

Philosophy of Science Issues in Clientelism Research

Harold Kincaid

Miquel Pellicer

Eva Wegner

Clientelism—roughly the distribution of resources from politicians to voters in exchange for influence on electoral behavior—remains a widespread phenomenon globally and is not just found in less developed countries. While clientelism has been around as long as there have been electoral processes and longer (it probably emerged from landlord-tenant relations), it has received a renewed burst of interest with a burgeoning empirical and theoretical literature from political scientists in the last two decades. This chapter discusses aspects of this recent literature. The discussion is framed in terms of developments in the philosophy of science and philosophy of social science and current debates over clientelism. The hope is to advance both a bit in the process.

Section 1 describes briefly some basic ideas from contemporary approaches in philosophy of science and philosophy of social science. The rest of the chapter then takes up topics in clientelism research where philosophy of science issues are lurking.

Section 2 concerns definitions of clientelism. We document a large range of accounts in the literature. Those definitions are sometimes unclear in key ways, often do not provide anything like a formal definition in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, and invoke different parameters across definitions. We argue that a plurality of definitions, definitions which are often informal in nature, is not *necessarily* a problem *if* research is cognizant of how it picks out clientelistic phenomena and does so in empirically fruitful ways. To advance that end we chart a set of different parameters that can be found in various definitions of

clientelism. Research would be improved, we argue, if work explicitly identified which of the elements of clientelism we sketch (or others) are being investigated. Clientelism is a complex phenomenon, and communication, debate, evidence and so on would all be advanced if the particular components of clientelism at issue are made as explicit as possible.

Section 3 discusses explanatory frameworks in clientelism research. We break the topic into different parts: first, the general questions about clientelism that are being asked, second, the broad type and system of causes and the specific proposed causal factors that instantiate them, and third questions about evidence raised by alternative possible explanations. Again, our hope is to clarify debates that are sometimes at cross purposes and unclear on basic presuppositions.

Section 4 concludes and raises questions worth further investigation.

Section 1: A Philosophy of Science Approach

This section sketches some general ideas from the philosophy of science and philosophy of social science (more details are developed in Chapter 1). These ideas are then applied and hopefully fleshed out and supported in applying them to political science research on clientelism. Most empirical work in political science works with at least implicit philosophy of science assumptions; the goal here is to be explicit about those assumptions with the hope of clarifying and improving debate within the field. This is an overriding goal of the volume as a whole.

The dominant approach in contemporary philosophy of science and the one adopted here is naturalism. “Naturalism” takes on many different meanings, but here the key idea is that philosophy of science and philosophy of social science are continuous with the sciences themselves. This means that philosophy of science issues are ultimately empirical and tested against scientific practice--we ask whether some abstract philosophy picture of science fits

what political scientists do and/or suggests how their work might be clarified. That is not to deny that getting clear on concepts is a good thing, and that the sciences, especially the behavioral and social sciences, raise what might be called philosophical questions. Still, naturalists deny that there is some special independent source of knowledge that comes from philosophy that is not already scientifically embedded.

Naturalism in the sense we use here inspires other ideas. The empirical nature of philosophy of science fits well with what we might call "contextualism" (Williams 1999; Kincaid 2003). Contextualism asserts that we are never really in the situation of evaluating all our knowledge at once--that we are always making claims against a background of knowledge that is taken as given. Thus, judgments about good science are likely to be complex, local judgments. Justification is always relative to a specific context, which is specified by the questions to be answered, the relevant error probabilities to be controlled, the background knowledge that is taken as given, etc. A priori universal rules for good inference, good explanation, and the like are hard to find and unlikely to do much work even if found. "Don't contradict yourself too much" may be universal guidance but it is not very helpful; scientific virtues like "simplicity" often are really empirical, substantive claims rather than formal logical virtues.¹ Instead, arguing for scientific success, progress, and error requires making an empirical case that will generally depend on lots of discipline and context specific details.

Several other ideas are likely fellow travelers with naturalism and contextualism. Some that will be of use in this chapter are:

Antiessentialism about theories: theories are not unified, monolithic entities and there is much more to science than theories. Work in the history and sociology of

science (Kuhn 1962; Beller 1999), analyses of the role of models in science (Giere 1988; Cartwright 1999) and other work in science studies give us reason to believe that ‘theories’ have diverse interpretations across individuals and applications, are often not a single axiomatizable set of statements, and involve differing kinds of extra-theoretical assumptions and devices in the process of explaining. From much of that same work we also learn that skills, material culture and social organization of expertise are essential to science.

Contextual elements in explanation: work on the logic of questions and answers and associated discussions of the pragmatics of explanation show the important role of context in explanation (Belnap and Steel 1976). It is useful to think of an explanation as an answer to a question. Questions are incomplete until contrasts classes of its terms are filled in (Why did Adam {as opposed to Eve} eat{as opposed to throw} the apple); that is done according to the context dictated by the interests and knowledge of the audience (Garfinkel 1981; van Fraassen 1980). A further contextual element suggests what kind of answer the question requires. Thus, what constitutes an adequate answer is not going to be a purely formal or logical matter determined by conceptual analysis of the ‘logic of explanation’. Debates in the social sciences over methodological individualism or other constraints on adequate explanation are accordingly empirical and contextual.²

Holism of theories, evidence and explanation: Critics of positivism argued forcefully that testing is always holistic. Bringing hypotheses to data always requires background theory about experimental set up, the distribution of errors in observations, and more. When hypotheses conflict with data it is thus unclear who is the guilty party: it may be the hypothesis that errs, but blame might also be due to bad company in the form of mistaken background assumptions. Contextualism builds on this fundamental insight. Yet, it is a deep

mistake to conclude--as much postmodernist commentary has--that this holism shows that judgments about good science are necessarily indeterminate, purely sociological, and the like. In fact, the holism of testing suggests just the opposite.³ A web of dependencies provides for a variety of independent tests.

Ruling out alternatives: Testing is not just holistic in that any test involves multiple assumptions, but it is also what you might call "contrastive." A hypothesis might fit the evidence and yet not be believable because other hypotheses might explain the evidence equally well. This is easily seen from Bayes' theorem analyzing the value of evidence in evaluating a hypothesis H :

$$p(H/e) = \frac{p(e/H)xp(H)}{p(e/H)xp(H) + p(e/ \neg H)xp(\neg H)}$$

We clearly have to evaluate the plausibility of the alternatives to H to assess how well E supports H . This point does not require any commitment to Bayesianism in general but is simply good scientific common sense: your theory is better supported if you give evidence against competitors.

The contextual value of mechanisms: The idea that social science should provide mechanisms is widespread. However, it seems that what we mean by mechanisms and what their role is depends on a number of contextual or local elements. A mechanism might be an intervening cause or the underlying individual details of some macrolevel social phenomena. Mechanisms might strengthen explanation and evidence, they might be essential, or they might obstruct or be inessential to explanation and evidence (Kincaid 2012).

These general philosophy of science ideas will be part of our analysis of current clientelism research at various places in the following. Hopefully, they will both help clarify the empirical issues and be made more concrete in the process.

Section 2 Defining Clientelism

This section concerns definitions of clientelism. Political scientists differ in what they take clientelism to be and in how they think it should be explained. We first survey a variety of definitions given by researchers. They differ and could be more explicit, so we outline a set of parameters about which they directly or indirectly make assumptions. That set of parameters goes some way towards clarifying the different perspectives separating researchers. We then argue, instantiating the philosophy of science framework sketched above, that these differences are not automatically worrisome once made explicit. Differences in definitions can reflect underlying diversity of phenomena or diversity of knowledge interests; they need not reflect deep epistemological differences over how to do clientelism research. We discuss a range of recent typologies proposed by clientelism researchers that seek to capture this diversity. Last, we highlight how typologies that are build inductively from existing research can capture both contextualism and provide structure.

It is worth discussing at some length how researchers define clientelism. That will make clear the diversity involved and also provide a base for us to sort out parameters and ambiguities.⁴

“We define clientelism as the discretionary distribution of public resources by politicians”
(Golden, Nazrullaeva, and Wolton 2020, p.1)

Clientelism is "nonprogrammatic distribution combined with conditionality" where "the party offers material benefits on the condition that the recipient returns the favor with a vote or other forms of political support." (Stokes et al. 2013, p. 13)

"Clientelist vote buying" is "the distribution of rewards to individuals or small groups during elections in contingent exchange for vote choices. Rewards are defined as cash, goods (including food and drink), and services." (Nichter 2014, p.316)

Clientelism is "the direct exchange of a citizen's vote in return for direct payments or continuing access to employment, good, and services" but "patrons provide private goods or club goods to their clients" (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, p. 2 and p. 109)

Electoral clientelism is "the allocations of private and material benefits to voters during elections". It is "not a transaction" (Kramon 2018, p. 3) but is "informational" (p. 11)

Clientelism involves "material benefits contingent on citizens political support" and a "citizen promises that he or she will provide (or has provided) political support" (Nichter 2018, p. 9 and p. 70).

The "key elements of clientelistic relationship [are] dyadic relationships, contingency, hierarchy, and iteration" (Hicken 2011, p. 290)

"the core attributes of clientelism [are]...an exchange in which individuals maximize their interests...involves longevity, diffuseness, face to face contact and inequality" and are different from "vote buying and corruption" (Hilgers 2012b, p. 162).

Clientelism is an “exchange relationship in which a powerful actor trades resources for political support from less powerful actors” (Shefner 2012, p.44).

General clientelism is "a personalistic relationship of power in which a divisible benefit is exchanged for political support" (Aspinall and Sukmajati 2019, p. 3-4).

"A patron-client relationship is a vertical dyadic relationship that is established between two persons of different power status" (Yaghi 2019, p. 119).

“Clientelistic exchanges are electoral strategies where politicians rely on electoral intermediaries to incentivize voters to support a particular candidate.” Incentives can be “positive and negative” (e.g. threats) (Mares and Young 2019 p.33 and p.35.)

"Iteration is the major characteristic of clientelism" (Ruiz de Elvira, Schwarz, Weipert-Fenner 2019, p.9)

Clientelism is “a strategy of political mobilization in which politicians solve or promise to solve voters’ problems in exchange for their political support.” (Szwarcberg 2015, p.2)

These definitions are sometimes unclear at key points and invoke different properties that are taken to be constitutive of clientelism. Some notion of a conditional exchange features in many definitions but scholars often add on other elements to their definition or conception of clientelism while a number also fully dispense with the notion that clientelism is an exchange.

At least the following different elements and questions seemed involved in the quotations above:

1. Is clientelism a contingent relationship? in both directions? for promised or actual behavior? Is exchange the same as contingency?
2. Who or what stands in a clientelistic relation? individual politicians and individual voters, individual politicians and individual brokers and then the latter with individual voters, parties and individual voters, individual politicians and groups of voters, and the latter two relations mediated by a broker cover most of the possibilities.
3. What behavior on the part of voters do patrons try to influence? individual votes in the immediate future? individual votes over time? individual kinds of other electoral support such as campaigning and making donations? immediate future or over time? For all the above, separate questions result if we substitute the often more realistic "promised" as a qualifier to the behavior in question.
4. As the above two questions imply, is the client-patron relation one shot or repeated?
5. Questions 3.) and 4.) reframed where "individual voters" is replaced by "brokers," e.g. do politicians have one shot or ongoing relations with brokers?
6. "Politician" can also be replaced by "brokers" in 2.) and 3.), e.g. do brokers have ongoing or one-shot relations with voters?
7. Is the relationship voluntary?
8. Is the relationship mutually beneficial? Are relationships with punishment as outcomes beneficial and/or voluntary?
9. Do the benefits from clientelist relations have to go to identifiable individuals? If not, is pork barrel politics an instance of clientelism?

10. Do patrons have to have greater power than clients? Brokers greater power than clients?

These ten questions have answers that can logically vary independently of each other, and most of the questions themselves have subcomponents. Theoretically, there are an enormous number of possible different definitions based on the elements listed here, and the literature has occupied a fair amount of the resulting hyperspace as the quotes above show. Iteration, power differences, one on one relationships, brokers, promises of electoral support, verified votes, club goods, voluntariness and more are all seen as necessary conditions in all kinds of different combinations and seen by others as not essential to clientelism. Sometimes it is not clear whether these elements are being invoked; sometimes an explicit definition is given only a little later for it apparently to be dropped or changed. Researchers often identify elements they take to be necessary but do not say if those elements are supposed to be sufficient or if they are part of a set of elements that is sufficient.

What are the implications of this plethora of actual and possible definitions for political science work on clientelism? On traditional positivist⁵ conceptions of science, this clientelist work may seem a mess. Shouldn't we first clearly define major concepts and then move on to tying them to observable events?

Some political scientists do hold the view that there is a correct definition of clientelism and that there are individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for particular behaviors truly being clientelism. This is clearly expressed in worries, typical of political science, about "conceptual stretching" (e.g. Hilgers 2012b or Nichter 2014). Several attempts have been made to narrow down the definition, either by making the contingency of the clientelistic exchange the one necessary condition of clientelism (Stokes et al. 2013, Nichter 2014, 2018), by going back to the roots of clientelism research and defining as

clientelism only those relations that display longevity, diffuseness, face to face contact and inequality (e.g. Hilgers 2012b), or by extracting specific traits as the "essential" or "core" (Hicken 2011, p. 4) elements of clientelism from the body of research on the topic.

As noted in section 1, explicit definitions in the form of necessary and sufficient conditions are certainly to be valued. However, the naturalist approach of Section 1 suggests things are not this simple. Much science proceeds without definitions involving necessary and sufficient conditions. Many scientific concepts are hard to define in that way. The concept of "gene," for example, still defies any definition in terms of jointly sufficient necessary conditions (Moss 2003) that covers all uses in biology. However, in applications biologists have been quite empirically and explanatorily successful. A similar situation holds for more ordinary everyday concepts—necessary and sufficient definitions are often unavailable. Since political science often has to build on ordinary language concepts, it is no surprise it runs into similar problems. However, we get on successfully in ordinary life nonetheless just as much good science does.

So, the question is how we deal successfully with less than perfect, often different, definitions? One approach (coming from psychology and artificial intelligence) suggests we use concepts that rely on family resemblance and prototypes (see Goertz 2006). The family resemblance idea in practice can work in diverse ways. Some elements can be necessary, with any of the others providing sufficiency. No element may be necessary, but the number of elements may be set, e.g. "any three of the following...". A looser, more general approach basically identifies a cluster of properties found in typical cases and thus groups phenomena by how similar they are to the prototypical properties. There are ways using fuzzy set theory (Ragin 2000) to formalize such judgements. Political science has generally led the way in investigating such methods, but they are almost nonexistent in the study of clientelism. In the end, such methods do not eliminate the need for qualitative similarity judgements in any case.

The contextualism defended here also suggests an alternative pragmatic approach to the definition of clientelism. The test of a definition is what we can do with it.⁶ The short story is that the more extensive, tight and clearly formulated are the ties of a concept to a body of theoretical and empirical work the more successful the concepts are. Those ties can be broken down into horizontal and vertical connections as it were, with horizontal ties being relations to other phenomena and their categorization and explanation, and vertical ties being either connections to “lower” more observable phenomena and higher ones to more general phenomena and categories. Definitions ideally get fleshed out by specification of further elements closer to observable data and indicators, even if we do not claim that they provide “if and only if” translations. In these ways the holism of testing, theory and evidence is a virtue.

In the past 10 years, research on clientelism has combined prototype and pragmatic approaches to provide typologies or classifications of clientelism (e.g. Stokes et al. 2013, Nichter 2008, 2014, 2018, Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, Hutchcroft 2014, Mares and Young 2019, Berenschot and Aspinall 2020, among others). Moving away from providing a single definition of clientelism, researchers seek to identify characteristics that distinguish clientelism from programmatic politics and different types of clientelism from each other. This has led to distinctions of clientelism that takes place at election time (“electoral clientelism” or “one-shot clientelism”) and clientelism that involves repeated interactions outside elections (“relational clientelism”) (e.g. Nichter 2018 or Yildirim and Kitschelt 2020); scholars have also proposed to distinguish clientelism at the group level (e.g. “meso-particularistic”) from clientelism at the individual level (micro-particularistic) (Hutchcroft 2014); between different types of electoral clientelism, such as abstention, turnout, and vote-buying (Nichter 2008 as well as Gans-Morse et al. 2014); clientelism that is based on positive inducements (e.g. “policy favors”) from clientelism that involves negative inducements (e.g.

“policy coercion”) (Mares and Young 2019); or more broadly, different forms of patronage systems (“party-centered” vs. “community-centered”) (Berenschot and Aspinall 2020).

These typologies, although mostly deductive, are typically closely tied to an author’s background knowledge on clientelism and often linked to a specific empirical project. This makes them often context-specific, such as Mares and Young’s (2019) typology capturing clientelistic exchanges in Eastern Europe, Nichter’s (2008) and Stokes et al.’s (2013) capturing “machine politics” or Hutchcroft’s (2014) capturing electoral politics in South-East Asia. The connectedness to context makes them better-suited to guide and organize empirical work in that context – the price is a proliferation of typologies, types, and discriminating factors, that, akin to the proliferation of definitions and understandings of clientelism, do not speak much to each other or build on each other. Again, the absence of such a shared understanding might not be a problem if researchers do not try to sell their typology as the definitive one.

Ultimately, we want a definition – or a typology - that picks out something of interest in the world. It may pick out properties or more broadly causes, causal processes, etc. (and properties or attributes are probably explicated largely in terms of their causal effects). Those properties and causes need to be stable enough and sufficiently contained that we can use them in building explanations of social phenomena. There does not have to be just one way to pick out such stable causes and properties. Afterall, the natural sciences often get on quite well with fundamental concepts such as "gene" that get can be fruitfully used in different ways to pick out useful patterns in the world. Even temperature and H₂O admit such flexibility (Chang 2008, 2012).

One way to identify stable clientelist phenomena comes from seeing which characteristics consistently group together. Pellicer et al. (2020) have shown one way to make progress on this task by developing a typology that is fully inductive and based on

ethnographic research on clientelism from all world regions. Taking as the basis ethnographic accounts of clientelism has the advantage of producing a typology closely linked to real-existing empirical phenomena; using accounts from all world regions allows the typology to be potentially more comprehensive than existing ones that are based on a particular context.

Pellicer et al. (2020) develop a coding scheme for capturing characteristics of the clientelistic exchanges described in this literature. The coding scheme seeks answers to many of the ten questions mentioned above for each exchange (e.g. who stands in the clientelistic relation? what are they exchanging? is there coercion? is there iteration?). They use cluster analysis to uncover types of clientelism; by design, each type uncovered in such a cluster analysis differs from the others as much as possible while all the observations (exchanges) that form part of a cluster (type) are as similar as possible. The result is a typology where each type is defined by a rich set of characteristics in terms of the who, what, and how of the exchange. We can think of this set of characteristics as potentially providing multiple sufficiency combinations (in the logic of “family resemblance concepts”) for concept membership in a type of clientelism (Barrenechea and Castillo 2019).

Overall, our view on concept definition allows for a certain defensible pluralism. If we give up the idea of finding the “true” definition of the concept, then we can allow that there may be multiple legitimate and useful ways to define. Plurality might result in several different ways, both objective (in the world) and descriptive (in our ways of describing) as suggested by the work on typologies. Perhaps the simplest cases are when there are multiple different causal processes going on and different definitions pick out different components. In addition, our conceptual tools can also be various. We may have different, noncontradictory ways of describing and grouping phenomena, both of which are useful but useful for different purposes. We may also sometimes apply a *single* description differently depending on contexts, e.g. just as “genes” are different kinds of molecular arrangements in different

biological circumstances. Note, however, that the pluralism we defend does not eliminate the need to be as clear and specific about the notion of clientelism at use as possible in any particular study.

Thus, we should not be surprised to see different definitions of clientelism. They may be compatible and unproblematic in the ways just described. Of course, they may also be signs of trouble. Maybe there are different definitions because there are not stable phenomena to investigate or because we have not yet found the conceptual tools to pick them out. We think the work by Pellicer et al. (2020) shows one way this can be approached. Any approach will require being as clear about concepts as is possible and ideally will help provide detailed account of their ties with other concepts and data so that we can argue that plurality is unproblematic.

Even if providing a definition of political clientelism is at the same time difficult and sometimes unnecessary, there are nevertheless instances where it may be useful for researchers. We thus develop a tentative a definition that speaks to the ambiguities in the ten points above.

We first discuss the main ingredients of our definition and then state below. We believe political clientelism is a linkage between a political actor (the patron) and one or more citizens (the clients) that has three essential components. First, the patron provides some type of resource and the client provides political support. Second, there is mutual agreement that the main rationale for the exchange is its conditionality. Third, the patron is more powerful than the client(s).

The linkage may be direct or mediated by a broker, and may involve a one-off or repeated interactions. We allow for the linkage to involve one client or a group of clients.

The first condition distinguishes political clientelism from other types of clientelism. Political clientelism requires the client to provide some form of *political* support. The

political actor may be an incumbent, a candidate, or an actor that conducts or seeks to conduct politics in the broad sense, such as a feudal lord. The type of political support given by the client(s) may be voting, or campaigning, or rallying around the patron for defense. The type of resources given by the patron are also very broad, from material resources to more immaterial ones such as the promise of insurance or protection. Our definition also allows for coercion from the part of the patron in the sense that the resources the patron gives may be the continuous enjoyment of valued goods that would otherwise be withheld.

The second condition is the heart of the definition of clientelism. It requires a mutual understanding that the main motive for each actor to provide its side of the exchange is the expectation that the other side will also fulfill her part of the exchange. We do not require in our definition that the exchange is immediate, or truly materializes. Any party to the exchange may eventually not fulfill the their side of it. What is important is that there is a consensus from the part of the two sides that the motives for each party to give is to receive in exchange. This distinguishes clientelism from other linkages between political actors and citizens. For instance, it excludes the distribution of goods at political rallies where politicians might try to buy votes but citizens do not understand the provision of goods in this way (see Kramon 2017). Pork barrel and special interest politics would also not qualify as clientelism because presumably the main rational for the politician to deliver pork is not the mere fact that people have voted for him, but the fact that they live in the area that the politician represents. However, there can be clientelism involving a group of clients, as long as the there is mutual agreement that the group of voters will vote for that politician mainly because she will provide goods to the community, and the politician will provide goods to the community mainly because the community will vote for him; whether in the end all members of the community vote for the politician or not is irrelevant, what matters is that each party understands that they and the others behave mainly to fulfill the exchange.

The third condition, that the patron ought to be more powerful than the clients rules out some cases that appear at odds with the usual understanding of the term. Specifically, it is possible to conceive of conditional exchanges where the political actor receives political support by a citizen who is more powerful than her. For instance, the actor providing political support may be a powerful regional entrepreneur, and the political actor may be a local politician that reciprocates with some political favoritism. However, if it is clear that the businessman is more powerful than the politician, we would typically think of the politician being the client and businessman being the patron. This would then not a case of political clientelism, as the patron provides political support, not the client.

We consider these three conditions as necessary to call a phenomenon political clientelism. On the basis of this discussion our proposed definition of political clientelism is:

Political clientelism is a type of linkage between a citizen or group of citizens (client(s)) and a more powerful political actor (the patron), in which the patron provides resources and the client provides political support, and where there is a mutual understanding that the main motivation for each party to provide goods is to receive in exchange.

Section 3 Explanatory Frameworks and Evidential Constraints

Turning next to issues about the *explanation* and evidence of clientelism, we look at the possible questions we might want explanations to answer and possible methodological or normative constraints we might want on answers to those questions (as discussed in Section 1). We sketch a general framework for thinking about the causes of clientelism. The first topic concerns just what about clientelism we want to explain, the second we discussed in Section 1 when we described relevance relations for answering questions, the third concerns

the range of causal factors that might be relevant, and the last problems of evidence in clientelism research.

Explanations we saw can usefully be viewed as answers to questions. Clientelism research aims to answer a variety of different questions. However, those different questions are not always explicitly distinguished by researchers. Yet, doing so is important in assessing the evidence for clientelistic explanations and to avoid debates at cross purposes. So, it is important to distinguish which of the following we want an explanation of clientelism to describe:

- What explains the extent of clientelism?
- What explains the origin of clientelism?
- What explains the persistence of clientelism?
- What explains the forms of clientelism?
- What explains the changes in the extent and forms of clientelism?

These are independent questions in that answers for any one of them may not provide answers to the others. So, for example, we might have good evidence about the specific factors supporting clientelism and at the same time reason to think those factors are historically time bound, etc. Modernization theory makes such claims.

When the definition of clientelism and the question to be asked about it is set, then the next task is to begin to spell out what proposed explanations look like. We assume that the primary sense of explanation is causal explanation. Thus, we are asking what the causal explanations of clientelism look like. We break this question into two parts: what are the general kinds of causal factors and what possible forms might they take in specific cases? We

will be discussing all five questions listed above, at least indirectly. Extent, persistence and forms of clientelism are the most direct focus.

The kinds of causal factors are usually organized by supply side and demand side factors. Paradigm demand and supply side factors would be the motivations of individual voters and politicians. Income maximization for voters and maximizing the probability of reelection or election for politicians are natural motives to attribute if we think of economic notions of supply and demand. A broader conception of supply and demand factors also includes other, non-material motives, for example psychological needs for status or social acceptance. Beyond individual motivations, there are distal and background causes that would be relevant to supply and demand explanations.

Figure 1 provides a schema for thinking about categorizing explanatory factors in clientelism. The particular definition of clientelism to be used and the specific question(s) about clientelism have to be decided. That sets the kind of elements that go into the client and patron behavior boxes. Those elements are the result of motivational and social and political factors. Clientelism is explained when the existing practices are explained by the combination of social and political causes and the interactions of client and patron behavior. Of course, in practice there can be considerable back and forth in determining elements, definitions, questions, etc., but Figure 1 gives a framework for thinking about the complexities. The schema of Figure 1 is a simplification. It is purposely abstract so that multiple definitions and explanations are possible. The elements of this schema can be instantiated in multiple ways. The goal here is to put some order into the web of clientelism literature, a prerequisite for sorting out explanatory claims and assessing evidence.

Obviously, any version will have to decide first on the question to be asked. That means at least one and possibly all from the list above, depending on how wide an account is

claimed to be. The important point is that explanations may answer some but not all relevant questions.

The various components of definitions and explanatory factors listed in Figure 1 are divided into supply side and demand side elements. This is a common parlance in the literature (e.g. Medina and Stokes, 2002, Diaz-Cayeros and Magaloni. 2003, Pellicer et al. 2020). It usefully organizes different elements and helps point out ways in which extant accounts of clientelism can be incomplete. For example, until recently, the clientelism literature has short changed the demand side of the clientelism (see Pellicer et al. 2020; Hicken and Nathan 2020). Researchers that are now taking up the demand side indeed argue that any explanation of the persistence of clientelism will be incomplete if client motives are not well understood, or oversimplified as in standard supply side accounts (e.g. Nichter 2018 or Pellicer et al. 2020).

The definition of clientelism spells out the components of the two boxes and the relation R between them. Probably the most invoked and basic definition takes box V to be a vote for an individual politician who is described in box P who transfers something of value to the voter. R is then described as an "exchange."

However, the phenomena are not all this simple for multiple reasons:

- The basic definition itself hides various decisions that need to be made. A prime question is whether R is an exchange and the transfer is a payment for the vote. We noted above that some researchers do not conceptualize R as an exchange and/or propose a host of other things that are exchanged instead of payments and votes. Accounts of clientelism that see individual feelings of obligation rather than instrumental self-interest also are not obviously exchanges. This, as in all the

complications we mention, is an empirical issue about motives, etc., not a semantic issue about the "right" definition.

- R might be interpreted differently even when it is called an "exchange." "Mutually beneficial" and "voluntary" or "autonomous" are often used adjectives. However, some good work, for example Mares and Young (2019), allow threats to withhold benefits, payments, etc. as an essential part of R. It is not clear how that relationship counts as autonomous or voluntary, though those terms themselves are generally left vague--understandably so, since there is little agreement anywhere on their precise requirements.

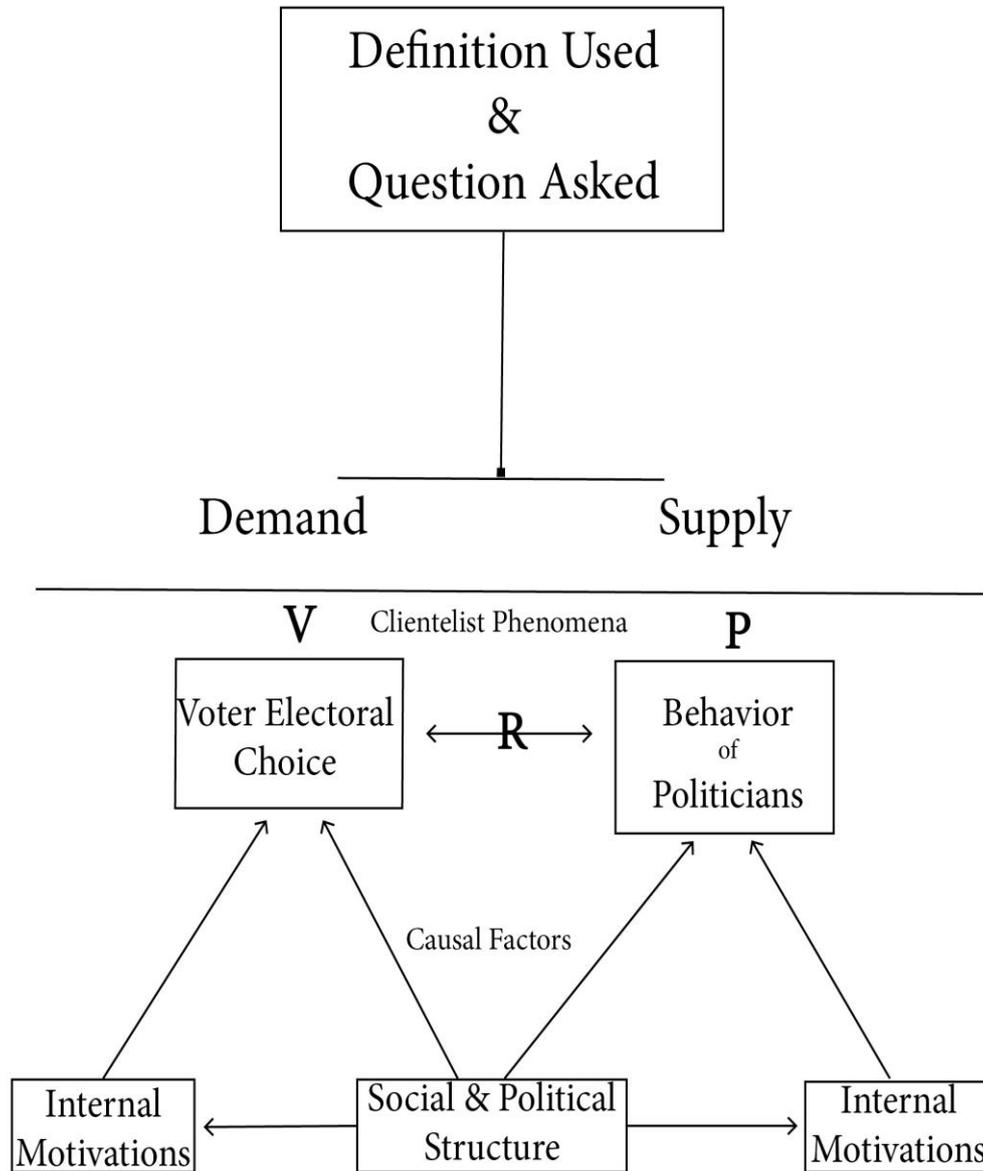


Figure 1. An abstract map of clientelist phenomena and approaches to their investigation. The top of the figure represents the fact that different definitions and explanatory questions may be asked. Below the line are components and causes of clientelistic phenomena, various components of which may be pursued with different definitions and explanatory questions such as those outline earlier. Thus, **V** and **P** can represent multiple entities, e.g. brokers and parties, aside from politicians and voters. We take the relation **R** to flow from the traits of **V** and **P** and thus do not add a causal arrow directly to it.

- The behaviors in the boxes **V** and **P** can be a variety of different things. For **V**, voter turnout and various kinds of electoral support such as campaign event attendance, canvassing, campaign donations, driving voters to the polls along with a six-pack of beer, and so on are all possible. **P** might be political parties and other partisan groups, brokers, and of course individual politicians who might provide standard material goods but also promises of future “insurance” or “protection” (see Pellicer et al. 2020).
- While some definitions of clientelism require that **R** be "direct," other actors could be and often are added between the two basic ones. Brokers and employers are obvious candidates. There would presumably be clientelistic relations of some sort between the intermediaries and patrons and the intermediaries and clients. This could again be described with the standard terminology of exchanges, mutually benefits, and so on.

We should note again that multiple definitions are not necessarily a sign of confusion or problematic. They do not need to be eliminated for one "right" definition, especially for one

judged by ordinary language. Rather they need to be judged by their empirical success as sketched earlier.

The causal boxes of Figure 1 and their causal arrows are, of course, simplified placeholders. Given the complexity and diversity of the phenomena--clientelism-- and the diversity of causal factors, many more arrows, elements and boxes could be added. Even so, the diagram does have some content. It also makes individual motivation an essential part of the story which is not always the case in clientelism research. It makes it possible for there to be social and political causes that are not obviously supply or demand factors. These can influence the behavior of V and P directly and thus the character of R, or indirectly by impacting on the internal motivations of voters and politicians. For example, large-scale structural elements such as the nature of the political system and the distribution of income and wealth can be causes that are in the background.

An illustrative instantiation of the above might be a single district voting system, weak parties, large poverty concentration and little ethnic identification. Those combined with maximizing clients and patrons might result in vote buying among swing voters with relatively high success because programmatic redistribution has little chance of success and the marginal utility of the bribe is high. There is quite some work that focuses on such background causes either that either directly or indirectly affect clientelism (e.g. Pellicer and Wegner 2013 on electoral systems, Stokes et al. 2013 on poverty and modernization, Corstange 2017 on political competition, Shami 2012, Pellicer et al. 2017 on the isolation of a community).

Whether and when any particular model of the above causal factors and others successfully explain is an empirical issue. However, there are some general considerations about what causal explanations should be like that we can raise here. We look at requirements that we must have *theories* that describe clientelism's causes, at specific types of causality

that might or might not be adequate for explaining clientelism. And at the types of evidence required to confirm theory and refute others.

Theories

A requirement for adequate explanation that is quite common across political science is that there is a theory used to answer the explanation-seeking question regarding the phenomena” (be it about the extent, the persistence, the origin, the form, etc. of the phenomena). The work cited above explicitly claims to present theories of the clientelist phenomena explained. We think this requirement needs to be qualified.

What do clientelism researchers mean by "theory"? Explicit answers are very rare. Actually, clarifications of what is meant with the word "theory" are very rare across political science.⁷ This suggests that we are dealing with assumptions that are taken for granted. Perhaps what lies behind the appeal for theory is a roughly positivist idea of "a set of abstract interconnected statements, consisting of assumptions, definitions and empirically testable hypotheses" (Sanders 2010, p. 25), probably with a friendly amendment that some of the statements are lawlike generalizations and the interconnections are deductive. Perhaps that is an ideal which "theory" expresses.

Clientelist research generally does not provide theory in these senses. Fortunately, it need not do so. Considerable work over considerable time from the history, philosophy and social studies of science has shown that much science works without theory in the sense Sanders describes. Science is rather messier than the theory ideal. We have seen that explicit definitions are sometimes lacking. Not surprisingly, a deductively organized set of generalizations are also not always present in good science. Instead, science is often a much more piecemeal affair. Causal claims are made, but they may have a narrow scope and no fully formalized deductive organization. Models there are, but they are often known to be

wrong in fundamental ways and often have an analogical character. Multiple models, sometimes consistent and sometimes not, often are used for the same phenomena. It is not that theories with explicit definitions and deductively organized laws are thought a bad thing, but much science does not work that way.

Political science in general is probably no exception. The work on clientelism certainly is not. Much work on clientelism proposes theories but in most cases the word theory could be substituted with “argument” or “mechanism”. Thus, “theory” is typically used to denote some partial causal processes or mechanisms that advocates think explains much of the phenomena. This much more limited sense of "theory" is used across the sciences and thus it is no criticism of clientelism research that it does the same.

However, two caveats are in order. To say that theories in the substantial sense of Sanders are not necessary for good science is not to say anything goes. Providing explicit, clear claims remains essential for science and this standard is certainly not always met in clientelism research. A second, important caveat is that political science and with it work on clientelism often assumes that differing theories have to be incompatible. That does not necessarily hold for theories in the weaker sense of descriptions of causal processes or mechanisms for several reasons. First, as we have seen different but compatible definitions and/or questions may be at issue. Secondly, causal mechanisms cited by researchers may just be parts of a complex system where other causal paths could be described.

It is not uncommon for clientelism researchers to propose “new”, “novel”, or “alternative” theories. That juxtaposition is often unnecessary and causes unnecessary confusion. Theories as they show up in clientelism research can sometimes give partial explanations that are extended by other theories which then make the explanation less partial. Complaints that clientelism research ignores the demand side clearly illustrate this point. Accounts that ignore demand are not therefore wrong but rather partial and incomplete. Even

if the notion of a "complete" explanation seems suspicious (it smacks of "the one true description of the world"), we can nonetheless practically speak about being able to answer more or fewer questions with a particular account. New or alternative theories *may* answer more questions better, but our point is that sometimes new or alternative theories may just be identifying other aspects and questions about clientelistic phenomena instead of replacing previous work.

Causes

If causes are now generally agreed to be the basis of explanation,⁸ how causation works remains controversial. Though they are seldom explicitly addressed, two key issues surface in clientelism research: complex causality and functional causes.

"Complex causality" as we use the term here refers to causal relations that are not well captured by a set of individually acting sufficient causes. Independently acting causes are those that have an effect regardless of other causes or, more strongly, that have constant effect *size* regardless of presence, absence or size of other causes. The independent variables in regression equations are generally thought of in this way. Mackie's (1980) INUS account presents a clear case: the cause can be a set of factors, some of which are necessary but not sufficient for the effect and others that are not necessary--the effect can happen without them--but do result in the effect when combined with the necessary connection. There are many related complexities. A factor may be a moderating cause when the effect of another variable depends on the level of the moderating cause. Numerous causal expressions used by social scientists reflect some form of complex causality: "thresholds," "forcing," "shaping," etc. and many appeals to "context" in explanation are also deviating from the idea of independent sufficient causes.

Causation in the case of clientelism may often be complex in these ways. Political science has been a leader in developing methods for thinking about complex causality (Ragin 1987, 2000). These methods, however, have yet to have an influence on clientelism research. Yet, the study of clientelism would be a fertile ground for these methods. Stokes et al. (2013) account of the end of vote-buying in the UK and the U.S. can be thought of representing complex causality. Their explanation focusses on the coming together of several conditions (increase in size and wealth of electorate, a less discernible vote, and cheaper mass communication) that made vote-buying unattractive for parties. They emphasize that as one of these conditions took longer to be fulfilled in the US (votes remained more discernible for a longer time in the US because of immigration), the decline in vote-buying was delayed. This highlights the idea that complex causality is at play.

Functional explanations are another potentially controversial issue in clientelism research regarding causality. Functional explanations are often indicated linguistically by phrases like "x exists in order to y," "x exists because it does y," and related constructions. They are as widespread as they are controversial across the social sciences (Kincaid 1996, 2005, 2020). Classical examples are Marx's claims that the state functions or exists to protect the interest of the ruling class and Durkheim's assertion that the division of labor functions to promote social solidarity. There are two elements to these explanations: 1.) the claim that some social practice has characteristic effects and 2.) that it exists because it does. The second kind of claim has seemed mysterious if there is no mechanism based in individual choice, plans, goals and so on--it seems to be free-floating teleology.

These explanations by goals served are quite common in clientelism research, though never recognized as such that I know of. Here are some examples:

- voters "declare support to signal their own credibility" and "request benefits to screen politician credibility" (Nichter 2018)
- "clientelism...acts as a pressure relief valve...giving formal democratic processes time to develop" (Hilgers 2012a)
- clientelism declines when "its institutional arrangements become fetters stifling the material possibilities of economic performance" (Kitschelt 2007, p. 299)
- clientelism has "filled cultural, institutional, and economics functions across a variety of economic and political systems" (Roniger 2007, p. 26)
- electoral clientelism exists in order to signal candidate viability and that they favor redistribution" and to "facilitate elite cooperation" (Kramon 2018, p. 16)

Despite skepticism from philosophers and social scientists alike (Elster 1989), there is nothing inherently wrong with the above qua explanations. The second, controversial element can be fleshed in entirely causal terms. So x exists to y if a.) x causes y and b.) x persists because it does so. At one time t_1 we evidence that x caused y and then that fact causally explains y presence in the next period t_2 . Evolutionary selectionist accounts work this way: Some trait contributes to fitness and then that fact causes the trait to exist in future generations. However, selection is just one type of mechanism. There can be other causes of persistence and the social sciences have produced some compelling examples (Kincaid 2006). So, the question is whether clientelism provides reason to believe claims like b.) about clientelist practices. That is a question of evidence and discussed in the next section.

Evidence

We turn finally to look at some philosophy of science issues about evidence as they surface in the clientelism literature. The goal is again to see what philosophy of science perspectives might have to say and how they might be made more nuanced and concrete. First, we discuss the epistemic issues raised by potentially unclear definitions and theories and hypotheses. Then we turn to questions about evidence raised by alternative possible explanations, the need for mechanisms, and causal inference. None of these discussions claims to be decisive but rather to illustrate questions that the clientelism literature has not pursued in detail and suggests routes for clarification.

Here is an evidential maxim, mentioned earlier, that is trivially obvious: unclear definitions, theories and hypotheses make well-confirmed results difficult. Any discussion of evidence in clientelism research must take this platitude seriously. The sheer number of possible definitions and causal factors muted in the literature makes this worry unavoidable.

As discussed, many definitions of clientelism are unclear at key points. Every definition has to--by definition!--have unexplained elements. However, they can be more or less clear about terms with standard meanings within a discipline and about logical relationships between terms. At the very least, the entities in the clientelistic relation are often unclear. Are "voters" individual voters or can they be groups of voters? Are "politicians" individual politicians or can they be parties? or brokers? We have seen that these are core topics in clientelism research but what they mean for a specific author often only becomes obvious when looking at the hypotheses, or even only at the point of the empirical measures.

We saw in section 1 in our common sense Bayesianism that evidence consistent with a hypothesis is inconclusive unless it is inconsistent with reasonable competing explanations. Like much social research, especially observational research, theories of clientelism frequently face problems ruling out reasonable competing explanations. Of course, doing so requires having hypotheses and theories in the first place that are clear enough that we can

say what competing explanations might be. Even given that clarity, holism of testing and underdetermination of theory by data can make ruling out alternatives difficult. Further, ruling out alternatives assumes that the theory at issue and its alternatives are sufficiently clear that we judge the latter to be incompatible with the former. Ruling out alternatives is made more difficult by lack of clarity.

A first important question is whether any given theory of clientelism is actually incompatible with some other accounts advocated in the literature. Or, put more accurately, whether all the pieces or elements of a given theory are incompatible with those of other accounts, since theories are not monolithic wholes. As noted above, it is standard in the clientelism literature to assert, at least implicitly, that the research presented represents a competitor to other existing accounts. That is often wrong and unfortunate. Clear debates and empirical and conceptual progress are not promoted when false juxtapositions are made.

One way that claims for exclusivity can fail is because of the plurality of definitions, targets of explanation, and questions asked that we described in the previous section. Theories that try to answer one specific explanatory question need not compete with theories that try to answer others. Theories with different definitions of clientelism may just be picking out different phenomena and thus not be inconsistent. And theories sharing definitions and questions might nonetheless take the entities involved to be different--one theory might be an account of parties and voter organizations and another be about individual politicians and individual votes. How often and where this happens in the clientelism literature is beyond our purview here. Nonetheless, it is an issue worth considering.

Another route to unneeded conflict comes from assuming that my favorite causes in my theory are incompatible with other ones. So, take theories that focus on the informational signals of clientelistic handouts (e.g. Kramon 2018, Muñoz 2014, or Chauchard 2018). These theories have been one of the most relevant contribution to clientelism research in recent

years. However, they are probably best seen as a potential addition rather than as a substitute to existing account on the motivations of clients. If a handout from a politician gives me information about electability and thus motivates me to vote for her, that doesn't preclude me from at the same time also being motivated by the direct material payoff or by norms of reciprocity, fairness, etc.. Information about electability, for example, gives me information about the probability of a candidate being able to bring public goods to my community by being elected. I could be a pure maximizer of my material well-being and have both direct payoffs and indirect payoffs (e.g. via public goods) as arguments in my utility function. Information from handouts would affect my subjective probabilities concerning the latter; they do not prevent direct payoffs from being in my utility function. These theories need not be exclusive and many hypotheses, and in fact evidence may be consistent with both signaling causes and causes of other kinds--for example, incumbents may provide lower amounts of handouts vis-a-vis challengers because they have established reciprocal relations, trust, etc. Researchers typically specify observable implications of their theory and argue for it to be confirmed if they find evidence that is consistent with that theory but spend far less effort to discuss other theories with which that same evidence would also be consistent.

These alternatives or complements to different "theories" in clientelism research are really about mechanisms, primarily demand side ones. We saw above in Section 1 there are multiple factors in assessing how important mechanisms are as evidence. Key are how much confidence we have in our mechanisms story and how much our theories, definitions, and hypotheses presuppose or assume about them. There is some benefit for clientelism research to be clear about what mechanisms are or are not supposed to be operative. We sketch some possible areas where this is so.

We have already seen that individual motives of maximizing redistribution via public goods does not rule out other motives. In general, we think that there is much work to be

done on specifying and testing motives in clientelism research. The needs here reflect a common situation in the social sciences where multiple individual level stories are possible and differentiating evidence difficult. But it would be good if these limitations were acknowledged and addressed more explicitly.

To give an important example, consider the widespread claims in the literature about the channels by which poverty leads to demand for clientelism, and thereby to its persistence (Stokes 2009; Stokes et al 2013).⁹ At least three types of channels have been proposed and mostly taken for granted. The first channel linking poverty to clientelism concerns the greater marginal utility the poor will find in any additional income and the fact that it will make buying poor votes cheaper than others for politicians (Dixit and Londregan 1996). The second relates to risk aversion – with poor voters said to be more risk averse and thereby more concerned about the uncertainty of redistributive policies promised by programmatic parties (e.g. Desposato 2006). And in the third channel, time attitudes matter. “Poor and uneducated citizens discount the future, rely on short causal chains, and prize instant advantages such that the appeal of direct, clientelist exchanges always trumps that of indirect, programmatic linkages promising uncertain and distant rewards to voters” (Kitschelt 2000, p.857).

Risk, time and marginal utility attitudes thus are individual-level mechanisms that are thought to explain the role of poverty for clientelist behavior. While all these channels sound plausible, such appeals to risk, time, and marginal utility attitudes are thrown together and mostly not backed up by empirical evidence. We note some examples here. First, the Dixit and Londregan 1996 article on which the marginal utility channel is based is routinely cited in work on clientelism. However, Dixit and Londregan 1996 is a formal model that proposes the theoretical argument but does not show direct evidence in its favor. To the best of our knowledge, the specific role of marginal utility in linking poverty to demand for clientelism

has never been empirically tested. Second, risk and time attitudes are usually not distinguished (e.g. in Stokes 2009 or Kitschelt 2000). This makes sense because promises of programmatic redistribution are both risky (the programmatic party might not win, it might renege on the promise, or other actors might veto redistribution) and accrue in the future (after electoral victory and a lengthy legislation process). However, risk aversion and time discounting are different individual preferences and programmatic politics can show independent amounts of delay and uncertainty. Therefore, as a motive for clientelism demand, time discounting is distinctive from risk aversion and thus they correspond to two distinct mechanisms. Third, clientelism research has struggled to operationalize risk or time attitudes empirically so that they are in line with the standard meaning of the concepts. Perceptions of the riskiness of programmatic politics, for example, have been operationalized as trust in politicians or as beliefs about how risky implementing an untested policy is; these are perceptions about the probability of success of programmatic policies which capture first and foremost the expected value of such policies, not their riskiness. Risk attitudes are mostly not explicitly measured, although Nichter (2018) has recently made some advances in distinguishing between risk and time preferences and in measuring them closer to current best practices in clientelism research.¹⁰

Two other sets of issues about mechanism come from evidence for functional claims and general considerations about causal evidence. Using the account given earlier, functional explanations require showing that x's effect y at one time is a causal factor in x's persistence into the next time period. It is possible to provide evidence for that relation directly using standard statistical correlations between the two events (see Kincaid 1996, 2006. That is seldom done on behalf of functional explanations in the social sciences and clientelism research is no exception. Alternatively, or in addition, evidence tracing a mechanism from the effects of x to its persistence would provide some support.

However, none of the functional ascriptions in the clientelism that we know of do much in this regard--they do not provide causal links between effects and persistence. Kramon's claim that clientelism buys off elites or Kitschelt's assertion that clientelism declines when "its institutional arrangements become fetters stifling the material possibilities of economic performance" (Kitschelt 2017, p. 299) have no elaborated mechanism connecting effects and persistence. Functional explanations may sometimes be less macro and perhaps shorthand for individual motives that could be identified. Nichter's claim that voters "declare support to signal their own credibility" and "request benefits to screen politician credibility" (Nichter 2018) could conceivably be cashed out in terms of individual beliefs and preferences. As usual, these possibilities need to be examined case by case in empirical detail.

There are, of course, still other issues about evidence in clientelism research that we have not discussed. However, we hope to have shown that approaching these issues in a systematic way from an applied philosophy of science perspective can help pinpoint issues that clientelism researchers should take seriously.

Section 4 Conclusion

There has been a renewed interest in clientelism during the last decades. Many monographs and journal articles have been published on different aspects of clientelism, frequently in top outlets. We have learned a lot about many specific aspects of clientelistic relations in different world regions. Moreover, there are probably more researchers and research projects on the topic than ever before, so the field is likely to continue thriving in the foreseeable future. In this context, it is useful to take a step back and consider what insights philosophy of science can provide about the current state of clientelism research (regarding definitions and explanations of clientelism). In this chapter we have sought to contribute to this reflection adopting major perspectives in contemporary philosophy of science: naturalism and contextualism.

As researchers in the clientelism literature have pointed out, there is a multitude of definitions of clientelism. This is often considered a shortcoming of the literature that shows its lack of clarity and requires a solution. We argue that a multitude of definitions is, as such, not a problem, as long as these definitions capture empirically relevant stable phenomena and as long as the parameters in which the definitions differ is made explicit. Different definitions can legitimately reflect different empirical phenomena operating in different contexts. Recent efforts in the clientelism literature to provide typologies that explicitly put structure into the different types of clientelism are helpful in this respect. Among these typologies, inductive ones that are derived from empirical observed clientelistic relations are particularly useful. When delimiting their object of inquiry the field might be better served by researchers being transparent about the specific parameters that delimit the specific phenomenon they are studying (and if possible relating to existing types of clientelism) rather than proposing their own definition of clientelism.

Just as there can be different definitions or types of clientelism, there can also be different causal questions we may ask about clientelism--different aspects of clientelism we seek to explain (its extent, its persistence, etc.). These different types of clientelism and questions asked generally lead to different explanations. We believe this diversity of explanations of clientelism can be accommodated into a useful template. We propose a broad, general, explanatory framework that can be used to organize research on clientelism. This framework requires the researcher to be clear about the definition of clientelism used and the aspect of clientelism to explain. The framework conceptualizes clientelism as a relation between actors whose behavior depends on internal motivations, broad social and political structures, and the interactions between these.

Our framework makes explicit the diversity of definitions and explanatory questions that can be asked about clientelism, but also the diversity of causal paths and interactions that may operate when trying to explain these. We believe it would be useful for researchers to acknowledge this diversity and the implications this diversity has for the status of their argument. It is common in clientelism research to examine one single causal argument, elevate it to the level of a theory, label it as “novel” or “alternative”, and test it in isolation. We believe progress in the field could be more solid if this partiality were recognized and more attention were devoted to embedding this part into the whole. Failure to do so may lead to erroneous inferences. Finding support for one’s argument does not imply that it is correct and the others are wrong. Different explanations may have overlapping empirical implications. Evidence supporting one partial mechanism may actually be the result of other causes or factors. Or several mechanisms may be at work at the same time.

Moreover, complex causality often implies that the specific mechanism that a researcher considers interacts with other mechanisms. Instead of emphasizing the difference

and uniqueness of one's mechanism, researchers may focus more on how their explanations complements and interacts with other explanations.

In sum, the plurality we find in clientelism research is not necessarily a bad thing. It probably reflects a plurality of empirical clientelism phenomena, of questions that can be asked, and of causal explanations. The field could benefit from embracing this plurality, attending to it, and giving it structure. This would be helped by researchers clarifying where their research fits into the whole in terms of definitions and questions and embedding their individual partial mechanisms into larger explanatory frameworks.

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¹Notes

See Sober (1989) on simplicity in phylogenetic inference for example.

² On arguments for this view about individualism, see Kincaid (1996, 1997, 2015).

³For example, if I know there is some casual relation between A, B and C but only have observations on their correlations, I am in a bind in deciding what causes what. But if it turns out that a fourth cause D is involved, then I can use their partial conditional correlations ("vanishing tetrads") to make causal inferences.

⁴ We are by far not the only one's pointing out the diversity of definitions and usages of the term "clientelism". for example, the recent reviews by Hicken and Nathan (2020), Golden et al. (2020) or Nichter (2014).

⁵ See Chapter X for discussion of positivism. As that chapter shows the term must be used with care because of the diversity of connotations beginning with the original positivists themselves.

⁶ The test is not whether we can show the definition fits with ordinary usage. As we have seen, those concepts themselves are not neatly definable. Moreover, there is no special status given to the concepts of common sense in any case, for we know that good science often proceeds independently of them and that humans' expressed self-descriptions can be poor guides to their behavior.

⁷ Representative perhaps is Marsh D. and Stoker, G. (2010) *Theory and Method in Political Science* (London: Palgrave MacMillan) which has almost no explicit discussion of what theory is, despite the title.

⁸ "Generally" might seem to suggest that interpretivists are in the minority which is probably in fact true. However, there is no reason that interpretivist points cannot be recognized while finding that meaningful actions have causal explanations. See Chapter ?? and Kincaid (1996).

⁹ On the role of poverty for clientelism, see Berenschot (2018) for a different perspective. Berenschot finds that Indonesia, clientelism is more prevalent in relatively richer areas and argues that this results from state-dependent development.

¹⁰ Nichter (2018) measures risk aversion with an incentivized game where respondents are asked to select between two bags, one giving a small payout (R\$2) with 100% probability and the other a 50:50 change of a

very small payout (R\$0.20) and a high one (R\$5). Time preferences are measured with an unincentivized question about receiving a prize tomorrow or a 10% higher prize in three months.