Losers' Consent and Democratic Stability: Experimental Evidence from Chile and Estonia

Hector Bahamonde [1] Inga Saikkonen [2] Mart Trasberg [3]

Authors in alphabetical order. All contributed equally to this project.

[1]University of Turku, Finland

[2]Åbo Akademi, Finland

[3]Monterrey Tec, Mexico

December 14, 2023

Democratic Backsliding

- Parece existir un consenso en que algunas democracias están en riesgo de retroceder (*democratic backsliding*).
- Estos retrocesos han sido estudiados en un sinnúmero de casos.
  - Kaufman and Haggard (2019) explican que "a transition to competitive authoritarianism in the **United States** is unlikely, although not impossible."
  - Kreko and Zsolt (2018) estudian el caso de **Hungria**.
  - Bochsler and Andreas (2020) estudian el caso de **Rusia**.

Democratic Backsliding: A "Winners Bias"

Desafortunadamente, la majoría ha concentrado sus esfuerzos en cómo el **ejecutivo** *agranda* sus poderes.

- Haggard and Kaufman (2021a, p. 27) definen "[d]emocratic backsliding is the incremental erosion of institutions [...] that results from the actions of [...] ***elected* governments**."
- Pérez-Liñán (2018, p. 2) explica que "most threats to democracy originate in the ***executive***, not in congress."
- Corrales (2020, p. 41) explica que "electoral irregularities contributed to democratic backsliding in Venezuela under ***chavista* rule**."

What about the electoral lossers?

Qué ocurre con los que pierden la elección? Existen diferencias sistemáticas en cuanto la tolerancia de acciones no democráticas entre "ganadores" y "perdedores"?

Nuestro Paper: "El baile de los que sobran"

- A diferencia de la mayoría de quienes estudian posibles violaciones de los principios democráticos por parte de los "ganadores," nosotros estudiamos a los "**perdedores**" electorales.
- Hicimos un survey experiment (pre-registrado) en dos democracias recientes, Chile (y Estonia).
- Entender si los votantes que apoyaron al **candidato perdedor** están más abiertos a respaldar acciones anti-sistémicas **contra el ganador**.
- Para esto, incluimos una teoría enfocada en *pérdidas* y *loss aversion* ("*prospect theory*," e.g., Kahneman and Tversky 1979).

Findings no conforman con nuestras espectativas iniciales

Encontramos que los votantes de **Kast** (perdedores) *no* son mas proclives que los votantes de **Boric** (ganadores) a apoyar acciones no democraticas (protestas antisistémicas) que pongan en peligro el *status quo*.

Democratic Backsliding

- Bermeo (2016) "**introduced** the landmark essay on democratic backsliding" (Haggard and Kaufman 2021b, p. 27).
- Democratic institutions, norms, and values are gradually eroded **within** a political system.
- Erosion of civil liberties, undermining of free and fair elections, and the **concentration of power in the executive branch**.

Prospect Theory

- **Losses loom larger than gains**: individuals "give more weight to losses than to comparable gains" (Levy 1992, p. 171).
- **Loss aversion**: individuals "are more concerned with preventing a decline than increasing gains" (Levy 1997, p. 89).
- **Asymmetric decision making**: "[I]ndividuals tend to be risk averse in a domain of gains, and relatively risk seeking in a domain of losses" (McDermott 1998, p. 18).

Pre-Registered Hypothesis

Argument

Respondents who voted for the candidate/party that lost the the last election (Kast) would be more likely to choose a candidate who supports anti-systemic actions (protests) against the current government than respondents in the "winning side."

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

Conjoint Experiment

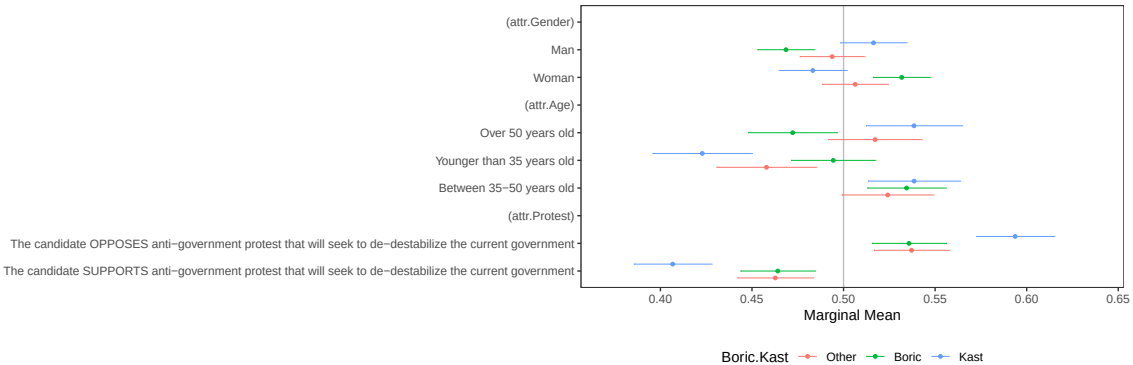
- Disenamos un conjoint experiment (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014).
- La muestra es representativa a nivel pais ($n = 741$).
- Fully randomized design (no constrains).
- Representatividad estadística de género y partido.
- Batería de socio-demográficos, intención política (Kast, Boric), evaluación de la democracia.

Dimension	Attribute Set
Gender	Male, Female.
Age	Younger than 35, Between 35-50, Over 50.
Protest	The candidate OPPOSES anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government, The candidate SUPPORTS anti-government protest that will seek to de-destabilize the current government

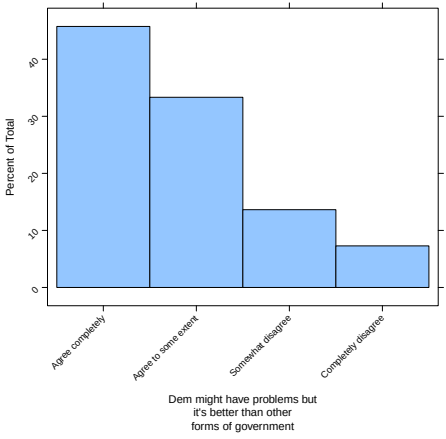
Subgroup Marginal Means (MM)

- We depart from standard AMCE analyses (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014) and instead compute **subgroup marginal means** (Leeper, Hobolt, and Tilley 2020).
- In practice, when using marginal means, there's no need to set a reference category.
- "In a forced-choice conjoint design, the grand mean is by definition 0.5" (p. 209).

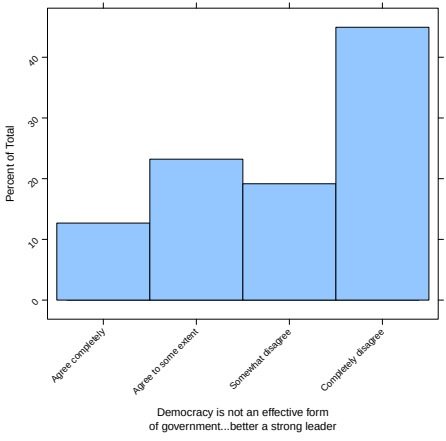
Subgroup Marginal Means (MM): Boric, Kast



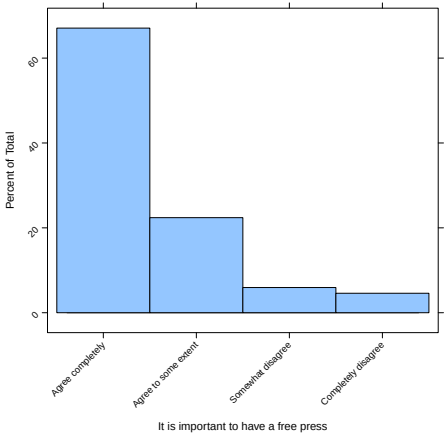
Other Descriptive Results: Support for Democracy



Other Descriptive Results: Support for Democracy



Other Descriptive Results: Support for Democracy



Main Takeaways: More Questions Than Answers

- Hipotetizamos que los *electoral losers* estarian mas dispuestos a apoyar acciones no-democraticas (protestas anti-sistemicas).
- Registramos esta hipotesis.
- Sin embargo, no encontramos resultados que van en linea con nuestras expectativas iniciales.
- Preguntas para ustedes: **cometimos un error en mezclar a la derecha con "protestas"?**

Thank you

📷 to check updates on this project.

Summary Stats

Table: Summary Statistics

Variable	N	Percent
Age	741	
... 18-24	120	16%
... 25-34	172	23%
... 35-44	146	20%
... 45-54	146	20%
... M¡c3¿¡a1¿s de 55	157	21%
Gender	741	
... Man	315	43%
... Woman	422	57%
... Otro/Prefiero no decir	4	1%
Education	741	
... Educaci¡c3¿¡b3¿n b¡c3¿¡a1¿sica completa (hasta octavo b¡c3¿¡a1¿sico).	10	1%
... Educaci¡c3¿¡b3¿n media completa.	192	26%
... Educaci¡c3¿¡b3¿n t¡c3¿¡a9¿cnico-profesional completa.	214	29%
... Educaci¡c3¿¡b3¿n universitaria completa.	270	36%
... Magister o Doctorado completo.	42	6%
... Menos que educaci¡c3¿¡b3¿n b¡c3¿¡a1¿sica (menos que octavo b¡c3¿¡a1¿sico).	2	0%
... Otro/Prefiero no decir	11	1%
Income	741	
... De $1000.001 a $2.000.000 mensuales liquidos	155	21%
... De $110.001 a $150.000 mensuales liquidos	7	1%
... De $150.001 a $225.000 mensuales liquidos	20	3%
... De $2.000.001 a $3.000.000 mensuales liquidos	48	6%
... De $225.001 a $350.000 mensuales liquidos	35	5%
... De $3.000.001 a $4.500.000 mensuales liquidos	31	4%
... De $35.001 a $75.000 mensuales liquidos	14	2%
... De $350.001 a $450.000 mensuales liquidos	48	6%
... De $450.001 a $550.000 mensuales liquidos	68	9%
... De $550.001 a $700.000 mensuales liquidos	86	12%
... De $700.001 a $1.000.000 mensuales liquidos	146	20%
... De $75.001 a $110.000 mensuales liquidos	18	2%
... Menos de $35.000 mensuales liquidos	28	4%
... M¡c3¿¡a1¿s de $4.500.000 mensuales liquidos	16	2%
... No sabe / No contesta	21	3%

Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27 (1): 5–19.

Corrales, Javier. 2020. "Democratic Backsliding Through Electoral Irregularities." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, no. 109, 41–65.

Haggard, Stephan, and Robert Kaufman. 2021a. "The Anatomy of Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 32 (4): 27–41.

———. 2021b. "The Anatomy of Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 32 (4): 27–41.

Hainmueller, Jens, Daniel Hopkins, and Teppei Yamamoto. 2014. "Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments." *Political Analysis* 22 (1): 1–30.

Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1979. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk." *Econometrica* 47 (2): 263.

Kaufman, Robert, and Stephan Haggard. 2019. "Democratic Decline in the United States: What Can We Learn from Middle-Income Backsliding?" *Perspectives on Politics* 17 (02): 417–432.

Leeper, Thomas, Sara Hobolt, and James Tilley. 2020. "Measuring Subgroup Preferences in Conjoint Experiments." *Political Analysis* 28 (2): 207–221.

Levy, Jack. 1992. "An Introduction to Prospect Theory." *Political Psychology* 13 (2): 171–186.

———. 1997. "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly* 41 (1): 87–112.

McDermott, Rose. 1998. *Risk-Taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy.*, 771. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal. 2018. "Impeachment Or Backsliding? Threats To Democracy In The Twentyfirst Century." *Revista Brasileira de Ciencias Sociais* 33 (98): 1–15.