

The code is very well-commented, organized and simple, and I was able to replicate everything they need using the replication code. Some suggestions:

- Since you are using cross-sectional Afro-barometer survey data, there may be unit heterogeneity among countries so some local independent variables may be unobservable. A potential solution to prevent omitted variable bias may be the random effects model (letting each country have its own intercept) if that seems to be a concern.
- I agree to your comment that the original paper is using large number of fixed effects and that you should test whether the subsets of the fixed effects parameters can be deleted for the sake of degree of freedom/parsimony. Just a quick reminder that though the fixed effects are not jointly significant, ad-hoc dropping of variables should still avoid being atheoretical.
- For your further robustness checks, here is a quasi-replication paper for your original paper that use the same typology but a new dataset and extra robustness check methods: http://eprints.imtlucca.it/2738/1/WP_2015_8.pdf. Specifically, Dincecco et al. controlled for other observable characteristics, tested the influence of unobservable features, and showed that their results are robust to sample changes and intermediate state development outcomes.