

HOMEWORK EXERCISES MT week5 (due week 6, Monday 11:59PM)

Exercise 1 (20 points)

From each of the following abstracts, identify the independent and dependent variable as well as the main research hypothesis that they might have used (5 pts each).

Abstract A

"Theory and extensive evidence connect poverty and underdevelopment to civil conflict yet evidence on the impact of development programs on violence is surprisingly mixed. To break this impasse, we exploit a within-country policy experiment to examine the conditions under which antipoverty programs reduce violence. The roll-out of India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme caused a large long-run reduction in Maoist conflict violence, as measured with an original data set based on local-language press sources. These pacifying effects were not uniform, however, but overwhelmingly concentrated in districts with sufficient pre-existing local state capacity to implement the program effectively. The results demonstrate the potential for anti-poverty programs to mitigate violent civil conflict by improving livelihoods, but also highlight the crucial role of state capacity in shaping these effects."

Dasgupta, A., Gawande, K., & Kapur, D. (2017). (When) Do Antipoverty Programs Reduce Violence? India's Rural Employment Guarantee and Maoist Conflict. International Organization, 71(3), 605-632. doi:10.1017/S0020818317000236

Abstract B

"Why are politicians more likely to advance the interests of those of their race? I present a field experiment demonstrating that black politicians are more intrinsically motivated to advance blacks' interests than are their counterparts. Guided by elite interviews, I emailed 6,928 U.S. state legislators from a putatively black alias asking for help signing up for state unemployment benefits. Crucially, I varied the legislators' political incentive to respond by randomizing whether the sender purported to live within or far from each legislator's district. While nonblack legislators were markedly less likely to respond when their political incentives to do so were diminished, black legislators typically continued to respond even when doing so promised little political reward. Black legislators thus appear substantially more intrinsically motivated to advance blacks' interests. As political decision making is often difficult for voters to observe, intrinsically motivated descriptive representatives play a crucial role in advancing minorities' political interests."

Broockman, D. E. (2013). Black Politicians Are More Intrinsically Motivated to Advance Blacks' Interests: A Field Experiment Manipulating Political Incentives. American Journal of Political Science, 57(3), 521-536.

Abstract C

“Development projects like schools and latrines are popular with politicians and voters alike, yet many developing countries are littered with half-finished projects that were abandoned mid-construction. Using an original database of over 14,000 small development projects in Ghana, I estimate that one-third of projects that start are never completed, consuming nearly one-fifth of all local government investment. I develop a theory of project noncompletion as the outcome of a dynamically inconsistent collective choice process among political actors facing commitment problems in contexts of limited resources. I find evidence consistent with key predictions of this theory, but inconsistent with alternative explanations based on corruption or clientelism. I show that fiscal institutions can increase completion rates by mitigating the operational consequences of these collective choice failures. These findings have theoretical and methodological implications for distributive politics, the design of intergovernmental transfers and aid, and the development of state capacity.”

Williams, M. (2017). The Political Economy of Unfinished Development Projects: Corruption, Clientelism, or Collective Choice? American Political Science Review, 1-19.

Abstract D

“Research on the impact of parties on public policy, and on immigration policy in particular, often finds limited evidence of partisan influence. In this paper, we examine immigration policy-making in the UK coalition government. Our case provides evidence that parties in government can have more of an impact on policy than previous studies acknowledge, but this only becomes apparent when we open up the ‘black box’ between election outcomes and policy outputs. By examining how, when and why election pledges are turned into government policies, we show that partisan influence depends not only on dynamics between the coalition partners, but how these dynamics interact with interdepartmental conflicts and lobbying by organised interests. In-depth process tracing allows us to see these complex dynamics, which easily get lost in large-n comparisons of pledges and outputs, let alone outcomes.”

Hampshire, J., & Bale, T. (2014). New Administration, New Immigration Regime: Do Parties Matter After All? A UK Case Study. *West European Politics*, (August), 1–22.

Exercise 2 (15 points)

Calculate a 95% confidence interval for the following samples (5 points each):

- a. $\bar{X} = 50, s = 9, N = 90$
- b. $\bar{X} = 25, s = 2, N = 335$
- c. $\bar{X} = -10, s = 25, N = 121$

Exercise 3 (10 points)

Given a normally distributed population with mean = 60 and standard deviation = 15, are we likely to find a sample mean of 65 if we draw a random sample of size 400? Explain.

Exercise 4 (20 points)

A local politician (Mr Jones) wishes to know whether his constituents have positive or negative feelings towards him. He asks a resident political scientist to conduct a small (random) survey (N = 50). One question in the survey is:

What is your general feeling about councillor Jones?

- *Very positive*
- *Positive*
- *Neutral*
- *Negative*
- *Very negative*

In the resulting dataset the scores are translated to a scale ranging from -2 to +2, with the following frequencies found:

Table 1: Attitudes towards Councillor Jones

Attitude	Frequency
Very positive (+2)	15
Positive (+1)	8
Neutral	16
Negative (-1)	7
Very Negative (-2)	4

The political scientist confirms that the variable attitude is measured on the interval scale.

Can we conclude from this analysis that Mr Jones' constituents have a positive attitude towards him (that is, that the mean attitude is higher than 0)? Provide manual calculations as well as SPSS syntax and results. Provide an interpretation of the results.

Exercise 5 (15 points)

- a. Explain the (conceptual) difference between the standard deviation of a sample and the standard error of the mean. (8 pts)
- b. What is the difference between the standard error of the mean and the standard deviation of the sampling distribution of sample means? (7 pts)

Exercise 6 (20 pts)

- a. Create a frequency table for v0239 in Dataset MT_HW2.sav. Do not provide a screenshot of the table, but use the "Export" function. Also have SPSS calculate the mean for you. Please provide the SPSS syntax for uploading the dataset, creating the frequency table and calculating the mean into the document. (5 pts)
- b. What values are in the frequency table that should not be? Repair this and create a new frequency table & mean. Compare the new table & mean to the ones obtained in question a. Why is the mean lower than under a.? (5 pts)
- c. Have SPSS calculate the standard deviation and standard error of the mean of v0239 and provide the SPSS syntax. (5 pts)

- d. Show how you can calculate the standard error of the mean from the standard deviation by hand. (5pts)