Research Profile FORM

**RESEARCH DESIGN FORM (GREY BITS ARE ILLUSTRATIVE TEXT ONLY)**

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| Section 1: Introduction | |
| 1. **Researcher Name:** | A.N. Author |
| 1. **Research Project Title:** | Does international aid weaken political accountability? |
| 1. **One sentence summary of research question:** | International aid provided to governments of developing countries may make them better able to meet the demands of their citizens. However because they may become less dependent on resources for citizens they may have weaker motivations to address their concerns. |
| 1. **Substantive motivation: [half page]** | A positive answer to this question has implications for optimal aid policies. |
| 1. **Theoretical motivation**   **[half page]** | This study will help shed light on how accountability in general works. If accountability derives primarily from underlying competition over access to political office then increased gains from office might increase accountability. If however it derives from control over the purse strings then it might weaken it. |
| 1. **Key literatures/debates to which this will contribute:**   **[half page]** | This work will speak to theoretical work on agency and representation; for example Besley’s work on Principled Agents; it also address work on accountability in Africa, such as accounts given in Bratton and van der Walle (Democratic Experiments). Finally it addresses discussion on dependency including older work on dependency theory (eg Frank, The Development of Underdevelopment) and newer work on the adverse effects of aid (eg Moyo’s Dead Aid). |
| 1. **Primary Hypothesis**   **[half page]** | When countries receive greater access to aid their governments become less responsive to their citizen’s demands. |
| Section 2: Identification Strategy | |
| 1. **X:** *What are the independent variables?* | Strategy 1: Aid received |
| 1. **Y:** *What are your dependent variables? What is your primary outputs and outcome of interest (what data is needed)?* | Strategy 1: Overall Corruption  Strategy 2: Politician responses to citizens requests |
| 1. **Units.** *What are the “units of analysis” for your study. This might be countries, counties, politicians, schools…* | Strategy1: Country / Years  Strategy 2: Politicians [The question asks about the units on which you take measurements and not the scales used for measurement] |
| 1. **Identification**   *How can you make the case that you are identifying causal effects? For quantitative work, how can you rule out confounders? For qualitative work, what are the observable implications of your causal theory? What processes would you expect to observe if your theory is correct, and can these help to rule out rival theories?* | For my quantitative analysis I will use an instrumental variables approach and try to instrument for aid by measuring income shocks among traditional donors  For my qualitative analysis I will look for evidence that politicians became more responsive to the demands of donors in the run up to or following increases in aid; I will try to assess the amount of time spent by politicians attending to the concerns of donors in at least three episodes. I will also look for evidence that they became less concerned about threats from other politicians. |
| Section 3: Sample, Data, & Implementation Strategies | |
| 1. **Sample**   **[half page]**  *How many units (of X, Y, and relevant clusters) will you study? What is your sampling frame? How will you select your sample?* | Strategy 1: 150 countries \* 20 years. All available units will be selected.  Strategy 2: 20 countries \* 10 government offices in each. Clustering at the country level. I will seek to generate new measures for the 10 most aid dependent and the 10 least aid dependent LDCs.  For the qualitative analysis I will select four countries based on the model developed in Strategy 1 (cases with high aid / low aid times high corruption / low corruption). |
| 1. **Measurement strategy:**   **[half page]**  *Describe measurement of Y,X, and auxiliary data. Be clear about units of analysis, methods (admin data, surveys, games, other), # of data collection rounds. If you are doing qualitative work, where will you find the information you need? Which archives, news sources, historical texts?* | I will use IMF information on aid dependence (all aid provided to governments as a share of government revenue)  For strategy 1: I will use ICRG measures of corruption  For strategy 2 I will generate new measures by sending requests to government offices seeking information on a service.  For qualitative work I will seek to do telephone interviews with politicians and attempt to assess typical allocation of time to different types of tasks. |
| 1. **Heterogeneity [3-5 sentences]**   *Do you expect the treatment to work differently for certain individuals / groups / communities?* | I expect the effects to be stronger when donors also provide security to governments and not simply financial support. |
| 1. **IRB / Human subjects**   *Will you be working with human subjects, or with data that is personally identified?* | I will seek IRB approval both for strategy 2 and for my interviews. |
| Section 4: Analysis & Threats | |
| 1. **Analysis strategy** *[half page]*   *How will you draw conclusions from your evidence? How will you know if your theory is wrong?* | I will use regression analysis for strategies 1 and 2 and reject my hypothesis using a classical t-test and a cutoff of p = 0.05.  I will reject the hypothesis if I fail to find qualitative evidence that politicians feel beholden to donor interests or that they feel less threatened by domestic political competition. |
| 1. **Threats to internal validity**   *(eg. attrition, spillovers and its channels, Hawthorn effects, John Henry effects)* | For all strategies I worry that countries and politicians are receiving aid because they are attendant to donor concerns and not the other way around. The instrumental variables strategy will help with this. In the interviews too I hope to get a sense of whether politicians incentives changed when more aid became available. |
| 1. **Threats to external validity**   *(eg scope conditions, representativeness of sample).* | For strategy 2 I worry that the inferences are limited by the types of services I can reasonably request at a distance. |
| 1. **Writing strategy**   *Provide a table of contents.* | Ch 1: **Theoretical motivation**; literature discussion; include a small model to show two different possible effects of increased aid. [15 pages]  Ch 2: **Quantitative analysis 1**: Cross national analysis using IMF and ICRG data [15 pages]  Ch 3: **Quantitative analysis 2**: Describe strategy for collection of data on citizen requests; illustrate data; Report results based on aid levels [15 pages]  Ch 4: **Case studies / Qualitative analysis**: Describe sample selection for case studies. Describe interview procedures. Summarize evidence gathered that supports or goes against the hypothesis. [15 pages]  Ch 5: **Conclusions / Discussion** [10 pages] |
| Section 5: Packaging | |
| 1. **Marketing strategy**   *How will you present your results to general readers? Describe any creative dissemination strategies.* | Small video showing graphics and figures with voice over explaining key findings. Include some audio fragments from interviews |

**MIDA summary**

M: What are your background assumptions about how the world works: what are the variables and how are they connected

I: What is your inquiry

D: What is your data strategy

A: What is your answer strategy