

The Evolution and Current State of Research on Pork-Barrel Politics (1970–2024)

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Abstract

This review examines scholarly research on pork-barrel politics from August 1970 to June 2024, utilizing a dataset of 279 documents in the Scopus database. It holistically elaborates on the prominent debates in research on pork-barrel politics that cover issues such as the effectiveness of budget distribution and the controversial practices of logrolling and earmarking. These debates revolve around the impact of pork on economic efficiency, resource equity, and potential corruption. The statistical analysis results through Bibliometrix RStudio software confirm a dynamic developmental trajectory from Pennock's seminal work in 1970 to recent contributions by Belmar et al. (2024). The annual growth rate of 3.93% reflects a steady increase in research on pork-barrel politics annually, indicating growing interest and attention from researchers over time. Peter Spáč emerges as a leading contributor with eight articles, both as a sole author and co-author, while Weingast et al. (1981) stand out with the highest citation count of 934. This bibliometric analysis provides a global overview of research trends in pork-barrel politics, covering topics such as country-based issues, antecedents and consequences, benefits, logrolling and earmarking mechanisms, and the intensified application of these practices before elections. Ninety-six future research questions identified from thirty-nine articles aim to deepen understanding of legislative dynamics and the relationship between legislators and their constituents in pork-barrel politics.

Keywords

Earmarking, Electoral Support, Logrolling, Pork-Barrel, Public Spending

Introduction

Pork-barrel politics refers to the practice of allocating government funds for local projects with the primary aim of benefiting a representative's constituency rather than the broader national or public interest. This term is often used in a political context to describe politicians' efforts to secure political support by allocating beneficial resources to their constituents (Lancaster, 1986; Tóth et al., 2022). Although the practice can directly benefit specific regions, it remains controversial because it can waste public funds and unfairly distribute resources. Pork-barrel politics indisputably reflect economically inefficient projects but are nonetheless politically popular (Shepsle & Weingast, 1981; Weingast et al., 1981).

As highlighted by Hird (1991), there are two types of pork in the context of legislation, namely "programmatic pork" and "allocative pork." The first type designates to legislative initiatives in which large programs are created to provide tangible benefits to constituents, even though they may be inefficient nationally. Members of Congress in the USA often use it to show concrete results of their work to voters despite the potential waste of public funds accompanying it. On the other hand, the second type operates under the assumption of federal programs that may or may not be efficient. In this case, certain legislators use their positions on committees to obtain funding for their districts, often at the expense of other, more needy districts. Such actions can lead to unfair distribution of funds and reduce overall social welfare. Thus, although political pork can present short-term benefits for particular constituencies, the practice can potentially damage the efficiency and fairness of resource distribution at the national level in the long term.

Research on pork-barrel politics has become the focus of academics over the last few decades, especially in political science and political economy. These studies explore how and why politicians engage in pork-barrel practices and their impact on political decision-making processes, economic efficiency, and public trust in government. Research on pork-barrel politics also includes analysis of legislative dynamics, voter behavior, and the relationship between central and regional governments. From 1970 to 2024, studies on pork-barrel politics have developed rapidly and produced many scientific publications. The development of information technology and advances in research methodology have enabled academics to conduct more in-depth and comprehensive analyses.

This article holistically overviews the central debates in pork-barrel politics research, covering issues such as budget distribution effectiveness and the logrolling and earmarking that often become controversial practices. The debates revolve around the impact of these practices on economic efficiency, resource equity, and potential corruption. As mentioned earlier, pork-barrel politics can benefit specific constituents and strengthen political support and legislative stability at the local level, although often at the expense of broader national interests.

Academic databases such as Scopus have helped collect and organize relevant literature, enabling bibliometric analyses that comprehensively depict research trends, influential authors, institutions, and countries. In pork-barrel politics, a bibliometric review can offer insights into how prior studies have developed over the last five decades and the key actors and institutions that have contributed significantly to the field. The overview can also help identify the most frequently discussed topics and gaps in the literature that still need to be filled by future research.

The authors conducted a bibliometric mapping of global literature on pork-barrel politics from 1970 to 2024, using 279 literature sources indexed in the Scopus database. The review included an analysis of publication trends, influential journals and articles, foremost authors and institutions, geographic distribution of research, and keyword patterns. Its primary aim was to present a holistic bibliometric review of pork-barrel politics research, focusing on identifying key trends, actors, and themes in the existing literature.

The benefits of this article include: (1) mapping research developments by identifying patterns and trends in academic publications regarding pork-barrel politics from time to time; (2) identification of significant contributions through uncovering the most influential authors, articles, and journals in the field; (3) analysis of scientific collaboration by identifying collaboration networks between authors and institutions in various countries; (4) formulation of research gaps through identifying areas or topics that still receive insufficient attention and require further research; and (5) providing recommendations or directions for future researchers to investigate unexplored yet topics. Thus, this bibliometric review can make a meaningful contribution to understanding pork-barrel politics research at the global level.

Theoretical Foundations

Pork-barrel politics is the practice of allocating government funds to local projects with the primary aim of benefiting a representative's constituency. It aims to gain local constituents' political support, especially projects before general elections. These projects can be infrastructure development, public facilities, or specific programs that benefit local communities economically and socially. Although pork-barrel politics can present short-term benefits for particular constituencies, it is often criticized for wasting public funds, being inefficient, and fostering corruption (Klingensmith, 2014; Kobrak, 2002; Nugroho & Muhammad, 2024).

The foremost theoretical basis for understanding pork-barrel politics comes from political economy theory, which examines the interaction between economics and politics in public decision-making. This theory highlights how political and economic actors influence each other in resource allocation (Balaam & Dillman, 2018). In the context of pork-barrel politics, political economy theory helps explain the motivations of politicians in allocating

public funds through local projects and how these decisions are influenced by political factors, such as the need to win elections or maintain political support. The theory introduces that public spending decisions are often based more on political than economic considerations. Politicians use financial allocations to maintain power and gain support from constituents. Funding allocation decisions may sometimes be based on the most pressing needs or economic efficiency, but politicians' cost-benefit calculations predominantly determine them (Khemani, 2010).

Public choice theory is a branch of political-economic theory that also provides a framework for analyzing the behavior of politicians and voters in the context of pork-barrel politics. This theory assumes that politicians and voters act based on their economic interests as private individuals and firms (Rose-Ackerman, 2008). Politicians seek to maximize their chances of reelection by allocating resources to projects that will gain the support of their voters. Instead, voters support politicians who can directly benefit their areas economically. Public choice theory helps us understand how political incentives influence funding allocation decisions. The theory has also become the most potent tool for criticizing political decisions far from voters' attention and control (Vaubel, 2019). Politicians tend to choose projects with symbolic value, which constituents can easily see as tangible evidence of their performance. However, it can lead to inefficient or uneven funding allocations.

Principal-agent theory is also very relevant to understanding pork-barrel politics. In this theoretical framework, politicians (agents) act on behalf of their constituents (principals), but there is a potential conflict of interest between them (Muñoz-Portillo, 2013). Politicians may prioritize projects that benefit them personally or politically over those most beneficial to society. The theory helps explain how monitoring and accountability mechanisms can influence politicians' behavior in allocating public funds. However, the relationship between the agent and the principal is often characterized by information asymmetry, where the agent has more information about their actions and decisions than the principal (Saam, 2007). It can lead to opportunistic actions by agents that may not always be in the principal's best interests. In pork-barrel politics, politicians may allocate funds to projects that benefit themselves more than society.

In the legislative system, pork-barrel politics is closely associated with logrolling, where politicians exchange support for specific projects. Legislative theory explains how politicians build coalitions and reach agreements through compromise and support exchange (Gordon & Simpson, 2018; Hortala-Vallve, 2011). Politicians agree to support each other's projects in logrolling, ensuring that every legislature member gets the desired projects for his or her constituency. Although it can help reach political agreements, logrolling can also result in inefficient resource allocation and reinforce the practice of pork-barrel politics. Logrolling often occurs in legislative bodies where lawmakers agree to support each other's projects for

mutual benefit. This practice allows for consensus but can also lead to budget inflation as each legislature member tries to get a share of the budget for projects in their area. It raises the risk of wasting public funds and inefficient resource allocation (Burnett & Kogan, 2014; Chupp, 2014; Kurosaka, 2020).

Constituency service theory also contributes to highlighting how politicians try to meet the needs and demands of constituents as part of their strategy to gain political support. Constituency services cover various activities, including providing information, resolving administrative problems, and allocating resources to local projects (Arter, 2018). In pork-barrel politics, constituency service manifests in fund or project allocations that benefit the politician's voters (Ames, 1995; Ciftci & Yildirim, 2019). This theory emphasizes the significance of the relationship between politicians and constituents in the decision-making process and resource allocation. Politicians who effectively provide constituency services tend to gain more robust support from their voters, increasing their chances of reelection (Russo, 2011). Constituency service is a legitimate and essential way for politicians to demonstrate their commitment and responsibility to constituents.

Next, network theory highlights the significance of relationships and collaboration between political actors in pork-barrel politics. We can understand how politicians build and leverage their relationships with colleagues, interest groups, and constituents to secure support and resources through network analysis. These networks play an essential role in the legislative process and allocation of funds, as politicians often rely on their relationships to achieve political and economic goals (Giugăl & Costinescu, 2020; Holmes, 2018). Political networks can facilitate cooperation and coordination between various political actors. For example, politicians may work with local government officials, community leaders, and interest groups to support their proposed projects. These networks can also serve as significant information channels, allowing politicians to better understand their constituents' needs and preferences.

Critical and ethical perspectives are also pivotal in understanding and evaluating pork-barrel politics. These perspectives highlight the negative impact of pork-barrel practices on social justice, transparency, and accountability in government. Critics of pork-barrel politics often emphasize how the practice can lead to unfair distribution of resources, corruption, and a decline in public trust in political institutions (Araneta-Alana, 2014; Bertelli & Grose, 2009). From a critical perspective, pork-barrel politics can be considered a form of power abuse by politicians prioritizing their political interests above public needs. The practice can damage public trust in government and reduce the quality of democracy (Mabbett, 2021). Therefore, developing strong oversight and accountability mechanisms is crucial to minimize the potential for abuse and ensure that public resources are allocated fairly and transparently.

The theoretical basis of pork-barrel politics has been strengthened by various empirical studies that examine specific cases in diverse countries. These studies provide evidence of how pork-barrel politics operates in practice and its impact on local economies, voting behavior, and political stability. Analysis of these empirical cases helps confirm or reject the hypotheses generated by the above theories. It provides insight into variations in the practice of pork-barrel politics across different political and economic contexts. By understanding the theoretical foundations underlying pork-barrel politics, we can better analyze and evaluate the practice in various contexts. Continued research and critical analysis are needed to develop policies and mechanisms to minimize the negative impacts of pork-barrel politics and ensure a more equitable and efficient allocation of resources. Through a deep comprehension of the theory and practice of pork-barrel politics, we can improve the quality of government and the overall welfare of society.

Methodology

This article used a bibliometric approach to examine 279 global pieces of literature on pork-barrel politics published from August 1970 to June 2024. It maps the dynamics of previous research and clarifies their progress at the global level while opening up further research directions relevant to these critical issues. The bibliometric approach is convenient for evaluating research developments, identifying research trends, and recognizing the contribution of scientists and institutions to specific fields of study. Its dimensions—including network analysis of keywords, citations, and inter-author collaborations—contribute to the above-mentioned fundamental debates in the introduction by providing a structured perspective on research trends and key actors in the field. Such a systematic approach can help identify patterns of scholarly collaboration and the most influential research themes and highlight gaps in the literature that have not been widely studied.

The primary data source is the Scopus database, one of the largest databases for scientific literature. Scopus provides access to various publications, including journal articles, conference papers, and books from social science disciplines (Firmansyah & Hidayat, 2024; Rifai et al., 2024). Using Scopus, the authors can access globally relevant articles covering multiple aspects of pork-barrel politics in all languages. The overview's results will offer valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in understanding and overcoming the challenges associated with pork-barrel politics.

Data were collected in the following steps: (1) keywords relevant to pork-barrel politics were first determined. These keywords include various terms related to the practice, concept, and phenomenon of pork-barrel politics, such as "pork-barrel," "pork-barrel politics," "constituency service," "political allocation," and so on; (2) a data search was carried out in the Scopus database using predetermined keywords. This review focused on the period from 1970 to 2024 to obtain broad coverage of research developments on the topic; (3) the

literature found through the initial search was then filtered based on its relevance to the research topic. Articles irrelevant or out of the scope of the inclusion criteria, such as publications that do not focus on pork-barrel politics, were excluded from the analysis.

Data analysis was carried out in several stages: (i) the initial stage, descriptive analysis, involved a general description of publication characteristics, including the number of articles published yearly, the geographic distribution of publications, and identifying the most productive journals, authors, and institutions. This descriptive analysis provides an overview of research trends and significant contributions to pork-barrel politics; (ii) network analysis was used to understand the relationships between various actors in pork-barrel politics research. It includes an overview of collaborations between authors, institutions, and countries. This analysis helps identify key research groups and patterns of scientific collaboration on the topic; (iii) content analysis was conducted to identify the prominent themes discussed in the literature on pork-barrel politics. It involves reviewing articles' abstracts, keywords, and titles to identify key topics, research methods, and key findings from various studies. Content analysis provides in-depth insight into the research focus and theoretical developments in the field; (iv) citation analysis is used to evaluate the impact of specific articles and identify the most influential works in pork-barrel politics research. This analysis includes assessing the number of citations received by articles and citation patterns between articles.

The primary software used in this bibliometric study was Bibliometrix RStudio. It is a software package that runs in RStudio and performs comprehensive bibliometric mapping (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Bibliometrix allows the authors to perform various types of analysis, such as descriptive, network, citation, and content. The software is very flexible, can handle large amounts of data, and can produce informative visualizations (Hidayat, 2024). Various steps were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results: (a) clear inclusion and exclusion criteria: clear criteria were established to filter out relevant articles. This ensures that only articles related to pork-barrel politics are analyzed; (b) data rechecking: data collected from Scopus is reverified to guarantee its accuracy and consistency. This includes cross-checking the title, author, journal, and other publication information; (c) use of statistical analysis software: Bibliometrix RStudio is employed to process the compilation of documents exported from Scopus into relevant statistical data.

This review has several limitations that need to be noted. Although Scopus is one of the largest databases, not all pertinent scientific publications may be covered. Therefore, some vital literature may not be included in the analysis. Using it as the sole data source will limit the generalizability of the findings. Such recognition of this limitation will hopefully prompt future research to complement the approach with additional databases, such as Web of Science or Google Scholar, to broaden the review scope and enrich the insights gained.

The limitation of the search time frame from 1970 to 2024 will also affect the generalizability of the findings, as potentially relevant literature from before 1970 is excluded from the analysis. This range allows for a more comprehensive focus on the modern development of pork-barrel politics. However, it risks missing historical perspectives that could provide a deeper understanding of the evolution of the practice in the early post-World War II period. Furthermore, because the data is limited to June 2024, the preliminary findings must be adjusted as new literature emerges. In addition, although bibliometric analysis uses quantitative techniques, the interpretation of results still involves subjective elements from the authors. Therefore, the authors must be careful when drawing conclusions and ensure that interpretations are based on solid data.

Results

This section presents critical information about the data set, annual scholarly production, influential articles, prominent authors, the geographic distribution of research, trending topics, and thematic evolution in pork-barrel politics research. The aim of presenting these data is to offer a comprehensive picture of the research landscape in the field, identify significant contributions from various parties, and help guide future research. The authors then can evaluate developments in these topics over time by understanding trends in scholarly production yearly. Analysis of leading articles and authors helps identify the most influential sources of information and productive collaborations. Additionally, mapping the geographic distribution of research, trending topics, and thematic evolution provides insight into how pork-barrel politics research develops thematically and regionally, which could ultimately facilitate the integration of findings and spur innovation in future studies.

Primary Information About the Data Set

This article examines global literature on pork-barrel politics published from August 1970 to June 2024. Table 1 presents the dataset covering 181 sources, including journals and books. The number of documents analyzed was 279, indicating significant publications. The annual growth rate of publications is 3.93% . This confirms a steady yearly increase in research on pork-barrel politics and reflects researchers' increasing interest and attention towards the topic over time.

The average age of documents is 14.4 years, indicating that the literature in the field is relatively old but still relevant in providing insights and theoretical foundations. The average number of citations per document is 34.66, which shows that each published document receives considerable attention and recognition from the academic community. The number of references used in these documents is 11380. Document content analysis shows the presence of 285 "Keywords Plus (ID)" and 494 "Author's Keywords (DE)." Keywords Plus are keywords generated by an algorithm based on the title and abstract of the article, while

Author's Keywords are keywords provided by the author himself. These keywords show the diversity of topics and subtopics discussed in the literature on pork-barrel politics.

The total number of authors involved in all publications was 406, with 127 authors writing single documents. Most of the research was conducted through collaboration between several authors, although there were also significant contributions from single authors. Documents written by single authors numbered 144, confirming that about half of the publications were the work of individuals. The average number of authors per document was 1.68, indicating collaboration in most studies. The percentage of international collaboration is 15.05%, which shows the contribution and cooperation of researchers in various countries in research on pork-barrel politics. The types of documents analyzed varied, with the majority being journal articles (245 documents). Additionally, there are four books, 11 book chapters, one conference paper, one editorial, one letter, two notes, 13 reviews, and one short survey. This variety of document types reflects the diverse approaches used in pork-barrel politics research, from in-depth analyses in journal articles to general views in short surveys and reviews.

Global research on pork-barrel politics is experiencing stable growth and has received significant attention in the academic community. The topic is highly complex and diverse, with many documents and keywords. Collaboration between authors also plays an essential role in enriching research in this field nationally and internationally. Various published documents demonstrate multiple approaches and perspectives employed by previous researchers in studying pork-barrel politics, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Table 1 Primary Information About the Data Set

Description	Results
Timespan	August 1970–June 2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)	181
Documents	279
Annual Growth Rate %	3.93
Document Average Age	14.4
Average citations per doc	34.66
References	11380
Keywords Plus	285

Table 1 Primary Information About the Data Set (continued)

Description	Results
Author's Keywords	494
Authors	406
Authors of single-authored docs	127
Single-authored docs	144
Co-Authors per Doc	1.68
International co-authorships %	15.05

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

Annual Scientific Production

As shown in Figure 1, scientific production on pork-barrel politics from 1970 to 2024 shows interesting fluctuations and reflects its research dynamics. In the early period (1970-1989), the number of articles published was small and did not show a significant increasing trend. The years 1970 and 1971 each recorded only one article. There were no publications from 1972 to 1974. From 1975 to 1989, articles varied from 0 to 2 per year. This fluctuation may be caused by the lack of attention and research funding in that period or pork-barrel politics, which had yet to become the main focus of political studies.

There was slow growth from 1990 to 1999, whereas in the early 1990s, a more consistent increase was seen. In 1991, 3 articles were published, which continued to increase until it peaked in 1999 with nine articles. This growth shows the beginning of increasing research interest in the issue of pork-barrel politics due to increasing awareness of the importance of transparency and accountability in politics. Scientific production shows a more significant increase when entering the 21st century. From 2000 to 2007, the number of articles ranged from 2 to 8 per year, with a peak of ten articles in 2008. In the following decades, scientific production continued to increase. 2010 and 2013 recorded 10 and 11 articles, respectively, with the most significant spike occurring in 2014 with 18 articles. The 2015 to 2024 period also showed high and consistent production, with the highest figure in 2021 reaching 17 articles. This trend reflects the scientific community's growing attention to the issue of pork-barrel politics, fueled by increased data access, better analytical technologies, and a global push to improve governance.

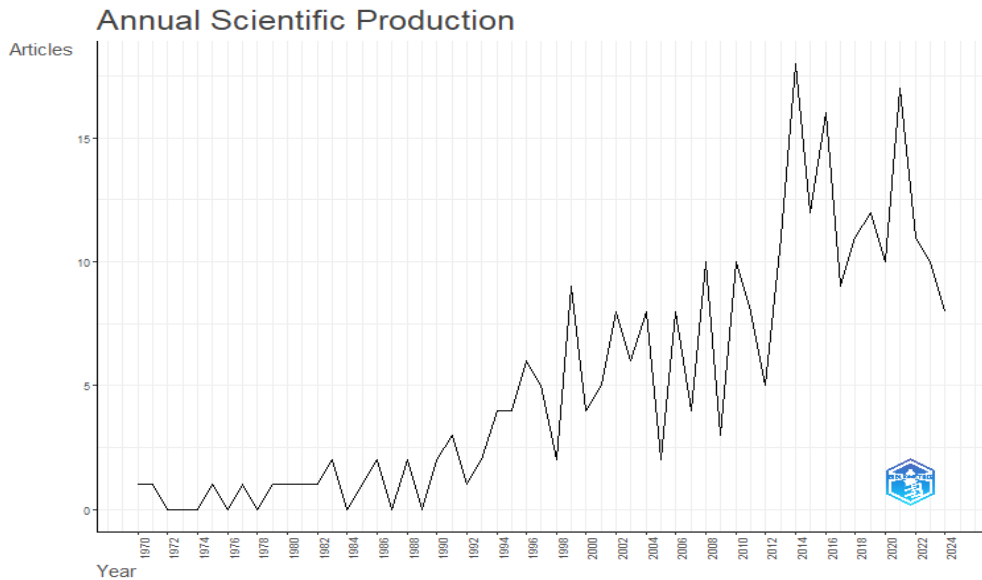


Figure 1 Annual Scientific Production (1970–2024)

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

Influential Articles

Out of the 279 documents available in the Scopus database, 232 have been cited by other works. The number of citations for each literature varies, ranging from 1 to 934. This confirms how well-known and accepted these prior studies are in pork-barrel politics. In addition, this provides an idea of how widespread the impact and importance of those research are in the scientific literature. Table 2 displays the ten most cited documents on an international scale from 1970 to 2024. The total number of citations (TC) for each piece of literature varies, with some articles receiving many citations, such as the work of Weingast et al. in 1981, which received 934 TC.

The table also shows TC per year and normalized TC, providing a comprehensive understanding of the importance and influence of each work. For example, although the article by Weingast et al. has a high TC count, a book by Stokes et al. (2013) had more TC per year, meaning the book had a more significant impact in a shorter time. Normalized TC also gives readers an idea of how influential a paper is in the scientific literature.

Table 2 Top 10 Most Global Cited Documents (1970–2024)

Document	TC	TC per Year	Normalized TC
Weingast et al. (1981) "Article"	934	21.2272727272727	1
Stokes et al. (2013) "Book"	759	63.25	6.98661087866109
Dixit & Londregan (1996) "Article"	721	24.8620689655172	4.03921568627451
Cox & McCubbins (1986) "Article"	642	16.4615384615385	1.68062827225131
Lizzeri & Persico (2001) "Article"	379	15.7916666666667	3.58223062381853
Stratmann & Baur (2002) "Article"	264	11.4782608695652	3.39549839228296
Golden & Min (2013) "Article"	252	21	2.31966527196653
Levitt & Snyder (1997) "Article"	231	8.25	2.83088235294118
Stein & Bickers (1994) "Article"	196	6.32258064516129	3.29411764705882
Dixit & Londregan (1998) "Article"	190	7.03703703703704	2

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

Leading Authors

Four hundred and six authors worked on a study on pork-barrel politics issues from 1970 to 2024, and Figure 2 presents a list of the ten most productive scholars. In the world of research, there are various ways to measure the influence and contribution of researchers. One way is to look at the number of articles that have been published and how their contribution is measured through fractionated articles. Peter Spáč is the most prolific researcher, with eight articles as sole author and coauthor. The many articles confirm that Spáč is very active in his research field. With a fractionated article figure of 5,283, Spáč publishes articles frequently and has significantly contributed to each of these publications. He is actively involved and holds many leading roles in various collaborative research. His intensive presence over seven years of studies (2015 to 2022) demonstrates the significant academic interest of political scholars, especially in Eastern Europe, where the practices of pork-barrel politics were highly prevalent.

On the other hand, Yannis Psycharis, who has four articles as first author and coauthor, with a fractional number of 1.25, shows a different pattern. Although the number of articles is only half that of Spáč, the fractional number is lower, indicating that his contributions to each article are more specific or within a larger collaborative team. It indicates that Psycharis collaborates more often on large projects where his contribution, although important, is not too dominant. Andrés Rodríguez-Pose has also published four articles with a fractional figure of 1.5. He predominantly partners with Psycharis to produce these articles. This confirms that his contribution to each article is quite significant. With these figures, it can be assumed that Rodríguez-Pose often acts as one of the prominent authors while also having a significant contribution to each research.

Another researcher, Edward Aspinall, with three articles and a fractional number of 2.5, shows intensive involvement in the study of pork-barrel politics. Compared to the number of articles, the high fractional figure suggests that Aspinall has played a significant role in each publication. This intensive involvement indicates that his contribution to the research is significant and has a major influence on the direction and results of the research. Kenneth N. Bickers also has three articles but with a fractional number of 1.5. This indicates moderate involvement in research with significant but not predominant contributions in every publication.

David Denemark and Diana Evans, each with three documents and a fractional figure of 3, show a complete and dominant involvement profile in each publication. This indicates that they often act as lead authors or have a significant role in their research. A fractional number equal to the number of articles indicates complete dominance in their contributions. Meanwhile, with three articles and a fractional number of 2, Jeffrey Lazarus shows a significant but not dominant contribution in each publication. These figures indicate that Lazarus plays an essential role in research but collaborates more often with teams where his role is necessary but only sometimes primary.

Felipe Livert, who has three articles with a fractional figure of 1.167, shows lower engagement in each publication. Nonetheless, his contributions remain essential, especially in more collaborative research contexts or with larger teams. Lastly, Carlos Pereira has three articles, with a fractional figure of 1.133, confirming the same condition with Livert. Lower fractional figures indicate that Liver contributed to larger teams or projects, spreading his contributions widely among researchers.

These data reveal variations in how researchers contribute to scientific articles. Some researchers demonstrate intensive and dominant involvement, while others collaborate more frequently in larger teams with more dispersed contributions. Each plays a vital role in advancing science through their diverse contributions, showing how dynamic and complex the research world is.

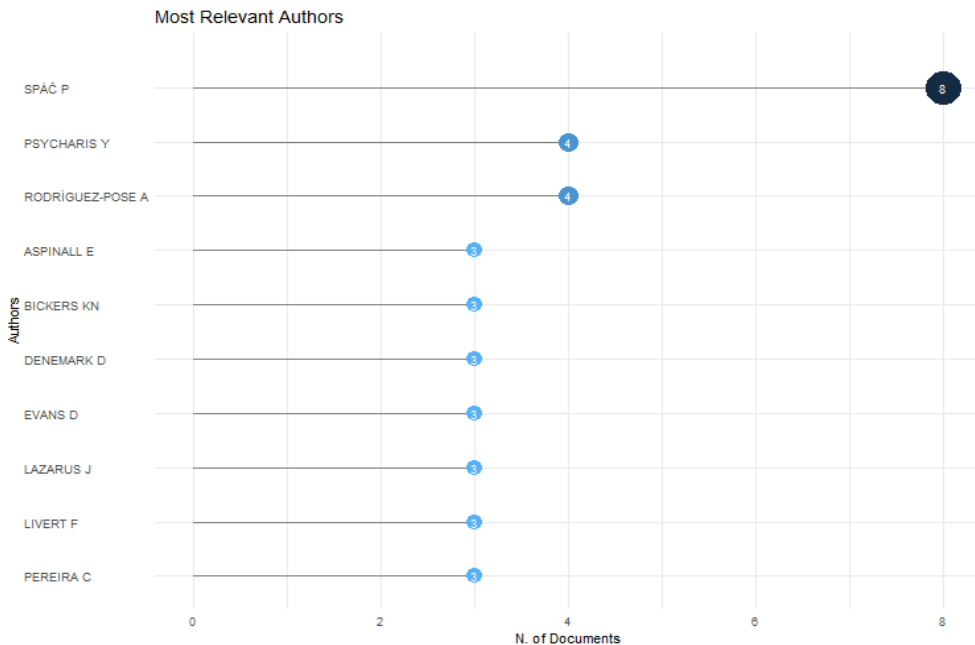


Figure 2 Top Ten Most Productive Scholars (1970 to 2024)

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

Geographic Distribution of Research

Research on pork-barrel politics is not just limited to one or two countries but has become popular globally. A total of forty-five countries contributed to this research from 1970 to 2024. Countries from various continents, such as the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Oceania, have all contributed to the academic literature in this area. This reflects the significance of the issue of pork-barrel politics as a phenomenon that affects many countries worldwide and shows the collective efforts of the international academic community in analyzing political and economic dynamics related to budget allocations. Contributions from various countries enrich the academic literature with diverse perspectives and findings, helping to build a more comprehensive understanding of pork-barrel politics at the global level.

The USA has the most publications, with 186 articles. This confirms that the USA is the main center for research on pork-barrel politics, reflecting this country's great academic interest and attention. Its immense contribution relates to the many academic institutions and research resources available. The UK is in second place with 29 publications, indicating the country's important role in academic research on pork-barrel politics. Australia and Brazil each contributed 17 publications, indicating significant interest in these two countries. Germany has 13 publications, while the Czech Republic has ten publications demonstrating their active research involvement. Countries such as Greece, Norway, Spain, China, Italy,

Chile, and Japan have a lower frequency but still show significant contributions, with more than five publications each.

Figure 3 presents production data over time for the five leading countries. The geographic distribution of research on pork-barrel politics shows the active involvement of various countries from 1970 to 2024. In 1970, the USA had only one article, but this number increased significantly each year, reaching a peak in 2024 with 186 articles. This consistent increase shows academics' great interest and attention in the USA towards the issue of pork-barrel politics. This trend reflects how attention to this issue has grown over time, with significant increases seen in 1994 with 19 articles, 1999 with 40 articles, 2011 with 106 articles, and 2020 with 162 articles.

The UK also shows a steady increase in publications because the issue is gaining attention among British academics. Although starting with one article in 1979, the amount increased to 29 articles in 2024. Significant development was seen in 2004, with 12 articles, and a continuous increase to 27 articles in 2023. Australia began contributing to this research in 2000 with a single article. The number of publications continues to increase, reaching 17 articles in 2024. Australia shows a spike in publications in specific years, such as 2014 with four articles and 2022 with 14 articles. Interest in research on pork-barrel politics in Australia has multiplied in recent years.

Germany began contributing to the research in 2002 with one article, and the number of publications increased until it reached 13 articles in 2024. This increase shows that although Germany started late in this research, academic interest continues to grow. Brazil began actively contributing in 2004 with six articles, and this number remained stable for several years before increasing to 17 articles in 2024. Significant spikes occurred in years such as 2017, with nine articles, and 2018, with 12 articles.

Overall, the United States remains a consistent leader in the number of publications, reflecting the amount of academic attention this country pays to the issue of pork-barrel politics. Other countries, such as the UK, Australia, Germany, and Brazil, also show a steady increase in contributions, indicating that research on pork-barrel politics continues to grow and become more prominent in various parts of the world.

The rise in academic attention to pork-barrel politics across countries can be attributed to increased access to data, advances in analytical technologies, and awareness of the significance of transparency in government. In addition, variations in socio-political contexts across countries, such as political systems, political cultures, and voter preferences, play an essential role in understanding and implementing its practices. For example, in countries with more centralized systems, such as Russia and China, budget allocation tends to be dominated by central political elites; in contrast, in decentralized countries, such as

India and Brazil, local influence is more visible in budgetary decision-making. Similarly, these countries' local political norms and voter preferences also shape pork-barrel politics.

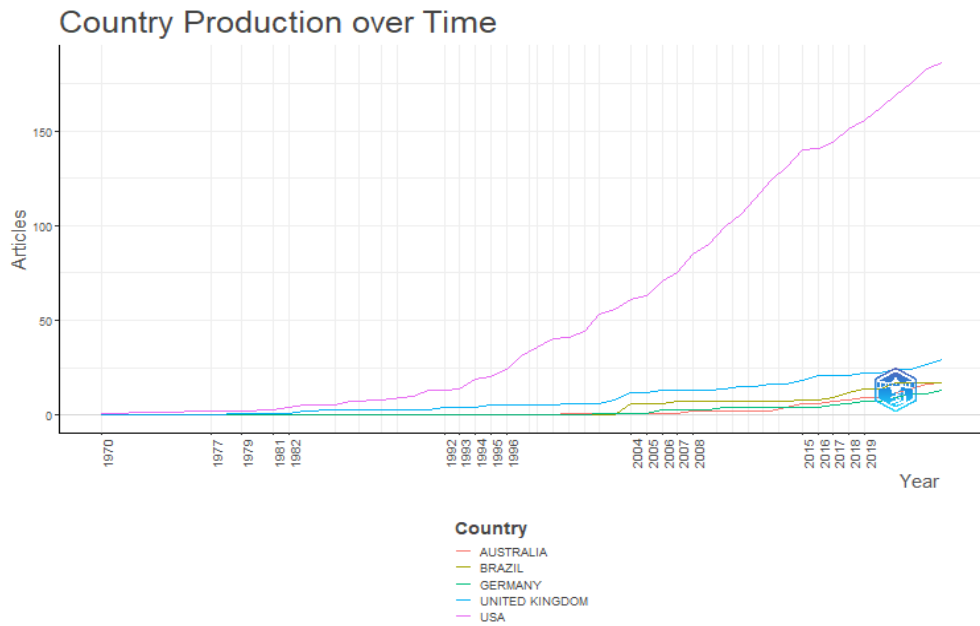


Figure 3 Country Production Over Time (1970–2024)

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

Trend Topics and Thematic Evolution

Table 3 presents trend data for several topics, their frequency of appearance, and annual distribution to understand how specific topics emerged and developed in research over a certain period.

Table 3 Trend Topics (1970–2024)

Term	Frequency	Year (Q1)	Year (Median)	Year (Q3)
politics	7	2005	2011	2012
pork barrel spending	6	2008	2012	2016
congress	7	2010	2014	2015
pork barrel	33	2012	2015	2021
earmarks	9	2012	2015	2022
pork barrel politics	19	2014	2017	2021
pork-barrel politics	16	2014	2017	2020
pork-barrel	8	2016	2017	2020
distributive politics	26	2015	2018	2021

Table 3 Trend Topics (1970–2024) (continued)

Term	Frequency	Year (Q1)	Year (Median)	Year (Q3)
corruption	6	2014	2018	2020
political economy	6	2016	2018	2022
elections	17	2016	2019	2021
clientelism	11	2016	2020	2022

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

The topic "politics" began to show its relevance in 2005, with the frequency of occurrence reaching its peak in 2011 and remaining a concern until 2012. During this period, discussions and research on politics experienced a significant increase, possibly triggered by global political events. Subsequently, "pork barrel spending" appeared in the literature in 2008 and continued to increase until it peaked in 2012. This topic remained a significant concern until 2016. The growing concerns regarding budget spending directed at special interests have become a central issue in public policy debates.

Meanwhile, the topic of "congress" began to receive attention in 2010. Its occurrence frequency increased until it peaked in 2014 and remained in focus until the following year, 2015. This indicates an intensive research period focusing on legislative bodies related to changes or significant political challenges. The topic "pork barrel" stands out as having the highest frequency of occurrence among all the analyzed topics. First appearing in 2012, this topic remains highly relevant until 2021. This signals continued attention to the controversial budget allocation practice, often criticized as inefficient and corruptive.

"Earmarks" also began appearing in 2012 and peaked in 2015, with continued relevance into 2022. Although the practice of earmarking is often viewed negatively, the topic remains an integral part of budget policy discussions. The "pork barrel politics" topic began to gain attention in 2012 and peaked in 2016, with relevance continuing into 2021. Likewise, "pork-barrel politics" emerged in 2014, peaked in 2017, and remained relevant into 2020. These variations in terminology show that although the terms used may differ, the topic's essence remains the same.

"Pork-barrel" as a separate topic emerged in 2016, with peak frequency in 2017 and relevance through 2020. This topic and other related variations of the term indicate a strong focus on budget distribution issues in a political context. "Distributive politics" began to gain attention in 2016, peaked in 2018, and remained relevant into 2021. It reflects continued interest in studying how political and economic resources are distributed among different groups and regions.

The topic of "corruption" emerged in 2014, peaking in 2018, and remained a concern until 2020. The issue of corruption remains a significant focus in political and

economic research, reflecting global concerns about the impact of corruption on governance and development. "Political economy" began to appear in the literature in 2016, reached its peak in 2018, and its relevance continued into 2022. This topic reflects studies that focus on the relationship between politics and economics and how the two influence each other in public policy and governance.

"Elections" began gaining attention in 2016, peaked in 2019, and remained relevant into 2021. This phenomenon reflects continued interest in the electoral process and its political dynamics. Finally, "clientelism" emerged in 2016, peaked in 2020, and remained a concern through 2022. The practice of clientelism, in which politicians provide benefits to specific individuals or groups in exchange for political support, remains an essential topic in political research.

These data show that topics such as "pork barrel," "distributive politics," and "elections" occur frequently and have remained relevant over the years. Topics such as "political economy" and "clientelism," despite their lower frequency, still show continued relevance in the data from the most recent year. This demonstrates a growing research trend in politics and economics, focusing on the issue of political distribution and its influence in various contexts.

The thematic evolution analysis results in Figure 4 reflect the trail of shifts in terminology and topics related to distributive politics and pork barrel from 1970 to 2024. In this context, the analysis focuses on how these topics changed and developed during two different periods, namely 1970 to 2013 and 2014 to 2024, relying on various metrics such as weighted increase, increase index, occurrence, and stability.

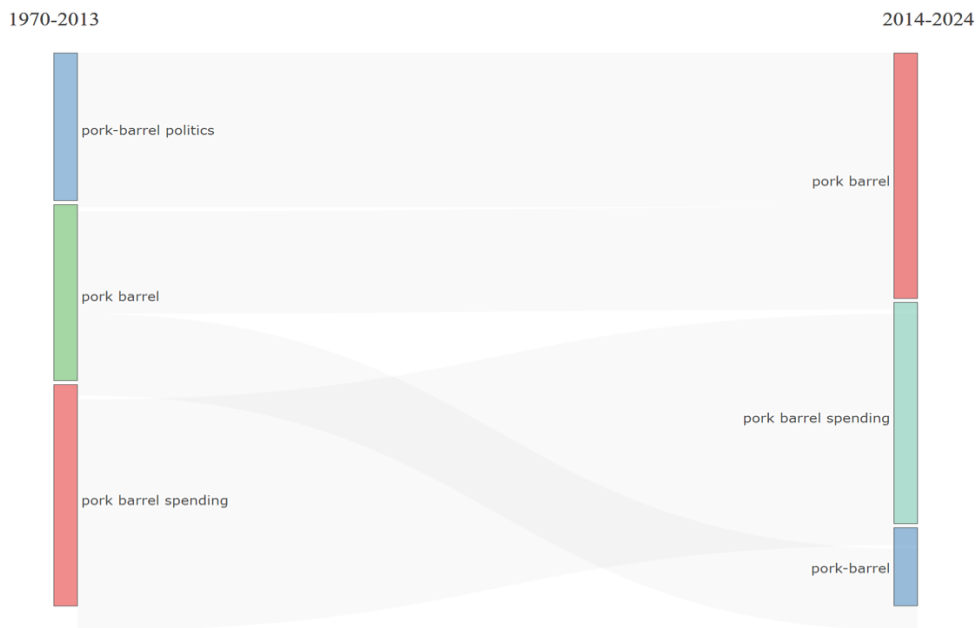


Figure 4 Thematic Evolution (1970–2024)

Source: Biblioshiny using RStudio

The "pork barrel" theme was prominent from 1970 to 2013 and continued to remain relevant between 2014 and 2024. This theme includes keywords such as "pork barrel," "pork barrel politics," and "distributive politics." With an "Inc_Weighted" of 0.441860465 and an "Inc_index" of 0.083333333, it can be concluded that there has been an increase in the weight and index of this theme, although the stability is low with a value of 0.023809524. Although this theme remains essential, significant variations or changes exist in discussing this topic between the two periods.

Additionally, a change from "pork barrel" to "pork-barrel," containing keywords like "congress" and "earmarks," has occurred. This theme has an "Inc_Weighted" of 0.352941176 and an "Inc_index" of 0.333333333, showing a significant increase, even though the number of occurrences is only three times. The stability of this theme is also relatively low, namely 0.071428571, indicating that although there is an increase in the weight and index, discussions on this topic experience variation or changes over different periods.

The "pork barrel spending" theme shows very high stability with a "Stability" value of 1, indicating no change in using this keyword between the two periods. With "Inc_Weighted" and "Inc_index" values of 1 each and appearing three times, this topic shows that discussion or research regarding "pork barrel spending" has remained consistent from 1970 to 2024.

This topic remains of concern, consistent, and essential without significant changes in the manner or context of discussion.

In contrast, "pork-barrel politics" experienced more dynamic changes with an "Inc_Weighted" of 0.666666667 and an "Inc_index" of 0.5. This theme showed a significant increase in usage, indicating greater attention to this topic recently. However, with a "Stability" value of 0.03125, the discussion regarding "pork-barrel politics" has experienced quite a lot of variation or change, which indicates an adaptation or change in focus in research or discussion on this topic.

In summary, this analysis provides deep insight into how topics related to pork-barrel politics have evolved and adapted over time. High stability in themes such as "pork barrel spending" indicates consistency in academic discussions or research. On the other hand, variations and changes in themes such as "pork-barrel politics" and "pork barrel" indicate new dynamics and developments in research focus and priorities. These data reflect changes in priorities and discussion contexts that reflect broader thematic evolution in pork-barrel politics.

Discussion

This section presents a comprehensive overview of the foremost research streams in prior studies in pork-barrel politics, country-based issues, antecedents and consequences of pork-barrel politics, the benefits of pork-barrel politics, logrolling and earmarking mechanisms for pork-barrel projects, intensive application of logrolling and earmarking ahead of the elections, and future research directions. By exploring these various aspects in depth, the authors aim to present a comprehensive picture of how research in pork-barrel politics has developed over time and across multiple geographic contexts. This review also helps identify gaps in the current literature and offers insight into future research directions to deepen our understanding of the relationship dynamics between legislators and constituents.

Foremost Research Streams in Prior Studies

Judging from the keyword network, trend topics, and thematic evolution of 279 previous publications, the authors identify six dominant streams of pork-barrel politics research that target the domains of general studies and theoretical approaches, historical perspectives, country-specific case studies, sector-specific studies, or international and comparative politics, where various political, economic and social aspects interact with each other.

The first stream, *distributive politics and pork barrel*, refers to how politicians distribute government resources to their constituencies to gain political support. It often involves allocating budgets for infrastructure projects or public services that directly benefit their constituents. In the pork-barrel context, politicians secure funding for projects that often do not have broad economic benefits but are highly valued by local communities (Fiva &

Halse, 2016; Knight, 2004; Manton, 2016; Papp, 2019; Spáč, 2016a; Zaremba, 2016). Research in this area explores how politicians use these distributions to maximize their reelection chances and how these distributions influence the fairness and efficiency of public resource allocation.

The second stream, *legislative behavior in decision-making*, examines how legislative members behave in lawmaking and how they use logrolling and earmarking mechanisms in determining the allocation of special funds for specific projects, often without going through the usual approval process. This study explores the power dynamics within legislative committees, the negotiation tactics used to secure support for earmarks, and their impact on government transparency and accountability (Burnett & Kogan, 2014; Gordin, 2010; Kim & Kim, 2023; Kok et al., 2022; McCambly & Aguilar-Smith, 2024; McKay & Lazarus, 2023). Logrolling and earmarking are often criticized for promoting corrupt practices and nepotism. However, they are also defended as ways to ensure that local needs are considered in the national policymaking process.

The third stream, *electoral dynamics and political accountability*, explores the relationship between general elections and political accountability. It includes how voters assess the performance of their representatives based on resource allocation and implementation of public projects, as well as how electoral pressures influence politicians' budget allocation decisions (Belmar et al., 2024; Braidwood, 2015; Clegg & Davies, 2024; Denemark, 2014; Lattmann, 2024; Ono, 2015; Rodríguez-Pose et al., 2016; Spáč, 2016b; Suiter & O'Malley, 2014; Ulubaşoğlu & Tülümce, 2024). Studies in this area examine whether competitive elections increase government accountability and how electoral mechanisms, such as campaign financing and campaign expenditure regulations, affect fairness and transparency in the political process.

The fourth stream, *corruption and clientelism*, examines the practices of corruption and clientelism in the political context of resource distribution. Corruption refers to the abuse of public power for private gain. At the same time, clientelism is a patron-client relationship in which public resources are distributed to specific individuals or groups for political support. Research in this area explores how corruption and clientelism occur, the factors that influence them, and their impact on government effectiveness and legitimacy. It also includes studying how political and institutional systems can strengthen or reduce these practices (Aspinall, 2015; Baião et al., 2019; Espiritu, 2014; Kasdin, 2010; Piattoni & Giglioli, 2020; Purwaningsih & Widodo, 2020; Rose-Ackerman, 2008; Tormos-Aponte et al., 2022; Zaremba, 2016).

The fifth stream, *public spending and infrastructure*, examines how public funds are used to develop infrastructure and public services. The focus is on budget allocations, who benefits from this spending, and how this affects economic growth and social welfare. In

pork-barrel politics, attention is paid to how infrastructure projects are often selected based on political considerations rather than economic or technical needs. This study explores the impact of public spending on local development, economic equality, and the efficient use of public resources (Alizadeh & Farid, 2017; Cadot et al., 2006; Curto-Grau et al., 2012; Golden & Picci, 2008; Hanretty, 2021; Kunz & O'Leary, 2012; Leigh & McAllister, 2023).

The sixth research stream, *birthplace favoritism and identity-based clientelism*, focuses on how politicians allocate funds and resources disproportionately only to their region of origin or certain identity groups that they consider their primary support base. Birthplace favoritism refers to the tendency of politicians to prioritize development and investment projects in their areas of birth or regions to which they have personal attachments (Baskaran & da Fonseca, 2021; M. Golden & Min, 2013; Gonschorek, 2021; Ingall & Crisp, 2001; Khalil et al., 2021; Mattos et al., 2021). On the other hand, identity-based clientelism is a strategy in which politicians direct economic benefits or public projects to certain identity groups, such as ethnic, religious, or social groups, to secure political support. This practice not only creates inequities in the distribution of resources but also strengthens identity-based political loyalties, which can lead to greater socio-political polarization (Aspinall, 2015; Kang, 2015; Magnani, 2017). Research in this stream shows how politicians' social dynamics and personal identities influence budget allocation decisions and development projects, as well as their impact on social cohesion and fairness of economic distribution.

Country-Based Issues

Prior studies on pork-barrel politics show how the various contexts influence the practice of this phenomenon. With different backgrounds, as reflected in country-based issues detected by the authors through their appearance in author keywords, titles, and content of all relevant literature, these research took locus on forty-one countries, both with authoritarian and democratic political systems (Albania, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, UK, Uruguay, and the USA) that provided unique insights into how public budget allocation has been used as a political tool. Socio-political, economic, and institutional factors that differ in each country play an essential role in shaping these practices in specific periods.

Variations in the socio-political context in various countries, such as the structure of political institutions, power dynamics, political culture, and voter preferences, will significantly influence how public funds are distributed. Central political elites often dominate funding allocation decisions in countries with highly centralized political systems, such as Russia and China (Gao et al., 2021; Treisman, 1996; Turovsky & Gaivoronsky, 2017). In contrast, in

countries with solid decentralization, such as India and Brazil, local and regional influences are more prominent in this process. Both countries have experienced a single transition from more centralized regimes to regimes with greater political, administrative, or economic power devolution to local governments (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006).

Political culture is also very influential in shaping pork-barrel practices. In certain countries, such as Japan, a political culture prioritizing collective interests can reduce the prevalence of pork-barrel politics (Noble, 2010). In contrast, in other places, such as the Philippines, political cultures tend to be individualistic or patron-client, and this practice tends to be more prominent (Holmes, 2018). Power dynamics, including electoral competition and coalition strategies, are essential. Politicians often use the pork barrel to secure electoral support by allocating public funds to projects that benefit their constituents. This strategy can vary depending on the political system and existing power structures.

Economic factors indisputably play an essential role in pork-barrel politics. Economic conditions greatly influence budget allocations and public policy strategies in each country. In a stable and economically prosperous country like Germany, politicians have more freedom to distribute public funds to projects that bring political benefits (Pennock, 1970). In contrast, in challenging economic conditions such as Ireland, public funds are prioritized for immediate needs, although political pressure to maintain voter support remains (Manton, 2016).

The institutional rules in each country also greatly influence the understanding and practice of pork-barrel politics. Research shows that local and national political dynamics can influence public resources distribution. Countries with different government systems will have different approaches to budget allocation. In countries with a parliamentary system like the UK, the allocation of funds is more influenced by dynamics between parties and coalitions (Mabbett, 2021). In contrast, the executive power has greater control in countries with a presidential system, such as Chile (Livert et al., 2024).

Differences in institutional rules and legislative structures will also lead to variations in how pork-barrel politics is conducted and understood. For example, in countries with different electoral systems, practices may vary in how public projects are distributed and the response of political actors to existing incentives and pressures. In some cases, such as in Argentina, politicians use the allocation of public funds to strengthen their political base by providing direct benefits to their constituents (Gordin, 2010). Meanwhile, in other countries, this allocation is used as a tool to punish political opponents or as a reward for political support (McMichael, 2018).

Cross-country studies and comparative political systems provide valuable insights into how varying contexts shape and influence the allocation of public resources through pork-barrel politics. Thus, a scientific understanding of pork-barrel politics must be distinct

from an in-depth analysis of a society's political power, institutional structures, and economic dynamics. To understand and manage this practice effectively, it is necessary to consider the specific context of each country.

The following presents a lengthy review of the dynamics of pork-barrel politics research in the United States from 1970 to 2024 to justify the influence of socio-political, economic, and cultural factors on the development of varied understanding of this phenomenon, which has also inspired other researchers in the remaining 40 countries in the world to broaden the focus of each study. 74 of the 279 identified pieces of literature (26.52%) have examined the phenomenon of pork-barrel politics in the United States, both in general and based on case studies in certain states or regions such as New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and West Virginia. In this regard, pork-barrel politics research in the United States has produced or applied several leading theories, which domestic and foreign researchers will later use to explore this issue further. Apart from that, a series of existing studies also reflect the development of specific trends in the politics of budget distribution over time.

One of the main theories that has emerged is resource distribution theory, which states that legislators will prioritize the distribution of public spending to their constituents to maximize their chances of reelection. Legislators direct federal funds to their constituencies to demonstrate tangible achievements that may increase constituent popularity and trust. Levitt & Snyder (1997) find that federal spending can increase the reelection of Democratic legislators, so this strategy effectively supports those framed campaigns. Logrolling theory emphasizes that legislators will collaborate with fellow legislators to support each other's projects through vote trading. This practice involves legislators forming coalitions by promising each other support for specific projects in exchange for similar support. Stratmann (1995) finds that logrolling contributes to pork-barrel spending, with legislators who participate in vote trading tending to obtain more funding allocations for their districts.

Electoral mobilization theory has also emerged, asserting that pork-barrel spending increases voter participation and electoral support. These expenditures are designed to benefit constituents and motivate them to participate in elections directly. Ansolabehere & Snyder (2006) show that pork-barrel spending increases voter participation, indicating that legislators use this spending as a political tool to ensure more outstanding electoral support. In addition, partisan theory has emerged, which underlines that partisan control of the government influences the distribution of public funds according to the political interests of the ruling party. Pork-barrel spending often reflects the priorities and policies of the ruling party, with that party tending to manipulate the distribution of funds to favor areas that provide the most robust voter support. Bickers & Stein (2000) find that Republican control of

Congress produces more contingent liability obligations that suit the interests of Republican representatives.

Finally, there is seniority theory, which emphasizes that legislators with seniority on key committees tend to get more pork-barrel spending for their districts. Seniority provides greater access to resources and influence in the budget process, allowing more senior legislators to secure projects that benefit their constituents. Boyle & Matheson's (2009) study shows that members of Congress with more influence on budget committees tend to obtain more pork-barrel allocations for their districts.

Regarding research trends, the evolution of the pork barrel shows that the focus of spending has shifted from traditional public works projects to research and national security areas. Brainard & Borrego (2003) note a steady increase in earmark allocations at colleges and universities, primarily associated with increased spending on homeland security and anti-terrorism, reflecting the adaptation of pork-barrel spending to contemporary needs. The use of earmarks has increased as a means of distributing federal funds. Earmarks allow legislators to direct funds to specific projects to maximize electoral gains and efficiently allocate public funds. Gordon & Simpson (2018) state that earmarks serve as an effective pork-barrel tool, supporting the hypothesis that earmarks play a vital role in the distribution of federal spending (Engstrom & Vanberg, 2010).

Another trend, partisan influence, emphasizes that partisan control influences the distribution of federal funds. Changes in government control often led to changes in the distribution of funds according to the policies of the newly ruling party. Ansolabehere & Snyder (2006) show that ruling parties tend to manipulate the distribution of funds to favor regions that provide the most substantial voter support. The next trend is that the role of committees in budget distribution is very significant, with Congressional committees and subcommittees playing critical roles in allocating federal funds. Legislators with access to crucial committees have more significant influence in directing pork-barrel spending to their districts. Boyle & Matheson (2009) find that members of Congress across states in the USA with more influence on budget committees tend to obtain more pork-barrel allocations.

The electoral effect of pork-barrel spending significantly affects legislators' reelection chances. This spending is a political tool to influence voters and gain electoral support. Klingensmith (2019) confirms that pork-barrel spending can be used to boost fundraising, and the additional campaign funds are then used to increase the likelihood of reelection of members of the United States Congress. The latest trend, budget reform, faces the challenge of designing effective mechanisms to limit pork-barrel spending. Several reforms, such as item-by-item vetoes and balanced budget amendments, have been proposed to control unnecessary spending. Gabel & Hager (2000) find that procedural obstacles can encourage

logrolling practices that increase pork-barrel spending, highlighting the complexity of designing effective budget reform.

Thus, research on pork-barrel politics in the United States reflects critical theories that have been generated or applied and shows emerging trends in the distribution of budgets and political influence.

Antecedents and Consequences of Pork-Barrel Politics

The study of pork-barrel politics has been an important topic in political science, economics, and public policy for decades. A growing body of literature shows a variety of perspectives regarding the motivations, impacts, and mechanisms underlying inefficient budget distribution for particular political interests. The literature on pork-barrel politics shows that despite differences in methodology and focus, there is broad consensus that this practice can lead to inefficient resource allocation and significant economic costs (DeRossi & Inman, 1999; Karakas, 2017; Klingensmith, 2014; Shepsle & Weingast, 1981; Weingast et al., 1981).

Democratic systems in many countries are based on the principles of popular representation, where politicians are elected to voice and fulfill the interests of their constituents. However, practices such as pork-barrel politics demonstrate structural weaknesses that allow politicians to prioritize the interests of particular individuals and groups above the broader public interest. These weaknesses highlight fundamental problems in democratic accountability mechanisms, opening room for criticism and raising questions about the effectiveness of the democratic system itself.

Pork-barrel politics refers to the practice of budget allocation by politicians for specific projects in their constituencies, with the primary goal of gaining political support and winning reelection rather than the overall public interest. These projects are often economically inefficient and must align with strategic needs or national development priorities. As a reflection of structural weaknesses in a democratic system, pork-barrel politics arises due to (1) misalignment of politicians' political incentives with the public interest, (2) lack of effective accountability mechanisms, (3) electoral system design, (4) absence of effective oversight, and (5) the influence of special interests and lobbying.

In democratic systems, politicians are elected by local constituencies and have strong incentives to prioritize short-term interests that can increase their popularity and help achieve reelection. Weingast et al. (1981) emphasize that the geographic basis of political representation leads to inefficient distribution of benefits and costs because legislators tend to support projects that directly benefit their constituents even though those projects may need to be more efficient and necessary. In addition, accountability mechanisms in democratic systems are often not strong enough to prevent abuse of power by politicians. Miners (1971) underscores that parliamentarians in many democracies are not constitutionally bound to fulfill their campaign promises, allowing for opportunistic behavior

that reinforces pork-barrel practices. Politicians can prioritize personal or particular group interests without meaningful consequences and solid accountability.

Electoral system design also plays a vital role in encouraging pork-barrel politics. Lancaster (1986) finds that electoral systems with single-member districts tend to engage in more pork-barrel practices than those with multi-member districts. This system encourages politicians to focus on local interests and projects that can provide direct electoral benefits. Oversight of public funds is also often weak, allowing politicians to use public funds for unnecessary projects. Epstein (1997) emphasizes that pork-barrel preferences leave almost the entire Pareto set uncovered in social choice theory. It suggests that ineffective oversight allows politicians to make inefficient and unfair decisions. Another antecedent is that special interests and lobbying groups often influence political decisions, encouraging politicians to support pork-barrel projects that benefit such groups. Sutter (1999) explores the motives behind politicians' support of pork-barrel projects, including personal financial gain and non-financial personal gain, often influenced by pressure from lobbying groups.

Consequently, pork-barrel politics will have several negative impacts in the form of economic inefficiency, social injustice, erosion of public trust, and rampant corruption. Pork-barrel politics leads to inefficient resource allocation, directing public funds to projects that do not provide significant economic benefits. Cox & McCubbins (1986) point out that although these projects benefit specific constituencies, they often need to be more economically efficient and consistent with national development priorities. Unequal budget distribution can exacerbate social injustice, with certain regions receiving more benefits than others. Banerjee & Somanathan (2007) and Lee (2018) show that ethnic diversity can influence the allocation of public goods, with minority voters often receiving fewer development projects. When the public realizes that politicians focus more on projects that benefit them politically than on the public interest, trust in democratic institutions can erode. That can reduce political participation and exacerbate political apathy among citizens.

Additionally, pork-barrel practices are often linked to corruption, where politicians use their positions to gain personal gain. Del Rossi (1995) points out that although pork-barrel spending is often seen as economically irrational, economic factors such as development and industrialization are essential in determining water resource spending, which can be a vehicle for corrupt practices.

Structural weaknesses in democratic systems that allow politicians to prioritize personal interests through pork-barrel politics give rise to significant criticism of existing accountability mechanisms. These criticisms cover several essential aspects: lack of transparency, weak monitoring mechanisms, absence of an effective sanctions system, and limited role of the media.

The lack of transparency in the decision-making process and budget allocation makes it difficult for the public to monitor and assess politicians' actions. Low transparency opens up opportunities for abuse of power and corrupt practices (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009). Additionally, oversight institutions that are ineffective or independent of political influence often fail to identify and punish abuse of power by politicians (Tangri & Mwenda, 2006). This allows politicians to continue to engage in pork-barrel practices without fear of consequences.

Politicians who engage in pork barrel practices rarely face adequate punishment because the system does not have an effective sanctions system (de Sousa & Moriconi, 2013). This inability to punish opportunistic behavior undermines accountability and reinforces cycles of injustice. Additionally, although the media can play an essential role in monitoring and reporting pork barrel practices, limited access to information and political pressure can hinder the media's ability to perform a practical monitoring function (Prat & Strömberg, 2013).

Structural weaknesses in democratic systems that allow politicians to prioritize private interests over public interests through pork-barrel politics highlight fundamental problems in democratic accountability mechanisms. This practice not only leads to inefficient resource allocation and social injustice but also undermines public trust in democratic institutions and increases the risk of corruption. To overcome this problem, comprehensive reform is needed in electoral system design, including strengthening oversight mechanisms, increasing transparency, and implementing an effective sanctions system.

The Benefits of Pork-Barrel Politics

Although often criticized for its potential waste of public funds and corruption, pork-barrel politics also has significant benefits in the context of representative democracy. Pork-barrel politics can be crucial in bridging local and national interests, encouraging regional development, strengthening political stability, and facilitating a more inclusive legislative process. The following is a long narrative explaining the benefits of pork-barrel politics from various points of view.

One of the main benefits of pork-barrel politics is its ability to encourage regional development. Politicians often use pork-barrel mechanisms to ensure their constituencies receive funds and projects to improve local infrastructure, create jobs, and stimulate the regional economy. Projects such as building roads, bridges, schools, and health facilities in remote or underdeveloped areas can significantly impact local communities' well-being. Evans (2004), for example, finds that pork-barrel spending can increase local income and create new jobs, reducing poverty and raising living standards.

With pork-barrel politics, local politicians are incentivized to continue to fight for their regional interests at the national level to ensure that development is not only concentrated in

big cities or developed areas but also spreads evenly to all corners of the country. This more equitable development is essential for reducing economic and social disparities between regions, which can support national stability. Research has shown that areas that benefit from these policies experience improved infrastructure and public services, reducing the gap between urban and rural areas (Bickers & Stein, 2000).

Pork-barrel politics also acts as a bridge between local and national interests. Politicians who successfully get pork-barrel projects for their districts often have strong support from local constituents. This support is not only crucial for their political careers but also for the political parties they represent. In this way, pork-barrel politics can strengthen relations between central and local governments and between politicians and their voters. Herron & Shotts (2006) note that pork-barrel politics can increase positive relationships between legislators and constituents, which helps strengthen long-term political support.

By allocating pork-barrel funds, the central government can demonstrate its commitment to regional development and be responsive to the needs of communities in various regions. It is vital in democratic systems where a government's legitimacy largely depends on its ability to meet the expectations and needs of its people. In other words, pork-barrel politics can function as a mechanism that ensures the government remains connected to the people and sensitive to local issues. According to Lazarus & Steigerwalt (2009), pork-barrel spending can serve as a tool to show that the government is responsive and committed to the public interest, increasing public trust in the government.

The existence of pork-barrel politics can also contribute to political stability. In pluralistic and competitive political systems, pork-barrel funding allocations are often used to build coalitions and achieve consensus among various political groups (Stratmann, 1995). Politicians from different backgrounds and interests can be encouraged to work together if they know they will benefit their constituencies. This is crucial when the government needs to pass controversial laws or budgets. Providing incentives through pork-barrel projects can make the legislative process smoother and more effective, ultimately contributing to a stable and functional government.

Pork-barrel politics is vital in facilitating a more inclusive legislative process. In many cases, pork-barrel projects result from negotiations and compromises between various political interests. This process ensures that voices from various regions and interest groups are heard and considered in decision-making at the national level (Baranski et al., 2023). Pork-barrel politics can strengthen regional representation in the legislative process by giving local politicians a tool to influence the allocation of funds and development projects (Drazen & Ilzetzki, 2023). Ensuring that resulting laws and policies reflect the diversity of needs and priorities across the country is vital. Ultimately, this can create more equitable and inclusive public policies.

Although pork-barrel politics is often criticized for its potential for waste and corruption, it is essential to recognize that this mechanism also has significant benefits. Pork-barrel politics can encourage regional development, bridge local and national interests, strengthen political stability, and facilitate a more inclusive legislative process. By ensuring that development and the allocation of public funds reflect the diversity of societal needs, pork-barrel politics can contribute to national prosperity and stability. To maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impacts of pork-barrel politics, greater transparency and accountability are needed in allocating public funds. The government and society must work together to ensure that these mechanisms are used reasonably and efficiently to benefit all parties involved.

Logrolling and Earmarking Mechanisms for Pork-Barrel Projects

In politics, the budget setting is often the main arena where various interests collide, and compromise becomes essential. Politicians use two critical mechanisms to secure funds for projects that benefit their constituents: "logrolling" and "earmarking." These two mechanisms closely relate to pork-barrel politics: allocating budgets for local projects to win voter support or building political alliances.

Logrolling is where politicians exchange votes to ensure their proposed projects get funding. In a legislative system, a lawmaker may have a vital project for his constituents, but the project needs more support to pass on its own. To overcome this, the politician will seek support from other members of parliament by offering his support for their projects in return. The logrolling process begins with the identification of common interests. Lawmakers will identify projects they support and look for colleagues with similar projects. The next stage is negotiation, where they commit to supporting each other's projects. When the voting time comes, politicians involved in logrolling will vote according to the agreement to ensure that all negotiated projects get approval (Burnett & Kogan, 2014; Hortala-Vallve, 2011; Kurosaka, 2020).

A practical example of logrolling can be seen when a member of Congress from an agricultural state needs funds for irrigation development. At the same time, another member from an industrial state needs funds for infrastructure projects. Through logrolling, they agree to support each other's projects within the budget law. In this way, both secure the necessary funding for vital projects for their constituents.

Meanwhile, earmarking is a practice in which legislature members designate funds in the budget for specific projects that often have direct benefits for their constituencies. In contrast to logrolling, which involves an agreement to exchange votes, earmarking is more individual. In earmarking, a member of parliament manages to secure funds for a particular project without the need for an agreement to exchange votes with other members. The earmarking process begins with the submission of project proposals by members of

parliament in the budget process. The relevant budget committee or subcommittee must then approve the proposal. Once approved, funds for the project are marked explicitly in the budget, ensuring that the project receives the allocated funding (Engstrom & Vanberg, 2010; Kasdin, 2010; Lazarus, 2010; Meinke, 2018; Schlossberg, 1988; Sciara, 2012b; White, 1993).

An example of earmarking can be seen when a senator secures an earmark to build a new highway in their constituency by including the provision in a budget bill. These funds are specifically allocated for that project and cannot be used for other purposes. Earmarking allows politicians to directly benefit their constituents through specific projects that often significantly impact their constituencies.

Both of these mechanisms, while helpful, are not free from controversy. The main benefit of logrolling and earmarking is the development of local infrastructure and increasing the popularity of politicians. Projects funded through logrolling and earmarking can bring direct benefits, such as much-needed infrastructure development in a constituency. Additionally, politicians who successfully secure funding for projects in their areas often receive incredible support from voters.

However, there are also significant adverse impacts. Projects funded through logrolling and earmarking are often criticized as budget waste because they are only sometimes based on the most urgent or efficient needs. This practice can lead to unfair distribution of national resources, where certain regions receive more funding simply because of the political influence of their representatives. In addition, there is a risk of increased corruption and nepotism because earmarking funds can be misused for projects that benefit individuals or political cronies.

Intensive Application of Logrolling and Earmarking Ahead of the Elections

In politics, elections determine who will hold power and influence fiscal policy and budget allocations. One frequently observed phenomenon is how politicians use logrolling and earmarking to maximize their reelection chances, especially in the election run-up (Ahlfeld, 2010; Law & Tonon, 2006). These practices have become an integral part of the political budget cycle, where politicians seek to attract support through strategic budget allocations for pork-barrel projects.

As mentioned earlier, logrolling is a practice in which politicians exchange votes for projects that benefit their constituents. On the other hand, earmarking involves marking funds in the budget for specific projects that benefit a politician's constituency. These two mechanisms are often used before elections to gain support from constituents and strengthen political alliances. Leading up to elections, politicians often manipulate budgets to show good performance to voters (Drazen & Eslava, 2010). Using earmarking, they can allocate funds to infrastructure, education, or health projects that provide direct benefits and

are visible to constituents. It aims to increase their popularity and maximize their chances of being reelected.

In complex legislative systems, politicians need to build coalitions to gain support for their projects. Through logrolling, they can pledge support for their colleagues' projects in exchange for support for their projects. These coalitions are often critical in the run-up to elections, as politicians seek to show constituents that they can bring concrete benefits through their political networks. Earmarking allows politicians to allocate budgets to projects in their constituencies directly. As the election approaches, this allocation becomes more strategic, focusing on projects with a direct and significant impact. Examples include the construction of roads, bridges, health facilities, or new schools. These projects not only provide tangible benefits to society but also serve as proof of politicians' commitment to the well-being of their constituents.

In the political budget cycle, the phase leading up to an election is often marked by increased government spending on pork-barrel projects. This pattern emerged because politicians sought to maximize the visibility and impact of government-funded projects. This cycle shows how fiscal policy can be influenced by the political calendar, with spending increases tending to occur in the run-up to elections to influence voter perceptions. The practice of logrolling and earmarking ahead of elections has both positive and negative impacts. On the one hand, projects funded through this mechanism can benefit society. On the other hand, this practice is often criticized because it leads to waste and inefficient allocation of resources. Additionally, there are concerns that logrolling and earmarking could strengthen political patronage, where budget allocations are based more on political considerations than community needs.

Several reform measures can be proposed to overcome the negative impacts of this practice. First, increasing transparency in the budgeting process and ensuring accountability for using earmarking funds will significantly reduce the risk of misuse (Sciara, 2012a). Open publication of earmarks and funded projects can enable the public to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of government spending (Abdellatif et al., 2016). Second, imposing stricter limits on the use of earmarks, such as limiting the amount of funds allocated through this process, could help reduce waste and abuse (Purwaningsih & Widodo, 2020). These reforms could also include a more rigorous evaluation of proposed projects to ensure that funds are allocated based on precise needs and measurable priorities. Third, engaging an independent oversight body to assess and verify projects funded through earmarking and logrolling can help ensure that budget allocations are based on objective considerations, not just political interests (Kasdin, 2010).

Politicians often use logrolling and earmarking to influence fiscal policy and budget allocations, especially during election run-ups. This practice becomes relevant in political

budget cycles, where politicians seek to maximize their reelection chances through strategic budget allocations. Even though it has benefits regarding infrastructure development and improving constituents' welfare, this practice also raises controversy due to the risk of waste and misuse of resources. With reforms that increase transparency, accountability, and oversight, the budget-setting process can run more fairly and efficiently, ensuring that public funds are used in the best interests of society.

Future Research Directions

To identify future research directions, the authors adopted specific steps from Bahoo (2020), Bahoo et al. (2020), and Bahoo et al. (2021). The first one is to review the 20 most cited articles. These articles were selected for their significant contributions to the field of study and were used to identify emerging research trends and understand how various studies are related. The authors can then see the network of relationships between various studies, identify the topics often discussed, and understand patterns and dynamics in pork-barrel politics research. This approach helps in identifying areas that have been widely explored and find gaps that still require further research.

The second step is to review all influential articles and trends over the past seven years (2017 to 2024). Ensuring the research reflects the latest developments and innovations in pork-barrel politics is essential. By focusing on influential articles and the latest trends, the authors can stay up-to-date with the latest discoveries and new methodologies. This step also helps in understanding the major concerns of the research community and how various innovations are being implemented in current studies.

The third step was reviewing other study sample articles to avoid top citation bias. Reviewing all articles in the study sample ensured that less well-known but still relevant and meaningful research was also considered in the analysis. Articles not highly cited may still contain significant contributions that should be noticed. This way, the authors can obtain a more comprehensive picture.

The final step is to convert the potential research agenda into research questions. Potential research agendas discovered during the literature review process are converted into specific research questions. These questions are then filtered to exclude those that other researchers have already studied. This helps identify unfilled gaps and areas that require further research. By establishing clear and focused research questions, the authors can design relevant future studies that can contribute to understanding pork-barrel politics.

This systematic process resulted in 96 future research questions from 39 articles, as listed in Table 4. By following these steps, the authors can identify relevant, innovative, and potentially impactful future research directions that could impact their field of study. These steps ensure that the research keeps up with the latest developments, fills existing knowledge gaps, and pushes the boundaries of understanding in pork-barrel politics.

Conclusion

This article explores the controversial labyrinth of pork-barrel politics through the lens of bibliometric mapping, which reflects the complex dynamics behind the political scene, from legislators' efforts to retain seats through electoral support to the deep development of local infrastructure. Pork-barrel politics not only affects the distribution of resources but also challenges the foundations of accountability in democratic systems, thereby requiring a holistic approach to formulating public policy that safeguards political interests and ensures social justice and economic sustainability. By increasing transparency, expanding public participation, and strengthening monitoring mechanisms, the pork-barrel policy can become a more effective instrument in advancing societal welfare and strengthening the foundations of democracy.

Additionally, the review has highlighted the significant contributions from critical researchers, revealing a steady growth of scientific interest and output. Prominent author "Peter Spáč" and influential article "Weingast et al. (1981)" have shaped the discourse on pork-barrel politics. Although the field has developed significantly, there remains much opportunity for future research to answer unresolved questions and explore new dimensions of pork-barrel politics, particularly concerning its impact on democratic governance and public trust.

Understanding the multifaceted nature of pork-barrel politics through bibliometric mapping can provide valuable insights into its broader implications and potential for reform. By encouraging a more transparent, participatory, and accountable approach to public budgeting, policymakers can reduce the negative aspects of pork-barrel practices and leverage them to contribute positively to societal development. This comprehensive perspective not only enriches academic discourse but also informs practical strategies for improving the effectiveness and fairness of public policy.

Table 4 Future Research Directions

Paper	Research Questions
Cardona & Rubí-Barceló (2014)	1. What is the impact of majority and legislative size on decision efficiency in negotiations with heterogeneous agents?
Firpo et al. (2015)	2. How much impact do budget amendments have on votes in the local context, and how do they compare to the overall state context?
Braidwood (2015)	3. What factors make the pork strategy so effective in consolidating local electoral dominance? 4. To what extent does media coverage of "pork" influence recipients and public opinion?
Clemens et al. (2015)	5. How can experiments and media studies be used to measure the ability of Members of Congress to leverage "pork" to gain voter support? 6. How do changes in party strength over time affect members' reelection outcomes?
Klingensmith (2016)	7. How can new approaches be developed to better aggregate data generated by atomistic political processes? 8. What are the implications of not returning the House to a full subcommittee governance model for the effectiveness of budget management by Congress?
Kiss & Székely (2016)	9. Do employment effects or facilitation effects of pork-barrel spending have a more significant impact on an incumbent's reelection prospects?
Blanco (2017)	10. To what extent will RMDSZ maintain its electoral support by relying on a strategy based primarily on resource allocation? 11. To what extent does the existence of freedom of information laws play a role in supporting citizen transparency networks in overseeing pork-barrel funds?
	12. What are the main challenges and obstacles to establishing and implementing national, regional, and local citizen transparency networks?

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|---------------------------|--|
| | 13. How effectively does the citizen transparency network increase accountability and public trust in managing pork-barrel funds? |
| Alizadeh & Farid (2017) | 14. What impact will the decision to use mixed technology have on service quality and internet speed in different regions of Australia? |
| | 15. How does the role of independent and minor parties influence the distribution and implementation of the NBN project in Australia? |
| Bertelli & McCann (2018) | 16. How can game theory delegation models and vote buying models provide insight into the costs of ex-post oversight in proposed legislation? |
| | 17. How can empirical analysis be used to understand the impact of ex-post monitoring costs on the distribution of pork-barrel funds across jurisdictions? |
| Meinke (2018) | 18. How do individual contributions to the party's collective goals affect the allocation of earmarks and other distributive benefits? |
| | 19. What implications do individual contributions to the party's collective goals have for Congress's policy formation and resource distribution? |
| Kang (2018) | 20. How can a fixed effects framework be used to examine differences in targeting strategies between Democratic and Republican presidents? |
| | 21. What are the implications of these different targeting strategies for political stability and representation in the United States? |
| Holzmann & Zaddach (2019) | 22. How might an at-large election system affect incentives for pork-barrel spending in various institutional settings? |
| | 23. Are incentive restrictions on pork-barrel spending in at-large electoral systems causally applicable across institutional contexts? |
| Hedlund (2019) | 24. How does the presence of two dominant parties with established institutional power affect policy |

- outcomes compared to a parliamentary system involving many competing smaller parties?
25. What are the differences in political dynamics and policies between a political system dominated by two large parties and a parliamentary system with many small parties?
26. What are the implications of these differences for effective and sustainable public policy decisions across political contexts?
- Albanese et al. (2019) 27. What are the differences between 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' elements in forming political party systems in various political contexts?
28. To what extent does the party system reflect the dominant social characteristics of society?
- Livert et al. (2019) 29. What is the boundary between citizen involvement and patronage?
30. What institutional conditions allow participation to strengthen government accountability?
- Piattoni & Giglioli (2020) 31. What is the relationship between the fragmentation of party systems and the increasing instability of governing coalitions with increasing types of particularistic exchange?
32. What alternative strategies for collecting data on the dependent variable can be used better to understand the influence of electoral systems on political particularism?
33. To what extent is Italy an outlier in a comparative perspective regarding political corruption trends and baselines, and how do long-term political-cultural dynamics and short-term variations in incentives play a role in this phenomenon?
34. How does the party's reputation for corruption in Italy compare with other European countries, and how has the evolution of current conditions following the emergence of the Five Star Movement and the rebranding of the League as a populist radical right party influenced this perception?
- Schneider (2020) 35. To what extent are the ethnic characteristics of political leaders endogenous to the characteristics of voters and political parties, and how does this influence experimental designs in distributive politics research?

- Heinrich & Peterson (2020)
- 36. How does the information voters have about their discretion over various government policy benefits influence their preferences in distributive politics?
 - 37. How does mention of local economic benefits in a press release about foreign aid affect an incumbent's reelection chances?
 - 38. Are there significant differences in legislators' logrolling strategies between aid projects benefiting different locations?
 - 39. How can legislators in countries that rarely benefit from aid use that aid to gain local political advantage?
 - 40. To what extent does foreign policy reflect the distribution of benefits to various local communities rather than zero-sum competition between opposing economic or ideological groups?
 - 41. How do national political cleavages (based on economic class or ideology) influence the implementation of programmatic goods in foreign policy in countries where legislators do not develop a personal voice?
- Catalinac et al. (2020)
- 42. To what extent does tournament strategy play a vital role in the LDP's dominance compared to other factors such as electoral structure and national support?
 - 43. How have LDP politicians adapted tournament strategies in other elections, such as the House of Counselors and prefectural assemblies with different electoral structures?
- Berman & Nugent (2020)
- 44. How have changes in voter-party connectedness in Tunisia occurred as the democratization process continued after the 2014 elections?
 - 45. What strategies did parties in Tunisia use during the 2014 elections, and how did these strategies change in subsequent elections to adapt to different regional dynamics?
 - 46. To what extent do historical regionalism factors influence the strategies and performance of parties at the subnational level in the context of Tunisia's new democracy?

- Khalil et al. (2021)
47. How can the theoretical link between authoritarian regionalism and electoral dynamics after regime change be strengthened by analyzing in-depth early elections in democracies?
48. Are there similar transfer practices by politicians at local government levels, such as town and village councils?
49. How do the characteristics and factors influencing politician transfers at the local government level compare with the state?
- Psycharis et al. (2021)
50. What is the relationship between local politics and fiscal allocation, especially in the context of mayors whose politics align with the government versus experienced (reelected) mayors?
51. What factors influence the allocation of grant funds to local governments, particularly in the context of political relationships and knowledge of the grantmaking process?
52. How do comparative political distributions after the economic crisis affect the allocation of grants to local governments?
53. What are the implications of the government's use of a pork-barrel strategy in allocating grant funds to local governments for local governance and development?
54. How can a fairer, more transparent, and accountable fiscal allocation model be implemented at the local level to improve the fairness and effectiveness of public funds?
- Psycharis et al. (2021)
55. How can more inclusive collective strategies be implemented in the administration and implementation of public policy in Greece to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public investments?
56. How can implementing a more transparent, fair, and accountable allocation of public funds affect Greece's economic, social, and welfare development?
- Baskaran & da Fonseca (2021)
57. How can different selection rules in politics affect the effectiveness and transparency of public policy?
58. What is the impact of hometown favoritism in public policy on the equitable and efficient use of public resources?

- Kim (2021)
- 59. How do the results of policies influenced by hometown favoritism compare with policies not influenced by this factor?
 - 60. How do differences in institutional configuration between presidential systems and other systems affect the president's ability to manipulate the government budget?
 - 61. What other factors influence a president's effectiveness in using the government budget for political purposes?
- Imami et al. (2022)
- 62. How does the nature of construction informality in Albania compare to other countries with similar characteristics?
 - 63. What are the views of experts and stakeholders on desirable and feasible approaches to addressing construction informality?
- Tóth et al. (2022)
- 64. How does fairness in the distribution of public resources influence citizens' perceptions of decision-makers and policies in different contexts?
 - 65. What impact does a policy that provides financial benefits to the state have on society's evaluation of the decision-maker and the policy?
 - 66. How do other contextual factors, such as political history and culture, influence public perceptions of pork-barrel political practices?
- Leśniewska-Napierała & Napierała (2022)
- 67. How does using EU funds for visible municipal projects affect voters' perceptions of incumbent performance?
 - 68. How does the relationship between supra-local and local power networks influence electoral accounting practices at the municipal level?
- Kovarek (2022)
- 69. How does place identity influence voters' propensity to vote for local candidates?
 - 70. What is the difference between intrinsic and instrumental considerations in influencing the choice of friends and neighbors?

- Kok et al. (2022)
71. How does the relationship between place identity and local candidate effects differ from the effects of other regional or geographic identities?
 72. How will earmarks impact project performance in the different environments of the Hydrogen Program, particularly in terms of the organizations involved, project objectives, and research outcomes?
 73. What is the difference in the quality of earmarked projects in other hard-to-measure dimensions, such as job creation, inter-organizational collaboration, and commercialization of new products and services, compared to competitively selected projects?
 74. How do politically driven selection processes compare with competitive or alternative selection processes such as lottery or egalitarian systems of allocating public funds for R&D grants? What are the implications of this comparison for the effectiveness of the allocation of public funds?
 75. What is the contribution of different types of earmarks, such as soft earmarks at the NIH, to project performance outcomes compared to other types of earmarks at other US government agencies?
 76. How can this research's results be applied to transition economies or other developing countries with similar characteristics to Albania, where informal institutions dominate?
- Carmignani (2022)
77. Are there other triggers besides elections that could influence a shift from wasteful to more efficient spending (and vice versa)?
 78. How do these change mechanisms operate in countries and situations where elections are not enough of a driving force, for example, when the government is not interested in being reelected (non-opportunistic) and incompetent?
- Zuo (2022)
79. How can the results of this study encourage replication with broader datasets to increase its generalisability, and what are the further implications of legislator attributes for legislative performance in authoritarian congresses?
 80. What non-legislative career incentives do legislators' attributes carry, and how do these influence their

- ability to solve policy problems and maintain geographic representation?
- Catalinac & Muraoka (2023)
81. What role do legislators' attributes play in building and maintaining geographic representation in an authoritarian legislature, and what are the implications for political and policy dynamics at the local and national levels?
82. How do programmatic policies impact voter satisfaction with incumbents, and how do these policies influence political support in Japan?
83. How does this policy impact reducing regional development inequality in Japan?
84. How can the mechanisms underlying these effects be further explained using geocoded data?
- Leigh & McAllister (2023)
85. How does the physical size of the novelty check in the distribution of sports grants affect the electoral impact in society?
86. Does the physical presence of an extensive check significantly affect voters' perceptions and support of grant recipients and the government?
- McKay & Lazarus (2023)
87. How can lobbying activities influence distributive policies? How can they continue to be investigated to understand their impact?
88. How does the potential for the practice of revolving-door lobbying influence government decisions?
- Gerber et al. (2024)
89. How do legislators in a democratic political system choose between the interests of their district, the public interest, and considerations of whether their citizens receive benefits commensurate with their contributions, and how does this influence legislative elections?
90. How can information about these considerations be conveyed to voters to influence their preferences?
- McCambly & Aguilar-Smith (2024)
91. How can this paradoxical phenomenon, which violates empirical patterns in competitive grantmaking and rational choice theory, encourage research to identify political mechanisms or community preferences that might influence grant distribution?
92. How do the types of projects funded by Congress, particularly in the context of earmarks, differ across

institutions and types of educational institutions such as WSIs and MSIs, and what are the implications for the reproduction of inequality?

Großer & Giertz (2024)

93. What political factors underlie the racial and social distribution of academic earmarks, and how do these factors influence the distribution of politicized public policy?

94. How can participation games influence inequality through interactions between candidates and voters in the context of elections?

Belmar et al. (2024)

95. How can politicians' responses to societal demands be explained through various clientelistic practices such as vote buying, participation buying, patronage, buying public support, or attending mass meetings?

96. How can causal relationships be uncovered, and how can the mechanisms that trigger non-programmatic demand be investigated in more detail in a context where the predominant occurrence is programmatic?

Source: Authors' Work

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