Electoral Effects of Development Aid: Experimental Evidence from Sierra Leone

K. Grieco, N. Meriggi and M. Voors

Comments by Fernando Mello[1]

[1]Department of Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles

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Summary

- Evaluate the electoral effects of a recent public health intervention in Sierra Leone on 2018 election result

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- In 2017, 300 villages in Kono Districts were randomly selected to receive a One Health intervention
- While communities were randomly selected, the choice of Kono District and seven study chiefdoms was made with heavy political involvement

Methods

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- Treatment of basic aliments including dehydration and worms
- Disease surveillance (monitoring and reporting community diseases)
- CAHWs received a started kit of medicine to treat basic illnesses and tools for community services

Hypotheses

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- Voters are more likely to vote for incumbent politicians when they attribute the development project to incumbent government

Estimators

Difference in means by block: Analyze as You Randomize!

HorvitzThompson estimator

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If you randomize with differential probabilities, weight by the assignment probabilities

Estimators 2

Heterogeneous Treatment Effect: be careful with sample size

Remember that you need 16 times the sample size to estimate an interaction

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Heterogeneous Treatment Effect: post-treatment variables

Conditioning on post-treatment variables eliminates the advantages of randomization and produce bias (JM Montgomery et al 2018)

Assumptions and violations

- Spillover effects?

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- Excludability?

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- SUTVA violation?

Suggestions

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- Make it clear that the PAP is being submitted after the treatment was assigned and before analyzing the data

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- Power Analysis to show the size of effect you expect

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- Ethical discussion if you fell could affect election outcome

Great Project!