Where do we go from here?

Measurement and Theory of Democratic Attitudes

Outline

Intro
Mass Attitudes and Democratic Deepening
  Theory and previous research
  Findings
Summary
  Summary
  Class questions

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What we have covered

- What are attitudes?
- How to measure them?
- Political Culture
- Political Support
- Qualitative Measurement
- Communism and Democracy
- Religion and Democracy
- Partial Democrats

**Underlying assumption: mass attitudes matter**

Why democratic attitudes

- Long history, starting with de Tocqueville
- Democratic systems need democratic citizens
  - Normative/self-respect
  - Stabilising effect on democratic regimes (Almond/Verba; Lipset)
  - Deepening of incomplete democratic regimes (Diamond)
- Particularly relevant for emerging democracies:
  - Germany after 45/89
  - Russia and the post-communist countries
  - Latin America
  - Parts of Africa
  - Possibly parts of the Arab world. China?
The problem

- Central tenets of research program plausible (even before mass surveys)
- But never properly tested
- Fails/Pierce research problem:
  - Does the level/distribution of democratic attitudes improve democratic outcome . . .
  - Or is it the other way around?
- (In emerging democracies)
- Very interesting findings
  - Simple design
  - Preliminary
  - By PhD-students

Previous findings

- Most work by Inglehart and associates
- Problems
  - Wrong/problematic variables (interpersonal trust, life satisfaction . . .)
  - Design: Consequence measured before cause
  - ‘Effective democracy'
- No/very few relevant/credible findings
Hypotheses

1. Link between attitudes/democratic quality?
   1.1 Level of democratic attitudes $\rightarrow$ quality of democracy five years after survey
   1.2 Rival hypothesis: quality of democracy five years before survey $\rightarrow$ level of democratic attitudes

2. Higher levels of democratic attitudes $\rightarrow$ reduced probability of democratic decline

3. Across-time changes in level of democratic attitudes $\rightarrow$ across-time change in democratic quality

Data/Variables

- All sorts of ‘Barometer’ and related surveys
- Three comparable attitudes:
  1. Support for democracy
  2. Rejection of authoritarianism
  3. Satisfaction with democracy
- Freedom House index (political rights + civil liberties; 2-14)
- Control variables
  - GDP per capita in 1995, PPP
  - Average rate of GDP/capita growth
  - Income inequality (Gini coefficients)
  - Ethnic fractionalisation
H1: Link

- Support for democracy, rejection of authoritarianism, democratic satisfaction: zilch effect on quality of democracy (five years on)
- GDP plays. Growth and inequality play sometimes
- Previous quality of democracy is a good predictor for support for democracy (in the aggregate)
- So are GDP, growth, inequality
- *Not in line with cultural model*

H2: Stability

- Quality of democracy decreased (1) vs same/increased (0)
- Support, rejection, satisfaction → no effect whatsoever
- Wealth and growth substantially reduce the probability of decline
- Inequality increases the probability of decline
- Ethnic fractionalisation (collinearity?)
H3: Change in levels $\times$ change in levels

- Controlling for economic factors and prior levels of democratic quality
- Economic factors play
- Democracy seems to be self-enforcing (positive effect of previous level of democracy on change)
- (Aggregate) change in attitudes has (ceteris paribus) a negative effect

Summary

- No evidence for culture model's core theoretical assumption
- What now?
Class questions

- Can you spot any problems with this article?
- If this holds, what are the consequences?
  - For democracy/politics?
  - For the research program?
- What other aspects of this research domain would you like to comment on?
- Would you recommend this course? Why not?