

Republican Voteshare in the US Presidential Election

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Literature Review:

The voteshare of an incumbent presidential candidate in a state is regressed against the general economic conditions of the state, which can be measured by the change in a state's unemployment rate and the percentage changes in real per capita personal income (Abrams 1980). Previous vote share for the incumbent party is also introduced as an independent variable (Abrams 1980). He claims that voters hold presidents accountable for changes in state-level economic conditions therefore cutting certain programs in strongly dominated states and moving them to closely contested states may improve the chances of reelection for the incumbent (Abrams 1980). He also claims that abolishing the electoral college and permitting popular votes to determine presidential outcomes can outweigh the efforts of such state-level redistributive policy (Abrams 1980). The fact that Donald Trump's victory was highly dependent on the electoral college, since he lost the popular vote by almost XXXXXXXXX votes, and driven by a few contested states in the Rust Belt, show with even more significance the effect of regional economic conditions on vote share. *can this model be applied at a county level, since it is simply a smaller geographical setting and more representative since it is closer to the individual level a dummy for Southern States was taken* (Abrams 1980).

Three main inferences made by Bartels (Bartels 2005) are: - The white working class has not abandoned the Democratic Party. - The white working class has not become more conservative. - Working class moral values do not trump economics.

Bartels (Bartels 2005) uses family income levels to categorize voters in terms of their economic status. He places families with incomes in the bottom third of the income distribution under "low income" or "working class" thus differentiating them from the middle and upper class families. *how do we operationalize this in terms of county-level economic data.*

Bartels (Bartels 2005) illustrates the Democratic share of the two-party presidential vote among white voters in the bottom third of the income distribution and in the top third of the income distribution. He attributes the loss of support from white voters to Democratic candidates to the middle and upper income groups, while claiming that support for Democratic candidates has increased among low-income white voters. *see what happens when we see the actual county-level economic data on family income alongside Democratic or Republican voteshare see what happens when we see the actual county-level economic data on family income, in areas with majority whites vs majority non-white, and see what happens see what happens when we see the actual county-level economic data on family income, in areas with majority whites, in rural vs urban counties, and see what happens*

While survey data is useful in forecasting, the actual data we use can give a better picture of voter behavior since it captures the reality of after the election has taken place. However, based on the actual data, we are not able to measure party identification, since there is no way to know the individual preferences of voters. Nevertheless, based on how the result in a certain county turned out, we can get an idea about the actual preference of the majority of voters of that county.

Bartels (Bartels 2005) argues that "Democratic identification declined by 18% among low-income whites (from 22% in 1952 to 4% in 2004) and by 29% among high-income whites (from 11% to ???18%)." But he mentions that "However, it seems odd to attribute the Democrats' problems to the white working class when the corresponding decline among more affluent whites is so much larger."

Although one individual has one vote, the value of that vote may be different. *can we see if the 18 percent decline among low-income whites (and seeing where they are concentrated) has more impact on the electoral*

outcome than the 29 percent decline among high-income whites who may be concentrated in bigger cities and urban areas and democratic states.

Methodology:

Dependent Variable:

Vote share (Republican Party) or Vote share (Democratic/Incumbent Party) or Difference in Voteshare between the two parties. In old literature, the second one is used often. However, in the modern literature the third one is used. In the case of this paper, the main question circles around Trump and hence the first variable may work best. Ask for advice?

Independent Variable:

-Education (replace this with the data from census API) -Demographic Data from Census (male, female, ethnicity, religion, education) -Unemployment -Per capita income -Employment in industry -Current Transfer Receipts -Adjustment for Residence -Dummy for incumbent party -Rural or urban county

Bibliography:

Abrams, Burton A. 1980. "The Influence of State-Level Economic Conditions on Presidential Elections." *Public Choice* 35 (5): 623–31.

Bartels, Larry M. 2005. "What's the Matter with What's the Matter with Kansas ?"