

Long Live the Social Justice: An Explanation for Increasing High Political Trust in China

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Introduction & Literature Review

Central Term: Political trust is “one of a family of terms referring to citizens’ feelings about their government” (Citrin and Stoker, 2018: 50).

What interests me to this topic? Discrepancy between existing predictions & reality--

-Decreasing political trust

(e.g. Wang, 2005; Wang & You, 2016; Zhou & Jin, 2018)

-Increasing and Higher political trust

(e.g. CSS, 2017; 2019; Cunningham et al, 2020)

Significance: Contribution my thinking to debate

Mainstream theories for explaining political trust:

-the institutional approach vs the cultural approach

How could we capture fairness through lens of both theories?

-Fairness: “unbiased, with no prejudices and with impartiality” (Sen, 2009:54).

-Performances about fairness taking place in the second decade of 21th century

e.g. remarkably, anti-corruptions; poverty alleviation, Gini Index etc.

-Culture impact vs post-materialist cultural shift-where the discrepancy occurs

Methodology

Data: The 2019 wave of the Chinese Social Survey (CSS)

Variables: -dependent variable (trust in central government)

-independent variables: perceived unfair treatment in aspects of society (F2), fairness with regard to vertical social fairness (F4a), evaluation on institutional fairness (F4b1), etc.

Data Manipulation Methods: Logistic Regression (ordered key variable)

Hypotheses to be tested:

H1: In general pattern, people who feel society more fair have the higher likelihood to hold political trust. There is an interaction term in terms of stress on fairness and fair performances.

H2: Supposing the cultural shift holds true, it can be observed the stress on fairness remains unchanged despite variances of education levels and that there is no significant correlation between education and political trust.

Results

H1: Statistically significant ($p < 0.05$ on average), people who feel society more fair are more likely to hold political trust.

H2: Education levels does not result in stress on fairness significantly ($p > 0.1$), although education levels can increase the likelihood of political trust significantly.

(More Information is available in the Handout)