

# **One Mandarin Benefits the Whole Clan: Hometown Favoritism in an Authoritarian Vietnam**

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Although patronage politics in democracies has been studied extensively, it is less understood in undemocratic regimes. This study discusses how government officials in authoritarian Vietnam direct public resources toward their hometowns. It estimates the impact of political promotions of officials on public infrastructure in their rural hometowns. There are three main results. First, promotions of officials improve a wide range of infrastructure in their hometowns, including roads, markets, schools, radio stations, clean water and irrigation. This favoritism is pervasive among officials across different ranks, even among those without budget authority, suggesting informal channels of influence. Second, in contrast to pork-barrel politics in democratic parliaments, elected legislators have no power to exercise favoritism. Third, only home communes receive favors, while larger and more politically important home districts do not. This suggests that favoritism is likely motivated by officials' social preferences for their hometowns rather than by political considerations.

**Anh Tran** is an Associate Professor of Public Affairs at Indiana University Bloomington, where he teaches international development, international trade and finance. His research focuses on the governance of developing countries, particularly in Asia. His current research projects are looking at transparency, corruption, tax evasion, political networks, and their economic and social outcomes. His researches have appeared in the *American Political Science Review*, *Journal of Public Economics* and *Journal of Financial Economics*. He also works frequently as consultant for reform initiatives by national governments, the United Nations and the World Bank. Anh has participated in UNDP Academic Fellowship, Asia Foundation's Emerging Leaders Program and Vietnamese Prime Minister's Research Council. In 2014, he was named an Outstanding Junior Faculty at Indiana University. Previously, he has studied and worked in Russia, France, Australia and the United States. Anh received his Ph.D. in Public Policy from Harvard University.

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**12:00 Noon**

**Room 203, Luce Hall, 34 Hillhouse Avenue**