

Replication of a research claim from McLaren (2012), from World Politics

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OSF project: <https://osf.io/rpumq/>

Preregistration: <https://osf.io/aqncj>

Claim summary

The claim selected for replication from McLaren (2012) is that individuals expressing most concern about the impact of immigration on the national community will be most distrustful of politicians and political institutions (Proposition 1). This reflects the following statement from the paper's abstract: "The findings indicate that even after controlling for other predictors of trust in the political system, concerns about the effect of immigration on the national community have an impact on trust in politics." The claim is tested with multivariate analyses conducted using HLM on four rounds of the ESS [European Social Survey]. The author uses multilevel modeling with a three-level model with the individual at level 1, variables that are measured at the country level and that vary across the four rounds of the ESS (country-round) at level 2, and variables measured at the country level that do not vary across the four rounds at level 3. The dependent variable, political distrust, measures how much the respondent trusts each of three institutions: the country's parliament, the legal system, and politicians; for the SCORE program, the parliament measure is used [the author finds support using each measure]. The independent variable of interest is concern about immigration (see the Parliament columns in Table 3 for details on the model selected for the SCORE program). The results indicate that after controlling for fairly powerful predictors of distrust in politics, concern about immigration has a statistically significant effect on distrust in politics in that higher concern about immigration is associated with higher distrust in politics.

Replication criteria

H* (SCORE focal test): Individuals' concerns about immigration is positively associated with distrust in their country's parliament.

Replication result

The analysis consisted of two-level models with individuals nested in countries, using data from the European Social Survey Round 5.

The main analysis used listwise deletion, i.e. eliminating all cases with missing values on the variables used in the analysis. The analytic sample size in this analysis was 17134, which meets the minimum requirements from the power analysis.

Auxiliary analyses, intended as robustness checks:

1. The model described above without survey weights,
2. The model described above with imputed missing data,
3. The model described above with imputed missing data and without survey weights.

All analyses – the main analysis and the auxiliary analyses – indicate that concern about immigration is positively association with distrust in the country's parliament, i.e. confirm the result in the replicated study, so the replication was successful according to SCORE criteria.

Exact results are as follows:

Main analysis: coefficient [b] on concern about immigration term = 0.183, SE = 0.009, p < 0.000001, t value = 21.174.

Auxiliary analyses:

1. The model described above without survey weights: coefficient [b] on concern about immigration term = 0.190, SE = 0.009, p < 0.000001, t value = 22.062.
2. The model described above with imputed missing data: coefficient [b] on concern about immigration term = 0.177, SE = 0.007, p < 0.000001, t value = 23.842.
3. The model described above with imputed missing data and without survey weights: coefficient [b] on concern about immigration term = 0.180, SE = 0.007, p < 0.000001, t value = 25.324.

Deviations from preregistration

none

Description of materials provided

Data

data_clean.csv – CSV file with cleaned data for final analysis (main analysis and auxiliary analysis 1) combining micro-data from the European Social Survey and country-level data from the different sources

data_clean.rds – RDS file with cleaned data for final analysis (main analysis and auxiliary analysis 1) combining micro-data from the European Social Survey and country-level data from the different sources

data_imp.rds – RDS file with imputed missing values based on data_clean.rds for auxiliary analyses

Analysis

data_imputation_code.R - takes data_clean.rds and imputes missing values with the mice package using predictive mean matching and country fixed effects.

data_analysis_code.R - takes (1) data_clean.rds and runs complete-case multilevel models with weights (primary analysis) and without weights (auxiliary analysis 1); (2) data_imp.rds and runs imputed data multilevel models with weights (auxiliary analysis 2) and without weights (auxiliary analysis 3).

Materials and Methods

data_cleaning_code.R - takes the source data (survey and country-level, as listed above) and cleans them into data_clean.rds and the corresponding data_clean.csv

wgi-data-extract.xlsx: Worldwide Governance Indicators: extract from
<https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators#>

far-right-party-vote.xlsx: Codes of far-right parties: Original Study Appendix (OSA):
http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/1566/2/McLaren_Cultural_Divide_in_Europe_Web_Appendix.pdf

ess-5-fieldwork-dates.csv: ESS fieldwork dates (to identify most recent election):
https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/deviations_5.html

instructions_source_data.txt – instructions for obtaining the remaining data (survey and country-level) from their original data sources

All materials on this project will be made public.

Citation:

Lauren M. McLaren. 2012. "The Cultural Divide in Europe: Migration, Multiculturalism, and Political Trust". World Politics, Volume 64, Issue 2 (April), 199-241. doi:
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S004388712000032>