Recitation 3 Randomization

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Since we have an extra week for this problem set, I will set up the labs in two parts. The first part is mostly dealing with data manipulation and visualization and the second part with randomization. Wednesday and Friday will cover randomization in depth and William is obviously better suited to introduce that information than I. Next Tuesday we will revisit it with some examples in lab.

Today, I will walk you through how to approach a dataset you are interested in working with and exploring what it holds. For today, we will be using Afrobarometer's Round 7 data. Afrobarometer is a public attitudes survey conducted across Sub-Saharan Africa every few years. I have quite a bit of experience with Afrobarometer data, though I have not used round 7 yet. The first step is to find out what format the data are stored in and find a way to easily access and read the data contained. Once you do that, it can be a good idea to write the data into a more universal file format. Some people save as .txt, though I prefer .csv.

These data are in .sav and unless you have SPSS on your computer or want to make a trip to the lab just to see the data, I recommend using the foreign package in R to read SPSS files and then save them in a better format. The two commands after the file name are useful for reading data. The use value labels turns those labels into factors, which is helpful for things like regions and countries but I prefer to have them as FALSE since it keeps. The to data frame prevents the reading as coming from a list and then needing to further manipulate it into a more readily-accessible object. Note, reading this way can take some time, even with relatively small, about 50k datasets.

Once we have the data, it is a good idea to check out what the structure is and what the data look like. This is also a good time to keep the codebook (assuming one accompanies the dataset, which is not always true) handy and look through the variables of interest to you. Further, make sure to keep an eye for alternative variables and potential robustness checks that someone may ask you to run to strengthen your argument. I am about to limit the data severely for time purposes, but it is typically not a good idea to do this, you want to keep as much data as possible.

Now that we have a limited number of variables we may be interested in, we should check their codings.

Next, we will create some visualizations of the data and see what our distributions are. For this, I think using ggarange or multiplot are useful tools. That way, we can create plots in bulk and visualize about 6 at a time.

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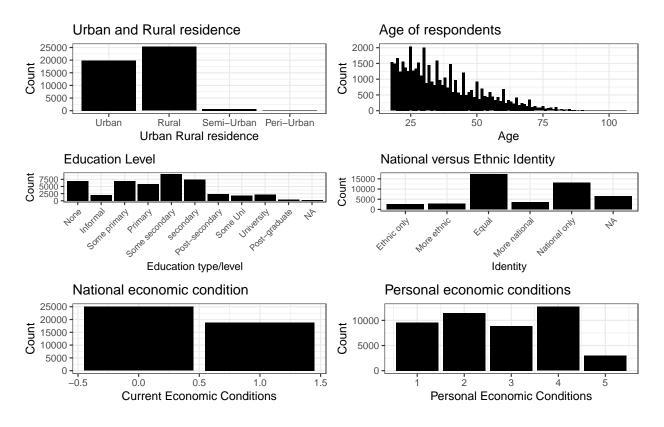
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   1200 5093 4863 6170
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            9555 11496
                           8914 12712
                                          3010
                                                    19
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```

Now that we have the data cleaned and plots made, we can take a look at them. The step above takes a decent bit of time, particularly with new datasets and formats you are unfamiliar with. Finding a codebook

is useful, but keep in mind that codebooks for panel or temporal data may shift over time. Take note of reverse codings as well, where two questions next to each other may be coded in opposite directions as you suspect. Finally, codebooks and datasets have errors, use intuition at times when you are unsure, also ask other people that use them.



A few things stand out to check. First, Most respondents are urban or rural. One way to deal with this to make a binary would be to select either urban or rural, and make those values a 1 and make all otters a 0. This lets you keep the data if you operate under the assumption that whichever category is a 1 is distinct enough from the others to make a theoretical difference. If you cannot make that assumption, do not combine them. Moreover, age has some interesting trends that are likely non-random. We can explore that further later, but it seems like certain values are showing up at a much higher rate than they should. We would expect that people residing at home during the enumeration time may be systematically different in some way, and good survey companies will give you these data. AB records time of interview, number of times approached, and outlines their rigorous methodology for who is to be selected at each household. In this case, it is likely people reporting the nearest age ending in 0 or 5, though I have not checked. Education is clearly right-skewed and indicates most respondents have not completed the equivalent of high school. For national versus ethnic identity, this is actually a shift into neutrality and national identity that may be driven by social-desirability bias. In previous rounds, this question is strongly right-skewed. Lots of NAs in this question as well, another indication of cautious respondents. We can see in the bottom two figures that few respondents think that economic conditions are excellent for either themselves or their country. Let's say we want to test for the correlation of perceptions of current economic conditions on perceptions of naitonal economic conditions, which is one correlate of voting behvior in the US.

```
[1] "id"
##
                                 "country"
                                                         "urbrur"
##
        "region"
                                 "age"
                                                         "language"
        "religion"
                                 "education"
                                                         "party_id"
                                "ethnic_id"
   [10] "party election pref
                                                         "nat_eth_id"
   [13] "current direction"
                                 "personal econ cond"
```

```
## GLM estimation, family = binomial(link = "logit"), Dep. Var.: current_direction
## Observations: 11,241
## Standard-errors: Standard
##
                       Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|))
##
  (Intercept)
                      -0.456294
                                  1.084600 -0.42069 0.673982
## personal econ cond 0.497471
                                  0.020402 24.38400 < 2.2e-16 ***
  ... 29 variables were removed because of collinearity (ethnic_id110, ethnic_id164 and 27 others [ful
##
## Signif. codes:
                   0 '*** 0.001 '** 0.01 '* 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
  Log-Likelihood: -5,873.2
                              Adj. Pseudo R2: 0.15252
              BIC: 18,452.7
                                Squared Cor.: 0.295059
```

We see a large substantive effect that is statistically reliable. This is a logit remember, so the coefficient is not super useful by itself. Next steps would e something like marginal effects plots. I am doing a bit more data manipulation for time purposes and clarity. I am coarsening the levels of urban/rural as well as education and only including those two and age as controls. This will allow for a fairly clear marginal effects plot.

```
##
                factor
                           AME
                                    SE
                                              z
                                                     p
                                                         lower
                                                                 upper
##
                   age
                        0.0004 0.0002
                                         2.2587 0.0239
                                                        0.0001
##
            education1 -0.0316 0.0064
                                        -4.9128 0.0000 -0.0442 -0.0190
##
            education2 -0.0927 0.0084 -10.9986 0.0000 -0.1092 -0.0761
   personal_econ_cond 0.1137 0.0020
                                        58.2882 0.0000 0.1099 0.1175
##
##
                urbrur -0.0453 0.0059 -7.6971 0.0000 -0.0568 -0.0338
```

