Where do we go from here?

Measurement and Theory of Democratic Attitudes

Outline

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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?