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Editorial Team of Network Science via submission portal

Dear Colleagues:

This letter accompanies our submission of a manuscript for your consideration. The manuscript “A Latent Factor Approach to Measuring State Preferences” develops a network based latent variable approach to measuring state preferences. We believe that this is a flexible framework that can be used to estimate unobservable concepts for a variety of phenomena political scientists are interested in studying.

In this paper, we focus on state preferences and provide a comparison of our approach to two prominent extant measures: S-scores and UN ideal point measures. We show that that our latent factor approach has better face validity than incumbent measures and that its expected effect in a regression on the initiation of militarized interstate disputes aligns with what scholars would expect. Most importantly, we show that by using our measure we can generate substantially more accurate out-of-sample prediction of MIDDs than measures currently used in the literature.

We look forward to your evaluation of this paper.

Respectfully submitted,

The Authors
