

Survey experiments

Week 3 (Regular course)

Duration: 12 hours/3 days

Course Description

This short course will introduce students to the logics and practice of experimental research in Political Science. We will discuss the framework and assumptions used to think about causality, and the different approaches. Then, we will concentrate on survey experiments. We will focus on their uses and varieties, as well as on the design, implementation and analysis. Each session will consist of an introductory lecture and a hands-on practical session. Students will be able to use either Stata or R for the practical sessions.

Contents

1. Introduction: Experiments and causal identification
 - (a) The potential outcomes framework
 - (b) Randomization
 - (c) Assumptions and violations
 - (d) Treatment effects: ATE, ITT, CACE, CATE
 - (e) Types of experiments in social sciences.

2. Survey experiments
 - (a) Origin, history and evolution of survey experiments
 - (b) Uses of survey experiments
 - (c) Survey methodology
 - (d) Measurement/sensitive issues
 - (e) Causal identification
 - (f) Types of survey experiments
 - i. Priming
 - ii. Framing
 - iii. Endorsement
 - iv. List experiments
 - v. Conjoint experiments
 - vi. Natural experiments and quasi-experiments in surveys

3. Designing, implementing and analyzing survey experiments effectively

(a) Design

- Pre-registration
- Ethics & deception
- Precision
- Realism, pre-treatment
- Attention & Satisficing
- Manipulation checks

(b) Implementation

- Sampling and weighting
- Power
- Assessing randomization

(c) Analysis

- Analysis
- Reporting
- Testing for heterogeneous effects

Sessions

Session 1

Lecture on experiments and causal identification

Hands-on analysis of experimental data: estimating treatment effects

Session 2

Lecture on survey experiments: types and uses

Hypotheses and experimental design development

Session 3

Lecture on survey experiments: treatment & questionnaire design

Questionnaire development

Session 4

Lecture on survey experiments: implementation and analysis

Analysis of experimental data: Power, randomization checks, treatment effects and heterogeneous effects

Methodology

During the sessions we will combine lectures on the background concepts with in-class activities based on the active learning methods.

The students are expected to bring their laptops with R and/or Stata installed.

The students will develop a draft of an experimental design, and will receive feedback.

These small groups will be in place for the in-class activities as well as the assignments.

References

- Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, Daniel J Hopkins and Teppei Yamamoto. 2018. “The number of choice tasks and survey satisficing in conjoint experiments.” *Political Analysis* 26(1):112–119.
- Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, Daniel J Hopkins and Teppei Yamamoto. 2021. “Beyond the breaking point? Survey satisficing in conjoint experiments.” *Political Science Research and Methods* 9(1):53–71.
- Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, Daniel J Hopkins, Teppei Yamamoto, James N Druckman and Donald P Green. 2021. “Conjoint survey experiments.” *Advances in Experimental Political Science* p. 19.
- Blair, Graeme and Kosuke Imai. 2012. “Statistical analysis of list experiments.” *Political Analysis* 20(1):47–77.
- Druckman, James and Donald P Green. 2021. *Advances in Experimental Political Science*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gerber, Alan S and Donald P Green. 2012. *Field experiments: Design, analysis, and interpretation*. WW Norton.
- Hainmueller, Jens, Dominik Hangartner and Teppei Yamamoto. 2015. “Validating vignette and conjoint survey experiments against real-world behavior.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(8):2395–2400.
- Kuhn, Patrick M and Nick Vivyan. 2021. “The misreporting trade-off between list experiments and direct questions in practice: Partition validation evidence from two countries.” *Political Analysis* .
- Leeper, Thomas J, Sara B Hobolt and James Tilley. 2020. “Measuring subgroup preferences in conjoint experiments.” *Political Analysis* 28(2):207–221.
- Muñoz, Jordi, Albert Falcó-Gimeno and Enrique Hernández. 2020. “Unexpected event during survey design: Promise and pitfalls for causal inference.” *Political Analysis* 28(2):186–206.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2011. *Population-based survey experiments*. Princeton University Press.
- Riambau, Guillem and Kai Ostwald. 2021. “Placebo statements in list experiments: Evidence from a face-to-face survey in Singapore.” *Political Science Research and Methods* 9(1):172–179.
- Sniderman, Paul M and JN Druckman. 2011. “The logic and design of the survey experiment.” *Cambridge handbook of experimental political science* p. 102.

Short biography



Jordi Muñoz is Associate Professor (Professor Agregat) at the Department of Political Science of the University of Barcelona, and Fellow at the Institutions and Political Economy Research Group. I hold an ICREA Academia Award. Previously, he was Ramón y Cajal research fellow (2014-19), postdoctoral researcher (Juan de la Cierva) at the Democracy, Elections and Citizenship Research Group (UAB, 2010-14). I hold a PhD from Pompeu Fabra University (2009). He has also been visiting researcher at the University of Gothenburg (2012) and Yale University (2007-08).