A Working Machine

Patronage Jobs and Political Services in Argentina

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Abstract

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Why does the control of patronage significantly increase a party's chances of staying in power? What do public employees do that affect electoral competition? What motivates public employees to do it? In this dissertation, I seek to describe *what* it is that public employees do that affects electoral competition and to establish *why* they do it. I argue that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters in exchange for a wide range of political services. Since government jobs are expensive, the type of political support that is expected in exchange for public sector employment goes far beyond the simple act of voting. Patronage employees perform a number of different political activities that are essential for attracting and maintaining electoral support.

However, a citizen who receives a public sector job with the understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the contract *after getting the job*. Why would public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage contract *after* receiving the job? Existing explanations are based either on fear of punishment (clients comply with their side of the agreement because they are afraid the patron will cut off the benefit if they fail to do so) or feelings of reciprocity (clients comply with the agreement because they want to help the person that have helped them).

Departing from these explanations, I argue that patronage employees engage in political activities that support politicians (patrons) because their fates are tied to the political fate of their patrons. Put simply, their incentives are aligned.

What makes patronage contracts self-sustaining without punishment or reciprocity is the fact that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician who has hired them. Patronage jobs (and working conditions) held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (the patron) but not by a competing politician, because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition. Supporters, then, have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services a credible one. This alignment of interests between patrons and clients (or politicians and patronage employees) makes patronage contracts incentive-compatible and therefore self-sustaining.

I test the empirical implications of my theory using an original face-to-face survey of 1200 local public sector employees that I fielded in three Argentine municipalities (Salta, Santa Fe, and Tigre). Using list experiments—a technique that provides respondents with the anonymity needed to obtain accurate information about sensitive topics—I show that a considerable proportion of public sector employees are involved in political activities. To establish *why* public sector employees provide these political services I use two survey experiments that allow me to identify employees' comprehension of the likely effect of a change in municipal government. The results strongly support the empirical predictions—public employees believe that their jobs are tied to the political success of the

incumbent politician. Finally, I complement the analysis of the survey results with a series of in-depth interviews of public sector employees, brokers, and politicians. I conclude by providing additional evidence from other Latin American countries as an out of sample test of the theory and to provide more confidence about the external validity of the argument.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the winter of 2009, I was returning from a two-hour interview with two public employees, José and Pablo.¹ The three of us needed to go back to the City of Buenos Aires so we were sharing a taxi. As soon as we got into the car, both of them started to make various phone calls. The following is part of one of those conversations. “How many?” asked José and someone replied on the other side of the line. “Great! Thanks!” he responded in excitement and hung up. So Pablo asked, “So? How Many?” “15!,” replied José with obvious satisfaction. “Awesome! Five for María, four for Cecilia, three for Susana...,” said Pablo, and looking in my direction he added, “You see, this is political activism. Live”.² So—with my most innocent voice—I asked: “How many *what?*” While José seemed quite uncomfortable with the disclosure of this information in my presence, Pablo quickly replied “Welfare Benefits! (*Planes Sociales!*)”

The goal of this dissertation is to explore this phenomenon. Pablo and José are public sector employees and both of them are also relatively important brokers (*punteros* or *referentes*) in their respective municipalities.³ Both of them obtained their jobs in the

¹ Names have been changed to ensure anonymity. Personal Interview, La Plata, August 5 2009.

² “*Ves, esto es militancia, en vivo y en directo.*” All translations from Spanish to English are mine.

³ In Argentina, both the term “*puntero*” and “*referente*” mean broker. However, the term “*puntero*” has a relatively negative connotation so brokers usually prefer to call themselves “*referentes*”. “*Militante*” (political activist) has a relatively neutral connotation, and it is used to refer to those with a more passive role in politics than brokers.

government because they were important local brokers embedded within politically influential clientelistic networks. Of course, not all public employees are partisan brokers—or even political activists (*militantes*)—and both brokers and public sector employees are involved in a number of different political activities beyond distributing social welfare benefits for the poor to their “friends.” While not all public employees are involved in the provision of political services, the use of public employment to fund the salaries of political workers (patronage) is certainly not an unusual phenomenon. The goal of this dissertation is to establish what public employees actually do under patronage “contracts” and why they do it. It aims to understand the specific mechanisms behind the electoral returns to patronage politics.⁴

Over the last decade, political clientelism in developing countries has become one of the most studied topics in political science. Although the debate is far from being settled, the empirical works of Auyero (2000), Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007a), Magaloni et al. (2007, 2012), Nichter (2008), Stokes and her co-authors (2004, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2012), Szwarcberg (2009, 2012), Wantchekon (2003), and Weitz-Shapiro (2006, 2008a, 2012) among many others, have substantively improved our understanding of the topic.⁵ However, most of the research on clientelism has focused on the exchange of goods for votes (vote buying), while relatively little has been done to understand how the exchange of jobs for political support (patronage) works.

⁴ Throughout this dissertation I define patronage as the discretionary and personalized exchange of public sector jobs for political support. I use the term patronage contract in an informal way to denote that patrons and clients engage in a *contract-like* exchange relationship in which politicians provide public sector jobs in exchange for political support. Patronage contracts are implicit or explicit agreements between those that get (or expect to get) a patronage job (the client) and those that get (or expect to get) political support in return (the patron). I discuss this definition and the more general definition of clientelism in the next section.

⁵ There is also a broad formal literature: Dixit and Londregan (1996), Medina and Stokes (2002), Morgan and Vardy (2011), and Robinson and Verdier (2003), among others.

Moreover, the majority of the literature on clientelism focuses on how political competition and/or poverty influence the choices of patrons and clients. Despite the fact that vote buying and patronage are devices intended to affect electoral results, the literature has mainly studied them as dependent variables.⁶ In fact, most of the studies on clientelism simply assume that clientelism works as an electoral strategy (Stokes 2007).⁷ In relation to patronage politics, the conventional wisdom is that the control of patronage significantly increases a party's chances of staying in power, but we still know very little about the specific mechanisms that explain the relationship between patronage contracts and political competition. We know even less about what sustains these contracts.

In this dissertation, I seek to describe *what* it is that public employees do that affects electoral competition and to establish *why* they do it. I argue that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters in exchange for a wide range of political services. Since government jobs are expensive, the type of political support that is expected in exchange for public sector employment goes far beyond the simple act of voting. Patronage employees perform a number of different political activities that are essential for attracting and maintaining electoral support. However, a citizen who receives a public sector job with

⁶ Poverty has long been considered a powerful predictor of clientelism. Whether poor people value a handout more than wealthy people or whether poor people are more risk averse and hence value more a benefit today rather than a promise for tomorrow, the bulk of the literature links clientelism with poverty (Stokes 2007). On the other hand, the prevailing approaches to the relationship between competition and clientelism have opposite expectations (Weitz-Shapiro 2008a, 2012). Some authors have linked clientelism with situations of low competition (Fox 1994; Geddes 1994; Grzymala-Busse 2003; Hale 2007; Magaloni et al 2007); while others argue that more competitive environments make votes more valuable and thus increase the incentives to use clientelism to obtain them (Keefer 2002; Krishna 2007; Remmer 2007; Robinson and Verdier 2003, Scott 1969). Finally, in recent years, some authors have combined the general agreement about the poverty of potential clients and the predictions about political competition, and have argued that it is the interaction of both that best predicts clientelistic practices (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b; Magaloni et al. 2007; Weitz-Shapiro 2008a, 2012).

⁷ This tendency has started to change in the last couple of years, particularly with the growing literature on the electoral returns of conditional cash transfer programs.

the understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the contract *after getting the job*. Why would public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage contract after receiving the job? Existing explanations are based either on fear of punishment (clients comply with their side of the agreement because they are afraid the patron will cut off the benefit if they fail to do so) or feelings of reciprocity (clients comply with the agreement because they want to help the person that have helped them).

By treating both patrons and clients—in this case, politicians and public employees—as equally sophisticated, self-interested individuals, my argument departs from existing accounts that tend to portrait clients as passive, non-strategic and/or myopic actors.⁸ What makes patronage contracts self-sustaining without punishment or reciprocity is the fact that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician who has hired them. Patronage jobs (and working conditions) held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (the patron) but not by a competing politician, because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition. Supporters, then, have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services a credible one. This alignment of interests between patrons and clients (or politicians and patronage employees) makes patronage contracts incentive-compatible and therefore self-sustaining.

⁸I discuss this point in chapter 6.

I test the empirical implications of my theory using an original face-to-face survey of 1200 municipal public sector employees that I fielded in three Argentine municipalities (Salta, Santa Fe, and Tigre). To elicit accurate information and minimize potential social response bias, I implemented two different strategies. The first consists of a set of techniques to earn the trust of the respondents by guaranteeing the full confidentiality of the most sensitive questions. The second strategy incorporates the use of list experiments—a technique that provides respondents with the anonymity needed to obtain accurate information about sensitive topics. Using these methods, I show that a considerable proportion of public sector employees are involved in political activities. To establish *why* public sector employees provide these political services I use two survey experiments that allow me to identify employees' comprehension of the likely effect of a change in municipal government. The results strongly support the empirical predictions—public employees believe that their jobs are tied to the political success of the incumbent politician. Finally, I complement the analysis of the survey results with a series of in-depth interviews of public sector employees, brokers, and politicians. I conclude with a brief analysis of other Latin American countries that considers the external validity of the results and the generalizability of the theory.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. I begin by defining clientelism and patronage. Second, I discuss the political and economic effects of patronage. I then describe the empirical strategy, the logic for the selection of Argentina as a case, and some characteristics of Argentina that are particularly relevant for this dissertation. Finally, this chapter provides a preview of the argument and presents the plan of the dissertation.

1.1 Defining Clientelism and Patronage

Throughout this dissertation, I define clientelism as the *discretionary and personalized exchange of goods or favors for political support*.⁹ I refer to patronage as a sub-type of clientelism, in which the good that is exchanged is a public sector job. In this section I first provide a detailed definition of clientelism and then focus on the specificities of the clientelistic exchange when the good being exchanged is a public job.

The characterization of the clientelistic exchange as personalized, individualized or direct (and often face-to-face) helps differentiate clientelism from other forms of distributive politics such as pork barrel politics, in which the exchange involves a group of voters. In contrast to pork barrel politics, where everyone who lives in a certain area would receive a benefit (e.g. electricity or a long-needed road repair), individuals that are not part of a clientelistic exchange can be excluded from the benefit. Clientelism thus can be individually targeted. To be clear, most politicians target benefits to particular segments of the population “based upon their perception that particular groups of voters will prefer policy packages from which their own groups will benefit” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b, 10). The expectation in these cases is that members of the benefiting groups will be more likely to vote for the politician or party that implemented the policies in question. However, the targeting is not personal, but aimed at a group that can be defined in abstract terms (as

⁹ This definition is very close to those provided by Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b), Piattoni (2001) and Stokes (2007), among others. Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b, 2) define clientelism as “a transaction, the direct exchange of a citizen’s vote in return for direct payments or continuing access to employment, goods, and services.” For Stokes clientelism is “the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution that the patron uses is simply: did you (will you) support me?” (2007, 605). Finally, Piattoni (2001, 4) define it as “the trade of votes and other types of partisan support in exchange for public decisions with divisible benefits.” For a distinction between clientelism and other forms of electoral strategies (including programmatic ones) see Stokes (2009).

in programmatic politics) or based on geography (as in the case of pork barrel politics)—within those groups, individuals cannot be excluded. In the case of a clientelistic exchange the benefit is not only targeted but it is targeted at the individual level.

Moreover, patrons “know” who receives a benefit. In modern clientelism, though, clients usually have little or no personal contact with the patron. Rather, the personal connection is with brokers or some other type of middlemen. These intermediaries make sure to emphasize how *personal* the connection is. They routinely and publicly emphasize their “service to the people” and stress “their particular efforts to obtain the goods, [...] thus creating the appearance that were they not there, the benefits would not be delivered” (Auyero et al. 2009, 5). The fact that the goods distributed through clientelism are often private—as opposed to public goods—, makes credit-claiming comparatively easier (Desposato 2007). However, as Weitz-Shapiro (2008a) argues, credit-claiming might be harder in certain cases, such as in the distribution of targeted government programs. In those cases, patrons and brokers have to make an extra effort to convince the clients of the personalized and discretionary characteristic of the benefit.¹⁰ This personal dimension of the clientelistic exchange implies that clientelistic relations are sustained over longer periods of time (Auyero 2000; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012).

The clientelistic exchange is also discretionary because the patron (or broker) enjoys considerably discretion (or, at least, can make clients believe so) to decide who receives a benefit. There is no set of formal rules that stipulates the characteristics of the

¹⁰ For a description of the strategies that politicians can use to create or increase the perception of voters regarding discretion in the implementation of social welfare policy, see Chapter 4 in this dissertation and Weitz-Shapiro (2008a, chapter 2).

clientelistic exchange. As I will discuss below, most of the literature chooses to characterize the clientelistic exchange as contingent on the behavior of the client rather than simply discretionary. My choice of the term *discretion* includes those cases in which the patron or the broker decides to exclude someone from receiving the benefit because he believes that the person is not fulfilling her side of the agreement by providing the expected political support. I choose this broader characterization for reasons that I discuss in the following paragraphs. Finally, I explicitly rely on the word “favors” instead of “services”—a term commonly used in definitions of clientelism— to emphasize the personal connections involved, as well as the *extraordinary* characteristic of the service provided. A favor, in this sense, is a special service that goes beyond what is due or usual.

Political support involves a number of different activities that range from the simple act of voting to participating in political meetings, attending rallies, or helping with electoral campaigns. In return, patrons provide different types of goods, ranging from handouts, favors, and money to unemployment benefits, housing subsidies, and public sector jobs. The existing literature provides a wide variety of examples of the types of goods and favors that can be distributed through clientelistic exchanges: clothing, mattresses, medicine, milk, corrugated metal, construction materials, blankets, hangers, utility bill payments, money, eyeglasses, chickens, trees, and magnets in Argentina (Brusco et al. 2004); medicine, health exams, dentures, wheelchairs, orthopedic boots, and female sterilization in Brazil (Nichter 2011); property titles, subsidized housing and food, work opportunities, and licenses to sell merchandise in flea markets in Mexico (Magaloni et al. 2007); furniture, animals, food, tools, and construction materials in Nicaragua (Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012); money in Taiwan (Wang and Kurzman 2007); and public sector jobs

in Italy (Chubb 1981, 1982; Golden 2003) and the United States (Banfield and Wilson 1963; Folke et al. 2011; Johnston 1979; Wolfinger 1972).

As this list of examples shows, the good or type of favor itself does not determine the existence of a clientelistic exchange.¹¹ Although all the examples here are private goods, it is possible to distribute private goods through programmatic politics. As Stokes (2009) notes, in advanced democracies most welfare-state policies are targeted yet programmatic.¹² In these cases, there is a set of rules that stipulate under what conditions citizens should receive certain benefits and all citizens that satisfy those requirements actually receive the benefit, without any bias or discretion. A group of people is defined in abstract terms—for instance the elderly, the unemployed, pregnant women—and all people thus defined receive the benefit. No member within the abstractly defined group of beneficiaries can be excluded.

The characterization of an exchange as clientelistic depends on the discretionary and transactional nature of the exchange and not on the type of good that is being provided. An exchange is clientelistic because the patron provides a discretionary favor or good (a job, in the case of this dissertation) with the expectation of receiving political support in return. Either the patron promises to deliver the good after the client provides the political support; or the patron provides the good or favor with the expectation that the client will provide political support afterwards. Note that the actual exchange only needs to take place

¹¹ Of course, pure public goods (such as clean air or national defense) are, by definition, impossible to be subjected to a clientelistic exchange because no one can be excluded from benefiting from the good.

¹² See Weitz-Shapiro (2008a; 2012) for an example of how the same program (a targeted food distribution program in Argentina) can be distributed via clientelism or in a non-clientelistic way. Recent studies of conditional cash transfer programs in Mexico (De la O 2013) and Brazil (Zucco forthcoming) that show that distribution in these cases was in fact programmatic, provide further evidence that the type of good (in this case a welfare benefit) in itself does not imply clientelism.

in expectation for the clientelistic arrangement to exist. As I will discuss at length in chapter 2, clients always have the possibility of taking the benefit and then reneging on the clientelistic contract by not providing the promised political support; patrons, in turn, can also fail to comply with their side of the bargain by requesting political support in advance, and then failing to deliver the promised benefits.

But what exactly do I mean by the transactional nature of the agreement? Most definitions of clientelism in the contemporary literature such as Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b) and Stokes (2007, 2009) emphasize the *quid-pro-quo* nature of the exchange in a very specific way. The provision of the goods and services are *contingent* upon the specific actions of the client: “patrons concede rewards to voters who support them and punish those who don’t” (Medina and Stokes 2007, 75). For Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b, 9) a clientelistic exchange is constituted by three components: “contingent direct exchange, predictability, and monitoring.” For them, there is a key distinction between programmatic politicians and clientelistic ones—the former do not engage in contingent exchanges so they “do not try to monitor or enforce conformity of voters with certain party preferences, while clientelistic patrons most definitely engage in such practices” (2007, 22). Similarly, for Stokes (2009, 14), politicians offer material benefits and services, “only on the condition that the recipient returns the favor with a vote (...) The voter suffers a punishment (or reasonably fears that she will suffer one) should she defect from the implicit bargain of a goody for a vote.”¹³¹⁴

¹³ For a similar perspective, see also Grzymala Busse (2008), Hicken (2011), Magaloni et al (2007), Nichter (2008), Szwarcberg (2009), and Weitz- Shapiro (2008a, 2012).

¹⁴ There is another school of thought in the clientelism literature that claims that feelings of reciprocity, rather than monitoring and punishment, are at the core of clientelistic exchanges (Finan and Schecheter 2012;

From this perspective, there are two more necessary conditions to classify an exchange as clientelistic. First, the patron can know, infer, or (at the very least) be able to make the client believe that it is possible to monitor the political behavior required by the clientelistic exchange. In the case of electoral support, this might involve some sort of mechanism that allows for the violation of the secrecy of the ballot or make the client believe that this is a real possibility. In these cases, party machines with an army of politicians and brokers “deeply embedded in social networks” are required to select appropriate clients and monitor their behavior (Stokes 2009, 14).¹⁵ Second, the client should believe that she could be punished if she reneged on her side of the agreement. For a clientelistic exchange to take place, the patron should be able to identify non-compliers and credibly commit to punish them.¹⁶

Lawson and Greene 2012). From this perspective, clients comply with their part of the agreement because they want to help the person that has helped them. And, of course, fear of punishment as an intrinsic characteristic of the clientelistic exchange is absent from their definition. I discuss this perspective in detail in chapter 2.

¹⁵ “Their social proximity allows them (politicians and brokers) to gather information about who votes and whom they vote for—even assuming the secret ballot, they can make reasonably accurate inferences about individual voting patterns” (Stokes 2009: 14). See also Schaffer (2007) and Lehoucq (2007). Going even further, Stokes (2009, 24) proposes to distinguish between “distributions undertaken by modern parties (which cannot enforce *quid-pro-quo* arrangements and rely on voter goodwill) from those undertaken by machines (which can impose punishments on defectors)”. Only in the second type of parties—more common in developing countries—is clientelism possible. Note, however, that dense organization “does not necessarily indicate clientelism.” This type of organization can be the result of earlier labor organization or even ideology as in the cases of Sweden, Finland, or Denmark (Grzymala Busse 2008, 669). Moreover, even politicians and brokers that belong to machine parties can decide whether to monitor and punish or not (Szwarcberg 2009).

¹⁶ However, even authors who claim that some form of monitoring and the threat of punishment are intrinsic components of clientelistic exchanges often find themselves making exceptions to this definition in order to accommodate it to real examples. For instance, when studying clientelism in advanced democracies, Kitschelt (2007, 303) states: “In established post-industrial democracies monitoring clientelistic exchange, let alone enforcement, are not based on heavy-handed violations of the secrecy of the vote. It is rather indirectly based on social pressure, mediated by membership and activism in political parties, unions, business, professional associations, and churches.” Also Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007c) take a step back and talk about “indirect monitoring and enforcement” (325) and “‘soft’ monitoring and incentives” (326): “The monitoring and enforcement of clientelistic citizen-politician linkages is not a simple process in which patrons at every step monitor their clients and intervene to punish free-riders. Clientelism involves a complex web of relations in which monitoring and enforcement is practices in a highly indirect and concealed fashion” (19).

My understanding of clientelism is different. I do not assume that clientelistic exchanges require monitoring of specific voting decisions or political behavior, nor that clients' fear of punishment is their main reason for fulfilling their side of the agreement. Whether monitoring and the fear of punishment actually happen are both questions subjected to empirical research and not an intrinsic part of the definition of the concept. How patron and client can assure compliance with the contract is the focus of much of the discussion in chapter 2. Put it simply, in a clientelistic exchange both sides expect to obtain something from the other one; but *whether* and *why* the contract is respected and patrons and clients actually obtain what they want are empirical questions and not constituent parts of the definition of the concept.

To be sure, I am not arguing that monitoring of political behavior or fear of punishment are never present in clientelistic exchanges, I am only arguing that these are not *necessary* characteristics of these types of arrangements and as such, should not be considered as intrinsic parts of the definition of the concept. There is, as I argue in this dissertation, another possibility to explain why clients comply with their side of the agreement that departs from existing accounts. Without being coerced to do so, clients can make an active and conscious decision to support their patron because they think that it is in their best interest to do so. If clients believe that their political support is important to maintain the status of the patron or broker that allows for the flow of benefits, clients have strong incentives to provide such support. With the exception of Auyero (2000) and more recently Zarazaga (2012), the literature on clientelism has mainly ignored this alternative mechanism to sustain the clientelistic exchange. Since this alternative mechanism is at the core of my argument, I will come back to this point in detail in chapter 2.

1.1.1 Patronage

I define patronage as the exchange of public sector jobs for political support. In this sense, patronage is a sub-type of clientelism, but certainly not the only one.¹⁷ I use the term patronage “contract” in an informal way to denote that patrons and clients engage in *contract-like* exchange relationships in which politicians provide public sector jobs in exchange for political support. Patronage contracts are implicit or explicit agreements between those that get (or expect to get) a patronage job (the client) and those that get (or expect to get) political support in return (the patron). The term refers both to the provision of political support in expectation of getting a job and to the provision of support after getting the job, and it is a type of clientelistic exchange only available to those in government. Since “patronage involves large rewards (a steady and secure income), it is exchanged not for a single vote but for a broader electoral support” (Stokes 2009, 15). In fact, as I will show in chapters 3 and 4, public sector employees provide different types of political services such as helping with campaigns, attending rallies, monitoring elections, and granting favors to voters, among other activities.

This definition of patronage does not imply anything about the characteristics of the client (the job receiver). The general understanding in the literature is that patronage jobs are usually distributed to supporters—and this is the case in the research conducted for

¹⁷ There is no consensus in the literature about the term patronage. For instance, for Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007a) and Chandra (2007), clientelism and patronage are interchangeable terms. As Piattoni (2001, 4) points out, the different uses of the two terms are in part linguistic – patronage is more commonly used in the English speaking countries while clientelism is more used in countries that predominately use the Romance languages. For others, however, both terms refer to different phenomenon in a different way than the one I use in this dissertation. For Schaffer (2007, 5), patronage refers to a distributional strategy consisting of providing material support “within the context of enduring asymmetric, but reciprocal relationships,” as oppose to vote-buying that, for him, only happens at election time. Finally, Stokes (2007) and Weitz-Shapiro (2008a) define patronage in the same way that is defined in this dissertation.

this dissertation as well—but it is not necessary to be a supporter to be involved in a patronage exchange. As I will explain in chapter 2, supporters are good candidates for patronage positions because they are likely more willing to provide political services. But this is also possible with an appointee that gets the job through pure personal (non-partisan) connections (Scherlis 2009). In other words, the only characteristic of the client that matters for this definition is that, in exchange for a job, she agrees to work for the patron providing political services.

It is also important to note that the types of political services that employees provide to their bosses are very diverse.¹⁸ The ones studied here are some of the most common among mid and low-level positions in the bureaucracy, but these are very different from the ones often provided by political appointees in high-level positions. The political support provided by those appointed to patronage jobs at high-level positions are more related to the control over public policies. Politicians want to appoint someone they trust to those areas that they consider important for their administration, in order to make sure that the bureaucrat will implement the policies preferred by the politician or to make their implementation easier. To make this distinction clear, Müller (2006) proposes to refer to the former type of patronage as “service patronage” (the distribution of public sector jobs in exchange for the client’s political support “outside” the job), and to the latter as “power patronage.” And, of course, patronage appointments at high levels make it easier for parties and politicians to get public employees to do them favors, make exceptions, or look the other way, making power patronage a prerequisite for personal and political corruption (related to the financing of politics), clientelism (especially in the form of

¹⁸ Chapter 2 describes these services in more detail.

manipulation of targeted public programs), and pork-barrel.

Other scholars have proposed a definition of patronage irrespective of what the client gives in return for the job appointment (Kopecký and Mair 2006, 2012; Scherlis 2008). For them, patronage refers to the discretionary power to appoint people to public and semi-public sector jobs, without any reference to what the patron receives in return. In the definition I choose to use in this dissertation what the patron gets are in fact political services (or political support), and since this dissertation focuses on mid and low-level positions, the types of political services that I consider are the ones covered by Müller's concept of "service patronage."

1.2 Why Study Patronage?

Why focus on public employment? Why focus on the exchange of public sector jobs for political support as opposed to some other form of clientelism? As mentioned, much of the contemporary literature has put its attention on the exchange of goods or favors for electoral support (vote-buying) but we still know very little about the exchange of public sector jobs for political support (patronage). This is in spite of the fact that patronage has been found in countries all over the world, from Italy (Chubb 1981, 1982; Golden 2003), Greece (Papakostas 2001; Pappas 2009), and the United States (Banfield and Wilson 1963; Folke et al. 2011; Johnston 1979; Wolfinger 1972) to Bulgaria, Hungary and the Czech Republic (Kopecký and Spirova 2011), Argentina (Calvo and Murillo 2004, 2012; Calvo and Ujhelyi 2012; Kemahlioglu 2006, 2011; Remmer 2007; Scherlis 2009), Nigeria (Bratton

2008), and Ghana and South Africa (Kopecký 2011).¹⁹ Finally, not only it is a widespread phenomenon about which we know very little, but more importantly it is one that has significant economic and political consequences.

It is easy to see how the distribution of public sector jobs with political motivations could affect the quality of public administration and generate economic inefficiencies. Since in patronage contracts the criteria for selecting new employees is their willingness or capacity to deliver political services instead of their skills for the job, education or merit, there is no mechanism to prevent unqualified citizens from getting hired, leading to poor public administration. Note, however, that the effects of hiring potentially unqualified workers are limited by the fact that many jobs in the public sector do not require very sophisticated skills. As Roniger (2004, 366) points out, in today politics, “most clientelistic intercessions operate above the fulfillment of minimal capacity requirements for entry into the administration.” In fact, the majority of jobs require very low qualifications so the effect of the partisan bias in hiring low skilled workers on the quality of public administration is fairly limited.

However, even if limited, when the partisan bias in hiring does affect the quality of the administration, economic resources end up being wasted. If the employees hired are unqualified for the job, with the same number of employees the output in terms of production is lower than it would have been in the case with qualified individuals. Moreover, if political appointees devote part of their working hours to the provision of

¹⁹ As Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b, 3) have pointed out clientelism is still present in advance industrial democracies such as Austria, Belgium, Italy and Japan, —even though the view in the 1950s and 1960s was that clientelism it was a characteristic of backwards societies that would disappear in the modern world, clientelism is still present in advance industrial democracies such as Austria, Belgium, Italy and Japan.

political services, less time is devoted to ordinary day-to-day working tasks. More generally, if the reason for hiring is to obtain political support, the size of the public administration can expand beyond the needs of the administration itself to instead reflect the political needs of the patron (Kemahlioglu 2006). In other words, in patronage systems in which the incumbent parties “earn political rents” from the employment relationships it creates, there is “an incentive to provide more employment than the efficient level” (Baland and Robinson 2007, 129).²⁰

Spending on patronage, in turn, leads to the under-provision of public goods—when public money is used for political gain, less is available for public goods (Lizzeri and Persico 2001; Magaloni et al. 2007; Persson and Tabellini 1999). Moreover, empirical studies have shown that professional bureaucracies in which hires, promotions, and dismissals are insulated from electoral politics are associated with economic growth (Evans and Rauch 1999), poverty reduction (Henderson et al. 2003), less corruption (Dahlström et al. 2012; Rauch and Evans 2000), investment in infrastructure (Rauch 1995), and higher bureaucratic performance (Rauch and Evans 2000).²¹ Note, however, that in some cases the level of public employment is “not chosen only from the point of view of ‘productive efficiency,’” but as a redistributive device to transfer income from the middle class to more disadvantaged citizens (Alesina et al. 2000, 219).

²⁰ Baland and Robinson (2007) refer to rural employers that “sell” the votes of their employees, but the logic of their argument applies to patronage contracts in public administration as well.

²¹ Ultimately, the more general argument behind many of these specific results is that elected officials behave differently than non-elected officials (because they face different incentives, have different time horizons or have different expertise and/or information). The literature on this issue, especially in American Politics, is extensive and beyond the scope of this chapter. See Iaryczower et al. (forthcoming) for a review.

In spite of this, some scholars have argued that a complete insulation of the bureaucracy from politicians is not necessarily a desirable scenario. For instance, far from the idea of patronage generating inefficiencies, Müller (2007, 258) has argued that patronage can be used to increase policy-making capacity: “(b)y planting their trustees in the administration and the public sector more generally, political parties can make their policies better informed and smooth their implementation.” From the principal-agent perspective, often used to study bureaucracies in the developed world, one of the main problems in the relationship between politicians (principals) and bureaucrats (agents) is how to make sure that the politician can delegate responsibility to the bureaucrat and still obtain his preferred outcome.²² Patronage appointments are a possible solution to this problem—with full freedom to appoint supporters the likelihood that the interests of the bureaucrat mirror those of the politician increases considerably. In this line, Grindle (2012, 154) has argued that in some Latin American cases “the patronage systems encouraged the responsiveness of bureaucratic actors to executive policy leadership.” Although these arguments apply mainly to the behavior of the high public officials who determine policy implementation and not the middle and low-level public employees that are the focus of this dissertation, political appointees at any level might be more enthusiastic, responsive, and loyal workers when they share the preferences of politicians.

The distribution of patronage jobs also has a number of serious political consequences that can have considerable impact on political competition and the quality of democracy. Control of patronage jobs significantly increases an incumbent’s probability of

²² The literature on this topic is vast (especially the formal one). See Gailmard and Patty (2012) for a review.

getting reelected, reducing the level of electoral competition.²³ Beyond the principled reasons — discussed below— for opposing this unfair advantage, a decrease in political competition is also costly, as competitive elections are associated with a number of positive empirical outcomes. Many empirical studies show that increased political competition improves government performance by making politicians more responsive to their constituencies.²⁴ Higher levels of competition have been associated with decreased corruption (Rose-Ackerman 1978), greater spending in primary education in Mexico (Hecock 2006), steeper economic growth in the U.S. states (Besley et al. 2007), stronger rule of law in Argentina (Bill Chavez 2003, 2007), less politicization of the state in East Central Europe (Grzymala-Busse 2003), and the likelihood of bureaucratic reform involving meritocratic recruitment in Latin America (Geddes 1994) and the United States (Ting et al. 2012).

Moreover, the use of any state resource for electoral competition provides an unfair advantage to the incumbent party. In this sense, patronage has much in common with the targeted manipulation of public programs and pork-barrel spending. In all three of these cases the electoral playing field is skewed in favor of the incumbent party. Elections may

²³ See chapter 2 for a discussion of this literature and its main findings.

²⁴ Note that in countries with “widespread institutional weakness” (Murillo and Levitsky 2005) like Argentina and many others in Latin America, political competition is an even a more important mechanism of accountability. In these countries, “whenever existing formal rules and procedures were perceived to harm the short-term interests of powerful actors, the rules were circumvented, manipulated, or changed.” Politicians in weak institutional democracies are then subjected to very low levels of horizontal accountability and enjoy ample opportunities to break and change the rules, but *they still have to win elections*. In fact, the strength of institutions is the fundamental difference between low levels of competition in places like Argentina and what Pempel (1990) has called “uncommon democracies,” advanced democracies of one-party dominance such as Japan or Sweden. According to Pempel, one of the undesirable consequences of single party dominance is that “the longer a party is in power, the greater the opportunity it has to use state resources to shape and reshape its following” (p.7). The reason why weak competition has more serious consequences in a context of weak institutions is that those opportunities are considerably broader.

still be competitive, but with the political use of state resources by the incumbent party to finance political workers, elections are less fair for the non-incumbent parties. This, in turn, generates perverse incentives among politicians. If politicians' success in the polls strongly depends on the political services provided by public employees, they have "little reason to care about the formulation of policies, the construction of programmatic parties, and practices of accountability" (Schaffer 2007, 11).

As a consequence of this unfair incumbency advantage, democratic accountability also suffers. With fair competition, elections provide information about the distribution of citizens' preferences, which makes it easier for these preferences to be represented and translated into public policies (Stokes 2007, 2009). If incumbents have an unfair advantage for electoral competition, elections tend to be less informative about the distribution of citizens' preferences. This in turn can affect levels of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and the legitimacy of the elected leaders. In a study of party competition in Latin America, Kitschelt et al. (2010) show that the level of confidence citizens express in democratic practices in their countries are lowest where programmatic party competition is weak. Similarly, empirical studies have shown that higher levels of (perceived) corruption (Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Seligson 2002; Weitz-Shapiro 2008b) and clientelism (Kitschelt 2007) reduce confidence in democratic institutions. In many countries in Latin American such popular dissatisfaction has led in the last years to important street protests and even removal of presidents.

Understanding how patronage contracts work is also important because they likely are a prerequisite for many other forms of clientelism and corruption. In the words of Piattoni (2001, 7) clientelism "implies" patronage:

“In order to bend the administrative decision-making process to particularistic criteria, in view of the electoral return that this would yield, the elected officials need to be able to put pressure on career officials, hence to control (albeit informally) their hiring, firing, and advancement.”

Bureaucrats have control over a wealth of resources that can be used (and abuse) for political and/or personal gain. Having “friends” appointed to certain positions, politicians will often find it easy to get patronage employees to do them a “favor” and provide resources required for clientelistic exchanges (Muller 2007), as well as for personal and political corruption. Similarly, Kopecky et al. (2008, 7) argue that patronage is the “necessary condition” for the emergence of vote buying, pork barrel, and corruption:

“Insofar as a party does not control state agencies it will hardly be in the position to develop large-scale clientelistic exchanges, to favor specific constituencies through the allocation of funds, or to make illegal use of public resources for private gains.”²⁵

Moreover, although hardly ever the main focus of analysis, most empirical studies of clientelism refer to the importance of public sector jobs to pay for the work of brokers and activists. For instance, at the beginning of his well-known book about clientelism in Argentina, Auyero (2000) includes a list of eleven actors (plus four elected officials) that are relevant in the local network he is studying. Of those eleven actors, four are public

²⁵ In *Politician's Dilemma*, when discussing presidential appointment strategies, Geddes (1994, 140) argues: “To deliver particularistic benefits to large numbers of voters, the president needs loyalists in all agencies that deal with the public for any purpose. Politicians must have bureaucratic colleagues on whom they can call to expedite pension payments, telephone hookups, and import licenses, approve loans, choose the teachers for local schools, and arrange, expedite, or fund exceptions to anything else affected by government regulation.” Similarly, for Müller (2007, 266): “Probably more important than jobs in the bureaucracy itself is the fact that bureaucrats control access to other resources that can be used in the clientelistic exchanges.” See also Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b, 36-40).

employees and the fifth works part time for the municipality on a temporary contract. After introducing the main political broker in the neighborhood (Matilde) on page 1, three young men are introduced: one is a public employee and the other one “is unemployed, but has been showing up at Matilde’s UB²⁶ for the last four months; he expects to obtain a municipal job soon.” In general, although very few studies outside the US focus specifically on public employment, there is considerable agreement that public sector jobs are a key component of electoral machines (see, for example, Levitsky 2003; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012).²⁷

Finally, besides the possible economic inefficiencies associated with the distribution of patronage jobs, its effects on political competition and accountability, and the possibilities for other forms of clientelism and corruption that patronage jobs facilitate, there is still another serious effect that the politicization of the administration can generate. The existence of bias in the distribution of public sector jobs raises serious questions about the independence of public administration and the possibility of equal access to the state. When clear rules for hiring and promotion do not exist, public employees “owe” their job to the patron that discretionally decides on hiring. In this context, the bureaucracy lacks independence and this lack of independence could lead to lack of impartiality *vis à vis* citizens. As Chandra (2004, 87) points out, in patronage democracies “proximity to a state official increases a voter’s chances of obtaining valued

²⁶ UB (*Unidad Básica*) is the way that the Peronists in Argentina called their grassroots offices; the other main traditional party in Argentina, the Radical Party (UCR) called their offices *Comités* (committees)

²⁷ The machine politics literature in the U.S. has more explicitly recognized and studied the importance of “jobs for the boys” for the sustenance of the machine. See chapter 2 for a more complete review of the literature on clientelism that has acknowledged the importance of public sector jobs to fund the work of activists and brokers.

state resources and services.” What happen to those citizens with no “proximity to a state official”?

At the same time, as Chubb (1981, 120) points out, “an able administrator can (...) transform a routine bureaucratic procedure into a personal favor.” In contexts of widespread patronage, public positions that channel those favors are filled with partisan workers that provide political support to their patrons. Would a citizen that is clearly identified with the opposition get equal treatment? Would a citizen with no personal connections to anyone on the public sector payroll even bother asking for help? When the public administration is filled with patronage employees, ordinary citizens might feel excluded. Whether this impression of uneven access to the state is real or not, it could be enough to keep away those without personal connections. As Cox and McCubbins (1986, 385) puts it: “Insofar as politicians can design the rules by which bureaucratic decisions are made, they can also (at least indirectly) influence the set of citizens that bring demands or complaints before the bureaucracy for redress.” And when those without personal connections are poor—as is usually the case—patronage is linked not only to an uneven access to the state and therefore weak rule of law, but it also becomes a means of reproducing existing inequalities.

1.3 Challenges to the Study of Patronage

Although patronage is often perfectly legal, it constitutes a “gray area” of acceptable practice (van de Valle 2007, 52), which makes it particularly difficult to study. The challenges seem so serious that Geddes (1994, 105) has stated that simply “there is no way

to measure amounts of patronage.” Long before that, Wilson (1961, 372) wrote: “So much secrecy is maintained in city politics that no exact data on patronage may ever be obtained in cities of any size.” Different strategies have been used in the contemporary literature to handle this problem and generate systematic data to study patronage politics.

Taking advantage of the fact that, in some contexts like Argentina and many Latin American countries, civil service rules are weak or non-existent, a number of studies have tried to get around the problem of measuring patronage by using proxies, such as the total number of public employees (Calvo and Murillo 2004), number of temporary employees (Kemahlioglu 2006, 2011) or spending in personnel (Brusco et al. 2005; Gordin 2002; Keefer 2005; Remmer 2007). However, while strict and clear civil service rules are usually a good indicator of the lack of patronage, lack of those rules does not necessarily mean that public sector jobs are distributed through patronage contracts. Moreover, these figures could also easily hide patronage appointments. For instance, all those measures would remain stable in a context in which new incumbents fire employees hired by the previous administration and replace them with their own supporters, without increasing the number of employees or the spending on salaries (Scherlis 2009). Estimates by proxy do not allow us to assess whether or not a public sector job was given with the expectation of getting political support in return.²⁸

Moreover, the challenge is not only to be able to assess whether public jobs are distributed in exchange for political services but also to be able to study the type of political support that public employees provide to their bosses and the reasons behind this support.

²⁸ For a longer discussion about the problems associated with this type of measures in general and in the case of Argentina in particular, see Scherlis (2009, 39-42).

However, asking either politicians or public employees about these political services is also problematic. As Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007c, 323-327) argue, the problem is that both patrons and clients have incentives to misreport clientelistic exchanges. In the case of patronage, public employees could be reluctant to admit that their job is a patronage job because that could imply that they did not really “earn” it. From the point of view of the patron, admitting the existence of patronage jobs is even more problematic because it implies the use of state resources for political purposes. Even when clientelism is often not illegal, politicians may answer questions about clientelism “as valence questions on which they suspect most citizens and observers to be on one side of the issue (against)” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007c, 326).²⁹

In the research carried out for this dissertation, I avoided the use of proxies, and tried to mitigate the problems associated with asking sensitive questions directly to the actors involved. As I explain in greater detail in chapter 3, I test the empirical implications of my theory using an original face-to-face survey of 1200 municipal public sector employees that I fielded in three Argentinean municipalities. To the best of my knowledge, this presents the first systematic attempt to measure the types and extent of the political services that employees hired through patronage contracts provide to their patrons. Still, eliciting such potentially sensitive information from respondents using standard survey methods could be difficult. To minimize the social response bias (whether in the form of

²⁹ To get around this problem, some scholars have opted recently to implement expert surveys. For instance, Herbert Kitschelt runs a cross-country project that includes nearly 90 countries at Duke University (“Democratic Accountability and Linkages Survey Project”), which aims to get information from every country with multi party elections on leadership accountability (see Kitschelt et al. 2009). Peter Mair and Petr Kopecký directed another expert survey in fifteen European countries and five new democracies that focuses on party patronage (see, for instance, Kopecký, et al. 2012). See Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007c, 327-329) for an argument in favor of this alternative.

inaccurate answers or refusals), I designed a series of list experiments. These experiments provide respondents with the anonymity needed to be able to obtain accurate information about their political activities. Further, the use of survey experiments allows me to assess why public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage contract. Finally, I complement the analysis of the survey results with in-depth interviews of public sector employees, brokers and politicians.

1.4 Why Argentina?

While the theory developed and tested in this dissertation applies to many countries without strict civil service rules, Argentina offers the perfect setting in which to begin testing it. Once infamous for its political instability,³⁰ Argentina is today infamous for its clientelistic politics. Whether fairly deserve it or not, Argentinean clientelism has become the focus of a lot of scholarly attention: Auyero (2000), Calvo and Murillo (2004, forthcoming), Calvo and Ujhelyi (2012), Kemahlioglu (2006, 2011), Levitsky (2003), Lodola (2005), Remmer (2007), Stokes and her coauthors (2004, 2005, 2006, 2012), Szwarcberg (2009, 2012), Weitz-Shapiro (2006, 2008a, 2012), and Zarazaga (2012), just to mention a few examples.

³⁰ Argentina has been a stable democracy with free and fair elections since 1983. The Partido Justicialista (Peronist or PJ), and Unión Cívica Radical (Radicals or UCR) have dominated electoral competition in Argentina for the last 60 years. Since the return of democracy in 1983, the PJ has won the presidential election five times (1989, 1995, 2003, 2007 and 2011), while the UCR has won it twice (1983 and 1999). Regardless of which party won the presidential election, the PJ has managed to control the Senate, a majority of the governorships and local governments, and usually a plurality of seats in the Lower House during the entire 1983-2011 period. Since the 2001 political and economic crisis, UCR has lost a lot of its national presence in the Argentinean political system but still preserves considerable importance for local and provincial elections.

Together with this well-documented widespread clientelism, Argentina provides an especially good setting to study the mechanisms of patronage for a number of reasons. Argentina lacks stable civil service rules and has a large public sector with “well-developed patronage systems” (Calvo and Ujhelyi 2012). Moreover, it has an extensive level of decentralization that results in significant variation in the size and the characteristics of public employment across provinces and municipalities.³¹ Finally, although some provincial regulations apply to municipal public employment, control over local personnel is the exclusive responsibility of local governments—a fact that increases the variation in the distribution of patronage even more.

The Argentine Constitution has guaranteed job stability for public employees since 1949 (Art. 14bis). National, provincial and local employees often enjoy tenure rights (normally after a year) and cannot be fired once they have achieved a permanent position. However, the tenure system is systematically bypassed with the increasing use of temporary contracts. Any Argentine administration (national, provincial, and local) is constituted by two main groups of employees—permanent employees (with tenure, or the legally guarantee expectation of tenure after a short period) and temporary employees (with contracts subjected to renewal, often on yearly basis). In spite of the stability of employment that permanent employees enjoy, Argentina lacks stable civil service rules and—although there were various attempts to create a meritocratic system of recruitment—most appointments are still discretionary. In general, there are no standardized exams for entrance and there exists no independent agency to oversee and coordinate hiring and

³¹ Argentina is a federal republic with a presidential system, extensive decentralization and significant regional variation. It has 23 provinces divided into more than 2000 local governments (around 1200 municipalities and 800 *comunas*), and a capital city (Buenos Aires) with a semi autonomous status.

promotions. The government (national, provincial, and local) can then politically appoint followers to public jobs either by enlarging the public sector or replacing temporal employees. As far as permanent personnel are not touched, every new president, governor and mayor enjoys considerable discretion to appoint new personnel.³² As it will be clear from the evidence presented in chapters 3 to 5, this discretion is use (and abuse) extensively for the distribution of patronage contracts.

Note that, in spite of all the attention that the literature has given to the Argentinean case, Argentina is not an outlier among Latin American countries—at least for the specific type of clientelistic exchange that is the focus of this dissertation. In an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) evaluation of bureaucracy and civil service systems across Latin American countries, Argentina is placed in the group of countries with intermediate development of the civil service, together with Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela (Echebarría 2006; see also Zuvanic et al. 2010). Despite the fact that all Latin American countries have established a career public service, the extent to which merit is the only criteria used for hiring, firing, and promotion varies enormously across countries. With the possible exception of Brazil, in all other Latin American countries civil service systems exist in parallel to political criteria for hiring, firing, and promotions (Grindle 2012; Iacoviello 2006; Zuvanic et al. 2010).³³

In sum, the combination of well-documented and widespread patronage with high levels of decentralization that results in significant variation in the economic and political

³² See Bambaci et al. (2007), Ferraro (2011), Grindle (2012), Scherlis (2009) and Chapter 6 in this dissertation for more details.

³³ Chapter 6 describes and discusses in depth how Argentina compares to other Latin American countries.

settings in which patronage contracts are taking place, makes Argentina a particularly useful laboratory for studying patronage politics. Since my purpose here is to study *how* patronage works and not to establish whether patronage exists, the choice of a country with well-known patronage politics seems appropriate. At the same time, Argentina does not seem to be an outlier in terms of patronage appointments, at least for Latin American standards, which makes the evidence presented in this dissertation relevant for other Latin American cases. Finally, the subnational variation that exists in Argentina allows me to test my theory in very different settings—which makes the expectation of the portability of the results to other settings more plausible—without losing the advantages of conducting research in only one country.³⁴

1.5 Preview of the Argument and Contributions

Why does the control of patronage significantly increase a party's chances of staying in power? What do public employees do that affect electoral competition? What motivates public employees to do it? In chapter 2, I develop a theory that seeks to understand *what* it is that public employees do that affects electoral competition and *why* they do it. Here, I present a preview of that argument.

Consistent with the general understanding in the literature, I argue that public sector jobs are disproportionally distributed to political supporters. However, since government jobs are expensive, the type of political support that is expected in exchange

³⁴ Of course, testing the theory in only one country can raise some concerns about the generalizability of the argument. I address this issue in chapter 6 of this dissertation.

for public sector employment goes far beyond the simple act of voting. In fact, politicians distribute many low and mid-level positions in the bureaucracy with the goal of maintaining a network of activists on the ground that performs a number of different political activities—such as helping with electoral campaigns or attending rallies—that are essential for attracting and maintaining electoral support.

Patronage jobs then provide politicians in power with a very powerful tool—an army of political workers. However, these types of contracts are hard to enforce for two reasons. First, because the law cannot be used to enforce the contracts, they must be self-enforcing. Second, since the exchange is non-simultaneous, both politicians and clients face a commitment problem. In the case of the provision of public sector jobs for political support, politicians are at risk of “wasting jobs” on employees that, once hired, would not comply with their side of the contract. Clients, in turn, are at risk of providing services with the promise of a future job from a candidate that, once in office, would renege on his side of the agreement and withhold the job offer. This dissertation focuses on the former commitment problem (what happens once the job has been delivered with the promise of political support in return). Why would public employees uphold their end of the contract and provide political services even *after* receiving the benefit of the job?

A citizen who receives a public job with the implicit or explicit understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the contract after getting the job. As Stokes (2007) points out, we would expect clientelistic relations to be full of opportunities for defection and betrayal. Why would employees comply with their side of the contract after receiving the benefit of the job? How can the mayor make sure not to “waste” jobs on citizens that will not fulfill their side of the patronage contract? The

literature so far has provided two main answers to this question: norms of reciprocity and fear of retaliation. According to the first set of theories, norms of reciprocity enforce the clientelistic exchange; clients comply with their side of the agreement because they want to help those who helped them. In other words, clients help the patron out of feelings of gratitude. Recent studies have shown that reciprocity might play a role in vote buying (Finan and Schechter 2012; Lawson and Greene 2012). From this perspective, public employees respect their side of the contract and provide political services because they want to help the person who has helped them.

The logic of the second set of theories is different. From this perspective, clients comply because they are afraid that the patron will cut off the benefits if they fail to do so. In fact, a lot of the contemporary literature on clientelism has focused on the monitoring and commitment problems that are associated with this perspective (see, for example, Brusco et al. 2004; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007; Nichter 2008; Stokes 2005 and 2007; and Robinson and Verdier 2003). As discussed in section 1.1, for many of the authors in this school of thought, the ability of the patron to identify non-compliers and punish them is what makes an exchange truly clientelistic. For them, the defining feature of clientelistic exchanges is that they are contingent on the client's behavior. If the client does not behave according to her patron's wishes—which requires either the ability to monitor or the client's belief that this is possible—, the patron has the power to punish the client by withdrawing or withholding the benefit. From this perspective then, the commitment problem is solved on the basis of fear—public employees provide political services because they are afraid that the patron will cut off the benefit and fire them if they fail to do so.

I argue that there is a third alternative that ensures that public employees uphold their part of the patronage contract and provide political support for the politician that have giving them these valued positions. Public sector employees (clients), I argue, engage in political activities that support politicians (patrons) because their fates are tied to the political fate of their patrons. Put simply, their incentives are aligned.

One reason for this incentive alignment is that politicians are generally able to appoint employees who are more likely to provide political services in the first place. Politicians want to distribute patronage jobs to those who are more likely to comply with the patronage agreement and provide political services. However, finding these types of employees is not an easy task. Potential employees can promise future compliance but for the promise to be credible in the absence of feelings of reciprocity or punishment for non-compliers it has to be incentive-compatible. Only if potential employees can credibly commit to provide political support in the future, patronage contracts are self-sustaining without punishment and reciprocity. The need to make patronage contracts incentive-compatible leads to the distribution of these jobs to supporters. All potential clients (or employees) can promise to provide political services in the future, but only supporters can make these promises credible. Patronage jobs and working conditions held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician who have hired them but not by a competing politician. Supporters then have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent (their patron) stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services credible.

Politicians use referrals and personal and partisan connections to screen potential clients and separate supporters from non-supporters. All things equal, supporters are more

likely to comply with the agreement and provide political services because they are more likely to actually support the party or the politician than non-supporters, making the provision of political services less costly for them. But, of course, perceptions could be misleading. Patronage employees could pretend to have certain political preferences to get a job, change their minds about their political preferences, or simply reduce the effort they are willing to devote to political work. Again, since the exchange is not simultaneous, employees with patronage jobs—even perceived supporters— still have the possibility of not complying with their side of the agreement after receiving the benefit of the job. Being a supporter—or, more accurately, being *perceived* as one—is not in itself enough to guarantee compliance with the patronage agreement.

What explains, then, that patronage agreements are in fact respected? What makes patronage contracts self-enforcing is the belief on the part of patronage employees that their jobs are tied to the political success of their patron. Public employees under patronage contracts believe that if the incumbent loses the election, their own jobs could be in jeopardy. Once perceived as a supporter of the incumbent politician, patronage employees have low expectations of keeping their jobs and their working conditions if the opposition were to win. A new politician will want patronage jobs to be distributed to those more likely to provide political services for him and only *his* supporters can credibly commit to do that in the future, so old employees will be replaced or demoted. Supporters of the incumbent then have a huge incentive to provide political services to try to keep the incumbent that have hired them in power. In other words, when supporters get the patronage jobs, patronage contracts are incentive-compatible and the commitment problem associated with the non-simultaneity of the exchange disappears. Supporters with

patronage jobs understand that it is on their best interest to provide political services to help the incumbent politician remain in power. And it is precisely this alignment of interests between patrons and clients (or elected politicians and patronage employees) what makes patronage contracts self-sustaining.

By providing a direct assessment of the specific mechanisms that lie at the core of the effect of patronage on political competition, my dissertation makes three main contributions. First, it presents the first systematic attempt to measure the types and extent of political services that employees hired through patronage contracts provide for their patrons. I also provide a novel explanation about the enforcement of these patronage contracts. By treating both patrons and clients—in this case, public employees—as equally sophisticated, self-interested individuals, my argument departs from existing accounts based either on feelings of reciprocity or fear of punishment. I argue that public sector employees comply with the patronage contract because their interests are aligned with those of their patrons. Patronage contracts then do not always indicate passive clients acting out of fear and behaving against their preferences. Clients (in this case, public sector employees) can make sophisticated calculations when deciding whether to comply with the agreement or renege. Finally, by showing the effectiveness of lists experiments to elicit truthful responses to sensitive topics, my dissertation also makes a methodological contribution.

1.6 Plan of the Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 2 introduces the self-enforcing theory of patronage and derives its empirical implications. After a discussion on the relationship between patronage jobs and political competition and a description of the types of political services that public employees provide to their bosses, I develop a novel theory that seeks to understand the reasons behind the provision of political services. Why would employees uphold their end of the patronage contract and provide political services even *after* receiving the benefit of the job? Departing from existing accounts, I argue that clients (employees) fulfill their side of the contract because their incentives are aligned with those of their patrons (politicians).

Chapter 3, 4 and 5 offer the main empirical tests of this theory. After showing that patronage jobs are in fact disproportionately distributed to supporters, Chapter 3 uses list experiments embedded in an original survey of 1200 public employees to measure the types and extent of the political services that patronage employees provide to their bosses during elections—namely, attending rallies, helping with electoral campaigns and monitoring elections. Chapter 4 focuses on one political service that employees do in between elections—providing favors. Both Chapters 3 and 4 show that, as predicted by the theory, supporters are more involved in the provision of political services. Chapter 5 tests the argument’s central implication, that public sector employees fulfill their side of the patronage contract by providing political services in pursuit of their own personal interests. Using survey experiments, I provide evidence that patronage employees believe that their fates are tied to the political fate of their patron, providing a good incentive for

wanting to help him to stay in power. The final chapter reviews the major findings and discusses their implications for our understanding of the dynamics of clientelism. In particular, my findings draw attention to the interests and strategic behavior of clients and to the particularly negative consequences of patronage exchanges. I also present in this chapter additional evidence from other Latin American countries as an out of sample test of the theory and to provide more confidence about the external validity of the argument.

Chapter 2

A Self- Enforcing Theory of Patronage

Although the conventional wisdom is that the control of patronage significantly increases a party's chance of staying in power, we still know very little about the specific mechanisms that explain the relationship between patronage contracts and political competition. We know even less about what sustains these contracts.¹ In spite of the fact that the literature on clientelism has shown a spectacular growth in the last decade, most of the research on clientelism has focused on vote buying (the exchange of goods or favors for votes), but relatively little has been done to understand how patronage (the exchange of public sector jobs for political support) works. Only a few scholars have looked systematically at the effect of patronage on political competition in the developing world.

In this chapter, I seek to develop a theory to understand *what* is it that public employees do that affects electoral competition, and to establish *why* they do it. Consistent with the general understanding in the literature, I argue that public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters. Besides doing their regular jobs, these supporters—now under patronage contracts—are expected to provide a range of political services for the politician that hired them (their patron). However, a citizen who receives a

¹ Recall that I define patronage as the exchange of public sector jobs for political support. Patronage contracts are implicit or explicit agreements between those that get (or expect to get) a patronage job (the client) and those that get (or expect to get) political support in return (the patron). See the introduction for a more detailed discussion of this definition.

public sector job with the implicit or explicit understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the agreement *after* getting the job. Why would public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage contract *after* receiving the job? What is their incentive to comply?

Patronage employees do not comply with their side of the agreement because they are afraid that the patron will cut off the benefit if they fail to do so, or because of feelings of reciprocity. Departing from existing explanations, I argue that what makes patronage contracts self-sustaining without punishment or reciprocity is the fact that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hires them. Patronage jobs and working conditions held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician but not by an opposition politician, because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to the provision of political services for the opposition. As a result, supporters have strong incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, making their original commitment to provide political services a credible one. Patronage employees understand that it is in their best interest to provide political services to help the incumbent politician remain in power. And it is precisely this alignment of interests between patrons and clients what makes patronage contracts incentive-compatible and therefore self-sustaining over time.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. In the next section, I discuss the relationship between patronage jobs and political competition. In section 2, I describe the types of political services that public employees under patronage contracts often provide to their patrons. In section 3, I focus on the commitment issues associated with the

clientelistic exchange and the existing explanations for the solution to this problem. In section 4, I present a novel theory about what sustains these patronage contracts and how the commitment problem is solved. In section 5 I briefly discuss the potential collective action problems that could arise from my self-enforcing theory of patronage. Section 6 outlines the empirical implications and the scope conditions of the theory developed here. The last section concludes.

2.1 Patronage Jobs and Political Competition

The conventional wisdom both in the traditional literature on machine politics in American cities and in more recent studies is that the control of patronage significantly increases a party's chances of staying in power. Despite this widespread perception, there is surprisingly little systematic evidence of the electoral returns of patronage jobs. As mentioned in the introduction, part of the reason we know so little about this issue is because it is extremely difficult to collect systematic and reliable data on patronage. In contexts with weak or no civil service systems, some scholars have used different "proxies" such as the number of public sector employees (Calvo and Murillo 2004), number of temporary employees (Kemahlioglu 2006; 2011) or spending in personnel (Gordin 2002; Keefer 2005; Nazareno et al. 2006; Remmer 2007) in order to study the electoral returns to patronage. However, even in the absence of civil service rules, a high number of public sector jobs (or high spending) is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the existence of patronage. A public sector job that is distributed in the absence of civil service

rules does not necessarily mean that it is distributed with the expectation of obtaining political support in return.

Even in the American politics literature, which has studied machine politics for more than fifty years, the effect of patronage on elections has only recently become clear (Folke et al. 2011). Taking advantage of the fact that the adoption of civil service reforms took place at different times across US states, Folke et al. (2011) use a difference-in-difference design to show that having access to state-level patronage increased the probability of winning state elections. In Argentina, using provincial-level data on the number of public employees, Calvo and Murillo (2004) show that public employment boosts incumbent electoral support when the Peronist party is in power. Using data from 1987-2005, Scherlis (2005) argues that provinces in Argentina with higher levels of patronage present lower levels of political alternation and more “closed” and stable party systems. Similarly, building on rentier theories of the state, Gervasoni (2010) finds a negative relationship between the size of the provincial payroll and levels of subnational political contestation.² Finally, using original survey data, Calvo and Murillo (forthcoming 2013) show that the expectation of receiving a public sector job has a significant effect on the voting intentions of respondents in Argentina (and Chile).

Beyond the Argentine case, scholars have called attention to the importance of public sector employees in helping the incumbent stay in power in a variety of countries.

² In contrast, Nazareno et al. (2006) find that there are no positive electoral returns to patronage at the municipal level in Argentina. They speculate that this result might be explained by the negative effect that patronage has for those that are paying (as taxpayers) but are not enjoying the benefits of these jobs. However interesting, their results are hard to evaluate because of the possibility of important selection bias in their data. Their sample includes only six provinces (out of 24), which were—as they admit— not selected randomly, but by availability of the data. Plausibly, provinces with higher levels of patronage have larger incentives to withhold this information.

Chubb (1981, 1982) shows the importance of patronage jobs in helping the Christian Democrats build a monopolistic system of power in Palermo that lasted for more than thirty years. McMann (2006) explains the persistence of hybrid regimes at the subnational level in Russia and Kyrgyzstan as a consequence of the lack of “economic autonomy” (the ability to make a living independent of the state). For him, in those areas where the state dominates economic opportunities and there are very few job options outside the state, incumbents have nothing to fear. Using a time-series cross-sectional dataset and examples from Mexico and Botswana, Greene (2010) argues that patronage jobs (among other state resources) are a key explanation for the survival of authoritarian dominant party regimes.

In sum, there is widespread agreement that the control of patronage increases the probability of winning elections, even if this consensus is not always based on systematic evidence. Less clear in many of the studies cited are the specific mechanisms that explain the relationship between the distribution of patronage jobs and electoral outcomes. With the possible exception of some post-Soviet states, it is highly unlikely that the votes of public employees are enough to win an election. Patronage jobs are in fact exchanged for a kind of political support that goes far beyond mere votes. Although not the only kind of support possible, in this dissertation I focus on the political services provided by public employees at low and mid level positions.³ The traditional literature on machine politics in the US has long recognized the central role of “jobs for the boys” in funding the salary of party workers (see, for instance, Bansfield and Wilson 1963; Pollock 1937; Wilson 1961; Wolfinger 1972). But more recently, public employment in new democracies (where weak

³ In the next section, I describe the services and other forms of political support provided by public employees at higher ranks.

civil service systems allow for ample opportunities for patronage) has received very little scholarly attention. Most of the research on clientelism has focused on vote buying (and more recently, turnout buying) and relatively little has been done to understand how patronage works. Moreover, the few extant studies on patronage focus on explaining variation in the use or existence of patronage (Grzymala-Busse 2003, Remmer 2007) and not on how it works or its consequences. As a result, most of what we know today about public sector employees as political workers is based on studies in which the main focus of interest is not the public sector, but clientelism.⁴

Most contemporary studies on clientelism recognize the importance of public sector jobs as a key component of electoral machines, especially as a way of financing the work of brokers. Remmer (2007) argues (following Stokes 2005) that the efficacy of clientelism strongly depends on the capacity of politicians to monitor electoral behavior and the distribution of public jobs to brokers who gather information about voters and deal with their material needs is critical to enhance this capacity. For Szwarcberg (2009), social welfare programs and public employment in Argentina “constitute the sources of clientelistic mobilization”. In what is probably the biggest survey of brokers conducted to date (800 interviews in four Argentinean provinces), 30 percent of the brokers interviewed (excluding those that hold public office) reported being public sector employees. In fact, public employment was the largest single occupation mentioned (Stokes et al. 2012). Zarazaga (2012) also conducted a survey of brokers (120 cases, using a snowball technique) in the province of Buenos Aires (Argentina) in which he found that fifty percent

⁴ Important exceptions to this are Calvo and Uhjleyi (2012) and Calvo and Murillo (2004, 2012), who have put public sector employees at the center of their studies.

of the brokers interviewed reported being public sector employees. In general, although very few studies outside the US focus specifically on public employment, there is agreement that public sector jobs are a key component of electoral machines (see also Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2003; Scherlis 2009).

Patronage jobs are then mentioned in the clientelism literature as one of the ways (probably the most important one) in which the work of brokers is financed. Although this type of research provides a lot of insights about the political activities of *some* public employees, not all patronage employees are brokers, and brokers are not the only ones involved in political activities that affect electoral competition. Most scholars focus on brokers because they are key actors in a variety of electoral and political activities, but a lot of public sector employees under patronage contracts that are not brokers are nevertheless involved in the provision of political services. We know very little about the activities of these less important, but still fundamental, political actors. In this dissertation, I study the political support provided by all types of public employees under patronage contracts, including brokers as well as those more anonymous employees that also provide political services. In the next section, I describe in detail the types of political services that these employees usually provide to their patrons and that are at the core of understanding the effect of patronage politics on political competition.

2.2 Political Services

Public sector employees provide politicians with an army of potential political workers. In contexts of weak or non-existent civil service rules, as it is the case in most Latin American

countries (Grindle 2012; Iacoviello 2006; Zuvanic et al. 2010), the possibility to discretionarily appoint public sector workers provides politicians in office with a powerful tool that can be used for political gain. However, not every job in the public sector is distributed for political reasons. Most parts of the public sector—even in contexts where there is widespread patronage—is dedicated to the delivery of public services and the administration of state resources. A politician who wants to stay in power cannot distribute every public sector job in exchange for political services without affecting his capacity to administrate efficiently and, as a consequence, his chances of reelection. The potential electoral returns of political appointees as well as the “on-the-job productivity” of public sector employees are both essential for a politicians’ survival (Calvo and Murillo, 2012).⁵ Without a functioning bureaucracy, the potential electoral gains from the distribution of patronage jobs become counterproductive.

Nonetheless, some jobs are in fact distributed in exchange for political support and these types of jobs are the focus of this dissertation. Patronage employees are, of course, expected to vote for the patron that appointed them, but the type of support that is expected in exchange for a position in the public administration goes far beyond that. Indeed, however high the number of public employees it seems extremely unlikely that their votes could be enough to substantively affect electoral outcomes, so using public jobs to buy votes would be expensive and inefficient (Kemahlioglu 2006; Piattoni 2001; Scherlis

⁵ A former mayor from a municipality in the province of Buenos Aires clearly illustrates this point: “It is not the same to spend 50% of your municipal budget on personnel salaries from having 80% of it allocated to salaries. [With 80%] you cannot do anything else. (...) You have to be efficient. If you have around three thousand public employees you can also add 100, 150, 200 [employees] that are exclusively dedicated to political activities (...) But you cannot have a thousand or two thousand political employees because it would be horrific and scandalous” (cited in Calvo and Murillo 2012, 5).

2009).⁶ Distributing public sector jobs has become increasingly costly, particularly after the neo-liberal reforms implemented in the 1990s in Latin America that dramatically reduced the size of the state apparatus. As a consequence, the exchange of patronage jobs for mere votes has become an even more inefficient strategy for politicians (Kemahlioglu 2006). But the increasing cost of distributing public sector jobs does not mean that politicians have ceased to use them for political gain. It simply means that politicians expect more than just a vote in return (Calvo and Murillo 2012; Calvo and Ujhelyi 2012; Kemahlioglu 2006; Scherlis 2009; Stokes 2009).

The type of political support that patronage employees provide to their bosses in exchange for their positions varies considerably according to the level of the position. The political services that are the focus of this dissertation are some of the most common among mid- and low-level positions in the bureaucracy. These services are very different from those typically provided by high-level political appointees. The political support provided by those appointed to patronage jobs at high-level positions are usually related to securing control over public policies. Politicians want to appoint someone they trust to those areas that they consider important for their administration to make sure that the bureaucrat will implement the policies preferred by the politician or to “smooth the implementation of policies” (Müller 2006, 191). Müller refers to this type of patronage as “power patronage” (the allocation of important positions), and he differentiates it from “service patronage”, which refers to the distribution of public sector jobs in exchange for

⁶This is not necessarily true for intra-party politics. For instance, in Argentina, very few people used to participate in intra-party elections, especially when compared to general elections. Since the 2011 national election, however, there are mandatory (both for parties and voters) simultaneous primaries for presidential and legislative positions. In August 2011 the first election was held under this law and the turnout was above 70 percent. See Kemahlioglu (2006) for an analysis of the effect of internal party politics on the distribution of patronage jobs in Argentina (and Turkey).

the client's political support "outside" the job. From the principal-agent perspective, often used to study bureaucracies in the developed world, one of the main problems in the relationship between politicians (principals) and bureaucrats (agents) is how to make sure that the politician can delegate responsibility to the bureaucrat and still obtain his preferred outcome. Patronage appointments are an easy solution to this problem—with patronage appointments the likelihood that the interests of the bureaucrat mirror those of the politician increases considerably. In addition to guaranteeing control over decision-making processes, political appointments at high and medium levels of the administration can also be motivated by other goals, including maintaining the party leadership, reinforcing or enlarging the governmental coalition, and bargaining with elective officials (Kopecky and Mair 2006; Scherlis 2009; Wilson 1961).⁷

However, "power patronage" can also be used for less noble purposes than to solve problems of delegation and control. Having supporters appointed to relevant positions makes it easier for parties and politicians to get public sector employees to do them favors or make exceptions for them (Geddes 1994; Gingerich 2007; Grzymala Busse 2008; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b; Kopecky et al. 2008; Müller 2006, 2007; Piattoni 2001).⁸ In this way, patronage appointments at high levels are usually a prerequisite for corruption (both for personal and political gains) and different forms of particularistic distribution such as vote-buying and pork-barrel politics. The manipulation of targeted public programs for political gain— such as the allocation of welfare benefits, targeted food distribution or

⁷ Public employment can also be motivated by redistributive goals (Alesina, Baqir and Easterly 2000; Alesina, Danninger, and Rostagno 2001).

⁸ For an interesting comparative study of the effect of electoral systems on political corruption among high-level public employees in Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile, see Gingerich (2007).

conditional cash transfer programs— is considerably facilitated when the public employees involved in the implementation are supporters of the politician who is expected to benefit from the clientelistic exchange.⁹ There are also many government activities that permit considerable discretion and case-by-case targeting such as business and market regulations, subsidies, loans, and procurement contracts for government infrastructure, just to mention a few (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b). In all these cases, the ability to discretionarily appoint supporters to key positions gives politicians ample possibilities for personal and political corruption.¹⁰ Finally, the diversion of state funds for political activities or the use of public property for political activities or campaigning also requires the presence of supporters in key administrative positions who are willing to collaborate with the politician.

The political services that I study here are of a different kind. I focus on the type of services usually provided by patronage employees in mid- and low-level positions. Mid- and low-level patronage employees are often involved in campaigning, organizing and attending rallies, voting in primaries, mobilizing voters both for primaries and general elections, organizing and/or attending political meetings, providing favors to citizens, distributing material incentives (vote-buying), being party polling officials on election day, and other activities. As chapter 3 and chapter 4 will show, many public employees act as intermediaries between the government and the voters by providing different types of political services before, during, and after elections.

⁹ See Weitz-Shapiro (2008a, 2012) for a very interesting study of the implementation of a targeted food distribution program in Argentina that shows the central role of the head of the social welfare office in cases of manipulation.

¹⁰ See Hopkin (2004) for a discussion of the growing illicit party fundraising associated with the decline of the mass party model of funding.

Public employees with patronage jobs owe their appointments to their patron—they have jobs that they could not have received were it not for the patron or the party of the patron. However, most of them combine their regular jobs at the administration with their duties “outside” the job (political services). Only the most important brokers have completely “no show” jobs.¹¹ As described by Banfield and Wilson (1963, 119):

“To get the services of men with the ability and energy that the jobs require, the machine must offer precinct captains and ward leaders [brokers] substantial inducements. Captains are often ‘payrollers,’ that is, they have appointive public jobs that could not get or keep if were not for the party. Some have ‘no show’ jobs: they are carried on the public payroll without being required to show up for work. A larger number have ‘show’ jobs and work like other employees—some more conscientiously than most—but their absence on election day and on other special occasions when the party needs them are overlooked”

Public employees with patronage contracts provide political services during primary and general elections, and also in between elections. In general elections, both during the

¹¹ There is anecdotal evidence in Argentina that some political appointments are occasionally (although rarely) made as a mode of fundraising by appointing someone who provides the name for the contract (sometimes in exchange for a percentage of the salary) but who is not expected to do anything in return—his/her salary is used for financing the party. This, of course, is illegal so it is hard to collect systematic data to test this use of public job contracts, but journalistic accounts in Argentine newspapers sometimes refer to it (see also Scherlis 2009, 218). Moreover, appointments are also occasionally (also rarely) made to help someone in particular or return a favor. In the Argentinean case, this seems to be more common among legislative employees than those appointed to the executive but, once again, the evidence on this issue is only anecdotal (Scherlis 2009 and personal interviews). During my fieldwork I encountered some situations where an appointment in the administration was made to help a widow of a former public employee, in one case, and a sick relative of an employee in another one. I also encountered cases of nepotism where the appointees were relatives of the councilmen who were to collect salaries but with no real intention of having the person working. Argentines call these cases of no-show jobs “gnocchi” (*ñoquis*, a potato based Italian pasta) because it is an Argentinean tradition to eat gnocchi at the end of the month and the name implies that these “fake” employees only show up at the end of the month to collect their paycheck. Note that the most influential brokers appearing on the payroll often have “no show” jobs but, in all three municipalities, other employees could perfectly distinguish employees that were doing full-time political work, from the ones that collect their checks and were doing nothing in return.

campaign and on election day, their role is crucial, especially since the availability of volunteers has decreased over the years.¹² Politicians at the provincial and local levels usually do not have enough resources to conduct capital-intensive professional campaigns with extensive use of the media (Kemahlioglu 2006). At the local level, “human-intensive” activities such as “door-to-door” visits (called *rastrillajes* in Argentina), political meetings, painting graffiti, plastering posters, transporting voters to polling places, and organizing and attending rallies, among other activities, are still essential parts of campaigning (Kemahlioglu 2006; Scherlis 2009; Zarazaga 2012). The most influential patronage employees on the payroll —brokers— are also key actors in vote buying strategies (Remmer 2007; Stokes 2005; Stokes et al. 2012; Zarazaga 2012). The day of the election, patronage employees also help by bringing voters to the polls and as partisan monitors (party polling officials).¹³ In this dissertation, I choose to focus on three activities that are essential for winning elections: helping with the campaign, attending rallies, and monitoring elections.¹⁴

¹² Jorge Fernández, a Peronist leader from Santa Fe, described this change in Argentina: “Up to 1986 or 1987 there was a high level of political mobilization [recall that Argentina returned to democracy in 1983]. There were robust political organizations with a strong presence of volunteer activists. There were neighborhood organizations and unions linked to the parties. With very scarce resources you ran a campaign. You hardly had to pay for anything, because everything was done by volunteers; people even contribute with their own money. But now, nothing of that is left...” (cited by Scherlis 2009, 209).

¹³ In Argentina, each party that competes in an election has the right to assign a partisan monitor (*fiscal*) by precinct (*mesa*), plus a head of monitors (*fiscal general*) by school (where the election takes place). In addition to these optional partisan monitors, Argentine electoral law requires at least one and up to three citizens (*autoridades de mesa*) selected by the government to monitor the election and count the votes. Although the citizens selected by the government are the only ones with authority to make decisions about any electoral issue, Argentinean political parties consider it crucial to have their own election monitors to ensure that votes are fairly counted and that no monitor from another party would use any tricks to steal votes. See Chapter 3 for more details.

¹⁴ Helping with the campaign includes a lot of different activities such as organizing meetings or rallies, distributing material incentives (vote buying), and painting graffiti, among others. I specifically chose a broad concept to ensure that all types of campaigning activities were covered. All activities that are the focus of this dissertation are described in more detailed in Chapter 3.

Public sector employees, brokers, and activists in general are also critical in primary races.¹⁵ In contrast to general elections—in which voting is mandatory and turnout is usually around 80 percent—very few people participate in intra-party elections in Argentina. In this context, the active role of patronage employees as voters and collaborators helping with mobilization efforts and electoral monitoring on election day is extremely important. The role of the “machine” in these elections with very low turnout has been emphasized by a number of scholars (De Luca et al. 2006; Jones and Hwang 2005; Kemahlioglu 2006; Scherlis 2009; and Zarazaga 2012). In fact, according to De Luca et al. (2006, 11): “Primary election results then indicate which party machine has the most resources (and makes the most efficient use of its resources), not which candidate (or list of candidates) is most popular among, or ideologically compatible with, the primary electorate.”¹⁶

However, since 2011 with the introduction of an electoral law that makes internal elections to select candidates for the presidency and national congress simultaneous and mandatory (both for parties and voters), the importance of public employees, brokers, and activists has considerably declined. With mandatory voting and therefore high turnout, internal elections for national candidacies have become similar to general elections. At the provincial and local level, though, electoral laws present significant variation; some

¹⁵ See Kemahlioglu (2006) for an analysis of the effect of internal party politics on the distribution of patronage jobs.

¹⁶ According to Jones and Hwang (2005, 269): “Patronage, pork barrel activities, and clientelism are important for success in general elections, but are indispensable for success in primary elections. In addition, patronage, pork barrel, and clientelism-based support often has the same anticipated effect on potential intraparty challengers that a large campaign war chest has in the United States; it causes them to desist from any attempt to defeat the party boss”.

provinces have mandatory primaries while others preserve the old system (maintaining the central role for patronage employees, brokers and activists).

Finally, patronage jobs are also important on the day-to-day administration in addition to around election time. One of the most important activities that patronage employees perform in between elections is providing favors. In places with weak institutions like Argentina, public officials usually have considerable discretion on how and when to enforce rules. In this situation, for many people—especially the poor— it is crucial to have regular access to someone at the government or to someone with access to government officials who can provide solutions to specific problems. The most politically influential and active patronage employees—brokers— do significantly more than specific favors to the citizens approaching the public administration seeking help. Brokers are usually in charge of facilitating the access of poor people to the state as well as helping the state reach poor populations (Auyero 2000; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012).¹⁷ Often brokers —sometimes patronage employees themselves— act as intermediaries between people in need of favors and the patronage employee who is in a position to help. This allows them to be able to provide a wide range of favors that would be impossible without these various connections to other patronage employees. In this dissertation I study the provision of favors by patronage employees to citizens, including both brokers and other—

¹⁷ As in many other developing countries, poor areas in Argentina are usually isolated from the centers of power (either because of real geographical distance, transportation, security, or culture). Brokers then are crucial intermediators between poor people and the distant state. At least in Argentina, they usually live in the same neighborhood as the people they help and they are essential in providing information about their needs to politicians in order to find solutions to their problems. Often they are also in charge of organizations that provide different services to citizens such as sport clubs, soup kitchens, or health care centers (Auyero 2000; Zarazaga 2012). In Argentina, brokers can also be crucial in preventing or causing social unrest (Auyero 2007; Zarazaga 2012). See Auyero 2000, Szwarcberg 2009, and Zarazaga 2012 for a more detailed description of what brokers do and their fundamental role in poor people's lives.

less influential—employees.¹⁸ I care both about the direct demand for favors (from voters to patronage employees) and the indirect (through brokers) one.

In sum, public employees under patronage contracts constitute an invaluable army of political workers that provide different services to their patrons. Of course, the level of involvement of each individual varies considerably—while some are in charge of, for example, organizing the rallies, others just attend those rallies and often bring someone else with them to help with mobilization—and, as mentioned, some other employees do not provide any political service. Establishing the extent to which public sector employees are involved in these political activities is one of the goals of this dissertation. What we do know from the existing literature is that public sector jobs are one of the main ways of financing political work. The control of patronage jobs, allowing the incumbent to finance political services, provides these incumbents with an important advantage over their competitors and increases their probability of reelection.

2.3 The Commitment Problem and Existing Explanations

Patronage jobs provide politicians in power with a very powerful tool—an army of political workers. However, patronage contracts are far from being ideal. They are not easy to enforce for two main reasons. First, since the exchange is non-simultaneous, a citizen who provides political services with the expectation of getting a public sector job is always at risk of facing a politician that can decide not to hire her *after* she has already provided the political services. Alternatively, a citizen who receives a public sector job with the implicit

¹⁸ See chapter 4 for a detailed description of the types of favors that patronage employees usually provide.

or explicit understanding that she will provide political services can easily decide not to comply with her side of the agreement *after* getting the job. Second, the law cannot be used to enforce these agreements so they have to be self-enforcing (Piattoni 2001; Robinson and Verdier 2003). As Stokes (2007) points out, it is reasonable to expect clientelistic relations to be full of opportunities for defection and betrayal.

In the first type of exchange—in which the political support is provided *before* the benefit is received—patrons need to be able to make credible promises to clients in order for the patronage agreement to be successful. If the patron cannot credibly commit to distribute public sector jobs once the election is over, clients have no incentive to provide political services during the campaign. This type of commitment problem—in which politicians' credibility affects the actions of clients that arises in what Nichter (2009) has called “prospective clientelism”—gets ameliorated when the benefit being exchanged is a public sector job. As Robinson and Verdier (2003) point out, the distribution of public sector jobs has the advantage (over other types of goods) on being contingent on the politician winning the election, which is key for extracting effort from clients. When the benefit is outcome-contingent (it is only distributed if the politician wins), clients have a strong incentive to provide political services to make sure the politician wins the election. From the point of view of the politician, there is also an incentive to comply with his side of the agreement, not only because employees will be needed in the administration anyway, but also because the need for the provision of political services does not end with the election.¹⁹ From the point of view of the patron, citizens that already provided political

¹⁹ The argument provided by Robinson and Verdier (2003) about why a public sector job is a credible way for politicians to redistribute is different to the one just outlined. They argue that patronage jobs are a credible way of redistribution (in contrast, for example, to pure transfer of income) because patronage jobs

services before the election are more likely to be willing to provide political services after the election, so there is an incentive for the politician to keep his promise of distributing jobs to those who helped him before the election.

More generally, clientelistic exchanges are usually based on long-term interactions (Auyero 2000; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012). In these ongoing relationships, politicians care about reputation. According to Diaz Cayeros et al. (2012, 121), “(a) party that consistently betrays its promises to deliver benefits to its most loyal supporters will be unable to sustain its electoral coalition over time.” Clients, of course, prefer dealing with brokers and patrons who have a “reputation for delivering on their promises” and brokers understand the importance of keeping their promises to “gain the loyalty of their clients” (Zarazaga 2012, 28-29). This concern about reputation raises the cost of non-compliance for patrons and brokers. They can still opt to renege on their promises, but over time this strategy might not be sustainable. For all these reasons, opportunistic defection in “prospective clientelism” both by clients and politicians seems to be less important (particularly when the benefit exchanged is a public sector job that is contingent on the patron winning the election) than the possibility of defection when the benefit is distributed in exchange for future political support. The rest of this chapter (and this dissertation) focuses on the latter.

distributed to members of the patron’s group (clients) generate rents for the patron. The reason for limiting the effect to clients is because close links between patrons and clients help ameliorate the moral hazard problem. From the point of view of the client, they argue, the key characteristics of public sector jobs are that they are selective and reversible so: a) when voting is observable, clients who do not vote according to their patron’s wishes are punished and do not get a job, and b) when voting is not observable, jobs still have the advantage of being contingent upon the patron winning the election (if too many clients defect from the clientelistic exchange, the patron loses the election and there are no jobs to distribute).

The second type of exchange— in which the political support is provided *after* the benefit is received—is more problematic. In this case, politicians are at risk of “wasting” jobs on citizens that, once hired, would not comply with their side of the agreement. A citizen who receives a public sector job with the understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the agreement *after* getting the job. Why would public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage agreement *after* receiving the benefit of the job? How can the politician make sure that he is not “wasting” jobs on citizens that will later not fulfill their side of the deal?

The literature so far has provided two main answers to this question: norms of reciprocity and fear of retaliation. According to the first set of theories, norms of reciprocity enforce the clientelistic exchange; clients fulfill their side of the agreement because they want to help those who have helped them. In other words, receiving a benefit engenders feelings of obligation and gratitude and clients help the patron out of these feelings. According to Scott (1972, 93) it is precisely the presence of feelings of reciprocity that distinguishes patron-client relationships from relationships of pure coercion: “A patron may have some coercive power and he may hold an official position of authority. But if the force or authority at his command are alone sufficient to ensure the compliance of another, he has no need of patron-client ties which require some reciprocity”. More recently, other scholars have also argued that reciprocity plays a central role in clientelistic relationships, particularly vote-buying. According to Schaffer (2007, 193), for instance, “embedding vote-buying within ritual gift exchange helps engender feelings of obligation among recipients, and can thus lower the rate of defection.” Lawson and Greene (2012) argue, based on survey experiments from Mexico, that the receipt of benefits creates

feelings of obligation among clients who then “spontaneously” support their political patron. Finan and Schechter (2012), in turn, also argue that vote-buying agreements can be sustained by norms of reciprocity and they use survey and experimental data from Paraguay to show that brokers target reciprocal individuals. Dunning and Stokes (2007) find evidence of “negative” reciprocity in Mexican elections in which many PRI supporters who did not receive benefits before the election decided to vote for the opposition. From this perspective, public employees respect their side of the agreement and provide political services simply because they want to help the person who helped them.

The logic of the second set of theories is very different. From this perspective—the most accepted among scholars of clientelism — clients comply because they are afraid that the patron will cut off the benefits if they fail to do so. Much of the contemporary literature on clientelism has focused on the monitoring and commitment problems that are associated with this perspective (see, for example, Brusco et al. 2004; Nichter 2008; Stokes 2005, 2007; Robinson and Verdier 2003). For many of the authors that support this perspective, the ability of the patron to monitor and punish accordingly is what makes an exchange truly clientelistic. For these scholars, the defining feature of clientelistic exchanges is that they are contingent upon the client’s behavior.²⁰ If the client does not behave according to her patron’s wishes—which requires either the patron’s ability to monitor or the client’s belief that this is possible—, the patron has the power to punish the client by withdrawing or withholding the benefit. In other words, for a patron to be able to ensure that the political support associated with the benefit is in fact provided, he should be able to credibly commit to punish non-compliers (and/or reward compliers). From this

²⁰ See Introduction for a discussion of definitions of clientelism based on the fear of punishment.

perspective, the commitment problem is solved on the basis of fear—public employees provide political services because they are afraid that the patron will cut off the benefit and fire them if they fail to do so.

In the next section, I present another solution to the commitment problem that arises in clientelistic agreements because of the non-simultaneity of the exchange. I argue that it is neither reciprocity nor fear of punishment that ensures that public employees uphold their part of the deal, but the fact that their fates are tied to the political fate of their patron. In what I called the self-enforcing theory of patronage, clients' compliance with clientelistic agreements is ensured by the fact that their incentives are aligned with those of their patrons—both the patron and client will benefit from the patron's success. Of course, this is not to say that fear of punishment or feelings of reciprocity are never present in clientelistic exchanges or that they are not possible, but rather that neither of these two factors are *necessary* characteristics of these types of arrangements.²¹ The theory developed in this dissertation provides a novel alternative to existing explanations.

²¹ A substantial part of the literature on clientelism that deals with commitment issues has devoted considerable attention to discuss whether it is possible to monitor voting behavior under the secret ballot (see, for instance, Brusco et al. 2004; Nichter 2008; Stokes 2005 and 2007; among others). In the type of political support that I study here (political services), the possibility of monitoring is not an issue. Most of the political activities (with the possible exception of the provision of favors) studied here are visible and thus, potentially easy to monitor. Note, however, that just because these activities can be monitored *does not* mean that they are in fact being monitored. I am not arguing that the activities provided by public employees are impossible to monitor, but that *it is not necessary to monitor behavior* in well designed patronage contracts in which these jobs are distributed to supporters. Patronage employees provide services because their incentives are aligned with the incentives of their patron, not because they are being monitored. To the extent that patrons and clients share the same interests, *monitoring is not necessary*.

2.4 Self- Enforcing Patronage Contracts

What makes patronage contracts self-sustaining in the absence of fear of punishment and feelings of reciprocity is the fact that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political success of the patron. This is because patronage jobs (and working conditions) held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician who hired them but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). As a result, supporters have strong incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent (their patron) stay in power. In other words, patronage employees engage in political activities that support their patron because their fates are tied to his political fate—the benefit of the job is contingent on the politician staying in power. Put simply, their incentives are aligned.

Politicians want to distribute patronage jobs to those who are most likely to comply with the patronage agreement and provide political services. However, finding this type of employees is not an easy task. Employees' willingness to provide political services in the future is private information not fully available to politicians at the time of hiring. Potential employees can promise future compliance but for this promise to be credible in the absence of feelings of reciprocity or punishment for non-compliers, it has to be incentive-compatible. Only if potential employees can credibly commit to provide political support in the future, patronage contracts are self-sustaining without punishment and reciprocity. The need to make patronage contracts incentive-compatible leads to the distribution of these jobs to *prior* supporters. All potential clients (or employees) can promise to provide

political services in the future, but only supporters can make these promises credible.²² Patronage jobs held by supporters will be maintained as they are by the incumbent politician, but not by a competing politician. Supporters then have strong incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent (their patron) stay in power.

If politicians could somehow know *ex ante* how potential employees would behave once hired, then the problem of commitment associated with the non-simultaneity of the patronage agreement would of course disappear. In other words, full information about the intentions of the citizens would prevent strategic defection and solve the commitment problem for politicians. As Calvo and Ujhelyi (2012) argue, there is heterogeneity in the willingness of potential public employees to provide political services; with complete information politicians would just simply hire the “right type” of citizens (those more willing to provide political services in the future). While the intention of potential public employees to provide political services once hired is private information, the political preferences of these potential employees regarding the politician at the time of hiring are not.²³ When hiring is mainly conducted through informal channels—as is the case in many new democracies with weak civil service systems—it is possible for politicians to access that information and use it for their own benefit.

Politicians then use referrals as well as personal and partisan connections to screen potential clients and to separate supporters from non-supporters.²⁴ Supporters might like

²² As explained in the following paragraphs, being a “true” supporter or not does not change the predictions of the theory. What matters is whether or not potential employees are *perceived* as supporters.

²³ See Calvo and Ujhelyi (2012) for an example of designing optimal patronage contracts with no information about individual political preferences.

²⁴ Most scholars that think about clientelism as a long-lasting relationship and not as a one-shot interaction emphasize that patrons (or, more often, their brokers) know their clients very well (see, for instance, Auyero

the politician or the politician's party for ideological or personal reasons, they might have connections with the party or they might just want to be perceived as supporters in order to obtain benefits. More importantly, supporters and non-supporters differ in their likelihood of providing political services in the future. All things being equal, those who demonstrate support are more likely to be the "right type", to comply with the agreement, and provide the promised political services. This is because they are more likely to *actually* support the party or the politician than non-supporters, making the provision of political services less costly for them. Citizens can make efforts to be visible for the patron and make sure they are identified as supporters—they can campaign on behalf of their patron before he is elected, and attend partisan meetings or rallies, among other things (Auyero 2000; Nichter 2009; Szwarcberg 2009).²⁵

Note that whether those who demonstrate support are sincere supporters or strategic actors with pure materialistic goals pretending to be supporters does not affect the empirical implications of the theory—for reasons developed in the following paragraphs, being a "real" supporter or just pretending to be one creates the same incentive-compatible patronage contracts. *Perceived* political preferences at the time of

2000; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012; Zarazaga and Ronconi 2012). Moreover, an important part of the literature on clientelism has focused on the discussion of who gets targeted in the clientelistic exchanges with the assumption (usually not directly problematized) that patrons and/or brokers can somehow screen core and swing voters (see, for example, Stokes 2005 and Nichter 2008). To the best of my knowledge, Finan and Schechter (2012) and Stokes et al. (2012) are the only studies providing systematic evidence that brokers do know the political preferences of their clients. Finan and Schechter (2012) use survey data to investigate how well middlemen know their clients in rural Paraguay. According to their data, brokers correctly predicted the partisan identification of their clients in around 80 percent of cases. Stokes et al. (2012), based on a survey of 800 Argentinean brokers, also provide evidence of brokers knowing their clients' political preferences.

²⁵ In Auyero's words (2000, 163): "Attendance at rallies is also considered a way of showing a broker that one is loyal, responsible, and ready to help out when needed—and therefore deserving of a job if and when one becomes available". Politicians seem to take these efforts seriously, as described by a public employee from Salta that works in close proximity to the mayor: "If a person has contributed to the mayor's victory, he has a right ("*tiene cierto derecho*") [to get a job]" (Personal Interview, Salta, August 10 2011).

hiring are then used by politicians as a “proxy” for citizens’ future willingness to provide political services.

This is why public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters. But, of course, perceptions could be misleading. In the case of “true” supporters, those absolutely committed to the goals of the party or the politician, it might be possible to believe that their commitment is so strong that they will be willing to provide sustained political support for as long as it is needed. On the other side of the spectrum, once citizens expect a party or a politician to distribute public sector jobs on the basis of perceived political preferences, citizens have an incentive to misrepresent their preferences in order to get a job.²⁶ However, supporters are often neither completely *partisan* (or ideological, solely motivated by the welfare of the party or the politician they support, or the group that the politician represents) nor completely *opportunistic* (only motivated by their own welfare) but some combination of both, and this combination might vary over time. Similar to Persson and Tabellini’s (2000) and Robinson and Torvik’s (2005) characterization of politicians as both partisan and opportunistic, I assume that supporters can care simultaneously about their own welfare (their jobs) and the future of the party or politician they support, but they care more about their own jobs.²⁷ Therefore, patronage employees

²⁶ As an employee from Salta clearly exemplifies: “I’ve told you that I got this job through politics, but the thing is that I was politically active *in order to* get a job” (Personal Interview, Salta, June 8 2011).

²⁷ This terminology is adapted from Persson and Tabellini’s (2000) characterization of politicians as *partisan* (those who care about the well-being of particular groups of society) or *opportunistic* (those who want to maximize their own well being). I agree with this perspective (and with Robinson and Torvik 2005), that it is possible to be both partisan and opportunistic. Following Robinson and Torvik’s (2001) assumption “that politicians maximize a weighted sum of their own welfare and the welfare of the group they represent, but where their own welfare is most important,” I characterize supporters as caring both about their own welfare (their jobs) and the future of the party or politician that they support, but caring about their own welfare more. It seems reasonable to assume that under normal conditions and when the benefit is as important as a job, personal welfare would matter more than the fate of the supported party or politician.

could pretend to have certain political preferences to get the job, change their minds about their political preferences, or simply reduce the effort they are willing to devote to political work. Since the exchange is not simultaneous, employees with patronage jobs—even perceived supporters— still have the possibility of not complying with their side of the agreement after receiving the benefit. Being a supporter—or, more accurately, being *perceived* as one—is not in itself enough to guarantee future compliance with the patronage contract.²⁸

What explains, then, that patronage agreements are in fact respected? Why do public employees under patronage contracts keep providing political services after getting the job? Even when politicians are able to appoint employees who are more likely to provide political services in the first place because they might care about the future of the party (perceived supporters), this is not enough to guarantee compliance. What makes patronage contracts self-enforcing is the belief on the part of patronage employees that their jobs are tied to the political success of their patron. In the absence of civil service rules, the incentive structure of the patronage agreement is such that the benefit of the job is contingent on the politician's reelection. Public employees under patronage contracts believe that if the incumbent loses the election, their own jobs (or working conditions) could be in jeopardy, which provides a major incentive to want to help the incumbent stay in power. Since the interests of public sector employees under patronage contracts are then perfectly aligned with those of the incumbent politician—they both want that the

²⁸ In the words of a leader from the Chicago Machine quoted by Meyerson and Banfield (1955, 70-71): "What I look for in a prospective captain (...) is a young person—man or woman—who is interested in getting some material return out of his political activity. I much prefer this type to the type that is enthused about the 'party cause' or all 'hot' on a particular issue. Enthusiasm for causes is short-lived, but the necessity of making a living is permanent."

politician to stay in office— and providing political services could help achieve this goal, the commitment problem associated with the non-simultaneity of the clientelistic exchange disappears and patronage contracts become self-enforcing.

But why do patronage employees believe that they could lose their jobs or suffer negative effects on their working conditions with a new administration? Perceived political preferences at the time of hiring have the same effect as the public pledges discussed by Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007, 15), those whose support for the incumbent is publicly known “are effectively then cut off from any expectation of rewards if the opposition should win.”²⁹ Since the distribution of patronage jobs is based on perceived political preferences, once a client is hired as a supporter for a patronage job her “true” political preferences do not matter. Her *perceived* political preferences will dictate the treatment she will get from the opposition. Whether a patronage worker is a pure ideological supporter, a pure opportunistic one, or—more frequently—something in between, she will be perceived and treated as a supporter by the opposition. Using the same logic that the incumbent applied to hire his supporters, a new incumbent will replace old employees with his own supporters. A new politician will want patronage jobs to be distributed to those more likely to provide political services for him and only *his* supporters could credibly commit to do that in the future, so old employees will be replaced or sidestepped. As a result, supporters of the incumbent have a huge incentive to provide political services to try to keep the incumbent who hired them in power.

²⁹ See Nichter (2009) for an interesting example of how clients in Northeast Brazil strategically decide to reveal their preferences for candidates or hide them according to their expectations of being rewarded or punished after the election.

Note that, from the point of view of the politician, once the “right type” of patronage employee is hired, there is an important incentive to keep her in that position. Although this dissertation focuses mainly on understanding the incentives of patronage employees, it is important to think about politicians’ incentives as well. Politicians, as mentioned, want to hire citizens that will comply with the patronage contract and provide political services. Once one of these types of employees is hired, she becomes more valuable over time. Similarly to the learning that happens with any regular job in which years of experience make workers more valuable, the experience in organizing political meetings or rallies, mobilizing citizens to these events, monitoring elections or knowing how to solve citizens’ problems is extremely valuable to politicians. Over time, patronage employees become more skilled and their “off-the-job” productivity increases. Politicians then have important incentives to try to hire the right types of employees from the beginning and keep them in their positions to take advantage of their political experience.

In sum, what makes patronage contracts self-sustaining without punishment or reciprocity is the fact that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (or at least those perceived as such). This is the case because only supporters—whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hired them— can credibly commit to provide political support in the future. Patronage jobs and working conditions held by perceived supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (their patron) but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). Once perceived as a supporter of the incumbent politician, patronage employees have low expectations of keeping their jobs and working conditions if the opposition were to win. Supporters then have large incentives to provide

political services to help the incumbent to stay in power. In other words, when supporters get the patronage jobs, patronage contracts are incentive-compatible and the commitment problem associated with the non-simultaneity of the exchange disappears. Supporters with patronage jobs understand that it is in their best interest to provide political services to help the incumbent politician remain in power. And it is precisely this alignment of interests between patrons and clients (or elected politicians and patronage employees) what makes patronage contracts self-sustaining.

2.5 A Note on the Collective Action Problem

In the previous section I argued that public employees comply with patronage contracts because they understand that it is in their best interest to provide political services to try to keep their patron in power. More precisely, the aligned incentives theory indicates that public employees understand that it is in their best interest that political services are provided *by someone* so the incumbent politician gets reelected. One can imagine, then, that it would be more rational for each actor to let others provide the services and enjoy the benefit of having the politician reelected without putting in any effort. When clients are a group (like employees with patronage contracts) and not just one individual, there is the temptation to free-ride on other clients' efforts. As long as a sufficient amount of people provided political services, whether one particular individual complies or not might not have a relevant effect on the outcome. Moreover, everyone will enjoy the benefit of the politician being reelected equally—those that provided services and those that did not. What is then the individual's incentive to contribute? As with many other public goods (in

this case, the reelection of the incumbent) that depend upon collective contributions (in this case, political services), there might be a temptation for each actor to let others make the effort. Since—in the absence of punishment—the benefit of the patron staying in power is non-excludable, both those who comply with the patronage contract and provide political services and those that do not will equally enjoy the benefit of keeping the patron in power and thus their jobs. In the words of Olson (1965, reprint 2003, 21):

“Though all the members of the group therefore have a common interest in obtaining this collective benefit, they have no common interest in paying the cost of providing that collective good. Each would prefer that the others pay the entire cost, and ordinarily would get any benefit provided whether he had borne part of the cost or not”

There are, however, a number of factors that reduce the likelihood of widespread free-riding in these instances, making cooperation more likely among public employees with patronage jobs.³⁰ First, it is important to note that the benefit at stake (a job) might be important enough to provide a significant incentive for cooperation. When the benefit is so huge, more people are willing to pay the cost (provide services) in order to make sure that the desirable outcome will actually happen. Of course, there will always be those less risk averse that are willing to take the risk of non-provision, but the bigger the benefit, the more people would be less likely to take the risk and more likely to be willing to pay the cost.

Second, the cost of cooperation is not necessarily very high. Political services are often provided during regular working hours so the choice of public employees is not

³⁰ Both laboratory experiments and field studies have shown that collective action succeeds far more often than expected according to Olson’s theory (see, for instance, Ostrom 2000 for a discussion on this).

between, for instance, attending a rally and staying at home, but between attending a rally and performing their regular “on-the-job” duties. Among the services analyzed here, the provision of favors is a good example of the type of services that are often provided during regular working hours. As I will show in Chapter 4, a favor is frequently just “a routine bureaucratic procedure” transformed into a “personal favor” by a patronage employee (Chubb 1981, 120). Moreover, because patronage jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters, what employees are often asked to do is to provide services to their preferred politician. And, of course, providing political services for one’s preferred politician is less costly than doing it for the opposition.

Third, individual contributions are not necessarily individually irrelevant to the outcome. While it may have little impact whether one particular individual attends a rally, the cooperation of an individual in charge of mobilizing many others to the rally, may be quite important to its success. Monitoring elections, as I will describe in Chapter 3, is also a key activity with a potentially important impact on political outcomes. It is a widespread belief among Argentinean politicians— a belief shared by scholars— that the ability to deploy election monitors to every single election booth is fundamental to succeed in an election (see, De Luca et al. 2002, 2006; Zarazaga 2012; and Chapter 3). In this case, the contribution that each patronage employee makes in her role as electoral monitor is far from being irrelevant to the outcome.

Finally, irrespective of the size of the administration, public employees usually interact only with a small group of people regularly and repeatedly. No matter how many public employees work at the administration, the amount of people that constitute “their” group is usually considerably smaller. Free-riding on others’ efforts to help the incumbent

politician stay in power could be harder to sustain when those on whom one is shirking are co-workers that one has to face on a daily basis.³¹ When an individual is part of a community—in this case, a group of employees— social or reputational concerns may outweigh any benefit that would result from free-riding on others (Chong 1991; Olson 1965).

Of course, I am not arguing that collective action problems do not arise among patronage employees, but—for the reasons outlined above— I expect the likelihood of widespread free-riding that might be detrimental to outcomes, to be small.³² The possibility of free-riding is always present but the specific costs and benefits involved in patronage contracts as well as the particular characteristics of the environment in which these contracts take place—the public administration— make cooperation more likely.³³

³¹ Using experimental evidence (from the lab) Ostrom and Walker (1997) have shown that face-to-face communication in a public good game produces substantial increases in cooperation. See also Ostrom and Walker (2005).

³² Although beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is possible to think of situations in which free-riding could be more extensive. First, any situation in which the cost of participation is increased might make it more tempting for clients to free-ride. For instance, if participation in politics involves physical risks (as in countries with widespread state repression or in the presence of violent political groups), clients might be more willing to free-ride on others, even at the risk of losing their jobs. Alternatively, if the benefit of the job is reduced, it might not be considered important enough to overcome the temptation of letting others do the work. For instance, when finding a job outside the state is considered an attractive and easily achieved option, as is the case in more developed countries, the incentives to free-ride might become larger still. It is also possible to imagine situations in which the contribution of each employee's participation becomes less relevant. For instance, with very low levels of electoral competition, employees might feel that their cooperation is not necessary for winning the election and this general feeling might generate high levels of free riding. Finally, even though it is generally accepted that cooperation in small groups is easier because of the potential social or reputational costs of non-cooperating, it is possible to imagine employees who do not care about other people's opinions and will still chose to free ride on others. In the end, "the world contains multiple types of individuals, some more willing than others to initiate reciprocity to achieve the benefits of collective actions" (Ostrom 2000, 138).

³³ Both field studies of collective action and experimental research have shown that contextual factors affect the level of cooperation. See Ostrom 2000 for a review of this literature.

2.6 Empirical Implications and Scope Conditions

The previous sections developed a theory of self-sustaining patronage contracts. Patronage jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters because supporters are more likely to be willing to provide political services in the future, and more importantly, they can credibly commit to do so. This is because patronage jobs held by supporters and the working conditions associated with those jobs will be maintained by the incumbent politician who hired them if he gets reelected, but not by a politician from the opposition. Supporters thus have strong incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power. Since the incentives of the patronage employees and the politician are then the same—they both want the incumbent to get reelected—patronage contracts are incentive-compatible and therefore sustainable without punishment.

This self-sustaining theory of patronage has three main empirical implications that will be tested in the following chapters. First, patronage jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters. Recall that not all jobs are patronage jobs so this implication does not mean that all jobs—not even the majority of them—will go to supporters. Empirically, the theory predicts simply that politicians hire a disproportionate number of their own supporters. Second, since most patronage jobs are distributed to supporters, more supporters (than non-supporters) should be involved in the provision of political services. Third, supporters are more involved in the provision of political services also because they strongly believe that their jobs are tied to the political success of the incumbent politician. I expect supporters to be more afraid of a new politician replacing the incumbent.

A key assumption of the theory developed here is that patronage employees care about their jobs. As mentioned before, it is not necessary to assume that patronage employees care *only* about their jobs. In fact, it might be that clients care both about keeping their jobs and about helping the politician or the party to whom they owe their jobs, but it is an important assumption of this theory that they care about their jobs more. If employees do not care enough about maintaining their jobs (or the working conditions associated with those jobs), the theory has very little explanatory power. This yields two more testable empirical implications. Employees who are typically less afraid of losing their jobs will therefore be expected to be less involved in the provision of services. Two characteristics of employees are particularly correlated with being more or less afraid of losing the job: education and type of contract. Those with more education, who thus have more outside options and those with tenure who can be subjected to changes in their working conditions but cannot be fired, have less to lose with a change in administration. I expect individuals with less fear of losing their jobs—namely these more educated and tenured employees— to be less willing to provide political services in order to help the mayor stay in power and secure their jobs.

More educated employees have more valuable skills and thus better labor market expectations in the private sector so public jobs are less valuable to them than to less educated employees with fewer outside options (Calvo and Murillo 2004, 2012; Robinson and Verdier 2003; Medina and Stokes 2002, 2007).³⁴ They are then generally less afraid of

³⁴ Moreover, as Calvo and Murillo (2004, 2012) show, in Argentina the wage premium derived from a public job is higher for less educated employees. Public sector employees with higher levels of education earn wages that are below their private market prices so less educated employees value their jobs in the public sector relatively more than employees with more education. Alesina, Danninger, and Rostagno (2001) find similar distributive effects of patronage in Italy.

losing their jobs and will accept or comply with patronage contracts less often than individuals that have more to lose with a change in administration. In other words, higher levels of education should be associated with less willingness to accept a public job in exchange for political support. Empirically, I expect to see more educated employees being less involved in the provision of political services and less afraid of suffering negative changes with a new administration.³⁵

A second characteristic that affects patronage employees' job security and, as a consequence, their willingness to comply with the patronage agreement is the type of employment contract under which they are hired. In Argentina, as in many other countries with civil service rules, some employees have tenure rights and cannot be fired, while others work under temporary contracts that need to be periodically renewed. Tenured employees (with permanent contracts) cannot be legally fired so they should have no fear of losing their jobs with a new administration. As I will show in Chapter 5, public sector employees with these types of patronage jobs still fear negative changes in their working conditions with a new administration, but they have no fear of losing their jobs. I expect then that tenured employees will be less involved in the provision of political services than non-tenured employees (who have more to lose from a new administration).³⁶ Certainly, I also expect them to be less afraid (than non-tenured employees) of losing their jobs with a change in administration.

³⁵ Recall that the types of political services that are the focus of this dissertation are those usually provided by political workers on the ground. It is possible that more educated employees are involved in other types of services not analyzed here.

³⁶ In line with this expectation, Calvo and Murillo (2012) find that in Argentina low-skilled workers with temporary contracts receive a higher wage premium than their counterparts with permanent contracts. For them, this shows that clients who provide the highest electoral returns (those more *sensitive* to clientelistic appeals) are more commonly targeted by politicians with these types of benefits (in this case, patronage jobs).

In the case of education, there might a trade off between “on-the-job” productivity and “off-the job” productivity. More educated employees are less sensitive to patronage exchanges and therefore less willing to provide political services. But education and skills are necessary conditions for certain types of jobs so politicians need to “sacrifice” potential political productivity for on-the-job productive for at least certain types of positions. Without a functioning bureaucracy, the potential electoral gains from the distribution of patronage jobs become counterproductive. Because of this, more educated employees have less to fear from a change in the administration (they have outside options), but they are also less likely to be fired (new politicians might need their on-the-job productivity).

This trade-off, however, does not exist in the case of tenure rights. Since untenured employees are more sensitive to patronage agreements, politicians— all things equal— should always prefer patronage employees under temporary contracts than employees with tenure rights. Untenured employees have more to lose than tenured employees from a change in administration and are therefore more eager participants in the efforts (by providing political services) to keep the politician in power. The choice of contracts, however, is not at the complete discretion of incumbent politicians. Across countries, there are usually legal limits to the amount of time that an employee can be hired under a temporary contract. Moreover, every new incumbent receives a set of tenured employees that are already in the administration when he takes office. Although there is still some variation in politicians’ willingness to distribute tenure rights across new employees, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to study this particular issue. For the argument developed here it is sufficient to take into account that although politicians might prefer

non-tenured contracts to tenured ones, they face limits (both legal and political) to their ability to choose the type of contract.

While the theory of patronage developed in this dissertation aims to provide a general theory of patronage beyond the Argentinean case where I test it, it is important to be explicit about the scope conditions of the theory. First, the theory developed here studies the commitment issues associated with patronage agreements, but patronage agreements are only possible in contexts of weak or non-existent civil service systems. As we will see in chapter 6, this is the norm in most Latin American countries as well as in many other young democracies. The argument presented here should be less informative about appointments in countries with strict regulations about hiring and firing public sector employees.

Second, the self-enforcing theory of patronage proposes a solution to the commitment issues that arise from the non-simultaneity of the patronage exchange. The theory aims to explain why patronage employees comply with their side of the patronage contract by providing political services *after getting a job*. Recall that patronage is defined in this dissertation as the exchange of a public sector job for political support. The theory developed in this dissertation focuses on the relationship between the patron that provides a job and the client that provides political services in return. It is beyond the scope of the theory to explain the behavior of employees that were hired by previous administrations. One of the core arguments developed here is that patronage jobs are distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hired them. This theory cannot explain the behavior of employees that were not chosen by the incumbent politician.

Third, this is a theory of patronage jobs distributed by an incumbent who wants to get reelected. The theory does not provide any insights about situations in which the politician is not seeking reelection, either because the law does not allow it or because of a personal decision. Finally, the argument assumes that partisan or political preferences are somehow informative. Although, as explained, supporters do not need to be “true” believers for the predictions of the theory to hold, being perceived as a supporter needs to be meaningful. If citizens can identify themselves with one party or politician first, and then switch at no cost—as might be the case in countries with very weak party systems—then being perceived as a supporter does not provide any valuable information to the incumbent or the challenger.³⁷ Under these circumstances, supporters can no longer credibly commit to provide political services in the future and the predictions of the theory might not hold.

2.7 Conclusion

Departing from existing explanations, the self-enforcing theory of patronage posits that public employees engage in political activities that support the incumbent politician because their interests are aligned with the political success of that politician (their patron). Patrons do not need to monitor clients and threaten to punish non-compliers, or rely on their feeling of reciprocity. To make patronage contracts work, politicians need to be able to screen supporters from non-supporters and distribute patronage contracts only to the former. When patronage jobs are distributed to supporters, patronage contracts are

³⁷ It is possible to think about other types of identification that might replace partisan identification, such as religion or ethnicity. Further research is needed to establish whether these other types of identifications work similarly to partisan identification for patronage appointments.

incentive-compatible. Only supporters—whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hires them— can credibly commit to provide political support in the future. Patronage jobs and working conditions held by perceived supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (their patron) but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). Supporters then have large incentives to provide political services to help their patron to stay in power, and this alignment of interests between patrons and clients makes patronage contracts self-sustaining.

The theory developed here does not argue that monitoring political behavior is impossible. Unlike the case of voting behavior under the secret ballot, there is no doubt that the types of political services studied here are visible (with the possible exception of the provision of favors) and thus potentially easy to monitor. However, just because they can be monitored does not mean that they are in fact being monitored. When patronage jobs are distributed to supporters, patronage contracts are incentive-compatible and monitoring (and the fear of punishment) is not necessary to sustain the exchange. Patronage employees provide services because their incentives are aligned with the incentives of their patron, not because they are afraid of being punished for their behavior. To the extent that patrons and clients share the same interests, *monitoring is not necessary*.

When clients believe that it is in their best interest to help their patron stay in power the possibility of distributing patronage jobs provides a self-sustaining incumbency advantage with potentially important effects on electoral outcomes. Elections may still be competitive, but with the political use of state resources by the incumbent party to finance political workers, elections are less fair for the non-incumbent. Moreover, if patronage

contracts are self-sustaining and patrons do not need to invest to identify non-compliers and credibly commit to punish them, the cost of clientelism gets considerably reduced. For a patron to be able to monitor clients and punish those who fail to fulfill their promise, a lot of resources need to be invested in costly machines. While the cost of clientelism does not completely disappear under incentive-compatible patronage contrasts, it might become significantly lower.

Chapter 3

Patronage Contracts and Political Services. Evidence from List Experiments

*“Patronage is used to induce (...) to work for the machine by getting out the vote and dispensing favors to voters.”
(Wilson 1961, 371)*

“The patronage system may be considered, too, as a method of financing party activity. The operation of a party organization requires the services of many men and women.... Indirectly, a considerable part of party expense is met by the public treasury, and the chief means of channeling public funds to party support is through the appointment of party workers to public office.”(Key 1964)

In chapter 2, I argued that patronage contracts are distributed to supporters in exchange for different types of political services that go far beyond electoral support. Politicians choose to hire supporters because their commitment to provide political services in the future is credible. Indeed, public sector employees under patronage contracts often help during elections by attending rallies, helping with the campaign, and as electoral monitors, among other things. In between elections, they also fulfill their side of the agreement by dispensing favors to voters. In this chapter, I test this claim using individual level data obtained from an original survey of public employees that I conducted in three Argentinean municipalities.

In spite of the fact the patronage is a widespread phenomenon, the difficulty in collecting systematic data means that we actually know very little about how public employees are hired, who they are voting for, what they do, and why they do it. The challenges of collecting systematic data on patronage are so serious that Wilson's more than fifty years old statement (1961, 372) is still relevant: "So much secrecy is maintained in city politics that no exact data on patronage may ever be obtained in cities of any size." In trying to deal with this measurement issue, scholars in Argentina have used different proxies for patronage, such as the total number of public employees (Calvo and Murillo 2004), the number of temporary employees (Kemahlioglu 2006, 2011), and spending on personnel (Brusco et al. 2005; Gordin 2002; Remmer 2007). However, the fact there is a high number of public employees or that a disproportionate amount of money is spent on public sector jobs does not necessarily mean that these jobs are patronage jobs. Moreover, the challenge is not limited to assessing whether or not public sector jobs are distributed in exchange for political services. If jobs are indeed distributed for this reason, it is also important to be able to establish the type and the extent of the political support that public employees provide their bosses together with the reasons behind this support. To make matters worse, directly asking either patrons or clients is unlikely to yield useful insights because they both have incentives to lie (see chapter 1).

Instead of using problematic proxy measures or direct survey questions to test the empirical implications of my theory, I take a different approach—one that allows me to elicit accurate information from the actors involved while minimizing social response bias (whether in the form of inaccurate answers or refusals). I use an original face-to-face survey of 1200 municipal public sector employees that I fielded in three Argentinean

municipalities that incorporates two strategies for encouraging truthful responses about sensitive topics. The first one (following Scacco 2009) consists of a number of techniques to earn the trust of the respondents by guaranteeing the confidentiality of the most sensitive questions. The second one is the use of list experiments—a type of question that provides respondents with the anonymity needed to obtain accurate information about their political activities.

Using these methods, I study how public sector jobs are distributed and to whom, the electoral behavior of public employees, and the type and extent of the political services that they provide to the mayor. The results presented in this chapter are consistent with the theoretical expectations outlined in chapter 2. First, I am able to show that most jobs are distributed through informal channels. Then, I use an instrumental variable design to show that—because politicians use the political preferences of the citizens at the time of hire as a “proxy” for their willingness to provide political services on the job—public sector jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters. Supporters who did not just vote for the mayor but also provide a number of different political services. Through the use of list experiments, I can estimate the exact proportion of employees that are involved in political activities, even though employees have incentives to lie about this behavior. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first systematic measurement of the types and extent of political services that employees hired through patronage contracts provide to their patrons. Finally, consistent with the theory developed in chapter 2, I show that supporters of the mayor are disproportionally more involved in the provision of political services.

This chapter is organized in six subsections as follows. In the next section, I describe in detail the survey design and protocol of implementation, the list experiment technique,

and the logic for the selection of municipalities, as well the main characteristics of the municipalities selected. In section two, I focus on the ways that public employees get their jobs and show the predominance of informal mechanisms of recruitment. After this section, I use an instrumental variable design to show that public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters. In the fourth section, I present the list experiments' estimates of the provision of three types of political services: helping with electoral campaigns, attending rallies, and monitoring elections. In section six, I test the robustness of the results. The last section concludes.

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 The Survey

The data from the survey was gathered in face-to-face interviews of 1184 lower and mid-level local public sector employees in the Argentinean municipalities of Salta (province of Salta), Santa Fe (province of Santa Fe) and Tigre (province of Buenos Aires).¹² Together with a team of research assistants, we interviewed around 400 employees in each municipality. On average, the survey interview lasted 24 minutes.

¹ More information about the survey can be founded in Appendix A.

² Top positions at all levels of government (national, provincial, and local), even in the cases where civil services regulations do exist, are discretionally appointed. Civil service systems usually include the specification of political positions for higher ranks in which hiring based on political affiliation is legal (as opposed to career position in which hiring is based on merit and qualifications). Top positions were, therefore, excluded from the sample.

Within each municipality, I generated a random sample based on the official list of public employees (excluding elected officials and high-level positions).³ The selected employees were then directly approached to interview at public offices during their working hours. Since the random sample was drawn from an official and complete list of public employees and the survey was administered during office hours at the municipality, both the permission and the collaboration of the local authorities were crucial. In order to minimize the probability of antagonizing the authorities and maximize the chances of getting their approval for the survey, I took two precautions. First, I purposely designed the survey instrument to be as short as possible to make sure employees would not be kept away from their jobs for long periods of time. Second, I excluded particularly direct sensitive questions (especially ones related to the mayor). Authorities in each municipality read the survey instrument carefully but did not censor any of the proposed questions.

I provided interviewers with lists of public employees in the random sample and the addresses of their respective places of work. Places of work ranged from offices at the City Hall or at decentralized offices (*delegaciones*) to parks, construction sites, cemeteries, hospitals, health centers, and the street itself. In cases in which the selected employee was not at the place of work at the time of the visit, or preferred to answer the survey at a different time of day, I instructed interviewers to make an appointment to return later. If the selected employee refused to answer the survey, or the interview could not be conducted after the second attempt, I replaced the respondent with the following name on

³ Information on public employment is not publicly available and Argentinean politicians are usually very reluctant to share it. The first challenge of the survey was therefore to get access to the data and this was only possible after being introduced to the authorities via personal connections and a number of interviews with public officials to introduce myself, explain the purpose of the study, get the list of public employees and, finally, get the authorization to conduct the survey.

the official list of public employees. I instructed the interviewers to make detailed records of failed interviews. Because there were survey and list experiment questions embedded in the survey with two conditions each—treatment and control—, two versions of the questionnaire were used. With the exception of the survey and the list experiment questions, respondents were asked questions from identical questionnaires. Interviewers used the two different questionnaires in sequential order, assigning respondents alternatively to either the treatment or the control group.

Since the survey was conducted face-to-face at public offices, getting truthful answers from public employees presented a challenge. While high-ranking public officials usually have their own offices, most public employees in Argentina share their workspaces with others. Public employees could be unwilling to reveal sensitive information in front of others, especially if they think that their jobs could be jeopardized by their answers. Following standard IRB procedures, all interviews started with the enumerators explaining the purpose of the survey and the confidentiality of all the data collected. Enumerators were instructed to emphasize the strictly academic purpose of the survey and to assure that respondents understood that the information would not be shared with the mayor or any other person. Besides this standard procedure, I implemented two distinct but complementary strategies to minimize social response bias (whether in the form of inaccurate answers or refusals).

First, as describe in section 3.1.2 below, I designed a series of survey list experiments with the goal of providing respondents with the anonymity needed to induce them to give accurate information about their political activities. Second, I followed Scacco's (2009) strategy (originally developed to survey rioters in Africa), and split the

questionnaire into two parts. The first one (Part A) had the background and general information about the respondent, as well as the less sensitive questions and a series of lists experiments. The second one (Part B) had the most sensitive questions about voting behavior, ideology, and political preferences. Each part of the questionnaire was marked with a different survey identification number that could only be matched with a document not available to the enumerators at any time. Apart from this number, the second part of the questionnaire had no information (such as age, gender, occupation, or place of work) that could be used to identify the respondent. Enumerators administered the first part of the questionnaire, while the sensitive part (Part B) was read and filled out by the respondents themselves.⁴ In this way, the other employees in the office were neither able to hear the questions nor the answers. This part of the questionnaire was designed to be short and very easy to understand with only closed-ended questions. Finally, the respondents were asked to store the second part of the questionnaire in a sealed cardboard box similar to a ballot box (something familiar to Argentineans since paper ballots and cardboard ballot boxes are still used in Argentinean elections).⁵

I instructed the enumerators to provide a detailed explanation of these procedures before handing Part B of the questionnaire to the respondents and to make sure respondents understood that the confidentiality of their responses was fully protected. Their understanding was fundamental to guaranteeing the success of the technique. Was it

⁴ Literacy rates are very high in Argentina so there was no concern that the respondents would not be able to read and fill the Part B of the questionnaires by themselves. In fact, according to the Argentina 2010 census, only 1.96% of the total population older than 10 years old is illiterate and public sector employees are probably more educated than the national average.

⁵ In a few cases, respondents asked enumerators to fill part B for them (asking directly). Enumerators were instructed to agree with these requests, but Part B was still stored in the cardboard box when the survey was completed.

in fact successful? To test the success of the strategies implemented, in the last round of the survey conducted in Salta between June and August 2011, I included one extra question. The new question asked about voting intentions in the next presidential election that was to be held two months after the survey was conducted (in October). The precise wording of the question was: “Finally, could you tell me for whom are you going to vote in the next presidential election?”⁶ Responses were coded 1 if the respondent mentioned the party of the mayor (Peronism) or any candidate from that party, and 0 otherwise.⁷ Half of the respondents were asked this question directly by the enumerator at the end of Part A of the questionnaire; the other half found this question at the end of Part B to answer by themselves. Table 3.1 presents the differences in means between the responses to the question when asked directly (in Part A) and when filled by respondents (in Part B).

Table 3.1: Voting intentions in next presidential election, by way of asking

Asking directly by enumerator (Part A)	0.48 (0.04) N=193
Filled by respondents themselves (Part B)	0.42 (0.04) N=196
Difference	0.06 (0.05) N=389

Two-sample t-test with unequal variances, standard errors in parentheses

⁶ In Spanish: “Por último, ¿podría decirme a quien va a votar en las próximas elecciones presidenciales?”

⁷ All references to peronist labels (peronism, kirchnerism, “*Frente para la Victoria*”) as well as the name of the main peronist candidate, Cristina Kirchner, were coded as 1s. The exception was Duhalde (7 respondents in Salta reported intentions to vote for him) that, although being a peronist, was running in clear opposition to the incumbent president at the time.

When asked directly about presidential voting intentions (in Part A), 48 percent of the respondents answered that they would vote for the party of the mayor (the Peronism). However, when respondents were answering the questions by themselves (in Part B), 42 percent reported that they would vote for the Peronist party. Although the results suggest that employees over-report their intention to support the party of the mayor in the presidential election when asked directly in front of others, the difference between the two means is not statistically significant.

However, according to the theory developed in chapter 2, patronage jobs are distributed to supporters so there is no reason to expect them to have any fear of making their political preferences public (since their preferences are aligned with the preferences of the mayor). Indeed, as we will see below in section 3.3, a disproportionate number of public sector jobs are distributed to supporters. Therefore it is not surprising that the differences in responses when asking the question directly and when letting the employees answering it by themselves are not significant. Only the employees that are not supporters might have an incentive to give untruthful responses in front of others about their political preferences. Table 3.2 thus presents the differences in means between the responses to the question when asked directly (in Part A) and when filled by respondents (in Part B) according to whether they reported voting for the mayor in the previous election or not. The question asked for whom they voted in the last mayoral election, and responses were coded 1 if the respondent voted for the incumbent mayor, and 0 otherwise.

Table 3.2: Voting intentions in next presidential election, by way of asking and support for the mayor

	Mayor Voters	Non- Mayor Voters
Asking directly by enumerator (Part A)	0.54 (0.04) N=147	0.21 (0.07) N=33
Filled by respondents themselves (Part B)	0.53 (0.04) N=155	0.05 (0.03) N=42
Difference	0.01 (0.06) N=302	0.16** (0.08) N=75

Two-sample t-test with unequal variances with standard errors in parentheses

Among those who reported voting for the incumbent mayor (column 1), the different question asking procedures do not seem to matter. However, among those who did not vote for the incumbent mayor in the last election (column 2), asking directly or not yields different results. When asked directly, 21 percent of non-mayor voters answered that they would vote for the party of the mayor in the next presidential election. When asked in the private questionnaire (Part B), only 5 percent answered that they would vote for the Peronist presidential candidate. A two-tailed t-test confirms that this difference (16 percentage points) is statistically significant at the 95 percent level. It might seem problematic to use a question about voting behavior to test the efficacy of the different questioning procedures since this question could be itself subject to the same problems of social response bias. Moreover, this question was included in Part B of the questionnaire, the usefulness of which I am testing here. However, the fact that the change in procedure made no difference for those who voted for the mayor but made a significant difference for

those who did not seem to suggest that splitting the questionnaire worked in the expected way, making a difference only for the types of employees that had an incentive to lie.

3.1.2 List Experiments

Together with the questions about voting behavior and political preferences, questions about political services were the hardest to ask. As mentioned in the previous section, employees could be unwilling to reveal that kind of information in front of others (recall that the interviews were done at public offices), but it was also possible that they would be unwilling to reveal that information in private or—even worse— provide inaccurate answers. To get around this problem— to increase the response rate and produce more valid estimates— questions about political services combined relatively direct questions, with questions in the sensitive part of the survey (Part B, filled out by employees on their own) that guaranteed the confidentiality of the responses, and a number of list experiments that guaranteed the anonymity of the responses.⁸

The logic of the list experiment technique is very simple. First, the survey sample is split into random halves: a treatment and a control group. Each group is read the same question and shown a card with a number of response options.⁹ Cards for the control and treatment group differ only in the number of response categories. List experiments work

⁸ To see the effects of social desirability bias on responses to a similar topic, see the work of Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. (2012). By comparing responses to direct questions with responses to list experiments, they show the existence of important social desirability bias on questions about clientelism in Nicaragua. For general advice on how to design list experiments, see Glynn (2013).

⁹ The list of responses was not read aloud to increase privacy. Recall that most interviews were conducted in front of others.

by aggregating the item we care about (the “treatment” or “sensitive” item) with a list of other items. Respondents are asked to report the number of items on the list that applies to them, but not *which* ones. For example, one of the political services studied in this dissertation is the provision of favors to citizens. Asking directly about this issue could be problematic because respondents could get offended, refuse to answer, or provide untruthful responses. List experiments provide a good solution to get around this problem.

In this example, both groups were read the following question:

Now I am going to hand you a card that mentions a number of activities. Please, I would like for you to tell me HOW MANY of those you did in the last week. Please, do not tell me which ones, just HOW MANY.

The control group received a card with the following activities:

- (A) Talk about politics with someone
- (B) Try to convince someone of the strengths and weaknesses of some politician
- (C/D) Try to convince someone of the strengths and weaknesses of some public policy
- (D/E) Have a serious fight with someone due to political differences¹⁰

¹⁰ This unlikely response was included in order to minimize the changes of “ceiling effects” (see Kuklinski et al. 1997). “Ceiling effects” occur when respondents select the entire list of possible responses. In this case, the respondent would be simply accepting to have performed all activities (including the sensitive one) so the level of anonymity that the list experiment was supposed to achieve would have been ruined and the claim about list experiments improving the validity of the estimates would be hard to sustain. An alternative to the use of unlikely events is to include items that are negatively correlated (see Glynn 2013), which is the strategy I used in some of the other list experiments. A similar problem, called “floor effects”, may arise if the control questions are expected to be negative for many respondents. In this case (as with ceiling effects), respondents in the treatment group may fear that answering the question truthfully would reveal their positive answer for the sensitive item. To minimize this effect, item A was included (because talking about politics is very common among people working in the public sector). It is important to note, however, that both the presence of ceiling or floor effects would lead to the underestimation of the population proportion of those who would provide a positive answer for the sensitive item (both types of problems lower the observed mean response of the treatment group) (Blair and Imai 2012).

The treatment group was given a similar card, with an extra activity placed in the third position:

(C) Help someone with an errand or task (*tramite o gestión*)
at the City Hall ¹¹

The question does not ask the respondent to tell the enumerator the specific activities. The respondent just has to tell the interviewer *how many* of those activities she did, so the question provides the respondent with full anonymity for her responses. Providing that the entire list does not apply (no one in the treatment group provides a “5” answer), respondents can be assured that no one can know their answer to the sensitive question. Thus, as long as the respondents understand that the anonymity of their responses is protected, list experiments generate more accurate responses than direct questioning and thus a more valid estimate of the frequency of the item we care about. Since respondents were randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups, and as long as the randomization was successful, the two groups would be identical, on average, on both observable and unobservable characteristics.¹² Therefore, an estimate of the proportion of respondents providing favors can be simply derived by comparing the average response among the treatment group and the average response among the control group.¹³

¹¹ The wording in Spanish for this example was: “*Ahora le voy a entregar una tarjeta donde figuran una serie de actividades [ENTREGAR TARJETA]. Quisiera, por favor, que me señale CUÁNTAS de ellas realizó Ud. en la última semana. Por favor, no me diga cuáles, sino solamente CUÁNTAS.*” The response categories were: “*Charlar de política con alguien,*” “*Intentar convencer a alguien de las virtudes o defectos de algún político.*” “*Intentar convencer a alguien de las virtudes o defectos de alguna medida política,*” “*Pelearse seriamente con alguien por diferencias políticas,*” and the treatment item was “*Ayudar a alguien con algún trámite o gestión en la municipalidad.*”

¹² See Table A4 and Table A5 in the Appendix for randomization checks.

¹³ The internal validity of the list experiment technique relies on the assumption that the length of a list has no effect on the responses independent of the substance of the list. Indeed, Kiewiet de Jonge and Nickerson

Differences in the means between the two groups provide a point estimate of the number of people that reported providing favors. If no one was providing favors, there will be no difference, on average, in the mean number of reported activities between the two groups. In this example, the average number of activities indicated by the control groups was 1.14 and the average number indicated by the treatment groups was 1.58, and so we can conclude that 44% of respondents provided favors ($1.58 - 1.14 = 0.44$).¹⁴

List experiments are not the only existing method to obtain valid estimates of attitudes and activities thought to be subject to social desirability bias. Another interesting alternative is the use of randomization response designs such as the one used by Gingerich (2006, 2010) to ask bureaucrats about corruption in Bolivia, Brazil and Chile.¹⁵ I choose to use list experiments instead for a number of reasons. Two characteristics of the list experiments seem particularly crucial for the type of survey that I conducted. One of the main advantages of the list experiment (over alternatives such as the randomized response technique) is its simplicity, both for the researcher (or enumerators) and respondents, which makes it very easy to implement. Because of this, respondents tend to show a good understanding of how the technique works to provide anonymity, and therefore they tend

(2011) find that list experiments do not overestimate the incidence of behavior or attitudes and that, for high incidence behaviors, they actually tend to underestimate. Holbrook and Krosnick (2010), in turn, tested the effect of list's length by including a non-existing behavior (taken a vacation to a fictional place) on a list experiment and find no effect of list's length on responses.

¹⁴ Although there have been some recent developments on how to use list experiments with multivariate regression analysis (see, for instance, Blair and Imai 2012; Corstange 2009; Glynn 2013; Imai 2011), difference-in-means estimators are still the standard for list experiments (Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012). One of the main advantages of using difference-in-means estimators is that there is no need to make any functional form assumptions.

¹⁵ The randomized response methodology works by introducing noise to responses (respondents flip a coin or use a spinner to determine whether to answer the sensitive item or the non-sensitive item), which protects individual answers but enables the researcher (who knows the probability distribution of the realizations of the device used) to estimate the frequency of the behavior under study. See Corstange (2009) for a brief discussion of different techniques to neutralize response bias.

to trust it as a method to protect their responses (Coutss and Jann, 2011). Since I interviewed low and middle rank employees, many of them with low levels of education, this was an important advantage over other alternatives.

Although the list experiment technique is fairly easy to implement and understand, it is still more demanding than responding to a simple, direct closed-ended question. Careful survey implementation was therefore crucial to obtain accurate responses.¹⁶ If the enumerators did not provide clear instructions, respondents might not understand that the anonymity of their responses was protected and, as a consequence, provided inaccurate responses. Besides the extensive training that the enumerators received, I took three precautions to decrease the chances of respondents not understanding the instructions.

First, I asked the enumerators to give the instructions for the question clearly and slowly and to provide an example. Second, the cards with the list of items contained letters instead of numbers to facilitate the detection of lack of understanding in the respondents. During the pre-test of the survey, I uncovered two types of error responses from employees who did not follow the instructions. One type occurred when employees gave a count of the frequency of doing each of the items instead of counting the items on the list. The second one was just mentioning the item or items from the list that applied to them one by one. In this second case, the use of letters made the confusion with the instructions

¹⁶ Careful implementation is always important when conducting surveys, but in the case of the list experiment this is particularly crucial because there is an unavoidable efficiency cost associated with the use of list experiments. List experiments may reduce bias by minimizing the incentives for respondents to lie, but it does it at the cost of efficiency (the standard errors around the list experiment estimates are larger than they would have been with a direct question with no response bias) (Blair and Imai 2012; Corstange 2009).

more evident to the enumerators.¹⁷ I asked the enumerators to provide the instructions again if respondents replied in any of the two ways mentioned or in any other way that showed a lack of understanding of the instructions. Since the survey included four list experiments, interviewers had a chance to explain the procedure again if the response for the first list experiment alerted them of any misunderstanding.¹⁸ Finally, I put the list experiment with the least sensitive item first. If respondents did not understand the instructions but did not feel any social desirability bias in answering the question, they would more likely just identify the items on the list one by one (instead of refusing to answer or providing untruthful responses). This gave the enumerators a better chance of detecting lack of understanding so that they could repeat the instructions.¹⁹

Using this technique, I asked about four different political services: providing favors (see chapter 4), attending rallies, helping with electoral campaigns, and monitoring elections. Before analyzing the results from the list experiments, I briefly explain the logic for the selection of municipalities and provide some of their basic socio-demographic characteristics.

¹⁷ I thank Anastasia Peralta Ramos, one of the enumerators that helped with the survey in Tigre, for this simple yet effective suggestion. I did not collect systematic data on this particular issue, but my own experience doing 160 surveys myself suggests that it was an effective technique to help detect problems.

¹⁸ Of course, it was not always possible to detect lack of understanding and/or trust in the technique.

¹⁹ Note that the enumerators explained the instructions as many times as necessary to answer the questions, but they *never* explained how the list experiment worked and which one was the item on the list we cared about. This is important to eliminate the possibility that respondents were over-reporting the sensitive item just to please the enumerators, as Ahart and Sackett (2004) suggested could have been driving the list experiment results in Dalton et al. (1994).

3.1.3 Selecting Municipalities within Argentina

Since Argentina has 1195 municipalities spread over 23 provinces,²⁰ conducting the survey on a representative sample of all municipalities was simply not feasible.²¹ In order to make the research tractable and still obtain a sample with variation across municipalities, I selected three very distinct municipalities from three different provinces for the survey: Salta (Province of Salta), Santa Fe (Santa Fe), and Tigre (*Conurbano Bonaerense*, Buenos Aires). The three municipalities vary significantly in their political and economic characteristics, providing a good opportunity to test how the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in chapter 2 travels across different political and economic environments.

The City of Salta (536,000 inhabitants) is the poorest of the three municipalities included in the survey with over 21% of its residents living in poverty,²² and more than half of the population without health insurance. Around 60 percent of the population has not finished high school and only 9 percent hold a college degree. Politically, Salta has been dominated by the Peronist Party since 1983, except in 1991-1995 and 1997-1999 when a provincial party (*Partido Renovador de Salta - PRS*) managed to win the municipal executive. Since 2003, the city has been governed by the Peronist Miguel Isa (with the PRS

²⁰ The city of Buenos Aires, host of the federal government, was excluded because of its unique status, which provides local authorities with more prerogatives than a municipal government but less than a province.

²¹ If we include the smaller counterparts of the municipalities, *comunas*, Argentina has more than 2000 local governments.

²² Throughout this dissertation, I measure poverty with the most widely used measure of poverty in Argentina— “unsatisfied basic needs” or NBI (*necesidades básicas insatisfechas*). A household is considered to have unsatisfied basic needs if it meets at least one of the five characteristics that are considered indicators of poverty in Argentina: Density of more than three persons per room (crowding), living in a precarious house (housing), not having an indoor flush toilet (sanitation), having a child between 6 and 12 years old that is not attending school (school attendance), having four or more persons per person working and a household head with 2 or fewer years of elementary school (subsistence capacity).

as a minor partner). Isa was reelected in 2007 with 46 percent of the vote against another Peronist candidate, and was recently (in 2011) reelected again with 49 percent of the vote (with a margin of victory of 20 percentage points over the runner-up).

The municipality of Santa Fe is located in the central part of the country in one of the richest provinces. With a population of around 485,000 inhabitants, it is the provincial capital and the second biggest city in the province of Santa Fe. Although the municipality itself is not the richest one in the province, it is fairly rich when compared to the rest of the country. With 14 percent of its residents living in poverty, 59 percent with health insurance and 11 percent with a college degree, it is the richest municipality included in the survey. In spite of being governed by the Peronist Party for most of the period since the return of democracy in 1983, both the city and the province of Santa Fe are today among the most competitive electoral arenas. In 2007, a coalition between the Radical Party and the Socialist Party won the gubernatorial and the Santa Fe mayoral elections, and Mario Barletta from the Radical Party became the mayor with 33 percent of the votes and a margin of victory of less than two percentage points over the Peronist candidate. In the 2009 elections for the City Council, the coalition between the Radical Party and the Socialist Party obtained 38 percent of the votes and a margin of victory of 13 percentage points. After the survey was conducted, in July 2011, Mario Barletta was succeeded by another radical winning with 45 percent of the vote and a margin of victory of 7 points.²³

²³ Barletta decided not to run for reelection, and instead he tried to obtain the candidacy for the governorship of the coalition between the radical and the socialist party. However, he lost the primary against the candidate from the socialist party, and the electoral law in Santa Fe did not allow him to run for the mayoral election after losing the gubernatorial primary.

Finally, Tigre (376,000 inhabitants) is located in the province of Buenos Aires in a region referred to as *Conurbano Bonaerense*.²⁴ This region contains around 25 percent of the electorate of the country and, as a consequence, it has attracted the attention of politicians, journalist, and academics alike. Much of the vast literature on Argentinean clientelism has focused on this area.²⁵ The electoral importance of the *Conurbano Bonaerense* was the central reason for including the municipality of Tigre. Because it is located in an area that composes such a huge part of the Argentine electorate, understanding how political competition works in this area is central to understand the Argentine electoral market more generally. Although not among the poorest municipalities in the *Conurbano*, 20 percent of Tigre's residents live in poverty, and more than half of the population has no health insurance. Around 17 percent of its residents have no formal education or have not finished elementary school, 55 percent have not finished high school, and only 7 percent have a college degree. Politically, the municipality of Tigre was governed by the radical party between 1983-1987 and by a personalistic municipal party (*Acción Comunal*) from 1987 till the death of its party leader in November 2006. In 2007, Peronist Sergio Massa won the election with 46 percent of the votes, with a margin of victory of four percentage points over *Acción Comunal* (42%). In the 2009 council elections, the Peronist Party increased its vote share to 53 percent, while *Acción Comunal*, in second place, received only 26 percent of the votes. In 2011, after the survey was finished, Sergio

²⁴ The *Conurbano Bonaerense* consists of 24 municipalities that surround the City of Buenos Aires. It hosts a population of around 10,000,000 inhabitants (1/4 of the total country population.)

²⁵ Examples include Auyero (2000), Levitsky (2003), Zarazaga (2012) among others. In the recent years, however, interest in other regions of the country has been increasing (see, for example, Brusco et al. 2005 and Weitz-Shapiro 2008a, 2012).

Massa was reelected with the largest margin of victory of all districts in the *Conurbano Bonaerense* receiving 73 percent of the votes over the *Acción Comunal's* 6 percent.

Although the municipalities for the survey were not selected at random, they are representative of the diverse economic and political realities of the country. By including a municipality from the poorer north mainly dominated by the Peronist party (Salta), a municipality from the relatively richer and more competitive center (Santa Fe), and one from the *Conurbano Bonaerense* (Tigre), I capture the regional diversity of Argentine politics. Given the important differences in political and economic characteristics across the three selected municipalities, a theory that works in all three places makes generalization from only three cases more plausible.

Table 3.3: Socio-demographic and political characteristics of the municipalities

	Salta	Santa Fe	Tigre
Province	Salta (North)	Santa Fe (Center)	Buenos Aires (CB)
Mayor	Miguel Angel Isa	Mario Barletta	Sergio Massa
Mayor in power	2003-present	2007-2011	2007-present
Mayor's party	Peronist	Radical	Peronist
Electoral Competition	Low	High	Middle/Low
Population 2001	472,971	369,589	301,223
Population 2010	536,113	485,345	376,381
% w/college	9%	11%	7%
% w/health insurance	48%	59%	45%
% poverty	21%	14%	20%

Note: Data from the 2001 Census (2010 data was not available at the time of writing this dissertation). Mayors are the ones in power at the time of the survey.

The municipalities' public sectors share a similar structure, with some tenured employees along with some untenured employees that resembles the way the national and provincial public sectors are organized in Argentina. There are, however, some differences across the municipalities, the most important being the proportion of tenured employees. The municipality of Santa Fe pays salaries to 5070 people. Excluding elected officials (the mayor and the 13 councilmen), top positions (*categoría superior*) such as advisors, secretaries, deputy-secretaries, directors and deputy-directors, and teachers, the payroll consists of 4528 workers.²⁶ Of those, 2611 (55%) are permanent employees (with tenure). Most employees (63%) are older than 40 years old, 36 percent are women and 45 percent got their job with the current administration. Tigre pays salaries to 2569 people. Excluding elected officials (the mayor and 24 councilmen) and top positions, the payroll consists of 2406 workers. Of those, only 475 (19.7%) are permanent employees (have tenure). Although comparative data is not available, anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of tenure jobs is relatively smaller than in other Argentinean municipalities.²⁷ This is an important detail because mayors can appoint new employees either by enlarging the public sector or by not renewing the contract of temporary employees and hiring new ones. Because only 20 percent of jobs are tenured, the opportunities for patronage are substantial. Women constitute 45 percent of the sample and the average age is 41. Among

²⁶ Teachers were excluded for two main reasons. First of all, not all Argentinean municipalities are in charge of schools (Tigre and Salta, for instance, have no schools under their supervision) so I excluded teachers to keep the different samples more comparable. Second, the process of hiring and firing teachers is different from other type of public employment in the sense that the appointment and promotion of teachers is regulated by agencies that are independent of the mayor. This, of course, does not mean that teachers are completely isolated from political pressures (see, for instance, Murillo and Ronconi 2004 on the effect of the political attitudes towards the incumbent on the number of strikes on Argentina), but the scope for patronage is undeniable smaller—at least in the case of Argentina— than for other public employees.

²⁷ According to the head and the director of the personnel office in Tigre, Tigre is an exception in comparison to the rest of the *Conurbano*. According to them, municipalities in that area usually have an equal number of permanent and temporary employees. Interview with the author, Tigre, July 15 2010.

the 2406 public sector employees in the sample, 1034 (45%) got their job with the current administration. Finally, the municipality of Salta pays salaries to 4619 people. Excluding elected officials and top positions, the payroll consists of 4263 employees. Of those, 77 percent are permanent employees and 47 percent were hired by the current administration. Almost half of the tenured employees (47%) obtained tenure with the current administration (recall that mayor in Salta was the only one of the three that was in power since 2003). Women constitute 37 percent of the sample and the average age is 47.

Table 3.4: Characteristics of public sectors across municipalities

	Salta	Santa Fe	Tigre
Total N in payroll	4619	5070	2569
Total N in the sample	4263	4528	2409
Tenured Employees	77%	58%	20%
Got job in current administration	47%	45%	43%
Women	37%	36%	45%
Older than 40	70%	63%	53%

Note: Data from Santa Fe is from June 2010; data from Tigre is from July 2010, data from Salta is from May 2011. In the case of Salta, data was missing from the official records particularly for year of hiring and age (1/5 of the observations have missing data). See Tables A1, A2 and A3 in Appendix A for more information and survey sample representativeness.

3.2 Getting the Job

Consistent with Argentine conventional wisdom as well as the existing literature, most public employees reported having found their jobs through informal channels. Around 65 percent of respondents found their job through someone (an acquaintance, friend, or relative) that worked at the municipality, 13 percent of the respondents have submitted

their information or resume to the municipality and were later contacted by the authorities, 5 percent used to be beneficiaries of a workfare program and were then hired as regular employees, 2 percent used to be interns at the municipality and were hired afterwards, and only 6 percent of the respondents found out about the job through public advertisement and/or entrance exams (also publicly advertised). Interestingly, 6 percent of the respondents reported to have found their job specifically through political channels.²⁸

Table 3.5: How did you find out about this job?²⁹

	N	%
Through someone/an acquaintance that worked at the municipality	352	30%
Through a friend/relative that worked at the municipality	328	28%
“Through politics”	69	6%
Submitted a resume to the municipality	156	13%
Through an employment agency/the media/ newspapers/ adds	40	3%
Previous beneficiary of a welfare program	55	5%
Previous internship at the municipality	25	2%
Entrance examinations	18	2%
Some other way & missing	141	12%
	1184	100%

Moreover, employees were asked how important they thought personal connections were in order to get a job in the area they worked. The response categories were very important, important, not very important, and not at all important. The majority of respondents

²⁸ Some examples of answers that specifically mentioned politics as the means of finding out about the job: “Through politics”; “Through a politician”; “Through a local broker”; “I used to work for a Peronist councilman”; “I used to work in politics with someone at the municipality”; “Because of political activism, social activism.” This, of course, does not mean that there were no political contacts on the other informal channels but it is interesting to note that some employees did not have any problems to openly admitting the political connection.

²⁹ The wording in Spanish was the following: “¿Se acuerda cómo se enteró de este trabajo?”

considered personal connections to be important (28%) and very important (29%); whereas only 24 percent thought that they were not at all important and 16 percent thought that personal connections were not very important. Both the results from Table 3.5 and the proportion of employees that consider personal connections to be important in order to get a job show the existence of significant discretion in the hiring of employees in the municipalities studied.

3.3 Who Gets Hired?

As described in chapter 2, the general understanding in the literature on public sector employment is that, in the absence of effective civil service rules, public sector jobs are allocated mainly to supporters. In spite of this general agreement, most of the evidence we have about public sector employees' voting behavior and/or partisan identification in the developing world is based on aggregate and often unreliable data.³⁰ Not only are governments that extensively use patronage more reluctant to share information, but also getting truthful answers from public employees is difficult. So, are public sector jobs distributed to supporters? If the answer is positive, we should see public sector jobs being mainly distributed through informal channels (as seen in Table 4.5), but also a disproportionate number of supporters of the incumbent's party among public employees hired by the current administration. In order to identify support for the mayor or the party

³⁰ Calvo and Murillo (2013), one of the very few papers on patronage that use individual level data, provide evidence that jobs are distributed to supporters (defined as "in-network" voters).

of the mayor, respondents were asked two questions.³¹ The first one asked for whom they had voted in the last mayoral election. Responses were coded 1 if the respondent said they had vote for the current mayor (*Mayor Voter*) in the last mayoral election, and zero otherwise.³² Second, respondents were asked to report if they identified themselves with a political party, and those that replied affirmatively to this question were asked with which party they identified themselves. This variable (*Mayor Party*) takes on the value 1 if the respondent said that she identified herself with the party of the Mayor, and zero otherwise.³³ Table 3.6 presents employees' self-reported mayoral vote in the last election (2007 for Tigre and Santa Fe, 2011 for Salta).

Table 3.6: Public employees last election self-reported mayoral vote

	All observations	Without non- registered voters	Without non- voters	Without missing, DK/NA, blank and null
Not registered	71 (6%)			
Did not vote	39 (3%)	4%		
Missing/ DK/NA	224 (19%)	20%	21%	
Blank or Null	18 (2%)	2%	2%	
Others	151 (13%)	14%	14%	18%
Current Mayor	681 (58%)	61%	63%	82%
	1184			

³¹ Recall that the political questions were asked in a separate questionnaire (Part B) to increase the response rate and improve the accuracy of the responses.

³² Respondents that were not registered to vote in that municipality were coded as missing. Note that voting is mandatory in Argentina and, although the sanctions for no voting are hardly ever enforced, turnout is usually high (around 75-80 percent).

³³ Missing values were coded as zero, but an alternative codification of this variable with missing values coded as missing was also tried in all the analyses presented in this chapter and results were substantively identical.

Table 3.6 shows that a majority of employees reported having voted for the current mayor. Of all respondents, 681/1184 (58%) reported having voted for the incumbent mayor in the last election. Excluding all the employees that did not answer the question, voted blank or null, did not vote or were register to vote in another district, the number rises to 82 percent of responses. Only 18 percent reported having voted for another candidate.³⁴ Moreover, if public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters, we should find a higher proportion of voters and supporters of the respective mayor's party among employees who got their job during the current administration. Table 3.7 compares the proportion of voters and self-reported sympathizers with the party of the incumbent mayor across employees who got their jobs during the current administration and those who got them before.

Table 3.7: Relationship between current administration jobs and support for the mayor

	Mayor Voters	Mayor's Party Supporters
Current Administration	0.72 (0.02) N=492	0.42 (0.02) N=499
Previous Administrations	0.53 (0.02) N=619	0.31 (0.02) N=577
Difference	0.19** (0.03) N=1111	0.11** (0.03) N=1076

Two-sample t-test with unequal variances and standard errors in parentheses

³⁴ Although there is no data about public employees' voting behavior to compare these numbers to, it might be indicative to remember that Massa (Tigre) won with 47 percent of the votes, Barletta (Santa Fe) won with 33 percent of the votes, and Isa (Salta) won with 49 percent of the votes.

Indeed, Table 3.7 shows that among the employees that got their jobs during the current administration, we find more mayor voters and more supporters of the mayor's party. Public sector employees hired during the current administration are far more likely (72%) to report having voted for the mayor than those that were hired by previous administrations (53%). Moreover, employees hired by the current mayor are also more likely (42%) to report being supporters of the party of the mayor than those hired by previous mayors (31%). A two-tailed t-test confirms that both differences (19 and 11 percentage points, respectively) are statistically significant at the 95 percent level. Table 3.7 shows that public jobs are, in fact, distributed mainly to supporters.

Two important caveats are worth mentioning about these results. The first one is that it is possible that employees, in general, are over-reporting their support for the mayor and his party. Recall that both questions were included in the sensitive part (Part B, the one filled by employees themselves) of the questionnaire, but it is still possible that employees were over-reporting support for the mayor so absolute numbers should be taken cautiously.

The second caveat is related to the direction of the relationship between being a supporter and getting the job. According to the theory developed in chapter 2, public sector jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters. The data shown here, however, is also consistent with a story of independent citizens that became supporters after getting the job. In other words, it is possible to have simultaneity in these results: those who got their jobs during the current administration could be more likely to identify themselves with the party of the mayor precisely because the mayor gave them a job. It is possible that instead of having gotten the job because they were sympathizers of the mayor's political party,

public employees could be sympathizers of the mayor's party *because* they got a job from this mayor.

I test for the possibility of reverse causation using an instrumental variable approach. Following Dunning and Stokes (2010), I use a question about the party identification of the respondents' parents when they were young to instrument for the partisan identification of the respondents.³⁵ The correlation between the respondent identifying herself with the party of the mayor and both her parents identifying with the same party is 0.30.³⁶ In simple terms, an instrument is a variable that is related to the independent variable, and is only related to the outcome variable through its impact on the independent variable (exclusion restriction). In this case, the partisan identification of the parents when the employee was young (or younger) is related to the partisan identification of the respondent because party identity is partially a product of family socialization (Dunning and Stokes 2010). Also, it is generally unlikely that parents' identification with the party of the mayor when the employee was young caused the mayor to hire the respondent years later, except through the effect of the parents' partisan identity on their children's partisan identity. If all these assumptions are valid, a relation between the partisanship of the parents and the respondent getting a public sector job indicates an

³⁵ The wording of the question was: "When you were younger, remember if your father (mother) identified himself with any political party?" If yes, "With which party did your father (mother) identify himself?" In Spanish: "Cuando usted era mas joven, ¿recuerda si su padre (madre) se identificaba con algún partido político?; "¿Con cual partido se identificaba su padre(madre)?"

³⁶ The correlation between a father and the respondent identifying with the party of the mayor was 0.29, whereas the correlation with the mother's party identity was 0.36. Although mother and father's party identification was highly correlated (0.54), the correlation was not perfect so I opted to use the partisan identification of both parents together. Dunning and Stokes (2010) found very similar correlations on their survey of Argentinean voters. Using the partisanship of either of the parents as instrument yielded were similar results (not shown).

effect of partisan identification of the respondent on the likelihood of receiving a public sector job.

Strangely enough, the municipality of Salta stipulates in its “*Carta Orgánica Municipal*” (the Municipal Constitution) that the daughters and sons of public sector employees would get priority at the time of hiring. Among the 389 respondents in Salta, 74 (19%) reported getting the job through her mother or father due to this regulation. In this case, the exclusion restriction is violated because the instrument (the ideology of the parents), when the parents are public employees, have a direct effect on the hiring of the son or daughter that is not through the family socialization of partisanship. For this reason, those 74 respondents were excluded from the analysis below.³⁷

Table 3.8 reports the results of this analysis. In all three columns the dependent variable is a dummy variable for whether the employee got his/her job during the current administration (*Current Mayor*). The main independent variable is the self-reported partisan identification coded 1 for employees that identified themselves with the party of the mayor and 0 otherwise (*Mayor Party*). The instrument is a dummy variable for whether *both* of the respondent’s parents had the same partisanship as the current mayor when the

³⁷ Even after excluding this group of employees, the exclusion restriction is probably the most problematic assumption for this analysis. If some employees got their jobs because of their parents, the exclusion restriction would be violated. To deal with this problem, it would ideal to have the information about the specific employees that got their jobs through their parents. Unfortunately, although an open ended question about how employees got their job was asked, the responses were coded by enumerators in a way that makes it impossible to separate employees that got their job through a relative from those that got it through a friend. Only in Salta, due to the regulation mentioned above, data was collected in a way that made it possible to separate those who got their jobs through their parents. My personal recollection (I did 160 surveys myself) is that very few employees mentioned their parents as the source for their job. As a robustness check, I run the IV regression excluding all employees that reported having obtained their jobs though a friend or a relative in Tigre and Santa Fe (125 employees), while still excluding the Salta employees mentioned above (74). The results from this IV regression are substantively equivalent to the one reported here. The coefficients are slightly smaller, but still significant at the 95% level. See Table B1 In Appendix B.

respondent was young, coded 1 for those whose parents shared the partisanship of the mayor and 0 otherwise (*Mayor Party Parents*). Controls for the age of the respondent (*Age*), Education (*Education*) sex (*Female*), and municipal dummies were also included.

Table 3.8: The effect of ideology on being hired by current mayor (IV regression)

	Current Mayor	IV Current Mayor	Reduced Form Current Mayor
Mayor Party	0.15*** (0.03)	0.29*** (0.11)	
Mayor Party Parents			0.09*** (0.03)
Age	-0.22*** (0.01)	-0.22*** (0.01)	-0.22*** (0.01)
Female	0.06** (0.03)	0.06** (0.03)	0.05* (0.03)
Education	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Salta	0.13*** (0.04)	0.09** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.03)
Santa Fe	0.03 (0.03)	0.06 (0.04)	0.03 (0.03)
Constant	1.01*** (0.06)	0.97*** (0.07)	1.04*** (0.06)
Observations	1,004	1,004	1,104
R-squared	0.32	0.30	0.31

Note: The age variable takes on values from 1 to 5, corresponding to respondents who are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and older. The education variable takes on values from 1 to 3, corresponding to respondents to whom the highest education completed is primary school, secondary school, and university or tertiary education. The female variable takes the value 1 when the respondent is female, and 0 otherwise. The municipality of Tigre is the base category. Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Column 1 reports the result of a simple regression in which *Current Mayor* is regressed on the respondent's self-reported partisan identification, Column 2 reports the instrumental

variable regression instrumenting the respondent's partisan identification with the partisan identification of her parents, and Column 3 reports the reduced-form regression in which *Current Mayor* is regressed directly on the instrument *Mayor Party Parents*. As expected from the t-test (Table 3.7 above), the naïve estimation of Column 1 shows a strong positive relation between the employees' partisan identification with the party of the mayor and getting a job during the current administration. The instrumental-variable estimator in Column 2 yielded the expected positive estimated coefficient, significant at the 99% level. The last column reports the reduced-form regression, in which the coefficient is also positive and significant at the 99% level. In sum, the results from the instrumental variable regression also show (conditional on age, education, sex, and municipality) a positive relationship between the respondent sharing her partisan identification with the current mayor and receiving a public sector job during the current administration. The results then do not support the hypothesis of employees becoming sympathizers with the party of the mayor *because* they got a job. The correlation between being a sympathizer of the party of the mayor and getting a job during the current administration (cf. Table 3.7) cannot be attributed to the reverse causation story of employees becoming partisan sympathizers *after* getting their jobs.³⁸

³⁸ Dunning and Stokes (2010) find similar (but weaker) results on their study of vote buying. They instrumented partisan ideology with the ideology of the voter's father and find that loyal supporters (core voters) in Argentina attract more campaign gifts and subsidies than non-supporters (swing voters). They also present evidence of a similar effect in Mexico and Venezuela.

3.4 Political Services during Elections

In the previous section, I showed that public sector jobs are in fact disproportionately distributed to supporters. As explained in chapter 2, mayors use the ideology of employees at the time of hiring as a proxy for their willingness to provide political services because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political services in the future. In this section, I present empirical evidence that public employees—particularly supporters—do provide political services. Indeed, many low and middle positions at public offices are distributed with the goal of maintaining a network of activists on the ground that performs a number of different political activities. Activities that, if enough and successful, can have an important impact on electoral returns. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to uncovering the different types of political activities performed by public employees as well as the types of employees that provide those services. Using the list experiment technique described above, I estimate the proportion of employees providing three different types of political services: A) Helping with campaigns, B) Attending rallies, and C) Monitoring elections. Of course, these three activities are not the only types of political services that political employees provide, but they are definitely among the most important ones.³⁹

3.4.1 Measuring Political Services. Evidence from List Experiments

Helping with Electoral Campaigns Participation of patronage employees in political campaigns is crucial. As Kemahlioglu (2006) shows, politicians at the provincial and local

³⁹ See Chapter 2, Section 2.2 for a description of other political services that employees often provide.

level in Argentina have very limited resources to finance capital-intensive professional campaigns with extensive use of the media. At the local level, “human-intensive” activities such as painting graffiti, plastering posters, and door-to-door visits, among others are still essential parts of campaigning. Moreover, the availability of “real” volunteers has considerably decreased over the years (Scherlis 2009), making the role of public sector employees even more important. Leaving aside the organization and participation of rallies (analyzed below), the types of activities that are organized and conducted during campaigns are diverse.

One activity that is common among political parties, especially in poorer neighborhoods, is organizing door-to-door campaigns (*rastrillajes*). Almost always this activity is accompanied by the distribution of paper ballots (*boletas*), the same ones that voters would find on Election Day at the voting booth. Argentinean elections are held with paper ballots that political parties themselves produce. The distribution of these ballots, either door-to-door or on a busy city corner, on the weeks before the election is one of the activities that all Argentinean parties conduct as important part of their campaigns. The importance of this activity cannot be stressed enough. It helps voters to get to know the candidates and get familiar with the ballot they intend to use on Election Day. This could be key in order to find the preferred ballot at the voting booth, which often—especially when national, provincial, and municipal elections are held concurrently— contains an

overwhelming number of ballots. In fact, the day of the election, many voters bring their ballots to the voting booth instead of looking for one in the polling place.⁴⁰

Moreover, the distribution of paper ballots before the election has been related to vote buying. A common practice among brokers is to hand in a ballot together with handouts when these are being distributed, which makes it clear where the handout is coming from and, as Brusco et al. (2004) point out in their study of vote buying in Argentina, could also reinforce the message that a vote is expected in return.⁴¹

Another important campaign activity that requires “muscle” is painting graffiti, hanging banners, and plastering posters with the name of the candidate or the party on empty walls. This is also an essential part of campaigning, especially for local politicians that cannot afford other, more expensive types of advertising on billboards. Those helping with the campaign take this activity very seriously, to the point of fighting for open walls. Indeed, in his study of Argentinean brokers, Zarazaga (2012) found that 18 out of 120 brokers reported having been involved in shootouts with other brokers on nights when they were painting graffiti. In addition to the activities mentioned, campaigning in Argentina usually also involves organizing political meetings with neighbors and other types of activities like seminars, social gatherings, and cultural events.

⁴⁰ In a survey conducted in three Argentinean provinces in 2001/2002, Brusco et al. (2004) find that 15 percent of the respondents reported having voted in the last election with ballots that they brought with them to the polling place.

⁴¹ Brusco et al. (2004) find that a voter that votes with a ballot provided by a broker is more likely also to have received handouts; and a person who receives both a ballot and a handout is more likely to report that the handout influences her/his vote.

Table 3.9 presents the result of a list experiment where the treatment category is “Work/help in the electoral campaign” in the last election.⁴² It shows that the average number of activities reported by employees in the control group with only four responses is 1.19, while the average in the treatment group were respondents had also the treatment item (political campaigns) is 1.41. The estimate percentage of public employees that helped in the last election is a significant 22 percent.

Attending Political Rallies

Another important activity for parties, especially during election time, is to conduct political rallies. Although today rallies are not as important as they used to be in Argentine politics, political parties still invest a lot of time and effort on organizing them. Crucial part of the organization is to make sure that enough people will show up. Qualitative work has pointed out that public employees (particularly non-tenured employees) and beneficiaries of social welfare programs are expected to turn out to rallies (Auyero 2000; Szwarcberg 2009; Zarazaga 2012). To facilitate and increase attendance, transport is often centrally organized. As a 35-year-old telephone operator from Salta told me, the last time she attended a rally was when a councilman from the mayor’s party started his mandate: “They brought us from here (the municipality) ... they told us we had to support him (*apoyarlo*)”.⁴³

⁴² The baseline response categories were: “Be a candidate” (*Ser candidato*), “Get informed about the different candidates” (*Informarse sobre los distintos candidatos*), “Get disenfranchised” (*Impugnar el voto*), and “Cast a straight-ticket vote from any of the parties” (*Votar la lista completa de algún partido*). The treatment item was: “Work/help in the electoral campaign” (*Trabajar/ ayudar en la campaña electoral*). To minimize the possibility of “ceiling effects”, items three and four are not possible to perform on the same election, and item one is a rare event.

⁴³ Interview with the author, Salta, June 15 2011.

Political rallies play a number of different roles in Argentine politics. First, they serve the straightforward purpose of advertising and allowing candidates to display their power to voters and other politicians. Second, attendance at rallies is also considered a way for potential clients to show loyalty to the party—an opportunity to publicly display support (Auyero 2000; Szwarcberg 2009, 2013). In Auyero's words (2000, 163), attending rallies is "a way of showing a broker that one is loyal, responsible, and ready to help out when needed—and therefore deserving of a job if and when one becomes available". Rallies give citizens the opportunity to be visible to brokers and politicians, publicly signal their support and their willingness to provide political services, with the expectation of getting a job (or some other benefit). A public employee from Salta explained this point bluntly, "*Acá el que toca el bombo, tiene trabajo*" (Here, whoever plays the drums has a job), referring to the usual presence of drums in political rallies in Argentina.⁴⁴ Politicians, in turn, seem to take these signaling efforts seriously. An employee from Salta that helped during the campaign and now works in close proximity to the mayor explains it clearly: "If a person has contributed to the mayor's victory, he/she has a right (*tiene cierto derecho*) [to get a job]".⁴⁵ Finally, the number of followers that each broker can mobilize to rallies provides

⁴⁴ Interview with the author, Salta, June 13 2011.

⁴⁵ Interview with the author, Salta, August 10 2011.

party leaders with important information about the power of each broker.⁴⁶ Rallies give brokers the opportunity to show the size of their network.⁴⁷

Table 3.9 presents the results of a list experiment in which the treatment category is “Attend Political Rallies” during the last election.⁴⁸ The average number of activities reported by employees in the control group with only four responses is 1.39, while the average in the treatment group where respondents had also the treatment item (political rallies) among the response options is 1.60. The estimate percentage of public employees that attended rallies during the last election is a significant 21 percent.

Monitoring Elections Argentine political parties consider the presence of partisan monitors (party polling officials) on Election Day essential to guaranteeing fair elections. Each party that competes in an election has the right to assign a partisan monitor (*fiscal*) by precinct (*mesa*), plus a head of monitors (*fiscal general*) by school. In addition to these optional partisan monitors, Argentine electoral law requires at least one and up to three citizens (*autoridades de mesa*) selected by the government to monitor the election and count the votes. Although the citizens selected by the government are the only ones with legal authority to make decisions about any electoral issue, Argentinean parties consider it

⁴⁶ In a survey of 800 brokers conducted in Argentina, Stokes et al. (2012, 169-170) asked brokers what was the most important activity for a broker who was interested in a political career. About 10 percent replied that mobilizing voters for a political rally was more important than mobilizing voters for a primary or a general election.

⁴⁷ Some scholars have argued that party leaders use this information to monitor brokers and reward or punish them according to their ability to mobilize people to those rallies (Stokes et al. 2012; Szwarcberg 2009, 2013; Zarazaga 2012).

⁴⁸ The baseline response categories were: “Participate in political meetings” (*Participar de reuniones políticas*), “Vote in the primaries of any party” (*Votar en las internas de algún partido*), “Abstain from voting” (*Abstenerse de votar*), and “Get informed about the election on the news” (*Informarse acerca de la elección en las noticias*). The treatment category was: “Attend political rallies” (*Concurrir a movilizaciones o actos electorales*).

crucial to have their own election monitors to make sure that votes are fairly counted and that no monitor from another party would use any tricks to steal votes.⁴⁹

Monitors are also in charge of ensuring that there are enough paper ballots from their party in the booth throughout the day. As mentioned, Argentinean elections are still held with paper ballots that political parties themselves produce. The national authorities are in charge of making sure that ballots from all the parties can be found at each polling station throughout the entire Election Day. However, one of the most popular “tricks” that is often denounced in Argentinean elections is that political parties steal other parties ballots from the voting booth so when citizens go to vote, they would not find that specific ballot. The official monitors are also in charge of making sure that this does not happen, but parties consider having their own monitors there essential to preventing their ballot from being stolen (or to try to steal ballots from other parties) (see also Zarazaga 2012).

While none of these practices is widespread enough to support an allegation of general fraud several incidents are reported during every election in Argentina, though

⁴⁹ The types of “tricks” that can be used when counting votes are diverse. One of them consists of dividing the blank or null votes (sometimes even the votes for minor parties) among the parties that have monitors present, which are usually the main parties. Monitors are also crucial in the event of a vote that might be counted as null (usually because there is something written on the ballot, or there are two votes for the same category or something else that might make the selection less clear). If the party that the vote might go for has no monitor present, the chances of counting that vote as null are higher. An experienced monitor would argue with the authorities to make it count for his/her party. Of course, the final decision on all these issues is always in the hands of the official monitor (the one assigned by the state) but it is not unusual to find inexperienced citizens as official monitors that do not know the rules well enough or are simply not willing to fight with partisan monitors over a vote. To get a better sense of the work of monitors, once I finished with the implementation of the survey, I volunteered as a partisan monitor for the Socialist Party (after trying unsuccessfully to become an official one) in the city of Rosario (Santa Fe) for the 2011 municipal and provincial elections. When the first vote that could or could not be counted as null came up, the highest official authority (*presidente de mesa*), who was a teacher in her early twenties, told me and the monitors from the other two parties to decide among ourselves what we wanted to do with that vote. See also Zarazaga (2012) for more examples of what monitors can do to affect electoral results.

they are never pervasive enough to change the result of a general election.⁵⁰ This might not be necessarily the case for primary elections, where the number of voters needed to win an election used to be a lot smaller and consequently the opportunities for changing the result by fraud considerably higher (De Luca et. al 2002, 2006; Zarazaga 2012).⁵¹ Finally, election monitors are also considered to be essential to monitor turnout-buying and vote-buying (see, for example, Brusco et al. 2004 and Szwarcberg 2009, 2012).

Table 3.9 presents the result of a list experiment where the treatment category is “Being an election monitor” in the last election.⁵² The average number of activities reported by the respondents in the control group with only four responses is 0.93, while the average in the treatment group where respondents had also the treatment item (election monitor) is 1.05. Thus, 12 percent of public employees reported having acted as election monitors (significant at the 95% confidence level) in the last election.⁵³

⁵⁰ For some examples of the complaints from political parties about these issues that were reported by the press after the 2007 and 2011 elections see: “Partidos opositores denuncian robo de boletas” (*El Litoral*, 10/28/07); “Wilma Ripoll también denuncia fraude y robo de boletas” (*Perfil*, 10/28/07); “Principales fuerzas de la oposición denunciaron robo de boletas” (*La Capital*, 10/28/07); “Una elección donde ganó la denuncia” (*La Nación*, 10/29/07); “La oposición denunció robos y faltantes de boletas” (*Clarín*, 08/14/11); “Para la oposición fue ‘sistematizado y organizado’ el robo de boletas” (*La Nación*, 08/15/11).

⁵¹ In contrast to general elections, very few people used to participate in internal party elections in Argentina. See Kemahlioglu (2006) for an analysis of the effect of internal party politics on the distribution of patronage jobs. Since the 2011 national election (after I finished the survey), however, primary elections are mandatory (both for parties and voters) for presidential and legislative positions. In August 2011 the first elections were held under this law and the turnout was above 70%.

⁵² The wording was: “I am going to hand you a card that mentions a number of activities. Please, I would like for you to tell me HOW MANY of those you did in the 2009 (2011) elections. Please, do not tell me which ones, just HOW MANY.” The baseline categories were: “Decide who to vote for at the last minute” (*Decidir el voto a último momento*), “Split the ticket” (*Cortar boleta*), “Abstain” (*No votar*), and “Cast a null vote” (*Anular el voto*). The treatment item was: “Be an election monitor” (*Ser fiscal de mesa*). Note that item two, three and four are impossible to perform at the same time. This was purposely done to minimize the chances of “ceiling effects”.

⁵³ Assessing the magnitude of these numbers can be difficult without some information about how many monitors are needed in an election. In Tigre, for example, 225,493 citizens were registered to vote in the 2009 election and there were 652 voting booths or “*mesas*” (Official data from the provincial electoral authorities, *Junta Electoral, Provincia de Buenos Aires*). Political parties usually assigned one monitor by booth plus a head monitor —“*fiscal general*”— by school, so 652 is a conservative estimate since it does not include the head

Table 3.9: Political services. List experiments estimates

	Electoral Campaigns	Rallies	Monitoring
Treatment	1.60 (0.04) N=586	1.41 (0.04) N=587	1.05 (0.03) N=585
Control	1.39 (0.04) N=584	1.19 (0.03) N=582	0.93 (0.02) N=587
Treatment effect	0.21** (0.06) N=1170	0.22** (0.05) N=1169	0.12** (0.04) N=1172

Note: List-experiment control and treatment values are the mean number of items identified by respondents (Rows 1 & 2). Rows 3 displays the average treatment effects (estimated proportion of the population reporting each activity). Standard errors in parentheses and number of subjects in each condition display below. Two-sample t-test with unequal variance. * & ** indicate significance at the 90 and 95 percent levels.

In sum, in this section I show that public sector employees do in fact provide different political services. The use of list experiments allowed me to provide an accurate estimate of the proportion of employees involved in each political service during the last election: 21 percent reported helping with the electoral campaign, 22 percent reported attending a political rally and 12 percent reported monitoring the election. However, according to the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in chapter 2, patronage jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters (because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political services in the future) and they are the ones that have more to fear from a change in administration. As a result, an empirical implication of the theory is that

monitor who is usually a relatively important broker. Recall that the total number of public employees in Tigre was 2406 (excluding elected officials and high rank position). Provided that the sample was properly drawn, we can infer that 289 (12% of 2406) of those 2406 employees served as election monitors in the 2009 election. Therefore almost half (44%, 289 out of 652) of the people needed to monitor the 2009 election were local low and mid level public sector employees, though only around 1% of Tigre's voters are public employees. Similar data for the other two municipalities was not available.

we should find more supporters involved in the provision of political services. The next section provides evidence that supporters are in fact more involved in the provision of the services study in this chapter, the next chapter provides similar evidence for the provision of favors, and chapter 5 tests the main empirical implication of my theory—supporters believe that their fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hired them.

3.4.2 Heterogeneous Treatment Effects

According to the argument presented in chapter 2, we should find a higher proportion of supporters providing political services. As explained, mayors provide patronage jobs to supporters because only supporters can credibly commit to provide political services in the future. As I show in chapter 5, employees ideologically closer to the mayor (those perceived as supporters) are the ones that have more to fear from a change in administration, which makes their original commitment to provide political services credible and works as a strong incentive for them to provide political services. Thus, one of the main empirical implications of the self-enforcing theory of patronage is that employees ideologically closer to the mayor (supporters) provide more political services. Moreover, two other characteristics of public employees could affect their provision of political services—the level of education and the type of contract. As explained in chapter 2, employees with lower levels of education and those without tenure have more to lose from a change in administration and therefore should also be more involved in the provision of political services.

To determine whether the provision of political services differs across different types of public sector employees, I estimate the difference-in-means across sub-groups. I have already shown in section 3.3 that public jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters. In this section, I show that supporters do in fact provide relatively more political services than non-supporters. Support for the mayor is measured with a question that asked respondents whether they identified themselves with the party of the mayor (*Mayor Party*).⁵⁴ Figure 3.1 displays the list-experiment estimates of the three political services by support for the mayor and Table 3.10 below presents the specific numeric values displayed in the figure.

⁵⁴ The exact wording of the question was: “Do you identify yourself with any party?” (*¿Se identifica Ud. con algún partido político?*), follow by: “With which party do you identify yourself?” (*¿Con cuál partido se identifica Ud.?*). These questions were included in the “sensitive” part of the questionnaire (Part B), that employees filled out by themselves.

Figure 3.1: List-experiment estimates of political services by support for the mayor

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control group (t-test with unequal variance). Black circles indicate the proportion of employees in the respective subgroup that performed the political service. Horizontal black bars represent 95% confidence intervals and vertical lines represent 90% confidence intervals. Dashed lines (red in the original) connecting the black circles represent the differences in proportion across supporters and non-supporters; numeric values of these differences display above those lines. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

In line with expectations, Figure 3.1 shows that in all three cases public sector employees who are ideologically closer to the mayor (supporters) provide more political services than those that did not identify themselves with the party of the mayor. Among the subgroup of

employees that reported identifying themselves with the party of the current mayor, the proportion of those helping with campaigns is 34 percent, while the proportion for those that did not identify with the party of the mayor is 16 percent. The 18 points difference between both groups is significant at the 90 percent level. We find a similar pattern for the other two political services. Among supporters of the party of the mayor, 28 percent reported attending rallies, while among non-supporters the proportion drops to 20 (although the 8 points difference is non-significant). Finally, among self-reported supporters, 27 percent were election monitors in the last election, while among non-supporters we find a proportion that is not significantly different from zero. The difference between the proportion of supporters and non-supporters that reported being election monitors in the previous election is a significant (at the 95% level) 21 percentage points.

As explained in chapter 2, there are two other characteristics that can also condition the provision of political services: the type of contract and the level of education. I expect employees without a tenure contract to be more involved in political services than those who enjoy tenure rights (*Tenure, No Tenure*). From the point of view of the theory developed in chapter 2, employees without tenure have more to lose with a change in the administration (they can legally be fired), which works as a strong incentive to provide political services to keep the mayor in power. Moreover, as an empirical fact, new employees are regularly hired under temporary contracts and only gain tenure after some time, so employees hired more recently (most probably under the current administration) are both more likely to be supporters and to be on temporary contracts.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ In fact, the correlation between being hired by the current administration and having a tenure contract is negative 0.62.

Finally, the sensitivity of public employees to patronage contracts also depends on the employees' skill and labor market expectations (Calvo and Murillo 2004; Robinson and Verdier 2002; Medina and Stokes 2002, 2007). Less educated workers have more to fear from losing their jobs, so it is also expected that they will be more willing to comply with their part of the patronage contract and provide the expected political services. I then expect to find heterogeneous effects across different levels of education. To explore this possibility I study the treatment effect across employees with a college degree (*College*) and those without a college degree (*No College*). Table 3.10 displays the list experiment estimates by these subgroups for the three political services, in addition to the numeric values displayed in the figure above for *Mayor Party*.

Table 3.10: Political services list-experiment estimates conditional on characteristics of the respondent

		Political Campaigns	Political Rallies	Election monitors
Mayor Party Supporter	Yes	0.34*** (0.08) N=379	0.28** (0.11) N=380	0.27*** (0.08) N=381
		0.16*** (0.06) N=790	0.20*** (0.06) N=790	0.06 (0.05) N=791
		0.18* (0.10) N=1169	0.08 (0.13) N=1170	0.21** (0.09) N=1172
	No	0.26*** (0.07) N=578	0.23*** (0.08) N=577	0.02 (0.06) N=579
		0.18*** (0.07) N=590	0.20** (0.08) N=592	0.23*** (0.06) N=592
		0.08 (0.10) N=1168	0.02 (0.11) N=1169	0.21** (0.09) N=1171
College	Yes	0.14 (0.09) N=265	0.17 (0.11) N=265	0.14 (0.09) N=265
		0.24*** (0.06) N=901	0.22*** (0.07) N=902	0.12** (0.05) N=904
		0.10 (0.10) N=1166	0.05 (0.13) N=1166	0.02 (0.10) N=1169
	No	0.14 (0.09) N=265	0.17 (0.11) N=265	0.14 (0.09) N=265
		0.24*** (0.06) N=901	0.22*** (0.07) N=902	0.12** (0.05) N=904
		0.10 (0.10) N=1166	0.05 (0.13) N=1166	0.02 (0.10) N=1169

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control groups. Standard errors in parentheses calculated with unequal variance; *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.

The results for the proportion of employees providing political services among those who enjoy tenure rights and those who do not enjoy those rights is not consistent across services. Contrary to expectations, there seem to be a higher proportion of tenured

employees helping with campaigns and attending rallies (although the difference to non-tenured employees is non-significant), while non-tenured employees are more involved in monitoring elections. Note, however, that the theory developed in chapter 2 posits that the main explanatory variable for the provision of political services is support for the mayor. Supporters are more involved in the provision of political services because they have more to lose from a change in administration—supporters without tenure rights could lose their jobs while supporters with tenure rights are only subjected to negative changes in their working conditions. Non-supporters, with or without tenure rights, have nothing to fear from a new government. The fact that the type of contract is not in itself a good predictor of the provision of services can be interpreted as evidence that the reason why employees comply with their side of agreement is not simple fear of losing their jobs (as the theory of monitoring and punishment predicts) but fear of losing their jobs (or negative changes in working conditions) with a change in administration. I will come back to this point in chapter 5.

In relation to education, the data does not show a clear pattern either. Less educated employees (without a college degree) seem to be more involved with attending rallies and helping with the campaign than more educated employees but the difference between both sub-groups is non-significant. For monitoring elections, the proportion of more educated employees that provide this service is slightly higher than the proportion of less educated employees,⁵⁶ but the estimate is not significant and the difference between both sub-groups is small and non-significant either. As in the case of the type of contract, the self-

⁵⁶ The slightly different results for monitoring elections and the other two activities in relation to education is not surprising considering that monitoring elections is an activity that requires more sophisticated skills than the other two.

enforcing theory of patronage predicts a conditional effect of education on the provision of services. As explained, less educated employees value their jobs more than more educated employees, but only supporters fear negative changes with a new administration. Non-supporters, with or without a college degree have nothing to fear from a new administration.

More precisely then, the theory developed in chapter 2 predicts a conditional effect of the type of contract and education on the provision of services. Among supporters, those without tenure contracts and less education have more to fear from a new administration and consequently should be more involved in the provision of services. To get a handle on this issue, table 3.11 below reproduce the list-experiments estimates conditional on being a supporter and includes controls for the type of contract and level of education.⁵⁷ If the self-enforcing theory of patronage is right and type of contract and education have a conditional effect on the provision of political services, we should see that the differences in means between supporters and non-supporters becomes bigger once we controlled for these two additional characteristics.

⁵⁷ An alternative strategy would have been to divide the data into more subgroups, creating subgroups of supporters with and without a college degree and supporters with and without tenure rights. The problem with this strategy is that the precision of the list experiment estimate depends on the number of subjects in each particular group so the smaller the subgroup, the bigger the uncertainty surrounding each subgroup. For this reason, I opted to include education and tenure as controls for estimating the difference between supporters and non-supporters of the mayor, instead of creating more (smaller) subgroups.

Table 3.11: Difference in means between supporters and non-supporters

	Difference in means across supporters and non-supporters		
Political Campaigns	0.18* (0.10) N=1169	0.20** (0.10) N=1165	0.21** (0.10) N=1165
Political Rallies	0.08 (0.13) N=1170	0.10 (0.13) N=1166	0.11 (0.13) N=1166
Election Monitors	0.21** (0.09) N=1172	0.20** (0.09) N=1168	0.20** (0.09) N=1168
Controls for College & Tenure	NO	YES	YES
Municipal Dummies	NO	NO	YES

Note: Differences in means across supporters and non-supporters for the three political services (Column 1). Column 2 includes controls for education (College) and type of contract (Tenure); Column 3 also includes municipal dummies. Standard errors in parentheses calculated with unequal variance; *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.

Indeed, table 3.11 shows that controlling for education and tenure rights slightly increases the difference in means between supporters and non-supporters for attending rallies and helping with the campaign. For monitoring elections, the difference is reduced in one percentage point. Last column also includes controls for municipalities, which only marginally affects the magnitude of the differences.

In sum, the empirics so far show that—depending on the type of political service—between 12 and 22 percent of public sector employees are involved in the provision of the political services described here. Moreover, I show that the proportion of employees providing these services is consistently higher among supporters (those that identify themselves with the party of the mayor) than non-supporters. Controlling for type of contract and education—the other two characteristics that I expected to affect the

provision of services— slightly increases the differences between supporters and non-supporters.

3.5 Robustness Tests

The results of this chapter strongly depend on the successful implementation of the list experiment design. To be sure, in all cases survey results depend on a successful implementation of the research design protocol, but in the case of list experiments the bar is set a little higher. As with any other experiment, it is possible to have problems of non-compliance, in which respondents assigned to treatment do not actually receive the treatment. The results presented here are in fact what are called intention-to-treat effects (ITT), since they compare the responses of individuals assigned to treatment and control. But it is possible that some individuals assigned to treatment (in this case, the question that includes the sensitive item among the other items on the list) did not actually receive the treatment. This could happen for a number of reasons: it might be that enumerators failed to provide clear instructions or distributed the wrong cards, or it might be that respondents did not pay attention to the instructions or failed to read carefully the cards with the listed items that they were handed. It is also crucial that the respondents understand that the technique guarantees the anonymity of their responses. If respondents do not fully understand that their answers were anonymous, the result could be inaccurate

responses or refusals and, as a consequence, a less valid estimate of the frequency of the activity that the list experiment intend to estimate.⁵⁸

One way to deal with the problem of potential non-compliance is to calculate the average treatment effect on the treated (ATT)— the effect of the treatment on those who actually *received* the treatment—, instead of the intention to treat effects (ITT). To try to get a measure of compliance, enumerators were instructed to record the duration of each interview. If the interviews were too short, it is possible that enumerators were not very careful or respondents were in a hurry and were not paying much attention to the questions, instructions, and answers they were providing, making it more likely that they did not actually receive the treatment. Thus one way to measure compliance is to exclude those respondents that took less than 15 minutes to answer the survey (recall that the survey lasted, on average, 24 minutes). Table 3.12 replicates the results of the analysis reported in Table 3.10 (ITT) for the main results—namely, *Mayor Party*— only for those respondents that took 15 minutes or more to answer the survey (ATT).⁵⁹ The results of both analyses are very similar, but the differences between supporters and non-supporters are slightly bigger when restricting the sample to only those that took more than 15 minutes to complete the survey.

⁵⁸ Note that if respondents did not understand or did not believe in the anonymity of the technique they would either refuse to answer or give a negative answer (in this case, an unreal “0”). The number of refusals for the list experiments was very low (15, 14, and 12 respondents for each of the list experiments replied DN/NA) and those were excluded from the list experiment estimates. On the other hand, “0” responses would not affect the estimation if they were randomly distributed across treatment and control but will bias the estimation against the results if more respondents in the treatment replied “0” because they saw the sensitive item on the list. If this were the case, the list experiment estimates presented here are conservative estimates.

⁵⁹ Among the 1184 respondents, 85 took less than 15 minutes to answer the survey and time was not reported for 27 surveys, thus the results in Table 3.11 exclude 112 responses.

Table 3.12: Political services list experiment estimates conditional on characteristics of the respondent, excluding short surveys

		Political Campaigns	Political Rallies	Election Monitors
Whole sample		0.22*** (0.05) N=1057	0.20*** (0.06) N=1059	0.12** (0.05) N=1060
Mayor Party	Yes	0.37*** (0.09) N=337	0.29** (0.12) N=338	0.25*** (0.08) N=339
		0.16*** (0.06) N=720	0.18*** (0.06) N=721	0.06 (0.05) N=721
		0.21* (0.11) N=1057	0.11 (0.13) N=1059	0.21* (0.11) N=1057
	No			

Note: Average treatment effects on the treated (ATT) calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control groups (excluding “non-compliers”, those who spent less than 15 minutes in completing the survey). Standard errors in parentheses calculated with unequal variance; *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01

Finally, the limited geographic scope of the project—only three municipalities in one country— might raise concerns about whether these results could apply to other settings. However, recall that the municipalities chosen for the project were very different both politically and economically, making it more likely that a theory that applies to all three municipalities would also apply to other settings. Table 3.13 presents once again the main results by municipality.

Table 3.13: Political services list experiment estimates conditional on characteristics of the respondent, by municipality

			Political	Political	Election
SALTA	Whole sample		0.29*** (0.08) N=384	0.23** (0.11) N=385	0.10 (0.07) N=384
	Mayor Party	Yes	0.30** (0.12) N=203	0.23 (0.16) N=204	0.09 (0.09) N=203
		No	0.30*** (0.11) N=181	0.28** (0.14) N=181	0.12 (0.10) N=181
	Difference		0.01 (0.16) N=384	0.05 (0.21) N=385	0.03 (0.13) N=384
	Whole sample		0.24*** (0.09) N=392	0.21** (0.08) N=391	0.14* (0.08) N=395
	Mayor Party	Yes	0.40** (0.19) N=65	0.32 (0.25) N=65	0.33 (0.22) N=66
		No	0.21** (0.10) N=327	0.19** (0.09) N=326	0.10 (0.09) N=329
Difference		0.19 (0.21) N=392	0.13 (0.26) N=391	0.23 (0.23) N=395	
TIGRE	Whole sample		0.13* (0.07) N=393	0.21** (0.09) N=394	0.14* (0.07) N=393
	Mayor Party	Yes	0.40*** (0.14) N=111	0.36* (0.20) N=111	0.55*** (0.14) N=112
		No	0.01 (0.08) N=282	0.13 (0.08) N=283	0.03 (0.08) N=281
	Difference		0.38** (0.16) N=393	0.23 (0.21) N=394	0.58*** (0.16) N=393

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between treatment and control groups. Standard errors in parentheses calculated with unequal variance; *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01

In general, results are similar to the ones reported above. Recall, however, that the statistical significance of the estimates of the list experiment depends on the size of each of the sub-groups so in some cases the list experiment estimates are non-significant. Moreover, the use of list experiments involves a trade-off between bias and efficiency so the size of the groups needed to be able to obtain a significant estimate is higher than it would have been with a direct question. List experiments reduce bias by minimizing the incentives for respondents to lie, but do so at the cost of efficiency (the standard errors around the list experiment estimates are larger than they would have been with a direct question with no response bias) (Blair and Imai 2012; Corstange 2009).

First, it is important to note that all three activities are conducted in the three municipalities included in the analysis. With the exception of electoral monitoring in Salta, it was possible to obtain significant estimates in all cases, showing that in all three municipalities public sector employees are involved in the provision of political services.⁶⁰ In the cases of Santa Fe and Tigre, supporters reported providing more political services than non-supporters for each of the three political services studied here. The proportion estimated for each political activity as well as the difference in the provision of services reported by supporters and non-supporters are not always significant, but the proportion of supporters involved in political services was consistently higher than the proportion of

⁶⁰ The fact that the estimate for electoral monitoring in Salta was not significant should not be interpreted as a sign that this activity is not important in Salta elections or that public employees are not involved. In Salta, besides partisan monitors, parties allocated to schools on Election Day what they called “Lawyer by School” (*Abogado por Escuela*). These are lawyers the party recruits to be present on election day in order to resolve any dispute. They have no legal authority and there is no legislation that regulates their role at the voting place. This was confirmed in many interviews with employees that were in charge of this activity in previous elections. These lawyers do not call themselves partisan monitors, although their role on the day of the election is very similar. This might have affected the estimates of the proportion of partisan monitors. Since parties count on the presence of these lawyers at each voting place, it is also possible that parties are less concerned with the deployment of partisan monitors and their presence is less relevant than in other municipalities.

non-supporters involved. In the case of Santa Fe, many of the estimates are non-significant because in this province the group of supporters is smaller than in the other municipalities, yielding bigger standard errors (only 66 respondents identified themselves with the party of the mayor).

In the case of Salta, there are no consistent differences in the proportion of supporters and non- supporters providing services. In fact, in the case of attendance to rallies, it seems that non-supporters reported higher participation (although the difference is not significant). This surprising result might be explained by the fact that Salta is governed by a coalition between two parties (the Peronist and the PRS) so supporting the party of the mayor and supporting the mayor (a Peronist) are not necessarily the same thing, at least for PRS supporters. Indeed, using a different measure of support for the mayor shows that supporters do generally provide more services than non-supporters. In particular, among those that reported having voted for the mayor in the last election, 29 percent reported helping with the electoral campaign, 22 percent reported attending rallies, and 13 percent reported monitoring elections (compare to 19, 10, and 8 percent, respectively, for non-supporters).

In sum, even with the mentioned caveats, the results are broadly consistent with the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in chapter 2 across the three municipalities. The diversity of municipalities surveyed — a municipality from the poorer north mainly dominated by the Peronist party (Salta), a municipality from the relatively richer and more competitive center (Santa Fe), and one from the *Conurbano Bonaerense* (Tigre) — suggests that the findings are more likely to be generalizable to other cases. I will come back to this point in the conclusion.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter presents the first (to the best of my knowledge) systematic evidence of the type and extent of political services that public sector employees provide to the mayor. This evidence strongly supports the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in chapter 2. First, I show that most jobs are distributed through informal channels. Second, I use an instrumental variable design to show that public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters. Third, I provide empirical evidence that, in the exchange of public sector jobs for political support, public sector employees provide a number of political services that go far beyond their electoral loyalty. They attend political rallies, help with electoral campaigns, and monitor elections. Using different techniques to obtain truthful responses and improve response rates, I show that a considerable proportion of employees, ranging from 12 to 22 percent, get involved in one or more of these activities during elections. Moreover, and consistent with the theory developed in chapter 2, I show that supporters of the mayor are more involved in the provision of these services.

In the next chapter (chapter 4) I focus on an activity that public employees provide in between elections as well—namely, providing favors. Chapter 5 focuses on understanding *why* public employees provide these services before, during, and after elections. As explained in chapter 2, public sector jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters because politicians use the political preferences of citizens at the time of hiring as a “proxy” for their willingness to provide political services. However, a citizen—even a supporter—who receives a job with the implicit or explicit understanding that she will return the favor by providing political services can easily renege on the contract after

getting the job. In chapter 5, and departing from existing explanations, I show that public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage contract because they fully understand that their jobs are tied to the political success of the mayor. Since the interests of the mayor and the interests of the public employees are the same—they both want the mayor to stay in office— and the provision of political services is a contribution in that direction, the commitment problem associated with patronage contracts simply disappears.

Chapter 4

Making it Personal. Patronage, Favors, and the Personalization of Public Administration

“Favoritism animates machine politics, favoritism not just in filling pick-and-shovel jobs, but in a vast array of public decisions.” (Wolfinger 1972, 389)

“An able administrator can thus transform a routine bureaucratic procedure into a personal favor, just as the policeman can exploit the slightest infraction of the law, real or imaginary, to create a network of personal obligations...” (Chubb 1981, 120)

“Insofar as politicians can design the rules by which bureaucratic decisions are made, they can also (at least indirectly) influence the set of citizens that bring demands or complaints before the bureaucracy for redress. If representation before the bureaucracy has distributional consequences, we would expect politicians to design the rules, and provide extra-governmental means (e.g., party organizations) to promote access to decision making on the part of their supporters.” (Cox and McCubbins 1986, 385)

In the previous chapter, I used a number of list experiments to estimate the proportion of public sector employees that were involved in the provision of political services during elections—namely, helping with electoral campaigns, attending rallies, and monitoring elections. Using this technique that provides respondents with full anonymity, I showed

that between 12 and 22 percent of the employees provided some type of political service around the time of the election. However, one of the main advantages that incumbents enjoy by using public sector employees as political workers is that the patronage agreement does not end with the election. Patronage employees continue to provide political services once elections are over. In this section, I focus on one of the activities that patronage employees perform in between elections—the provision of favors.

In general, the literature on clientelism refers to favors or gifts (or goods) as general terms to denote the types of “things” that are exchanged in clientelistic relationships. Many surveys on clientelism use a question that asks respondents whether they have received a “gift or a favor” from a broker or political activist during the last election (see, for example, Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012). Similarly, the Latin American Public Opinion Project (Lapop), the biggest ongoing survey on the Americas, includes a question that asks whether the respondent has been offered “a favor, food or some other thing or benefit”.¹ But favors and material benefits are not equivalent, especially when the actors granting these favors are public employees or other agents with access to public employees and state resources. In these cases, favors are basically “free” in the sense that public employees during working hours, on a salary paid by the state, while technically doing their regular jobs, can provide favors to voters. It does not even need to be a *real* favor—it just need to be framed as one. Often, in ways that I will describe below, public employees can turn a regular administrative task into a personal favor. When normal administration becomes a constant personalization of even the most routine tasks, favors become the normal way of dealing

¹Others have opted to ask only about material benefits, without referring to favors or services (Calvo and Murillo forthcoming 2013; Finan and Schecheter 2012).

with citizens (a.k.a. voters)²—and the personalization of the public administration can be easily used for political gain.

In fact, the provision of favors by state employees can be a very effective and extremely cheap (at least, from the point of view of the politician) way of obtaining and maintaining votes. The widespread use of discretion—or, often more accurately, *perceived* discretion—in the everyday tasks of public sector employees and the personalization of things that need to get solved, help to give voters the impression that personal relations are key for getting things done at the City Hall, provincial or national administrations. Once established, these personal connections work as a strong incentive to try to keep things as they are. If a citizen has established a personal connection with someone in the public sector (or with regular access to it) that provides help when needed, why would she vote for another party? Similar to what I argued in chapter 2 for public employees under patronage contracts, citizens might have a strong incentive to want to maintain the *status quo* by keeping the incumbent in office and the connection to the state intact. This is not because citizens are afraid of losing some benefit or access to the state if the bureaucrat found out that they voted against the incumbent and nor because of feelings of reciprocity, but because self-interested voters that live in clientelistic environments perfectly understand the benefits of maintaining their personal connections to the public administration.

In this chapter I draw on original survey and survey experiment data that I collected across public sectors in three Argentinean municipalities (Salta, Santa Fe and Tigre) as well

²I use the terms voters and citizens interchangeable in this section. Voting is mandatory in Argentina from age 18 to age 65 (although sanctions for not voting are very rare) and elections usually have about 70 or 80 percent of turnout.

as on interviews and informal conversations with public employees, brokers and politicians to study the provision of favors by public officials.³ Based on this evidence, I show that a) public employees grant favors very often, b) supporters grant more favors than non-supporters, c) supporters get asked to grant favors more often, and d) supporters tend to be more “helpful.” In contrast to most of the existing literature on vote buying, this chapter presents the point of view of the favor provider (in this case, the public sector employee) instead of the favor receiver (the citizen). Of course, this choice has its own limitations, probably the main one is the fact that I have no direct evidence about the electoral effectiveness of these favors—whether receiving a favor actually affects the way people vote.

The reminder of this chapter is organized as follows. In the next section, I draw on interviews and informal conversations carried out with brokers, public employees and politicians, as well as on examples from the existing literature to illustrate the types of favors that are provided and to give a sense of how widespread the phenomenon is. In section two, I discuss the way patronage employees (or intermediaries) manage to personally claim credit for these favors. In section three, I use the list experiment technique described in chapter 3 to estimate the proportion of employees that grant favors in the municipalities studied. Section four studies the types of employees that are more often involved in this political service. As predicted by the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in Chapter 2 and in line with the results on political services provided during

³ Most of the interviews and conversations were conducted in Salta, Santa Fe and Tigre during 2010/11, but some interviews were also conducted during preliminary fieldwork in 2009 in *Conurbano Bonaerense* (Province of Buenos Aires). See chapter 3 and Appendix A for a full description of the survey and the logic for the selection of the municipalities.

elections (Chapter 3), I show that supporters are disproportionately more involved in the provision of favors. Section five provides evidence that supporters get asked more frequently to grant favors than non-supporters. Section six shows that supporters and non-supporters respond differently when asked to grant a favor. The last section concludes.

4.1 Granting Favors

The literature on pork-barrel politics provides considerable evidence that rules about the distribution of material benefits are manipulated for political gain by politicians and state officials from all over the world. In Argentina, Giraudy (2007), Lodola (2005), Nazareno et al. (2006), and Weitz-Shapiro (2006) provide evidence of significant discretion in the distribution of a workfare program for the unemployed (*Plan Trabajar*). In Mexico, Magaloni (2006) finds that the PRI favored moderately competitive districts with social programs while punishing those controlled by the opposition. In Peru, Schady (2000) argues that Fujimori's government favored marginal districts in the distribution of anti-poverty programs. In India, Vaishnav and Sircar (2012) find evidence of electoral bias in the distribution of public school building funds across constituencies in the southern state of Tamil Nadu; while Cole (2009) finds electoral bias across administrative districts on agricultural credits lent by government-owned banks. In Zambia, Baldwin (forthcoming) finds evidence that in chiefdoms where the chief has a good relationship with the Member of Parliament, more classrooms get constructed.

This discretion in the administration of government-funded programs (often anti-poverty and conditional cash transfer programs, targeted food assistance, or

unemployment benefits) can also be found at the individual level. In places with weak institutions like Argentina, public officials (elected and unelected) usually have considerable discretion on how and when to enforce the rules.⁴ In this situation, for many people—especially the poor— it is crucial to have regular access to someone at the government or to someone with access to government officials who can provide solutions to specific problems when needed. Political bias then can be found both at the aggregate level—in the distribution of resources across regions or groups— and at the individual level, as I do in this dissertation. For instance, Weitz-Shapiro (2008a, 2012) shows that Argentinean mayors enjoy significant power to include or exclude specific people from the list of possible beneficiaries of a food assistance program. In her study of machine politics in Argentina, Szwarcberg (2009, 51) also describes situations in which problems are solved (and exceptions made) at the individual level: “Anyone visiting local legislative offices on any business day will notice people waiting to talk with a councilor in the hopes that he or she can help solve a personal problem.” A similar scenario is described by Chubb (1981, 120) in the city of Palermo where “the party intervenes in the processes of ordinary administration... all relationships are highly personalized and politicized, even those regarding the most trivial administrative procedures.” Auyero (2000) also provides various examples of the kind of problems that poor people get solved through the problem-solving network of the governing Peronist Party in a poor municipality in Argentina.

⁴For Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007b, 12), this is a situation that some politicians find very convenient: “Clientelistic politicians (...) prefer rules and regulations for the authoritative of costs and benefits that leave the maximum political discretion to the implementation face, i.e., has as few precise rules of disbursement and entitlement as possible. Politicians then may cast their net narrowly and aim at identifying particular individuals and small groups whose support can be obtained by material inducements tailored to their personal needs and serviced by political appointees in public bureaucracies who do the governing parties’ bidding”. Golden (2003) makes a similar argument about Italian public administration.

The poor are both most vulnerable to the arbitrariness of the state and most in need of its protection. In the words of Auyero (2012, 118):

“Economic globalization and neoliberal hegemony notwithstanding, the state—downsized, decentralized and/or ‘hollowed out’—still is a key actor in the lives of the destitute. Even when badly functioning and lacking basic resources, the Argentine state still grants access to citizenship and provides (limited but vital) welfare benefits. It is, in other words, deeply ‘implicated in the minute texture of everyday life’ of the poor”

In a detailed ethnography of poor people waiting in a welfare office, Auyero (2011) describes the “uncertainty and arbitrariness in waiting” that those in need of assistance are exposed to. Weitz-Shapiro (2008a) also describes Argentinean local welfare offices full of people waiting to talk to the person in charge (often the mayor), while Szwarcberg (2009) describes a similar scenario outside councilmen offices in a number of Argentinean municipalities. It is not just the macro-level functioning of the state, but often the daily encounters with public officials that are essential to poor people’s lives.

However, the need for favors from government officials—of someone that helps when dealing with the state— is certainly not restricted to the poor. For instance, Szwarcberg (2009, 144) cites an owner of a *remisería* (taxi service) in the *Conurbano Bonaerense*: “if local politicians want to punish a businessmen they simply enforce existing local regulations.”⁵ Similar to the situation of the City of Palermo described by Chubb

⁵ In the district where this interview took place (Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires province) *remiserías* are required by law to have two separate bathrooms for women and men, but most of these places consist of a very small

(1981, 119) where “there are literally thousands of ways in which a vigilant police officer can either perform a favor or make life miserable for a shopkeeper or a street vendor.” And, of course, the types of favors provided not by mid and low-level positions in the bureaucracy—the focus of this dissertation—, but by political appointees in high-level positions are very rarely about the poor. Government activities such as business and market regulations, subsidies, loans, and procurement contracts for government infrastructure are all activities that permit considerable discretion and case-by-case targeting (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007b). More than forty years ago, Wolfinger explained this clearly:

“(T)here is no reason why the advantages of political influence appeal only to the poor. In places where the political culture supports expectations that official discretion will be exercised in accordance with political considerations, the constituency for machine politics extends across the socio-economic spectrum. People whose interests are affected by governmental decisions can include those who want to sell to the government, as well as those whose economic and social activities may be subject to public regulation.” (Wolfinger 1972, 389)

Moreover, the diversion of state funds for political activities or the use of public property for such activities also requires supporters in key administrative positions willing to collaborate. Having supporters appointed to relevant positions makes it easier for parties and politicians to get public employees to do them favors or make exceptions of this kind.

office and almost always the drivers are all men. According to the owner: “The rule is just made to pay a bribe...they know you cannot afford a place with two bathrooms...” (Szwarcberg 2009, 145.)

In this dissertation, however, I focus on the favors that low and mid-level bureaucrats grant to citizens and those who often act on their behalf (brokers). Even when restricting the analysis to employees at low and middle positions, the type of favors that public employees provide to others is extremely diverse. Some of the employees interviewed referred, for instance, to the inclusion on the list of beneficiaries to welfare benefits. One public employee from La Matanza (Buenos Aires) explained to me that the way they found most of the cases of people in need is through their network of activists: “the majority are activists (*militantes*), the ones that come to me with the names of the people that need help... many of them [the beneficiaries] are politically active (*participan políticamente*) and I know them personally”.⁶ But public employees do a lot more than distribute or manipulate the distribution of material benefits. Since most of the literature has been focusing on the exchange of votes for benefits (vote-buying), the manipulation of public policies that distribute material benefits has gotten a lot of attention, but public employees—both brokers and less important political workers— provide a wide range of different favors beyond interfering with the distribution of benefits.

The day I interviewed the employee mentioned above, for instance, he was about to meet with someone (after my interview) who was trying to organize an art exhibition and wanted to ask for his help on organizing the event. As he pointed out, not all favors are about “issues of extreme need and urgency, of food,” instead “to the extent that you can,

⁶ Personal Interview, La Matanza, August 10 2009. Recall also the conversation reproduced at the beginning of this dissertation, in which two public employees (both important brokers) were discussing the distribution of welfare benefits among people they knew. Although there is plenty of evidence (both in the scholarly literature and on journalists accounts) of bias in the distribution of material benefits in Argentina, it is extremely rare to find anti-poverty benefits distribute to the non-poor. In most cases, it is not about distributing benefits to those that do not qualify to get the benefit, but about which ones among those that do *qualify* receive it (or receive it sooner).

you help with a bunch of [different] things.”⁷ Another public employee from the province of Buenos Aires mentioned other examples:

“From a person that does not want to wait in line to get his driver’s license and he calls us and says: ‘is there any way that I can get the license without having to wait in line?’... To someone that has a problem because his father felt and broke his leg and need to go to the hospital, and instead of calling the hospital directly, he calls us for us to send his father to the hospital... To a group of young people that calls me because they want to meet with me to organize a party at the university...”⁸

Note that in many of the favors mentioned here, more than one person needs to be involved. Less influential public employees could probably only get certain types of favors done, usually the ones that are closer to her area of work. But brokers—often patronage employees themselves—can provide favors on such a variety of areas because they have connections to other patronage employees at the municipality that help him help others. Another example illustrates this point. One of the patronage employees interviewed was explaining to me the kind of things he is often asked to do:

*“Imagine a guy whose father died and who does not have a place to hold a wake (...) But he knows that there is a broker (“referente”) who is a **friend** of the Secretary of Social Welfare at the Municipality, also in charge of the Cemetery (...) So you pick up the phone and in five minutes you are saying: ‘go see Juan, who is the director of the cemetery, **he** will give you a service, a*

⁷ Personal Interview, La Matanza, August 10 2009.

⁸ Personal Interview, La Plata, August 5 2009.

*coffin, a wreath, six hours in a place to hold a wake...”*⁹
(emphasis added)

Every time that a broker gets something done for someone, there are in fact other public employees involved (in this example, the director of the cemetery) in making these things happened. So even in the cases in which brokers themselves do not hold public sector jobs, they use their connections with patronage employees to get things done.¹⁰ Over and over, brokers refer to picking up the phone to solve things and the person on the other side of the phone is almost always a public official. When the favor is very important, this public official is an elected official or someone that works in close relation with the mayor or a councilman (high rank officials). When the favor is “small”, like the ones I study in this dissertation, often the person that facilitates the resolution of the problem is a low or mid-level public employee.

4.2 Making it Personal

In the previous section, I described some of the existing evidence about how politicians and public officials enjoy significant discretion to manipulate public programs for political gain. Frequently, however, patronage employees do not manipulate the rules; do not provide any *real* favor. A normal administrative task can be perceived as a personal favor if the

⁹ Name was changed to ensure anonymity. The person he named was the actual director of the municipal cemetery. Personal Interview, La Plata, August 5 2009.

¹⁰ Sometimes, brokers are public employees at the national or provincial level but they are politically active at the local level. In fact, the broker cited is a provincial public employee from Buenos Aires (used to be a municipal employee) who continues to be an important broker at the local level. In these cases, connections with local patronage employees are fundamental to be able to “deliver” at the local level.

patronage employee manages to personally claim credit for it—if she can create the *image* of helping.¹¹ Without breaking any rules, maybe just making an exception, or providing some information that the citizen does not have, simply doing their jobs, or helping making things go faster, patronage employees can give the impression that *they* are the reason things went through. If they manage to successfully create the perception that they are personally responsible—and not the municipality as an institution— for the task accomplished, they can claim credit for it. Patronage employees—especially the most active ones, the brokers—understand this logic perfectly. A situation that has been described by the machine politics literature in the US more than fifty years ago:

“Nowadays there is little that the machine can do for such people [the poor] except to give them information about where to go and whom to see in the city bureaucracy and (what is probably more important, despite its illusionary character) to give them the feeling that they have a friend and protector. The ward leader cannot arrange to have welfare payments made to someone not entitled to them; he can, however, tell a needy person who is entitled to payments how to apply for them. In doing so, he may, of course, manage to leave the impression that if he had not made a telephone call and used “his” influence as a “friend” the payments would never have been made.” (Bandfield and Wilson 1963, 121-122)

¹¹Weitz-Shapiro (Chapter 2, 2008a) makes a similar argument about how mayors can create an image of being able to exercise discretion in the distribution of benefits to be able to enforce the clientelistic exchange. The difference between her argument and mine is that, for her, this personalization of the distribution of a food program is done in order to convince voters that the politician is responsible for program distribution and that he can actually *punish* defectors (those who do not vote as expected) by withdrawing the benefits. My argument is different. Similar to what I argue about public employees in chapter 2, I argue here that voters fully understand the benefits of the personal connection. Once voters are able to get favors from public employees (or some intermediary between them and public employees), there is a huge incentive to vote to keep the incumbent in power in order to increase the chances of the public employee keeping her job. Citizens with personal connections with the administration understand the benefits of voting to maintain the *status quo*.

Patronage employees are fully aware of the importance of these personal connections that tend to facilitate credit claiming. For instance, in discussing the difference between collecting food assistance with an ATM card and in a bag from the hands of the person in charge of distribution, a public employee (and local broker) put it clearly: "... it is not the same thing because the ATM card does not listen to you, does not speak to you, does not understand you (*no te contiene*), does not ask you how you are doing...".¹² In contrast, another public employee interviewed claimed to be happy with the new system of ATM cards because that would actually reduce poor people's "broker dependence" (*dependencia punteril*). To communicate this change, he was *personally* calling all the beneficiaries he knew and, in those cases he didn't know the beneficiary personally, he was calling the activist that referred the beneficiaries.¹³

There is in fact some evidence in the literature that the efforts of brokers and activists to create or reinforce the personal connection work. A passage from Auyero's well-known ethnography on the Peronist network in a slum in Argentina illustrates this point:

"The most important point of agreement among slum-dwellers about the brokers is that they are personally responsible for the distribution of things. The organization that grants a pension, offers a job, or gives out medicine or a food package is not the local, provincial, or national government, but Matilde or Juancito. They are the ones who really care, who feel for them, who are their friends and who—as good friends—are always available. Hundreds of pages of interview transcripts and field- notes

¹² Personal Interview, La Plata, August 5 2009.

¹³ Personal Interview, La Matanza, August 10 2009.

*testify to one simple—although essential—fact: **it is not the state that is perceived as the distributing agency; it is Matilde or Juancito.***” (Auyero 1999, 314, emphasis added)

Note that in this example, both Matilde and Juancito are brokers—Matilde is also a councilwoman and Juancito is a local public employee. When things get solved, Matilde or Juancito are the ones that get credit, but other public officials are involved in getting these things done. In other words, brokers—sometimes, public employees themselves—often act as intermediaries between voters and other patronage employees. In this role, they manage to claim personal credit for things that are in fact provided by the public administration with state resources.

4.3 Granting Favors. List-Experiment Estimates

In this section, I use a list experiment (the method is described fully in Chapter 3) to study the extent to which public employees provide favors to others. Table 4.1 presents the results of a list experiment in which the treatment category is to help someone at the City Hall in the previous week.¹⁴ Note that the question asks about helping “someone” so it

¹⁴ The wording was: “Now I am going to hand you a card that mentions a number of activities. Please, I would like for you to tell me HOW MANY of those you did in the last week. Please, do not tell me which ones, just HOW MANY.” The baseline categories were: “Talk about politics with someone” (*Hablar de política con alguien*), “Try to convince someone about the strengths and weaknesses of some politician” (*Tratar de convencer a alguien sobre las fortalezas y debilidades de algún político*), “Try to convince someone about the strengths and weaknesses of some policy” (*Tratar de convencer a alguien sobre las fortalezas y debilidades de alguna política pública*), “Have a serious fight with someone due to political differences” (*Tener una pelea seria con alguien a raíz de diferencias políticas*). The treatment item was: “Help someone with an errand or task (tramite o gestión) at the City Hall” (*Ayudar a alguien con algún tramite o gestión en la municipalidad*). Item four (an unlikely event) was included to minimize the changes of “ceiling effects” (see Kuklinski et al. 1997). “Ceiling effects” occur when respondents would select the entire list of possible responses. In this case, the respondent would be simply accepting to have performed all activities (including the sensitive one) so the

might refer to directly helping citizens, but it can also refer to help other patronage employees—often brokers—help citizens. As described, the list experiment technique is particularly useful to study sensitive behaviors.¹⁵ It works by guarantying the complete anonymity of responses because employees are not asked to answer about specific activities, only about the number of activities done. The average number of activities reported by employees in the control group with only four responses is 1.14, while the average in the treatment group where respondents has also the treatment item (provide favors) is 1.58. Since respondents were randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups, it is possible to attribute the difference in means to employees who report providing favors. The estimated percentage of public employees helping others with errands or tasks at the City Hall in the week prior to the interview is a significant 44 percent.

level of privacy that the list experiment was supposed to achieve would have been ruined. Most probably, the responses would not be accurate anymore because, to avoid selecting the five items and admitting to the sensitive behavior, respondents would lie. In that case, the claim about list experiments improving the validity of the estimates by guarantying the privacy of responses is hard to sustain.

¹⁵ Some might be surprised that I consider providing favors a sensitive behavior. It is true that in some cases, employees show pride in being helpful. However, in other cases, especially during interviews when questions about favors were asked in a more direct way, it was clear that for some employees asking about this issue was sensitive. One employee provided a good example of how some would get slightly offended by the implication of employees providing favors. After a couple of questions in that direction, he replied: “But politics is not a favor machine! (*una maquina de hacer favores*)” (Personal Interview, La Matanza, August 10 2009).

Table 4.1: Granting favors. List-experiment estimates

	Favors
Treatment	1.58 (0.05) N=591
Control	1.14 (0.05) N=590
Treatment effect	0.44*** (0.07) N=1181

Note: List-experiment control and treatment values are the mean number of items identified by respondents in each group (Rows 1 & 2). Rows 3 displays the average treatment effects (estimated proportion of the population that reported providing favors). Standard errors in parentheses and number of subjects in each condition (N) display below. Two-sample t-test with unequal variance. *, ** & *** indicate significance at the 90, 95 and 99 percent levels.

4.4 Who Grants Favors?

According to the argument developed in Chapter 2, a higher proportion of public sector employees that support the mayor or the party of the mayor should be involved in the provision of favors. As jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters, the empirical expectation is to find more supporters (than non-supporters) involved in the provision of political services. Moreover, I expect supporters to be more involved in the provision of political services because they believe more strongly that their jobs are tied to the political success of the incumbent politician (an expectation that I test in Chapter 5). I also expect that employees with lower levels of education and those without permanent contracts will be more involved in the provision of favors. Less educated employees—who have less

outside employment options— and those without permanent contracts—who can get fired— have more to fear from a change in administration.

To determine whether the provision of favors differs across different types of employees — similarly to what I did in Chapter 3 to study the provision of services during elections— I calculate the difference in the size of the list experiment estimate across subgroups. As in the previous chapter, support for the mayor (*Mayor Party*) is measured by a question that asks respondents whether they identify themselves with the party of the mayor. As an alternative measure I use in this chapter *Mayor Voter*, employees that reported having voted for the mayor in the last election.¹⁶ Education is a self-reported measure of having a college degree or not and tenure is also a self-reported measure of having tenure rights or not. Table 4.2 below presents the list experiment estimates of the provision of favors for the four subgroups mentioned, as well as the difference in means estimate.

¹⁶ I use two different measures of support (*Mayor Party* and *Mayor Voter*) because some employees identify themselves with the party of the mayor but not with the mayor, and vice versa. Moreover, electoral identification is a weaker commitment than identification with a party so it is perfectly possible to vote for a certain candidate and do not feel identified with the party of that candidate (specially in Argentina where elections are mandatory). Besides, both in Salta and Santa Fe the mayor was elected by a coalition of parties so voters that voted for the mayor do not necessarily identify themselves with the party of the mayor. For all these reasons, while positively correlated, both measures are only correlated at 0.4.

Table 4.2: Making favors. List-experiment estimates conditional on characteristics of the respondents

Characteristic	No	Yes	Differences in Effects	
Mayor Voter	0.25** (0.25) N=430	0.54*** (0.10) N=680	0.29** (0.15) N=1110	0.20 (0.15) N=1110
Mayor Party	0.37*** (0.08) N=797	0.57*** (0.13) N=384	0.20 (0.16) N=1181	0.19 (0.15) N=1181
Have a College Degree	0.44** (0.08) N=909	0.42** (0.15) N=267	0.02 (0.17) N=1178	0.02 (0.16) N=1178
Have Tenure	0.50*** (0.10) N=596	0.38*** (0.10) N=584	0.12 (0.14) N=1180	0.11 (0.14) N=1180

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control groups. Last column includes municipal dummies. Standard errors in parentheses calculated with unequal variance; ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1

Table 4.2 shows that, in general, there are large differences in means in the expected directions. First, supporters are in fact more likely to be involved in helping people at the City Hall. Among the subgroups of employees that reported having voted for the current mayor (*Mayor Voter*), the proportion of those that reported helping someone in the week before the survey is 54 percent; among those that reported not voting for the current mayor the proportion is 25 percent. The 29 percentage-points difference is significant at the 95 percent level. Among the subgroups of employees that self-identified with the party of the mayor (*Mayor Party*), the proportion of those that reported providing favors is 57 percent; among those that do not identified with the party of the mayor, the proportion diminish to 37 percent (though the 20 percentage-points difference is not significant).

Taking together, these results provide evidence that supporters of the mayor are indeed more likely to grant favors.

In terms of education, there is no significant difference among those with a college degree and those without one (44 and 42, respectively). Although more research is needed to explain this result, it is possible to imagine that to be able to grant favors, employees need to be in a position of relative power—a position that might require a certain level of education. It is possible that employees at low levels of the public administration have nothing to offer in terms of assistance, while mid-level employees (more likely to have a college degrees) have positions at the bureaucracy that allows them to help others. Finally, the effect of the type of contract goes in the expected direction. The proportion of employees with a permanent contract (*Tenure*) that reported granting favors is 38 percent, compared to 50 percent among employees without a permanent contract (although this 12 percentage-points difference is not statistically significant).

4.5 Asking for Favors

In the previous section, and consistent with the theory developed in chapter 2, I showed that supporters are more involved in helping people at the City Hall. This result is both consistent with a situation in which supporters are more often asked for favors, but it is also consistent with a situation in which supporters and non-supporters are equally likely to be asked for favors, but only supporters are willing to grant those favors. This distinction is important because it has very different implications. The first scenario might indicate a general public that understands that there might be some benefits in approaching

employees that are better connected politically. The second one shows a different attitude among supporters and non-supporters—the former ones being more willing (or more capable) to help. In this section, I present evidence in favor of the first scenario (although it is entirely possible that both things are occurring at the same time). A higher proportion of supporters, both that reported voting for the incumbent mayor (*Mayor Voter*) and those that identified themselves with the party of the mayor (*Mayor Party*), are providing favors because they are *asked for favors* more often.

Outcome Variable To test the claim described above I use a question included in the survey described in Chapter 3 that asked public sector employees about the frequency of people asking for favors related to their jobs.¹⁷ The exact wording was: “How frequently do people come to you to ask you for favors related to your work here at the municipality?” Responses were coded on 1-6 scale: (1) never, (2) a couple of times a year, (3) a couple of times a month, (4) 1-2 times a week, (5) 3 times a week and more, and (6) every day.”¹⁸

Explanatory and Control Variables To measure support, I use again the variables described above, *Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*. I also include controls for the variables that, according to the theory developed in Chapter 2, might affect employees’ willingness to provide political services—namely, education and type of contract. The education variable (*College*) takes on the value of 1 when the respondent has a college degree and zero otherwise. The type of contract variable (*Tenure*) takes on the value of 1 when the respondent enjoys tenure rights and zero otherwise. The models also include controls for

¹⁷ All questions included in this chapter were asked in the survey described in Chapter 3 and Appendix A. See those for more details on the survey and its implementation.

¹⁸ The exact wording in Spanish was: “Trabajando en el Estado seguramente mucha gente se le acerca para pedirle ayuda con algún trámite o gestión en la municipalidad, ¿verdad? ¿Con qué frecuencia diría Ud. que se le acerca gente a pedirle favores relacionados con su trabajo en la municipalidad?”

age, gender, time of hiring, and municipality to control for regional effects. The age variable (*Age*) takes on values from 1 to 5, corresponding to respondents who are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, and older than 55. The gender variable (*Female*) takes on the value of 1 for female respondents and zero otherwise. The time of hiring (*Current Mayor*) takes the value of 1 when the respondent was hired by the current administration and zero otherwise. Finally, the models also include a variable (*Reciprocity*) to control for propensity to help others. This variable was measured with the following question: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘We always have to return the favors that people do us’.” Respondents were offered the following choices: strongly agree, agree more than disagree, disagree more than agree, strongly disagree.¹⁹ This variable takes the value of 1 if the respondent said she “strongly agreed” or “more agreement than disagreement”, and zero otherwise.²⁰

Results Table 4.3 presents the results of a series of OLS regressions where the outcome variable takes on values from 1 to 6, in which higher numbers correspond to higher frequencies of being asked to grant favors. The regression results reported on columns 1 and 2 measure support using previous vote for the incumbent mayor (*Mayor Voter*), whereas columns 3 and 4 measure support using self-identification with the party of the incumbent mayor (*Mayor Party*). Columns 1 and 3 include only controls for age, gender, education, and municipality, whereas results in columns 2 and 4 also include

¹⁹ In Spanish: “Qué tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está Ud. con la siguiente afirmación: “Siempre hay que regresar los favores que alguien nos hace. Diría Ud. que está...muy de acuerdo, mas de acuerdo que en desacuerdo, mas en desacuerdo que de acuerdo, o muy en desacuerdo.” The distribution of responses was: 66% strongly agree, 20% agree more than disagree, 8% disagree more than agree and 6% strongly disagree.

²⁰ An alternative coding grouping the last three responses together was also tried (because the distribution of responses was very skewed) and the results were similar.

controls for type of contract, time of hiring and reciprocity. The main results from the different models are quite similar and consistent with my theoretical expectations. The models that include the full sets of controls (columns 2 and 4) provide slightly stronger results for the variables of interest, so I focus on interpreting these results.

Table 4.3: Frequency of favors

	Mayor Voter		Mayor Party	
Mayor Voter	0.50*** (0.12)	0.54*** (0.12)		
Mayor Party			0.46*** (0.12)	0.50*** (0.13)
Age	0.04 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.06)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.06)
Female	0.42*** (0.12)	0.453*** (0.12)	0.46*** (0.12)	0.49*** (0.12)
College	-0.45*** (0.14)	-0.44*** (0.14)	-0.55*** (0.14)	-0.55*** (0.14)
Salta	0.03 (0.14)	0.03 (0.16)	0.06 (0.14)	0.03 (0.16)
Santa Fe	-0.03 (0.14)	-0.04 (0.15)	-0.02 (0.14)	-0.06 (0.15)
Tenure		0.21 (0.17)		0.26 (0.16)
Current Mayor		-0.24 (0.16)		-0.20 (0.15)
Reciprocal		-0.11 (0.16)		-0.10 (0.17)
Constant	2.76*** (0.20)	3.15*** (0.27)	2.98*** (0.19)	3.34*** (0.27)
Observations	1,096	1,085	1,063	1,054
R-squared	0.040	0.046	0.042	0.051

Note: An alternative specification for these models would be an ordered probit since the frequency of favors is measured on a 1-6 scale, but results were very similar (and much harder to interpret) so I opted for OLS. Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

As expected, the coefficients on the vote for the mayor variable and the identification with the party of the mayor variable are both positive and significant, indicating that being a supporter is correlated with a higher frequency of demands for favors. Put differently, the positive and significant relationship between the main explanatory variables and the outcome variable indicates that being a supporter increase the probability of being asked for favors. Being a supporter (both *Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*) is associated with a significant 0.5 unit increase in the frequency of demand for favors (recall that frequency is measured on a 1-6 scale).

Two other results are worth mentioning. The first one is the strong and positive relation between being a woman and the frequency of favors asked. One possible explanation is that in Argentine administration women are common in positions that involve face-to-face interaction with citizens, which allows for more demands for favors than jobs that are out of the reach of ordinary citizens. Note that this strong relationship between gender and being asked for favors is not present in the other political services, suggesting that there is something about this particular activity that is different from the others. Another result that is intriguing is the significant and negative relationship between the outcome variable and education—those without college degrees are more frequently asked for favors than those with college degrees. Recall that there was no difference in the provision of favors (Table 4.2) across employees with and without a college degree. These two results together might suggest that although less educated employees are more frequently asked for favors, they are not in positions to deliver on those favors. As mentioned, it is possible that to be able to grant favors, employees need to be in a position

of relative power, which is more often occupied by employees with higher levels of education.

To sum up, supporters (both voters and partisans) are more frequently asked for favors than non-supporters. It is possible, as Calvo and Ujhelyi (2012) argue, that this is caused by the fact that public employees more willing to provide political services self-select into positions that allow them to provide these services. In this case, the disproportionate amount of petitions for favors that supporters receive could be related to them holding positions that allow them to grant more favors. Note, however, that this mechanism of self-selection in Calvo and Ujhelyi's (2012) argument is needed because, for them, political preferences at the time of hiring are private information not available to the politician. In the argument developed in this dissertation, personal connections and referrals are used for political screening and politicians use the political preferences at the time of hiring to screen supporters from non-supporters. It is possible then that they use this information as well to assign patronage employees to those positions that involve more possibilities to grant favors. However, a situation in which citizens simply choose to ask favors from supporters is also consistent with this data. So it is possible that citizens choose supporters not because only supporters are in positions that allow them to help, but because citizens *prefer* supporters. But how would citizens know how to screen supporters from non-supporters? And, if they prefer supporters, is there any evidence that supporters respond differently to these types of petitions? The next two sections deal with these issues.

4.6 Personal Connections

In the previous section, I provided evidence that supporters get asked for favors more frequently than non-supporters. In the next section I provide evidence that looking for supporters to get help seems to be a rational strategy because supporters tend to be more helpful (either because they want to or because they can). But how would citizens be able to screen supporters from non-supporters? In the cases of most influential patronage employees—brokers—this is not an issue because they are usually well-known by everyone. However, screening supporters from non-supporters is harder for regular citizens when referring to less influential patronage employees. In this section, I provide evidence that people asking for favors are able to target supporters because they actually *know* them. Favors are not asked from strangers but from friends and acquaintances.

To test this claim I use the following question: “How likely is that the person who is asking you for a favor is: a) a friend or acquaintance, b) a relative, c) an stranger sent by someone you know, and d) a complete stranger.”²¹ The response options were very likely, likely, not very likely, and unlikely. I coded the former two options as “likely” and the latter two as “unlikely” to facilitate the discussion. Figure 4.1 below displays the responses for option “a” (friend or acquaintance), across supporters (left panels) and non-supporters (right panels).

²¹ The exact wording in Spanish was: “¿Podría decirme cual es la probabilidad de que la persona que le pide el favor sea... a) un amigo o conocido, b) un familiar, c) un desconocido mandado por alguien que usted conoce, d) un completo desconocido.” The response options were: “muy probable, probable, poco probable, nada probable”.

Figure 4.1: Asking favors from friends and acquaintances, across supporters and non-supporters

Figure 4.1 shows that supporters responded significantly differently from non-supporters when asked about whom are usually those asking them for favors. About 60 percent of those that reported voting for the mayor in the previous election (top-left panel) responded that it was very likely/likely that the person who asked for a favor was a friend or acquaintance; while a little less than 40 percent responded that this was not very likely/unlikely. In contrast, among non-voters, the responses were equally distributed among the two categories (49 and 51, respectively). I find a similar pattern for partisans and non-partisans. Among those that self-identified with the party of the mayor, 64 percent

reported that it was very likely/likely that the person that asked for a favor was a friend or an acquaintance, while only 36 percent responded that this was not very likely or unlikely. In contrast, among those that do not identified with the party of the mayor, although I still find slightly more responses in the very likely/likely category (53 percent), the difference with the other category (47 percent) is only five percentage points.

In sum, supporters get asked for favors by a disproportionate number of friends and acquaintances, suggesting that people understand the importance of political connections. When possible (i.e. when someone knows a supporter), supporters are chosen over non-supporters (in the next section I provide a potential reason for this). An employee from Salta explained to me the importance of knowing the right person. She was an administrative employee that was very involved with voluntary work in her neighborhood. She was the head of a neighborhood center (*centro vecinal*). These centers usually organize social and cultural events, sometimes sports and, in poor neighborhoods like hers, they are usually also used for soup kitchens and as centers for the distribution of food assistance benefits. When asked about how much interest she had in politics, she emphatically replied: "Very interested! All the contacts [you need] to bring things to your neighborhood are political contacts."²²

Note that those asking for favors could be voters themselves or brokers acting on their behalf. Many of the "friends and acquaintances" that ask for favors might be brokers asking for something for one of their clients. And, of course, brokers know perfectly who are the patronage public employees and where to find them. Recall the conversation

²² Personal interview, Salta, June 15 2011.

quoted in section 4.1 about a broker calling the director of the municipal cemetery (his *friend*) to help someone organize a wake. Brokers themselves are also well-known. A conversation with a public employee (and broker) from La Matanza clearly illustrates this point: “For instance, if I had a problem, I wouldn’t think about calling you,” I said to him; “Because you don’t know me,” he replied. So he explained to me the kind of people that usually come to him asking for help: “All kinds of people (...) It can be people that know you because you have a friendship relation, a neighborhood relation, people that know you are in politics (...) I am 55 years old and I have been politically active (*milito*) since age 16... People know me one way or the other (*Alguno que otro me conoce*).”²³

In sum, whether the solution to the problem comes directly from a patronage employee or from a broker—who may or may not be a public employee himself— knowing the right person is fundamental to getting a problem solved. Voters might know a broker that might act on their behalf or they might know a less influential employee. Brokers, in turn, are known by everyone and they know, better than anyone, who can be asked to do what, which allows them to provide a very diverse portfolio of favors (more than regular employees that might only be able to help people on their own area of work). They are, in Auyero’s (2000) words, at the center of the “problem solving network.”

4.7 Are Supporters More Helpful?

Supporters more frequently grant favors related to their public sector jobs and they are also more frequently asked for favors (especially by friends and acquaintances). In the

²³ Personal Interview, La Matanza, August 10 2009.

theory developed in chapter 2, I argue that the reason supporters are more involved in the provision of political services (in this case, providing favors) is that patronage jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters and also because they believe that their fates are tied to the political fate of the mayor. Patronage jobs (and their working conditions) held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (their patron) but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). Supporters then have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services credible. As a result, supporters are more involved in helping those that asked for favors because they understand that it is on their best interest to help the incumbent politician remain in power.

From the point of view of voters, to the extent that they perceive over time that public employees that support the mayor are more helpful than others, it is expected that they will keep on asking supporters for help. Ideally, the kind of evidence that would support this claim would be some sort of experiment in which the same favor is asked of supporters and non-supporters and then compare their responses. A survey of voters, or interviews with voters might also help in studying this issue. Instead, the kind of data I present here is indirect (based on the responses of the employees), but still provides some suggestive evidence of a different response across supporters and non-supporters when asked for help.

To study the differences in responses when asked for favors across supporters and non-supporters, I asked the following question to public employees: “Now I am going to ask about an hypothetical situation: Imagine that someone comes to you and ask you for a

favor, but the thing she is asking is actually handled by another office or person, then you: a) tell her that you are not the person in charge of that, b) tell her to which office she has to go, or c) tell her to which office she has to go and give her the name of someone that you know at that office to make sure that the problem gets solved.”²⁴ About 3 percent responded “a”, about 40 percent responded “b”, and about 57 percent responded “c.”²⁵ To test whether these responses vary across supporters and non-supporters, Figure 4.2 presents the set of responses split across those that reported voting for the incumbent mayor in the previous election and those that do not (top panels) and those that self-identified with the party of the mayor and those that do not (bottom panels).

²⁴ The wording in Spanish was: “*Ahora le planteo una situación hipotética: Supóngase que alguien se le acerca para pedirle un favor pero lo que le están pidiendo, en realidad, depende de otra oficina o persona, entonces Ud.: 1) le dice que eso no depende de Ud., 2) le indica a cuál oficina tiene que dirigirse, 3) le indica a cuál oficina tiene que dirigirse y le da el nombre de alguna persona que Ud. conoce en esa oficina para asegurarse de que el problema se solucione.*”

²⁵ These percentages are calculated over a population of 895 employees, those that did not answer “never” to the previous question analyzed in section 4.4 about how often they were asked for favors related to their work.

Figure 4.2: Helpful responses, across supporters and non-supporters.

Indeed, Figure 4.2 shows that supporters responded differently than non-supporters to the hypothetical question of someone asking for a favor that was outside their area of work. First, option (“a”), the least “helpful” of the three options, was chosen by a very small percentage of employees (2-4 percent) across all groups so I focus on discussing the other two— more interesting—response options. About 60 percent of those that reported voting for the incumbent mayor (top-left panel) choose option “c”, the most “helpful” option, while about 37 percent choose option “b”, the less helpful. Among non- voters (top right panel), 49 percent choose option “c” (the most helpful) and 48 percent choose option “b”. A similar

pattern is found when compare supporters of the mayor's party to non-supporters. About 69 percent of those that self-identified with the party of the mayor (bottom-left panel) chose the more helpful option ("c"), while 29 percent chose the less helpful one. In contrast, about 50 percent of non-supporters of the party of the mayor chose the helpful option, while 46 percent chose the less helpful option.

In sum, supporters seem more prone to try to help voters (or, as mentioned above, brokers on behalf of voters), even in situations in which the favor asked is outside their area of work. To be sure, I am not arguing that supporters are somehow "nicer" than non-supporters. The results described in this section suggest that it might make perfect sense for citizens to try to find supporters when in need of a favor. Either because supporters are more eager to provide political services (favors to citizens, in this case) to help their patron stay in power or because supporters are better equipped (they might know the "right" person to ask), citizens' preferences for asking favors of supporters seem to be based on real differences in supporters' responses.²⁶ In fact, more probably, supporters are both more eager to help (I provide evidence in favor of this argument in chapter 5) and have the capacity to do so (because they might know more people in positions to help).

²⁶ Note, however, that these different responses across supporters and non-supporters are not based on years of experience on the job. It is possible to imagine a scenario in which the willingness to provide the person asking for a favor with a name of a contact to help him/her is associated with years of experience in the job and the knowledge of the people in charge of each of the areas. As we seen in chapter 3, new jobs are disproportionally distributed to supporters (both voters and partisans) so supporters have, on average, fewer years on the job than non-supporters. Knowing the right person to ask, in this case, could be more about having the right political connections than about having more years of experience on the job.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I provide evidence that, in line with the theory developed in chapter 2 and the patterns found for the other political services studied in chapter 3, supporters are disproportionately more involved in granting favors. As explained, supporters are more involved in all the four types of political services studied in this dissertation—monitoring elections, helping with electoral campaigns, attending rallies, and making favors— both because patronage jobs are disproportionately distributed to them and because they believe that their fates are tied to the electoral fate of the mayor (I provide empirical evidence of this in the next chapter). Patronage jobs and working conditions held by supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). As a result, supporters have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services a credible one.

In this chapter I focused on a particular type of political service—the provision of favors— that is not necessarily attached to the electoral cycle. As an employee from Tigre bluntly explained it to me, “people get needy” (*la gente se pone más densa*) around elections, but favors are requested and granted in non-electoral times as well.²⁷ The fact that patronage employees provide favors is not only important because it is an activity that is done constantly but also—and more importantly—because it is a very cheap and potentially effective way for the incumbent to gain and maintain electoral support. As

²⁷ Personal Interview, Tigre, January 6 2011.

discussed in the introduction to this section, the use or perceived use of discretion in the everyday tasks of public employees gives voters the impression that personal relations are key for getting things done at the public administration. Once established, these personal connections work as strong incentives to want to maintain the status quo. Citizens who receive help from state officials or intermediaries (brokers) understand that their personal connection has been critical for that purpose. If a citizen established a personal connection with someone in the public administration (or with easy access to it) that provides help when needed, why would she vote for another party? In line with my argument on patronage employees, citizens have a strong incentive to maintain the *status quo* by keeping the incumbent in office and their connection with the state intact. Self-interested voters that live in clientelistic environments perfectly understand the benefit of maintaining their personal connections to the public administration.

Finally it is also important to note, as Calvo and Murillo (forthcoming 2013, 5) point out, that “proximity to partisan networks is not simply need based.” Even if a voter is in crucial need of help, she might not be connected to a patronage employee who is in a position to help. The fact that public sector jobs are distributed with a partisan bias raises serious questions about the independence of public administration and the possibility of equal access to the state. When clear rules for hiring and promotion do not exist, public employees “owe” their jobs to the patron that discretionally decides to hire them. In this context, the bureaucracy lacks independence and this lack of independence could lead to lack of impartiality *vis à vis* citizens. As Chandra (2004, 87) points out, in patronage democracies “proximity to a state official increases a voter’s chances of obtaining valued state resources and services.” What about citizens with no “proximity to a state official”?

Chapter 5

Self- Enforcing Patronage Contracts

“A New York state senator explained this point bluntly: “My best captains (...) are the ones who are on the payroll. You can’t get the average voter excited about who’s going to be an Assemblyman or State Senator. I’ve got two dozen people who are going to work so much harder, because if I lose, they lose.” (cited by Wolfinger 1972, 395).

Why do public sector employees provide political services? As discussed in chapter 2, since the exchange of the political support for the job is not simultaneous and the law cannot be used to enforce these contracts, patronage contracts give ample opportunities for deception and betrayal. There is always a risk that once the public sector job has been delivered, the public employee has little incentive to provide political services (James 2005; Robinson and Verdier 2003; Ujhelyi and Calvo 2011).¹ When the political support is supposed to be provided *after* the benefit is received, the citizen who receives a public sector job can always opt to renege on her side of the agreement and refuse to provide the promised support. The majority of the existing literature on clientelism argues that clients

¹ Although not the focus of this dissertation, in the cases in which political support is provided before the benefit is received, there is also the possibility of betrayal from the part of the politician. From the point of view of citizens, working for a politician with the hope of getting a public sector job is risky. There is no enforcement mechanism and politicians can simply refuse to comply with their side of the agreement once in office. As discussed in chapter 2, this risk is much lower when the benefit exchanged is a public sector job.

comply with their side of the agreement (either in terms of electoral or broader political support) because of fear of punishment or norms of reciprocity. An alternative explanation, what I have named a *self-enforcing theory of patronage*, for why public sector employees under patronage contracts provide political services *after* getting their jobs is that their incentives are aligned with those of the politician that have hired them. The purpose of this chapter is to establish *why* public sector employees provide political services. Using two original survey experiments embedded in the survey described in chapter 3, this chapter tests the main empirical implications of the theory.

One reason for the incentive alignment between patronage employees and politicians—as I have shown in chapter 3—is that politicians are generally able to appoint supporters, who are more likely to provide political services in the first place. Using a number of list experiments embedded in a survey of public sector employees, chapters 3 and 4 provide evidence that, as hypothesized, supporters are far more likely to provide political services. However, supporters are more involved in the provision of political services not only because patronage jobs are disproportionately distributed to them, but also because they have more to lose from a change in the administration. Patronage jobs and the working conditions associated with them are safe if the incumbent gets reelected, but could be in jeopardy if the opposition wins. By the same logic that the incumbent chooses supporters for patronage jobs—they can credibly commit to provide political services— a new politician will want his own supporters in patronage positions. As a consequence, current patronage employees could be fired (if they do not enjoy tenure rights) or sidestepped— and the desire to prevent this, makes their original commitment to the provision of political services credible.

The fear of losing their jobs or the possibility of suffering negative changes in working conditions if a new mayor from the opposition were elected provides an important motivation for public employees to help the incumbent mayor stay in office. If public employees think that their jobs depend on the mayor staying in power, there is a critical incentive for them to support him with political services. In this chapter, I show that employees under patronage contracts do believe that their fates are tied to the electoral fate of the mayor. The empirical innovation of this research is the use of a survey experiment to identify the potential effect of a change in the political color of the administration on different types of public employees. Specifically, a randomly selected subset of the respondents were asked to estimate the likelihood of losing their jobs and suffering changes in working conditions if the next election were to be won by the opposition. The control group was asked the same questions but without providing any information about the hypothetical winner of the future election. I test the self-enforcing theory of patronage by estimating heterogeneous treatment effects across different types of public employees.

Based on the theory of patronage developed in this dissertation, I expect that supporters will be more likely to fear losing their jobs or experiencing negative changes in their working conditions if a mayor from a different party were elected, and the results of the survey experiment are consistent with this expectation. In contrast, the hypothetical question about a new mayor from a different party winning the election has no effect on the future expectations of non-supporters. Moreover, for the reasons discussed in detail in chapter 2, I also expect employees with tenure to be less concerned about a change in the administration. For tenured employees, the expectation is straightforward, those with

tenure rights cannot get fired so they are only subjected to be sidestepped or demoted, which could be very important for certain employees but hardly as serious as losing their job.

It is unclear how we should expect respondents' level of education to influence their fear of losing their job or suffering negative changes in their working conditions. On the one hand, more educated employees are harder to replace since they are more likely to have valuable skills. As discussed in chapter 2, not all public employees are patronage employees hired in exchange for their political support. Every administration—even the ones with widespread patronage—needs to dedicate some resources to just administrate. A functional bureaucracy needs some qualified employees, who were hired because of those qualifications and fully dedicated to their regular (non-political) work. A new administration would most likely also put some value on those skills, so more educated employees could have less to fear from a change in administration. On the other hand, more educated employees are more likely to be in positions of relative power that a new mayor would probably want to see in the hands of his own people.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. In the next section I describe the methodological approach, the survey experiment, and the data. In section two I present the results of two survey experiments designed to test the empirical predictions of my theory of patronage. In section three, I use regression analysis to corroborate the results from the previous section. In section four, I test one of the alternative explanations to my theory—fear of punishment— and find some support for it among certain types of employees and certain types of services. In section five I focus on the other main alternative explanation to my theory—feelings of reciprocity— and find no evidence to

support this explanation. Section six presents the main results per municipality as a robustness test. The last section briefly concludes.

5.1 Research Design and the Survey Experiment

5.1.1 An Experimental Approach

Scholars studying public opinion in the US have been using survey experiments for more than two decades now.² The use of survey experiments in comparative politics is a more recent development, but in the last years—and together with the growing use of experiments of all types in the discipline— they have become an increasingly popular research tool. Survey experiments have been used to study a variety of topics such as attitudes towards clientelism among middle class voters in Argentina (Weitz-Shapiro 2008a, 2012), the influence of chiefs' preferences on voting behavior in Zambia (Baldwin forthcoming), the effects of information on attitudes towards corruption in Brazil (Winters and Weitz-Shapiro 2011), the role of feelings of obligation in vote buying arrangements in Mexico (Lawson and Greene 2012), just to mention a few examples that are related to the topic of this dissertation. However, to the best of my knowledge, no survey experiment has been used before to investigate what sustains patronage contracts. In fact, even traditional surveys of public employees are almost non-existent in the contemporary political science literature of new democracies.³

² See Gaines, Kuklinski, and Quirk (2007) and Gilens (2002) for an overview of the survey experiment technique.

³ Traditional surveys of patronage recipients in the US have been done before. See, for instance, Sorauf's (1956) study of Centre County Pennsylvania and Jonhston's (1979) study of New Haven. More recently,

Survey experiments provide a useful tool to test the empirical implications of the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in this dissertation. By making treatment assignment exogenous to observed outcomes, this technique is extremely useful to identify and isolate mechanisms. An alternative approach would have been to ask the question directly and run regressions controlling for a number of covariates that could affect the outcome. The problem with this approach in this particular research is that many of those covariates—support for the mayor, electoral choices, partisanship, just to mention a few—could be subjected to social desirability bias. As discussed in chapter 3, employees could be unwilling to provide this type of information or—even worse— provide inaccurate responses if they think that their jobs could be in jeopardy for their responses. A number of different techniques were implemented (see chapter 3) to minimize this issue, but the use of survey experiments allows me to avoid having to rely on the effectiveness of the techniques implemented.

5.1.2 The Survey Experiments

The survey experiments were embedded on an original face-to-face survey of 1184 public sector employees administered across the Argentinean municipalities of Salta, Santa Fe, and Tigre.⁴ Respondents were selected from a random sample of the official lists of employees at each municipality and the interviews were conducted during working hours

Gingerich (2006) has conducted a survey of bureaucrats mainly in mid and high-level positions in several agencies in Bolivia, Brazil, and Chile to study political corruption.

⁴ See section 3.1.3 (chapter 3) for a description of the three municipalities, the logic for their selection, and a more detailed description of the survey implementation. See also Appendix A for more information on the survey and survey representativeness.

at public offices. Each of the survey experiments included two conditions—treatment and control— so two versions of the questionnaire were used.⁵ Interviewers used the two different questionnaires in sequential order, assigning respondents alternatively to either the treatment or the control group. Standard randomization checks find no evidence that random assignment was not successful.⁶

To estimate public sector employees’ perception of job stability, all respondents were asked to estimate the likelihood of keeping their jobs at the municipality after the next election. Respondents selected into the control group were asked the following question:

Control

On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “Not at all likely”, and 10 means “Very likely”, how likely is that you will continue working at the municipality next year, after the 2011 mayoral elections?

To facilitate the response, respondents were handed a card with the following picture:

Not at all likely					Likely				Very likely		DK
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	99

⁵ Ideally, respondents would be randomly assigned into each experimental condition in order to avoid potential spillover effects (Gaines, Kuklinski, and Quirk 2007) but this was logistically too complicated to implement with a pen and paper questionnaire.

⁶ Table A4 in Appendix A reports the average age, gender, education and salary of respondents in each condition. The balanced distribution of the variables across the two conditions suggests that the groups are fairly equivalent on observable characteristics and that the randomization was successful in each of the three municipalities. None of the differences between the control and treatment groups are statistically significant (at the 95 percent confidence). Table A5, also in Appendix A, shows the number of surveys administrated by each enumerator by type of questionnaire (treatment or control).

The other half of the respondents, the ones selected into the treatment group, were shown the same card and asked the following question:

Treatment

On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “Not at all likely”, and 10 means “Very likely”, how likely is that you will continue at the municipality next year, after the 2011 mayoral elections *if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins?*⁷

To estimate the perception of public employees about the possibility of changes, all respondents were first asked how satisfied they were with their jobs. They were given four possible responses: very satisfied, satisfied, not very satisfied and not at all satisfied.⁸ The purpose of this question was simply to put the survey experiment question in context. After this framing question, the following question was asked to the group of respondents selected into the control group:

Control

On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “Not at all likely”, and 10 means “Very likely”, how likely do you think it is that that level of satisfaction with your job will change next year, after the 2011 mayoral elections?

⁷ The wording in Spanish is “*En una escala de 0 a 10, donde 0 es NADA Probable, y 10 es MUY Probable, ¿Cuán probable es que Ud. siga trabajando en la municipalidad el año que viene, luego de las elecciones para intendente de 2011 (si el actual intendente no fuese reelecto y ganara la oposición)?*”

⁸ In Spanish: “*En términos generales, ¿Cuán conforme diría Ud. que está con su trabajo?*” And the response options were: “*Muy conforme; Conforme; Poco conforme; Nada conforme*”

Whereas the respondents selected into the treatment group were asked:

Treatment

On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “Not at all likely”, and 10 means “Very likely”, how likely do you think it is that level of satisfaction with your job will change next year, after the 2011 mayoral elections *if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins?*⁹

In both cases, respondents were also handed the card with the scale from 0 to 10 shown above. Respondents were assigned to either treatment or control for both questions. Immediately after this question, all respondents from both the treatment and the control group were asked:

Do you think that your situation will be better, the same or worse?¹⁰

5.1.3 The Data

In addition to the survey experiments, the survey instrument included a number of other questions used in the following analysis. With the exception of the survey experiments described above and the list experiments described in chapter 3, respondents were asked questions from identical questionnaires.

⁹ In Spanish: “En una escala de 0 a 10, donde 0 es NADA Probable, y 10 es MUY Probable ¿Cuan probable cree Ud. que es que ese nivel de conformidad con su trabajo cambie el año que viene, luego de las elecciones para intendente de 2011 (si el actual intendente no fuese reelecto y ganara la oposición)?”

¹⁰ In Spanish: “¿Ud. cree que su situación será mejor, igual o peor?”

In order to identify support for the mayor or the party of the mayor, respondents were asked two different questions.¹¹ The first one asked them for whom they had voted in the last mayoral election. Responses were coded one if the respondent said they had voted for the current mayor (*Mayor Voter*) in the last mayoral election, and zero otherwise.¹² Second, respondents were asked to report if they identified themselves with a political party and those that replied affirmatively to this question were asked with which party they identified themselves. This variable (*Mayor Party*) takes on the value of one if the respondent said that she identified herself with the party of the Mayor, and zero otherwise.¹³ Respondents were also asked about their type of contract (*Tenure*) and responses were coded as one if employees reported having tenure rights, and zero otherwise. The level of education is measured such as the variable *College* takes the value of one if employees reported having a college degree, and zero otherwise.

To test existing theories of reciprocity respondents were asked the following question: “How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘We always have to return the favors that people have done for us’.” Respondents were offered the following choices: strongly agree, more agreement than disagreement, more disagreement

¹¹ Recall that the political questions were asked in a separate questionnaire to increase response rates and to improve the accuracy of the responses. See section 3.1.1 in chapter 3 for a detailed description of the techniques used.

¹² Respondents that were not registered to vote in that municipality (those that live in a different municipality) were coded as missing. Note that voting is mandatory in Argentina and turnout is high. Since the return of democracy in 1983, turnout has been usually above 70% for national, provincial, and municipal elections.

¹³ Missing values were coded as zero, but an alternative codification of this variable with missing values coded as missing was also tried in all the analysis presented in this chapter and results were substantively identical.

than agreement, strongly disagree.¹⁴ This variable (*Reciprocity*) takes the value of one if the respondent said she “strongly agreed,” and zero otherwise. To test theories of monitoring, respondents were asked the following question: “Do you believe that the government or the political parties can find out for whom someone voted?”¹⁵ This variable (*Monitoring*) takes the value of one if the respondent said YES, and zero otherwise with DN/NA responses coded as missing. Table 5.1 displays the summary statistics for these variables.

Table 5.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev
Mayor Voter	1113	0.61	0.49
Mayor Party	1184	0.33	0.47
Tenure	1183	0.50	0.50
College	1181	0.23	0.42
Monitoring	1038	0.28	0.45
Reciprocity	1176	0.66	0.47

5.2 Self- Enforcing Patronage. Survey Experiment Evidence

One of the main advantages of randomized survey experiments is that randomization—when successful— ensures that the populations in the control and treatment groups are, on average, equivalent on both observables and un-observables. This allows me to follow the

¹⁴ In Spanish: “*Qué tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está Ud. con la siguiente afirmación: “Siempre hay que regresar los favores que alguien nos hace. Diría Ud. que está...muy de acuerdo, mas de acuerdo que en desacuerdo, mas en desacuerdo que de acuerdo, o muy en desacuerdo.”*”

¹⁵ The wording in Spanish was: “*Si bien el voto es secreto ¿Cree Ud. que el gobierno o los partidos políticos pueden descubrir por quién votó alguien?*”

convention of using difference of means (t-tests) to analyze the experimental results.¹⁶ I have also corroborated the main results with regression analyses in which the treatment is included as an independent variable along with other controls. After analyzing the main treatment effects, the core of the argument is tested by examining the characteristics of the public employees mentioned above—namely support for the mayor, type of contract and education—that condition the size of the main treatment effect.

5.2.1 Perception of Job Stability

To test whether employees fear losing their jobs if the incumbent mayor loses the election all respondents were asked to estimate (on a scale from 0 to 10) the likelihood of keeping their jobs at the municipality after the next election. A randomly selected subset was also told: “if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins.”¹⁷ Because the

¹⁶ All the difference of mean tests reported here were calculated using Welch’s approximation to account for potential unequal variances between the groups. The standard errors obtained with the Welch approximation only differ marginally from the ones obtained with a standard student t-test (which assumes equal variance across groups).

¹⁷ A slightly different question was used in the case of Salta because of the timing of the upcoming mayoral election. For political reasons beyond my control (explained in Appendix A), the survey in Salta had to be postponed until after the municipal and provincial elections were held. Consequently, the surveys in Santa Fe and Tigre were conducted around a year before the following provincial and mayoral elections whereas the survey in Salta was conducted right after the elections and almost four years before the next ones. The main issue with this was that a lot of employees in Salta that did not have tenure at the time of the survey were expecting to get tenure in the next four years and this expectation affects their responses to the question about job stability. To get around this problem, in the case of Salta, another question was asked right after the one described above: “Now imagine that the next mayoral elections, instead of being in 2015, would be next year. In this same scale (0 to 10), how likely is that you keep on working at the municipality next year, after these hypothetical elections (*if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins*)? (*Ahora imagínese que las próximas elecciones para intendente, en lugar de ser en 2015, fueran EL AÑO QUE VIENE. En esta misma escala, ¿Cuan probable es que Ud. siga trabajando en la municipalidad el año que viene, luego de estas supuestas elecciones, si el actual intendente no fuese reelecto y ganara la oposición?*”). Both questions are highly correlated (0.8), but less so when restricting the sample to non-tenure employees only (0.67)—the ones that could get tenure in the next four years. The results from this chapter are consistent across both measures. I decided to use the second question about the hypothetical election though to keep it as similar as possible to the questions asked in Tigre and Santa Fe.

individuals who received the treatment were randomly selected, differences in responses across the treatment and control groups can be attributed to the extra information received by the treatment group. These results, nonetheless, are corroborated with regression analyses in which the survey experiment treatment is included as an independent variable along with controls for tenure, age, gender, education and municipality (results reported in Table C1 in Appendix C). Table 5.2 presents the average treatment effect with the standard errors in parentheses below.

Table 5.2: Likelihood of keeping the job, across treatment and control groups

... if the incumbent mayor is not be reelected and the opposition wins? (treatment)	7.75 (0.12) N=563
... ? (control)	8.15 (0.11) N=568
Treatment effect	-0.41** (0.16) N=1131

Two-sample t-test with unequal variance

Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As the table shows, respondents who were told the hypothetical about the incumbent mayor losing the next election and the opposition winning responded differently from those who did not hear any information about the outcome of the election. The significant negative effect means that, in general, employees are not eager to see a new mayor from a different party in power. Whereas the average response among the control group was 8.15, the figure drops to 7.75 among those who received the treatment. The average treatment

effect is a significant 0.41 difference (at the 95percent level). Public employees in general fear losing their jobs if the next election were to be won by the opposition.¹⁸

However, employees with tenure—who cannot be legally fired— should probably not fear loosing their jobs, regardless of any electoral result. An employee from the personnel office at Tigre explained it clearly. When asked about what happened with the change of administration in 2007 (recall that Tigre was governed by the same party between 1987 and 2007, and a mayor from a different party was elected in 2007), she replied: “After 20 years of the same administration things are complicated, people are afraid (...) the permanent employees are not, but the ones on temporary contracts are afraid”. Interestingly—and in line with the expectations of the theory developed here—she then explained to me that in the end not that many people were fired, only the ones that were “very politically involved with the previous administration.”¹⁹

Note that the wording of the question does not necessarily refer to firing. It is possible that the question also captures cases of employees that would consider simply resigning after the election. However, the comparison of the estimation of the conditional average treatment effect for tenured and non-tenured employees (below) suggests that the question is more likely capturing the likelihood of being fired than the likelihood of resigning. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of responses across treatment and control

¹⁸ Note that the treatment in this and the following survey experiment only manipulates respondent’s perceptions if they initially thought that there was some chance the incumbent mayor could be reelected. This seems very likely in the context of municipal elections in Argentina where the reelection rate for mayors is around 60 percent. This reelection rate makes the assumption that employees thought possible that the mayor would be reelected highly likely, while it also makes the treatment (non-reelection) also feasible. Moreover, it is worth noting that if these assumptions were wrong and most employees thought that the mayor’s reelection was very unlikely or that the opposition wining was very unlikely, I would be underestimating the treatment effect.

¹⁹ Personal Interview, Tigre, August 23 2010.

groups and type of contract and Table 5.3 presents the average treatment effect with the standard errors in parentheses below across types of employment contracts.

Figure 5.1: Frequency distribution across treatment and control groups and type of contract

Table 5.3: Likelihood of keeping the job for tenure and non-tenure employees

	Tenure	Non-tenure	Differences in Effect	
... if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins? (treatment)	9.34 (0.08) N=270	6.28 (0.18) N=293		
... ? (control)	9.36 (0.09) N=289	6.90 (0.17) N=279		
Treatment effect	-0.03 (0.12) N=559	-0.62** (0.25) N=572	-0.60** (0.28) N=1131	-0.59** (0.27) N=1131
Municipal Dummies			NO	YES

Two-sample t-test with unequal variance. Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

As expected, the treatment effect is much stronger for the non-tenured employees. Among employees that do not enjoy job security the treatment effect is a significant 0.62 (compare to a non-significant 0.03 for tenured employees). The difference in effects between tenured and untenured employees is a significant 0.60 (at the 95 percent level), even when including indicator variables for municipality (last column).

According to the argument presented in chapter 2, the perception of job stability should be different for different types of employees—particularly supporters. In the words of an employee from Santa Fe that has been working at the municipal administration since 1985: “In the municipal administration, I think that there is always something like a ‘Sword of Damocles’; ‘Let’s hope that they [the new administration] don’t find out to whom I belong, that they don’t have any political prejudice against me because, if they do, they’ll transfer me’.” Some minutes later in the same interview she added: “I think that, in general,

no one talks too much about politics because of this.”²⁰ Indeed, the main empirical implication of the theory developed in this dissertation is that supporters of the incumbent have more to fear than non-supporters from a change in the administration. I expect then that employees ideologically closer to the mayor –namely, *Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*—estimate a higher likelihood of losing their jobs if the incumbent mayor were to lose the next election.

There are two other characteristics that the theory predicts to have a conditional effect on individual perception of job security—education and type of contract. I have shown already that employees with tenure rights do not fear losing their jobs. However, I will provide evidence in the next section that they do fear things changing for the worse at work if a mayor from a different party won the election. In relation to education, I expect those with lower levels of education—more easily replaceable— to estimate a higher likelihood of losing their jobs if the incumbent mayor were to lose the next election. To determine whether these types of employees react more strongly to the hypothetical electoral outcome, I examine heterogeneity in the treatment by estimating conditional average treatment effects (CATE). I do this simply by estimating causal effects separately for different subgroups of the population.²¹ Figure 5.2 presents such effects. Lines 1-3 display the results already discussed to facilitate the comparison. Since tenured employees cannot be fired, I present the effect for the whole sample (black dots) and the effect without tenured employees (white dots) for each subgroup of employees. As expected, excluding

²⁰ Personal Interview, Santa Fe, August 16 2011.

²¹ Table C2 in Appendix C shows the exact numeric effects within each subgroup. Section 5.3 presents the regression analysis of these results.

tenured employees makes all the effects stronger in the predicted directions (however, since the number of observations is reduced, standard errors become bigger).

Figure 5.2: Likelihood of keeping the job, heterogeneous treatment effects

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control group (t-test with unequal variance). Black circles indicate the treatment effect for all employees within that subgroup; white circles restrict the sample only to non-tenured employees. Horizontal black bars represent 95% confidence intervals and vertical lines represent 90% confidence intervals. Numbers above the diagonal lines (red in the original) connecting the white dots indicate the differences in effects across respondents with and without each characteristic for non-tenured employees. Robust standard errors; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

As the figure shows quite clearly, supporters who receive the hypothetical about a candidate from the opposition winning the election respond quite differently to the question about the likelihood of keeping their jobs from those that do not hear the hypothetical. In fact, hearing the hypothetical about the opposition winning has no effect on the future expectations of non-supporters of keeping working at the municipal administration. First, the difference in effects between those untenured employees (white dots) who reported having voted for the incumbent mayor (line 5) and those that did not (line 4) is a significant (at the 99 percent level) 2.06 difference. Recall that the scale was 0 to 10 so this means that those who had voted for the current mayor feel, on average, 20 percent less confident about keeping their jobs if the opposition wins. Even when comparing the whole sample (black dots), there is still a 1.30 significant difference between voters and non-voters. Results are similar when using the alternative measure of support. The difference between those untenured employees who identified themselves with the party of the mayor (line 7) and those that do not (line 6) is a significant (at the 90 percent level) 0.94, indicating that the supporters of the mayor's party feel on average around 10 percent less secure about keeping their jobs if the opposition wins. Again, even when comparing party supporters and non-supporters across the entire sample (black dots) there is a 0.71 difference (significant at the 95 percent level).

Finally, the level of education (last two lines) also conditions the average treatment effect in the predicted direction. Less educated employees who receive the treatment respond differently to the question about the likelihood of keeping their jobs from those in the control group. For employees with a college degree, the treatment has no effect and the type of contract does not seem to affect their feeling of security in the job either. As

mentioned earlier, employees with higher skills might be valuable for a new administration (regardless of partisan affiliation) and the results presented here suggest that employees with a college degree are aware of this. The difference in effects between untenured employees with and without a college degree is 0.97 (significant at the 90 percent level), indicating that employees with a college degree feel, on average, 10 percent more confident about keeping their jobs with a change in the administration. As shown in chapters 3 and 4, with the exception of the provision of favors, low skilled workers are generally more involved in the provision of political services. In line with Calvo and Murillo (2004), I have argued that public employees are more inclined to support the incumbent with their services when their market alternatives outside the state are fewer, which is often the case with lower skilled workers. The results here provide an additional incentive for less educated employees to provide political services to the mayor to try to keep him in power—they feel particularly insecure about the likelihood of maintaining their jobs with a new administration from a different party.

5.2.2 Perception of Job Changes

The fear of losing one's job if the opposition wins the next election is not the only mechanism that sustains patronage contracts. Especially for tenured employees that cannot be fired, other incentives are in place. As described in chapter 2, if a new mayor wins the next election, "disloyal" employees—the ones perceived by the new mayor as supporters of the old administration— might be transferred, sidestepped, demoted, or

assigned to different activities. A tenured employee from Santa Fe that has been working at the municipality since 1985 explains:

“The fear [for a tenured employee](...) is about changing jobs, changing the place of work, it is about being sent somewhere else, somewhere where he does not know how to do the job, or where he doesn’t have much to do, or too far away from his house, or with a different schedule, or without the extra monetary benefits that his current jobs allows him to earn... A lot of things can be changed...”

And, in fact, she argues, there were a few cases like these when the administration changed from the Radicals to the Peronists in 2007: “Old employees have been sidestepped a little, their participation has been restricted, I know of people that had to ask to be transferred to another area because there was no room for them anymore where they used to work...” Despite this, she added, some employees kept on doing “their own thing” [showing support for the opposition], creating problems with the current administration and risking “being sent somewhere else.” She finished this portrait of the situation by adding: “I am not saying this happens, all I am saying is that *you’re afraid of it, it is your salary, your livelihood...*” For this reason, she explains, she always tries to “stay [politically] neutral”²²

Another tenured employee from Tigre that has been working at the municipality since 1988 —and clearly identified with the opposition that governed the municipality between 1987 and 2007— described the general atmosphere with the change in the administration in 2007. According to her, the turnover in general was not widespread but

²² Personal interview, Santa Fe, August 16 2011.

all the bosses changed and “it was difficult at the beginning, sometimes politics get mixed up with work” and the new bosses were suspicious of the old employees (*había recelo*), they perceived them “almost as criminals.”²³

To determine whether public sector employees are in fact afraid of this type of changes if a new mayor from the opposition were to be elected, I again use a hypothetical about the outcome of the next election. Employees were first asked to report their level of satisfaction with their current job. The majority of them reported being satisfied (59%) and very satisfied (31%), while 8 percent reported being little satisfied, and only eight respondents (0.7%) reported being not at all satisfied with his job (6 respondents (0.5%) did not answer the question).²⁴ After this question, respondents were asked about the likelihood of that level of satisfaction changing after the next election. All respondents were asked to estimate (on a scale from 0 to 10) the likelihood of the reported level of satisfaction with their jobs changing after the next election. A random half was also told: “if the incumbent mayor is not reelected and the opposition wins.” Then, respondents were asked whether they think that their situation would be better, the same or worse. To compare the results across treatment and control groups, responses were coded 1 for better, 0 for no change expected, and -1 for worse.²⁵ Figure 5.3 shows the distribution of

²³ Personal interview, Tigre, January 6 2011.

²⁴ It is difficult to make any substantive interpretation of these considerable high levels of satisfaction (similar across the three municipalities). The purpose of the question was simply to frame the following one. Two characteristics of public employment in Argentina might be important in understanding the general level of satisfaction with public sector jobs. First, there is a wage premium for less educated employees (Calvo and Murillo 2004). Second, part of the administration enjoys tenure rights, a situation without equivalent in the private sector. Taking together, these two characteristics might be important to understand the generally high level of satisfaction with public sector jobs found in the survey.

²⁵ Originally, these two questions were designed to be used together in order to get a 0-10 estimate of positive or negative change. However, respondents did not find it easy to give 0-10 point estimate on this question and

responses across treatment and control groups and Table 5.4 presents the average treatment effect with the standard errors in parentheses below.

Figure 5.3: Direction of change in job satisfaction, across treatment and control groups

Table 5.4: Do you think that your situation would be better, the same or worse?

... if the incumbent mayor is not be reelected and the opposition wins? (treatment)	0.13 (0.03) N=499
...? (control)	0.36 (0.02) N=528
Treatment effect	-0.23*** (0.03) N=1027
Two-sample t-test with unequal variance Standard errors in parentheses; *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01	

there were a substantial number of non-responses. The other question, more straightforward, was easier to understand and there were very fewer non-responses. I then decided to use only this second question.

Indeed, respondents who were told the hypothetical about the current mayor losing the next election and the opposition winning respond quite differently from those who did not hear any information about the electoral outcome. Whereas the average response among the control group was 0.36, the average for those that received the treatment was 0.13.²⁶ The average treatment effect is a significant 0.23 difference. The negative sign indicates that, on average, public sector employees think that their situation would be worse if the opposition were to win the following election.²⁷ Finally, Figure 5.4 presents the differences in the size of the treatment effect across different subsets of the population. The expectations here are the same as in the previous section. I expect employees ideologically closer to the mayor (*Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*) and those with less education (*College*) to be more prone to think that the change would be for the worse.²⁸ Although I am more agnostic about this expectation, employees with tenure (*Tenure*)—that have in general been in the job longer and even possibly already experiences a change in the administration— might be less afraid of suffering negative changes.

²⁶ Note that, regardless of the treatment, most employees think that they situation will be the same or better; while very few replied that they were expecting that things would get worse. This is related to the fact that, in all the municipalities studied, there are rules that tied salary increases, promotions and tenure rights to years in the job. Because of this, a lot of public employees tend to think that, all other things equal, working conditions will get better over time.

²⁷ Table C3 in Appendix C shows the regression analysis results.

²⁸ Table C4 in Appendix C shows the exact numeric effects within each subgroup.

Figure 5.4: Likelihood of change, heterogeneous treatment effects

Note: Average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control group (t-test with unequal variance). Black circles indicate the treatment effect for employees within that subgroup. Horizontal black bars represent 95% confidence intervals and vertical lines represent 90% confidence intervals. Numbers above the diagonal lines (red in the original) indicate the differences in effects across respondents with and without each characteristic. Robust standard errors; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

As the figure shows clearly, supporters of the mayor (both *Mayor Party* and *Mayor Voter*) who receive information about the outcome of the election respond quite differently to the question about changes in working conditions from those who do not hear such

information. In contrast, hearing the hypothetical about the opposition winning has a significantly smaller effect on the future expectations of change among non-supporters. In other words, the strength of the main treatment effect is conditional on the characteristics of the respondents predicted by the self-enforcing theory of patronage—namely support for the mayor. First, the difference in effects between employees who reported having vote for the incumbent mayor (line 5) and those that did not (line 4) is a significant (at the 99 percent level) 0.21. Recall that the scale in this case is -1 to 1 so 0.21 indicates that those who had voted for the current mayor are, on average 10 percent more negative about the changes in working conditions if the opposition wins. The difference in effects between those that identify with the party of the mayor and those who do not (lines 6 and 7) is 0.25 (significant at the 99 percent level). And both the magnitude of the difference and its significance remains unchanged after including controls for municipalities (see Table C4 in Appendix C).

Employees with tenure, as predicted, also feel less afraid than untenured employees of a new mayor from the opposition getting into power. The difference in effects across respondents with and without tenure is 0.13 (significant at the 95 percent level). Finally, the effect across different levels of education is not conclusive. The difference between those with a college degree and those without a college degree is not significant and it goes against the expectations. Possibly, this result reflects the fact that more educated public sector employees tend to hold jobs in which the potential for change is larger than in low skilled jobs.

In sum, the two survey experiment questions show that, on average, public sector employees associated with the incumbent mayor (*Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*) have

strong incentives to try to keep things as they are. The results clearly indicate that those that could be perceived as supporters by the opposition are afraid of losing their jobs or things changing for the worse with a new administration, which is a strong incentive to the provision of political services that could help keep the incumbent in office.

5.3 Regression Analysis

In this section, I corroborated the difference-of-means (t-test) results discussed so far with regression analysis in which the experimental treatment is included as an independent variable. This type of analysis allows me to control for confounding factors. I estimate a series of regressions with interactions between the main characteristics of interest according to the self-enforcing theory of patronage—*Mayor Party* and *Mayor Voter*—with treatment assignment for both survey experiments along with controls for age (*Age*), sex (*Female*), education (*College*), time of hiring (*Current Contract*) and type of contract (*Tenure*).²⁹ Importantly, this type of analysis also allows me to control for the main alternative theories to the self-enforcing theory of patronage—reciprocity and fear of punishment.

To control for the monitoring and fear of punishment theory, I asked respondents whether they thought that the government or the political parties could find out about individual voting behavior. Surprisingly for a country with no serious allegations of electoral fraud since the return of democracy in 1983, 24 percent of the respondents

²⁹ The coding for all these variables is explained in section 5.1.3.

believe that it was possible for the government or political parties to violate the secrecy of the ballot, 63 percent replied that this was not possible, and 12 percent replied that they did not know. Recall that the survey instrument had to be approved by the local authorities so a direct question about whether employees were afraid of being punished by the mayor if they failed to collaborate by providing political services was not possible. The logic behind asking a question about the secrecy of the ballot as a proxy for monitoring political services has to do with the fact that monitoring voting is harder than monitoring other activities, such as attending rallies and helping with electoral campaigns. Thus, the expectation is that if respondents think that voting is in fact being monitored they would also think the same for the other activities that are easier to monitor. If the monitoring theory were correct, individuals who believe the secrecy of the ballot can be violated would be more likely to provide political services than the ones that do not, out of fear of being monitored and punished. All negative responses for this variable (*Monitoring*) were coded as 0 and positive responses were coded as 1 whereas “Don’t Know” answers were coded as missing.³⁰

In order to control for the norms of reciprocity alternative, I asked respondents how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: “We always have to return the favors that people have done for us”. Respondents were offered the following choices: strongly agree, more agreement than disagreement, more disagreement than agreement, strongly disagree. Those who answered strongly agree are coded as being subject to a

³⁰ It is possible to argue that the simple doubt about the secrecy of the ballot could be enough to generate incentives in favor of certain behavior. To take into account this possibility an alternative coding of the variable *Monitoring* where “Don’t Know” answers were coded as “Yes” was also tried. The results were substantively equivalent.

norm of reciprocity. This variable (*Reciprocity*) then takes the value of 1 if the respondent said she “strongly agree”, and zero otherwise. Most of the respondents (66percent) were coded as reciprocal individuals.³¹ Table 5.5 presents the regression results. The left panel presents the results for the perception of job stability experiment so the dependent variable ranges from 0 to 10. The right panel presents the results for the direction of change experiment so the dependent variable ranges from -1 to 1. For both cases, I corroborated the results with the two different measures of political support (*Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*).

³¹ The reason for coding as positive only the “strongly agree” responses was because the distribution of responses was extremely skewed. The distribution of responses was: 66% strongly agree, 20% more agreement than disagreement, 8% more disagreement than agreement and 6% strongly disagree. An alternative coding grouping the first two responses together was also tried but the nonreciprocal group ended up being too small to be able to obtain significant estimates for the list experiments.

Table 5.5: OLS analyses of the survey experiments

	Likelihood of staying in the job				Change for better or worse			
Treatment*	-1.05***	-1.38***			-0.20***	-0.22***		
Mayor Voter	(0.28)	(0.31)			(0.07)	(0.08)		
Treatment*			-0.71**	-0.72**			-0.26***	-0.25***
Mayor Party			(0.29)	(0.30)			(0.07)	(0.08)
Treatment	0.29	0.55**	-0.09	-0.06	-0.11**	-0.12*	-0.15***	-0.17***
	(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.16)	(0.18)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Mayor Voter	0.58***	0.66***			0.09*	0.11*		
	(0.21)	(0.22)			(0.05)	(0.06)		
Mayor Party			0.50**	0.46**			0.21***	0.21***
			(0.21)	(0.22)			(0.05)	(0.06)
Female	-0.01	0.01	-0.03	-0.02	0.02	-0.00	0.02	-0.00
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Age	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Salta	-0.54***	-0.54**	-0.52***	-0.51**	0.17***	0.18***	0.16***	0.17***
	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Santa Fe	-1.54***	-1.45***	-1.50***	-1.40***	0.08*	0.11**	0.09**	0.11**
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.18)	(0.20)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
College	0.08	-0.07	0.07	-0.08	-0.13***	-0.14***	-0.10**	-0.10**
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Tenure	2.50***	2.43***	2.44***	2.35***	-0.05	-0.06	-0.06	-0.07
	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Current Mayor	-1.05***	-0.91***	-0.99***	-0.87***	0.04	0.01	-0.00	-0.03
	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.20)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Monitoring		-0.06		-0.01		-0.01		-0.01
		(0.17)		(0.16)		(0.04)		(0.04)
Reciprocity		-0.20		-0.23		-0.03		-0.02
		(0.16)		(0.16)		(0.04)		(0.04)
Constant	7.35***	7.35***	7.48***	7.56***	0.29***	0.37***	0.32***	0.39***
	(0.39)	(0.43)	(0.37)	(0.40)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Observations	1,054	917	1,120	980	962	835	1,017	888
R-squared	0.36	0.35	0.34	0.32	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.09

Note: The left panel presents the results for the perception of job stability survey experiment; the right panel presents the results for the direction of change survey experiment. Recall that the survey experiment for likelihood of staying in the job is measured on a 0-10 scale; whereas the he direction of change is measured on a -1-1 scale. The results were substantively equivalent when using ordered probit so OLS results are reported for simplicity. The municipality of Tigre (the base category) was excluded. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The regression analyses confirm the results obtained from the difference in means analysis discussed in section 5.2. Indeed, even after controlling for confounding factors, Table 5.5 shows that being a supporter of the mayor (measured either as *Mayor Voter* or *Mayor Party*) conditions the average treatment effect in the predicted direction. Mayor supporters are both more afraid of losing their jobs and suffering chances for the worse if a new mayor from the opposition were to win the next election. Including controls for the belief about the secrecy of the ballot and about feelings of reciprocity does not substantively affect any of the main predictions. In fact, the coefficients on these two variables (*Monitoring* and *Reciprocity*) are not significant. The regression analyses then are consistent with the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in this dissertation and with the difference in means analyses conducted in section 5.2.

In sum, public sector employees seem to have strong incentives to help the mayor stay in power—specially his supporters (*Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*). Since they believe that a new mayor could have them fired or sidestepped, helping the current mayor remain in power is perfectly consistent with their own interests. As far as their personal interests are aligned with those of the mayor, there is no need for any type of selective incentive to be used by the mayor to “encourage” the employees to provide political services. However, some other employees might be in a different situation. In fact, some employees do not fear losing their jobs and some might even think that their situation would improve if the opposition won the next election. Moreover, we saw in chapters 3 and 4 that *some* non-supporters also provide political services (although to a lesser extent).³² For these types of

³² In particular, I show in chapter 3 (Section 3.4.2) that among those that did not identify with the party of the mayor, 16 percent helped with electoral campaigns (compare to 34 percent of supporters), 20 percent attended rallies (28 percent for supporters), and 37 percent (57 percent for supporters) provided favors

employees, it is hard to find the type of incentive alignment upon which the self-enforcing theory of patronage is constructed. The next section explores the incentives behind the political behavior of these *other types* of employees and examines in more detail the explanatory power of alternative theories.

5.4 Alternative Explanation I: Fear of Punishment

The following story provides a good example of the types of employees that might require some “encouragement”, as well as an example of a very subtle type of incentive. Laura, a tenured employee who had been working in one of the Peronist municipalities for more than 20 years, described to me what kind of activities they usually do around elections. She mentioned that, among other things, they are in charge of the organization and mobilization of rallies and, during election time, public employees often have to attend these rallies on weekends: “Some of us go. Sometimes they tell you, ‘You have to go,’ especially if it is in the area ... It is up to you whether you go or not, but if you need something later on ... if you have children and you need to be absent some other day....”³³

(chapter 4, section 4.4). In contrast, the percentage of non-supporters acting as electoral monitors was not distinguishable from zero, suggesting that in general non-supporters were not involved in this (particularly sensitive) activity.

³³ In some other cases, the requests for political services are more direct. A good example of this happened in Salta during the last (non-mandatory) primary election (January 2011). The mayor’s candidature was virtually uncontested (he won by 90% of the votes), but there was a strong competition in the race for seats in the City Council. An architect without a tenure contract told me about voting in Salta primaries: “Your boss comes with a list [paper ballot] and tells you where you are voting, he asks you if you will need transportation on the day of the election, and he gives you the party list that you have to vote for... Everyone under a temporary contract has to go to vote ... They don’t tell you directly, but the understanding is that voting is a requirement for the renewal of your contract.” (Personal interview, Salta, August 3 2011). Another employee also mentioned that temporary employees are “required” (“*obligados*”) to vote every time they are asked. On the Sunday of the 2011 election, she got a phone call to “remind” her that there was only one hour left to vote and that they were waiting for her; she went to vote (Personal interview, Salta, June 6 2011). Other interviews confirmed that during this election employees were asked to vote and lists with their names were

Besides helping with the organization of rallies, employees also helped before and during the day of the election (always a Sunday in Argentina). In the two weeks prior to the 2009 election, Laura and her co-workers were asked by their boss to take turns at the local Peronist office (*local partidario*) to help citizens with questions about the electoral register (typically to find out the address of their assigned voting booth). During the Sunday of the election, some employees worked as election monitors while others —like Laura— helped by delivering lunch to the partisan monitors. Interestingly, Laura had gotten the job at the municipality during the previous administration thanks to a relative that participated in politics with the Radical Party (one of the parties in the opposition). And today, she still identifies herself with the Radical Party, she is affiliated to that party, and had voted in the last Radical primary in 2010. However, as most people in her office, she contributes to the Peronist party campaigning during and after her working office hours.³⁴

So what about employees like Laura who were hired by the previous administration? Due to the tenure system, when a new mayor gets into office he is only able to appoint a limited number of employees. Only new employees could have been appointed by the incumbent mayor with the explicit or implicit understanding that they would provide political services in return for the job. What about the public employees that were hired by the previous administration? What about employees that identified with the opposition? We have seen in chapters 3 and 4 that some of them, like Laura, do in fact provide political services (although to a lesser extent than supporters). But there is no

handed by their bosses to party leaders. The day of the election those lists were used to control turnout (Various interviews with the author; Salta, June and August 2011). The strategy proved successful; 53 percent of the public sector employees interviewed in Salta reported voting in the 2011 primaries, compare to only 12 percent of turnout among the general population.

³⁴ Personal interview, Tigre, January 6 2011. Name was changed to ensure anonymity.

reason for them to be afraid of being fired if the administration changed (they have been longer in the job and they often have tenure) and they are also less likely to believe that things would be worse with a new mayor from a different party. In fact, as in the case of Laura, they might even support an opposition party. Therefore, it is hard to argue that *their* incentives are aligned with the incentives of the current mayor and that the self-enforcing theory of patronage can explain their behavior. What is the reason then for employees like Laura to provide political services?

In order to convince these types of employees—whose incentives are not aligned with the incentives of the mayor—to collaborate and provide political services for the mayor, the cost of non-collaboration needs to be increased. To make non-supporters help in the provision of favors, some “external” encouragement seems necessary. In this section, I show that *these types* of employees are sometimes motivated by fear of punishment or more subtly, as in the case of Laura, the loss of some benefits that comes with doing what the boss asks (even when it is not part of the job).

To test this prediction I used the question described above about the possibility of monitoring voting behavior and the list experiment estimates of political services from chapters 3 and 4. To estimate whether the provision of services is conditional on individual beliefs about the secrecy of the ballot I compare the political services list experiment estimates across the subgroup of respondent that believe the secrecy of the ballot can be violated and those that do not. Table 5.6 presents these results.³⁵

³⁵ Recall that the estimates for political services were obtained from a series of list experiments (embedded in the same survey) conducted in order to avoid social desirability bias and consequently improve the accuracy of the responses. See chapters 3 and 4 for more details.

Table 5.6: Believe the government/parties can find out about voting behavior

Believe	Yes	No	Differences in Effects		
	0.51*** (0.14) N=289	0.44*** (0.09) N=748	0.07 (0.17) N=1037	0.0002 (0.17) N=1037	0.01 (0.17) N=1030
Favors					
	0.19** (0.08) N=289	0.13** (0.05) N=742	0.07 (0.10) N=1031	0.01 (0.10) N=1031	0.01 (0.10) N=1025
Election Monitors					
	0.26*** (0.09) N=288	0.15** (0.06) N=739	0.11 (0.11) N=1027	0.13 (0.11) N=1027	0.13 (0.11) N=1021
Campaigns					
	0.36*** (0.12) N=287	0.18** (0.07) N=741	0.18 (0.13) N=1028	0.17 (0.13) N=1028	0.17 (0.13) N=1022
Political Rallies					
With Municipal Dummies			NO	YES	YES
Other Controls			NO	NO	YES

Note: Table reports estimated difference between treatment and control groups according to each of the four list experiments conditional on beliefs about the secrecy of the ballot. The last three columns report differences in effects. Last column includes the following controls: Age, Female, College and Mayor Party. A control for tenure was not included because it is highly correlated with Current Mayor; Mayor Voter was not included because it is highly correlated with Mayor Party. Standard errors in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Table 5.6 indicates that respondents who believe that the secrecy of the ballot can be violated (column 1) reported slightly higher proportions of all four political services than those who believe in the secrecy of the ballot (column 2), especially for the last two activities—attending rallies and helping with campaigns. In all four cases, though, the difference in effects is not significant.

However, as explained in chapter 2 by the self-enforcing theory of patronage and shown in the sections above, supporters (that are more likely to have been appointed by the current administration) provide political services because their incentives are aligned with those of the mayor. In contrast, the self-enforcing theory of patronage has little to

explain about the behavior of employees that were not chosen by the current administration. Employees appointed by previous administrations (or at least some of them) might be the ones subjected to the kind of encouragement or negative incentive that the theory of monitoring predicts. A closer look at the monitoring hypothesis would then consist of exploring the results according to whether the respondents were hired during the current administration or during previous ones. Figure 5.5 presents the results of this analysis.³⁶

³⁶ Table C5 in the Appendix C shows the exact numeric values within each subgroup.

Figure 5.5: Believe the government can find out about individual voting behavior

Note: Estimated difference between treatment and control groups according to the list experiments. Circles indicate the proportion of employees in each subgroup that performed the respective political service: black circles indicate employees that do not believe the secrecy of the ballot can be violated while white circles indicate those who believe it can be violated. The variable *Monitoring* is coded with “DK” answers as missing values. Horizontal black bars represent 95% confidence intervals and vertical lines represent 90% confidence intervals. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

The figure shows that believing that the secrecy of the ballot can be violated among employees hired by the previous administration has a small conditional effect (in the predicted direction) on the likelihood of providing at least one of the political services

studied here—namely attending rallies.³⁷ Among new employees (hired during the current administration) the difference in the proportion of the four political services provided is very similar across those who believe that voting is in fact secret and those who do not believe that. In other words, for employees appointed by the current administration—the ones whose behavior is explained by the self-enforcing theory of patronage—doubting the secrecy of the ballot has no conditional effect on their provision of services. For the employees that were hired by previous administrations, the difference between believing or not that voting is in fact secret seems to matter for one particular type of service—attending rallies. There also seems to be a small, though not significant, effect in the predicted direction for campaigns.

Note that the belief about the secrecy of the ballot both for new and old employees has no conditional effect on the two political services that are more difficult to monitor. Providing favors is—almost by definition— a very personalized activity that is very hard to monitor. Monitoring elections in Argentina, in turn, is a very sensitive activity that requires a loyal citizen that would be willing to defend the interest of the party or the candidate.³⁸ While being an election monitor is very visible and easy to monitor, the way public employees would behave in this role during the day of the election is very hard to monitor. It is not surprising then that politicians choose as monitors only those they can fully trust. Indicative of this argument is the fact that Laura— the employees from the opposition

³⁷ To be sure, it is important to note that believing or not in the secrecy of the ballot it is not correlated with either of the measures of support for the mayor (*Mayor Voter* and *Mayor Party*). The only characteristic of respondents that seem to be correlated with believing or not in the secrecy of the ballot is education. Surprisingly, more educated people are more likely to believe that the government or the political parties can find out about individual voting behavior. See Table C6 in Appendix C.

³⁸ See chapter 3 for a description of the activities that monitors are in charged in Argentinean elections and a discussion of their importance.

whose participation in political activities was described at the beginning of this section—was in charged of delivering food to the monitors during the 2009 election, and not acting as an election monitor herself.

The other two activities are easier to monitor and do not require the same level of loyalty as being an election monitor. Among old employees that believe that the secrecy of the ballot can be violated, 31 percent (significant at the 95%) reported having helped with the electoral campaign during the last election whereas only 11 percent (non significant) of those that believe voting is in fact secret reported having helped with the campaign. While, this 21 percentage points difference between both groups is non-significant, it is considerably bigger than the difference between those that believe in the secrecy of the ballot and those that do not for new employees (3 non-significant percentage points in the opposite direction).

Consistent with what we know from the existing literature, the bigger (and the only significant) effect is found for participating in political rallies. Among old employees that believe that voting is not secret, 46 percent (significant at the 99%) reported having attended a political rally during the last election, compared to a non-significant 13 percent for those who believe that voting is in fact secret. The 33 percentage points difference between both groups is significant at the 95% level and it remains significant even after controlling for age, sex, education and party identification (see Table C5 in Appendix C). In contrast, among new employees the difference is a non-significant six percentage points in the opposite direction.

Indeed, qualitative work has pointed out that public employees and beneficiaries of social welfare programs are often expected to turn out to rallies (Auyero 2000, Szwarcberg 2009). How these “expectations” translate into people actually attending a political rally might vary. Sometimes, “‘gratitude’ goes without saying because it almost always comes without asking. [...] On a few occasions, attendance is explicitly required. Yet such requests are seldom phrased as orders, obligations; rather, they are usually phrased as invitations” (Auyero 2000, 161). On other occasions, attendance to rallies is strictly monitored. According to Szwarcberg (2009, 15), brokers use lists with the names of “machine members, beneficiaries of welfare programs, public employees, neighborhood community organizers, and party activists whose problems they have solved, are solving, or are thinking about solving in the future. Everyone who had come to ask for help or who had been offered assistance without asking is on these lists and is expected to be at the rally” (see also Zarazaga 2012).

My own research also suggests that public employees are often taken to rallies by local authorities during and after their working hours. As a 35 year old telephone operator from Salta told me, the last time she attended a rally was when a councilman from the mayor’s party started his mandate: “They brought us from here (the municipality) ... they told us we *had* to support him.”³⁹ To get a handle at this issue, respondents were asked if they had attended a rally in the last three months and who did they go with to that rally (or the last one they attended if they reported attending more than one). Consistent with the

³⁹ Personal interview, Salta, June 15 2011.

evidence presented here, among the 280 respondents that reported attending a rally in the previous three months, 41 percent reported attending it with co-workers.⁴⁰

5.5 Alternative Explanation II: Norms of Reciprocity

In contrast to the self-enforcing theory of patronage developed in chapter 2 and the monitoring theory just discussed, others have argued that clientelistic contracts are sustained on norms of reciprocity (Finan and Schechter 2012; Lawson and Greene 2012; Scott 1972). From this perspective, clients behave according to their patrons' wishes out of a sense of gratitude. In the particular case under study here, this means that public employees provide political services to the mayor out of gratitude for getting the job. According to this theory then, employees who believe in norms of reciprocity *and* who own their jobs to the current mayor should be more involved in the provision of political services.

To test this theory I used respondent's level of agreement with the following statement: "We always have to return the favors that people have done for us". Those who answered strongly agree are coded as being subject to a norm of reciprocity (coded 1), and zero otherwise. To study whether the provision of services is conditional on respondent's levels of reciprocity I compare the political services list experiment estimates from chapters 3 and 4 across reciprocal and non-reciprocal groups of individuals, among those hired during the current administration. Table 5.7 presents these comparisons.

⁴⁰Once again, recall that the survey instrument had to be approved by the local authorities so a direct question about whether employees were "forced" into attending rallies was not possible so all the evidence presented in this section is indirect.

Table 5.7: Political services by reciprocity, for employees hired during current administration

Believe	Strongly Agree	Other answers	Differences in Effects		
	0.44*** (0.13) N=356	0.68*** (0.18) N=177	-0.24 (0.22) N=533	-0.15 (0.22) N=533	-0.05 (0.22) N=529
Favors					
Election Monitors	0.29*** (0.08) N=352	0.13 (0.11) N=177	0.16 (0.14) N=529	0.22* (0.14) N=529	0.21 (0.14) N=526
Campaigns	0.28*** (0.09) N=351	0.04 (0.12) N=176	0.24 (0.16) N=527	0.18 (0.15) N=527	0.16 (0.15) N=524
Political Rallies	0.32*** (0.12) N=352	-0.04 (0.14) N=177	0.37* (0.19) N=529	0.34* (0.18) N=529	0.23 (0.18) N=526
Municipal dummies			NO	YES	YES
Other Controls			NO	NO	YES

Note: Table reports estimated difference between treatment and control groups according to each of the four list experiments conditional on beliefs about the secrecy of the ballot. Last three columns report differences in effects. Last column includes the following controls: Age, Female, College and Mayor Party. A control for tenure was not included because it is highly correlated with Current Mayor; Mayor Voter was not included because it is highly correlated with Mayor Party. Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 5.7 shows that for some activities—attending rallies, helping with campaigns and monitoring elections—agreeing with the reciprocity statement is correlated with providing more political services. Surprisingly, the opposite seems to be true for the provision of favors. However, the differences in effects between those who strongly agree with the statement mentioned above and those who do not are only significant at the 90 percent level for attending political rallies, and even for this activity the difference lose its significance once other controls (age, sex, education, party identification) are included.⁴¹ In fact, the answer to the reciprocity question is correlated with many of the other variables

⁴¹ Table C7 in Appendix C shows the correlation between the answer to the reciprocity question and other relevant variables (age, gender, time of hiring, type of contract, support for the mayor and education).

that the self-enforcing theory of patronage states as the more relevant to explain the provision of political services. More importantly, reciprocal individuals tend to be supporters (both measured as *Mayor Party* and *Mayor Voter*) and less educated.

In sum, although there seem to be a positive correlation between strongly agreeing with the reciprocity statement and the provision of at least some of the political services, the difference in effects between reciprocal and non-reciprocal respondents are not significant once other controls are included.

5.6 Robustness check

Finally, as with any other project with a limited geographic scope, there could be concerns about whether these results would apply to other settings. Recall, however, that the three municipalities chosen for the project were very different both politically and economically, making it more likely that a theory that applies to all three municipalities would also apply to other places. Table 5.8 presents once again the main results for mayor supporters—*Mayor Voters* and *Mayor Party*—divided by municipality for the two survey experiments discussed in section 5.2.

Table 5.8: Political services list-experiment estimates conditional on being a supporter, across municipalities

		Likelihood of staying in the job			Change for better or worse		
		No	Yes	Difference in Effects	No	Yes	Difference in Effects
SALTA	Mayor voters	1.37**	-0.49*	1.86***	-0.27*	-0.20**	-0.07
		(0.57)	(0.27)	(0.64)	(0.15)	(0.07)	(0.16)
	Mayor Party	N=65	N=278	N=343	N=57	N=261	N=318
		0.34	-0.53	0.87*	-0.10	-0.30***	0.20*
SANTA FE	Mayor voters	(0.37)	(0.32)	(0.49)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.12)
		N=163	N=192	N=355	N=156	N=171	N=327
	Mayor Party	0.20	-0.98*	1.18*	-0.02	-0.26**	0.24**
		(0.45)	(0.56)	(0.71)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.11)
TIGRE	Mayor voters	N=219	N=164	N=383	N=202	N=148	N=350
		-0.47	0.18	-0.64	-0.11*	-0.23	0.12
	Mayor Party	(0.38)	(0.81)	(0.93)	(0.06)	(0.17)	(0.15)
		N=326	N=65	N=391	N=296	N=61	N=357
TIGRE	Mayor voters	0.01	-1.40***	1.41***	-0.17*	-0.51***	0.34**
		(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.49)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.12)
	Mayor Party	N=133	N=205	N=338	N=122	N=181	N=303
		-0.15	-2.16***	2.02***	-0.22***	-0.69***	0.47***
TIGRE	Mayor voters	(0.23)	(0.52)	(0.49)	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.13)
		N=275	N=110	N=385	N=249	N=94	N=343

Two-sample t-test with unequal variance.

Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results by municipality presented in Table 5.8 are broadly consistent with the ones obtained when pulling the three municipalities together. A partial exception is the municipality of Santa Fe when measuring support with the *Mayor Party* variable in the stability survey experiment and the municipality of Salta when measuring support with the *Mayor Voter* variable in the change experiment. In both cases, the coefficient for the difference in effects estimation has the opposite sign (although is not significant) to the one predicted by the theory and obtained for the whole sample. Note, however, that in both

cases, the reduced sample sizes caused by the limited number of employees from the party of the mayor in Santa Fe (65 respondents) and employees that did not report voting for the mayor in Salta (57 respondents) make the estimation more difficult. Similarly, in Santa Fe when measuring support for the mayor with the *Mayor Party* variable in the change experiment, the result is not significant (although the sign of the coefficient is as expected).

5.7 Conclusion

The theory developed in chapter 2 proposed a novel explanation for the sustainability of patronage contracts. By treating both patrons and clients—in this case, public employees—as active agents with clear individual interests, it departs from existing explanations based either on feelings of reciprocity or fear of punishment. According to the self-enforcing theory of patronage, public sector employees provide political services to the mayor because they believe that it is on their best interest to keep the incumbent mayor in power. In this way, the commitment problem that arise in patronage contracts because of the non-simultaneity of the exchange of public jobs for political services disappears because of the alignment of interests between the mayor and the patronage employees.

In this chapter, I have used two survey experiments embedded in an original survey of public employees to test the main empirical predictions of this theory. The results of both experiments strongly support the self-enforcing theory of patronage and draw attention to the interests and strategic behavior of clients, rather than treating them as non-strategic actors, overly driven by short-term responses to the actions of patrons. Public employees who support the mayor, either measured as self-reported voting

behavior or as identification with the party of the mayor, are more afraid of losing their jobs or things changing for the worse if a new mayor from the opposition were to be elected.

Once we take into account the incentive alignment predicted by the self-enforcing theory of patronage, the role of monitoring and punishment is limited to certain types of employees and certain type of services. Employees hired by previous administrations, often from a different party than the current mayor, have no fear of losing their jobs or experiencing changes for the worse if a new mayor from a different party gets into power. For these types of employees, it is hard to find the type of incentive alignment upon which the self-enforcing theory of patronage is constructed. However, as shown in chapters 3 and 4, *some* of them still provide certain political services (although to a lesser extent than supporters). In this chapter, I provide some indirect evidence that their behavior might be explained by the fear of punishment theory, only for those services that are highly visible and easy to monitor. Finally, I find no evidence in support of the theory that employees provide political services because of a norm of reciprocity or deference.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

This dissertation has set out to answer two main questions: *what* do public sector employees do that affects electoral competition and *why* do they do it. In the preceding chapters, I have argued that public employees under patronage contracts provide political services to the patron that hires them. These diverse political services—attending rallies, helping with campaigns, monitoring elections, and granting favors, just to mention the ones studied in this dissertation— are essential for obtaining and maintaining electoral support. The ability that some incumbents enjoy in contexts of weak civil service systems to distribute public sector jobs to those that would provide political services yields incumbents with a very powerful electoral tool.

Patronage contracts, however, are risky. Since the exchange of the job for political support is not simultaneous and the law cannot be used to enforce such agreements, defection and betrayal are always a possibility. In this dissertation, I have focused on the commitment problems that arise from the non-simultaneity of the exchange when the public sector job is distributed with the expectation of obtaining political support from the client in the future. A citizen who receives a public sector job with the implicit or explicit understanding that she will provide political services in return can easily renege on her side of the agreement *after* getting the job. Why would public sector employees comply with their side of the patronage agreement *after* receiving the benefit of the job?

This dissertation suggests a novel explanation for why public sector employees (the clients) comply with their side of the patronage contract even after obtaining the job from the politician (the patron). Departing from existing explanations, the self-enforcing theory of patronage posits that public employees comply with their side of the agreement because they believe that their fates are tied to the political fate of their patron. Patrons do not need to monitor clients and threaten to punish non-compliers. To make patronage contracts work, politicians only need to be able to screen supporters from non-supporters and distribute patronage contracts only to the former. When patronage jobs are distributed to supporters, patronage contracts are self-sustaining. This is the case because only supporters—whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politician that hired them—can credibly commit to provide political support in the future. Patronage jobs and working conditions held by perceived supporters will be maintained by the incumbent politician (their patron) but not by a competing politician (because supporters of the incumbent cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). Once perceived as a supporter of the incumbent politician, patronage employees have low expectations of keeping their jobs and working conditions if the opposition were to win.

The *actual* firing or demotion of public employees may happen only rarely, in certain very specific places, or for certain types of employees. Nonetheless, the fact that employees believe in this possibility is enough of an incentive to support their patron. When something as valuable as one's livelihood is at stake, clients might be less willing to take the risk of being wrong. Supporters then have large incentives to provide political services to help their patron to stay in power. In other words, when supporters get the patronage jobs, patronage contracts are incentive-compatible and the commitment

problem associated with the non-simultaneity of the exchange disappears. Supporters with patronage jobs understand that it is in their best interest to provide political services to help the incumbent politician remain in power and this alignment of interests between patrons and clients makes patronage contracts self-sustaining.

The empirical evidence provided in chapters 3, 4 and 5 is consistent with this theory. The list and survey experiment results show that supporters are indeed more likely to be involved in the provision of political services and that they are more afraid than non-supporters of losing their jobs or suffering negative changes in working conditions with a change in administration. Once we take into account the incentive alignment predicted by the self-enforcing theory of patronage, the role of monitoring and punishment is limited to certain types of employees and certain type of services. Employees hired by previous administrations, often from a different party of the current mayor, have no fear of losing their jobs or experiencing changes for the worse if a new mayor from a different party gets into power. For these types of employees, it is hard to find the type of incentive alignment upon which the self-enforcing theory of patronage is constructed. The theory of reciprocity, in turn, finds very weak support in the data.

The empirical results from the three Argentinean municipalities included in this dissertation provide strong evidence in support of the self-enforcing theory of patronage. But can the theory developed in this dissertation help to explain the functioning of patronage appointments in other places? While I do not have the data to test the theory systematically in other countries, this section presents additional evidence from Latin America as an out of sample test of the theory and to provide more confidence about the external validity of the argument. I draw attention to a series of patterns found in other

Latin American countries that are consistent with the self-enforcing theory of patronage, increasing the likelihood of the portability of the theory and the findings of this dissertation. In the following pages I describe the remarkably weak Latin American civil service systems and provide evidence that, in line with the empirical implications of my theory of patronage, there is partisan bias in hiring decisions and patronage employees have good reasons to fear losing their jobs or suffering negative changes in their working conditions with a new administration.

6.1 Beyond the Argentine Case

As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, patronage is a widespread phenomenon that has been found in countries all over the world. Scholars have found patronage appointments in settings as diverse as Italy (Chubb 1981, 1982; Golden 2003), Greece (Papakostas 2001; Pappas 2009), the United States (Banfield and Wilson 1963; Folke et al. 2011; Johnston 1979; Wolfinger 1972), Bulgaria, Hungary and the Czech Republic (Kopecký and Spirova 2011), Nigeria (Bratton 2008), and Ghana and South Africa (Kopecký 2011), among others. However, the mere fact that patronage jobs exist beyond Argentina does not constitute evidence that the theory developed in this dissertation helps us understand how patronage actually *works* in other places. In this section, I describe some characteristics of the functioning of Latin American public administrations that are key for the theory developed here. Certainly, I am not claiming that the self-enforcing theory of patronage can explain the way patronage works in all the countries mentioned above, nor can it probably explain all Latin American cases. The goal of this section is to provide

evidence that the empirical implications of the self-enforcing theory of patronage are compatible with patterns observed beyond the three municipalities studied in the previous chapters.

According to the argument advanced in this dissertation, patronage jobs are disproportionately distributed to supporters (because only they can credibly commit to provide political support), whose fates are tied to the political fate of the politicians that hire them. Patronage employees believe that their jobs and working conditions will be maintained by the incumbent but not by a competing politician (because incumbents' supporters cannot credibly commit to provide political services for the opposition). Supporters then have large incentives to provide political services to help the incumbent stay in power, which makes their original commitment to provide political services credible. Even supporters that cannot be fired (those with tenure) believe that they might suffer negative consequences on their working conditions with a new administration.

Certainly, a weak civil service system is a precondition for any theory of patronage. The theory developed here is a theory about the commitment issues associated with patronage contracts but these types of contracts are only possible in contexts of weak or non-existent civil service systems—like the ones found in many Latin American countries. The argument does not carry much explanatory power in contexts with strict regulations about hiring and firing, where appointments to public jobs are fully based on merit and dismissals are only a product of bad performance. However, the absence of a strong civil service system does not in itself imply that, as predicted by my theory of patronage, there is partisan bias in the distribution of jobs or that patronage employees are afraid of losing

their jobs or of suffering negative changes in working conditions with a new administration.

Two other practices found in Latin American public administrations are consistent with the main empirical implications of the theory: partisan bias in hiring decisions and fear of negative changes (turnover of public employees in the extreme cases) with new administrations. In this section, after providing a general description of Latin American civil service systems, I rely on secondary literature to show that political hiring does happen and that public employees have good reasons to fear a change in the administration.

Latin American Weak Civil Service Systems All Latin American countries have constitutionally recognized career public services and laws that institute these systems (Iacoviello 2006). These systems recognize the legitimacy of some political appointments for high-level positions (as in all countries), often institute tenure rights for the rest of the employees, and in many cases mandate the selection of these (non-political) employees on the basis of merit. Many countries in the region have introduced rules about merit-based competition for recruitment of new employees, but implementation has been haphazard in most cases (Iacoviello 2006; Longo 2006a; Zuvanic et al. 2010). In practice, in most Latin American countries, civil service systems co-exist with political criteria for hiring, firing, and promotions (Grindle 2012; Iacoviello 2006).

In 2006, the IDB conducted an evaluation of civil services in 18 Latin American countries (Echevarría 2006) according to which Latin American public administrations can be classified in three main groups based on their level of professionalization. In some Latin

American countries, particularly in Central America (with the exception of Costa Rica), hiring occurs only through political connections. The partisan bias in recruitment is so widespread that in some of the countries in this group it is possible to guess the partisan affiliation of public employees based on the year they were hired (Iacoviello 2006). In others—among them Argentina—some formal criteria for the selection and promotion of employees based on merit exists but it is poorly implemented and co-exists with political criteria. Finally, other countries—Brazil and Chile—have solid merit systems for the recruitment and promotion of public employees (Iacoviello 2006; Zuvanic et al. 2010).¹

Figure 6.1 reproduces the findings on merit criteria of the IDB study. It is based on an index that measures the extent to which “objective, technical, and professional procedures exist and are followed to recruit, select, promote, compensate and dismiss employees” (Zuvanic et al. 2010, 152). Low values on the 0 to 100 scale indicate the absence of merit criteria while high values indicate the use of this criteria.

¹The mechanisms for hiring and firing (meritocratic or politicized) are not the only characteristics of civil service systems that are important to establish the professionalization of the public administration and the strength of the civil service system. Other characteristics such as functional capacity or flexibility are also important. However, the present or absence of merit criteria for hiring and firing is the most important characteristic of civil service systems for the theory developed in this dissertation.

Figure 6.1: Merit index in Latin American countries

Source: Echevarría 2006

As Figure 6.1 clearly shows the merit index indicates that the institutionalized use of merit criteria for selection, promotion and dismissal of Latin American public sector employees is infrequent. The average for the region is 33 points (out of 100), ranging from 2 points for Panama to 87 points for Brazil. Argentina, with 52 points, is considered to be among the countries with intermediate development of civil service (together with Colombia, Uruguay, Mexico, and Venezuela), where merit-based practices co-exist with political patronage (Iacoviello 2006; Zuvanic et al. 2010).

Several common practices explain the gap between the existence of legally recognized civil service systems in all Latin America countries and the reality described by

the IDB index (Grindle 2012).² The most obvious way to maintain the patronage system is “simple failure to observe laws and regulations” (Grindle 2012, 150). For instance, in Guatemala, the civil service law was passed in 1968 but its regulatory framework was only put in place in 1998 (Iacoviello 2006). In El Salvador, the civil service law (1961) was modified several times, but the regulatory framework was never established (Iacoviello 2006; Iturburu 2012a). In Venezuela, the civil service law was passed in 1975 and the regulatory framework was put in place in 2002, almost thirty years later (Iacoviello 2006).

Another common mechanism used to maintain the discretion in hiring—in this case, without contravening civil-service laws and regulations— is the widespread use of temporary appointments. The systematic use of temporary contracts gives governments the advantage of avoiding, not only restrictions on recruitment, but often the tenure system as well, giving politicians more autonomy to both hire and fire. And, of course, temporary employees have more to fear with a new administration—permanent employees might be afraid of a negative change in working conditions with a new administration, but temporary employees could lose their jobs. Recall that one of the empirical implications of the theory developed in this dissertation is that temporary employees that support the politician in power will be more enthusiastic collaborators than those who enjoy tenure rights. Having so much to lose works as a strong incentive to provide political services to try to keep their patrons in power. The proportion of temporary employees then is an important characteristic of public administrations with significant impact on the predictions of the theory. And, as the examples below show, the use of temporary contracts is a very popular practice among Latin American administrations.

² See Grindle 2012, pages 227-239 for a detailed description and examples of these practices.

For instance, in El Salvador, the only reform that was introduced to change the Civil Service Law (1961) was conducted in the 1990s to deal with the situation of temporary employees that constituted 40 percent of the total personnel at that time (Longo 2006a).³ By 2012 the number of temporary contracts in the national administration was reduced to 21 percent, but public enterprises and decentralized agencies still had 37.5 percent of their employees under these contracts (Iturburu 2012a). In Peru, about 40 percent of public sector employees work under temporary contracts; while in Dominican Republic a quarter of public employees is on such contracts (Iacoviello 2006). In Argentina, Honduras, and Uruguay the proportion of temporary employees is about 15 percent, but there is significant variation across areas to the extent that some agencies have more temporary than tenured employees (Iacoviello 2006).⁴

Note that the merit index discussed above is based on a general assessment of the national civil services, but there is significant variation across different agencies and levels of government. Different types of bureaucracies can exist within the same country (Gingerich 2006, forthcoming; Zuvanic et al. 2010), and lower levels of the administration (provinces and municipalities) are usually more politicized. For instance, in Argentina, the Central Bank is considered an institution where meritocratic principles prevail over political ones in the process of hiring, firing, and promotions.⁵ The national bureaucracy, in

³ Since 2004, the year when the research for the IDB report was conducted, the Salvadorian Civil Service Law was modified many more times, but no regulatory framework has yet been passed (Iturburu 2012a).

⁴ For instance, in Uruguay, in 2004, the Ministry of Transportation had 85 percent of its employees under temporary contracts; while the Ministry of Tourism had 50 percent (Iacoviello 2006).

⁵ All Latin American countries, even the ones with the weakest meritocratic systems, have areas of the administration that are more professionalized. For instance, the Ministry of Commerce and Production in Venezuela, the Customs Office in Bolivia, and the Secretary of Labor, the Administration and Personnel National Office (ONAP), the Comptroller General's Office, and the Supreme Court in Dominican Republic

turn, is considered to be in an intermediate level where political and meritocratic criteria co-exist, often unevenly, across sectors. And, at the other end of the spectrum, provincial and municipal bureaucracies are often considered to be the more politicized (Zuñiga et al. 2010). Even a country that ranks high on its use of meritocratic criteria at the national administration like Chile, has regional and municipal administrations where the discretionary criteria is more pronounced (Calvo and Murillo 2012; Leyton Navarro 2006).

Partisan Bias in Hiring and Firing

A quote from Grindle (2012, 151-152) provides a vivid illustration of the functioning of (at least some) Latin American administrations:

“Many of the patronage systems in Latin America resembled the kind of electoral partisanship and rotation in office founded in the United States in the nineteenth century. With each election, even when the same party was returned to office, jobs were lost, shifted and allocated to party stalwarts who had been helpful in winning the election. Frequently, the first year of a new administration was one in which little was accomplished other than recruiting personnel and making plans for new initiatives. Similarly, the final year of an administration, taking place in an election year, was often a time of poor performance as officials engaged widely in electoral mobilization or worked to establish alliances to ensure they could find jobs after the election.”

Finding direct evidence of political bias in hiring decisions is not easy. As discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, systematic data on patronage is very hard to find and generate. However, some Latin American administrations are so politicized that there is little doubt about the political bias in hiring decisions. For instance, according to a survey

(Longo 2006a). See also Gingerich (forthcoming) for more examples and evidence of within country variation in the cases of Bolivia, Brazil, and Chile.

conducted in 2008 in the Dominican Republic's public administration, 70 percent of hires are based on recommendations and political influence (Iacoviello 2009a). In Panama, only 18 percent of the national public administration is considered to be formally part of the public administration (*acreditado*), the rest of the public administration is subjected to discretionary appointments and dismissals (Longo 2006b). In El Salvador, the law gives priority to internal candidates when there is an opening, and only when this process fails the law stipulates the call for an open competition. In reality, open competitions are never called and internal competitions are politicized (Iacoviello 2006).

The strong politicization of hiring decisions "reinforces the process," generating strong incentives for new incumbents to hire new, more loyal employees. Each new administration has "reasons to have no confidence in the competence and loyalty of employees appointed by previous administrations," which in turn motivates the appointment of new bureaucrats (Iacoviello 2006, 544). Where employees can be easily fired, this search for loyal employees might translate in high rates of turnover with each change in the administration. Since many Latin American countries guarantee job stability for public employees, the distrust on old employees that cannot be fired end up often generating "parallel bureaucracies" of new, more responsive, employees. As a result of this practice of sidestepping employees hired by previous administrations, working conditions of the old employees might suffer considerably.

The fear of suffering negative changes or even losing one's job with a new administration seems to be a reasonable expectation in many Latin American countries. For instance, in Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru, there is mass replacement of public employees with each change of administration (Iacoviello 2006;

Zuñiga et al. 2010). In Panama, during Mireya Moscoso's administration, about twenty-five thousand public employees were fired and replaced with supporters (Longo, 2006b). And this was not an exception since high instability and the turnover generated with each change in the administration have been present in Panama's public administration for a long time (Strazza 2012). In the Dominican Republic, about three thousand civil servant (*funcionarios de la Carrera Administrativa*) that were supposed to be under the protection of the tenure system lost their jobs in 2004 as a result of a change in the administration (Longo 2006b). In Guatemala, labor unions and NGOs estimate that massive firings (*barridas*) with changes in administration affect between 20 and 30 percent of the administration (Iturburu 2012b). I am certainly not claiming that the turnover of public personnel is something that happens every time, or to a majority of workers with each change in the administration. However, the fact that it occurs frequently might be enough to affect the behavior of employees. To the extent that being fired is a plausible expectation, it does not need to happen to many people or too often. The mere possibility of losing one's job (or suffering negative changes) with a new administration might be enough to affect the behavior of patronage employees.

6.2 Exploring Three "Other" Cases

Can the self-enforcing theory of patronage help explain patronage appointments in other countries in Latin America? In this section, I draw on secondary evidence from three cases to show in more detail that the patterns found in the three municipalities studied in this dissertation are also present in other settings. In each case—following the structure from

section 6.1—, I describe the strengths and weaknesses of the civil service system and I provide evidence that, in line with the empirical implications of the self enforcing theory of patronage, there is partisan bias in hiring decisions and patronage employees have good reasons to fear losing their jobs or suffer negative changes in their working conditions with a new administration. I first present evidence from Argentina to show that the three municipalities chosen were not outliers, but representative of the patterns found in the rest of the country. Then I focus on two countries, one considered to have a widely politicized bureaucracy—Bolivia— and one considered to have a bureaucracy that is closer to the meritocratic, Weberian ideal—Chile.

Argentina At the outset of the 1990s, the majority of Argentinean national public employees were appointed by discretion and obtained tenure after one year of service (Grindle 2012). There was no meritocratic system of recruitment in place but—since the Constitution of 1949/1957 (Article 14bis)— job stability was constitutionally guaranteed for public employees, limiting the extent of personnel turnover when administrations changed.⁶ As a result, many employees could be brought into the system through patronage, but remained on the public sector through a system of tenure (Grindle 2012). In 1991 a new civil service career system was introduced, creating SINAPA (*Sistema Nacional de la Profesión Administrativa*). Among the main characteristics of the reform was the introduction of open competitions and meritocratic criteria for hiring and promotions.⁷

⁶The 1949 Constitution (passed during Perón's presidency) was largely ignored during the 1957 reform, which based the new text on the 1853 Constitution. The one notable exception was Article 14 bis, guaranteeing job stability for public employees, which was carried over from the 1949 Constitution.

⁷Together with the civil service reform and other market-oriented reforms introduced in the 1990s, the national administration was downsized massively, reducing the number of public employees from 347,000 to 200,000 (Grindle 2012, 187). Local administrations were not affected (Gibson and Calvo 2000).

The system had a good start and by 1999, 25 percent of the total national administration had been recruited under the new rules (Ferraro 2012).

However, the new civil service system introduced by the 1991 reform was not an obstacle to “massive political appointments a few years thereafter” (Ferraro 2011, 172). By 2007, the percentage of SINAPA employees in the national administration was reduced to 17 percent (Ferraro 2012, 170), and by the end of 2000s the system “had been largely pushed to the margin” by a resurgence of patronage appointments (Grindle 2012, 215; Iacoviello and Zuvanic 2006a).⁸ Moreover, as pointed out by Calvo and Murillo (2012) the establishment of SINAPA was simultaneous to the growth of local administrations to which SINAPA did not apply (see also Gibson and Calvo 2000). At the national level, different types of temporary contracts were used to avoid civil service regulations. The widespread use of temporary contracts to bypass the system ended up creating a parallel bureaucracy of temporary employees (Ferraro 2011; Grindle 2012; Iacoviello and Zuvanic 2006a). Given the variety of these contracts, it is hard to estimate with precision the extent of their use, estimations vary from 19 percent in 2001 (Calvo and Murillo 2012), 14 percent in 2002 (excluding military, security, education and health, Bambaci et al. 2007) and around 15 percent in 2006 (Iacoviello 2006).⁹ Moreover, there is significant variation across agencies and temporary contracts are used more widely at the local level.¹⁰ Regardless of

⁸ See Grindle (2012, 215-216) for a description of the variety of mechanisms that were used to bypass the civil service system.

⁹ The source of the data in Calvo and Murillo (2012) is a survey conducted in 2001 (SIEMPRO), which has the advantage of capturing all the different types of temporary contracts used in Argentina (including free-lance contracts and internships) that are usually under-reported by the authorities.

¹⁰ At the end of 2004, the Argentine Ministry of Social Welfare had 302 permanent employees and 1054 employees on temporary contracts, the Ministry of Economics had 2104 permanent employees and 1123 temporary, and the Ministry of Education had 885 permanent employees and 778 temporary (Iacoviello 2006). At the time of writing these pages, early 2013, a newspaper denounced that the Ministry of Labor in

the initial type of contract, many “off-schedule” employees are regularly eligible for tenure after some time in service (Grindle 2012; Scherlis 2009).¹¹

Systematic direct evidence of partisan bias in hiring decisions is hard to obtain, but a nationally representative survey conducted in 2007 by Calvo and Murillo (forthcoming) provides some convincing indicators. They show that proximity to party activists of the two main Argentinean parties (UCR and PJ) is a statistically significant predictor of a respondent’s expectation of receiving a public sector job. And the effect is strong: knowing one standard deviation more activists than the prevalence rate increases the expectation of being offered a job in the public sector by around nine percent for the PJ and five percent for the UCR. Moreover, the percentage of respondents (among the general population) that estimates their probability of obtaining a public sector job as a result of the election as very likely is about five percent for the PJ and three percent for the UCR.

Massive firings with changes in the administration for political reasons are not common in the national administration (Iacoviello and Zuvanic 2006a) but individual examples are still possible to find, especially for local administrations that are generally more politicized than the national administration. For instance, when the new Peronist mayor of Merlo (Buenos Aires province) assumed office in 1989 (Raúl Othacehé), 1200

Argentina had 65 percent of its employees on temporary contracts (*La Nación*, “En Trabajo, el 65% de los empleados son contratados,” January 21, 2013). At the local level, according to the head and the director of the personnel office in Tigre (Buenos Aires), municipalities in that area usually have an equal number of permanent and temporary employees (Personal Interview, Tigre, July 15 2010). Also, recall the number of employees with temporary contracts in the municipalities studied in the empirical chapters of this dissertation range from 80 percent in Tigre, to 40 percent in Santa Fe and 25 percent in Salta.

¹¹ Since 1992, public sector labor legislation stipulates annual negotiations over salaries and benefits with the unions. These annual meetings provide the setting for the unions to bargain over contracts, which make tenure rights more likely to many workers hired under short-term contracts that did not originally entitled tenure rights (not even after a year) (Grindle 2012). It has also been argued that tenure rights were distributed to temporary workers in reward of demonstrated loyalty (Calvo and Murillo 2012).

public employees (supporters of the old mayor) lost their jobs, despite the fact that the previous mayor was also a Peronist (O'Donnell 2005).¹² Another interesting example is described in Stokes et al. (2012). In this case the turnover of public employees was not caused by a lost election but by a divorce. In Córdoba, the Peronist Juan Manuel de la Sota was elected governor in 1999 and reelected in 2003; his wife Olga Riutort was put in charge of the Secretary of Government. When they divorced in 2005, one thousand people lost their jobs (as reported by a broker from Riutort's faction in an interview).

More often, employees hired by previous administrations are not fired but ignored, demoted, or bypassed. Since employees are routinely hired discretionally by the administration in power and then locked in their positions with permanent contracts, politicians do not trust employees hired by previous administrations (Bambaci et al. 2007; Ferraro 2011; Scherlis 2009). An interview cited by Ferraro (2011, 162) with a minister from President De La Rúa's administration (1999-2001) describing his organizational strategy illustrates this point:

"The received administrative units [...] were either eliminated (dissolved in the organizational chart) or 'neutralized' (not given any substantial work at all). Policy initiatives were placed under the responsibility of new units called programs, managed and staffed entirely with political appointees. The minister defended this strategy with two arguments: a) each new administration requires new bureaucratic structures and personnel to carry put its policies; b) career civil servants remained loyal to the former administration because, in fact, they were political appointees

¹² Ironically, the previous mayor (Gustavo Green), when the relationship between him and Othacehé was good, distributed public sector jobs to Othacehé's supporters (following a request from Othacehé) in order to finance their work during the campaign (see O'Donnell 2006, 165).

and the previous open competitions to fill these posts were mere simulations.”

This testimony shows one of the sources of politicians’ distrust of public employees in the Argentinean administration: “a lack of loyalty resulting from the fact that permanent bureaucrats are political appointees—of the previous administration—in disguise” (Ferraro 2011, 162).¹³ Note that this distrust for employees appointed by previous administrations and the consequent hiring of new, more loyal ones can serve very different purposes. As discussed in chapter 2, political appointments can help to solve basic problems of delegation and control. Politicians want to appoint bureaucrats that will implement their preferred policies and hiring loyal employees—more responsive to their bosses— is one way of trying to achieve that goal.¹⁴ But, of course, the search for more responsive employees might also be associated with the types of political services that are the focus of this dissertation as well as other types of “services,” like enabling or tolerating corruption (both for personal and political gains), and different forms of particularistic distribution such as clientelism and pork barrel.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the practice of bypassing the merit system and sidestepping the permanent bureaucracy has become standard practice in Argentine administration. Frequently, new, “more trustworthy” employees are hired by expanding the overall number of officials, by restructuring or eliminating existing

¹³ Ferraro (2011) then goes on to argue that this is only partially true—for him, there is a general distrust of permanent civil servants that goes beyond perceived political loyalties. The interview is still indicative of the fact that the fear of suffering negative changes in working conditions (because of the practice of sidestepping the employees appointed by previous administrations) is plausible in the Argentinean administration.

¹⁴ This is what Müller (2006) calls “power patronage.” Chapter 2 discusses the different types of patronage appointments and the services associated with it.

¹⁵ See Scherlis (2009, 139-143) for a description of three highly politicized agencies in the current Argentine administration and the different types of political services that they provide to the government: the national news agency (Telam), the Ministry of Welfare and the National Statistics Office (INDEC).

organizations and creating new ones, or by creating new job titles and responsibilities (Grindle 2012; Iacoviello and Zuvanic 2006a).

Similarly to what happens with the national administration, most local governments have some sort of civil service regulation that includes open competition for hires and tenure rights (recall that this is guaranteed by the National Constitution), but these regulations are easily sidestepped with the widespread use of temporary contracts (Scherlis 2009). As at the national level, massive firings are not particularly common with changes in administration. In general, all top and some mid-level bureaucrats are replaced together with “those who are more openly linked to a previous government,” but the rest of the jobs are usually maintained (Scherlis 2009, 182). Despite these similarities, lower levels of government are more politicized than the national administration (Calvo and Murillo 2012; Scherlis 2009). Moreover, the types of services that are usually required at the local level are more in line with the ones studied in this dissertation. Indeed, at the national level, control over key areas of government (either to solve problems of delegation and control or for “less noble” purposes) and their resources is the main goal of patronage appointments; at the local level the distribution of patronage jobs to maintain a network of activists on the ground is much more common (Scherlis 2009). At the local level, state jobs are used “to organize, run, and mobilize extended electoral machines on the ground” (Scherlis 2009, 220).¹⁶

Bolivia The Bolivian public administration has been described as a “patronage bureaucracy” (Zuvanic et al. 2010), “approaching the neo-patrimonial ideal type”

¹⁶In fact, in his analysis of patronage appointments in four Argentinean provinces, Scherlis (2009, 251) concludes that: “no party can develop electoral machines without first controlling the state agencies that can provide the necessary financial, organizational, and human resources to do so.”

(Gingerich 2006, forthcoming), and plagued with “bureaucratic informality” and “patronage appointments” (World Bank 2000). According to a World Bank report (2000, 17), Bolivian bureaucracy is characterized by “(l)ow administrative capacities due to a high rate of personnel turnover, frequent and pervasive political interference in public management, weakness and/or non-compliance of formal administrative procedures and control, and systemic corruption....” According to the index described in section 6.1, Bolivia is among the countries with the weakest merit systems, in which there is a strong politicization of decisions on public employees’ selection and dismissal (Iacoviello 2006). With 22 points, Bolivia is below Argentina (52 points) and below the Latin American average (33 points), but still far from the worst cases of Panama (2 points) and El Salvador (9 points).

Since the 1980s, Bolivia has been implementing institutional reforms and attempts to create a meritocratic system in its public administration. However, until today those efforts have only translated into very limited changes, creating “meritocratic enclaves” (like the Customs Office) in the context of a national administration that is basically a “patronage bureaucracy” (Zuñanic et al. 2010). Political criteria continue to dominate the process of hiring and firing, despite the fact that the few institutions that were reached by the institutional reforms have hired personnel through open public competitions (Iacoviello and Zuñanic 2006b; Zuñanic et al. 2010).

Political connections are crucial for personnel decisions. A survey of 738 public employees at different hierarchical levels from 15 different agencies conducted by the World Bank in 1999 supports this claim. Respondents were asked to estimate the ratio of public employees perceived to have been hired for political reasons in the agency where

they worked, and the average for these responses was 43 percent (World Bank 2000). As mentioned, when hires are political, new incumbents have good reasons to distrust old employees and to want to hire new (more loyal) employees, which in turn politicizes firing decisions. In a more recent survey, conducted in 2003 across 14 different institutions (1038 public employees were interviewed) respondents were asked to rank the following factors of greatest importance for dismissal in their institutions: poor performance, unethical behavior, insubordination, and political factors. 32 percent of respondents indicated that in their institutions political factors were the most important determinant of dismissals (Gingerich 2006). In the same line, 68 percent of respondents indicated that it was “highly probable” or “probable” that they would lose their posts in the near future (Gingerich 2006, forthcoming).

Moreover, the survey conducted by the World Bank in 1999 (2000, 13) described above provides a good sense of the extent of the excessively high rates of personnel turnover often generated by the search of “loyal” employees:

[O]nly 33 percent of public employees were working in the same agency as in 1995, and 58 percent were working in the public sector in 1995. Since 1997, the year of the last election, around one-third of public employees are estimated to have left the public sector and only 52 percent are still working in the same agency as they were in 1997. Only 9 percent of current public employees believe they will be working in the same agency in five years. Also, 53.6 percent of public employees reported as likely or very likely the possibility of losing their jobs, and 74 percent believe that the high staff turnover is a “serious” or “very serious” problem that affects organizational efficiency.”

In sum, the weak Bolivian service system gives ample opportunities for patronage appointments that Bolivian politicians use in their advantage for political gain. As described at length for the Argentinean municipalities studied in this dissertation, patronage appointments tend to make those public employees “respond primarily to their patrons and perform functions that may or may not be among their official duties” (World Bank 2000, 45). Bolivian parties rely on the bureaucracy for political support that goes beyond the official duties of the public sector job. Parties require public employees to pay contributions and participate in campaign events (World Bank 2000).¹⁷

Chile On the opposite side of the spectrum, the Chilean national public sector is usually considered to be closely approximating the conditions of a highly professional, Weberian ideal type bureaucracy. Chilean “meritocratic bureaucracy” is not only characterized by a high degree of autonomy (isolation from political manipulation), but also by high levels of technical capacity (Zuñanich et al. 2010). According to the merit index described in section 6.1, Chile is classified (together with Brazil and Costa Rica) among the countries with the strongest merit systems in which there is widespread acceptance of meritocratic principles for selection, promotion and dismissal of public employees (Iacoviello 2006). With 62 points, Chile is way above the Latin American average of 33 points and above the Argentina score of 52 points, but still far from the best case of Brazil (87 points). By 2009, the Chilean merit index increased to 78 points (Iacoviello 2009b).

In Chile, public employees have enjoyed tenure rights since 1960 (Grindle 2012) and since 1989 the Administrative Statute (*Estatuto Administrativo*) establishes

¹⁷ In the World Bank survey described above, 30 percent of the employees interviewed reported to having made some contribution to a political party (World Bank 2000). Unfortunately, there is no similar question in this survey about participating in electoral/political events.

competition for entry into the public administration. Moreover, since 2003 the New Deal on Public Employment (*Ley de Nuevo Trato*) also introduces merit criteria for high-level political appointments through the High Level Public Management System (*Sistema de Alta Dirección Pública*), reducing the number of fully discretionary political positions from 3100 to 650 (Grindle 2012).¹⁸ However, as in the case of Argentina and many other Latin American countries, the existence of temporary contracts (*contrata*) allows hiring outside the system. Employees under temporary contracts in Chile not only do not enjoy job stability, but they are also hired without an open competition.¹⁹

According to survey data reported in Calvo and Murillo (2012), temporary contracts increased in Chile over the last decade. Whereas the 1996 survey reports 19 percent of public employees on temporary contracts, the 2006 survey reports 27 percent of employees working under these types of contracts.²⁰ Nevertheless, the level of stability in the national public sector is high, even for those with temporary contracts (Iacoviello 2009b). The fact that the same center-left coalition (*Concertación*) won the presidency four times consecutively (1990, 1994, 2000, 2006) might have been an important factor favoring this stability. However, in 2010 Sebastián Piñera, with the support of a right-wing coalition, became president and the new administration “worked to reclaim positions that

¹⁸ The new recruitment system (overseen by a political commission) put some limits on discretionary appointments but “left considerable room for discretion by hiring officials” (Grindle 2012, 224). Candidates for open positions are selected based on merit and included on lists of three or five candidates (depending on the position), but the final decision among those finalists is made by a politician at his/hers own discretion. If none of the candidates is chosen, the position can remain open.

¹⁹ There are two main types of temporary contracts in the Chilean administration: those subjected to renewal at the end of each year (*a contrata*) and those that can be fired at any time (*a honorarios*).

²⁰ According to official sources, the number of employees “*a contrata*” is even higher (around 50%), but this number includes those employees with permanent contracts (*de planta*) that are working at a different job position but can return to his/hers former position later (Dipres 2012). Unfortunately, there is no official information on the proportion of employees under this situation readily available.

were filled through the new high level appointment system so that they could be assigned to political appointees” (Grindle 2012, 226).

Despite the implementation of civil service reforms, political connections and political ideology still seem to matter for appointments in the public administration. In a nationally representative survey conducted by Calvo and Murillo (forthcoming), the percentage of respondents that estimate their probability of obtaining a public sector job as a result of the election as very likely is about five percent for all five Chilean parties (recall that it was five percent and three percent for the Argentinean PJ and UCR, respectively). Moreover, in Chile—where parties are more easily placed on a left-right ideological spectrum—the perceived likelihood of being offered a public sector job decreases with ideological distance to each of the five parties. Proximity to party activists of the PS or the PPD also increased the perceived likelihood of being offered a job—the effect is also positive but not significant for the DC, and there is no effect for the UDI and RN (Calvo and Murillo forthcoming).²¹

Unquestionably, political networks have a more crucial role in shaping the expectations of obtaining a public sector job in Argentina than in Chile (Calvo and Murillo 2012), but the role of politics cannot be completely ignored even in one of the most meritocratic systems in Latin America. Although the national administration is generally characterized by high levels of stability, in the survey conducted by Gingerich (2006, forthcoming) described above, 40 percent of Chilean respondents estimated that it was “highly probably” or “probable” that they would lose their jobs in the near future (compare

²¹ PS= Partido Socialista; PPD= Partido por la Democracia; DC= Democracia Cristiana; UDI= Unión Demócrata Independiente; RN= Renovación Nacional.

to 68 percent in the Bolivian case).²² Moreover, local administrations—as in Argentina—tend to be more politicized than the national administration (Calvo and Murillo 2012; Leyton Navarro 2006). A city councilman from *Concertación* explains bluntly: “in the municipalities there is a strong base for employment because there is no High Management System (...) in general, many local [political] operators have taken refuge in the municipality” (cited in Calvo and Murillo 2012, 15).

As in Argentina—although probably to a lesser extent—being afraid of suffering negative changes with a change in the administration might still seem plausible to some Chilean employees (especially at the local level). Another interview with a Chilean mayor in 2009 talking about his retirement illustrates this point:

“I have not retired from [name of the municipality where he is mayor] because this is a very large municipality and I have many pending assignments, and, moreover, I have not told my people. There is a very large team of people working with me here, they depend directly on me, and therefore I cannot make the decision on my own. If I leave, around 500 people fall [lose their jobs]...”
(cited in Calvo and Murillo 2012, 15)

Moreover, the change in administration in 2010, after twenty years of *Concertación*, shows that suffering negative changes (or losing the job) with a new administration was also a very real possibility in the national administration. Only three months after Piñera’s inauguration (March 2010), 1400 public employees were fired and another 1200 contracts

²² For Chile, the survey included 595 public employees across 6 agencies (Gingerich 2006). Note that the survey was conducted in 2004, before the High Level Public Management System was fully implemented.

that were subjected to renewal were terminated. The president justified the massive firings on the bases that the people fired were political activists (*operadores políticos*).²³ By August 2012, of the 529 high-level bureaucrats that were hired through the High Level Public Management System and were still in office, 473 (89%) were hired during Piñera's administration. Although some bureaucrats resigned their positions, some were reassigned to new positions and some managed to finish their original 3-year contract, the majority (56%) of high levels officials that were in the administration when Piñera took office were fired (Garrido 2013).²⁴

In sum, even in a country like Chile that is considered to have one of the most professionalized public administrations in the region, there is evidence consistent with the self-enforcing theory of patronage. Section 6.1 and 6.2 have provided secondary evidence that there are good reasons to assume that the theory developed in this dissertation might carry strong explanatory power in other countries in Latin America. In the following sections, I discuss broader implications of my theory of patronage.

6.3 Taking Clients Seriously

Most of the literature on clientelism focuses on elite level strategies and usually portrays clients as myopic, nonstrategic, and/or mainly driven by short-term reactions to the

²³ "Piñera justificó despidos masivos en el sector público" (Emol, June 10 2010). See also "Gobierno desvinculó a 1373 personas y no renovó 1255 contratos hasta el 31 de mayo" (El Mercurio, June 10 2010); "PRSD y ANEF amenazan con acusación constitucional contra Lavín por despidos" (Emol, June 13 2010); and "PS solidariza con paro de ANEF y denuncia hostigamiento a funcionarios públicos" (Emol, August 26 2010).

²⁴ Cited by Garrido (2013), based on information obtained from the High Level Public Management System. Note that the president can legally fire all bureaucrats hired under this system, even before the contract expires. The main difference is that in the case in which the period of the contract is ended before the end of the period, employees receive severance pay (Garrido 2013).

actions of politicians. For instance, one of the ongoing debates in the literature is the core/swing debate. Do parties target core or swing voters? In this elite-centered debate—as Nichter 2009 points out—citizens' strategies are completely ignored. Not only are citizens passive actors whose only role is to accept or reject the clientelistic offer that parties distribute, they are also assumed to be sincere in their political preferences, with preferences that are exogenous and unchanged over time. The preferences of swing voters might be more or less conditional on what the parties do, but core voters, from this perspective, are assumed to have an ideological commitment to their party that is exogenous to past and/or future material redistribution.²⁵ Despite the fact that most theories of voting behavior portray voters as primarily concerned with their own well-being, core clients in the clientelistic literature are often assumed to be non-instrumental voters, only motivated by their unconditional loyalty to the party.

In fact, the literature on clientelism is plagued with arguments that imply some sort of asymmetry between the rationality of the client and the rationality of the other actors (non-clients, the patron and/or the broker). Take, for instance, the theories of reciprocity discussed in chapter 2. According to these theories, clients comply with their side of the clientelistic agreement by providing political support because they want to help the person that helped them (either with a handout, a favor, a job, or something else). To the extent that these theories are about clientelism, the goal of the patron is clear—he wants to extract political support from his clients. While patrons and brokers are then self-

²⁵ An important exception to this is the forthcoming book by Magaloni et al. (2012), in which they argue that political parties invest in core supporters to maintain their loyalty. They do not take the preferences of core voters as static and independent from the redistribution of welfare, rather they argue that voter's commitments to a party are "inevitably shaped by the history of welfare benefit distribution" (122).

interested strategic actors with clear instrumental goals, clients are noble and altruistic individuals that care about “doing the right thing.”

According to the theories of monitoring and punishment—also discussed in chapter 2—, clients comply with their side of the deal because they are afraid that the patron will punish them if they fail to do so. This perspective also suggests a different rationality for the behavior of clients (*vis-à-vis* other voters). In general, the starting point of any rational theory of voting is that voters chose parties and politicians that make them better off. When the empirical reality does not match this assumption, scholars try to explain the “anomaly”. For instance, when poor voters support right-wing parties—typically opposed to redistribution—, it is assumed that something out of the ordinary is happening that makes citizens vote against their interests. Under “normal circumstances,” it is assumed that it is rational for voters to reward or punish candidates according to what they have done or could do in the future to make them better off.

From the perspective of the theories of monitoring and punishment, in contrast, the fact that clients receive something from a patron that makes them better off is not enough to secure their support. The assumption being that clients would rather collect the benefit but behave in some other way different from supporting the politician who provided the benefit, either supporting another politician or not supporting anyone (Zucco 2010). While rational voters in most voting theories are assumed to support the politician that would make them better off, this is not enough—from this perspective— to explain the political behavior of clients. As in the core/swing debate, the assumption here is that voters’ preferences are somehow orthogonal and/or unaffected by the distribution of material benefits. Clients in this literature need some enforcement mechanism (beyond the benefit

itself) that would guarantee the provision of the support and the success of the clientelistic exchange.

In contrast, the argument put forward in this dissertation suggests that clients do not act qualitatively differently from other voters.²⁶ Clients, as any other citizen, care about their own well-being. They are not necessarily more noble and altruistic than others, and they do not need to be “forced into” supporting a politician that makes them better off. As any other voter, clients can choose to support the politician that guarantees the continuity of the benefit because they understand it is in their best interest to do so. To the extent that clients believe that the continuation of the benefit is conditional on the patron remaining in a position of power, clients have an incentive to help the patron achieve this goal. In the specific clientelistic case discussed in this dissertation, public employees have an incentive to help the politician that hired them to stay in power, which in turn explains why they comply with the patronage agreement and provide the services needed to ensure the electoral success of the politician. When the clientelistic exchange is incentive-compatible, neither feeling of reciprocity nor monitoring and punishment are *necessary* to sustain the exchange. To the extent that patrons and clients share the same interests, there is no need for any external enforcement mechanism.

²⁶ There is evidence that voters are less myopic, more rational and better judges of their own interests than the recent literature on clientelistic exchanges often assumes. For instance, Zucco (forthcoming) shows that a non-clientelistic conditional cash transfer (CCT) program in Brazil is associated with more votes for the incumbent party, suggesting that voter responses to CCTs are similar to retrospective economic voting. De la O (2013) in turn shows that the programmatic Mexican CCT program fostered support for the incumbent. These two examples are particularly significant because the type of voters that are targeted with CCT programs (the poor) are the same that are the targeted of clientelism. As Zucco (2010) points out, voter response to CCTs is similar to ordinary retrospective economic voting. Even without discretion, monitoring and punishment, policies that make voters better off are rewarded at the polls.

6.4 Implications for Other Forms of Clientelism

The self-enforcing theory of patronage advanced in this dissertation has implications for the theory of clientelistic exchanges more generally. A direct implication of my theory of patronage is that monitoring and reciprocity are not always necessary for a clientelistic exchange to take place. Whether the benefit exchanged is a public sector job, cash, food or a favor, this dissertation argues that self-sustaining clientelistic exchanges are possible in the absence of monitoring and feelings of reciprocity.

Departing from existing explanations, I argue that clients can make an active and strategic decision to support their patron because they think that it is in their best interest to do so. The self-enforcing theory of patronage suggests that clients provide political services to their patrons, not as a short-term reaction to the patron's actions or because they are thankful, but because they understand that the continuation of the benefit is conditional on the patron remaining in the position of power that grants access to these benefits. Whether it is a public sector job, some material benefit, or a favor, when clients believe that the continuation of the benefit is tied to the success of the patron, clientelistic agreements become self-sustaining. When clients believe that the continuation of the benefit is contingent on the patron or broker maintaining his position of power, they have a strong incentive to support the patron to help him stay in that position. Either by providing electoral support or through the political services studied in this dissertation, clients have a strong incentive to keep on supporting the patron. As shown by Auyero's (2000) research, patrons and brokers seem to be fully aware of the importance of this and they make significant efforts to generate and maintain this belief among clients:

“With each problem that they solve for a client, brokers are continually better positioning themselves so that, at election time, they will essentially be able to blackmail their clients, the implied threat being that, if the broker and his or her patron are forced from office, the broker’s clients will no longer receive the benefits of the social programs established by the patron and run by the broker.” Auyero (2000, 123)

With the exception of Auyero (2000) and—more recently—Zarazaga (2012), the literature on clientelism has mainly ignored this alternative mechanism to sustain the clientelistic exchange and, for the most part, adopts a definition of clientelism that implies the existence of monitoring and punishment.²⁷ The alternative mechanism for the sustainability of clientelistic exchanges that I develop in this dissertation calls attention to the importance of taking the interests and actions of clients more seriously. In doing so, it makes clear that clients might simply want to ensure their broker or the politician behind the broker get the support needed to maintain the position that allows for the flow of benefits to continue.

Note that I am not arguing that fear of punishment (or even feelings of reciprocity) are never present in clientelistic exchanges or that they are not possible, but rather that neither of these two factors are *necessary* characteristics of these types of arrangements. As I have shown in this dissertation, clientelistic exchanges are possible without coercion. Certainly, the absence of coercion might be interpreted in a positive light. As Stokes et al. (2012, 354) argue, “the voter who faces no conditionality has greater autonomy than the voter who faces possible sanctions if the defects.” However, if clientelistic contracts can be

²⁷ See also van de Valle (2007, 63-64) for the description of two cases (Benin and Nigeria) where the clientelistic exchange is also sustained with no “instrumentality.”

self-sustaining without punishment, clientelism becomes cheaper, very hard to detect and even harder to curb.

If the patron (or broker) does not need to invest to identify non-compliers and credibly commit to punish them, the cost of clientelism gets reduced significantly.²⁸ For a patron to be able to monitor clients and punish those who fail to fulfill their promise, a lot of resources need to be invested in costly machines. Certainly, the cost of clientelism does not completely disappear in the absence of monitoring and punishment. Recall that for clientelistic contracts to be self-enforcing clients need to believe that the continuation of the benefit is conditional on the patron or broker maintaining his position of power—which gives access to the benefits distributed. In the case of patronage, once public sector jobs have been distributed to supporters, the relationship between being in power and the ability to distribute jobs is straightforward and patrons do not need to invest expensive resources in convincing patronage employees that their jobs are tied to the reelection of the incumbent. However, in other cases, patrons and brokers might need to invest more in personally claiming credit for the benefits distributed and in “creating the appearance that were they not there, the benefits would not be delivered” (Auyero et al 2009, 5). While this continuous effort of linking the benefit to the continuation of the patron in the position of power is not free, it is substantially cheaper than the alternative of identifying non-compliers and punishing them.

Moreover, without coercion and threats of punishment, clientelism is also harder to detect and curb. Convincing clients that the benefit is contingent on the patron’s success is

²⁸ This reduction in cost would also be true if the theories of reciprocity were corrected. I focus in this section in the theories of monitoring and punishment, which are the most popular in the literature on clientelism.

a significantly more subtle mechanism than threatening to punish non-compliers. More importantly, it is perfectly legal. Threatening citizens to vote in a certain way, abstain, or provide any type of political support is clearly illegal. Often, these threats are only made explicit in private settings so clientelistic arrangements are still hard to detect. However, when clientelistic exchanges are self-enforcing and patrons only need to make clients believe that the continuation of the benefit might be at risk if he loses the election, the arrangement becomes legal. In fact, this type of “campaign” is almost undistinguishable from the type of campaign that any programmatic politician might conduct. Campaigning on the fact that the opposition might fail to maintain certain policies—fiscal austerity, support for education, a conditional cash transfer program, or any other policy subjected to change— is perfectly legal and a very common campaign strategy. There is nothing substantively different in these types of promises. Both types of politicians—clientelistic and programmatic —try to tie the continuation of a certain policy or benefit to their continuation in power.

In this way, clientelism becomes even less visible and harder to limit. In the end, curbing clientelism gets reduced to limiting the discretion of politicians and brokers to distribute benefits. In the case studied here, patronage contracts are sustained by the ability of the politician to distribute jobs to supporters, who believe that their jobs are contingent on the success of their patron. This belief is based on the fact that a new incumbent will have the same discretion as the old one to hire his supporters and supporters of the previous administration will suffer the consequences. Only limiting the discretion of politicians could prevent them from choosing supporters over non-supporters for jobs and in turn change the clients’ belief that their job is tied to the success of the

patron. More generally, clientelistic exchanges depend on the discretion of the patron or broker to distribute benefits. When benefits are distributed discretionally, clients tend to think that the continuation is tied to the patron that distributes them. Only limiting the original discretion in the distribution, it is possible to curb the type of clientelistic exchange describe here that is not sustain in any illegal mechanism of enforcement.

6.5 What's So Wrong with Patronage?

As O'Donnell (2010, 13-18) points out, most non-normative conceptualizations of democracy (including those that claim to be minimalistic) contain two distinct elements. First, they always explicitly include the element of competitive elections for most important governmental positions. Second, sometimes less explicitly, they add some “surrounding conditions” (external to the electoral process itself) that are necessary or/and sufficient for the existence of *real* competitive and fair elections. In other words, democracies can be thought as containing elements that regulate in a particular way the “access to power” as well as the “exercise of power” (Mazucca 2010). As described by Mazzuca (2010, 343) a key distinction in the exercise of power is “whether goods and services are provided according to universal/general standards, like merit and need, or particularistic decisions based on personal connections and the ruler’s discretion.” An important characteristic of patronage— one that shares with other forms of misuse of state resources like pork-barrel and the manipulation of targeted public programs— is that it has the potential to affect both the access to power and the exercise of power dimensions of democracy.

Concerning the electoral component (access to power), when clients believe that is in their best interest to help their patron stay in power—as in the theory developed here—the possibility of distributing patronage jobs provides a self-sustaining incumbency advantage with potentially important effects on electoral outcomes. Elections might still be competitive, but with the political use of state resources by the incumbent party to finance political workers, elections are less fair for the non-incumbent parties. In general, the literature on clientelism has mainly discussed the problems with clientelistic exchanges in relation to its effects on and around elections. Most authors focus on discussing the effects of clientelism in relation to political competition and the way clientelistic exchanges affect representation, (vertical) accountability and the choice of leaders (Stokes et al. 2012).

Undeniably, patronage shares these damaging effects on the quality of democratic competition with other forms of clientelism. First, with fair competition, elections provide information about the distribution of citizens' preferences, which makes it easier for these preferences to be represented and translated into public policies (Stokes 2007, 2009). If incumbents have an unfair advantage, elections tend to be less informative about the distribution of citizens' preferences, damaging the quality of representation and the accountability of the system. Second, fair competition makes politicians more "responsive", in the sense that it provides an incentive for politicians to act so as to obtain or maintain citizens support at the ballot box. When competition is less fair, politicians have more opportunities to ignore voters' preferences. Finally, when elections are less informative about citizens' preferences, and performance in office is not the main driven of reelection or termination of mandates, the choice of leaders gets affected (Stokes et al. 2012).

However, the distribution of patronage jobs implies the manipulation of state resources for political gain and the fact that the resources used are, by definition, public resources, mark a fundamental distinction to other forms of clientelism. While other forms of clientelistic exchanges (vote-buying or turnout-buying) can be implemented using state resources, they can also be deployed by non-incumbent politicians using private or partisan funds. Being in power is always an advantage when it comes to implementing clientelistic agreements, but when the type of benefit exchanged is a public sector job, it is a necessary condition.

In this sense, patronage has much in common with the manipulation of targeted public programs (such as scholarships, food distribution programs, and conditional cash transfer programs) and pork barrel politics. Any strategy designed to win votes will, if successful, affect electoral competition and, consequently, the choice of leaders, the accountability of the system, and the quality of representation (Stokes et al. 2012). However, when these strategies are implemented from the state with state resources (as the ones mentioned), it is not just about affecting the access to power but also the exercise of power (Mazucca 2010). Patronage contracts are designed to finance political workers and thus they will—when successful—have an effect on political competition, generating the same negative consequences as other types of clientelistic exchanges. But the fact that state resources are used makes patronage contracts fundamentally different from other clientelistic agreements.

The existence of political bias in the distribution of public sector jobs affects the independence of the public administration and raises serious concerns about the possibility of equal treatment by the state. When jobs are distributed discretionally and

according to political criteria, employees “owe” their jobs to the politician that hired them. This lack of independence could in turn generate a lack of impartiality *vis à vis* citizens. As the evidence presented in chapter 4 shows, knowing the right person in the public administration can make an important difference in getting things done. More generally, in patronage democracies, knowing a state official “increases a voter’s chances of obtaining valued state resources and services” (Chandra 2004, 87). Proximity to a state official and need, however, do not always go together and this generates serious problems of equal access *to*, and equal treatment *by* the state. Moreover, those *with* access to state officials, have a strong incentive to keep on supporting the politician in power to make sure that the connection to the state remains safe. This situation, in turn, fosters the incumbency advantage and helps to reproduce the unequal access to the state.

Whether clientelistic exchanges involve the use of public offices and public money or not has important political consequences that make these kinds of exchanges particularly damaging for democracy. Abuses in the exercise of power such as the distribution of patronage jobs, the manipulation of targeted public programs or pork barrel politics are all non-programmatic forms of distributive politics that have an effect both on the access to power and on the exercise of power. Once in power, the use of public resources for political gain provides an unfair advantage over non-incumbent parties. The abuses in the exercise of power dimension reinforces the unfairness in the access to power dimension, guaranteeing that the electoral playing field will remain skewed in favor of the incumbent party.

This discussion suggests that building a democratic society is not just about getting the political regime right, but also about getting the state right. Unequal access to the state,

of which patronage is an important cause, plagues many democracies with areas of low intensity citizenship (O'Donnell 1993). In the extreme, as O'Donnell (1993) points out, when citizens are unable to get fair treatment from the state or to obtain from state agencies public benefits or services to which they are entitled, the liberal component of democracy is affected.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Methodology

The survey consisted of face-to-face interviews of 1184 low and mid-level local public sector employees in the Argentinean municipalities of Salta (province of Salta), Santa Fe (province of Santa Fe) and Tigre (province of Buenos Aires).¹ Together with a team of research assistants, we interviewed around 400 employees in each municipality. The survey was administered between August 10 and December 30 2010 in Santa Fe, between August 11 and November 26 2010 in Tigre, and from June 6 to August 11 2011 in Salta.² It was preceded by a pilot administered in Santa Fe between July 22 and July 29 2010 consisting of 40 cases. On average, survey interviews lasted 24 minutes.

A random sample based on the official list of public employees (excluding elected officials and high-level positions) was generated within each municipality. The selected employees were then directly approached to interview at public offices during their working hours. Interviewers were provided with the list of names of public employees that

¹ The survey methodology and the survey instrument were approved under Columbia University IRB protocol IRB-AAA9968.

² The survey in Salta was scheduled to be conducted in November and December 2010 but changes in the electoral calendar generated by the death of the main presidential pre- candidate (Nestor Kirchner) made the authorities in Salta reluctant to allow me to conduct the survey on the scheduled dates. They were both worried about sharing the list of public sector employees with me and about the questionnaire itself. The time was particularly complicated for them, they argued, because early elections were called (primaries for January 2011 and general elections for April 2011) and 2000 employees were been considered for tenure at the time. As a consequence, the local authorities agreed to give me the information and authorization necessary to conduct the survey, only after the elections. As a result, the survey in Salta was administered after the April 2011 provincial elections (when both the governor and the mayor were reelected), but before the October 2011 national elections.

were selected and the addresses of their respective places of work. In cases where the selected employee was not at the place of work at the time of the visit, or preferred to answer the survey at a different time or day, interviewers were instructed to make an appointment to return later.³ If the selected employee refused to answer the survey, or the interview could not be conducted after the second attempt, the respondent was replaced with the following name on the list. Interviewers were instructed to make detailed records of failed interviews. Since there were survey and list experiment questions embedded in the survey with two conditions—treatment and control—, two versions of the questionnaire were used. With the exception of the survey and the list experiment questions, respondents were asked questions from identical questionnaires. Interviewers used the two different questionnaires in sequential order, assigning respondents alternatively to either the treatment or the control group.

Interviewers were recruited from Humanities and Social Science departments in Santa Fe, Salta and Buenos Aires and were either advanced undergraduate or recently graduated students.⁴ For the purpose of survey verification, basic information about the employees (age, years in the position, and type of contract) was obtained from each of the municipalities and was not distributed to the enumerators. If this information did not

³ In some specific cases, the public employees preferred to make an appointment to meet after hours. Interviewers were instructed to agree with these kinds of requests at their convenience. Some interviews were also scheduled by phone in those cases where the employee worked from home, in a place different from what the record indicated, or at a different time. Some employees—particularly those working on the area of health such as ambulance drivers, nurses and doctors, and those working in security— worked weekend and night shifts. An extra effort was made to interview them, but unfortunately because of security reasons, some of the places were not safe enough to access by night. As a result, workers that worked night shifts might be slightly under-represented.

⁴ The enumerators were: Anastasia Peralta Ramos, Ignacio Cesar, Ignacio Puente and Nicolas Schujman in Tigre; Leilen Lua Bouchet, Nahuel Avalos Theules, Alejandro Núñez Avendaño and Leonardo Pez in Santa Fe; and Sofia Checa, Marcela Godoy, Mariana Godoy, Mariana Macazaga, Gonzalo Rodriguez, and Ludovica Pian in Salta. I conducted interviews myself in the three municipalities as well.

match the one reported by the interviewer in the survey instrument beyond the reasonable expected mistakes, further verification was conducted on the interviews administered by that interviewer. This second round of verification was done in person (by me) with the respondents.⁵ The contact rate for the survey was 59 percent, the response rate was 56 percent, the cooperation rate 95 percent, and the refusal rate 3 percent. The margin of error was 2.7%.⁶

⁵ With this methodology, one enumerator was identified that was fabricating the responses. The full set of interviews conducted by her was replaced by a new set conducted by a different interviewer. There was no need to replace the names of employees selected because the *entire* set of interviews was fabricated so the new enumerator used the original selected names.

⁶ Rates calculated according to the American Association of Public Opinion Research.

Table A1: Survey sample representativeness (Salta)

Variable	Employees in the survey		All employees	
	N	%	N	%
Observations	389		4263	
Gender				
Male	228	58.61	2701	63.35
Female	161	41.39	1562	36.65
Start working with current mayor	211*	54.24	1491**	46.75
Older than 40 years old	230	59.13	2121***	70.04
Tenure				
With tenure	242	62.21	2992****	77.11
No tenure	146	37.53	888****	22.89
Secretary				
Finance	106	27.25	732	17.17
Public Works	68	17.48	788	18.48
Government	40	10.28	522	12.24
Chief of Cabinet	38	9.77	514	12.06
Commerce & Participation	25	6.43	175	4.11
Social Assistance	19	4.88	318	7.46
Planning and Development	19	4.88	124	2.91
General Secretary	16	4.11	185	4.34
Environment	12	3.08	266	6.24
Missing & Others	47	12.08	639	14.99

*1 missing observation

**1074 missing observations

***1235 missing observations

****383 missing observations

Table A2: Survey sample representativeness (Santa Fe)

Variable	Employees included in the survey		All employees	
	N	%	N	%
Observations	395		4528	
Gender				
Male	235	59.49	2917	64.42
Female	160	40.51	1611	35.58
Start working with current mayor	141	35.70	1949**	44.87
Older than 40 years old	270*	67.94	2765***	63.34
Tenure				
With tenure	256	64.81	2484	54.86
No tenure	139	35.19	2044	45.14
Secretary				
Culture	20	5.06	307	6.78
Government	25	6.33	415	9.17
Finance & Economy	50	12.66	370	8.17
Social Development	143	36.20	1579	34.87
Control	38	9.62	550	12.15
Urban Planning	21	5.32	190	4.20
Public Works	52	13.16	718	15.86
Production	15	3.80	100	2.21
Others and missing	31	7.85	299	6.60

* 2 observations missing

** 184 observations missing

*** 163 observations missing

Table A3: Survey sample representativeness (Tigre)

Variable	Employees in the survey		All employees	
	N	%	N	%
Observations	400		2406	
Gender				
Male	193	48.25	1323	54.99
Female	207	51.75	1083	45.01
Start working with current mayor	184*	46.00	1034***	45.37
Older than 40 years old	192**	48.61	1201***	52.70
Tenure				
With tenure	88	22.00	475	19.74
No tenure	312	78.00	1931	80.26
Secretary				
Sanitary Policy and HR	127	31.99	896	37.24
Public Services	105	26.45	590	24.52
Community Promotion	51	12.85	317	13.18
Citizen Protection	37	9.32	160	6.65
Finance and Administration	23	5.79	87	3.62
Institutional Relations	12	3.02	83	3.45
Public Investment	11	2.77	55	2.29
Urban Control	9	2.27	32	1.33
Public Revenue	9	2.27	63	2.62
Others	16	4.03	123	5.11

* 2 missing observations

** 5 missing observations

*** 127 missing observations

Table A4: Covariate balance across type of questionnaires, by municipality

Variable	Tigre		Santa Fe		Salta		Whole Sample	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
Observations	199	201	196	199	196	193	591	593
Female	0.55	0.48	0.41	0.40	0.40	0.42	0.46	0.44
Age	39.33	39.65	44.63	44.80	43.86	43.11	42.61	42.51
Education	6.37	6.11	5.30	5.11	5.56	5.63	5.74	5.62
Salary	3.08	3.14	2.56	2.62	2.59	2.67	2.74	2.81

Note: The balanced distribution of the variables across the two conditions suggests that the groups are fairly equivalent on observable characteristics and that the randomization was successful in each of the three municipalities. None of the differences between the control and treatment groups are statistically significant (at the 95 percent confidence level).

Table A5: Covariate balance across type of questionnaires, by enumerator

	Type 1	Type 2	Total
Alejandro	42	43	85
Anastasia	41	39	80
Gonzalo	28	29	57
Ignacio C.	39	39	78
Ignacio P.	43	44	87
Leilen	23	23	46
Leonardo	23	22	45
Ludovica	16	15	31
Marcela	41	41	82
Mariana G.	7	6	13
Mariana M.	29	29	58
Nahuel	100	103	203
Nicolás	44	46	90
Sofía	36	33	69
Virginia (me)	79	81	160
Total	591	593	1184

Appendix B. Additional Tables for Chapter 3

Table B1: The effect of ideology on being hired by current mayor (IV regression), excluding employees that go their job through their parents (in Salta) and through friends or relatives (in Santa Fe and Tigre)

	Current Mayor	IV Current Mayor	Reduced Form Current Mayor
Mayor Party	0.16*** (0.03)	0.24** (0.12)	
Mayor Party Parents			0.08** (0.04)
Age	-0.21*** (0.01)	-0.22*** (0.01)	-0.22*** (0.01)
Female	0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.05* (0.03)
Education	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Salta	0.08** (0.04)	0.06 (0.05)	0.14*** (0.03)
Santa Fe	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
Constant	1.05*** (0.07)	1.02*** (0.08)	1.07*** (0.07)
Observations	824	824	910
R-squared	0.30	0.30	0.29

Note: The age variable takes on values from 1 to 5, corresponding to respondents who are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and older. The education variable takes on values from 1 to 3, corresponding to respondents to whom the highest education completed is primary school, secondary school, and university or tertiary education. The female variable takes the value one when the respondent is female, and 0 otherwise. The municipality of Tigre was excluded to avoid multicollinearity. Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Appendix C. Additional Tables for Chapter 5

Table C1: OLS analyses of perception of job stability survey experiment

	Likelihood of staying in the job after the next election		
New mayor treatment	-0.41** (0.16)	-0.43*** (0.15)	-0.33** (0.13)
Tenure			3.01*** (0.20)
College		-0.15 (0.20)	0.08 (0.18)
Female		-0.16 (0.17)	-0.06 (0.15)
Age		0.81*** (0.07)	0.20*** (0.08)
Salta		0.07 (0.17)	-0.86*** (0.18)
Santa Fe		-0.85*** (0.21)	-1.74*** (0.20)
Constant	8.15*** (0.11)	5.98*** (0.27)	6.87*** (0.26)
Observations	1,131	1,128	1,128
R-squared	0.01	0.15	0.33

Note: Since the outcome variable is measured on a 0 to 10 scale, an alternative specification would be an ordered probit. The results were substantively equivalent using either specification so OLS results are reported for simplicity. The tenure variable takes the value of 1 for tenure employees, and zero otherwise. The college variable takes the value of 1 for employees with a college degree, and zero otherwise. The female variable takes the value of 1 for women, and zero otherwise. The age variable takes on values from 1 to 5, corresponding to respondents who are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and more than 55. The municipality of Tigre (the base category) was excluded. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table C2: Likelihood of keeping the job, heterogenous treatment effects

Characteristic	Whole Sample				Employees without Tenure			
	No	Yes	Difference in Effects		No	Yes	Difference in Effects	
Have Tenure	-0.62** (0.25) N=572	-0.03 (0.12) N=559	-0.60** (0.28) N=1131	-0.59** (0.27) N=1131				
Mayor Voter	0.34 (0.27) N=417	-0.96*** [0.21] N=647	1.30*** (0.35) N=1064	1.21*** (0.34) N=1064	0.65 (0.46) N=184	-1.41*** (0.31) N=348	2.06*** (0.55) N=532	1.79*** (0.48) N=532
Mayor Party	-0.18 (0.20) N=764	-0.89*** (0.28) N=367	0.71** (0.35) N=1131	0.71** (0.35) N=1131	-0.32 (0.30) N=378	-1.26*** (0.44) N=194	0.94* (0.53) N=572	0.99** (0.47) N=572
College Degree	-0.52*** (0.19) N=871	0.01 (0.32) N=257	-0.53 (0.39) N=1128	-0.54 (0.39) N=1128	-0.97*** (0.32) N=387	0.002 (0.38) N=183	-0.97* (0.54) N=570	-0.79* (0.47) N=570
Municipal Dummies			NO	YES			NO	YES

Note: In each panel, the first two columns show the average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control group (t-test with unequal variance). The last two columns show the difference in effects across respondents with and without each characteristic, and the last column includes controls for municipalities. Values in the left panel refer to the whole sample. Values in the right panel refer only to employees without tenure. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table C3: OLS analyses of perception of changes for better or worse survey experiment

	Likelihood of changes in the job after the next election		
New mayor treatment	-0.23*** (0.03)	-0.23*** (0.03)	-0.23*** (0.03)
Tenure			-0.06 (0.04)
College		-0.10** (0.04)	-0.10** (0.04)
Female		0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)
Age		-0.03* (0.01)	-0.02 (0.02)
Salta		0.16*** (0.04)	0.18*** (0.04)
Santa Fe		0.06 (0.04)	0.08* (0.04)
Constant	0.36*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.06)	0.37*** (0.06)
Observations	1,027	1,024	1,023
R-squared	0.04	0.07	0.07

Note: The results were substantively equivalent when using ordered probit so OLS results are reported for simplicity. The tenure variable takes the value of 1 for tenure employees, and zero otherwise. The college variable takes the value of 1 for employees with a college degree, and zero otherwise. The female variable takes the value of 1 for women, and zero otherwise. The age variable takes on values from 1 to 5, corresponding to respondents who are 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and more than 55. The municipality of Tigre (the base category) was excluded. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table C4: Likelihood of changes for better or worse, heterogenous treatment effects

Characteristic	No	Yes	Difference in Effect	
Have Tenure	-0.29*** (0.05) N=521	-0.16*** (0.05) N=505	-0.13** (0.07) N=1026	-0.13* (0.07) N=1026
Mayor Voter	-0.10** (0.05) N=381	-0.31*** (0.05) N=590	0.21*** (0.07) N=971	0.21*** (0.07) N=971
Mayor Party	-0.15*** (0.04) N=701	-0.40*** (0.07) N=326	0.25*** (0.07) N=1027	0.25*** (0.07) N=1027
College Degree	-0.21*** (0.04) N=799	-0.28*** (0.07) N=225	0.07 (0.08) N=1024	0.07 (0.08) N=1024
Municipal dummies			NO	YES

Note: First two columns show the average treatment effects calculated as the difference between the treatment and the control group (t-test with unequal variance). The last two columns show the difference in effects across respondents with and without each characteristic. The last column includes controls for municipalities. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table C5: Believe the government can find out about individual voting behavior (Monitoring)

	Believe	Differences in Effects				
		No	Yes			
Appointed by Previous Mayors		0.38*** (0.13) N=406	0.45** (0.21) N=148	0.06 (0.24) N=554	0.02 (0.24) N=554	0.03 (0.23) N=550
	Favors	0.03 (0.07) N=403	0.16 (0.12) N=148	0.13 (0.14) N=551	0.10 (0.14) N=551	0.09 (0.14) N=547
	Election Monitors	0.11 (0.08) N=401	0.31** (0.13) N=148	0.21 (0.15) N=549	0.22 (0.15) N=549	0.23 (0.15) N=545
	Campaigns	0.13 (0.09) N=401	0.46*** (0.14) N=147	0.33** (0.17) N=548	0.34** (0.16) N=548	0.34** (0.16) N=544
	Political Rallies	Municipal Dummies			NO	YES
		Other Controls			NO	YES
		0.48*** (0.14) N=340	0.58*** (0.20) N=140	0.09 (0.25) N=480	0.01 (0.24) N=480	0.03 (0.24) N=477
	Favors	0.25*** (0.08) N=337	0.20* (0.11) N=140	0.05 (0.15) N=477	0.13 (0.15) N=477	0.13 (0.15) N=475
	Election Monitors	0.22** (0.09) N=336	0.19 (0.13) N=139	0.03 (0.17) N=475	0.003 (0.16) N=475	0.02 (0.16) N=473
	Campaigns	0.26** (0.11) N=338	0.20 (0.20) N=139	0.06 (0.21) N=477	0.07 (0.21) N=477	0.01 (0.20) N=475
Appointed by Current Mayor	Political Rallies	Municipal dummies			NO	YES
		Other Controls			NO	YES

Note: Table reports estimated difference between treatment and control groups according to each of the four list experiments conditional on beliefs about the secrecy of the ballot. Last three columns report differences in effects. Last column includes the following controls: Age, Female, College and Mayor Party. A control for tenure was not included because it is highly correlated with Current Mayor; Mayor Voter was not included because it is highly correlated with Mayor Party. Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table C6: Covariate balance across those who believe that voting is secret and those that believe that it is possible to can find out about individual voting behavior

	Secrecy of the ballot can be violated	Voting is secret	
Observations	289 (28%)	749 (72%)	
Age	41.2 (0.70)	42.6 (0.42)	1.42 (0.82)
Female	0.48 (0.03)	0.45 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.03)
Current Mayor	0.49 (0.03)	0.46 (0.18)	-0.03 (0.03)
Tenure	0.46 (0.03)	0.48 (0.02)	0.02 (0.03)
Mayor Voter	0.66 (0.03)	0.64 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.03)
Mayor Party	0.34 (0.03)	0.36 (0.02)	0.02 (0.03)
College	0.29 (0.03)	0.23 (0.02)	-0.06** (0.03)

Note: Table reports proportions with standard errors in parentheses. Last column reports the difference between the two groups for each of the characteristics

Table C7: Covariate balance across reciprocal and non-reciprocal individuals

	Strongly Agree	Other answers	
Observations	776 (66%)	400 (34%)	
Age	43 (0.43)	41.6 (0.59)	1.42** (0.73)
Female	0.41 (0.02)	0.51 (0.03)	-0.09*** (0.03)
Current Mayor	0.46 (0.02)	0.45 (0.02)	0.01 (0.03)
Tenure	0.51 (0.02)	0.46 (0.02)	0.05 (0.03)
Mayor Voter	0.65 (0.02)	0.55 (0.02)	0.10*** (0.03)
Mayor Party	0.36 (0.02)	0.26 (0.02)	0.09*** (0.03)
College	0.17 (0.01)	0.35 (0.02)	-0.18*** (0.03)

Note: Table reports proportions with standard errors in parentheses. Last column reports the difference between the two groups for each of the characteristics

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