Forms of Civic Engagement and Corruption

Disentangling the role of associations, elite-challenging mass activities and the type of trust within networks

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Outline

1. Background and Motivation
2. Theory and Hypotheses
3. Data and Methods
4. Empirical Findings
5. Implications and Limitations
1. Background

- Corruption – i.e. the misuse of public office for private gain - recently attracted considerable attention

➔ Costs of corruption:
  - Causes bureaucratic inefficiency
  - Causes market failures
  - Deters private investment
  - Misaligns public policies and expenditures
  - Raises income inequality
  - Disincentives innovation
  - Reduces foreign investment

(e.g. Mauro 1995; Tanzi and Davoodi 1998; Jain 2001; Gupta et al. 2002)

➔ Fighting corruption necessitates identification of elements that facilitate corruption, or assist its prevention
1. Background and Motivation

- **Potential Importance of Voluntary Associations**
  - Formal networks of civic engagement (or voluntary associations) are widely considered to play an important part in society.
  - Some assign them pivotal roles in promoting civic virtues, reciprocity, and cooperation.
  - Others argue that social networks might predominantly pursue their own narrow interest and facilitate social harms.

**Main Research Focus**

*What are the effects of formal networks of civic engagement on corruption?*
1. Background and Motivation

**Main Aspects and Contributions**

- Main focus on cross-country relationship between civic involvement and corruption
- Takes into the role of social networks and associations may strongly depend on the type of trust (broad vs. narrow) that is dominant within the network
- Extends focus from formal forms of civic engagement to also include more informal, situation-specific ones (i.e. participation in non-violent protest actions)
- Addresses potential connection between associations and elite-challenging actions and its implication for the effect on corruption
2. Theory and Hypotheses

**Associations and Corruption (Tocqueville view)**

- Associations provide platform for intense and repeated horizontal interactions; Organizational structures help to internalise social values and rules concerning mutual cooperation
  
  (see e.g. Putnam 1993; Paxton 2007; Freitag et al. 2009; Griesshaber and Geys 2012)

  ➔ Members develop values of solidarity and civicness, social responsibility for collective endeavours, civic skills and social trust

- Associations allow to become part of the political process (increase political awareness; provide structure to monitor officials)

  ➔ Citizens are monitoring political sphere through association

**Hypothesis**

- **Societies with high civic engagement in voluntary associations experience lower levels of corruption.**
2. Theory and Hypotheses

• **Associations and Corruption (Olson view)**
  
  • Distinct groups are unlikely to have homogenous preferences
    ➔ Civic engagement may become possibility or tool to lobby policymakers  
    (Knack and Keefer 1997)
  
  • Specialized interest groups have a much stronger incentive to engage in costly and inefficient rent-seeking compared to their incentive to work toward the ‘common good’ (Olson 1982)

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**Hypothesis**

• *Societies with high civic engagement in voluntary associations experience higher levels of corruption.*
2. Theory and Hypotheses

- **The role of trust within associations**
  - All forms of association depend on certain forms of trust and reciprocity
    - type of trust on which associations are based crucial (Warren 2004)
  - **Wide-reaching trust** - likely to enforce broader identities, inclusiveness, civic orientations and interest in the common good (see also Griesshaber and Geys 2012)
  - **Narrow trust** - rather enforces exclusiveness, in-group cohesion and particularized reciprocity (Warren 2004; Harris 2007)
    - “Cultural foundation of corruption” (Fukuyama 2000: 8)

### Hypotheses

- **Societies with high civic engagement in associations that are based on a broad reach of trust experience lower corruption.**
- **Societies with high civic engagement in associations that are based on a narrow reach of trust experience higher corruption.**
2. Theory and Hypotheses

- **Participation in Elite-Challenging Actions**
  - Other, more informal and situation-specific types of engagement (i.e. participation in elite-challenging or protest actions) may bear similar societal relevance
  - Connects people to overcome collective action problems and collaborate for common aim (Welzel et al. 2005)
    - loosely-knit and informal structure more capable of bridging group-specific networks and creating inclusiveness
    - presents challenging forces from below (confronting political elites and decision makers, holding them accountable)

**Hypothesis**

- *Societies with high civic engagement in elite-challenging actions experience lower levels of corruption*
3. Data and Methods

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<tr>
<th>Data</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Main analysis carried out at country level</td>
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<td>• Cross-sectional data for 47 countries from around the world</td>
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<td>• Selection of countries mainly based on participation in 5th round of the World Values Survey (WVS) – major source on civic engagement</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Estimation</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Linear OLS regression estimations across 47 countries</td>
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3. Data and Methods

### Dependent Variable – Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)
- **Source:** Transparency International (CPI 2008)
- Composite index aggregating information from various sources
- Standardized index annually available since 1998
- Index ranges from 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (highly clean)

### Independent Variables – Civic Engagement
- **Data taken from 5th round of World Values Survey (WVS) 2004 – 2008**
- **Voluntary associations:** % of respondents that are an active or inactive member of any of 10 different association types *(Questions V24-V33 in the WVS)*
- **Elite-challenging actions:** % of respondents that have already participated in a petition, a boycott or a demonstration *(V96-V98 in the WVS)*
3. Data and Methods

• **Broad vs. Narrow Trust Associations**

  • Distinction based on share of members of an association type that say most people can be trusted (Question V23 of the WVS)

  • Figure is adjusted for radius of trust in association – i.e. degree to which answer to generalized trust question reflects orientation towards generalized others over a specific in-group (closely following Delhey et al. 2011)

  ➔ **Broad Trust Association:** Level of radius-adj. generalized trust lies above level of generalized trust in society

  ➔ **Narrow Trust Association:** Level of radius-adj. generalized trust lies below level of generalized trust in society
3. Data and Methods

- Example: Russia
3. Data and Methods

- **Control Factors**
  - Human Development Index 2005 (GDP per capita as alternative)
  - Level of generalized trust (radius-adjusted, taken from WVS)
  - Additional controls considered one at a time
    - Average Freedom House/Polity measure
    - Ethno-linguistic fractionalization (from Alesina et al. 2003)
    - Percentage of Protestant population (La Porta et al. 1999, from Teorell et al. 2012)
4. Findings I – Civic engagement and Corruption

- **OLS Regression Results – CPI (2008) as dependent variable**

Graph displays OLS regression coefficients (with 95% confidence intervals); All models control for HDI and level of radius adj. generalized trust
4. Findings I – Civic engagement and Corruption

- **OLS Regression Results – CPI (2008) as dependent variable**

Graph displays OLS regression coefficients (with 95% confidence intervals); All models control for HDI and level of radius adj. generalized trust
### 4. Findings II – Associations and Protest Behaviour

**Hierarchical Logistic Random-Intercept Models**

**Participation in non-violent protest actions as dependent variable**

- Odds ratios reported (Standard errors in parentheses)
- Significance levels: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05
- Reference category is no membership
- Various controls included but not reported (i.e. gender, age, education, income, life satisfaction, democratic values, HDI, democracy score)

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<td>Membership in general(a)</td>
<td>1.955***</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.047)</td>
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<td>Membership in narrow trust associations</td>
<td>1.519***</td>
<td>1.517***</td>
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<td>(0.045)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership in broad trust associations (in %)</td>
<td>1.806***</td>
<td>1.802***</td>
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<td>(0.044)</td>
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<td>Level of associational membership (in %)</td>
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<td>1.014**</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>0.174</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.156</td>
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4. Findings III – Conditional Effect

- **Effect of elite challenging actions on corruption with changing levels of associational participation**

Marginal effect of participation in elite-challenging actions (with 95% confidence intervals) given certain level of associational membership; Results based on OLS estimation across 47 countries using CPI of 2008 as dependent variable; Illustration based on Brambor et al. (2006)
5. Conclusion - Implications and Limitations

**Main Results**

- Participation in elite-challenging actions seems connected to lower levels of corruption
- Indirect effect of associations through facilitating non-violent movements
- Effectiveness of elite-challenging actions in reducing corruptions seems to depend on type of organizational networks that are facilitating them

**Limitations and open questions**

- Causality
- Role of associations may differ depending on the institutional environment and the existing corruption regime
References


References


Appendix

- Alternative Associational Distinction – Russian Example
Appendix

- Alternative Associational Distinction – Russian Example

![Graph showing the relationship between Outgroup Trust and Society's level of trust for various types of associations. The graph is divided into three sections: Broad trust associations, Particularized trust associations, and Low trust associations. Each association type is represented by different colored ellipses with corresponding data points.](image)