

201 Comparative Government Revision (II)

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Aims of this Session

- ▶ Understand the empirical developments in the field
- ▶ Understand how to assess empirical contributions
- ▶ Appreciate the importance of including a discussion of the empirical evidence in your exam answer

Trade-Offs

Table 1: Trade-Off Case Study vs Large N

	Case Study	Cross-Case Study
Research Goals		
Hypothesis	Generating	Testing
Validity	Internal	External
Causal insight	Mechanisms	Effects
Scope of proposition	Deep	Broad
Empirical Factors		
Population of Cases	Heterogenous	Homogenous
Causal Strength	Strong	Weak
Useful Variation	Rare	Common
Data Availability	Concentrated	Dispersed

Source: (Gerring, 2006)

More complicated than that

- ▶ Discuss the following trade-offs: generating/testing hypothesis, internal/external validity, concentrated/dispersed data availability, homogeneous/heterogeneous population by comparing the two research designs and results below:
 - ▶ Suppose you run an experiment (200 participants) and you present them with fake news. The treated group is now more against the incumbent.
 - ▶ Suppose you do a case-study (interviews) in trying to understand why people drink more water during summer.

Activity!

- ▶ Question 1: The same logic that is explicated in discussions of quantitative research methods underlies or should underline the best qualitative research (KKV). Discuss.
- ▶ Question 2: (Historical) Qualitative analysis should be used to complement/understand contemporary quantitative results. Discuss.

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- ▶ Grey areas? Quantitative researchers advised to make pre-analysis plan (say what regression they run, with what data, etc.). Shouldn't qualitative researchers do the same?

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 - ▶ What if we don't do history properly? Remember [Kreuzer \(2010\)](#) Remember historical resources biases
- ▶ Consider [Capoccia and Ziblatt \(2010\)](#). Is our understanding about democratization limited if we study it without history?

Suggestions Question 2 (Contd)

- ▶ Systematic vs Non-systematic Variable Discrimination
 - ▶ Systematic differences more relevant for generalizability.
 - ▶ Examples in Britain: systematic differences: properties of the district, non-systematic weather at the time of the election.
 - ▶ But: Non-systematic may be critical junctures. Examples: strikes in the 19th century.
 - ▶ So, historical events often serve as the tipping points, permanently affecting the relations between the variables.

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 - ▶ But: Non-systematic may be critical junctures. Examples: strikes in the 19th century.
 - ▶ So, historical events often serve as the tipping points, permanently affecting the relations between the variables.
 - ▶ Qualitative research that turns up “nonsystematic variables” is often the best way to uncover such tipping points.
 - ▶ Quantitative research can then be reorganized around the shifts in variable interaction that such tipping points signal.
 - ▶ Qualitative research may not only “peel away layers of unsystematic fluff from the hard core of systematic variables but also to assist researchers to understand shifts in the value of the systematic variables.” (Tarrow, 1995)
- ▶ Triangulation?

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 - ▶ Case studies allows heterogenous populations. Large-N does not (unit-homogeneity assumption). Trade-off between N (number of observations) and K (number of variables). But if no control variables needed, or it is relatively "cheap" to add one more case, is Large-N the way?

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 - ▶ Example: studies of successful revolutions often possess characteristics of unsuccessful ones as well. If we do not sample well the revolutionary episodes, how can we ascribe particular characteristics to particular developments?
- ▶ Caveat: Usually when we say Large-N we mean cross-sections. How about longitudinal cross-national data?

Activity!

- ▶ Assess the methodology and/or implications of the following contributions/observations:
 - ▶ Downs (1957)
 - ▶ Moore (1966)
 - ▶ Majority Cycling (Riker 1986)

Suggestions

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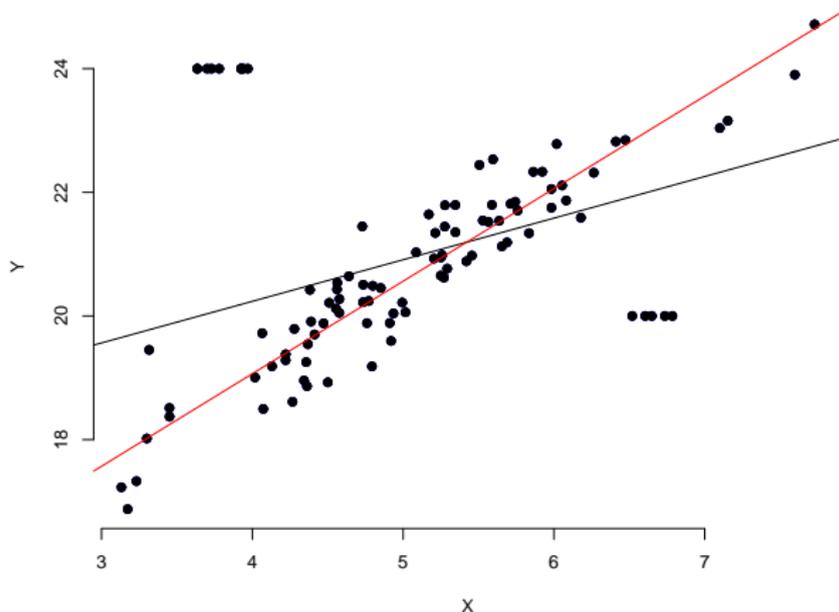
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- ▶ Majority Cycling (Riker 1986, McKelvey chaos theorem) – The generic instability of majority rule is a proposition consistent with any pattern of empirical observation about policy making: no change, incremental change or radical change; It is unclear what potential observations would test the predictions of this model, insofar as it predicts “anything can happen”; Instability is rare (Tullock 1981); Why so much stability? But are ex-post explanations ok? Would experiments help? But labs differ from legislatures, no expectations of future interactions.

Democratization Developments

- ▶ Classical Tradition on the development of political regimes in Europe (Moore, 1966)
 - ▶ Explained sweeping national trajectories of regime development, focusing less on short-term moments of regime transformation of the kind stressed in, say, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986)
 - ▶ Downplay international factors and focus on domestic variables on democratization (see, by contrast, Levitsky and Way 2011)
 - ▶ Overemphasis on class as determinant of regime change

Activity

- ▶ Suppose X is log of GDP per capita and Y is democracy. What is happening?



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- ▶ Circular causality - is democracy endogenous to development? Lipset vs Boix and Stokes Endogenous demo – demo as more than the short-run product of its socioeconomic correlates and perhaps the result of a longer historical chain?

Studying Demo with History

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 - ▶ Democratization in Europe multidimensional.
Mono-dimensional redistributive approach limited.
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 - ▶ Often, both the Left and the Right are represented by multiple parties; multiple possibilities for strategic coalitions over specific institutional reforms that may not replicate class divisions
 - ▶ European political parties historically quite flexible in reshaping their social constituencies to adapt to social change. Party ideologies, conflicts, and alliances within and between parties and the relationships of parties with interest groups are likely to generate independent incentives for institutional reform, just as (more/less?) important as those driven by class.

Exam-Prep Hands On

- ▶ Question 1: To what extent has judicialization been the result of intentional allocation of political power to judiciaries by elected officials?
- ▶ Question 2: Is coherent policy-making necessarily more difficult in a federal than a unitary system?
- ▶ Question 3: How far is democratization the result of socio-economic conditions?

Question 1

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- ▶ Endogenous institutions?

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- ▶ Boix and A&R – the main struggle between masses and elites is centered on universal suffrage - is that all democracy is about? Micro-foundation – pro-democratic preferences once a certain level of inequality is reached – untested?

Question 3 (Contd)

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- ▶ Boix and A&R – the main struggle between masses and elites is centered on universal suffrage - is that all democracy is about? Micro-foundation – pro-democratic preferences once a certain level of inequality is reached – untested?

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- ▶ Good Luck!