

LOCAL REPRESENTATION IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALIZATION:  
MAYORS, CITIZENS, AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN LATIN AMERICA

A Dissertation

by

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## ABSTRACT

Representation is a basic component of democracy and yet scientific understanding of how it works has been limited to the national level of government, especially in the developing world. This research develops and tests theories regarding two key aspects of local representation: government responsiveness and procedural inclusiveness. I examine local representation in the context of decentralization because local officials and citizens interact according to the set of decentralization policies that define the local political sphere. I find that both contextual factors and individual-level factors are important determinants of local representation.

This study takes three approaches to studying the relationship between local representation and decentralization. First, it uses formal theory to explore the impact of electoral competition on local representation in the dimensions of sector and scope. Decentralization and local capacity are found to constrain the behavior of the mayor. Next, it takes an in-depth look at the representational orientations of mayors, using data collected during fieldwork in Ecuador. It predicts the emergence of attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility using both individual-level and county-level covariates. Lastly, I consider representation from the citizen's point of view. Using data from 18 countries in Latin America and two samples of counties in Ecuador, I test the impact of participation on citizen evaluations of local government. I find that participation in general has a limited impact on citizen evaluations, with the exception of direct contact with government.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all my family. First to my husband, Mark who inspired me with the idea of getting a PhD. in the first place and has supported me every step of the way. Also to my parents, Michael and Rachel Nesbit and my sister Heather Nesbit, for their examples of excellence in both education and character. To my wonderful in-laws who adopted me into their Aggie family. And finally, to my family in Chi Alpha Campus Ministries and College Heights Assemblies of God for living out Galatians 6:2, “Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ”.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION: EXPLORING REPRESENTATION IN THE

#### DECENTRALIZED CONTEXT

#### **Why Study Local Representation?**

Political scientists have long studied the concept of political representation, or how politicians respond to and act in the interests of citizens (see Pitkin 1967). In democratic countries, elected officials are expected to be accountable to citizens and behave in accordance with their wishes. Unfortunately, students of Latin American politics are all too familiar with the consequences of poor representation which occurs when the critical linkages between citizens and their government officials break down. At the very least, corrupt politicians regularly rob the poor of their political voice (Taylor-Robinson 2011); dissatisfied citizens may take to the street to demand the resignation of the president as in Ecuador in 2005 (Mainwaring 2006); or the entire system of political parties may collapse as in Venezuela in the late 1990s (Morgan 2011). Clearly the quality of political representation affects the quality of democracy, but again our understanding of how it works is largely limited to the national level of government.

So representation matters, but why should we study it at the local level? Local governments are arguably the smallest meaningful microcosm of democracy that citizens will encounter, and they will encounter their local government with more frequency than

the state/provincial or national government<sup>1</sup>. Local governments, in the context of decentralization, which will be examined shortly, are also in charge of providing the basic services that citizens use every day such as water, sewage, and trash collection. When these important services are noticeably absent from the lives of citizens, they are likely to be quite unhappy. In fact when local governments perform better, we expect that citizens will feel more satisfied with not only their local government but perhaps democracy itself. So local governments are important because they are the most proximate democratic entity to the citizen and they provide services that directly impact the life quality of citizens. Furthermore, if local officials are democratically elected, then they should have incentives to be responsive to local needs. They should represent their constituents, if not along abstract left-right ideological lines, then in basic and practical ways. Thus, in this dissertation I investigate features and determinants of local representation.

### **Why Study Decentralization?**

In recent decades, policy analysts and academics alike have considered the merits (and demerits) of one possible solution to unresponsive national government: decentralization. Decentralization is defined as “a process of state reform composed of a set of public policies that transfer responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government” (Falleti 2005, p. 328). This theory argues that local

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<sup>1</sup> I make this assumption for Latin America, and it may extend to other parts of the developing world. I acknowledge that is likely not universally true, and realize an important possible scope condition is that this research is limited to Latin America. However, there is some evidence that the assumption may hold for the United States. See for example, Thomas and Streib 2003 and Bimber 1999, who argue that citizens in the U.S. have more contact with local than national government.

governments should be given authority, resources, and responsibilities because they are closer to the people they serve and have better information about local needs and preferences. While on the surface decentralization appears to be a straightforward solution to weak representational linkages, its detractors argue that local officials may be just as corrupt as national officials and they may lack the ability (or incentives) to provide quality representation to their citizens. If this is the case, decentralization is no solution at all. I argue that decentralization merits study not just because its effects are controversial in the literature, but because it promises citizens better governance and may even raise their expectations about what local government should do. It has the power to either strengthen citizen trust in democracy or further erode it.

### **The Puzzle of Local Representation in the Context of Decentralization**

This dissertation addresses the question, does decentralization improve local representation? If so, when and where (that is in which contexts)? While the literature has not explicitly connected decentralization with enhanced representation, yet this is often assumed to be the case. Why? The idea flows logically from what we already know about the purported benefits of decentralization. First, if decentralization enhances local accountability by allowing the public (rather than national officials) to select the mayor and council members, then we can assume that the incentives of local officials to be responsive to their constituents also increases as they face electoral constraints. Decentralization may also increase transparency, meaning that citizens have more information about what their local officials do (or don't do), and thus they are better equipped to hold them accountable. Secondly, decentralization usually increases the

amount of resources available to local government officials, which allows them to provide the public works projects that take care of citizen needs, which is a part of representation<sup>2</sup>. Lastly, decentralization brings service delivery closer to the people, meaning that the local government has more responsibilities in a decentralized context. This should mean that local officials are directly accountable to the citizens for things like water, sewage, trash, and transportation services<sup>3</sup>. Due to decentralization, we know that mayors are under increased scrutiny from the public and have more functions to perform, but they also have an opportunity to do the most good in their municipality in terms of representing their constituents. The purpose of this research is to find out whether or not they rise to the occasion.

This “rising to the occasion” need not happen uniformly within a nation. In fact, we know that in the developing world subnational units do not develop at homogenous rates economically, and we should not expect them to develop at homogenous rates democratically. Yet, this is exactly what some of the literature on decentralization has done when it has considered decentralization to be a national-level institutional characteristic that is constant across all local contexts in a given country. My research design allows me to relax this assumption and explicitly test the impact of decentralization on representation at the local level.

Some local governments are more likely than others to produce quality

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<sup>2</sup> This is assuming that local officials are not just stealing or misappropriating the money allocated to the local government. Theory tells us that local governance will not flourish in the face of corruption (see Escobar-Lemmon and Ross, 2013)

<sup>3</sup> In many places in Ecuador, the location of the mayor’s house is public knowledge, and citizens will track him/her down at any hour if they are dissatisfied with their services. This may serve as an incentive for even the most reticent officials to be responsive.

democratic representation, so I am careful to address a variety of relevant contextual factors which vary across subnational units, including level of urbanization, economic development, political experience, and partisan affiliation. In sum, I add to the literature on local governance by explicitly connecting and testing the relationship between decentralization and local representation, which was previously an untested assumption in the literature. I also innovate by allowing decentralization to vary subnationally, which allows me to better predict differences in local representation and to consider the influence of contextual factors on democratic development within a given locality.

### **Conceptualizing Decentralization**

The school of thought in comparative politics known as *new institutionalism* (see March and Olsen, 1984) has challenged political scientists to think about how political institutions shape important outcomes such as democracy, inequality, representation. New institutionalism implies that if the rules of the game change, politicians will behave differently. In general, we expect that the political behavior of elected officials is molded by the institutions in which the actors find themselves. Scholarly work on national-level institutions has done much to confirm this expectation, but the impact of local-level political institutions has received considerably less attention.

For the purpose of my research, I conceptualize decentralization as part of the institutional context. A recurring theme throughout this dissertation is investigating and testing how the behavior of local officials responds to their institutional context, the chief component of which is decentralization. Decentralization is measured differently in each of the three empirical chapters, but in all cases it is considered to be part of the

local context in which citizens and their elected officials interact. More specific details about decentralization and its measurement are provided in each chapter.

### **Conceptualizing Representation**

There are a number of different conceptualizations of representation that are possible, given the long history of study in this area of political science. As a preface to this discussion, I wish to be clear that in this research project I am primarily concerned with representation in the general sense of local elected officials acting on the behalf of their constituents (Pitkin 1967). The study of representation has strong roots in the American politics literature that generally seeks to understand how legislators represent the majority (or median voter) of their constituents based on their legislative actions and in particular, roll-call votes<sup>4</sup> (see, for example, Bartels 1991, Erickson and Wright 1980, Wright 1989, and Hill 2010). I mention this literature because my dissertation holds to the basic concept of elected officials responding to citizens as a whole rather than as particular types of citizens<sup>5</sup>. Thus, I am not especially concerned with the representation of specific groups such as women or ethnic minorities, and I recognize that representation of the majority may look very different from representation of traditionally excluded groups (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, forthcoming). However, I do test for gender and ethnicity effects in Chapter III, and I consider inclusiveness in governance style to be one representational orientation that officials can

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<sup>4</sup> Scholars of American politics refer to this conceptualization of representation and the predictors of roll-call votes as the “standard model” of representation, which entails partisanship and constituency preferences.

<sup>5</sup> To be fair, the American literature on the subject certainly has examined ideas of group and issue representation, but I am citing canonical ideas here in order to show the basis for my approach to local representation which I will talk about in more detail shortly.

exhibit. In future research, I plan to clarify types of local representation, making distinctions between general and group-oriented representation.

### **Conceptualizing Local Representation**

Since the literature on representation has focused heavily on the national level, building a conceptualization of local representation requires some reshaping of past conceptualizations to fit the local government context. At the local level, I choose to focus on government responsiveness which is closely related to the concept of representation, particularly substantive representation. Pitkin defines representation broadly as “acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them” (1967, p. 209). Schwindt-Bayer (2010) provides a working definition of substantive representation that is germane to my research on local governments. For her, representation involves policy responsiveness in attitude and behavior; it includes both having preferences that match one’s constituents, and responsiveness in policymaking (see p. 20). To enhance conceptual clarity within this project, I limit my consideration to two aspects of substantive representation without attempting to describe other forms of representation such as passive or descriptive representation that might simultaneously operate between citizens and elected officials. The first aspect is *responsiveness*, which for the purpose of this research, can be thought of as the alignment between government decisions and citizen preferences. The second is *procedural inclusiveness* which can be thought of as the degree to which a government allows a diversity of actors into the decision-making process (see Orentlicher 2001).



These dimensions of *responsiveness* and *procedural inclusiveness* have additional ties to the literature. Responsiveness at the local level can be thought of as what Mansbridge (2003) calls anticipatory representation, which occurs when representatives focus on what they think their constituents will approve of in the next election. I argue<sup>6</sup> that in the local context, mayors are very retrospective in their thinking, and seek to have a list of public works projects that they can produce as evidence that they should continue in office. Local politicians tend to frame their achievements in terms of which citizen needs they have responded to during their term. What I term *procedural inclusiveness* is related loosely to Mansbridge's (2003) idea of surrogate representation, in which a legislator may represent constituents outside of their district because of their issue interests. The connection here is that sometimes members of marginalized groups find that their needs are addressed by someone in the legislature that they did not vote for because that person strongly advocates for the interests of their group. In the local context, because there is only one executive (the mayor), he or she must exhibit inclusiveness in order for the group to receive representation (at least from the executive official). Essentially, if there is no possibility of surrogate representation (e.g., there is no other mayor that can give your village water.), then inclusiveness becomes even more crucial to the quality of local representation. Thus we see that the

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<sup>6</sup>I should add that this idea is consistent with how the mayors in Ecuador talked about elections during my fieldwork interviews.

ideas of *responsiveness* and *procedural inclusiveness* emerge from the literature but can be adapted to fit the local context<sup>7</sup>.

### **Local Representation in Each Chapter**

The major goals of this research project are as follows: 1) to formulate a theory about local representation that is broadly and cross-nationally testable; 2) to investigate the dimensions of representational behavior among local official; and 3) to capture a bottom-up view of representation and local government by incorporating citizen attitudes and opinions. In order to fulfill these goals, I develop three corresponding conceptualizations of local representation in each of the substantive chapters. I will now explain how each chapter conceptualizes representation and summarize its main contributions.

First, we can evaluate local representation in terms of outcomes that a mayor produces. More specifically, I argue that electorally successful mayors select a representational strategy that allocates resources to the sectors of greatest popular concern and in a way that suits their constituents. In this part of the dissertation, local representation is conceptualized as the fit between the mayor's allocation choices and popular preferences broadly construed. I develop the idea that representational outcomes must match citizen preferences both in terms of the sector of the service provided and the scope of its provision, as a broadly available or narrowly targeted good. In the game

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<sup>7</sup> Additional literature on representation is considered in Chapter II and each empirical chapter contains additional pertinent literature.

theoretic model, mayor representational choices are shaped by beliefs about citizen support in the next election. The model generates several hypotheses, some of which are tested in the following two chapters. Several brief case studies of Ecuadorian cantons follow the game and use budgetary data to illustrate how mayors make choices that impact both the sector and the scope of goods that citizen receive. The purpose of the chapter is to present a broad conceptualization of local representation in terms of outcomes and to demonstrate that the decentralization context as well as the mayor's personal capacity can shape these outcomes. I find that there is a threshold level of representation that mayors must provide to citizens in order to be electorally viable, and the mayor's ability to provide this level is constrained by the local institutional context.

However, conceptualizations of local representation that stop at outcomes are incomplete because mayors (and local officials more generally) are constrained in a number of ways by their local context, including the depth and breadth of urgent needs in the canton, institutional capacity, and the size of their budget. If a mayor fails to provide local representation in terms of scope and sector, it is because he or she is either unwilling or unable to do so. In some cases, a willing mayor might not be able to produce the outcomes that he/she would like to because of these structural challenges. In order to address this issue, I look directly at mayoral attitudes and consider what they say about themselves and their constituents. Thus I explore the roots of representation through a conceptualization of local representation along two dimensions: political openness and administrative responsibility. As presented in Chapter III, political openness captures the mayor's willingness to include marginalized populations and

increase citizen participation, and administrative responsibility captures whether or not the mayor actively engages in planning and performing works projects that meet citizen needs.

This chapter provides an in-depth look at the representational strategies of mayors using interview and survey data collected by the author during fieldwork in Ecuador. I code mayors according to their representational attitudes on the dimensions of political openness and administrative responsibility. I then test hypotheses about which local conditions and individual characteristics are associated with different representational strategies. I show that both contextual- and individual-level factors are predictors of representational attitudes, but individual-level findings are stronger on the whole. For instance, women and indigenous mayors are more likely to exhibit attitudes of political openness, and education is an important predictor of attitudes of administrative responsibility.

Again, if we stop there the story of local representation is still incomplete, because the first two conceptualizations of local representation make assumptions about citizen preferences rather than examining them directly. In my third and final conceptualization of local representation, I think of representation as an ongoing dialogue between citizens and elected officials through participation in which citizen can express complaints and evaluate the service delivery provided by their local government.

The final empirical chapter supplies the citizen's view of local government representation through examination of mass survey data from Ecuador and 18 countries in Latin America. I use multi-level models to assess how individual- and canton-level

factors shape citizen evaluations of local government responsiveness. It examines the impact of individual behaviors such as participation, activism, and beliefs about corruption, as well as canton-level variables such as decentralization and the mayor's representational attitudes (political openness and administrative responsibility) on citizen opinions. AmericasBarometer data are combined with interview data collected by the author during fieldwork in Ecuador. The findings make it clear that increasing participation alone is not enough to turn dissatisfied citizens into satisfied citizens; in doing so, they point to the need for other conceptualizations of local representation that emphasize elite outcomes and attitudes, such as those found in Chapters II and III.

As a final note on the conceptualization of local representation, there are admittedly other possible ways to define local representation, including some that explicitly involve political parties. I choose not to include them explicitly in my conceptualization of representation primarily because they are not uniformly relevant at the local level. Scholars that have theorized about the importance of political parties for national representation generally assume that representation occurs along left-right ideological lines. I argue that the abstract ideological aspects of representation are often not present at the local level of government; so, by beginning without strong presuppositions about how partisan ideologies work in local government, my theory better fits most local contexts. It is appropriate for the contexts where parties do not play a strong role in local politics, and it is adaptable to contexts where they do. In fact, in the third chapter I look at the role that political parties play in shaping the representational attitudes of mayors, but they are not assumed to be the only vehicle through which

representation occurs. In future research, I plan to clarify the role that political parties play in shaping local representation.

### **Why Study Local Representation in Latin America and Ecuador?**

The puzzle of local representation is particularly relevant in Latin America. Most countries in Latin America have experimented with some form of decentralization, even if they lack federal constitutions (see Escobar-Lemmon, 2002). This has been done for many different reasons, some of which have to do with national governments attempting to make governance more efficient, democratic, and participatory in order to bolster regime legitimacy (Smith 2012). International donors such as the World Bank and the IMF have also strongly promoted decentralization in Latin America as a part of neoliberal economic reforms and structural adjustment packages crafted to save countries from the economic crises of the 1980s. Additionally, decentralization was seen as a part of re-democratization after authoritarian interludes, and several countries in Latin America introduced elections for local officials concurrent with their return to democracy<sup>8</sup>. Some countries, such as Ecuador and Bolivia, even favored the local level of government over the state or principal level of government when crafting decentralization policies (see Eaton, 2011). Thus, local governments throughout Latin America have become more relevant to citizens and elected officials alike in recent decades.

Two of the three empirical tests conducted as part of understanding how local representation is constructed and construed, are based on data from Ecuador. While

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<sup>8</sup> This is the case for Ecuador, which will be discussed in more detail shortly.

perhaps not the most salient case that comes to mind when one thinks of local representation, Ecuador is an ideal place to explore the way in which decentralization has created a context for local representation to flourish; it also has created variation. I selected Ecuador as the main ground in which to set the theory for several reasons. On a theoretical level, Ecuador is an attractive country to study because it provides the researcher with subnational heterogeneity in two important ways. First, the structure of Ecuador's decentralization policy allows local officials to request competencies from the national government in up to seven sectors (see Chapter II). Thus some municipalities took on additional service provision and administrative responsibilities while others did not, leading to a situation in which some citizens and local officials within the same country experience more decentralization than others. This is quite unique in the Latin American context because the level of decentralization experienced varies sub-nationally<sup>9</sup>.

Secondly, for a country its size, Ecuador has extraordinary amounts of variation in local political context, culture, and economy. It contains three distinct regions: 1) the agriculturally productive but still underdeveloped coastal plains (with the exception of Guayaquil which is a major metropolis and the commercial center for Ecuador); 2) the Andean highlands where indigenous groups strongly encourage norms of local democracy and the national government in Quito proclaims the leftist-socialist "Citizen's Revolution"; and 3) the Amazon basin where local government is a relatively newly established entity in the midst of oil companies, indigenous disputes, and

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<sup>9</sup> Ecuadorian decentralization policies are discussed in further detail in Chapter III.

organized crime syndicates. (In this region, anything goes in politics, including murder, death threats, and suitcases full of money to bribe your opponent.) So I have sufficient variation in context to allow me to test hypotheses about when and where local representation will be strongest.

The amount of variation in Ecuador is truly astounding and requires local officials to develop their cantons in different ways. There is no single model of local development for Ecuador, which makes it difficult to capture all the strategies of representation that may be occurring. However, the goal of this research is not just to describe Ecuadorian heterogeneity but more importantly to investigate recurring patterns in local representation and governance. In addition, I argue that the heterogeneity in local contexts increases the generalizability of the Ecuadorian finding to other countries. For example, what we learn about the Andean highlands in Ecuador may inform work in Bolivia and Peru, and what we learn about the Amazon basin may be a useful tool for understanding representation in that region of Brazil. Even beyond the Ecuadorian context, the motive of my research is to articulate theories about local representation that can be transported and re-tested in diverse local contexts. Ecuador is the country where I choose to begin my study of local representation, but I hope to explore the concepts of local representation cross-nationally in future research.

### **Conclusion**

This research aims to conceptualize and test how decentralization shapes local representation. It also investigates the contexts in which (when and where) local representation will emerge in order to account for the real-world subnational



heterogeneity in the rate of democratic development within a nation. To test whether or not decentralization impacts local representation, we first needed to create a few working conceptualizations of local representation by drawing on past literature and shaping it to fit the local context. The following three chapters have slightly different findings about the impact of decentralization on representation, but each leads to the conclusion that to some extent, both individual-level factors (race, gender, education) and contextual factors, such as decentralization, are important predictors of local representation. This supports the idea that institutional context matters and that the individuals work within their context to produce local representation outcomes.

## CHAPTER II

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION AND DECENTRALIZATION: A FORMAL MODEL WITH EVIDENCE FROM LOCAL BUDGETS IN ECUADOR

#### **Introduction**

As mentioned in the introduction, my research investigates how institutional context (decentralization) shapes the behavior of local officials and their constituents (representation). In the next two chapters of my dissertation, I focus on the behavior of local officials in the context of decentralization reforms. The final chapter will discuss representation from the citizen's perspective. In this chapter, I develop a formal model for mayoral representation in sector and scope and illustrate its implications using budget data from two cantons in Latin America. In particular, I address the following question: how does decentralization shape mayoral representational behavior? In order to do this, I consider how mayors make decisions to allocate their time and resources (responsiveness), given their political concerns about reelection. The formal model predicts that when institutional constraints (such as insufficient decentralization) prevent the mayor from allocating sufficient resources, his/her expectations of continuing in office are low and thus the representation offered is of lesser quality. Case-study analysis of local budgets suggests that this is indeed the case and points to the need for examining mayoral attitudes in greater detail, which is done in Chapter III.

Although decentralization has made local governments more important for both citizens and elected officials, a theory of local representation in the context of decentralization reform has not been developed or tested. My research treads into new

territory by dealing explicitly with the strategic representational choices of elected officials at the local level. The gap in the literature is partly due to a lack of empirical data on the attitudes and actions of local elites and their constituents. During my fieldwork in Ecuador, I gathered original data that allow me to test my theoretical expectations. However, the chief need in this literature is for theoretical concepts to be connected solidly with empirical methods. My research addresses this concern by creating a mathematical formalization of concepts and by paying explicit attention to fit between theoretical and empirical methods. While the current data available are not sufficient to test all the implications of the model that I develop in this paper, I am able to shed new light on the subject by combining the formal model with new data on local mayors.

### **Representation Defined**

As mentioned in the introduction, a basic tenant of democracy is that elected officials are expected to be accountable to citizens and behave in accordance with their wishes (Dahl 1971). I use a definition of representation from Schwindt-Bayer (2012) in which representation involves policy responsiveness in attitude and behavior; both of having preferences that match one's constituents and responsiveness in policymaking (see p. 20). In general, I am focusing on two dimensions of substantive representation and leaving passive or descriptive representation (Pitkin 1967) for investigation in future research. The first aspect is *responsiveness*, or more specifically, the alignment between government decisions and citizen preferences. The idea of responsiveness as representation is common in the literature, both in American and comparative research

traditions (see Eulau and Karps 1977, Fishel 1973, Kang and Powell 2010). The second is *procedural inclusiveness* which can be thought of as the degree to which a government allows diversity of actors into the decision-making process (see Orentlicher 2001, Vallejo and Hauselmann 2004, Haywood 2009). This particular chapter focuses on the *responsiveness* aspects of representation (see Chapter III for consideration of *procedural inclusiveness*) and further breaks down the concept of *responsiveness* into representation in *sector* and *scope*, which are explained in the next section.

### **More on Local Representation**

At the local level, government executives (usually termed mayors) are often elected from county-wide constituencies, and legislators (usually termed councilors) may be elected from countywide or precinct elections<sup>10</sup>. To further elaborate on my conceptualization of local representation as responsiveness, I consider two avenues of representation, *representation in scope* and *representation in sector*. Representation in scope refers to how closely local elected officials match citizen preferences for public and private goods. Representation in sector means how closely local elected officials match citizen preferences for different types of goods in various sectors such as transportation, education, water, sanitation, healthcare, etc.

Conceptually, *representation in scope* comes from the literature on programmatic versus particularistic goods. For example, Morgan (2011) argues that representational

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<sup>10</sup> This statement seems to cover what is typical in most of Latin America, given that a country has enacted minimal forms of political decentralization to allow for local elections. In the case of Ecuador, from which I draw the empirical evidence for this research, councilors are elected from precincts that have been previously designated as either rural or urban. In Ecuador both mayor and councilors are often unaffiliated with any political party or have changed parties several times.

links between citizens and government can be clientelistic (Politician provides individually targeted benefits.), corporatist (Politician incorporates major actors in society by providing group benefits.), or programmatic (Politician uses ideology to provide benefits to voters.). In general, policy or programmatic representation has been the considered the “most democratic” linkage type (Morgan 2011, Sartori 1976, Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, Kitschelt et al. 2010), while clientelism and the provision of private goods are seen as offering only limited political representation to clients (Taylor-Robinson 2011, Cleary and Stokes 2005).

All of these conceptualizations of local representation were developed at the national rather than the local level of government and therefore require adjustment to better fit the dynamics of local politics. Accordingly, I expand Morgan’s (2011) linkage typology to be more applicable to the local setting, by allowing programmatic representation to include the creation of local projects, regulations, and services for citizens, even if clear ideological positions on these issues are not articulated by elite or mass opinion. In short, programmatic representation at the local level involves engaging in activities that are targeted at broad segments of the population irrespective of their individual or group status. It is less about standing for an abstract ideology, especially when local issues (such as building roads or providing access to clean water) may have no nationally salient ideological referent. Thus the *scope* of an official’s actions can range from extremely broad, in which all time, energy, and resources are focused on providing programmatic goods, to extremely narrow where all efforts target only individuals with excludable goods.

Of course, local officials may strategically provide benefits to individuals or groups in conjunction with activities that are widely beneficial to the mass citizenry (programmatic). In some cases a project that appears to benefit a broad segment of the population may actually privilege one group over another. For example, spending money to improve higher education instead of primary education may be a way of favoring wealthy citizens over impoverished citizens. This is where the idea of *representation in sector* becomes important. I argue that quality representation means not only providing programmatic local benefits, but also providing the type of benefits that align with the preferences of the majority of the citizens in the municipality, without seriously harming minority populations. For example, if the main problem in municipality A is a lack of clean water, and the mayor focuses time and attention on building a road instead, he or she may be providing proper *representation in scope*, but not in *sector*. For *representation in sector* to occur, the fit between the type of good preferred by the citizen and the good provided by the official is necessary. My conceptualization is consistent with the principal-agent framework of accountability, where citizens are the primary agent for elected officials who are principals (see Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin 1999, Fearon 1999).

### **Considering Citizen Preferences**

The actions of local officials are central to representation, but in order to truly have representation, the preferences of citizens must also be considered. I assume that citizens have preferences over both the sector in which goods are provided and the scope of how they are provided. For example, the majority of citizens may agree that education

is the most important sector for the government to invest in, but their preference as to the scope of investment may differ. One citizen expects that more money will be spent on buying desks and textbooks for all students, while another expects that his friend, the mayor, to provide a placement for his son at the regional university. Alternatively, it is quite conceivable that citizens may agree that the government should provide a public good but differ as to the sector of the good, as suggested previously. Therefore, representation in scope and sector are conceptually distinct, and good representation occurs when local officials are attentive to both types of preferences.

It is admittedly difficult to aggregate citizen preferences when one acknowledges that they do not speak with one voice, but rather have heterogeneous expectations about what the government should do. I choose to make the simplifying assumption that each local unit (or canton) has a majority coalition of voters that agree about what they want the mayor to provide in terms of sector and scope, even if they disagree on other political matters. This is different from the median voter, who is often conceptualized as moving to the left or the right on a one-dimensional ideological spectrum. At the local level, left-right ideology probably does not drive agreement between citizens about what the mayor should do, but it is necessary to assume that there is some identifiable majority of voters that the mayor can aim at pleasing in order to get reelected<sup>11</sup>. My personal experience in Ecuador suggests that this is a valid assumption.

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<sup>11</sup> I recognize the possibility that majoritarian outcomes can be significantly nonlinear, meaning that policies need not smoothly change from one mix to another as the mix of underlying represented groups changes. Rather, because of the twist at 50%, a small, smooth change in the mix of underlying groups may nonetheless manifest itself in policy discontinuity. I recognize that this is a large simplifying assumption and welcome ideas on how it can be adjusted to better mirror political reality.

## **Decentralization and Representation**

In the case of local governments, the institutional rules that distribute power between national and subnational governments are supposed to shape the behavior of local elected representatives. This set of rules is often referred to as decentralization, especially in the developing world where countries may lack constitutional federalism but still reserve considerable power and resources for subnational, especially local, units of government (see Rodden 2004). Additionally, comparative studies of representation link institutions to representational outcomes. Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes (1999) state that although elections allow voters a measure of control over the actions of officials, voting is an imperfect instrument of control. According to these authors, we need to consider the merits of institutional structures that are transparent and provide citizens (voters) with the necessary information to punish or reward officials (p. 50).

Some scholars argue that decentralization is one such institutional structure. Local officials are assumed to have better information about the preferences and interests of their constituents (Mitchinson 2003), and voters can monitor local officials more effectively (Khemani 2001). Thus decentralization is hypothesized not only to influence local governance outcomes (such as improving access to water and sanitation) but also to affect the processes by which citizens and governments interact to produce these outcomes. Faguet (2004) finds that after decentralization government spending in Bolivia altered considerably to pursue public works projects likely preferred by citizens.

These findings have not gone uncontested by scholars. Madison (Federalist 10) famously argued that some policy domains should be nationalized rather than



decentralized in order to improve local-level outcomes and to safeguard against situations in which local majorities tyrannize local minorities. More recently, Treisman (2007) argues that decentralization should not be expected to enhance government accountability or improve representation of minorities. Gelineau and Remmer (2005) find that citizens do not always separate national politics from local politics, which may lessen their ability to hold the correct level of government responsible. Keefer, Narayan, and Vishwanath (2006) warn that local governments can only be more accountable to citizens if citizens have adequate information about local affairs and if local officials provide credible promises to voters. This literature suggests that decentralization does not always improve local governance, but rather that the effects of decentralization on context.

### **Considering Types of Decentralization**

A serious consideration of the effects of decentralization must account for the differences between the types of decentralization and the divergent incentives they may provide to local officials (see Falleti 2005, 2010). Political decentralization fundamentally changes the incentives of local officials because it mandates that local mayors and council members must be popularly elected rather than appointed by national officials (Eaton and Schroeder 2010). This creates new incentives for representation (of some quality) at the local level. Morgan (2011) examines political parties in Venezuela and finds that political decentralization weakens clientelistic representation. However, this study used parties as the unit of analysis, and the findings

may obscure important intraparty heterogeneity in the behavior of officials<sup>12</sup>. Local politicians may begin to rely strategically on programmatic representation after decentralization, especially as further devolution of resources and authority takes place.

Administrative decentralization involves the devolution of responsibilities from national to subnational units. In the case of local governments, administrative decentralization often involves handing over the responsibility to provide basic services such as potable water, plumbing, and waste management. Local governments may also administer the transit system, the making of streets, parks, and monuments, and the creation of schools and healthcare facilities. In fact there is wide range of things that local governments can do, but clearly what they actually do varies greatly both cross-nationally and sub-nationally. As elected officials face increasing expectations for service provision, they may conclude that they must invest in programmatic works of broad scope to efficiently promote their reelection. However, some local officials may be able to use personal wealth or strong clientelistic connections to stay in office without investing seriously in programmatic representation (Auyero 2001; Piattoni 2001).

Fiscal decentralization is arguably the favorite type of decentralization for the local official because they receive an increase in the amount of money that they can distribute (see Falleti 2005, 2010). Essentially, the size of the local financial pie to be divided between various goods of different scopes and sectors can increase dramatically as a result of fiscal decentralization. As a result, mayors and councilors become more

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<sup>12</sup> Also the finding about representation may be driven by Venezuelan politics, meaning that the generalizability of this particular finding is unclear.

salient actors to citizens and advocacy groups competing for a share in government resources. In this scenario, there is more potential for goods distribution, but it is not certain that the local officials will spend the money in ways that reflect the preferences of citizens. In subsequent sections I develop a formal model of local officials' representational strategies in the institutional context of various levels of each type of decentralization.

### **Accounting for Capacity**

Finally, it is important to mention that local officials are unlike national politicians in that they are often both politicians and administrators. While national officials rarely administer the programs or public works that they fund, local officials must often make such decisions about the placement of water pipes or trash collection schedules for example. Consequently, the capacity of the local government plays a role in how local officials choose to represent citizens by determining the type and scope of goods that can be provided. Capacity refers to the ability, competency, and efficiency of subnational governments to plan, implement, manage, and evaluate policies, strategies, or programs designed to impact social conditions in the jurisdiction (Shafritz 1986). Capacity can be thought of both in terms of human and physical capital (Azfar et al. 2004). Human capital includes the education and experience of local officials and staff, while physical capital refers to access to phones, computers, transportation, and other items necessary for governance.

Previous scholars have argued that decentralization combined with a lack of local capacity can lead to suboptimal and even disastrous outcomes, especially in the

developing world (Prud'homme 1995; Fiszbein 1997; Azfar et al. 2004; Smoke 2010). This research has considered outcomes such as economic efficiency and service delivery, while the relationship between local capacity and representation has not been explicitly examined. It is assumed that as capacity increases, so will the quality of representation. However, if municipalities have a high capacity to provide goods in one sector but not in another, the mayor may choose to create a project in the easiest sector rather than the most necessary one. Thus, incentive structures for local officials imply that the relationship is likely to be more complex than the current literature suggests. In the following sections I develop a formal model of the strategic choices of local elected officials who must decide how to represent citizens both as politicians and administrators.

### **Setting Up the Model**

This model uses these well-known ideas to contribute to the literatures on representation and decentralization in two ways<sup>13</sup>. First, I parameterize each type of decentralization, allowing them to have separate effects on the mayor's choice set. Secondly, I build a model that has implications for representation both in scope and sector.

I employ a principal-agent model in which a local official (referred to as the Mayor) selects either the relative amount of public to private goods or the level of

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<sup>13</sup> The game theoretic contributions to the literature on decentralization and the allocation of resources should not be overlooked. Models of strategic behavior have been an important part of the literature on local government. One canonical example is Tiebout's (1956) idea of economic efficiency gained through voting with one's feet. Additionally, Beasley and Coate (2000) have shown that decentralization allows for the level of public goods to differ in each district.

resources to be invested in the sector identified by the public as containing the “most important problem”<sup>14</sup>.

**Figure 2-1: Choice Sets.**

**A**

*Mayor's choice set,  $M = \{0 \leq r_i \leq 1\}$* <sup>15</sup>

**B**

*Voter's choice set,  $V = \{Replace, Retain\}$*

**Figure 2-1: Choice Sets.** (A) This equation represents the mayor's choice set. (B) This equation represents the voter's choice set.

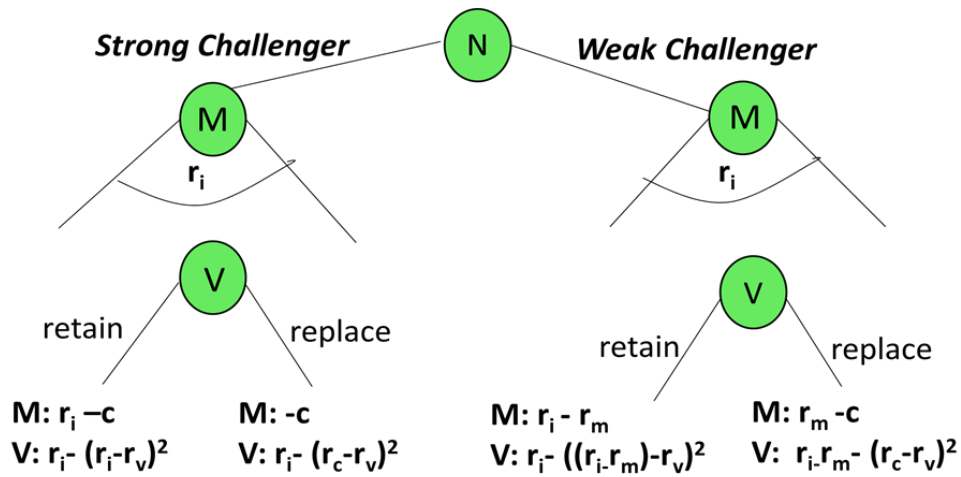
The Voter then decides to replace or retain the Mayor based on the difference (squared) between his/her preferred amount (of either public to private goods or investment in a certain sector) and that chosen by the Mayor. There are two states of the world, one in which the Mayor's electoral opponent (referred to as the Challenger) is able to select a relative amount of public goods ( $r_c$ ) that is closer to the Voter's ideal point ( $r_m$ ) than that selected by the Mayor ( $r_i$ ) and the other in which the Challenger is unable to select a level that the Voter prefers more than the level already selected by the Mayor. Figure 2-2 provides a sketch of the sequence of moves.

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<sup>14</sup> The mechanics of the matching game are the same in my framework, the only thing that changes is which of two representation choices the Mayor is making, i.e., scope or sector.

<sup>15</sup> I also assume that every value of  $r$  belongs to the set of real numbers, thus  $r_c, r_i, r_v \in \mathbb{R}$

**Figure 2-2: Game Tree.**



**Figure 2-2: Game Tree.** This game tree shows the actions and payoffs for all actors.

I assume that both the Mayor and the Voter know each other's personal ideal points ( $r_v$  and  $r_m$  respectively) as well as the relative value that is actually selected by the Mayor ( $r_i$ ). However, neither knows the type of the Challenger (referred to as either weak or strong).

**Figure 2-3: Types of Challenger.**

$$Challenger\ type = \begin{cases} Weak & \text{if } (r_c - r_v)^2 \geq (r_i - r_v)^2 \\ Strong & \text{if } (r_c - r_v)^2 < (r_i - r_v)^2 \end{cases}$$

**Figure 2-3: Types of Challenger.** This figure shows the condition which the Challenger takes either the strong or weak type.

Furthermore, I assume that the Voter will decide to retain or replace the Mayor based only on the relative amount of public goods and his/her beliefs about the type of

the Challenger. Payoffs accrue to the Mayor and the Voter as follows in Table 2-1 for the strong Challenger and the weak Challenger types. Figure 2-4 further explains the payoffs of the Mayor and Voter.

**Table 2-1: Voter and Mayor Payoffs**

	<b>Strong Challenger</b>	<b>Weak Challenger</b>
<b>Mayor (r<sub>i</sub>, retain) =</b>	$r_i - c$	$r_i - r_m$
<b>Mayor (r<sub>i</sub>, replace) =</b>	$-c$	$r_m - c$
<b>Voter (r<sub>i</sub>, retain) =</b>	$r_i - (r_i - r_v)^2$	$r_i - ((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2$
<b>Voter (r<sub>i</sub>, replace) =</b>	$r_i - (r_c - r_v)^2$	$r_i - r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2$
<b>r<sub>max</sub> (scope)=</b>	$(f/(\alpha + \theta)) - (1/\delta)$	$(f/(\alpha + \theta)) - (1/\delta)$
<b>r<sub>max</sub> (sector)=</b>	$(f/(\alpha + \theta))(1/\lambda) - (1/\delta)$	$(f/(\alpha + \theta))(1/\lambda) - (1/\delta)$

**Figure 2-4: Payoffs.**

**A**

$$\text{Payoffs for } M(r_i; V; C) = \begin{cases} r_i - c & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ -c & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - r_m & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \\ r_m - c & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \end{cases}$$

**B**

*Payoffs for*  $V(r_i; V; C)$

$$= \begin{cases} r_i - (r_i - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - (r_c - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - ((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \\ r_i - r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \end{cases}$$

**Figure 2-4: Payoffs.** This figure shows the payoffs for all players given the Challenger's type. Figure (A) displays payoffs for the Mayor, and (B) displays payoffs for the Voters

The  $r_{\max}$  terms for both sector and scope represent the max value of  $r_i$  that the Mayor can select given his institutional context and capacity. The level of fiscal decentralization is represented by  $f$  (which can be any positive real number) and controls the total amount of goods that can be distributed by the Mayor. The level of administrative decentralization is represented by  $\alpha$  (which can be any non-negative real number) where larger values represent more responsibilities to provide public goods in any sector.

The level of political decentralization enters the game in two ways. First, it is implicit in the fact that a local election has taken place that there at least a basic level of political decentralization in which voters select their officials rather than the officials being appointed by the national government. Secondly, some researchers have suggested the local political competition is part of political decentralization because it offers voters



a variety of choices (see Treisman 2007). In this case, the idea of having a strong and weak Challenger for the Mayor captures the situations where citizens may have a viable alternative to the current local official.

The  $\theta$  parameter symbolizes the amount of private resources that the mayor invested in private goods. I assume that the sum of the amount of administrative responsibilities and the amount of resources invested in private goods is greater than or equal to the amount of fiscal decentralization. The transfers that reach the local government due to fiscal decentralization are often not the only source of revenue for the municipality which may also get funds from local taxes and the collection of fees for services. This assumption allows me to include the idea of these addition revenues without adding additional parameters to the model.

The capacity of the local municipality is  $\delta$  (which can be any positive real number) and is a simplified term representing both the human and technological aspect of capacity. Another way to think about  $\delta$  is as the inverse of a cost, so that as capacity increases, the cost of providing a certain level of public goods decreases ( $r_i$ ). The parameter  $c$  indicates the cost the Mayor has to pay if he is replaced, in terms of status or position; the more the Mayor values his position, the more he has to lose if he is not reelected. The ideal proportion of public to private spending for the Mayor and Voter are denoted by  $r_m$  and  $r_v$  respectively. Additionally,  $r_c$  refers the relative amount of public to private goods that the Challenger would select if the Mayor is replaced by the Voter. Finally, the difference between the  $r_{max}$  equations for scope and sector is simply the inclusion of an addition term,  $\lambda$ , for the sector equation, indicating the number of

additional relevant sectors into which the mayor must further divide fiscal resources.

### Equilibria

The conditions for Nash equilibria require that no player is strictly better off by deviating from the given state. The strategy of the Voter is characterized by Figure 2-5 and that of the Mayor is in Figure 2-6.

**Figure 2-5: Strategy of the Voter.**

**A**

$$\text{Strategy of Voter } (r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Retain if } p > \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \\ \text{Replace if } p < \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \end{array} \right\}$$

**B**

$$\text{Strategy set of Voter}(p(\text{Strong Challenger}); r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Retain if } p > \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \text{ and } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Retain if } p = 0 \text{ and } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Replace if } p = 0 \text{ and } r_i \geq r_c \text{ and } r_i \geq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i \leq r_c \text{ and } r_i \leq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Replace if } p = 1 \text{ for all } r_i \\ \text{Replace if } p < \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \text{ and } r_i \geq r_c \text{ and } r_i \geq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i \leq r_c \text{ and } r_i \leq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \end{array} \right\}$$

**C**

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Case 1: } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Case 2: } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \end{array} \right\}$$

**Figure 2-5: Strategy of the Voter.** This figure shows the best response functions and strategy sets for the Voter. (A) The best response function of the Voter for any allocation value is shown. (B) Here is shown the strategy set of the Voter. (C) These equations show the cases in which the Voter will retain the Mayor.

The Voter will retain the Mayor for a given level of allocation ( $r_i$ ) in either of the following two cases, given that both conditions are true. Here we see that the Voter will retain the Mayor when the relative amount of public goods is either very high or very

low, relative to the ideal points of the Challenger, Voter, and Mayor.

**Figure 2-6: Strategy of the Mayor.**

**A**

$$\text{Strategy of Mayor}(\text{Retain}, r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r_i > r_m + pc - pr_m \\ \text{and} \\ p < \frac{r_i - r_m}{c - r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

**B**

$$\text{Strategy of Mayor}(\text{Replace}, r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r_m > pr_m + c \\ \text{and} \\ p < 1 - \frac{c}{r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

**C**

*Strategy of Mayor*( $p$ (Strong Challenger);

$$V(\text{Retain}, \text{Replace})) = \left\{ \begin{array}{lll} r_i > r_m + pc - pr_m & \text{if } V = \text{Retain} & \text{and } p < \frac{r_i - r_m}{c - r_m} \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Retain} & \text{and } p = 0 \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p = 0 \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p = 1 \\ r_i = r_m > c + pr_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p < 1 - \frac{c}{r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

**Figure 2-6: Strategy of the Mayor.** This figure show the respective best responses of the Mayor if he is retained in part (A), and if he is replaced by the Voter in part (B). (C) This shows the strategy of the Mayor given his beliefs about the strength of the Challenger.

The best response function for the Voter and Mayor are characterized by Figure 2-7, and Figure 2-8 describes the Equilibria (proofs of equations are in Appendix A).

We see that in the case that the Mayor is retained, we will select  $r_i$  strategically; but if he is to be replaced, he will consider the relative costs of holding (and losing) office as well as his own ideal level of public goods.

**Figure 2-7: The Best Response Functions of Voter and Mayor.**

**A**

$$\text{Best Response of the Voter}(r_i) = \frac{1}{2} \left( r_m + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + r_m^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2r_m r_v} \right)$$

**B**

$$\text{Best Response of the Mayor (Retain, } r_i) \quad r_m = \frac{r_i - c}{2}$$

$$\text{Best Resopnse of the Mayor (Replace, } r_i) \quad r_m = c$$

**Figure 2-7: The Best Response Functions of Voter and Mayor.** This figure displays the best response functions for both the Voter (A) and the Mayor (B).

**Figure 2-8: Equilibria.**

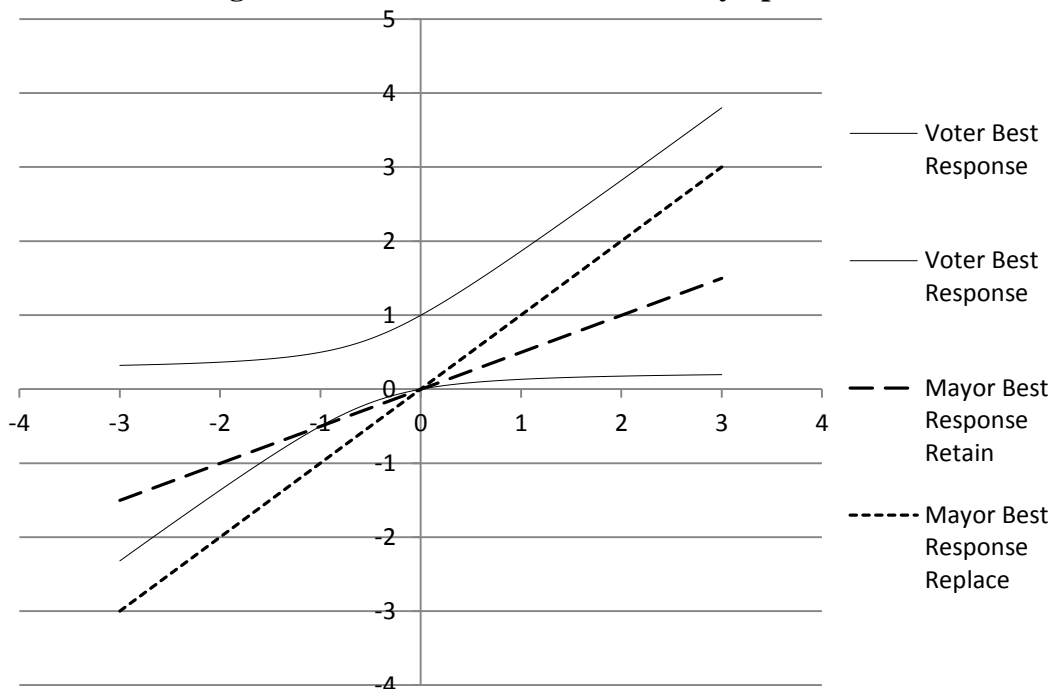
$$\begin{aligned} \text{Equilibrium 1} \quad r_i^* &= \frac{1}{4} \left( 7r_v - 2c \pm \sqrt{-81r_v^2 - 32r_c + 64r_c r_v - 20r_v c} \right) \\ r_m^* &= \frac{1}{7} \left( 6c - 22r_v \pm \sqrt{512r_v^2 - 320r_v c + 64c^2 + 448r_c - 896r_c r_v} \right) \\ \text{Equilibrium 2} \quad r_i^* &= \frac{1}{2} \left( c + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + (c)^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2(c)r_v} \right) \\ r_m^* &= c \end{aligned}$$

**Figure 2-8: Equilibria.** This characterized the equilibria that are found when each best response function is substituted in the best response function of the other actor.

So we see that the Mayor has incentives to allocate more goods as the probability that he/she is facing a strong challenger increases, provided he thinks that it is possible that he will be retained by voters. If he thinks that he will not be retained, then he has no incentive to provide a level of goods that differs from his/her own preferences.

Additionally, we can gain insight about the utility space by graphing the best response functions of the Voter and Mayor. Figure 2-9 shows that the best response function of the Voter is hyperbolic, while the best response of the Mayor is linear.

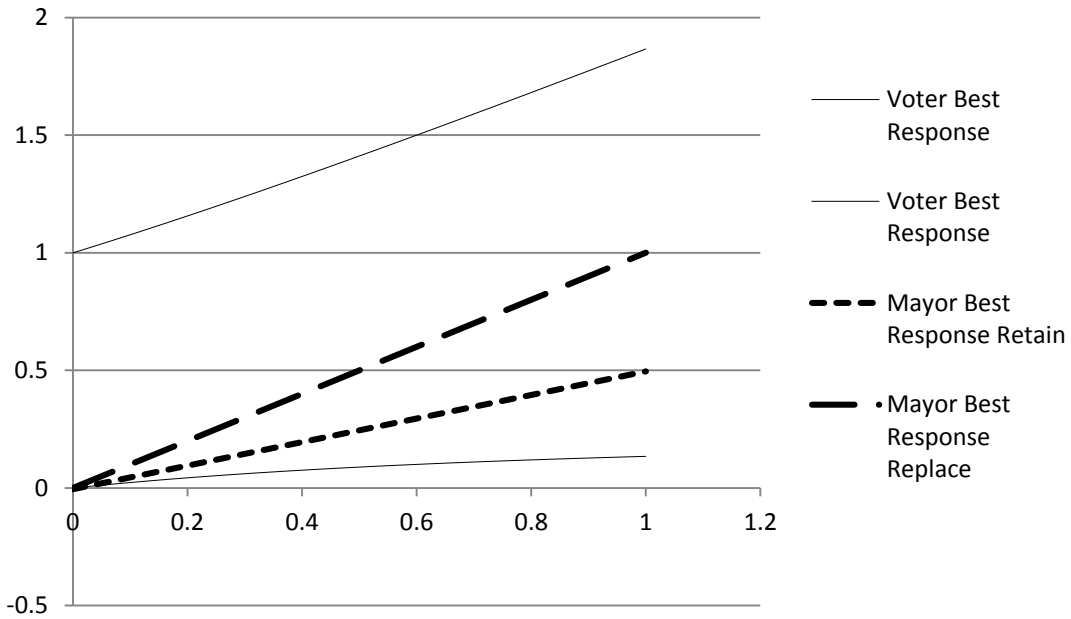
**Figure 2-9: A Broad View of the Utility Space.**



**Figure 2-9: A Broad View of the Utility Space.** This figure shows all the possible equilibria points for the hyperbolic best response function of the Voter and linear best response functions of the Mayor. Since we are working in multidimensional space, the parameters not relevant to the equilibria were set to one-half.

For the sake of clarity, I have graphed the Mayor’s best response function in two situations: when he observes that the Voter retains him, and when he observes that the Voter replaces him. We also see that there are several places where the utility of the Mayor crosses the utility of the Voter, indicating a Nash Equilibrium. However, because all of the parameters in the model are bounded between zero and one (inclusive), there are only two equilibria that are relevant for analysis of this particular model. If we graph the functions only over the range of possible x-values, (0-1) Figure 2-10 is produced.

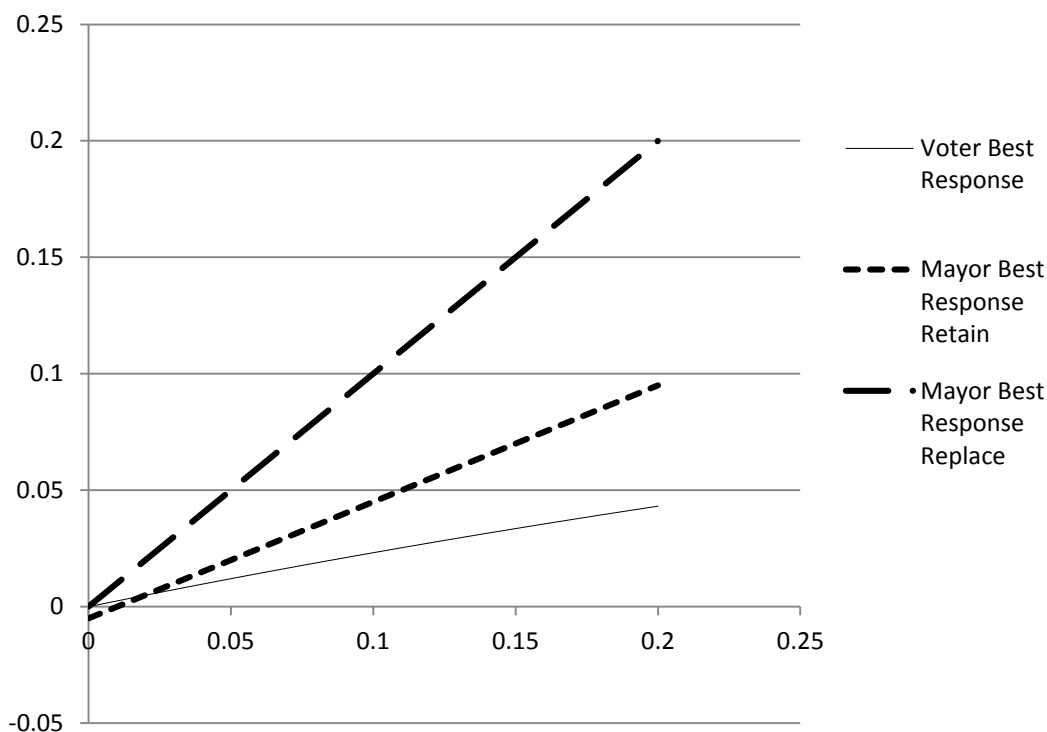
**Figure 2-10: The Utility Space Graphed Over the Range of Possible X-Values.**



**Figure 2-10: The Utility Space Graphed Over the Range of Possible X-Values.** Here we see the best responses of the Mayor and Voter, for the parameter range of the model.

The difficulty with this figure is that it is still difficult to get a clear view of intersection of the functions. Figure 2-11 takes an even more narrow view of this intersection and indicates the equilibria points more visibly.

**Figure 2-11: A Close-up View of the Equilibria Points.**



**Figure 2-11: Figure 2-11: A Close-up View of the Equilibria Points.** This figure provides a closer look at the intersection of the Mayor and Voter best response functions.

In Figure 2-11 we see that the equilibria are both near the origin, but the equilibrium point for the case in which the Mayor is retained is observably non-zero, while the intersection for the Mayor being replaced is not observably different from zero. These findings indicate that the Mayor will increase the value of the allocations in response to his belief that he will be retained. It is consistent with Case 1, above, in which the Mayor is retained, though he chooses to allocate only a small amount of goods. Future research will be needed to parse out the implications of this interesting pathology of local government that allows the Mayor to be retained in spite of his/her seemingly inept representational performance.

The previous analysis assumes that  $r_{\max}=1$  and that the Mayor is able to select any value of  $r_i$  between zero and one, but what if this is not possible? The purpose of the  $r_{\max}$  equations given above is to analyze cases where institutions and capacity do not allow the Mayor to have complete flexibility over what he/she will do. In these cases, it matters how low  $r_{\max}$  is relative to the other ideal preferences of the actors. The most interesting case occurs where  $r_{\max}$  is less than the ideal level of voter  $r_v$ . When this happens only Case 1 enumerated above is possible in equilibrium, which means that very low levels of goods are provided and the mayor is retained if there is any doubt ( $p < 1$ ) about the strength of the Challenger. Therefore,  $r_{\max} > r_v$  acts as a threshold that a canton must exceed in order for the second equilibrium case, in which the Mayor allocates higher values of goods, to be possible. Given that this is the case, we can formulate hypotheses about what institutional combinations are necessary for a canton to exceed the threshold in order to allow mayors to provide better local representation.

### **Empirical Implications**

While the equilibria in the model yield many empirical implications, I choose to focus on two particular types: 1) those that deal with the electoral implication of the game, and 2) those dealing with the institutional structure of the government and its relationship to the political behavior of elites. First, the equilibria show that as the probability that the Mayor faces a strong challenger increases, he/she will increase the level of resources allocated to the sector that citizens are most concerned about or provide representation in the broader scope in order to strengthen his/her electoral chances. This includes providing levels of goods that are above the Mayor's preferred



amount at times. In the empirical world, perhaps we can observe that increases in electoral competition will lead to increases in representation. In particular, we should focus on whether or not the challenger candidate is backed by a national party or the party of a president as both these two characteristics could signal the general strength of the challenger, depending on how the party system functions in a particular area.

**H1: Mayors facing a challenger candidate that is “strong” will increase the amount of resources that are allocated to the area of citizen concern and provide them in a broader way.**

It also should not be overlooked that in several cases, the Mayor has incentives to provide the representation in sector and scope at his level of his/her preference. This leads to the rather obvious suggestion that some mayors may have higher ideal points than others, but the cause of this variation is not discussed in this chapter. However, for the sake of research in the next chapter, it is important to acknowledge that the individual variance in the preferences of mayors for certain levels of allocation matters for the outcome level of representation provided.

**H2: Mayors that prefer higher allocations will increase the level of representation they provide.**

Moving to consideration of the institutional variables, since the setup for the game in scope and sector is the same, so are the equilibria. In either case, we see that Mayor is retained when he/she selects either a relatively large or very small level of allocation. In both cases there are institutional constraints ( $r_{\max}$ ) on these values. When considering representation in scope, we see that it could be impossible for the Mayor to

provide an allocation level that is high enough relative to expectations of the Voter and the efforts of the Challenger, especially if  $\lambda$  takes a high value, indicating that there are many sectors that warrant attention in the local budget.

**H3: All other things being equal, increases in the complexity of budget demands will decrease the amount of spending invested by the Mayor.**

**H3a: As a consequence of H1, representation in sector may be observed less frequently than representation in scope.**

Secondly, when considering the level of fiscal decentralization,  $f$ , it is apparent that the danger to both the Mayor and the Citizen lies in the value being too small. If the value is too small, the way that the Mayor decides to spend the resources is not likely to be satisfying to the Mayor because it will almost certainly be much smaller than the Voter's ideal point, and the Challenger cannot be expected to change the level of fiscal decentralization. So if there are insufficient funds coming from the state, the locality may just be stuck in a cycle of poor representation unless local officials can creatively solicit aid from non-government sources. These findings add an insight to the literature on fiscal decentralization which has warned of the dangers of too much fiscal decentralization leading to inefficient government. While this danger has been shown to be an empirical reality in some countries, my model suggests that in places that are poorly developed a sheer lack of resources can also lead to a trap of unresponsive governance.

**H4: All other things being equal, as fiscal decentralization increases, more instances of representation in scope and sector will be observed.**

Administrative decentralization forces the Mayor to divide the pie in order to provide the public goods that are legally required of him/her. More administrative decentralization can be associated with lower levels of possible allocation ( $r_{\max}$ ), and may impact representation in a way similar to the number of sectors in which a local government must provide services.

**H5: All other things being equal, as administrative decentralization increases, the fit between the level of resources selected by the mayor and desired by the voter will decrease.**

Finally, the implication for political decentralization is that if the Mayor will not be reelected with certainty his allocation choice will depend on his own tastes,  $r_m$ , rather than those of the voter,  $r_v$ . This implies that though elections may not be sufficient to ensure representation they appear to be necessary conditions. As regards the viability of the challengers, we see that as the probability of the Challenger being a strong type increases so does relative value of  $r_i$  that the Mayor must select in order to avoid being ousted by the Challenger. This implies that political competition may increase the amount of public expenditures and expenditures in the important sector that the Mayor is willing to make.

**H6: All other things being equal, if local elections are present, a minimum level of representation can be observed.**

Capacity is supposed to increase the maximum value of allocation possible and thus the chances that the Mayor will be able to provide a value of  $r_i$  that is amenable to the Voter; this also may lessen the responsiveness of the local government. Fortunately,

the reverse should also be true. In empirical research, capacity can be measured by observing, for example, the education and experience of the mayor and the number of local employees with a college degree.

**H7: All other things being equal, as capacity increases so will instances of representation in both scope and sector.**

The following section discusses the methods that I use to investigate some of these empirical implications.

### **Methods**

In order to test my hypotheses, I use budget data for two specific Ecuadorian cases. Ecuador is an excellent case for testing my hypotheses for several reasons. First, although technically a unitary state, Ecuador has recently devolved considerable power to the local level of government, rather than the state level as is the case with most federal systems. This makes Ecuador moderately decentralized, rather than an extreme case (see Daughters and Harper 2007).

Ecuador also provides me with unique levels of subnational heterogeneity in local institutional structures. Although each municipality in Ecuador has experienced the same basic level of decentralization, the municipalities in the subnational sample do differ in the level of decentralized services that they provide to citizens. According to Faust and Harbers (2012) the 1998 Ecuadorian constitution strengthened the position of subnational governments relative to the national government by allowing them to apply for the competencies of their choosing in up to seven sectors, including health, education, social welfare, environmental protection, agriculture, and transportation.

Municipalities requesting competencies would also receive funds in addition to what they already received from the national government via the 15 percent law of 1997, which stipulated that 15% of the national income must be transferred to local governments. As a result, in 2004 municipalities within Ecuador were experiencing different levels of decentralization simultaneously. This variation within Ecuador allows me to test the implications of my theory related to the addition of service responsibilities.

The two cases, Rumiñahui and Saraguro, which highlight the analytical potential for budget data, were not selected randomly but were chosen by the researcher to include variation in the dimensions of decentralization, and rural versus urban capacity considerations. They were also selected over other cases that might have offered similar variation due to the availability of mass survey data from the AmericasBarometer to evaluate citizen opinions in each municipality. Budget data for these cantons were not available online, but were collected in person from municipal accountants during fieldwork conducted by the author.

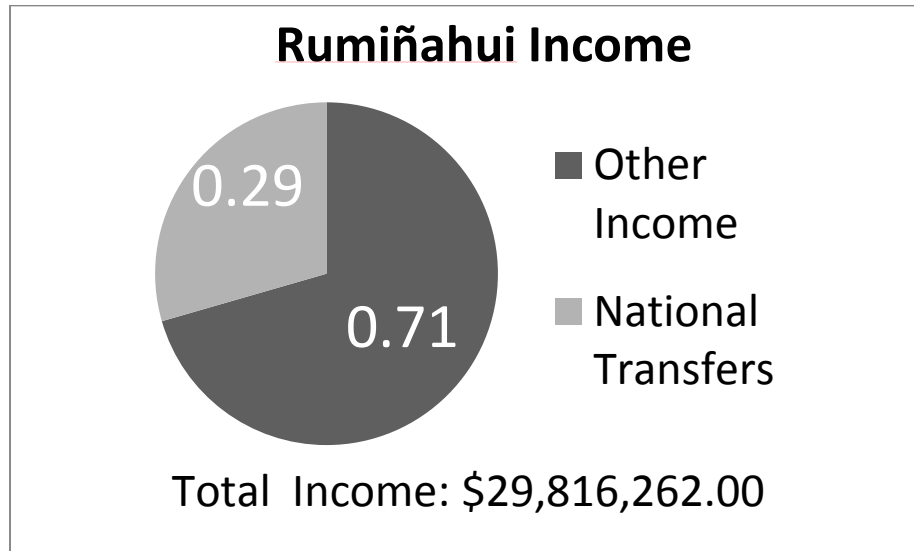
### **A Tale of Two Budgets: Rumiñahui and Saraguro**

Rumiñahui and Saraguro are both located in the mountain region of Ecuador, but the similarity stops there. Rumiñahui is a bustling suburb of the capital city, Quito, as well as home to wealthy landowners attempting to escape from urban crowding. Being so near to Quito, it has a relatively healthy economy (by Ecuadorian standards), and its citizens have access to basic services and a variety of transportation options. However, Quito also shares with Rumiñahui its urban problems such as organized crime and drug trafficking. According to the AmericasBarometer survey, the most important problem

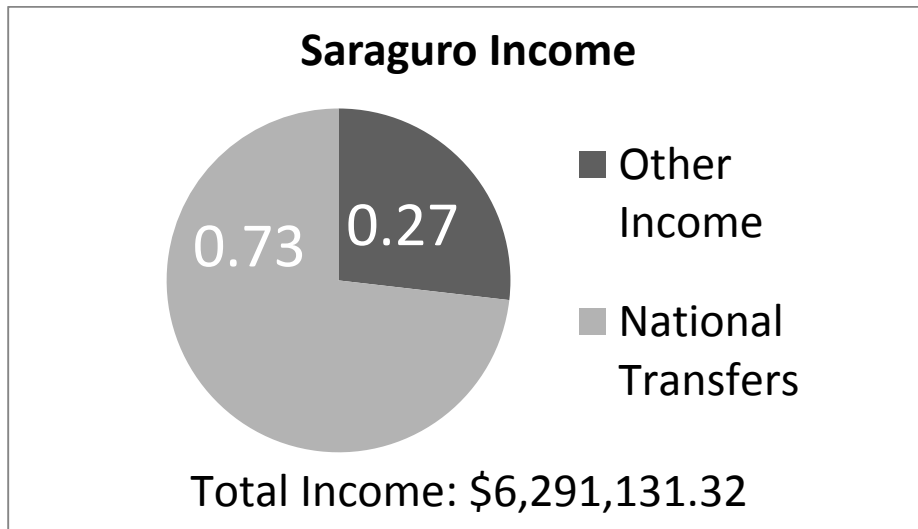
facing citizens of that municipality is security. Saraguro, on the other hand lies far to the south, about a two-hour bus trip away from the nearest urban center of Loja. Nestled in a small Andean valley, the quiet town of Saraguro is surrounded by land used primarily for small-scale agricultural production. While crime is not as problematic in this canton, providing basic services such as water and sewage systems to a highly dispersed rural population is a major challenge for the local government. In the AmericasBarometer survey, the citizens of Saraguro identified a lack of clean water as their most important problem. Clearly, for local officials in Rumiñahui and Saraguro, representation in sector will mean allocating resources so as to address issues of security and water respectively. In order to assess representation in scope from budget data, I consider the proportion of the budget that was spent on jobs as opposed to public works. While there are other ways for local officials to provide narrowly targeted benefits, the provision of employment to specific citizens (mostly likely friends, relatives, or political supporters) is widely practiced throughout the country. Thus this measure of representation in scope (jobs/public works) makes sense for both Rumiñahui and Saraguro. Figure 2-12 displays the income of each municipality, divided into own-source revenue and revenue received from transfers.

**Figure 2-12: Municipal Income.**

**A**



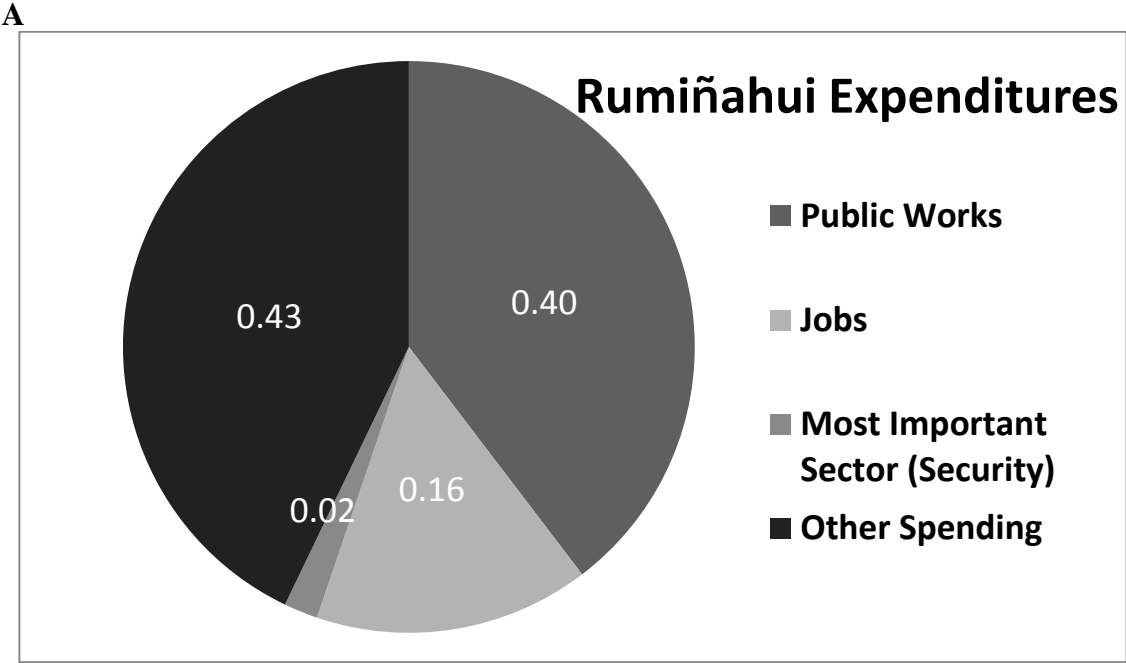
**B**



**Figure 2-12: Municipal Income.** These pie graphs show that the canton with the larger income, Rumiñahui, is less dependent on national transfers. (A) shows the municipal income for Rumiñahui, while (B) shows the municipal income data for Saraguro.

The figure shows that Rumiñahui has a much larger budget and is much less dependent on transfers from the national government than its poorer counterpart. The literature on fiscal decentralization may lead us to believe that since Rumiñahui has more money to allocate (and more of it is coming from local rather than national sources), it will be more responsive than Saraguro. Figure 2-13 shows the expenditures for Rumiñahui and Saraguro.

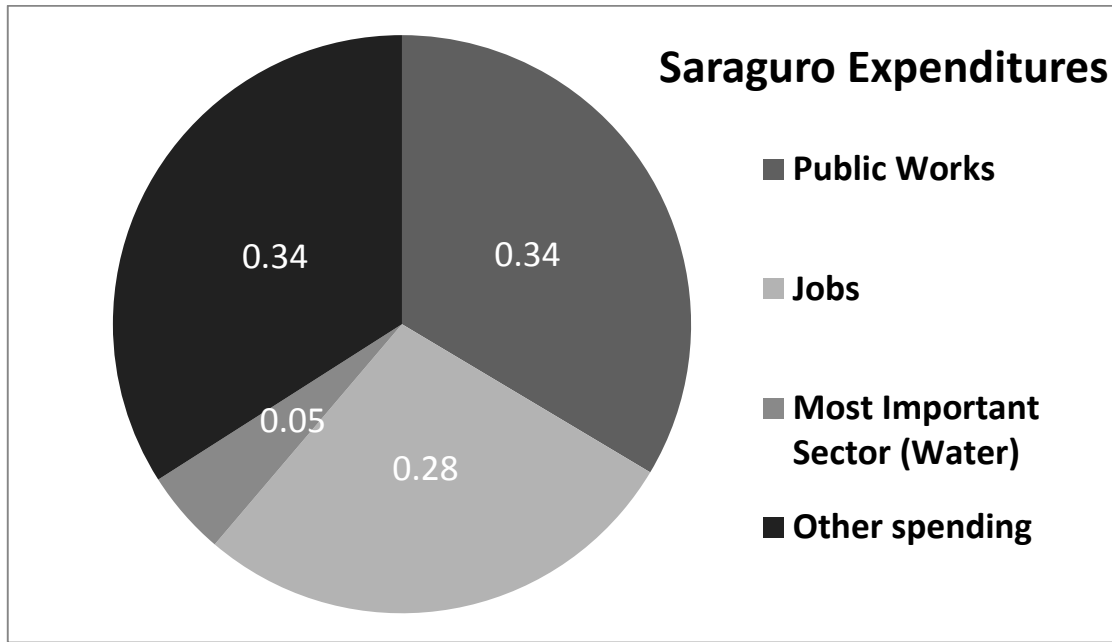
**Figure 2-13: Municipal Expenditures.**



**Figure 2-13: Municipal Expenditures.** These pie graphs show that representation in sector is poor. (A) Less than a tenth of a percent of Rumiñahui’s municipal expenditures went toward their constituents’ most important sector. (B) The smaller canton, Saraguro, does only slightly better.



**B**



**Figure 2-13** Continued.

We see that Saraguro spends proportionally more money on jobs than does Rumiñahui, but in the absence of data on the preferences of citizens for job versus public works, we cannot conclude that Rumiñahui does a better job providing representation in scope. However, it is clear that officials in Saraguro spend more money on targeted goods. Representation in sector, on the other hand, seems to show Saraguro doing a slightly better job than Rumiñahui, although the difference between the two percentages (5% and 3% respectively) is not statistically significant. However, neither municipality does very well at channeling resources to the sector that is under public scrutiny. This follows logically from the implications of the formal model (H3a) which states that representation in sector may be more difficult to achieve empirically as demands on the local budget become more complex. It could be that since Rumiñahui is in charge of

providing more services to citizens<sup>16</sup>, it has to divide its fiscal resources into more bins, which means that each category will receive a small percentage of support. Either way, the findings point to a problem that is common in Ecuador and perhaps in other parts of that developing world as well, which is that providing targeted instead of broad representation in scope can crowd out representation in sector, because too much of the local budget has been spent on paying workers and there is not enough left over to address other citizen needs.

### **Conclusion**

Theories of new institutionalism have emphasized the role that “rules of the game” play in determining the behavior of elected officials. At the national level, some political rules have been found to enhance representation, but scholars have largely neglected the potential implications of local institutional structures for enhancing democracy. This study addresses the question, does decentralization shape local representation outcomes? It likewise contributes to the literature by explicitly considering the institutional contexts of decentralization in a way that aligns with past research on the topic. My game-theoretic formalization of the local electoral situation of mayors allows me to focus on officials’ strategies and incentives when they face competition (captured by the strength of the challenger) and the level of representation they can provide is constrained by decentralization, which dictates the political, fiscal,

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<sup>16</sup> Urban municipalities do not always provide more services or request more competencies than rural municipalities, but it happens to be true in this particular case. Having been to each of these cantons personally, I also know that just because Rumiñahui provides more services than Saraguro, this does not mean that it provides them more effectively.

and administrative rules of the game. Additionally, through fieldwork, I have come to believe that capacity issues are pervasive in the developing world, and warrant serious consideration. Accordingly, I have included both institutional and local capacity as contextual factors that influence the maximum level of resources that can be allocated by a mayor.

The equilibria of the formal model show that the mayor will allocate more goods in situations where he is uncertain about his electoral prospects. If he is certain that his competition for the next election is stronger or weaker than himself, he will default to providing the amount of representation that he most prefers. Where he is uncertain about the status of the challenger and he believes he has a chance of being reelected by the citizens, he will provide allocations that are even greater and broader than his preferred ratio in order to please more citizens and avoid being ousted by his competitor. All this assumes that mayors can select a level of allocation that is amenable to citizens.

However, if this is not the case and institutions constrain the options of the mayor to the extent that his maximum possible allocation choice is less than that preferred by the voters, then he will likely not be retained by the voters. Anticipating defeat, he will have little incentive to provide anything more than his own preferred level. Thus both electoral and contextual factors are important determinants of the quality of representation. In Chapter III, I will address how several of these factors shape representation.

The case studies are added here to illustrate that it is possible to measure representation in sector and scope empirically through looking at a combination of local

budget and public opinion data. Through contrasting these two budgets, we see that as predicted by the model, representation in sector seems hard to achieve as both municipalities allocate only a small percentage of their resources to the sector that the majority of citizens identified as the most important problem. Furthermore, as predicted by the decentralization literature, in the canton with greater fiscal independence from the national government, we see less money being spent on targeted goods (jobs). Of course these conclusions must be tentatively held due to the small sample size. Fortunately, I have access to additional budget data from cantons in Ecuador, which can be coded in similar ways. At the conclusion of this process, I anticipate that I will have sufficient data for a small sample multivariate test of the relationship between decentralization and representation using evidence from local budgets in Ecuador and thus be able to test more fully the empirical implications developed in this chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### POLITICAL OPENNESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY:

### REPRESENTATIONAL ATTITUDES OF MAYORS IN ECUADOR

#### **Introduction**

This research project addresses the question, does decentralization enhance representation, and if so, in which contexts? Each chapter contributes a unique conceptualization of representation and a set of evidence to answer this question. In the previous chapter, I explored the concept of representation as an allocation decision that mayors make and developed a theory about how these decisions are made with regard to sector and scope. I found that decentralization contexts can either constrain or enable representative behavior. In this chapter, I address the impact of decentralization on representation by taking an in-depth look at mayoral attitudes, or what I call their representative orientation in the context of decentralization reforms. I investigate when and where mayoral orientations become most responsive and inclusive in order to find out whether decentralization provides a conducive context for representation.

By way of reminder, the conceptualization of representation in the project as a whole focuses on two dimensions of substantive representation, *responsiveness* and *procedural inclusiveness*, which have been discussed in the introduction and previous chapter. Whereas in the last chapter I looked exclusively at the *responsiveness* dimension, in this chapter I also include a measure of *procedural inclusiveness*. In doing so, I suggest that ideal local executives are both inclusive in the way they relate to citizens and responsive in their provision of goods and services, although they may do a

better job at one dimension than the other. Hence, I evaluate local officials on each dimension so that I can test whether or not the dimensions have distinct predictors. I find that inclusiveness and responsiveness do indeed emerge under different circumstances and thus should be treated as distinct entities. The empirical consideration of both varieties of representation at the local level is an innovation in scholarly research that I hope to continue exploring in the future research.

### **Local Mayors: Politicians and Administrators**

Mayors juggle two distinct representational roles. They are simultaneously administrators and politicians. On one hand, they are often directly involved in the daily operations of a municipality and the details of producing public work projects, and on the other hand their role as elected politicians demands that they consider votes and political support when making decisions. Mayors can be held directly accountable for the works they produce and the quality of life that citizens experience<sup>17</sup>. In this way they are distinct from national legislators and presidents whose job it is to create and execute policies that are often more abstract from the citizen perspective. They are also distinct from bureaucrats and hired “city managers” because they are directly elected by citizens and are assumed to govern with politics in mind. In order to determine if a mayor is providing good quality representation, one must take into account the expectations of citizens. What is it that citizens expect from their mayor? While I recognize that there are a plethora of possible answers and that some citizen expectations may conflict with

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<sup>17</sup> Even if they cannot be directly reelected themselves, mayors may have ambitions to higher office or their party can be reelected, so they behave as if they are facing the possibility of reelection. This argument has been made by Taylor (1992) concerning legislators.

each other, I make the simplifying assumption that there are at least two things that all citizens want.

The first thing that citizens want is a government that works, that is, a government that provides good quality services and is competent in the way it invests resources. This requires the mayor to have sense of what I term *administrative responsibility* in the way that he or she approaches his/her job. Since this study focuses on what mayors choose to tell me about themselves and their job, it does not capture the outcomes of what the mayor produces<sup>18</sup>. I argue that this can be a positive thing. For instance, it is likely that outcome measures of canton development are the result of more than just the administrative responsibility of the mayor. They are also the result of factors such as the technical capacity of the labors executing the work, the amount of funds available in a given year, and even the weather. (This is especially the case in countries such as Ecuador which are prone to flooding, landslides, and earthquakes.) However, government responsiveness starts with the attitudes and actions of the local officials, and examining these perspectives will give us a picture of the roots of representation<sup>19</sup>.

The second thing that I assume citizens expect from their local government is

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<sup>18</sup> Some canton-level measures of development are used in subsequent analysis, but they are considered covariates and not central dependent variables because it is hard to know how much a particular mayor is to blame for the current state of development in the canton. I have witnessed cases where a current mayor has inherited a fiscal and administrative nightmare from a predecessor and is “swimming upstream” to fix things. On the other hand, a mayor of questionable competence may look great if he/she has received a prosperous and well-governed canton from the previous mayor. (Personal interviews, Provinces of Loja and Esmeraldas, April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013)

<sup>19</sup> The public management literature suggests that the mayor’s ability to manage matters (see for instance Avellaneda, 2009). I agree with the literature that skill is an important determinant of the quality of representation provided, and I consider the effects of education and prior experience as a proxy for one’s level of skill that can impact representational orientation.

*political openness*; citizens want the government to respond to them as individuals and as a group, whether they are elites or peasants. Political openness means that the local officials have contact with the people both in groups and as individuals<sup>20</sup>. It also means that officials engage in participatory mechanisms by which they gain information from the people about their needs and priorities and conduct informational sessions during which they communicate the actions of the government to the population. Political openness is often associated with strengthening democracy at the local level<sup>21</sup>. As noted earlier, representational crises in Latin America have been brought about by the weakening and breakdown of linkages between citizens and their officials. In fact, the wave of leftist governments elected in many countries throughout Latin America is at least in part a reaction to the previous marginalization of the impoverished, rural, and indigenous sectors of the population (see Smith 2012). In Ecuador, decentralization reforms that were once a part of the neoliberal economic agenda, have now been recycled by the leftist government of President Correa as a means to improve citizen participation<sup>22</sup>. These recent reforms have raised the expectations of citizens for political

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<sup>20</sup> Obviously in larger municipalities the level of individual contact must decrease. However, I have observed that citizens still hold the expectation that a personal meeting with the mayor can fix all their problems. Almost all municipal buildings are crowded with people who are trying to see someone about their issue. It can be argued that the pervasiveness of individual care can perpetuate clientelism. I do not deny this, but I argue that popular beliefs about the roles of government change slowly. Thus, in order to be truly responsive, mayors must put in at least a modest amount of time to attend the people. (Personal interviews, Provinces of Pichincha and Cotopaxi, February 19<sup>th</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

<sup>21</sup> In keeping with past research (Orentlicher 2001, Vallejo and Hauselmann 2004, Haywood 2009), I consider it to be a part of how officials provide representation rather than a component of democracy itself. But because it has close ties to local democracy, the argument could be made that it is part of the deepening of democracy.

<sup>22</sup> This raises an important point about what political openness does *not* mean. It does not mean that a mayor attempts to engage in partisan maneuvering, targeting of public works project only to political supporters, or overtly prioritizing his or her party's agenda over the good of the canton. It does not mean



openness along with better services and responsive government. The next section discusses the case of Ecuador in more detail.

### **Why Ecuador?**

In order to test my hypotheses, I use a combination of data from in-depth personal interviews collected from a sample of 45 mayors and vice-mayors<sup>23</sup> from different cantons (like counties) in every region of Ecuador. Ecuador is an excellent case for testing my hypotheses for several reasons. As previously mentioned, though technically a unitary state, Ecuador has recently devolved considerable power to the local level of government. This is in lieu of empowering the state level which is the case with most federal systems. This makes Ecuador moderately decentralized, rather than highly decentralized (see Daughters and Harper 2007). Additionally, in Ecuador, as in many countries in Latin America, local electoral calendars were deliberately moved so as not to be concurrent with nationally scheduled elections. In theory, these reforms should draw more popular attention to local issues rather than allowing them to be overshadowed by national debates (Manor 1995, Peterson 1997).

Ecuador also provides me with unique levels of subnational heterogeneity in local institutional structures. Although each municipality in Ecuador had experienced the same basic level of decentralization, the municipalities in the sample also differ in the

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politics the way most Ecuadorians have experienced it. In fact, mayors are often quick to tout the lack of such “politics” in their canton as a virtue. (Personal interviews, Provinces of Pichincha and Cascales, March 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

<sup>23</sup> Vice-mayors are included because according to Ecuadorian law (as well as in practice) they are often required to perform mayoral duties in the mayor’s absence. Therefore, it seems that they have an understanding of the executive and administrative functions of the mayoral position in ways that other council members do not. Vice-mayors are elected from and by the cantonal council (of which the mayor is a member) for a two-year term.

level of decentralized services that they provide to citizens. As mentioned in Chapter II, the 1998 Ecuadorian constitution strengthened the position of subnational governments relative to the national government by allowing them to apply for the competencies of their choosing in up to seven sectors, including health, education, social welfare, environmental protection, agriculture, and transportation. As a result, municipalities within Ecuador are experiencing different levels of decentralization simultaneously<sup>24</sup>. Figure 3-1 shows the mean number of competencies requested by municipalities in my sample by region. As we can see, the average is less than one for every region, but cantons in the mountain region were markedly more likely to request competencies. I discuss regional differences shortly.

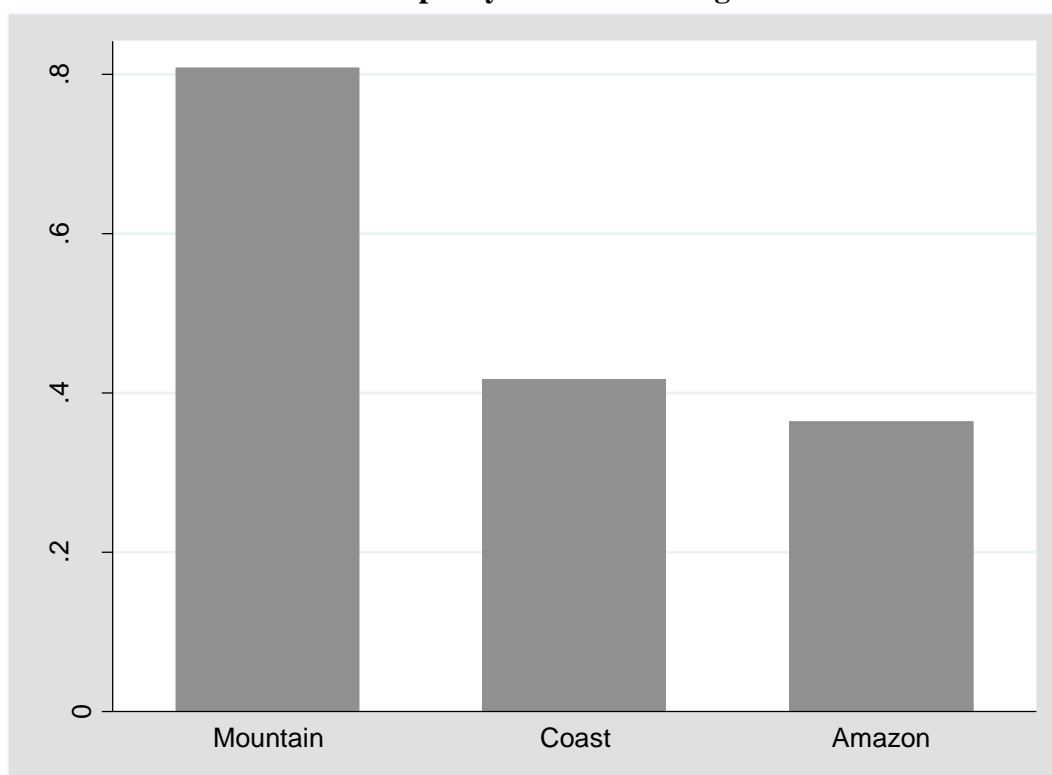
In 2009, a new constitution was put in place which attempted to clarify the roles and competencies pertaining to each level of government. The process attempted to deepen decentralization in several ways. First, new laws made fiscal transfers between national and local women. Furthermore, all municipalities were charged to assume the responsibility for basic services in the rural sectors<sup>25</sup> and as well as transportation. Most municipalities have both a rural and an urban sector, with some exceptions being large cities such as Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. This change to administrative decentralization meant different things for different municipalities. Some experienced no

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<sup>24</sup> About 34% of the cantons in my sample have requested at least one competency from the national government, and this is less than the national average in which about half of the cantons—48% according to a 2009 study by the Ecuadorian State Bank—have requested at least one competency. Information on exactly which sectors these competencies fall into is not available.

<sup>25</sup> Previously, local governments were only responsible for providing services in the urban sector. The new constitution and COOTAD—the organic code which provides specific rules and laws for municipalities—have divided cantons into rural versus urban sectors and enumerated local government responsibilities for each sector type.

**Figure 3-1: The Average Number of Competencies Requested by Cantons in the Sample by Ecuadorian Region.**



**Figure 3-1: The Average Number of Competencies Requested by Cantons in the Sample by Ecuadorian Region.** This figure shows that cantons in the mountain region, on average requested more competencies than those in either the coastal or Amazon region.

change, while others experienced an unwelcome increase or decrease in the amount of services they are responsible for. While this reform may eventually reduce the variation in the level of decentralization, my recent study shows that it has not yet done so because of the slow pace of *de facto* change. (For example, municipalities have until 2015 to assume responsibility for transit, and even then smaller cantons need only assume part of this competency). The laws related to local governance also give significant space for mayors to maneuver; a proactive mayor can push administrative decentralization forward quickly in his canton, but a passive mayor need not be in such a hurry to do so.

The result is substantial variation in the amount of decentralization that citizens from different cantons around the country experience.

The 45 (out of 220) municipalities sampled within Ecuador were selected based on the availability of survey data of citizen preferences from the AmericasBarometer that is used in another chapter of my dissertation project. The AmericasBarometer uses several forms of random selection to create a nationally representative survey of individuals, but it is not clear that the cantons were selected randomly<sup>26</sup>. Though not random, the cantonal sample is quite representative of the population of the country as a whole and includes cantons from every region and almost every province. (There are 29 provinces.) It includes urban/rural, ethnic, geographic, and economic heterogeneity. The local officials in my sample constitute a wide variety of partisan backgrounds, political experience, and educational attainment, which will be detailed in subsequent sections<sup>27</sup>.

### **Defining Representational Typologies**

Starting from the assumption that citizens expect mayors to make decisions based on attitudes of *administrative responsibility* and *political openness*, I coded mayoral attitudes based on the coding scheme in Table 3-1. The responses of mayors to several

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<sup>26</sup> The match between AmericasBarometer data and my interviews was necessary for two parts of my dissertation, the first being in Chapter II where I match budget data with data on citizen preferences, and the second being in Chapter IV where I match mayor characteristics with citizen evaluations of responsiveness. This data matchup allows me to make connections across the analysis conducted in different chapters.

<sup>27</sup> Additional details about my fieldwork in Ecuador can be found in the Appendix to this chapter.

open-ended questions were evaluated and classified as high, medium, or low. Questions asked included the following<sup>28</sup>:

- What are your most important duties and responsibilities as mayor?
- What is the most important problem in your municipality?
- What is your most important accomplishment?
- How is citizen participation here in your municipality (high, low...)?
- What are the difficulties of serving the rural sector of your canton?
- What is your schedule like? Do you have regular hours to attend the people, to work with the council, or to review works projects?
- Do you meet with groups of citizens as well as individuals?
- What does representation mean to you?<sup>29</sup>

As Table 3-1 suggests, in order to be coded *high* on either administrative responsibility or political openness, a mayor had to fulfill all of the different requirements for either dimension of representation. To be clear, fulfilling some but not all of the requirements was grounds for being coded as *medium* and not *high* on a given dimension. Being coded as *medium* was much easier to achieve as the mayor only needed to mention some of the requirements and rather than all of them. Being coded as *low* required the mayor to display either a distinct lack of purpose or reticence toward that dimension. In order to

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<sup>28</sup> Due to the conversational setup of the interviews, responses were coded in their entirety, including responses to questions that may have seemed off topic. For instance, if a mayor talked about citizen participation or public work projects as a part of his response to questions about how the municipal council worked, these attitudes were also taken into account. At times the mayor or vice mayor was prompted by the interviewer to elaborate on certain themes, so I am confident that the respondent was given ample opportunity to express his or her views.

<sup>29</sup> This is not a complete list of all the questions used in the interview, but rather a list of those that were primarily used in coding. A comprehensive list is available from the author upon request.

illustrate the type of language that was used by mayors and how it was coded, Table 3-2 contains examples of responses that contributed to the coding of each mayor’s response.

**Table 3-1: Coding Scheme of Representational Attitudes**

	<b>Administrative Responsibility</b>	<b>Political Openness</b>
<b>high</b>	Emphasizes (mentions multiple times or once with extended commentary) the following: 1) the importance of public works in general especially as a tool for evaluating their job success; 2) the completion of public works projects or attempts to obtain money for such projects; 3) the importance of planning, order, or efficiency within the municipality; and 4) the desire to improve services and citizen quality of life.	Emphasizes (mentions multiple times or once with extended commentary) the following: 1) the importance of attending to marginalized populations including the rural, indigenous, women, or the poor; 2) interaction with citizens both as individuals and groups both in the office and in the neighborhoods or communities; and 3) the importance of having fully implemented measures of citizen participation
<b>medium</b>	Mentions some of the above one or two times, but lacks emphasis in some areas	Mentions some of the above one or two times, but lacks emphasis in some areas
<b>low</b>	Fails to mentions the above, or clearly signifies that they are not a priority by expressing reticence to implement projects	Fails to mentions the above, or clearly signifies that they are not a priority by expressing excessive frustration with citizens and participatory processes

Words that are considered as contributing to the coding of the mayor as high, medium, or low on the dimensions of political openness or administrative responsibility are in bolded print. It is important to keep in mind that these samples are responses to different questions and that interviews were considered holistically and not solely based on the small excerpts shown below.

**Table 3-2: Sample Wording**

	<b>Administrative responsibility</b>	<b>Political Openness</b>
<b>high</b>	<p>Q: “How do you relate to the people?”  A: “I have work projects on the weekends in what we call the “solidarity mingas”. <b>All the technical people and machinery</b> are there on Saturday and Sunday to help the people with <b>their needs and maintaining of services—including water and electricity</b>. This can also extend to the giving of healthcare and taking doctors out into the communities. So these <b>projects</b> come from <b>planning</b> with the citizens.”  (Personal interview, Province of Ibarra, March 18<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>	<p>Q: “How do you relate to the people?”  A: “We have these new laws, and they are part of the social dynamic. I have to make the budget, and now I have to <b>consult the communities</b> so that they can prioritize the works. So in order to do a project you have to have an <b>intimate relationship</b> [with the people]. I have a system that passes through the organization of society, including <b>representatives of different neighborhood and social groups including youth, older adults, laborers, peasants, indigenous groups, etc.</b> So now we also comply with the law, but our process has more than 10 years of experience and is <b>well known in the communities</b>. I have my own days for attending the people. <b>All day on Tuesday, I attend them.</b>  (Personal interview, Province of Ibarra, March 18<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>
<b>medium</b>	<p>Q: What is the most important problem in your municipality?  A: “Basic services: water, sewage, and paving the streets... The highway that is being built is <b>an important work</b> for our economy and tourism, and it will make our canton a key place between the mountains and the coastal region. But it also creates issues for <b>administering</b> the canton”  (Personal interview, Province of Cotopaxi, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>	<p>Q: How do you spend your time?  A: “I spend time visiting <b>rural areas</b>... My first works that I did as mayor were in the <b>rural sector with peasants</b>. The natural beauty of our canton should be captured. How the municipality <b>attends the people is important</b> and can resolve doubts and concerns that they may have.”  (Personal interview, Province of Cotopaxi, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>
<b>low</b>	<p>Q: What is your most important accomplishment?  A: “It’s really hard to be in charge of an institution, but I’ve seen that we can help others. I’ve met so many people. Before I came to the [municipality] I didn’t understand how the [indigenous] peoples lived... This is the best thing about my job, to serve the communities.”  (Personal interview, Province of Sucumbios, March 25<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>	<p>Q: How is citizen participation here in your canton?  A: “They do the budgets and the planning; otherwise they won’t be given resources. We are building a soccer field that is beautiful. We are also building a fair grounds...”  (Personal interview, Province of Sucumbios, March 26<sup>th</sup> 2013)</p>

Beyond coding mayors on these dimensions, what other generalizations might we make about the way they behave? Table 3-3 is an attempt at defining typologies based

on a two-dimensional array of *administrative responsibility* and *political openness*.

**Table 3-3: Mayor Typologies**

		Administrative Responsibility		
		<i>high</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>low</i>
Political	<i>high</i>	Superstar	Populist-leaner	Populists
	Openness	<i>medium</i>	Technocrat-leaner	Compliant
		<i>low</i>	Technocrats	Technocrat-failure

In the upper left cell we have the *Superstar* mayors. These are mayors who have fully embraced the role of planning public projects and administering the municipal government and exhibited remarkable proficiency in making room for different actors to participate. I make the assumption that they are a sort of ideal type of representative. In the middle of the table we have those mayors that I call the *Compliant* mayors. These mayors understand what is required of them by the new constitution in terms of providing for services and citizen participation, but they are not particularly passionate or representative in either area. In the bottom right cell, we have the *Failures*. These mayors clearly fail to provide representation to citizens on either political or administrative dimensions. They are not likely to get reelected and may even be forced out of office before the end of their term<sup>30</sup>. The upper right cell contains the mayors that

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<sup>30</sup> Having a Failure mayor would probably result in what the Ecuadorians term “votes of shame”. As one secretary explained it to me, the “vote of shame” occurs when a citizen votes for a candidate and is later



I label *Populists*. They are very committed to involving everyone in the political process, but are not committed to the tasks of administering works. They use democratic rhetoric to get elected, but they do not make service delivery or administration a priority while they govern<sup>31</sup>. Finally, in the lower left cell reside the *Technocrats*. These mayors are more committed to tangible results and efficiency than citizen involvement. They are strong administrators but weak in terms of political outreach. Those officials who fall into the off-diagonal cells are coded according to their leanings. For example a *Technocrat-leaner* is someone who is stronger in the dimension of administrative responsibility than political openness (with the opposite being true for a *Populist-leaner*). A *Technocrat-failure* is someone who is compliant only on the dimension of administrative responsibility but fails when it comes to providing the dimension of political openness; a *Populist-failure* moderately includes citizens but fails to provide services.

### **Predicting Representational Orientations**

In this analysis, I consider several variables that measure an official's political and institutional context including strength of partisanship, the level of administrative decentralization, and the vote share received in the previous election. However, I expect that the decision-making calculus of the local officials may be shaped by additional factors because the mayor cannot neglect his administrative role for the sake of political

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ashamed to admit that he/she was duped into giving the official his/her vote. (Personal interview, Province of Ibarra, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014)

<sup>31</sup> Again, one must remember that what is being measured here is the overall orientation or willingness of the mayor to provide the service and whether or not they see it as an important part of their job. It speaks more to the focus and the drive of the mayor rather than how competent he or she may be (which is probably more a product of education and experience).

pursuits. Thus I will consider a variety of other predictors that I organize into individual-level and canton-level factors. I begin with individual-level factors and examine variation in three categories: 1) demographic characteristics, 2) political attitudes, and 3) the political and electoral positions of individual officials. In the second part of the analysis, I deal with canton-level predictors that may limit the choice set of mayors and influence the emergence of representational types, including the geographic region, urbanization, economic development, and the level of administrative decentralization. In doing so, I build multivariate and bivariate models for each dimension of representational attitudes. Next, I describe the distribution of mayoral types in Ecuador.

### **The Distribution of Mayoral Types**

In order to evaluate the hypotheses, I coded the responses of Ecuadorian mayors according to the system enumerated above. Table 3-4 contains the distribution of mayors according to high, medium, and low levels of administrative responsibility and political openness. The cells contain the number (count) of mayors followed by the percentage (of the total observations) that fell into each category in parentheses. The results show that most mayors fall in the middle of the distribution, but more mayors fall disproportionately into or near the *Technocrat* type as opposed to the *Populist* type.

**Table 3-4: Mayor Densities by Type**

		Administrative Responsibility			
		high	medium	low	total
Political Openness	high	Superstar 5 (11.1%)	Populist-leaner 7 (15.6%)	Populist (4.4%)	14 (31.1%)
	medium	Technocrat-leaner 9 (20.0%)	Compliant 10 (22.2%)	Populist-Failure 2 (4.4%)	21 (46.7%)
	low	Technocrat 7 (15.6%)	Technocrat-Failure 3 (6.67%)	Failure 0 (0.0%)	10 (22.2%)
total		21 (46.7%)	20 (44.4%)	4 (8.9%)	45 (100%)

There are many possible explanations for this distribution, and an exhaustive look at all the variables that shape it is outside the scope of this study. However, I believe that this distribution is likely a consequence of both decentralization laws and the priority that citizens place on seeing results from their local government in terms of solutions to problems and quality services. It appears that mayors are responding rationally to the pressures to take on new constitutionally mandated competencies and implement more organized and planned administration. They may also reason that citizens are more likely to vote favorably for them or someone in their party in the next election if they notice a real improvement in their quality of life. The *Technocrats* are willing to bet that citizen may not notice that they are being excluded from the political process if their services work better than before (Personal interview, Province of Cotopaxi, February 19<sup>th</sup> 2013).

When we consider the distribution of cases along the diagonal from the top left to the bottom right, or from Superstar mayors to Failures, we see some good news. There are five mayors that qualify as Superstars and none that qualify as Failures. Notably, there is one canton in the sample that likely had a mayor that would qualify as a Failure,

but he was caught in a corruption scandal and forced to leave by an angry mob of citizens a few months before I arrived for an interview. While the vice-mayor (who was then the acting mayor) was classified as Compliant rather than a Failure, his municipal building lacked computers and the canton's capital city smelled strongly of the trash piled outside of dilapidated buildings, all of which are reminders that Failure mayors can leave a terrible mess in their wake.

### **Individual-level Predictors**

#### *Demographics*

In this section I take a look at who these mayors are in terms of gender, race, and education. Since Ecuador adopted gender quotas in 1997, women have steadily gained greater presence in the national legislature (see Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). Rules in the 2008 constitution about the placement of women on party ballots require parties to create lists that alternate between male and female (or female and male) candidates<sup>32</sup>. This applies to all legislative seats, both at the national and local level. However, mayors are local executives and are elected off of separate lists from the cantonal council (local legislative body) in which each party runs one candidate. As such, gender quotas are only relevant for legislative elections (canton council) and not for executive elections (mayors).

My sample contained only two female mayors in addition to two vice-mayors. I also interviewed seven other female councilors. In general, it seems that women still

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<sup>32</sup> Laws requiring every other candidate to be a female are sometimes called a zipper quotas. For more information on zipper quotas and the types of gender quotas that are used internationally, please see Dahlerup 2008.

have difficulty arriving at executive posts in the cantonal government, but it is much easier for them to gain spots on the council (via quotas). Women may be rare in my sample, but if they measure up to males in representation they may leave a good impression on citizens, paving the way for the election of other women. Additionally, since females are political outsiders in Ecuador, we may anticipate that they will stress the dimension of political openness, because they have personal experience with marginalization. In fact, every female mayor or vice-mayor I interviewed mentioned political discrimination in some way. One mayor pointedly said that the male candidates practiced “political cannibalism” during the campaign. Another mentioned specific instances of death threats and attempts on her life (Personal interviews, Provinces of Napo and Babahoyo, March 4<sup>th</sup> and April 16<sup>th</sup>). However, it is not clear that we should expect women to differ from men when it comes to administrative responsibility.

**H1: Women mayors are more likely to rank high on the political openness dimension of representation.**

Like women, racial and ethnic minority officials are also political outsiders. They may also be swift to bring the needs of the marginalized to the forefront of municipal operations because of past experiences and because they are expected to do so by their minority constituents. However, there is no reason to believe that these respondents will perform any differently from mestizo mayors when it comes to administrative responsibility.

**H2: Mayors who are members of racial and ethnic minorities will be more likely to rank high on political openness than those who are not.**

My sample contains 11 mayors and vice-mayors that are from ethnic minorities (defined as those who self-identify as indigenous, Afro-descendants, or Montubios<sup>33</sup>). Six of them rank high on political openness. Four are ranked medium, and only one ranks low.

Finally, the prediction for education is rather straightforward. Avellaneda and Escobar-Lemmon (2012) have shown that education impacts the success of Colombian mayors, and I have reason to believe that Ecuadorian mayors will also exhibit more representative attitudes as a result of education (see also Avellaneda, 2012). We might expect that mayors with higher education are particularly well situated to be responsible administrators, and they may also be politically open because their education may have added to their awareness of the issues and needs of marginalized sectors.

**H3: There is a positive relationship between increased levels of education and attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

The most common level of education is a bachelor's or university degree (38.7%). 22.5 percent of mayors hold a graduate degree. 16.13% have only a high-school diploma equivalent and 22.5 have an incomplete university degree (some college experience or a degree in progress). All Superstar mayors hold a college degree, and only one Technocrat does not. The same is not true of the few Populists in the sample, none of whom hold college degrees.

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<sup>33</sup> Montubios are officially recognized as a distinct people group by Ecuadorian law. They reside in the coastal plains and have distinct cultural practices that often isolate them from other groups. However, they are similar in appearance and dress to mestizos and speak Spanish (both historically and currently).

### *Political Attitudes about Decentralization*

In this section, I will address the relationship between a mayor's representation orientation and some of his/her political attitudes, namely attitudes about decentralization. To be sure, the vast majority of mayors want more decentralization<sup>34</sup> but they do not agree about how it should be done, what it should do, or whether the current decentralization policies are actually beneficial for local governments<sup>35</sup>. In both my survey and interviews I asked respondents to give opinions about decentralization. When asked to express an opinion, only about 24% of respondents suggested no changes were needed to the current decentralization plan. The rest of the respondents were quick to opine on what they felt was lacking in the current version of decentralization outlined in the 2008 constitution and COOTAD, the organic laws regulating local governance. Responses were then coded based on whether the grievances mentioned had to do with fiscal, political, or administrative aspects of decentralization. These dimensions are often used in the literature on local governments to measure types of decentralization that may vary across time and space (see Falleti, 2005). Moreover, several mayors expressed concerns about the clarity and construction of laws governing municipalities that were not strictly related to any of the above three types of decentralization. So I created an

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<sup>34</sup> Only two mayors responded that they wanted the national government to assume more responsibilities. All other mayors said that they wanted more money and responsibilities from the national government. (Personal surveys, Province of Loja and Esmeraldas, April 4<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2013)

<sup>35</sup> 18% of mayors stated that the amount of re-centralization was greater than the amount of decentralization so that there was effectively no decentralization. The rest felt that there had been at least some level of decentralization. The reason for this variance in the levels of decentralization and mayoral perception is an interesting puzzle in itself, but it is not the focus of this chapter. I leave it for future research, though I do have some ideas about how relationships between cantons, provinces, and national governments shape these perceptions.

additional category which I will subsequently refer to as “lack of planning”. Some mayors expressed concern about more than one dimension, so I have allowed mayors to enter more than one category.

Only 10% of mayors were concerned about political aspects of decentralization, which were related to claims that the national government did not respect the political choices of the local government. Thirty-two percent expressed dissatisfaction with the fiscal arrangement, particularly lack of money. Over half, 52%, complained about administrative aspects of decentralization, often citing a change in the amount of service responsibility. Surprisingly the majority of those complaining about administrative decentralization actually wanted to take on more services<sup>36</sup>. Another 29% bemoaned the lack of planning and clarity in the legislation, and hoped that reforms would better the design of decentralization<sup>37</sup>.

How might these attitudes impact a mayor’s representational strategy? First, one might think that mayors who are not able to work well within the present system of decentralization will be less competent when it comes to administrative responsibility. Remember that the Ecuadorian laws are still quite open in terms of what mayors can do and where they can borrow or be granted money. We might also expect that mayors who are zealous for the political autonomy of the canton may be more likely to demonstrate

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<sup>36</sup> In several cases, mayors complained about the competency of agriculture being moved away from local governments and into the hands of provincial governments, who they believed to be ineffective and out of touch with the people. Six of the mayors surveyed also talked about making roads in the rural areas, which is a competency that belongs to the provincial government but has often been left unattended. (Personal interviews, Province of Guayas and Atacames, April 11<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013)

<sup>37</sup> Mayors that want to provide additional services than the ones required by the law can petition the government for the right to work in this sector. These competency requests are described in a subsequent section.



political openness because they want to protect the rights of the marginalized and insure them a voice in local spaces. Accordingly, I coded mayors based on their overall satisfaction with decentralization on a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 is not satisfied, 2 is somewhat satisfied, and 3 is very satisfied. In general, I expect that as satisfaction increases so will the ability to govern, because mayors have figured out the new rules of the game and can use them to benefit the canton. Unfortunately it is difficult to determine the direction of causality from the present data. I argue that one's representational orientation is shaped by one's feeling about the context one works in, but is also possible to argue that representational orientation may impact one's feeling about the system. I check for reverse causality in my analysis.

**H4: Mayors that feel decentralization is lacking fiscal or administrative dimensions will demonstrate less administrative responsibility.**

**H5: Mayors that feel decentralization is lacking in the political dimension will demonstrate more political openness.**

**H6: Mayors that are generally satisfied with decentralization will demonstrate more political openness and administrative responsibility.**

#### *Political Situation*

However, playing with the hand you are dealt can be easier if you have the winning combination of electoral and partisan support. In this section I explore the relationship between representational attitudes and other factors that have traditionally defined the political space, including the partisanship of the mayor, his/her margin of victory in the previous election, length of time in office, whether or not he or she ran for

re-election, and whether or not he/she was actually re-elected. In terms of partisanship, 22% of mayors claimed to be completely independent, even if they were elected through a political party. Of the partisan mayors, 55% (43% of the overall sample) claim affiliation with Alianza Pais, the leftist-socialist party of the recently reelected and wildly popular president Rafael Correa. Another 8% of partisan mayors report affiliation with the P.S.P, (Partido Sociedad Patriótica) a populist/personalist party, and another 6% or so affiliated with the Pachakutik, an indigenous-leftist party. The center-right party, the P.S.C. (Partido Social Cristiano) also claims about 6% of the partisan mayors. The remaining 33 % of partisan mayors (26% of overall sample) belong to local or regional parties that are not represented in the national legislature. All things considered, about 60% of mayors belong to a party that has representation in the national legislature and as mentioned above 43% of mayors are from the president's party. Mainwaring and Scully (1995) have hypothesized that institutionalized parties enhance accountability and representation. Ecuador as a whole in no way qualifies as having an institutionalized party system (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Mainwaring, 1999), but perhaps it is the case that local officials who are affiliated with a national party will behave more responsively. It could be that political parties enhance representation in several ways. First, national parties may be most skilled at recruiting the most qualified individuals to run on their list, and they may provide opportunities for the advancement of a politician's career. Also, they may oversee local officials and incentivize responsiveness for mayors who cannot be reelected but who care about the future of their political party

and do not want to damage its reputation in their municipality.<sup>38</sup>

**H7: Mayors who are affiliated with a national party will exhibit higher levels of representational attitudes in both the administrative and political dimensions.**

Furthermore, the case can be made that those mayors who are affiliated with the president's party should embrace the ideals of his "Citizen's Revolution" which emphasizes political inclusiveness and openness. The same might be true for mayors of the indigenous Pachakutik party which has been a constant advocate of indigenous rights.

**H8: Mayors who are affiliated with Alianza Pais or Pachakutik will display high amounts of political openness.**

Next, I consider the electoral strength of the mayor in terms of his/her past margin of victory and future electoral success. We might suppose that a mayor's past margin of victory may coincide with his/her representative ability. If elections are effective mechanisms by which voters select the mayors that they believe to be good types (see Fearon 1999), we anticipate that more voters will show more aggressive support of mayors that go on to perform well. It is also possible that mayors with a larger margin of victory will feel they have a strong mandate to represent the people who elected them.

**H9: Mayors with large margins of victory will be more likely to demonstrate**

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<sup>38</sup> I believe that given the chaotic nature of the Ecuadorian system, the last mechanism occurs less frequently, but I think that it might be present in in Alianza País, the party of the president.

**representation in both political and administrative dimensions.**

Additionally, mayors that are strong on both dimensions of representation will likely feel that they have done their job well and will decide to run for re-election based on their past performance<sup>39</sup>.

**H10: Mayors with who run for reelection will be more representative in both dimensions.**

Finally where does previous experience with electoral success come into this puzzle? If an official has been elected before, I imagine that the mayor has provided citizens with at least moderate levels of representation. Given the general electoral climate of instability and the low reelection rates, being in office for more than one period could signal that an official has governed effectively. At the same time, if the rhetoric of Correa and his movement is to be believed, these older politicians are all part of the old aristocratic ruling class that has oppressed the poor and the marginalized throughout the centuries, and they must be done away with in order to move the country forward. Based on this argument, we might expect mayors who have served for a long time to be less politically open in their representational orientation. Thus these two theories are at least partially in conflict, so hypothesis 11b is added to test the idea that new mayors will be better than old ones at political openness administrative responsibility.

**H11a: Officials who have had prior experience with the same elected**

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<sup>39</sup> This assumes that all good mayors will run for reelection and does not explicitly take into account that some good mayors may be frustrated with the system at the end of the term and decide not to run for reelection. This is a very interesting possibility that I would like to explore in future research.

**position will be more likely to display attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

**H11b: Officials who have had prior experience with the same elected position will be less likely to display attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

### **Canton-level Predictors**

While playing with the institutional hand you are dealt may be key to representation, it's important to recognize that not all mayors are dealt the same hand. In this section, I explore the relationship between canton-level factors with which a mayor must grapple and attitudes of representation. In this section I address the following covariates: the level of decentralization (both as fiscal dependent on the national government and competency request), the level of urbanization, geographic location, and the level of local development. At times it is unclear that there are theoretical expectations for how these canton-level predictors will shape attitudes (with the exception of decentralization), so rather than formulate hypotheses for all of them, I discuss possibilities which are explored in subsequent models.

Mayors can inherit certain fiscal and administrative situations. Among them being the number of competencies the municipality has as well as the level of fiscal dependence on national government transfers. All local governments are required to provide certain basic services such as water and sewage, but they can increase their level of administrative decentralization through petitioning the government to work in other sectors such as agriculture and health care which are areas in which local governments

are not required to provide services. Since mayors can shape these situations as well as be shaped by them, I consider the possibility that causality works in both directions. However, I use canton-level data from 2009<sup>40</sup> which would be the first year that the mayors in my sample held office. Consequently, there is reason to believe that these statistics reflect the work of past officials, except in cases where the mayor had held office for multiple terms. In general, we might expect that mayors who create situations in which their municipality takes on more administrative responsibilities do so to signal their competence to their constituencies.

Moreover, I surmise that mayors who are in cantons that have higher levels of fiscal independence will also display higher representative orientations because they are actively developing the revenue generating sectors of the canton and they are able to collect taxes.<sup>41</sup> As mentioned earlier, due to legal flexibilities, different cantons can experience different levels of decentralization simultaneously because their fiscal and administrative situations can vary dramatically. If decentralization enhances representation, mayors who are in cantons that are experience more decentralization will be more representative of their citizens.

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<sup>40</sup> The source for the canton level data on water and plumbing coverage, administrative competencies, and fiscal self-sufficiency is the Basic Municipal Evaluation conducted in 2009 by the Ecuadorian government in association with the German Institute for Development (GIZ) and made available online by the State Bank of Ecuador.

<sup>41</sup> Apparently it takes special ability for mayor to be able to collect taxes or even charge for services provided by the municipality. Mayors believe that this is the result of broken trust from past government officials who have been corrupt. They believe that once the government proves that it can be trusted with citizen money, citizens will pay (personal interview conducted April 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, El Oro and Guayas Province, Ecuador).

**H12: Mayors of cantons that have requested administrative responsibilities will be more likely to demonstrate high levels of political and administrative representation.**

**H13: Mayors of cantons that are fiscally dependent on the national government will be less likely to demonstrate high levels of political and administrative representation.**

In order to measure variance in administrative decentralization, I use a dichotomous measure for whether or not the canton had ever requested an additional competency<sup>42</sup>. Fiscal dependence is measured as the percentage of the municipal budget that comes from national government transfers and ranges in the sample from 53 to 99 percent.

The government of Ecuador has divided each canton into rural and urban sector and then measures the population of each sector. This is done because rurality (which is just the mathematical opposite of urbanization, in terms of percentage) is part of the formula that determines how much money a canton receives from the state.

Notwithstanding these recent attempts by the national government to correct for what is sometimes an appalling lack of development in the rural sectors, having a large percentage of the population living in the rural sector still presents a significant challenge to local officials. Mayors explain that in urban areas it is just easier to provide basic services because users are concentrated geographically, so there are more users to

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<sup>42</sup> In general it is assumed that all municipalities that requested a competency were granted it. This is consistent with analysis by Faust and Harbors (2011), and I have not seen any contradictory cases thus far.

help share the cost of the pipes and maintenance (personal interviews, provinces of Pichincha and Sucumbios, March 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2013). The new constitution of 2008 requires that local governments service the rural as well as the urban sector with potable water. In some areas this means cutting through miles and miles of jungle or climbing over towering mountains to get water to each far-flung community. Additionally, the rural sector is traditionally less educated, less wealthy, and less mestizo (containing minority populations). This often means less tax dollars for the municipality to collect. We might expect that mayors who come from less urbanized areas to be less representative on the administrative dimension because they have fewer resources to work with and a much harder task. On the other hand, representational orientation is about having plans and desires to be responsive so perhaps mayors in rural areas will be more aware of the needs around them and have a great desire to administer responsively. Since we lack clear expectations about the relationship between urbanization and administrative responsibility, we will allow for the relationship to go either way.

In terms of political openness, having a large rural sector generally means that you *de facto* have more peasants and indigenous peoples to respond to, and it is logical to think that a mayor would work to include these constituencies. On the other hand, having these constituencies does not of necessity mean that the mayor will respond to them, and the matter is open for investigation.

Additionally, it has been suggested by academics as well as the mayors themselves that in Ecuador that there are differences between the coastal, mountain



(sierra), and Amazonian (oriente) regions (see Lucero 2001)<sup>43</sup>. Some coastal mayors have used the idea of regional differences to explain everything from low popular participation to low tax revenues (because, as they explain, there isn't a culture of paying in the coastal region) (Personal interviews, province of Guayas, April 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2013). Do local officials also behave differently depending on the region? Could it be that those in the mountain region (sierra) are more representative in terms of both administrative responsibility and political openness, while those in the coastal region are less so? It is also difficult to know what to expect from the Amazon region, other than less urbanization and development due to the remoteness of the region.

The total population size of the canton is a simple but necessary covariate to include in analysis. I believe that cantons with a larger population size, regardless of whether or not they are predominately rural or urban, need a mayor who has strong administrative skills because the demands on that official will be greater. Furthermore, I could be that in places where the mayor simply has more people to attend to, he/she will not be able to give as much face-to-face attention to groups and marginalized people, so I anticipate that as population size increases, political openness will decrease.

While it is true that the mayor is the executive of the canton and responsible for guiding its economic development, some mayors inherit cantons that are in a better place in terms of development and administration than others. This is especially salient when

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<sup>43</sup> Diligent search has not been able to find any empirical tests demonstrating actual differences in political behavior between the three regions. It should be noted that only recently (after the discovery of oil deposits) has the Amazonian region become a player in national politics. The historical cleavage has been between the highlands Quito and coastal Guayaquil. See Eaton 2013 for more on the Guayaquil-led separatist movement.

we consider that a large percent of mayors were not governing their canton in the previous term. We might surmise that when a city fails to provide basic services, this is either the result of past inattention or current neglect<sup>44</sup>. Either the mayor will work harder to overcome past difficulties, or he/she will capitulate to the inherited difficulties of the situation and fail to provide the appropriate representation. In general, it is possible that high levels of development in terms of provision of basic services lead to better representational performance, unless the mayor chooses to rise above his/her situation. Since representation is about one's orientation and attitude, even if it is hard to provide services in the jungle, a driven and purposeful mayor can still be a Superstar, whereas a mayor can be a Failure if he or she has an easier situation but lacks the correct perspective. Therefore, I will include measures of local development in the model, but I do not have strong expectations about their relationship to representational attitudes. I define basic services as the percentage of the canton that has access to potable water and plumbing. My sample contains cantons ranging from 46 to 100% population having access to potable water and from 10 to 97% having access to plumbing systems.

### **Putting It All Together: Multivariate Models of Representational Attitudes**

In this section I use ordinal logistic regression to predict political openness and administrative responsibility using demographic, personal attitudes, political situation, and canton-level covariates. For the sake of sample size, in a following section I will also look at models with one or at most two covariates. Table 3-5 shows multiple

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<sup>44</sup> Of course it could always be that providing services in the jungle is just more difficult than providing them on the coast, but this goes back to geography.

regression coefficients for covariates by category, including demographics, attitudes about decentralization, political characteristics, and canton-level predictors which are further divided into two groups, the first deals with geography and population and the second deals with governance<sup>45</sup>.

In general, we see that demographic variables are stronger predictors of the political dimension of representation than the administrative dimension, with the notable exception of education which seems to be the most important factor in that category for administrative responsibility. Attitudes about decentralization are not strong predictors in general, except for complaints about fiscal decentralization, which is related to increases in political openness and decreases in administrative responsiveness. Complaining about the lack of fiscal decentralization is associated with increases in political representation, and it seems that overall satisfaction with decentralization also improves it. This could be because politically open mayors tend to come from small more rural cantons that may face greater fiscal constraints. Therefore these complaints about fiscal decentralization should not be taken to mean that the mayor is unwilling or unable to work within the new system, but rather that doing so regularly brings to mind the scarcity of resources. Additionally, fighting for more resources for ones canton is sometimes seen as part of the mayor's job; so if they did not complain, there would be cause for concern.

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<sup>45</sup> Since my sample size is so small, I will refer to p-values that are less than .1 as statistically significant, but I will also report exact p-values so that reader can judge for him/herself.

**Table 3-5: Multivariate Analysis of Representation Attitudes by Categories**

	Demographics		Attitude about Decentralization		Politics		Canton factors 1		Canton factors 2	
	P.O.	A.R.	P.O.	A.R.	P.O.	A.R.	P.O.	A.R.	P.O.	A.R.
<b>Female</b>	1.14	16.5								
<i>p-value</i>	0.41	0.99								
<b>Ethnic minority</b>	1.71**	0.43								
<i>p-value</i>	0.04	0.59								
<b>Education</b>	-0.66*	0.72**								
<i>p-value</i>	0.08	0.05								
<b>Lack fiscal</b>			2.20**	-1.72*						
<i>p-value</i>			0.03	0.08						
<b>Lack admin.</b>			0.34	-0.20						
<i>p-value</i>			0.74	0.82						
<b>Lack political</b>			2.41	0.10						
<i>p-value</i>			0.14	0.93						
<b>Lack planning</b>			0.23	0.87						
<i>p-value</i>			0.85	0.42						
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>			1.60**	0.48						
<i>p-value</i>			0.05	0.36						
<b>Political experience</b>					-0.81	-0.24				
<i>p-value</i>					0.22	0.73				
<b>National party</b>					1.42**	1.38**				
<i>p-value</i>					0.03	0.05				
<b>Run for reelection</b>					-1.07*	0.18				
<i>p-value</i>					0.10	0.78				
<b>Percent urban</b>							-2.61**	1.59		
<i>p-value</i>							0.04	0.23		
<b>Sierra</b>							-0.10	0.57		
<i>p-value</i>							0.90	0.47		
<b>Costa</b>							-0.38	0.27		
<i>p-value</i>							0.65	0.82		
<b>Water coverage</b>									0.02	-0.02
<i>p-value</i>									0.45	0.30
<b>Dependence</b>									0.05*	-0.03
<i>p-value</i>									0.07	0.33
<b>Competency request</b>									-0.49	0.95
<i>p-value</i>									0.41	0.13
Pseudo-R2	0.11	0.13	0.15	0.09	0.11	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.05
N	31	31	31	31	44	44	45	45	43	43

In terms of political factors, we see that being a part of a national party is far and away the most important predictor, as it is positive and significant for both models. This indicates that national parties can provide a real boost to representation, even in fragmented party system such as Ecuador. Running for reelection is significant (but barely so) and negative for the political openness model, suggesting that mayors of all stripes can run for reelection, and sometimes those who choose to do run do so based on their administrative accomplishments (technocrats and technocrat-leaners) rather than connections with the people. In terms of canton-level predictors, none are clearly associated with administrative responsibility, but urbanization and dependence on the national government are significantly related to political openness. In the case of urbanization, it is no surprise that a highly open style of governance becomes difficult in cantons with large urban populations. Given the previous findings, it is likely that these cantons may have difficulty generating their own revenue and are thus more dependent on the national government. In the end, these findings may say more about the correlation between urbanization and national government dependence, which is negative ( $r = -.58$ ) and highly significant ( $p = .00$ ) than representational success of the mayor.

If more observations were available, we would certainly test of all the covariates together in one model. Unfortunately this is not possible due to the small sample size. So Table 3-6 is an attempt to test the strength of covariates across categories. For instance, it allows us to see the effect of education on political openness while controlling for attitudes about decentralization. The rule of thumb used in Table 3-6, was to gather those

coefficients that were significant in each category in Table 3-5, and the total population size is added to the political openness model as a control variable.

The findings here are generally what one would expect from the last model. For political openness, the lack of fiscal resources, the overall satisfaction with decentralization, and running for reelection stand out as the most important predictors (reelection predicts less political openness). For administrative responsibility, education and national party participation are strong positive predictors and running for reelection and complaining about fiscal decentralization are strong negative predictors. The most surprising finding here is likely that running for reelection is a negative predictor for administrative responsibility and perhaps attests to the generally chaotic nature of partisan politics in Ecuador. It may also be that mayoral motives for providing citizens with representation are less about the next election than previously thought.

### **Determinants of Representation: Bivariate Analysis**

This section takes an additional look at the support for each hypothesis, beginning with individual level characteristics, and then considering political situations and canton-level predictors as well. This is done to assure that important relationships that may exist in the data are not overlooked due to sample size.

**Table 3-6: Multivariate Analysis of Representation Attitudes across Categories**

	<b>P.O.</b>	<b>A.R.</b>
<b>Ethnic minority</b>	3.22	
<i>p-value</i>	0.11	
<b>Education</b>	-0.93	1.27**
<i>p-value</i>	0.21	0.05
<b>Lack fiscal</b>	5.27*	-3.67**
<i>p-value</i>	0.08	0.02
<b>Lack administrative</b>		-0.91
<i>p-value</i>		0.47
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	2.52*	
<i>p-value</i>	0.08	
<b>National party</b>	-1.54	4.01**
<i>p-value</i>	0.40	0.02
<b>Run for reelection</b>	-6.78**	-3.44**
<i>p-value</i>	0.03	0.05
<b>Percent urban</b>	-6.78	
<i>p-value</i>	0.98	
<b>Nat'l gov. dependence</b>	-0.11	
<i>p-value</i>	0.21	
<b>Total population</b>	-0.00**	
<i>p-value</i>	0.03	
Pseudo-R2	0.36	0.41
N	21	21

*Personal Characteristics*

**H1: Women mayors are more likely to rank high on the political openness dimension of representation.**

Out of the four females in my sample, three ranked high in political openness and one ranked medium. Two ranked high in administrative responsiveness; one ranked medium, and one ranked low. In sum, the sample contains one female superstar mayor, one female populist, and two that were compliant in terms of administrative

responsibility and high on political openness. In fact there is a positive correlation (.284) between being a woman and political openness ( $p=.058$ ), but no correlation between being female and administrative responsibility ( $r= -.06$ ,  $p=.69$ )<sup>46</sup>. Evidence supports H1 and suggests the women mayors are not less adept at representation than men, certainly when it comes to knowing how include the marginalized sector.

**H2: Mayors who are members of racial and ethnic minorities will be more likely to rank high on political openness than those who are not.**

Political openness is positively correlated ( $r=.297$ ) with being a member of a racial minority group ( $p=.056$ ). In administrative responsibility, six minority mayors are ranked high and five are ranked medium, which is good but since it almost exactly mirrors the distribution of the entire sample, the correlation here ( $r=.148$ ) is not statistically significant ( $p=.33$ ). The sample contains two indigenous mayors who are classified as Superstars. Like women, ethnic minorities are not lagging behind their counterparts in embracing attitudes of representation.

Interestingly, when combined into one measure of “political outsiders”, women and ethnic minorities account for half of all mayors ranked high on political openness (7 out of 14). The correlation between being a political outsider and political openness ( $r=.358$ ) increases in size and statistical significance ( $p=.02$ )<sup>47</sup>. It is important to remember how the variable for political openness was coded. In order to be ranked as

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<sup>46</sup> Pearson’s chi-squared tests for tabular association were also used to corroborate each of the bivariate correlations in the analysis and are available from the author upon request.

<sup>47</sup> The coefficient from a bivariate ordinal logit with political openness as the dependent variable and being a political outsider as an independent variable is positive and statistically significant at  $p=.014$



high, a mayor had not only to talk about helping one group of constituents such as co-ethnics or women but also had to embrace mechanisms of participation in general and talk about having a close relationship with the people. So I have reason to believe that these political outsiders, though they are few in number, could actually be bringing something fresh into political system that may strengthen Ecuadorian democracy (as opposed to only distributing exclusive goods to particular groups). Furthermore, this is something that decentralization scholars predicted would be the consequence of opening the local political spaces.

**H3: There is a positive relationship between increased levels of education and attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

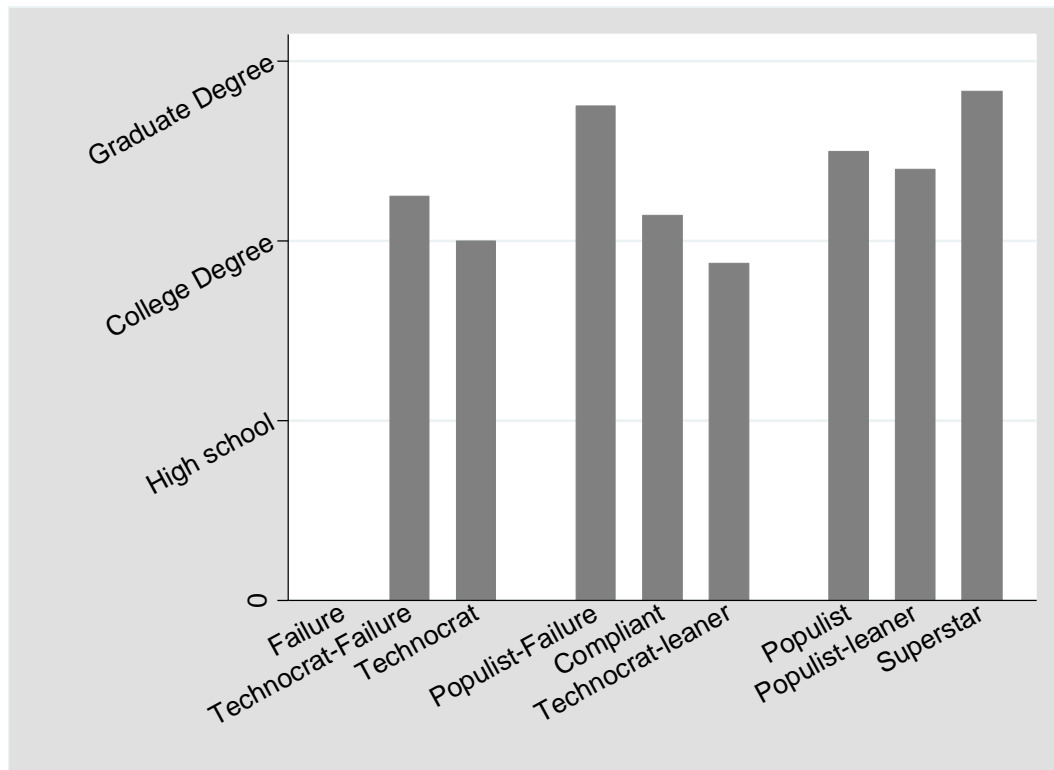
The correlation between political openness and education is actually negative ( $r = -.23$ ), but it is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.21$ ). However the correlation between administrative responsibility and education ( $r = .34$ ) is positive and significant ( $p = .06$ )<sup>48</sup>. So we must conclude that H3 is partially supported. It is supported with respect to education increasing attitudes of administrative responsibility, but there is no corresponding increase in political openness. This suggests that education can help a mayor be more responsive on the administrative dimension, but successful representation in the openness dimension may have its origins in other personal experiences caused by race and gender. Figure 3-2 presents the mean education level across each of the nine types of mayors explained in Tables 3-3 and 3-4. Overall,

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<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately information about educational attainment was only available for 31 out of 45 of the respondents.

Superstars have the highest education, but the effect of education seems to differ within each level of political openness. At the highest level of political openness, education increases with levels of administrative responsibility, but at low and medium levels of openness, education decreases as levels of administrative responsibility increase. This suggests that education boosts orientations of administrative responsiveness, but only those individuals with high political openness.

**Figure 3-2: Average Education among Mayor Types.**



**Figure 3-2: Average Education among Mayor Types.** This figure shows education in improve representation among mayors who ranked high in political openness, but the relationship is negative for those ranking medium and low.

*Attitudes about Decentralization*

**H4: Mayors that feel decentralization is lacking fiscal or administrative dimensions will demonstrate less administrative responsibility.**

**H5: Mayors that feel decentralization is lacking in the political dimension will demonstrate more political openness.**

**H6: Mayors that are generally satisfied with decentralization will demonstrate more political openness and administrative responsibility.**

Correlation coefficients yield little support for these hypotheses. The only statistically significant result is the relationship between complaining about fiscal decentralization and levels of administrative responsibility ( $r = -.35$   $p = .05$ ). The relationship between complaints about administrative decentralization and administrative responsibility is negative but not statistically significant, perhaps due to the varied nature of the reasons that respondents complained about this dimension. Hypothesis five is also not supported by correlation evidence ( $r = .14$   $p = 0.45$ ), possibly because so few respondents complained about this element of decentralization. Correlations for hypothesis 6 relating to a mayor's overall satisfaction with decentralization are positive (political openness  $r = .23$ ; administrative responsibility  $r = .17$ ) but not statistically significant ( $p = 0.35$  and  $p = 0.18$  respectively). I also checked each instance the possibility of reverse causality in which opinions about decentralization may lead to representational orientations, using bivariate logistic and ordinal logistic regressions. I encountered a significant relationship ( $p = .07$ ) only for complaints about fiscal decentralization. In this case, orientations of high administrative responsibility predict

less frustration with levels of fiscal decentralization.

Though we are not able to make strong statements about the direction of causality, all in all, it seems possible that when the attitudes of mayors stay positive about decentralization and they work creatively within the system, they demonstrate strong administrative abilities to constituents. The mayors I interviewed also made it clear that decentralization is a process (Personal interview, Province of Ambato, February 20<sup>th</sup> 2013), and that in the face of institutional instability, the best mayors do not wait for institutional change, they play with the hand they are dealt.

#### *Political Situation*

**H7: Mayors who are affiliated with a national party will exhibit higher levels of representational attitudes in both the administrative and political dimensions.**

I find support for this hypothesis in several ways. First, the correlation coefficients for belonging to a national party and political openness ( $r= 0.35$ ,  $p= 0.02$ ) and administrative responsiveness ( $r= 0.38$ ,  $p= 0.01$ ) are positive and statistically significant. Also, the coefficients on an ordinal logistic regression model with national party affiliation as the independent variable and political openness and administrative responsiveness as dependent variables are positive and significant at  $p= .03$  and  $p=.02$  respectively. These findings suggest that mayors who have national party affiliations perform better because they have more accountability and incentives to consider the long-term political game. It may also be the case that these parties are adept at finding,

recruiting, and co-opting talented mayoral candidates<sup>49</sup>. This might be particularly true for the party of president, Alianza Pais, which first ran candidates in the 2006 general elections and is a relatively new party on the Ecuadorian political scene. So, somehow the best mayors and the national parties have found each other. In any case, if citizens can trust the mayors who connect with major political parties, perhaps they will learn to trust the political system more as a whole, and this could have positive implications for democratic stability.

**H8: Mayors who are affiliated with Alianza Pais or Pachakutik will display high amounts of political openness.**

An ordinal logistic regression with political openness as the dependent variable and a dichotomous variable for being affiliated with these two parties is the independent variable shows that there is not a statistically significant relationship. The same is true of the correlation coefficients. However when the causal assumptions are reversed, I find that both political openness and administrative responsibility predict participation in their Alianza Pais or the Pachakutik party (and not the other way around for political openness)<sup>50</sup>. This implies that political open and representative mayors are members of these parties for whatever reason and not necessarily that partisanship causes

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<sup>49</sup> Ordinal logit models with political openness and administrative responsibility as the dependent variables and national party affiliation as the independent variable show evidence that the causality could be working in this direction as well.

<sup>50</sup> Incidentally there is a positive and significant relationship between AP and Pachakutik membership (IV) and administrative responsibility (DV). I had not expected to find this relationship, but I think that it is interesting nonetheless because it shows that while these parties may focus their rhetoric on political openness, they are actually more effective in administration. This also raises important questions about whether the national government may be funneling extra money to municipalities whose mayors are co-partisans and hence the increases in administrative responsibility performance.

representative behavior.

**H9: Mayors with large margins of victory will be more likely to demonstrate representation in both political and administrative dimensions.**

In order to assess hypothesis 9 and 10, I used two ordinal logistic models in which the dependent variables were political openness and administrative responsiveness and the independent variables are the past margin of victory and being a candidate for mayor (on the ballot) in the next elections. None of the relationships come near statistical significance, even when possible reverse causality is considered. Correlation coefficients are not statistically significant. In terms of margin of victory, it could be the case that some mayors are just from districts with more competitive elections and more qualified candidates or that a very popular mayor is not challenged because of his success, and thus the tightness of the election in itself has nothing to do with the mayor's actual performance.

**H10: Mayors with who run for reelection will be more representative in both dimensions.**

Seventy-four percent of mayors in the sample ran for re-election<sup>51</sup> (and 50% of the vice-mayors ran for reelection to the council). This includes some mayors that were failures in one of the dimensions (political openness and administrative responsiveness). Interestingly, some of the Superstar mayors did not run for reelection after telling me in the interview that they were planning to do so. As these mayors were partisans, it is

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<sup>51</sup> All mayors were legally eligible for reelection because they were all only elected to one period after the ratification of the new constitution in 2008.

possible that their party decided that they should not run in order to help them campaign for national office in the 2017 national elections. Many mayors ran for reelection, but only 30% of those who ran were reelected. There are also no statistically significant relationships between being reelected and representational success on either dimension. In total, 8 mayors out of 35 (about 23%) were reelected and 5 vice-mayors out of 10 (all 5 that ran) were reelected. I believe the difference illustrates that the mayor's position is the most coveted and therefore the most competitive race. It also shows an astonishing amount of electoral turnover in local executives, that isn't limited to municipalities where mayors failed to exhibit representational attitudes and behaviors. Data from past Ecuadorian local elections are not readily available for comparison purposes, but studies of Brazilian municipalities<sup>52</sup> in the 1999s and early 2000s show reelection rates between 37 and 15 percent. So these rates are on the low side, but certainly not unheard of. On the one hand, low reelection rates are good because it may indicate that citizens are not afraid to vote out bad mayors. On the other hand, not allowing mayors to continue in office may be detrimental to the development of representational skills in the individual official<sup>53</sup>.

**H11a: Officials who have had prior experience with the same elected position will be more likely to display attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

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<sup>52</sup> Brazil is a relevant comparison case because it also has a multiparty presidential system that is less institutionalized according to Mainwaring (1999).

<sup>53</sup> In this round of elections, all mayors were eligible for reelection because of recent constitutional changes that essentially reset the electoral clock for all local officials, regardless of how many past periods they had served.

**H11b: Officials who have had prior experience with the same elected position will be less likely to display attitudes of political openness and administrative responsibility.**

In keeping with the idea that few local officials, particularly mayors, are reelected, at the time of the interview 71% of officials interviewed were serving in that position for the first time. 13% were serving a second term, and about 16% were serving a third term in office. A dichotomous variable, political experience was created to measure whether or not the official had been reelected (either once or twice) to his/her position. Ordinal logistic regressions with political openness and administrative responsiveness as dependent variables and political experience as the independent variable demonstration that there is no significant relationship between political experience and administrative responsibility (though the coefficient is negative). However, there a negative and significant ( $p=.06$ ) relationship between political openness and experience, which supports our hypothesis 11b and does suggests that perhaps newer mayors are more open.

In order to further investigate the matter, I use a multinomial regression model in which the dependent variable is the representational type of the official as presented in Table 3-3 (Populist, Superstar, Complaint, etc.). When compared to the base-category of being Compliant, only the coefficient for being a Technocrat-leaner achieves statistical significance ( $p=.05$ ) and is negative. This suggests that there is a negative relationship



between political experience and technical/administrative expertise<sup>54</sup>. This does not bode well for hypothesis 11a, although with so few observations one should be careful not to read too much into the lack of significant statistical findings. It is worth mentioning that of the five mayors coded as Superstars, only two had prior mayoral experience, and of the remaining three mayors, all were allied with a national party and two were from marginalized groups. Thus we have not found prior experience as mayor to be as important in determining administrative orientations of the mayor as his or her demographic and partisan characteristics, and experience may even work against orientations of political openness.

In conclusion, in a country where the next election is a chaotic gamble at best, it is little wonder that some mayors tell me that they can do the most good by not constantly obsessing over how many votes a work will get them. Many have told me that doing their job well comes before concerns about the next election and that partisanship should essentially be checked at the door so that everyone can work together for the good of the canton. Of course, “One has to take off the flag of one’s party and put on the flag of one’s canton” (personal interview, province of Imbabura, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2013). Despite the fact that political decentralization has politicized the local space, many mayors feel that partisan politics is detrimental to the provision of local services (personal interviews, provinces of Babahoyo, Loja, and Zamora, April 16<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 31<sup>st</sup>). This is likely because in Ecuador partisan politics is closely associated with clientelistic targeting of goods, but perhaps this can change as mayors who are attentive

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<sup>54</sup> Table with coefficients is reported in the Appendix

to popular concerns and who are also gifted administrators restore popular confidence in the government and its local spaces.

*Decentralization*

**H12: Mayors of cantons that have requested administrative responsibilities will be more likely to demonstrate high levels of political and administrative representation.**

**H13: Mayors of cantons that are fiscally dependent on the national government will be less likely to demonstrate high levels of political and administrative representation.**

In evaluation of hypothesis 12, no significant coefficients can be found; however all the coefficients (from correlations and ordinal logistic models) show a positive relationship between requesting a competency and levels of administrative responsibility<sup>55</sup> and a negative relationship between political openness. So with a larger sample, we might expect to see that administrative decentralization predicts administrative responsibility rather than political openness. Similar methods were used to evaluate hypothesis 13. This time, the covariate of interest is measured as the percentage of the municipal budget that comes from national government transfers and ranges in the sample from 53 to 99 percent. Coefficients for the relationship between administrative responsibility and dependency are negative as predicted by hypothesis 13

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<sup>55</sup> The coefficient for the competency covariate in the logistic model predicting administrative responsibility has a p-value of 0.15. Ordinal logistic regression models were also used to check for reverse causality. While no covariates were statistically significant in these models either, the pattern of positive coefficients for administrative responsibility and negative coefficients for political openness mentioned above holds.

but none of them reach statistical significance. Interestingly, the coefficients for the relationship between fiscal dependency and political openness are positive and the p-value for the ordinal logistic coefficient on dependency is 0.09, which is significant since we are using 0.10 as the threshold p-value. So it seems that perhaps in a larger sample we would see the expected negative relationship between administrative responsibility and fiscal dependence, but an unexpected positive relationship between fiscal dependence and political openness<sup>56</sup>. These findings suggest the value of separating out the two dimensions, because they seem to have different causal predictors<sup>57</sup>.

#### *Other Canton-Level Factors*

##### **Urbanization**

In general, it is important to note that the sample contains a wide variety of urbanization, including urban populations ranging from 1240 to 1,599,361 residents and between 12% and 95% of the canton population. Ordinal logistical regressions with administrative responsiveness and political openness as the dependent variables and percent of the population living in an urban zone as the independent variable do not find any significant relationships. However, there is negative and significant ( $p = .03$ ) relationship between urbanization and political openness.

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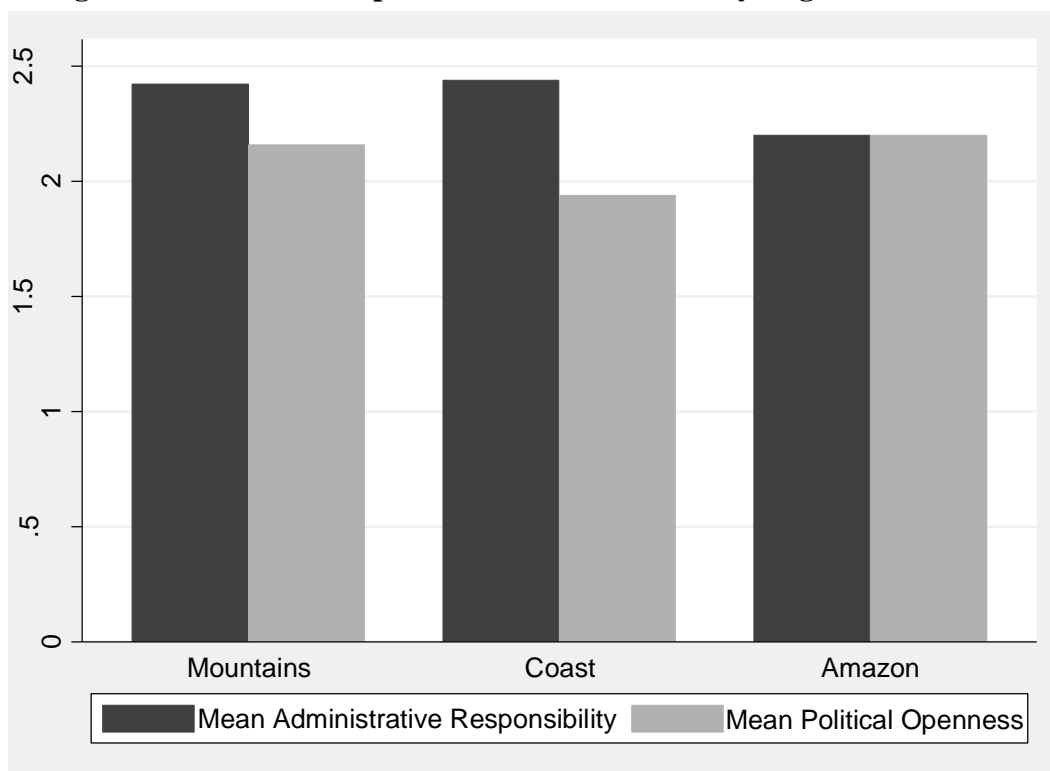
<sup>56</sup> The only explanation that I have for this unexpected finding is that political openness may be related to a style of governance that is not as strict about tax collection or the payment of fees because it emphasizes dealing with citizens. This is only a tentative conjecture and more research is needed to determine why this is the case.

<sup>57</sup> Indeed, the political openness dimension seems to be negatively correlated with total population in the canton while administrative responsibility is positively correlated with it. Fiscal dependence is also negatively correlated with population size, suggesting that a mayor's representational attitudes may be most constrained by the number of people he/she has to take care of.

## **Region**

My sample contains 15 cantons from the sierra, 16 cantons from the coast, and 7 cantons from the Amazon region. I have almost achieved parity in the number of cantons between the two major regions and I have a good showing for the Amazon region, as well. Unfortunately neither coefficients from the appropriate ordinal logistic models nor correlation coefficients show any statistically significant relationships. However, the sign on both the logistic and the correlation coefficients are negative in relation to political openness, suggesting that in a larger sample, one might discover that there is less citizen participation and inclusion of marginalized sectors in this region. Figure 3-3 presents the mean level of representational orientations by region. It demonstrates that while there is not a difference in administrative responsiveness between the coast and the sierra or mountains region, the coastal region does have a lower mean (1.9) of political openness as compared to the sierra (2.2). The Amazon region has lower administrative responsibility than either of the other regions, but comes out tied with the mountains and ahead of the coastal region in political openness.

**Figure 3-3: Levels of Representation Orientation by Region in Ecuador.**



**Figure 3-3: Levels of Representation Orientation by Region in Ecuador.** This figure shows that the average level of political openness differs among regions, but the average administrative responsibility does not.

### **Population Size**

Correlation coefficients seem to support the idea the urbanization negatively impacts political openness but is positively related to administrative responsiveness. The correlation between population size and administrative responsibility is positive ( $r=.27$ ) and significant ( $p=0.07$ ); the correlation between population size and political openness is negative ( $r= -.30$ ) and significant ( $p=0.05$ ). Ordinal logistic coefficients show similar levels of significance ( $p=.11$  and  $p=.05$  for administrative responsiveness and political openness respectively) and the same signs.

## **Basic Services**

Unfortunately, neither administrative responsibility nor political openness are significantly related to the level of basic services (based on correlations and ordinal logistic regression), but notably signs on all coefficients for water and plumbing are negative in the models for administrative responsibility. This could support that idea that where mayors know the situation is grim, they focus intensively on works projects to improve basic service provision.

## **Summary of Findings**

Tables 3-7a and 3-7b summarize the theoretical expectations and findings for almost all covariates across the three sections of analysis. In the table headings, “Bivariate finding” refers to the findings reported in the paragraphs immediately above; “Multivariate by category” refers to Table 3-5, and “Multivariate across category” refers to Table 3-6. Most importantly, we see that there is a fair degree of divergence in the covariates that predict political openness and administrative responsibility, which further suggests that are in fact separate dimensions and should be treated as such.

**Table 3-7a: Theoretical Expectations and Findings for Political Openness**

<i>Covariate</i>	<i>Hypothesis Number</i>	<b>Political Openness</b>			
		<i>Expectation</i>	<i>Bivariate finding</i>	<i>Multivariate by Category</i>	<i>Multivariate across Category</i>
<b>Female</b>	1	+	+ and p<0.1	+	not included
<b>Ethnic minority</b>	2	+	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	+
<b>Education</b>	3	+	-	- and p<0.1	-
<b>Decentralization lack- fiscal</b>	4	none	none	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1
<b>Decentralization lack- administrative</b>	4	none	none	+	not included
<b>Decentralization lack- political</b>	5	+	+	+	not included
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	6	+	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	+
<b>National party Alianza Pais or Pachakutik</b>	7	+	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	- and p<0.1
<b>Margin of victory</b>	8	+	+	not included	not included
<b>Run for reelection</b>	9	+	+	not included	not included
<b>Political experience</b>	10	+	+	- and p<0.1	- and p<0.1
<b>Administrative request</b>	11a and 11b	+ (a) and - (b)	- and p<0.1	-	not included
<b>Nat'l gov. dependence</b>	12	+	-	-	not included
<b>Percent urban</b>	13	-	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	-
<b>Sierra</b>		-	- and p<0.1	- and p<0.1	-
<b>Costa</b>		+	+	-	not included
<b>Total population</b>		-	- and p<0.1	-	not included
<b>Water coverage</b>		-	- and p<0.1	not included	- and p<0.1
		+	+	+	not included

**Tables 3-7a and 3-7b:** In the table headings, “Bivariate finding” refers to the findings reported in the paragraphs immediately above; “Multivariate by category” refers to Table 3-5, and “Multivariate across category” refers to Table 3-6.

**Table 3-7b: Theoretical Expectations and Findings for Administrative Responsibility**

<i>Covariate</i>	<b>Administrative Responsibility</b>				
	<i>Hypothesis Number</i>	<i>Expectation</i>	<i>Bivariate finding</i>	<i>Multivariate by Category</i>	<i>Multivariate across Category</i>
<b>Female</b>	1	none	+	+	not included
<b>Ethnic minority</b>	2	none	+	+	not included
<b>Education</b>	3	+	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1
<b>Decentralization lack- fiscal</b>	4	-	- and p<0.1	- and p<0.1	- and p<0.1
<b>Decentralization lack- administrative</b>	4	-	-	-	-
<b>Decentralization lack- political</b>	5	none	none	+	not included
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>	6	+	+	+	not included
<b>National party Alianza Pais or Pachakutik</b>	7	+	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1	+ and p<0.1
<b>Margin of victory</b>	8	+	+	not included	not included
<b>Run for reelection</b>	9	+	+	not included	not included
<b>Run for reelection</b>	10	+	+	+	- and p<0.1
<b>Political experience</b>	11a and 11b	+ (a) and - (b)	-	-	not included
<b>Administrative request</b>	12	+	+	+	not included
<b>Nat'l gov. dependence</b>	13	-	-	-	not included
<b>Percent urban</b>		+ or -	+	+	not included
<b>Sierra</b>		+	+	+	not included
<b>Costa</b>		-	-	+	not included
<b>Total population</b>		+	+ and p<0.1	not included	not included
<b>Water coverage</b>		+	-	-	not included

**Tables 3-7a and 3-7b:** In the table headings, “Bivariate finding” refers to the findings reported in the paragraphs immediately above; “Multivariate by category” refers to Table 3-5, and “Multivariate across category” refers to Table 3-6.



These tables show that there are some differences between the findings in the multivariate models and the bivariate models. In some cases, the bivariate finding for a variable is significant but the multivariate findings are not. This not surprising because the multivariate models lose statistical power because of the small sample size. As long as the positive or negative sign remains the same, the results should be interpreted as consistent with one another, even if statistical significance is not uniformly achieved. However, there are some cases for which sign for the variable (positive or negative) does not remain unchanged across all models. For example, in looking at the impact of belonging to a national party on orientations of political openness, we see that the impact is positive and significant in the bivariate and the first multivariate models, but it becomes negative and significant when regressors from other categories, namely demographic ones, are included in the model. Given that demographic variables such as race and gender have a consistent and significant impact on political openness, we can conclude that the first two models suffered from omitted variable bias and the last multivariate model is the most conclusive. As Tables 3-7a and 3-7b show, the impact of running for reelection on political openness is the only one other case for which the sign shifts unexpectedly and the multivariate model result is statistically significant. I suspect that omitted variable bias is a work in the bivariate results here as well, and more credence should be given to the multivariate findings.

### **Conclusion**

Finally, what can we learn about impact of decentralization on the representational attitudes of mayors? First, in order to answer that question, the

dimensions of local representation had to be defined. I contribute to literature on local governance by positing that the concepts of *administrative responsibility* and *political openness* capture a large amount of what citizens expect their local government to do. Next, I coded data from in-depth interviews to describe the distribution of representational orientations in Ecuador. The mayors represent an interesting mix of officials, some of whom were in office before, during, and after the new constitution and laws that sought to extend and reform decentralization. Others are serving for their first period under the new decentralization rules. Therefore, it is too early to state definitively the long-term impact of decentralization reforms in Ecuador, but the interview data capture an interesting snapshot of mayoral attitudes in a transitional period.

As the findings show, administrative responsibility seems to be easier to predict from education and party alliances, but political openness is more closely related to satisfaction with decentralization and the demographic characteristics of the mayor. Also, mayors are likely to talk about the need for more fiscal decentralization; interestingly this is positively related to attitudes of political openness and negatively related to attitudes of administrative representation. In terms of political openness, complaints about decentralization can be viewed as mayors voicing the concerns of their people who often have many more needs than a municipal government can ever meet. In general, mayors are happy that decentralization is happening and want it to continue because they feel that they are the most legitimate government to serve the people because of their close proximity to their constituents (personal interview, province of El Oro, April 8<sup>th</sup> 2013). This satisfaction with decentralization is related to increases

political openness. So it can be argued that decentralization, if accompanied by the promised fiscal resources leads to better local representation.

It is important to remember that political openness represents a very new way of thinking in comparison with decades of democracy where politics in Latin American as a whole and in Ecuador especially excluded the poor, rural, and indigenous sectors of society (see Taylor-Robinson 2010, North and Cameron 2003). Notable social movements such as CONAIE (Confederation de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador) have worked to change the status of marginalized indigenous peoples and have succeeded in gaining constitutional recognition and rights at the national level (Smith 2010). However, these *de jure* rights often take time to be realized *de facto* and incorporated into the political culture of a locality. My research shows that some mayors are early adopters of the openness dimension of representation while other lag behind, content to focus only on the single dimension of administration. It will be interesting to see when and if this one-dimensional representation becomes politically intractable as a campaign strategy.

This is just the beginning for research on local representation, and future research has a plethora of questions to address. For instance, future research should take an explicit look at the role of race and gender in providing representation in the political openness dimension. Additionally, I plan to use in depth paired case studies that compare the situation of two municipalities in greater detail, examining all the demographic, budgetary, and mass survey data that is available for the cantons. This will serve to validate both dimensions of representation and explain when and where they

become salient. In summation, the concepts of political openness and administrative responsibility are building blocks for research that shed light on the nature of local representation after decentralization reforms.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DEMOCRATIC PURCHASING POWER OF LOCAL PARTICIPATION IN LATIN AMERICA: CITIZEN EVALUATIONS OF LOCAL REPRESENTATION IN THE CONTEXT OF DECENTRALIZATION

#### **Introduction**

The central question in my dissertation concerns the impact of decentralization on local representation, and its impact on how local officials represent citizen preferences. In the previous two chapters I have considered representation from the official's perspective and made assumptions about the nature of citizen preferences and evaluations of local government. In this chapter I examine the representation relationship between citizens and their elected officials from the citizen's perspective. It is a look at the governance process from the "bottom up" that challenges past notions about the impact of participation on how citizens view their local government. It differs from the following chapters in that it does not consider representation among elected officials as an outcome or an orientation, but rather it looks at how citizens perceive the representational behavior of local officials given their contact with them. In addition, I test the idea that mayoral attitudes (which are examined in detail in Chapter III) impact citizen attitudes by combining data from my fieldwork with data from the AmericasBarometer. In doing so, I highlight that fact that representation in the decentralized context is an on ongoing dialogue between the representatives and the represented that occurs through participation.

Studies of participation often assume that a high level of citizen involvement is a

desired end for developing democracies, and indeed decentralization is promoted as a means to this end. Furthermore, studies of decentralization and local democracy often point to high levels of citizen participation in certain localities as signs of good governance and the consolidation of democratic norms at the grass-roots level. This research begs the question, what are the results of participation? Past research assumes that conventional political participation is a democracy-reinforcing process that results in both positive attitudes toward the regime and more responsive governance (see Booth and Seligson 2009; Finkel 1978). However, there is some empirical evidence which suggests that the process is more complex than previously thought. For example, Booth and Seligson (2009) have demonstrated that participation is correlated at the micro-level with both positive and negative attitudes about the democratic regime. This insight about who participates points to another question about the results of participation: If citizens with negative attitudes about the regime are engaging in conventional political participation, should we assume that participation will lead to satisfied citizens?

Relaxing this assumption allows me to investigate two previously unconsidered possibilities. The first is that dissatisfied citizens stay dissatisfied even after participation, and may eventually disengage with democracy or even attempt to subvert it. Secondly, it is possible that those citizens who start out satisfied with the government may become frustrated with the government through engaging with it. Thus, I argue that while participation may have profound implications for the quality of democracy, levels of local participation may be more relevant in identifying instances of unmet demands for services (dissatisfied citizens) than opportunities to build satisfied democrats. How

the government manages this demand and the subsequent beliefs of citizens about its responsiveness and effectiveness ultimately determine if the effects of participation are truly beneficial to democracy. This study explicitly investigates the impact of participation on citizen evaluations of local government responsiveness and effectiveness<sup>58</sup>.

In examining local participation, the recent trend in the literature has been to move beyond studies of voting for assessing the level of citizen involvement (Baiocchi et al. 2011; Booth and Seligson 2008, 2009; Van Cott 2008; Goldfrank 2007). It is particularly appealing to examine local participation because as decentralization occurs citizens have more possibilities for interaction and involvement at the local level than at the national level. That is to say, they have a wider set of relatively low-cost options for participation that go beyond casting a ballot in an election. However, it is uncertain if merely having more opportunities to participate because of decentralization enhances citizen satisfaction with government, as international advocates of state reform suggest it should. If citizens are assumed to receive information about the responsiveness of the government during participation, they will update their views on the government accordingly. Additionally, they should form evaluations of their local government differently based on how they have chosen to interact with it. Thus research must account for diversity among forms of conventional participation and the evaluations of

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<sup>58</sup> Responsiveness is discussed in a later section and defined as government actions that align with citizen demands and preferences. Effectiveness is defined as success in producing a desired outcome (a good or service in the case of local governments). Effectiveness does not imply maximum production with minimum wasted expense in the economic sense.

the local government they create. In sum this study seeks to understand the democratic purchasing power of participation and whether it differs depending on local context (e.g., level of decentralization) and the type of participation. In order to assess the relationship between participation and government effectiveness I employ a research design that extends broadly across Latin America and then takes a closer look at a decentralized country in order to examine local variation in participation.

This chapter begins with a review of previous research related to government responsiveness, local participation, and decentralization. It will show how each part of the literature can benefit from a serious consideration of the other parts. In doing so, I uniquely address the question of responsiveness from the citizen's perspective and extend the theory into the local arena. I will then discuss my theory of local government responsiveness and participation in the presence of decentralization and develop hypotheses to address the gaps in scholarly understanding. This discussion will be followed by an explanation of my data and case selection and several empirical tests of my hypotheses using cross-national and intra-country comparisons. I will then evaluate the overall support for each of my hypotheses and conclude with thoughts about how research in this field of study can be advanced. In general, I find that the relationship between participation and government responsiveness is more nuanced than previously thought, with direct forms of contact with the government exerting the most influence over citizen attitudes. More notably, after multiple tests there is a lack of evidence to support that idea that decentralization increases perceptions of local government responsiveness either directly or through increases in citizen participation, calling into



question the ardent support given to these reforms by international associations such as the IMF and World Bank.

### **Local Government Responsiveness**

As previously discussed, in democratic countries, elected officials are expected to be accountable to citizens and behave in accordance with their wishes (Dahl 1971). While the previous chapter focused on the *procedural inclusiveness* and *responsiveness* dimensions of substantive representation, the chapter focuses primarily on representation as *responsiveness*.<sup>59</sup> Both in the developed and the developing worlds, scholars consider government responsiveness an integral part of the functioning of democracy (Binzer, Hobolt and Klemmensen 2008; Cleary 2007; Faguet 2004; Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Conaghan 1996). In fact, many prominent definitions for representation include a reference to responsiveness. For example, Pitkin defines representation broadly as, “acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them” (1967, p. 209).

The literature on representation has focused almost exclusively on the national level of government, without considering the quality of representation that occurs at the local level. I argue that if government responsiveness is linked to the strength of local democracy, it is critical not only that local governments are responsive, but that citizens perceive this responsiveness. It is mass awareness and agreement with the work of the

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<sup>59</sup> In this chapter citizens evaluate government responsiveness, but actually citizen participation is related to the concept of procedural inclusiveness. In future research I intend to investigate whether or not mayors that are politically open in their orientation encourage citizen participation.

government<sup>60</sup> which ultimately signifies the effectiveness of local government and the strength of the linkages between citizens and their elected officials. When considering the responsiveness of local government it is important to note that unlike national government actions that citizens often evaluate in terms of abstract ideological preferences, the effectiveness of local governments is a concrete reality that citizens experience every day when they turn on the water or take out the garbage. Thus, evaluations of local government effectiveness and responsiveness are more likely to be based on the true state of reality, which citizens can observe at a relatively low cost, than corresponding evaluations of national government. This is especially the case in the presence of decentralization because local governments have some level of fiscal and administrative autonomy and thus are more directly responsible for the quality of life that citizens experience<sup>61</sup>.

### **Decentralization and Local Government Responsiveness**

The idea that local governments (in addition to national governments) should also be responsive to citizen demands increased in popularity as international actors such as the World Bank and IMF advocated decentralization reforms purported to enhance the efficiency and quality of governance across the developing world. Some form of decentralization has been enacted by a variety of countries in Latin America, under the

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<sup>60</sup> Survey questions that ask for citizens' opinions about how much the government cares about them are sometimes considered to be measures of "external efficacy" (Miller and Listhaug 1990). While this concept is related to my portrayal of local government responsiveness, external efficacy does not capture the concrete aspects of citizen evaluations of government.

<sup>61</sup> In the case that local government is not decentralized, citizens still gather information about the effectiveness of local government but they attach less weight to that information since the local government has less decision-making power. As decentralization increases, I expect that citizens attach more weight to the actions of the local government and evaluate it accordingly.

assumption that it would increase local government responsiveness (Manor 1997; Blair 2000; Faguet 2004). As previously stated, local officials are assumed to have better information about the preferences and interests of their constituents (Mitchinson 2003), and voters may be able to monitor local officials more effectively (Khemani 2001). Thus decentralization is hypothesized not only to influence local governance outcomes (such as improving access to water and sanitation), but also to affect the processes by which citizens and governments interact to produce these outcomes. These findings have not gone uncontested in the literature. Some scholars argue that decentralization should not be expected to enhance local responsiveness (see Gelineau and Remmer 2005; Vishwanath 2006).

Some scholars argue that local governments and decentralized countries are more corrupt and prone to elite capture than national governments or centralized countries (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2000; Fisman and Gatti 2002; Shah 2006; Treisman 2007). In particular, Escobar-Lemmon and Ross (2013) show that political decentralization does not improve perceptions among citizens that the government is less corrupt. This means that having local elections and competition for office at the subnational level do not necessarily generate the popular perception that these governments are capable and honest. Corruption at any level of government has the ability to drag down citizen evaluations and create mistrust even in the participatory processes that are designed foster confidence in government responsiveness. It is imperative that research take seriously the implications of perceived corruption, because its presence can explain why well designed institutions such as decentralization do not work as hypothesized. Taken

together, this literature suggests decentralization is not a panacea for bad governance, especially in the presence of corruption, but rather that the effects of decentralization on responsiveness are mediated through the information and incentives of key actors such as citizens and local officials. Thus, in order to fully examine the process of representation in conjunction with decentralization, I also consider the role that citizen participation plays in shaping local governance.

### **Decentralization and Participation**

The literature on local government participation has increased quickly in recent years following the new local practices, most notably in Brazil and other countries in Latin America that allow citizens to participate directly in making the budget (Avritzer 2009; Baiocchi 2011; Fung 2011; Schonwalder 1997). These new practices have optimistic implications for government responsiveness because citizens now have an additional tool (the budget) with which to shape local government responsiveness. While these reforms are usually viewed as part of the general devolution process, they are not synonymous with decentralization, which generally empowers local governments but does not always involve the creation of programs such as participatory budgeting that actively seek citizen input. Anderson and von Laerhoven (2007) make a valuable contribution by investigating the incentive structure of local elites who decide how or whether to involve citizens in government decision-making processes, but what happens after that? The effect of participatory programs on citizen opinions about government responsiveness remains uninvestigated.

In sum, the literature on representation suggests that elections give officials

incentives to be responsive to citizens. Advocates of decentralization suggest that empowering local governments can improve government responsiveness, and studies of participatory budgeting argue that citizen involvement is important for democratic outcomes. However, the literature on representation and responsiveness has failed to extend these ideas to local governments, and the literature on decentralization has not considered the role that citizen participation may play in creating effective outcomes. Thus what we lack is a framework for understanding ideas of local governance, decentralization, and citizen participation together. I contribute to each of these literatures by suggesting a causal story in which citizens evaluations of local government responsiveness are based on upon their interactions with it (i.e.-participation), the decentralization context in which they find themselves, and the attitudes of elected officials.

### **Local Participation as an Independent Variable**

As previously stated, much of the literature on participation at every level of government has focused on citizen involvement as the end of the causal process or has assumed that it reinforces positive opinions about the government. Past research has investigated the idea that citizen attitudes and behaviors contribute to an overarching culture that is more or less supportive of democracy (Almond and Verba 1963; Booth and Seligson 1984; Tiano 1986; Seligson and Booth 1993). However, few explicit tests of the effects of participation exist, among which are Finkel's (1985, 1987) studies of political behavior in the United States and West Germany. He finds that voting increased regime support and campaign activity increased the individual's political efficacy.

Stenner-Day and Fischle (1992) use simultaneous equation models to show that different forms of political participation have varied effects on political efficacy. Bowler and Donovan (2002) use data from U.S. states to show that exposure to direct democracy increases popular belief that the government is responsive to the public. Other scholarship shows that having voted in the past increases an individual's probability of voting in a subsequent election (Denny and Doyle 2009; Gerber, Green, and Shachar 2003). This line of research gives us insight into one possible consequence of participation: democracy reinforcement. However, research by Booth and Seligson (2009) argues that the relationship between system support and participation is parabolic rather than positive-linear. Thus both citizens having positive evaluations of the government and those with negative evaluations of the government are likely to engage in conventional forms of participation. Do those who participate because they view government negatively think less badly (or less negatively) than before? Clearly, the possible negative consequences of participation should be considered.

Other empirical evidence suggests that how a citizen feels about the regime is not the only determinant of whether or not he or she will participate. In fact, studies about participation in Latin America have noted that communal participation, especially in rural areas, increased the quality of life for citizens and allowed them to bargain with the national government in order to obtain benefits (Nye 1987; Booth and Seligson 1979; Fishel 1979). At times citizens may be driven to participate by the hope of obtaining tangible benefits. This research suggests that the purported positive effects of

participation can be noted by researchers both in terms of general attitudes of support and more specific expectations of material benefits.

Recently, attention has been drawn to the multifaceted nature of participation. Political participation is no longer limited to voting and campaign activity. Distinctions between types of participation are quite helpful because they allow various types of participation to be linked either to different causes, or in the case of my theoretical story, to different outcomes. For example, Booth and Seligson (2008) consider the determinants of several types of participation including voting, contacting a public official, communal activism, civil society engagement, campaign-partisan activism, and protest involvement (see p. 107).

Of the types of participation, two, communal activism and civic participation (or civil society engagement, see Booth and Seligson 2008), have received significant attention from scholars of local governments. Work on communal activism, especially pertaining to participatory budgeting processes, argues that it leads to the burgeoning of local democracy which increases in the presence of favorable institutional practices such as local competition (Avritzer 2009; Baiocchi et. al. 2011; Goldfrank 2007; Wampler 2007; Davies and Falletti 2012). Civic activism or civil society engagement is sometimes distinguished from communal activism (see Booth and Seligson 2008) and sometimes considered part of participatory budgeting (see Baiocchi et. al. 2011). As described by Putnam (1994), civic activism implies that participation in non-governmental organizations can shape citizen opinions about the government, though Booth and Richard (1998) do not find support for this linkage in Central America. However, even

considering the recent advances made by scholars in understanding how citizens participate, we continue to know little about the attitudinal effects of participation.

### **Participation as Information Accumulation**

My current research addresses this gap in the literature by examining the relationship between participation and government responsiveness and effectiveness in a decentralized setting from the perspective of an average citizen. Any theory that seeks to understand the citizen side of local government responsiveness must take seriously the role of information in leading citizens to their opinions of government. Undoubtedly, participation provides local officials with information about citizen opinions, but citizens gain equally valuable information about their local government both from conventional participation experiences—such as voting and meeting attendance, as well as from every interaction they have with the local government, including making requests and filling out paperwork. They use this information to form evaluations about the responsiveness and effectiveness of their government. At least on the local level it is plausible to assume that every citizen has information about their local government just by using the basic services they provide. Participation then provides citizens with additional considerations upon which to evaluate government.

If this is the case, the relationship between participation and local government responsiveness could be either positive or negative. It is possible that citizens who participate and engage with the local government will be satisfied by their interactions and be persuaded that the government is indeed responsive. It is also possible that citizens who engage with the local government will be frustrated by its ineffectiveness



and may even be alienated if their concerns were not taken seriously. While traditional literature would assume that this relationship is always positive for conventional forms of participation, according to my argument it is difficult to distinguish the directionality of the relationship between participation and government responsiveness.

**H1a: Citizen participation increases the perceived responsiveness of government.**

**H1b: Citizen participation decreases the perceived responsiveness of government.**

Decentralized institutional arrangements have been argued both to increase the absolute levels of local participation and to make local governments more responsive to citizen demands. Due to policies of decentralization, local governments become relevant to citizens as targets of collective action for the redistribution of goods (Falleti 2005, 2010). In the complete absence of decentralization, the citizen may attach some significance to the ability of the local government to perform a service, but they are both less likely to engage with that government and view its performance as separate from that of the national government. Whether or not decentralization increases local government responsiveness and effectiveness, it usually makes local government a relevant actor, thereby increasing the demands of citizens for goods and services and generating participatory behavior.

If local governments are in fact more responsive, it is likely that citizens who engage with these governments will have positive experiences that will lead to favorable evaluations. As decentralization increases, local governments should have increased

ability to meet citizen demands and generate satisfaction. Thus, I hypothesize both that decentralization will stimulate local participation and increase the democracy reinforcing effects of participation.

**H2: Citizens in decentralized localities will be likely more likely to participate.**

**H3: Citizen in decentralized localities will be more likely to perceive the government as responsive after participation compared to those in centralized localities.**

Additionally, if decentralization advocates are to be believed, decentralization should lead not only to shifts in citizen attitudes but also to shifts in the way that elected officials view their job. Increasing attitudes of responsiveness may in turn cause officials to behave differently toward citizens, who will perceive this responsiveness. Thus there are possible indirect effects of decentralization that are mediated through the representational attitudes of local officials. By considering the connection between citizen and elite attitudes, I capture a previously untested aspect of the purported consequences of decentralization. In order to do this, I draw on theories and data that are elaborated on in the third chapter. I expect more responsive and inclusive mayoral attitudes will lead to more positive citizen perceptions of government.

**H4: Citizens living in a municipality where the mayor higher representational orientations will be more likely to have positive evaluations of the government.**

Previous literature has shown that different types of participation might lead to

different outcomes. While there are several types of participation available to citizens at the local level, not all of them provide the same amount of information about the performance of the local government. For instance, I argue that the act of voting likely provides little information about the responsiveness and effectiveness of the local government compared to a conversation with the mayor or attending a budget meeting. The most direct information likely comes from the most direct contact with government employees. Community participation and civic activism also provide information about the local government, but the signal may be noisy because citizens are engaging in civic organizations and not directly with the government. Therefore, the strength of the relationship between each type of participation and government effectiveness and responsiveness is conditioned upon the level of information that the form of participation provides to the citizen. The directionality of the relationship is hypothesized to be influenced by the local context, in this case captured by decentralization as outlined above.

**H5: All other things equal, the act of voting does not significantly alter a citizen's perceptions of local responsiveness.**

**H6: As a citizen's direct contact with the local government increases, perceptions of local government responsiveness will increase<sup>62</sup>.**

**H7: As a citizen's communal participation and civil society activism increase he/she will be more likely to perceive the local government to be responsive,**

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<sup>62</sup> Hypotheses 5 and 6 are bi-directional in the same way as H1. However, they are stated only in the positive direction in the interest of being succinct.

**but less likely than if he/she had direct contact with the government.**

Other notable work on local governments and decentralization has highlighted the role of corruption (see Escobar-Lemmon and Ross 2013). Corruption enters this story as a generator of ineffectiveness, which works contrary to the supposed positive effects of decentralization and leads citizens to be aggravated as a result of their interactions with the government. To the extent that citizen participation reveals local government to be ineffective because it requires bribes or misappropriates tax dollars, the results of participation will be dissatisfaction. It is also possible that perceptions of corruption indicate a lack of government transparency, which leads citizens to think that government is non-responsive. Thus I expect perceptions of corruption to negatively impact the directionality of the relationship between participation and responsiveness.

**H8: As a citizen's perceived level of corruption increases, he/she will be less likely to perceive the local government to be responsive.**

I will now discuss the methods used to evaluate each of these hypotheses.

### **Data, Case Selection, and Measurement**

In order to evaluate my hypotheses I need data from democratic countries that have experienced different levels of decentralization. Fortunately there are a board range of cases that fit this description, which speaks to the generalizability of the theory. As discussed in the introduction, many countries in Latin America have implemented decentralization, both to solve economic problems and address issues of democratic legitimacy. Several countries in Latin America have made the local level of government the target of decentralization reforms. Thus Latin America is an excellent context for

investigating my hypotheses. I test my expectations using the AmericasBarometer survey data for 18<sup>63</sup> countries in Latin America during the 2006-2007 wave of the survey. The sample contains some countries that had enacted significant political and fiscal decentralization reforms (8 of 18) and others that had not (coding based on Daughters and Harper 2007). These data allow for a cross-national test of the hypotheses with the contextual variable for whether or not the country was decentralized at the time.

Since my theory is concerned with local governments and participation, I also use two AmericasBarometer datasets from Ecuadorian municipalities. The first dataset contains twenty municipalities<sup>64</sup> in Ecuador in 2004. A representative sample of 300 respondents per municipality yields a total of 6000 respondents. The second contains data from thirty municipalities in 2012. The drawback to the second dataset is that it was stratified so as to be a national representative sample, and thus it contains few observations per municipality. On average there are 20 respondents per municipality, and never less than 16<sup>65</sup>. In spite of the small sample size, these data are useful because they match with the fieldwork data collected by the author in the spring of 2013. Ecuador is a developing democracy that had experienced moderate decentralization reforms both in 2004 and 2006. Both municipal samples contain high levels of subnational variation in

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<sup>63</sup> Latin American Countries: Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Guyana

<sup>64</sup> There are about 220 municipal governments in Ecuador, which are also called cantons. Ecuadorian cantons included: Azogues, Espejo, Mira, Esmeraldas, Eloy Alfaro, San Lorenzo, Cotacachi, Otavalo, Saraguro, Babahoyo, Manta, Sucre, Tena, Cayambe, Pedro Moncayo, Ambato, Lago Agrio, Putumayo, Cascales, Joya de los Sachas

<sup>65</sup> Local governments in the 2012 sample where the mayor was also interviewed include: Pucará, Latacunga, Cañar, La Mana, Santa Rosa, Esmeraldas, Atacames, Colimes, Duale, Milagro, Naranjal, Ibarra, Otavalo, Loja, Chaguarpamba, Babahoyo, Montalvo, Vinces, Portoviejo, Chone, Flavio Alfaro, Manta, Morona, Archidona, Cayambe, Rumiñahui, Los Bancos, Ambato, and Zamora.

terms of geography, population density, and urbanization. There is an eight-year gap between the two municipal samples, and much transpired in Ecuadorian politics during that time period. The most notable thing was the crafting and implementation of the new constitution in 2009, which reshaped decentralization and emphasized the rights of marginalized sectors. The previous chapter contains a more complete discussion of the new constitution. I expect that if anything, the new constitution has raised citizen expectations about what government should do and has placed local government under more pressure to respond to citizen demands<sup>66</sup>.

Additionally, Ecuador is an interesting case to study due to the variety of opportunities that citizens have to participate in their locality. Particularly in the Andean region of the country, citizens and government officials collaborate in *mingas*, in which citizens provide the labor and the government provides the material to construct basic infrastructure such as water pipes and roads (North and Cameron 2003). A recent interview conducted by the author with an Ecuadorian mayor reveals that *mingas* can also be a Saturday pastime in small urban areas where government officials work alongside residents to change street-light bulbs, repaint walls, collect trash, mend fences, and fix minor maintenance issues, while everyone brings a sack lunch to eat together (Shockley 2013). Some municipalities in the sample also practiced participatory budgeting in which neighborhoods gather to decide how local money should be spent and then larger assemblies for all neighborhood representatives are conducted in which

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<sup>66</sup> The dynamic nature of citizen opinions in Ecuador is something I look forward to investigating in future research. I can envision a pre- and post- constitutional change set up that uses multiple samples of the nationally representative data.

the budget is discussed in detail, voted on, and approved<sup>67</sup>. The municipal building itself often contains surprising volumes of citizens who come to see the mayor or someone else about issues of all sorts; so direct contact with the local government is not reserved only for those who are particularly active in politics but is a cultural expectation in many municipalities in Ecuador<sup>68</sup>.

### *Measuring Government Responsiveness*

When citizens evaluate the responsiveness of their local government, they are likely to think about how well the government has done in providing basic services. Unlike national legislators who demonstrate responsiveness through making laws, the constitutional responsibilities given to local governments in Latin America entail the provision of basic tangible goods and services such as water, electricity, sewage systems, and trash collection. There are multiple ways to measure the idea of tangible responsiveness, and this article employs two in particular. First, I measure government responsiveness in Ecuadorian municipalities (2004 sample) using the survey question that asks respondents, “Do you think that the mayor and the municipal council respond to what the people want, always, the majority of the time, once in a while, almost never, or never?” The citizens’ perception of responsiveness is an ordinal measure that ranges

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<sup>67</sup> The new Ecuadorian constitution of 2009 now mandates that all local government practice participatory budgeting, but when the 2004 surveys were conducted, it was practiced in some but not all of the municipalities, and was more common in the Andean region than in the Amazonian or coastal region.

<sup>68</sup> Although each municipality has had the same opportunities to decentralize, the municipalities in the Ecuador subnational sample do differ in the level of decentralized services that they provide to citizens. See the previous chapters for a more detailed description of decentralization and competencies in Ecuador.

from 1 (never) to 5 (always)<sup>69</sup>. This question has face validity in the sense that it couples government actions with citizen demands and asks the citizen to rate how often the two coincide.

Secondly, I measure responsiveness using the question that asks respondents, “Would you say that the services that the municipality provides are...(1) very good (2) good (3) neither good nor bad or regular (4) bad (5) very bad (the worst)”. This question is used for both the Ecuadorian samples (2004 and 2012) and the cross-national sample of 18 countries<sup>70</sup>. It asks respondents to think specifically about what the government does, not just how they feel about the mayor or how much they trust it as an institution. This question taps a dimension of responsiveness that deals with the effectiveness of government and can be informed by participation and active engagement. Thus it is more appropriate than other measures that gauge relatively static or general political feelings such as partisanship or trust. While both questions are measures of the larger concept of responsiveness, to be clear about which dependent variable is used during the analysis, the question specifically about responsiveness is labeled responsiveness and the question about service delivery is labeled effectiveness.

### *Measuring Participation*

As previously discussed, participation is a multifaceted concept and my data offer me the ability to measure several different types. First, I measure direct contact

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<sup>69</sup> A survey appendix at the end of the dissertation contains all information relevant to question wording and coding.

<sup>70</sup> Ideally I would use both questions in each sample; however, the first question is not available for all countries in the cross-national sample. Therefore the cross-national sample only has independent variable which is termed effectiveness for clarity, and the 2004 Ecuadorian sample has two which are termed responsiveness and effectiveness.



between the citizen and the local government. The government contact variable was created using the following citizen actions, measured dichotomously for having engaged in the behavior in the last year:

- 1) Asking for help or presenting a petition to an office, government official, council member, or the mayor
- 2) Attending an open meeting
- 3) Attending a municipal session
- 4) Attending a meeting of neighborhood government (refers to the level below the municipality).

Factor analysis confirms that the questions above form a single measurement dimension. For the 2004 Ecuadorian municipal data, I created an additive index of government contact ranging between zero and four. The cross-national data and 2012 Ecuadorian sample only contain two of the relevant items and so the additive index for that analysis ranges from zero to two.

The communal activism variable was created using measures that encompass community participation that is not necessarily political, but that is directed at problem solving and improvement. This conceptualization and operationalization is in keeping with the work of others that have used the AmericasBarometer data<sup>71</sup> (e.g. Booth & Seligson 2008). The following behaviors (completed within the last year) were used create the communal activism variable:

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<sup>71</sup> Booth and Seligson (2009) perform confirmatory factory analysis to show that the same questions used in my analysis load on one dimension each for communal and civil participation. My analysis leads to similar indices for both samples.

- 1) Donating money or materials to help solve a problem in your community or neighborhood
- 2) Contributing personal work or labor
- 3) Attending community meetings about a problem or improvement
- 4) Organizing a new group to solve a neighborhood problem or seek improvement.

These questions were not available on the 2012 survey, so communal activism was captured using the following question, “In the last 12 months have you contributed to help solve a problem of your community, neighbors, or neighborhood? Please, tell me if you did this at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never in the last 12 months?”<sup>72</sup>

The civil society engagement variable, which captures the idea of citizens being active in society in ways that are not specifically political, was created using the following past behaviors:

- 1) Attending a religious meeting
- 2) Attending an association for parents or family of a primary or secondary school student
- 3) Attending a committee or council to improve the community
- 4) Attending associations for professionals, businessmen, or growers and/or a peasant organization.

In keeping with more traditional conceptualizations of political behavior, I

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<sup>72</sup> The variable ranges from 1 to 4, where 1 is never and 4 is once a week.

include having voted in the most recent mayoral election for the 2004 Ecuadorian cantons data. However, the 18 country sample and the 2012 Ecuadorian sample did not include a measure of voting at the local level. To capture local voting potential, these models include an indicator for whether or not the citizen is registered to vote.

It is important to note that all questions asked citizens to think retrospectively about participation in the past year and then evaluate the government at the time of the interview. So I expect that participation has temporally preceded the evaluations of responsiveness and effectiveness. Even though the data do not allow me to control for the citizen evaluations of responsiveness and effectiveness before participation, I can control for other characteristics of the citizen and his/her attitudes, which I discuss below. Also, I am able to look at some of the differences in attitudes overtime with my municipal samples from Ecuador. However, since there is an eight-year gap between them and they which are not drawn from the same cantons, I do so with caution.

### *Second-level Variables*

According to theory, decentralization is a contextual variable that can impact individual-level attitudes, so I measure it at the country level and at the canton level for the Ecuador samples. The country-level measures are from Daughters and Harper's classification of Latin American countries on the fiscal dimension of decentralization. They use data from the Inter-American Development Bank to assess whether or not the country has experienced at least moderate levels of fiscal decentralization<sup>73</sup>. Fiscal

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<sup>73</sup> I use a dichotomous measure where 0 means a country has experienced no or very limited fiscal decentralization and 1 means that the country has experienced at least moderate levels of decentralization.

decentralization is used as opposed to measures that capture other aspects of decentralization because it is particularly relevant to local representation. A canton can have local elections, but without fiscal powers and resources to implement changes, citizens are not likely to perceive their government as being responsive to their needs. At the canton level, I use data from the Basic Municipal Evaluation conducted by the Ecuadorian government in association with the German Institute for Development (GIZ). This study measures whether or not a canton has requested to have an additional service responsibility since the law first allowed for cantons to obtain these competencies in 1998. Administrative decentralization is a crucial component of local responsiveness in Ecuador because taking on additional competencies signals that municipal governments are attempting to go above and beyond what is required by the law to address citizen concerns. Cantons that have taken on more services are considered to be more decentralized than those that have elected not to do so.

I also measure the representational attitudes of mayors which are added to the data from the 2012 Ecuadorian sample. I assume that citizen expectations for mayors fall into two dimensions: political openness and administrative responsibility. Citizens expect local officials to address their needs and concerns both through maintaining an open style of governance that includes them in government processes and through being responsible administrators of local services. I used interview data from face-to-face interviews with mayors in Ecuador to code each mayor as demonstrating attitudes of high, medium, or low political openness and administrative responsibility. Each dimension is coded separately, and mayors are often coded differently for each

dimension. For a full explanation of the dimensions and coding scheme, the readers should refer to the third chapter.

#### *Corruption and Control Variables*

As discussed above, corruption is assumed to play a large role in determining both the responsiveness and effectiveness of local governments. I measure citizen perceptions of government corruption in their canton for the municipal sample and general perceptions of government corruption for the cross-national sample. (The locally framed question is not available cross-nationally or in the 2012 sample.) In the survey, citizens are asked how widespread they believe corruption to be; answers range from 1 (not widespread or limited) to 4 (very widespread and common). Additionally, I include how frequently the respondent listens to radio news, which controls for political attentiveness, because this may influence his/her information about what the local government is doing (see Escobar-Lemmon and Ross 2013). Standard controls for political ideology (on a left-right scale), gender, age, ethnicity, income, and education are also incorporated. Table 4-1 contains a summary of the measure of each of the key variables across all three samples.

**Table 4-1: Summary of Measurement across Samples**

Concept	Hypothesis number	Cross-national Measure	Municipal 2004 Measure	Municipal 2012 Measure
<b>Responsiveness</b>	DV	satisfaction with local services	1)Local government responds to what the people want 2)satisfaction with local services	satisfaction with local services
<b>Contact Participation</b>	6	1) Asking for help or presenting a petition 3) Attending a municipal session	1) Asking for help or presenting a petition 2) Attending an open meeting 3) Attending a municipal session 4) Attending a meeting of neighborhood gov.	1) Asking for help or presenting a petition 3) Attending a municipal session
<b>Civic Participation</b>	7	1) Attending a religious meeting 2) Attending a school association 3) Attended a council to improve the community 4) Attending associations for professionals 1) Donating to help solve a problem community	1) Attending a religious meeting 2) Attending a school association 3) Attended a council to improve the community 4) Attending associations for professionals 1) Donating to help solve a problem community	1) Attending a religious meeting 2) Attending a school association 3) Attended a council to improve the community 4) Attending associations for professionals Contributing to help solve a problem of community, neighbors, or neighborhood (1-4 for frequency of participation)
<b>Communal Participation</b>	7	2) Contributing personal labor 3) Attending community meetings 4) Organizing a new group to solve a problem	2) Contributing personal labor 3) Attending community meetings 4) Organizing a new group to solve a problem	
<b>Voting</b>	5	Registered to vote	Voting in last local election	Registered to vote
<b>Corruption</b>	8	Widespread in country?	Widespread in municipality?	Widespread in country?
<b>Mayor Attitudes</b>	4	Not included	Not included	low, medium, or high levels of political
<b>Decentralization</b>	3	(0/1) for policies of fiscal decentralization	(0/1) for having requested an administrative competency	(0/1) for having requested an administrative competency

## **Results**

Since my theory involves both individual-level behaviors and attitudes such as participation and a contextual factor, i.e. the level of decentralization, I use a multilevel model to investigate my hypotheses. More specifically, I estimate a multilevel model because I expect individual perceptions of responsiveness to be influenced by country or cantonal-level decentralization and the data are structured with individual-level observations nested in country or county groups. I allow both the slopes and intercepts to vary in the model in order to capture both shifts in the baseline levels of effectiveness and responsiveness due to decentralization (intercepts) and any changes in the relationship between participation and responsiveness that are conditioned on decentralization. Table 4-2 contains a multilevel regression model of government effectiveness for 18 countries in Latin America.

**Table 4-2: Multi-level Model of Satisfaction with Local Services in 18 Countries in Latin America\***

	<b>DV: Service Satisfaction</b>	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T- value</b>
<b>Fixed effects: Level 1</b>	<b>Participation: Contact with Local Gov.</b>	<b>0.043 (0.012)</b>	<b>3.639</b>
	<b>Participation: Communal Activism</b>	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.832
	<b>Participation: Civic Activism</b>	<b>0.024 (0.007)</b>	<b>3.494</b>
	<b>Participation: Registered to Vote</b>	-0.021 (0.022)	-0.996
	<b>Perceived Level of Corruption</b>	<b>-0.075 (0.008)</b>	<b>-9.606</b>
	<b>Ideology (Left to Right)</b>	<b>0.016 (0.003)</b>	<b>6.188</b>
	<b>Political Attentiveness</b>	-0.005 (0.006)	-0.838
	<b>Gender (Male)</b>	<b>-0.038 (0.013)</b>	<b>-2.944</b>
	<b>Monthly Income</b>	<b>0.021 (0.003)</b>	<b>6.177</b>
	<b>Age</b>	0.001 (0.000)	-1.135
	<b>Years of Education</b>	0.002 (0.002)	1.420
	<b>Survey Weights</b>	<b>0.159 (0.042)</b>	<b>3.746</b>
	<b>Intercept</b>	1.924 (0.103)	18.603
	<b>Fixed Effects: Level 2</b>	<b>Decentralization</b>	-0.019 (0.113)
<b>Random Effects: Level 2</b>	<b>Intercept: Variance (Std. Dev.)</b>	0.066 (0.252)	
	<b>Decentralization: Variance (Std. Dev.)</b>	0.122 (0.349)	
<b>Number of Observations:</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	18,081	
	<b>Level 2</b>	18	

\*Bolded text indicates  $p < 0.5$ .



The individual-level (or fixed) effects for the participation measures show that there is a significant and positive relationship between assessments of government effectiveness and the contact dimension of participation, which supports hypothesis 5. A weaker, although still statistically significant, relationship also exists between civic participation and government effectiveness, providing support for my seventh hypothesis. Both of these positive findings support part A of the first hypothesis. Interestingly, although a negative relationship exists between both communal participation and voting and government effectiveness; the relationship is not statistically significant even in this large dataset and thus should not be interpreted as support for part B of hypothesis 1. It is also possible that communal participation acts as a substitute for effective government rather than a support to it (see Booth and Seligson 2009). In fact, auxiliary regressions using communal participation as the dependent variables show that both government effectiveness and its square (included because the relationship was found to be parabolic in the literature) are significantly related to communal participation. The effectiveness term is negative, demonstrating that disgruntled citizens are active in community projects. This finding is not novel; rather it highlights the leverage gained by examining the effect of each form of participation separately. As predicted by the fourth hypothesis, being registered to vote has no significant influence on how citizens evaluate the effectiveness of their local government. The big take-away point is that some forms of participation, most notably direct contact with the government, seem to be satisfying to citizens, but other forms, such as voting, are not sufficient to change the minds of unhappy citizens. This later

finding contradicts much of the previous literature which predicts a strong positive relationship between voting and evaluations of the responsiveness of government.

Finally, corruption is significantly related to lower levels of perceived government effectiveness, which is in accordance with hypothesis 7. The random effects show an increase in the percent variance explained when both the varying intercepts term and the varying slopes term for decentralization are included in the model. However, the decentralization term is not significant at the individual level, suggesting that the effect of decentralization is contextual rather than individual. This also contradicts previous theories that argue that decentralization should lead to more responsive government and hence perception of that responsiveness.

Table 4-3 shows the multilevel analysis for 20 Ecuadorian cantons, similar to that in Table 4-2, for all Latin America. It includes models of local government effectiveness (service approval) on the left and responsiveness on the right. Table 4-3 provides support for my hypotheses. In keeping with findings from the cross-national sample, contact with the local government is positively related to government effectiveness and responsiveness (hypothesis 6). Again, the signs for the other measures of participation are negative. Even though they are not significantly related to perceived responsiveness, this provides evidence that participation, especially voting, does not always reinforce democracy in the developing world. Again, it seems that direct contact and participation with the government is the only form of participation with democratic purchasing power in Latin America.

**Table 4-3: Multi-level Model of Government Effectiveness and Responsiveness in 20 Cantons in Ecuador\***

		DV: Service Satisfaction		DV: Local Gov. Responds	
		Estimate (Std. Err.)	T- value	Estimate (Std. Err.)	T- value
Fixed Effects: Level 1	Participation: Contact with Local Gov.	<b>0.061</b> <b>(0.025)</b>	<b>2.487</b>	<b>0.052</b> <b>(0.025)</b>	<b>2.119</b>
	Participation: Communal Activism	-0.004 (0.026)	-0.163	-0.007 (0.025)	-0.265
	Participation: Civic Activism	-0.012 (0.026)	-0.441	-0.013 (0.026)	-0.503
	Participation: Voted in Local Election	-0.128 (0.073)	-1.760	-0.060 (0.073)	-0.822
	Perceived Local Corruption	<b>-0.095</b> <b>(0.028)</b>	<b>-3.458</b>	<b>-0.118</b> <b>(0.028)</b>	<b>-4.294</b>
	Ideology (Left to Right)	-0.002 (0.010)	-0.210	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.585
	Political Attentiveness	0.034 (0.027)	1.254	-0.007 (0.027)	-0.258
	Gender (Male)	<b>-0.105</b> <b>(0.051)</b>	<b>-2.070</b>	<b>-0.122</b> <b>(0.051)</b>	<b>-2.411</b>
	Ethnicity	-0.038 (0.038)	-1.003	0.023 (0.037)	0.612
	Monthly Income	0.013 (0.013)	0.990	<b>0.028</b> <b>(0.013)</b>	<b>2.101</b>
	Age	0.000 (0.002)	-0.176	0.002 (0.002)	1.065
	Years of Education	-0.001 (0.007)	-0.128	-0.001 (0.007)	-0.084
	Intercept	<b>3.321</b> <b>(0.279)</b>	<b>11.893</b>	<b>2.785</b> <b>(0.274)</b>	<b>10.170</b>
	Fixed Effects: Level 2	Decentralization	<b>0.308</b> <b>(0.141)</b>	<b>2.193</b>	<b>0.472</b> <b>(0.118)</b>
Random Effects:	Intercept: Variance (Std. Err.)	0.081 (0.284)		0.077 (0.277)	
	Decentralization: Variance (Std. Err.)	0.022 (0.140)		0.010 (0.100)	
Number of Observations	N Level 1:	1,082		1,101	
	N Level 2:	20		20	

\*Bolted text indicates that  $p < .05$ .

Corruption is related to decreases in government effectiveness and responsiveness, which could partly explain the lack of significant findings. How can participation better one's perceptions of government if taking a closer look at government through participation only reveals to the citizen how self-serving it is? Contrary to the cross-national analysis, decentralization is positively related to local responsiveness and effectiveness at the individual level. Random effects again show that both the intercept and slope terms (decentralization) are accounting for second level variation, but decentralization accounts for considerably less variation than it did in the cross-national model. Additionally, there is little support for the idea that decentralization increases participation (hypothesis 2)<sup>74</sup> as there are very few differences in participation between groups of cantons. One reason for the difference in findings between samples is that Ecuadorian counties only varied with respect to administrative decentralization, while the cross-national measure of decentralization included political and fiscal decentralization. Since Escobar-Lemmon and Ross (2013) have shown that the type of decentralization matters for citizen attitudes, further research at the county level is necessary to investigate the impact of fiscal and political decentralization.

In order to test my fourth hypothesis about the indirect impact of decentralization that comes through the attitude of local mayors, Table 4-4 displays a multi-level model of citizen satisfaction with services, or perceived government effectiveness, in 30 Ecuadorian cantons in 2012. The specification of the fixed effects is almost identical to

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<sup>74</sup> Difference of means tests reveal that there is no significant difference in the levels of participation between centralized and decentralized cantons, except with respect to civic participation. Fewer citizens in decentralized cantons participated in civic organizations.

**Table 4-4: Local Government Effectiveness in 30 Municipalities in Ecuador in 2012\***

<i>Fixed Effects</i>	<b>DV: Service Satisfaction</b>					
	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T- value</b>	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T- value</b>	<b>Estimate (Sd. Err.)</b>	<b>T- value</b>
<b>Participation: Contact Local Gov.</b>	<b>-1.074 (0.443)</b>	<b>-2.42</b>	<b>-1.084 (0.452)</b>	<b>-2.40</b>	<b>-1.103 (0.296)</b>	<b>-2.42</b>
<b>Participation: Communal Activism</b>	0.267 (0.184)	1.46	0.283 (0.185)	1.53	0.186	1.59
<b>Participation: Civic Activism</b>	-0.132 (0.175)	-0.76	-0.133 (0.175)	-0.76	-0.131 0.177	-0.74
<b>Participation: Registered to Vote</b>	13.692 (1078.22)	0.01	14.503 (1106.18)	0.01	14.042 (863.01)	0.02
<b>Perceived Corruption</b>	-0.048 (0.197)	-0.24	-0.025 (0.198)	-0.31	-0.028 (0.199)	-0.14
<b>Ideology (Left to Right)</b>	0.034 (0.061)	0.56	0.034 (0.061)	0.55	0.031 0.062	0.50
<b>Gender (Male)</b>	0.513 (0.336)	1.53	0.499 (0.336)	1.48	0.508 (0.338)	1.50
<b>Ethnicity</b>	0.018 (0.210)	0.09	-0.023 (0.221)	-0.11	-0.024 (0.223)	-0.11
<b>Monthly Income</b>	0.079 (0.050)	1.59	0.080 (0.049)	1.62	0.081 (0.050)	1.62
<b>Birth Year</b>	-0.004 (0.012)	-0.34	-0.003 (0.012)	-0.28	-0.003 (0.012)	-0.25
<b>Years of Education</b>	0.031 (0.044)	0.70	0.030 (0.044)	0.69	0.031 (0.044)	0.70
<b>Intercept</b>	-8.138 (1078.47)	-0.01	-10.268 (1106.49)	0.01	-10.232 (863.28)	-0.01
<b>Decentralization</b>	-0.529 (0.493)	-1.07	-0.318 (0.459)	-0.69	-0.306 (0.451)	-0.68
<b>Mayor's Political Openness</b>	-0.388 (0.325)	-1.20	-0.449 (0.340)	-1.32	-0.417 (0.353)	-1.18
<b>Mayor's Admin. Respons.</b>	0.073 (0.408)	0.18	0.087 (0.391)	0.22	-0.067 (0.389)	-0.17
<i>Random Effects</i>						
<b>Intercept:</b>	0.000 (0.512)		0.664 (0.260)		0.000 (0.528)	
<b>Decentralization:</b>	0.944 (0.387)					
<b>Mayor's Political Openness:</b>			0.000 (0.227)			
<b>Mayor's Admin. Respons. :</b>					0.282 (0.103)	
<b>N Level 1:</b>	337		337		337	
<b>N Level 2:</b>	30		30		30	

\*Bolded text indicates  $p < 0.5$ .

the previous two models, but random effects include the decentralization measure as well as political openness and administrative responsibility. Due to the small number of second-level observations, I include the second-level effects one at a time.

Unfortunately, not many of the fixed effects are statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level, but this is likely because of the comparatively small sample size. Contact with local government officials is consistently statistically significant and negative across all three models, indicating that citizens who contact their government are more likely to evaluate their local government negatively. This is in stark contrast to the 2004 findings in which direct contact had a positive and significant impact on citizen evaluations. Perhaps citizens have grown weary of interacting with local governments that are corrupt and inefficient, or perhaps local governments have become more salient to citizens in general and are thus the first recipient of citizen complaints that were previously leveled at other government entities. Either way, these are not the positive and significant effects predicted by the literature. The second-level effects show that decentralization and administrative responsibility both account for a moderate share of the variance in citizen attitudes between cantons, but political openness does not. These findings partially support the fourth hypothesis, and show that at least when it comes to administrative factors, the attitudes of citizens are related to the attitudes of their local executive. Since the dependent variable is framed in terms of satisfaction with local services, it is no surprise the mayors who talk extensively about plans for local service provision govern municipalities with citizens who are more satisfied.

The findings from the literature about the effects of participation and

decentralization clearly lead to the expectation of positive relationships, so in order to be completely thorough in my analysis, I performed additional robustness checks. Another way to explore the effects of decentralization as a contextual variable is to make it interact with each participation variable. Perhaps the effects of participation vary in the presence of decentralization. Table 4-5 uses an individual-level ordinal logit model to explore possible interactive effects. Model 1 shows the results for the cross-national sample. The main effects, or non-interactive terms, in Table 4-5 are very similar to those found in Table 4-2. The interactive effects are mostly insignificant, with the exception of the term for civic participation and decentralization. It could be the case that citizens in decentralized countries participate in civil society in an attempt to change the distribution of goods (see Falletti and Davies 2012), but doing so has not made them think more favorably of the government. This suggests that their demands have either been unanswered or demand continues to exceed the supply of goods offered by municipal officials. In addition, decentralized countries exhibit higher levels of each type of participation than centralized countries, suggesting that decentralization increases demand on local governments<sup>75</sup>.

Since coefficient magnitudes are not directly interpretable for the ordinal logistic regression models shown in Table 4-5, Figure 4-1 was created to model the effects of participation in centralized versus decentralized countries (Model 1) using predicted probabilities generated by Clarify. I use predictions of the fourth response category

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<sup>75</sup> A difference in means test suggests that there is a significant difference between levels of communal and civic participation in centralized and decentralized countries.

**Table 4-5: Ordinal Logit Model of Government Effectiveness and Responsiveness in 18 Latin American Countries and 20 Cantons in Ecuador\***

	18 Latin American Countries		20 Ecuadorian Counties			
	Model 1 DV: Service Satisfaction		Model 2 DV: Service Satisfaction		Model 3 DV: Local Gov. Responds	
	Estimate (Sd. Err.)	T- value	Estimate (Sd. Err.)	T- value	Estimate (Sd. Err.)	T- value
<b>Contact with Local Gov.</b>	<b>0.158</b> <b>(0.039)</b>	<b>3.97</b>	0.095 (0.076)	1.24	0.113 (0.074)	1.510
<b>Contact*Decentralize</b>	-0.055 (0.055)	-1.010	0.061 (0.117)	0.520	-0.058 (0.115)	-0.510
<b>Communal Activism</b>	-0.018 (0.018)	-0.080	0.029 (0.078)	0.380	0.057 (0.077)	0.740
<b>Communal*Decentralize</b>	-0.008 (0.024)	-0.350	-0.044 (0.119)	-0.370	-0.118 (0.115)	-1.020
<b>Civic Activism</b>	<b>0.046</b> <b>(0.020)</b>	<b>2.250</b>	0.040 (0.076)	0.530	-0.093 (0.077)	-1.210
<b>Civic*Decentralize</b>	<b>-0.061</b> <b>(0.028)</b>	<b>-2.150</b>	-0.082 (0.120)	-0.680	0.134 (0.121)	1.100
<b>Register (M1)/Vote(M2-3)</b>	-0.007 (0.058)	-0.120	-0.453 (0.228)	-1.990	-0.400 (0.219)	-1.830
<b>Register/Vote*Decentralize</b>	-0.125 (0.090)	-1.390	0.398 (0.340)	1.170	0.514 (0.330)	1.560
<b>Decentralize</b>	0.149 (0.112)	1.320	0.692 (0.876)	0.790	1.114 (0.830)	1.340
<b>Perceived Corruption</b>	<b>-0.152</b> <b>(0.016)</b>	<b>-8.970</b>	<b>-0.286</b> <b>(0.068)</b>	<b>-4.210</b>	<b>-0.280</b> <b>(0.064)</b>	<b>-4.370</b>
<b>Ideology (Left to Right)</b>	<b>0.044</b> <b>(0.006)</b>	<b>7.270</b>	0.021 (0.023)	0.910	-0.005 (0.022)	-0.210
<b>Political Attentiveness</b>	-0.001 (0.013)	-0.050	0.062 (0.059)	1.050	0.053 (0.060)	0.880
<b>N</b>	18,081		1,101		1,082	

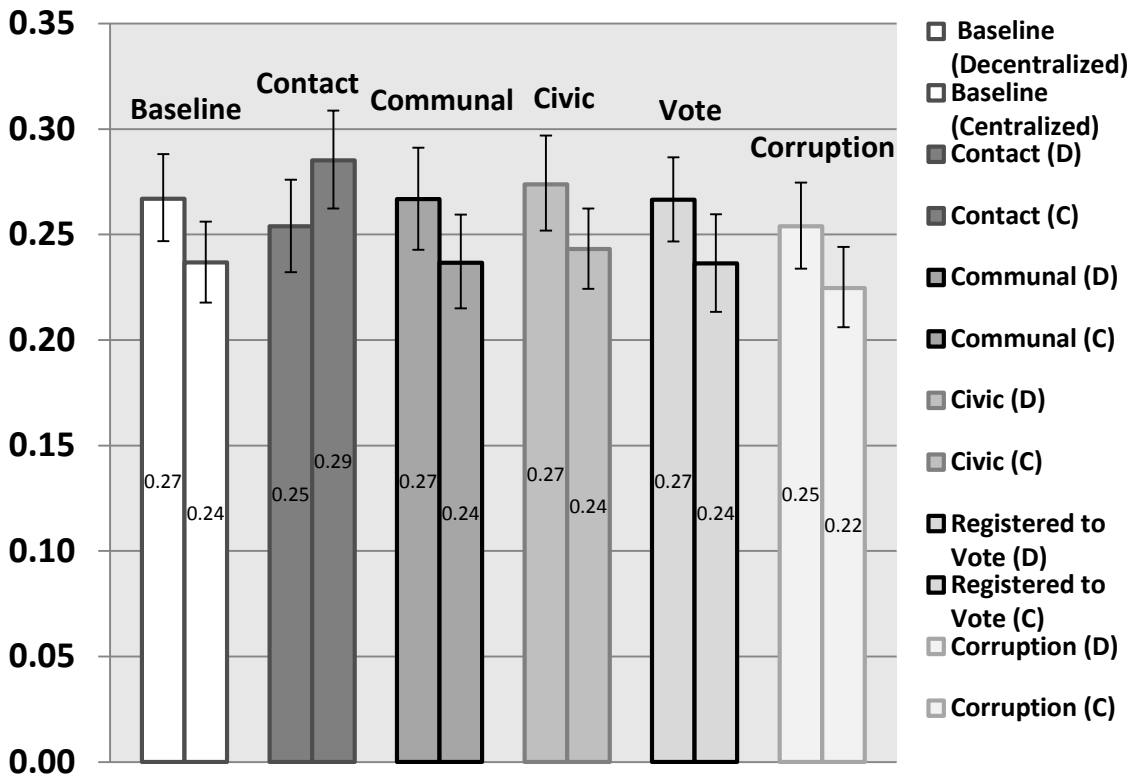
\*Bolded text indicates p<.05



signifying that local services are “good”.

In Figure 4-1, we see that when all other variables are set to their mean value, the baseline probability of perceived effectiveness for decentralized countries is higher than for centralized countries, even though the individual-level variable is not significant in Model 1. In both types of countries, increasing the amount of contact the citizen has with the local government and his/her level of civic participation each generate increases in the probability that he/she will evaluate services as good. Meanwhile, increases in corruption generate negative deviations from the baseline probabilities. Although the error bars in both figures are overlapping, indicating that these effects are not statistically significant, the basic results are in keeping with the finding from the multi-level model in Table 4-2. This shows that while decentralization can raise expectations about government performance, neither decentralization nor participation can greatly improve perceptions, especially when corruption is present.

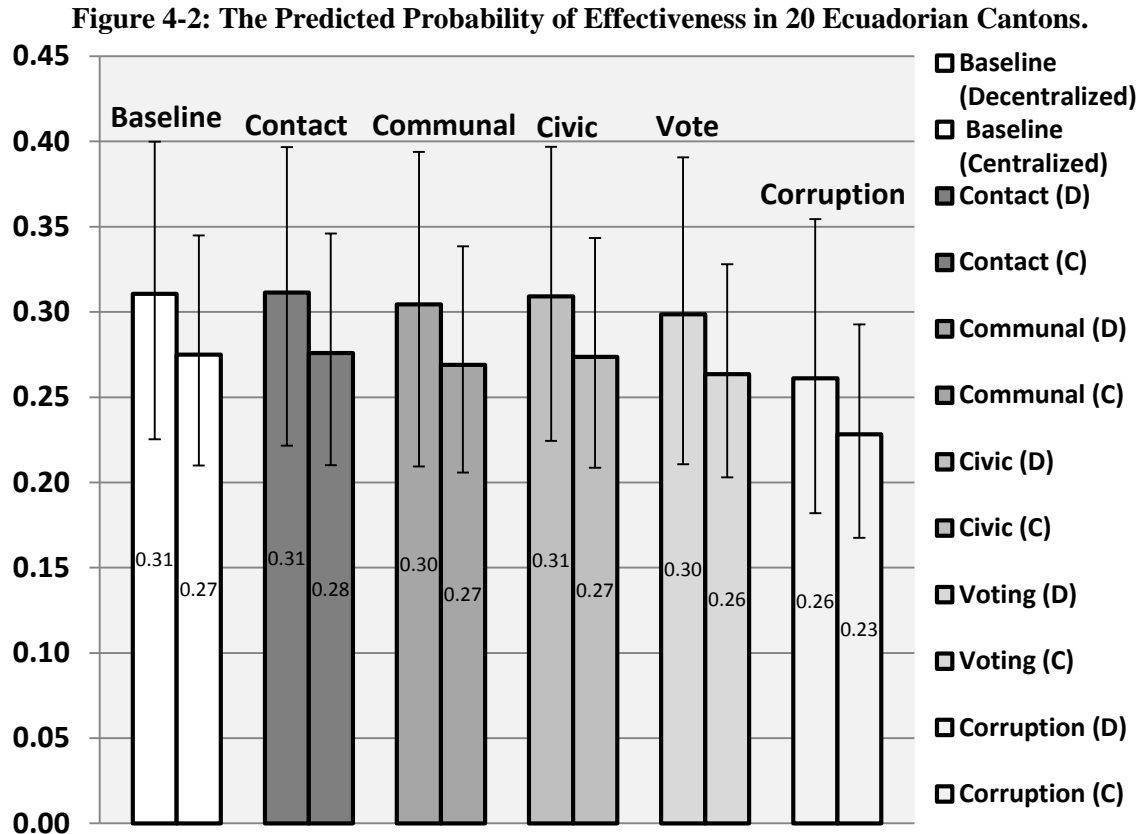
**Figure 4-1: The Predicted Probability of Effectiveness in Centralized and Decentralized Countries.**



**Figure 4-1: The Predicted Probability of Effectiveness in Centralized and Decentralized Countries.** Please note that the mean values for main effects in the model are as follows: effectiveness: 2.988, contact: .269, communal: .781, civic: 1.392, voting: 1.103, corruption: 3.266, presidential approval: 3.039, political ideology: 5.689, gender: .486, education: 9.064, income: 4.209, age: 38.422, political attentiveness: 2.778. To create deviations from the mean for simulations, I set participation variables to one level above the mean value as a general rule.

In order to test the possible interactive nature of the relationship between participation and decentralization in the Ecuadorian sample, Models 2 and 3 of Table 4-5 present individual-level ordinal logistic regression models for government effectiveness and responsiveness. Again, the model clearly supports the interpretation that we can expect little from the participation and decentralization variables. As with the cross-national analysis, I conducted simulations using Clarify for the fourth category of the

government effectiveness variable, indicating that services are “good.”



**Figure 4-2: The Predicted Probability of Effectiveness in 20 Ecuadorian Cantons.** Please note that the mean values for main effects in the model are as follows: effectiveness: 2.988, contact: .269, communal: .781, civic: 1.392, voting: 1.103, corruption: 3.266, presidential approval: 3.039, political ideology: 5.689, gender: .486, education: 9.064, income: 4.209, age: 38.422, political attentiveness: 2.778. To create deviations from the mean for simulations, I set participation variables to one level above the mean value as a general rule. For example the mean is .492 so the simulation increased contact from the mean to 1, indicating one interaction with the government.

Figure 4-2 shows that when all other variables are set to their mean values, the baseline probability of evaluating the local government to be effective is higher for decentralized cantons (counties) than centralized ones. The error bars are once again overlapping, and

thus these differences are not statistically significant. However, we do see that corruption lowers the probability of effectiveness in both groups, while contact with local government increases the probability of effectiveness but only in centralized cantons. Communal participation lowers the probability of effectiveness but only in decentralized cantons while voting lowers the probability in both groups. While not statistically significant at conventional levels, these negative effects suggest that some forms of participation have a negative impact on effectiveness, and certainly the relationship is not strictly positive. The findings about voting are the most clear in this regard. They indicate a story in which disgruntled citizens who go to the polls are more dissatisfied with the government than those that did not vote at all because they had higher expectations of the government that were not fulfilled. Finally, auxiliary regressions to check for reciprocity find that perceived effectiveness and responsiveness do not predict any type of participation. This suggests that both satisfied and dissatisfied citizens interact with the local government, which is consistent with past literature. Rather than seeking to nullify past research on the causes of participation, my analysis draws attention to lesser studied effects of participation, which are certainly surprising given past research. Table 4-6 summarizes the findings for each covariate across all three samples.

### **Conclusion**

The findings are clear. We can scratch both participation and decentralization off the list of potential panaceas for the developing world, especially in Latin America. The results from Ecuador in 2004 and 2012 especially support this interpretation. In the first

two models, there seems to be one bit of good news for those concerned about the development and depth of local democracy, namely that direct citizen contact with the local government leads to positive evaluations of government responsiveness and effectiveness, in both cross-national and 2004 sub-national samples. This suggests that

**Table 4-6: Summary of Findings across Models**

Variable	Hypothesis Number	Expectation	Cross National	Municipal 2004: Responsive	Municipal 2004: Service Sat.	Municipal 2012
Contact Participation	6	+	+ p<.05	+ p<.05	+ p<.05	- p<.05
Civic Participation	7	+	+ p<.05	-	-	-
Communal Participation	7	+	-	-	-	-
Voting	5	none	-	-	-	+
Corruption	8	-	-p<.05	- p<.05	- p<.05	-
Mayor Attitudes (second-level)	4	+	NA	NA	NA	+
Decentralization (second-level)	3	+	+	+	+	+

citizens who engage with their government either because of a problem or to request an improvement do not automatically go away frustrated and dissatisfied; rather, it seems that contact with the government has genuine democratic purchasing power. The picture presented by Ecuadorian municipalities in 2012 is less encouraging. It suggests that citizens could be more frustrated with services offered by local governments as a result of contact with the government. One must be careful about generalizing with the sample given that it is admittedly non-random and relatively small. Still, the negative finding here is robust to several different specifications and suggests that dissatisfaction grows

alongside citizen participation in local government.

As regards communal and civic participation, the lack of findings suggests that citizens do not receive clear information about the competence of the government from these activities. It could also be, especially in Ecuador where levels of communal work remain high, that community involvement may at times be a substitute for effective government. In places where the government begins to be more effective and responsive, citizen may feel that the urgency of communal participation has decreased. Thus, the relationship between communal work and effective government is more complicated than first expected. The negative finding could be due to the fact that decentralization has raised citizen expectations that the government should provide services without the necessity of communal work. The continued need to engage in communal work may suggest to citizens that the government is unresponsive. Further research is needed to parse out the effects of communal and civic participation.

The most consistent individual-level finding is that citizens who think the government is corrupt will be less likely to view it as effective or responsive. In a way, this is good news for democracy because it means that citizens are not duped by political rhetoric into accepting a corrupt government. When it comes to evaluating local services and responsiveness, if corruption is rampant, citizens will “tell it like it is” rather than pretending that corruption does not have negative repercussions. This honesty is the beginning of democratic accountability which hopefully translates into better governance.

In terms of local context, decentralization largely fails to enhance perceptions of

government effectiveness and responsiveness. This is bad news for researchers and international actors such as World Bank and IMF who have argued for the implementation of decentralization as a means of improving the quality of local governance and boosting local democracy. On the other hand, at least from the citizen's perspective, decentralization has raised expectations of what the local government should do. It is also true that in the Ecuadorian sample decentralization positively affected perceptions of responsiveness, but this was not the case in the cross-national sample. As mentioned above, one possible explanation for discrepancies between cross-national and sub-national findings is the nature of the decentralization measure. Scholars have shown that decentralization occurs in political, fiscal, and administrative arenas (Falleti 2005, 2010). While the cross-national decentralization measure includes fiscal aspects, the municipal sample only allows for a dichotomous measure of variation in administrative decentralization. Perhaps it is a local government's willingness to accept additional administrative responsibilities that truly signals competence and responsiveness to the people more than just receiving fiscal transfers that can easily be misappropriated by corrupt politicians. And in terms of politicians, we see that local government attitudes about administrative responsibility are more relevant to citizen evaluations than attitudes about political openness, which fits with the idea that citizens desire an effective government that is capable of providing services.

By bringing together scholarly works related to participation, government responsiveness, and decentralized government, I shed new light on each literature. I find little support for the commonly held idea that participation, especially voting, increases

perceptions of government responsiveness. Rather, some forms of citizen participation, such as voting and communal activism, correlate with more negative evaluations.

However, citizens do gain information about the effectiveness and responsiveness of local government through direct contact. Thus it alone has the power to sway popular attitudes in Latin America that other forms of participation were purported to have. By treating participation as a multidimensional independent variable, I add to the literature a more nuanced understanding of how mass political behaviors shape mass attitudes.

Finally, although there is surely room for future scholarly efforts to clarify the relationship of decentralization to participation, after careful analysis, I must add my name to the list of its naysayers.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION: LOCAL REPRESENTATION EXISTS AND MATTERS

#### **The Puzzle Solved?**

This research project set out to investigate whether decentralization enhances the quality of local representation and under what contexts local representation emerges. Along the way, I constructed three conceptualizations of local representation based on the responsiveness and procedural inclusiveness dimensions of substantive representation. In the end, it seems that evidence for decentralization is mixed. It certainly increases options for mayors, which may allow them to make allocation that better fit citizen needs, as we learn from Chapter II, but whether an individual mayor will be oriented toward providing quality representation exclusively as a result of decentralization is unlikely given the findings in Chapter III. Chapter IV demonstrates that decentralization accounts for the differences in citizen evaluations of government between cantons, but it does not do so through increasing citizen participation (which has little to do with citizen perceptions of responsiveness). The moral of the story is that decentralization can provide a space in which local officials are empowered to represent citizens, but whether or not they choose to do so and whether or not citizens perceive this responsiveness depends on other individual and contextual factors.

I build on and extend the past literature in several important ways. First, I explore representation at the local level, while most theorizing has examined at the national level. I also focus on executives instead of legislators, meaning that theories constructed for national legislators have to be further adapted to explain the behavior of local

mayors. Secondly, I relax the assumption that decentralization is strictly a national-level concept that impacts all municipalities equally. By examining subnational variation in decentralization, I capture the uneven progress of democracy that occurs within developing countries. Finally, I believe that this research project has been fruitful because it serves as a foundation for understanding the relationship between decentralization and local representation and leads to a plethora of other questions about mayors and citizens that are interesting in themselves, including the implications of gender and race for the representation of marginalized groups at the local level.

### **Local Representation: It Exists**

The underlying assumption of my dissertation has been that local representation exists, is distinct from national-level representation, and creates patterns of local governance that are empirically observable. I have demonstrated the validity of this assumption in several ways. First, if there was any doubt about the existence of local representation, my interview data show that it exists in the minds of local government officials, many of whom take their representational role as elected government officials very seriously. Additionally, my survey data show that the actions of the local government are salient to the mass public. So, if citizens expect local officials to be responsive to their needs, and local officials believe that they are representing the people, we can be confident that local representation does in fact exist in Latin America.

If one concedes that local representation does in fact exist, then the second question becomes, how do we know that it occurs in meaningful patterns? Stated another way, how do we know that it's not just random noise (especially in a chaotic country

such as Ecuador)? I demonstrate the presence of a systematic component to local representation in two ways. First, I show that of the dimensions of representational orientations, political openness and administrative responsiveness (Chapter III) fit with theoretical expectations about other variables such as gender, ethnicity, and education (construct validity). The finding about education is particularly important because it measures the personal capacity of the mayor, which was part of the capacity parameter in the formal model (Chapter II). Then it shows up again in Chapter III as a significant predictor of administrative responsibility, which emphasizes that local representation can (and should) be explained systematically. Secondly, it is not just that local elected officials have systematic behavior, but, according to Chapter IV, citizens also have systematic and predictable opinions about the performance to their local government. So local representation exists, but does it matter? In case the reader remains unconvinced, I will address the importance of local representation after summing up the main findings of the dissertation.

### **Summing Up the Evidence**

#### *What We Learn about Representation*

The reader will recall that local representation has been conceptualized in three different but harmonious ways. In Chapter II, representation meant the fit between the outcomes produced by the mayor (in terms of sector and scope) and citizen preferences, broadly construed. In Chapter III, representational orientations of mayors included the separate dimensions of administrative responsibility and political openness which capture ideas of responsiveness and procedural inclusiveness respectively. In the final

chapter, representation was viewed as a dialogue in which citizen participation can shape opinions about local government services and responsiveness. Since each chapter has a different conceptualization, we learn something different from each part, but the parts fit together to give a more complete picture of the representational process. Chapter II shows us that in order to be representative, mayors should allocate a minimum level of resources to areas (sectors) of citizen concern; in other words, they must be minimally responsive, but institutional factors such as decentralization constrain the availability of such resources. We also find out that mayors are better equipped to deal with the challenges presented by their institutional context when they have greater personal capacity.

In Chapter III we saw that the explanatory factors for administrative responsibility and political openness are very different, suggesting the possibility of two separate representational dimensions, one that emphasizes citizen participation and awareness of constituent needs, particularly those of marginalized groups, and another that focuses on administering service provision. Each mayor decides for him- or herself what mix of these two dimensions to employ, but overall most mayors are stronger on the administrative responsibility dimension than the political openness dimension, suggesting that in spite of concerns about the prevalence of populism (high political openness, low administrative responsibility) in Ecuador that might arise because of the style of the current president, technocratic (low political openness, high administrative responsibility) local governance is far more common. This means that the weakness of local democracy in Ecuador is not that it does not attempt to address the service needs of

its citizens, but that it does not do so, by and large, in an inclusive way. Yet Chapter III demonstrates, on the whole, that citizens do not just want to be included in the process, but they also want results. Thus local representation must compromise both results for citizens in terms of outcomes as well as avenues for them to express their needs through participation. If either is lacking, the risk increases that citizens will be alienated from politics, causing erosion in the support for democracy.

#### *What We Learn about Decentralization*

In each chapter, I have attempted to keep in mind the differences between the different types of decentralization: fiscal, political, and administrative. In the formal chapter I am able to make the most distinctions between each type, with the result being that we do see different predictions for fiscal and administrative decentralization.

Administrative decentralization increases the number of pieces into which the local fiscal pie must be divided, while fiscal decentralization increases the size of the pie. As it turns out, administrative decentralization that is not accompanied by sufficient fiscal decentralization will constrain the ability of the mayor to provide the threshold level of representation in budgetary outcomes necessary for success in reelection. This finding is consistent with predictions in the literature. Escobar-Lemmon (2001) argues that “fiscal decentralization is especially important because the power of the purse can make or break subnational government, affecting the quality of representation” (p. 24). Thus we see that when we treat decentralization as part of the institutional context, it can in fact impinge upon the behavior of local mayors, which is something that I look forward to exploring in future research.

The idea that decentralization affects the behavior of local mayors is seen again in the chapter examining mayoral attitudes. In this case, the institutional context can be thought of as the rules of the game. Some mayors are better at playing this game than others. Mayors who complained about the lack of fiscal decentralization were less likely to demonstrate high levels of administrative responsibility, emphasizing that a lack of fiscal decentralization can deter mayors from developing representational attitudes and providing works projects that address citizen needs.

Finally, in the chapter on citizen attitudes, decentralization again acts as a contextual factor that accounts for significant amounts of variance in citizen evaluations of local government between cantons in Ecuador and between 18 countries in Latin America. Additionally, in the 2004 municipal sample, decentralization has a positive and significant individual-level impact on citizen attitudes. Being careful not to overstate the findings of this chapter, I think there is some evidence that decentralization is related to citizen attitudes about the representativeness of local government, but the relationship is not as clear or as strong as the impact of decentralization on mayoral attitudes and behaviors. This makes sense because we expect that institutions will shape elite attitudes and behaviors first and then trickle down to impact mass opinion. Thus the fact that there are any findings, even weak ones, about how decentralization shapes mass opinion supports my theoretical expectations.

#### *What We Learn about Local Politics*

Decentralization is not the only factor that shapes local politics. I also consider the role of electoral processes in Chapters II and III of the dissertation. Ambitions for

reelection are expected to shape the incentives of all elected officials, including local mayors. Electoral constraints are necessary to the formal model in Chapter II, and we see that they are important for determining the amount of representation the mayor provides. The data from local official interviews in Ecuador provide an interesting follow-up to this finding. Many mayors stated that an excess of politics is a problem for local government, and that they do not find it helpful to think about the next election. Rather, they were choosing to focus on doing a good job and providing services for citizens while in office, deferring to some combination of the citizens and God Almighty to decide their fate in the next election. It is worth restating that quite a low percentage of mayors that ran for reelection were successful in recent elections, which is probably more a result of the disorganized nature of the Ecuadorian party system than a lack of prayer.

Partisan politics, as Chapter III shows, are not generally viewed as healthy for local politics in Ecuador. As many officials explained, each elected official should take off the banner or the shirt of their political party and put on the shirt of the canton, signifying that everyone is on the same team. Political parties are only for elections; afterward, it is expected that everyone will join forces to combat things like lack of potable water, pollution of water sources, and unsafe roads. Of course, some cantons will follow this guideline more than others, but in my observation, the majority of disagreements between local officials do not follow partisan lines but are sparked by substantive and practical issues related to governance, such as how much money should be spent in the rural sector versus the urban sector. On the other hand, while politics

appear to be nonpartisan or at least less partisan at the local level, Chapter III shows that partisanship does matter for the quality of mayors that enter office. Mayors that belong to a party that has members in the national legislature are consistently more representative than mayors that are independent or elected by a local movement. This suggests both that parties are effective at selecting strong candidates and that the accountability structure of the party could provide oversight for mayors. Parties may also give mayors a platform for political advancement beyond the local level. So ironically, even though Ecuadorian officials are not fans of politics, especially partisan politics, parties provide an important boost in quality of representation.

#### *What We Learn about Mayors*

While this dissertation research has focused heavily on contextual factors such as decentralization, it also contains interesting findings about the relevance of the individual characteristics of mayors and citizens (which will be addressed in the following section). As previously mentioned, one of the strongest findings is that the level of education of the mayor has a strong positive effect on administrative responsibility, showing that mayors who have a higher capacity for navigating the institutional context are able to provide better representation to citizens. Additionally, being female or a member of a minority ethnic group is related to increases in the level of political openness that a mayor exhibits. This is likely the case because women and ethnic minorities are traditionally political outsiders, and once inside the government, they work to include and attend marginalized sectors and place a high importance on citizen participation. In doing so, they are providing a new alternative to mestizo-centric



male-dominated local politics, which has been prevalent throughout the history of Ecuador, and raising the bar for future local executives in terms of citizen relations. In particular, the idea that women provide representation of a different set of issues from men is consistent with the literature on women's representation (see Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson forthcoming, Schwindt-Bayer 2006, Franceschet and Piscopo 2008), and I plan to investigate gender differences among local officials in future research.

#### *What We Learn About Citizens*

In this dissertation, primarily in the third chapter, we discover a key thing about the individual-level determinants of citizen attitudes in Ecuador. The most important finding is that citizens who perceive higher levels of corruption in their canton or country will be less likely to have a positive evaluation of their local government. Interestingly the measure of corruption in Chapter IV is very general; it does not ask specifically about corruption in the government or a particular part of society. However, corruption has been shown to lower trust in national-level government institutions (see Seligson 2002), and it appears that local governments are not exempt. This means that widespread corruption in local government in Latin America still has the potential to undo the positive democratic effects of decentralization. Where government is corrupt, it will matter very little how many opportunities citizen have to participate; if they do trust the government, they will not be satisfied with their democratic experience.

## **Future Research**

I plan to extend my research on local representation and decentralization in two ways. First, I plan to fully analyze all the data that I collected during my fieldwork in Ecuador. This includes a more extensive analysis of the budget data collected while in Ecuador, which would allow me to test the allocation outcomes aspect of representation related to the formal model more thoroughly. I also envision an additional chapter or article that considers the role of local councilors as representatives and how they work together with the mayor to serve the canton. This would allow me to compare and contrast the representation that is provided by local executives and local legislators within the same canton. Though I would have fewer canton-level data points, looking at variation within the canton would allow me to hone in on the causes of representation even further by controlling for canton level factors. Finally, I would like to investigate the attitudes of mayors toward NGOs and other non-government sources of development funding. Can we predict when collaborative versus competitive attitudes will emerge?

The second way that I plan to extend this research agenda is by testing the components of the theory in other country contexts. I hope to find evidence for similar dimensions of representation in other Latin American and developing world countries, in order to demonstrate the generalizability of my conceptualizations of local representation. In particular, I believe that testing the theory in Costa Rica in particular would be helpful because it has a longer history of stable democracy than Ecuador, as well as an institutionalized party system, and has been well-studied by political science scholars. Dissertation fieldwork in Costa Rica was planned but not funded, and therefore

remains to be done in the future. Other promising avenues of research on local representation are before me as I start my new job at Qatar University in the Social Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI). Although not a democracy, Qatar has held municipal elections every four years since 1999, and according to the government website, municipal council members are tasked with urban planning, infrastructure regulation, and management of economic, financial, and administrative affairs<sup>76</sup>.

Other extensions to the project include plans to further study the role of NGOs in local representation, which was originally planned as a part of this dissertation. Unfortunately, as explained in the introduction, it was not possible to collect the needed data during my fieldwork in Ecuador. To further study this aspect of local governance, I need to collect data on NGOs through surveying and interviewing directors about their involvement with local government and citizens. Unless policies change, Ecuador is not a possible country case for this research. Costa Rica is a sensible option, but other opportune countries will also be considered.

If plans for future extensions of the research move forward, I have hopes of publishing this research as an academic book. Meanwhile, a similar version of at least one of the chapters will be submitted for publication as a stand-alone article<sup>77</sup>. In conclusion, I hope to launch into a vibrant scholarly dialogue about what local representation is, how we conceptualize it, and when and where it emerges, both in Latin America and globally. This research agenda also has the potential to contribute to

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<sup>76</sup> They also oversee agriculture, but I am guessing that competency is not incredibly meaningful. Source: Qatar e-government website: [portal.www.gov.qa/wps/portal/about-qatar/municipalcouncil](http://portal.www.gov.qa/wps/portal/about-qatar/municipalcouncil)

<sup>77</sup> I welcome feedback from the committee on the best publication strategy for this project.

existing literatures on decentralization, participation, and local governance, in order to further scholarly understanding of the local roots of democracy in the developing world.

### **Broader Impacts: Why Local Representation Matters**

My research on local representation and decentralization has implications for the quality of the democratic process as a whole. Decentralization reforms have promised to enhance the quality of governance and responsiveness to citizen needs. If citizens view their democracy as legitimate and feel that they have a voice in the decision-making process, democracy will be more stable. Clarifying the linkages that exist between citizens and government officials will aid policy practitioners in understanding how to enhance and strengthen these linkages. Strengthening linkages will mean more opportunities for minority or underrepresented voices to be heard in government, and more opportunities for them to contribute to the policy-making process. Additionally, policies of decentralization continue to be popular with international donors such as the World Bank, and governments across the developing world continue to enact them. My research provides interesting information to such actors about the consequences of their institutional choices.

During my fieldwork in Ecuador, it was easy to see the real-world relevance of local governance and the impact that it has on citizen quality of life, whether it was being surrounded by the smells of yesterday's trash as I threaded my way through crowded streets, or sitting in the municipal building with people who had walked from miles away and would wait for hours to file one document. But perhaps the most poignant moment occurred at the end of an interview with a mayor, when he suddenly

asked me what I thought he could do to improve the working of his municipal government. Of course, I explained that the purposes of the study were academic and that it was not my job to tell him how to run his municipality, but he did not like this answer. He insisted that he was genuinely interested in results of the study and learning ways that he can govern better. I was very impressed by his humility and honesty, and I have never thought of my work the same since then.

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Note: The names of the local officials and their respective cantons have been removed from all citations to maintain IRB compliance.

APPENDIX A

MATHEMATICAL APPENDIX

**The payoffs for the Mayor and Voter:**

$$\text{Payoffs for } M(r_i; V; C) = \begin{cases} r_i - c & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ -c & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - r_m & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \\ r_m - c & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \end{cases}$$

*Payoffs for V*( $r_i; V; C$ )

$$= \begin{cases} r_i - (r_i - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - (r_c - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{strong} \\ r_i - ((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{retain} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \\ r_i - r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2 & \text{if } V = \text{replace} & \text{and } C = \text{weak} \end{cases}$$

**Equation 1: The Strategy of the Voter**

$$\text{Voter's Strategy } (r_i) = \begin{cases} \text{Retain if } p > \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \\ \text{Replace if } p < \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \end{cases}$$

**Derivation of Equation 1:**

Let  $p$  be the probability of a Strong Challenger.  $V$  will Retain when:

$$(p)(r_i - (r_i - r_v)^2) + (p - 1)(r_i - ((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2)$$

$$> (p)(r_i - (r_c - r_v)^2) + (p - 1)(r_i - r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2)$$

$$r_i^2 - 2r_m r_i + r_m^2 - 2r_i r_v + 2r_m r_v - r_c^2 + 2r_c r_v < p \left( \frac{-2r_m r_i + r_m^2 + 2r_m r_v}{-2r_m r_i + r_m^2 + 2r_m r_v} \right)$$

$$\frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} + 1 < p$$

\*does not hold if the fraction is positive

$$r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c) < 0$$

$$r_i^2 - 2r_v r_i < r_c^2 - 2r_c r_c$$

\*holds if  $r_i < r_c$

$$r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v) < 0$$

$$r_m + 2r_v < 2r_i$$

$$\frac{1}{2}r_m + r_v < r_i \text{ or } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m$$

\*Which leads to Cases 1 and 2 below

### Equation 2: Strategy of the Voter- continued

Strategy set of Voter( $p(\text{Strong Challenger}); r_i$ )

$$= \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \text{Retain} & \text{if } p > \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \text{ and } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Retain} & \text{if } p = 0 \text{ and } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Replace} & \text{if } p = 0 \text{ and } r_i \geq r_c \text{ and } r_i \geq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i \leq r_c \text{ and } r_i \leq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Replace} & \text{if } p = 1 \text{ for all } r_i \\ \text{Replace} & \text{if } p < \frac{r_i(r_i - 2r_v) + r_c(2r_v - r_c)}{r_m(-2r_i + r_m + 2r_v)} \text{ and } r_i \geq r_c \text{ and } r_i \geq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \text{ or } r_i \leq r_c \text{ and } r_i \leq r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \end{array} \right\}$$

The Voter will retain the Mayor for a given ( $r_i$ ) in either of the following two cases,

given that both conditions are true.

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Case 1: } r_i < r_c \text{ and } r_i < r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \\ \text{Case 2: } r_i > r_c \text{ and } r_i > r_v + \frac{1}{2}r_m \end{array} \right\}$$

### Derivation of Equation 2:

To show that M will Replace for all  $p=1$

$$r_i - (r_i - r_v)^2 < r_i$$

$-(r_c - r_v)^2$  Is always true if by definition of the Strong type

To show when M will Retain for all  $p=0$

$$r_i - ((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2 > r_i - r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2$$

$$((r_i - r_m) - r_v)^2$$

$> r_m - (r_c - r_v)^2$  which is true for the conditions of Cases 1 and 2

### Equation 3: Best Response of the Mayor

$$\text{Best Response of Mayor(Retain, } r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r_i > r_m + pc - pr_m \\ \text{and} \\ p < \frac{r_i - r_m}{c - r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

$$\text{Best Response of Mayor(Replace, } r_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r_m > c + pr_m \\ \text{or} \\ p < 1 - \frac{c}{r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

### Derivation of Equation 3:

$$EUMayor(r_i, \text{Retain}) = p(r_i - c) + (1 - p)(r_i - r_m)$$

$$pr_i - pc + r_i - r_m - pr_i + pr_m$$

$$0 < -pc + r_i - r_m + pr_m$$

$$r_i > r_m + pc - pr_m$$

$$p < \frac{r_i - r_m}{c - r_m}$$

$$EUMayor(r_i, \text{Replace}) = p(-c) + (1 - p)(r_m - c)$$

$$-pc + r_m - c - pr_m + pc$$

$$0 < r_m - c - pr_m$$

$$r_m > c + pr_m$$

$$p < 1 - \frac{c}{r_m}$$

#### Equation 4: Strategy of the Mayor

*Strategy of Mayor*( $p(\text{Strong Challenger}); V(\text{Retain, Replace})$ )

$$= \left\{ \begin{array}{lll} r_i > r_m + pc - pr_m & \text{if } V = \text{Retain} & \text{and } p < \frac{r_i - r_m}{c - r_m} \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Retain} & \text{and } p = 0 \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p = 0 \\ r_i = r_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p = 1 \\ r_i = r_m > c + pr_m & \text{if } V = \text{Replace} & \text{and } p < 1 - \frac{c}{r_m} \end{array} \right\}$$

#### Equation 5: Best Response of Voter

Take the partial derivative of Equation 1 with respect to  $r_i$ , which yields:

$$\frac{(2r_i - 2r_v)}{-2r_m r_i + r_m^2 + 2r_v r_m} + \frac{r_i^2 - 2r_v r_i + 2r_c r_v - r_c^2}{(-2r_m r_i + r_m^2 + 2r_v r_m) \left(-r_i + \frac{r_m}{2} + r_v\right)}$$

Solve for  $r_i$ , which yields:

$$r_i = \frac{1}{2} \left( r_m + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + r_m^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2r_m r_v} \right)$$

#### Equation 6: Best Response of the Mayor

Take the partial derivative of Equation 3 with respect to  $r_m$ , which yields

$$\text{For retain } \frac{-c - r_m + r_i - r_m}{(c - r_m)^2}$$

$$\text{For replace } - \frac{c - r_m}{r_m^2}$$

Solve for  $r_m$ , which yields

$$\text{For retain: } r_m = \frac{r_i - c}{2}$$

$$\text{For replace: } r_m = c$$

### Equation 7: Equilibria

Substituting  $r_m$  from the mayor into Equation 5 for the Voter yields

$$\text{For retain: } r_i^* = \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{r_i - c}{2} + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + \left(\frac{r_i - c}{2}\right)^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2\left(\frac{r_i - c}{2}\right)r_v} \right)$$

$$\text{Solved for } r_i^* = \frac{1}{4} (7r_v - 2c \pm \sqrt{-81r_v^2 - 32r_c + 64r_c r_v - 20r_v c})$$

$$\text{For replace: } r_i^* = \frac{1}{2} (c + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + (c)^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2(c)r_v})$$

Now substitute  $r_i$  into Equation 5 (Best Response of the Mayor).

$$\text{For retain: } r_m^* = \frac{\frac{1}{2} (r_m + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + r_m^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2r_m r_v}) - c}{2}$$

Which simplifies to:

$$r_m^* = \frac{1}{4} (r_m + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + r_m^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2r_m r_v}) - \frac{c}{2}$$

Therefore there are two equilibria which can be characterized as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Equilibrium 1 } r_i^* &= \frac{1}{4} (7r_v - 2c \pm \sqrt{-81r_v^2 - 32r_c + 64r_c r_v - 20r_v c}) \\ r_m^* &= \frac{1}{7} (6c - 22r_v \pm \sqrt{512r_v^2 - 320r_v c + 64c^2 + 448r_c - 896r_c r_v}) \\ \text{Equilibrium 2 } r_i^* &= \frac{1}{2} (c + 2r_v \pm \sqrt{-4r_c + (c)^2 + 8r_c r_v + 2(c)r_v}) \\ r_m^* &= c \end{aligned}$$



## APPENDIX B

### FIELDWORK

At once chaotic, colorful, and expressive, local politics in Ecuador are anything but boring. In addition to a memorable adventure, I learned valuable lessons about the reality of local politics that I attempt to convey in the following chapters. I am grateful for the generous financial support of the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research, the Texas A&M College of Liberal Arts Dissertation Enhancement Fund, the Bush Presidential Library Travel Fund, and the Graduate Office of the Department of Political Science at Texas A&M University. With the help of these generous supporters, I was able to spend three months in Ecuador conducting interviews with local officials and NGO representatives<sup>78</sup>. I was in Ecuador during February, March, and April of 2013. During this time, I conducted around 70 interviews with local government officials, and around 50 of them were with mayors or vice-mayors. I was personally in every region, and conducted interviews in 20 out of the 29 provinces, and 50 out of the 220 cantons.

In general, the protocol for conducting an interview involved setting up an interview with the mayors of a particular canton<sup>79</sup> via email and phone, although in some cases, the best thing to do was just to show up at the municipal building and wait to be attended. I used public transportation in all its lively and colloquial forms to arrive at the

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<sup>78</sup> This is in addition to a pre-fieldwork and language study experience that took place in Quito, Ecuador in July of 2012 and was made possible by money from the College of Liberal Summer Travel Funds.

<sup>79</sup> Please note that sample was not random, but it is fairly representative and based on the cantons where the AmericasBarometer conducted surveys in 2004 and 2012, which allows me to produce some merged analysis mayoral and citizen attitudes in Chapter IV.

municipal buildings. The semi-structured interviews lasted between 30 minutes to an hour, and afterward I would ask the official to fill out a closed-ended survey. Then, I would request access to budgetary documents from the mayor<sup>80</sup> and to be introduced in the office of the councilors. Few councilors keep regular hours, especially in rural municipalities, so I usually had to interview whoever was available at the time.

However, my interviews with councilors often gave me an opposition perspective on the performance of the mayor and proved to be useful for understanding the dynamics of local politics in that municipality. Most of the interviews took place in the office of the local official, though some took place in less formal spaces such as parks, restaurants, and occasionally the mayor's home. In all but a handful of rare cases, I interviewed and observed the local official in his/her own canton, which gave me some idea of the level of development, the availability of basic services, and the level of citizen activity in and around the municipal building.

Additionally, I talked with directors of local- and national-based non-government organizations about their connections with local government and citizens. In doing so, I found that the non-government sector was experiencing a sudden and severe decline in influence due to political conflicts with Ecuador's president and national government and increased regulations. While these interviews provided me with interesting ideas for future research, they also showed me that the non-government sector in Ecuador is not at

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<sup>80</sup> The annual budget statements are legally public information and are usually posted to the municipal website in large cities. However, most municipalities required special permissions from the mayor to access the documents and some refused out right to grant me access to their budget information, even after granted me an interview.

all fulfilling the mediating representational role that I had previously theorized that it would. This is not to say that NGOs are unable to fulfill this role, only that present circumstances in Ecuador precluded me from collecting meaningful data to test this part of my theory. My interviews with local officials suggest that in the past NGOs were particularly active and successful at things like providing potable water to rural areas and support to agrarian peasants. The majority of mayors lamented the loss of NGO support, but some expressed frustration with the sector and were glad to be rid of them. In sum, this dissertation does not give further consideration to the NGO sector either in terms of theory or data, but focuses instead on the direct relationship between citizens and their elected officials.

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL TABLES

**Multinomial Logistic Regression: The Impact of Political Experience on Mayor Type**

<b>Baseline=</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Err.</b>	<b>z</b>	<b>P&gt; z </b>
<b>Compliant</b>				
<b>Populist-Failure</b>				
political experience	0.29	1.38	0.21	0.84
Constant	-1.39	1.12	-1.24	0.22
<b>Technocrat-Failure</b>				
political experience	-0.41	1.55	-0.26	0.79
Constant	-1.39	1.12	-1.24	0.22
<b>Populist-Leaner</b>				
political experience	-16.65	1274.10	-0.01	0.99
Constant	0.56	0.63	0.89	0.37
<b>Technocrat-Leaner</b>				
political experience	<b>-2.48</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>-2.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Constant	0.69	0.61	1.13	0.26
<b>Populist</b>				
political experience	-16.65	2383.62	-0.01	0.99
Constant	-0.69	0.87	-0.80	0.42
<b>Technocrat</b>				
political experience	-1.32	1.06	-1.25	0.21
Constant	0.22	0.67	0.33	0.74
<b>Superstar</b>				
political experience	-1.79	1.29	-1.39	0.17
Constant	0.00	0.71	0.00	1.00

	<b>Control Variables for Table 4-2</b>					
	<b>18 Latin American Countries</b>			<b>20 Ecuadorian Counties</b>		
	<b>Model 1 DV: Service Satisfaction</b>		<b>Model 2 DV: Service Satisfaction</b>		<b>Model 3 DV: Local Gov. Responds</b>	
	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Estimate (Std. Err.)</b>	<b>T-value</b>
<b>Gender (Male)</b>	<b>-0.110</b>	<b>-3.930</b>	<b>-0.284</b>	<b>-2.420</b>	<b>-0.259</b>	<b>-2.200</b>
	<b>0.028</b>		<b>0.117</b>		<b>0.118</b>	
<b>Monthly Income</b>	<b>0.084</b>	<b>12.450</b>	0.002	0.080	0.047	1.530
	<b>0.007</b>		0.032		0.030	
<b>Age</b>	<b>-0.004</b>	<b>-3.680</b>	0.003	0.580	<b>0.012</b>	<b>2.460</b>
	<b>0.001</b>		0.005		<b>0.005</b>	
<b>Years of Education</b>	<b>-0.016</b>	<b>-4.430</b>	0.015	0.920	0.017	1.030
	<b>0.004</b>		0.016		0.016	
<b>Ethnicity</b>			<b>-0.257</b>	<b>-3.400</b>	-0.102	-1.430
			<b>0.076</b>		0.072	
<b>Survey Weights</b>	0.037	0.660				
	0.056					
<b>Constant 1</b>	<b>-2.871</b>		<b>-4.011</b>		<b>-2.565</b>	
	<b>0.132</b>		<b>0.745</b>		<b>0.684</b>	
<b>Constant 2</b>	<b>-1.398</b>		<b>-2.053</b>		-0.496	
	<b>0.130</b>		<b>0.735</b>		0.677	
<b>Constant 3</b>	<b>.798</b>		0.003		1.970	
	<b>0.129</b>		0.731		0.681	
<b>Constant 4</b>	<b>3.406</b>		<b>2.772</b>		<b>3.69</b>	
	<b>0.135</b>		<b>0.740</b>		<b>0.695</b>	

## APPENDIX C

### SURVEY APPENDIX

All variables are taken from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), Municipal Survey of Ecuador, 2004, the 2006 and the 2012 waves of the Democracy Audit. Available at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/>. Please note that some survey questions have been re-coded from the original survey items to allow for clearer model interpretation. The questions and responses below are the ones that appear in the models. The letter and number codes before the question identifies the LAPOP question, and have no theoretical significance. Where recoding has taken place, the question code is followed by the letter 'r'. Translations from Spanish are my own.

#### **Effectiveness** (municipal and cross-national samples)

SGL1r: Would you say that the services offered by the municipality are...

1) Very bad 2) bad 3) neither good nor bad 4) good 5)very good

#### **Responsiveness** (municipal sample only)

LGL4r: Do you believe that the mayor and the municipal council respond to what the people want...

1)Never 2)Almost never 3)Once in a while 4)The majority of the time 5)Always

#### **Participation-Contact**

(municipal and cross-national samples)

NP1r: Have you attended an open city council meeting or an open meeting convened by the mayor during the past twelve months? 0)No 1)Yes

(municipal sample only)

NP1Ar: Have you attended a municipal meeting convened in the last 12 months? 0)No

1)Yes

(municipal sample only)

NP1Br: Have you attended a parochial (neighborhood) meeting convened in the last 12

months? 0)No 1)Yes

(municipal and cross-national samples)

NP2r: Have you asked for help or have you presented a petition to an office, government official, council member, or the mayor during the last 12 months? 0)No 1)Yes

**Participation-Communal** (municipal 2004 and cross-national samples)

(municipal 2012 sample)

CP5r: Now to change the topic, in the last 12 months have you contributed to help solve a problem of your community, neighbors, or neighborhood? Please, tell me if you did this at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never in the last 12 months? 1) Never 2) Once or twice a year 3) Once or twice a month 4) Once a week

(municipal 2004 and cross-national samples)

CP5Ar: In the last year have you donated money or materials to help solve a problem in your community or neighborhood? 0) No 1) Yes

CP5Br: In the last year have you contributed your own work or labor? 0) No 1) Yes

CP5Cr: In the last year have you attended community meetings about a problem or improvement? 0) No 1) Yes

CP5Dr: In the last year have you tried to help organize a new group to solve a neighborhood problem or seek improvement? 0) No 1) Yes

(municipal 2012 sample only)

CP5r “In the last 12 months have you contributed to help solve a problem of your community, neighbors, or neighborhood? Please, tell me if you did this at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never in the last 12 months?” 1) never in the last 12 months 2) once or twice a year 3) once or twice a month 4) at least once a week

**Participation-Civic** (municipal and cross-national samples)

*(Prompt) Now I am going read a list of groups and organizations, please tell me if you have attended their meetings...*

CP6r: Meetings of a religious organization? You attend...

1) Having ever attended (weekly or yearly) 0) Never attending

CP7r: An association for parents or family of a primary or secondary school? You attend...



1) Having ever attended (weekly or yearly) 0) Never attending

CP8r: A committee or council to improve the community? You attend...

1) Having ever attended (weekly or yearly) 0) Never attending

CP9r: Associations for professionals, businessmen, or growers and/or a peasant organization? You attend...

1) Having ever attended (weekly or yearly) 0) Never attending

### **Participation-Voting**

(municipal sample only)

VB5r: Did you vote in the last local election for mayor and council members in 2000?

0)No 1)Yes

(cross-national sample only)

VB1: Are you registered to vote?

1)Yes 2)No 3)In process

### **Corruption**

(municipal sample only)

EXC7Ar: Taking into account your own experiences and those of others that you have heard mentioned, would you say that corruption is your municipality is...

1)not widespread 2)a little widespread 3)somewhat widespread 4) very widespread

(cross-national sample only)

EXC7r: Taking into account your own experiences and those of others that you have heard mentioned, would you say that corruption of public officials is...

1)not widespread 2)a little widespread 3)somewhat widespread 4) very widespread

**Political Ideology** (municipal and cross-national samples)

L1: According to the significance that the terms “left” and “right” have for you, where would you place yourself on the following scale, with 1 being the most left and 10 being the most right?

Answer is on an ordinal scale from 1 to 10.

**Political Attentiveness** (municipal and cross-national samples)

A1r: How often do you listen to radio news?

1) Never 2) Rarely 3) Once or twice a week 4) Everyday

**Presidential Approval** (municipal and cross-national samples)

M1r: And speaking in general about the government, you say that the job that (*the current president*) is doing is...

1) Very bad 2) Bad 3) Neither good nor bad 4) Good 5) Very good

**Education** (municipal and cross-national samples)

Ed: What was the last year of schooling that you completed?

Answer is continuous 0-20+

**Age** (municipal and cross-national samples)

Q2: How old are you?

Answers continuous 18 through 99

Q2y: In what year were you born?

Answers continuous 1932 - 1994

### **Income**

(municipal 2004 and cross-national samples) \*Monetary differed per country.

Ecuadorian municipal sample scale is given here, but the cross-national scale is 0-10.

Q10: In which of the following ranges would you find your family's monthly income?

00) No income 01) less than \$25 02) between \$26-50 03) \$51-100 04) \$101-150 05) \$151-200

06) \$201-300 07) \$301-400 08) \$401-500 09) \$501-600 10) \$750-\$1,000 11) \$1001-1500  
12) \$1501-2000 13) \$2000 and more

(municipal 2012 sample)

Q10new: In which of the following ranges would you find your family's monthly income, include all remittances from abroad and the income of all adults and children that work?

00) No income 01) less than \$40 02) between \$40 - \$90 03) between \$91 - \$130 04) between \$131 - \$180 05) between \$181 - \$220 06) between \$221 - \$260 07) between \$261 - \$310 08) between \$311 - \$350 09) between \$351 - \$400 10) between \$401 - \$460  
11) between \$461 - \$530 12) between \$531 - \$790 13) between \$791 - \$1060 14) between \$1061 - \$1580 15) between \$1581 - \$2110 16) more than \$2110

**Gender** (municipal and cross-national samples)

Q1r: Gender?

0) Male 1) Female

**Ethnicity** (municipal sample only)

ETIDr Would you consider yourself...

1) White 2) Mestizo 3) Indigenous 4) Black 5) Other