

Measurement and Theory of Democratic Attitudes

Outline

Intro

Democrats with Adjectives

Theory

Data and Methods

Findings

Summary

Summary

Class questions

Last week: 'Delegative Democrats'

- ▶ Subtypes of Democracy (as a regime)
- ▶ Subtypes of democratic attitudes
 - ▶ Support for a very strong presidency
 - ▶ Focus on evaluation of the presidency
- ▶ We were not convinced
 - ▶ Methods
 - ▶ Indicators
 - ▶ Interpretation
- ▶ But: concept not totally implausible

This week: 'Democrats with Adjectives'

- ▶ We remain in Latin America (Mexico)
- ▶ Fusion of liberal democratic principles and illiberal views

Direct measures of democratic support: problems

1. Interviewer effects
 - ▶ Obvious
2. Vacuous conceptions of democracy
 - ▶ Democracy universally popular
 - ▶ Positive answers almost meaningless
3. Competing conceptions of democracy
 - ▶ 'Common ground' in established liberal democracies (?)
 - ▶ Meaning 'vague, shifting and controversial' in non-established democracies
4. Conflicting values
 - ▶ People may be ok with norms & institutions (e.g. elections)
 - ▶ But not with underlying values/applications

What do people mean by 'Democracy?' – measurement

1. Open definition: What does D. mean for respondent
 - ▶ Rich data
 - ▶ Coding
2. Constrained definition: Researcher has ready-made definition
 - ▶ Respondents asked to identify 'essential' elements from closed list
 - ▶ Obviously less flexible
3. Indirect definition: Constrained definition in the background
 - ▶ Bulk of research
 - ▶ Batteries of statements; agree – disagree
 - ▶ Researchers try to tap into underlying (conflicting) attitudes

Critique: Analysis under-complex

- ▶ Researchers try to align respondents to a single underlying dimension (pro/con liberal democracy)
 - ▶ Assumes simple dimensionality
 - ▶ Assumes citizens are consistent
- ▶ Mixed regimes ('delegative', 'illiberal', 'clientelist'), mixed attitudes
- ▶ Almond/Verba: mix of ideal-type respondents (or maybe not)
- ▶ Schedler/Sarsfield: mix of attitudes at individual level (inconsistency)
- ▶ Cluster analysis of respondents

Cluster analysis

(‘What data gets into while theory is on a holiday’?)

- ▶ (Factor analysis: find *variables* that correlate)
- ▶ Cluster analysis: Form groups of *cases* that are similar
 - ▶ I.e. similar profile across a few/many variables
 - ▶ Calculate similarity/dissimilarity index (many)
 - ▶ Form clusters of cases that are ...
 - ▶ Close to each other (homogeneous)
 - ▶ Far from other clusters
 - ▶ Decide on optimal number of clusters
- ▶ Problems
 - ▶ Spoilt for choice
 - ▶ No hard criteria for choosing anything

Data

- ▶ Government sponsored second survey on Mexican Political Culture
- ▶ February 2003
- ▶ \approx 5000 cases
- ▶ Six of 74 variables selected (overt support plus three core principles)

Dimension	Variable	Wording
Direct support	Democracy vs dictatorship	democracy-prosperity trade-off
Freedom of association	Freedom of association	government has right to intervene
Freedom of expression	Freedom vs prosperity	freedom-prosperity trade-off
Freedom of expression	TV pluralism	permit person on TV to contradict one's opinions
Equality	Indigenous participation	Should indigenous people participate in politics
Equality	Gay participation	Should homosexual persons participate in politics

Univariate distributions

1. Democracy vs dictatorship: High levels of support, but also high levels of DKs
2. Freedom of association: Solid majority against intervention (but 1/3 in favour)
3. Freedom vs prosperity: majority in favour of free expression
4. TV pluralism: majority *against*
5. Indigenous participation: large (80+ per cent) majority in favour
6. Gay participation: bare majority in favour

Cluster analysis

- ▶ Measure of similarity?
- ▶ Clustering: agglomerative (Ward)
- ▶ Six clusters (min. 10 per cent of respondents)
- ▶ Interpretation of these clusters as subtypes
 1. 'Liberal Democrats'
 2. 'Intolerant Democrats'
 3. 'Paternalistic Democrats'
 4. 'Homophobic Democrats'
 5. 'Exclusionary Democrats'
 6. 'Ambivalent Non-Democrats'

Liberal/Intolerant/Paternalistic Democrats

- ▶ Liberal Democrats (14)
 - ▶ Direct support
 - ▶ Clear majorities support four of the five remaining principles
- ▶ Intolerant Democrats (14)
 - ▶ Almost identical to first cluster
 - ▶ But do not like dissenting views on the telly
- ▶ Paternalistic Democrats (19)
 - ▶ More tolerant than Intolerant Democrats
 - ▶ But highly suspicious of associations (trade unions?)

Homophobic/exclusionary Democrats & Ambivalent Non-Democrats

- ▶ Homophobic Democrats (28)
 - ▶ Comparable to Paternalistic Democrats
 - ▶ But want to exclude gays from participation
- ▶ Exclusionary Democrats (12)
 - ▶ Comparable to Paternalistic Democrats
 - ▶ But *also* want to exclude indigenous population from participation
 - ▶ Are these still 'Democrats' ?
- ▶ Ambivalent Non-Democrats (12)
 - ▶ Would trade democracy for economic prosperity
 - ▶ Liberal with respect to indigenous participation
 - ▶ Ambivalent in all other aspects

Summary

- ▶ Overall: inconsistency
 - ▶ Very few liberal democrats
 - ▶ Almost no consistent authoritarians
- ▶ Roughly three quarters qualify as 'Democrats with attitudes'
 - ▶ Abstract support for regime type
 - ▶ Support for most principles
 - ▶ Particular exceptions
 - ▶ Democracy 'a private privilege, not a universal guarantee'
- ▶ Little overlap (but: homophobia)
- ▶ Problem of slow erosion

Class questions

- ▶ Are you more happy with Schedler/Sarsfield than you were with Walker? Why/why not?
- ▶ Is it ok for any democracy to have so many 'democrats with adjectives'?
- ▶ How is this different from the approach taken by Miller et al.? And What class question(s) would you like to discuss? Why?