

## Conceptualizing and Measuring Party Institutionalization in New Democracies

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### **Abstract**

This article conceptualizes party institutionalization and theorizes the conditions under which party elites invest in institutionalized parties in new democracies. We specify routinization and value infusion as two central dimensions of party institutionalization and theorize conditions relevant for party institutionalization across three central spheres: the party system, the state and society. Constructing measures for routinization and value infusion based on expert survey data, we test our framework through multivariate regression models across parties in 18 Latin American democracies. As theoretically expected, some conditions (access to executive office, a party's formative environment and group ties) significantly relate to both dimensions, while others (party system polarization and fragmentation, permanent state subsidies, and legislative office) relate to one dimension only. This highlights the multidimensionality of party institutionalization as a phenomenon and the complexity of the empirical conditions associated with it.

In a widely cited review article on political parties in Latin America, Levitsky urged us more than ten years ago to develop more nuanced conceptual frameworks that differentiate various dimensions of parties as organizations, conceding that such efforts are seriously constrained by a lack of data (2001a, 106-107). Reflecting this difficulty, most of the literature to date has focused either on in depth qualitative studies of a single or a few cases at the *party level* or, alternatively, on the cross-national study of party *system* institutionalization at the country level. In contrast, this article *conceptualizes and empirically explores the diversity of party institutionalization*, an important party property in both new and established democracies.

According to Levitsky (1998) as well as Randall and Svåsand (2002), party institutionalization – a party’s development towards consolidation – becomes manifest in two distinct internal properties: *routinization*, a structural dimension which refers to rule-guided processes between a party and its followers and *value infusion*, an attitudinal dimension which refers to followers’ emotional affiliation to their party. While party institutionalization “is not identical with the party’s development in purely organisational terms” (Randall and Svåsand 2002, 12), structures and practices party elites decide to invest in can be either conducive or detrimental to institutionalized relationships between followers and their party (Panebianco 1988, 53-65). This is important as – leaving in-depth case studies aside – routinization and value infusion are notoriously difficult to capture directly.<sup>1</sup> To measure the mechanisms and practices party elites choose to build their own party allows us to capture empirically whether investments in each dimension of party institutionalization have been made or not. Using data from the Democratic Accountability and Linkages Project (DALP, Kitschelt et al. 2009) to construct such measures therefore provides us with nuanced proxies

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<sup>1</sup> Many comparative studies use party age as proxy for party institutionalization, which reflects this difficulty, e.g. Harmel and Janda (1994), Mainwaring (1998), Roberts and Wibbels (1999), see also Luna (2014) for a critical discussion.

for each dimension. This, in turn, allows us to examine which conditions are conducive to routinization and value infusion and which are not.

Party institutionalization in new democracies constitutes a puzzle as parties are often born ‘in the state’ rather than formed on the basis of strong societal ties as in old democracies (Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck forthcoming, van Biezen 2005). They operate in contexts characterized by high levels of political uncertainty which is bound to alter fundamentally the considerations of elites regarding the type of party base to build and might lead to a prioritization of flexibility, in turn conducive to low institutionalization levels (Lupu and Riedl 2013, 1349). It has been argued that in new democracies creating a permanent anchoring in society is time-consuming, labour-intensive and only chosen if no other option is available to build up support (van Biezen 2005, 155). Yet if this is so, *why do we find considerable diversity among parties in, for instance, Latin American democracies with some parties being highly institutionalized, like the Workers’ Party (PT) in Brazil or the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico, while others have remained weakly institutionalized in the long term such as the Ecuadorian Roldosista Party (PRE) and the Radical and Social Democratic Party (PRSD) in Chile?*<sup>2</sup> Generally speaking, why should party elites consider costly investments in a routinized party base worthwhile and build stable ties with their followers (value infusion) in highly uncertain environments that incentivize electoral, ‘catch-all’ strategies and – with this – flexible, weakly institutionalized parties (Gunther and Hopkin 2009, Kirchheimer 1966, Lupu and Riedl 2013, Tavits 2013)?

Studying party institutionalization is particularly important in new democracies since stable parties can be crucial for the viability and functioning of democracy (see among others Dix 1992, Randall 2006, Svåsand 2013, Tavits 2013). Institutionalized parties tend to be more firmly anchored in society, helping parties to overcome collective action problems, and

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Freidenberg and Levitsky (2006), Langston (2003), Samuels (2004).

so in turn, allowing for the effective channelling of preferences from citizens to party elites embedded in democratic institutions. Party institutionalization can thereby stabilize patterns of party competition and is thus relevant to party *system* institutionalization, a central element in assuring politicians' electoral accountability to citizens.<sup>3</sup>

While we focus on the *party level*, our study nonetheless contributes to the refined measurement of party system institutionalization as a multidimensional concept. To measure institutionalization on the party level is relevant to two of the four conceptual dimensions of party system institutionalization (Luna 2014, 406-407): the rootedness of parties in society suggesting stable ties between parties and followers (echoing the concept of value infusion) and the extent to which party infrastructures are well developed and stabilize relationships with followers (echoing the concept of routinization).

Especially in the Latin American context, relatively little is known about the conditions under which party elites invest in institutionalization, which is problematic since the region's much studied 'crisis of representation' has been closely linked to the decline of traditional political parties as well as the decay of entire party systems (e.g. Sanchez 2008). To be able to examine the various consequences of different patterns of party institutionalization (e.g. the mobilization strategies parties are able to employ or parties' ability to stabilize electoral success over time), the nature of parties as complex organizations (Wills-Otero 2014, 2) needs to be conceptualized and mapped out first, which is one major aim of this article.

After introducing our two-dimensional conceptualization of party institutionalization in the following section, we theorize conditions – related to party system characteristics, the

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<sup>3</sup> Party *system* institutionalization has been theorized referring to four dimensions: the stability of the rules of competition, the legitimacy of the party system, the stability of parties' roots in society, and the strength of party structures. Roots in society have so far been operationalized through indicators as diverse as party age or ideological party-voter linkage; the strength of party organization usually is left aside. See on this Luna (2014), Mainwaring and Scully (1995), Mainwaring and Torcal (2006), and Sanchez (2008). See Casal Bértoa (2016) on the distinction between *party* institutionalization and party *system* institutionalization.

nature of party-state and party-society relations – that incentivize party elites in new democracies to invest in either routinization, value infusion or both. While our hypotheses theorize conditions relevant to party building in new democracies generally, we apply them to parties across 18 Latin American democracies. Estimating multivariate regression models, we show that routinization and value infusion neither always go together, nor are they necessarily more likely to be present under the same conditions. We conclude with a discussion of the broader implications of our findings for the study of political parties in new democracies more generally.

### **Conceptualizing Party Institutionalization**

Party institutionalization captures a party's development towards consolidation. Focusing on the conditions under which elites incentivize the formation of an institutionalized party base, we start out from Panebianco's seminal book (1988). Building on his contribution, conceptual work on parties' internal life has distinguished two dimensions of institutionalization: *routinization* and *value infusion*.<sup>4</sup> The *routinization* of a party's relationship to its followers takes place when processes within it become more rule-guided and regularized. This becomes visible in an increasingly elaborate and stable infrastructure (Panebianco 1988, 49, 53), conducive to organizational rules becoming "perceived as permanent structures" (Levitsky 1998, 81) and to parties as structures being increasingly dense, regularized and thus able to guide followers' behaviour (Janda 1980).<sup>5</sup> Importantly, the *presence of permanent structures*

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<sup>4</sup> A party's autonomy from its environment, a third dimension Panebianco (1988) considered as important – which Randall and Svåsand (2002, 13) classified as the 'external dimension' of party institutionalization – is not considered here.

<sup>5</sup> Note that we distinguish base-level routinization (through which followers are socialized into party rules) from constraints on leaders' autonomy through the 'formal institutionalization of internal participation and contestation at all levels of the party' constituting mechanisms for rank and file to hold leaders accountable (Samuels 2004, 1010, see on this distinction Wills-Otero 2009, 132-133). The latter presupposes particular types of party rules, while routinization as defined here, does not require formal, vertical accountability mechanisms between followers and leaders. Base-level routinization is only likely to shape the behaviour of leaders, if leaders themselves are recruited from the party base. The two aspects are assumed to go together in the classical

as a factor conducive to base-level routinization is not equivalent to the creation of formal party branches in the traditional (Western European) sense. It equally can be assured by networks of local intermediaries (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006, Kitschelt and Kselman 2010). In this sense, permanence does not presuppose one particular ‘organizational form’ but refers to structures (be those formal *or* informal) which guide followers’ behaviour who interact within them and thereby create continuity between elections. These structures support base-level routinization because formal party branches as well as informal networks incorporate members and followers into the party (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006, Kitschelt and Kselman 2010, 13-14). They provide channels for communication between party and grassroots (Levitsky 2001b, 54-56, Tavits 2012, 85-86), with party officials forming part of these structures who “establish routines and standard operating procedures” (Kitschelt 1994: 222), thereby familiarizing followers with rules and procedures that govern the internal life of a party.

While also characterizing the relationship between party and followers, *value infusion* is not a structural feature. It shows when party followers start caring about the survival of their party as such, rather than seeing it as a mere instrument to achieve a set of goals (Janda 1980, 19, Levitsky 1998, 82). Wilson (1973) as well as Panebianco (1988) have stressed that most organizations will try to combine the provision of different incentives to followers to stabilize voluntary support which parties continuously depend on, since followers are free to leave. That said, Panebianco (1988, 10-11) associates value infusion especially with non-material collective incentives such as party identification linked to a particular cause or to social and political goals shared by followers. Similarly, the provision of such incentives can be generated by leaders embodying core party values (Pedahzur and Brichta 2002, 40,

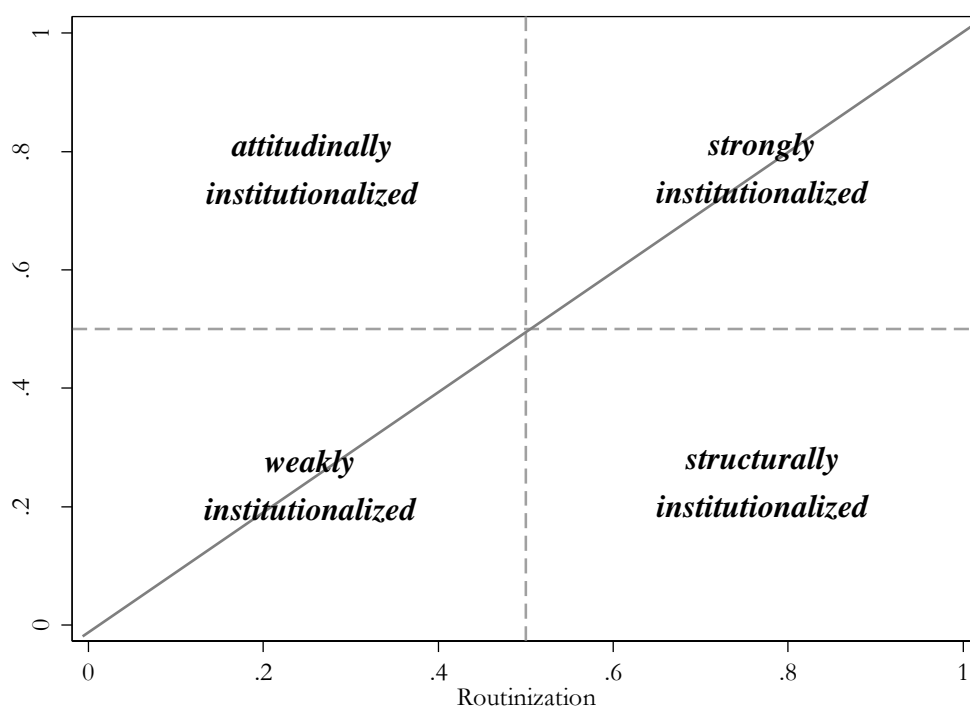
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mass party model (e.g. Panebianco 1988). Yet various studies have indicated that outsider recruitment as well as high leadership autonomy or fluidity can co-exist with a routinized party base (Kitschelt 1994, Levitsky 1998, Wills-Otero 2009), stressing the importance to treat leader autonomy or fluidity as separate concepts (e.g. Burgess and Levitsky 2003).

Rosenblatt 2013).<sup>6</sup> While selective incentives are important to motivate ambitious elites, non-material incentives provided to followers generate non-instrumental attachments and thus a diffuse loyalty to the organization independent of the on-going provision of material benefits or career advancements (Panebianco 1988, 10-11, Randall and Svåsand 2002, 10).

To sum up, routinization and value infusion capture qualitatively distinct phenomena, reflecting Randall and Svåsand's insightful distinction between structural and attitudinal institutionalization (2002) that do not necessarily coincide (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Configurations of Party Institutionalization**



Note: Based on Randall and Svåsand (2002).

Reviewing recent qualitative studies, purely structural institutionalization is indeed widespread in very young democracies (Svåsand 2013, 265), while new parties formed by

<sup>6</sup> Panebianco is usually referred to as proponent of the incompatibility between charismatic leadership and institutionalization as he presents party dissolution after a charismatic leader's departure as the most likely outcome. Interestingly, he considered strong institutionalization as the *second most likely outcome* (with weak institutionalization being the least likely), leaving the question regarding what conditions lead to one or the other outcome unanswered (1988, 161-162). If a 'charismatic party' outlives its leader, attachments to *past leaders* can strengthen followers' loyalty and, with this, value infusion.

individual entrepreneurs in old democracies often routinize internal processes to support intra-party coordination with little interest in value infusion (Bolleyer 2013, 215-217). Similarly, Freidenberg and Levitsky showed that Latin American parties have created informal branch structures, without cultivating a committed membership (2006, 179), a discrepancy also found in Central Eastern Europe (van Biezen 2005, 155-156).

### **Theorizing Elite Investments in Party Institutionalization**

What are the conditions under which party elites are more or less likely to invest in routinization or value infusion? We distinguish three sets of factors that create incentives towards building an institutionalized relationship with followers, each derived from the party's position in a core arena of party activity – party system, state and society. All factors theorized in the following feature in debates on party development beyond one particular region, assuring our framework's broader applicability.

#### *The Nature of Party Systems and Party Institutionalization*

Polarization, the ideological distances between parties, and fragmentation, the number of parties that compete, are two constitutive features of party systems (e.g. Downs 1957, Sartori 1976). As each of these two features has repercussions for the nature of competition between parties, we can expect them to influence elite choices whether to invest in party institutionalization.

Starting with polarization, the broadening of a party's programmatic profile or – in Lupu's words (2013) the dilution of its brand – can facilitate the mobilization of a diverse range of followers. From this perspective, parties' attempts to create stable and permanent connections to clearly demarcated groups through party institutionalization seem counterproductive (Gunther and Hopkin 2009, 214, Lupu and Riedl 2013, 1349). However,



considering a polarized party system in which ideological differences between parties are pronounced, citizens are more likely to recognize those differences and, in turn, are more likely to form stable party attachments (see LeBas 2011, Lupu 2015a, 334-335). In such a context, attempts on behalf of elites to generate stable attachments by appealing to long-term partisan loyalties, and thereby generate value infusion, are less costly and more likely to pay off as compared to systems where ideological differences between parties are smaller and less visible (and ‘catch all strategies’ to build ad hoc coalitions are thus more beneficial). Consequently, elites’ incentives to foster followers’ durable emotional affiliation should grow with the polarization of the party system in which they are embedded.

**H1** (*Polarization Hypothesis*): The more polarized a party system, the more likely party elites invest in value infusion.

Moving to party system fragmentation, as the number of political parties in a party system rises, it becomes increasingly costly for voters to gather sufficient information to assess the record of incumbents and the promises of potential challengers (see also Blais and Dobrzynska 1998, Schleiter and Voznaya 2014). Under such conditions, parties face higher pressure to try to cultivate distinctive party labels able to underpin stable commitments of clearly defined groups of followers (Hanson 2010, LeBas 2011, Lupu 2015a) which, in turn, supports value infusion. More importantly, as presenting distinct policy packages or identities become – *ceteris paribus* – more difficult in increasingly fragmented (and thus complex) party systems, investments in an infrastructure stabilizing ties to followers (Kitschelt and Kselman 2010, 13-14), i.e. routinization, becomes increasingly valuable.

**H2** (*Fragmentation Hypothesis*): The more fragmented a party system is, the more likely party elites invest in routinization and value infusion.

*Party-State Relations and Patterns of Party Institutionalization*

Problems of resource scarcity are bound to complicate party building in new democracies, where parties – after transition – were suddenly confronted with the pressure to run democratic elections and win over volatile electorates. Consequently, direct and indirect access to state resources should strengthen parties’ capacity to build institutionalized parties (see Casas-Zamora 2005, Grzymala-Busse 2008, Molenaar 2012, van Biezen 2003).<sup>7</sup>

Starting with direct state funding, *permanent state subsidies* received directly by the party organization (rather than electoral subsidies received by individual candidates) should increase the capacity of elites to build a routinized infrastructure including party officials who “establish routines and standard operating procedures” (Kitschelt 1994: 222), socializing followers into party rules. We don’t expect a link between permanent subsidies and value infusion as disposing of money or other material resources itself is not enough for parties to incentivize citizens’ emotional affiliation to them (Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck forthcoming). The same rationale applies to the link between institutionalization and *legislative office* providing access to indirect state funding. Parliamentary representatives receive formal support, e.g. through access to professional and technical staff (Morgenstern, Negri, and Pérez-Liñán 2008, 174). Although usually reserved for ‘parliamentary usage’, parties still benefit from those resources (Bolleyer and Gauja 2015, Carey 2003, 31-33). As they multiply with a party’s size in the legislature, investments in routinization should become easier the stronger the party’s position in the legislature.

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<sup>7</sup> Rather than theorizing the implications of parties’ overall dependency on state resources, we theorize the consequences of (direct and indirect) types of state funding in three separate hypotheses. This is because, first, permanent subsidies to party organizations can be expected to be more immediately relevant for elites’ party building strategies than (indirect) incumbency-related resources received by individual office-holders. Second, unlike legislative office, access to core executive office is expected to affect both routinization *and* value infusion. While our findings substantiate this, for various robustness checks underpinning this set-up, see footnote 21 and the supplementary material.

**H3** (*Permanent State Subsidies Hypothesis*): If a party has access to permanent state subsidies, party elites are more likely to invest in routinization.

**H4** (*Legislative Office Hypothesis*): The bigger a legislative party is, the more likely party elites invest in routinization.

Finally, taking over the *core executive office* in a regime – such as the presidency – should increase a party’s capacity to build a *routinized party*. Government patronage, for instance, can be used by parties to establish links to recipients of resources, helping to develop routinized exchanges between these parties and their followers (Kitschelt 1994, Kopecký, Mair, and Spirova 2012, Stokes 2007).<sup>8</sup> We further expect *a link between executive office and value infusion*. While permanent party subsidies and parliamentary seats tend to be accessed by the large majority of parties including more minor ones (Casas-Zamora 2005), parties holding the core executive office such as the presidency tend to be major players in their party systems. Such players need to gather and sustain support across a wide range of relatively diverse constituencies. This positively incentivizes the cultivation of long-term loyalties through the provision of non-material collective incentives, rather than the sole reliance on selective incentives such as patronage that are most effective when targeting specific groups (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, Stokes 2007). In conjunction, occupants of core executive office enjoy superior visibility, putting them in a particularly suitable position

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<sup>8</sup> Studies show that particularistic exchange relationships between parties and followers tend to be based on rule-guided and regularized behaviour. The distributive efficiency of patronage-based parties depends on their capacity to gather information about the responsiveness of potential clients to selective benefits and their commitment to support the party even in the absence of formal sanctions (Stokes 2007, 610-615). To overcome these problems parties invest in dense networks of local intermediaries (brokers) who identify and monitor potential clients over time and build long-term reciprocity-based relationships with them (see, for example, Schaffer and Schedler 2007).

to present themselves as a major identification figure to followers (Samuels 2002, Weisberg 2002, 342), an advantage supportive to value infusion.<sup>9</sup>

**H5** (*Executive Office Hypothesis*): The longer a party holds the core executive office in a regime, the more likely are investments in routinization and in value infusion.

While up to now we have theorized party-state relations considering the opportunity structures of parties' *current* regime, parties often emerged in different settings than the one they currently operate in. The nature of this *formative environment* is likely to leave its 'genetic imprint' on parties' characteristics in the longer term (Lupu 2015b, Panebianco 1988, 49-50, Randall and Svåsand 2002, 17-18, Riedl 2016, Slater and Wong 2013). Parties formed in authoritarian, thus less competitive, settings, find it easier to build stable attachments and establish a distinctive brand than parties formed in fully democratized settings facing stiff competition from not only numerous new but also already established parties (Loxton 2015, 160-161, Randall and Svåsand 2002, 18). This suggests that the former find it easier to generate value infusion than parties formed post-transition. Furthermore, parties formed in authoritarian settings which managed to survive transition have been ascribed a competitive advantage thanks to 'inherited' resources, like territorial organizations or informal local networks, that facilitate routinization post-transition (Frantz and Geddes 2016, Loxton 2015, 161-162). More specifically, formerly ruling parties and those anti-regime parties that used violence under authoritarianism face enhanced pressures to legitimize themselves in newly democratized regimes through forming close ties to society (de Zeeuw 2010, Grzymala-Busse 2002, 69-70, Holland forthcoming, Tavits 2013). Investments in routinized relationships to followers are one strategy to do so.

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<sup>9</sup> These theoretical arguments are equally applicable to holders of prime ministerial office in parliamentary regimes which can be at least as powerful and visible as a president in a presidential regime.

**H6** (*Formative Environment Hypothesis*): A party formed in an authoritarian context is more likely to invest in routinization and value infusion.

*Party-Society Relations and Patterns of Party Institutionalization*

Despite the importance of parties' relationships with the state, the *support of societal groups* can be an important foundation for still fluid party organizations to consolidate. Compared to old democracies, in Asia, Latin America, Africa or Central Eastern Europe ties to religious or ethnic groups have had similar importance as class-based ties to unions (Mainwaring and Scully 2003, Randall and Svåsand 2002, Van Cott 2007). Ties to these three types of groups provide a particularly fruitful foundation for party institutionalization because these groups often tend to provide wide-spread local infrastructures and a pool of followers used to operate in organizational, rule-based settings, both supportive of routinization. Simultaneously, these groups pursue a strategy of social incorporation and cultivate strong, encompassing group identities - supportive of value infusion - from which individuals can only exit at very high cost (e.g. Chandra 2004, LeBas 2011).

**H7** (*Group Ties Hypothesis*): A party with strong ties to a union, ethnic or religious group is more likely to invest in routinization and value infusion.

**Data, Measurement and Model Choice**

The following analysis draws on a cross-sectional data set that combines expert ratings on political parties' organizational characteristics and linkage strategies in 2008 with electoral statistics and data on chief executives from 1978-2008 in 18 Latin American democracies. We consider our approach applicable to democratic regimes that have been stable for a certain period of time and repeatedly experienced, competitive elections, as in those regimes, parties are exposed to the competitive pressure of democratic elections, an assumption that underlies several of the hypotheses in our framework. The Latin American regimes covered

in our empirical application are suitable cases because they meet this condition: all countries experienced at least 4 democratic elections since transition and have each an average (polity2) democracy score of 5 or higher during the ten years prior to this study (see Hagopian and Mainwaring 2005, Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñan 2013, Marshall, Jagers, and Gurr 2013). Moreover, the Latin American region shares a similar history of economic development compared to other world regions (see, for example, Bértoa and Ocampo 2012). This relative unit homogeneity is advantageous since it allows us to concentrate on the explanatory variables in our framework, while providing crucial variation in the latter to test our hypotheses. Our analysis includes all legislative parties covered in the DALP dataset (Kitschelt et al. 2009) which – considering our purposes – has various advantages over alternative data sources, including a (comparatively) broad coverage of parties, leading to a sample of 88 political parties across 18 countries.<sup>10</sup>

### *Operationalization of Party Institutionalization*

The DALP survey allows us to capture directly whether party elites invest in structures and practices that are closely associated with routinization and value infusion respectively, which provides us with suitable proxies to measure each dimension empirically.<sup>11</sup>

In line with the conceptualization of base-level routinization as structural institutionalization detailed earlier, we combine two items in the DALP survey as proxy for its presence: the establishment of permanent local party offices (item A1) and the existence of parties' local intermediaries (item A3), which avoids a bias in favour of a formal organization

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<sup>10</sup> We provide additional information on the dataset and its advantages, question wordings as well as a list of countries and parties covered in the supplementary material. For more details on the survey see <https://web.duke.edu/democracy>.

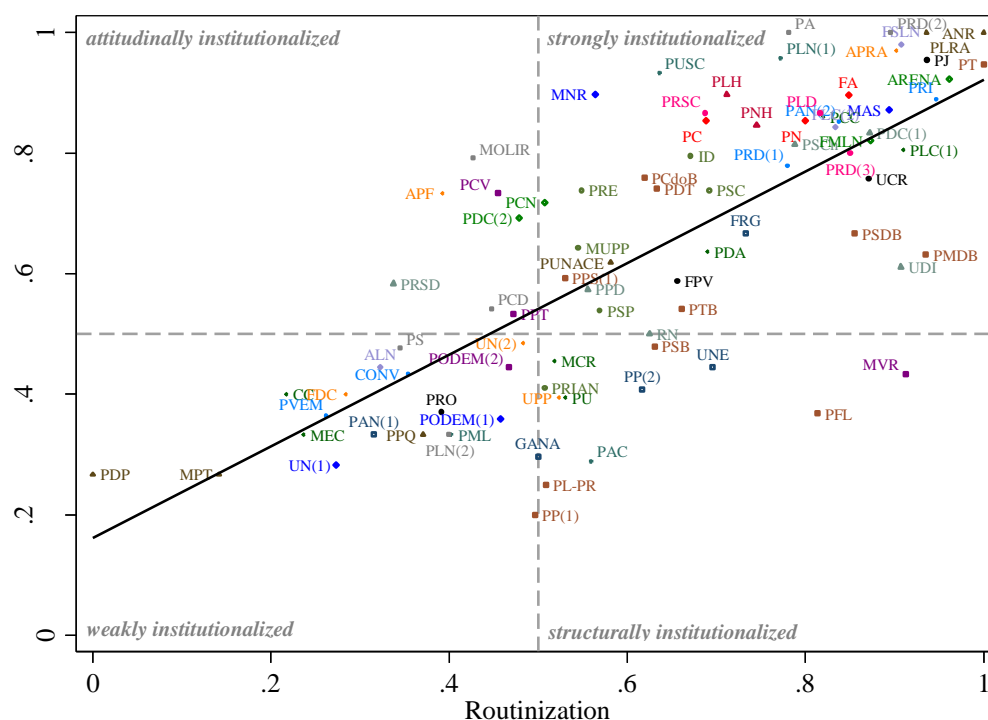
<sup>11</sup> See Figures S1 and S2 in the supplementary material for more details on our measures of the dependent variables.

(Kitschelt and Kselman 2010, Levitsky 1998).<sup>12</sup> The routinization index is constructed as follows: first, each indicator is normalized between 0 and 1 with higher values indicating higher levels of routinization. Second, we calculate mean expert ratings per party for each indicator. Third, we use an additive aggregation rule (i.e. the mean of both proxies), assuming each indicator measures one aspect of the dimension captured.

We measure value infusion through the appeal of party elites to long-term partisan loyalty invoking the party's historical origins or achievements of historical leaders, or reference to party symbols or rituals (item E4). This indicator directly taps into Panebianco's argument that party identification and solidarity between followers (reinforced by shared symbols and rituals) are primary sources of collective incentives central to generate value infusion (1988, 10-11, see also Wilson 1973). It also reflects the importance of past leaders as identification figures who (if a party could outlive them) can serve as important source of followers' long-term attachment (Rosenblatt 2013). We normalize the item to range from 0 to 1 with higher values indicating higher levels of value infusion and calculate the mean expert ratings per party. Figure 2 provides for a graphical overview.

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<sup>12</sup> As detailed earlier, conceptualizations of base-level routinization used in party research establish a close link between the infrastructures used for our routinization measure and the presence of routines and standard-operating procedures. Empirical research in social psychology, management and public administration underpins this claim, indicating that the presence of organizational infrastructures (formal offices or informal networks) intensifies and regularizes contact between group members, while restricting interaction with others (Borgatti and Foster 2003, 995-996, 1004, Lee and Kim 2011, 206-207). This establishes interconnected relationships that are voluntary but become socially shared, structural facts that constrain behaviour as they support the further assimilation of group members' attitudes and the development of behavioural routines between them through imitation and learning, while decreasing turn-over (Becker 2004, 651, Brass et al. 2004, 796-797). Local units (establishing dense networks and short paths between those operating in them) facilitate the diffusion of practices and norms of reciprocity within and across units, reinforced by officers with formal organizational roles supporting the standardization of norms and practices and incentivizing compliance with them (Brass et al. 2004, 803-807).

**Figure 2: Party Institutionalization in Latin America**

Note: Calculations based on DALP. Parties from the same country displayed in the same colour. See Figure S3 in the supplementary material for country patterns and Table S3 for party acronyms.

Considering the face validity of our measures, among the parties that are strongly institutionalized on both dimensions are the Brazilian Workers Party (PT), the Paraguayan Colorado Party (ANR), and the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico, echoing earlier qualitative studies.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, the Peronist Party (PJ) in Argentina – Levitsky’s case of attitudinal party institutionalization (1998) ranks highly on routinization. This goes back to, on the one hand, the inclusion of informal structures into our measurement and, on the other, our focus on base-level routinization.<sup>14</sup> Levitsky considered the PJ as weak on ‘formal routinization’ with outsider recruitments being common and leaders enjoying wide discretion (1998, 2001b). At the same time, he characterized *base-level* Peronist activity as informally routinized “to an important degree”, with activity in local units being “rooted in

<sup>13</sup> See for in-depth case studies Samuels (2004), Langston (2003), and Greene (2007).

<sup>14</sup> Note that at the time of the survey two factions of the Peronist Party competed against each other, the Federal Peronists (PJ in Figure 2) and the Front for Victory (FPV in Figure 2), of which the FPV is less institutionalized.



widely shared norms” and Peronist practices “widely known and remarkably similar across territorial units” (1998, 87, 2001b). This not only substantiates ‘our’ location of the PJ with respect to *base-level* routinization but also underlines the appropriateness of our decision to include both formal party structures and informal networks into our measure. It also explains why the category of (relatively) strongly institutionalized parties includes state-centred party machines such as the Colorado Party (ANR), labour-based patronage parties such as the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and programmatic mass-parties such as the Brazilian Workers Party (PT). Our operationalization avoids dismissing any party distinct from the classical ‘mass party model’ as weakly institutionalized.

Returning to the broader picture, most parties are strong or weak on both routinization and value infusion, indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.74 ( $p < 0.000$ ) between the two dimensions. Nevertheless, this leaves over 25 per cent of the variation between the two indicators unexplained. We also find routinized parties that do not foster value infusion in the same way as they foster routinization (i.e. *structurally institutionalized parties*) such as the Liberal Front Party (PFL) in Brazil and the Fifth Republic Movement (MVR) in Venezuela, of which the latter is currently trying to outlive the death of its charismatic leader, Hugo Chavez (see, for examples, Hawkins 2010, Roberts 2003). The personalistic Alliance for the Future (APF) in Peru and the Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement (MOLIR) in Panama, in contrast, fall in the quadrant of *attitudinally institutionalized parties*.<sup>15</sup>

#### Operationalization of the Explanatory Variables

Since our analyses are based on cross-sectional data, we can examine whether and how the conditions theorized in our hypotheses are related to different patterns of party institutionalization but we cannot test the causal relationships between them. We partially

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<sup>15</sup> See Crabtree (2010) and Pérez (2011) for in-depth studies.

account for these data limits through the time structure of our data. Reflecting our theoretical rationale we lag the measures of our independent variables by using data from before 2009 (the year of the DALP survey) as far as possible.<sup>16</sup> Descriptive statistics are provided in the supplementary material.

We measure *Party System Polarization* using the Taylor-Herman index (Taylor and Herman 1971) calculated on the basis of item D6 in the DALP data, which captures political parties' left-right placements, and parties' seat shares in the national legislature. *Party System Fragmentation* (H2) is measured based on seat shares capturing the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). We calculate the index for each election between 1999 and 2008 and then take the mean for each country, to control for sudden changes in party systems. We measure *Permanent State Subsidies* (H3) capturing the number of years a political party has received permanent organizational funding prior to the survey based on data provided by Molenaar (2012, 13, 28). We use the logged variable to account for decreasing returns for each year after funding was introduced. To test H4 (*Legislative Office*) we use parties' parliamentary strength based on the seat share parties held prior to the survey.<sup>17</sup> We measure the time period during which a party held *Executive Office* (H5) by coding the number of years the party held the presidency since 1980 or the latest return to democratic rule.<sup>18</sup> We again use the logged variable to account for decreasing returns for each year the party held the presidency. *Formation Environment* (H6) captures the regime type in the first five years of a party's lifespan using the mean score for that period of the polity2 item in the Polity IV dataset. The item captures the regime type of a country ranging from -10 (strongly autocratic) to +10 (strongly democratic) (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2013). We inverse and normalize the variable to run from 0 (strongly democratic) to 1

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<sup>16</sup> The group ties measure relies on the DALP dataset. Thus this variable could not be lagged.

<sup>17</sup> Data for the distribution of seats is provided online by most countries; detailed resources are available on request from the authors.

<sup>18</sup> Data on presidents and their parties stem from [www.rulers.org](http://www.rulers.org) and [www.ipu.org/parline/](http://www.ipu.org/parline/).

(strongly autocratic) to mirror the direction of our hypothesis. Finally, we capture a party's *Group Ties* (H7) based on DALP item A8 which asks experts to indicate the most relevant civil society organization a political party is strongly linked to. We use the percentage of experts positively identifying either unions, ethnic, or religious groups as the most relevant civil society organization the party is linked to. The variable, hence, ranges from 0 (no group ties) to 1 (strong group ties). Finally, we include *logged party age* as a control variable covering the years from the party's foundation up to 2008.

### Model Choice

To analyse the relationship between our explanatory variables and the two dimensions of party institutionalization we estimate multivariate OLS regression models with standard errors clustered by country, to account for the nestedness of political parties within countries and the heteroscedasticity in the error term (see Gelman and Hill 2007).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> We estimate linear hierarchical models as an alternative. The basic findings stay the same with only slight changes in the level of significance of some variables (see Table S4 for the results of these models in the supplementary material).

**Table 1: Results of OLS Regression Models**

	(1) DV = Routinization		(2) DV = Value Infusion	
	<i>B</i>	<i>Standardized Coefficient</i>	$\beta$	<i>Standardized Coefficient</i>
Polarization (H1)	0.01 (0.00)	0.02 (0.01)	<b>0.01***</b> (0.00)	<b>0.03***</b> (0.01)
Fragmentation (H2)	<b>0.03***</b> (0.00)	<b>0.06***</b> (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)
Perm. State Subsidies (H3)	<b>0.03*</b> (0.01)	<b>0.03*</b> (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
Legislative Office (H4)	<b>0.01***</b> (0.00)	<b>0.12***</b> (0.02)	0.00 (0.00)	0.03 (0.02)
Executive Office (H5)	<b>0.05***</b> (0.01)	<b>0.06***</b> (0.01)	<b>0.06*</b> (0.02)	<b>0.06*</b> (0.03)
Formation Environment (H6)	<b>0.15*</b> (0.05)	<b>0.05*</b> (0.02)	<b>0.18**</b> (0.06)	<b>0.05**</b> (0.02)
Group Ties (H7)	<b>0.15*</b> (0.05)	<b>0.04*</b> (0.01)	<b>0.16*</b> (0.07)	<b>0.04*</b> (0.02)
Party Age (log)	0.03* (0.01)	0.03* (0.02)	0.06** (0.02)	0.07** (0.02)
Constant	0.02 (0.05)	0.62*** (0.01)	0.21* (0.08)	0.64*** (0.01)
N	88		88	
Adj. R2	0.73		0.63	
F	55.36***		45.20***	

Unstandardized ( $\beta$ ) and standardized coefficients reported. Standard errors in parentheses (clustered by country).  
+  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

## Results and Discussion

Table 1 reports the results for both dependent variables, routinization (Model 1) and value infusion (Model 2). Concerning goodness of fit both models perform very well. Model 1 explains about 73 per cent of the variance of routinization. Model 2 captures about 63 per cent of the variance of value infusion.

All coefficients have the theoretically expected signs. Three variables – *Executive Office*, *Formation Environment*, and *Group Ties* – are significantly associated with both dependent variables. However, three – *Party System Fragmentation*, *Permanent State Subsidies*, and *Legislative Office* – significantly relate only to routinization. *Party System Polarization* relates only to value infusion. All effects reported below are significant at the 95

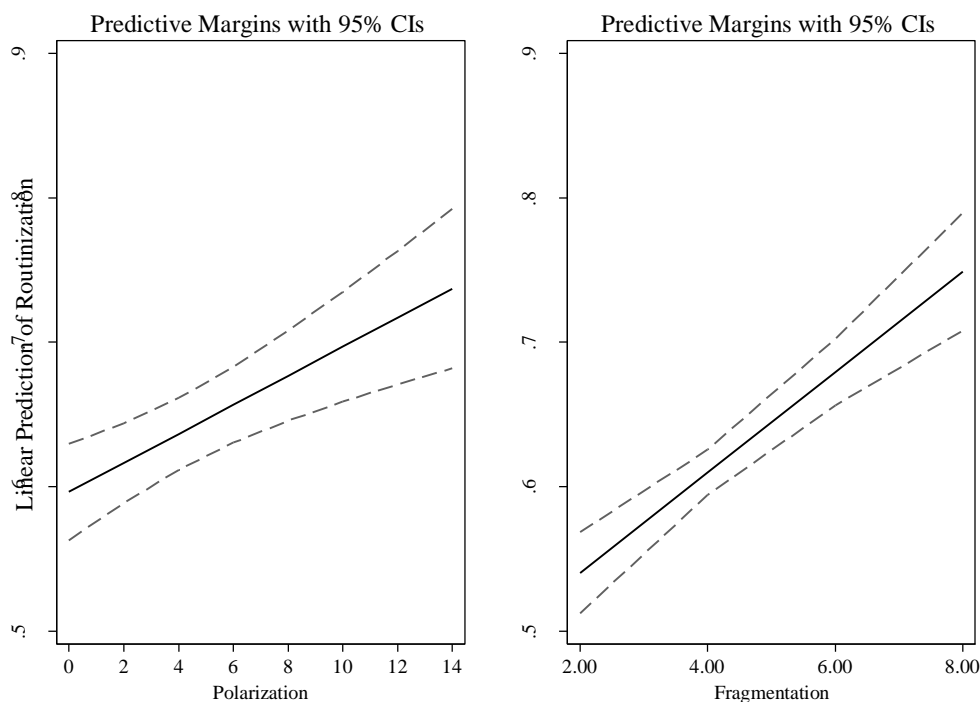
per cent confidence level or higher. Note that these results are robust and hold despite controlling for logged party age. In the following we discuss the findings in Table 1 grouped along the three sets of factors theorized as relevant to party building.<sup>20</sup>

### *Elite Investments in Institutionalized Political Parties*

Considering conditions linked to a *party's embeddedness in its party system*, *polarization* (H1) is positively related only to value infusion, while a party's operation in a *fragmented party system* (H2) is associated with routinization (see Figure 3). In increasingly polarized systems ideological differences between parties become more pronounced, citizens are more likely to recognize inter-party differences and, in turn, are more likely to form stable party attachments (Lupu 2015a, 334-335). Parties are therefore incentivized not only to invest in the distinctiveness of the offer within their party system, but also to increase the potential identification of their voters with the party's ideological position or the group identity they address thereby enhancing value infusion (Bartolini 2000, Lupu 2013). The coefficient is highly significant on the 99.9% confidence level. Figure 3 (left panel) below shows that value infusion is more than 10 percentage points lower for parties in a party system with very low polarization (for example, Honduras) compared to parties in a party system with high polarization (for example, El Salvador).

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<sup>20</sup> To check the robustness of our findings we ran additional model specifications with several country level control variables: level of development, democratic experience, and party system volatility. None of these variables had significant effects on our two dependent variables. They did not increase the explanatory power of our models or affect our main results (see for details Table S8 in the supplementary material).

**Figure 3: Predictive Margins of Party System Characteristics**

*Party System Fragmentation* (H2), in contrast, is positively related to party routinization ( $p < 0.001$ ). One rationale for the differentiated impact of fragmentation is provided by Epstein (2009), who argues – referring to the Brazilian multiparty system – that high fragmentation complicates the distinguishability of programmatic party platforms, especially if the party system is also prone to clientelistic behaviour as many Latin American party systems are. In such contexts, the building of long-term loyalties is very demanding, which might incentivize elites to invest in party routinization instead. As shown in Figure 3 (right panel), routinization increases from 0.54 in party systems with an effective number of parties of 2 to 0.75 in a party system with 8 ‘effective parties’.

Moving to *party-state relations*, as theoretically expected permanent party subsidies (H3), access to legislative office (H4) and executive office (H5) are significantly related to

routinization.<sup>21</sup> The longer political parties benefit from *permanent state subsidies* (H3) the more they tend to be routinized. Similarly, the access of a political party to legislative office has a positive and comparatively large effect on routinization (see standardized coefficients reported in Table 1). Routinization increases from 0.55 for a party with a legislative seat share of 10% to 0.78 for a party with 40% of the legislative seats (see Figure 4, left panel below). While both the availability of permanent subsidies and legislative office facilitate routinization, they do not support the generation of non-instrumental attachments of followers, i.e. we find no significant relationship with value infusion.

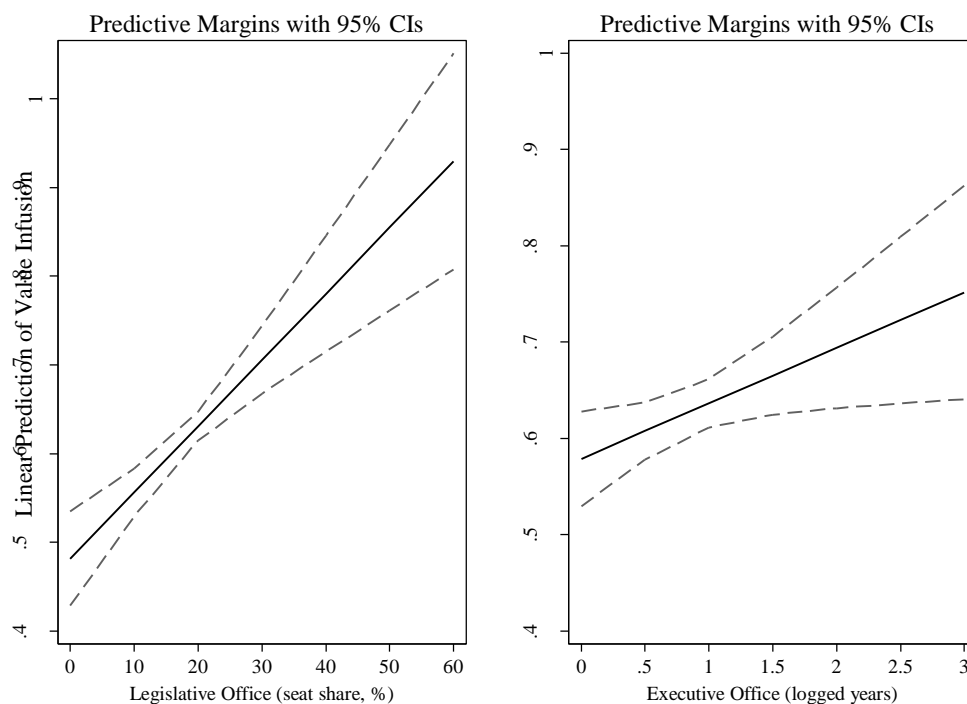
In contrast, parties with access to the presidency as core executive office are characterized by higher levels of both routinization and value infusion, in line with our *Executive Office Hypothesis* (H5). The presidency provides parties with a comparative resource advantages, facilitating the capital intensive formation of permanent party structures supporting routinization. One unit increase in executive office access (logged years) leads to a 0.05 point ( $p < 0.001$ ) increase in party routinization. Regarding value infusion, presidential parties – as major players – face incentives to maintain partisan loyalties across a broad range of supporters through the provision of non-material collective incentives conducive to value infusion, rather than to rely solely on selective incentives such as patronage that are most effective when targeting specific groups (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, Stokes 2007). Simultaneously, due to the superior visibility of the presidency as the core executive office, these parties can effectively increase the value of their party label for rank and file members (Hicken and Stoll 2011, Samuels 2002, Weisberg 2002). One unit increase in executive office

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<sup>21</sup> We ran three additional model specifications to examine the robustness of our arguments regarding access to state resources (H3-5). First, we ran our main model with an additional control variable capturing the overall dependency of parties on state resources. Second, we added a variable controlling for participation in government coalitions.. Finally, we controlled for single-party dominance (Greene 2007). All results indicate that our results are very reliable. None of our main findings lose significance and their effects remain remarkably robust both in size and direction. Details are provided in Table S5 in the supplementary material.

access (logged years) leads to a 0.07 point ( $p < 0.05$ ) increase in value infusion (see Figure 4, right panel).

**Figure 4: Predictive Margins of Access to Legislative and Executive Office**



Based on our cross-sectional analyses, it is difficult to rule out reverse causation. While in new democracies access to public office often helps to overcome problems of resource scarcity in the process of party building (Levitsky, Loxton and Van Dyck forthcoming), party institutionalization might also help a party to access presidential office and lead to a stronger representation in the legislature. To examine whether success in executive and legislative elections is affected by either one or both of our two dimensions of party institutionalization we performed additional robustness checks by regressing (separately) a party's degree of routinization and value infusion (at  $t_1$ ) on its success in either the next legislative or presidential election after 2008 (at  $t_2$ ). The results suggest that reverse causation does not



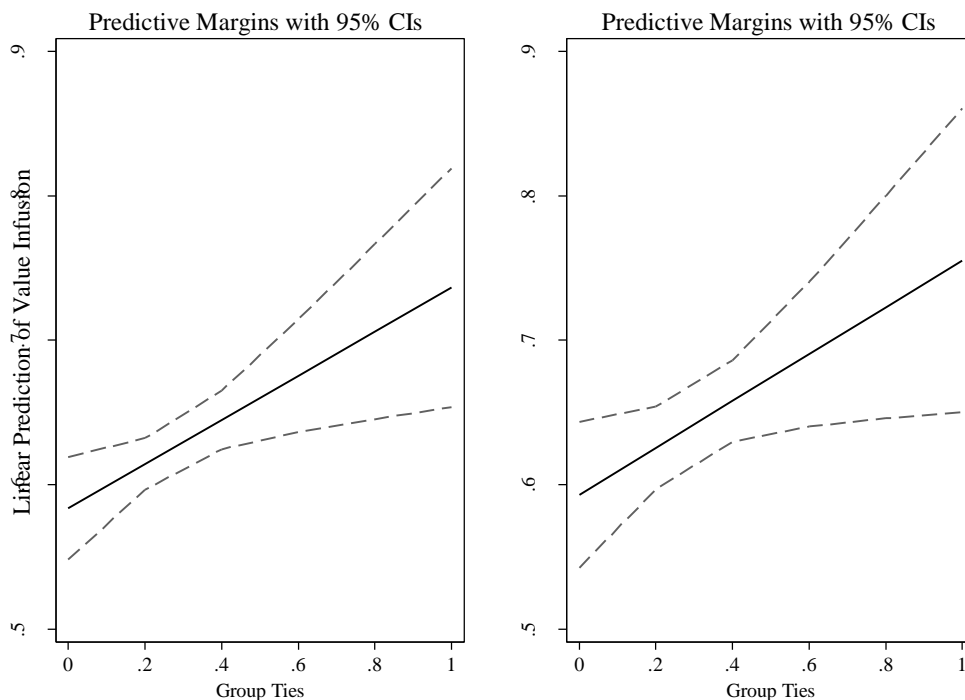
drive the relationship between party institutionalization and winning executive or legislative office. We do not find any significant association between routinization (at  $t_1$ ) or value infusion (at  $t_1$ ) and the share of seats a political party is able to win in the next legislative election (at  $t_2$ ) or the probability of winning the next presidential election (at  $t_2$ ).<sup>22</sup> These findings echo earlier work which highlights that access to presidential office does not require presidential candidates to rely on a strong party organization, as the frequent election of political outsiders (Levitsky and Loxton 2013) and the dominance of highly personalized and media based electoral campaigning illustrate (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007).

Having considered the implications of opportunity structures available to parties in their *current* regime, we now move to the implications of their *Formation Environment* (H6), which is positively associated with routinization and value infusion alike. The link to routinization echoes studies stressing the importance of ‘inherited’ resources in terms of territorial organization or informal local networks from which formerly ruling successors as well as their repressed counterparts – if they survive transition – profit (de Zeeuw 2010, Frantz and Geddes 2016, Loxton 2015, 161-162). Routinization increases from 0.57 for parties formed under a strongly democratic regime to 0.72 for parties formed under a strongly autocratic regime. Moving to value infusion, our results indicate that value infusion increases from 0.57 for parties formed under a strongly democratic regime to 0.75 for parties formed under a strongly autocratic regime. As authoritarian settings are less competitive, parties find it easier to build stable attachments and establish a distinctive brand than parties formed in fully democratized settings facing stiff competition (Loxton 2015, 160-161, Randall and Svåsand 2002, 18).

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<sup>22</sup> Detailed information on these endogeneity checks can be found in the supplementary material Table S6 and S7.

Concluding with the implications of a party's societal relations, ties to unions, ethnic, or religious groups (*Group Ties*, H7) are conducive to both dimensions of party institutionalization. Parties with strong group ties are on average 15 percentage points more routinized compared to parties without such ties (see Figure 5, left panel). To uphold these alliances and secure a long-term electoral support base, party elites face strong incentives to invest in permanent party structures to coordinate their interaction with these groups which simultaneously bring resources with them (Burgess 1999, 106-111), both of which supports routinization. Also, parties with strong ties to unions, ethnic or religious groups are more likely to invest in value infusion than those without. For the former, value infusion is on average 15 percentage points higher (see Figure 5, right panel). As Collier and Collier (1991) showed, several political parties in Latin America established 'stable, institutionalized alliances' with labour unions. A similar stabilizing role was played by ethnic movements (Madrid 2005, Van Cott 2007) and religious associations (see Mainwaring and Scully 2003). Simultaneously, these groups cultivate strong and encompassing group identities from which individuals can only exit at very high costs (e.g. LeBas 2011) supportive to value infusion.

**Figure 5: Predictive Margins of Group Ties**

To sum up, our findings highlight that distinguishing between routinization and value infusion is not only conceptually persuasive but empirically important to account for patterns of party development: all factors theorized in our framework played a role, but the majority (four of seven) only affected either routinization *or* value infusion. Two of the three factors having significant effects on both dimensions fall in the sphere of party-state relation, the third falls in the sphere of party-society relations. In contrast, each of the two party system characteristics associate strongly with only one of the two dimensions: polarization is associated with value infusion only, while fragmentation is only associated with routinization. Considering which sphere – party system, state and society – is particularly relevant for each dimension of party institutionalization, routinization is related particularly strongly to the nature of party-state relations: four of six variables that are significant fall in that analytical category, i.e. all four of our hypotheses on the link between party-state relations and routinization hold. The picture regarding value infusion is more complex: while

again two significant conditions are associated with parties' current or past relationship to the state, the remaining two are linked to parties' relations with society (group ties) and their party system (polarization).

## **Conclusion**

Building institutionalized parties is a demanding process, especially in new democracies (Casal Bértoa 2016, Levitsky 1998, Randall 2006, Randall and Svåsand 2002, van Biezen 2005). To account for the diversity of party institutionalization in new democracies we specified conditions incentivizing party elites to invest in institutionalized relationships to followers in contexts that are commonly considered unfavourable to extra-parliamentary party building (e.g. Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck forthcoming, Randall 2006, Svåsand 2013, van Biezen 2003). Drawing on literatures on party development from various regions, we identified such conditions across three central spheres of party activity: irrespective of the type of democracy they operate in, parties compete with each other in the electoral market, they access (if they can) state institutions and (to different degrees and in different ways) are linked to society. Substantiating our decision against a more parsimonious approach, we found that in new democracies - represented by those in the Latin American region - routinization and value infusion were significantly associated with conditions located in all three spheres. Simultaneously, our findings revealed variegated relationships between explanatory factors located in each sphere and each of the two dimensions of party institutionalization. Consequently, the conceptual distinctions between qualitatively different dimensions of party institutionalization (Levitsky 1998, Randall and Svåsand 2002) are indeed empirically relevant.

Exploring the conditions that incentivize party elites in new democracies to build institutionalized parties is important. The latter provide structures allowing citizens to be

involved in politics between elections and thereby form long-term attachments rather than solely engaging in politics for instrumental reasons (e.g. to receive material benefits through clientelistic party networks). Value infusion can help counter anti-party sentiments and alienation from politics that are wide-spread among citizens in Latin American democracies (see Payne 2006) strengthening the legitimacy of a democratic regime. Simultaneously, routinized relationships with followers provide channels of communication from citizens to elites, a core element to assure the electoral accountability of representatives (e.g. Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006, Randall and Svåsand 2002). By systematically assessing under which conditions parties institutionalize structurally or attitudinally, we thus not only address an important theoretical and empirical gap as large-N studies have so far not distinguished these two dimensions. We also contribute to an important debate on the quality of democracy and the contribution the nature of individual parties is likely to make to the consolidation of new democracies (Diamond and Gunther 2001, Diamond and Morlino 2005).

A central challenge for future research will be the assessment of the actual effects of different dimensions of party institutionalization, which we disentangled conceptually and empirically, on the democratic process. Party institutionalization is often considered as beneficial for democracy (Huntington 1968, Mainwaring and Scully 1995), yet it remains unclear whether (too) strongly institutionalized parties might not have negative effects as well (e.g. Casal Bértoa 2016, Hicken and Martinez Kuhonta 2011, Randall 2006). Similarly, if routinization and value infusion vary in strength within the same party, we face the challenge to theorize separately the effects of each dimension on party system institutionalization and, more broadly, on democracy. Research has stressed that a permanent local organization can be an important tool for clientelistic parties to allocate selective incentives (Levitsky 2001a, Stokes 2007). And, as indicated by our mapping of institutionalization patterns (Figure 2),

some parties routinize *without* fostering value infusion, i.e. without cultivating an emotional attachment of followers to the party and, with it, possibly to the regime which the party represents. Functional linkages underpinned by routinized party structures might support the persistence of parties, which, in turn, might stabilize party competition. Yet the effects of routinization are not equivalent to effects that can be expected from value infusion in terms of generating citizens' support and attachment to political parties that is not instrumentally driven. This, in turn, suggests that once we move towards understanding the contexts in which different modes of party formation and development are likely to occur, we might be able to tackle an even bigger challenge – to understand the latter's consequences for democracy.

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