

# Which Jobs for Which Boys? Party Finance and the Politics of State Job Distribution in Africa\*

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## **Abstract**

Much of the literature on clientelism views the distribution of state jobs in the same way it does other forms of clientelistic exchange: as a mechanism of political mobilization. Despite its prevalence, this perspective does not account for the services that job recipients frequently provide to their political principals beyond the one-time exchange of political support. Drawing on extensive data from Benin and Ghana, including a comprehensive database of minister biographies, surveys of bureaucrats, administrative data, and elite interviews, this paper argues that leaders distribute and manage state jobs in ways that enable them to extract and control state money for political financing. Whether incumbent leaders extract state resources themselves, delegate to elite party agents, or co-opt and coerce bureaucrats to divert money to the party shapes which jobs they distribute politically and to whom. The findings suggest that jobs are substantively different from other currencies of clientelistic exchange.

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In contexts of widespread clientelism, jobs in the state apparatus are typically viewed as tools of political accommodation and electoral mobilization. They constitute a flexible and attractive mechanism through which leaders build and maintain political support (Golden, 2003; Robinson and Verdier, 2013). Politicians distribute state jobs in ways that help them to assemble ruling coalitions (Ariotti and Golder, 2018), manage or co-opt elite rivals (Arriola, 2009; Roessler, 2016), “buy” votes (Stokes, 2005), reward supporters (Geddes, 1994), or convey information about their credibility to voters (Kramon, 2018). These practices come in many forms including executive appointments to key brokers who can mobilize entire voting blocs (e.g. Arriola and Johnson, 2014) and lower-level jobs distributed to individual voters or party activists (e.g. Shefter, 1977).

Despite the prevalence of this patronage-based model of job distribution, it overlooks an important reality facing incumbent leaders in many electoral regimes throughout the world: they depend on public officials to extract state money for political financing. If incumbents distribute jobs simply to broaden their political support, they risk placing opponents or potential defectors into positions with access to valuable pecuniary resources. Centering this financial imperative, I argue in this paper that politicians distribute jobs not only to mobilize political support, but also to finance their political operations. The argument is based on the simple insight that leaders place trusted agents into jobs with access to the state’s potential reservoir of political money and keep untrusted agents away from those positions. This practice is especially important in African countries, where leaders depend on extracted state money for political financing and where elite defections from governing coalitions are common.

To demonstrate the extractive underpinnings of job distribution, I first develop a theory of the political extraction of state money, which argues that the institutionalization of an incumbent’s political party conditions who they select as extraction agents and how agents are controlled. I show that leaders of parties with high levels of institutionalization extract in *collusive* ways: delegating extraction broadly to elite party agents and relying

principally on party mechanisms of control over extraction agents. By contrast, leaders of parties with low levels of institutionalization engage in *coercive* extraction. They eschew delegation to elites – many of whom have incentives to defect from the ruling party – and delegate extraction to rank-and-file bureaucrats, whose compliance is more easily bought or coerced due to the attractiveness of their public service jobs.

These extraction strategies produce divergent patterns of state job distribution. In collusive extraction, leaders distribute executive posts broadly to the party cadre who, in turn, serve as disciplined extraction agents. These dynamics result in more politicized – but also more stable – executive institutions. In coercive systems of extraction, leaders keep potential defectors away from state resources by minimizing the appointment of political elites to executive posts. Their greater reliance on rank-and-file bureaucrats as extraction agents leads to more frequent politicization of bureaucratic recruitment. Lacking reliable party-based mechanisms of control, leaders in coercive systems of extraction use their powers of dismissal to control extraction agents.

I support the argument with a nested, mixed-methods research approach connecting party institutionalization, extraction strategies, and job distribution both across and within two African countries – Ghana and Benin. Despite similarly high levels of political competition, party institutionalization varies considerably in these two countries. Drawing on extensive archival, survey, administrative, and interview data, I link the two countries' varying levels of ruling party institutionalization to differing extraction practices, then demonstrate that these extraction practices produce variation in the politicization and management of state jobs.

The argument has important theoretical and empirical implications. It suggests that the widespread tendency in the literature on clientelism to equate jobs with other state-provided goods and services is incomplete. Unlike schools, electricity, roads, or cash, jobs come with ongoing access to state money and resources. To the extent that leaders depend on state money for political finance, they are likely to distribute jobs in ways that

mobilize these financial resources in their interest. Second, the paper underscores the importance of incorporating party institutions – and party financing in particular – into theories of political management of the state. Party institutions are important not only as locuses of political competition (O’Dwyer, 2006; Grzymala-Busse, 2007) and policy credibility (Pitcher, 2012), but also as mechanisms for solving the financial and agency problems that leaders face in office (Martínez-Gallardo and Schleiter, 2015). Empirically, the findings reinforce the need to focus not only on *how much* leaders extract from the state, but also on the varying avenues through which such extraction occurs (Johnston, 2005; Grzymala-Busse, 2008; Ang, 2020). This shift is critical for understanding the politics of state capacity, and for moving beyond conceptions of many states in Africa and throughout the developing world as uniformly weak or neopatrimonial (Mkandawire, 2015).

The paper begins by discussing theories of clientelistic job distribution and elaborating a theory linking party institutionalization, extraction, and state job distribution. I then summarize the cases, data, and methods used in the study. In Section 4, I provide descriptive accounts of collusive and coercive extraction in Ghana and Benin, respectively. In Sections 5 and 6, I analyze the relationship between extraction and job distribution, first at the executive level and, second, for the public service. I conclude with a discussion of the broader applicability of the study.

## 1 Politics and State Job Distribution

In much of the literature on clientelism, the distribution (or promised distribution) of jobs in the state apparatus is treated much like any other state resource that politicians provide in exchange for political support. Politicians distribute jobs to form elite coalitions (e.g. van de Walle, 2007; Ariotti and Golder, 2018), neutralize political threats (e.g. Arriola, 2009; Roessler, 2016), mobilize voters (e.g. Wantchekon, 2003), or reward party brokers (e.g. Driscoll, 2018; Brierley, 2020a). Jobs are appealing to political patrons because they are selective and attributable, rendering them “a perfect mechanism” for politicians to

claim individual credit (Golden, 2003, 198) and to cultivate political loyalty among clients (Grindle, 2012, 67). For clients, jobs not only serve as a source of security but, in many cases, involve handsome benefits and “prebends” beyond their paycheck (Joseph, 1987; Robinson and Verdier, 2013). Jobs are therefore widely seen as a durable mechanism of political mobilization, even if their political use undermines state capacity (Dahlström and Lapuente, 2017; Geddes, 1994).

Understood as a tool of political mobilization, variation in leaders’ use of patronage jobs is usually viewed as a function of their cost-benefit calculations. Certain conditions – robust party competition (Grzymala-Busse, 2007; O’Dwyer, 2006), institutionalized meritocratic administrative rules (Shefter, 1977), and higher levels of socio-economic equality (Scott, 1977; Kitschelt, 2000) – raise the costs of using jobs to mobilize political support. Despite the demonstrated utility of these approaches, their central focus on the exchange itself elides important questions about benefits that politicians receive from job recipients *after* the exchange. Job recipients regularly steer policy in politically favorable ways (Wood and Waterman, 1991; Peters et al., 2004), direct goods, services, or favors to voters (Piattoni, 2001; Oliveros, 2016), or divert resources to parties (Gingerich, 2013; Figueroa, 2021).

Not all patronage recipients, however, act in service of their political principal. Jobs offer opportunities for clients to gain access to state power and resources that they can use *against* the incumbent. Politicians that distribute jobs to mobilize political support or accommodate rivals therefore risk empowering opponents with access to resources or political platforms. In Kenya, for example, some security personnel shirk orders from the political leadership in support of alternative political principals (Hassan, 2020). In Ghana and Uganda, some bureaucrats have resisted the distribution of public benefits to ruling party supporters (Brass et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2020). In Senegal, President Macky Sall who, from 2004-2007 served as the appointed Prime Minister to then-President Abdoulaye Wade, used this position to amass resources that aided his successful challenge to Wade

in the 2012 presidential election ([Kelly, 2020](#)).

Thus, the same attributes that render jobs such a valuable currency of clientelism also present challenges to incumbents in their efforts to control the resources of the state. We should therefore expect leaders to be concerned not only with the political support they obtain from jobs, but also with the risks of placing potential defectors into positions that can elevate their political standing. Yet, few studies have systematically addressed whether and how these risks shape leaders' job distribution decisions.<sup>1</sup>

## 2 Extractive Political Financing, Party Institutionalization, and Job Distribution

I focus in this article on how leaders' concerns about loyalty and access to state money for political financing shape their job distribution strategies. These concerns are particularly salient in Africa, where elections have become increasingly competitive and expensive in recent decades (e.g. [Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012](#); [Koter, 2017](#)) and where politicians depend to a large extent on extracted state money to fund their political operations ([Wardle, 2017](#)).

Why do politicians in Africa depend on the extraction of state money for political financing? The clientelistic structure of politics implies that voters and party members expect to *receive* material inducements from politicians rather than to provide monetary or in-kind support to them (e.g. [Bob-Milliar, 2012](#)). Even where there are growing incomes and middle-class urban populations, clientelistic linkages between voters and politicians remain prevalent ([Nathan, 2019](#)) and clientelistic appeals are often more effective than programmatic ones ([Wantchekon, 2003](#)). In the absence of supporter contributions, parties and candidates rely on a mix of other sources of funding. Public financing is formally available in around 70% of African countries but, in practice, this support is insufficient to cover expenses ([Check et al., 2019](#)). Domestic business communities comprise an

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<sup>1</sup>For exceptions, see [Samuels and Shugart \(2010\)](#) and [Martínez-Gallardo and Schleiter \(2015\)](#).

important source of political finance in African countries, but high levels of state control of the economy and weak financial institutions mean that, in many countries, businesses do not form a reliable donor base (Arriola, 2012).

Thus, in the face of rising campaign costs and limited financial resources outside of the state, incumbents use the state to finance their political activities. They do so by “extensively dipping into the state treasury” and by providing economic opportunities in exchange for political funds (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997, 66). Although scholars have often assumed that incumbents enjoy ‘easy’ or ‘unfettered’ access to state money (e.g. Widner, 1997, 79), they encounter complications in their efforts to extract from the state. First, the increasing competitiveness of elections raises the value of resource capture: leaders must ensure that large sums of state money do not fall into the hands of opponents or potential defectors. Second, facing a rising probability of leaving office through term limits or electoral defeat (Bleck and Van de Walle, 2018; Posner and Young, 2018), leaders, once out of office, become vulnerable to prosecution, often politically motivated, for causing financial loss to the state (e.g. Lawson, 2009; Tangri and Mwenda, 2006).

Leaders therefore face a principal-agent problem in the course of extraction. In seeking to keep extracted resources away from opponents and potential defectors, they will prefer to manage extraction themselves. Doing so, however, raises the potential risk of prosecution should they leave office. To mitigate this longer-term risk of prosecution, leaders (principals) will delegate extraction to agents, but only if agents are reliable in the sense that they will extract in service of the incumbent.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1 Party Institutions and Extraction

How leaders respond to this agency problem, I argue, is conditioned by the strength of their party institutions. Whether parties endure over time, are internally organized,

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<sup>2</sup>This basic principal-agent model is similar to others used to study politician-bureaucrat relationships, i.e. Moe (2006); Gailmard and Patty (2007).

and possess collective brands or values shapes leaders' incentives to delegate extraction.<sup>3</sup> For this article, I bracket the strength of voters' attachments to parties, which are often included in conceptualizations of party institutionalization, but are less relevant to extraction. There is considerable variation in party institutionalization across African countries (Elischer, 2013). In countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Benin, parties serve largely as vehicles of personalistic, often ethnic, intra-elite accommodation with minimal grassroots organization (e.g. Rakner and van de Walle, 2009). In other cases, such as in Tanzania and Ghana, parties have developed much more elaborate and durable alliances and organizations (Morse, 2018; Riedl, 2014). Many African parties fall somewhere between these two poles, with either relatively stable (ethnic) elite alliances or some degree of grassroots party organization.

Although party institutions in Africa are not immutable, they do display a large degree of historical continuity. Recent scholarship debates the precise historical origins of African party institutions, with some arguing that key moments of party institutional formation occurred during decolonization in the mid-20th century (Bleck and Van de Walle, 2018) and others asserting that periods of authoritarian rule in the 1970s and 1980s were the most critical periods of party formation (LeBas, 2011; Riedl, 2014). In either case, scholars tend to agree that many of today's party institutions predate and have largely survived recent transitions to more open and competitive political regimes (e.g. Lindberg, 2007).

Party institutions shape leaders' responses to extraction dilemmas in two ways. First, durable and well-organized parties enable leaders to select reliable extraction agents with confidence. Through repeated election cycles and internal party organization, party leaders learn about the competencies and loyalties of party members, especially the party

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<sup>3</sup>These three dimensions of party institutionalization reflect approaches developed by Mainwaring and Scully (1995), Levitsky (2003), Randall and Svåsand (2002) and Lupu (2016). Collective brands or values within the party need not encompass a specific ideology, which is less common in Africa than elsewhere (Manning, 2005). They could reflect shared identities or a strong commitment to collective material benefit for members. Party institutionalization is related to, but not synonymous with, party *system* institutionalization (PSI). Whereas PSI focuses on interactions *between* parties, party institutionalization focuses on intra-party features or on interactions between parties and voters.

elite who have worked their way up the party hierarchy over time. Internal competition such as primary elections and leadership selection processes are particularly useful for the identification of reliable extraction agents, as they reveal members' abilities to raise money and win elections. Leaders of well-institutionalized political parties can therefore confidently delegate extraction to trusted elite agents.

Weakly institutionalized political parties, by contrast, are unlikely to possess the durability or organizational characteristics that allow leaders, many of whom manage their parties personalistically, to learn about potential extraction agents. These parties frequently disband or reform with new alliances and members, making it difficult for party leaders to gain useful information about potential agents. The absence of internal rules and contests further deny party leaders important opportunities to gather information about potential extraction agents. Leaders of weakly institutionalized parties therefore have incentives to either manage extraction themselves or delegate to less powerful individuals whose compliance is more easily co-opted or coerced.

Second, party institutions shape agents' incentives to ensure that extraction benefits the political principal. Knowing that the party is likely to survive and succeed in the future, agents in institutionalized parties are less likely to defect. Well-institutionalized organizational rules and procedures further shape agent behaviors. If party agents act in ways that undermine the party's interest, for example by mismanaging extracted resources, they may become ineligible for advancement or lose internal elections. Collective values infused into the party have a similar effect: they condition agents to act in accordance with party values and subject members to sanctions when they misbehave. In institutionalized parties, leaders can therefore count on the party's control mechanisms to ensure that extraction agents serve their interests. Control represents a far more serious challenge for leaders of weakly institutionalized parties. Without party-based loyalty incentives, leaders must employ more coercive means to control extraction agents.

## 2.2 Extraction and Job Distribution

Leaders of institutionalized parties therefore engage in what I call *collusive* extraction – widely delegating extraction to elite party agents who, in turn, extract in the party’s interest. This system is collusive in the sense that party officials willfully extract “for the team” (Gingerich, 2013) without significant involvement or pressure from the principal. In collusive extraction, principals can remain distant from extraction, thereby reducing risks of future prosecution, without serious risk that the extracted resources will benefit another party. In terms of job distribution, leaders of collusive extraction systems distribute high-level posts primarily to elite political agents. These party agents then use their positions to capture rents for the party, for example by awarding state contracts to partisan-aligned businesses.

Facing a much less predictable political landscape, leaders in weakly institutionalized parties engage in *coercive* extraction. Facing frequent elite defections and fluid party structures, incumbent leaders are unable to reliably delegate extraction to elite party agents. Instead, they manage major extraction deals themselves, or coerce bureaucrats to serve as extraction agents. Empirically, coercive extraction implies, first, that leaders will minimize the appointment of political elites to high-level government posts. Even if political principals could control elites to some extent by threatening their dismissal, the lucrative nature of elite-level deals means that incumbents still risk serious political or financial loss if their elite agents extract, then defect. Additionally, in delegating extraction to rank-and-file bureaucrats, leaders in coercive systems are more likely to politicize recruitment to public service jobs.<sup>4</sup> Bureaucrats are more easily bought or coerced than political elites because, whereas elites typically have other resources such as wealth or professional skills on which they can sustain themselves outside of office, rank-and-file bureaucrats are unlikely to have attractive job prospects outside the state.

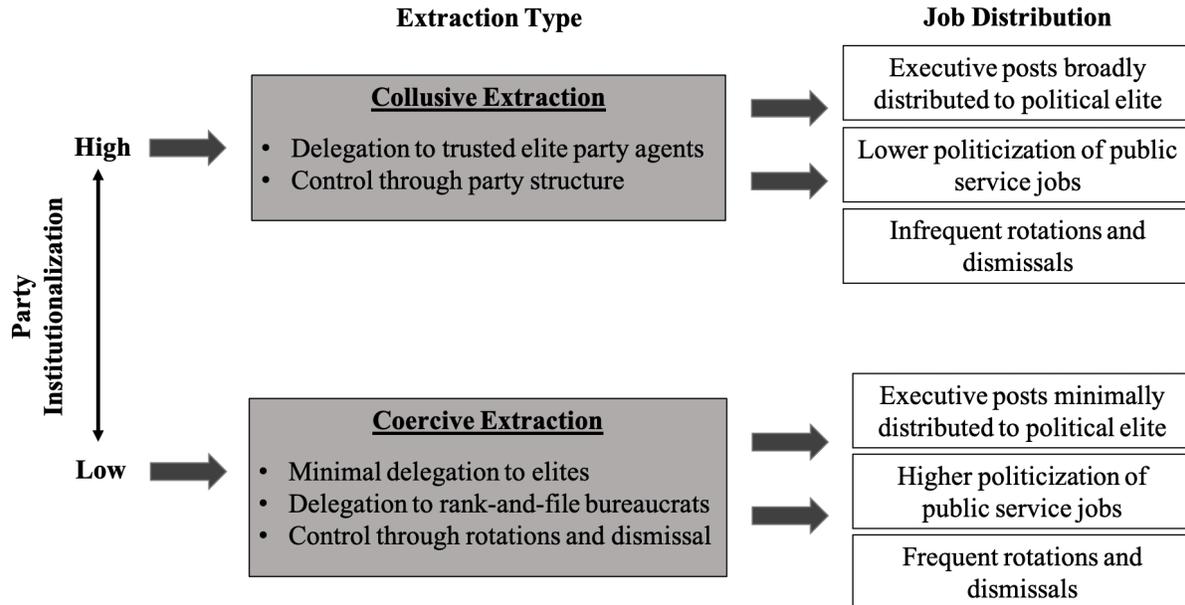
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<sup>4</sup>Although principals could, in theory, coerce any bureaucratic agent (Brierley, 2020b; Iyer and Mani, 2012), coercion is less costly to monitor and implement if leaders enlist politically supportive agents such as co-partisans or co-ethnics (Hassan, 2020).

These different systems of extraction also lead to differences in the frequency with which leaders strategically dismiss state personnel. In collusive systems, party agents looking to move up the party ranks have incentives to serve the party. As such, leaders need not rely heavily on dismissals to ensure control over extracted resources. In coercive systems, by contrast, neither elites nor bureaucrats have strong political incentives to remain loyal to the incumbent. Leaders must therefore rely to a greater extent on their powers of dismissal to ensure that elites do not gain access to resources and that bureaucratic extraction agents continue to extract in the incumbent's interest. Figure 1 summarizes the relationship between party institutionalization, extraction, job distribution, and dismissal.

Although the theory can apply broadly to clientelistic electoral regimes, I identify several important scope conditions. First, the theory assumes some basic level of political competition along with some degree of incumbent concern about reprisal should they leave office. In the absence of these conditions, the political principal would have little incentive to delegate extraction at all. Second, the theory assumes that executive and bureaucratic institutions are sufficiently malleable, and that chief executives are sufficiently powerful, to implement their extraction and job distribution strategies. Features such as highly institutionalized meritocratic recruitment, low levels of presidential discretion over appointments, or strictly enforced civil service protections or procurement codes could make it difficult for leaders to extract in *either* collusive or coercive ways. Additionally, the systems described assume the absence of a vibrant, independent private sector as both collusive and coercive extraction systems depend to some extent on a weak or state-dependent private sector.

**Figure 1: Party Extraction and Job Distribution**



### 3 Empirical Approach

I investigate the theorized linkages between party institutionalization, extraction, and job distribution with nested cross- and within-country analyses of Benin and Ghana – two countries with similarly high levels of political competition but contrasting strength in party institutions. Despite their similarly competitive political environments, political parties in Benin and Ghana are extremely different. Ghana’s parties rate among Africa’s most highly institutionalized whereas Benin’s rate among the lowest.<sup>5</sup> Since the first elections of the current multi-party era, Ghana’s two main parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the National Patriotic Party (NPP), have grown in terms of their organizations, their mobilization capacities, and their shares of parliamentary seats. By contrast, Benin’s parties have remained highly fluid since the 1991 regime transition, with most parties lacking stable organizations of any kind. The use of two extreme cases is intended for theory-building purposes (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). In the conclusion,

<sup>5</sup>See supplementary material for cross-national indicators of party institutionalization.

I discuss applications of the theory to intermediate levels of party institutionalization.

I investigate the extraction-based argument in three steps. First, I use qualitative data to describe how party structures produce different modes of extraction in the two countries: collusive extraction in Ghana and coercive extraction in Benin. Interviews with current and former ministers, party officials, bureaucrats, journalists, and civil society experts provide insight into specific extraction practices. Given the sensitive nature of the interview content, respondents are kept anonymous, using only vague references to titles and organizational affiliations. Where possible, I supplement interview data with existing case work or media accounts of key events and decisions. I also corroborate the qualitative narratives of collusive and coercive extraction with data from bureaucratic surveys (described below).

Second, I analyze patterns of executive job distribution to assess whether collusive extraction in Ghana leads to a more politicized and stable corps of elite-level personnel than in Benin. I draw on an original database containing detailed biographical data for all minister appointees (n=586) spanning 12 different presidential terms across the two countries.<sup>6</sup> Minister data come from a variety of sources including government communiqués, newspapers, legislative archives, and interviews with political historians.<sup>7</sup> The database includes information on each appointee's educational, professional, and political backgrounds. Using these data, I construct a latent measure of politicization of each minister appointee with a Bayesian item-response theory (IRT) model. I pool this measure with ministry-level data on procurement contracts, personnel, and budgets to analyze patterns of executive job distribution.

Third, I use survey data to investigate whether coercive extraction leads to more politicized recruitment and dismissal of bureaucratic personnel. I draw on results from an original survey of bureaucrats fielded in 2013 and 2014 with a total of 1,096 public service employees from the two countries. To administer this survey, I distributed questionnaires

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<sup>6</sup>See supplementary material for details.

<sup>7</sup>In Benin, I consulted Pierre Metinhoue's (2005) historical records.

in public service training programs at multiple sites in each country. The survey captures a diversity of public servants across different agencies and experience levels. Although the survey samples were based primarily on access and convenience, they are largely in line with what is known about the relevant populations. In the supplementary material, I provide additional information on the survey demographics and I compare the survey's key findings to those from a second survey of bureaucrats conducted in 2017 in Ghana.

## **4 Party Institutions and Extraction in Ghana and Benin**

Incumbent leaders in both Benin and Ghana rely to a large extent on extracted state money for political financing, but they employ different extraction methods. In Ghana, political leaders engage in collusive extraction: delegating extraction broadly to elite political agents who facilitate the award of procurement contracts to partisan-aligned businesses in exchange for their financial support to the party. By contrast, Benin's presidents closely guard opportunities for elite-administered extraction deals and rely more frequently on rank-and-file bureaucratic agents to divert rents and revenues. In this section, I describe these two different extraction systems and discuss their origins in each country's party institutions.

### **4.1 Collusive Extraction in Ghana**

As large membership organizations, Ghana's two major parties, the NDC and the NPP, raise money from a range sources including, principally, donations from wealthy party members and businesses (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009; Sakyi et al., 2015). Private donations to parties frequently come with expectations of returns on these "investments," often in the form of public procurement contracts (Whitfield, 2018, 118). This practice is especially prevalent in public works and construction services (Luna, 2019), with construction contractors forming "the single most important source of business funding to the NDC"

(Opoku, 2010, 179). As one former NPP minister explained, the practice of awarding contracts to political donors has now extended to many sectors, including even small contracts to provide stationery and printing to ministries.<sup>8</sup> These exchanges figure prominently in accounts of party financing for both parties (e.g. Ayee et al., 2007; Bagbin and Ahenkan, 2017) and form the basis of a vast collusive system of party financing administered broadly by party elites serving in positions where they see to the award of contracts to party financiers.

In Ghana, presidents remain largely distant from extraction. Decisions about procurement contracts have been decentralized to 550 procurement entities housed in ministries, agencies, and local governments. Each procurement entity appoints a tendering committee to review bids and award contracts. The tendering committee is chaired by the minister, agency head, or the chief executive of the local government – all of whom are appointed by the president. The remainder of the committee is comprised of politicians and bureaucrats, including two members of parliament.<sup>9</sup> In practice, the political appointee serving as chairperson of the committee has significant discretion over the committee membership. According to one procurement officer, the minister “chooses his men for the [tendering] committee” and “gets the outcome he wants.”<sup>10</sup> Recent studies support this perspective, asserting that “the organisational structures of public procurement are packed with government political appointees to favour the distribution of public contracts to party financiers, loyalists and clients” (Appiah and Abdulai, 2017, 26).

Collusive extraction in Ghana is made possible by the parties’ strong institutions, especially their durability and organizational structures. These party institutions allow presidents to learn about potential extraction agents, many of whom have, over many years, worked their way up party hierarchies by serving in local, regional, or national party positions; or by running for elected offices such as district assemblies or parliament.

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<sup>8</sup> Author Interview, Accra, December 12, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> See Ghana’s Public Procurement Act of 2003.

<sup>10</sup> Author Interview, Accra, June 17, 2017.

In many cases, the political agents being considered for appointments to extraction-rich executive positions have already proven themselves as effective fundraisers, either through their party positions or their “gifts” to the party.<sup>11</sup> As one NDC official noted, “We know when someone is serious when they sacrifice some of their wealth for the party. They might provide money...some office space, some vehicles, some printing.”<sup>12</sup>

Ghana’s strong party institutions also generate incentives for agents to extract in service of the party. The parties’ internal elections – presidential and legislative primaries as well as contests for party offices – often center on contestants’ past contributions to the party. The NPP’s 2007 presidential primary provides a vivid example. With 17 party members running to replace departing president John Kufuor, candidates were eager to tout their past support of the the party. One candidate, Alan Kyerematen, emphasized his “commitment, loyalty and leadership qualities within the NPP over the last 15 years.” Another, Arthur Kennedy, explained how the the primary became intensely focused on who could raise money for the benefit of party activists (Kennedy, 2009, 6-7).

To summarize, Ghana’s governing parties have largely extracted money from the state by awarding procurement contracts to party-aligned businesses in return for financial support. This extraction system is primarily executed by party elite who, as I explain below, are placed into state positions where they can facilitate the extraction of rents through public procurement processes. To the extent bureaucrats participate, for example through their roles on tendering committees, they serve largely as accessories to the system. Collusive extraction is made possible by strong party institutions, which enable presidents to delegate extraction with confidence and to eschew more coercive forms of control over key extraction agents.

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<sup>11</sup> Author interview, Takoradi, December 9, 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Author interview, Accra, April 8, 2014.

## 4.2 Coercive Extraction in Benin

Like their Ghanaian counterparts, incumbent politicians in Benin also rely on extracted state money to finance their political operations. Politicians use “hidden” sources of funding, including “acts of plundering public resources” (Houndeté, 2017), and funds from “state resources, foreign contributions, and by placing party members who then contribute” (Bryan and Baer, 2005, 33). A survey of candidates running in the 2015 legislative and local elections found that candidates were most likely to receive funding either from their parties or coalitions, or from unspecified “others” (Ch et al., 2019, 21).

Unlike in Ghana, however, leaders in Benin do not widely delegate extraction to elite political agents. With highly mutable coalitions and a large number of parties centered around individuals who represent specific ethno-regional groups (Koter, 2016), incumbent leaders in Benin face a high likelihood of elite defection from their party or coalition.<sup>13</sup> In this fluid party landscape, the delegation of extraction to elite political agents comes with considerable risk that potential defectors will gain access to valuable resources. Benin’s presidents have therefore pursued extraction differently than their Ghanaian counterparts: maintaining tight control over potentially lucrative procurement deals and delegating more frequently to bureaucrats, for whom the cost of defection (or non-compliance) is considerably higher.

Decisions about procurement contracts in Benin are highly centralized – and tightly guarded – in the office of the president. A former member of President Thomas Boni Yayi’s staff explained, decisions about bigger public procurement contracts, especially “over the counter” (*gré-à-gré*) contracts in which there is no tendering process, are “almost always made inside the office of the president.” The state’s procurement authority, this individual noted, “would not have any information” about contracts.<sup>14</sup> A former minister added that it is “certain categories” of contracts that are used to “finance the political parties,” and

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, Hounnikpo and Decalo (2013, 345) on “*transhumance*” in Benin’s parties, which translates as “movement” or “nomadism.”

<sup>14</sup>Author Interview, Cotonou, July 2, 2018.

that ministers “are not usually included in those affairs.”<sup>15</sup>

Several examples underscore the central roles presidents play in extractive procurement deals. In the run-up to his 2001 re-election, President Mathieu Kérékou extracted around \$2 million from a telecommunications deal with the U.S.-based Titan Corporation.<sup>16</sup> Yayi, who served as president from 2006-2016, similarly maintained tight control over his relationship with key political financier (and now president) Patrice Talon, a relationship based largely on the award of contracts and privatization concessions in Benin’s lucrative port and cotton sectors. Yayi also involved himself directly in deals with Chinese contractors, for which ministers dubbed him “the first diplomat” in Benin-China relations (Soulé-Kohndou, 2018, 4). Explaining why presidents often control these deals, one former minister said, “the challenge for the president is that he does not always know where the ministers stand politically.”<sup>17</sup>

Benin’s incumbent leaders have also relied to a considerable extent on the capture of rents and revenues from the day-to-day business of the bureaucracy. Said ruling party official, “there have been certain agencies that nourish the President’s political needs.”<sup>18</sup> Politicians often seek out “wealthy employees of the state” to support them, especially “tax and customs agents.”<sup>19</sup> Agents at the Port of Cotonou, in particular, have served as “a principal source of [party] finance” (Bako-Arifari, 2001, 42), where there is “a well-established relationship between the needs of political parties for extraordinary revenues in the run-up to elections and the level of informal payments collected from port users” (Zinnes, 2016, 33). Police and *gendarmes* are also important extractions agents, collecting 200,000 to 300,000 CFA per day (equivalent to \$400-\$600), significant portions of which get funneled upwards to those in positions of authority (Bako-Arifari, 2006, 209).

As “very light organizations” built around the personal ambition of individual politi-

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<sup>15</sup> Author interview, Cotonou, June 22, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> United States District Court, Southern District of California. “Shurkin et al vs. Titan Corp. et al,” File number: 04-CV-06 -LAB LS, p. 43.

<sup>17</sup> Author interview, Cotonou, June 29, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Author interview, Cotonou, June 18, 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Author interview, Cotonou, June 20, 2014.

cians (Bierschenk, 2006, 547-548), parties in Benin lack both the internal organizational structures and collective values that incentivize agent loyalty. Fearing that extracted resources will get channeled to opposition leaders or potential defectors, Benin's incumbents have employed co-optation and coercion to maintain control over extraction. Among the most visible examples of these tactics was when Yayi, fearing defection of his most important political financier and beneficiary of extraction, Patrice Talon, accused Talon of an assassination plot and dismissed the entire government, which included a number of Talon-affiliated ministers.<sup>20</sup> Bureaucrats in Benin also widely report fears of political reprisal (see Section 6 below). A former employee at the tax authority explained that personnel had "much freedom" in their ability to profit from their positions, but only if they "repaid" the politicians who helped them.<sup>21</sup>

In short, Benin's parties possess few, if any, of the institutional qualities that could help their leaders manage the political risks and agency problems involved in extraction. As such, collusive forms of extraction are not available in Benin. Instead, Benin's political leadership has typically engaged in more coercive forms of extraction that centralize presidential control over extractive procurement deals, delegate extraction more frequently to bureaucrats, and use coercive instruments of control.

### **4.3 Comparing Extraction in Survey Results**

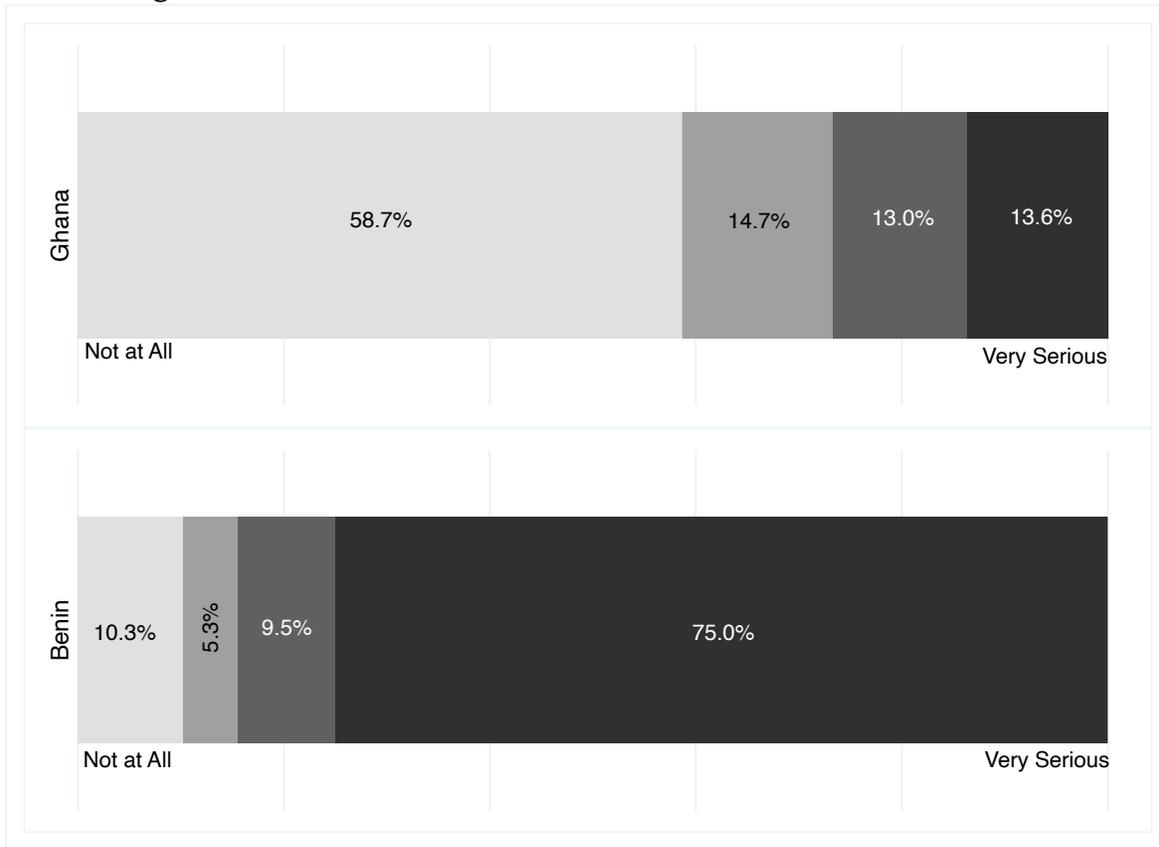
A principal difference between extraction in Benin and Ghana is that leaders in Benin rely to a much greater extent on bureaucrats to divert state rents and revenues to political coffers. This difference is strongly evident in the survey of bureaucrats. Figure 2 shows survey results reflecting bureaucrats' perceptions of diversion of their organization's resources to a political party. Beninese bureaucrats overwhelmingly saw resource diversion to parties as a serious problem (75.0%) in their organization, compared to only 13.6% of

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<sup>20</sup>However, Talon still went on to defeat Yayi's chosen successor, Lionel Zinsou, in the 2016 election.

<sup>21</sup>Author interview, Parakou, June 16, 2014.

**Figure 2: Diversion of Resources to Parties in Benin and Ghana<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Responses to questions asking to what extent “resources disappearing for party use” is a problem in their organization. Benin: n=527, Ghana: n=484.

bureaucrats in Ghana – a statistically significant difference ( $t = 25.4$ ).<sup>22</sup> The large magnitude of the difference between the two countries suggests that these differences are not driven by social desirability bias or by other survey-related factors.

## 5 Extraction & Executive Job Distribution

Having established the prevalence of different political extraction practices in Benin and Ghana, I now turn to the question of whether these practices produce the patterns of job distribution outlined in Figure 1. I first analyze the distribution of executive posts.

<sup>22</sup>Whether or not the respondents see these issues as a problem is not necessarily akin to the frequency of their occurrence, but they are likely to be related.

The empirical focus throughout this section is on minister appointments, which are easily comparable across countries.<sup>23</sup> I use the term “ministers” rather than “cabinet members” because not all ministers are members of the cabinet. In Ghana, for example, only 19 ministers can serve in the cabinet, but the total number of ministers is typically far higher.

The extraction-based theory generates three expectations for executive job distribution. First, thanks to their well-institutionalized parties, Ghana’s presidents have a large pool of trusted extraction agents to whom they delegate extraction, leading to a much broader distribution of executive posts to political agents than in Benin. Second, among the many political agents appointed in Ghana, those with more robust histories in the party should be placed into positions with greater extraction opportunities. Third, because Ghana’s leaders can rely on internal party mechanisms of agent discipline, they should dismiss ministers less frequently than in Benin, where leaders must use dismissals to ensure that potential defectors do not gain meaningful access to state resources.

## **5.1 The Political Distribution of Minister Appointments**

In collusive systems such as Ghana’s, leaders can remain relatively distant from extraction by delegating to party agents – individuals who they have come to know over repeated interactions within the party. In Benin’s coercive system, the prevalence of elite defection from the ruling party implies that presidents limit political actors’ access to executive posts, even among co-partisans, for fear that they will use these posts to amass resources and power to challenge the incumbent. As such, the expectation is that Ghanaian presidents would distribute minister posts more broadly to elite political actors, whereas Benin’s presidents would minimize the appointment of political actors as ministers. This latter expectation differs considerably from conventional accounts of elite accommodation in clientelistic contexts, which assume that leaders of weaker parties widely distribute executive posts to assemble political support coalitions ([Geddes, 1994](#); [van de Walle, 2007](#)).

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<sup>23</sup>In Ghana, I exclude deputy and regional ministers because there are no clear equivalents in Benin.

In both countries, presidents have broad *de facto* discretion over minister appointments. They can appoint as many ministers as they see fit, determine their prerogatives, and dismiss them at will. There is, however, one important difference in the two countries' appointment rules: Ghana's constitution mandates that half of all Ministers of State should be members of parliament (MP) (Article 78), but no such provision exists in Benin's constitution. In practice, Ghanaian presidents can sidestep this requirement by appointing ministers who do not bear the formal title of Minister of State. Nonetheless, I show that, in practice, the appointment of MPs in Ghana often goes far beyond this constitutional requirement and has served as an important part of the broader extraction strategy.

### **The Breadth of Executive Politicization**

To assess whether presidents distribute jobs broadly or minimally to political agents, I estimate a latent *politicization* score for each minister appointee using a Bayesian IRT model.<sup>24</sup> The measurement strategy assumes that a minister is more political if they have a more visible record of political activity and less relevant technical experience (Camerlo and Pérez-Liñán, 2015). The model aggregates nine dichotomous variables coded from ministers' biographies. Four variables relate to the appointee's political background. These variables indicate whether, prior to or at the time of appointment, the individual was publicly affiliated with a political party, held a party leadership role, was an MP, or had run for political office.<sup>25</sup> The remaining variables measure whether each minister's educational and professional backgrounds relate to their assigned portfolio.<sup>26</sup>

The model is designed such that individuals with more political experience and less

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<sup>24</sup>Used extensively in educational testing to measure latent traits such as ability, IRT models are increasingly common in comparative politics such as in the measurement of regime types (Geddes et al., 2017; Pemstein et al., 2010; Treier and Jackman, 2008).

<sup>25</sup>Since including the MP variable could confound the two countries' different constitutional provisions regarding the (non-)appointment of MPs, I construct the politicization index without this variable and present results in the supplementary material. Without the MP variable, Ghana's average politicization scores decline but differences between the countries remain statistically significant.

<sup>26</sup>Descriptive statistics for all variables appear in the supplementary material.

relevant technical experience receive higher politicization scores. To ensure that the politicization scores do not simply reflect party institutionalization or size (i.e. that leaders of larger parties can appoint more of their own), the model does *not* discriminate between individuals affiliated with the ruling party and opposition parties. Importantly, there is no a priori reason to expect that Ghana's ministers would be more political than Benin's. Many accounts of government formation in Africa emphasize that presidents distribute minister posts to attract support from other elites (e.g. [Widner, 1992](#)) or to neutralize threats from opponents (e.g. [Arriola, 2009](#)). Additionally, the low barrier to party entry in Benin means that elites could easily form their own parties and occupy leadership posts within them.

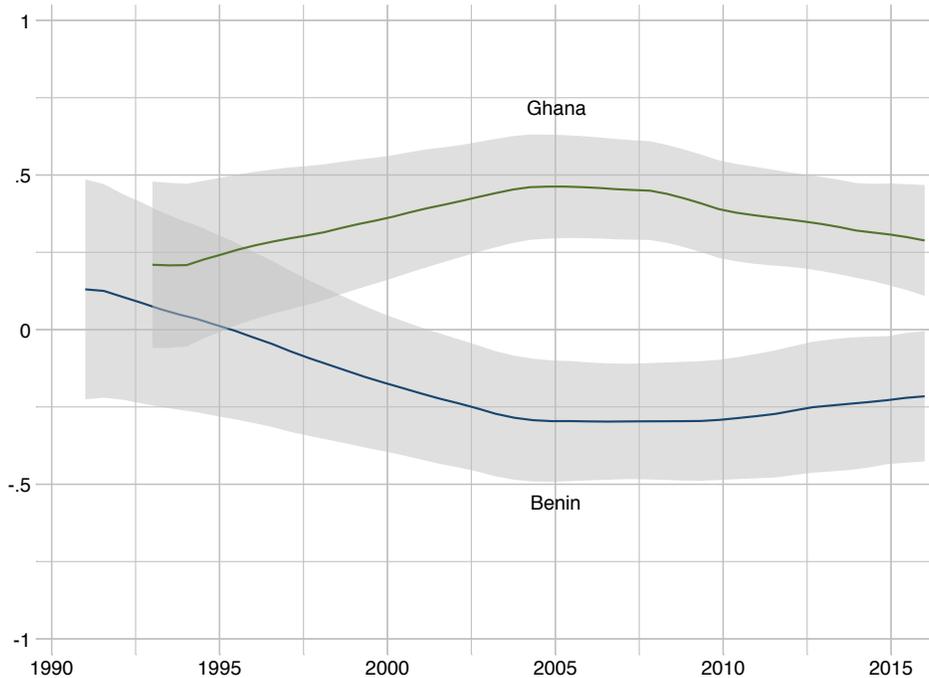
Figure 3 displays each country's average politicization scores over time. From the late-1990s through 2016, Ghana's ministers had significantly higher politicization scores than Benin's. The rise in politicization scores in Ghana in the late-1990s is consistent with accounts of President J.J. Rawlings' gradual acceptance of the (political) need to replace technocrats with "technopols" who were willing to serve the extractive interests of the NDC ([Abdulai and Mohan, 2019](#)). In Benin, the declining politicization scores in the 1990s and early-2000s coincide with significant episodes of ruling coalition fracture during the presidencies of Nicephore Soglo and Mathieu Kérékou ([Banégas, 2003](#)). As defections became more common, leaders increasingly turned to the appointment of technocrats and personal loyalists over political actors. By the time Yayi assumed office in 2006, he saw that "political nominations [of ministers] come with a lot of [political] risk," preferring instead to "look closely at many CVs" to find those with better technical qualifications.<sup>27</sup> Since 2001, 40% of Beninese appointees have had no visible political background whatsoever and only 20% of appointees have been appointed from the National Assembly.

These differences are not easily explained by variation in constitutional rules. Although, as noted above, Ghana's constitution requires a majority of Ministers of State to

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<sup>27</sup> Author interview, Cotonou, November 14, 2013.

**Figure 3: Minister Politicization Scores in Benin and Ghana<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Politicization score estimates depicted as local polynomial smooth lines with 95% confidence intervals.

come from parliament, most Ghanaian presidents have far exceeded this requirement: MPs constitute 64% of minister appointments in Ghana. During President John Kufuor's second term in office (2005-2008), this percentage reached as high as 75%. Although the constitutional provision likely generates a norm that presidents allocate portfolios to MPs, there is also widespread acknowledgement of the extractive benefits associated with minister portfolios in Ghana.<sup>28</sup> The resources that are accessible from these positions benefit presidents, parties, as well as individual MPs in their efforts to raise funds for re-election and offer material support to their constituents (e.g. [Lindberg and Zhou, 2009](#)).

### **Party Loyalty and Access to Extraction in Ghana**

Though consistent with the extraction-based theory, the cross-country differences in the minister politicization scores are merely suggestive of the theory. I gain further leverage

<sup>28</sup>Numerous interview respondents noted that MPs desire minister positions because of the benefits that accrue to them and their constituents.

by analyzing within-country patterns of portfolio distribution in Ghana, where ministers serve as key extraction agents. In delegating extraction to party agents, leaders in Ghana's collusive system should place their most trusted party elite into positions where they can facilitate the award of procurement contracts to party financiers.

I investigate this claim with a measure of political loyalty that multiplies the politicization score by a binary variable coding whether individuals are longstanding members of the president's party.<sup>29</sup> If an individual has extensive political experience as reflected by a high politicization score *and* a longstanding affiliation with the ruling party, they would receive a higher loyalty score. As expected, average loyalty scores are significantly higher in Ghana (0.72) than in Benin (0.29), with  $t=11.46$ .

To assess whether those with higher loyalty scores are placed into extraction-rich ministries, I use data on government contracts awarded by each ministry between 2012 and 2016.<sup>30</sup> The contract data were obtained from the website of Ghana's Public Procurement Authority (PPA) along with in-person visits to their offices. In total, I obtained data on 5,062 contracts. In multiple discussions with employees at the PPA, they expressed confidence that nearly all central government contracts awarded from 2012 - 2016 were contained in the data. Any unpublished contracts, they explained, were likely to be small in number and withheld for reasons of either national security or parliamentary privilege.<sup>31</sup> To ensure that the withholding of national security contracts does not bias the sample, I remove the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the analysis. I also remove all local governments and independent agency contracts, which would not have been overseen by a minister.

I calculate both the total value (in constant U.S. dollars) and total number of contracts awarded by each ministry in each year. Controlling for annual budget allocations, number

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<sup>29</sup>I define "longstanding" as having become publicly affiliated with the party prior to the most recent presidential election cycle.

<sup>30</sup>These were the years for which complete contract data were available.

<sup>31</sup>Author interviews at Public Procurement Authority, Accra, Ghana June 22, 2017 and June 23, 2017.

of personnel,<sup>32</sup> and dummy variables coding 1) whether a new minister was appointed that year and 2) election years, I use OLS regression to test whether ministries with greater access to procurement are more likely to receive or retain a loyal ruling party agent. In years when a new appointment is made, I use the loyalty score of the new appointee. In years with no appointment, I use the loyalty score of the sitting minister, representing the leader's decision to retain that minister.<sup>33</sup>

The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 1. In Models 1-4, I test the relationship using random effects models with robust standard errors clustered at the ministry level. All but one of the models (4) produces a positive and statistically significant relationship between ministry contracts and the appointment or retention of a loyal minister. In Models 5 and 6, I use ministry- and year-fixed effects to show that, as a ministry's contracting activity increases, it is more likely to be assigned to an individual with a higher political loyalty score, thus lending further support to the extraction-based expectations.

## 5.2 Collusive vs. Coercive Control: Minister Tenure & Dismissals

Another implication of the extraction-based theory is that incumbents will vary in their use of dismissals to maintain control over extraction. In Ghana's collusive system, leaders can rely on parties' internal discipline mechanisms to ensure agents extract in service of the incumbent, thus attenuating the need to use dismissals to compel agent loyalty. Although incumbents in Benin do not typically delegate extraction to elite agents, leaders are likely to use their powers of minister dismissal frequently to ensure that potential defectors do not enjoy ongoing access to state power or resources.

To assess these expectations, I compare indicators of dismissal and stability (Table 2). First, ministers in Benin are far more likely to leave the government in the middle of a presidential term (56.0%) than are their Ghanaian counterparts (32.1%). Second, I compare

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<sup>32</sup>Personnel numbers are from the Ministry of Finance's annual budget statements.

<sup>33</sup>Additional information and descriptive statistics for all variables appear in the supplementary material.

**Table 1: Procurement Contracts and Appointment of Loyal Ministers in Ghana**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Value of Contracts (log)	0.022*** (2.65)		0.018* (1.96)		0.021* (1.83)	
Number of Contracts (log)		0.089** (1.99)		0.077 (1.57)		0.105** (2.26)
Ministry Budget (% of total)			-0.443 (-0.50)	-0.778 (-0.87)	-1.780 (-0.92)	-1.895 (-0.91)
Ministry Personnel (log)			0.022 (0.61)	0.028 (0.79)	0.063 (1.08)	0.079 (1.41)
New Appointment			-0.035 (-0.40)	-0.023 (-0.26)	-0.048 (-0.58)	-0.032 (-0.40)
Election Year			0.026 (0.24)	0.041 (0.37)	0.031 (0.30)	0.045 (0.41)
Constant	0.044 (0.43)	0.152 (1.56)	-0.038 (-0.15)	0.006 (0.02)	-0.354 (-0.72)	-0.417 (-0.93)
Fixed Effects	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	112	112	107	107	107	107
R-squared	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.08

\*p<0.1    \*\*p<0.05    \*\*\*p<0.01

Panel regression with robust standard errors clustered by ministry. The dependent variable is the minister loyalty score. T-statistics in parentheses.

average annual portfolio turnover by calculating portfolio volatility rates, which add together the total number of ministers who enter the government, exit government, and are reshuffled in a given year, divided by the total number of ministers in the government (Lijphart, 1984). An average of 37.7% of ministerial portfolios turn over in non-inauguration years in Benin, compared to 25.7% in Ghana. Third, I compare average minister tenures. Ghanaian ministers serve, on average, 826 days in their posts compared to an average tenure of 710 days in Benin.<sup>34</sup> This difference expands when comparing only individuals with politicization scores above the median in each country. Political ministers in Ghana serve, on average, significantly longer than those with lower politicization scores.

Taken together, the patterns of executive job distribution are consistent with the extraction-based theoretical expectations. In Ghana, those with greater and more visible political

<sup>34</sup>The shortest tenure was 18 days in Benin and 42 days in Ghana. The longest tenure was 2,743 days in Benin and 2,848 days in Ghana.

**Table 2: Minister Rotation and Dismissal**

	Benin	Ghana	z or t
Intra-Term Exit	56.0%	32.1%	5.68***
Portfolio Volatility (Intra-term)	0.77	0.50	1.51*
Percent Turnover Per Year (Intra-term)	37.7%	25.7%	1.40*
Days Served (Overall)	710	826	-2.80***
Days Served (High Politicization)	713	844	-2.27**
N (appointments)	310	276	
N (individuals)	250	166	
Years Covered	1991-2016	1993-2016	
Presidential Term Length	5 years	4 years	

\*p<0.1 \*\*p<0.05 \*\*\*p<0.01

z-statistics and t-statistics from difference of proportions/means tests

experience are widely placed into positions where they can administer extraction through procurement deals. In Benin, contrary to conventional assumptions about elite patronage, leaders have minimized the placement of political actors into executive posts. Additionally, ministers in Benin have significantly shorter tenures and leave government with greater frequency than ministers in Ghana, suggesting that Beninese leaders may use their appointment and dismissal powers more frequently to manage elite access to extraction.

## 6 Extraction and the Politicization of Public Service Jobs

The extraction-based theory also anticipates divergence in the distribution and management of public service jobs. Leaders in Benin rely to a greater extent on rank-and-file bureaucrats as extraction agents than do leaders in Ghana. This difference generates three expectations. First, in order to attract agents with aligned incentives, incumbents in Benin are more likely to politicize the recruitment of public service jobs. Second, those hired based on their political links should be placed into organizations where extraction is prevalent. Third, since incumbent leaders cannot fully count on the selection of reliable extraction agents, they are more likely to use (threats of) dismissal to maintain control

over extraction. In this section, I assess these expectations with survey data.

## 6.1 Politicized Recruitment

Figure 4 shows the distribution of responses to two survey questions asking bureaucrats about politicized recruitment to the public service. The first question asks respondents to choose the response that best describes how they came to be hired in their current organization: 1) through a family member or friend, 2) as a result of their political affiliation or involvement, or 3) through an exam, interview, or application process. Another question, using the same set of response categories, asks respondents to describe how others in their organization were hired. For both questions, there is a statistically and substantively significant difference between the two countries. Whereas 19% of the survey respondents in Benin reported that their political affiliation was the *principal* way that they obtained their job, less than 1% of respondents in Ghana answered in this way.<sup>35</sup> When asked about others in their organization, 15% of Beninese respondents said that political links were most important in hiring, whereas approximately 4% responded this way in Ghana.<sup>36</sup>

Although the surveys were conducted completely anonymously and there was no reason for respondents to believe otherwise, these responses suggest the possibility of some social desirability bias, albeit in different directions in each country. The survey participants in Benin were *more* likely to say that political links mattered for themselves than for others in their organization, suggesting that they perceived some benefit from making their political links known. In Ghana, respondents were *less* likely to say that political links mattered for themselves than for others in their organizations, suggesting potential biases against divulging their political links. Nonetheless, the high level of confidence ( $p < .001$ ) in the cross-country differences suggests that they withstand potential biases.<sup>37</sup>

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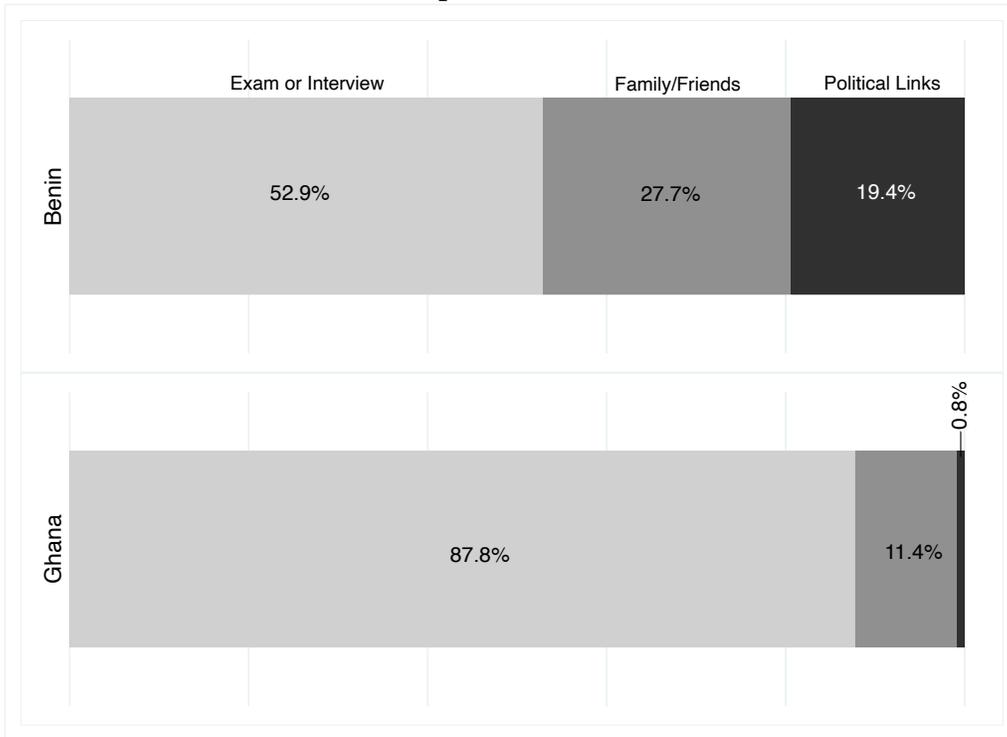
<sup>35</sup>The different proportions are statistically significant with  $z = 9.87$ .

<sup>36</sup>Once again, the differences in proportions between countries are statistically significant with  $z = 5.96$ .

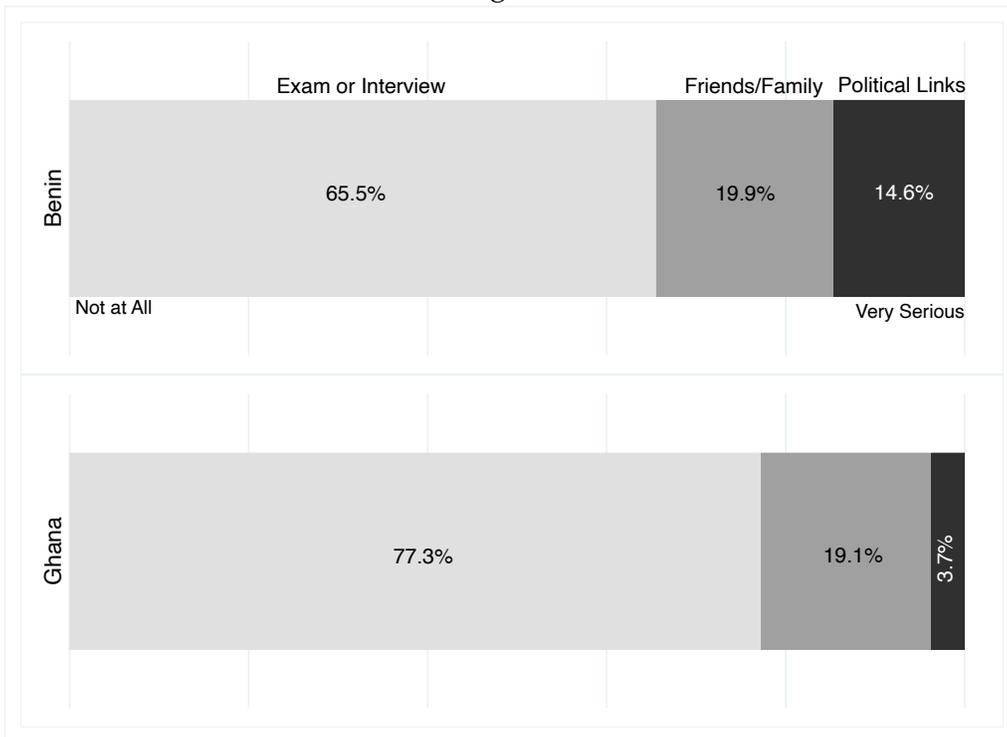
<sup>37</sup>See supplementary material for additional discussion and analysis.

**Figure 4: Public Service Job Politicization in Benin and Ghana**

How Respondent Was Hired

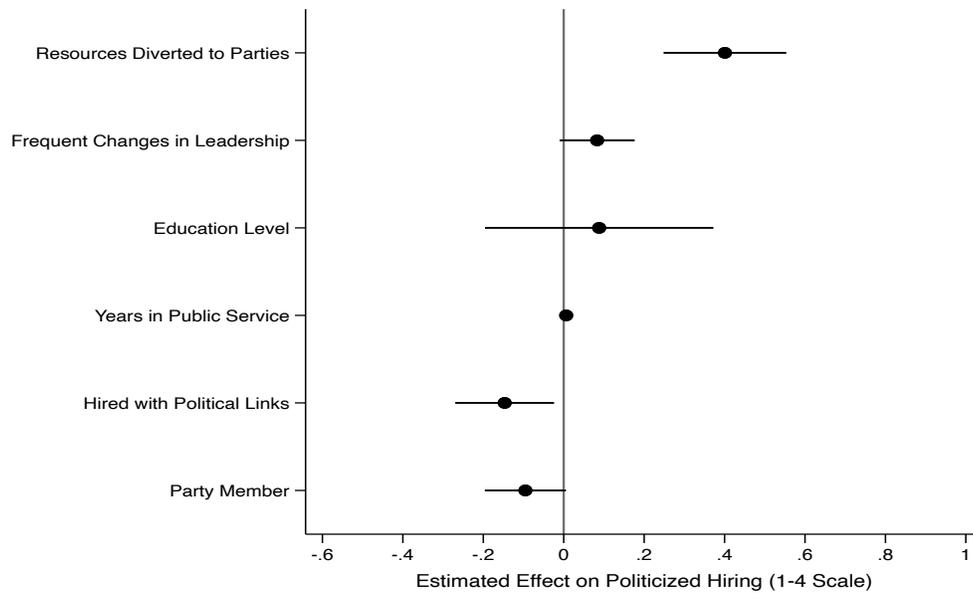


How Others in Organization Are Hired



Examining this relationship further, I conduct regression analyses of survey responses in Benin (Figure 5). I find that bureaucrats who report high levels of political resource diversion in their organization are also significantly more likely to see politicized hiring as a problem in their organization. This relationship is strong and robust to the inclusion of covariates measuring other forms of perceived political influence in one’s organization, as well as attributes of individual respondents and different organization types.<sup>38</sup>

**Figure 5: Extraction by Bureaucrats and Politicized Hiring in Benin<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Coefficients and 90% confidence intervals from OLS regression with robust standard errors clustered by organization type. The dependent variable is perceptions of “hiring of personnel because of their affiliation to the ruling party” as a problem in their organization. N = 474 and R<sup>2</sup> = 0.29.

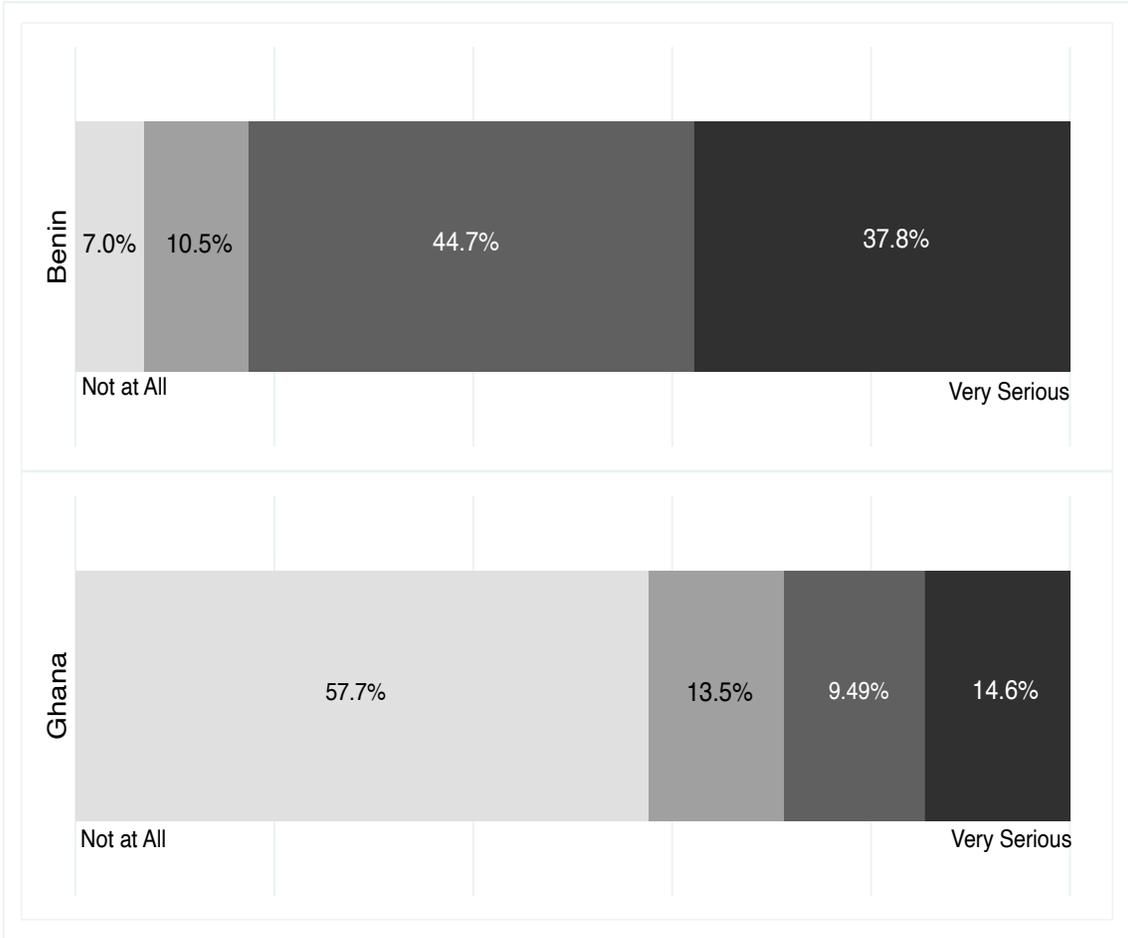
## 6.2 Coercive Control of Bureaucratic Extraction Agents in Benin

Despite widespread politicization of hiring processes, Benin’s presidents cannot fully rely on politicized recruitment to control extracted resources. Leaders therefore also employ coercive tools of control – dismissing bureaucrats who do not comply with political

<sup>38</sup>In the supplementary material, I provide descriptive statistics, present full model results, and perform robustness checks with alternative models.

directives. In Figure 6, I show that survey respondents’ levels of concern about political dismissals are, as expected, considerably higher in Benin than in Ghana, with over 82% of Beninese respondents expressing some level of concern about political dismissals, compared to 29% in Ghana.

**Figure 6: Political Firing of Qualified Personnel<sup>a</sup>**

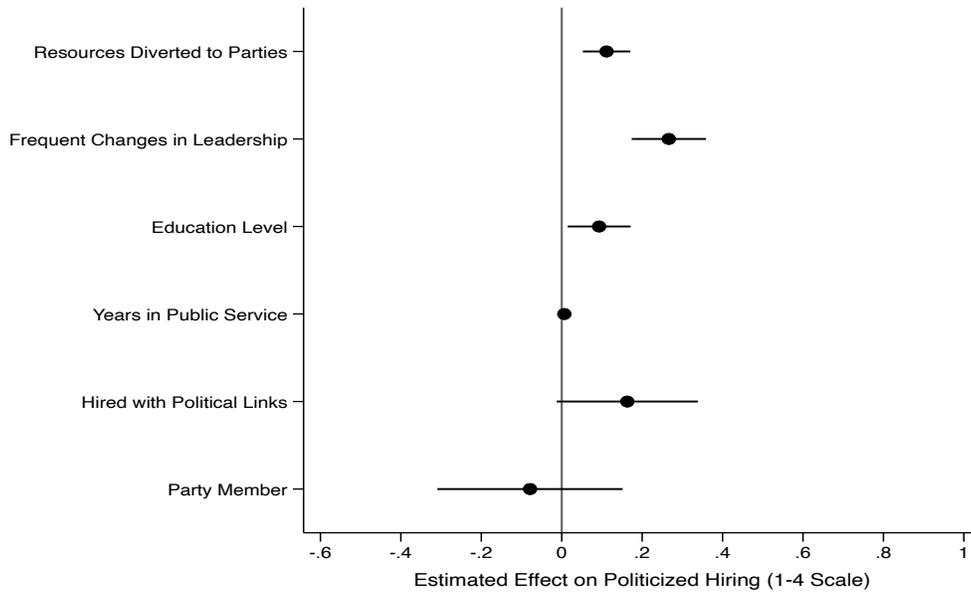


<sup>a</sup>Distribution of survey responses asking bureaucrats to rate the importance of “qualified personnel get sacked because of their party affiliation” as a problem in their organization.

Regression analysis, once again, provides further insight into the relationship between the political diversion of resources and bureaucrats’ perceptions about political dismissals. Those who report high levels of concern about “resources disappearing for party use” in their organizations also express higher levels of concern about political dismissals (See Figure 7). This relationship withstands the inclusion of covariates measuring other forms

of political influence, bureaucrats' individual attributes, and organization types. The results do indicate, however, that political dismissals may occur for a multitude of political reasons, inclusive of extraction agent control.

**Figure 7: Political Firing of Qualified Personnel<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Coefficients and 90% confidence intervals from OLS regression with robust standard errors clustered by organization type. The dependent variable is bureaucrats' perceptions of political firings as a problem in their organization. N = 474 and R<sup>2</sup> = 0.41. Full model results provided in supplementary material.

## 7 Conclusion

This article has provided theory and evidence that updates our understanding of the politics of state job distribution in clientelistic contexts. I have argued that leaders' concerns about resource control generally, and political finance in particular, occupy a prominent place in job distribution decisions, particularly where incumbents depend on the extraction of state money for political finance. To support this argument, I have shown that variation in job distribution – both across and within two African countries – is strongly reflective of their different systems of party-based extraction.

Although the empirical focus of this paper is on Ghana and Benin, the argument applies more broadly. In a number of Africa's well-institutionalized ruling parties, such as the Botswana Democratic Party (Good, 2010; Sharife, 2016), the Rwandan Patriotic Front (Kelsall, 2013; Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2012), and the Chama Cha Mapinduzi in Tanzania (Ewald, 2013), elite party agents serving in government positions work collectively to serve the party's financial interests. These systems look similar to Ghana's collusive system of extraction and often involve the placement of elite party agents into extraction-rich positions. By contrast, ruling parties with low levels of institutionalization such as the People's Party in Malawi have relied more frequently on bureaucratic personnel as key extraction agents, while limiting the involvement of political elites in these activities (Dulani, 2019). There is also evidence of frequent politicization of bureaucratic recruitment in Malawi in comparison to other African countries (Sigman et al., 2018).

The theory also applies to parties with intermediate levels of institutionalization. In Uganda, the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) has high levels of durability and strong grassroots organization but, at the elite level, is "an unruly catch-all for aspiring political elites" (Collord, 2016, 641). In this context, the president himself oversees the NRM's principal extraction activities such as the use of 'ghost soldiers' and military procurement deals (Khisra, 2019; Tangri and Mwenda, 2013). At the same time, however, the NRM has used the proliferation of state organizations to broaden extraction for its grassroots-level machine (Vokes and Wilkins, 2016). In parties such as the Ethiopian People's Democratic Revolutionary Front (EPDRF), a relatively stable (ethnic) elite alliance led the party's elite to form a network of for-profit entities serving the party's financial needs (Abegaz, 2013). The EPDRF's weak internal structure, however, characterized by frequently "changing strategies of political mobilization and organization," meant that party leaders used more coercive forms of control over coalition members (Vaughan, 2011).

In emphasizing job distribution as a mechanism of political financing, the study calls

for more attention to the different *types* of goods and services involved in clientelistic political exchanges and the different strategies that leaders employ in their politics of distribution (e.g. [Holland, 2016](#)). It also points to the critical role of party institutions (e.g. [Pitcher, 2012](#)) and party finance (e.g. [Samuels, 2002](#)) in structuring clientelistic exchange. Party-based incentives shape not only the types of policies that governments pursue, but also the ways that politicians manage and deploy the capacities of the state. Party institutions therefore form an important avenue through which to better understand the politics of state performance in Africa and beyond.

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