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## **Horizontal inequalities and affirmative action**

An analysis of attitudes towards redistribution across groups in Africa

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**Abstract:** Inequalities between ethnic or racial groups, defined as horizontal inequalities, are pervasive and persistent. They persist due to cumulative and reinforcing inequalities arising from unequal access to different types of capital. Affirmative action policies can provide promising opportunities for escaping this inequality trap. However, political support for these policies across a wide range of groups in society is crucial for introducing and maintaining them. Interestingly, little is known about the popular support for affirmative action policies and redistribution across ethnic groups, in particular in developing countries. We aim to address this lacuna by providing an overview of theories relating to attitudes towards redistribution across groups and analysing these issues empirically in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda.

**Keywords:** horizontal inequalities, affirmative action, economic redistribution, ethnicity, Africa

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## 1 Introduction

Inequalities between ethnic or racial groups (defined as ‘horizontal inequalities’) are pervasive and persistent (Stewart 2008; Stewart and Langer 2008). They are not only unjust, but they also raise the risk of violent conflict (Langer 2005; Stewart 2008) and can be a cause of inefficiency (Roemer 1998; Deshpande and Weisskopf 2014). In addition research on countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, and the United States has shown horizontal inequalities to be extremely persistent; in some cases locking certain groups into positions of inferiority for centuries (see e.g. Figueroa 2008; Guerreiro Osório 2008; Stewart and Langer 2008; Langer 2009; Todd and Ruane 2012). Summarizing Stewart and Langer’s (2008) earlier argument, Stewart argues that the persistence of horizontal inequalities is ‘due to cumulative and reinforcing inequalities arising from unequal access to different types of capital, including education, finance, land and social networks’ (Stewart 2010: 10). Moreover, ‘asymmetries in social capital, in particular, arising from group members having stronger contacts within their [own] group than across groups, have made it almost impossible for some groups to escape these inequalities’ without special support (ibid.). In addition inequalities in terms of political power and cultural status as well as the effects of discrimination often reinforce this inequality trap (ibid.).<sup>1</sup> Hence, in cases where there are very sharp and persistent group-based or horizontal inequalities, there may be a strong case for the introduction of affirmative action policies.

## 2 Theorizing attitudes towards redistribution

Much of the literature devoted to attitudes towards redistribution concerns redistribution across *individuals*, although some of this has bearing on the issue of redistribution across groups, particularly where it incorporates considerations of ethnic diversity. Existing research on these issues predominantly uses European or US data. Various approaches have been taken towards understanding attitudes concerning redistribution: we differentiate here between theories of ‘desert’ or ‘deservingness’, the median voter hypothesis, and the welfare regime hypothesis, which all relate predominantly to attitudes towards vertical redistribution, but some have bearing on horizontal redistribution as well. Investigations into attitudes towards affirmative action programmes, in contrast, specifically relate to redistribution across groups: here diversity and attitudes towards ‘the other’ are particularly relevant.

*The ‘desert’ approach* is based on the view that individuals approve more of redistribution if they feel that people *deserve support* (van Oorschot 2000, 2006). Investigations of perceptions of who deserves social support derived from exploring public attitudes point to three criteria: responsibility, identity, and reciprocity.

### 2.1 Responsibility

If a person’s (or group’s) poverty is believed to be outside their control they are more likely to be perceived as deserving support. Belief that rewards arising from the operation of the market are in accordance with deserts (i.e. broadly the US view) leads to opposition to redistribution, as

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the concept of cultural status inequalities, please see Langer and Brown (2008).

against the view that luck plays a major part (i.e. the European view), which justifies redistribution (Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Benabou and Tirole 2005). We should note that this view of just redistribution—depending on whether inequality is due to personal effort or to luck—fits with the philosophical position termed ‘luck egalitarianism’ (Swift 2005). This also comes close to Roemer’s ‘equality of opportunity’ concept, defined as a situation where a person’s income is not affected by ‘predetermined, morally irrelevant circumstances’ (Ferreira and Gignoux 2011: 654). Since group membership is often outside the control of a person, it can be argued to constitute a ‘predetermined, morally irrelevant circumstance’. This should therefore point towards approval for broad equality among groups, but inequality within them, since the latter is more likely to depend on individual effort. On this basis, therefore, one might expect more approval for redistribution across groups than within them. But this could be offset by a stereotyping of groups such that the impoverishment of poorer groups is believed to be due to their own efforts, or lack of them. Indeed, this is in accordance with US research. According to Larsen, ‘American survey studies, primarily based on the General Social Survey (GSS), have consistently shown a strong relationship between negative attitudes towards black people and the public’s lack of support for welfare policies’ (Larsen 2011: 333). In the South African case, attitudes towards redistribution among whites have been found to be more negative, the more ‘racist’ people are (Roberts et al. 2011). Having negative stereotypes of different groups is likely to be associated with cultural distance, which is the second hypothesis of what accounts for people’s views of ‘deservedness’.

## 2.2 Cultural distance

A second determinant of ‘deservingness’ is cultural distance. When people identify with the needy person, it is more likely they will consider this person deserving of support. This fits with social psychologists’ recent hypothesis that people’s view of justice (fair rules and fair distribution) may be related to their identity in two ways.<sup>2</sup> First, cultural norms of fairness can differ across groups. Second, the ‘scope of justice’ or the ‘moral community’—i.e. who is regarded as within a moral community and subject to accepted conceptions of fair rules and fair distribution and who is morally excluded (outside the scope of justice)—may be determined by group identity (Wenzel 2000; Opatow 2001; Clayton and Opatow 2003). Moreover, ‘what is viewed as fair and unfair differs for groups that are inside or outside one’s scope of justice’ (Clayton and Opatow 2003: 304). Indeed, ‘moral exclusion can make it seem fair that one’s own group is better off (has more resources, etc.) than other groups’ (Clayton and Opatow 2003: 305).

This view of how people perceive justice leads to the opposite conclusion to that of the ‘responsibility’ criterion. It implies that people would be more favourable to redistribution within their own group, and less favourable to redistribution across groups. A considerable literature ‘assumes that individuals accept redistribution to in-group members but disapprove of redistribution to out-group members’ (Schmidt-Catran 2016) (p. 5 of online version) (see also Alesina et al. 2001; Luttmer 2001; Larsen 2006; van Oorschot 2006; Alesina and Giuliano 2011; Schmidt and Spies 2014). This assumption is supported by evidence of lower levels of redistribution in multi-ethnic societies than in homogeneous ones. For example, the relatively low level of redistributive policies in the US compared with Europe has been attributed to the comparatively high ethnic diversity (Gilens 1999; Lipset and Marks 2000; Alesina and Glaeser

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<sup>2</sup> Though interestingly, Wenzel (2000: 157) noted that: ‘In four decades of social psychological research on distributive justice, the relationship between justice and identity has been more or less neglected’ (quoted in Clayton and Opatow (2003: 301).

2004). Indeed, as noted above, it has been argued that support for welfare schemes in the US was undermined by the view that they would largely benefit African-Americans (Quadagno 1994). Moreover, ‘a number of studies have shown a negative relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and public welfare spending across American cities and states’ (Larsen 2011: 332-33). For example, Alesina et al. (1999: 1243) show that ‘the shares of spending on productive public goods—education, roads, sewers and trash pickup—in U.S. cities (metro areas/urban counties) are inversely related to the city’s (metro area’s/county’s) ethnic fragmentation, even after controlling for other socioeconomic and demographic determinants’ (Alesina et al. 1999: 1243). In addition, ‘American survey studies, primarily based on the General Social Survey (GSS), have consistently shown a strong relationship between negative attitudes towards black people and the public’s lack of support for welfare policies’ (Larsen 2011: 333). The theory of ethnic competition is broadly in line with this approach; i.e. ethnic groups compete for resources and power, and consequently it is argued that there will be hostility towards horizontal or between-group redistribution (see Olzak 1992).

Some have questioned whether Europeans share these attitudes. For example, Taylor-Gooby (2005) did not find a relation between diversity and public spending across European states, and neither does Gerdes (2011) for Danish municipalities. In contrast Eger (2010) for Sweden, and Larsen (2011) for Sweden, Denmark, and the UK show that similar attitudes of hostility towards welfare redistribution are to be found by those who are hostile to immigrants.

In line with the ‘social distance’ view, there is evidence for lower public expenditure across African countries where there is more ethnic fragmentation (see e.g. Easterly and Levine 1997). In this respect Miguel and Gugerty (2005) find that education facilities, quality of education, and maintenance of water facilities are of a lower standard in more diverse areas in rural western Kenya. They explain this by fewer social sanctions of users among non-co-ethnics. Similarly, Habyarimana et al. (2007: 724) use experimental games in Uganda to explain why such differences occur. They find more cooperative games among co-ethnics, which they attribute to ‘in-group reciprocity norms . . . sanctioned by an ethnic technology “findability” that facilitates sanctioning among co-ethnic groups’. Interestingly, they do *not* find taste heterogeneity comparing different group members, nor less altruism across groups. Alesina et al. (2014), similarly, find that more ethnically heterogeneous districts in Indonesia have greater deforestation. They explain this via several channels: lower trust/social capital, less collective action and therefore weaker negotiations with companies, more corruption, and more and smaller jurisdictions. However, against the prevailing view, a study of public goods provision and health and education outcomes at the district level in Zambia finds ‘a positive relationship between ethnic diversity and some measures of public goods provision’, while at the same time uncovering a negative association between central government expenditure allocation and district diversity (Gisselquist et al. 2016: 308).

### **2.3 Reciprocity**

The third determinant of ‘deservedness’ is the reciprocity dimension: a person is perceived as more deserving if he/she has contributed to the same social security system. This may explain hostility to redistribution towards immigrant groups who have not paid into the home country social security system; and also from those in the formal sector—who pay social security contributions—to those in the informal sector. In the African context, poorer ethnic groups are largely employed outside the formal sector, while taxpayers from the richer groups tend to be in the formal sector. Adopting this perspective then leads to a comparable conclusion to that of social distance, one would expect more support for within-group redistribution and less for across-group redistribution. However, the policy response to this would be different as once all

groups are brought into the same social security system, more favourable attitudes towards redistribution across groups should develop, in contrast to the social distance hypothesis which would appear more difficult to overcome.

## 2.4 The median voter hypothesis

Meltzer and Richard (1981) is a dominant theory for understanding attitudes towards vertical redistribution and essentially argues that the greater the inequality, the more approval for redistribution there will be. The empirical evidence is inconclusive however. Indeed, some studies even find a reverse relationship (see e.g. Iversen and Soskice 2006). In this respect Schmidt-Catran (2014) warns however that cross-sectional evidence may be misleading because of country-specific effects. Conversely, he finds supporting evidence for the long term within country preferences but not cross-country. Similarly, according to Jaeger (2013), panel data for European countries shows more support for redistribution where inequality is higher. Finseraas (2009), analysing survey data from 22 European countries, also finds some support for the median voter hypothesis among the two upper income quintiles while controlling for a range of other variables including having low income, being female, being in a minority group, being a member of a trade union, and age. One possible explanation for weak supporting evidence for the median voter hypothesis is the effect of ethnic diversity, as discussed above. In addition, the assumption underlying the hypothesis that people are motivated purely by self-interest has been questioned, in particular for developing countries. Bowles and Gintis (2000) argue in this respect that survey evidence shows more complex motives. They further argue that where many people are below a minimum basic needs standard of living there is ‘a virtually unconditional willingness to share with others to assure them of some minimal standard’ (Bowles and Gintis 2000: 50).

## 2.5 Welfare regime theory

Another theory put forward to explain attitudes towards vertical redistribution is Esping-Andersen’s (1990) ‘welfare regime theory’. He argues that different welfare regimes lead to different degrees of solidarity and distinguish between the following regimes: ‘liberal regimes’, which aim to reduce poverty but not inequality; ‘social democratic regimes’ which are characterized by comprehensive social services and benefits and portray more solidarity and a high ‘taste for equality’; and ‘conservative regimes’ with high benefits based on contributions, involving preferences for equity rather than equality (Esping-Andersen 1990). The evidence—from developed countries—does not give much support to this theory (Jaeger 2006). With cross-sectional evidence taken from developed countries, Dallinger (2010) finds little support for the welfare regime hypothesis, showing different attitudes are to be found in similar regimes, though she finds that support for redistribution is lowest in liberal regimes. ‘Immature’ regimes are found to be more pro-redistribution than ‘mature’ ones. She shows that approval for redistribution is lower in richer countries, and finds some support for the median voter hypothesis. Dion and Birchfield (2010) cover 50 countries, including some developing countries, and find that attitudes vary according to region and country context. Individual preferences for redistribution are found to vary negatively with income and appear to be more positive among women, the unemployed, and older people. They are also lower the greater the level of development of the country.

A related view is that ‘beliefs in regard to the causes of inequality, concerns for fairness, religious convictions, forms of altruism, as well as social norms about what is acceptable or not in terms of inequality and poverty’ are ‘driving forces behind the formation of redistributive preferences’ (Pittau et al. 2015: 715). History and culture are important factors shaping and

influencing these beliefs and social norms (Alesina and Giuliano 2011). Empirical evidence—drawing on differences between immigrants’ attitudes and local populations—supports the view that individuals from different cultures have significantly different attitudes towards redistribution (Alesina and Giuliano 2011; Luttmer and Singhal 2011).

Some individual characteristics may also influence attitudes, including age and gender, and perceived prospects for social mobility. Alesina and Giuliano (2011) find that the unemployed, women, and the youth are usually more in favour of redistribution, as are people who are more left wing. Benabou and Efe (2001) argue that the prospect of social mobility among the poor tends to reduce support for redistribution and they find weak evidence for this hypothesis in the United States. Knowledge about the possibilities of redistribution can also affect attitudes. Using evidence from South Africa, Pellicer et al. (2015) find that if people think inequality is unavoidable and there are few or no possibilities for redistribution, they are less likely to support redistribution than if they are convinced that policies for redistribution are feasible.

As noted, these studies mainly relate to attitudes towards vertical redistribution, but they have bearing on horizontal redistribution as well. Investigations of attitudes towards affirmative action programmes are precisely concerned with horizontal redistribution—which is our main concern here. Harrison et al. (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of attitudes towards affirmative action programmes, drawing on 126 independent samples involving 29,000 people, all in the US. The main determinants for approval of the programmes were a respondent’s race; gender; personal self-interest; collective self-interest; experience of personal discrimination; beliefs about discrimination; racist and sexist attitudes; political ideology; and political party membership. The more ‘prescriptive’ the programme, the less favourable were attitudes.

Research into attitudes towards affirmative action policies in South Africa has indicated that support for affirmative action is larger if the beneficiaries of these policies are women or disabled people, rather than racial groups (Roberts et al. 2011). Similarly, in a European context, the elderly are consistently ranked first on the deservingness criteria, followed by the sick and the disabled. Third place usually goes to the unemployed, while last place is consistently occupied by migrants. Other research in South Africa finds that the quantity and quality of inter-group contact between black and white people is associated with support for affirmative action policies (Dixon et al. 2010). A further study concludes that policy support for affirmative action among the black population can be explained by strong in-group identification and high levels of perceived threat, while policy support among the white population can be explained by low levels of prejudice and perceived threat (Durrheim et al. 2011). This evidence is in line with a mixture of responsibility, social distance, and reciprocity in explaining attitudes.

### **3 Hypotheses**

Drawing on the discussion and insights presented above, we formulate a set of hypotheses concerning people’s attitudes towards horizontal redistribution. Some of the hypotheses considered above concern the determinants of individual attitudes at a point in time, and some concern why countries differ from each other (i.e. the median voter; the welfare regime hypotheses; the effect of societal ethnic heterogeneity; and the impact of the level of development). We do not have sufficient data over time or enough countries to explore the second set of hypotheses with any rigour. Here we consider both attitudes by individuals towards redistribution to other (poorer) groups and attitudes aggregated by group towards redistribution to other poorer groups.

We put forward the following hypotheses of determinants of these attitudes, on the basis of the preceding literature review.

### **3.1 Relative income**

This derives from the view that self-interest determines attitudes, as argued in the median voter hypothesis; i.e. where a person or group is in the income hierarchy will partly determine their views and attitudes towards redistribution. We assume that this applies equally to attitudes towards horizontal redistribution as to vertical redistribution. Inequalities can be measured objectively, or as perceived by individuals. It is important to note here that there may be significant differences between perceived and objective horizontal inequalities (Langer and Smedts 2013), and this could explain a mismatch between the severity of the prevailing objective inequalities and people's willingness to redistribute towards the relatively disadvantaged groups in society. Therefore, in our analysis we explore both objective conditions and perceptions of inequality. In particular, we hypothesize that:

- Individuals/groups who are poorer than other individuals/groups are more likely to support redistribution.

However, since action is the result of how people perceive their situation, we also hypothesize that:

Individuals/groups who see themselves as poorer than other people in society are more inclined to support redistribution than those who perceive themselves as relatively richer individuals/groups.

### **3.2 Ethnicity and nationality**

The literature review suggests that (i) the greater the ethnic heterogeneity, and (ii) the more hostile stereotyping of others, the less the support for horizontal redistribution. While the heterogeneity hypothesis can only be tested by cross-country or cross-regional data, which we lack, we can test for attitudes towards others by exploring how far people feel their own ethnicity determines their identity as against a national identity. Importance given to national identity would imply that ethnic distinctions matter less to people. Moreover, this measurement of ethnic identity as against national identity gives an indication of which groups are within the scope of justice of the individual. The literature review suggests that group identity determines conceptions of fair distribution within the morally defined in-group and justifies the exclusion of the out-groups. It is therefore crucial whether people select their ethnic group or their national group as a primary identity marker. Consequently, we hypothesize that:

- Individuals/groups who feel more national than ethnic are more likely to support redistribution across groups.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that individuals/groups who consider their ethnic identity more important are less likely to support redistribution to poorer ethnic groups if they are among the poorer groups. It is plausible that individuals/groups who consider their ethnic identity more important are more likely to support redistribution to poorer ethnic groups if they consider their own ethnic group to be among those poorer ethnic groups in the country. Therefore, in line with the theory of collective self-interest, we hypothesize that:



- Individuals/groups who feel more ethnic than national are more likely to support redistribution to poorer ethnic groups, if they consider their own ethnic group to be among those poorer groups.

### **3.3 Attitudes towards others**

People may have positive or negative attitudes towards other people or other groups. It is likely that the more positive their attitudes towards other groups (positive stereotypes), the more they will approve redistribution and conversely with negative attitudes. There are two ways we can capture these attitudes: by positive or negative perceptions of other groups; and by trust in other groups. Hence we hypothesize that:

- People with positive attitudes towards individuals belonging to other groups are more likely to approve redistribution towards them.
- People who have more trust in individuals belonging to other groups are more likely to approve of redistribution.

### **3.4 Treatment by government**

It is also possible that groups who consider they are disfavoured by the government may approve redistribution to offset this. On the other hand, they could feel that being discriminated against is likely to mean that any redistribution will not reach them. However, we hypothesize that:

- Groups who feel they are treated badly by the government will be more likely to support redistribution than groups who feel they are favoured.

### **3.5 Confounding variables**

Evidence from earlier empirical research suggests a number of other variables that may influence attitudes including age, gender, and level of education. We therefore also include these variables as controls.

## **4 Empirical methodology**

### **4.1 Data and descriptive statistics**

The objective of our empirical analysis is to investigate the determinants of approval of redistribution across different groups in four African countries: Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya. The perceptions surveys which we use in our empirical analysis were conducted in 2011 as part of a joint project between the Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) at the University of Oxford and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The main objective of the CRISE–JICA project was to better understand the question why horizontal inequalities sometimes lead to political mobilization and/or violent conflict along ethnic lines, while in other cases this does not occur. The countries included in the study were purposively selected. While each of the countries was confronted with severe ethnic

and/or regional inequalities, group mobilization along ethno-regional lines differs substantially across them. As further noted by Langer and Mikami, while ‘the surveys were not nationally representative’, the samples were selected in such a way ‘that there was a sufficiently large number of respondents from all the major ethnic and religious groups included in our survey samples’ (Langer and Mikami 2013: 209). Thus, while ‘the results are only statistically representative for the selected survey locations, we can draw wider inferences on the assumption that the surveyed areas are qualitatively representative of a larger part of society’ (ibid: 209.). Table 1 provides more details on the specific locations and the number of respondents that were included in our survey. While in Ghana and Nigeria our survey sample was restricted to the capital city, in Kenya and Uganda we surveyed a number of other cities besides the capital cities of Nairobi and Kampala. The actual surveys were conducted with the help of highly experienced local implementation agencies and hence no foreigners were present during the interviews. Given the subject of our research (i.e. attitudes towards redistribution), it is worthwhile to highlight the latter point because recent research by Cilliers et al. (2015) has found that respondents contributed more in dictator games (i.e. more redistribution) in the presence of a ‘white foreigner’ due to demand effects.

Table 1: Overview of survey locations and number of interviews

Country	Survey sites and number of interviews	Total
Ghana	Accra (406)	406
Nigeria	Lagos (412)	412
Kenya	Nairobi (300), Nakuru (303), and Mombasa (304)	907
Uganda	Kampala (200), Gulu (100), Mbale (100), and Mbarare (100)	500

Source: Langer and Mikami (2013: 209).

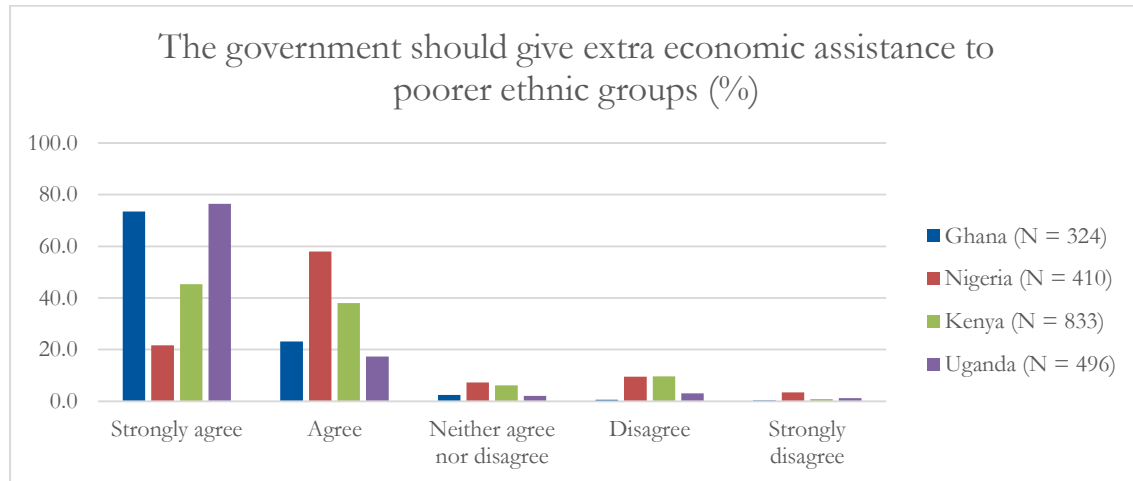
Besides containing a range of questions concerning among other things people’s socio-economic and educational background, their perceptions of government, their attitudes towards and contact with people from other groups, their views on the importance of ethnic and national identities, as well as their perceptions of the prevailing socio-economic and political horizontal inequalities, the survey also contained a number of specific questions concerning people’s attitudes towards economic redistribution and the political inclusion of poorer ethnic groups and regions. In this paper we explore and analyse the variation in attitudes observed in these questions, thereby advancing our understanding of the determinants of people’s attitudes towards affirmative action-type policies.

Our dependent variable is the support for economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups. The variable is measured by the extent of agreement (varying from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’) with the following statement in Ghana and Uganda: ‘The government should give extra economic assistance to poorer ethnic groups.’ The statement was slightly different in Nigeria and Kenya. In these questionnaires the statement was: ‘The government should budget more money to poorer ethnic groups.’ The meaning of the two statements is almost identical, but the different phrasing of the statements could account for part of the differences between the countries. Within each country we consider agreement with the statement as a good indication for support for economic redistribution.

The general support for economic redistribution is strong in the selected countries (see Figure 1). In Ghana and Uganda over 70 per cent of respondents strongly agree with the statement ‘that government should give extra economic assistance to poorer ethnic groups’ (Langer and Mikami 2013: 121). Opinions are a little more divided in Nigeria and Kenya, although most respondents still tend to agree with the statement. We used the ‘strongly agree’ response for two reasons: first,

because people might say they agree, thinking it was the ‘correct’ answer; and second, because the majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree with the statements. We therefore use the ‘very strong’ category to indicate approval, which takes a value of one if people strongly agree and zero otherwise.

Figure 1: Support for economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups



Source: Authors' calculations.

One of the central independent variables is socio-economic status (SES). The economic position of an individual/group can be assessed either by objective data or by perceptions of status. To measure objective SES on the individual level, we use the average score of an individual's answer to five questions asking about basic human needs. In these questions the respondent is asked whether (s)he or anyone in his/her family lacked food, water, medical treatment, fuel, or a cash income in the past twelve months. This variable was coded in such a way that a higher value on the scale indicates less experienced poverty, and thus a higher SES. The resulting scale has a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.80 and explains more than 50 per cent of the variance in the five questions for Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda. The quality of the scale is less satisfactory in Ghana with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.69, explaining only 32 per cent of the variance in the five questions.

Due to the lack of reliable data on objective SES of ethnic groups, we created a sample-based estimate by calculating the average SES score by ethnic group in each country sample. This leads to some uncertainty in the estimates when there are limited observations of a particular ethnic group due to the location of the survey.

Perceived SES is measured by allowing the respondent to rate his/her living conditions compared to other individuals in the country, while perceived socio-economic condition of the ethnic group is measured by rating the living conditions of the respondent's ethnic group compared to other groups in the country.

The importance of identity is measured by three variables. The first one asks the respondent to choose between being a member of his/her ethnic group and his/her national identity. Respondents could select one out of five statements that best expresses their feelings. These statements range from feeling only national to feeling only ethnic. The two other variables measure the importance of different aspects of identity for the way the respondent thinks about himself/herself. Both ethnic and national identity are given as alternative aspects of identity in this variable. We also include a sample-based measure of the importance of ethnicity and national identity by ethnic group. These variables are operationalized as the proportion of

respondents by ethnic group that considers their national/ethnic identity very important for the way they think about themselves. As with the objective SES measure of ethnic groups, these estimates are less precise for ethnic groups with a small number of observations.

Attitudes towards members of other ethnic groups are measured in two variables. The first one is very straightforward, using answers to questions on how the respondent perceives people of other ethnic groups on a scale from ‘very negative’ to ‘very positive’. The second one uses answers to the question to what extent the respondent trusts people from different ethnic groups on a scale from ‘not at all’ to ‘I trust them a lot’.

The last variable in the analysis is of a more political nature. This variable is derived from a question asking about the extent to which an individual is satisfied with the treatment of his/her ethnic group by the current government on a five-point scale from ‘very dissatisfied’ to ‘very satisfied’. The models also include a range of control variables, including gender, age, and level of education. Gender is measured dichotomously, age is included as a continuous variable, while education is included as an ordinal variable with four categories (none, primary education, secondary education, and post-secondary education).

## 5 Estimation results

In this analysis we will compare results of separate binary logistic regression models for the selected countries. The detailed results for each country are not discussed here but can be provided by the authors on request. Binary logistic regression does not allow us to compare the size of the effects across models, but we can evaluate the direction and significance of the effects in the models in order to come to some general conclusions on the support for affirmative action policies. Table 2 summarizes the results of the logistic regression models with regard to the support for economic redistribution. The results in Table 2 are derived from the full models for each country, i.e. the models which include all variables that are discussed in the hypotheses. We therefore take a confirmatory approach by adding all the hypothesized relationships to the models.

Table 2: Support for economic redistribution in the selected countries (full models)

Variables	Ghana	Nigeria	Kenya	Uganda
Gender (Male)		-**		
Age				
Education		-*		
Higher objective SES (individual)			-*	
Higher objective SES (ethnic group)				+*
Higher perceived SES (individual)			-*	
Higher perceived SES (group)		-**		
Bad treatment of group by government		+***	Na	+**
Ethnic more important than National Identity		+**		+*
Importance nationality(individual)	+***		+*	
Importance nationality (group)				+*
Importance ethnicity (individual)	+*		+***	
Importance ethnicity (group)				
Perception other ethnic groups	+**	+**	+***	
Trust other ethnic groups				

\*\*\* p < .01 \*\* p < .05 \* p < .10

Source: Authors' calculations.

## 5.1 Socio-economic status

Our first hypothesis states that individuals and groups with a higher SES will be less likely to support redistribution. This SES may be either objective or perceived. Therefore we test the hypothesis with an objective measure of experienced poverty and a subjective measure of living conditions compared to others. The objective measurement of SES is negative and significant in Kenya, and negative and almost ( $p=0,11$ ) significant in Ghana—i.e. there is more approval for redistribution among poorer people. For Nigeria and Uganda, the parameter is not significant. Results are therefore in line with the hypothesis advanced above for two of the selected countries. In Kenya and Ghana, individuals who experienced more poverty in the past 12 months are significantly more likely to strongly support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups.

The coefficients for the objective measure of SES aggregated at the group level are in the expected direction but not significant for Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya. In Uganda however, the effect is significant and in the opposite direction. Members of ethnic groups that experienced, on average, more poverty in the last 12 months are significantly less likely to support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups.

In evaluating subjective SES, we considered the perceptions of individual living conditions compared to other individuals in the country. The effect of this subjective measure is significant and negative in Kenya but not in Ghana, Nigeria, or Uganda. For Kenya results are in line with the hypothesis. Respondents that consider their living conditions better than other Kenyans are less likely to support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups.

The perceived economic situation of the ethnic group compared to other ethnic groups in the country is significant in Nigeria, and in accordance with our hypothesis, but not in Ghana, Kenya, or Uganda. In Nigeria respondents who consider the economic situation of their ethnic group worse than other ethnic groups in the country are more likely to support economic redistribution.

## 5.2 Importance of national identity

The next hypothesis relates to the importance of national identity. Based on the literature review, we expect that respondents who attach more importance to their national identity relative to their ethnic identity will be more likely to support redistribution to poorer ethnic groups.

We measure attitudes towards national identity in several ways: first, by the proportion of respondents who say their national identity is more important than their ethnic one; second, by the proportion of respondents who say their national identity is important. With regard to economic redistribution, results for the importance of national identity—which is an indicator of national solidarity—are generally in accordance with the hypothesis. Respondents that are less national are significantly less likely to support economic redistribution in Ghana and Kenya. In Nigeria and Uganda the coefficients are not significant.

## 5.3 Importance of ethnic identity

The next identity aspect is ethnic identity. Two hypotheses relate to this variable. First, we expect individuals who consider their ethnic identity to be more important to have a scope of justice that tends to be limited to their own ethnic group. Therefore, we expect individuals that attach

more importance to ethnic identity to be less likely to support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups. Second, we expect individuals that attach more importance to their ethnic identity to be more likely to support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups if they consider their own ethnic group among those poorer groups in the country. In the latter case the support for economic redistribution is driven by collective self-interest rather than considerations of the scope of justice of redistribution.

Again, we measure attitudes towards ethnic identity in two ways: first, by the proportion of respondents who say their ethnic identity is more important than their national one; second, by the proportion of respondents who say their ethnic identity is important.

Results for the importance of ethnic identity relative to national identity are significant in two of the four countries. However, the results are in contradiction to the first hypothesis. Both in Nigeria and Uganda individuals are more likely to support economic redistribution if they consider their ethnic identity more important than their national identity. In Ghana and Kenya we find similar results in the second variable for the importance of ethnic identity. In this case respondents who report that their ethnic identity is very important are also more likely to support economic redistribution. Rather than asking respondents to rank their ethnic versus their national identity, this question asks about the importance of ethnic identity for the way the respondent thinks about him/herself. We find no support for the hypothesis that the scope of justice of these respondents is limited to their own ethnic group.

To test the second hypothesis, we include an interaction effect between the importance of ethnic identity and the perceived SES of the respondents' ethnic group. Table 3 is limited to the coefficients for the variables included in the interaction (perceived SES of ethnic group and importance of ethnicity). The full results of these models can be provided by the authors upon request. The interaction is significant and in line with the hypothesis in Kenya. Individuals are significantly more likely to support economic redistribution when they consider their ethnic identity very important and think that their group's economic situation is worse than that of other ethnic groups in the country. However, the interaction is not significant in Ghana, Nigeria, or Uganda. Therefore, our second hypothesis can partly explain why we find strong support for economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups among respondents who consider their ethnic identity more important.

Table 3: Interaction effects of perceived socio-economic status ethnic group and importance ethnicity

Variables	Categories	Ghana	Nigeria	Kenya	Uganda
Perceived SES ethnic group	Worse	-0.502	0.910	0.886***	0.439
	Same	-0.719*	-0.301	0.704***	0.194
	Better	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0
Imp. ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	Not important	19.368	-	-0.037	19.937
	Not very Important	-1.384	-	-0.271	-0.595
	Somewhat important		-	0.192	-0.691*
	Very important	0 <sup>a</sup>	-	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>
Interaction perceived SES ethnic group—Imp. ethnicity	Worse * Not imp.	-20.250	-	-1.563	-
	Worse * not very imp.	1.343	-	-1.022	0.621
	Worse * Somewhat		-	-1.198**	0.096
	Same * Not imp.	-20.196	-	-1.238*	-0.136
	Same * Not very imp.	-0.177	-	-0.927*	0.758
	Same * Somewhat imp.		-	-1.099**	1.038
Ethnic vs National identity	More national	-	0.128	-	-
	Equally	-	0.230	-	-
	More ethnic	-	0 <sup>a</sup>	-	-
Interaction Ethnic vs National identity - Perceived SES ethnic group	Worse * more national	-	-0.938	-	-
	Worse * Equally	-	0.082	-	-
	Same * More national	-	-0.470	-	-
	Same * Equally	-	0.038	-	-
Constant		1.835	1.015	0.963	1.861
R square (Nagelkerke)		0.172	0.175	0.150	0.088

\*\*\* p < .01 \*\* p < .05 \* p < .10

<sup>a</sup> Reference category: Coefficient set to zero

<sup>b</sup> This variable contains only three categories in the Ghanaian sample: not important, important, very important.

Source: Authors' calculations.

#### 5.4 Perceptions of other ethnic groups

We also hypothesized that individuals with more positive attitudes towards other ethnic groups would be more likely to support redistribution towards disadvantaged ethnic groups. With regard to economic redistribution, the variable is strongly significant in all countries except Uganda. Respondents that have a very positive attitude towards members of other ethnic groups are significantly more likely to support economic redistribution. Despite the fact that the results for the variable are significant in some of its categories, the overall contribution of the variable to the fit of the model is rather limited.

Trust in other groups may be another indicator of inter-group attitudes. Hence we hypothesized that respondents with more trust in members of other ethnic groups would be more likely to support redistribution. Results in the analysis do not support this hypothesis. Trust in members of other ethnic groups is not significantly related to attitudes towards economic redistribution in any of the countries.

## 5.5 Treatment by government

Our final hypothesis is of a more political nature. We hypothesize that individuals who believe that their ethnic group is treated badly by government will support redistribution to rectify the situation. When it comes to economic redistribution, the perceived treatment of the ethnic group by government is significant in two out of three countries (the variable was not included in the Kenyan survey). Respondents in the Nigerian and Ugandan samples are more likely to support economic redistribution when they are dissatisfied with the treatment of their ethnic group by government. In Ghana we find no significant relation between the two variables.

As far as the confounding variables are concerned, the only significant results were found in Nigeria, where being male and more highly educated led to lower support for redistribution. Age had no effect.

## 6 Some conclusions

We should first note that it appears that there are substantial differences in the determinants of attitudes towards redistribution across our four African countries, which is likely to be due to historical, political, and policy differences.

With regard to our hypotheses, we found support for the hypothesis that poorer individuals/groups would be more likely to support redistribution in Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana, but not in Uganda.

With regard to the second hypothesis, that people are more likely to support redistribution the more national they feel vis-à-vis their ethnic identity, we found that people who felt more national were indeed more likely to support redistribution in Ghana and Kenya, with no significant effects in the other two countries.

On the other hand, people who also placed emphasis on their ethnic identity were, in all four countries and contrary to expectations, also more likely to support redistribution. However, including an interaction between the importance of ethnic identity and the perceived socio-economic condition of respondents' ethnic group illustrated that this effect can, at least in part, be explained by collective self-interest. The Kenyan sample showed that individuals who considered their ethnic identity more important than their national identity were more likely to support economic redistribution to poorer ethnic groups, if they considered their own ethnic group to be among those poorer groups in the country.

With regard to the third hypothesis, that people would be more likely to support redistribution to other groups if they had more positive views of other groups, we found support for the hypothesis in all four countries.

With regard to the fourth hypothesis, that people would be more likely to support redistribution if they felt the government had been treating them badly, there was support for the hypothesis in Nigeria and Uganda.

Perhaps the most important finding is the high level of support for redistribution across groups in *every* country, which is possibly unexpected given the high degree of ethnic heterogeneity in these countries. This means that affirmative action policies may well receive support. Greater acceptance of national identity would increase this support. But, interestingly, this does not seem



to mean reducing the strength of ethnic identity but rather enhancing national and ethnic identities. Further, improved perceptions of other ethnic groups could further enhance support for affirmative action policies.

These findings suggest that policies therefore need to go beyond affirmative action on policies to encompass policies directed at improved respect for other groups and national integration. The differences in findings across these African countries suggest that there is an urgent need for more in-depth research on the evolution and determinants of attitudes towards redistribution in Africa and other developing countries.

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