State Capacity, Institutional Experimentation and Development

Leonard Wantchekon

Princeton University, African School of Economics, & NBER

I have been interested in studying and "doing something about" political distortions since middle school.

First as a pro-democracy activist (1983)

Political Mechanisms in Economic Development:
A Game-Theoretic Analysis.

Houantchekon, Leonard

March 11, 1993

The failure to understand fundamental politico-economic
mechanisms...is worldwide... We understand liberal democracy
so poorly that we do not know why is it that liberal democracy
has arisen only in nations that are market-oriented, not in all of
them but only in them... India's difficulties in economic devel-
opment are in part consequences of their leaders' inability to
understand that growth requires growth mechanisms: if not the
market, which Indian policies cripples, then the authority of the
government that they have chosen to ignore.[1]

Although it is now widely accepted that economic performance depends
critically on the existence of a "bad" or a "good" government, the clarifi-
cation and evaluation of politico-economic mechanisms remain a challenge
for economists and political scientists. This is the purpose of the emerg-
ing discipline of Positive Political Economy. That is, the study of rational
decisions in the context of the political and economic institutions. This
paper aims to contribute to this literature. We provide a model of ratio-
nal economic and political agents to address the following issues: what is
the impact of political institutions on investment and capital accumulation?
How does politics affect public investment in education? In our model, firms
engage in a capital accumulation game and compete as economic interest
groups for political influence. Political parties get financial contributions
and bribes from interest groups to produce "policy positions", and compete
for vote shares in elections. When elected, they implement public policies.
Consumers' tastes affect the demand for goods produced by firms and their
policy preferences partly determine the composition of the legislature.

[1] From "Politics and Markets", Lindblom Charles, pp 5-6

Then as first year PhD student at Northwestern (1993)

Introduction

Growth, productivity and misallocation

▶ Contemporary macro development scholarship explains cross-country differences in income through divergent productivity (TFP) and the misallocation of factors of production (e.g., Restuccia and Rogerson, 2008; Hsieh and Klenow, 2009)

▶ **Stylized fact:** Disparities in capital and labor account for at most 50% of the differences in income-per-capita (Klenow and Rodriguez-Clare, 1997; Hall and Jones, 1996; see Caselli, 2005 for a review)

▶ TFP is responsible for 𝐭𝐡𝐞 𝐫𝐞𝐦𝐚𝐢𝐧𝐢𝐧𝐠 50%. Also referred to as Social Infrastructure of Development; it includes Social Cohesion and Governance (Hall and Jones, 1999).

▶ At the core of social infrastructure lies **State Capacity**.

What is State Capacity?

▶ What it is: The ability of the state to get things done (Besley, 2022)

▶ 4 Pillars of State Capacity:

  ▶ **Autonomy :** Legally entrenched power of state to exercise public policy functions of a legislative, executive and judiciary. (Skocpol, 1985)

  ▶ **Authority:** Ability of state leaders to use agencies of the state to exercise control over society. (Mann, 1984 ; Migdal, 1988)

  ▶ **Management:** Capacity to plan and execute policies. (Mann, 1984 ; Fukuyama, 2004)

  ▶ **Resources:** How much wealth a polity produces and how much can be extracted from the state through taxation. (Tilly, 1985; Levi, 1988 ; Besley and Perrson, 2009)

Commonly used indicators for State Capacity

▶ **Coercive Power:** Prevalence of crime, corruption, strength of rule of law, and military power

▶ **Public Good Provision:** Quality and levels of infrastructure, health, education, and welfare programs

▶ **Taxation:** Level, tax base, and type

▶ **Macroeconomic Management:** Budget deficits, inflation

▶ **Structural Interventions:** Labor markets, industrial development

Critique

▶ The aforementioned indicators seem to be too **technocratic, apolitical and focused on resource generation**.

▶ This approach lacks a clear normative benchmark. The definition does not look at "*how are things getting done?*" Russia versus Mauritius or Sweden

▶ It tends to ignore social & agency cost, and doesn't explicitly integrate the role of institutions.

▶ All else being equal, an institution that promotes transparency and citizen engagement may lead to stronger state capacity because it reduces the social cost of policy implementation. [Khemani et al, 2016]

▶ Thus, state capacity heavily depends on the nature of political institutions. (e.g. democratic vs autocratic)

Roadmap of the Talk

▶ First, I define political distortions and account for their origins and persistence. This was covered at length during the 31st Kuznets Memorial Lecture.

▶ Then, I will propose to use this knowledge to correct political distortions and strengthen state capacity through institutional editing and experimentation.

▶ I will focus on institutions that promote political agency (public reason, deliberation, social contracts).

▶ I will show that deliberation helps strengthen state capacity through (i) better **information sharing**, (ii) prevention of **coordination** failure and, (iii) promotion of individual and group **agency** on the part of the citizens.

Political Distortions

What are Political Distortions?

▶ Different theories highlight the "ideal government" behavior for development.

▶ Economic models often rely on the concept of a "Benevolent dictator" or "Social planner" that aims at maximizing development and social welfare outcomes.

▶ Political distortion captures the gap between what the government ought to do from a development and social welfare perspective to what it actually does.
(Canen and Wantchekon, 2022)

▶ In other words, it occurs when politics gets in the way of development, from the perspective of a normative theoretical benchmark. (See Acemoglu et al, 2005 and others)

Consequences of Political Distortions

▶ The nature of politics is a central component in the study of state capacity and TFP.

▶ E.g. : States captured by politicians who implement policies like preferential taxes and regulations are de facto weaker.

▶ These policies are the direct result of distortions emerging from the political process. In other words, political distortions weaken state capacity.

▶ Political distortions originate from institutions that that reward politicians and state actors for designing and implementing policies that generate the misallocation of factors of production. (e.g. Hsieh et al, 2019 show the extent of productivity loss due to misallocation of talent as a result of gender and racial discrimination.)
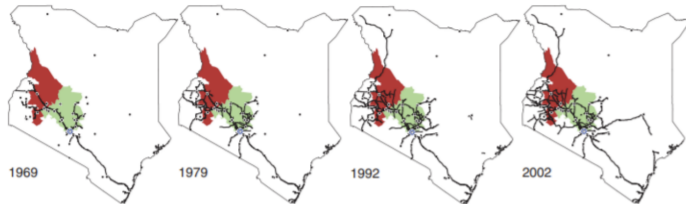
Examples of Political Distortions

- **Firm-oriented distortions:**
    - Khwaja and Mian, 2005 show that politically connected firms borrow 45% more from public banks in Pakistan and have a default rate of 50%, leading to a loss of 0.3 to 1.9 % of GDP every year. *[Benchmark: No politician on the board !!]*

    - Akcigit et al, 2018 show that political connections lower innovation in Italy. *[Benchmark: Schumpeterian creative destruction]*

- **Clientelism and voter-oriented distortions in democracies:**
    - Beg, 2021 shows that the landed elites in Pakistan exploit the economic dependency of rural agricultural tenants and sharecroppers in elections. *[Benchmark: Voting based on political preferences, not paternalistic ties]*

    - Burgess et al, 2015 show that ethnic favoritism drives the expenditure on road building in Kenya. *[Benchmark: Optimal road network is based on population and market access]*

Panel A. Actual network

1969   1979   1992   2002

Panel B. Counterfactual network based on population and distance (market potential)

1969   1979   1992   2002

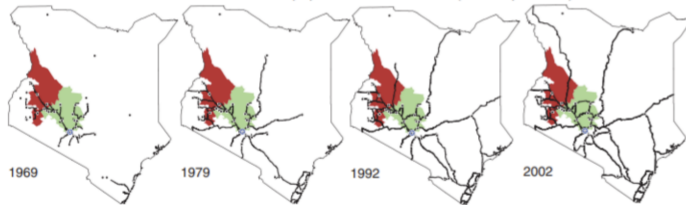| — Paved road | | Kikuyu districts | | Kalenjin districts | ⬡ Nairobi | • Town/city (1962) |

Figure 1: Evolution of Kenya's paved road network Details

State Capacity Building

▶ Much of the economics literature views state capacity building as top-down (public) investment that might include efforts towards building cohesive polities (Besley, 2022)

▶ It tends to focus on building technical expertise in public management for state agents. This includes :

  ▶ Attracting Talent and Incentivizing Public Service Motivation (Francois, 2000 ; Ritz et al, 2016 ; Dal Bó et al, 2013 & 2018)
  ▶ Developing effectiveness in Revenue Mobilization (Bergeron et al, 2020 & 2022 ; Okunogbe, 2022 & 2023 ; Pomeranz, 2015 & 2017)

▶ There is an emerging approach based on **Institutional Experimentation** as opposed to policy experimentation. It aims at reducing political distortions.

Institutional Editing and Experimentation

What is an Institution?

Theoretical view of social and democratic institutions.

Quoting Myerson, [1995]:

> *The structure of* **a democratic political system** *(and states) consists of the offices that politicians may seek, the constitutional powers associated with these offices, and the procedures by which candidates are elected to these offices. These structures together form* **a complex incentive system** *for politicians, determining what kinds of political decisions and strategies will be rewarded. Thus, the constitutional structure of a democracy may* **influence the conduct** *of its politicians* **and the performance** *of its government.*

It is a policy-making process/ game form (e.g. deliberation) specifying only the set of players, the sets of strategies for each player, and an outcome function. It can be represented as a strategic-form game $G = \langle N, (A_i)_{i \in N}, (u_i)_{i \in N} \rangle$, which captures the incentives affecting players and generates outcomes.

Institutional Editing

- ▶ Major institutional change happen at critical junctures i.e. Constitutional moment (See García-Ponce and Wantchekon, 2023 and Dercon, 2023), but they mostly occur as a result of altering a decision making process.

Why? Incremental changes an be as effective. They tend to be more sustainable

- ▶ For example, consider the game of maintaining a public good. *(See details below)*
- ▶ In that game, there are 2 equilibria: bad one with no provision of public good and a good one with provison of public good.

Institutional editing:

- ▶ Now, modify G to obtain $\tilde{G}$ that includes a voting or deliberating stage.
- ▶ Players first vote on public good provision and a positive vote serves as a commitment device.
- ▶ In $\tilde{G}$, there is a unique equilibrium wherein the public good is provided with certainty.

Voting stage facilitates information sharing or coordination.

Analysis of the game

Maintenance of a public good:

- ▶ The public good requires maintenance by both players.

- ▶ Maintenance is costly with cost $c \in (0, 1)$.

	Maintain	Not Maintain
Maintain	**$1 - c$, $1 - c$**	$-c$, 0
Not Maintain	0, $-c$	**0, 0**

The Nash equilibria for G:

- ▶ Good equilibrium: Each player maintains the public good by contributing for it.

- ▶ Bad equilibrium: The public good is not maintained as neither player decides to contribute for it.

New stage

▶ This is a classic "Battle of Sexes" problem.

Add the voting stage:

▶ The public good is provided only if both players vote for provision.

▶ Voting for provision serves as a commitment to maintain the good: the maintenance stage is trivial.

Unique strict Nash equilibrium for $\tilde{G}$:

▶ Both players vote for provision and the public good is maintained with certainty.

▶ Voting helps solve coordination failure.

▶ In the previous exercise, we see that modifying the game allowed or coordination towards an optimal outcome.

▶ This gives us the added value of game $\tilde{G}$ (with voting) as compared to game G (without voting). ▶

Next, we look at "how do we take an existing institutions and edit it to get a more desirable outcome?"

Institutional Experimentation

Question: How do we measure the impact of a new institution?

- Institutional Experimentation aims at identifying the added value on an "edited" institution (henceforth institution 1) as compared to status quo institution (henceforth institution 0) . See Atchade et al, 2021 for details.

- The edit in institution might lead to two complementary effects :

    - a better policy being chosen (an intermediate outcome).
    - more effort exerted towards the policy's implementation as a result of optimism/excitement among stakeholders.

- Together these two effects shape the final outcome.

Mechanisms

The focus of this talk is on deliberation as a form of editing.

- ▶ **Clarity:** Deliberation facilitates information sharing and prevents coordination failure, leading to a better policy outcome.

- ▶ **Agency :** Deliberation makes participants more "optimistic" towards the successful implementation of the chosen policy. This positive belief updating on the success of the policy might induce higher effort by the participants.

The **intrinsic effect** of institution 1 is captured by the additional effort/investment induced by the updated beliefs. (See Atchade et al, 2021 for details)

More Technically

Let $Y(i, d)$ be the outcome for endogenously chosen policy $d \epsilon \{1, ..., L\}$ by institution $i \epsilon \{0, 1\}$

▶ The **average institution effect** is defined by :

$$\tau_{0,1} = \mathbf{E}[\, Y(1, d) - Y(0, d) \,] \qquad (1)$$

▶ We define the intrinsic effect of institution 1 compared to institution 0 under policy D by:

$$\tau_{0,1}(D) = \mathbf{E}[\, Y(1, d) - Y(0, d) \mid d = D \,] \qquad (2)$$

Key Steps in institutional experimentation

1. Define and randomly assign institution 1 and institution 0.

2. Ensure treatment homogeneity (game form and implementation).

3. Measure the individual beliefs over the policy alternatives before the voting/deliberation stage and after the policy outcome.

Example 1: Chieftaincy in Zimbabwe

▶ Chiefs have authority over public goods provision, taxes, land distribution and local justice decisions.

▶ Individuals with connections to the chief have more secure tenure rights and invest more in land fertility, getting higher output (See Goldstein and Udry, 2008 , Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson, 2014)

Figure 2: Chief in Zimbabwe

Editing with Competent advisors

▶ Institutional experimentation will consist of correcting the misallocation by editing features of the existing institutions.

▶ Traditional authorities govern with advisory councils (Bolt et al. 2022; Baldwin and Holzinger 2019).

▶ "There are no bad kings, only bad councilors" - An Akan saying (Wiredu, 1995)

▶ Baldwin et al, 2018 proposed an institutional edit that consisted of encouraging competent advising.

▶ The intervention led to an improved governance (e.g. better public goods provision, more inclusive representation).

Example 2: Market Reforms in China

▶ The most prominent example of institutional experimentation is China in late 1970s led by Deng Xiaoping. (Vogel, 2011)

▶ The status quo system of institutions was communism with three major dysfunctions : (i) Over Centralization (ii) Absence of market competition (iii) Inequitable education system (Mühlhahn, 2019)

▶ Following edits were made to solve these problems respectively : (i) Political decentralization (ii) Setting up of special economic zones (iii) Education reform to improve its access (Xu, 2011)

▶ These edits were systematically experimented i.e. they were tested locally, retooled if required and then scaled up. (Hsieh et al, 2019 ; Wang and Yang, 2022)

Figure 3: Deng Xiaoping

Deliberation

Building Consensus

Deliberation makes less divisive policies due to its **consensus-driven nature**, making it a good institutional design for positive updating of beliefs.

We now look at the culture of deliberation across many African societies.

Deliberation as the essence of African Political Culture

▶ "The one who is alone is an animal but those that are two are human beings" - A Chewa (Maravi) proverb (Kayange, 2018)

▶ Wiredu, 1995 asserts that human beings are by nature mutually dependent on one another; and that this mutual interdependence is a human mode of being"

▶ Consensus Democracy was widespread across pre-colonial Africa - Marawi Kingdom (present-day Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique), Buganda people of Uganda, Zulu in South Africa and Ashantis of Ghana. This consensus was typically achieved through deliberation.

Contd

- "Deliberations in a consensual democratic forum aim at restoring goodwill through reconciliation and persuasive discourse among participants who acknowledge and respect the deliberative capacity of other participants by recognising that dialogue 'presupposes not just two parties (at least) but also two conflicting positions' " - Wiredu, 1997 (Ajei, 2016)

- Wiredu advocated substituting current form of democracy with traditional consensus democracy.

- In his critique, Ani, 2014 finds this assertion 'records more nostalgic colorations than accurate descriptions' and is impractical.

- What we will do is edit current form of democracy with the essence of African culture of deliberation

Next, I will present my own work that consists of experimentation with **public reason, social contracts and deliberation.**

Deliberation Experiments for State Capacity

I will present three projects :

1. Political selection and voter agency (Wantchekon and Guardado, 2023)

2. Bureaucratic deliberation and performance (Aman-Rana, Wantchekon and Kovo, 2023)

3. Public deliberation and education policy (Wantchekon et al., 2023)

Political Selection and Voter Agency

Literature Review

▶ Public debate screenings build political knowledge that changes the way people vote (Bidwell, Casey and Glennerster, 2020)

▶ More democratic procedures increase the likelihood that parties select voters' most preferred candidates and favor candidates with stronger records of public goods provision. (Casey, Kamara and Meriggi, 2020)

▶ There is a greater role for information provision in reducing information asymmetries between politicians and their constituents and improving public service delivery. (Duflo et al, 2013)

Experiment Details

Wantchekon and Guardado, 2023 :

- ▶ The intervention took place prior to the March 2011 elections in Benin and involved 150 randomly selected villages.

- ▶ In the **treatment group** (edited institution) candidates held town hall meetings where voters deliberated over their electoral platforms.

- ▶ The **control group** (status quo institution) was exposed to the standard campaign, i.e. one-way communication of the candidate's platform by himself or his local broker.

Townhall Meetings

Results

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Overall	Opposition	Incumbent	Overall	Opposition	Incumbent
			DV: Village Turnout			
Treatment	3.309**	2.654*	5.110	0.376	-0.225	3.445
	(1.619)	(1.572)	(4.301)	(2.391)	(2.186)	(9.907)
Treatment X % Village Attendees				9.573**	10.212***	0.701
				(3.934)	(3.791)	(30.557)
Observations	150	110	40	138	104	34

Robust standard errors clustered at the village level in parentheses. All specifications include a commune fixed effect. The sample size for columns 4-6 is smaller as there was missing detailed information on the meetings for 12 villages - 6 from the opposition and 6 from the incumbent. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Figure 4: Effect on Voter Turnout

Results

- We find that town-hall meetings led to :
    - a more informed citizenry
    - higher electoral participation
    - lower policy polarization along demographic lines **(Convergence)**.
- We also observe a greater willingness to reject unethical behavior by politicians in the form of vote-buying.
- This is consistent with townhall deliberation promoting what we call more "ethical" voting behavior.

Bureaucratic Performance and Agency

Aman-Rana, Wantchekon and Kovo (2023)

▶ Audits can help reduce corruption in local governments through external accountability [Avis, Ferraz & Finan, 2018]

▶ Can internal accountability be as effective? In other words : Does the collective deliberation among bureaucrats regarding their governance enhance overall performance?

  ▶ (+) Increased agency and **autonomy** of bureaucrats (Rasul and Rogger, 2018; Duflo et al., 2018; Bandiera et al., 2021; Fujiwara and Wantchekon, 2013; Wantchekon and Guardado, 2023), while also providing crucial **information** regarding constraints on performance (Iaryczower, Shi & Shum, 2018; Canen & Iaryczower, 2024)

  ▶ (-) Accountability or the sense that one is monitored can heighten tensions at the expense of internal **cohesion and trust** within organization (Mendelberg, 2002; Thompson, 2008)

Experimental design

- ▶ 3 meetings one month apart (starting Sept 2016)
  - ▶ The mayor was not invited
- ▶ Same structure: presentation and then open discussion on **external evaluation reports**
- ▶ Clear agenda
  - ▶ Meeting #1: Presentation of each **municipality's own audit reports** from last year
  - ▶ Meeting #2: Presented results from a **survey of bureaucrats** across the 20 municipalities
  - ▶ Meeting #3: Presented results from a **survey of citizens** from their own municipality
- ▶ Control municipalities: No deliberation
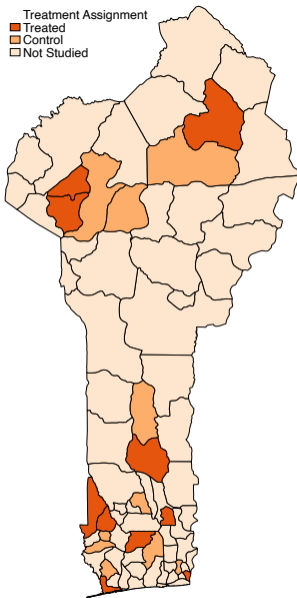
Figure 5: Spatial Distribution of Treatment Assignment.

Table 1: Did Collective Deliberation Affect Bureaucrat's Performance?

Dependent Variables	Pre-Period Control Mean	DID Estimate	Standard Error	P-Value	Randomization Inference P-Value	Obs.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Municipal Audit-Based Performance	77.835	6.8286**	2.9555	0.032	0.000	112

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

Citizens' perceptions and experience with service delivery

Positive (insignificant) short-run effect of deliberation exercises on citizens' experience with government (0.17 std deviation increase; $p > 0.1$)

- ▶ Improved perceptions of accountability of bureaucrats

- ▶ Lower probability of payment of bribes

- ▶ Higher ease of access to services and better living conditions

Table 2: Heterogeneity of Audit-Based Performance

Dependent Variables	Below Mean Control Mean (1)	Treatment (2)	Treatment × Above Mean (3)	Obs. (4)	P-Value: T + T × Above Mean = 0 (5)
Municipal Audit-Based Performance	63.138	10.779*** (2.605) {0.060}	-7.572*** (2.225) {0.960}	112	0.312
Sub-Components of Municipal Audit-Based Performance					
Record Keeping	63.800	18.583* (9.860) {0.400}	-18.562** (8.692) {0.800}	112	0.997
Transparency of Public Procurement	68.238	11.061* (5.623) {0.100}	-10.110 (6.057) {0.620}	112	0.848
Overall Management	65.000	39.935** (17.788) {0.140}	-42.201** (17.554) {0.380}	72	0.825

Table 3: Heterogeneity of Citizen Outcomes

Dependent Variables	Below Mean Control Mean	Treatment	Treatment × Above Mean	Obs.	P-Value: T + T × Above Mean = 0
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Aggregate Index					
Citizen Experience Index	-	0.285* (0.149) {0.160}	-0.256*** (0.079) {0.760}	432	0.845

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Randomization inference *p*-value in curly brackets.

Key takeaways

- Collective deliberation exercises led to an improvement in auditors' evaluation of the bureaucracy

- There was no short-run effects on public service delivery
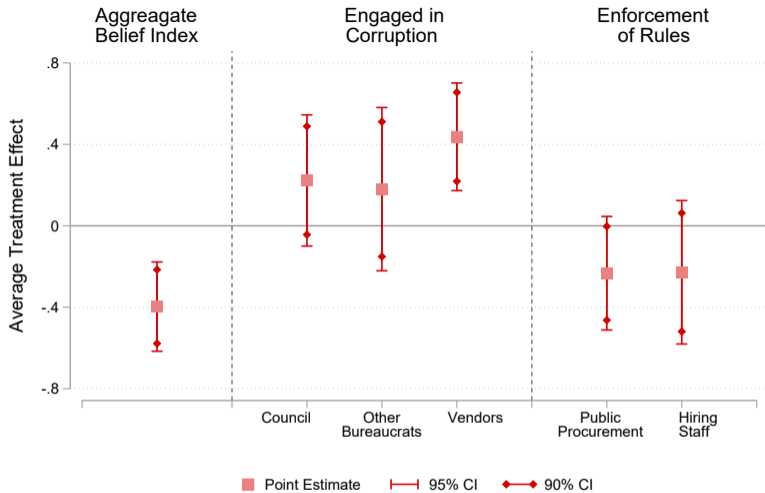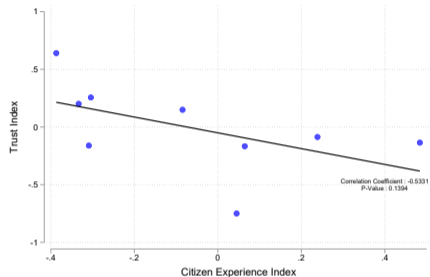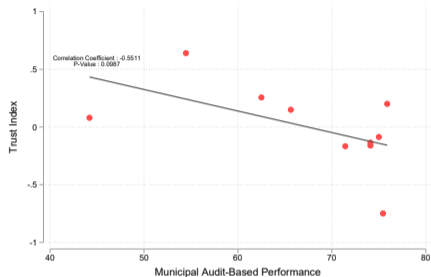
Figure 6: Impact of meetings on Bureaucrats' Perceptions

Effects on the distribution of bureaucratic beliefs about rule of law

Belief about Enforcement Index
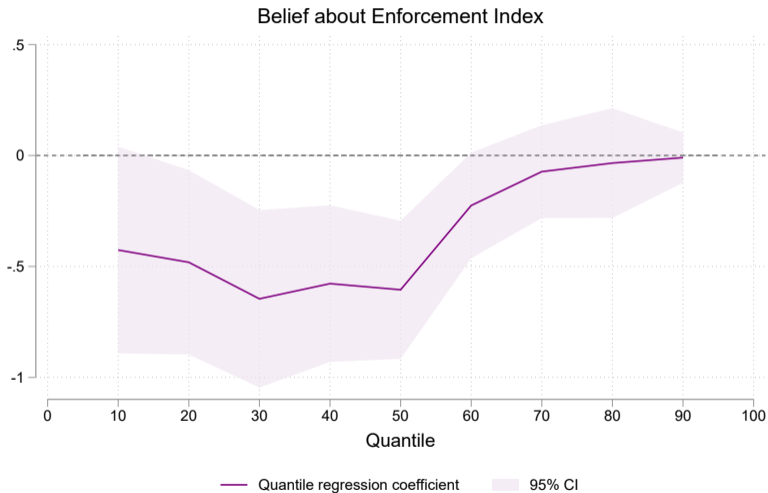
Effect on trust among bureaucrats

Bureaucrats' Level of Trust In
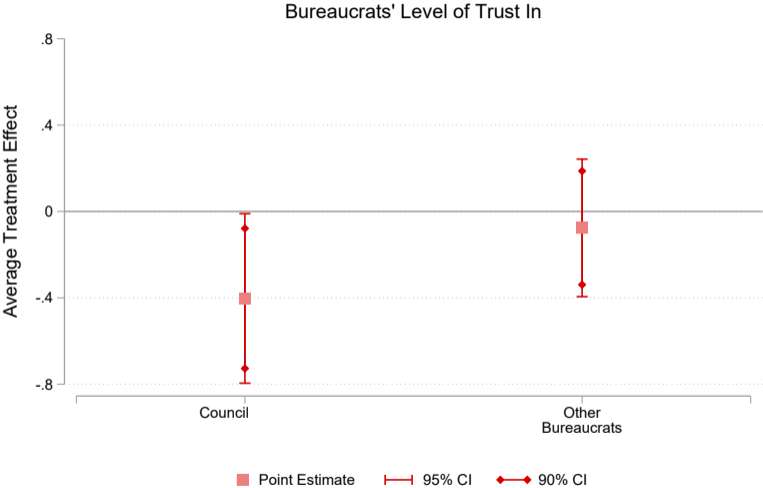
How is trust correlated with performance

- ▶ While trust and social cohesion are important for performance (Brown et al., 2015; Keefer and Vlaicu, 2024)

- ▶ Higher trust could also allow for collusive agreements at the cost of service delivery (Tirole, 1986; Milgrom and Roberts, 1988; de Janvry et al., 2023)

Public Deliberation and Education Policy

Public reason and social contracts: Do they work?

RISE Nigeria: Leverage role of deliberation in African traditional decision-making (Wantchekon et al., 2023):

▶ Context: Decision-making between local stakeholders in education.

▶ Step 1: Information gathering and dissemination on policy preferences

▶ Step 2: Deliberation through the organization of Education Summits

▶ Step 3: Drafting and signing of a "Social Contract".

▶ Outcomes: Ownership of decisions, education investments, actual learning.

Implementation Summits

Social Contract

Social contract signed by local policymakers and education stakeholders.

Memorandum of Understanding
Nkanu West Local Government Education Summit
Mega-Mater Elizabeth High School, Agbani, Enugu State
December 9, 2020

Memorandum of Understanding signed by the SSA State Governor, (Representing the Commissioner of Education of Enugu State and Donor Representative; SBMC Representative; NGO Representative; Parent Representative; Traditional Rulers; hereafter referred to as the stakeholders.

Following the priority discussions that took place in person throughout today's Education Summit,

We, the State Government of Enugu State and the stakeholders,

CONSCIOUS of the importance of education to: developing livelihoods; creating stronger communities; giving children a path to social mobility; fostering economic development; and aiding the process of creating a better future;

DESIROUS to work in unison towards the improvement of the education system in Nkanu West;

REAFFIRMING the crucial importance of every stakeholder in the design, implementation, and outcomes of all education policies; and

DETERMINED, as stakeholders and legislators, to contribute to the greatest extent of our abilities to the commitments outlined in this document,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Quality of Education
1. The State Government shall seek to spend an additional 100% increase to:
   a. Specific Target 1: Establish a system that recruits trained and qualified teachers in the LGA. Abolish recruitment based on familiarity of government officials.
   b. Specific Target 2: Pass the policy of lower teacher – student class ratio. Adopting the policy of 1:18 teachers per class.
   c. Specific Target 3: Increase advocacy to encourage more male teachers in the LGA. About 39% increase in this recruitment.

Article 2
Financial Management
1. The State Government shall seek to spend an additional 100% of the existing budget on education to:
   a. Specific Target 1: Establish at least 5 additional committees monitoring and tracking the disbursements of funds allocated Nkanu West LGA.
   b. Specific Target 2: Increase spending allotted to teacher's welfare and retention by at least 20% of the existing budget allocation to Nkanu West LGA.
   c. Specific Target 3: Creation of a department of education sector expenditure tracking and assessment at the local government level.

Article 3
Access to Education
1. The State Government shall seek to make an additional 100% increase to:
   a. Specific Target 1: Introduce merit award system within school to reward efficient student.
   b. Specific Target 2: Introduce a school local security system, deployment of a minimum of two security personnel in each school in the local government area.
   c. Specific Target 3: Introducing a fencing policy for all schools in the local government. Each school is expected to have a well enclosed fence.

2. The State Government shall seek to make an additional 100% improvement to existing system on:
   a. Specific Target 1: Abolish cultism and l hoodlums in school environment. Incorporate the law enforcement agencies in providing a more secured environment for school and school-aged students

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE the Governor of Enugu State, The Commissioner of Education, and the stakeholders have signed below this Memorandum of Understanding on this 9th day of December, 2020.

Mr. Kingsley Animba
Head Teacher

Igboke Onyebuchi
(Civil Society Organisation)

HRH Igwe Crescent Okafor
Traditional Ruler

Chief Ogbodo Chibuzor Moses
SBMC Chairman

Uwakwe Jane Ngozi
Quality Assurance Educator

Lady Ann Adaeze Onyekwena
SSA to State Governor
(Representing the State Commissioner for Education)

Example from Nkanu (West LGA, Enugu State).

Post-summit Workplan

After summits, officials draft a workplan to operationalize commitments.

Access to Education	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cost (NGN)
Objective A: Provide incentives to encourage enrolments and reward high-performing students					
Activity 1A: Ensure that the minimum one meal per day is provided at every school across the LGA.					
Activity 2A: Organise a minimum of one inter-house competition week per school session in every school.					
Activity 3A: Provide free pencils, erasers, and books to every student in each school to encourage enrolment.					
Activity 4A: Organise community level sessions (minimum one) in each town with the help of local leaders, where government officials present information to gathered parents. • Use Churches/Mosques to help disseminate information about the sessions.					
Activity 5A: Provide bursaries for the top 5 students in primary 6 in each school to continue their studies at junior secondary school.					

Nkanu: Targeted activities to meet agreed objectives in the social contract.

Post-summit Stakeholder Workshops

After summits, follow-up workshops with schools' stakeholders to:

- ▶ Present findings on the state of education in Local Government Area (LGA);

- ▶ Inform participants on the social contract and other activities taking place;

- ▶ Reiterate importance of stakeholders in keeping local government accountable.
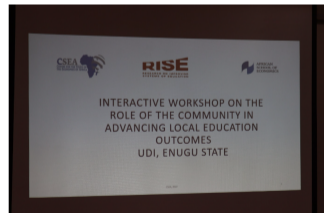
Summary of Results

▶ Strong improvements in school infrastructure

▶ Learning losses due to COVID-19 were smaller in treated locations

▶ Stakeholder commitment is inconclusive

Mean test score by Treatment vs Control LGAs
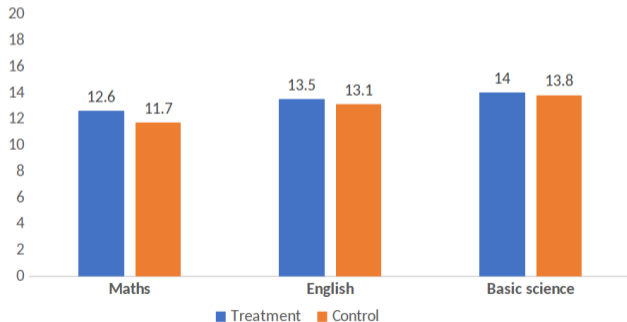
Conclusion

▶ "The problem of the formation of the (republican) state, hard that it may sound, is not insoluble even for a race of devils, granted that they have intelligence....How to establish for them a constitution such that, although their private dispositions may be really antagonist; they may yet so act as check upon one another, that is in their public relations the effect is the same as if they have no such evil sentiments. Such a problem must be capable of solution."

- Immanuel Kant, Perpetual Peace (1795)

Conclusion

▶ This lecture covers recent attempts to meet Kant's challenge from more than two centuries ago. I argue, that institutional editing and experimentation is a great complement to existing more top-down state building strategies (investment in physical and human capital). It is theoretically grounded, incorporates insights from local political culture, while building on recent advances in Empirical Political Economy.

UPDATES:
What Ever Happened to that Skinny Left Wing Activist
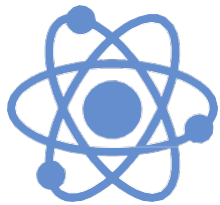Shown on the Second Slide?

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Founded the Pan African Scientific Research Council (PARSC)- A Network of ~550 Scientists

Became a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2013 and a Fellow of the Econometric Society in 2018.
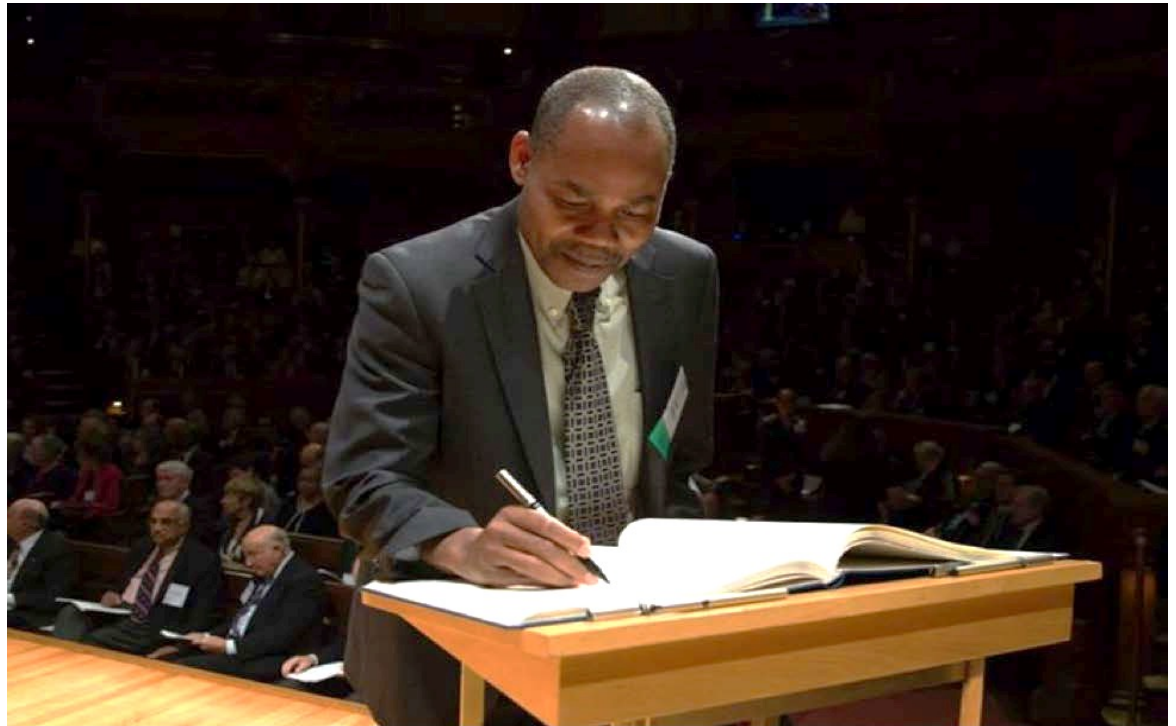
Induction Ceremony at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2013)

Personal Life

Traditional marriage
photo of Catherine

At a Montreal Bus Station before heading to
Vancouver for my PhD (1991)

Kristia and Travis in New Haven
(Summer 1997)

With Catherine (2009)

Travis' Training for Soccer Coaching in Madrid

Father-Daughter Dance at Kristia's Wedding

Kristia's PhD. Graduation, Harvard (2021)

Appendix

Alternative Editing with a new Social Choice Rule Back

Evidence from Afghanistan

- ▶ It's not only about "including the chief":

  - ▶ Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov (2017) show that when traditional leaders were present in participatory meetings and the decision was made by public consultation, they tend to capture the process in their benefit.

- ▶ Institutional editing: They proposed a change the social choice rule

  - ▶ They found that decisions made under secret vote reduces the influence of the chief and improve villagers' perceptions of good governance.
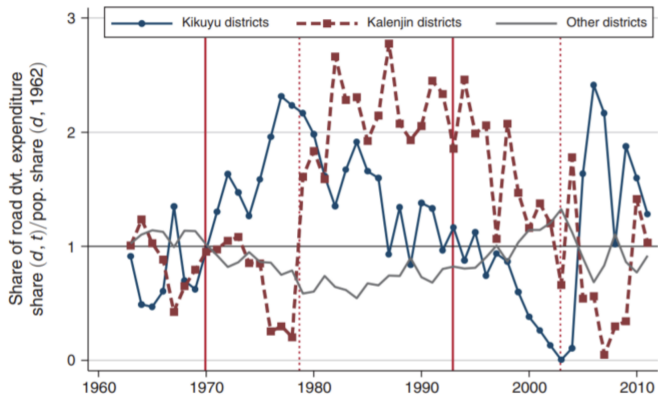
Burgess et al, 2015 Back

Figure 7: Road Expenditure in Kenya

Example: School Board

We will look at the effect of deliberation among stakeholders to decide the teacher's pay.

▶ Here, the policy outcome is the level of teacher's salary

▶ The final outcome is the learning levels among students

▶ Deliberation helps in :

  ▶ Information sharing on cost of living and effectiveness of a raise

  ▶ Revealing other stakeholders' preferences

  ▶ Having chosen a level of teachers' salary, the stakeholders feel optimistic towards its success. Thus, they put in effort to achieve to sustain the policy and improve the learning outcomes.