README for replication files

ARTICLE: Information Valence and Evaluations of Congress and Individual Legislators: Experimental Evidence Regarding Negativity Bias in Politics

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SOFTWARE:

Stata 13

R version 3.5.2

FILE LIST:

analysis_bots_removed.do: Replication Stata code that produces results reported in all Tables and Figures in the manuscript. However, the code associated with producing the graphics for manuscript Figures are included in the Figures.RMD file.

appendix_data_pre_bot_removal.dta: Data associated with Tables A3 and A4, as well as Figures A2 and A3 reported in the online Appendix.

appendix_analysis_pre_bot_removal.do: Stata code that produces results reported in Tables A3 and A4, as well as Figures A2 and A3 in the online Appendix.

data_bots_removed.dta: Replication data for results (including all Tables and Figures) reported in the manuscript.

Figures.RMD: R code to reproduce graphics for all Figures associated with this manuscript and its appendix, except Figure A1.

NOTE: Data are completely anonymized. Importantly, this means that respondent IP addresses are not included in any of the data files in this repository, per our IRB agreement. Therefore, data and code necessary for the detection and removal of likely bots and foreign IP addresses is not included here.

CODE BOOK: See below.

Negativity Bias Study Codebook

Demographics

Party ID (partyid)

1. Democrat (including leaners)
2. Republican (including leaners)

Party (party)

1. Democrat
2. Republican
3. Independent
4. Other

Strong Republican (gopstrong)

1. Yes
0. No

Strong Democrat (demstrong)

1. Yes
0. No

Party Proximity (partyproximity)

1. Democratic
0. Republican

Race (race)

0. White
1. Black
2. Hispanic
3. Native America
4. Asian
5. Other

Education (education)

1.Less than high school

2. High School graduate
3. Some college (no degree)
4. Associates degree
5. Bachelor's degree
6. Graduate degree

Ideology (ideology)

1. Very liberal

7.Very conservative

Independent Variables

Valence (valence)

*Randomized. Whether the information presented was negative or positive

0. Positive
1. Negative

Party Match (partymatch)

*An ordinal variable indicating whether the respondents partisan identity matches (i.e., is the same as) the candidate or Congress (majority) that (s)he read about. This was constructed using the partyid variable.

2. Match

1. Mismatched

0. Non-partisan

Tri-valence (trivalence)

*Randomized. For use in studies 3A and 3B. Whether the information presented depicted a positive, negative, or neutral (e.g., no change) trend in the behavior of the Congress/congressman.

1. Positive

2. Neutral

3. Negative

Alternative Party Match Variable (altpartymatch)

*An alternative construction of the above measure utilizing the "party" variable instead of "partyid"

2. Match

1. non-partisan vignette

0. No Match

Partisan Identifiers (partisanship)

*Randomized. This variable captures whether the candidate or Congress that participants read about was given partisan labels within the text.

0. None
1. Democrat
2. Republican

Dependent Variables (participants randomized into the studies below. Between subjects design). Words/letters that appear in parentheses below were randomized

Study 1A (study1a)

*"How many consecutive terms of this behavior would it take for you to officially conclude that Representative Davis (**D/R/none-listed**) has become an **(in)effective** legislator?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6 or more

Study 1B (study1b)

*"How many consecutive sessions of this behavior would it take for you to officially conclude that **(Republican majority)** Congress has become an **(in)effective** institution?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6 or more

Study 2A (study2a)

*"We now ask you to consider some behaviors that Representative Richardson **(D/R/non-listed)** has engaged in recently. After considering the behavior, please indicate whether you would vote **(against)** for Richardson based on such behavior(s), or whether you would require more information."

The values correspond to the number of behaviors each respondent needed to read about before deciding to vote for/against the congressman.

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. More than 5

Study 2B (study2b)

*"We now ask you to consider some behaviors that **(the Republican)** Congress has engaged in recently. After considering each behavior, please indicate whether you would **(dis)approve** of Congress based on such behaviors, or whether you would require more information to **(dis)approve** of their performance."

The values correspond to the number of behaviors each respondent needed to read about before decided to approve/disapprove of Congress.

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. More than 5

Study 3A (study3a)

*"…how effective or ineffective of a legislator has Representative Davis (D/R/none-listed) been during his career?"

1. Not effective at all
2. Slightly effective
3. Moderately effective
4. Very effective
5. Extremely effective

Study 3B (study3b)

*"In your opinion, how effective or ineffective has Republican majority Congress been during the last 6 years, from 2010-2016?"

1. Not effective at all
2. Slightly effective
3. Moderately effective
4. Very effective
5. Extremely effective

Qualities (qualities)

*"Which of the following qualities best represents the most important quality that an effective legislator should have? If another quality comes to mind other than those listed below, please choose "other" and write in the quality you have in mind next to your choice." (order was randomized)

1. Voting in a way that is consistent with the opinion of their constituents
2. The ability to secure federal funds for use in the legislator's district
3. The ability to get legislation passed that is important for the country and district
4. Other

As a side note, other ideas that received multiple mentions were the ability to compromise and work across the aisle, "honesty and integrity," cutting taxes and otherwise promoting small government, protecting and upholding the constitution.