon in chapter 5.

clientelism to be very common. On the other hand, the data shows that Lebanese Sunni and Shiite exhibit significantly lower levels of generalized trust in both 2013 and 2018 the more they believe clientelism to be prevalent. In other words, the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism is negative for all Lebanese ethnic groups, except for Christians during the year 2018 as they benefit from widely distributed patronage with no need for dishonest behavior.

These results are a first step in indicating that cultural and institutional factors play no role in the observed relationship. On top of the added cultural controls within the statistical model I use, the fact that trust varies across time and for a same ethnic group (Lebanese Christians) should discredit ethno-cultural factors. Furthermore, since all Lebanese ethnic communities live under the same political system and these do not change from 2013 to 2018, political institutions cannot be responsible for the differences observed in levels trust.

The WVS results could, however, be subject to the classical pitfalls of observational data, namely confounding factors, and reverse causality. I therefore complement my WVS analysis with an online survey experiment administered in Lebanon in April and May of 2023, as to isolate the causal variable of inter-client competition.

On top of establishing a direct causal link, the survey experiment allows me to test my theoretical mechanism of inter-client competition's effects on generalized trust. I prime respondents with one of three stories: one that asks participants to imagine themselves competing against their neighbors for scarce patronage by displaying iconographic images of their leaders and where patronage is distributed to some but not others; another story that depicts a situation where patronage is abundant and competition unnecessary; and a third unrelated story describing varieties of grass found in Brazil (to serve as the control group).

Unlike results from the observational portion of the dissertation, experimental results do not support my argument. Whereas I hypothesize that respondents exposed to the story of inter-client competition should be less trusting as compared to the control group and respondents exposed to the story of no inter-client competition should be more trusting as compared to the control group, the levels of generalized trust in all three groups are statistically indistinguishable.

I also interview a prominent Lebanese politician, and whose name I keep anonymous, to confirm if clientelist exchanges intensify particularly during election years. There is mixed evidence in the literature concerning this question. Even though most of the evidence points to an intensification of bribes during parliamentary election years in Lebanon, I seek to confirm this trend with firsthand testimony from the interview as my argument relies extensively on this assumption. I find through my interview that there is proof pointing to an intensification of clientelist exchanges during parliamentary election years in Lebanon.

I discuss conclusions and implications in chapter eight. My findings partially support the claim that generalized trust is influenced by inter-client competition, at least in the Lebanese case. There are a few reasons as to why the experimental portion of my dissertation does not support my argument. First, it might be that the theoretical mechanism connecting different types of clientelism and generalized trust is too complex to capture through a prompt read in a survey experiment. In other words, simply reading a paragraph describing the variations of uncompetitive and competitive clientelisms might not be sufficient to illicit a feeling of unfair/fair perception of distribution of patronage. Experiments can also be underpowering by affecting respondents but not enough to attain level of statistical significance.

A second and more problematic situation for my argument is the possibility that different types of clientelism have no varying effects on generalized trust. Results from the observational portion

of the dissertation with WVS data could be affected by a confounding variable that I have missed in my analysis. I conclude by assuming my argument is in fact valid, but my experimental method flawed and consider relevant implications. If the manner through which patronage is distributed does affect generalized trust, more attention has to be given to the effects of allocation of resources on generalized trust.

In the next chapter, I introduce the literature on which I construct my argument.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is fourfold. First, I demonstrate why trust is vital for societies to function as they were intended to. Trust helps lubricate social interactions, overcome the collective action problem, and lead to effective democratic governance. I also show that generalized trust, as opposed to other types of trust, is especially crucial. Second, I review the various sources of generalized trust presented in the literature. Apart from a few exceptions, the consensus seems to be a that trust is created by either cultural or institutional factors. Third, I look at what is said about the possible varieties of clientelism and the different ways through which it is examined. And fourth, by covering the literature, I show that the empirical relationship between clientelism and generalized trust is seldom examined, but also that the effect of access to resources and competition on generalized trust is never considered.

Why Generalized Trust Matters

Trust is usually considered as part of the wider concept of social capital, and widely accepted today as referring to dense social networks, norms of reciprocity, and generalized trust (Hooghe and Stolle Ed., 2003). Putnam's (1993) work on social capital in Italy was a catalyst in directing scholarly attention to the concept, but also to trust in particular. Social capital has even gone beyond academic circles as it even caught the attention of policy makers. The British government, for example, explicitly made civic education in schools a priority under the direction of PM Blair, and other governments are following suit (Hooghe and Stolle Ed., 2003).

I focus in this dissertation on generalized trust specifically, because there is extensive evidence in the literature that it is social capital's most vital component. After Putnam's (1993)

seminal work, a long list of scholars have written about the varieties as well as the different sources of trust (Uslaner, 2002; Levi, 1998; Putnam, 1993; Crepaz, 2008; Rothstein, 2000; Offe, 1999; Muller and Seligson, 1994; Knack, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995; Newton, 1999; Stolle, 2000, 2002). In comparison, networks of associations and norms of reciprocity have rarely been examined in isolation. But what makes trust, and particularly generalized trust, so important?

First and foremost, trust is essential for overcoming collective action problems. Olson (1965) first described the difficulty in getting a group of seemingly rational, self-interested individuals in collaborating to produce a public or common good, even when individual interests within the group align. Collective action poses a problem because of the possibility of free riding: It is in every actor's best interest within the group to abstain from working towards contributing to the provision of the common good and instead profit or "free ride" from others' efforts. One can find numerous examples of public goods that are impossible to provide without first overcoming dilemmas of collective action. Paved roads, for example, cannot be supplied without everyone's participation through taxes; worker unions cannot exist without a collaboration to strike unanimously; and political institutions that ensure safety and the rule of law are not achievable without everyone's participation.

This is where social capital lends a much-needed hand, as it plays a crucial role in overcoming the collective action problem according to many (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993; Boix and Posner, 1998; Brehm and Rahn, 1997). But even more so, it is trust in particular that allows for a "logic of reciprocity" (Kahan, 2003). Individuals who have faith others will contribute to the provision of the public good instead of free riding are incentivized to contribute themselves, snowballing into the successful provision of public goods.

Janssen (2008) lends further support to this assertion by experimentally demonstrating through a series of prisoner's dilemma games that trust is the crucial variable for cooperation. The prisoner's dilemma is extensively used by scholars to depict a classical example of a collective action problem where two previously partnered but now imprisoned collaborators are interrogated separately and given the choice to denounce their counterpart in exchange for freedom. The result is always mutual denunciation (or defection from collaborating with partner), with the worst possible outcome for both participants. Trust, Janssen (2008) finds, is often the missing link that helps overcome the free rider problem faced by participants in a prisoner's dilemma scenario.

As Alexis de Tocqueville was first to point out, the state is limited in its ability to organize collective action (Cohen and Rogers, 1995; Habermas, 1996). State institutions operate through laws backed by power. But once again, "[…] laws and sanctions are limited as means of organizing collective action" (Warren Ed., 1999, p.14). Laws can only cover and regulate a limited number of interactions between people. Collective action therefore rests on the goodwill of participants. Tocqueville also made it clear that trust cannot be created by the state and its institutions. Trust comes instead from civil society, characterized by vigorous associational life, a theme reintroduced by Putnam (1993).

Putnam (1993) recognizes the importance of first overcoming collective action problems before "making democracy work". While making use of a natural Italian experiment in the form of regional decentralization in 1970, he finds through rigorous quantitative and qualitative empirical testing that northern Italian institutions perform far better than their southern counterparts. Regional cabinet stability, budget promptness, number of day care centers, bureaucratic responsiveness, housing and urban development, among other things, perform far more adequately in Italy's northern regions. The answer, per Putnam (1993), is not in the quality

of institutions or even in economic development. Rather, institutional performance is due to a variable unrelated to either initial institutional design or wealth. Northern Italian regions are characterized by what he calls a civic community which consists of norms of reciprocity, dense networks of associations and, most importantly, trust. The ultimate reason behind the north's robust social capital is a culture of voluntary membership in associations. Northern Italians participate in all types of associations, far more than do distrustful and isolated southern Italians.

However, it is no coincidence that Putnam's (1993) sixth and final chapter looking to connect social capital with effective institutional performance begins with a section labelled "dilemmas of collective action" (Putnam 1993, p.163). The performance of institutions, including regional governments, depends on how citizens overcome the free rider problem. It might be true that in today's developed countries there exists a variety of enforcing institutions whose role is to punish defectors to ensure the provision of public goods. But the question becomes: why do these institutions succeed in some contexts and not in others in the first place? Institutions do not create themselves and for those reasons cannot be the initial cause of the observed difference in institutional performance. This is where, according to Putnam (1993), trust and cooperation come into play.

Putnam (1993) explicitly points to the importance played by social trust within the larger concept of social capital, as the key to Northern Italy's robust institutional performance. Institutions cannot enforce every aspect of social, economic, and even political interactions. Cooperation is necessary between different branches of government, managers, workers, and even rival political parties, and only trusting actors can collaborate effectively. Therefore, "Trust is an essential component of social capital" (Putnam, 1993, 170).

Putnam (1993) uses the terms trust and social trust interchangeably. By social trust, he means "…a more impersonal or indirect form of trust…" (Putnam 1993, p.171). Social trust is therefore different from "thick trust", the ability to trust individuals of intimate familiarity. Social trust is the willingness to trust strangers of whom little is known. It is trust in society at large, hence the term "social" trust. Evidently, social trust is what is needed for country-level cooperation, or at least regional cooperation in Putnam's (1993) case, to attain the intended institutional performance.

If trust is a must to overcome collective action problems and ensure adequate institutional performance, the literature identifies numerous additional reasons why trust is indispensable for a variety of desirable socio-economic outcomes. From an economic perspective, trust reduces transaction costs as it dampens the risks associated with economic exchanges (Fukuyama, 1995; Granovetter, 1992; McAllister, 1995; Michalos, 1990; Zucker, 1986). Fukuyama (1995), for example, considers that without trust economic growth is at best weak. Cultural characteristics and specifically trust is essential for the existence of large corporations that drive economic prosperity. Even though modern economic success rests on institutions in the form of contracts or laws such as the respect of property rights, these institutions themselves are created by the social fabric of trust. Like Putnam (1993), Fukuyama (1995) points to the importance of institutions in lubricating social interactions and especially economic ones, but also to how institutions are not enough to sustain complex industrial economies. Arrow goes as far as to label trust a commodity that has a "… real, practical, economic value" (Arrow, 1974, p.23).

Knack and Keefer (1997) agree that trust and economic growth are theoretically connected. The dilemma frequently faced by agents engaged in today's complex economic activities is that they have to often "[…] rely on the future actions of other" (Knack and Keefer, 1997, p.17). In the

absence of formal and enforceable contracts, only trusting actors can rely on one another for optimum, long term economic growth. However Knack and Keefer (1997) go further in their analysis by empirically testing the relationship between various components of social capital and economic growth across a set of twenty-nine market economies. Their findings are revealing especially for the role played by trust in economic growth as opposed to social capital in general.

Utilizing data from the World Value Survey, they observe a robust statistical relationship between trust and civic engagement, the latter measured through a civic index constructed with questions such as, among others, "to what extent is it justifiable to cheat on taxes if given a chance" or "claim government benefits not entitled to". Respondents who believe that generally speaking, most people can be trusted are also significantly more likely to view "uncivic" behavior as unjustifiable (Crepaz et al., 2014). That is, they are most often in favor of collective action behavior that contributes to public goods such as tax compliance. Furthermore, trust and civic norms are both significantly related to economic prosperity, the latter measured through national levels and equalness of income. But most interestingly, membership in associations is not related to economic growth. It appears that of the three components of social capital, membership in associations does nothing for economic growth. These results confirm that not all components of social capital affect economic growth equally, and that trust plays a particularly important role (Knack and Keefer, 1997).

Uslaner (1999) explicitly calls trust the "[…] most essential part […] of social capital" (In Warren eds. 1999, p. 122). Criticizing Putnam (1993), he considers social capital, and particularly generalized trust, to reflect a system of moral values. Trust is not part of social capital but is produced by it. Trust, per Uslaner (Warren, Eds., 1999), leads people to be more tolerant of others and willing to compromise. Like Putnam (1993), however, Uslaner (Warren, Eds., 1999)

acknowledges that it is generalized trust as opposed to particularized trust, or trust in close relatives and kin, that matters. For cooperation to emerge on a large nation-wide scale, trust must be extended to individuals outside of one's clan. As Banfield (1958) describes, inhabitants of Montegrano in Sicily are trapped in poverty because they only trust their own. An environment of hostility and mistrust is by no means favorable for economic growth.

On top of working to overcome collective action problems, generalized trusters are more likely to vote, work to solve community issues, give to charity, and be willing to serve on a jury (Warren, Eds., 1999). Particularized trust, on the other hand, as Uslaner indicates (Warren, Eds., 1999), operates in very different ways. Particularized trusters do not participate in civic life as much as their generalized trusting counterparts, but rather prefer to turn to their own clan and shut down from public life. Particularized trusters do sometimes participate in associations; however, ones that are based on the rejection of foreignness and the reinforcement of in-group ideals.

If generalized trust is required to overcome collective action problems and make democracy work, among other things, it also exhibits advantageous individual-level attributes. First, trust correlates with higher tolerance vis à vis people who come from ethnically different backgrounds (Rothstein, 2013), which in turn helps promote inter-ethnic cooperation. Tolerance also facilitates life in diverse societies (Hooghe and Stolle Eds., 2003, p.4), especially in countries with considerable influx of immigrants. Second, trust is significantly correlated with being optimistic in having control over one's life (Delhey and Newton, 2003; Uslaner, 2002).

To summarize, generalized trust helps overcome the collective action problem which is a major impediment to the supply of all types of collective goods, including democracy. It also leads to economic growth and tolerance. All these variables are intrinsically linked and generalized trust

appears to be connected to all of them. Accordingly, for all these reasons, generalized trust is the focus of this dissertation.

Sources of Generalized Trust

If generalized trust is as important as demonstrated above, the next question automatically becomes: How is it created? If scholars are unanimous in their views on the importance of trust, the same cannot be said of their opinions of how it is generated. I identify two main perspectives for sources of generalized trust in the literature. With a few exceptions, most believe trust to be fostered by either cultural or institutional factors.

Putnam (1993) was the first to bring trust back to the forefront of the debate, and his views as to where trust emerges are cultural in nature. It appears that the components of social capital obey a form of causal order, where "social trust in complex modern settings can arise from two related sources- norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (Putnam 1993, p.171). More specifically, it is associations characterized by horizontal or egalitarian internal structures, as opposed to vertical social networks that rely on hierarchy and dependence, that make up the networks of engagement and norms of reciprocity so vital for the generation of social trust. A mechanism of diffusion exists for Putnam (1993): the inter-personal trust that is created between members of associations "spills over" into society at large and becomes in turn social or generalized trust. Associations are creators of social capital because of their "socialization effect [and] function as learning schools for democracy" (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003, pp.22-23).

The origins of trust in this account are evidently cultural, where culture is defined as behaviors and values. Echoing what Tocqueville said more than a century ago, Putnam (1993) ultimately argues that it is a culture of voluntary association that is the cause of the disparity observed in institutional performance between Italian regions.

But Putnam's (1993) answer as to why the North and South are so culturally divergent remains incomplete as is pointed out by some (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003). Whereas in the North, voluntary associations started to multiply after the Dark Ages, feudalism and its hierarchical mode of interdependence remained a constant feature of the Italian South for centuries to come. In Putnam's (1993) view, historical circumstances determine which path a society takes. The story he describes seems to be determined only by luck since the difference cannot be pinpointed to a specific variable. "Path dependence can produce durable differences in performance between two societies, even when the formal institutions, resources, relative prices, and individual preferences in the two are similar" (Putnam 1993, p.179). There is some degree of fatalism in Putnam's (1993) account. The path towards social capital is determined in advance and nothing can be done to alter its course [In his later work, however, (Putnam 2000) claims that even though social capital and more specifically trust are shaped by historical forces outside of our control, there are steps that can be taken by governments].

Nevertheless, to prove that it is culture as opposed to institutions or economic development that makes democracy work in Northern Italy, Putnam (1993) looks to neutralize the latter two variables as plausible causes. Political institutions are ruled out by his method of most similar systems design (Przeworski and Teune, 1970; Lijphart, 1971): institutions are identical across all Italian regions in 1970 when the policy of decentralization is implemented and as a result cannot be the source of observed difference in performance. To eliminate economic development as a possible cause, Putnam (1993, pp.152-159) relies on pairs of multiple regressions to compare the effects of civics on economics and vice versa in the periods 1900s to 1980s across various Italian regions. He finds that civics predicts economics (measured through industrial share of workforce and infant mortality), but that economics has no effect on civics.

Beyond Putnam (1993), there is confirmation in the literature that cultural factors are important determinants of generalized trust. Berggren and Jordahl (2006) and Zak and Knack (2001) all find that hierarchically organized religions such as Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and Islam are negatively related to generalized trust, while Uslaner (2002), Bjørnskov (2007), Inglehart and Baker (2000), and Glaeser et al. (2000) detect a positive association between Protestantism and generalized trust. The theoretical mechanism advanced is familiar: hierarchically structured organizations cannot create generalized trust.

Traunmüller's (2011) work lends additional support to the role played by culture, and more specifically, to Protestantism's social structure on generalized trust. Through his analysis of 97 small-scale German regions, he finds a doubly positive effect of Protestantism on generalized trust: Not only are Protestants more trusting, but a Protestant context (inhabited by a Protestant majority) is also correlated with higher rates of generalized trust, regardless of an individual's religious affiliation. In other words, German Catholics living in predominantly Protestant regions exhibit higher levels of generalized trust compared to their Catholic counterparts living in predominantly Catholic regions. Traunmüller's (2011) results are noteworthy since they explicitly separate the individual and contextual effects of religion on trust. The finding that a predominantly German Protestant region scores higher on trust, even for non-protestants, indicates that it is not necessarily the values instilled by Protestantism that generate trust, but the social structure of Protestantism that affects the greater society in which it is embedded. It confirms Putnam's (1993) initial argument that "social ties embodied in religious communities are at least as important as religious beliefs" (Putnam, 2000, p67).

If Protestantism helps cultivate generalized trust because of its horizontal and egalitarian social structure, Ekelund et al. (2002) present yet another reason as to why Protestantism and trust

might be connected (Bjornskøv, 2007). The spread of the reformation throughout western Europe depended on high levels of social mobility in part because of a decline of Feudalism and a rise in entrepreneurialism. Social mobility, in turn, broke the Catholic church's monopoly on "selling salvation". "[…] Part of the effect of Protestantism [on trust] might simply be an extremely long run effect of reduced social distance" (Bjornskøv, 2007). This suggests that on top of being a religious denomination whose organizations are horizontally structured, Protestantism is the embodiment of societies with high rates of social mobility with reduced perception of socio-economic distance between citizens. And as Bjornskøv (2007, p.5) argues, "anything that reduces the distance between the citizens of a country could be expected to lead to more trust".

Whereas religious organizations are associated with prevailing cultures of diverse associational structures, there is also evidence in the literature that a culture of associational life is connected to generalized trust as advanced by Putnam (1993) and Tocqueville before him. Using data from Sweden and Germany, Stolle (2001) finds a robust correlation between joining associations and generalized trust, just as Putnam (1993) had observed in northern Italy. Nevertheless, Stolle (2001) goes further in her analysis in the aim of circumventing the problem of self-selection bias when evaluating the effect of voluntary associations on trust. Put differently, there could be a case of reverse causality where people who are already more trusting are also more likely to join associations. Simple correlations between membership in associations and generalized trust at single time points are inadequate tools to confirm the direction of causality. For those reasons, Stolle (2002) runs a time series analysis and compares individuals who have just recently joined associations with those that are long-time established members in the aim of testing both directions of causality: The effect of joining associations on trust, but also, the effect of trust on joining associations. She finds evidence supporting both versions. On average, people

who join associations exhibit significantly higher rates of generalized trust, but associational life also contributes to an increase in members' generalized trust.

Brehm and Rahn (1997) reach similar conclusions but with a caveat. They start with the theoretical assumption that civic engagement and generalized trust affect one another reciprocally. Participation in civic associations produces more trust, but trusting people are also more likely to join voluntary associations. Utilizing time series data from the General Social Survey spanning from 1975 to 1994, Brehm and Rahn (1997) observe a statistically positive relationship between generalized trust and civic engagement in both directions of causality. That is, civic engagement positively affects trust, but the reverse is also true. Nevertheless, the relationship is asymmetric. The effect of civic engagement on trust is considerably stronger (coefficient size) as compared to the effect of generalized trust on civic engagement. Brehm and Rahn's (1997) findings lend support to Putnam's (1993) version of events where social trust is generated by associational life.

Although the cultural approach treats generalized trust as a phenomenon created from a bottom-up process, the institutional view considers trust to be primarily generated from the top down, or through state institutions. Tarrow (1996), for example, disagrees with Putnam (1993) in that social capital, let alone trust, is created by societal forces. State institutions that operated in the different Italian regions, he contends, must have played a direct role in the creation or destruction of social capital, where culture was itself shaped by administrative forces. Levi (1996) criticizes Putnam (1993) on the same grounds, claiming that satisfactory policy performance can be a source of trust, whereas Skocpol et al. (2000) argue that many of the voluntary organizations that Putnam (1993) praises in his work depend on state support.

There is no shortage of works concerning the effects of political institutions on generalized trust (Levi, 1998; Rothstein, 1998, 2000). Rothstein (1998) goes as far as to claim that "just

institutions matter" for trust. With Scandinavian welfare states as proof, Rothstein (1998) contends that generous and rigorous redistribution of wealth leads to a satisfied citizenry that has many reasons to be trusting and that a culture of association is not the cause of trust. The same reasoning is presented by Letki (2003) who finds that social trust (or generalized trust as she measures it) owes nothing to civil society but rather the perception of how well democratic institutions are performing.

Scandinavian countries are particularly interesting as they present a puzzle (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005). The extensive contact people have with state institutions when seeking unemployment insurance, child and elderly care, health care, among many other things, might replace and thus hinder the role of "voluntary reciprocity" (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005, p.340) and destroy social solidarity in the process (Boli 1991; Zetterberg and Ljungberg 1997). This concern is also echoed by Wolfe (1989) for whom a welfare state that is too developed weakens community and family ties and leads to a crowding out of civil society and social capital.

According to Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), there are particular types of institutions that lead to stronger generalized trust, namely, universal welfare systems. Universal welfare programs, especially prevalent in Sweden and its Scandinavian neighbors, provide services to all citizens equally, no matter the background or needs of recipients. On the other hand, needs-testing programs, as its name implies, distribute welfare according to recipients' needs. The problem with such systems, as Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) argue, is that they give citizens an incentive to exaggerate their needs and lie to state bureaucrats to receive benefits. Bureaucrats in turn, aware of citizens' dishonest motives, make access to benefits more difficult, thus reducing citizens' trust in them. This dynamic leads to a vicious cycle of mutual distrust between state bureaucrats and citizens, in turn negatively affecting generalized trust. In addition, when bureaucrats are difficult

to convince, citizens often resort to cheating for access to benefits to which they would normally have easy access.

Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) rely on findings from the field of social psychology to support their theoretical argument. People are not only interested in what benefits they are able to obtain from public institutions, they also care about whether the process is fair. This is known as procedural justice. And per Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), procedural justice and generalized trust are linked in three ways. First, trust in others is partly shaped by public-service bureaucrats. "If social workers, local policemen, public health workers, and so on act in such a way that they cannot be trusted, why should people in general be trusted?" (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005, p.349). Second, if other citizens cheat to get the benefits they need, then how can others in general be trusted? And third, If I myself cheat to get the benefits I am entitled to, then how can other people in general be trusted?

To put their theory to the test, Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) examine survey data from Sweden. Even though the majority of welfare institutions are universal in nature, some still operate under a needs-testing approach. Among those are housing allowances, social assistance, and disability pension (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005, p.350). Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) make use of this institutional variation within Sweden to test several implications related to their argument. They find that average generalized trust among respondents who had no contact with selective or needs-testing institutions measured 6.7, on a scale of 0 to 10. This figure drops to 6.0 for those who deal with one selective institution, and 5.7 when dealing with two or more selective welfare institutions (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005, pp.351-352). But the reverse is also true: contact with a larger number of universal welfare institutions increases generalized trust: from 5.9 when dealing with no universal institutions, to 6.7 when dealing with more than eight. Furthermore, the results

hold when controlling for a variety of socioeconomic variables such as education, income, membership in organizations and life satisfaction (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005, p.354).

But Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) do not stop there. They test the causal mechanism that links experiences with institutions to trust. They use a question gauging respondents' perceptions of being mistreated when dealing with different types of welfare institutions in Sweden. On the other hand, they find that frequent contact with selective institutions increases perceptions of mistreatment, and that this perception is also correlated with higher levels of mistrust (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005, pp.356-357). The opposite is also true. Individuals who have infrequent or no contact with selective institutions also exhibit lower perceptions of mistreatment and higher levels of generalized trust.

Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) point to two problems faced by arguments connecting associational life and trust, problems they claim to overcome. First, most neo-Tocquevillian scholars do not present a convincing micro-mechanism explaining exactly how associational life and generalized trust are related. In other words, why would associations create trust in strangers? Even though Putnam (1993) did posit that associations create particularized trust which then becomes generalized trust, the move from trust in people we personally know versus people we do not know remains unconvincing. This problem is criticized by several scholars, most notably Uslaner (2002) for whom there is no reason trusting people we get to know personally makes us trust people we do not know. And second, there is an absence of empirical testing pertaining to the causal mechanism in the works of neo-Tocquevillians.

Rothstein and Stolle (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) make a very similar argument to that presented by Kumlin and Rothstein (2005). State institutions (not necessarily welfare-related institutions) lead to higher levels of generalized trust because of the perception of fairness.

However, they bring additional evidence to support their causal mechanism by testing new implications related to their theory. If the impartiality of institutions and generalized trust are related, then there should exist a positive correlation between generalized trust and trust in institutions, specifically institutions that are expected to function impartially, such as the police, the legal system, and the health system, among others. On the other hand, the relationship between generalized trust and trust in institutions that are not thought to function impartially (since they serve a political purpose such as the parliament), is not expected to be very strong. An analysis of survey data from Sweden confirms this hypothesis. The relationship between trust in impartial institutions and generalized trust is stronger in the positive direction compared to the relationship between generalized trust and trust in institutions that are not necessarily supposed to act impartially.

Beyond the particularities of welfare institutions and culture, some even contend that democracy is in itself a generator of trust (Levi, 1998; Offe, 1999; Sides, 1999). According to Levi (1998), democracy can empower people who do not control substantial resources, giving them more say in future decisions thus allowing them to be more trusting. Sides (1999), on the other hand, finds a strong correlation between generalized trust, civil liberties and political rights. For Rothstein (2000) however, the link between democracy and generalized trust depends on trust in institutions as he argues throughout his works (Rothstein, 1998, 2003, 2005). But past the perceptions of fairness and impartiality that are central features of his argument, democracy can generate trust because it punishes deviant behavior more rigorously than other types of regimes, making it easier to trust strangers.

Uslaner (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003, p.171), however, explicitly disagrees. He believes trust is not affected by the type of government, whether democratic or authoritarian. Rather, trust

is generated by state policies that alleviate economic inequalities. Even though it is true that there is a correlation between democratic governance and more generous redistributive policies, it is the latter that creates trust rather than the former. Put differently, the correlation between democracy and generalized trust is driven by the confounding variable of more extensive redistribution. The real causes of generalized trust "[…] lie in the deeper values societies hold-and in the distribution of resources" (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds,. p.173). By deeper variables, Uslaner alludes to the structural factors of economic equality/inequality. Furthermore, Uslaner (2002) asserts that ethnic homogeneity, education, and income do not necessarily cause generalized trust, as their effects disappear in multivariate analyses (p.179).

The true producer of generalized trust for Uslaner (2002, 2003) is income equality. Of all the state-level variables identified by the literature as being potentially associated with generalized trust, the Gini index (measure of income equality/inequality) has the greatest effect (Uslaner, 2003 p.182). In democracies at least, "the single biggest barrier to generalized trust is income inequality" (Uslaner, 2003, p.18).

The theoretical reasons connecting income equality and generalized trust at the individual level, for Uslaner (2002), rest first on a sense of optimism and control over one's life. In a more equitable society, people with less become more optimistic that they can share society's wealth, and optimism is the building block of generalized trust (Uslaner, 2002). But people are also more trusting if they believe that society rewards hard work as opposed to personal connections; that is, if they have some control over their socio-economic status.

Second, a fairer distribution of income creates stronger bonds between people of all backgrounds. When wealth is concentrated at the top, neither people at the top or the bottom of the income ladder view individuals in the other group as part of their "moral community" (Uslaner,

2002). Strong income disparities hinder the notion of a "common fate" that is supposed to bring people of different backgrounds together.

Not only does Uslaner (2002; 2003) use this argument against the idea that democracy per se leads to trust, but also against the socio-cultural arguments put forth by Neo-Tocquevillians that connect associations with trust. More specifically, he believes Putnam's (1993) argument to be flawed because of possible reverse causality. Associations do not cause trust, but trusting people are more likely to join associations in the first place. Uslaner (2002) tests this hypothesis through simultaneous equations estimations (Uslaner, 2002, p.122) and finds much stronger empirical support for trusters joining associations rather than the opposite. Consequently, the driving variable is income equality, which affects trust, and in turn, the extent to which people are willing to join associations, suggesting the correlation between associations and trust observed by Putnam (1993) is only driven by the omitted variable of income equality.

In this sense, Uslaner (2002; 2003) introduces a new source of trust, one that is explicitly detached from culture or institutions. Trust is affected by what he calls deeper structural variables, such as the distribution of resources in a society. Institutions such as the welfare state can sometimes alleviate income inequalities and create trust, but democracy's socio-political egalitarian principles do not necessarily have the same effect. Put simply, Uslaner (2002; 2003) discredits the role of culture and institutions in the creation of trust in favor of economics.

If generalized trust is extensively examined in democratic settings, our understanding of its functioning in non-democratic settings is much more limited. Nevertheless, some do focus on how generalized trust is generated in authoritarian regimes. Jamal (2007), for example, uses WVS data from three Middle Eastern countries to show how generalized trust is not necessarily correlated with democracy as much as it is linked to satisfaction with the functioning of institutions

such as the police, the parliament, and the government. These findings support her claim that trust is produced when citizens are satisfied with the performance of state institutions, regardless of whether they are democratic or authoritarian. Citizen's whose interests are defended by political institutions, even if authoritarian or corrupt, tend to exhibit higher levels of generalized trust (Jamal, 2007, pp.1330-1331). She describes what she calls a "performance-based" approach (Jamal, 2007, p.1330) as opposed to the cultural approach proposed by Putnam (1993).

Most interestingly, Jamal's (2007) findings suggest that generalized trust is not necessarily affected by societal variables such as democracy or a corruption-free system. Rather, it is affected by "more recent and contemporary experiences" (Jamal, 2007, p.1331). Similarly, Mishler and Rose (1997, p.34) argue that citizens ask themselves, "what has society done for me lately?".

Clientelism and Generalized Trust

Nevertheless, the relationship between clientelism and trust is not adequately examined in the literature, with a few exceptions. Putnam (1993) was one of the first to note clientelism's detrimental effect on social capital and particularly on social trust. There are, however, two implicit mechanisms through which clientelism hurts trust in Putnam's (1993) account. Moreover, both mechanisms affect the outdated patron-serf relationships of the feudal era but also what I refer to as the more "modern" version of clientelism where votes are exchanged for bribes.

In his attempt to trace northern Italy's civic roots, Putnam (1993) pays close attention to the prevalent clientelist practices under feudalism that seemingly dominated socio-economic life in the South throughout the Middle Ages. Under feudalism, peasants (or clients) depend extensively on a patron (or feudal lord) for survival. Feudal lords monopolize violence and access to vital resources to keep their subjects loyal as well as to discourage any form of solidarity between them [Putnam describes peasants under the feudal system as "clients" (p.145), although

this can be somewhat misleading: Subjects under feudalism had no choice but to capitulate to their feudal lord, suggesting that they had very little to offer in return for resources and protection].

The structure of social relationships, whether hierarchical, vertical and exploitative, as opposed to horizontal and egalitarian, is key to Putnam's (1993) overall argument that connects associations to trust. Horizontal networks suggest that individuals of relatively equal socio-economic power interact. But they can also be vertical, or hierarchical, where people depend on others in a highly skewed relationship. It is for those very reasons that Protestant congregations are far more conducive to trust then the Catholic church, as Protestantism promotes horizontal associations while Catholicism relies on vertical and hierarchical organization (Putnam, 1993, p.173). As Putnam (1993) elaborates, feudalism is self-reinforcing since peasants have no other option but to support their local lord: "In the absence of horizontal solidarity, as exemplified by mutual aid societies, vertical dependence is a rational strategy for survival-even when those who are dependent recognize its drawbacks" (Putnam, 1994, p.145).

Naturally, socio-economic systems based on exploitation inevitably lead to severe distrust between exploiter and exploited. However, Putnam's (1993) account suggests there are reasons to believe they also hinder inter-client trust and hence generalized trust. The first mechanism through which Feudalism negatively affects generalized trust rests on the nature of the vertical relationships of dependency and exploitation on which it operates. "A vertical network, no matter how dense and no matter how important to its participants, cannot sustain social trust and cooperation" (Putnam, 1993, p.174). This is because, as Putnam (1993) expounds, subordinates of a same patron "[…] hold nothing hostage to one another. They have nothing to stake against mutual defection and nothing to fear from mutual alienation" (Putnam, 1993, p.174). In other words, the vertical ties of dependence between patrons and clients give no reason for the latter to associate and

collaborate. It leads to a society of atomized and detached individuals. All that clients should be concerned with to survive under a feudal system is being on good terms with their patron. And since associations are a precursor for generalized trust in Putnam's (1993) story, it follows that feudalism's vertical structure, much more prevalent in the Italian south, hinders the development not only of patron-client trust, but of inter-client trust as well.

Putnam's (1993) second mechanism relates to clients' harmful competition for access to resources. Since resources are scarce and clients have little to offer a patron in return, fellow clients become potential opponents as they, too, seek access to the same line of limited patronage. Speaking of solidarity rather than trust per se, Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984, pp. 48-49) indicate that the vertical relations of feudalism […] "undermine the horizontal group organization and solidarity of clients and patrons alike, but especially of clients".

As Putnam (1993, p.100) contends, the modern version of clientelism that operates through the exchange of votes for personal favors, more prevalent in contemporary Southern Italy, is also affected by the two mechanisms described above: Vertical relationships give clients no reason to associate which pits them against one another. Moreover, rather than their "programmatic commitments to public issues" (Putnam,1993, p.99), political relationships between parties and voters -electoral clientelism- hinge on personalistic connections. Bribes offered to voters range from help with obtaining licenses, employment or even cash rewards. As opposed to feudal clientelism, Putnam (1993) describes a relationship that isn't as asymmetric. Even though political patrons are still in a position of power vis à vis their clients, who are usually in desperate need of favors, political patrons' leverage comes from their ability to distribute patronage and not from the use of violence. Nevertheless, clients are now somewhat empowered by the ballot box, albeit to a limited extent.

Putnam (1993) employs both qualitative and quantitative methods to support his argument. Through his 1982 nationwide survey of regional political figures (p.99), he discovers that the majority of his southern respondents describe politics as "clientelist" as opposed to "programmatic". Political parties are not concerned with presenting an appealing program in order to win votes. Rather, they rely on personal favors distributed to their constituents. The discourse uncovered through his interview with political elites points to a reliance on favors for political support. Evidence from Putnam's (1993) surveys also shows that political patrons in Italy's southern regions meet much more frequently with constituents than their northern counterparts, but with a caveat: the subject of discussion in client/patron meetings in the Italian South generally centers on distribution of patronage rather than policy (Putnam, 1993, p.101).

From a quantitative standpoint, Putnam (1993, p.100) correlates clientelism with his regional "civic community" index, the former measured by the percent of respondents indicating that exchanges are clientelist rather than programmatic, and the latter measured through four components: preference voting, referendum turnout, newspaper readership, and scarcity of sports and cultural associations (Putnam, 1993, p.96). As expected, clientelism and "civicness" are negatively related with a coefficient of -0.71 (p.96).

It must be noted, however, that even though Putnam (1993) does not directly test the link between clientelism and generalized trust per se, his results do give important insights as to what results to such a test might be. This is because a strong civic community can be considered a reliable proxy for generalized trust since both are intrinsically linked as Putnam (1993) demonstrates in his earlier chapter (Ch. 2 and 3). In other words, we can assume a strong negative correlation, for example, between generalized trust and clientelism when the correlation between clientelism and the civic community index is negative.

Beyond Putnam (1993), there are some who have attributed the failure of Italy's southern democratic development entirely to clientelism. For example, Huysseune (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) disagrees with Putnam (1993) in that the root cause of broken southern governance is not the absence of social capital or civic culture, but rather, the Italian state's role in producing networks of clientelism and patronage. Citing numerous sources such as Lupo (1993) or Sabetti (1996), Huysseune (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) points to evidence suggesting that solidarity did exist in the South, discrediting Banfield's (1958) "amoral familism" (the every man for himself mentality) prevalent in southern Italian village of Chiaromonte.

In its attempt to bring all regions under its control to establish a highly centralized bureaucracy, the Italian state had to confront and subdue local elites in all parts of the country. According to Huysseune (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003), the process was much more complicated in southern regions where it had to face organized banditry that displayed hostility. The solution was to integrate these local rebels into the state apparatus by giving them access to government resources. This system allowed southern elites to utilize state resources for personal means such as for the distribution of patronage in return for political support. In Huysseune's (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) theoretical reasoning, clientelism and a strong civic culture can coexist side by side. Corrupt governance does not originate from the absence of an associational culture; but rather from a lack of commitment to programmatic politics on the part of the political class. Huysseune (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) suggests that it is due to the ability to distribute patronage with little accountability.

But the relationship between clientelism and trust is even more nuanced if one is to consider Molenaers' (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) work on associational life in Nicaragua. While comparing the two remote villages of El Toro and La Danta, she finds similar levels of

participation in associations among inhabitants with very different levels of trust across the two villages. Even though Molenaers (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) does not directly measure generalized trust through her surveys, she utilizes a valid proxy measure for that purpose.

She notices that in El Toro only thirty five percent of respondents claim to be involved in the cooperative relation of "cambio de mano" (in exchange for a hand) (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003, pp.122-123), whereas this number rises to seventy-eight percent of respondents in La Danta. Cambio de mano is essentially a horizontal and cooperative form of interaction. When a villager in La Danta lends a hand to a fellow villager, for example, the receiver of the service acknowledges that they owe something to the provider and are aware that they must reciprocate sometime in the future. As the mechanism implies, the interaction relies heavily on mutual trust between the villagers since the risk of defecting from reciprocity is real. As Molenaers (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003, p.122) puts it: "Trust is fundamental in these forms of cooperation because there is always a time lapse between the favor delivered and the favor returned". This is precisely why this type of exchange is a reliable proxy for generalized trust in El Toro and La Danta, respectively.

The exchanges Molenaers (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) describes hinge not only on trust, but also on power symmetry between actors. Distorted power relations allow some not to reciprocate a service. On top of that, in La Danta as opposed to El Toro, local leaders are integrated in cambio de mano, suggesting that horizontal relations and trust extend even to individuals "higher up" the socio-economic ladder. But most importantly, Molenaers (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) notes that clientelism does not differ significantly across villages. Inhabitants of both El Toro and La Danta rely on their local leaders for access to benefits in exchange for some form of political support.

But if La Danta and El Toro display quasi-similar traits concerning all potential explanatory variables (associations, poverty rates, education…), why is there a difference in levels of reciprocity and trust? According to Molenaers (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003), the answer lies in how resources are allocated by external authorities to local political elites in each village.

While El Toro was a typical case of a land reform village where extensive amounts of resources are distributed to local politicians by the central government, La Danta received no such external aid. The problem with land reform villages is that they give local leaders too much discretion over how resources are then distributed to the locals. Some of Molenaers' (Hooghe and Stolle, Eds., 2003) interviewees explicitly portray land reform villages as having trouble "getting ahead" (p.116) because "[…] they suffer from a culture of non-reciprocity, they always received a lot without having to do anything in return". In essence, though clientelism is prevalent in both villages under scrutiny, the unconditional access to abundant resources from the part of local elites in El Toro insulates them from acting reciprocally vis à vis their clients. It allows local political leaders complete discretion in distribution of these resources to locals, weakening accountability, reciprocity, and most importantly, trust.

So far, this review has focused on the importance of generalized trust for a variety of desirable social, economic and political outcomes. It has also attempted to describe the various sources of generalized trust as well as what was said in the literature concerning clientelism and generalized trust. However, going beyond the literature on trust and reviewing very briefly the works on varieties of clientelism is essential for the argument I present later on in this dissertation: the works of Putnam (1993) and Molenaers (2003…) specifically, indicate that different types of clientelism can exert different effects on generalized trust.

Varieties of Clientelism

Lust (2009) describes a form of "competitive clientelism" in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Particularly in parliamentary systems, candidates vie for a seat to access state allocated resources. Additionally, voters know very well that access to government jobs, licenses, and other state resources depend on their personal relationship with local constituents (Lust, 2009, p.124). As a result, candidates compete with one another by promising their constituents the maximum amount of access to state benefits. Even though legislative elections in the MENA region are not intended to produce policy changes as Lust (2009) notes and are not designed for democratic purposes, there is a level of candidate "accountability", even though minimal. Candidates have to be able to provide -or at least convince constituents- that they can provide state resources. If not, they risk losing elections.

From a broader perspective and regardless of region or political system, there is a substantial body of literature arguing that clientelism is more prevalent when poverty is rampant (Keefer, 2007; Brusco et al., 2004; Stokes, 2005; Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007; Stokes et al., 2013; Wantchekon, 2003; Bustikova and Corduneanu-Huci, 2009, 2017; Robinson and Verdier, 2013; Calvo and Murillo, 2004). The reasoning is that poorer voters are more likely to sell their votes in exchange for services because of the larger payoffs given their difficult material situation. In simpler terms, poverty makes it "cheaper" to buy votes. Some, such as Albertus et al. (2016), even go as far as to suggest that governments do sometimes purposely utilize policies to keep their population poor to leverage their bribing powers when needed. Albertus et al. (2016) found that the PRI, Mexico's leading political party since 1929, deliberately implemented land reform policies designed to inhibit long term growth in the aim of having more vote-buying power during

elections. In the same logic, Magaloni et al. (2007) assume that when the average voter's income increases, it becomes costlier and more difficult for political parties to buy their way to victory.

But as Berenschot (2018) suggests, most of the literature on clientelism only takes the "cost perspective" (Berenschot, 2018, p.1566) into account, that is, the costliness of bribing voters. As a result, it misses what Berenschot (2018, p.1567) calls the "constraint perspective" or the conditions under which voters can more effectively resist clientelist exchanges. Very few works focus on clientelism's constraining factors.

For example, McMann (2006) finds clientelism in Russia and Kazakhstan to be more frequent in areas with less economic autonomy, where citizens do not have "[…] the ability to earn a living independent of the state" (McMann, 2006, p.20). When citizens are more economically independent from the state, they can better resist its attempt to "buy" them. Viewed from the opposite angle, extensive control of economic activities in the hands of a small number of political elites inhibits the ability of voters to resist clientelism since the only access to desired resources is through the state. When no other source of resource exists, losing state benefits becomes a matter of life and death. This gives the state the ability to "weaponize" resources for political aims. The ability of non-state actors to oppose the state because of economic independence is reminiscent of arguments presented under variants of modernization theory (See Bates and Lien, 1985; Clark et al., 2015).

Clark et al.'s (2015) EVL (Exit Voice and Loyalty) model adequately captures the dynamic between clients dependent on state resources and the political elite. A lack of a credible "exit" option reduces clients' ability to bargain with the state, suggesting that the option of "voicing" their discontent is not possible. They have no other choice but to show "loyalty" or acquiesce to the state's economic blackmail.

Berenschot's (2018) results agree with McMann's (2006) when he implements a within-country variation study of clientelism in Indonesia but adds additional region-level indicators to operationalize his constraint perspective. He uses "[…] district government expenditures (as share of total regional GDP), the ratio of jobs and finance vis à vis government jobs […], and the percentage of industry jobs as well as the combined share of the industry, trade and finance sectors in the district GDP" (Berenschot, 2018, p.1583). Whereas his first two indicators serve to measure dependency on state resources, the last measure captures the extent of local economic diversification, with the assumption that diversification allows citizens to break free of state dependence.

From a theoretical perspective, there are different mechanisms through which economic dependence on state resources as well as weak economic diversification increases the frequency of clientelist exchanges (Berenschot, p.2018). First, in regions where natural resources are abundant, non-state actors that require licenses to extract resources find themselves at the mercy of the state as it holds complete discretion in the granting of such licenses. Second, and reminiscent of McMann's (2006) argument, voters in regions where the state controls the bulk of resources simply cannot afford to defect from clientelist exchanges imposed by the state. They have no other option to turn to if the state does not provide them with the coveted benefits. And third, a large industrial sector empowers unions and bolsters civil society vis à vis the state.

Berenschot (2018) finds that his variable aimed at capturing the constraint perspective is significantly related to variations of clientelism within certain Indonesian regions (those with high dependence on state resources), whereas indicators designed to measure the cost perspective such as poverty show weaker correlation with clientelism (not significant in multivariate analyses, Berenshot, 2018, p.1583). In other words, the Indonesian case indicates that clientelism is driven

by a regional population's dependence on state resources as opposed to poverty. It is therefore not so much the degree of economic development (growth and wealth), but rather its character (distribution of resources among state and non-state actors and economic diversification) that predicts clientelism (Berenschot, 2018, p.1587). Put differently, the constraint perspective of clientelism demonstrates that structural factors empower either vote sellers or turn citizens into vulnerable vote buyers.

Finally, in a work I rely on extensively to construct my argument, Corstange (2016) examines how various types of clientelism in Lebanon and Yemen affect the amount of patronage received by voters. Corstange (2016) finds that in "monopsonies" (p.18), or politically uncompetitive communities dominated by an uncontested political patron, clients receive little to no reward for their votes since their patron is insulated from competition and can therefore set the price of a vote. On the other hand, in politically competitive communities (Corstange, 2016, p18), competing political factions drive the price of a vote upwards, in turn rewarding clients with more lucrative patronage in exchange for their votes. Most interestingly, Corstange (2016, Ch.8) also finds that clients living in monopsonies are those that ironically display most public sycophancy for their leaders, sycophancy that is very often insincere as its sole purpose is to access the scant patronage distributed.

I will return to Corstange (2016) in subsequent chapters to support my theoretical argument (chapter three) as well as describe the inner workings of clientelism in Lebanon in more detail (chapter five).

In this chapter, I have focused on demonstrating how generalized trust is particularly crucial for an array of desired socio-economic outcomes. I have also attempted to show through the literature review that the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust is understudied.

I have also briefly reviewed factors that affect the dynamic of clientelist exchanges. The review indicates that apart from a few cases, arguments linking possible economic predispositions and generalized trust are rather limited in number. In the next chapter, I present my theoretical argument. I attempt to show how different dynamics of clientelism affects voters' ability to access resources, which in turn affects generalized trust.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

Before describing my theoretical argument, I explain how the literature summarized in chapter two leads me to the formulation of my research question. It was argued that clientelism hampers generalized trust because of inter-client competition (Putnam, 1993; Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984). But it was also shown that the leverage exerted by patrons over clients differs according to context (Lust, 2009; Corstange, 2016) which in turn affects competition between clients. Power asymmetries between patrons and clients in favor of the former was most pronounced under medieval feudalism where patrons have absolute power over their subjects. It was less severe under the modern form of clientelism (where elections are held) since patrons do have to listen to their clients, even though to a limited extent (Putnam, 1993, pp.99-100; Molenaers 2003; Corstange, 2016; Lust, 2009).

But most importantly, as Corstange (2016) demonstrates, clients are most empowered when there is extensive competition between patrons, reducing inter-client competition for access to patronage. Therefore, it appears that a relationship exists between political competition among patrons and generalized trust, hence the question: What are the effects of different types of clientelism on generalized trust? By "type of clientelism", I mean competitive or uncompetitive, and the extent of leverage patrons hold over their clients. The question can also be rephrased more broadly: How do power differentials (symmetry/asymmetry) between patrons and clients affect generalized trust?

The aim of this chapter is to describe all moving parts of my theoretical argument. The overall argument can be summarized as follows: When one patron dominates the political arena and competition between patrons is thus inexistent, competition between clients for access to

patronage becomes extensive, reducing in turn generalized trust. But the reverse is also true: When competition between patrons for votes is extensive, competition between clients is no longer required, increasing generalized trust.

To theoretically connect patron competition and client competition, I rely on what was demonstrated by Corstange (2016) in Lebanon and Yemen: When patrons compete against one another, clients no longer need to compete for patronage because their votes gain in value due to "market" pressures. On the other hand, when one patron dominates the political arena, clients are forced to compete for the very limited patronage offered because patrons can "buy" their constituents "cheaply". But most importantly for my theoretical argument, competition between clients takes the form of insincere public sycophancy for their political patron [I later describe, in chapter five, how Corstange (2016, Ch.8) finds evidence supporting a causal connection between insincere display of public sycophancy for one's political leader and patronage-seeking in Lebanon].

On the other hand, to connect inter-client competition and generalized trust, I rely first on the observations made by Putnam (1993) as well as Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984), namely that inter-client competition affects trust. However, I complement their argument with an individual "micro-level" mechanism borrowed from Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) that relies on perceptions of dishonesty and fairness of access to resources. I start in what follows by describing the individual-level mechanism linking inter-client competition and generalized trust through the variables of dishonesty and perceptions of fairness, moving on to the driving variable of inter-patron competition (or lack thereof).

Insincere Competition, Fairness and Generalized Trust

Even though my argument falls in line with what is argued by Putnam (1993), namely that clientelism hampers generalizes trust between clients, the causal connection between inter-client competition and generalized trust that I present differs from his explanation. Putnam (1993) argues that inter-client trust erodes under clientelism for two reasons: Clients have no need to associate with one another which leads to an atomized society; and clients directly compete for resources: "[clients] hold nothing hostage to one another. They have nothing to stake against mutual defection and nothing to fear from mutual alienation" (Putnam, 1993, p.175). Furthermore, under clientelism […] "opportunism is more likely on the part of both patron (exploitation) and client (shirking)" (Putnam, 1993, p.175). Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) would agree with Putnam's (1993) second point: Competition between clients harms their solidarity. I contend however that competition in itself does not explain the entirety of the story.

I argue that it is specifically dishonest or insincere competition (a central independent variable that I later test in my online experiment) and its effects on the perception of fair access to patronage that affect generalized trust. Under Putnam (1993) as well as Eisenstadt and Roniger's (1984) descriptions, any type of competition harms trust [Putnam (1993) does not explicitly label competition between clients as dishonest, even though he appears to allude to it when he explains how clients deliberately choose to withhold information from one another as a protection against exploitation (Putnam, 1993, pp.174-175)]. The other blind spot in Putnam's (1993) as well as Eisenstadt and Roniger's (1984) arguments is the absence of a mechanism that explains the flip side of the story - how a lack of competition between clients can help generate trust, instead of simply leaving it unaffected.

To formulate a theoretical argument where I connect inter-client competition and generalized trust at the individual level, I rely on the micro-level mechanisms found by Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) who show how a context of dishonesty and unfair access to state benefits affect generalized trust. Specifically, as shown in the previous chapter, Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) argue that needs-based testing welfare institutions push citizens to engage in dishonest behavior with state bureaucrats with the aim of maximizing benefits. This leads, in turn, to a perception of unfair distribution of benefits since it is usually the dishonest citizen who receives the largest payoff.

Even though in the Swedish scenario described by Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), citizens do not necessarily witness their peers behaving dishonestly with the state when dealing with selective welfare institutions, they are aware it does take place, especially in areas where selective institutions are ubiquitous. Citizens are cognizant of the process, as Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) stress, because they themselves are often dishonest when dealing with bureaucrats. Citizens' awareness of the dishonesty of others affects their trust in the general population. When dishonesty is rampant and cheating behavior pays better than honest behavior, citizens question why people in general should be trusted.

On the other hand, the Swedish universal welfare system does not create the need for dishonesty while ensuring more people get access to the benefits they need (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005). Interestingly however, and crucial for my theoretical argument, the effect of universal welfare institutions on generalized trust is not neutral. A context free of dishonesty does not only leave trust unaffected, it increases it. "[…] In fact, the effects of experiences with universal institutions on trust are positive" (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005, p.352). The reason behind the positive effect of universal welfare institutions on generalized trust is a perception of fair

distribution of benefits. As Kumlin and Rothstein (2005, p.349) claim: "universal programs […] may give rise to a sense of equal treatment and that the rules of the game in society are based on principles of fairness". In their allocation of equal benefits to all, universal welfare states create a perception of fair distribution of resources and render dishonest behavior unnecessary, boosting generalized trust for these two reasons.

Theoretically, therefore, both dishonesty and access to benefits are intrinsically linked and in turn affect perceptions of fairness: It is dishonest behavior and its apparent rewarding effects that increase the perception of unfairness. Conversely, more equal distribution of benefits with no dishonest behavior increases the perception that resources are fairly distributed (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005).

Like Kumlin and Rothstein (2005, p.347), my argument relies on something the social-psychology literature calls "procedural justice" (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1998; Levy, 1997). Beyond the final amounts of goods distributed, procedural justice implies that people are usually most interested in whether the process of allocation of resources is fair. More recently, and directly related to generalized trust, Houle and Miller (2019) find that social mobility is a stronger predictor for generalized trust than is income equality, supporting procedural justice's premise that generalized trust is affected by the manner through which resources are distributed instead of the final amounts received.

Dishonesty and fairness of access to resources are central in Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) argument. They are also the centerpieces of my argument. I argue that when competition between clients is extensive, dishonesty is rampant because clients publicly support their patrons, but for devious reasons. In such a context, it is believed that the dishonest client usually receives higher rewards, creating the perception of unfair distribution of resources, which in turn damages

generalized trust. I also argue that when inter-client competition is inexistent, clients have no need to display insincere behavior for access to benefits while also receiving generous patronage because of political competition. This strengthens the perception of fair distribution of resources which in turn increases levels of generalized trust.

Lies and dishonesty are therefore ubiquitous in a clientelist environment where clients compete extensively with one another for patronage. And as Corstange (2016) observed in Lebanon and Yemen, ethnic groups that received the least amount of patronage are also those that, ironically, displayed far more insincere public political support for their political leader.

In regions where patronage is scarcely distributed and competition is extensive, clients are aware that the public political support displayed by fellow clients is intended to send a message to the local political party with the aim of having preferential access to patronage. The logic is once again very similar to that put forth by Kumlin and Rothstein (2005). Clients are cognizant of the dishonest behavior of others because they themselves engage in it. But on top of that, unlike citizens acting dishonestly with state bureaucrats, insincere public political support can be easily seen by fellow citizens, arguably exerting an even stronger effect on trust.

It must be added, however, that the mechanisms I describe here are especially pronounced when a large proportion of the population relies on clientelism for access to resources which is true in Lebanon: about 55% of Lebanese voters admit having sold their votes when measured through a list experiment that circumvents social desirability bias (Corstange, 2018). The larger the number of people involved in clientelist exchanges, the more generalized trust in particular is affected. In addition, the pervasiveness of public support for a political leader in a context where clients must compete for votes and publicly show support for their leader shows citizens that clientelism is very common.

Whereas Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) argument falls under the realm of institutionalism as it is the type of welfare institution that affect generalized trust, the argument I put forth does not. In their narrative, dishonesty and the way resources are allocated are driven by the type of welfare institution. In my argument, it is driven by the existing clientelist dynamic, or power symmetry/asymmetry between political patrons and their clients, which is the next phase of my theoretical argument.

Inter-Patron Competition and Inter-Client Competition

Power differentials between patrons and their clients are directly affected by the number of patrons competing for votes, which in turn affect inter-client competition. The works of Lust (2009), but especially Corstange (2016), support this claim. For Lust (2009), under "competitive clientelism", competing political patrons in legislative elections in most Middle Eastern countries force political factions to be more attentive to their clients' demands in fear of losing seats to political opponents. Corstange's (2016, p.38) description follows the same logic, while adding the dimension of the "price of a vote": "electoral competition, or lack thereof, influences the balance of market power in clientelist exchanges".

When political competition exists between different factions, political elites have to tend to their voters. This translates into pricier votes from a patron's point of view and hence more generous bribes. But the reverse is also true as described above. Clients living under a monopsony (uncompetitive political arena) are forced to compete with one another because the patron that dominates politics sets "the price of a vote", to use Corstange's (2016) words. With no political competition to fear, they "buy" their voter at a cheap price. The only reason they even distribute scarce patronage is ensure some minimal level of voter turnout to give their tenure legitimacy.

Most importantly for my theoretical argument, the extent of competition between patrons directly affects the extent of competition between clients as well as the insincere public support they exhibit for their political patrons. Extensive competition at the top (patrons) reduces competition at the bottom (clients) whereas no competition at the top exacerbates competition at the bottom. This is how political competition between patrons affects generalized trust: Through its effects on inter-client competition.

The Comprehensive Argument

The argument I present can be summarized as follows, starting by the power dynamic between patrons and clients, all the way to generalized trust. When one patron rules unchallenged, clients are forced to compete against one another by publicly supporting their political leader. However, this support is insincere since its aim is accessing patronage as opposed to expressing satisfaction with the party's program. A context rife with dishonesty and unequal distribution of patronage weakens generalized trust because it creates a perception of unfair access to benefits: The most dishonest of clients usually receive the highest payoffs. This effect is especially pronounced true when clientelism and public support for patrons are widespread.

On the other hand, when multiple patrons compete for votes, clients are no longer required to compete with one another through the display of insincere public affection for their political patron as they receive generous rewards regardless of their efforts. In such a context, generalized trust grows unobstructed because public dishonesty does not prevail and patronage is distributed much more generously, leading to the perception of a much fairer distribution of patronage.

My argument could be criticized on the grounds that it does not present a new theoretical argument. I use Corstange's (2016) work to connect patron competition to client competition and Kumlin and Rothstein's work (2005) to connect client competition to generalized trust. Even

though this criticism is warranted, connecting existing theoretical mechanisms to create a new theory only strengthens the credibility of my argument, especially when the two theoretical mechanisms I rely on have been empirically validated.

Generalized Trust: a State or Trait?

Even though the sources of generalized trust are countless as described in chapter two, one relevant question to the theoretical argument I present remains: Is a person's level of generalized trust immutable or is it sensitive to changing environmental factors? Even though the academic literature seems divided on the matter, Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) work lends strong support to the latter.

The Swedish welfare system, as Kumlin and Rothstein (2005, pp.350-351) show, consists of a number of welfare institutions from universal services (transportation, childcare, health care, among others) to selective needs-testing services (housing allowances, social assistance, transportation allowances, disability pensions among others). Yet it can be reasonably assumed that Swedish citizens' needs change, and as a result, so does their encounter with different kinds of welfare systems. Put differently, a Swedish citizen might deal with a selective institution today and a universal one tomorrow, or vice versa (or a mix of both). If one adds the premise that the type of institution affects trust, it follows that trust is a state rather than a trait, one that can be affected by environmental factors, at least different types of welfare institutions.

If we were to strictly follow Putnam (1993) or Uslaner (2002) where for the former it is a specific cultural trait that creates trust whereas for the latter it is the level of income equality in society that determines levels of generalized trust, then trust is understood as an immutable trait rather than a changing state. Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) findings seem to invalidate this line of reasoning.

Just as in the case of Swedish citizens interacting with different types of welfare institutions, a Lebanese client can encounter different varieties of clientelism, from generous and rather fair in a competitive scenario, to unfair with public dishonesty dictating to whom patronage is distributed. Conceptualizing trust as a state rather than a trait allows me make use of the variation in type of clientelism and the degree of exposure to either competitive or uncompetitive clientelism and their respective ensuing effects on trust.

Competitive Clientelism and Corruption

Observers might point to two contradictory forces in my argument, particularly in the case of competitive clientelism: on the one hand, I argue that competitive clientelism strengthens generalized trust, but clientelism remains a form of corruption and corruption is believed to harm generalized trust (Rothstein, 2013). However, I argue that the beneficial effects of competitive clientelism on generalized trust eclipse its potential negative effects tied to the perception of corruption. I rely on what was demonstrated by Jamal (2007) to support my claim. Jamal's (2007) findings indicate that citizens are most concerned with institutions that serve their personal interests, whether authoritarian and/or corrupt. I argue that clients living in competitive contexts who receive generous rewards for their bribes with no need for insincere behavior will be more trusting of others, even if through clientelism which is considered a form of corruption by observers. What matters most in the end are citizens' personal gains regardless of broader contextual variables (Jamal, 2007; Mishler and Rose, 1997).

In addition, corruption is a concept that is best understood in democratic contexts where politics is usually geared at providing public goods. In a country where more than half the population relies on political parties for access to vital benefits such as healthcare, schooling, employment and more, clientelism might not necessarily be understood as corruption. In Lebanon,

it is a political party's traditional role to provide goods to its clients, even when this is done at the detriment of providing public goods.

Therefore, the competitive form of clientelism that Lebanese Christian clients benefit from does not necessarily create two opposing forces when it comes to generalized trust. Political parties distribute benefits to those who vote for them, as they should, and when rewards are distributed generously and in an equal manner with no insincere behavior, trust is strengthened.

Hypotheses

What follows are testable implications that are drawn from the argument presented in this chapter. First, I hypothesize that *clientelism and generalized trust are negatively correlated for clients living in uncompetitive political contexts;* and second, that *clientelism and generalized trust are positively correlated for clients living in competitive political contexts.* Hypotheses one and two rest on the assumption that measures of clientelism at the individual level (more details in chapter six) capture individuals' exposure to clientelist exchanges, which in turn are either negatively or positively related to generalized trust, depending on the political context (patron competition or lack thereof).

Whereas the above hypotheses test the relationship between political competition (or lack thereof) and generalized trust, the following hypotheses test the causal mechanism that connects patron competition with generalized trust, namely dishonesty and fairness in distribution of resources. Specifically, I hypothesize that *clients who witness public dishonest sycophancy and receive no reward for their efforts will exhibit lower levels of generalized trust as compared to the general population,* and, *clients who do not witness public dishonest sycophancy and receive patronage despite showing no public support will exhibit higher levels of generalized trust as compared to the general population.*

Hypotheses one and two test the first and last variables in the causal chain: the political context, that is whether there are one or multiple patrons competing and if this exerts different effects on generalized trust. The third and fourth hypotheses, on the other hand, test the causal mechanism connecting the number of competing patrons and generalized trust, namely, dishonest client behavior and fair access to resources and its subsequent effects on generalized trust.

The Argument in the Literature

From a theoretical perspective, the argument I present differentiates itself in two ways from the literature by departing from both the institutional and cultural determinants of generalized trust and by leaving societal and state forces outside of the equation. In a sense, I follow Uslaner (2002) in arguing that generalized trust is unaffected by culture and institutions and is instead affected by economic factors such as access to resources.

In my argument, culture and associations play no role in the formation of generalized trust. No matter citizens' involvement in voluntary organizations or their religious affiliation, their trust in others is affected only by their ability to fairly access resources without having to exhibit dishonest behavior. Second, no argument in the literature contends that clientelism can lead to increased generalized trust. As elaborated in chapters two and three of this dissertation, clientelism is consistently associated with decreasing levels of generalized trust.

In his account, the theme of access to resources and trust was already explored by Uslaner (2002). Income equality was the prime mover of generalized trust. However, whereas dishonesty was not central in Uslaner's (2002) argument, he did allude to it: income inequality is a sign that hard work is no longer rewarded by merit. Rather, wealth is driven by personal connections, which negatively affects generalized trust.

Nevertheless, unlike Uslaner (2002) as well as Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), the mechanism I present operates outside of democratic contexts. Uslaner (Hooger and Stolle, Eds., 2003, p.181) explicitly claims that his theory only works to explain the link between income equality and generalized trust in democratic settings, whereas Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) gauge the effect of different types of welfare institutions in an established democracy, namely Sweden. Clientelism on the other hand usually takes place in very fragile democracies. This difference, I contend, gives my argument an advantage by design.

As was pointed out in the literature review, democracy can sometimes exert positive effects on generalized trust for its own sake (Levi, 1998). Democracy empowers weaker socio-economic actors by granting them better access to resources and punishes those that break the law more effectively than in non-democratic countries, giving more people the possibility to trust others. This creates a problem from a research design perspective when testing different mechanisms on generalized trust in only democratic settings: It becomes difficult to disentangle the effects of democracy on generalized trust from other variables. In other words, democracy is a confounding factor that must be isolated. The advantage of testing my theoretical argument in a non-democratic setting is precisely that it isolates the non-existent or -at worst- weak effect of democracy on generalized trust.

In sum, I have presented in this chapter a theoretical argument that connects political competition among patrons to generalized trust in clientelist settings. I have also formulated four hypotheses that I test in chapter seven. However, before delving deeper into the Lebanese case and describing how I operationalize my variables and what data I use to test my hypotheses, I elaborate in the next chapter on the theoretical difference between democracy and competitive clientelism.

I do so to show how even though political competition does bring some level of citizen accountability and material benefits to a larger number of citizens, it still falls short of democracy.

CHAPTER 4

BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND THE MARKET

If the competitive form of clientelism enables clients to effectively extract generous benefits from their political leaders, then where does one draw the line between, a democratic regime where votes are given the same electoral weight through free and fair elections, and clientelism, which is associated with targeted rewards at the expense of the provision of public goods? Even though competitive clientelism seems to empower citizens economically, it still falls short of providing citizens the ability to interact in a marketplace of ideas and exert real pressures on their political leaders.

In this chapter, I take a step back from the general argument I present as well as my empirical analysis to question the theoretical relationship between democracy and the competitive version of clientelism. I first examine the intrinsic link between democracy and economic development since competitive clientelism empowers citizens in ways that are reminiscent of arguments that connect economic development to democracy. Through a variety of mechanisms, economic development -and with it the empowerment of a segment of the population- allows the citizenry to pressure the state into power-sharing arrangements. Whereas the "market of votes" (or the sale of one's vote for personal benefits) empowers clients to obtain more rewards with competitive clientelism, it does not necessarily permit the imposition of democratic constraints on government as opposed to nationwide economic development. Competitive clientelism is therefore stuck between democracy and the market, more specifically the market of votes.

I will examine two possible theoretical connections between competitive clientelism and democracy. First, I assume that competitive clientelism empowers some lucky citizens. I am not yet bringing trust into the equation but rather comparing this form of client empowerment to

similar mechanisms described in the economic development literature. Second, I assume that I do find evidence to support the theoretical argument presented in this dissertation; namely, that competitive clientelism leads to higher levels of generalized trust. From that link, I can consider whether the trust generated from competitive clientelism can potentially lead to democracy.

I am arguing that even though competitive clientelism empowers a limited number of citizens, it falls short of the prerequisites of democracy for three reasons. First, clientelism remains a form of corruption that excludes certain groups of society and does not contribute to the public good. Second, the advantages of competitive clientelism can be short-lived. Political patrons sometimes form alliances that rob their constituents of any possible leverage as can be seen in Lebanon, with the Sunni community. Lastly, assuming there is a relationship between competitive clientelism and generalized trust, clientelism contributes at best to sporadic pockets of trust and falls short of producing widespread cooperation, which democracy requires.

The Economic Determinants of Democracy

Since the argument I advance in this dissertation relies a theory of market vote and client empowerment, it is worth examining whether there exist favorable economic conditions that empower citizens vis à vis their political leaders in the wider literature.

Many observers believe economic development is a prerequisite for democracy. Lindblom (1977, p.165), for example, notes that "liberal democracy has arisen only in nations that are market oriented". However, the claim that economic predispositions are what lead to democracy was first formalized by Lipset (1959) where he demonstrated strong correlations between various measures of economic development and democracy.

Before examining the link between clientelism and democracy, I investigate the theoretical mechanisms that connect economic development to democracy. There are two strains of arguments

I identify in the literature linking economic development and democracy. The first I label "the structural causes of democracy" and the second the "socio-cultural causes of democracy". Even though the second mechanism describes how cultural and behavioral changes lead to democracy, it still falls under the header of the economic determinants of democracy as cultural changes are trigged by economic factors.

The Structural Determinants of Democracy

Most of the academic literature on economic development and democracy describe a process of democratization that occurs as a bargaining process between the citizenry and political elites, leading in turn to what I call the structural causes of democracy. Even though societal pressures force a change in regime, I label it as such since it is a change in the structure of the economy, specifically a shift from agriculture to industry that then allows a new class of citizens to exert pressure on the state and demand democracy.

Moore (1966) famously claimed, "no bourgeoisie, no democracy", and became renowned for his structuralist (or Marxist) account of democratization (or lack thereof). Through his description of the English and French transitions to democracy, Moore (1966) posited that a change in a state's economic structure followed by a struggle between different socio-economic classes triggers the advent of democracy. Aided by a restructuring of the economy from agriculture to mercantilism, a new and powerful class of bourgeois-merchants exerts pressure on the state. The newly empowered English bourgeoise, for example, successfully imposed parliamentary constraints on the British crown. Some suggest that the nature of the economic goods now produced, as well as the state's need for taxation and a credible commitment problem between the monarchy and the merchant class lead to the creation of democratic institutions (Lien and Bates, 1985; North and Weingast, 1989; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006).

The shift to a mercantilist economy did not only create a wealthier socio-economic class. It also empowered the newly created bourgeoisie by changing the nature of taxable wealth. Specifically, the circulation of mobile assets such as manufactured goods as well as silver and gold allowed the bourgeoisie to effectively evade the predatory state and force it to the negotiating table. This is one reason, as Lien and Bates (1985) suggest, why England democratized before France. The advent of the industrial revolution in England and the beginning of larger flux of mobile goods gave the English bourgeoise considerable negotiating powers over the crown. On the other hand, the French landed aristocracy, whose assets were much less mobile and whose riches were therefore easily targeted by the monarchy, were initially (before France industrialized) unable to exert the same political pressure on the French crown.

The creation of institutions that restrict a monarch's powers are then put into effect since there exists a credible commitment problem between the monarch and the wealthy bourgeoise (North and Weingast, 1989): the monarchy's promise to repay its lenders carries little credibility as it holds all military power.

 In Clark et al.'s (2017) language, the English bourgeoisie held a credible "exit option": "voicing" its discontent. In comparison, the French aristocracy who, in the days prior to the industrial revolution spreading to France had no real exit option, had no choice but to "acquiesce" to the state's demands. This difference demonstrates that it is not necessarily a wealthier citizenry that effectively extracts benefits from its government which leads to democratization, but rather the nature and distribution of riches.

The "resource curse" argument (Ross, 2001) demonstrates that it is the nature of economic development, and not necessarily wealth per se, that creates democracy. A resource-wealthy state reliant on oil and natural minerals for revenue can effectively resist any attempt at democratization

since it does not rely on taxes to finance its expenditures. The people have no leverage, and the state can use this "free revenue" to repress any attempts to curtail its powers.

The Socio-Cultural Determinants of Democracy

Nevertheless, one criticism faced by the accounts of structuralists such as Moore (1966) is their inability to explain the higher levels on inter-personal trust in economically developed states. In other words, if economic development allows citizens to curb the power of the state and impose democratic constraints, why do democracies tend to have much higher inter-citizen trust and cohesion? (as indicated by the generally robust levels of interpersonal trust in OECD countries[3]). The socio-cultural variant of economic development provides an explanation. As its name indicates, behavioral changes create a shift to democracy, rather than empowered citizens imposing a change in political institutions.

Inglehart's (1997) theory connecting modernization to democracy adequately embodies the socio-cultural variant. Inglehart (1997) starts by questioning the causal link between modernization and democracy: "Is the linkage between development and democracy due to wealth per se? Apparently not…" (Inglehart 1997, p.163). It is rather, for Inglehart (1997), much less a bargaining process between the state and the wealthy bourgeoise as Moore (1966) argues but more of a socio-cultural change pervading society with norms of cooperation and tolerance brought about by modernization. Specifically, it is industrialization and its requirements for vigorous exchange of information, mobility of the workforce, and the need for society to come together for the manufacturing of complex goods that generates collaboration and tolerance, and as a result, democracy.

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[3] https://ourworldindata.org/trust

Putnam's (1993) line of reasoning comes close to Inglehart's (1997) version of economic development and democracy. Putnam (1993) cites collaboration and tolerance that, in turn, lead to democracy. The major difference with Putnam (1993), and what places him outside of the umbrella of modernization theories, is there must exist a civic culture that promotes tolerance and democracy irrespective of the new requirements engendered by modernity and industrialization. Even though I label Inglehart's (1997) account as socio-cultural, the cultural changes he describes are still generated by economic factors.

If both variants of democratization via economic development are true, and with competitive clientelism having somewhat similar empowering effects, then the following questions arise: Can competitive clientelism empower citizens to force a change of regime? Can it create norms of reciprocity and trust that then produce democracy? I argue in both instances, it cannot.

Competitive Clientelism and the Structural Determinants of Democracy

Similarly to the effects of the structural determinants of democracy, competitive clientelism does empower some citizens as it allows them to demand more of competing patrons fighting for their votes. Nevertheless, crucial differences separate the former situation from the latter and hence affect the chances of bringing democracy.

The capacity of the new socio-economic classes to pressure the state is specifically due to new structural factors created by modernity, namely a shift in the type of economy. In this scenario, the state has very few retaliatory measures to use, particularly when the state is financially dependent on its citizenry for survival. To put it again in Clark et al.'s (2017) EVL language, the state has no credible exit option and must therefore acquiesce to the demand of its people and democratize.

This is not necessarily true with competitive clientelism. Even though this brand of clientelism does empower citizens vis à vis their patrons, shifting alliances between patrons can very quickly alter the situation and the balance of power. Political patrons do have potential exit options, even though opponents under competitive clientelism. If their survival is at stake, they can create new alliances leaving voters with no alternatives. An example of shifting alliances between patrons and the ensuing change of balance of power between them and their voters is seen through recent history of the Lebanese Sunni community.

Even though in today's Lebanon Sunnis are trapped in a monopsony (where one patron rules uncontested) with very little leverage over their sole political patron, the situation was considerably different just a few decades ago. Prior to the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), no political leader dominated the Sunni community. Unlike many of their political rivals whose ancestors had made politics a profession under the Ottomans, such as the Gemayyels, Jumblatts or Arslans, the Hariri family is relatively new to politics. To my knowledge, no clear account exists as to what political life was like in the Sunni camp before 1975. However, it can be fairly assumed that it was far more competitive than it is today given that rival factions ran for office. After the civil war and the decimation of the Sunni political class, the Hariri family rules uncontested over its Sunni constituents[4].

The Sunni example from Lebanon demonstrates how the rapid shift in political competition (a decade and a half) within one community weakens the leverage clients hold over their patrons. A simple shift in alliances or the elimination of a political rival can transform a community's political reality. This is one major reason why competitive clientelism cannot lead to

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[4] Saad Hariri withdrew from political life in 2022, suggesting that politics within the Lebanese Sunni community could become competitive once again.

democratization: it does not provide clients with stable, long-term capabilities to pressure political leaders.

To my knowledge, there exists one work in the literature that presents a possible theoretical connection between clientelism and democracy. Lizzeri and Persico (2004) claim that democracy takes root when it becomes too costly for officials to gain public support with targeted patronage. As the need for wider support grows, officials turn to the provision of public goods as opposed to targeted goods to increase their electorate's size. However, how the provision of public goods then leads to a democratic regime is not entirely clear in their account since citizens could be content with the performance of their government and satisfied with the goods they receive without demanding democracy as Jamal (2007) demonstrates.

Clientelism, even when it is competitive, does not aid clients in pursuing democracy by pressuring their political leaders. The rapid shifts in alliances between patrons does not provide solid grounds from which to challenge the state, as is the case where structural economic changes, such as the those described by Moore (1966) and others, have the potential to empower citizens far more than does competitive clientelism.

Competitive Clientelism and the Socio-Cultural Determinants of Democracy

If competitive clientelism does not necessarily lead to democracy through the mechanism invoked by structuralists, I argue that it is also unable to generate democracy through widespread socio-cultural changes.

Providing competitive clientelism does produce trust as I attempt to demonstrate in this dissertation, then there are reasons to believe that it can imbue society with norms of tolerance and reciprocity and result in democracy through a similar mechanism argued by Inglehart (1997). However, there are reasons to be skeptical of such developments.

First and foremost, competitive clientelism remains a form of corruption that excludes a large portion of the population. In Grindle's (2016, p.242) words, "clientelism is rooted in particularism and relationships of exchange; democracy is based on notions of equality and citizenship rights." By nature, clientelism is designed by political leaders to circumvent the task of having to make promises to a much larger segment of the population and allow them to attain their goals while shrinking the size of the winning coalition required to govern. Even though the proportion of Lebanese citizens who sell their votes is abnormally high, there are still some who do not benefit from clientelist transactions.

Second, even in the most rewarding settings of competitive clientelism where clients receive the highest payoffs and require no competition with their neighbors to access patronage, generalized trust remains isolated in certain segments of the population. In the case of Lebanon, only people residing in the districts that are deemed "hot" in terms of legislative electoral competition could be generally more trusting of the people around them. In other words, trust does not necessarily spread throughout society because of a better provision of targeted goods supplied by authorities to specific clients.

But if competitive clientelism creates enough trust to spread throughout society, can it then lead to democracy as in the "socio-cultural" variant of economic development and democratization? The answer to this question is not clear. In theory, it appears that for competitive clientelism to create societal-wide generalized trust, every client in society would have to be rewarded with patronage. This would become counterproductive to the very essence of clientelism as its goal is to selectively target rewards for cheaper political support. It is only logical to pursue clientelism when it is cheaper to bribe a minimum number of voters needed to secure an election as opposed to committing to programmatic promises. The question then becomes, when is it more

efficient to provide public goods as opposed to targeted rewards through patronage? Maybe personalized rewards are easier to deliver and satisfy voters in the shorter run than would be improving local infrastructure, for example, projects that would only benefit voters in the long run and hence not bring immediate political gains to patrons.

Putnam (1993) notes why clientelism is incompatible with democracy. Clientelism, he claims, goes against "civic-ness" (Putnam 1993, p.99), where civic-ness means "a steady recognition and pursuit of the public good at the expense of all purely individual and private ends" (Skinner 1984, p.218). When patrons focus on providing some of their constituents with personal rewards, they do so at the expense of programmatic politics that seek to benefit wider society through public goods (Putnam 1993, p.99). Furthermore, democracy is arguably in itself a public good. It is (in theory) non excludable, that is, once provided, everyone reaps its benefits. Democracy is also non-rival. Its "consumption" by one individual does not decrease the amount available for others.

Competitive clientelism, no matter how rewarding to its clients, still harms the public good. To put it in Putnam's (1993) language, even in a context of competitive clientelism with clients who benefit from generous patronage, civic-ness is not created.

If, however, future research does show that the provision of public goods leads to democracy, then Putnam's (1993) claim that it is democracy first that then creates the efficient provision of public goods is turned on its head. The relationship between democracy, trust, and the distribution of goods through competitive clientelism deserve more attention. The literature has identified numerous correlations so far; however, the exact causal mechanism and the direction of causality remain a point of contention.

CHAPTER 5

SETTING THE CONTEXT: CLIENTELISM IN LEBANON

This chapter's aim is to describe why Lebanon is an ideal case to test my theoretical argument of inter-client competition on generalized trust. There are three reasons why Lebanon fits the bill. First, as the literature demonstrates, clientelism is rampant in Lebanon (Hamzeh, 2001; el Khazen, 2000, 2003; Cammett and Issar, 2010; Cammett, 2014; Corstange, 2012, 2016, 2018). It affects more than half of the population when measured using methods that circumvent social desirability biases that can contaminate the data (Corstange, 2012). Second, and perhaps most importantly, clientelist dynamics vary across Lebanese ethnic groups where some must compete for patronage while others do not, as I describe in more detail in this chapter. From a research design perspective, this difference is crucial for a within country-variation test of my argument (more details in chapter 6). And finally, although a democracy on paper, Lebanon falls short of many of the prerequisites of functioning liberal democracies as demonstrated through descriptive statistics of published country-level democratic scores, thus allowing me to attenuate the possible confounding effects of democracy on generalized trust.

Politics in Lebanon are based on bribes for votes, not on programmatic commitments. Not only is the practice of vote selling common, but it affects all ethnic groups equally, and it is reinforced by Lebanon's electoral system. And while Lebanon is a democracy on paper, the reality is quite different.

In this chapter, I will first describe clientelism's prominent role in Lebanese politics, how the practice dates back to Ottoman times, and how sectarianism became intertwined with Lebanese clientelism.

Second, I will provide estimates of the prevalence of clientelism in Lebanese politics during the last fifteen years, as well as a summarize the Lebanese electoral system. Lebanon's consociational system exacerbates clientelist practices.

Third, I will describe how, even though Lebanon is a democracy on paper, reality paints a very different picture, as much of Lebanon's liberal safeguards are routinely violated.

Fourth, I elaborate on the distinction between competitive and uncompetitive clientelism and their respective effects on insincere public sycophancy. I also describe how competitive clientelism is a rather recent phenomenon (dating to around 2007) triggered by intense political competition within the Christian camp after the return of General Michael Aoun from exile.

Fifth, with the help of the literature, I show the different effects competitive and uncompetitive clientelism exert on the abundance of bribes received by voters. Most importantly for my argument, I show how competition between clients for access to patronage forces some to resort to insincere public sycophancy with little rewards in return while others receive abundant rewards with no need for fake display of public affection for their leaders.

Sixth, I examine political competition within the Shiite community in Lebanon. Unlike other Lebanese ethnic groups that either have competing parties or only a single party, Lebanese Shiites have a choice between two tightly collusive parties that perfectly align on all policy issues and do not attempt to undermine each other's electoral base. This alignment complicates things when attempting to determine the level of political competition in Shiite politics. I argue however that because of the sturdy alliance set up between the two main Shiite political parties, political competition within the Shiite camp is practically inexistent.

Finally, using existing literature and an interview conducted with an elite Lebanese politician, I examine whether clientelism intensifies during election season or whether it is a

consistent, intense, practice. The majority of the evidence suggests that even though politicians might provide very limited patronage to their clients in a continuous fashion, the exchange of personal favors for political support, i.e. votes, increases significantly during election seasons.

History of Clientelism in Lebanon

Clientelism in Lebanon is not a recent phenomenon. Political support in exchange for personal favors was a feature of politics in the region long before the creation of modern Lebanon by France in 1920. Clientelism finds its roots in feudal practices of the eighteenth century under Ottoman rule where feudal lords granted locals access to land in exchange for devout political allegiance (Hamzeh, 2001). The feudal system in Lebanon was thus roughly similar to feudal organizations elsewhere, albeit with a few differences.

The Ottomans relied on a feudal structure that gave local political elites much autonomy in the administration of local affairs and especially tax collection. Feudal lords or muquata'jis (Hamzeh, 2001; Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984) were responsible to "amirs". Amirs in turn mediated between the local lords and Ottoman authority. But most significantly, as Hamzeh (2001) points out, "the basic characteristic of the *iqta'* [feudal] systems was that political legitimacy and allegiance depended more on personal loyalty than on coercive obedience to an impersonal authority." (Hamzeh 2001, p.168). The building block of political stability was precisely the very personal relationship between the feudal lord and his follower. "They [the muquata'jis] lived among the villagers and their power depended on their followings atba' or 'uhda (clients) […]" (Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984, p.91).

During my interview with a Lebanese political elite, my interviewee described the origins of Clientelism in Lebanon: "The Sublime Porte[5] managed its provinces by appointing "walis" or

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[5] The Sublime Porte is used by Historians to refer to the Ottoman central authority in Istanbul.

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governors whose main tasks were to maintain order, raise taxes, and enlist soldiers for the Ottoman armies. They performed their duties by delegating locals to obtain the required taxes and conscripts. Some were called Bey, Sheikh or Zaim, and became the middlemen between the government and the people, negotiating favors and exemptions. This tradition subsided after the end of the Ottoman empire, and the creation of the Lebanese Republic, in spite of the efforts to establish the rule of law of a democratic regime. It lessened but did not disappear until the civil war when the Lebanese state collapsed and gave way to small territories governed by armed militias through violence. With no accountability, individuals came to rely again on who they knew and not on rules and regulations. With the end of the civil conflict, and because the militiamen became the political leaders, citizens understood that these leaders, or "Zaims", elected or by tradition were the key to obtaining favors or rights" (Anonymous source, personal interview, October 28th, 2023).

However, it was not until hostilities between different religious groups in the mid nineteenth century, specifically between Maronites (a Christian denomination) and Druze (a Muslim denomination) that sectarianism became part of Lebanese politics and part of clientelism (Hamzeh, 2001). Allegiance to feudal lords became based not only on personal ties, but on religious kinship as well. Maronite lords, for example, rallied support exclusively from within their own religious communities, as did Druze, Sunni etc... When a central administrative council was formed in 1861 to preside over the district of Lebanon, its twelve seats were allocated by confessional quotas: Each of the six main sects (Maronite, Druze, Sunni, Shiite, Greek Orthodox and Catholic) received two seats (Hamzeh, 2001). This was the beginning of the institutionalization of sectarianism in Lebanese politics, a characteristic that still heavily dictates institutional appointments in the modern state of Lebanon.

If French rule over Lebanon from 1918 to 1943 somewhat sidelined feudal lords in political affairs, it still championed power-sharing practices in the aim of pacifying opposition to its rule, particularly from the Sunni community. Power sharing practices continued after 1943 with independence from France. Even though Ottoman rule had ended more than a quarter of a century ago, feudal lords who were once powerful political figures under Ottoman rule still held significant political power in the middle of the twentieth century. Familiar Muquata'ji family names such as the Jumblats, Arslans and Gemayyels (among many others) went on to form their own political parties that continue to hold considerable power even in contemporary Lebanese politics. In today's market for votes, these parties also regulate clientelist exchanges. There is therefore an institutionalization of feudalism in today's Lebanon through political parties run by feudal families that once administered local affairs for the Ottomans. In many instances the feudal lord has become the political party.

The unwritten National Pact of 1943 (when Lebanon gained its independence from France) was somewhat of a "gentlemen's agreement" between the various religious factions. Its aim was to provide guidelines on how to divide political institutions in the newly independent state of Lebanon (Bogaards, 2019). Lebanon exemplified consociationalism, where power is primarily shared along ethnic lines (Lijphart, 1977). The pact specifically stipulated that the President of the Republic be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni, and the Speaker of the House, a Shiite. However, the Pact still gave considerable advantage to Christians with a favorable ratio of six to five in number of parliamentary seats. In a parliamentary democracy modelled on the French Third Republic where parliamentarians elect a president who in turn selects ministers, control of parliament is synonymous with control of the state.

The country's consociational division of power helps to reinforce rather than weaken clientelism. As Corstange (2012, p. 487) explains, "Lebanon's sectarian power-sharing institutions perpetuate clientelism in Lebanese politics […]". Even though designed to mitigate conflict between competing ethnic groups, power-sharing institutional arrangements often lead to gridlock that prevents political factions from enacting any type of political reform. With commitment to programmatic policy change now off the table, political parties direct their efforts to rewarding their constituents with targeted, personalized patronage. These rewards include but are not limited to, cash, employment, food baskets, scholarships and medical care.

It was not until the end of the civil war in 1990 and the Taif agreement that the institutionalized division of power between ethnic groups would be formally included in the constitution: the President remained a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni, and the Speaker of the House a Shiite. Nevertheless, the real change came with a new ratio in the distribution of parliamentary seats between Christians and Muslims: a much fairer fifty-fifty ratio (Karam, 2012). This ensured a more balanced distribution of political power between Christians and Muslims, the former now a clear minority in the country. With the parliament still the main powerhouse of the Lebanese political system, an equal distribution of seats was the only way to ensure political parity.

Post-Civil War Lebanon: Electoral Laws and Prevalence of Clientelism

Even though electoral districts are drawn and redrawn before almost every parliamentary election in Lebanon, its electoral laws have generally been consistent since independence: multimember districts with plurality voting rules where parliamentary candidates who receive the largest number of votes win the seat. However, the laws incorporate a significant twist based on the consociational spirit in place since the middle of the nineteenth century: seats in each district

are allocated by religious sect, but constituents cast a single vote with a list of names for every seat, regardless of their own religious affiliation. Casting a vote with a list of names is often referred to as block voting (Shahandashti, 2016). A concrete example is of use here.

Consider a Sunni resident in the predominantly Christian electoral district of Zahleh in the East of the country. The district holds seven seats in parliament. Two of those seats must be filled by Greek Catholics, one by a Maronite, one by a Sunni, one by Shiite, one by a Greek Orthodox, and one by an Arminian Orthodox. However, the Sunni resident in question casts a single vote with a list of names for every respective seat. This system allegedly encourages candidates to seek votes from outside of their own ethnic community. As a result, political parties run lists of candidates that they encourage their followers to cast without altering any names on the list. Corstange (2012, 489-490) describes how parties even distribute pre-printed lists that are deliberately printed on small pieces of paper with very little margins to discourage voters from altering lists by scratching out names and writing in their own suggestions.

Nevertheless, although the electoral system encourages candidates to rally voters from outside of their own religious community, clientelist exchanges remain strongly entrenched between co-ethnic patrons and clients. For example, even with Lebanese voting laws that make it in a Christian party's best interest to go after Sunni or Shiite votes, the distribution of patronage predominantly occur between the party in question and its Christian clients. The literature identifies numerous reasons as to why ethnicity is often the basis for the formation of groups comprised of members that are better able to successfully cooperate (Chandra, 2004; Habyarimana, 2009; Posner, 2005; Horowitz, 1985). However, Corstange (2016) relies on the role of "reduced transaction costs" (p. 36) to explain how political parties and their voters are able to

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overcome collective action problems and hence ensure successful clientelist exchanges between them.

Patrons and clients must overcome the collective action problem for the exchange of patronage for votes to occur as each side is tempted to defect. When patrons provide rewards, clients must keep their end of the bargain by voting for the reward-providing political party. Put differently, some clients are tempted to collect patronage distributed by one party but vote for another, preferred party. Patrons would also like to promise voters rewards and renege on their engagement after ballots are cast. Clientelist exchanges are not institutionalized and monitored by a third party as to overcome the credible commitment problem.

In Lebanon, political parties hold an impressive array of methods to monitor whether clients have held their end of the bargain by voting accordingly. For example, political parties monitor voting behavior through pre-printed ballots they hand out to voters. By changing the font and size of the names on the lists among other things, political party representatives, consistently present in voting rooms, are able to keep an eye on proceedings and connect voters to ballots afterwards. In addition, the very small number of voters assigned to each ballot box, between two hundred and fifty and three hundred, (Corstange, 2012, p.490), facilitates party officials' monitoring.

Cooperation between patrons and clients in turn depend on factors that can facilitate this delicate transaction such as the ability of political parties to identify possible client "defectors" as described above. For those reasons, reduced transition costs play an important role in successful exchanges of patronage for votes. Ethnic homogeneity (in Lebanon's case religious homogeneity) is a transaction cost-reducer because of two reasons both of which are mutually reinforcing

(Corstange, 2016, p.36): the information technology mechanism and the strategic selection mechanism (Habyarimana et.al., 2007, 2009).

The information technology mechanism implies that since people usually seek interactions from within their own ethnic group more so than they do with ethnic strangers, they usually have more abundant and reliable information on fellow ethnics. This added information allows co-ethnics to better monitor one another and alleviate the threat of defection. Habyarimana et. al. (2007) describe this mechanism as giving participants an advantage of "findability": the networks of information strung between co-ethnics allows them to better find each other if one defects from the transaction. This mechanism is in turn reinforced by the strategic selection mechanism. Because people believe that successful cooperation is more likely with co-ethnics, they tend to avoid out-group individuals in favor of their own, thus maintaining information abundant and reliable.

But Corstange (2016, pp.137-143) adds that in the Lebanese context, these two mechanisms are reinforced by an additional factor: Small social units, such as families and clans, with their dense networks of information, constitute the backbone of clientelist exchanges. This is because party allegiances in Lebanon usually remain constant from generation to generation within extended families. On top of that, inter-ethnic marriages are not a common occurrence in Lebanon. The result is that political parties can rely on support from reliable families and clans that also happen to belong to the same ethnic community. To make it even more enticing for family members to maintain party loyalty, political parties usually promise more benefits to families who vote in bloc, thus adding extra pressure on family members who contemplate defection. It is for those very reasons that clientelist exchanges remain concentrated between co-ethnic patrons and clients in Lebanon, even when it is theoretically in a party's interest to rally non-co-ethnics.

Even though anecdotal evidence suggests that clientelism is fairly common in Lebanon, the phenomenon is not frequently measured. To my knowledge, Corstange (2012, 2018) provides the only unbiased rates of clientelism in Lebanon. The problem with obtaining unbiased measures of clientelism is the issue of social desirability pressures faced by respondents (Gonzalez Ocantos et al., 2012) as selling one's vote is frowned upon (Stokes, 2005; Carlin and Moseley, 2015) and is also associated with a stigma of poverty (Cammett, 2014). To counteract this issue, numerous scholars have resorted to a method known as the list experiment.

The logic of the list experiment is as follows: one group of randomly selected respondents is presented with a list of "non-sensitive" items (unrelated to clientelism) that influenced their vote, such as for example, candidates' programs, opinion of friends… Respondents in this group answer directly by confirming or denying whether each item affected their voting decision. The other randomly selected group is presented with the same list of items plus an additional item related to vote selling. In this group, however, respondents only give a count of how many of the items influenced their votes, without specifying which ones[6]. This procedure makes it impossible for interviewers to know who, from the list of respondents, sold their vote. Since participants are aware of this feature, they are enticed to answer more truthfully. A comparison of responses between both groups allows researchers to estimate a truer rate of clientelism within the population compared to directly asking respondents whether they sold their votes.

Corstange's (2012, 2018) list experiment administered shortly after the 2009 parliamentary election points to a staggering prevalence of clientelism in Lebanon. He finds that as opposed to "only" 26% of respondents blatantly admitting that personal benefits influenced their votes when interviewed directly (which is already a large number in any election worldwide), 55% of the

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[6] See Corstange (2012, p.492) for detailed description of list experiment method.

electorate throughout the country actually did sell their vote in exchange for patronage, as is deduced when comparing the control and treatment groups in the list experiment (Corstange, 2012, p.493). Furthermore, the practice seems to be affecting all ethnic communities rather equally (54% for Sunnis; 56% for Christians; 64% for Shiites), dispelling the popular myth that only Sunnis were bought with Hariri's fortune and Saudi funds[7]. This estimate, as Corstange (2018) puts it, is highly consistent with qualitative accounts he received from local observers estimating that "[…] between 40% and 70% of the voters are bought in any given election" as "[…] the 55% figure falls directly in the middle of this range" (Corstange, 2018, p.87). Still, there are some reasons to believe that this figure might be even higher in reality.

The 55% estimate is sampled from among Lebanese residents. In 2009, no electoral law allowed non-residents to vote, and there are allegations that political parties were flying people from abroad in the thousands in the aim of increasing their vote count, a way of "[…] giving voters a ride to the polls" (Corstange, 2012, p.499). If this were true, then the sample estimate underrepresents the true proportion of individuals who benefited from patronage since expatriates most likely left Lebanon at the time Corstange's (2012) list experiment was conducted. But even with the possibility of an underestimated proportion, the simple fact that over half of the Lebanese electorate sold their vote is staggering.

Democracy in Lebanon

What is described so far gives the impression that even though clientelism is rampant in Lebanese politics, elections are taken seriously, and the country is an "electoral democracy" (Diamond, 2002) where relatively competitive elections do take place. However, democracy is

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[7] Rafic Hariri made his fortune in Saudi Arabia in the construction business. See:
https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/feb/15/guardianobituaries.syria
Saudi Arabia was an ally of the Hariri Family until 2021 when Saad Hariri (son of Rafic Hariri) withdrew from political life.

more than expressing one's preference at the polls, and there are substantial nuances that this interpretation misses. Principles related to civil liberties and implementation of the rule of law, for example, should be given equal importance.

Numerous democratic measures point to weaknesses in Lebanese democracy, specifically in the implementation of the rule of law and the fight against corruption. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), for example, includes in its measurement the liberal principle of democracy which rests on the safeguard of individual rights[8]. V-Dem's Liberal Democracy Index is comprised of three elements: equality before the law, individual liberties, and judicial and legislative constraints on the executive. To put things into perspective, Lebanon's Liberal Democracy Index was 0.27 (on a scale from 0 to 1 where 1 is most liberal) in 2020, while Mexico's and Brazil's indices were 0.41 and 0.54, respectively, for that same year[9].

Political parties exercise significant influence on the judiciary system, a feature highlighted with the investigation into the 2020 Beirut port explosion. Judges assigned to the case who dare place any responsibility for the disaster on political figures are dismissed under the pretext of political bias[10].

As described in chapter two, many believe that democracy, particularly sturdy safeguards of civil liberties, are generators of trust (Levi, 1998; Offe, 1999; Sides, 1999; Rothstein, 2000). Strong rule of law and rigorous punishment of devious behavior makes it safer for people to trust one another. Nevertheless, Lebanon's poor track record for respecting civil liberties allows me to limit the possible confounding effects of liberal democracy on generalized trust.

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[8] See: https://v-dem.net/documents/39/v-dem_methodology_v14.pdf (p.4).
[9] See: https://v-dem.net/data_analysis/CountryGraph/
[10] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/01/lebanon-judiciary-farce-in-beirut-blast-investigation-must-end/

Competitive and Uncompetitive Electoral Districts

What makes Lebanon stand out as an ideal case to test my theory, apart from its high rates of clientelism and the attenuation of possible confounders of strong liberal safeguards, is the drastic difference in political competition across its ethnic communities. In this section, I describe how elections were always competitive in Lebanon, yet highly competitive districts are a relatively new phenomenon dating back to 2005-2006, with the return of General Aoun from exile and the creation of his political party, the Free Patriotic Movement. Within-district competition primarily affects Christian districts.

Following Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri's assassination in 2005, and with many fingers pointing to Syria as the culprit, a vast majority of Christians (alongside Sunnis) from various political factions participated in demonstrations to voice their discontent at the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Even though the Christian community seemed united against Syrian influence in 2005, political maneuvering was quick to break this united Christian front.

After fleeing Lebanon in 1990 because of failed armed resistance to Syrian occupation, General Michel Aoun announced that his primarily Christian-supported Free Patriotic Movement was aligning itself with the pro-Syrian Amal and Hezbollah parties, just a few months after his return from exile. Most surprising was the young Free Patriotic Movement's success in the 2005 parliamentary elections. Aoun's public justification for the alliance was his discontent directed at rival Christian political parties, particularly the Lebanese Forces and Kataaeb. He accused them of allowing their anti-Syrian Muslim allies to gain as many seats as possible in parliament at the expense of the Christian community. Nevertheless, political analysts agree that Aoun's move to align himself with the pro-Syrian bloc was to help him in his quest to become President in the near future, a role always reserved for a Maronite Christian.

Nevertheless, Aoun's suspect political jockeying did cause questioning among his Christian supporters. Disillusioned by traditional Christian parties (primarily the Lebanese Forces and Kataaeb) because of their participation in the civil war, many Lebanese Christians turned to the newly created Free Patriotic movement for a cleaner start. However, Aoun's alliance with political movements backed by Teheran and Damascus did not sit well with many Christian voters. This point was exploited by Christian patrons, particularly the leader of the Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea. The return of Aoun and the creation of a political movement that was able to gather political support from a large proportion of Christian voters, created a considerable schism in the Christian community, and with it, intense political competition. Many within the community, including the Maronite patriarch of Lebanon, called for Christian reconciliation, nevertheless in vain.

Christian voters are spread between two evenly sized camps. The anti-Syrian March 14 alliance where established Christian parties such as the Lebanese Forces and Kataaeb (among other much smaller parties) form an alliance with Hariri's Sunni Future Movement (itself supported politically and financially by Saudi Arabia). On the other hand, the pro-Syrian March 8 alliance unites Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and the two Shiite Amal and Hezbollah parties (along with a number of smaller parties from various ethnic backgrounds).

As a result, Christians are now in high demand, not only because they constitute the swing vote or linchpin, as many observes put it (Corstange, 2016, p.66) in determining which alliance seizes power in Lebanon, but also which regional powers impose their hegemony over the country, either the Syrian-Iran alliance or Saudi Arabia. With a roughly equal proportion of Sunnis, Shiites and Christians (the country's three largest ethnic communities), Lebanon was always a place for foreign meddling. There are allegations that millions of dollars were funneled into Lebanon during

the 2005, 2009 and 2018 parliamentary elections in the aim of buying as many voters as possible, with foreign funds giving political parties added resources to engage in clientelism, on top of the state assets that they frequently misappropriate to finance their clientelist enterprise (Anonymous source, personal communication, October 28th 2023).

Results from the 2005 parliamentary elections demonstrate that Christian voters were very evenly distributed across both camps, between 25 to 30% of Christian voted for either bloc (Corstange, 2016, p.66), competition that remained consistent during the 2009 and 2018 parliamentary elections. Furthermore, during the 2009 parliamentary elections, competition in specific Christian districts was particularly heated: predominantly Christian districts such as Zahleh, West Bekaa-Rashayya, the Matn, Kisirwan, Batrun and the Beirut first district were often cited by all political factions as the most competitive districts (Corstange, 2012, p.501). On the other hand, about a third of the electoral districts were so dominated by one alliance that opposition did not even bother to run a candidate there.

Such a remarkable contrast of competition within the Christian community, as opposed to the Sunni community, can be observed in the August 2007 parliamentary by-elections to replace two assassinated parliamentarians, a Sunni and a Maronite, both from the anti-Syrian March 14 coalition. Whereas the outcome for the Sunni seat was decided months before the election as "[…] the nominee's two main "opponents" were, in fact, his own campaign manager and deputy campaign manager who […] submitted their candidacies in order to hire three sets of "candidate representatives instead of one" (Corstange 2016, 52). No one knew who from the Free Patriotic Movement or Kataeeb party would win the hotly contested Christian seat.

If political competition within the Lebanese Christian community is intense, the same cannot be said of other religious groups. For example, the Sunnis, are trapped in what Corstange

(2016, p.77) calls a monopsony, where one patron rules uncontested. Lebanese Sunnis in post-civil war Lebanon were represented by billionaire entrepreneur Rafik al-Hariri. His assassination in 2005 did not alter the established dynamic as his son, Saad al-Hariri took over proceedings.

Access to Patronage in Lebanon, Inter-client Competition and Insincere Public Support

As described in the last section of chapter two (Varieties of Clientelism), competition between patrons, or lack thereof, directly affects the number of people bribed as well as the generosity of those bribes for the following reasons: "[…] electoral contestation between dueling patrons bids up the value of the vote within their community. People have credible options from which to choose from, so competitive pressures compel politicians to reach out to more, and more expensive, voters" (Corstange, 2016, p.48). Hegemonic patrons, on the other hands, can afford to buy their constituents' votes at a relatively cheap price. In the Lebanese context, this suggests that Christians are those that receive the most lucrative bribes, both in number and amount, as opposed to Lebanese Sunnis and Shiites.

It is difficult to test whether constituents living in competitive areas obtain significantly more generous rewards by measuring the amounts of targeted goods received by voters, such as, monetary bribes. Researchers' inability to link individual-level variables to every respondent in the list experiment method means social desirability biases cannot be circumvented. There are however specific kinds of rewards that can be used for such an analysis; rewards that are measured at the aggregate level and used as indicators of prevalence of clientelism: club goods distributed indiscriminately to a number of clients such as access to electricity and water as well as percent of an ethnic community's employment in the public sector.

Testing whether Lebanese Sunnis' lack of political options negatively affects their access to club goods. Corstange (2016, p.173) finds that Sunnis living in urban areas receive, on average,

20% to 40% less water and electricity per day than their Lebanese peers from other communities. This negative effect is somewhat mitigated for a limited number of Sunnis residing in rural area; the logic being that patrons rely only on club goods in settings where their constituents "dominate demographically" (Corstange, 2016, p.158) as to bribe more efficiently (bribing ethnically mixed areas with club goods is a waste of resources from a patron's point of view, as nonethnics benefit from the indiscriminate distribution of the good). Furthermore, Sunnis are generally much less employed in the public sector as compared to their peers from other ethnic communities. Notwithstanding some exceptions, the findings suggest that Sunnis in Lebanon are not well rewarded, if rewarded at all, for their votes.

These findings are crucial for my argument in this dissertation. They suggest that political competition between co-ethnic patrons empowers voters, thus giving them access to more frequent and generous bribes; whereas, the absence of competition in a community leaves its members with limited choice but to accept whatever little patronage is offered. In my argument, I build on Corstange's (2016) work by measuring the effect different types of clientelism exert on generalized trust. Yet another of Corstange's (2016) findings directly relate to the theoretical mechanism I present in this dissertation.

Clients receiving the least generous payoffs for their votes are also, ironically, those that engage most in what Corstange (2016, p.194) calls "public sycophancy", or public display of political support for a patron/party. When competition between patrons is limited, clients must do all they can to differentiate themselves from their peers to access the limited patronage distributed. Thus, absence of competition between patrons drives up competition between clients. One way to outcompete a fellow client is to send costly signals of commitment to one's patron through public displays of support. Such a move is costly because clients must invest time and effort; but also

risky, because there could be reprisals if the opposition wins. Below are two examples of public display of political iconography in Lebanon (figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1:Public Sycophancy for Hariri.

Figure 2:Public Sycophancy for Nasrallah.

In figures 1[11] and 2[12], a word of support is addressed to the political patron in question (Sunni leader Saad Hariri in figure 1 and Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of the power Shiite party, Hezbollah, in figure 2). Most intriguingly, the people responsible for the display of the portraits sign their names at the bottom of the iconography (Afif el Tayyibi's sons and Mohamad Diab Ismail, respectively).

In Lebanon, ethnic communities that receive few rewards for their political support are, ironically, also those who engage most in public displays of political support to their patron. Crucial for my argument, Corstange (2016) demonstrates how the display of iconography with presenters' names signed at the bottom is no accident but serves a very specific purpose. He finds that individuals in both Lebanon and Yemen who place emphasis on connections (as opposed to merit) to secure employment in the public sector (measured through surveys and interviews) are significantly more likely to engage in public sycophancy for their political leaders, evidence that supports a causal connection between the display of political iconography and patronage-seeking (Corstange, 2016, pp. 211-218). This causal connection underlines the insincerity of this public show of sycophancy, and Corstange (2016) goes as far as to call it "perverse competition" (p.197) between clients.

While impossible to truly gauge, we can reasonably assume that most, if not all, Lebanese citizens are aware that their peers' public display of support for their political leaders is insincere and serves no purpose other than personal enrichment. As I argued in chapter three and intend to demonstrate in this dissertation, insincere public displays of affection, coupled with limited access to patronage, negatively affects generalized trust for some, while positively affects generalized

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[11] "WSLS news", accessed Sep. 9, 2023, https://www.wsls.com/news/2022/05/13/lebanon-vote-seen-as-last-chance-in-crisis-plagued-nation/)
[12] "Times of Israel", accessed Sep.9, 2023, https://www.timesofisrael.com/despite-lebanon-election-setbacks-hezbollah-remains-a-growing-threat-to-israel/)

trust for those who receive generous patronage and have no need to resort to fake displays of public support.

While Sunni clients must compete against one another for access to the limited patronage distributed in Lebanon, Christians have no need to do so. It is Christian patrons that bear competitive pressures and must outbribe one another to acquire the support of their clients who are in high demand. Christian clients receive generous rewards without having to compete against one another.

Shiite Competition in Lebanon

Competition is not a dichotomous variable. It is therefore difficult to gauge. Competition can be intense, completely absent, or problematic to qualify when it is somewhere in between. Political competition within an ethnic community is crucial to determine in the Lebanese context since it directly affects the relative quantity of patronage received by voters. Political competition can give access to generous rewards in some instances or allow patrons to "buy" their voters cheaply when political competition is inexistant. And as I argue, the level of political competition and available patronage affect the extent of public sycophancy which then affects generalized trust.

Within-ethnic political competition is easy to determine for Sunnis and Christians in Lebanon as demonstrated above. Political competition is inexistent for the former, where one party fields its candidates unchallenged, while the latter sees intense competition between rival patrons. Christians, being in high demand, are offered generous patronage, while Sunnis are bought relatively inexpensively. However, political competition within the Shiite camp is problematic to gauge: Two very closely allied parties, namely Amal and Hezbollah, share the bulk of Shiite votes. This makes the generosity (or lack thereof) of patronage received by Shiite voters difficult to determine.

Corstange (2016) explicitly places the Shiite community in the competitive category. He acknowledges that even though competition within the Shiite camp is limited, it does not curb the amount of patronage received by Shiite constituents since they still have real political alternatives. The alliance between Amal and Hezbollah "[…] has restricted competition and deterred the emergence of other Shiite politicians, but, at the same time, offers constituents credible alternatives between the two cartel members" (Corstange, 2016, p.67). Amal, the more secular party of the two, relies on its access to state assets to fund its clientelist machine. Hezbollah, however, relies heavily on financial support from Iran. Viewed in this light, Lebanese Shiite constituents receive relatively generous patronage in exchange for their votes as they can threaten to support either one of the parties. Unfortunately, Corstange (2016) does not test the effect of Shiite competition on patronage as his analyses hinge on a dummy variable for "being Sunni". In other words, Christians and Shiites are grouped together in his regressions. Nevertheless, I contend that competition between Amal and Hezbollah is not as considerable as Corstange (2016) portrays it to be.

Hezbollah and Amal have closed ranks to the extent that neither one works to undermine the other's electoral base. Both perfectly align on all policy issues, whether domestic or foreign. This has been the case since 2005 after Syrian forces departed Lebanon. On a programmatic level, there are no reasons for competition. However, and more importantly, the balance of power between the two parties strongly suggests there is an absence of Shiite rivalry.

Amal, the much smaller of the two in terms of voter share as well as the much weaker in terms of paramilitary capability, exists at Hezbollah's whim. One of Corstange's (2016, p.76) interviewees even claims that "If Hezbollah became displeased with Amal, they're gone in a day". It therefore seems highly unlikely for Hezbollah to invest considerable resources to sway Shiite voters their way when Amal, if it becomes an opponent, can be easily eliminated. And from Amal's

point of view, it would be unwise to attempt to outbribe Hezbollah voters when they are well aware of potential consequences.

Furthermore, an outbidding battle between Hezbollah and Amal to determine who can rally as many voters as possible would surely displease Iran, Hezbollah's financial and military sponsor. Hezbollah needs to maintain credibility in the eyes of its foreign funder, which suggests refraining from generously bribing Shiite voters when there exist far cheaper ways to eliminate Shiite political opposition considering the party's military capabilities. Both Amal and Hezbollah have therefore come to a cordial agreement. They utilize their respective resources to keep their electoral base content, albeit at a cheap price.

For all those reasons, it seems as though Shiite competition is not as dynamic as it is in the Christian camp. Shiite voters are unable to exert considerable pressure on their political parties for more generous patronage.

Sporadic or Continuous Patronage?

If I am arguing that the generosity of patronage distributed affects generalized trust through inter-client competition, I first must determine if patronage is distributed only around election time, continuously and unrelated to electoral context, or somewhere in between. Most of the literature indicates that clientelism intensifies when elections are approaching, as I show in this section. Even though there is some evidence that political parties do continuously work to keep their constituents satisfied, the bulk of clientelist exchanges seem to occur as elections approach. Furthermore, my interview with the anonymous Lebanese politician lends support to the argument that the bulk of patronage distribution occurs during election season.

There is confirmation throughout Corstange's (2012, 2016, 2018) works that patronage intensifies particularly during the weeks leading to parliamentary elections. One Lebanese senior

official describes elections as a "season for money" (Corstange, 2012, p.483) and Corstange (2012) concludes that "Lebanon, by virtually all accounts supports a thriving vote market around election time" (Corstange, 2012, p.498).

On the other hand, some contend that clientelism is also used to maintain a strong support base and that clientelist exchanges also occur between elections (Cammett and Issar, 2010; Cammett, 2014; Szwarcberg 2015). Cammett and Issar (2010) focus on what they call "brick and mortar" clientelism in Lebanon; that is institutions, such as schools and hospitals, set up by political parties in the aim of establishing long term commitment to clients, as opposed to the sporadic rewards that occur during election season.

Clearly, then, there is evidence in the literature for both sides of the argument: clientelism occurs both outside and during election season. However, specific literature on clientelism in and outside of Lebanon indicates that even though the distribution of patronage can happen when no elections are around the corner, there are theoretical as well as empirical reasons indicating that it intensifies significantly during election season.

Evidence from a completely different political context provides a rationale for why intensifying patronage during election season is financially more efficient for political parties. Albertus (2016) et al. find that the PRI, Mexico's leading political party, deliberately implements land reform policies designed to inhibit long term growth in the aim of having more bribing efficacy during election time. Poverty, especially among the peasantry directly affected by unsound land reform, makes it substantially easier for the PRI to acquire votes at a cheaper price. From a theoretical perspective, and for purposes of generalization, the PRI's practices suggest that political parties see it as unbeneficial to cater to their constituents when no elections are underway, preferring rather to allocate the bulk of patronage during elections. Even if no single party in

Lebanon is able to impose its own policies to purposely impoverish its voters as the PRI does in Mexico, the underlying logic nevertheless remains: Political parties work to save the majority of their resources to influence voters more effectively around election season.

Empirical evidence also exists specifically from Lebanon, indicating that clientelism increases dramatically during election season. While investigating the effect of clientelism on the creation of jobs in both private and public firms, Diwan and Haidar (2021) observe how politically connected firms (PCFs) in politically connected sectors (PCSs) see a significant jump in employment during the 2009 Lebanese parliamentary election. Politically connected sectors usually dependent on state licensing such as pharmaceuticals, fuel imports and construction among others. Figure 3 below reproduced from Diwan and Haidar (2021, p.1376) clearly illustrates their results.

Figure 3: Net job Creation (reproduced from Diwan and Haidar (2021)).
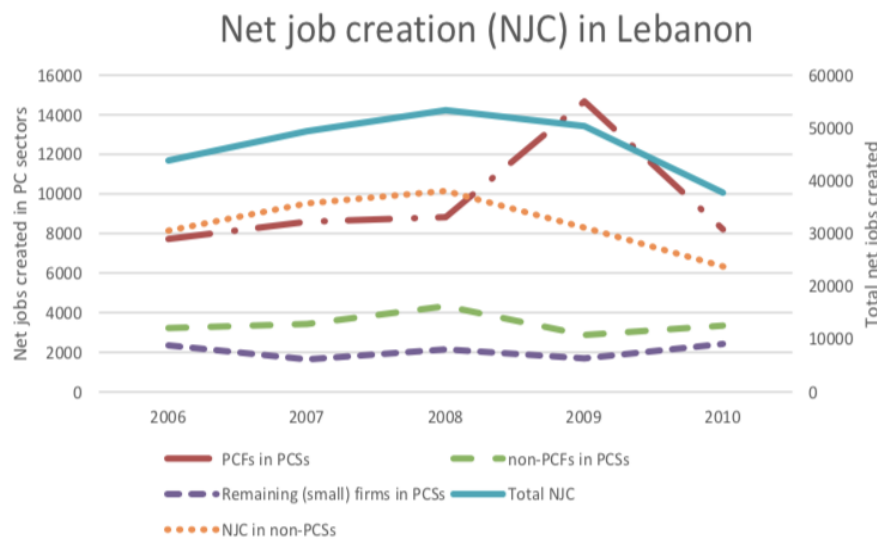

Figure 1. Aggregate net job creation in Lebanon.

In 2009, a year with a highly competitive parliamentary election, net job creation in PCFs and PCSs (in red on figure 3) hovered above 14,000, as opposed to around only 8,000 in all other

years: proof that patronage, at least in the form of employment, is distributed much more during election time. Also of note is the unchanged number of jobs created in other types of firms and sectors. Non-PCFs or firms in non-PCSs see no change in the number of jobs created during the election year of 2009.

Furthermore, even in works that describe continuous rather than sporadic clientelism in Lebanon, there is evidence of an intensification of distribution of patronage when elections approach. Even though political parties set up health clinics and schools in an attempt to provide year-round services as Cammett and Isaar (2010, p.408) describe, a director of a local political party-run health clinic that they interview states that "when elections come, the rates of the clinics go down and food aid increases". On top of the evidence gathered from the literature which supports the claim that clientelism drastically intensifies during election season, firsthand testimony from my interview with the anonymous Lebanese politician confirms this trend.

My interviewee claims that during election season in particular, many political patrons visit their constituents with suitcases full of cash with the intent of directly distributing its content to their followers. This money reminds them who helped them cover costs for surgery or repair their apartment, for instance. My interviewee's detailed description of the intricate workings of clientelism in Lebanon confirms that the bulk of clientelist exchanges occur during election season.

An additional reason reinforces the patronage during election season argument, one that concerns the functioning of the Lebanese political system. As described above, Lebanon's political institutions are modeled on the French third republic where power is concentrated in the parliament. Deputies elect the president and name other officials in the executive branch. So even though local-level elections do take place in Lebanon, such as municipal elections, they do not

carry the political weight associated with parliamentary elections and therefore do not motivate political parties to deploy their clientelist enterprises.

Even though total numbers of votes per district are difficult to obtain for the 2018 parliamentary election to demonstrate the level of competitiveness, the same reasons that rendered the 2009 parliamentary election competitive (as described by my interviewee) still loomed large in 2018. The same two blocks backed by Saudi Arabia and Iran vied for control of arguably the country's most important political institutions, the parliament: on the one hand, the March 14 coalition comprised of Sunni patron Saad Hariri, along with a number Christian and Druze allies among others, and on the other, the March 8 coalition comprised of Hezbollah, Lebanon's powerful Shiite party as well as a number of allies including the newly created Christian party, the Free Patriotic Movement[13]. It is also fair to assume that the competitive elections of 2018 were accompanied by the same spike in clientelism.

Whereas the 2018 parliamentary elections were seemingly highly competitive, the scheduled 2013 parliamentary elections were postponed several times and then cancelled altogether due to ethnic tensions spilling over into Lebanon from neighboring Syria's civil war[14]. It can be reasonably assumed that no political party would commit to distributing patronage with no certainty of an election around the corner. This contextual difference between the occurrence of a highly competitive elections (2018) and the absence of an election (2013) provides me with an additional comparative advantage, one that I intend to use in my design as explained in the next chapter.

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[13] "Al-Jazeera News", accessed Aug.6, 2023, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/5/10/unpicking-the-results-of-lebanons-elections

[14] "New York Times", accessed Aug.6, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/01/world/middleeast/lebanon-elections-postponed.html ; "Reuters", accessed Aug.6, 2023, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-parliament-election/lebanese-parliament-delays-june-election-deepening-drift-idUSBRE94U19N20130531/

To summarize, I have demonstrated in this chapter why Lebanon is an ideal case to test my argument in this dissertation. To be precise, the presence of both competitive and uncompetitive forms of clientelism across different ethnic communities in a country where clientelism is rampant allows for a within-country comparative test of my argument. I have followed Corstange's (2016) work showing how the Christian community is the most politically competitive, the Sunni community the least competitive, but have argued that the Shiite community is more uncompetitive than it is competitive. I have also shown, through the literature and my interview with the anonymous Lebanese politician, that the bulk of clientelist exchanges occurs during election season.

Furthermore, political competition directly affects inter-client competition. Whereas Sunni and Shiite clients must compete against each other for the purpose of accessing the limited quantity of patronage distributed by unchallenged patrons, Christian clients have no need to do so since their votes are in high demand, a result of their feuding Christian patrons. In addition, and crucial for my theoretical argument, inter-client competition for patronage is based on public sycophancy that is insincere in nature. Finally, ubiquitous corruption and weak rule of law means Lebanon remains a country where civil liberties and due process are seldomly respected. This allows me to lessen the possible confounding factor of democracy, and particularly liberal democracy, on generalized trust.

In the next chapter, I describe how I use the case of Lebanon to implement a research design to test the hypotheses I posited in chapter three. I rely on observational data and experimental data from Lebanon to support my argument.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I describe the observational and experimental data I use to test the various hypotheses related to my theoretical argument in this dissertation. Because all the data originates from Lebanon, I can use the advantages of a within country variation; more specifically, to control for several institutional and economic factors.

The first part of the chapter delves into the WVS data examined through logistic regressions as well as the operationalization of the variables included in the analysis. I specifically use logistic regressions, since generalized trust in the WVS is a dichotomous variable. The collection of the WVS data I employ (from the sixth and seventh waves) coincide perfectly with electoral void (2013) and competitive parliamentary elections (2018) in Lebanon, respectively. This allows me to use specific questions in the WVS to test the effect of parliamentary elections, and the entailed clientelist exchanges that accompanies them, to better understand generalized trust for various ethnic Lebanese groups. I also assess the WVS questions used to operationalize my dependent and independent variables of generalized trust and clientelism respectively, and the various controls introduced in the analysis, and defend the rationale for what controls to include in my statistical models.

Once this framework is established, I run a logistic regression using aggregate data from all countries included in the WVS's seventh wave before comparing it to the analysis implemented in Lebanon in the next chapter (seven). The goal of this aggregate test is to demonstrate how the variables included in my statistical model generally follow what is argued in the literature when

the totality of the WVS data is examined, specifically that generalized trust and clientelism are negatively correlated with one another.

In the second part of the chapter, I describe the online survey experiment I administer in Lebanon in April and May of 2023. The purpose of the survey experiment is to compliment the WVS data by avoiding the potential pitfalls of confounding factors and reverse causality, common drawbacks of observational data. Most importantly, however, the online survey experiment allows me to test my argument's causal mechanism; namely, the variable of insincere sycophancy and competition (or lack thereof) between clients for access to patronage and its different effects on generalized trust.

Before going into the specificities of the data, I rephrase the general hypotheses posited in chapter three to fit the Lebanese context by including the Lebanese ethnic groups that witness competitive or uncompetitive politics and the temporary variation of distribution of political patronage between election years and non-election years.

Hypotheses Rephrased for the Lebanese Context

Recall from chapter three the various hypotheses drawn from the theoretical argument I present as follows: first, *clientelism and generalized trust are negatively correlated for clients living in uncompetitive political contexts.* Second, *clientelism and generalized trust are positively correlated for clients living in competitive political contexts*. Furthermore, and related to the causal mechanism, I phrased a third and fourth hypothesis: *Clients who witness public dishonest sycophancy and receive no reward for their efforts will exhibit lower levels of generalized trust as compared to the general population,* and *clients who do not witness public dishonest sycophancy and receive patronage despite showing no public support will exhibit higher levels of generalized trust as compared to the general population.*

As I showed in chapter five, real political competition in Lebanon exists only in the Christian community. As a result, Christian clients are the only ones receiving generous rewards in return for their votes. On the other hand, Sunni and Shiite clients have little say in clientelist exchanges since the former are ruled by a single hegemonic patron (the Hariri family) and the latter can only choose between two tightly colluding political parties (Hezbollah and Amal) thus driving down the "price" of a Sunni and Shiite vote and drastically diminishing the rewards they receive for their votes.

Added to that, I have also demonstrated in chapter five through the relevant literature and my interview, how patronage, at least in Lebanon, is primarily distributed during election season. Together, these two differences (competitive and uncompetitive clientelism across Lebanese ethnic groups and the intensification of patronage during election season as opposed to non-elections) allow me to formulate hypotheses specifically tailored for the Lebanese context. These comparative hypotheses permit me to test the effects of both clientelism across ethnic groups and across election and non-election years.

Since there are no parliamentary elections and hence no "season of money" in 2013, and no patronage distributed in Lebanon for all ethnic groups, the need for public sycophancy and limited patronage in return for some (Sunnis and Shiites) on the one hand, and the lack of need for public sycophancy with generous patronage in return for others (Christians) on the other, is not pronounced in 2013 as it is 2018. It is therefore difficult to predict how clientelism is related to generalized trust in Lebanon is 2013.

For example, even though Lebanese Christians benefitted from generous rewards for their votes with little need to display insincere public support in 2009 and again in 2018 (as I demonstrated in chapter five), how are Lebanese Christian clients to think of clientelism in an

electoral void (2013) in between two rewarding elections, and how will this affect, in turn, their levels of generalized trust? As I argued in chapter three and with valuable support from Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) findings, generalized trust is highly sensitive to context. It fluctuates at the individual level depending on how fairly/unfairly the distribution of resources is perceived to be. Nevertheless, the rate of fluctuation is difficult to measure and beyond the scope of this dissertation (also due to a scarcity of data). It might be that the generous rewards received by Lebanese Christian clients in 2009 with no exposure to insincere public sycophancy no longer exert a positive effect on trust four years later, in 2013. On the other hand, it could be the case that the positive effect of clientelism on trust for Lebanese clients in 2009 is still significant in 2013, only four years after a competitive election.

The same can be said of Lebanese Muslims. It is difficult to tell whether the negative impact of clientelism with its atmosphere of insincere public sycophancy in 2009 still exerts negative effects on generalized trust in 2013, or whether this negative effect dissipates.

Since the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust for both Lebanese Christians and Muslims is delicate to determine in the absence of elections for theoretical reasons, I posit that no relationship exists between generalized trust and clientelism for Lebanese Muslims and Christians alike when no parliamentary elections are taking place. I can now state my first two hypotheses rephrased for the Lebanese context:

H1: Clientelism and generalized trust are uncorrelated for Lebanese Muslims in 2013.
H2: Clientelism and generalized trust are uncorrelated for Lebanese Christians in 2013

On the other hand, since an election does occur in 2018, and an extensive amount of patronage is distributed, albeit more generously and with less public sycophancy for Christians

than for Muslims, I expect a negative correlation between clientelism and generalized trust for Lebanese Muslims. However, since patronage is distributed more abundantly and fairly (without the need for dishonest sycophancy) for Christians, I expect the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust to be positive for Christians. Together, these two expectations yield the following hypotheses:

H3: Clientelism and Generalized trust are negatively correlated for Lebanese Muslims in 2018.
H4: Clientelism and Generalized trust are positively correlated for Lebanese Christians in 2018.

H1 and *H2* are tested trough a single logistic regression with WVS from 2013 where I add a dummy variable for "being a Lebanese Christian" (with Christians coded as "1" and Muslims as "0") and interact the categorical variable of clientelism with the dichotomous variable of religion to test how the relationship between clientelism and religion affect generalized trust.

On the other hand, H3 and H4 are also tested with a single logistic regression and with WVS from 2018 where I also add a dummy variable for "being a Lebanese Christian" and interact the categorical variable of clientelism with the dichotomous variable of religion to test how the relationship between clientelism and religion affect generalized trust.

So far, I do not make the distinction between Sunnis and Shiites in my statistical models. However, data from the WVS's seventh wave (2018 data) allows me to separate Sunnis and Shiites in Lebanon to test the relationship separately for each (a feature not possible in older WVS waves). For this purpose, I run two separate regressions, one for Sunnis and one for Shiites, to show how the relationship between trust and clientelism is still negative and significant in 2018 for each group, respectively.

Whereas I test *H1, H2, H3* and *H4* using observational data for Lebanon from the WVS's sixth and seventh waves, I test the fifth and sixth hypotheses (*H5* and *H6*) formulated below with

data collected from the administration of an online survey experiment in Lebanon during April and May of 2023. In what follows, I described the observational component of my research design pertaining to the test of *H1, H2, H3* and *H4.*

World Value Survey Data and Statistical Models

The WVS is a series of questions administered in several countries every few years (approximately every 5-6 years) in the aim of measuring "social, political, economic, religious and cultural values of people around the world"[15]. The average number of respondents per country is approximately one thousand two-hundred and the sample is stratified, meaning, proportionally representative of all ethnic and socio-economic groups. Approximately 60 countries are selected in each wave and are chosen to include respondents from both developed and developing settings.

Crucially, data for both the sixth and seventh WVS waves are collected in Lebanon at times that are representative of both an absence of a parliamentary election and a competitive election: while the scheduled 2013 parliamentary elections were postponed and then cancelled altogether due to political tensions affecting Lebanon from neighboring Syria's civil war[16], the 2018 parliamentary elections were as competitive as the 2009 elections[17]. Therefore, and critical to test my argument, little to no patronage is distributed in 2013, while it is abundantly distributed in 2018.

Specifically, data from the sixth WVS wave is collected in Lebanon from November 17th to November 30th of 2013[18]. On the other hand, data from the seventh wave of the WVS is collected

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[15] See: https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp

[16] https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/01/world/middleeast/lebanon-elections-postponed.html ; https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-parliament-election/lebanese-parliament-delays-june-election-deepening-drift-idUSBRE94U19N20130531/ ; https://www.france24.com/en/20130621-lebanon-clashes-parliamentary-elections-postponed

[17] See chapter 5, p. 86.

[18] See: "Results by country", p.39, found here: https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp

in Lebanon in June of 2018[19], only a month after parliamentary elections in May 2018. Therefore, not only is the data collected during the 2018 election year, but respondents are questioned on matters pertaining to elections only a few weeks after competitive parliamentary elections.

Apart from the cultural controls introduced in the analysis (described below) to mitigate the fact that the regressions are applied on separate ethnic groups, the within country variation design allows me to control for general economic conditions as well as institutional factors. From an economic perspective, Lebanon had not yet confronted the severe economic crisis that started in October of 2019 resulting in even greater income inequality in a country already faced with staggering income disparities[20]. Abnormally high-income inequality could adversely affect levels of generalized trust, particularly for the middle class who is now almost inexistent, a result of Lebanon's economic meltdown. Furthermore, a within-country variation suggests that the effects of the national- level economic factors are, to some extent, controlled for.

From an institutional perspective, identical electoral laws apply to all Lebanese religious communities indiscriminately. This is an important contextual control as examined in the clientelism literature since different electoral laws do exert different effects on clientelist exchanges (Corstange, 2012, 2016, 2018; Singh, 2019, 2021). This dynamic could affect my argument. I will now describe how I operationalize my dependent variable, independent variable, and controls through specific WVS questions from both its sixth and seventh waves.

Operationalizing Generalized Trust

Trust is the dependent variable of interest in this dissertation. To be precise, I am interested in generalized trust. As I have demonstrated in the literature review in chapter two, generalized trust allows societies to function as they were imagined to, with robust cooperation and little social

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[19] See: "Results by country", p.6, found here: https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV7.jsp
[20] https://www.unescwa.org/publications/inequality-lebanon-growing-gap

tension. Ideally, generalized trust allows individuals in modern states to collaborate for the provision of public goods that are otherwise impossible to produce. For those reasons, I am focused on generalized trust.

The literature debates whether generalized trust represents a real measure that captures something that exists in the consciousness of people. I join Rothstein (2013), Uslaner (2002) and Delhey and Newton (2003) in believing that generalized trust represents society's moral standards, as well as the extent to which there is widespread belief that fellow citizens are willing to act beyond self-interest, no matter socio-economic or ethnic differences.

Rosenberg (1965) was the first to develop a question to operationalize the concept of generalized trust. His question explicitly avoids asking to whom the respondent is giving their trust. The purpose of this deliberate vagueness is to better understand the ability of the respondent to trust society at large. Rosenberg's (1965) question is: "generally speaking, would you say most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?"[21]. This well-known version of the generalized trust question is often referred to as the traditional trust questions (TTQ hereafter) and is widely used in surveys, including all waves of the WVS.

One criticism against the TTQ is that "most people" is vague and can be misleading. Starting from the puzzling observation that China displays abnormally high levels of generalized trust for a non-OECD country, Steinhardt (2012) asks, "how is high trust in China possible?" He contends that many Chinese respondents in survey samples live in the more rural and isolated corners of the country where they associate "most people" (in the TTQ) as the people familiar to them, a result of the repeated social interactions with a limited number of individuals. His argument is reinforced by the very low levels of outgroup trust observed (how trusting respondents are of

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people they meet for the first time) in those same rural regions where generalized trust is, otherwise, relatively high.

If one compares Lebanon to China, however, the former is relatively urbanized: 89% in 2018 according to the World Bank[22] compared to the latter's 59% for that same year, suggesting that the effect of repeated interactions with a limited number of people and the negative drawbacks on interpreting the TTQ do not necessarily affect survey respondents in Lebanon as it would in China. Even so, had Lebanese respondents in the WVS been selected from mostly rural areas and been affected by an overestimate of positive responses to the TTQ, it can also be fairly assumed that this overestimate of generalized trust would affect all ethnic Lebanese communities alike and should therefore not bias my results.

Operationalizing Clientelism

Clientelism, the independent variable of interest, is not as straightforward to measure as generalized trust. This is chiefly due to responses being affected by social desirability biases. There are reasons to believe respondents are not always truthful in their answers due to social pressures, as Corstange (2018) demonstrates through his list experiment. But even though list experiments are more accurate at measuring true rates of clientelism, they cannot be used to correlate variables at the individual level since they are unable to distinguish who was influenced by bribes. They can only give general rates of clientelism in the population. On top of that, clientelist exchanges are usually secretive and cannot be observed without questioning individuals involved in clientelist exchanges. As a result, one feasible way to measure clientelism at the individual level is through survey questions.

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[22] See: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=LB

Both the WVS's sixth and seventh waves ask respondents the following: "In your view, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections: Voters are bribed". Respondents answer through four categories, ranging from "not often at all" to "very often". The wording of the question reduces the risk of social desirability bias, as it does not inquire whether respondents personally sold their votes, but rather asks their opinion on the prevalence of vote buying. Reducing the effect of social desirability bias mitigates the risk of reverse causality since more trusting respondents could also be more willing to answer truthfully.

Descriptive statistics from the WVS's sixth and seventh wave tell a very similar story to Corstange's (2018) rates of clientelism measured through his list experiment, suggesting that WVS respondents might not necessarily be affected by social pressures.

Table 1:tabulation of voter bribe in Lebanon in 2013.

How often are voters bribed?	Freq.	Percent	Cumul.
Not at all	86	7.81	7.81
Not often	230	20.89	28.70
Fairly often	400	36.33	65.03
Very often	385	34.97	100.00
Total	1101	100.00	

Table 2: tabulation of voter bribe in Lebanon in 2018.

How often are voters bribed?	Freq.	Percent	Cumul.
Not at all	86	7.36	7.36
Not often	200	17.11	24.47
Fairly often	420	35.93	60.39
Very often	463	39.61	100.00
Total	1169	100.00	

In 2013 (table 1) almost 37% of Lebanese respondents claim that voters are bribed "fairly often" while almost 35% claim that it is "very often". Combining these two categories yields a total of 72% which comfortably exceeds Corstange's (2018) rate of 55% obtained through his list

experiment.

Results for June of 2018 (table 2) show very similar results. About 36% of respondents in Lebanon claim that voters are bribed "fairly often", while almost 40% believe it is "very often". Adding the proportion from these two categories yields a total of approximately 76% which again exceeds Corstange's (2018) measure of 55% who admit selling their vote which he obtained through his list experiment. It appears that Lebanese respondents of the WVS (both 6th and 7th wave) are not necessarily underreporting the prevalence of vote buying, which suggests that social desirability bias is not contaminating the data.

On the other hand, a drawback in the WVS question I use to operationalize clientelism is that it must be met with an assumption: respondents who believe clientelism is prevalent have personally experienced it and rely on the distribution of patronage. Put differently, it could be the case that while some respondents assert that clientelism is highly prevalent in Lebanon, they have never themselves experienced it, but are rather affected by rumors of its occurrence. If this were the case, results in my analysis could be affected by an overreporting of true clientelist rates (the online survey experiment I implement in Lebanon circumvents this issue).

Nevertheless, even though this measure of clientelism is not ideal, it remains the only way to measure vote buying through observational data (apart from experiments or field work) without running into social desirability issues. I therefore use the WVS question for vote buying as a proxy measure to create a scale of exposure to clientelism. As demonstrated (with the help of the literature), not all Lebanese citizens are exposed to clientelism to the same extent. Some rely on it for access to employment, healthcare, schooling and even access to electricity, while others do not at all engage in the exchange of favors for votes. I use this measure of clientelism and correlate it

against generalized trust to test the effects of degree of exposure to different types of clientelism (competitive for Christians or uncompetitive for Muslims).

To test the hypotheses that clientelism and generalized trust are uncorrelated for both Lebanese Muslims and Christians in 2013 (*H1* and *H2*) and negatively correlated for Lebanese Muslims but positively correlated for Christians in 2018, respectively (*H3* and *H4*), I create a dummy variable for respondents' religious denomination and interact it with the clientelism variable (made possible by a question in the WVS' sixth and seventh waves that asks respondents their religious affiliation). I combine all Christian sects (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Maronite) and code those respondents as "1", combine all Muslims sects (Sunnis and Shiites) and code those respondents as "0", while all respondents who identify as being from "other" religions in the WVS (sixth and seventh waves) are dropped from the analysis. Adding a dummy variable for respondents' religion allows me to test the difference between religions for each year in one model, respectively, as opposed to creating two separate regressions, one for Lebanese Muslims and one of Lebanese Christians. A single model allows me to increase the number of observations and statistical power.

Regarding controls I add to my model, I rely on Jamal's (2007) work on trust in the Middle East for three reasons. First, Jamal's (2007) dependent variable is generalized trust. Second, even though her work does not include Lebanon, her investigation focuses on Middle Eastern countries (Jordan, Morocco and Egypt). And third, she employs WVS data (from the WVS's fourth wave).

As stated above, the cultural confounder looms large in the observational part of my study since I am isolating two Lebanese ethnic groups to test the effect of clientelism on generalized trust: the Christians and the Muslims. It could be that trust and clientelism correlate differently for various ethnic groups and for reasons related to specific cultural traits concerning Christianity or

Islam that I am omitting from my analysis. Jamal's (2007) strategy to control for cultural or religious confounders is to include two questions routinely asked in all waves of the WVS: the frequency of attendance at religious services and the extent to which respondents believe that political leaders should be religious[23].

Several scholars have posited various relationships between political culture and trust. Often, political culture is influenced by prevalent religious norms. While Putnam (1993) and Uslaner (2002) agree that the Catholic church is harmful to trust because of its vertical and hierarchical structure whereas Protestant organizations reinforce trust because of horizontal and egalitarian relationships between its members. Inglehart (1990) believes Islam to be detrimental to trust because of a culture of limited tolerance toward out-groups. Jamal's (2007) decision to use religious questions to control for political culture is reasonable considering how heavily religion influences the prevailing political culture and with it, generalized trust. I use the "frequency of attendance at religious services" to control for the effect of religiosity on generalized trust. Jamal (2007) also makes use of a question that asks respondents the extent to which they support the idea of a religious political system. However, this question is not asked in the WVS's sixth wave. I refrain from including it in my analysis to have a similar model with which I test sixth and seventh waves WVS data.

Jamal's (2007) own argument centers on the effects institutional performance exert on generalized trust. That is, citizens satisfied with government performance, whether democratic or authoritarian, should display higher levels of trust in both institutions and in the public. To test this argument, Jamal (2007) relies in her logit model on four questions that gauge what she calls political confidence (Jamal, 2007, pp.1337-1346). These questions seek to measure confidence in

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[23] See Appendix for exact wording of WVS questions used in logistic regression.

government, parliament, political parties, and the police. To compliment her performance-based theory of political institutions, Jamal (2007) adds two questions that gauge "performance-based political assessments" (Jamal, 2007, p.1337) where the first measures respondents' views on respect of human rights in their country and the other on whether democracy is better than other political systems.

Following Jamal's (2007) strategy, I include questions related to political confidence as well as performance-based political assessment in my model but add an additional question of my own (one that gauges respondents' confidence in courts). From a theoretical point of view, I estimate that confidence in the judicial system is no different than confidence in government, parliament, or any other political institution.

Furthermore, Jamal (2007) adds controls that are known to affect trust. I also include these in my model, such as the classical demographic variables: income, education, age, and gender. As Uslaner (2002) argues, income and education are almost always positively correlated with higher levels of generalized trust.

Finally, and relying on Uslaner's (2002) work, I use questions that gauge respondents' financial satisfaction [a variable also included by Jamal (2007)], life satisfaction, and control over one's life. As I elaborated in chapter two, the causal variable connecting Uslaner's (2002) independent variable of income equality to generalize trust is a sense of optimism and control over one's life.

The following is the list of the variables I use in my logit model with generalized trust as the dependent variable: The extent to which voters are bribed (the main independent variable of clientelism); confidence in the government, the parliament, political parties, the police and the courts; the extent to which human rights are respected; support for democracy; religious service

attendance; the demographic controls of income, education, gender and age; financial satisfaction; life satisfaction; and control over one's life.

However, before presenting results of my statistical model tested in Lebanon in the next chapter, I must first run my statistical model against the aggregate data of the WVS' seventh wave to assess whether the variables included in the model behave according to what is stipulated in the literature. Results are presented in table 3 and figure 4 below.

Table 3: logistic regression for generalized trust with aggregate WVS data (seventh wave)

TTQ	Odds ratios	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
voterbribe	.83	.00	-17.98	.000	.81	.84	***
respecthumanright	1.29	.02	17.68	.000	1.25	1.32	***
supportfordem	.98	.01	-0.84	.400	.96	1.01	
policetrust	1.12	.01	7.34	.000	1.08	1.15	***
parliamenttrust	1.08	.02	4.28	.000	1.04	1.12	***
govtrust	.88	.01	-7.09	.000	.86	.92	***
polpartytrust	1.20	.02	10.44	.000	1.16	1.25	***
trustcourt	1.17	.02	9.56	.000	1.13	1.20	***
income	1.06	.00	11.08	.000	1.05	1.07	***
education	1.20	.00	32.74	.000	1.19	1.21	***
age	1.01	.00	19.02	.000	1.01	1.01	***
gender	.97	.02	-1.35	.180	.93	1.01	
finsatisfaction	1.06	.00	10.03	.000	1.05	1.07	***
lifesatisfaction	.98	.00	-2.74	.000	.97	.99	***
relserviceattend	.90	.00	-19.80	.000	.89	.91	***
controloflife	.99	.00	-1.54	.120	.98	1.00	
Constant	.02	.00	-41.38	.000	.02	.02	***

Mean dependent var	0.221	SD dependent var		0.415
Pseudo r-squared	0.096	Number of obs		59156
Chi-square	5996.667	Prob > chi2		0.000
Akaike crit. (AIC)	56580.456	Bayesian crit. (BIC)		56733.251

*** *p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Figure 4:Odds ratios for generalized trust with aggregate WVS data (seventh wave).
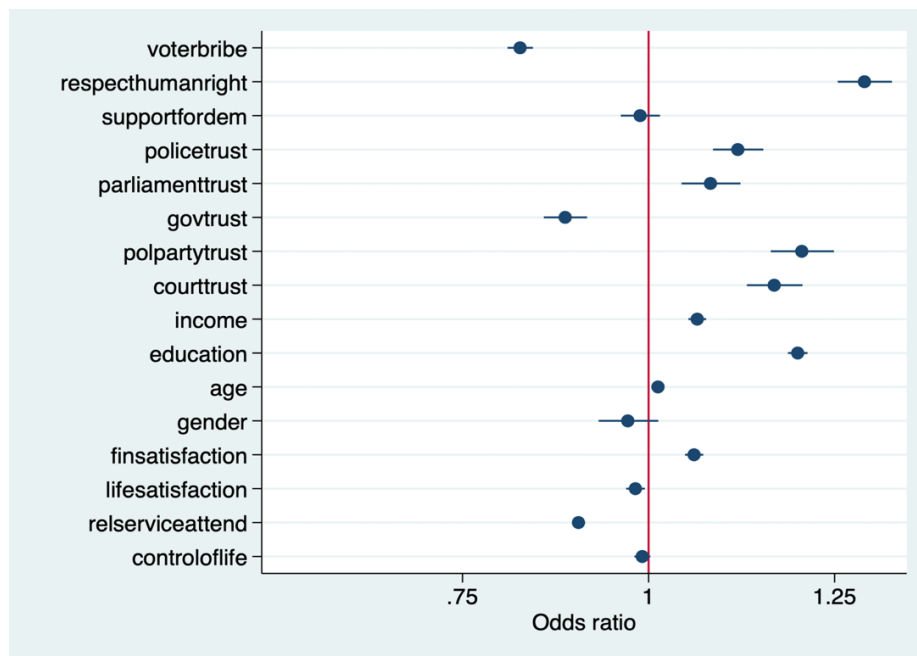
Figure 4 is a graphical representation of the odds ratios for every independent variable on the dependent variable of generalized trust. An independent or predicting variable whose odds ratio is greater than one is positively associated with the dependent variable, whereas a predicting variable whose odds ratio is smaller than one is negatively associated with the dependent variable. Furthermore, since variables whose odds ratios are statistically distinct from one are those that exert a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, a vertical line is drawn at point "1" on the graph, and all variables whose confidence intervals do not intersect with the line are deemed statistically significant (at the 95% level in this case; see table 3 for all levels of significance).

For a predicting variable with an odds ratio larger than one (and statistically significant), a one-unit increase is associated with an increase in the odds of falling into the category coded as "1" for the dependent variable as opposed to "0". On the other hand, and in a similar logic, predicting variables whose associated odds ratio are smaller than one (and statistically significant)

are associated with a decrease in the odds of falling into the category coded as "1" for the dependent variable as opposed to "0".

However, odds ratios are interpreted by considering only the value after the decimal. For example, an odds ratio of 1.5 for a specific independent variable that is statistically distinct from 1 signifies that a one-unit increase in the independent variable in question leads to a 50% increase in the odds of falling into the category coded as "1" for the dependent variable. On the other hand, an odds ratio of 0.8, for example, signifies that a one-unit increase in the associated independent variable leads to a 20% decrease in the odds of falling into the category coded as "1" for the dependent variable.

All variables from the logistical regression (table 3 and figure 4), except for trust in government, life satisfaction, and control over one's life yield coefficients that are in accord with the literature. In agreement with Putnam's (1993) predictions, clientelism in the form of voter bribe is negatively related to generalized trust. More specifically, the belief that vote buying is widespread is associated with an almost 20% decrease in the odds of believing that most people can be trusted.

Furthermore, a positive view on respect of human rights is positively associated with generalized trust, but not necessarily with support for democracy (results that support Jamal's (2007) theory of the positive effect of performance-based satisfaction on generalized trust regardless of the political regime in place).

Jamal's (2007) political confidence variables, as well as the confidence in courts question that I added, all support Jamal's (2007) theory that confidence in institutions and generalized trust are positively correlated, except for confidence in government. In other words, there is a significantly positive correlation between generalized trust and trust in all political institutions,

except for confidence in government. Being more trusting of government increases the odds of being wary of strangers by about 10%. Concerning demographics, results also follow what is stipulated in the literature with education, wealth, and age all positively correlated with generalized trust (Uslaner, 2002).

Yet the most surprising result concerns the "life satisfaction" and "control over one's life" coefficients. The odds of being wary of strangers increases by 2% for people who claim to be satisfied with their lives. Respondents who claim to feel in control of their lives are not more or less likely to be trusting of others, findings that do not support Uslaner's (2002) argument connecting optimism and control over one's life to generalized trust.

It must be noted, however, that the nature of clientelism is complex and nuanced across cultures and that the statistical model using aggregate WVS data from over 60 countries is insensitive to these nuances. In other words, the model above does not describe how (the causal mechanism) clientelism negatively affects generalized trust and for what countries the relationship is stronger or weaker. For instance, it is unclear and beyond the scope of this dissertation whether clientelism in Latin America is accompanied by the public sycophancy witnessed in Lebanon. The aim of running my model against aggregate WVS is rather to simply set a comparative benchmark for the analyses implemented in Lebanon in the next chapter.

The large volume of respondents in the aggregate data (more than fifty-nine thousand) as well as the diverse cultural and economic settings from which respondents are recruited is intended to provide a more neutral ground to gather results for my statistical model. I plan to maintain the full list of variables listed above when examining data from Lebanon despite the few unexpected results. In the next section, I give details of the survey experiment I implement in Lebanon.

The Experimental Data

One issue with the WVS' observational data is my inability to test the causal mechanism I posit in chapter three as my logit regressions only examines correlations between variables. Another issues I face with the WVS data are common to observational methods. They include possible confounding factors and reverse causality. Finally, and as explained in the previous section, the WVS question used to operationalize clientelism is problematic as it asks respondents their belief in the prevalence of vote buying, and not whether they personally sold their votes, making it possible for some respondents to claim that clientelism is prevalent without having personally experienced it. The online survey experiment circumvents all these issues and serves to compliment the WVS analyses.

I recruited participants for my online survey experiment through Cint[24], an online surveying platform with access to participants in Lebanon[25]. Respondents are invited to complete the survey through the web (I use Qualtrics[26] for my surveying platform). Cint was asked to stratify the sample as much as possible, to be representative of the Lebanese population, although an unstratified sample does not bias results in experiments (Mullinix et al., 2015). Only Lebanese citizens who are twenty-one and older are invited to participate, as they are eligible to vote and, therefore, possibly targeted by bribes. For answers to remain unaffected by participant-bias, respondents are not told that the focus of the study is generalized trust, but rather that its aim is to understand public opinion in Lebanon.

I chose twenty-one concise, closed-ended questions for my experiment. Questions relate to demographics, opinions on democracy in Lebanon, religiosity, opinions on different types of

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[24] https://www.cint.com/about
[25] I obtained IRB approval through UGA to carry out the survey experiment in Lebanon.
[26] https://www.qualtrics.com/about/

political systems, confidence in various political institutions and most importantly, my dependent variable of generalized trust. The survey experiment is administered in Arabic (its English-translated version can be found in its entirety in the appendix). Even though I explicitly claim in the consent form (read by participants before they take the survey) that only Lebanese citizens 21 years or older are eligible to participate, I add two questions at the beginning of the survey asking respondents their age and whether they are Lebanese citizens. Participants who claim not to have Lebanese citizenship or are younger than 21 are automatically dropped from the sample.

I also add, two instructional manipulation checks (to check for respondents' attentiveness), and a subjective manipulation check to help identify attentiveness to experimental information (Kane and Barabas, 2019). Respondents that fail to correctly answer one of the instructional manipulation checks are automatically dropped from the sample. Unfortunately, a factual manipulation check at the end of the survey that quizzed respondents on the subject of the short story (treatments) was dropped because of logistical reasons[27] (each manipulation check is labeled in italics in the survey located in the appendix).

Embedded in the survey are three different short paragraphs, including two scenarios concerning varieties of clientelism, both with and without competition between clients. Participants are randomly assigned to read one of the three paragraphs. One paragraph completely unrelated to clientelism describes the variety of tropical grass that grows in Brazil and is introduced to create a control group whose aim is to measure an average of generalized trust, one that is unaffected by the treatments of varieties of clientelism.

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[27] Cint implemented an automated mechanism where respondents who failed the instructional manipulation check question (question 12 in the appendix) were automatically dropped from the survey and not allowed to continue. Implementing a same system for the factual manipulation check was not possible and the factual manipulation check question was therefore dropped from the survey.

Each clientelism-related treatment read by participants is formulated to elicit a specific emotional response that potentially affects generalized trust as described in my theoretical argument in chapter three. Most crucially, the TTQ is asked right after respondents read one of the three paragraphs to test the effect of each treatment (or no treatment) on generalized trust. However, unlike the traditional way of having respondents answer through a "yes" or "no" on the TTQ, I use a scale to add more precision: Respondents choose a number from one to ten, where one represents the least amount of generalized trust and ten, the most.

The introduction of three different stories which are intended to affect how participants respond makes this a *survey experiment* rather than a simple survey (such as the WVS). Below are the three possible paragraphs read by participants:

The control group (unrelated to clientelism):

There are several different types of grass found in Brazil. Some of the most common are Axonopus Grass, Cynodon Grass, Paspaulum Grass, and Zoysia Grass. Some grasses do better in colder areas, while others thrive in the heat. In addition, some grasses germinate quickly, while others take more time to become established. Grasses also range in color, from green, to golden yellow, to light brown. An arrow you can click to continue will appear soon. While you wait, please take a moment to reflect on grass varieties in Brazil. We may ask you some questions about Brazilian grasses in the following sections.

The "competition between clients" treatment:

You are someone who relies extensively on your political patron for favors such as monetary rewards and employment, especially during election season. However, because political patronage is scarce this election year, you know you have to find ways to get picked over your peers and therefore decide to hang a large portrait of your political patron on your balcony. But you notice your neighbor is doing the same thing in the hope of gaining access to the scarce patronage you desperately need. Despite your best efforts, you receive no special favors for your vote this year, favors your neighbor probably received instead.

The "lack of competition between clients" treatment:

You are someone who relies extensively on your political patron for favors such as monetary rewards and employment, especially during election season. Because political patronage is abundant this election year and almost everyone is guaranteed access, you decide there is no need to hang a large portrait of your political patron from your balcony as gaining an advantage over your neighbor is not necessary. Most interestingly, you notice that your neighbor also chooses not to display public political support. Despite your lack of public political support, you still receive special favors for your vote this year.

I intentionally change the wording between the inter-client competition or lack thereof treatments as little as possible and do not use a person's name in the story, as this might indicate a religious affiliation and affect trust for the various ethno-religious groups. Also, and most importantly, I do not explicitly describe the neighbor/client's behavior as dishonest, as this would possibly affect trust in ways unrelated to my causal mechanism. Rather, I simply describe the actions of the client, as well as their neighbor's, and rely on organically eliciting the appropriate emotional response.

As was explained in chapter three, dishonest behavior that results in access to more patronage is what creates a perception of unfairness. On the other hand, no dishonest behavior and generous access to resources creates a perception of fairness. The treatments are purposely worded to depict and test this dual effect, respectively.

Having described the general setting of the survey experiment, I can now rephrase the hypotheses related to my causal mechanism to fit the Lebanese context and more specifically, the experimental setting: *Participants exposed to the treatment of dishonest political support while receiving no reward for their efforts will exhibit lower levels of generalized trust compared to the control group* (*H5*), and *Participants exposed to the treatment of no dishonest political support while still receiving patronage will exhibit higher levels of generalized trust compared to the control group* (*H6*).

I aim to test the mechanism of dishonesty and access to resources (which affect the perceptions of fairness of access to resources) with the wording of my fifth and sixth hypotheses (*H5* and *H6*). Furthermore, the addition of a control group is crucial to have a neutral benchmark to compare the negative effect of competition between clients on generalized trust on one hand, and the positive effect of lack of competition between clients on generalized trust on another.

To determine the required sample sizes for statistical significance, I rely on an analysis of Cohen's d (Cohen, 1992). If generalized trust is affected by a variety of factors, as stipulated in the literature, I must assume that the effect of client competition (or lack thereof) on generalized trust to be minimal (Cohen d of 0.2). With a minimal assumed effect and an aim of a significance level of 0.05 (95% confidence), I require a minimum of 392 participant per group (Cohen, 1992, p.158), for treatment and control groups, taking the total of participants to 1176.

However, even though my survey experiment holds several advantages over observational data, specifically the circumvention of confounders and endogeneity, it has one significant disadvantage over the WVS data. The survey experiment's success hinges on the assumption that reading a story related to having to compete with one's neighbor for patronage elicits the same emotional response of having experienced it in real life. In other words, experiments can be rendered ineffective by weak external validity. This is where the observational data from the WVS holds a considerable advantage. This is particularly true in my case since the WVS data I use (specifically from its seventh wave) was collected in Lebanon a very short time after parliamentary elections.

The aim of this chapter was to present the research design through which I plan to test the hypotheses related to my theoretical argument. Observational WVS data, as well as my own experimental data, are intended to complement one another. Whereas the observational data tests overall correlations between variables, the experimental data aims to test the causal mechanism related to my argument as well as investigate the issue of direct causality as opposed to mere correlation. In the next chapter, I report results from the tests for all hypotheses, the first four from the observational section of the design, and the last two from the experimental portion.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS

I will now present the results of analyses performed on my observational and experimental data. Only the observational portion of my study (WVS data) supports my theoretical argument. Prior to analyzing the data, I predicted that generalized trust and clientelism are uncorrelated for Lebanese Muslims and Christians in 2013. Even though my analysis rejected these hypotheses, the overall results from the WVS analysis still supports my argument as hypotheses three and four (*H3* and *H4*) are validated: generalized trust and clientelism are positively correlated for Lebanese Christians during the election year of 2018, whereas negatively correlated for Lebanese Muslims during that same year.

On the other hand, results from the experimental portion do not support my argument. More specifically, hypotheses five and six (*H5* and *H6*) are rejected. Participants in my online experiment exposed to the treatment of "no inter-client competition" are not likely to be more trusting than participants in the control group, and participants exposed to the treatment of "inter-client competition" are no more likely to be less trusting than participants in the control group. In other words, the average levels of generalized trust for all three groups (both treatment and control groups) are statistically indistinguishable. I provide below results from analyses obtained from the observational (WVS) data first, followed by experimental (online experiment) data later.

2013 WVS Data: Testing H1 and H2

I use a logistic regression to test my first and second hypotheses (*H1* and *H2*) for the year 2013. To test the effect of my central independent variables of clientelism (labeled "voterbribe") as well as the religious denomination of respondents, I interact the continuous variable of

clientelism with a dichotomous variable indicating Lebanese respondents' religious affiliation (the variable is labeled "religion" and is coded "1" if the respondent is Christian and "0" if they are Muslim). Table (4) below represents results for the full model and figure 5 depicts the odds ratios for every independent variable. The number of respondents in the sample is 633 and the pseudo-R^2 is 0.08 or almost 8% (number of respondents is down from 1200 in the original WVS sample to 633 since I omit all respondents with any missing observation for all variables in the model).

Table 4: logistic regression results for no election year (2013 WVS data).

gentrust	Odds ratio	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
voterbribe	.73	.13	-1.73	.084	.51	1.04	*
religion	3.13	2.46	1.45	.147	.67	14.65	
voterbribe x religion	.76	.21	-0.98	.325	.45	1.30	
respecthumanright	1.49	.23	2.56	.011	1.09	2.03	**
supportfordem	.84	.12	-1.21	.227	.64	1.11	
policetrust	.94	.14	-0.42	.676	.69	1.27	
parliamenttrust	.81	.13	-1.36	.174	.59	1.09	
govtrust	1.02	.15	0.12	.906	.75	1.37	
polpartytrust	.96	.15	-0.24	.812	.71	1.30	
courttrust	1.50	.25	2.47	.013	1.09	2.07	**
income	.92	.07	-1.11	.265	.79	1.06	
education	1.02	.06	0.31	.760	.91	1.13	
age	1.00	.01	0.04	.972	.98	1.01	
gender	.91	.23	-0.37	.712	.55	1.50	
finsatisfaction	.96	.06	-0.62	.533	.84	1.09	
lifesatisfaction	1.12	.08	2.53	.012	1.04	1.32	**
relserviceattend	1.03	.08	0.40	.688	.88	1.20	
controloflife	.95	.06	-0.75	.451	.82	1.08	
Constant	.09	.11	-2.03	.042	.01	.92	**

Mean dependent var		0.122	SD dependent var		0.327
Pseudo r-squared		0.080	Number of obs		633
Chi-square		37.398	Prob > chi2		0.005
Akaike crit. (AIC)		469.257	Bayesian crit. (BIC)		553.816

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Figure 5:odds ratio plot for predicting variables with 95% confidence intervals (2013).
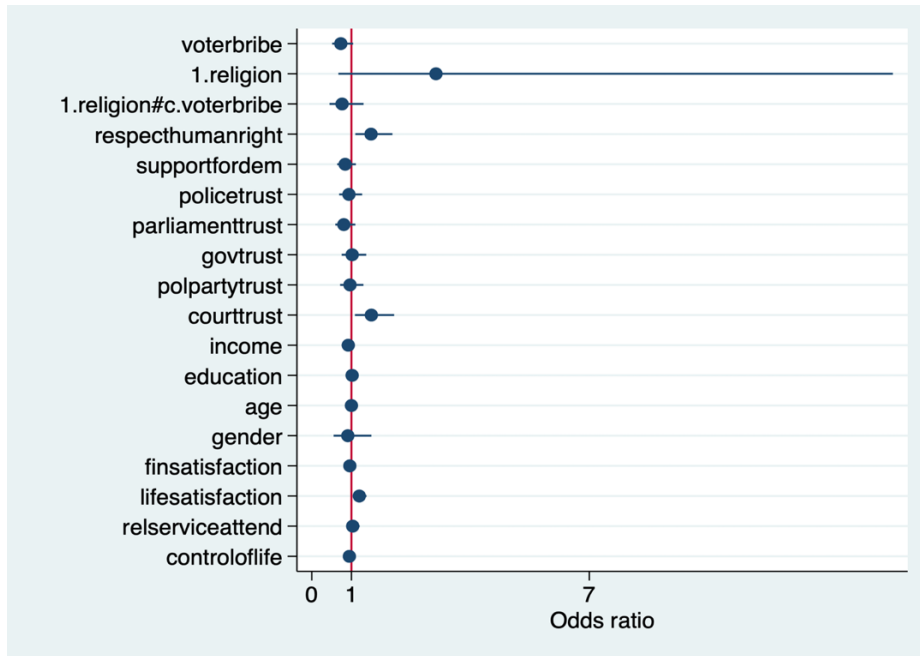

Figure 5 above is a graphical representation of the first two columns in table 4 where the dots represent the odds ratios for each independent (or predicting) variable on the dependent variable as well as their associated confidence intervals for the 95% level.

The odds ratio for clientelism (labelled voterbribe) is approximately 0.73 which indicates that in Lebanon in 2013, the odds of being trusting of others decreases by about 28% the more Lebanese respondents believe that voters are bribed (results that are statistically significant at the 90% level as seen from table 4). This is true for all Lebanese respondents, regardless of their religion. On the other hand, the dichotomous variable measuring respondents' religious affiliation (labelled religion) exerts no significant effect on generalized trust. In other words, being Christian or Muslim in Lebanon exerts no independent effect on generalized trust.

Of all remaining predicting variables, only the belief that human rights are respected (labeled respecthumanright), trust in courts (courttrust) and life satisfaction (lifesatisfaction) are

all positively correlated with generalized trust (at the 95% level). All remaining variables are not statistically linked to the dependent variable of generalized trust.

Nevertheless, so far I have only interpreted results in terms of odds ratios, which is different from predicted probabilities (and arguably much less intuitive). Also, as Berry et al. (2012) argue, the interactive term should be evaluated by examining marginal effects with respect to all independent variables, regardless of whether the interactive term is statistically significant. Failing to do so might lead scholars to "either understate, or more worryingly, overstate the support for their theories" (Berry et al., 2012, p.1). In my case, this entails evaluating the marginal effect of both clientelism and religion on generalized trust, respectively: figure 6 below represents the marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism, whereas figure 7 represents the marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion.

Figure 6:marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism (2013).
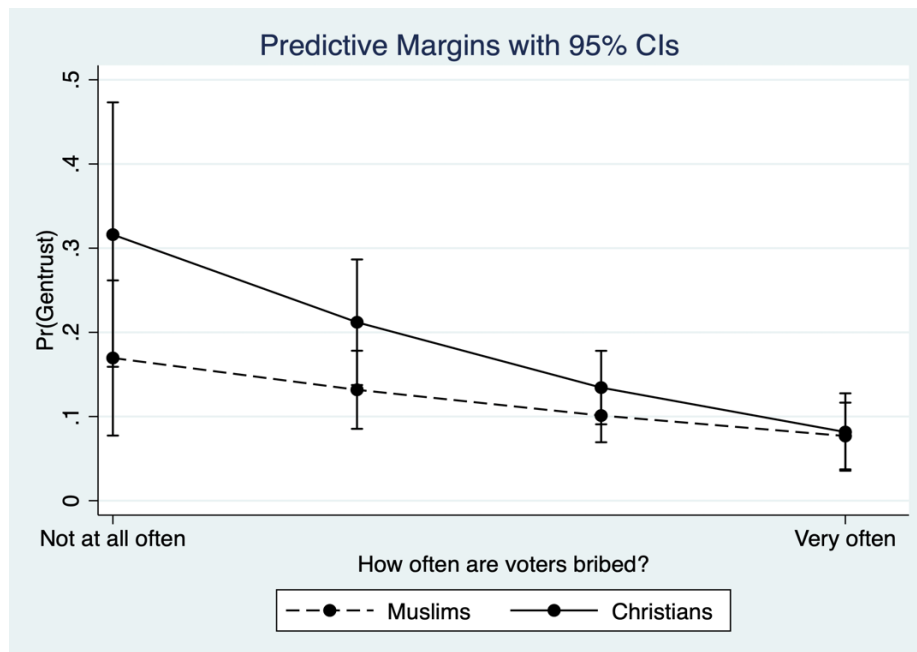
Figure 7:marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion with 76% confidence intervals (2013).
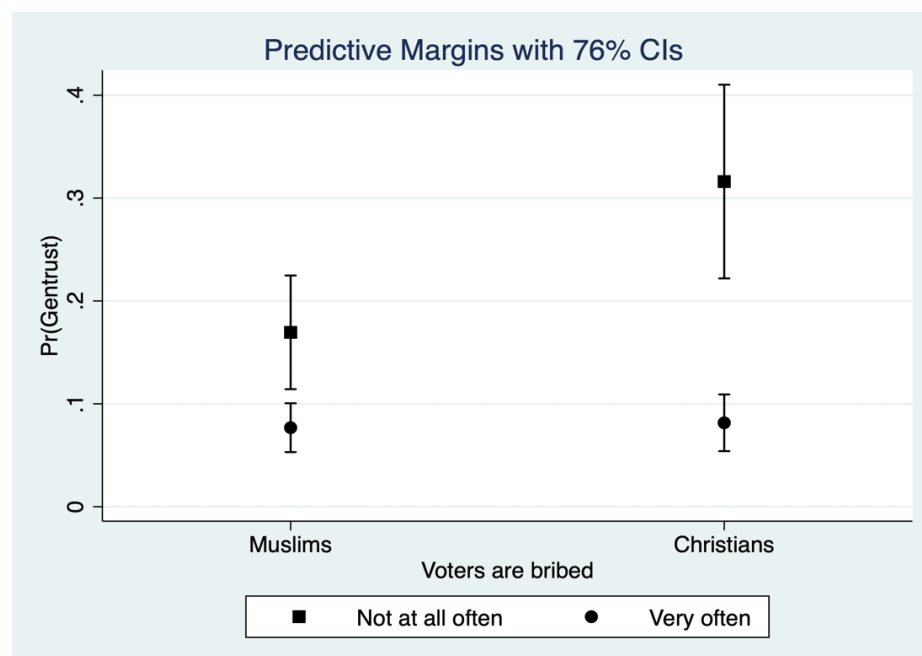

Figure 6 reveals that the more Lebanese respondents believe clientelism is prevalent (used as a proxy measure to capture exposure to vote selling), the less they are trusting of others, results that hold for Muslims and Christians alike. For example, Lebanese Christians (solid line) are a little over 30% likely to say that most people can be trusted when they believe clientelism is not happening at all, while they are less than 10% likely to think most people can be trusted when they believe that voters are bribed very often.

A decrease in generalized trust as the prevalence of clientelism increases can also be seen for Lebanese Muslims (dashed line): they are about 17% likely to say that most people can be trusted when they perceive clientelism to be at its lowest, while this number drops to less than 10% when they believe clientelism to be highly prevalent. Nonetheless, more evidence is needed to confirm results in figure 6 (Berry at al., 2012). Figure 7 brings additional evidence to support results from figure 6.

In figure 7, I plot the marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion. This allows me to compare whether the different probabilities of being trusting for every category of clientelism are statistically distinct from one another, for both Christians and Muslims, respectively. I am only plotting the probabilities of generalized trust for the lowest and highest categories of clientelism in the aim of not overcrowding the figure (where the "not at all often" category is represented by a square and the "very often" category is represented by a circle). I drop the two middle categories of "not often" and "fairly often". From a theoretical perspective, a statistical distinction between the probabilities of being trusting for the highest and lowest levels of perceived clientelism is most informative.

Crucially however, as Julious (2004) demonstrates, 84% and 76% confidence intervals must be used to test the overlap of calculated values at the 95% and 90% levels, respectively[28], since the 95% and 90% confidence intervals are only intended to test the distinctness of calculated values with "0", and not with other calculated values.

Figure 7 reveals that at the 90% level (76% calculated confidence intervals), the probabilities of generalized trust for the lowest and highest category of clientelism are statistically distinct for both Lebanese Christians and Muslims, respectively[29]. Figure 7 therefore confirms findings in figure 6: In 2013, the more Lebanese respondents from all religious backgrounds believe clientelism to be prevalent, the less they are trusting.

Together, figures 6 and 7 lead me to reject *H1* and *H2*. I had hypothesized no correlation between my variables for all Lebanese ethnic groups for the year 2013, however, generalized trust and clientelism are negatively correlated for both Lebanese Muslims and Christians in 2013, when

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[28] See Julious (2004,p.218). The values of 83.4 and 75.5 are to be used for the 95% and 90% levels, respectively. These values are rounded up to give 84% and 76%, respectively.
[29] An analysis at the 84% level (for 95% confidence intervals) revealed that probabilities of generalized trust at highest and lowest levels of clientelism were distinct for Lebanese Christians, but not Muslims.

no parliamentary elections were held. I implemented the same analysis and used the same statistical model, albeit with data from 2018, an election year in Lebanon, to test *H3* and *H4*.

2018 WVS Data: Testing H3 and H4

Table 5:logistic regression results for election year (2018 WVS data).

gentrust	Odds ratio	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
voterbribe	.62	.09	-3.40	.001	.47	.81	***
religion	.00	.00	-5.58	.000	.00	.03	***
voterbribe x religion	4.53	1.27	5.37	.000	2.61	7.86	***
respecthumanright	1.30	.17	2.04	.041	1.01	1.68	**
supportfordem	.68	.08	-3.30	.001	.54	.85	***
policetrust	1.44	.19	2.54	.011	1.08	1.84	**
parliamenttrust	.85	.16	-0.83	.407	.58	1.24	
govtrust	1.51	.25	2.44	.015	1.08	2.07	**
polpartytrust	.86	.15	-0.81	.417	.61	1.22	
courttrust	.88	.14	-0.77	.439	.64	1.21	
income	1.14	.08	1.84	.066	.99	1.31	*
education	.99	.06	-0.07	.947	.88	1.12	
age	1.00	.01	0.28	.783	.98	1.01	
gender	1.13	.24	0.59	.555	.74	1.73	
finsatisfaction	.94	.06	-0.96	.336	.82	1.07	
lifesatisfaction	1.25	.10	2.75	.006	1.06	1.46	***
relserviceattend	1.15	.06	2.49	.013	1.03	1.28	**
controloflife	.84	.05	-2.57	.010	.73	.96	**
Constant	.06	.06	-2.88	.004	.01	.42	***

Mean dependent var	0.102	SD dependent var	0.303
Pseudo r-squared	0.126	Number of obs	1137
Chi-square	94.666	Prob > chi2	0.000
Akaike crit. (AIC)	692.628	Bayesian crit. (BIC)	788.315

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Figure 8:Odds ratios plot for predicting variables with 95% confidence intervals (2018).
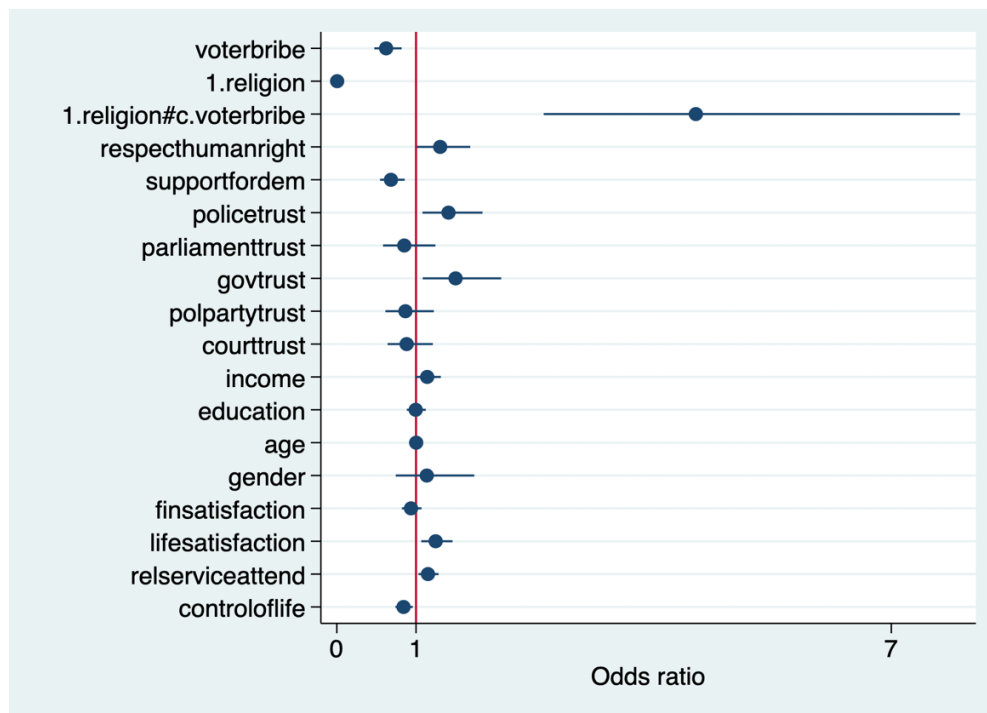
From table 5 and figure 8, clientelism is negatively correlated with generalized trust in 2018 before the effect of religion is considered: the odds of being trusting decreases by about 38% the more Lebanese respondents believe that voters are bribed, results that are statistically significant at the 99% level (the pseudo R-squared is about 12% and the number of observations is 1137).

The belief that human rights are respected, trust in the police, trust in government, income, life satisfaction, and attendance of religious service are all positively associated to generalized trust, albeit at different confidence levels. Apart from attendance of religious service being positively correlated with generalized trust, all other positive associations with the dependent variable are in accord with what is argued in the literature (Putnam, 1993; Uslaner, 2002; Jamal, 2007).

On the other hand, support for democracy and control over once's life are both negatively related to generalized trust, at the 99% and 95% levels, respectively. While the finding that democracy is not necessarily connected to generalized trust in non-democratic settings agrees with Jamal's (2007) results, the negative correlation between a feeling of control over one's life and generalized trust disagrees with Uslaner's (2002) argument.

Most striking, however, is the religion variable, which is statistically significant at the 99% level and indicates that being a Lebanese Christian (since Christians are coded as "1" and Muslims as "0", or a one unit move from "0" to "1") is associated with a 100% decrease in the odds of being trusting of others. Nevertheless, this is the simple relationship between religion and generalized trust, where the effects of exposure to clientelism are not yet brought into the equation. As I have argued and as the literature demonstrates, even though clientelism is prevalent in Lebanon, not all Lebanese citizens are exposed to clientelism and not all clients are exposed to the same kind of clientelism (competitive and uncompetitive).

As the positive and significant interactive term indicates, the relationship between generalized trust, clientelism, and respondents' religious affiliation is complex. Nevertheless, and as already mentioned, interpreting the effect of the interactive term through its odds ratio does not provide much information on the predicted change in probability associated with change for different values of the independent variable. I therefore evaluate the marginal effect of both clientelism and religion on generalized trust as I did with the 2013 data; however, this time with data from 2018, an election year. Figure 9 below represents the marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism.

Figure 9:marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism (2018).


Predictive Margins with 95% CIs
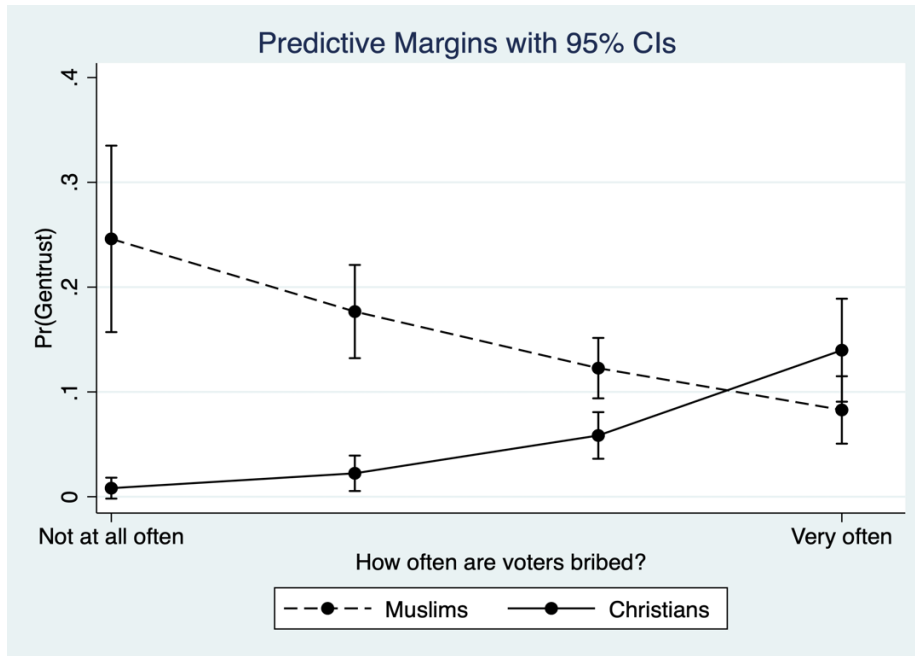
As seen from figure 9, the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism appears to be negative for Lebanese Muslims (dashed line) in 2018: Lebanese Muslims who believe that voters are bribed "not at all often" are about 24% likely to believe that most people can be trusted, whereas this figure drops to about 8% for those who believe that voters are bribed "very often".

Conversely, the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism appears to be positive for Lebanese Christians (solid line) in 2018: The likelihood that Lebanese Christians who believe that voters are bribed "not at all often" are trusting is indistinguishable from zero (at the 95% level), whereas this figure increases to about 15% for Lebanese Christians who believe voters are very often bribed.

However, two more tests are required to confirm the findings in figure 9. First, adjusted confidence intervals (Julious, 2004) are needed to test whether both lines representing Muslims and Christians are statistically distinct for the last category of clientelism of "very often" as intervals do overlap at this point at the 95% level, but might not overlap for the adjusted intervals

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advocated by Julious (2004). And second, the conditional relationship between religion and clientelism must be interpreted through an additional angle (Berry et al., 2012); that is, with marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion (as I did in the analysis for the 2013 data). Below are figures 10 and 11 representing the marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism but with adjusted confidence intervals, and the marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion with adjusted confidence intervals, respectively.

Figure 10: marginal effect of religion on generalized trust against clientelism with adjusted CIs (2018).
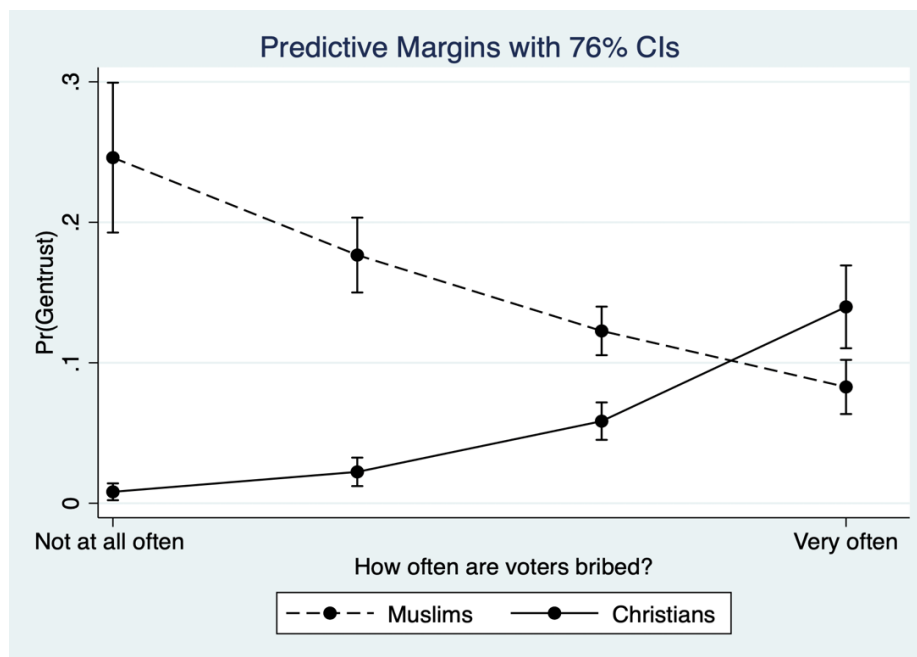
From figure 10, when 76% confidence intervals are used (to test the statistical distinctness of calculated values at the 90% level)[30], the lines for Muslims and Christians are statistically distinct for all categories of clientelism, including the highest category, where respondents believe that voters are bribed very often[31].

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[30] See Julious (2004, p.218). The values of 83.4 and 75.5 are to be used for the 95% and 90% levels, respectively. These values are rounded up to give 84% and 76%, respectively.

[31] An analysis at 84% level (to test the distinction at the 95% level) revealed no statistical difference for the last category of clientelism.

In figure 11 below, I plot the marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion with 84% confidence intervals, which allows me to compare whether the different probabilities of being trusting for every category of clientelism are statistically distinct from one another (for both Christians and Muslims, respectively) at the 95% level.

Figure 11: marginal effect of clientelism on generalized trust against religion with 84% confidence intervals (2018).
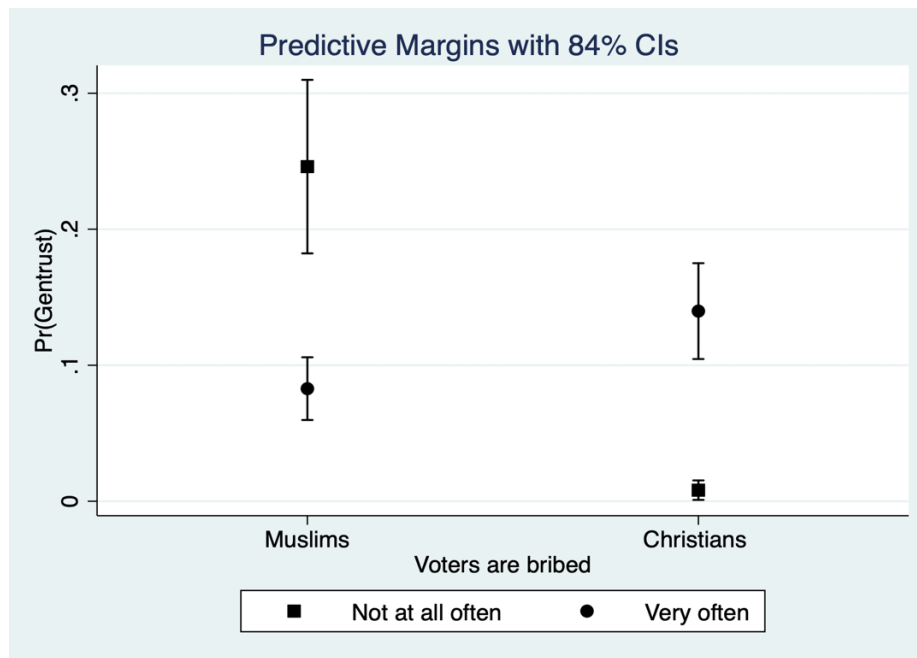
For logistical reasons, and as I did for the 2013 data, I only plot the probabilities of generalized trust for the lowest and highest categories of clientelism (where the "not at all often" category is represented by a square and the "very often" category is represented by a circle). I drop the two middle categories of "not often" and "fairly often") to avoid overcrowding the plot. From a theoretical perspective, a statistical distinction between the probabilities of being trusting for the highest and lowest levels of perceived clientelism is most informative.

Figure 11 reveals that at the 95% level (84% calculated confidence intervals), the probabilities of generalized trust for the lowest and highest category of clientelism are statistically distinct for both Lebanese Christians and Muslims, respectively. Figure 11 therefore confirms

findings in figure 10: the more Lebanese Muslims believe clientelism to be prevalent, the less they are trusting, whereas the more Lebanese Christians believe clientelism to be prevalent, the more they are trusting.

Since the perception of the extent of clientelism is used as a proxy measure for the degree of exposure to clientelism (or vote buying), the results suggest that the more Lebanese Muslims are involved in clientelism, the less they are trusting of others. On the other hand, the more Lebanese Christians are involved in clientelism, the more they are trusting of others.

As I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation, exposure to clientelism takes on different forms for Christians and Muslims in Lebanon. The difference in results between Lebanese Christians and Muslims is, I argue, due to the different types of clientelism they are exposed to, respectively: while Lebanese Christians are handsomely rewarded in 2018 with little to no effort, Lebanese Muslims are exposed to dishonest public sycophancy and receive little to no reward for their public display of support.

These results mimic Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) findings where instead of using varieties of clientelism, they examined the effect of exposure to different types of welfare institutions (selective or universal) in Sweden. The more Swedish citizens were exposed to one or the other type of welfare institution, the more pronounced the effects were on generalized trust. In the Lebanese case, the more citizens are exposed to a specific type of clientelism (competitive or non-competitive), the more the different effects on generalized trust become apparent.

Furthermore, what matters most for people is whether they can access the benefits they need and if the distribution of these benefits was rather fair, even if the process was achieved through clientelism and in non-democratic settings. As I argued in chapter three, when clientelism affects more than half the population of a country, the exchange of votes for material benefits is

no longer necessarily seen as a form of corruption. It is normal and even expected for political parties in Lebanon to work to provide resources to their clients at the expense of the provision of public goods. Although this might sound like corruption in the minds of western observers, it is not necessarily the case in countries like Lebanon.

Less evident to interpret are the significantly different initial levels of generalized trust between Lebanese Christians and Muslims in 2018. In other words, why are Lebanese Muslims substantially more trusting than their Christian counterparts when both believe that clientelism is not at all common? Since there are many possible answers to this question, I refrain from emitting any explanations and suggest further investigation.

The Sunnis/Shia Distinction

While Corstange (2016) argues that the political dynamic within the Sunni and Shiite communities in Lebanon are significantly different as Sunni voters are stuck with only one choice at the ballot box while Shiites can choose between two political parties (Hezbollah and Amal), I argued in chapter five that political competition within the Lebanese Shiite community is limited and practically inexistent given the high level of collusion between Hezbollah and Amal. The WVS's 2018 data allows me to test the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism for Sunnis and Shiites, respectively. If my argument is correct and Shiite voters engage in public sycophancy as frequently as Sunnis do during an election year, generalized trust and clientelism should be negatively correlated for Shiites as they are for Sunnis in 2018. I posit the two following hypotheses (*Ha* and *Hb*):

Ha: Generalized trust and clientelism are negatively correlated for Lebanese Sunnis in 2018.
Hb: Generalized trust and clientelism are negatively correlated for Lebanese Shiites in 2018.

To test *Ha* and *Hb*, I employ two separate logistic regressions: one for Sunnis and one for Shiites. I use WVS data from its 7th wave and with the same list of variables as the above models. I do not use an interactive term since my goal is not to test whether the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust for Lebanese Sunnis and Shiites are statistically indistinguishable. I only seek to demonstrate that the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust is negative for each religious denomination, respectively.

Table 6 and figure 12 represent results for the full model and predicted probabilities of generalized trust as a function of clientelism for Lebanese Sunnis, respectively; and table 7 and figure 13 represent results for the full model and predicted probabilities of generalized trust as a function of clientelism for Lebanese Shiites, respectively.

Table 6: full model results for Lebanese Sunnis is 2018.

gentrust	Odds ratio	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
voterbribe	.60	.16	-1.92	.055	.36	1.01	*
respecthumanright	.96	.23	-0.17	.864	.59	1.54	
supportfordem	.65	.14	-1.91	.056	.42	1.01	*
policetrust	1.20	.34	0.65	.513	.68	2.12	
parliamenttrust	.94	.34	-0.16	.875	.46	1.92	
govtrust	.81	.29	-0.56	.575	.39	1.67	
polpartytrust	1.58	.57	1.27	.205	.77	3.24	
courttrust	1.67	.59	1.44	.150	.83	3.36	
income	.95	.14	-0.33	.745	.71	1.27	
education	.83	.11	-1.40	.162	.64	1.07	
age	1.00	.01	0.23	.815	.98	1.03	
gender	2.55	1.20	1.98	.047	1.01	6.43	**
finsatisfaction	.76	.12	-1.68	.093	.55	1.04	*
lifesatisfaction	1.18	.19	1.05	.294	.86	1.62	
relserviceattend	1.38	.14	3.16	.002	1.13	1.69	***
controloflife	1.20	.18	1.26	.207	.90	1.61	
Constant	.04	.071	-1.87	.061	.00	1.16	*

Mean dependent var		0.119	SD dependent var		0.324	
Pseudo r-squared		0.154	Number of obs		312	
Chi-square		35.006	Prob > chi2		0.004	
Akaike crit. (AIC)		226.196	Bayesian crit. (BIC)		289.827	

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Figure 12: Predicted probabilities of generalized trust for different levels of clientelism for Lebanese Sunnis is 2018.
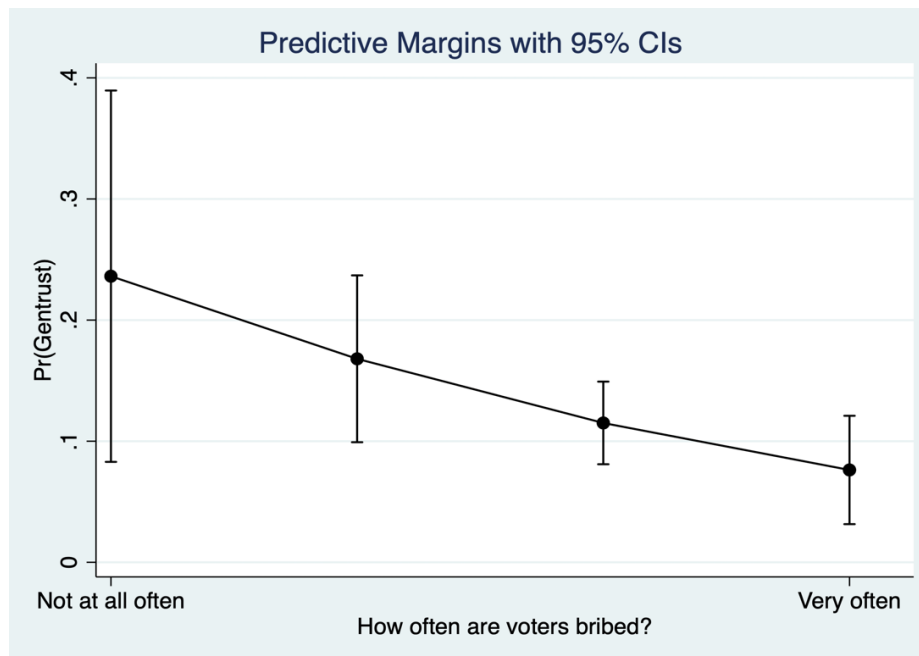
Even with a relatively smaller number of observations (312 respondents), the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism (voterbribe) is still statistically significant in the negative direction (at the 90% level) for Lebanese Sunnis in the election year of 2018 (only a few other variables are statistically correlated with the dependent variable as evident from table 6). Figure 12 shows how Lebanese Sunnis' trust in others drops the more they perceive clientelism to be prevalent: A Lebanese Sunni who perceives clientelism as not common is about 23% likely to say others can be trusted, whereas this figure drops to about 8% for those who believe clientelism to be very frequent. The same relationship between generalized trust and clientelism holds true for Lebanese Shiites, as seen below in table 7 and figure 13.

Table 7: full model results for Lebanese Shiites is 2018.

gentrust	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
voterbribe	.55	.16	-2.00	.046	.314	.989	**
respecthumanright	1.58	.59	1.23	.218	.762	3.292	
supportfordem	.58	.22	-1.43	.154	.277	1.225	
policetrust	1.61	.77	1.00	.318	.631	4.13	
parliamenttrust	1.75	.83	1.19	.234	.695	4.441	
govtrust	4.94	2.26	3.50	.000	2.021	12.104	***
polpartytrust	.97	.42	-0.07	.947	.413	2.288	
courttrust	.73	.29	-0.78	.434	.332	1.606	
income	1.36	.26	1.62	.105	.938	1.974	
education	.95	.21	-0.24	.809	.617	1.457	
age	.99	.03	-0.33	.743	.935	1.049	
gender	1.68	1.10	0.80	.425	.467	6.098	
finsatisfaction	1.05	.21	0.23	.819	.702	1.565	
lifesatisfaction	.76	.21	-0.95	.340	.444	1.324	
relserviceattend	1.04	.18	0.20	.843	.732	1.466	
controloflife	.96	.25	-0.16	.870	.573	1.603	
Constant	.00	.01	-1.76	.079	0	2.051	*

Mean dependent var		0.067	SD dependent var			0.251
Pseudo r-squared		0.413	Number of obs			283
Chi-square		57.520	Prob > chi2			0.000
Akaike crit. (AIC)		115.813	Bayesian crit. (BIC)			177.785

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Figure 13:predicted probabilities of generalized trust for different levels of clientelism for Lebanese Shiites in 2018.
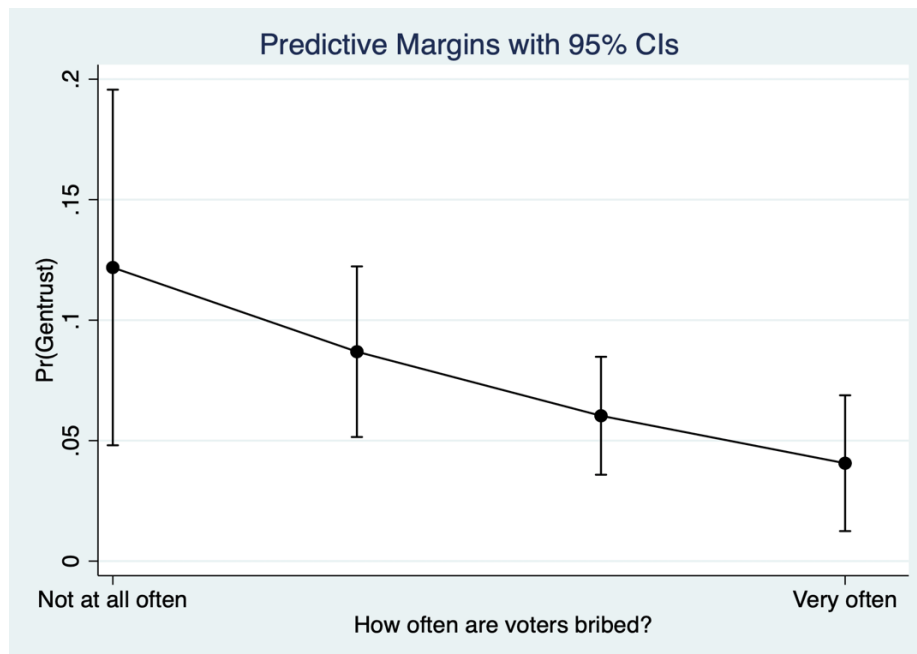

Again, even with a relatively smaller number of observations (283 respondents), the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism (voterbribe) is still statistically negative (at the 95% level) for Lebanese Shiites in the election year of 2018 (only a few other variables are statistically correlated with the dependent variable as evident from table 7). Figure 13 shows how Lebanese Shiites' trust in others drops the more they perceive clientelism to be prevalent: A Lebanese Shiite who perceives clientelism as not common is about 12% likely to say others can be trusted, whereas this figure drops to about 4% for those who believe clientelism to be very frequent.

The relationship between generalized trust and clientelism for both Sunnis and Shiites, respectively, is negative and significant in 2018. This finding lends support to my argument that similar dynamics between generalized trust and clientelism exist for Lebanese Sunnis and Shiites.

Summarizing results from the observational portion of my analysis, even though *H1* and *H2* are not supported whereas *H3* and *H4* are, the overall results from the WVS analyses (2013

and 2018) still lend support to my argument. A negative correlation between clientelism and generalized trust in 2013 (instead of an absence of correlation as I hypothesized) suggests that in the absence of distribution of patronage (or at least very little parsonage distributed), a perception of frequent clientelism affects respondents' trust in ways my theoretical argument does not cover. Put differently, my theoretical argument describes what occurs during election years and distribution of patronage, and I had only included data from a year with non elections for comparative purposes. Even though my 2013 predictions were not accurate, the effect of clientelism on generalized trust was still different for 2013 when compared to 2018, which is all that matters for my theoretical argument.

Concerning the interpretation of results for 2013, there can be several explanations as to why clientelism and generalized trust are negatively correlated when no elections are held in Lebanon, and I only speculate on a few here. Maybe during an absence of election, respondents' lack of access to patronage made them resent their political leaders, which drove generalized trust downward. Another explanation, related to my argument, might be that when patronage is scarcely distributed, competition between clients for patronage increases for all ethnic groups, reducing generalized trust. The investigation of the causal mechanism between clientelism and generalized when no elections occur is outside of the scope of this dissertation and requires future scholarly attention.

On top of the differences between Muslims and Christians, and across election versus non-election years, I showed that the relationship between generalized trust and clientelism for both Sunnis and Shiites in 2018 is the same: Clientelism negatively affects generalized trust for both religious denominations.

Thus far, however, I have not tested the causal mechanism that drives my argument, namely that Muslims experience a form of clientelism centered on dishonest public sycophancy and unfair access to patronage while Christians receive generous patronage with no need for dishonest public sycophancy. I have only shown correlations between clientelism and generalized trust for Lebanese Muslims and Christians in 2013 and 2018. My causal mechanism is tested in the online survey experiment I administer in Lebanon in April and May of 2023. I move next to analyzing evidence from my experimental data in the aim of finding support for my theoretical argument.

Online Survey Experiment: Testing H5 and H6

As described in chapter six, I administer an online survey experiment in Lebanon during the months of April and May of 2023 to test my causal mechanism: on the one hand, the effect of generous access to patronage without the need to display dishonest sycophancy on generalized trust; and on the other, the effect of limited patronage with widespread dishonest public sycophancy on generalized trust. Participants are exposed to two different prompts depicting these two different situations in a survey experiment where I ask respondents a variety of questions related to democracy in Lebanon, trust in various political institutions, opinions about income inequality and, of course, generalized trust. My aim is to test hypotheses five and six: *Participants exposed to the treatment of dishonesty of others and who receive no reward for their efforts will exhibit lower levels of generalized trust as compared to the control group* (*H5*), and *Participants exposed to the treatment of no dishonest political support and still receive patronage regardless of public support will exhibit higher levels of generalized trust as compared to the control group* (*H6*).

Testing hypotheses *H5* and *H6* is achieved through two t-tests: first, comparing the average level of generalized trust of respondents exposed to the treatment of inter-client competition with

the average level of generalized trust of respondents in the control group (*H5*); and secondly,

comparing the average level of generalized trust of respondents exposed to the treatment of no

inter-client competition with the average level of generalized trust of respondents of the control

group (*H6*). T-tests detect if the mean levels of generalized trust (on the TTQ scale) per group are

statistically distinct from one another at different levels of confidence (by looking at the p-value

for the two-tailed test). Tables 8 and 9 show results for both t-tests, respectively.

Table 8:t-test for mean TTQ scores in control vs treatment (competition between clients).

Num. of obs. (control)	Num. of obs. (treatment)	Mean TTQ (control)	Mean TTQ (treatment)	Diff. mean	Diff. Std. error	t-value	p-value (two tailed)
417	409	5.56	5.35	0.21	0.19	1.05	0.29

Table 9:t-test for mean TTQ scores in control vs treatment (no competition between clients).

Num. of obs. (control)	Num. of obs. (treatment)	Mean TTQ (control)	Mean TTQ (treatment)	Diff. mean	Diff. Std. error	t-value	p-value (two tailed)
417	403	5.56	5.41	0.15	0.20	0.75	0.44

From table 8, the average level of generalized trust for respondents exposed to the treatment

of "competition between clients" (5.35 on the 1-10 TTQ scale) is not statistically distinct from the

average level of generalized trust for respondents in the control group (5.56 on the 1-10 TTQ

scale), indicated by a p-value of 0.289.

The same conclusion can be drawn from table 9 when comparing the average level of

generalized trust for participants exposed to the treatment of "no inter-client competition" (5.41

on the 1-10 TTQ scale) with the average level of generalized trust for participants in the control

group (5.56 on the 1-10 TTQ scale). The p-value of 0.446 indicates no statistical difference at any level. *H5* and *H6* are therefore rejected and, as a result, the experimental portion of my study does not support my theoretical argument.

To investigate whether the experimental treatments effectively influenced participants, (regardless of its effects on generalized trust) I run different t-tests to gauge whether respondents' answers to the subjective manipulation check is statistically distinct across groups. I find no statistical difference at any level of significance[32].

The subjective manipulation check asked respondents the following: "In your opinion, how much competition is there between people for access to political patronage?" (question 17 in survey). As Kane and Barabas (2019, p.235) put it, the subjective manipulation check is designed to "[…] ask respondents for their thoughts regarding the independent variable being manipulated by the researcher", which in my case is competition between clients. The fact that answers across groups are not statistically distinct suggests that my experimental treatment was not effective. In my next chapter, I explore and describe the implications of my findings.

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[32] Results are not shown.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This dissertation investigated the link between different forms of clientelism and generalized trust in Lebanon. As I demonstrated through my literature review, generalized trust is crucial for societies to function efficiently and overcome collective action problems. A nation that overcomes its collective action problem can successfully provide public goods and, in Putnam's (1993) words, "make democracy work". For these reasons, it is crucial to understand which circumstances create or destroy trust.

In this final chapter, I summarize my argument, design, and findings, and discuss potential implications based on my findings. However, before going over implications, I speculate on why the experimental part of my study does not support my argument. I assume my argument to be invalid and consider the relevant implications. Next, I consider my argument valid (and not supported by the experimental portion of my study for different reasons) and explore the relevant implications, but also evaluate where my argument stands in relation to the literature. Finally, I suggest ways to re-examine my argument, especially its causal mechanism.

My argument focused on a variable that is assumed to always have detrimental effects on generalized trust: namely, clientelism or the exchange of favors and benefits for votes. Clientelism is a form of corruption, and corruption weakens trust in society (Rothstein, 2013). I argue that even though clientelism is generally harmful to trust, it can bolster trust under specific circumstances.

Utilizing the literature on clientelism, I argued that when competition is inexistant between an ethnic community's political elite, its voters are forced to engage in insincere public sycophancy in the aim of accessing the scarce patronage distributed during election season, which hurts generalized trust. On the other hand, when an ethnic community's political elites compete against

one another, voters have no need to engage in public sycophancy since patronage is abundant and generous, which creates generalized trust.

Central to my theoretical argument is the perception of a fair distribution of resources. When people believe resources are distributed fairly, trust is strengthened, whereas when resources are perceived as unfairly distributed, trust is eroded. When clients must engage in insincere public sycophancy for their political leaders and receive little to no rewards, trust is harmed because dishonest behavior is often rewarding, reinforcing the view that patronage is unfairly distributed. On the other hand, when clients do not engage in insincere public sycophancy for their leaders and receive generous benefits for their votes, a perception of fairer distribution of benefits strengthens trust. The connection between a perception of fair distribution of resources and generalized trust is already established in the literature (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005).

My theoretical argument combines elements of Corstange's (2016) and Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005) works: I build on Corstange's (2016) work where different types of clientelism exist within Lebanon (competitive and uncompetitive) but add that they affect clients' perception of fairness of distribution of resources differently, exerting different effects on generalized trust. My argument also incorporates elements from Jamal's (2007) findings: if citizens are satisfied when their interests are defended, trust is generated, regardless of whether the process is achieved in democratic and corrupt-free settings. When patronage is perceived to be fairly distributed under competitive clientelism, generalized trust is strengthened even if clientelism is considered a form of corruption from a western point of view.

Examining Lebanon gave me the advantage of a within country variation. Economic variables and especially political institutions' confounding effects are attenuated as they are constant at the country level. Lebanon provides an additional and crucial advantage: its rates of

clientelism is excessively high, around 55% (Corstange, 2018). Even though the argument I present affects Lebanese clients and not necessary all Lebanese citizens, it still affects most Lebanese residents, an important detail if I am to talk of generalized trust. In other words, the effect of vote selling and buying on generalized trust is not restricted to a very small portion of the population.

For the observational part of my study, I relied on WVS data from two different waves (2013 and 2018 in Lebanon) to compare how clientelism correlates with generalized trust for different Lebanese religious communities in years with and without elections. I operationalized clientelism with a question that gauges respondents' opinions on voter bribe, and generalized trust with the traditional trust question. The WVS data supported my argument: only a month after the 2018 competitive parliamentary elections in Lebanon, clientelism and generalized trust are positively correlated for Lebanese Christians, whereas they were negatively correlated for Lebanese Muslims (for both Sunnis and Shiites, as I also show in separate analyses).

Nevertheless, even though these findings support my argument, they do not provide support for a connection between an unfair/fair perception of distribution of patronage and weakened/strengthened generalized trust. Therefore, to test my causal mechanism, I implemented an online survey experiment in Lebanon in April and May of 2023, where I exposed respondents to three different treatments: one group read a story of neighbors competing for patronage through insincere public sycophancy without receiving any patronage; one group read a story of two neighbors receiving patronage without the use of public sycophancy; and finally, one group read a story unrelated to clientelism to serve as the control group. Experimental results did not support my argument. The average level of generalized trust for all three groups was statistically indistinguishable.

There are two possible reasons to explain why my online survey experiment did not support my argument. First, and most damaging for my work, is the possibility that my argument is incorrect. Different types of clientelism do not exert different effects on generalized trust and the findings from the observational portion of my study are due to confounding factors that I am omitting from my analysis.

What can explain the WVS data's positive relationship between clientelism and generalized trust for Christians in 2018, but a negative relationship in 2013? A missed confounder that mediates the positive correlation for Lebanese Christians in 2018 would have most probably been observed in the 2013 data as well. The only remaining explanation is a missed confounder affecting correlations in 2018 but not 2013 and only for Lebanese Christians. I am unable to provide an explanation.

Second, and much more probable, is a flaw in my experimental method. As I mentioned in chapter six (research design), experiments are effective in proving causality, but they often lack external validity. Put differently, participants in my experiments were not exposed to real life competition for patronage. Instead, I relied on having my participants read a short passage describing a particular scenario hoping that it would elicit the same emotional response as having experienced the situation in real life. It is possible that the way through which I phrased my treatments did not evoke the emotions that would then affect generalized trust, or it did not evoke enough emotions to yield statistically significant results.

An analysis of the difference in subjective manipulation check responses across groups confirms the ineffectiveness of my experimental design: respondents from all three groups had similar opinions on the extent of competition between clients for access to patronage (no statistical distinction). Since a flaw in my experimental method is a real possibility and supported by post-

experiment analyses, I suggest a few ways through which my causal mechanism can be examined in the future.

Field work in Lebanon during an election season could be an effective means of examining how the distribution of patronage affects generalized trust. Researchers could identify clients engaged in public sycophancy, gauge their levels of generalized trust, compare it to the general population, and ask a third question linked to the causal mechanism. One such question could resemble what Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) used in their survey: to what extent do respondents consider access to resources to be fair? Corstange (2016) used a very similar method when connecting public sycophancy to access to patronage. He found that Lebanese and Yemeni citizens who engaged in public sycophancy were more likely to believe that political connections are beneficial for public sector hiring. I now consider my argument correct, but unsupported by my experiment because of the aforementioned flaws, and consider the possible implications.

If a competitive form of clientelism does bolster generalized trust, then clientelism is not necessarily detrimental to trust as is implied in the literature (Putnam, 1993; Uslaner, 2002). I suggest that the relationship between the two is much more nuanced. Putnam (1993) argues that clientelism weakens civil society as it creates a particularistic relationship between politicians and voters and diverts resources away from the provision of public goods. Nevertheless, Jamal (2007) did find that generalized trusters in the Middle East do not always support democracy as implied by Putnam (1993). Rather, they are more trusting when they are satisfied with institutions that defend their personal interests, whether these institutions are democratic or not. Jamal (2007) claims that her performance-based approach to generalized trust (individuals who are satisfied with what institutions has lately done for them) is more applicable to the Middle East than Putnam's (1993) cultural-based approach.

The argument presented in this dissertation falls in line with the performance-based approach advocated by Jamal (2007). My argument differs from Jamal's (2007) as it does not consider the effect of political institutions on generalized trust but rather the distribution of patronage by political parties and patrons. I also add a different causal mechanism that relies on the perception of fairness. But similar to Jamal's (2007) argument and, to some extent, Kumlin and Rothstein's (2005), generalized trust is affected by citizens' satisfaction with the status quo, rather than by specific cultural traits. Almost all cultural and religious variables in my models were statistically insignificant. In addition, the relationship between clientelism and generalized trust for Lebanese Christians differed significantly in 2018 and 2013, weakening the claim that cultural factors affect generalized trust.

Beyond the effects of clientelism on generalized trust, the findings in this dissertation (albeit limited) support Uslaner's (2002) argument, as opposed to Putnam's (1993), but with a caveat. It is economic rather than cultural factors that affects generalized trust. Even though Uslaner (2002) did not include perceptions of fairness in his theoretical argument, he believes that generalized trust is affected by the distribution of wealth in a society, measured through rates of income equality/inequality.

In 2003, Uslaner stated that "the Gini index has the greatest impact on trust of any independent variable (Hooghe and Stolle Ed., 2003, p.181). Nevertheless, if people are more preoccupied with the way wealth is allocated rather than final outcomes, measures of social mobility could prove to be stronger predictors of generalized trust than are measures of income equality, like the Gini index. Social mobility is the ultimate measure of fair access to resources at the national level.

From an observational standpoint, measures of income equality and social mobility are difficult to disentangle since they are strongly correlated with one another: the more there is social mobility, the less there is income inequality. However, one group of countries could be used to demonstrate social mobility's superior predictive power: countries with a history of communism. A communist legacy creates the unusual scenario of having low levels of income inequality but also low social mobility. Even Uslaner (Hooghe and Stolle Ed., 2003) acknowledges that the Gini index loses its predictive powers for generalized trust in states with a history of communism (Hooghe and Stolle Ed., 2003, p.180).

If generalized trust is believed to be the crucial element in allowing societies to function smoothly and efficiently, it follows that the allocation of wealth should be given much more attention than what it has received.

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Online Survey Experiment (translated from Arabic):

1)Are you 21 years of age?
- Yes
- No

2) What is the highest level of education that you have attained?

- No education
- Primary education
- Lower Secondary education
- Brevet
- High School
- Baccalaureate
- Bachelor or equivalent
- Masters or equivalent
- Ph.D. or equivalent
- Prefer not to say

3) What is your gender?
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

4) How old are you?

--Enter numerical value: …..

5) On this card is an income scale on which 1 indicates the lowest income group and 10 the highest income group in your country. We would like to know in what group your household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

- 10
- Prefer not to say

6) What region do you live in?
- East Beirut
- West Beirut
- Zahle
- West Bekaa-Rachaya
- Baalbek-Hermel
- Byblos-Keserwan
- Metn
- Baabda
- Aley-Chouf
- Akkar
- Tripoli-Minnieh-Dennieh
- Bcharreh- Zgharta-Batroon-Koura
- Saida-Jezzine
- Zahrany-Tyre
- Marjaayoun-Nabatiyeh-Hasbayya-Bint Jbeil
- Prefer not to say

7) Are you a Lebanese Citizen?
- Yes
- No

8) Did you vote in the last parliamentary election?
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

9) What religious denomination do you belong to?

- Sunni
- Shiite
- Druze
- Maronite
- Protestant
- Orthodox
- Other
- Prefer not to say

10) Apart from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services these days?

1. More than once a week

2. Once a week
3. Once a month
4. Only on special holy days
5. Once a year
6. Less often
7. Never, practically never
8. Prefer not to say

11) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The state should make people's income more equal? (Scale from 1 to 10 with 1 completely disagree and 10 completely agree).

- 1 (completely agree)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10(completely disagree)
- Prefer not to say

12) *(First Instructional manipulation check)* You probably have a favorite color, but we are interested in whether or not you are completing this survey carefully, so please select the color purple below:
- Blue
- Green
- Red
- Purple
- Yellow

13-A) Please read this short story carefully and imagine that you are in this situation:

You are someone who relies extensively on your political patron for favors such as monetary rewards and employment, especially during election years. However, because political patronage is scarce this election year, you know you have to find ways to get picked over your peers and therefore decide to hang a large portrait of your political patron on your balcony. But you notice your neighbor is doing the same thing in the hope of gaining access to the scarce patronage you desperately need. Despite your best efforts, you receive no special favors for your vote this year, favors your neighbor probably received instead.

13-B) Please read this short story carefully and imagine that you are in this situation:

You are someone who relies extensively on your political patron for favors such as monetary rewards and employment, especially during election years. Because political patronage is abundant this election year and almost everyone is guaranteed access, you decide there is no need to hang a large portrait of your political patron from your balcony as gaining an advantage over your neighbor is not necessary. Most interestingly, you notice that your neighbor also chooses not to display public political support. Despite your lack of public political support, you still receive special favors for your vote this year.

13-C) Please read this information about the Brazilian grass.

There are several different types of grass found in Brazil. Some of the most common are Axonopus Grass, Cynodon Grass, Paspaulum Grass, and Zoysia Grass. Some grasses do better in colder areas, while others thrive in the heat. In addition, some grasses germinate quickly, while others take more time to become established. Grasses also range in color, from green, to golden yellow, to light brown. An arrow you can click to continue will appear soon. While you wait, please take a moment to reflect on grass varieties in Brazil. We may ask you some questions about Brazilian grasses in the following sections.

14) Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people? Please answer with a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 indicating that most people can be trusted and 10 indicating that you need to be very careful.
- 1 (Need to be very careful)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10(Can be trusted)
- Prefer not to say

15) I would like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all?
(Respondents answer through four categories: Trust completely; Trust somewhat; Do not trust very much; Do not trust at all; prefer not to say).

15 (A) Your family
15 (B) Your neighbor
15 (C) People you know personally
15 (D)People you meet for the first time
15 (E) People from another religion
15 (F) People of another nationality

16) I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence - quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all or prefer not to say.

16 (A) The government
16 (B) The courts
16 (C) The police
16 (D) The parliament
16 (E) Political parties

17) *(Subjective manipulation check)* In your opinion, how much competition is there between people for access to political patronage?
- 1(Not much competition)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10(A lot of competition)
- Prefer not to say

18) How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Lebanon? Respondents answer through four categories: Completely satisfied; rather satisfied; rather dissatisfied; completely dissatisfied; prefer not to say.

19) I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. (For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country or prefer not to say).

19 (A) Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections.
19 (B)Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country.
19 (C)Having the army rule.
19 (D)Having a democratic political system.
19 (E) Having a system governed by religious law in which there are no political parties or elections.

20) *(Second Instructional manipulation check)* You probably have a favorite drink, but I would like you to select Coca Cola below:
- Apple juice
- Orange juice
- Tea

- Coca Cola
- Coffee

21) Please tell me for the following action "someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties", whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using a 10-point scale (1=never justifiable and 10=always justifiable) or prefer not to say.