Are African Party Systems Different? Correction

THOMAS BRAMBOR
Stanford University

WILLIAM ROBERTS CLARK
University of Michigan

MATT GOLDER
Florida State University

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Introduction

In our replication files for our article in *Electoral Studies* entitled 'Are African Party Systems Different?', we provide all the material (a readme file, data files, do-files, log-files etc.) to replicate all of the results and claims that we made in the article. When constructing these replication files, we noticed two small typos. These typos do not affect any of the analyses that employ data from Mozaffar, Scarritt and Galaich (MSG); they only affect the analyses relating to the corrected data that we construct. As we illustrate in the article, our claims about the effect of either ethnic fragmentation and district magnitude on the size of party systems does not depend on whether we use the MSG data or our own corrected data. As such, the claims that we make are qualitatively unaffected by the two typos that we found. However, we now evaluate how our results do change when we correct the two typos.

Table of Results

Below, we present the results from our corrected analysis. The first three columns in Table **??** are equivalent to the last three columns of Table 1 in our article. The last column now provides the

correct results from our new analysis when we correct the two typos that we found.

Table 1: Institutional and Sociological Determinants of the Effective Number of Legislative Parties (Dependent Variable: Effective Number of Legislative Parties)

Regressor	MSG	Interactive Socio-Institutional Fully-Specified	Fully-Specified Corrected Data	New Analysis with Corrected Data
Fragmentation	-0.01*	-0.31*	-0.03	-0.30
	(0.00)	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.23)
Concentration	0.49**	0.11	0.29	0.10
	(0.19)	(0.27)	(0.29)	(0.41)
Log(Magnitude)	-0.65**	0.66	0.23	-0.07
	(0.23)	(0.45)	(0.47)	(0.58)
Fragmentation x		0.15**	0.01	0.13
Concentration		(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.09)
Fragmentation x		-0.07	-0.07	-0.0001
Log(Magnitude)		(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Concentration x		-0.86*	-0.32	-0.20
Log(Magnitude)		(0.35)	(0.20)	(0.27)
Fragmentation x				
Concentration x	0.01**	0.18*	0.11*	0.08
Log(Magnitude)	(0.00)	(0.08)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Proximity	-1.90**	-0.58	-0.62	-0.72
	(0.44)	(0.43)	(0.58)	(0.56)
PresidentialCandidates		0.50**	1.24**	1.20**
		(0.18)	(0.40)	(0.41)
Proximity x	0.58**	0.04	-0.50	-0.45
PresidentialCandidates	(0.16)	(0.27)	(0.37)	(0.38)
Constant	2.12**	1.27**	0.31	1.35
	(0.31)	(0.30)	(1.11)	(1.23)
R^2	0.52	0.76	0.73	0.73
N	62	62	62	62

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed); robust standard errors in parentheses.

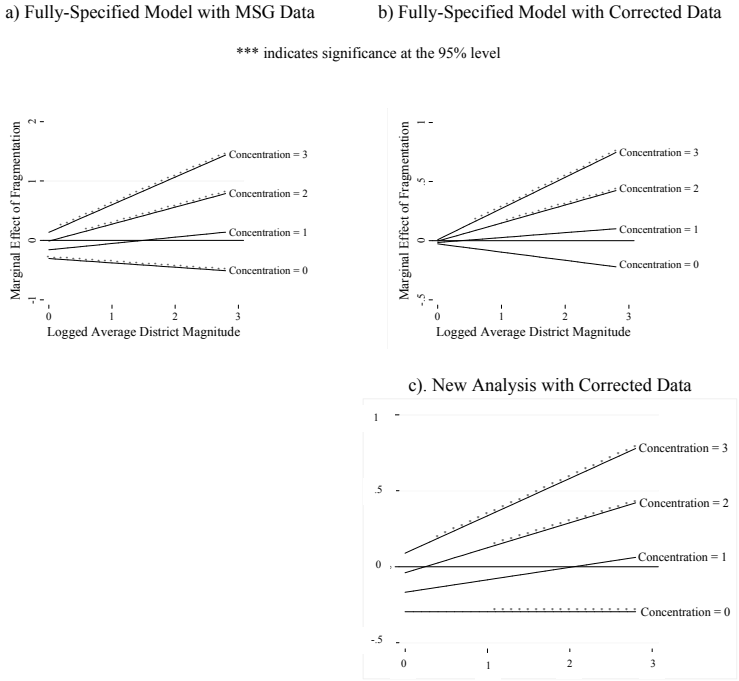
The coefficients on the Fragmentation and Concentration variables now look much more similar to those from the Fully-Specified model using MSG data. However, the coefficients on variables that relate to Log(Magnitude) remain quite different. As we note in our article, the inferences that we can draw from a table of results such as this are quite limited. Instead, we should evaluate the marginal effects of ethnic fragmentation and district magnitude on the size of

the party system with the help of figures similar to those in our article. This is what we will now do.

The Effect of Ethnopolitical Fragmentation

In Figure **??** we plot the marginal effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation on the effective number of legislative parties. Figures 1a and 1b below are equivalent to Figures 1a and 1b in our article. They indicate the marginal effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation from the fully specified model using MSG data (1a) and using our corrected data (1b). Figure 1c is based on our new analysis - this is the marginal effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation using the corrected data when we correct the two typos that we found.

Figure 1: Marginal Effect of Ethnopolitical Fragmentation on the Effective Number of Legislative Parties



The first thing to note is that Figure 1c looks a lot more like Figure 1a than Figure 1b does. This indicates that the change in results that come from correcting MSG's data and recoding their

CONCENTRATION variable is not as significant as it appears in our article. The key question, though, is whether anything has really changed regarding our claims about the effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation on the size of African party systems. The answer is no. MSG claim that "high ethnopolitical fragmentation is likely to reduce the number of parties" in Africa (381). The figures shown above indicate that if this is the case at all, it is under extremely rare circumstances. In fact, when ethnic fragmentation has a statistically significant effect on party system size, it is much more likely to be positive than negative.

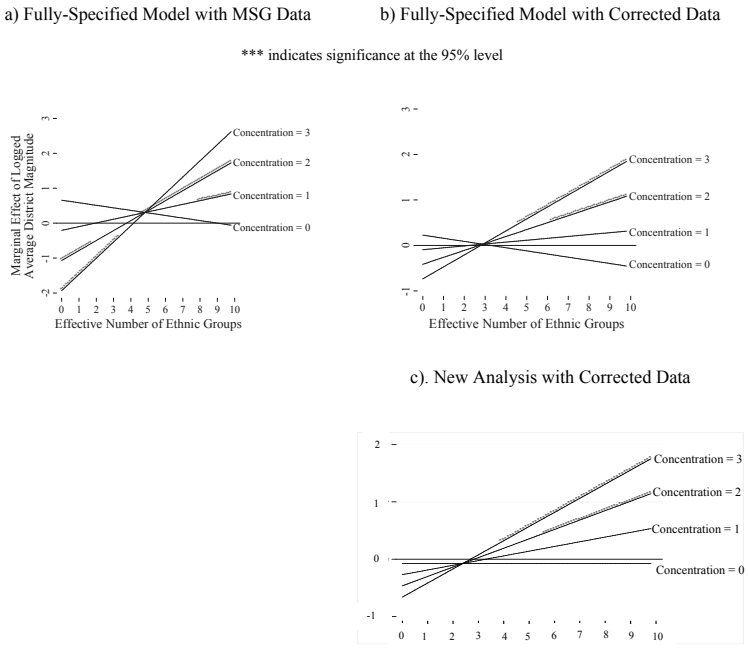
As we note in the article, Figure 1a based on MSG's data suggests that ethnic fragmentation does reduce the number of parties when CONCENTRATION is zero i.e. when the ethnic groups are radically decentralized. However, even if we rely on MSG's data, Figure 1a actually shows that in 80% of the sample ethnic fragmentation either has no effect on the number of parties or increases it. In other words, it is extremely difficult to justify MSG's claim that "high ethnopolitical fragmentation is likely to reduce the number of parties" (381) even when we stick with their own data. The information in Figure 1b based on our corrected data would suggest that ethnopolitical fragmentation never has a significant negative effect on the size of party systems. However, these results are open to question due to the two typos that we found in our code. The information in Figure 1c, when we correct the typos in our code, suggests that ethnic fragmentation does have a statistically significant negative effect on the number of parties, though now only when CONCENTRATION is zero AND when LOG(MAGNITUDE) is sufficiently large. However, again, we would like to emphasize to the reader that in 98% of our sample, ethnic fragmentation either has no effect on the number of parties or increases it. The empirical evidence in these figures is entirely consistent with the research since Duverger (1954) that ethnic fragmentation either increases the number of parties or has no effect; it is not consistent with MSG's unconditional claim that it reduces party system size.

The Effect of District Magnitude

In Figure **??** we plot the marginal effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation on the effective number of legislative parties. Figures 2a and 2b below are equivalent to Figures 2a and 2b in our article.

They indicate the marginal effect of district magnitude (logged) from the fully specified model using MSG data (2a) and using our corrected data (2b). Figure 2c is based on our new analysis - this is the marginal effect of district magnitude using the corrected data when we correct the two typos that we found. The basic point to take away is that the correction of the two typos makes very little difference when it comes to any inferences we drew about the effect of district magnitude on party system size.

Figure 2: Marginal Effect of District Magnitude (logged) on the Effective Number of Legislative Parties



Recall that MSG claim that " district magnitude substantially reduces the number of electoral and legislative parties" (387). This is in direct contradiction to all previous work examining the effect of electoral system proportionality on party system size. As we report in the article, Figure 2a does suggest that an increase in district magnitude may sometimes have a significant reductive effect on the number of parties. However, this is only the case when ethnic fragmentation is sufficiently low and group concentration is sufficiently high. It turns out that less than 20% of the sample fall within the required range of significance. It should be obvious that this is not compelling

evidence for MSG's *unconditional* claim that "district magnitude substantially reduces the number of electoral and legislative parties" (387).

In the paper, we found it strange that we would ever find that district magnitude has a significant negative effect on the number of parties. This was because it has been a staple of the institutionalist literature to argue (and find) that countries with large district magnitudes tend to encourage large numbers of parties. Given the unusual nature of this finding and the fact that we had noticed some data collection errors for the average district magnitude variable in the MSG dataset, we thought that this result might disappear when we estimated the same model with corrected data. This was indeed the case. As expected, Figure 2b shows that district magnitude never has a significant reductive effect on the number of parties. Of course, the information in this figure is in doubt due to the two typos that we found in the code. However, Figure 2c, when we correct the typos, still indicates that district magnitude never has a significant reductive effect on the number of parties. The bottom line is that there is no robust evidence to support MSG's claim that an increase in district magnitude will reduce the number of parties in the real world. This is exactly what one would expect based on the existing party system literature.

Conclusion

When constructing the replication files for our *Electoral Studies* article, we noticed two small typos. As we noted at the beginning, these typos do not affect any of the analyses that employed data from Mozaffar, Scarritt and Galaich (MSG); they only affected the analyses relating to the corrected data that we constructed. Here, we briefly evaluate how our results and inferences change when we correct the two typos. In effect, our analysis regarding the effect of district magnitude on the size of African party systems is almost completely unaffected. We never find that an increase in district magnitude reduces the number of parties; it always has no effect or a positive effect depending on the level of ethnic fragmentation and the degree of ethnic concentration. The analysis regarding the effect of ethnic fragmentation is more affected but our basic claims remain supported. Our reanalysis confirms our conclusion that our results are entirely consistent with the research since Duverger (1954) showing that ethnic fragmentation either increases the number of parties or has

no effect; it is not consistent with MSG's unconditional claim that it reduces party system size.

You can find the necessary code to replicate the results of this new analysis in the zip file: correction.do.