

Government formation and political discussions in Twitter: An extended model for quantifying political distances in multiparty democracies / Frederic Guerrero-Solé & Hibaí Lopez-Gonzalez

Abstract: The Retweet Overlap Network (RON) method has proved to be successful in quantifying the distances between political parties in multiparty democracies (Guerrero-Solé, Corominas-Murtra & López-González, 2014; Guerrero-Solé, 2017). These distances are frequently used in political science to explain the formation of coalitions and governments (Volden & Carrubba, 2004). This paper explores how data collected from Twitter can be related to ideological similarities between political parties, drawing on an extended development of the RON method that calculates the overlaps between the communities of retweeters of the most influential users in a political discussion. The method is applied to two conversations in Twitter during the last two General Elections in Spain in 2015 and 2016. Our results are consistent with the dynamics and the outcomes of the bargaining processes after both elections, and support the Spanish President's statement on the reasonableness of a government of the Popular Party (PP), the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the Citizens-Party of the Citizenry (Cs) (Del Riego, 2016) after the Spanish General Elections in 2016. This work links quantitative analysis of the overlaps of the parties' communities of retweeters with the theories of coalition and government formation. It contributes to the exploration of Twitter metrics that can be used as new indicators of the support for coalitions in multiparty democracies.

Imagined politics: How different media platforms transport citizens into political narratives / Bryan McLaughlin & John A Velez

Abstract: This paper examines political transportation—the construction of mental models that represent a political world and result in the absorption and positioning of oneself within the constructed world. Specifically, we propose that when citizens become immersed in the political narrative crafted by a politician, they become more likely to see the political world as personally relevant and, subsequently, become more committed to supporting that candidate. Further, the degree of political immersion should depend upon which media platform a campaign message is delivered through. These expectations were tested using an experiment where partisans were exposed to a campaign message delivered in the form of a television ad, a political email, or a series of tweets. Results demonstrate that Twitter was the least likely to lead to political immersion. Further, results provide support for our theoretical model, where there is an indirect effect of campaign messages on political attitudes and behavior through immersion and perceived personal relevance. Taken together, this study demonstrates the utility of applying the concept of narrative transportation to politics.

The Brexit botnet and user-generated hyperpartisan news / Marco T. Bastos & Dan Mercea

Abstract: In this paper we uncover a network of Twitterbots comprising 13,493 accounts that tweeted the U.K. E.U. membership referendum, only to disappear from Twitter shortly after the ballot. We compare active users to this set of political bots with respect to temporal tweeting behavior, the size and speed of retweet cascades, and the composition of their retweet cascades (user-to-bot vs. bot-to-bot) to evidence strategies for bot deployment. Our results move forward the analysis of political bots by showing that Twitterbots can be effective at rapidly generating small to medium-sized cascades; that the retweeted content comprises user-generated hyperpartisan news, which is not strictly fake news, but whose shelf life is remarkably short; and, finally, that a botnet may be organized in specialized tiers or clusters dedicated to replicating either active users or content generated by other bots.

Second screening for news and digital divides / Matthew Barnidge, Trevor Diehl, & Hernando Rojas

Abstract: Second screening is a relatively new set of media practices that arguably empowers audiences to shape public narratives alongside news organizations and political elites. But in developing countries such as Colombia, it is important to examine who participates in this process, as substantial inequalities in both access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) persist. This study examines how socio-economic status (SES) relates to the adoption of second screening practices in Colombia, a country in which the technological access and literacy necessary to engage in these practices are becoming widespread, but are not yet ubiquitous. Based on a random sample of face-to-face interviews, results show evidence of persistent digital divides in Colombia in terms of ICT access, ICT use, and second screening for news. Additionally, results indicate that the relationship between SES and second screening for news is indirect, mediated through technological access and public affairs engagement.

Socially connected but still isolated: Smartphone addiction decreases social support over time / Juan Herrero, Alberto Urueña, Andrea Torres, & Antonio Hidalgo

Abstract: Recent literature has suggested that smartphone addiction is negatively associated with users' psychosocial well-being. Much of the research on this subject, however, is of a correlational nature, which has been pointed out as an important limitation that does not allow distinguishing the antecedents of the consequences. In this study, 416 smartphone users were followed for 1 year (three waves separated by six months each) to assess the relationship between smartphone addiction and social support. Cross-lagged model results indicated that social support predicts later addiction to the smartphone and that smartphone addiction decreases social support over time. Growth mixture model results indicated that the decrease in social support during the follow-up year was higher for users with greater smartphone addiction at the beginning of the study. Multivariate and univariate analyses of variance indicated that some personal characteristics of users (extraversion, neuroticism and sensation search) could affect the evolution of social support related to smartphone addiction. In general, these results suggest that the extensive use of a social communication technology such

as the smartphone could have the paradoxical effect of diminishing the psychosocial well-being of its users.

#### The effect of online and mixed-mode measurement of cognitive ability / Tarek Al Baghal

Abstract: A number of studies, particularly longitudinal surveys, are collecting direct measures of cognitive ability, given its importance as a measure in social science research. As longitudinal studies increasingly switch to mixed-mode data collection, frequently including a web component, differences in survey outcomes including cognitive ability may result from mode effects. Differences may arise due to respondent self-selection into mode or due to the mode causing differential measurement. Using a longitudinal survey that measured cognitive ability after introducing a mixed-mode design with a web component, this research explores if and how mode affects cognitive ability outcomes. This survey allows for control of several possible selection mechanisms, including a limited set of direct cognitive ability measures collected in a single mode in an earlier wave. Findings presented here show clearly that web respondents do better on a number of cognitive ability indicators. However, it does not appear that this is wholly explainable by respondents of different ability self-selecting into particular modes. Rather, it appears that measurement of cognitive ability may differ across modes. This result is potentially problematic as comparability is a key component of using cognitive ability in further research.

#### Dynamic instructions in check-all-that-apply questions / Tanja Kunz & Marek Fuchs

Abstract: Check-all-that-apply questions are one of the most commonly used question formats in self-administered surveys. They are especially valuable because they allow respondents to select several responses from a list of alternatives that they consider applicable. In this study, we assessed the effectiveness of different types of instructions requesting a specific number of responses to a check-all-that-apply question in a Web survey. We compared 'static' instructions that are always visible together with the question stem, 'dynamic' instructions that instantly appear once respondents start answering the question, and 'combined' instructions taking advantage of both static and dynamic instructions. Findings showed that in view of respondent compliance with the instruction, the combination of a static and dynamic instruction is most effective. However, findings also revealed that the specific number of responses requested in the instruction has to be taken into account as a decisive factor influencing the response selection process and ultimately data quality.

#### Measurement reliability, validity and quality of slider versus radio button scales in an online probability-based panel in Norway / Oriol J. Bosch, Melanie Revilla, Anna DeCastellarnau, & Wiebke Weber

Abstract: Little is known about the reliability and validity in web surveys, although this is crucial information to evaluate how accurate the results might be, and/or to correct for measurement errors. In particular, there are few studies based on probability-based samples for web surveys, looking at web specific response scales and considering the impact of having smartphone respondents. In this paper, we start filling these gaps by estimating the measurement quality of sliders compared to radio button scales

controlling for the device respondents used. We conducted therefore two Multitrait-Multimethod experiments in the Norwegian Citizen Panel, a probability-based online panel. Overall, we find that if smartphone respondents represent a non-negligible part of the whole sample, offering the response options in form of a slider or a radio button scale leads to a quite similar measurement quality. This means that sliders could be used more often without harming the data quality. Besides, if there are no smartphone respondents, we find that sliders can also be used, but that the marker should be placed initially in the middle rather than on the left side. However, in practice, there is no need to shift from radio buttons to sliders since the quality is not highly improved by providing sliders.