

VIII ISSUES IN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE: AssignmentsNovember 20:

Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry.
Part I: Theory, but excluding pages 60-71.

Comments: This book has become an important statement of comparative analysis, for it raises standard questions in interesting ways and introduces some new issues of its own. Be aware of the "nomothetic-idiographic" distinction, be prepared to explain the role of proper names in social science theory, and note the characteristics of the "most similar systems" and "most different systems" research designs. (The portion that I have excluded from coverage in the seminar deals with regression analysis, which probably will not have been treated in your statistics course by the we take up this reading.)

November 22:

Przeworski and Teune. The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry. Part II:
Measurement

Comments: Przeworski and Teune deal here with the problem of insuring that an observation on some social phenomenon in one country "means the same" as a comparable observation in another country. They illustrate an approach to achieving such conceptual equivalence using sample survey data. I will illustrate an adaptation of their procedure in assessing the conceptual equivalence of measurements I have taken on political parties in different cultural contexts.

VIII. ISSUES IN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE: Other Readings

Lijphart, Arend. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," American Political Science Review, 65 (September, 1971), 682-693.

This article argues the advantages of the "comparable cases" approach in political inquiry. In Przeworski's and Teune's terminology, this would correspond to the "most similar systems" design. Lijphart's description of the approach is one of the most spirited and optimistic available.

Lijphart, Arend and James A. Caporaso (ed.), "Symposium on Comparative Methodology," Comparative Political Studies, 8 (July, 1975), 131-199.

This symposium was sparked by the distinction between the "most similar" and "most different" systems designs in Przeworski and Teune. It contains a valuable article by Theodore Meckstroth amending the implications of the "most different" design, a clarification by Lijphart of his "comparable-cases" approach, a discussion by Donald Campbell of degrees of freedom and case studies, and a brief note by Teune on what his book attempted to accomplish.

Janda, Kenneth. "A Technique for Assessing the Conceptual Equivalence of Institutional Variables across and within Culture Areas." Paper prepared for delivery at the 1971 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago.

The paper explains a technique for analyzing a matrix of z-scored variables, advanced as indicators of the same concept, for the purpose of investigating the measurement equivalence of the variables when observations are made on political parties in different cultural contexts.

Janda, Kenneth. "Conceptual Equivalence and Multiple Indicators in the Cross-National Analysis of Political Parties." Paper prepared for delivery at the Workshop on Indicators of National Development, Lausanne, Switzerland, 1971.

Part I inquires into the cross-cultural applicability of the concept of political party as a unit of analysis in comparative research. Part II investigates the conceptual equivalence of different variables that are advanced as common indicators of basic properties of 90 parties across cultures. Findings of Part II show that insofar as the problem of conceptual inapplicability in parties research is thought to lie in using "Western" concepts for non-Western parties, the "fit" of the indicators tends to be better for the non-Western than the Western parties.

Barton, Allen H. and R. Wayne Parsons, "Measuring Belief System Structure," Public Opinion Quarterly, 41 (Summer, 1977), 159-180.

The method described in this article is virtually identical with that utilized in the analysis of conceptual equivalence in political parties research explained in the two papers above. Barton and Parsons focus alternatively on the problem of determining "consistency" in attitudes among elites and masses.