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Data 400 – Capstone in Data Analytics

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Text Analysis of Political Discourse and Economic Development

in Newly Decolonized Countries

Context

* Modernization theory suggests that economic development fosters political freedom, but this relationship is less clear in newly decolonized countries. This project will explore the role of political discourse in shaping economic and political outcomes. By analyzing speeches, policy documents, and media coverage, we can uncover how leaders and institutions frame economic development and political freedom, and whether these narratives align with modernization theory.

Objectives

1. To analyze the relationship between political discourse and economic development in newly decolonized countries.
2. To identify common themes, narratives, and framing strategies used by political leaders in these countries.
3. To explore whether political discourse reflects or challenges modernization theory.

Research Questions

1. How do political leaders in newly decolonized countries frame economic development and political freedom in their public discourse?
2. Are there differences in discourse between countries that experienced rapid economic growth but retained authoritarian regimes (e.g., China, Vietnam) and those that transitioned to democracy (e.g., India, Botswana)?
3. How do cultural and historical factors influence the framing of economic and political issues in these countries?

Data Sources

* Textual Data
  + Political speeches and policy documents from leaders in newly decolonized countries (UN speeches, government websites)
  + Media coverage of economic and political issues (news articles from Reuters, BBC)
  + Historical documents (independence speeches, colonial-era texts)
* Economic and Political Indicators
  + GDP per capita (World Bank)
  + Political freedom scores (Freedom House)

Methodology

1. Text Collection and Preprocessing:

* Use web scraping to collect speeches, policy documents, and media articles from government websites and news outlets.
* Focus on a sample of newly decolonized countries (e.g., Vietnam, Algeria) and former colonial powers (e.g., France, UK) for comparison.
* Clean and preprocess text data

1. Text Analysis:

* Topic Modeling: Use Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) to identify common themes in political discourse (e.g., economic growth, democracy, corruption).
* Sentiment Analysis: Analyze the tone of discourse (positive, negative, neutral) toward economic development and political freedom.
* Framing Analysis: Identify how economic and political issues are framed (e.g., as opportunities, threats, or challenges).

1. Integration with Quantitative Data:

* Correlate textual findings (e.g., prevalence of democratic themes) with economic and political indicators (e.g., GDP growth, political freedom scores).

Expected Outcomes

* Identification of key themes and narratives in political discourse related to economic development and political freedom.
* Insights into how discourse differs between newly decolonized countries and former colonial powers.
* A deeper understanding of how cultural and historical factors shape political narratives and their alignment (or misalignment) with modernization theory.