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Title: Measuring Perceived Effectiveness of Political Institutions: Report on the ANES Pilot Study 2006

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Dataset: 2006 ANES Pilot Study

Author's Abstract:

The ANES Pilot Study 2006 included four questions measuring perceptions of how much the President and the U.S. Congress can influence what is happening in the nation or in the personal lives of citizens. The responses collected show that Americans think the President has a slightly stronger impact than the U.S. Congress and that for both the societal impact is larger than individual impact.

Respondents who watch more televisions news are more likely to believe in a higher effectiveness of political institutions. Similarly, there is some evidence that perceived effectiveness, especially on the personal lives of the respondents, increases with the amount of attention citizens pay to governmental affairs. However, there is only weak evidence that perceived effectiveness increases the likelihood to vote in an election. Similarly, no clear resolution could be found for a simple experimental manipulation of the questions wording for the general impact of political institutions ('nation' vs. 'United States' as the object of reference).