Methodology

- Objective: Test the ‘accountability model’ - Does improved information affect voting?
- Treatment: Information on the quality of local public services - From government data - Delivered through "iamaware" radio debates with MPs
- Assignment: 40 districts randomly selected from a stratified sample using matched pair randomization and coarsened exact matching on district covariates
- Compliance: 7.8% of respondents in treatment districts confirm exposure (i.e. heard the broadcast)
- Spillover to control: Rebroadcasting of information through Accra meant 6.4% of respondents in control districts also confirm exposure - But content of information exposure is still distinct between treatment and control

The First Panel Survey of African Voters(?)

- Conducted either side of the December 2012 General Election
- In 4 treatment and 4 control districts
- Attrition rate: 34%, of which:
  - 74% due to migration or travel
  - 11% could not be located
  - 11% refused participation
  - 3.4% sick or passed away
- Validating the Panel: 70% of respondents re-surveyed within 100m of the original survey location
- Response consistency: Greater stability in sociodemographic responses than in political opinions

Voters’ Information

- Estimating actual service indicators: Few, inaccurate responses
- Convergence: Impressive convergence to the true indicators. Convergence is faster in the treatment group
- Balance: Despite matching on district covariates, lack of balance in pre-treatment information between treatment and control groups at individual level

Absolute vs. Relative Updating

- Complex treatment: Treatment provides information on both absolute performance, and performance relative to other districts
- Interference: Plausible that politicians also mobilized data during the election
- Unmeasured variable: Updating will also depend on respondents’ assessment of similarity between districts

Accountability Effects

- Hypotheses: Mix of absolute and relative updating has ambiguous implications for voting responses
- Winner-Bias: Strong evidence of winner-bias in voting recall
- Treatment Effect: Of those who originally intended to vote for the incumbent:
  - 52% of treated switched to a challenger
  - 39% of control switched to a challenger

Parallel vs. Serial Motivations

- Existing Theory: Tsai et al (2013) suggest there are many barriers to translating information into political behavioural models
- But: Voting is simple and cheap - may require only partial motivation
- For the sequential information-processing steps in Tsai et al (2013):
  - In serial, 3.2% of the sample meet all conditions
  - In parallel, 32% of the sample meet at least 6 of 9 conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Absolute Indicators</th>
<th>Relative Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>+9.99%</td>
<td>+1.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-6.61%</td>
<td>-10.96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>% Switch away from Incumbent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared for Harvard Government Department Poster Session