Milestone Six and a Half

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Abstract

This is an extension of Campbell et al. (2019) which details two separate experiments which suggest that individuals think of politicians with local connections and that exibit behavioral localism more highly. I was able to replicate the entire article with the exceptions of table 1 and figure 2 because they visuals relating to methodology and not the results themselves. I will be conducting an extension which includes the use of stan_glm instead of lm as well as look at certain subgroups based upon location and party identification. I hope to find cool things:)

Contents

1 Introduction

Campbell et al. (2019) aims to answer the driving question of, "Why do politicians with strong local roots receive more electoral support?" by running and analyzing two separate studies. The first study uses a "paired profiles factorial vignette design" by asking subjects to rate hypothetical members of Parliament. The hypothetical members have varying levels of local roots as well as varying levels of "behavioral localism"—their track record of constituency service and if they act more so as a trustee or delegate. In the second study, subjects again considered hypothetical members of Parliament with varying levels of local roots. How, the subjects also received information on their political preferences and partisan loyalties. The first study depicted that the additional information swayed rankings, but local roots still seemed to have an association. The second study agreed with these results stating that, "even if voters are provided with a rich array of information about politicians' behavior and ideological positioning, the effect of local roots remained positive and notable." The remainder of the article discusses the nuances of these results within the frame of the driving question.

Using R, I replicated Campbell et al. (2019). The original code can be found in the *The Journal of Politics* Dataverse.[1] All of my code for this paper including the extension is available in my Github repository.[2]

[1] https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/C15VOD

[2] https://github.com/SamuelLowry/why_friends_and_neighbors_replication_paper.git

2 Literature Review

After the introduction, you will have a literature review, not dissimilar from the one in the paper you are replicating. (You do not get to assume that we have read the paper you are replicating. We haven't. So, if something is worth understanding about the literature, then you need to tell us, and in your own words.) You also need to closely review any relevant literature that has come out since the paper was published. (We will take off points if a simple Google scholar search brings up a relevant article which you should have mentioned.) Of course, if a lot of time has passed and/or this is a particularly active area of research, there may be dozens of relevant articles. You can't review them all. Pick the most important ones, especially those written by the same authors and/or using the same data and/or performing an analysis similar to your own extension.

3 Possible Extensions

I have already been able to replicate all of the results from *Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots* Campbell et al. (2019) by Rosie Campbell, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, and Markus Wagner in the *The Journal of Politics*. The next step is to improve upon their methods and make suggests as to what to do next. My thoughts are below:

1. The first step is to suggest using stan_glm from the rstanarm package instead of the simple lm. This allows for the use of generalized linear modeling instead of linear modeling with optional prior distributions for the coefficients—a Bayesian function.
2. Both studies examine how the attributes of the Members of Parliament influence views on behavioral localism and local roots. Nevertheless, the data does not look within many demographic categories which are collected about the subjects. How do these views change based upon individual political views, gender, education level etc. I aim therefore to also use priors to maybe weight for these separate groups to create a better picture of the UK electorate.
3. Study 2 uses F-tests to see if there is interactions between Members of Parliaments' local ties and each remaining attribute. Page 140 in the textbook cautions against the use of such tests, for noisy data can give rise to insignificance with hypothesis testing even if there is some. Therefore it would be better to scrap this point or revise it. I am still in the process of determining a better alternative.
4. In order to maybe make this study more reliable to extrapolate upon, we could delete all vignettes within the analysis where the Member of Parliament lives outside of the district which simply cannot occur with other legislators such as Congressmen in the United States which are required to live within their district.

These extensions will hopefully better the article as a whole and clarify its implications.

All analysis for this paper is available in my Github repository for this milestone is in the footnote below.[3]

[3] https://github.com/SamuelLowry/why_friends_and_neighbors_replication_paper.git

4 References

Campbell, Rosie, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, and Markus Wagner. 2019. "Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots." The Journal of Politics. 81(3), 937-951.

A Appendix of Replicated Graphics

I was able to replicate table 2, figure 1, and figure 3. I was unable to replicate table 1 and figure 2 because they were not data related. They were merely visualizations displaying content about methods and experimental design. Table 1 depicts written descriptions of the hypothetical Members of Parliament present to subject. Figure 2 depicts a screenshot of the survey.

Table 2

% Table created by stargazer v.5.2.2 by Marek Hlavac, Harvard University. E-mail: hlavac at fas.harvard.edu
% Date and time: Tue, Apr 14, 2020 - 21:47:10

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Intercept	-0.412^{***}	-0.661^{***}	-0.412^{***}	-0.664^{***}
	(0.057)	(0.128)	(0.057)	(0.125)
Local roots	0.755^{***}	0.759^{***}	0.755^{***}	0.758^{***}
	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.080)
Behavioral localism information	0.683^{***}	0.691^{***}		
	(0.078)	(0.079)		
Behavioral localism: High (vs. no info)			1.395^{***}	1.402^{***}
			(0.098)	(0.098)
Behavioral localism: Low (vs. no info)			-0.007	-0.0002
			(0.085)	(0.086)
Local roots X Behavioral info.	-0.253^{**}	-0.257^{**}		
	(0.110)	(0.110)		
Local roots X High behavioral localism			-0.311^{**}	-0.311^{**}
			(0.140)	(0.139)
Local roots X Low behavioral localism			-0.233^{*}	-0.238^{**}
			(0.119)	(0.119)
Controls for voter characteristics?	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	5,203	5,203	5,203	5,203
R^2	0.036	0.046	0.107	0.116
Adjusted R^2	0.036	0.044	0.106	0.114
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 1

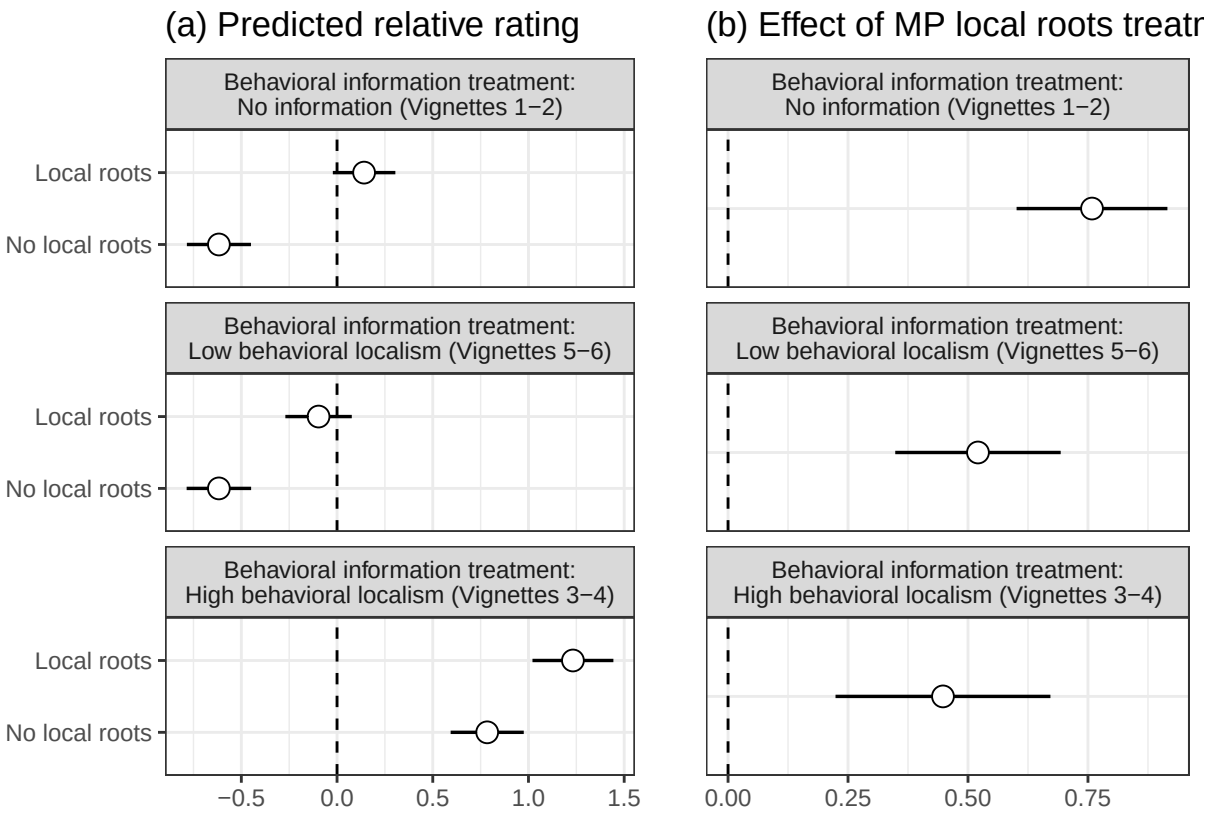
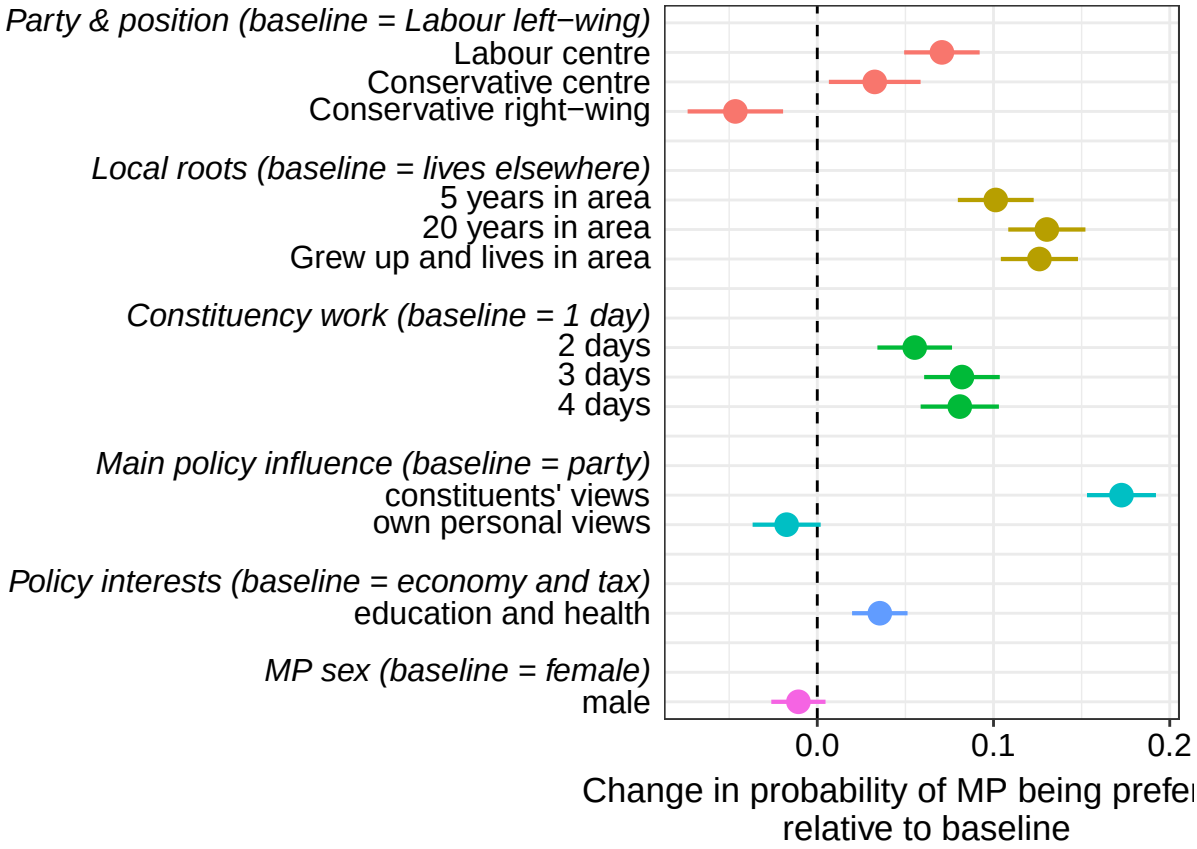

(a) Predicted relative rating
(b) Effect of MP local roots treatr
Behavioral information treatment:
No information (Vignettes 1−2)
Behavioral information treatment:
Low behavioral localism (Vignettes 5−6)
Behavioral information treatment:
High behavioral localism (Vignettes 3−4)
Local roots
No local roots
−0.5
0.0
0.5
1.0
1.5
0.00
0.25
0.50
0.75

Figure 3


Party & position (baseline = Labour left−wing)
Labour centre
Conservative centre
Conservative right−wing
Local roots (baseline = lives elsewhere)
5 years in area
20 years in area
Grew up and lives in area
Constituency work (baseline = 1 day)
2 days
3 days
4 days
Main policy influence (baseline = party)
constituents' views
own personal views
Policy interests (baseline = economy and tax)
education and health
MP sex (baseline = female)
male
0.0
0.1
0.2
Change in probability of MP being prefe
relative to baseline