

# Do Party Elites Impede Accountability? Evidence from South African Local Government Elections\*

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## Abstract

Does elite control of nominations for elected office reduce the power of citizens to hold politicians accountable? Most extant theories argue as such, but we lack solid empirical research to test whether party-controlled nominations actually lead to agency loss. In this paper, we examine the extent to which public opinion about local government performance predicts renominations of incumbent councillors in South Africa by political parties. Through analyses of more than 8000 councillor career paths geographically linked to several sources of survey and administrative data, we find strong evidence that party elites are responsive to the subjective views of citizens regarding the quality of individual politicians and of local services, particularly in electorally competitive areas. By contrast, “objective” measures of service delivery improvement only weakly predict renominations. Contrary to conventional and scholarly wisdom about democratic accountability in strong party systems, we find that party elites’ strategies of human capital retention are sensitive to citizen views. However, this party-based accountability mechanism may not incentivize the concrete provision of public goods and services.

**Keywords:** Democracy, accountability, service provision, political parties, Africa, political parties, elections

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# 1 Introduction

Most normative democratic theories of human development are premised on the functioning of accountability mechanisms (Sen 1999, Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999, World Bank and Bank 2003, Schumpeter 1942). The conventional expectation is that competition for elected positions ought to force those in office (incumbents) to do their jobs and to take responsibility for their actions. If those officials fail to deliver, citizens can apply pressure, including through elections, and vote representatives out of office. These mechanisms ought to incentivize politicians to try to deliver the goods and services that citizens want.

In practice, of course, electoral accountability frequently breaks down, and the notions of “rule by the people” and strong citizen agency may be divorced from reality. Understanding the drivers of this breakdown, and how it might be repaired, remains a central strand of research for political scientists (for a review, see Ashworth 2012). Leading explanations in the context of developing countries include the prevalence of clientelism (Stokes 2005; Wantchekon 2003), identity politics (Carlson 2015), and asymmetric information (Berry and Howell 2007, Besley and Burgess 2001, Khemani and World Bank 2016).

In this paper we focus on the role of elite influence, particularly the effects of elite control of candidate selection within political parties. We ask: what are the implications for democratic accountability when choices about incumbent renomination are delegated to party elites? If party elites have interests that diverge from those of ordinary citizens, this delegation might lead to substantial “agency loss”: a discrepancy between what citizens would like politicians to do and what they do in practice. Perhaps most famously, Michels’ “Iron Law of Oligarchy” posited that power within organizations – particularly in large political parties – will become concentrated and ultimately less democratic (Michels 1915). However, this proposition has received little theoretical or empirical scrutiny in young democracies.

In virtually all modern democracies, political parties exert some degree of influence over who runs for and ultimately wins political office. As Schattschneider famously wrote, “parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties” (Schattschneider 2009 (1942, 1)). However, despite a proliferation of research on how citizens can directly hold politicians accountable in young democracies (e.g., Gottlieb 2015; Carlson 2015; Harding 2015), research on the mediating role of political parties with respect to accountability in young democracies has remained largely focused on how parties maintain clientelistic relationships with citizens (e.g. Stokes 2005; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007). We seek to investigate how parties take into account (or not) citizen preferences and opinions when deciding which incumbent politicians will remain in elected offices. This linkage between parties and citizens is fundamental to understanding citizen agency within strong-party democracies, as well as the professional incentives faced by politicians charged with responding to citizens’ wants and needs.

Despite some commonalities, party systems vary widely in the degree to which party elites are afforded independent decision-making authority to select candidates for electoral competition, and to decide where, and on what basis politicians will compete (Riedl 2014). At one extreme, parties can be weak and inchoate, and viable candidates may be more likely to select the party they want to run with rather than the reverse. In such contexts, those running to be chief executive may simply create parties *de novo*. At the other extreme, in countries with strong party brands (Lupu 2013) and electoral rules that institutionalize strong roles for parties – such as closed-list proportional representation – party elites will be particularly influential. In these cases, unless parties employ open and binding primary systems<sup>1</sup>, authority for candidate selection is effectively delegated to party leadership.

In the context of elite-controlled nomination systems, analysts often assume that citizens’ interests have little impact on party decisions. In a critique of the growth of “gatekeeper

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<sup>1</sup>For example, Ichino and Nathan (2012) predict the use of primary systems in Ghana.

politics” within the African National Congress (ANC) party in South Africa, for example, [Beresford \(2015, 233\)](#) argues that “appointments at all levels of public office ... are made on the grounds of political loyalties over competence.” Political scientists, meanwhile, have continued to echo Michels’ core claim, hypothesizing that politicians who are nominated by a small party selectorate will be less responsive to citizen interests than to the interests of party elites ([Rahat 2007](#)). In short, candidate selection processes in elite-controlled systems are typically presumed to work against rather than in favor of democratic accountability.

Whether or not this is true in practice – whether elite control of nominations leads to agency loss for citizens – remains an empirical question, with profound implications for institutional design. Do parties, through their own rules and the choices of an elite selectorate, systematically retain politicians who are preferred by their constituents and remove those who are not? Or do they make renomination and promotion decisions using other criteria, to an extent that the views of ordinary citizens are not reflected in these outcomes?

To address these questions, we examine incumbent renominations and promotions in the 2016 South African local government elections. We analyze the career paths of over 8000 local councillors, combined with geo-coded data on both public opinion and constituency conditions. In doing so, we depart from the existing literature on candidate selection, which has focused on older and wealthier democracies and has tended to explain the procedures through which candidates are selected, but not the determinants of actual candidacies, nor whether party choices reflect citizen preferences (e.g. [De Luca, Jones and Tula 2002](#), [Lundell 2004](#)). For example, [Rahat \(2007\)](#) provides a useful typology of selection approaches and strategies, but offers no empirical analysis of the outcomes that particular strategies produce. [Wegner \(2016\)](#), meanwhile, finds a positive relationship between councillor renomination and some service delivery outcomes in South Africa’s 2011 elections, but does not examine constituent perceptions and preferences. In order to assess whether elite-controlled nominations contribute to agency loss, it is necessary to know what citizens actually want,

which requires measurement of public opinion. With newly available, fine-grained survey data, we are able to carry out such analyses for the most recent round of elections.

Contrary to standing assumptions about elite-controlled nomination systems, we find surprisingly little evidence of agency loss. South African political parties, and particularly the dominant ANC party, renominate incumbent politicians in ways that appear quite *consistent* with constituents' expressed views. In municipalities and wards where citizens expressed greater satisfaction with services and councillor performance in the year before the 2016 municipal elections, incumbent councillors were significantly more likely to be renominated, and were also more likely to be promoted to a higher position on their party's PR list. Moreover, party approaches to renominations are predictably sensitive to public opinion at the corresponding level of administration (for example, municipal-level public opinion for councillors elected at the municipal level via proportional representation; and ward-level public opinion for ward councillors). Electoral competition also plays a role consistent with the idea of party responsiveness: we find that parties are more responsive to public opinion in their renomination decisions in electorally-competitive constituencies.

At the same time, we find only a very weak link between measurable improvements in welfare-enhancing service delivery and politician renominations. Moreover, service delivery improvements are not a strong driver of citizens' subjective perceptions of councillor performance.<sup>2</sup> Rather than benchmarking against actual job-description related performance, we find that citizens' expressed satisfaction with local politicians is most tightly linked to views about councillors' empathy and trustworthiness, as well as subjective ratings of one's own life circumstances. Thus, while elite-controlled nomination systems appear to be more responsive to citizen views than previously realized, this accountability mechanism may not incentivize politicians to improve their constituency's material welfare.

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<sup>2</sup>For example, in the nationally representative Afrobarometer Round 6 survey, the Pearson correlation coefficients between our measures of objective service delivery improvement and satisfaction with local councillor performance all fall below 0.05.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we outline a theory of accountability with elite delegation, and highlight the observable implications of agency loss within this system. Second, we describe the South African case and our approach to data collection and analysis. Third, we present our results, organized by level of analysis. We conclude by summarizing the main findings and discussing implications for theories of democratic accountability in elite-controlled party systems.

## 2 Accountability and Agency Loss in Elite-Controlled Party Systems

To understand why elite delegation might produce agency loss, a useful starting point is a basic model of electoral accountability (with no special role for elites), summarized by [Ashworth \(2012, 184-6\)](#). In this two-period model, incumbent politicians choose actions  $a$  in the first period, which can be observed as efforts and outcomes by voters, who get to reelect or to replace the incumbent. If reelected, the incumbent will receive some benefit  $B > 0$ , which includes things like “salary and perks of office, the value of improving policy while continuing in office, gains from potential corruption open to winners, or direct psychic benefits to holding office” ([Ashworth 2012, 185](#)). In developing country contexts without strong private-sector opportunities for local politicians, the relative value of  $B$  may be quite high. These benefits incentivize politicians to take actions to increase the probability of their reelection.

One can define  $a = 1$  as those actions that voters desire (for example, actions that improve constituent welfare or otherwise increase satisfaction with their representatives), with the alternative  $a = 0$ , which in the latter case also yields some non-electoral benefit  $b > 0$  for the politician. While in office, politicians can allocate their finite time and effort toward actions

that voters desire ( $a = 1$ ) *or* toward actions that do not help voters but are likely to yield non-electoral benefits ( $a = 0$ ). For example, politicians might spend time cultivating ties to party bosses, or attempting to divert resources to themselves or party allies.

The model implies that an incumbent is responsive to voter sanctioning – granting citizens some degree of agency – when the following inequality holds:

$$BPr(reelect|a = 1) \geq BPr(reelect|a = 0) + b \tag{1}$$

Under a system of elite delegation, however, party elites observe politician actions and measure public opinion (either informally or through polling), and then decide whether or not to renominate the incumbent. Party elites (“the party”) must select who they want to do the work of representing the party brand and enjoy the privileges of holding office. Given that the party cares about its electoral fortunes, we might expect party elites to select candidates who take actions to increase their own chances of re-election, as in the voter-driven model above. However, in a system where citizen voting is shaped by strong party brands, citizens may not be particularly sensitive to individual candidate selections. Especially in party “strongholds,” party elites can reasonably expect victory regardless of the individual they put forward as their representative. Under these conditions, it is unclear how much emphasis party elites will place on an individual incumbent’s success in satisfying citizens. Instead of rewarding incumbents who are popular with their constituents, elites may choose to nominate politicians who will generate “rents,” who are particularly loyal, or who prioritize policy goals favored by elites but not by citizens.

From the incumbent’s perspective, the probability of their own re-election under this system is jointly determined by the probability of renomination by their party and the likelihood that their party will win the election for that contest. However, the party also gets to

decide where candidates will compete, and can choose either a very safe, competitive, or unwinnable contest. As a result, rational incumbents will focus primarily on the likelihood of renomination decisions by their party, and responsibility for ensuring that candidate selection is responsive to citizen views shifts to the party-elite selectorate. Note that incumbents will still be effectively responsive to citizens if taking citizen-oriented actions ( $a = 1$ ) sufficiently increases the probability of *renomination*; in other words, if the *party* is responsive to the incumbent’s choice to take (or not take) actions that voters desire. Thus, citizens retain agency if:

$$BPr(\textit{renomination}|a = 1) \geq BPr(\textit{renomination}|a = 0) + b \quad (2)$$

While politician performance might be evaluated in numerous ways, it is ultimately citizen *perceptions* of the value of  $a$  that counts for the satisfaction of voters, and therefore for the potential for agency loss. For example, technocratic or policy-driven party elites could use renominations to reward and punish politicians in their party based on observable performance metrics, such as the delivery of basic government services, assessments of financial management by expert auditors, or the performance of other legally-mandated duties. However normatively desirable this scenario might be, this system could still produce agency loss from the perspective of citizens if these “objective” measures of performance are not an important driver of citizen evaluations. In other words, we should not presume to know *a priori* what constitutes  $a$ , the set of actions that, if taken by an incumbent, would increase the probability of her re-election under a voter-driven selection mechanism. The key to assessing the magnitude of agency loss is to determine whether citizens’ subjective evaluations significantly affect the probability that politicians are renominated by their party. Such evaluations may be a function of politician actions ( $a$ ), citizens’ information about those actions, and citizens’ pre-existing preferences. Our data allow us to distinguish explicitly

between public opinion and observable measures of job-related performance, and to examine the empirical relationship between them rather than making assumptions about which actions citizens value.

The balance of scholarly and conventional wisdom is that party selectorates are unlikely to take citizen views into account under systems of elite delegation, pointing to the self-serving biases generated by such institutions. Party leaders, according to this view, will make choices to serve their own interests rather than rewarding politicians for serving citizens. In the extreme case, party elites may collude with incumbents to capture the gains from  $b$ , rather than making renomination conditional on service delivery or constituent service. For instance, [Packel \(2008\)](#) notes that in many countries, local government elections are explicitly non-partisan to ensure that “merit, not party affiliation, is the basis of representation.” The implication, of course, is that parties do not value merit. Indeed, in the South African case we consider here, [Heller \(2001\)](#) (as cited by [Packel 2008](#)) argues that the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party’s “hegemony” is contributing to the unraveling of local democracy. Similarly, [Gaventa and Runciman \(2016\)](#) argue that the ANC may be taking its power “for granted” and overlooking the needs of constituents. Making reference to the case of Senegal, ([Packel 2008](#), 7) concludes, “Where local elections occur on a partisan basis, nomination rules that favor national parties can serve as impediments to downward accountability.”

While the notion that party elites are “out of touch” with citizens is a popular refrain, especially for well-established parties, such assumptions bely the reality that modern political parties, including throughout Africa, tend to invest heavily in political polling, research, and outreach, especially in election years. That said, in line with our discussion above, parties that seek to satisfy voters are more likely to look to citizens’ expressed preferences and opinions rather than “objective” information about their welfare. It is well-established that citizens, including in older and wealthy democracies, frequently make voting decisions based on limited and quite superficial information or biases ([Achen and Bartels 2017](#)), and we may

expect similar patterns in poorer and younger democracies.

If party elites *do* respond to citizen views of incumbent performance, we expect that this will depend heavily on whether their elected representatives are in or out of political power, and on the level of political competition. First, to the extent that parties are sensitive to citizen perspectives on government performance in the selection of candidates, we expect this to be more prevalent in governing parties (who want to take credit for performance) than within opposition parties. We expect citizens to blame ruling party politicians for poor service performance much more than they blame opposition party politicians. Second, party elites should be more sensitive to citizen views of incumbent performance in constituencies where incumbents face strong political competition. Going back to [Schumpeter \(1942\)](#), and in more recent studies on service delivery (e.g., as reviewed in [Pepinsky, Pierskalla and Sacks 2017](#), and [Wegner 2016](#)), electoral competition frequently predicts higher levels of public goods and services, presumably through greater pressures on the bureaucracy.<sup>3</sup> In turn, we expect that in electorally competitive areas, governing parties will be more attentive to factors that might affect re-election prospects, and that they will be more likely to replace unpopular candidates in such areas.

To summarize, elite delegation may produce agency loss to the extent that party elites' decisions about renomination are insensitive to citizen perceptions of incumbent politicians. Conversely, if party elites are reliably responsive to the perceptions of constituents in their renomination decisions, the magnitude of potential agency loss is reduced. To adjudicate among competing accounts of possible agency loss as a result of elite control of renominations, and to better understand the bases of electoral accountability, we seek to address the following questions empirically:

1. Are parties in power more likely to (not) re-nominate and to promote politicians in

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<sup>3</sup>By contrast, emphasizing scholarly studies from Latin America, ([Packel 2008](#), 9-10) finds that the evidence concerning whether electoral competitiveness leads to greater service provisions has been mixed.

areas where citizens hold (un)favorable views of their representatives or where satisfaction with services is high (low)?

2. Are these patterns more pronounced in politically-competitive areas?
3. To what extent is the expressed satisfaction of citizens shaped by politician’s measurable job performance, versus other factors?

### 3 Case selection, Data and Research design

#### 3.1 The case of South African Local Government Elections

We explore these questions in the context of contemporary South Africa. While the ruling ANC party has garnered the most seats and votes at every level of government since 1994, there is significant and growing variation in the composition of local government. Moreover, with a constitution and supporting legislation explicitly structured towards the empowerment of local government as an arena for citizen-state relations and more effective service delivery, South Africa is an often-cited case for champions of the “Democratic Local Governance” (DLG) paradigm (Blair 2000). South Africa is also a strong-party system in the sense that virtually all major parties have strong “brands” (Lupu 2013) and retain control of candidate selection at all levels of government.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>It is imperative to learn about the nominations process inferentially because the formal process guidelines are opaque and wide-ranging. While the ruling ANC lays out its procedures in a document, “2016 Local Government Elections Candidate Selection Process,” the 20 pages and 81 guidelines reflect a multi-step and ambiguous process, with multiple goals and prerogatives. Perhaps the only clear mandate is the one to ensure equitable representation of women. Otherwise, the formal process involves nominations by party branches, which in turn form ward screening and selection committees; their proposals are considered at the regional, municipal and provincial levels, and ultimately the National Executive Committee “ratifies all lists.” (6) In a similar manner, the leading challenger, Democratic Alliance (DA) party, in its 2014 document, “Regulations for the Nomination of Candidates,” details a process which is intended to generate input from local communities in the selection of ward candidates and PR lists, but reserves substantial discretion for executives and executive committees. To our knowledge, no public data are available indicating the degree to which the preferences of low-level (e.g. ward and municipal) nominating bodies are ultimately respected

We study how parties selected candidates for local government councils for the election held August 3, 2016. South Africa’s local government includes three types of councillors: ward councillors, who are elected in single-member districts under “first past-the-post” rules; proportional representation councillors, who are selected via proportional representation with closed-lists; and district councillors (for the 226 of South Africa’s “local” municipalities outside the 8 major metropolitan areas).<sup>5</sup> We focus on just the first two types of councillors,<sup>6</sup> who appear in roughly equal numbers within municipalities, and totalled 8,377 heading into the 2016 elections.<sup>7</sup> Even with thousands of electoral contests all around the country, political party national executive councils ultimately decide who will run in every contest.

Elite-controlled nominations in South Africa can be considered a “most likely” case for party-based accountability. Despite more than 20 years of dominance, the ANC has faced increasing electoral challenges in recent years, especially from the Democratic Alliance (DA) party. Ten different parties controlled at least one municipality in the 2011-16 councils. Given the anticipated competitiveness of the 2016 elections, especially in major urban areas, party elites were acutely aware of their electoral vulnerabilities and stood to gain from being sensitive to voter perceptions in their nomination decisions.

South African councillors, like elected representatives in most legislative bodies, have wide-ranging responsibilities, including some that develop informally via custom. However, we expect that citizen perceptions are likely to be most attuned to politician actions (*a*) relating to the delivery of basic infrastructural services, such as potable water, sanitation, electricity, and refuse removal. These services are highly politically salient in South Africa, and citizens

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or re-arranged at higher levels of the party.

<sup>5</sup>Note that because of redistricting the number of local municipalities was reduced to 205 for the councils to begin in 2016, but this should not affect our results as our data are all from the 2011-16 boundaries and consolidated municipalities became larger, expanding the number of councillors.

<sup>6</sup>District councils stand above local municipalities and play an ambiguous role in local governance in South Africa. Those councillors are elected by a formula of 40 percent based on proportional representation and 60 percent by the councillors themselves, and the district councillors are chosen from among local municipal councillors. We leave the study of these councillors to future research.

<sup>7</sup>Seat allocation rules are described at <http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/localgov/local.html>).

have come to expect councillors to be responsible for their delivery (see also ? and [DeKadt and Lieberman 2017](#)). Although councillors do not have individual budgets to implement services directly, [Paradza, Mokwena and Richards \(2010, 11\)](#) note that councillors are designated to “act as [watchdogs] and ensure the municipality implements policies to address the needs of citizens.” In addition to basic services, the South Africa Councillor Handbook describes the responsibilities of councillors to include “improving the lives of all citizens,” “the development and growth of the economy,” and “job creation.” Thus, while we focus on improvement in basic services as our primary measure of observable councillor performance, we also consider additional measures of material well-being over which councillors could be expected to have some influence, including improved access to formal housing, and improved employment rates.

### 3.2 Data and Research Design

We constructed a dataset of local councillors elected in 2011. We then matched each councillor with his or her constituency: ward and municipality for ward councillors, and municipality for PR councillors. We conduct our analyses at the municipal level in all nine provinces, and at the ward level in Gauteng province.<sup>8</sup>

Our key outcome of interest is the renomination status of these councillors for the 2016 local elections, which we identify through automated name-matching of party lists made available from South Africa’s Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).<sup>9</sup> Many councillors were not renominated. If renominated, they were put forward as a ward candidate, a PR candidate, or both. If nominated as a PR candidate, the individual was assigned a rank on

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<sup>8</sup>While the more fine-grained (ward-level) data are generally preferred, we do not have these data beyond Gauteng; and because PR councillors are appointed at the municipal level, we can only analyze the data at that level. In the latter case, we estimate the effects of citizen attitudes and changes in service delivery on all councillors from that municipality.

<sup>9</sup>Name-matching could be a small source of measurement error in our analyses, which we have tried to minimize with manual inspection.

the PR list, which determined the likelihood of actually attaining a council seat after the election, and of membership on the executive committee for the municipality’s governing party. Some councillors were also nominated to the provincial or national legislatures in the 2014 elections, which we consider a promotion. Thus, we are able to evaluate councillors’ nomination outcomes in a binary manner (renominated or not) or in a more graded manner.<sup>10</sup>

In the appendix, we show summary statistics for the municipal-level data, which includes both ward and PR councillors elected in 2011 in all 234 municipalities in South Africa (226 local municipalities and 8 metropolitan municipalities). The entire dataset contains 8,377 councillors; however, we focus our main analysis on the 5,841 who are members of the ruling party in their municipality (since it is unlikely that opposition party councillors will be evaluated by citizens or by party elites in the same manner). Our main dependent variable, *Renomination*, is a binary variable indicating whether a councillor was renominated by the same party for any elected position in the August 3, 2016 elections or the 2014 general election. Figure 1 shows the distribution of nomination outcomes for all ruling party councillors, and separately for ruling party ward and PR councillors. We see that nearly half of councillors are not renominated at all (approximately 49% of ruling party councillors). Conditional on being renominated for any position in 2016, most 2011 ward councillors are renominated as ward councillors (56%) and most 2011 PR councillors are renominated as PR councillors (75%). Notably, only a small handful were nominated for a national position in 2014. The rarity of promotion of local councillors to higher positions supports a key assumption we make in our analysis: that councillors whose renomination we do not observe are indeed “rejected” by the party, rather than receiving a promotion we cannot observe in our data.

For incumbent PR councillors, we also created an ordered categorical outcome, *Promotion*, that captures information about their position on the PR list. The first level (Demoted -

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<sup>10</sup>In cases where individual names appear more than once on nomination lists, we classify candidates according to the most prestigious nomination by our criteria.

0) denotes PR councillors who were either not renominated, or who were renominated at a lower quartile position on the PR party list. The second level (Same Position/Ward - 1) captures PR councillors who were renominated within the same quartile on the PR party list, or were renominated as a ward councillor.<sup>11</sup> The third level (Promoted - 2) captures PR councillors who moved up to a higher quartile party list position in 2016 or who were nominated to a party list in the 2014 national elections. Figure 2 shows the distribution of *Promotion* outcomes.

We also collected ward-level data in the province of Gauteng (with summary statistics available in the appendix). Out of a total 508 wards in Gauteng, we limit our analysis to the 478 wards for which no by-election took place between 2011 and 2016.<sup>12</sup> The dependent variable, *Renomination*, is defined in the same way as in the municipal-level analysis (Figure 3).

As discussed above, we are primarily concerned with public opinion regarding councillor performance and local government service delivery, and we incorporate multiple sources of data.<sup>13</sup> At the municipal level, we draw on the 2016 Community Survey, conducted by South Africa's statistical agency, Stats SA, which sampled 1.3 million households across the country. To measure perceptions of local governance performance, the survey asked citizens to rate the quality of services they receive on a scale from 1-3 (Poor, Average, Good). We aggregate ratings for water, electricity, refuse removal, and sanitation into a single index (*Service Rating Index*) by de-meaning and standardizing the scores for each of the four services, then taking the equally-weighted average for each municipality (as recommended by Kling, Liebman and Katz 2007).

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<sup>11</sup>We do not have strong reason to believe that nomination as a ward councillor is more or less preferable than nomination as a PR councillor. However, our results are similar when ward councillor nominations are excluded or counted as demotions.

<sup>12</sup>By-elections take place when an elected official dies or resigns.

<sup>13</sup>All measures were taken prior to the announcement of the local government candidates.

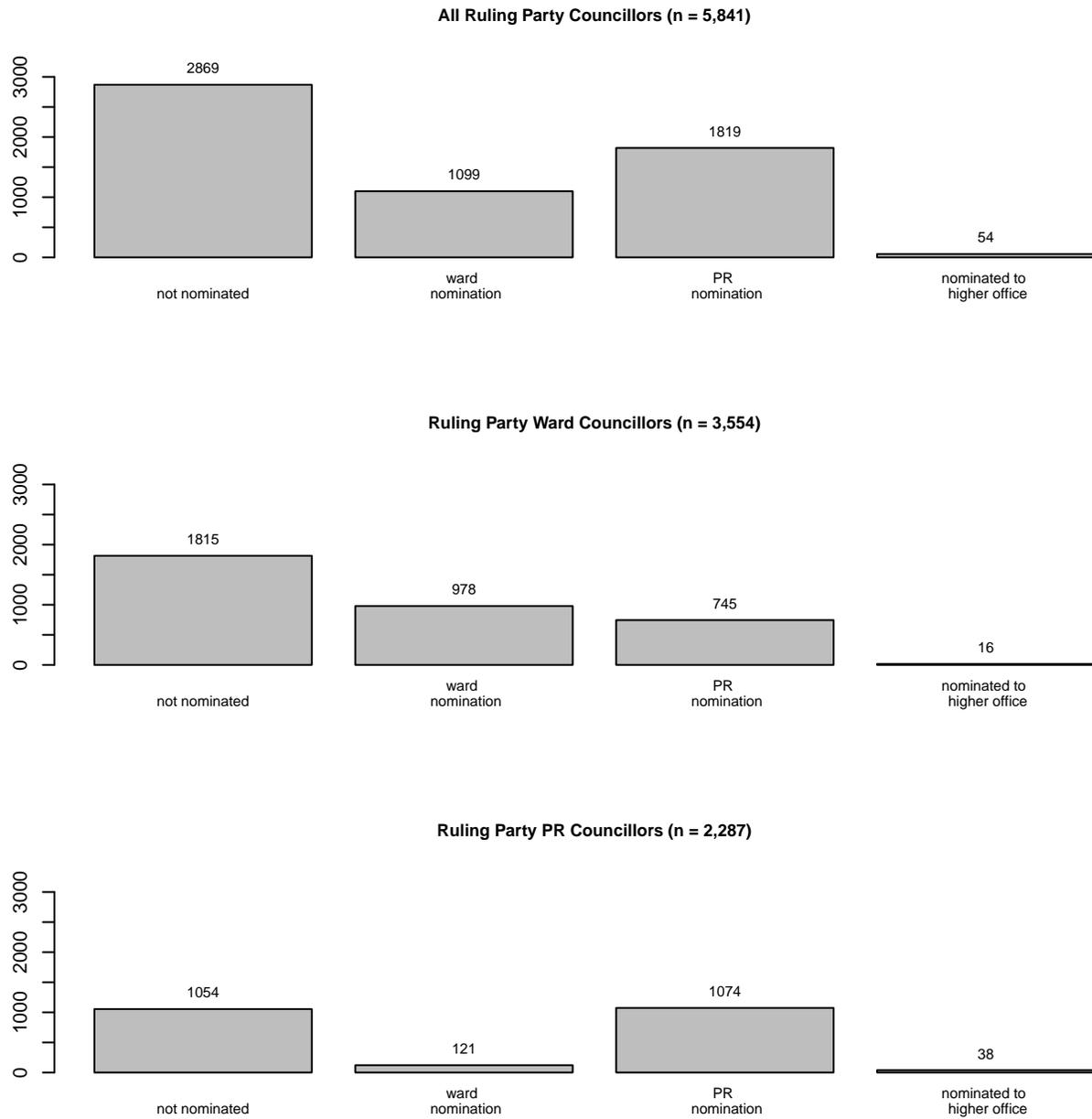


Figure 1: Distribution of 2016 nomination outcomes for ruling party ward and PR councillors elected in 2011, all municipalities in South Africa. Higher office refers to a candidacy in the 2014 national elections.

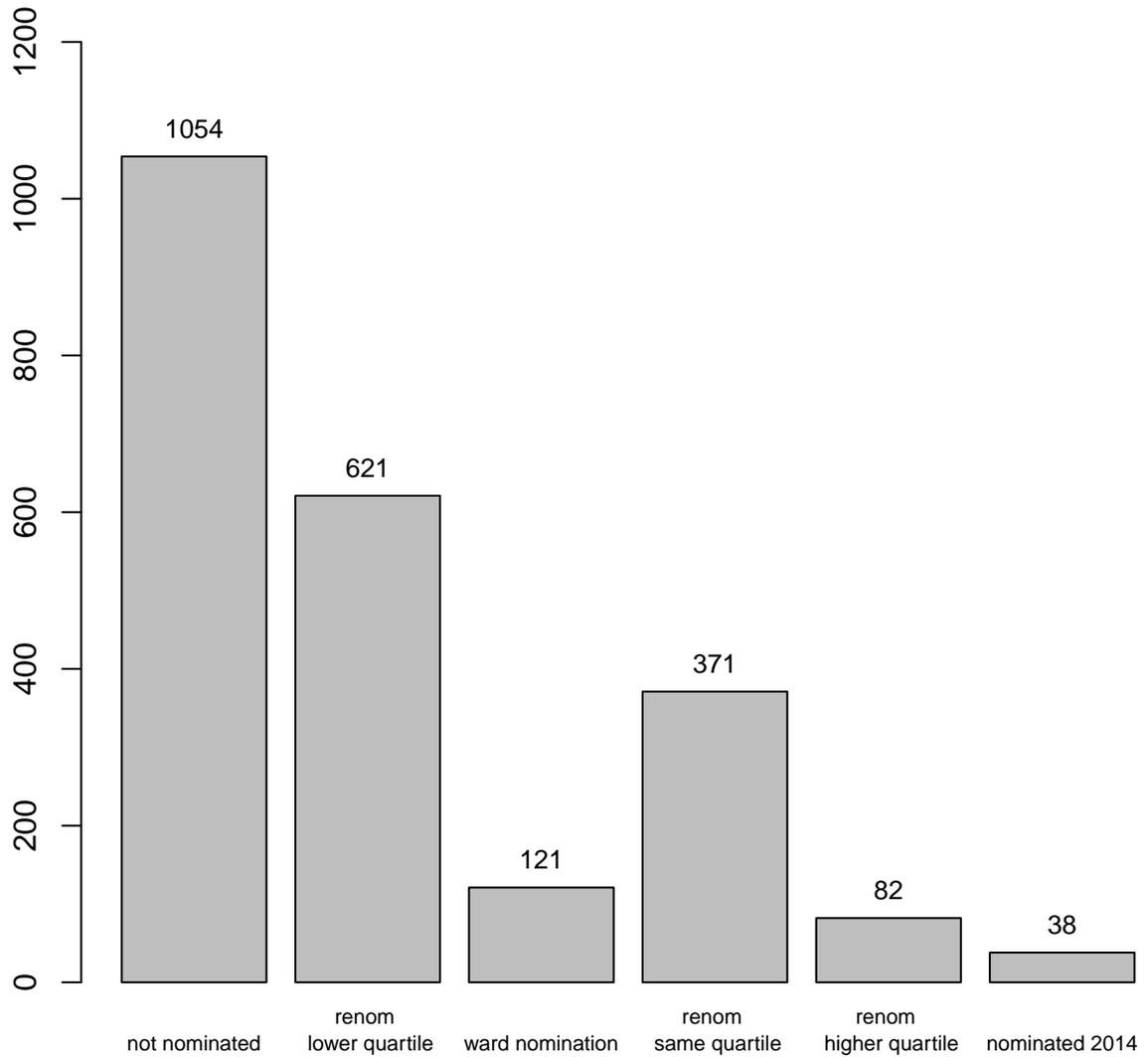


Figure 2: Distribution of 2016 Promotion outcomes for ruling party PR councillors elected in 2011, all municipalities in South Africa. The quartile refers to councillors' position on the party PR list. Higher office refers to a candidacy in the 2014 national elections.

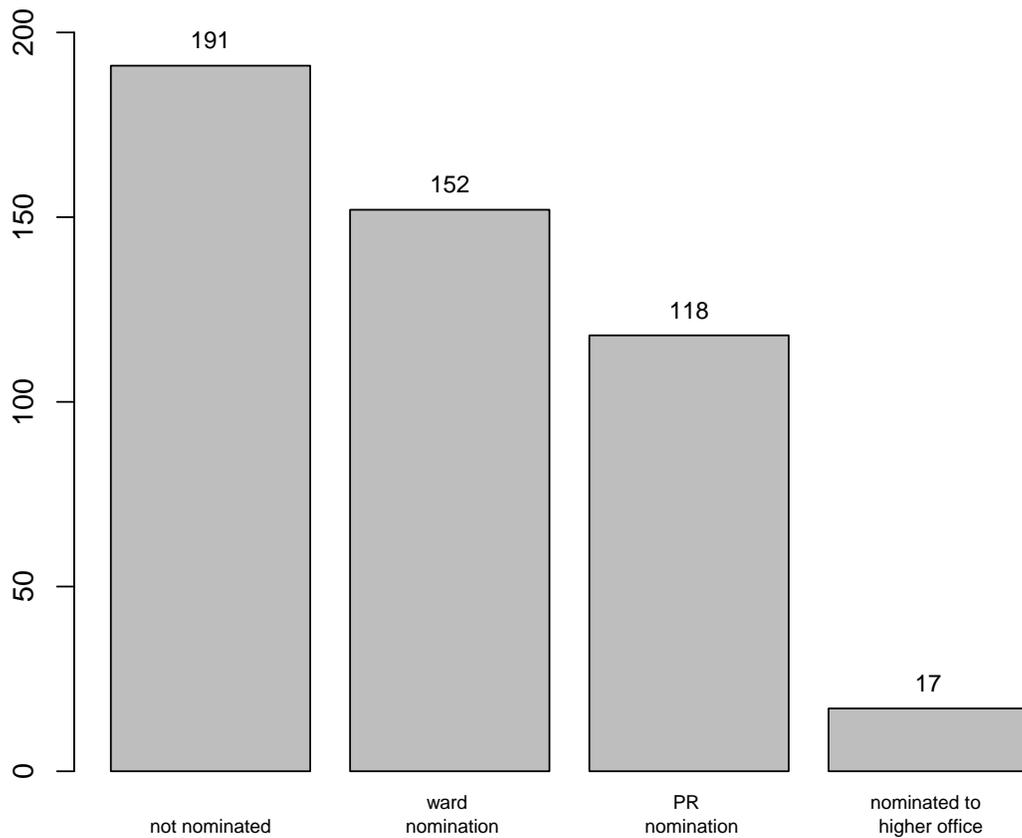


Figure 3: Distribution of 2016 nomination outcomes for ward councillors elected in 2011 in Gauteng province. Wards with by-elections between 2011 and 2016 are excluded. Higher office refers to a candidacy in the 2014 national elections.

We use ward-level data from the Gauteng City Regional Observatory (GCRO) Quality of Life Survey, which enumerated more than 27,000 respondents and is representative at the ward level in Gauteng province.<sup>14</sup> To capture citizen perceptions, we define *Councillor Satisfaction* as the average rating of satisfaction with one’s local councillor, ranging from “Very dissatisfied” (1) to “Very satisfied” (5), measured in 2015. *Service Satisfaction Index* is an index of satisfaction in 2015 with each of the four services included in the the service rating index for the municipal analysis, constructed in the same way.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, we consider “objective” observable measures of performance that relate to a councillor’s legally-mandated duties and that may reasonably be expected to affect citizen perceptions of councillors. Like [Wegner \(2016\)](#), we collect data on access to services from the national statistical agency, Stats SA. For the municipal-level analysis, we measure councillor performance using data from the South African National Census of 2011 and the 2016 Community Survey. We first measure *Service Coverage Change*, an index of change in the percentage of municipal residents with access to flush toilets, piped water, electricity, and weekly refuse removal between 2011 and 2016.<sup>16</sup> We also measure *Formal Housing Change*, the change in the percentage of municipal residents with access to formal housing. At the ward-level, we construct three measures of objective performance: *Service Coverage Change* and *Formal Housing Change* are constructed in the same way as at the municipal-level, and *Employment Change* is the change between 2013 and 2015 in the percentage of respondents in a ward who do not classify themselves as “unemployed and looking for work.”

Importantly, all of the aforementioned sources of data are collected, at least in part, at the behest of the government and are widely available to government actors. Thus, unlike for

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<sup>14</sup>Our main analysis uses the 2013 and 2015 survey waves, which have sample sizes of 27,490 and 30,002, respectively. A similar survey was conducted in 2011, but the sample size is significantly smaller (16,729). Our results, however, are essentially unchanged when we substitute the 2011 data for the 2013 data.

<sup>15</sup>These questions were asked in both 2013 and 2015. In our main ward-level analysis, we use only the 2015 responses, for consistency with the municipal-level analysis. However, results are similar when we instead use the change in satisfaction from 2013 to 2015.

<sup>16</sup>We present analyses of the effects of each service separately in the appendix.

citizens, it is fair to assume that such data are available to elite decision-makers. Our goal, as presented in the next section, is to estimate the sensitivity of renomination decisions to these data.

In order to control for the potential confounding influence of other constituency and politician characteristics, we include a number of municipality- and councillor-level covariates. We measure the percentage of respondents in the municipality with a post secondary education (*Post Secondary (%)*), and the percentage of respondents who identify their population group as African (*Ethnicity - African (%)*). To account for population in- or out-migration, we measure *Log Population Change* as the difference in the log of municipal population between 2011 and 2016. *Win Margin (2011)* represents the percentage of total PR votes by which the winning party won the municipality. At the councillor level, we control for the number of years the councillor had been in office as of 2016 (*Years Incumbent*) as a measure of politicians' experience, and whether the councillor ever switched from one party to another prior to 2016 (*Switched Party*), a potential indicator of party loyalty.

At the ward-level, we construct a similar set of covariates. *High Income* indicates the percentage of respondents in a ward with incomes at or above the 75th percentile income category within the entire sample, averaged for 2013 and 2015. *Civic Engagement* is an equally-weighted index of several survey items that capture levels of political participation and community organization, including voter registration, electoral participation, attendance at community meetings, membership in community groups, and participation in protests. Finally, *Win Margin (2011)* is the difference between the number of votes received by the winning candidate and the candidate who won the second highest number of votes, divided by the total number of votes cast.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>In the 2011 elections, all winning parties won more than 50% of the vote.

## 4 Analysis

We estimate the strength and direction of the relationships between citizen evaluations of incumbent performance (both of councillors directly and of services provided by the local government), measures of “objective” politician performance according to their job descriptions, and the renomination decisions of political parties (equations 3 and 4). We also examine whether such relationships vary according to the degree of electoral competition (equations 5 and 6). While we cannot advance *causal* claims in a context in which public opinion and politician performance are clearly not exogenous, we proceed with a strong concern for possible confounding variables, and addressing alternative theoretical accounts. We triangulate with multiple sources of data and at multiple levels of analysis.

$$\Pr(\text{Renomination/Promotion}_{i,w,m} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SubjectivePerformance}_{w,m} + \gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,w,m} + \epsilon_{i,w,m}) \quad (3)$$

$$\Pr(\text{Renomination/Promotion}_{i,w,m} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SubjectivePerformance}_{w,m} + \beta_2 \text{ObjectivePerformance}_{w,m} + \gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,w,m} + \epsilon_{i,w,m}) \quad (4)$$

$$\Pr(\text{Renomination/Promotion}_{i,w,m} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{SubjectivePerformance}_{w,m} + \beta_2 \text{Competitiveness} + \beta_3 \text{SubjectivePerformance} * \text{Competitiveness}_{w,m} + \gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,w,m} + \epsilon_{i,w,m}) \quad (5)$$

$$\Pr(\text{Renomination/Promotion}_{i,w,m} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{ObjectivePerformance}_{w,m} + \beta_2 \text{Competitiveness} + \beta_3 \text{ObjectivePerformance} * \text{Competitiveness}_{w,m} + \gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,w,m} + \epsilon_{i,w,m}) \quad (6)$$

In all equations,  $\mathbf{X}_{i,w,m}$  represents a vector of control covariates,  $i$  indexes each incumbent councillor,  $m$  indicates the municipality, and  $w$  indicates the ward (for ward councillors).

## 4.1 Municipal-Level Results

In Table 1, we estimate the likelihood of renomination in 2016 among all incumbent local councillors in South Africa. We consider three subsets within this sample. First, we model renomination among all councillors who were members of the ruling party in their municipality.<sup>18</sup> Second, we restrict the sample to ANC ruling councillors. Third, we consider *non-ruling* councillors, for whom we do not expect to observe the same relationship between service ratings and renomination outcomes. In Table 2, we explore how the effects of politician performance at the municipal level – both perceived and “objective” – vary based on the level of political competition. To do so, we include an interaction term between our performance measures and the 2011 electoral margin of victory. Standard errors are clustered at the municipal level, and all models include province fixed effects.

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<sup>18</sup>We define the ruling party at the municipal level as the party with the largest total number of councillors.

Table 1: Citizen Evaluations and Councillor Renomination - All Municipalities (Logit)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Service Rating Index	-0.081 (0.077)			-0.052 (0.079)	-0.073 (0.081)	0.169 (0.119)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.111*** (0.038)	0.101** (0.039)	-0.091 (0.063)	0.126*** (0.039)	0.100** (0.039)	-0.087 (0.063)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.226 (0.395)			0.027 (0.404)	0.031 (0.429)	-0.585 (0.576)
Log Population $\Delta$				0.079*** (0.028)		
Ethnicity - African (%)	1.413** (0.615)	1.384** (0.631)	-0.900 (0.959)	1.352** (0.633)	1.396** (0.638)	-0.670 (0.970)
Post Secondary (%)	-0.520** (0.258)	-0.387 (0.280)	0.432 (0.341)	-0.476* (0.264)	-0.447 (0.287)	0.562 (0.355)
Ward Councillor	-4.812*** (1.662)	-3.896** (1.783)	9.961*** (2.305)	-4.748*** (1.704)	-4.339** (1.855)	11.035*** (2.411)
Years Incumbent	-0.171*** (0.057)	-0.173*** (0.060)	0.072 (0.099)	-0.193*** (0.058)	-0.173*** (0.060)	0.065 (0.099)
Switched Party	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.073*** (0.017)	0.028*** (0.011)	0.032*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.017)
ever_switchedparty	-0.983*** (0.115)	-1.175*** (0.145)	-0.976*** (0.100)	-0.969*** (0.115)	-1.179*** (0.145)	-0.975*** (0.100)
N Councillors	5841	5315	2536	5678	5315	2536
N Municipalities	234	202	234	234	202	234
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

RSE clustered at municipal level

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

Table 2: Determinants of Councillor Renomination - All Municipalities (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Svc. Rating Index x Win Margin	-0.454*** (0.160)	-0.394** (0.173)	-0.204 (0.242)			
Svc. Coverage $\Delta$ x Win Margin				-0.342 (0.304)	-0.558 (0.350)	0.453 (0.461)
Service Rating Index	0.369*** (0.099)	0.329*** (0.109)	-0.003 (0.118)	0.113*** (0.039)	0.100** (0.039)	-0.094 (0.064)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	-0.055 (0.078)	-0.059 (0.082)	0.162 (0.122)	0.110 (0.184)	0.251 (0.218)	-0.032 (0.221)
Win Margin (2011)	0.217 (0.211)	0.120 (0.232)	-0.130 (0.294)	0.126 (0.207)	0.040 (0.226)	-0.217 (0.293)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.262 (0.395)	0.076 (0.429)	-0.509 (0.582)	0.235 (0.397)	0.035 (0.429)	-0.613 (0.585)
Log Population $\Delta$	1.500** (0.621)	1.418** (0.644)	-0.851 (0.989)	1.689*** (0.655)	1.774*** (0.685)	-1.050 (1.020)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.666** (0.292)	-0.533 (0.327)	0.608 (0.382)	-0.527* (0.294)	-0.391 (0.326)	0.577 (0.386)
Post Secondary (%)	-4.264** (1.699)	-3.777** (1.915)	11.092*** (2.417)	-4.440*** (1.705)	-4.146** (1.901)	10.740*** (2.430)
Ward Councillor	-0.171*** (0.057)	-0.174*** (0.060)	0.056 (0.101)	-0.170*** (0.057)	-0.172*** (0.060)	0.057 (0.101)
Years Incumbent	0.030*** (0.011)	0.032*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.017)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.017)
Switched Party	-0.981*** (0.115)	-1.181*** (0.146)	-0.973*** (0.100)	-0.985*** (0.115)	-1.182*** (0.146)	-0.975*** (0.100)
N Councillors	5841	5315	2536	5841	5315	2536
N Municipalities	234	202	234	234	202	234
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*p&lt;0.1; \*\*p&lt;0.05; \*\*\*p&lt;0.01

Robust standard errors clustered at municipal level in parentheses

Examining the first two columns in Table 1, we find that favorable evaluation of government services is a positive predictor of renomination for councillors from ruling parties ( $p < 0.01$ ). Substantively, a one standard-deviation increase in average citizen service ratings is associated with a 2.37 percentage-point [0.002%, 4.6%] increase in the predicted probability of renomination. As expected, these associations are only evident among ruling party councillors. In fact, the negative point estimate on service ratings for non-ruling councillors suggests that opposition parties may be more likely to punish their councillors by withholding renominations in municipalities where public opinion is more favorable. The difference in findings between ruling and non-ruling party councillors increases our confidence that the results are not explained by higher rates of overall turnover in areas with higher citizen satisfaction (i.e. in more urbanized or well-developed areas).

To investigate the possibility that the relationship between service ratings and renomination is driven by objective performance metrics that may be observable by party elites, we control in columns 4-6 for actual change in service delivery and change in access to formal housing. Not only are these measures not significant predictors of councillor renomination, but the coefficients on service ratings remain virtually unchanged in size and significance when they are included.<sup>19</sup> These findings suggest that ruling parties *are* in fact responsive to citizen evaluations when making renomination decisions, but not necessarily to objective improvements in the material welfare of the constituency.

Looking to the first two columns of Table 2, we find that for ruling party councillors, the effect of service ratings is significantly decreasing with win margin magnitude. This suggests that, as expected, citizen evaluations matter more in politically competitive municipalities compared to stronghold areas. Substantively, a one standard deviation increase in service ratings is associated with a 7.8 percentage-point [3.2%, 12.2%] increase in the predicted

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<sup>19</sup>In addition, when we exclude service ratings, modeling renomination as a function of our objective performance metrics and covariates, we still find no significant relationship and the coefficients remain remarkably stable in size. Results from this analysis are available in Table 3 of the appendix.

probability of renomination in the most competitive municipalities, but has an effect indistinguishable from zero as municipality win margins exceed 80% (Figure 5). Again, we find no such relationship for non-ruling party councillors. Nor do we find evidence that the effect of changes in objective service provision varies significantly based on the level of political competition.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, at the municipality-level, it appears that subjective citizen views of services, but not objective measures of performance, do influence party nominations to a significant degree.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the importance of citizen views is increasing with the electoral competitiveness of the municipality.

Next, we examine councillor promotions among ruling party councillors elected through the proportional representation (PR) party list system in 2011. Since party leaders decide where PR candidates will be placed on the party list in each municipality, we capture variation in PR list position in order to obtain a more fine-grained measure of politician career advancement. Here we use an ordered logit model with province fixed effects to estimate the change in the predicted probability of each categorical outcome given a one standard deviation upward shift in *Service Rating Index* and *Service Coverage Change*. As seen in Figure 6, the simulated point estimates indicate that an upward shift in constituent service ratings has a significant and positive association with career advancement. Substantively, a one standard deviation

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<sup>20</sup>The results in columns 4-6 remain virtually the same when service ratings are excluded from the model.

<sup>21</sup>An apparent exception to this conclusion about the insensitivity of party elites to councillors' objective job performance is the finding, previously reported by [Wegner \(2016\)](#), that clean municipality audit opinions are a positive predictor of renomination under some conditions. However, we are hesitant to make inferences about the impact of municipal audits with the data available to us. For one, there are virtually no cases of poor audits in electorally competitive municipalities, and when we estimate the effects of audits on renomination conditional on vote margin, we find statistically significant positive effects only in non-competitive municipalities where the 2011 win margin is greater than 50 percent. There is simply insufficient variation in audit scores among politically competitive municipalities (where we would most expect to see party elites responding to such performance metrics) to draw solid conclusions about their impacts. Moreover, when we subset the data to PR councillors in the top 10% on their party list – in other words, the municipal executives who are *most* responsible for this type of oversight function – the direction of the effect of audit opinions reverses, whereas the coefficient on service ratings remains positive and substantively meaningful (although it drops below conventional levels of statistical significance, likely due in part to the major reduction in sample size). These analyses, and further description of the municipality audit measures, appear in the appendix.

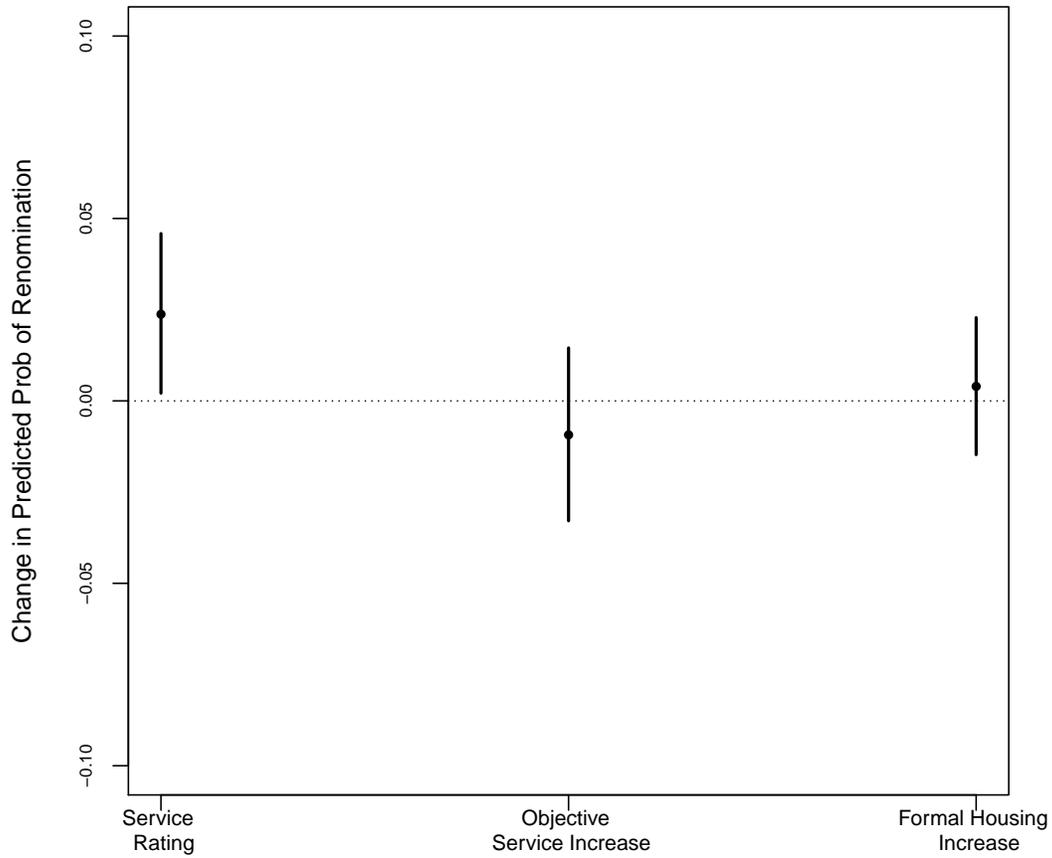


Figure 4: Change in the predicted probability of councillor renomination associated with a one standard deviation increase in predictor variables. Includes ruling party councillors in all municipalities. Lines show 95 percent confidence intervals.

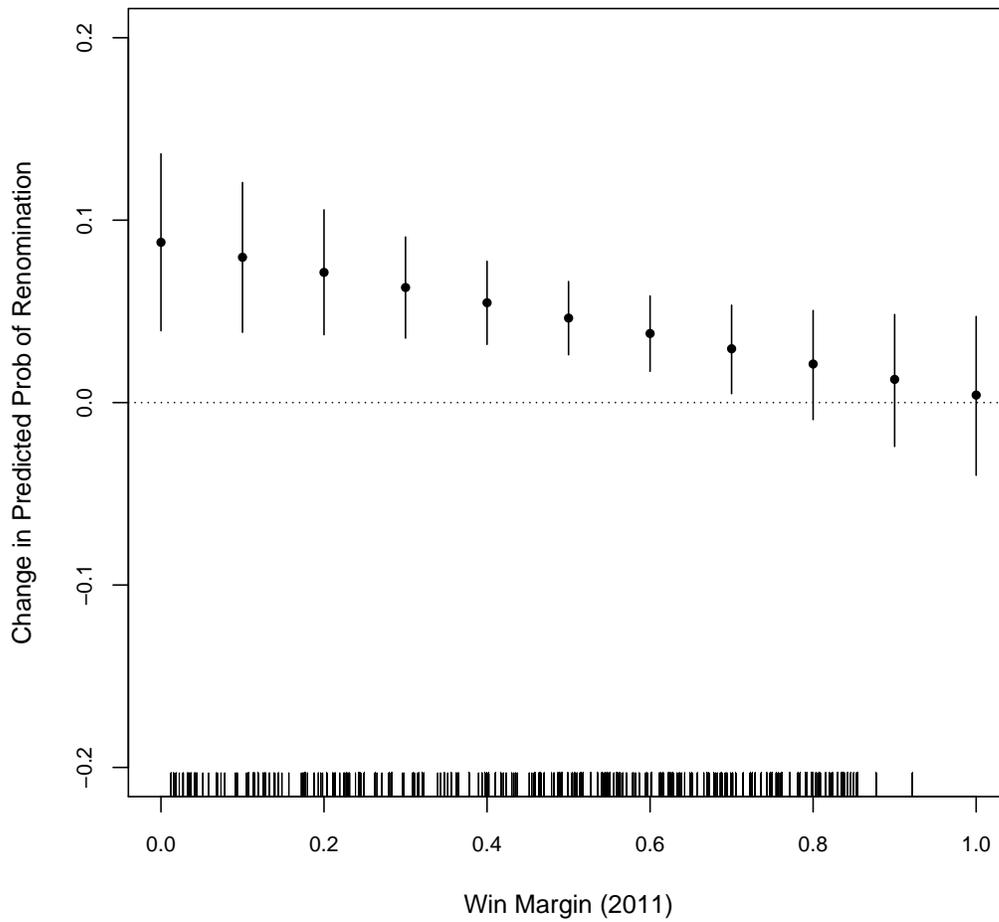


Figure 5: Change in the predicted probability of councillor renomination associated with a one standard deviation increase in *Service Rating Index*, at different levels of margin of victory for the municipal ruling party in 2011. Includes ruling party councillors in all municipalities. Lines show 95 percent confidence intervals; rug plot shows distribution of data observations.

increase in municipal-level service ratings is associated with a 9.9 percentage-point decrease [-16.5%, -0.035%] in the predicted probability of Demotion, a 3.4 percentage-point increase [1.49%, 4.87%] in the predicted probability of being renominated at the same position or as a ward councillor, and a 10.9 percentage-point increase [4.19%, 17.2%] in the predicted probability of Promotion. By contrast, observable service delivery improvement has no significant effect.<sup>22</sup> These findings once again point to the role of subjective citizen views, but not objective service delivery performance, as an important driving factor behind party elite decisions about incumbent renomination.

## 4.2 Ward-Level Results

The results presented in the previous section model the effects of municipal-wide citizen perceptions and municipal-level material outcomes on the renomination outcomes for councillors. This is an important vantage-point for both citizens and for party elites, as councillors are expected to act collectively to oversee their municipality. However, these analyses are necessarily more limited when it comes to the role of observed performance and perceptions at the individual-level.

To address this concern, we leverage ward-level data within the province of Gauteng, for which we can measure outcomes associated with individual ward councillors. These analyses, estimating the likelihood of councillor renomination, appear in Table 3. Here we show results for all ward councillors, ANC ward councillors, and DA ward councillors. During the period covered by our analysis, the ANC was in control of all but one of the municipalities in Gauteng province (Midvaal). Thus, for both of the single-party analyses, Midvaal is excluded.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>We show in Appendix Table 4 that these results hold when we consider individual services separately. In fact, we estimate a negative coefficient for change in piped water access, which was one of the main objective service delivery items that [Wegner \(2016\)](#) found to positively predict renomination in the prior local election.

<sup>23</sup>Note that we do not include councillors that were replaced in by-elections or their mid-term replacements in any of the analyses.

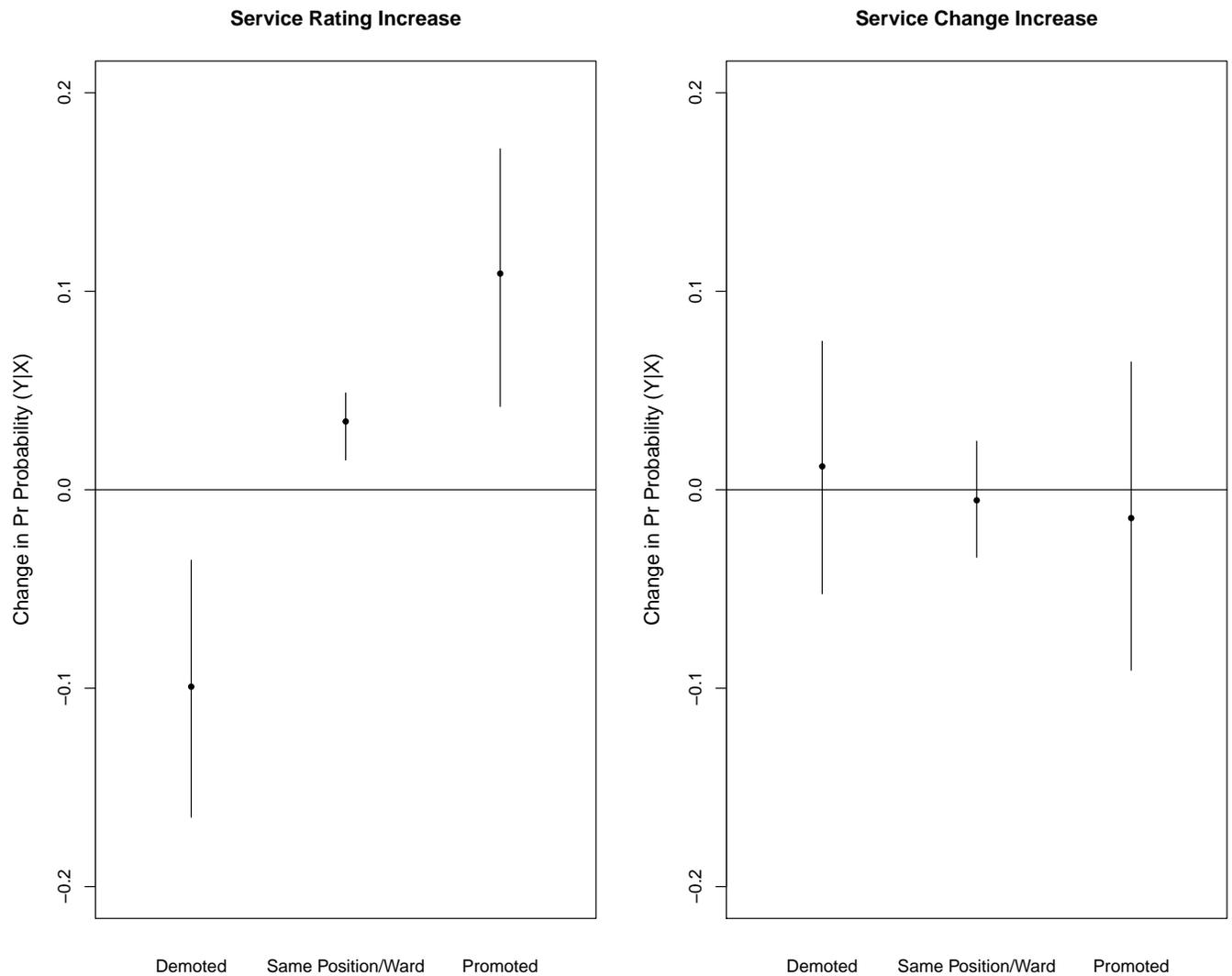


Figure 6: Change in the predicted probabilities of councillor promotion outcomes associated with a one standard deviation increase in *Service Rating Index* and *Service Coverage*  $\Delta$ , using ordered logistic regression. Includes ruling party PR councillors elected in 2011 in all municipalities. Lines show 95 percent confidence intervals.

Table 3: Determinants of Ward Councillor Renomination in Gauteng (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All	ANC	DA	All	ANC	DA
	(1)	(ruling) (2)	(non-ruling) (3)	(4)	(ruling) (5)	(non-ruling) (6)
Councillor Satisfaction	0.531** (0.251)	0.707** (0.319)	1.082* (0.590)	0.549** (0.255)	0.694** (0.322)	1.132* (0.614)
Service Satisfaction Index	-0.139 (0.136)	-0.084 (0.156)	-0.504* (0.296)	-0.117 (0.141)	-0.086 (0.160)	-0.551* (0.304)
Service Coverage $\Delta$				0.140 (0.160)	0.172 (0.180)	0.795* (0.426)
Formal Housing $\Delta$				-3.761*** (1.421)	-2.673* (1.519)	-5.958 (3.698)
Employment $\Delta$				0.293 (0.905)	0.562 (0.999)	-2.133 (2.193)
High Income (%)	-1.916 (1.208)	-2.668* (1.476)	-1.032 (2.836)	-2.109* (1.227)	-2.722* (1.497)	-1.334 (2.924)
Post Secondary (%)	1.729 (1.685)	2.229 (2.352)	-0.309 (3.649)	1.741 (1.712)	2.335 (2.382)	-0.548 (3.784)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-1.571** (0.759)	-0.932 (1.488)	-3.472** (1.539)	-1.559** (0.765)	-0.931 (1.502)	-3.819** (1.581)
Civic Engagement	-0.186 (0.224)	-0.153 (0.266)	0.021 (0.534)	-0.164 (0.225)	-0.147 (0.267)	0.148 (0.557)
Log Population (2011)	0.293 (0.321)	-0.140 (0.368)	0.939 (0.708)	0.309 (0.323)	-0.141 (0.372)	0.804 (0.723)
Years Incumbent	-0.028 (0.048)	0.006 (0.060)	0.119 (0.124)	-0.027 (0.049)	0.005 (0.061)	0.105 (0.124)
Switched Party	-1.599*** (0.572)	-0.590 (1.316)	-2.942** (1.257)	-1.665*** (0.572)	-0.753 (1.321)	-3.004** (1.250)
Switched Municipality	0.229 (0.309)	-0.105 (0.427)	0.641 (0.702)	0.247 (0.312)	-0.071 (0.431)	0.625 (0.702)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	477	338	134	477	338	134

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

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Looking at the first row of Table 3, we see that citizens' expressed *satisfaction* with their local councillor is a consistently positive and significant predictor of renomination. The effects are also substantively quite meaningful. Among the full sample of councillors, a one standard-deviation increase in the average level of citizen satisfaction with local councillor performance is associated with an approximately 7.6 percentage-point [1.6%, 13.1%] increase in the predicted probability of renomination for that councillor.<sup>24</sup> The coefficient estimates are even larger among the ANC and DA subsets (excluding Midvaal). Satisfaction with government services, however, does not appear to be a positive predictor of councillor renomination at the ward-level. This (non)-finding may be due to a perception that service delivery is primarily the purview of the municipal government rather than individual ward councillors.

The relationships between renomination and constituent satisfaction with councillors remain similar when controlling for three separate measures of objective performance: change in service coverage with wards, change in the percentage of citizens with access to formal housing, and change in the percentage of the population that is employed. These objective job performance measures are, at best, weakly associated with party renomination decisions. Increases in the index of service coverage between 2013 and 2015 have no statistically significant association with likelihood of renomination, except within the DA councillor subset. Turning to the other objective performance measures, we find that positive change in access to formal housing has a significant *negative* association with renomination.<sup>25</sup> Increases in employment, meanwhile, are not a significant predictor of renomination in either direction. One potential concern in interpreting these results is post-treatment bias: if average satisfaction with local councillors is partly a function of service delivery in a ward, the estimated

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<sup>24</sup>In real terms, a one standard-deviation increase in the average level of citizen satisfaction is approximately equivalent to a shift from an average citizen response of "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" with local councillor performance to an average citizen response halfway between "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" and "Satisfied."

<sup>25</sup>This potentially surprising finding would be consistent with (McClendon 2018), who argues that new housing projects can be sources of profound envy within communities, and if so, (our extrapolation) resulting conflictual politics could lead to negative attitudes towards councillors.

effect of service delivery on the probability of councillor renomination may be biased downward when both variables are included in the same model. The two are positively correlated; however, as shown in Table 7 of the appendix, the coefficients on service coverage change remain similar in terms of size and statistical significance when measures of citizen satisfaction are excluded.<sup>26</sup>

In Table 4, we introduce interaction terms to examine whether levels of political competitiveness condition the effects of citizen evaluations. We first interact councillor satisfaction with the ward-level electoral margin of victory in 2011 (row 1). As predicted, we see negative and statistically significant interaction coefficients, except within the DA subset. Substantively, Figure 4 shows that a one-standard deviation increase in councillor satisfaction is associated with a 19.2 percentage-point [8.1%, 30.1%] increase in the predicted probability of renomination in the most competitive wards, but that this effect decreases as wards become less competitive, becoming statistically indistinguishable from zero above win margins between 70 and 80%. These results support the hypothesis that parties pay the most attention to citizens' views about local politicians when electoral competition creates stronger incentives to nominate popular candidates. On the other hand, the interaction between objective service delivery and political competition falls short of statistical significance and has the opposite sign. If anything, electoral competition may actually *decrease* the importance of objective service delivery for candidate renomination.

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<sup>26</sup>One potential concern with estimates of change in service coverage and citizen satisfaction at the ward-level is that they may mask measurement error due to survey sampling. While the GCRO sample is large, estimates for some wards are based on as few as 30 observations. To address this, we used a non-parametric bootstrap, resampling observations within each ward cluster and re-estimating our models using each simulated dataset. As shown in Figure 2 in the appendix, our substantive conclusions remain unchanged: using the bootstrapped standard errors, the effect of service coverage change on renomination is indistinguishable from zero, while the effect of satisfaction with one's local councillor remains significant and positive.

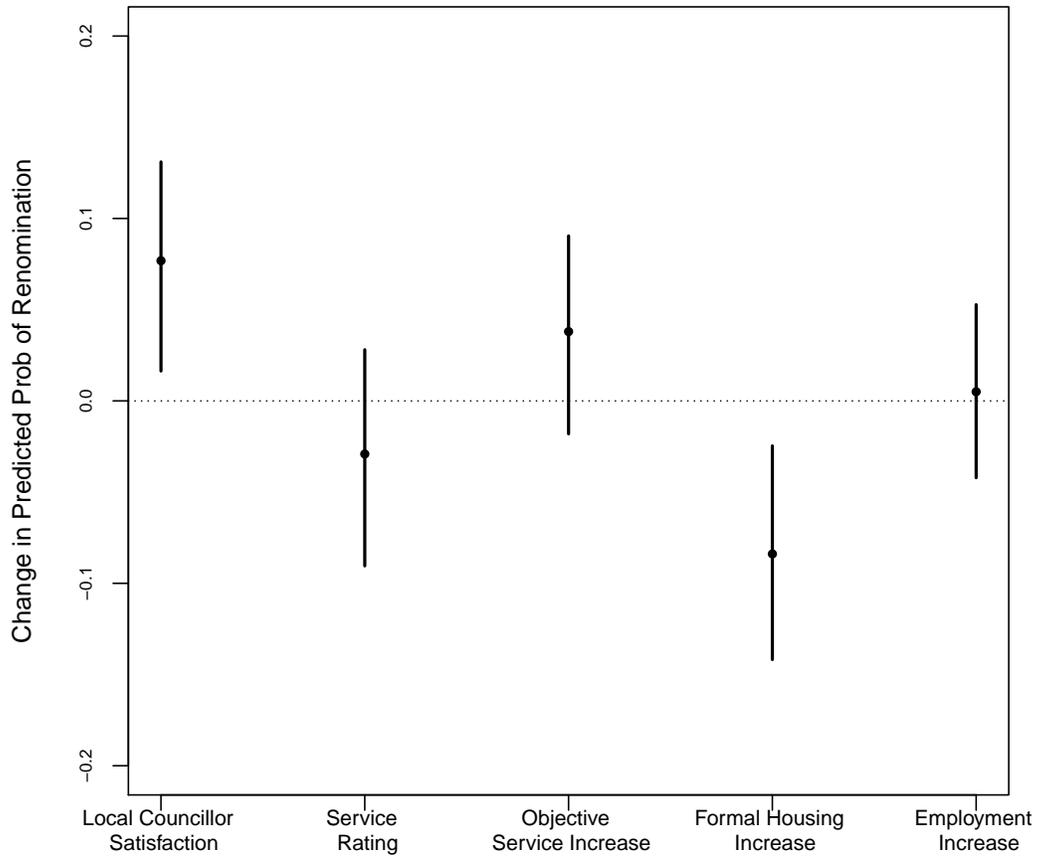


Figure 7: Change in the predicted probability of councillor renomination associated with a one standard deviation increase in predictor variables. Includes all ward councillors in Gauteng. Lines show 95 percent confidence intervals.

Table 4: Determinants of Ward Councillor Renomination in Gauteng (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All	ANC	DA	All	ANC	DA
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Councillor Satis. x Win Margin	-2.233** (0.877)	-3.212*** (1.247)	-3.030 (2.503)			
Service Coverage $\Delta$ x Win Margin				0.475 (0.501)	0.595 (0.571)	1.261 (1.245)
Councillor Satisfaction	1.937*** (0.610)	2.853*** (0.920)	3.386* (1.895)	0.616** (0.239)	0.747** (0.304)	1.165** (0.547)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.127 (0.162)	0.191 (0.184)	0.853* (0.452)	-0.067 (0.313)	-0.129 (0.372)	-0.217 (0.801)
Win Margin (2011)	5.528** (2.357)	8.478*** (3.214)	5.747 (6.532)	-0.447 (0.474)	0.181 (0.770)	-1.458 (1.136)
Service Satisfaction Index	-0.098 (0.144)	-0.118 (0.165)	-0.450 (0.309)	-0.096 (0.132)	-0.117 (0.147)	-0.444 (0.277)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-3.904*** (1.442)	-3.049** (1.549)	-6.617* (3.885)	-3.816*** (1.377)	-2.729* (1.449)	-4.324 (3.082)
Employment $\Delta$	0.228 (0.913)	0.494 (1.010)	-2.333 (2.250)	0.307 (0.893)	0.420 (0.976)	-1.887 (2.070)
High Income	-2.442* (1.277)	-2.817* (1.547)	-4.039 (3.422)	-2.242** (1.121)	-2.546* (1.330)	-0.641 (2.550)
Post Secondary Education	1.563 (1.744)	1.678 (2.405)	0.922 (3.912)	1.595 (1.543)	2.544 (2.140)	-1.029 (3.095)
Ethnicity - African	-2.035** (0.819)	-1.081 (1.926)	-4.481** (1.822)	-1.499** (0.726)	-0.975 (1.746)	-2.327 (1.434)
Civic Engagement	-0.099 (0.233)	-0.130 (0.275)	0.433 (0.583)	-0.084 (0.212)	-0.077 (0.249)	0.044 (0.480)
Log Population (2011)	0.235 (0.326)	-0.134 (0.377)	0.824 (0.745)	0.095 (0.151)	-0.113 (0.175)	0.125 (0.339)
Years Incumbent	-0.014 (0.050)	0.031 (0.062)	0.129 (0.130)	-0.041 (0.047)	0.001 (0.058)	0.048 (0.112)
Switched Party	-1.812*** (0.597)	-0.664 (1.342)	-3.868*** (1.484)	-1.640*** (0.554)	-0.737 (1.323)	-3.056** (1.198)
Switched Municipality	0.249 (0.320)	-0.248 (0.442)	0.738 (0.709)	0.305 (0.306)	-0.067 (0.410)	0.580 (0.645)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	477	338	134	477	338	134

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

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Taken together, these results, which draw on fine-grained data at the ward level, provide additional evidence that citizen approval of local government councillors, but not the actual performance of these councillors concerning service delivery, housing, or employment, is an important positive driver of party nomination decisions. Of course, from a political standpoint, this is a perfectly rational tendency: to the extent that party elites develop their human capital strategies as electoral strategies, constituent perceptions ought to matter more than objective performance measures. Moreover, the fact that citizen perceptions are more tightly associated with renominations in electorally competitive places lends credence to the assumption that party elites renominate popular candidates *because* of a perceived electoral benefit.

One possible concern is the potential for ceiling effects, whereby areas that are already close to perfectly serviced at baseline have little room to increase their service coverage. If these areas (which are more likely to be urban areas) see greater turnover of candidates in general, while poorer and more rural areas, with greater variation in service improvement, generally see less turnover, the effects of service change on renomination may be underestimated. Baseline levels of service provision may also affect both the party's expectations and citizens' expectations of what councillors can accomplish.

To test for this possibility, we run a number of robustness checks (results included in our appendix). First, we control for baseline levels of service delivery, in 2011 for the municipal-level analysis and in 2013 for the ward-level analysis. Next, we interact change in service delivery with baseline levels, to see if changes in service delivery do matter in areas that are not well-serviced initially. Finally, we repeat the ward-level analysis omitting wards that are fully serviced at baseline, omitting those above 90% coverage at baseline for all services. Across all of these robustness checks, we do not find evidence that objective performance measures are significant predictors of politician renomination.

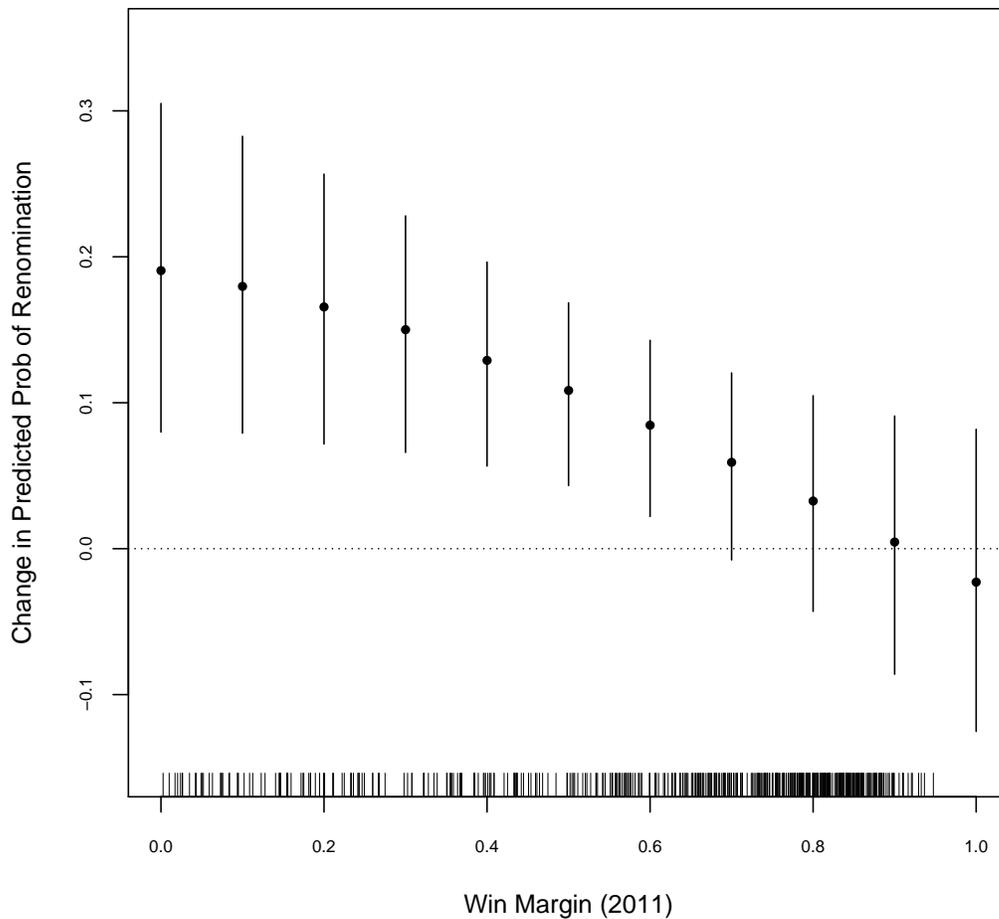


Figure 8: Change in the predicted probability of councillor renomination associated with a one standard deviation increase in *Councillor Satisfaction*, at different levels of margin of victory for the ward councillor in 2011. Includes ward councillors in Gauteng. Lines show 95 percent confidence intervals; rug plot shows distribution of data observations.

Another potential inferential concern is that party elites might influence both renominations *and* councillors' popularity: if party elites choose favorites among incumbent councillors, and supply these individuals with extra resources or assistance from the party that increases their popularity, then the link between citizen satisfaction and politician renominations may be spurious. We believe there are good reasons to doubt this interpretation, however. First, given the wide discretion of party elites to nominate favored candidates to "safe seats" where election outcomes are a near-certainty, it is difficult to see why party leaders would expend significant resources to discriminately boost the popularity of municipal-level candidates *more than a year before municipal elections were held*. Second, if parties were in fact distributing some (unobserved) assistance to incumbents in competitive constituencies in order to boost their popularity, it is unclear why such assistance would affect citizens' service ratings but not observable service delivery outcomes. In the end, we favor the more straightforward interpretation: party elites renominate candidates in constituencies where citizens' hold more favorable views of local government, in order to win more elections.

## 5 Discussion: Unpacking the Sources of Citizen Views

In our effort to understand whether party elites in South Africa make choices about candidate nominations that take into account citizens' expressed preferences, we have documented three clear patterns: 1) there is a strong relationship between the likelihood of renomination and constituent views about service quality and individual politician performance; 2) this relationship is strongest in electorally competitive areas; and 3) there is little association between observable measures of improved material welfare in a given constituency and the likelihood that representatives of that constituency are renominated, regardless of levels of electoral competition.

These findings naturally raise the question: where do citizens' subjective views about local

government performance come from? Is public opinion itself being driven by improvements in the availability of services, or are both public opinion and subsequent renomination the result of some other (unobserved) aspect of performance? Such concerns are important because if observable politician performance affects citizen perceptions, then one might conclude that, by taking citizen evaluations into account, party elites are at least indirectly rewarding welfare-enhancing service delivery and the performance of legally-mandated duties. By contrast, if citizen perceptions are formed primarily on the basis of other factors, we must make more nuanced conclusions about the effect of elite-controlled nomination processes in strong-party systems on politician behavior.

To sort out the possible effects of local government performance on citizen perceptions, we analyze constituency-level and individual-level survey data. First, we use a two-stage regression approach using the ward-level data, with results displayed in Table 5. Here we show the second-stage effects of variation in citizens' satisfaction with their local councillor on renomination, where observed service delivery change is used as a first-stage instrument for councillor satisfaction. The two are positively correlated, but not strongly ( $\rho = 0.091$ ,  $F = 3.9$ ). We find a positive but statistically insignificant coefficient on councillor satisfaction in row 1, which can be interpreted to mean that the variation in councillor satisfaction associated with change in service delivery is *not* itself a significant predictor of politician renomination. In column 2 we repeat the same procedure using observed service delivery change to instrument for the service satisfaction index ( $\rho = 0.095$ ,  $F = 4.3$ ), and we again find an insignificant association with renomination. Thus, it appears that determinants of citizen satisfaction *other than* service delivery ultimately predict renomination and promotion. We do not repeat this analysis in the national sample, because objective service delivery change and service satisfaction are weakly negatively correlated.

Table 5: Determinants of Ward Councillor Renomination in Gauteng (Two-Stage OLS, using *Service Coverage*  $\Delta$  as First-Stage Instrument)

	Dependent variable: Renomination	
	(1)	(2)
Councillor Satisfaction (IV)	0.451 (0.456)	
Service Satisfaction Index (IV)		0.433 (0.469)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-0.834** (0.330)	-1.205* (0.678)
Employment $\Delta$	0.083 (0.210)	-0.271 (0.436)
High Income (%)	-0.843 (0.537)	-1.383 (1.103)
Post Secondary (%)	0.115 (0.500)	-0.135 (0.739)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.348** (0.169)	-0.608* (0.355)
Civic Engagement	-0.032 (0.052)	-0.115 (0.096)
Log Population (2011)	0.154 (0.124)	0.216 (0.197)
Years Incumbent	-0.002 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.014)
Ever Switched Party	-0.359*** (0.131)	-0.394** (0.158)
Ever Switched Municipality	0.021 (0.076)	-0.002 (0.104)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	477	478

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

Robust standard errors in parentheses

To further unpack the relationship between public opinion and councillor performance, we turn to two sources of disaggregated, individual-level data: the sixth round of the Afrobarometer survey conducted in 2016, and the 2015 GCRO survey in Gauteng Province. Our objective with these survey data is to understand whether and to what extent citizen views of councillor performance are themselves shaped by objective levels of service delivery, relative to other factors. Thus, our outcome of interest is satisfaction with local councillor performance at the individual-level.

In the nationally-representative Afrobarometer sample (Table 6), we do not detect any significant association between service delivery and views of councillor performance.<sup>27</sup> Neither relative improvement in services at the municipality level (*Service Coverage Change*), nor absolute levels of service delivery at the municipality or enumeration area level are significant predictors of councillor approval.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, household-level service access levels are also not a significant predictor of views of local councillor performance.<sup>29</sup> In additional analyses presented in the appendix, we also show that respondents who suffered from a lack of access to water or electricity in the last twelve months in enumeration areas where these services were widely available (an indicator of poor service quality) were *not* more likely to disapprove of councillor performance (in fact, the point estimates are positive). In short, while some coefficients point in a positive direction, none of our measures of objective service improvement, access or quality serve as a reliable guide to citizen approval of local councillors in the national sample. These findings are robust when we repeat the analyses among subsets of respondents who identify as being black, who reside in ANC-governed municipalities, and

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<sup>27</sup>We measure satisfaction with councillor performance using the question, ‘Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the last twelve months, or haven’t you heard enough to say? ... Your elected local government councillor’. We measure trust in local council using the question, ‘How much do you trust each of the following, or haven’t you heard enough about them to say? ... Your Local Government Council’. Outcomes are coded on a 4-point scale.

<sup>28</sup>For enumeration area services, Index 1 is a summary index of access to piped water, electricity, sewage, and paved roads. Index 2 is a summary index of the presence of a post office, school, police station, health clinic, and cell service.

<sup>29</sup>The Household Service Index is a summary index of household access to water, toilets, and electricity.

who express high levels of trust in the ruling party.<sup>30</sup>

By contrast, views of councillor performance are strongly and consistently predicted by other dimensions of citizen-government relations such as perceptions that councillors care about the community and views about councillor corruption and trustworthiness. For example, Afrobarometer survey respondents who agreed that local councillors “try their best to listen to what people like you have to say,” were significantly more likely to approve of councillor job performance and to trust their local council. Moreover, respondents who viewed councillors as being corrupt were significantly less approving of performance. Not surprisingly, South Africans who expressed trust in the ruling party were also more likely to approve of councillor performance (likely indicating a partisanship effect), while those who evaluated their living conditions more positively were also more likely to approve of local government.

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<sup>30</sup>These analyses are available upon request.

Table 6: Determinants of Satisfaction with Local Councillors - Afrobarometer R6 (OLS)

	Dependent variable: Approval of councillor performance					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.002 (0.056)					
Municipal Services 2016		-0.001 (0.036)				
Enumeration Area Services: Index 1			0.030 (0.019)			
Enumeration Area Services: Index 2				0.019 (0.017)		
Household Service Index					0.035 (0.023)	0.028 (0.020)
Evaluation of Living Conditions						0.067*** (0.014)
Think Councillors Listen						0.321*** (0.021)
Contacted Councillor						0.076** (0.038)
Think Councillors Corrupt						-0.187*** (0.022)
Trust Ruling Party						0.173*** (0.017)
Female	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.027 (0.038)	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.019 (0.033)
Ethnicity - African	0.248*** (0.046)	0.247*** (0.049)	0.269*** (0.048)	0.243*** (0.047)	0.271*** (0.049)	0.043 (0.045)
Education	0.012 (0.012)	0.012 (0.012)	0.010 (0.012)	0.011 (0.012)	0.008 (0.013)	0.006 (0.011)
Employed	0.018 (0.042)	0.018 (0.042)	0.016 (0.042)	0.019 (0.042)	0.017 (0.042)	-0.003 (0.037)
Asset Index	0.031 (0.022)	0.031 (0.022)	0.027 (0.022)	0.029 (0.022)	0.025 (0.022)	-0.007 (0.020)
Observations	2299	2299	2299	2299	2299	2216
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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

Robust standard errors in parentheses

Table 7 shows the relationships between individual access to services, ward-level service coverage improvements, and satisfaction with local councillor performance in Gauteng province. After controlling for a baseline set of demographic variables, we see that individual access to basic services such as piped water, flush toilets, and refuse removal at the time of the survey enumeration are positively predictive of councillor satisfaction. However, *change* in service coverage at the ward-level — a more reasonable indicator of councillors’ job performance — has no significant association with councillor satisfaction. Moreover, service access levels account for a relatively low amount of variation in councillor satisfaction, compared with other subjective attitudes. To compare the relative predictive power of these and other variables, we ran the same baseline model with a wide range of predictors from the GCRO survey. Of the top 50 predictors, determined by comparing the adjusted  $R^2$  from each model, only five relate to individuals’ objective conditions. The top 40 are all subjective measures of expressed satisfaction with services or government more generally.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Results from this analysis appear in Table 11 in the appendix.

Table 7: Determinants of Satisfaction with Local Councillors in Gauteng (OLS)

	Dependent variable: Satisfaction with councillor performance					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.021 (0.017)	0.022 (0.017)				
Service Index (2015)	0.183*** (0.019)					
Piped Water		0.011 (0.037)	0.149*** (0.034)			
Flush Toilet		0.279*** (0.055)		0.435*** (0.045)		
Electricity		-0.030 (0.050)			0.173*** (0.045)	
Refuse Removal		0.284*** (0.045)				0.402*** (0.039)
Female	-0.019 (0.025)	-0.020 (0.025)	-0.016 (0.025)	-0.019 (0.025)	-0.016 (0.025)	-0.019 (0.025)
Education (Matric)	0.014 (0.026)	0.010 (0.026)	0.025 (0.026)	0.014 (0.026)	0.024 (0.026)	0.015 (0.026)
Ethnicity - African	-0.410*** (0.043)	-0.412*** (0.043)	-0.409*** (0.043)	-0.412*** (0.043)	-0.421*** (0.043)	-0.414*** (0.043)
Income	0.051*** (0.006)	0.051*** (0.006)	0.053*** (0.006)	0.051*** (0.006)	0.054*** (0.006)	0.052*** (0.006)
Formal Dwelling	0.125*** (0.043)	0.130*** (0.044)	0.307*** (0.038)	0.144*** (0.042)	0.303*** (0.040)	0.228*** (0.037)
Unemployed	-0.193*** (0.028)	-0.191*** (0.028)	-0.201*** (0.028)	-0.193*** (0.028)	-0.201*** (0.028)	-0.195*** (0.028)
Observations	11,253	11,253	11,253	11,253	11,253	11,253
R <sup>2</sup>	0.064	0.067	0.058	0.064	0.057	0.065
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.063	0.066	0.057	0.063	0.056	0.064

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

Robust standard errors in parentheses

In sum, South African citizens' views about councillor performance appear to be most closely linked to their broader feelings about the government in general, as well as perceptions of various inter-personal qualities of councillors, such as their level of empathy and accessibility. By contrast, citizens (especially outside of Gauteng) do not appear to consistently make performance evaluations through reference to the service conditions of their household or their locality. This is not to say that politicians' actual job performance does not matter. But it does cast doubt on the idea that local councillors are renominated by parties on the basis of citizen views that are themselves determined by councillors' actions to measurably improve constituent welfare.

We view these patterns as consistent with the idea that individual councillors possess a wide range of tools for influencing citizen views, and can exercise significant agency over their own popularity. Specifically, those councillors with the ability to persuade constituents that they are serving their interests, and empathize with their problems, are likely to enjoy higher performance evaluations regardless of their actual service delivery track record. Indeed, when we examined the open-ended responses that GCRO survey respondents gave to explain why they held the views they did about their councillor, we found that many citizens focused on perceived responsiveness to constituency concerns, how personally accessibly councillors are, and how much (or little) they seem to care about the community. This is consistent with previous findings that perceived empathy by politicians and "demonstration of concern" for the problems of ordinary citizens can play a deciding role in shaping citizens' judgements of politicians ([Wong 2016](#); [Funk 1999](#)), as well as a more general literature suggesting that perceived sensitivity to the needs of others drives perceptions of trustworthiness ([Mäkelä and Townley 2013](#)). While such judgements vary widely for councillors in South Africa, our findings suggest that these perceptions — but not necessarily actual relative improvement in services — can affect the likelihood of renomination by the party.

## 6 Conclusion

The overwhelming conclusion from our analysis of party elites' human capital strategies is that elite-controlled renominations closely track the public opinion of citizens with respect to the quality of service delivery and their locally-elected leaders. This sensitivity of party elites to public opinion is particularly strong in electorally competitive areas. By contrast, we find little predictive power from measures of welfare-enhancing performance outcomes, at least among the material outcomes that we understand to be important in the South African case.

With hindsight, some might argue that it is not altogether surprising that parties seek to retain in office those individuals who are liked and admired by voters and/or where voters are content with government services; and that they do so when the electoral stakes are highest. But these findings starkly challenge prevailing assumptions about agency loss in political systems in which parties exert strong centralized control over nominations, as well as the conventional wisdom of many observers of South African politics. Our study suggests that party elites in South Africa's strong-party system are in fact reasonably attuned to the views of citizens, and are aligning their nomination decisions at least partly on the basis of citizen preferences.

While these analyses offer a novel insight into party elite strategies – we are not aware of other studies that have analyzed the effects of public opinion on candidate renominations in a developing country context – the overall findings paint a mixed picture for the quality of democratic accountability. On the one hand, our results reveal a level of responsiveness to citizen views that has frequently been assumed not to exist. The notion of “cadre deployment” in South Africa implies that political representatives are evaluated by the party selectorate only in terms of their party loyalty, rather than constituent satisfaction, and our findings contradict that claim. On the other hand, *actual* observable performance in

terms of extending access to public services was not a strong predictor of citizens views or renominations. As a recent World Bank study argued, “Political engagement happens in ‘healthy’ ways when leaders are selected and sanctioned on the basis of performance in providing public goods” (Khemani and World Bank 2016). Yet citizen views about their politicians and the quality of government are clearly affected by myriad factors beyond public goods provision. For instance, elected representatives may garner popularity in some cases by spending more time campaigning, by providing informal services for constituents, or through the distribution of patronage resources.<sup>32</sup> To the extent that such behaviors may detract from the ability of politicians to effectively work towards universal service delivery for their constituents, the consequences of the party-based accountability we observe in South Africa remain normatively ambiguous. In this regard our findings resonate with the extant literature on politicians’ behavioral incentives under other types of political systems, which, as summarized by (Ashworth 2012, 184), “has taught us two major lessons: incentives are driven by the incumbent’s desire to impress the voters; and this desire often conflicts with the normative imperative to advance the voters’ interests.”

Nevertheless, the observation that party elites pay close attention to what citizens think and perceive – and that those concerns are intensified when electoral competition is strong – suggests to us that democratic practice, at least in contemporary South Africa, may be more responsive to citizens than is frequently argued. While we cannot generalize to an entire class of institutions from one case, our findings push back against blanket concerns about the “anti-democratic” tendencies of elite delegation in developing country contexts. Beyond a concern for agency loss, future research should consider the material consequences of such systems, including investigations of what drives citizen perceptions of government officials.

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<sup>32</sup>It is important to recall, however, that our survey summaries are representative of entire wards and municipalities, not just party supporters.

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Supplementary Appendix for

“Do Party Elites Impede Accountability? Evidence from South African Local Government  
Elections”

March 10, 2018

Table 1: Summary Statistics for Municipal-Level Analysis

	N obs	Min	Max	Range	Median	Mean	Std. Dev.
Renomination	8377	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.52	0.50
Promotion	4157	0.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	0.45	0.71
Years Incumbent	8377	5.00	15.00	10.00	5.00	6.68	2.66
Switched Party	8377	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.12	0.33
Service Coverage $\Delta$	234	-1.31	1.64	2.94	-0.01	-0.00	0.54
Service Rating Index	234	-2.20	1.70	3.91	-0.09	-0.00	0.85
Audit Opinion	224	1.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.24	1.30
Formal Housing $\Delta$	234	-0.25	0.48	0.73	0.09	0.09	0.08
Post Secondary (%)	234	-0.07	0.32	0.40	0.06	0.06	0.06
Ethnicity - African (%)	234	0.01	1.00	0.98	0.90	0.76	0.31
Log Population $\Delta$	234	0.01	0.13	0.12	0.03	0.04	0.02
Win Margin (2011)	234	0.01	0.92	0.91	0.49	0.46	0.25

Table 2: Summary Statistics for Ward-Level Analysis (Gauteng Province)

	N obs	Min	Max	Range	Median	Mean	Std. Dev.
Renomination	478	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.60	0.49
Years Incumbent	478	5.00	15.00	10.00	5.00	6.22	2.36
Switched Party	478	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.04	0.19
Switched Municipality	478	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.22	0.41
Service Coverage $\Delta$ (2013-2015)	478	-4.44	2.74	7.18	-0.06	0.00	0.79
Councillor Satisfaction	477	1.00	4.33	3.33	2.65	2.67	0.55
Service Satisfaction Index	478	-4.26	1.76	6.02	0.19	-0.02	0.96
Formal Housing $\Delta$ (2013-2015)	478	-0.36	0.32	0.68	0.00	0.02	0.09
Employment $\Delta$ (2013-2015)	478	-0.37	0.37	0.74	0.03	0.04	0.11
High Income (%)	478	0.03	0.88	0.85	0.26	0.32	0.20
Post Secondary (%)	478	0.00	0.64	0.64	0.14	0.19	0.14
Ethnicity - African (%)	478	0.19	1.00	0.81	0.97	0.81	0.24
Civic Engagement	478	-1.84	1.43	3.27	0.06	0.01	0.55
Log Population (2011)	478	6.80	11.43	4.63	10.10	9.88	0.69
Win Margin (2011)	478	0.00	0.95	0.94	0.71	0.63	0.24

Table 3: Service Improvement and Councillor Renomination - All Municipalities (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Svc. Coverage $\Delta$ x Win Margin				-0.314 (0.305)	-0.561 (0.350)	0.386 (0.458)
Win Margin				0.109 (0.207)	0.032 (0.226)	-0.203 (0.292)
Svc. Coverage $\Delta$	-0.089 (0.077)	-0.078 (0.081)	0.177 (0.119)	0.087 (0.184)	0.247 (0.218)	0.004 (0.220)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.250 (0.397)	0.062 (0.429)	-0.585 (0.572)	0.259 (0.398)	0.065 (0.430)	-0.606 (0.581)
Log Population $\Delta$	1.354** (0.614)	1.364** (0.637)	-0.615 (0.972)	1.603** (0.654)	1.741** (0.685)	-0.945 (1.018)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.509** (0.258)	-0.455 (0.287)	0.550 (0.355)	-0.512* (0.293)	-0.393 (0.326)	0.571 (0.386)
Post Secondary (%)	-5.510*** (1.647)	-5.127*** (1.831)	11.567*** (2.376)	-5.188*** (1.687)	-4.945*** (1.874)	11.342*** (2.391)
Ward Councillor	-0.174*** (0.057)	-0.176*** (0.060)	0.061 (0.099)	-0.173*** (0.057)	-0.174*** (0.060)	0.053 (0.101)
Years Incumbent	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.017)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.017)
Switched Party	-0.985*** (0.115)	-1.181*** (0.145)	-0.967*** (0.100)	-0.987*** (0.115)	-1.184*** (0.145)	-0.967*** (0.100)
N Councillors	5841	5315	2536	5841	5315	2536
N Municipalities	234	202	234	234	202	234
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

RSE clustered at municipal level

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

Table 4: Individual Service Improvement and Councillor Renomination - All Municipalities (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination									
	All Ruling	All Ruling	All Ruling	All Ruling	All Ruling	ANC	ANC	ANC	ANC	ANC
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Piped Water Access $\Delta$	-1.820** (0.874)	-1.841** (0.867)				-1.962** (0.879)	-1.939** (0.860)			
Flush Toilet $\Delta$	0.035 (0.942)		-0.121 (0.991)			0.774 (0.921)		0.589 (0.969)		
Electricity Access $\Delta$	0.238 (0.755)			0.205 (0.758)		0.097 (0.785)			0.006 (0.784)	
Refuse Removal $\Delta$	0.603 (0.482)				0.622 (0.494)	0.590 (0.509)				0.629 (0.504)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.213 (0.546)	0.227 (0.541)	0.223 (0.531)	0.216 (0.530)	0.201 (0.532)	-0.073 (0.481)	-0.007 (0.481)	-0.023 (0.460)	0.019 (0.471)	0.013 (0.469)
Log Population $\Delta$	1.223 (0.748)	1.255* (0.753)	1.348* (0.779)	1.329* (0.776)	1.342* (0.776)	1.288* (0.768)	1.273* (0.772)	1.368* (0.796)	1.352* (0.805)	1.359* (0.798)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.618* (0.334)	-0.648** (0.297)	-0.455 (0.312)	-0.466 (0.305)	-0.377 (0.289)	-0.467 (0.348)	-0.607* (0.318)	-0.295 (0.330)	-0.392 (0.335)	-0.356 (0.316)
Post Secondary (%)	-4.428** (2.070)	-5.402*** (1.714)	-5.010*** (1.762)	-4.812** (1.898)	-4.213** (1.940)	-4.282** (2.156)	-5.092*** (1.848)	-4.535** (1.912)	-4.652** (2.044)	-4.046** (2.043)
Ward Councillor	-0.175*** (0.060)	-0.175*** (0.060)	-0.173*** (0.060)	-0.173*** (0.060)	-0.174*** (0.060)	-0.178*** (0.063)	-0.177*** (0.063)	-0.175*** (0.063)	-0.175*** (0.063)	-0.176*** (0.063)
Years Incumbent	0.031*** (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.011)
Switched Party	-0.984*** (0.143)	-0.986*** (0.142)	-0.983*** (0.142)	-0.983*** (0.142)	-0.983*** (0.142)	-1.178*** (0.169)	-1.183*** (0.169)	-1.175*** (0.168)	-1.177*** (0.167)	-1.174*** (0.168)
N Councillors	5841	5841	5841	5841	5841	5315	5315	5315	5315	5315
N Municipalities	234	234	234	234	234	202	202	202	202	202
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

RSE clustered at municipal level

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

Table 5: Determinants of Councillor Renomination with Audit Opinion - All Municipalities (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination			
	All Ruling	ANC	Non-Ruling	Top 10% PR
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Service Rating Index	0.126** (0.051)	0.116** (0.052)	-0.074 (0.085)	0.228 (0.168)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	-0.052 (0.106)	-0.036 (0.107)	0.190 (0.143)	0.434 (0.350)
Audit Opinion	0.079** (0.037)	0.082** (0.037)	0.033 (0.054)	-0.003 (0.116)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.027 (0.535)	-0.159 (0.461)	-0.749 (0.725)	-1.189 (1.409)
Log Population $\Delta$	1.352* (0.752)	1.284* (0.763)	-0.250 (1.235)	-0.820 (2.673)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.476* (0.289)	-0.419 (0.316)	0.666* (0.385)	-0.517 (1.224)
Post Secondary (%)	-4.748*** (1.751)	-4.269** (1.926)	11.505*** (3.233)	11.691* (6.225)
Ward Councillor	-0.193*** (0.061)	-0.196*** (0.064)	0.055 (0.106)	
Years Incumbent	0.028** (0.011)	0.030** (0.012)	0.075*** (0.019)	0.008 (0.036)
Switched Party	-0.969*** (0.143)	-1.156*** (0.169)	-0.952*** (0.109)	-0.516 (0.594)
N Councillors	5678	5155	2482	337

RSE clustered at municipal level

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

*Audit Opinion* comes from the Auditor-General of South Africa (2014). It represents the final “score” given by AGSA to each municipality from audits conducted in 2013 and 2014. It ranges from 1 (disclaimed audit) to 5 (clean audit). This measure captures several dimensions of municipal management, including the quality of accounting systems, accounting for expenditures, compliance with key legislation, management of procurement processes and supply chains, technical competence of staff, and human resource management.

Table 6: Service Improvement and Councillor Renomination with Baseline Levels - All Municipalities (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All Ruling (1)	ANC (2)	Non-Ruling (3)	All Ruling (4)	ANC (5)	Non-Ruling (6)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	-0.087 (0.106)	-0.072 (0.108)	0.171 (0.149)	-0.117 (0.105)	-0.181* (0.095)	0.144 (0.138)
Service Coverage Index (2011)	-0.029 (0.080)	0.003 (0.079)	0.005 (0.128)	-0.011 (0.078)	0.062 (0.071)	0.080 (0.114)
Service Rating Index	0.113** (0.053)	0.100* (0.054)	-0.087 (0.083)	0.106** (0.052)	0.177*** (0.050)	-0.105* (0.062)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	0.243 (0.516)	0.030 (0.457)	-0.588 (0.705)	0.291 (0.509)	0.128 (0.465)	-0.243 (0.742)
Log Population $\Delta$	1.409* (0.788)	1.396* (0.808)	-0.670 (1.190)	1.150 (0.793)	0.903 (0.765)	-0.749 (1.077)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-0.610* (0.329)	-0.436 (0.355)	0.577 (0.476)	-0.693** (0.335)	-0.552** (0.270)	1.153*** (0.325)
Post Secondary (%)	-4.394** (1.952)	-4.384** (2.097)	10.958*** (3.959)	-5.047*** (1.879)	-3.018* (1.721)	8.979*** (2.975)
Ward Councillor	-0.172*** (0.060)	-0.173*** (0.063)	0.065 (0.106)	-0.171*** (0.060)	-0.160** (0.064)	0.057 (0.104)
Years Incumbent	0.031*** (0.011)	0.032*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.018)	0.031*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.012)	0.073*** (0.018)
Switched Party	-0.983*** (0.141)	-1.179*** (0.167)	-0.975*** (0.108)	-0.977*** (0.141)	-1.197*** (0.169)	-0.951*** (0.108)
Service $\Delta$ X Service Coverage (2011)				-0.194* (0.110)	-0.193* (0.106)	-0.102 (0.127)
N Councillors	5841	5315	2536	5841	5315	2536
N Municipalities	234	202	234	234	202	234
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

RSE clustered at municipal level

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

Table 7: Service Improvement and Councillor Renomination in Gauteng (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All (1)	ANC (2)	DA (3)	All (4)	ANC (5)	DA (6)
Service Coverage $\Delta$ x Win Margin				0.435 (0.529)	0.510 (0.627)	1.596 (1.607)
Win Margin				-0.332 (0.471)	0.507 (0.783)	-2.104* (1.182)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.183 (0.158)	0.201 (0.178)	0.662* (0.392)	-0.058 (0.329)	-0.091 (0.413)	-0.345 (1.087)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-3.875*** (1.407)	-2.768* (1.504)	-5.646 (3.513)	-3.913*** (1.418)	-2.922* (1.513)	-5.935 (3.664)
Employment $\Delta$	0.128 (0.893)	0.519 (0.984)	-2.150 (2.095)	0.254 (0.904)	0.598 (0.990)	-2.121 (2.145)
High Income (%)	-1.958* (1.184)	-2.057 (1.416)	-0.557 (2.752)	-2.009* (1.202)	-1.864 (1.432)	-1.061 (2.869)
Post Secondary (%)	1.896 (1.685)	2.535 (2.383)	-1.600 (3.610)	2.014 (1.699)	2.520 (2.392)	-0.689 (3.675)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-1.639** (0.756)	-0.878 (1.439)	-3.906** (1.600)	-1.507** (0.767)	-1.469 (1.827)	-3.427** (1.663)
Civic Engagement	-0.217 (0.222)	-0.180 (0.263)	-0.116 (0.533)	-0.172 (0.228)	-0.209 (0.269)	0.194 (0.565)
Log Population (2011)	0.220 (0.314)	-0.226 (0.367)	0.850 (0.715)	0.201 (0.318)	-0.217 (0.367)	0.811 (0.719)
Years Incumbent	-0.030 (0.048)	0.001 (0.060)	0.124 (0.118)	-0.035 (0.049)	-0.002 (0.060)	0.153 (0.124)
Switched Party	-1.654*** (0.568)	-0.772 (1.311)	-2.916** (1.231)	-1.723*** (0.575)	-0.692 (1.315)	-3.507*** (1.332)
Switched Municipality	0.300 (0.309)	-0.020 (0.428)	0.514 (0.695)	0.360 (0.315)	-0.003 (0.428)	0.679 (0.686)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	478	338	134	478	338	134

Note:

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

Table 8: Individual Service Improvement and Councillor Renomination in Gauteng (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination									
	All (1)	All (2)	All (3)	All (4)	All (5)	ANC (6)	ANC (7)	ANC (8)	ANC (9)	ANC (10)
Piped Water Access $\Delta$	0.318 (1.567)	1.041 (1.320)				0.470 (1.866)	1.335 (1.534)			
Flush Toilet $\Delta$	0.431 (1.965)		1.334 (1.642)			0.312 (2.244)		1.394 (1.863)		
Electricity Access $\Delta$	0.809 (1.459)			1.231 (1.253)			1.852 (1.562)		2.001 (1.367)	
Refuse Removal $\Delta$	0.421 (1.010)				0.735 (0.924)	-0.332 (1.134)				0.223 (1.038)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-3.840*** (1.478)	-3.432*** (1.299)	-3.687** (1.452)	-3.521*** (1.293)	-3.246*** (1.222)	-2.798* (1.579)	-2.398* (1.413)	-2.554 (1.561)	-2.637* (1.389)	-1.972 (1.336)
Employment $\Delta$	0.124 (0.896)	0.176 (0.891)	0.172 (0.890)	0.136 (0.894)	0.239 (0.886)	0.454 (0.989)	0.564 (0.981)	0.561 (0.981)	0.475 (0.987)	0.627 (0.976)
High Income (%)	-1.986* (1.192)	-1.939 (1.184)	-1.961* (1.184)	-2.051* (1.186)	-1.936 (1.186)	-2.205 (1.427)	-2.023 (1.420)	-2.082 (1.415)	-2.233 (1.417)	-2.108 (1.419)
Post Secondary (%)	1.903 (1.686)	1.908 (1.686)	1.942 (1.684)	1.927 (1.685)	1.963 (1.685)	2.608 (2.387)	2.569 (2.390)	2.604 (2.380)	2.615 (2.381)	2.642 (2.385)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-1.659** (0.761)	-1.615** (0.756)	-1.608** (0.756)	-1.687** (0.759)	-1.615** (0.757)	-0.938 (1.440)	-0.853 (1.435)	-0.840 (1.439)	-0.945 (1.441)	-0.847 (1.438)
Civic Engagement	-0.216 (0.223)	-0.217 (0.223)	-0.216 (0.222)	-0.214 (0.222)	-0.207 (0.222)	-0.178 (0.264)	-0.175 (0.263)	-0.183 (0.263)	-0.176 (0.264)	-0.174 (0.263)
Log Population (2011)	0.217 (0.316)	0.213 (0.314)	0.229 (0.313)	0.201 (0.315)	0.240 (0.314)	-0.284 (0.374)	-0.226 (0.367)	-0.211 (0.366)	-0.276 (0.371)	-0.206 (0.366)
Years Incumbent	-0.031 (0.049)	-0.030 (0.048)	-0.029 (0.048)	-0.033 (0.048)	-0.028 (0.048)	-0.007 (0.061)	0.001 (0.060)	0.003 (0.060)	-0.006 (0.060)	0.002 (0.060)
Switched Party	-1.659*** (0.571)	-1.634*** (0.568)	-1.672*** (0.571)	-1.665*** (0.570)	-1.643*** (0.568)	-0.753 (1.312)	-0.776 (1.311)	-0.788 (1.311)	-0.747 (1.312)	-0.776 (1.312)
Switched Municipality	0.302 (0.310)	0.297 (0.309)	0.309 (0.309)	0.310 (0.309)	0.291 (0.309)	0.018 (0.431)	-0.017 (0.427)	-0.005 (0.428)	0.004 (0.429)	-0.027 (0.428)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	478	478	478	478	478	338	338	338	338	338

Note:

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

Table 9: Determinants of Councillor Renomination in Gauteng with Baseline Levels (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination					
	All	ANC	DA	All	ANC	DA
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.072 (0.187)	0.093 (0.212)	0.964* (0.519)	0.076 (0.219)	0.210 (0.254)	0.731 (0.564)
Service Coverage (2013)	-0.294 (0.249)	-0.279 (0.301)	0.390 (0.668)	-0.123 (0.273)	-0.103 (0.327)	0.472 (0.712)
Councillor Satisfaction	0.582** (0.238)	0.762** (0.305)	1.119* (0.617)	0.552** (0.256)	0.703** (0.324)	1.109* (0.626)
Service Satisfaction Index	0.126 (0.249)	0.119 (0.294)	-0.869 (0.629)	-0.012 (0.267)	-0.018 (0.314)	-0.948 (0.658)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-3.871*** (1.373)	-2.698* (1.449)	-6.169* (3.746)	-3.767*** (1.425)	-2.711* (1.531)	-7.252* (3.914)
Employment $\Delta$	0.161 (0.883)	0.347 (0.971)	-2.169 (2.196)	0.285 (0.906)	0.619 (1.006)	-2.226 (2.223)
High Income (%)	-1.958* (1.090)	-2.635** (1.308)	-1.404 (2.922)	-2.055* (1.231)	-2.808* (1.507)	-1.277 (2.949)
Post Secondary (%)	1.384 (1.534)	2.726 (2.146)	-0.433 (3.799)	1.675 (1.715)	2.498 (2.400)	-0.345 (3.876)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-1.495** (0.723)	-0.677 (1.428)	-3.997** (1.619)	-1.497* (0.775)	-0.877 (1.519)	-3.795** (1.663)
Civic Engagement	-0.090 (0.210)	-0.028 (0.249)	0.125 (0.560)	-0.144 (0.230)	-0.121 (0.273)	0.105 (0.559)
Log Population (2011)	0.119 (0.151)	-0.104 (0.176)	0.836 (0.727)	0.314 (0.324)	-0.168 (0.375)	0.949 (0.742)
Years Incumbent	-0.033 (0.047)	0.004 (0.058)	0.103 (0.123)	-0.026 (0.049)	0.009 (0.061)	0.066 (0.129)
Switched Party	-1.541*** (0.546)	-0.852 (1.307)	-3.116** (1.284)	-1.644*** (0.573)	-0.695 (1.327)	-3.091** (1.272)
Switched Municipality	0.254 (0.301)	-0.056 (0.411)	0.581 (0.704)	0.253 (0.312)	-0.077 (0.432)	0.598 (0.711)
Service $\Delta$ X Service Coverage (2013)				-0.013 (0.124)	0.089 (0.140)	-0.482 (0.441)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	477	338	134	477	338	134

Note:

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

Table 10: Determinants of Councillor Renomination in Gauteng - Excluding Fully Serviced Wards (Logistic Regression)

	Dependent variable: Renomination	
	All	ANC
	(1)	(2)
Service Coverage $\Delta$	0.304 (0.200)	0.283 (0.226)
Councillor Satisfaction	0.521 (0.410)	0.773* (0.467)
Service Satisfaction Index	-0.061 (0.205)	-0.036 (0.226)
Formal Housing $\Delta$	-5.444*** (1.818)	-4.254** (1.917)
Employment $\Delta$	0.455 (1.323)	0.822 (1.439)
High Income (%)	-2.740 (1.852)	-4.343* (2.223)
Post Secondary (%)	1.646 (2.716)	5.019 (3.494)
Ethnicity - African (%)	-1.466 (1.333)	0.471 (1.922)
Civic Engagement	-0.045 (0.342)	-0.306 (0.395)
Log Population (2011)	0.167 (0.393)	-0.082 (0.438)
Years Incumbent	-0.039 (0.081)	-0.034 (0.091)
Switched Party	-2.040** (1.017)	-14.876 (882.744)
Switched Municipality	0.681 (0.560)	0.533 (0.645)
Municipality FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	231	189

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 11: Comparing Predictors of Local Councillor Satisfaction in Gauteng

rank	predictor	RSq	F	waldP	coef	coefP	objective
1	satisfied_municipal	0.30	4122.62	0.00	0.55	0.00	0
2	satisfied_provincial	0.18	1878.87	0.00	0.42	0.00	0
3	done_most_none	0.16	1590.74	0.00	-0.98	0.00	0
4	satisfied_national	0.16	1522.50	0.00	0.36	0.00	0
5	satisfied_economy	0.12	904.31	0.00	0.30	0.00	0
6	agree_mun_doesnt_care	0.12	903.45	0.00	-0.29	0.00	0
7	satisfied_security	0.11	858.09	0.00	0.30	0.00	0
8	satisfied_emergency	0.11	797.53	0.00	0.27	0.00	0
9	satisfied_roads	0.10	709.86	0.00	0.24	0.00	0
10	done_most_local	0.10	705.22	0.00	0.80	0.00	0
11	satisfied_police	0.10	686.98	0.00	0.26	0.00	0
12	muni_satisfied_15	0.09	589.91	0.00	0.82	0.00	0
13	satisfied_parks	0.09	588.57	0.00	0.22	0.00	0
14	community_improvement	0.09	586.67	0.00	0.44	0.00	0
15	satisfied_education	0.09	560.24	0.00	0.27	0.00	0
16	satisfied_streetlights	0.09	498.56	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
17	satisfied_drains	0.09	411.29	0.00	0.22	0.00	0
18	satisfied_money	0.09	498.26	0.00	0.24	0.00	0
19	satisfied_dwelling	0.08	479.23	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
20	satisfied_healthcare	0.08	434.04	0.00	0.24	0.00	0
21	satisfied_payment	0.08	469.42	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
22	satisfied_billing	0.08	460.07	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
23	satisfied_sanitation	0.08	409.86	0.00	0.21	0.00	0
24	satisfied_libraries	0.08	299.57	0.00	0.21	0.00	0
25	satisfied_neighbourhood	0.08	385.42	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
26	satisfied_living_standard	0.07	367.95	0.00	0.21	0.00	0
27	satisfied_refuse	0.07	367.79	0.00	0.22	0.00	0
28	subj_gov_index15	0.07	358.38	0.00	0.32	0.00	0
29	batho_pele	0.07	338.98	0.00	0.51	0.00	0
30	subj_sp_index15a	0.07	345.02	0.00	0.30	0.00	0
31	satisfied_energy	0.07	341.78	0.00	0.20	0.00	0
32	satisfied_water	0.07	337.36	0.00	0.22	0.00	0
33	safe_night	0.07	307.55	0.00	0.17	0.00	0
34	roads_satisfied_15	0.07	304.29	0.00	0.33	0.00	0
35	agree_wrong_direction	0.07	292.86	0.00	-0.18	0.00	0
36	provincial_satisfied_15	0.07	279.15	0.00	0.66	0.00	0
37	satisfied_whole_life	0.07	274.17	0.00	0.19	0.00	0
38	crime_improved	0.07	267.93	0.00	0.26	0.00	0
39	subj_sp_index15	0.07	252.71	0.00	0.23	0.00	0
40	sanitation_satisfied_15	0.06	245.50	0.00	0.36	0.00	0
41	satisfied_time	0.06	244.48	0.00	0.18	0.00	0
42	waste_satisfied_15	0.06	242.23	0.00	0.39	0.00	0
43	high_status_15	0.06	233.79	0.00	1.23	0.00	1
44	waste_disposal_15	0.06	227.25	0.00	1.07	0.00	1
45	high_income_15	0.06	225.09	0.00	1.15	0.00	1
46	flush_toilet	0.06	221.67	0.00	0.55	0.00	1
47	post_secondary_15	0.06	218.43	0.00	1.44	0.00	1
48	agree_failed_state	0.06	216.10	0.00	-0.15	0.00	0
49	energy_satisfied_15	0.06	208.15	0.00	0.42	0.00	0
50	etolls_good	0.06	206.32	0.00	0.16	0.00	0

Table 11 was produced by regressing local councillor satisfaction separately on each of a wide range of variables constructed from the GCRO dataset (357 total: 277 individual-level and 81 ward-level) and a set of individual demographic characteristics (age, gender, race, education, and income). The table includes the “best” 50 predictors, sorted by  $R^2$ . The last column indicates whether a variable was coded *ex ante* as a measure of “objective” service access or living conditions. The full list of variable definitions is available upon request.

Table 12: Individual Household Services and Satisfaction with Local Councillors - Afrobarometer R6 (OLS)

	DV: Approval of Councillor Performance		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Water Inside House	0.052 (0.048)		
Toilet Inside House		0.052 (0.047)	
Electricity Available to House			0.119 (0.074)
Female	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.026 (0.038)	-0.026 (0.038)
Ethnicity - African	0.265*** (0.049)	0.265*** (0.049)	0.249*** (0.046)
Education	0.010 (0.013)	0.009 (0.013)	0.012 (0.012)
Employed	0.018 (0.042)	0.018 (0.042)	0.017 (0.042)
Asset Index	0.028 (0.022)	0.028 (0.022)	0.026 (0.022)
Observations	2299	2299	2299
Province FE	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 13: Service Access Shortages and Satisfaction with Local Councillors - Afrobarometer R6 (OLS)

	DV: Approval of Councillor Performance	
	(1)	(2)
Without Water Last Year	0.037 (0.066)	
Without Electricity Last Year		0.006 (0.042)
Female	-0.055 (0.048)	-0.010 (0.039)
Ethnicity - African	-0.585*** (0.228)	-0.216 (0.152)
Education	0.010 (0.016)	-0.002 (0.013)
Employed	-0.047 (0.053)	0.027 (0.044)
Asset Index	-0.014 (0.028)	0.003 (0.023)
Observations	1360	2133
Province FE	Yes	Yes

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

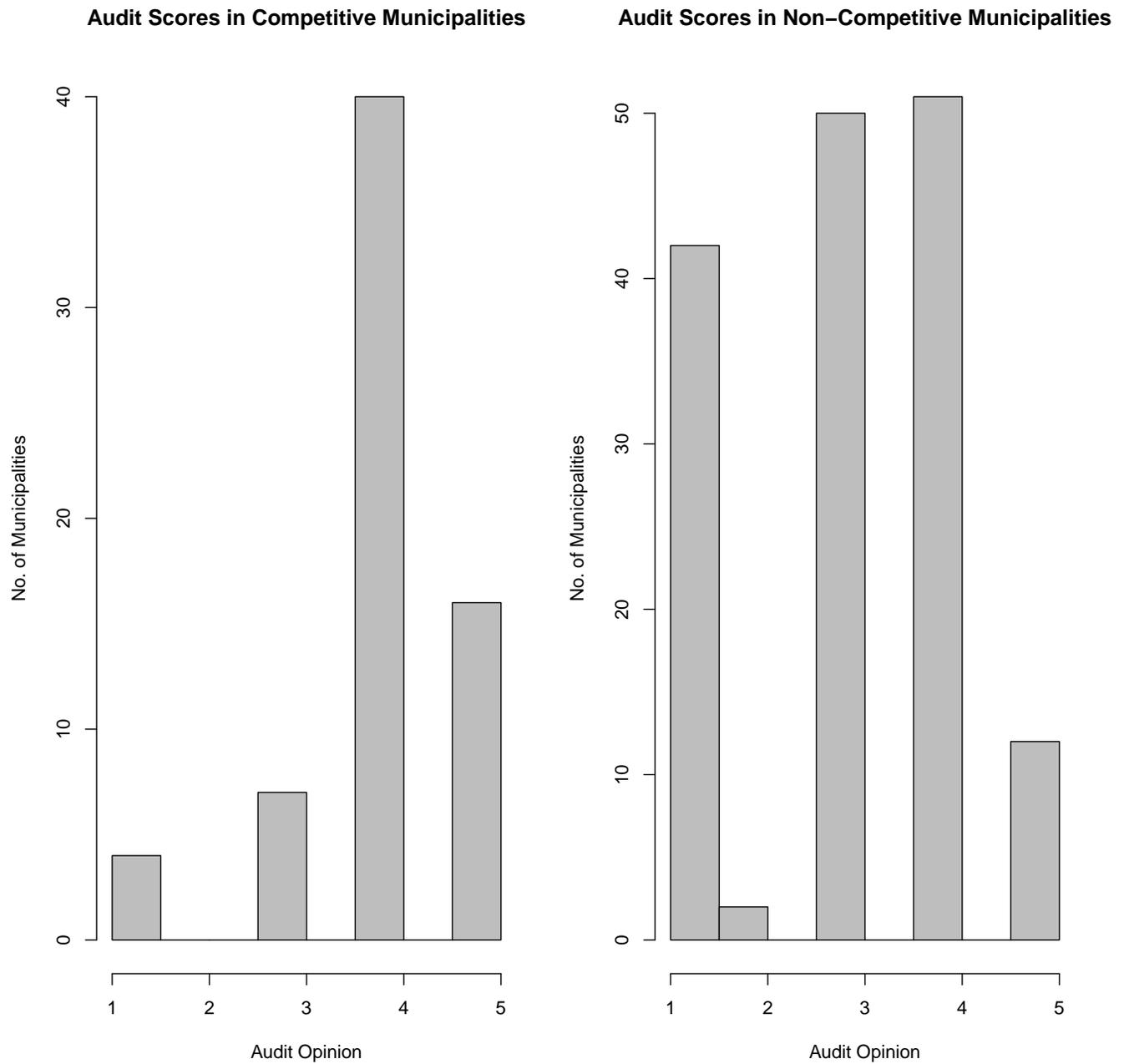
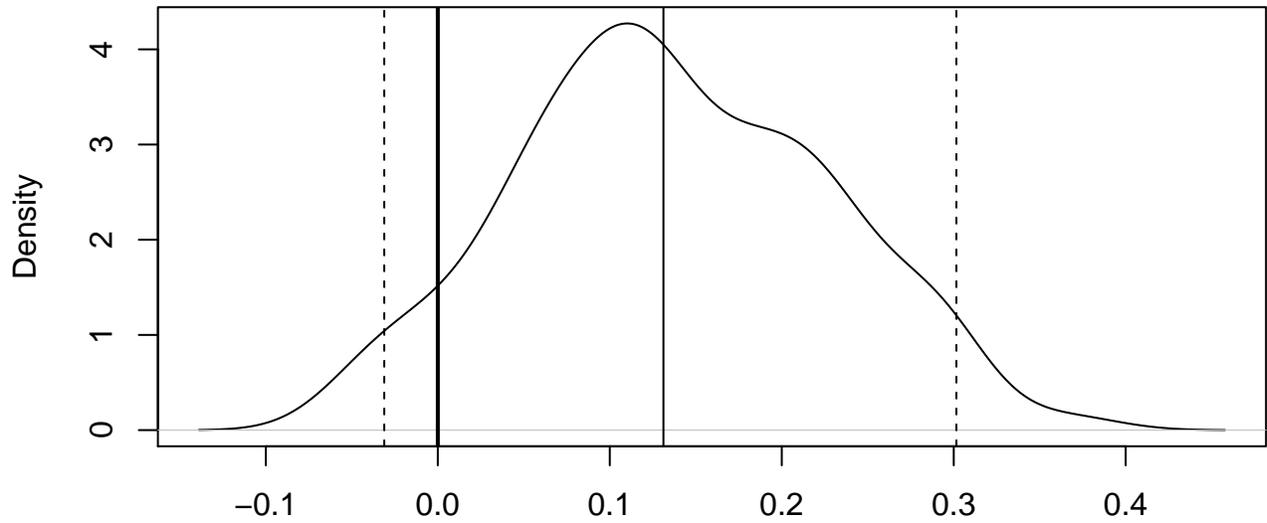


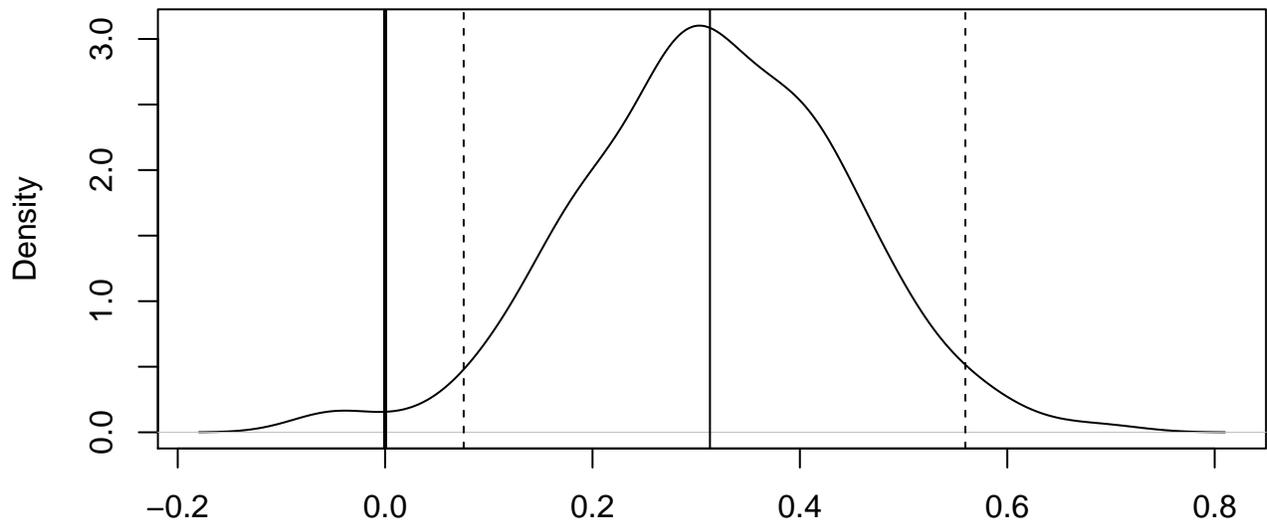
Figure 1: Histogram of Audit Scores in Competitive Municipalities (Win Margin greater than 30%) and Non-Competitive Municipalities

### Bootstrap estimated coefficients: Service Coverage Change



N = 200 Bandwidth = 0.02811

### Bootstrap estimated coefficients: Satisfaction with Councillor



N = 200 Bandwidth = 0.03928

Figure 2: Distribution of estimates of coefficients for *Service Coverage Change* and *Councillor Satisfaction* with clustered bootstrap. Dotted lines represent 95% confidence intervals