

Determinants of Local Service Provision in Africa: Evidence from Malawi

Adam Harris¹ and Ellen Lust²

September 4, 2016

¹Postdoctoral Fellow, Governance and Local Development (GLD) Program, University of Gothenburg. [Email: asharris4@gmail.com]

²Professor, Director of the Governance and Local Development (GLD) Program, University of Gothenburg. [Email: ellen.lust@gu.se]

Research Questions

- What is the role of ethnicity in explaining variation in the quality and access to services?

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- Does the role of ethnicity vary, depending on social institutions?

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- Individuals' abilities to access high quality education for their children is highly dependent on their community; village level factors are dominant drivers of the extent to which individuals can obtain quality education services.
- The roles of ethnic characteristics remains salient, even when taking into account political clientelism and networks.
- The impact of ethnicity depends critically on the norms and rules governing social interactions in the community, or what we call social institutions.

Motivation

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 - Assume that social institutions matter - ethnicity is salient to norms and rules that govern behavior

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- The Basic Logic of Social Institutions:
 - Shared ethnic identity with authorities matter in contexts where norms are ethnicized and ethnic competition is high
 - More personal connections with authorities matter in contexts where access to services and jobs are personalized

Hypothesis 1

Ethnicization

Ethnic factors will be salient determinants of access to quality education in villages which are highly ethnicized. They will not be significant determinants in villages which are not highly ethnicized.

Hypothesis 2

Personalization

Networks associated with clientelism will be significant determinants of access to quality education in villages in which access to jobs and services are highly personalized. They will not be significant determinants in villages which are not highly personalised.

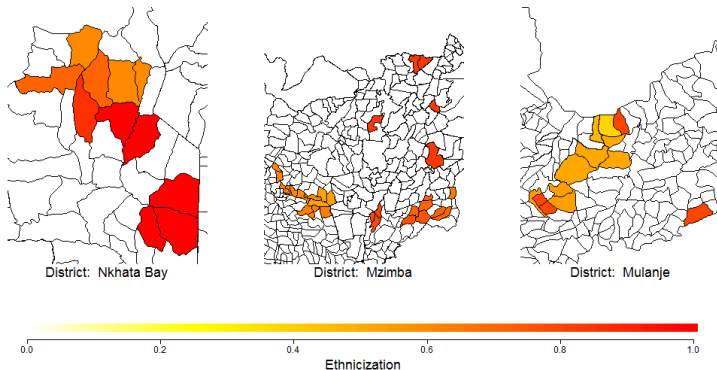
Hypothesis 3

Village- v. Individual-level Variables

Village level determinants of service provision are better predictors of education outcomes than individual level factors.

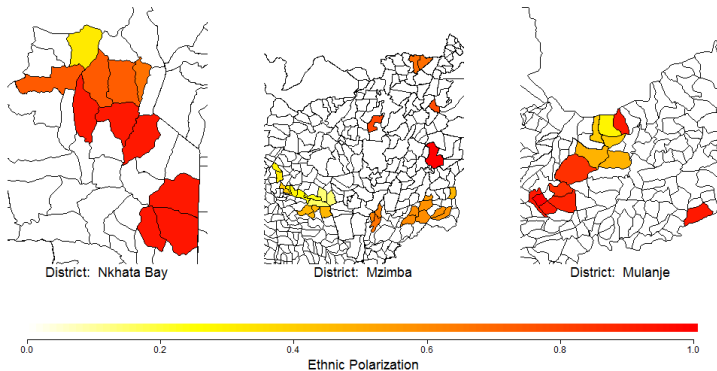
Ethnic Diversity

Figure: Variation in Ethnicization



Ethnic Diversity

Figure: Variation in Polarization



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Determinants of Education in Malawi

Variable	Expectation
Village Co-ethnicity with the President	+
Individual Co-ethnicity with the President	null or < above
Village support for the DPP	+
Local Connections	null

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 - N = 8,000

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■ Controls:

- Age, gender, village population, SES, education, support for ruling party (DPP), urban/rural, religion

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 - Whether or not all children (6-17) are enrolled in school

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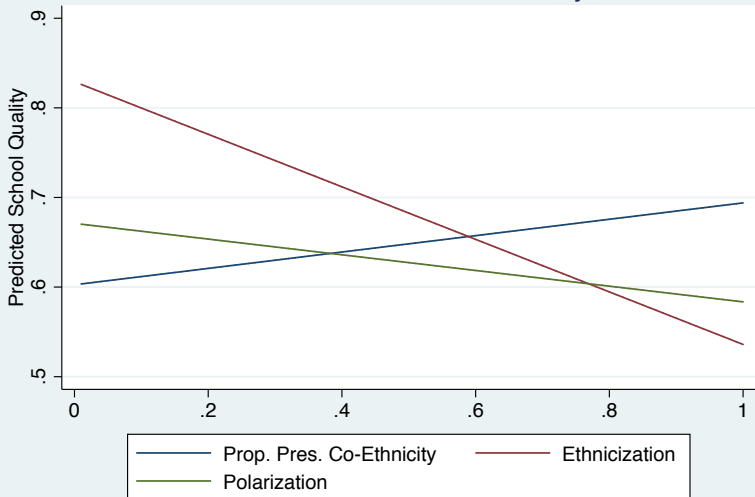
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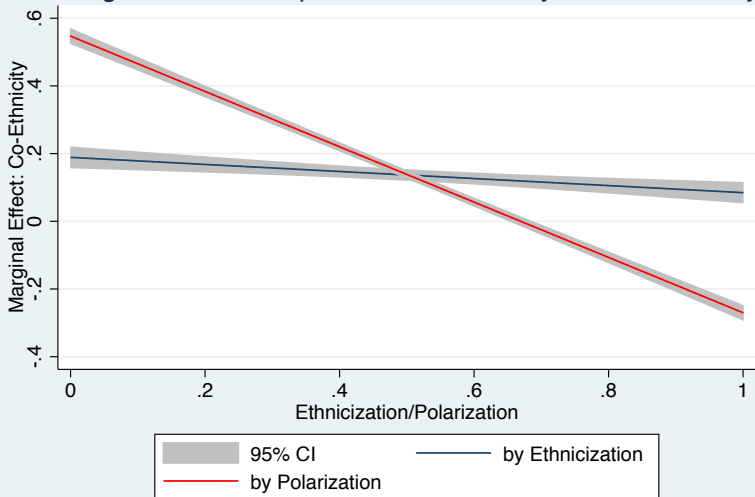
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- Village-level co-ethnicity with president is positive and significant
- Triple interaction: [co-ethnicity w/president * ethnicization * polarization] is positive and significant

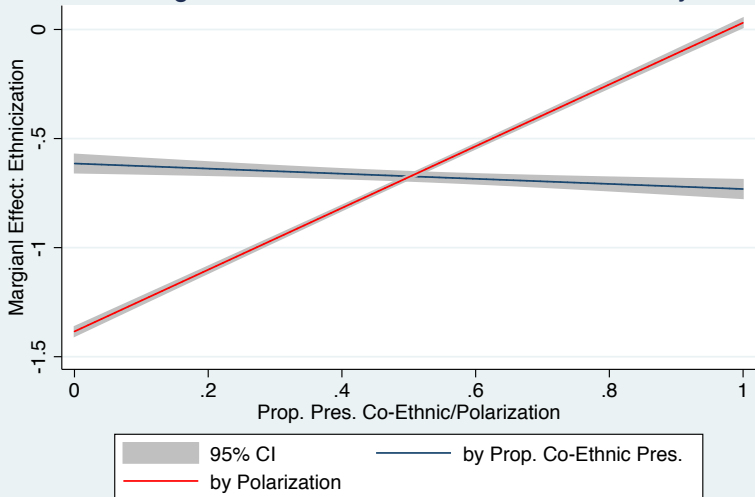
Predictions of School Quality



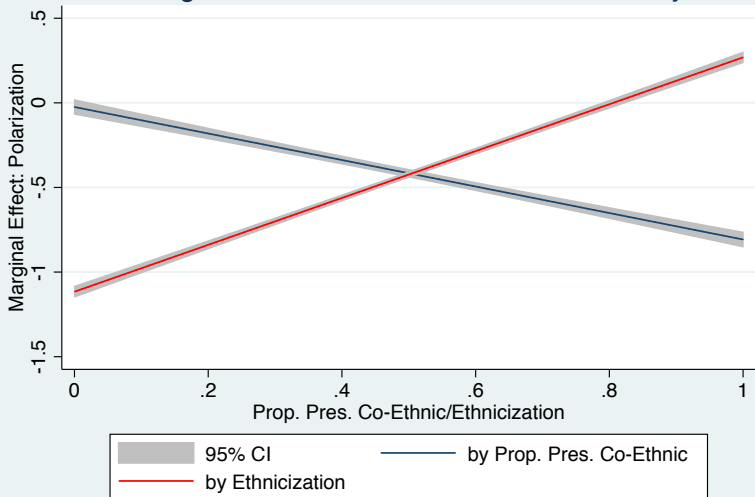
Marginal Effect: Prop. Pres. Co-Ethnicity - School Quality



Marginal Effect: Ethnicization - School Quality



Marginal Effect: Polarization - School Quality



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- Moving from no Co-ethnics w/the President to 100% Co-ethnics is related to a 4% increase in school quality

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- Policy Implications:
 - Changing Norms Regarding Ethnicity, not Ethnic Composition, is Key to Better Quality Services
 - Need to Recognize Relatively Limited Impact of Co-Ethnicity with the President
 - Because Factors Inter-related, Many Paths to Good (or Bad) Outcomes

Thank you.

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 - the extent to which individuals believe that their actions reflect upon the reputation of their village/ethnic group/family and the salience of that reputation

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 - Relative difference in sanctioning between co- and non-co-ethnics

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