

Women Also Know Stuff

Challenging the Gender Gap in Political Sophistication

Patrick W. Kraft

7th Annual General Conference of the European Political Science Association Milan, Italy

22-24 June 2017



Stony Brook University

Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)		
Obama (-)		
Romney (+)		
Romney (-)		

Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)	I think he is honest, has good intentions.	
Obama (-)	I don't feel he is up for the job, he doesn't really know how to get things accomplished from idea to actual reality.	
Romney (+)	He comes across as an honest person and I feel that financially he would be better for the country.	
Romney (-)	I am a moderate conservative and there are some things about anti-gay rights that I don't support.	

Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)	I think he is honest, has good intentions.	He's got a hot wife. Sound mind. Bill Clinton, the best president we ever had, is voting for him. He's not in any type of scandal and is the perfect president for us now.
Obama (-)	I don't feel he is up for the job, he doesn't really know how to get things accomplished from idea to actual reality.	
Romney (+)	He comes across as an honest person and I feel that financially he would be better for the country.	
Romney (-)	I am a moderate conservative and there are some things about anti-gay rights that I don't support.	Everything.

Who scores higher on political knowledge?

Both respondents scored equally on the conventional political knowledge measure in the 2012 ANES!






















Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)	I think he is honest, has good intentions.	He's got a hot wife. Sound mind. Bill Clinton, the best president we ever had, is voting for him. He's not in any type of scandal and is the perfect president for us now.
Obama (-)	I don't feel he is up for the job, he doesn't really know how to get things accomplished from idea to actual reality.	
Romney (+)	He comes across as an honest person and I feel that financially he would be better for the country.	
Romney (-)	I am a moderate conservative and there are some things about anti-gay rights that I don't support.	Everything.

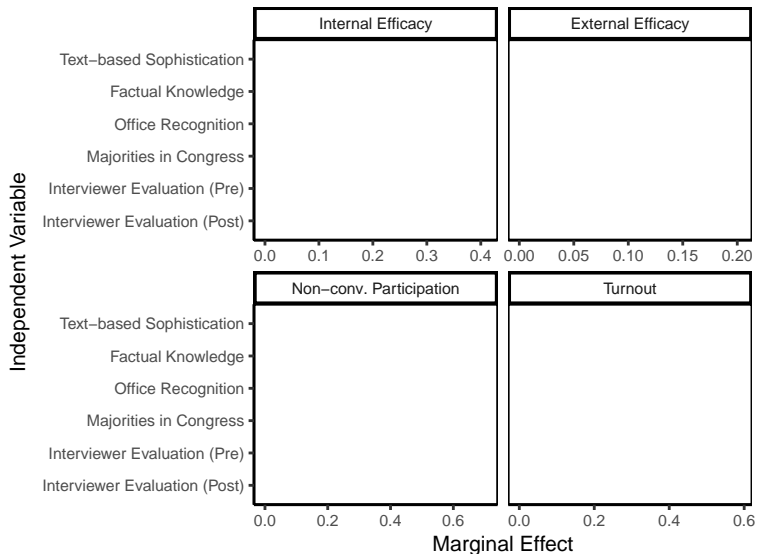
Validating the Measure I

Text-based Sophistication	Factual Knowledge	Office Recognition	Majorities in Congress	Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)	Interviewer Evaluation (Post)	Text-based Sophistication
						Factual Knowledge
						Office Recognition
						Majorities in Congress
						Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)
						Interviewer Evaluation (Post)

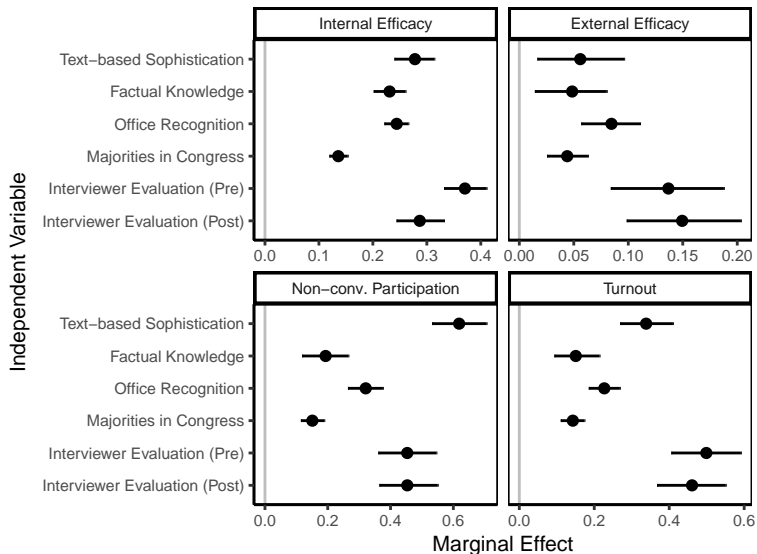
Validating the Measure I

Text-based Sophistication	Factual Knowledge	Office Recognition	Majorities in Congress	Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)	Interviewer Evaluation (Post)	
	Corr: 0.271	Corr: 0.277	Corr: 0.221	Corr: 0.437	Corr: 0.369	Text-based Sophistication
		Corr: 0.503	Corr: 0.385	Corr: 0.314	Corr: 0.366	Factual Knowledge
			Corr: 0.478	Corr: 0.48	Corr: 0.554	Office Recognition
				Corr: 0.394	Corr: 0.426	Majorities in Congress
					Corr: 0.624	Interviewer Evaluation (Pre)
						Interviewer Evaluation (Post)

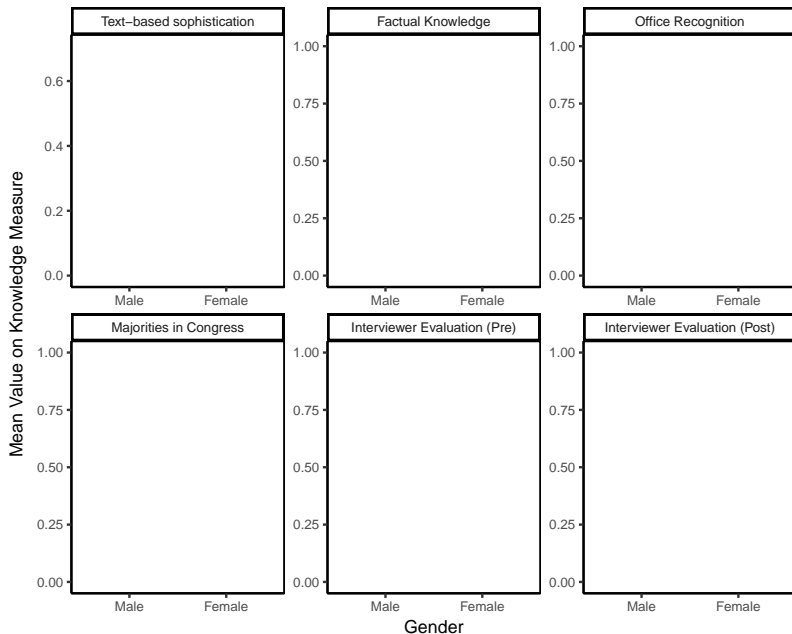
Validating the Measure II



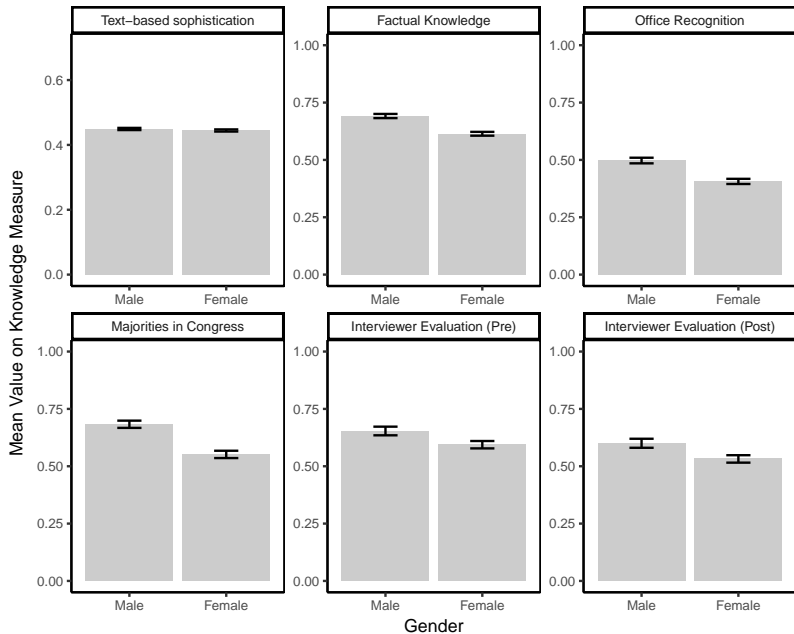
Validating the Measure II



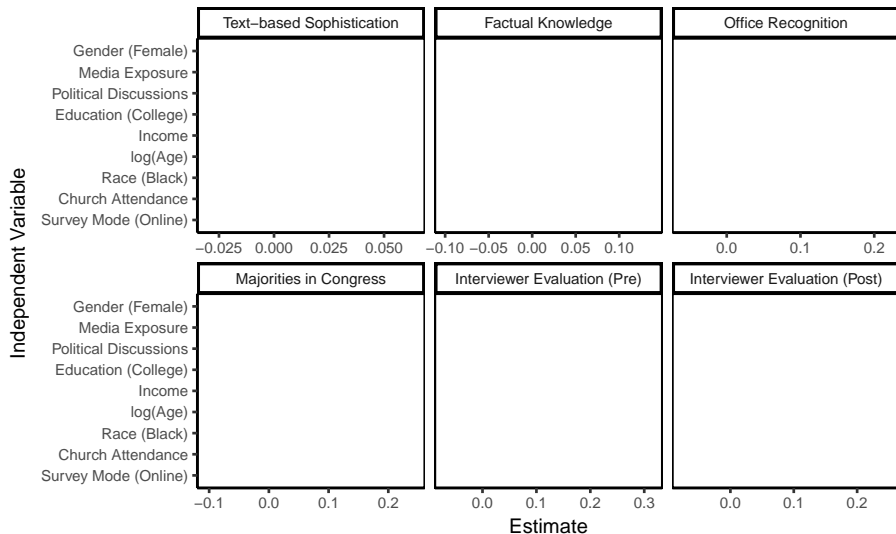
Assessing the Gender Gap I



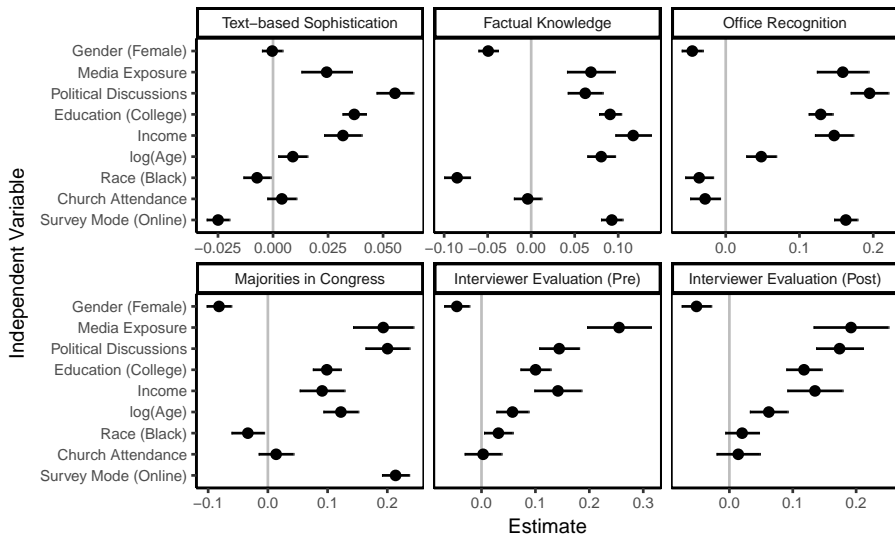
Assessing the Gender Gap I



Assessing the Gender Gap II



Assessing the Gender Gap II



Conclusion

- ▶ Women might score lower than men on **factual knowledge** about political institutions, but there are no differences in the **sophistication** of expressed political attitudes.
- ▶ We observe **theoretically meaningful** variation in the **complexity** of verbatim open-ended responses.
- ▶ Text-based sophistication is conceptually closer to the **structure of belief systems** than conventional measures (e.g., Tetlock, 1983; Luskin, 1987).

Who scores higher on political knowledge?

	Respondent A	Respondent B
Obama (+)	I think he is honest, has good intentions.	He's got a hot wife. Sound mind. Bill Clinton, the best president we ever had, is voting for him. He's not in any type of scandal and is the perfect president for us now.
Obama (-)	I don't feel he is up for the job, he doesn't really know how to get things accomplished from idea to actual reality.	
Romney (+)	He comes across as an honest person and I feel that financially he would be better for the country.	
Romney (-)	I am a moderate conservative and there are some things about anti-gay rights that I don't support.	Everything.

Thank you very much for your attention!

Manuscript and code available at:

<https://github.com/pwkraft/knowledge>

Comments, questions?

patrick.kraft@stonybrook.edu

References

- Luskin, Robert C. 1987. "Measuring political sophistication." *American Journal of Political Science* 31 (4): 856–899.
- Tetlock, Philip E. 1983. "Cognitive style and political ideology." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 45 (1): 118.