

# Ethnic Cabinet Diversity, Co-Ethnic Representation, and Attitudes Toward Government

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Published in *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Parties*

Does co-ethnic cabinet representation change how people respond to increasing ethnic cabinet diversity? Existing literature studies co-ethnic representation and cabinet diversity separately. I argue that the interaction between co-ethnic cabinet representation and ethnic cabinet diversity lowers government confidence and impacts feelings of ethnic fairness. Using a newly constructed dataset linking both the World Values Survey and the Afrobarometer to country-year measures of ethnic cabinet diversity, I find that interacting co-ethnic representation with ethnic cabinet diversity largely has the expected results. Country leaders should think carefully about how to manage cabinet appointments in order to improve attitudes toward government.

Keywords: co-ethnic representation, ethnicity, diversity, cabinet.  
(3658 words + '300-word' figure)

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No matter the number of constraints placed on country leaders when selecting a cabinet minister, several individuals are inevitably qualified for a seat (Franceschet, Annesley and Beckwith, 2017). Country leaders, therefore, can use cabinet appointments to signal ethnic inclusion to underrepresented ethnic groups (e.g., Bormann, 2019; Francois, Rainer and Trebbi, 2015). Scholars have examined how people respond to ethnic cabinet diversity and co-ethnic cabinet representation (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2007; Barreto, Segura and Woods, 2004; Pantoja and Segura, 2003), but have considered these impacts separately. This research note studies how ethnic cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation interact to influence attitudes toward government.

While leaders cannot use cabinet appointments to erase a history of institutional ethnic discrimination (e.g., Dinas, Fouka and Schlapfer, 2021), understanding how members of the public distinguish ethnic cabinet diversity from co-ethnic representation is an important step toward being a more effective leader. How does the public respond to the interaction between ethnic cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation? I argue that when ethnic cabinet diversity increases, individuals with co-ethnic representation will have less confidence in government and will feel that their ethnic group is being treated unfairly, but that this feeling of unfairness is more pronounced in individuals without co-ethnic representation.

I test these expectations using data from the World Values Survey and Afrobarometer that I link to country-year data on co-ethnic cabinet representation and ethnic cabinet diversity. As expected, individuals who have co-ethnic representation respond to increasing ethnic cabinet diversity with decreased confidence in government. Increasing ethnic representation decreases government confidence for both those co-ethnically and not co-ethnically represented. Individuals' responses to co-ethnic representation and ethnic cabinet diversity are intertwined. Country leaders would do well to think about how the composition of their cabinets might provoke mixed reactions from members of the public.

## Theory

When looking at the ethnic composition of a cabinet in a multi-ethnic society, I argue that there are two salient features to which the public is likely to respond: co-ethnic representation and ethnic cabinet diversity. These features impact people’s attitudes toward government, which I operationalize here as their confidence toward government and their feeling that their ethnic group is being treated fairly. The impact of these features is predicated on some baseline level of understanding about cabinet composition. While people’s knowledge about specific cabinet details is limited (Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013*b*), they do have a general understanding of cabinet composition and cue off of salient cabinet features like the presence of co-ethnic representation (Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013*a*).

Ethnic cabinet diversity refers to the degree to which cabinet seats are shared among ethnic groups. Increasing ethnic cabinet diversity involves changing the composition of the cabinet, replacing old cabinet ministers with new ones from underrepresented ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> An individual’s co-ethnic representation increases when more cabinet ministers are members of their ethnic group. Individuals with co-ethnic cabinet representation care about ethnic cabinet diversity because it determines how effective their co-ethnic representatives will be.

When cabinet diversity is high, decision-making is more difficult because the cabinet contains ministers from diverse ethnic groups with relatively similar seat shares. While multi-ethnic collaboration is certainly an admirable goal, most ethnic groups lack extensive experience successfully sharing power. Power-sharing falters because cabinet ministers lack familiarity with non-coethnics (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002) and perceive incompatibility between ethnic groups (Bobo, 1988). Because of this lack of familiarity, ministers tend to prioritize ingroup identities, turning themselves inward toward their group when they are exposed to ethnic diversity (Putnam, 2007; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Incompatibility of interests means that ministers from different ethnic groups view themselves as distinct

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<sup>1</sup>Expanding the cabinet is usually not possible (Opalo, 2011).

(Brief, Umphress, Dietz, Burrows, Butz and Scholten, 2005; Koopmans and Veit, 2014; Stolle, Soroka and Johnston, 2008) and believe that they need to compete for finite resources (Bobo, 1988; Glaser, 1994). Both of these mechanisms exacerbate differences between ethnic groups. These differences breed dysfunction and gridlock, as each ethnic group in an ethnically diverse cabinet holds veto power over cabinet decisions (Birnie and Waguespack, 2011). There are certainly circumstances where elites can overcome these differences and successfully collaborate (e.g., Bormann, 2019; O’Brochta, 2022a; O’Brochta, 2023a), it just may be more challenging to do so than if cabinet ministers had more similar interests.

Individuals with co-ethnic cabinet representation, therefore, care about ethnic cabinet diversity because it determines how effective their co-ethnic representatives will be. When cabinet diversity is high, decision-making is more difficult because the cabinet contains ministers from diverse ethnic groups with relatively equal political power. Therefore, when ethnic cabinet diversity increases, individuals co-ethnically represented in the cabinet lose confidence in government to get things done. This loss of confidence is at least initially focused at the cabinet itself. However, because members of the public tend to lack extensive knowledge of how government decisions are made and how public goods are produced, I argue that people generalize their feelings and that their loss of confidence is toward government as a whole. As such, cabinet-related gridlock is an indicator of broader government dysfunction.

**Hypothesis 1:** Increasing ethnic cabinet diversity decreases government confidence among co-ethnically represented individuals but increases it among individuals without co-ethnic representation.

Gamson’s law suggests that the distribution of cabinet seats among parties should be done with a ‘fairness norm’ in proportion to their legislative seat share (Ecker and Meyer, 2019). As Lin, Stevenson, Wessel Tromborg and Fortunato (2017) show, members of the public largely subscribe to Gamson’s law in the context of party portfolio allocations. The concept of fairness may take on a different meaning when considering ethnicity. In many

country contexts, ethnic divisions have longstanding and deep historical origins, meaning that fairness is difficult to achieve. Increasing cabinet diversity reduces power among some individuals co-ethnically represented in the cabinet, leading to a backlash effect that may prompt feelings of unfairness (O’Brochta, 2023*a*). At the same time, increasing cabinet diversity may increase power among some individuals who had co-ethnic representation previously, but whose representation has now increased. However, increasing cabinet diversity may be insufficient to prompt feelings of fairness, as historically marginalized ethnic groups often discount the degree to which descriptive representation will provide meaningful political power (O’Brochta, 2022*b*). As such, increasing cabinet diversity should increase feelings of unfairness among all individuals represented in the cabinet.

While perceived unfairness increases among individuals with co-ethnic representation as cabinet diversity increases, those individuals without co-ethnic representation should respond even more strongly. Political leaders made a conscious choice to continue to exclude them from the cabinet, and they may feel that their ability to participate in the political process is compromised to the extent that they seek to obtain influence through extra-political means (e.g., Aliyev, 2023).

**Hypothesis 2:** Increasing ethnic cabinet diversity increases feelings of unfair treatment for all individuals, but to a lower degree for individuals co-ethnically represented in government.

## Research Design

To test these hypotheses, I choose to collect data on ethnic cabinet composition and individual-level data on attitudes toward the government and political participation. Since cabinet composition changes between countries and across time, observational data is the most appropriate way to study cabinet composition. This design is similar to studies of women’s representation (Barnes and Taylor-Robinson, 2018; Barnes and Burchard, 2012). I link data from the World Values Survey (WVS) and Afrobarometer to corresponding datasets list-

ing cabinet membership. I choose to use the WVS because it encompasses a wide variety of country contexts. However, comprehensive ethnic cabinet membership data is currently only available for select African countries, hence my use of the Afrobarometer.

## World Values Survey

I link WVS data from 1995 to 2013 across 35 countries and about 75,000 individuals to data on ethnic cabinet representation from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (EPR, Vogt, Bormann, Ruegger, Cederman, Hunziker and Girardin, 2015). EPR runs from 1946 to 2017 and includes countries with 250,000 or more residents. The dataset includes ethnic groups deemed to be politically relevant.<sup>2</sup> In the EPR dataset, expert coders assign ethnic groups' access to executive power — including cabinet representation and potentially access to other senior leadership posts — into one of seven categories.

I exclude countries where the WVS reports only one ethnic group: for example, individuals in Poland are all classified as 'white' or 'Polish.' I take the remaining countries and match the 661 ethnic groups identified in EPR with one or more of the 898 ethnic groups identified in the WVS. If an ethnic group is not mentioned in EPR, I assume that it lacks executive power.

I measure co-ethnic representation with a dichotomous variable indicating whether an individual's ethnic group has access to executive power (coded as 1) or not (coded as 0) (*In Cabinet*). EPR does not calculate the exact proportion of executive or cabinet seats held by each ethnic group. This means that calculating cabinet diversity using information on the ethnicity of each cabinet minister is not possible when working with the EPR data. Therefore, I choose to use the EPR to calculate the *presence* of co-ethnic representation.<sup>3</sup> Using these data, I calculate the percentage of ethnic groups possessing executive power (*Representation*). To be clear, this is a proxy measure of ethnic cabinet diversity that has the advantage of being available in countries worldwide. The *Representation* measure is

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<sup>2</sup>Meaning that at least one political actor claims to represent an ethnic group.

<sup>3</sup>See the Supplemental Information (SI) 1 for further discussion.

informative about how power is shared at the executive level, but it is relatively imprecise, changing only when an ethnic group is granted or loses access to executive power.

I rely on a WVS question about respondents' confidence in government for the dependent variable. The question asks, 'How much confidence do you have in the government?' with options 1 (none) to 4 (a great deal) (*Confidence*). I interact co-ethnic representation with the percentage of ethnic groups in the cabinet (Hypothesis 1).

## **Afrobarometer**

I supplement the WVS analysis with a different dataset linking Afrobarometer responses to more detailed data on ethnic cabinet diversity. Afrobarometer covers 17 African countries relatively consistently from 2005 to 2018 and has about 100,000 respondents. More importantly, Raleigh and Wigmore-Shepherd (2022) have created lists of cabinet membership in 23 African countries from 1997 to 2018.

Afrobarometer asks respondents to self-identify their ethnic group and records their answers without standardization, resulting in 602 reported ethnic groups. Cabinet ministers in Raleigh and Wigmore-Shepherd (2022) come from 182 ethnic groups. I worked with an African coder to identify whether and which ethnicities in Afrobarometer matched the cabinet dataset. The coder was trained to complete this task and engaged in Internet research when they were unsure. They provided a confidence rating for each match and the source of their information. I took this coding and checked the entire dataset. This process involved matching ethnic groups with slight spelling variations (e.g., Afrikaaner versus Afrikaans versus Afrikaner) in the Afrobarometer dataset, checking that these spelling variations referred to the same ethnic group, and coding these individuals in the same ethnic category. Then, I investigated each remaining ethnic group in Afrobarometer to determine if it was affiliated with an ethnic group in the cabinets dataset (e.g., one group was a subset of another). Those individuals who belonged to ethnic groups not in the cabinet were considered lacking co-ethnic representation.

I created a variable indicating whether an individual’s ethnic group had cabinet representation (*In Cabinet*).<sup>4</sup> I measure ethnic cabinet diversity using the Herfindahl-Hirschman index, a common measure of diversity (Robinson, 2020).<sup>5</sup> This index ranges from 0, indicating one ethnic group controls all cabinet seats, to 1, indicating that many ethnic groups control an equal number of seats (*Cabinet Diversity*).

The dependent variable is an Afrobarometer question about how unfairly the respondent feels that his or her ethnic group is treated in government. The question reads, ‘How often [is your ethnic group] treated unfairly by the government?’ where 1 indicates never and 4 indicates always (*Ethnic Unfairness*). I interact co-ethnic representation with cabinet ethnic diversity (Hypothesis 2).

In the analysis described in the main text, I use linear regression models with fixed effects by country and year and robust standard errors. Dependent variables are scaled between 0 and 1. Independent variables are lagged by one year.<sup>6</sup> I include a number of demographic and country-level (Polity 2, GDP per capita, percentage of women in the cabinet and the legislature, and country ethnic diversity) control variables. SI.4 shows the results from multilevel models with random effects by country and year and robustness checks.

## Results

Before moving to test the two hypotheses, we might be interested in whether there is a direct relationship between co-ethnic cabinet representation and individuals’ confidence in government and feelings of fairness. I find that individuals with co-ethnic cabinet representation have lower confidence in government and increased feelings of ethnic unfairness. I discuss these results and possible explanations for them in SI.3.

Hypothesis 1 assesses whether ethnic representation in government impacts individuals with co-ethnic representation differently than those without co-ethnic representation. Recall

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<sup>4</sup>See SI.2.

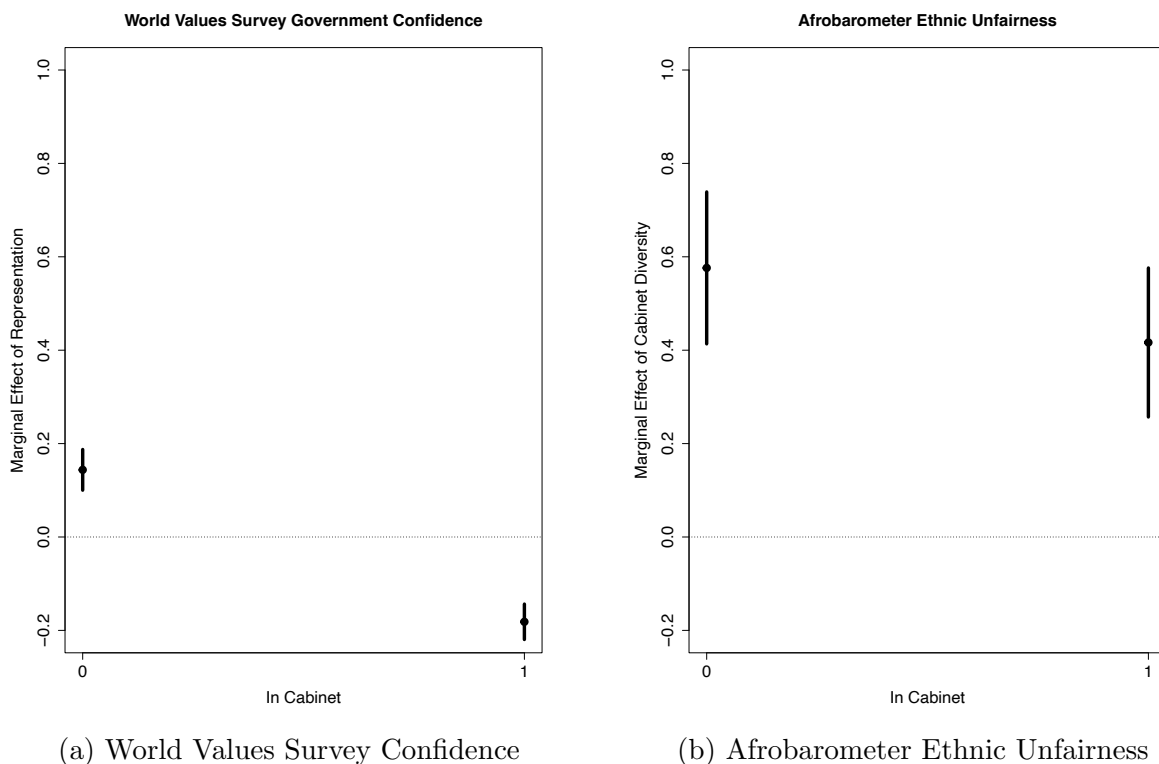
<sup>5</sup>See SI.2.

<sup>6</sup>My expectation is that individuals’ attitudes are based on the cabinet from the previous year.



that the World Values Survey includes the confidence in government question and that these data were linked to a proxy measure of ethnic cabinet diversity called *Representation* — the share of ethnic groups represented in the cabinet. Figure 1, panel A shows that increasing ethnic representation in government decreases government confidence among co-ethnically represented individuals (*In Cabinet*=1), but increases confidence among those without co-ethnic representation (*In Cabinet*=0). These results support Hypothesis 1.

Figure 1: Interaction Between Co-Ethnic Representation and Representation/Cabinet Diversity



Interaction between *Representation* or *Cabinet Diversity* and *In Cabinet* for dependent variables *Confidence* and *Ethnic Unfairness*. Linear regression models with country and year fixed effects and robust standard errors. Dependent variables scaled from 0 to 1. 95% confidence intervals.

Hypothesis 2 argues that increasing cabinet diversity increases feelings of unfair treatment for all individuals, but does so less for those with co-ethnic representation. I test this Hypothesis using Afrobarometer data and a measure of *Cabinet Diversity* that includes information about the ethnic group membership of each cabinet minister. Figure 1, panel B

shows partial support for this Hypothesis. Increasing cabinet diversity does increase feelings of unfair treatment. Further, the point estimate for the amount of impact of increasing cabinet diversity on feelings of unfairness is lower for those co-ethnically represented in government. However, the confidence intervals associated with these point estimates overlap, meaning that there is not a statistically significant difference between the size of the effect for those co-ethnically and not co-ethnically represented.

One reason that there may not be a statistically significant difference between those co-ethnically and those not co-ethnically represented is that individuals who are members of traditionally under-represented groups tend to prioritize substantive over descriptive representation (O’Brochta, 2022*b*) and may feel that political elites are simply increasing co-ethnic representation as a token gesture (O’Brochta, 2023*b*).

## Discussion and Conclusion

Constructing a cabinet is a balancing process. Country leaders need to consider coalition partners at the same time that they have an opportunity to appoint ministers from diverse backgrounds. When considering the ethnic background of potential ministers, country leaders again need to balance different considerations. People want their ethnic group to be included and to have meaningful political power. But political power is finite, so allocating more political power to one group deprives other groups of power.

Country leaders who decide to increase ethnic cabinet diversity face a trade-off. Those already represented in the cabinet see their share of cabinet political power decrease at the same time that they know that this decrease in power is part of a power-sharing arrangement. Normatively, increasing cabinet diversity through power-sharing is often part of good governance. However, country leaders acting based only on normative interests risk losing political support and re-election. Better communication with the public may help country leaders explain their cabinet selection choices such that increasing cabinet diversity still

increases feelings of fairness, but less negatively impacts government confidence.

Several limitations of this study provide opportunities for future research. First, creating a comprehensive database of cabinet ministers and their ethnicity worldwide would allow this theory to be tested on a larger number of country-years. It would also enable researchers to construct a more precise measure of cabinet representation worldwide instead of relying on the proxy *Representation* measure. This could also allow researchers to examine more dependent variables of interest, as survey data from different sources could be included. Adding dependent variables that measure similar quantities, but are worded differently, will help to ensure that the results shown here are robust to survey question design. Additionally, the evidence presented demonstrates a correlation between co-ethnic representation and cabinet diversity and public attitudes. It is difficult to test causation, since co-ethnic representation and cabinet diversity cannot be experimentally manipulated. However, it would be worthwhile to further investigate the mechanisms by which cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation are associated with changing attitudes.

The take-away message for country leaders is that people do respond to changes in the interaction between ethnic cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation. How much these factors impact politicians ability to govern is unclear. Leaders do not want confidence in government or perceptions of ethnic fairness to decrease, but then again, few people are likely to base their vote choice in a subsequent election on ethnic cabinet representation alone. Ethnic cabinet diversity and the amount of co-ethnic representation are symptoms of broader ethnic inclusion or exclusion and may serve to cue people to think about how well government truly represents them and their interests; these cues are worthy of future study.

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# Supplemental Information: Ethnic Cabinet Diversity, Co-Ethnic Representation, and Attitudes Toward Government

## Contents

SI.1: World Values Survey Dataset	1
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Replication data and code for all empirical analysis is posted on the author's website.

## SI.1: World Values Survey Dataset

- Independent Variables:

1. In Cabinet: From Ethnic Power Relations Dataset (Vogt, Bormann, Ruegger, Cederman, Hunziker and Girardin, 2015). 1 (ethnic group is in the cabinet) or 0 (ethnic group is not in the cabinet)
2. Representation: From Ethnic Power Relations Dataset. Percentage of ethnic groups represented in the cabinet

- Dependent Variable:

3. Confidence: "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? The government (in your nations capital)." 1 (none) to 4 (a great deal)

- Controls:

4. Female: 1 (female) or 0 (male)
5. Age: in years. Recoded into factor for 18 to 35, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and over
6. Married: 1 (yes) or 0 (no)
7. Unemployed: "Are you employed now or not?" 1 (unemployed) or 0 (employed)

8. Income: “On this card is an income scale on which 1 indicates the lowest income group and 10 the highest income group in your country. We would like to know in what group your household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in.” 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest)
9. Education: “What is the highest educational level that you have attained?” Different scales used for different waves. Recoded into factor for below secondary, some secondary, completed secondary, and completed Bachelors
10. Politics: “How interested would you say you are in politics?” 1 (not at all interested) to 4 (very interested)
11. Ideology: “In political matters, people talk of the left and the right. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?” Recoded into dichotomous variable for left ideology where 1 (ideology score of six or below) or 0 (otherwise)
12. Minority: 1 (ethnic minority) or 0 (otherwise). To determine if an individual is part of an ethnic minority group, I used a procedure similar to Robinson (2020) where I calculated the percentage of respondents from different ethnic groups included in the World Values Survey in each country-year. Since the World Values Survey uses a representative sample, ethnic group size should be accurately represented. I coded individuals belonging to the largest ethnic group as a majority (or plurality) group member and all other individuals as members of minority groups
13. Polity: Polity 2
14. GDP Per Capita: From Varieties of Democracy dataset (Coppedge, Gerring, Knutsen, Lindberg, Teorell, Altman, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Luhrmann, Marquardt, McMann, Paxton, Pemstein, Seim, Sigman, Skaaning, Staton, Wilson, Cornell, Alizada, Gastaldi, Gjerlow, Hindle, Ilchenko, Maxwell, Mechkova, Medzihorsky, von Romer, Sundstrom, Tzelgov, Wang, Wig and Ziblatt, 2020). Logged GDP per capita
15. Female Cabinet: From Varieties of Democracy. Percentage of women in the cabinet
16. Female Legislature: From Varieties of Democracy. Percentage of women in the legislature
17. Ethnic Diversity: From the Historical Index of Ethnic Fractionalization Dataset (Drazanova, 2020). Herfindahl-Hirschman index of country-level ethnic diversity

## Descriptive Statistics

The combined WVS-EPR sample contained 64 country-years spread across 16 years (1995 to 2013) and 35 countries and about 75,000 respondents. Most countries appear one or two times in the dataset. The variables used in the analysis were chosen in order to maximize the number of country-years included in the dataset. There was a good variation in different countries: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria,



Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Malaysia, Moldova, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, and Venezuela.<sup>1</sup>

Of these countries, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Colombia, and Romania have ethnic legislative quotas. Burundi from the Afrobarometer dataset does as well (Bird, 2014). These ethnic legislative quotas do not necessarily translate into reservations for cabinet seats. In addition, quota formulas differ across countries and over time. I account for the presence of these quotas, along with cabinet seat reservations, using random effects by country and year in regression models.

Table SI.1.1 displays descriptive statistics for individual-level variables, while Table SI.1.2 displays descriptive statistics for country-level variables.

Table SI.1.1: World Values Survey Individual-Level

Variable	Min	Max	SD	Mean	Median
Confidence	1.00	4.00	0.96	2.39	2.00
In Cabinet <sub>t</sub>	0.00	1.00	0.47	0.66	1.00
Minority	0.00	1.00	0.44	0.27	0.00
Female	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.52	1.00
Married	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.56	1.00
Unemployed	0.00	1.00	0.30	0.10	0.00
Income	1.00	10.00	2.29	4.68	5.00
Below Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.40	0.20	0.00
Some Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.37	0.17	0.00
Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.49	0.40	0.00
BA	0.00	1.00	0.36	0.15	0.00
Age 18-35	0.00	1.00	0.49	0.43	0.00
Age 35-49	0.00	1.00	0.45	0.29	0.00
Age 50-64	0.00	1.00	0.39	0.19	0.00
Age 65+	0.00	1.00	0.29	0.09	0.00
Political Interest	1.00	4.00	0.98	2.32	2.00
Ideology Left	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.53	1.00

Descriptive statistics for individual-level data in the World Values Survey dataset.

## EPR Measures of Cabinet Prestige

I use the percentage of ethnic groups listed in the Ethnic Power Relations dataset that are represented in the cabinet as my measure of ethnic cabinet representation. This measure is derived from more detailed information that the EPR provides about cabinet membership

<sup>1</sup>Of these countries and survey years, WVS data overlaps with the Afrobarometer data in Nigeria (2012) and South Africa (2006). Since the independent variable of interest changes only across country-years, examining these two country-years specifically does not add analytic leverage.

Table SI.1.2: World Values Survey Country-Level

Variable	Min	Max	SD	Mean	Median
Year	1981.00	2020.00	9.18	2006.41	2006.00
Representation <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.03	1.00	0.25	0.45	0.35
Country Diversity	0.01	0.88	0.24	0.46	0.46
Polity 2 <sub><i>t</i></sub>	-10.00	10.00	5.31	5.49	8.00
GDP Per Capita log <sub><i>t</i></sub>	6.63	11.03	1.02	9.18	9.24
Pct. Women Cabinet <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.00	0.44	0.10	0.13	0.10
Pct. Women Legislature <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.33	53.08	10.93	16.45	13.75

Descriptive statistics for country-year data in the World Values Survey dataset.

which includes power rankings from a group monopolizing cabinet power to groups that are discriminated against by the state. Of particular interest are the senior partner and junior partner categories. These categories apply to situations where power-sharing is occurring. EPR defines the difference between senior and junior partners as “depending on the group’s absolute influence in the executive — that is, irrespective of group size —, measured by the number and importance of the positions controlled by group members.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, the EPR provides a general differentiation between groups with more or less power and prestige, but there is no formula used to make the differentiation between junior and senior partners. For this reason, I exercise caution when utilizing the EPR dataset, as definitions of senior and junior partners may vary across country-contexts and therefore not be directly comparable. Additionally, unlike the Afrobarometer dataset where the ethnic power score has a known formula that can be refined, the EPR coding procedure for junior and senior partners is not completely clear. Thus, I choose to limit my use of the EPR to examining cabinet representation — a quantity which is more easily countable — and choose not to use the EPR to calculate a measure of ethnic cabinet prestige. Future work would do well to carefully consider EPR access to state power measures and to think about whether such measures could include increased description and precision.

## SI.2: Afrobarometer Dataset

- Independent Variables:

1. In Cabinet: From African Cabinet and Political Elite Data Project (Raleigh and Wigmore-Shepherd, 2022). For consistency with the WVS analysis, I rely on a country-year measure of cabinet diversity using the list of cabinet membership from July of each year. 1 (ethnic group is in the cabinet) or 0 (ethnic group is not in the cabinet).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>See [https://icr.ethz.ch/data/epr/core/EPR\\_2021\\_Codebook\\_EPR.pdf](https://icr.ethz.ch/data/epr/core/EPR_2021_Codebook_EPR.pdf) footnote 12.

<sup>3</sup>This dataset does include ministers without portfolio, ministers of state, or similar types of ministers that some may consider to be part of the cabinet and some may not. I include all ministers not listed as the Chief of State in the dataset. I take minister political power into account when using the Ethnic Power Score described below.

2. Cabinet Diversity: From African Cabinet and Political Elite Data Project (Raleigh and Wigmore-Shepherd, 2022). Herfindahl-Hirschman index where 0 indicates a cabinet dominated by one ethnic group and 1 indicates a cabinet with representation equally shared among many ethnic groups
  3. Ethnic Power Score: The formula is  $(3h + 2m + l)p$  where  $h$ ,  $m$ , and  $l$  are the percentage of cabinet seats controlled by an ethnic group with high, medium, and low prestige and  $p$  is the proportion of the cabinet controlled by the ethnic group. Based off of Krook and O'Brien (2012)
- Dependent Variable:
    4. Unfair: "How often [is your ethnic group] treated unfairly by the government?" 1 (never) to 4 (always)
  - Controls:
    5. Leader Match: 1 if the ethnic group of the country leader matches that of the respondent. 0 otherwise
    6. Female: 1 (female) or 0 (male)
    7. Age: in years. Recoded into factor for 18 to 35, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and over
    8. Unemployed: "Do you have a job that pays a cash income? Is it full-time or part-time? And are you presently looking for a job (even if you are presently working)?" 1 (unemployed) or 0 (employed)
    9. Income: Two proxy variables for income or wealth. "Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough food to eat?" Recoded to 1 (never) and 0 (otherwise). "Which of these things do you personally own? Television." 1 (own) or 0 (do not own)
    10. Education: "What is the highest level of education you have completed?" Recoded into factor for below secondary, some secondary, completed secondary, and completed Bachelors
    11. Politics: "When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters never, occasionally, or frequently?" 1 (never), 2 (occasionally), 3 (frequently)
    12. Minority: 1 (ethnic minority) or 0 (otherwise). Same procedure as described for the WVS, but with the Afrobarometer dataset
    13. Polity: Polity 2
    14. GDP Per Capita: From Varieties of Democracy. Logged GDP per capita
    15. Female Cabinet: From Varieties of Democracy. Percentage of women in the cabinet
    16. Female Legislature: From Varieties of Democracy. Percentage of women in the legislature

17. Ethnic Diversity: Calculated from the Afrobarometer because the Historical Index of Ethnic Fractionalization Dataset does not extend to recent years. Herfindahl-Hirschman index of country-level ethnic diversity

## Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of about 100,000 respondents across 17 African countries with up to 5 rounds of the Afrobarometer included (mean 3.5 rounds for each country). Rounds are conducted in one or two year periods in a given country. Included countries are: Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Table SI.2.1 displays descriptive statistics for individual-level variables, while Table SI.2.2 displays descriptive statistics for country-level variables.

Table SI.2.1: Afrobarometer Individual-Level

Variable	Min	Max	SD	Mean	Median
Unfair	1.00	4.00	1.01	1.80	1.00
In Cabinet <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.00	1.00	0.48	0.64	1.00
Leader Match <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.00	1.00	0.35	0.14	0.00
Minority	0.00	1.00	0.46	0.70	1.00
Female	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.00
Unemployed	0.00	1.00	0.45	0.27	0.00
Own TV	0.00	1.00	0.49	0.38	0.00
Had Food	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.48	0.00
Below Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.48	0.00
Some Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.39	0.19	0.00
Secondary	0.00	1.00	0.45	0.29	0.00
BA	0.00	1.00	0.19	0.04	0.00
Age 18-35	0.00	1.00	0.50	0.53	1.00
Age 35-49	0.00	1.00	0.45	0.28	0.00
Age 50-64	0.00	1.00	0.34	0.13	0.00
Age 65+	0.00	1.00	0.23	0.06	0.00
Political Interest	1.00	3.00	0.72	1.88	2.00

Descriptive statistics for individual-level data in the Afrobarometer dataset.

## Using the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index

The Herfindahl-Hirschman index is written as  $1 - \sum_{i=1}^n p^2$  where  $p$  is the proportion of the cabinet controlled by a given group and  $n$  is the number of groups. Ministers whose ethnicity was labeled as “other” were coded as belonging to the same ethnic group; rarely was more than one minister coded “other” in a given country-year.

Table SI.2.2: Afrobarometer Country-Level

Variable	Min	Max	SD	Mean	Median
Year	2005.00	2018.00	3.86	2012.15	2013.00
Cabinet Diversity <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.39	0.92	0.08	0.81	0.82
Ethnic Power Score <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.00	0.42	0.06	0.04	0.01
Country Diversity	0.29	0.96	0.12	0.83	0.87
Polity 2 <sub><i>t</i></sub>	-4.00	9.00	4.00	3.86	4.00
GDP Per Capita log <sub><i>t</i></sub>	6.57	9.62	0.81	7.83	7.56
Pct. Women Cabinet <sub><i>t</i></sub>	0.00	0.45	0.10	0.21	0.20
Pct. Women Legislature <sub><i>t</i></sub>	3.69	44.50	11.69	19.67	15.24

Descriptive statistics for country-year data in the Afrobarometer dataset.

This index is the standard measure of group heterogeneity, and it has been widely used to measure ethnic diversity in political science (Jensenius and Suryanarayan, 2015; Lancee and Dronkers, 2011; Tallman and Li, 1996). If one ethnic group dominates the cabinet, the index is low (close to 0); if groups are relatively equal in size in the cabinet, the index is high (close to 1) (Harrison and Klein, 2007).<sup>4</sup>

The Herfindahl-Hirschman index is meant to account for cabinet diversity by including both the number of ethnic groups represented in the cabinet and their relative size in the cabinet. For example, if we consider a cabinet with ten ministers where six are from one ethnic group and four other ethnic groups each hold one cabinet seat, the formula would be  $1 - \sum_{i=1}^5 (0.6^2 + 0.1^2 + 0.1^2 + 0.1^2 + 0.1^2) = 0.60$ . We can see how changing the distribution of groups in the cabinet changes the index by looking at an example with four ministers from one group, three ministers from a second group, three ministers from a third group, and no ministers from the two remaining groups or  $1 - \sum_{i=1}^5 (0.4^2 + 0.3^2 + 0.3^2 + 0^2 + 0^2) = 0.66$ . So, the Herfindahl-Hirschman index is higher for the cabinet where fewer ethnic groups are represented, but the ethnic groups that are included have a more equal distribution of cabinet seats. This is a trade-off. One could argue that including more ethnic groups in the cabinet results in a more diverse cabinet regardless of the distribution of those cabinet seats. On the other hand, one could argue that token representation adds little to overall ethnic cabinet diversity. The Herfindahl-Hirschman index accounts for both the distribution of seats and the number of groups included in the cabinet.

The Herfindahl-Hirschman index is constrained to measuring cabinet diversity; it does not account for alignment between the distribution of cabinet seats and the percentage of members of the public belonging to different ethnic groups. Therefore, it is possible that a country can have a high Herfindahl-Hirschman index at the same time that the country is not particularly diverse. The challenge here is that data on country-level diversity does not necessarily use the same ethnic groups as does data on cabinet diversity. More importantly, country-level data is only available after a given census, whereas cabinet data is available

<sup>4</sup>The Herfindahl-Hirschman index is also known as Blau's Index, Hirschman's Index, Herfindahl's Index, or Simpson's Index. Teachman's Index is similar (Harrison and Klein, 2007, 1212).

monthly and yearly. For this reason, while it would be useful to examine how cabinet diversity aligns with country diversity by combining the two measures, I examine them separately. I include a control variable for country-level diversity. Additionally, I include random effects by country. This means that we are interpreting relative changes in cabinet diversity within a country context.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Afrobarometer survey question about fairness states, “How often [is your ethnic group] treated unfairly by the government?” This question does not ask whether diversity in government matches country-level diversity. Indeed, the key theoretical backing for the hypothesis is that power-sharing is perceived as more fair. All of the country-contexts in the dataset include multiple ethnic groups, so the concept of fairness involves some form of power-sharing arrangement being more fair, even if the groups included are relatively small in size.

### **SI.3: Relationship Between Co-Ethnic Representation and Feelings of Confidence and Fairness**

When co-ethnic representation increases, individuals expect to receive additional government benefits for themselves and their ethnic group (Arnesen, Duell and Johannesson, 2019; Sobolewska, McKee and Campbell, 2018). These benefits may include budgetary allocations and other policies that benefit their ethnic group, but the simple act of having representatives like them in the cabinet should be enough to make them feel that their perspectives are being taken into account in government decision-making (Ruiz-Rufino, 2013; Tezcur and Gurses, 2017). Additionally, the knowledge that co-ethnic representatives are in the cabinet should instill confidence that the government is making decisions that take into account the needs of the represented individual’s ethnic group (Mansbridge, 1999; Sanchez and Morin, 2011). Therefore, increased co-ethnic representation should improve individuals’ confidence in government and feelings of ethnic fairness.

Before testing the interaction between co-ethnic cabinet representation and ethnic cabinet representation on feelings of confidence and fairness, I examine the direct effect of co-ethnic cabinet representation on confidence and fairness. I expect that as co-ethnic cabinet representation increases, individuals’ confidence in government and feelings of ethnic fairness will increase.

In addition to the other measures created using the World Values Survey and Afrobarometer data, I created a measure of the power of each individual’s ethnic group in the cabinet. This index, based off of Krook and O’Brien (2012)’s gender power score, takes into account both the proportion of cabinet seats controlled by a given ethnic group and the prestige or power associated with the particular ministry that the ethnic group controls. I use Krook and O’Brien (2012)’s guidelines to code cabinet ministries into low, medium, and high prestige, calculating the percentage of ministers in each category and weighting them by 1, 2, and 3 respectively. I then sum these values and multiply by the percentage of cabinet seats controlled by the ethnic group.<sup>5</sup> An *Ethnic Power Score* of zero indicates no ethnic cabinet

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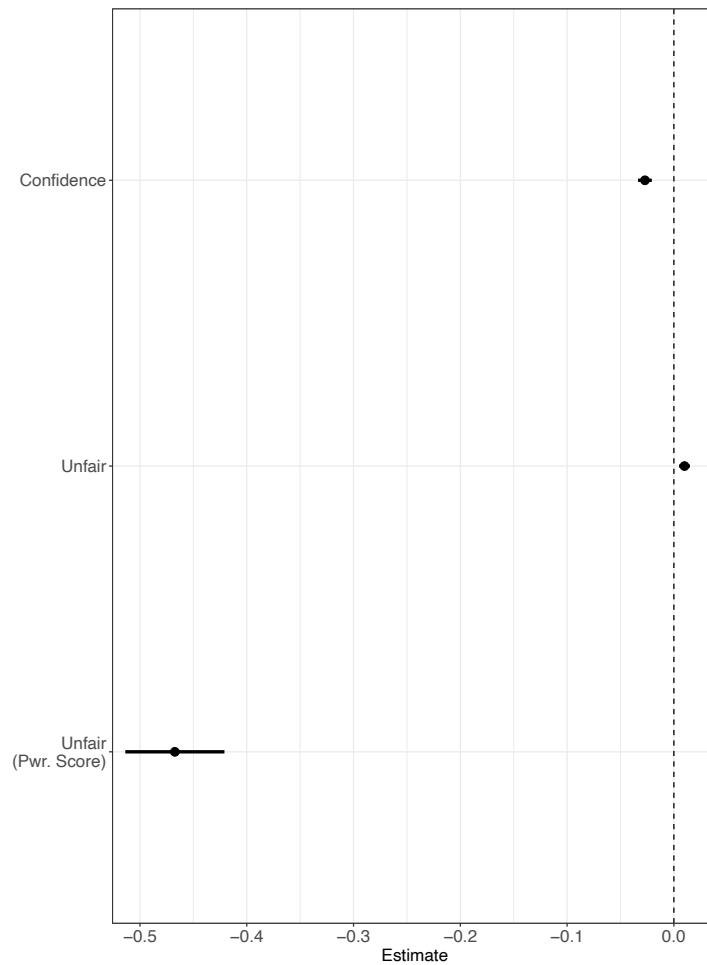
<sup>5</sup>The formula is  $(3h + 2m + l)p$ , where  $h$ ,  $m$ , and  $l$  are the percentage of cabinet seats controlled by an ethnic group with high, medium, and low prestige and  $p$  is the proportion of the cabinet controlled by the

representation, whereas higher values indicate greater representation in high prestige ministries. The *Ethnic Power Score* is available for the Afrobarometer data since it includes information on individual cabinet ministers.

To test this expectation, I examine the effect of co-ethnic representation on confidence in government and assessments of unfairness, checking the latter results using the *Ethnic Power Score*, as it is possible to compute for the Afrobarometer data.

The first row in Figure SI.3.1 displays the point estimate for the effect of a respondent having co-ethnic cabinet representation on their level of government confidence using the World Values Survey data. When a respondent has co-ethnic cabinet representation, government confidence decreases, the opposite of the expected result.

Figure SI.3.1: Effect of Co-Ethnic Representation on Confidence and Ethnic Unfairness



Linear models with country and year fixed effects and robust standard errors. 95% confidence intervals. Dependent variables scaled from 0 to 1. *Confidence* from World Values Survey. *Unfair* from Afrobarometer. *Unfair (Pwr. Score)* uses the Ethnic Power Score as the independent variable.

Moving to the second row of Figure SI.3.1 and the Afrobarometer data, a respondent with co-ethnic cabinet representation has increased feelings of ethnic unfairness compared ethnic group.

to a respondent without co-ethnic cabinet representation. This again is the opposite of the expected result.

The theoretical link between co-ethnic representation and increased government confidence and feelings of ethnic fairness relies on co-ethnic representation resulting in meaningful benefits for ethnic group members. If a representative lacks political power and is only a token representative of their ethnic group, members of the public may respond negatively. This negative response could explain the counter-intuitive findings in the above tests.

I use the *Ethnic Power Score* to account for the amount of political power ethnic groups have in a cabinet. I expect that members of the public who have more co-ethnic political power in the cabinet will feel more ethnically included in government. This is reflected in the third row of Figure SI.3.1, where a high amount of ethnic power is associated with a significant decrease in feelings of ethnic unfairness. This means that the presence of co-ethnic representation can increase feelings of ethnic unfairness *if it is not accompanied by actual political power* in the form of a substantial number of co-ethnic cabinet seats and/or co-ethnic ministers appointed to powerful ministries.

Including token representatives is not a successful way to achieve ethnic balance. Token representatives have little political power and so do not make individuals from that ethnic group feel represented. At the same time, token representatives do hold cabinet seats that are not available to other ethnic groups. So while token representation seems to create ethnic balance in the cabinet, such representation is more likely to foment resentment toward the cabinet and the country leader.

## SI.4: Regression Model Tables

Table SI.4.1 displays results from multi-level models with the WVS data. Model 1 includes additive effects of cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation. Model 2 interacts cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation. All respondents live in a country context where at least 1% of the population identified as a member of an ethnic minority group. Models 3 and 4 control for the country continent.

Table SI.4.2 displays results from multi-level models with the Afrobarometer data. Model 1 includes additive effects of cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation. Model 2 interacts cabinet diversity and co-ethnic representation. Models 3 and 4 measure co-ethnic representation using the percentage of the cabinet from an individual's ethnic group. Models 5 and 6 use the ethnic power score.



Table SI.4.1: World Values Survey Models

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Confidence			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Female	0.020* (0.011)	0.020* (0.011)	0.020* (0.011)	0.020* (0.011)
Pct. Women Cabinet <sub>l</sub>	0.004 (0.118)	-0.057 (0.118)	0.050 (0.120)	-0.006 (0.120)
Married	0.009 (0.007)	0.011 (0.007)	0.009 (0.007)	0.011 (0.007)
Unemployed	0.012 (0.011)	0.006 (0.011)	0.012 (0.011)	0.006 (0.011)
Income	0.001 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)
Some Secondary	-0.088*** (0.011)	-0.085*** (0.011)	-0.088*** (0.011)	-0.085*** (0.011)
Secondary	-0.108*** (0.010)	-0.103*** (0.010)	-0.108*** (0.010)	-0.103*** (0.010)
BA	-0.161*** (0.013)	-0.158*** (0.013)	-0.161*** (0.013)	-0.157*** (0.013)
Age 35-49	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.0001 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.008)	-0.0002 (0.008)
Age 50-64	0.001 (0.010)	0.005 (0.010)	0.001 (0.010)	0.005 (0.010)
Age 65+	0.068*** (0.013)	0.073*** (0.013)	0.068*** (0.013)	0.073*** (0.013)
Political Interest	0.108*** (0.004)	0.106*** (0.004)	0.108*** (0.004)	0.106*** (0.004)
Ideology Left	-0.063*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)	-0.063*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)
Policy 2 <sub>l</sub>	-0.028*** (0.004)	-0.033*** (0.004)	-0.027*** (0.004)	-0.032*** (0.004)
GDP Per Capita log <sub>l</sub>	-0.604*** (0.068)	-0.588*** (0.068)	-0.655*** (0.071)	-0.643*** (0.071)
Pct. Women Legislature <sub>l</sub>	-0.001 (0.003)	0.0004 (0.003)	0.0003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
In Cabinet <sub>l</sub>	-0.076*** (0.009)	0.158*** (0.020)	-0.076*** (0.009)	0.157*** (0.020)
Representation <sub>l</sub>	-0.462*** (0.056)	-0.068 (0.063)	-0.465*** (0.056)	-0.070 (0.064)
Country Diversity	-2.258*** (0.503)	-2.417*** (0.507)	-2.737*** (0.586)	-2.966*** (0.591)
Minority	-0.097*** (0.008)	-0.066*** (0.008)	-0.097*** (0.008)	-0.066*** (0.008)
Female x Pct. Women Cabinet <sub>l</sub>	0.059 (0.062)	0.059 (0.061)	0.059 (0.062)	0.058 (0.061)
In Cabinet <sub>l</sub> x Representation <sub>l</sub>		-0.456*** (0.034)		-0.457*** (0.034)
Constant	9.127*** (0.736)	8.863*** (0.740)	9.878*** (0.958)	9.724*** (0.968)
Observations	69,518	69,518	69,518	69,518
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Multi-level models with random effects by country and year. Models 3 and 4 control for continent.

Table SI.4.2: Afrobarometer Models

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Unfair					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female	-0.031** (0.015)	-0.032** (0.015)	-0.031** (0.015)	-0.031** (0.015)	-0.052*** (0.018)	-0.052*** (0.018)
Pct. Women Cabinet <sub>t</sub>	0.389*** (0.074)	0.384*** (0.074)	0.416*** (0.074)	0.416*** (0.074)	0.669*** (0.100)	0.676*** (0.100)
Unemployed	0.065*** (0.007)	0.065*** (0.007)	0.065*** (0.007)	0.065*** (0.007)	0.060*** (0.009)	0.061*** (0.009)
Own TV	-0.012 (0.008)	-0.012 (0.008)	-0.009 (0.008)	-0.009 (0.008)	-0.00004 (0.010)	0.001 (0.010)
Had Food	-0.173*** (0.007)	-0.173*** (0.007)	-0.170*** (0.007)	-0.170*** (0.007)	-0.155*** (0.008)	-0.155*** (0.008)
Some Secondary	-0.004 (0.009)	-0.004 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.009)	0.008 (0.011)	0.008 (0.011)
Secondary	0.024*** (0.009)	0.025*** (0.009)	0.025*** (0.009)	0.025*** (0.009)	0.040*** (0.011)	0.040*** (0.011)
BA	0.064*** (0.018)	0.064*** (0.018)	0.067*** (0.018)	0.067*** (0.018)	0.059*** (0.021)	0.057*** (0.021)
Age 35-49	0.002 (0.007)	0.002 (0.007)	0.002 (0.007)	0.002 (0.007)	-0.009 (0.009)	-0.009 (0.009)
Age 50-64	0.024** (0.010)	0.024** (0.010)	0.025** (0.010)	0.025** (0.010)	0.020 (0.012)	0.020 (0.012)
Age 65+	-0.034** (0.014)	-0.035** (0.014)	-0.032** (0.014)	-0.032** (0.014)	-0.043** (0.018)	-0.043** (0.018)
Political Interest	0.016*** (0.005)	0.016*** (0.005)	0.016*** (0.005)	0.016*** (0.005)	0.005 (0.006)	0.005 (0.006)
Polity 2 <sub>t</sub>	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.009* (0.005)	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.007)
GDP Per Capita log <sub>t</sub>	-0.274*** (0.049)	-0.288*** (0.049)	-0.220*** (0.049)	-0.220*** (0.049)	-0.352*** (0.060)	-0.343*** (0.060)
Pct. Women Legislature <sub>t</sub>	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.006*** (0.001)	-0.006*** (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)
In Cabinet <sub>t</sub>	0.029*** (0.008)	0.423*** (0.107)				
Representation <sub>t</sub>			-0.435*** (0.039)	-0.518** (0.219)		
Ethnic Power Score <sub>t</sub>					-1.680*** (0.090)	-0.352 (0.393)
Cabinet Diversity <sub>t</sub>	1.464*** (0.227)	1.751*** (0.241)	1.481*** (0.226)	1.465*** (0.230)	1.864*** (0.306)	1.931*** (0.306)
Country Diversity	-1.118*** (0.092)	-1.122*** (0.092)	-0.947*** (0.092)	-0.948*** (0.092)	-1.022*** (0.111)	-1.007*** (0.111)
Leader Match <sub>t</sub>	-0.361*** (0.010)	-0.363*** (0.010)	-0.289*** (0.011)	-0.289*** (0.011)	-0.273*** (0.012)	-0.274*** (0.012)
Minority	-0.154*** (0.007)	-0.154*** (0.007)	-0.181*** (0.007)	-0.181*** (0.007)	-0.198*** (0.009)	-0.195*** (0.009)
Female x Pct. Women Cabinet <sub>t</sub>	-0.014 (0.058)	-0.014 (0.058)	-0.014 (0.058)	-0.014 (0.058)	0.023 (0.069)	0.022 (0.069)
In Cabinet <sub>t</sub> x Cabinet Diversity <sub>t</sub>		-0.476*** (0.129)				
Representation <sub>t</sub> x Cabinet Diversity <sub>t</sub>				0.109 (0.281)		
Ethnic Power Score <sub>t</sub> x Cabinet Diversity <sub>t</sub>						-1.862*** (0.537)
Constant	3.829*** (0.473)	3.700*** (0.476)	3.383*** (0.468)	3.399*** (0.470)	4.105*** (0.591)	3.955*** (0.587)
Observations	92,616	92,616	92,616	92,616	62,629	62,629

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Multi-level models with random effects by country and year.

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