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# Editorial: Methods in political science – Innovation & developments

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## KEYWORDS

methods, analysis, innovation, methodological innovation, LLM, ideology, survey methods

## Editorial on the Research Topic

### Methods in political science – Innovation & developments

Research methods are steadily advancing, and the COVID-19 pandemic once again highlighted the ingenuity and adaptability of scholars in political science and other disciplines when faced with novel challenges. To provide a platform for emerging methodologies and offer an overview of the evolving landscape in the field, we invited scholars to showcase their methodological innovations. This resulted in a diverse group of contributors presenting their studies as part of this Research Topic, spanning various subfields within political science and beyond.

How and why can a particular method enhance research in political science? As exemplified by *Designing Social Inquiry* (King et al., 2021) and numerous other works, researchers continually seek improved methodological approaches to address real-world problems. These innovations may take different forms: a new way to apply theory empirically, improvements to existing methods, or entirely new approaches to analyzing social and political phenomena. Sometimes, it is driven by the emergence of new phenomena or their amplification.

Yet, Research Topics dedicated to research methods are rarely assembled outside of specialized journals. This Research Topic aimed to bring method-oriented articles to a broader audience and to present a mix of advanced techniques and emerging models that shape the future of political science research. We showcase qualitative, quantitative, and computational advancements in concepts and methods.

- [Lindholm et al.](#), in “*Beyond Negativity? A Laboratory Study on Emotional Responses to Populist Strategies on Social Media*,” examine how different response strategies operate on social media. Using facial expression analysis and self-report measures applied to Instagram and TikTok, they contribute to a better understanding of emotional responses to ordinariness and victimhood.
- In “*On the Same Space? Measuring the Ideology of Voters and Political Elites*,” [Waldner](#) presents a new approach to evaluating ideological proximity between voters and political elites. Using Monte Carlo simulations, real-world election data, and a post-election survey, he proposes a model based on a small set of questions with the potential to reshape how we measure ideological distance.
- [Toro-Maureira et al.](#), in “*B-Call: Integrating Ideological Position and Voting Cohesion in Legislative Behavior*,” analyze voting patterns in the United States, Brazil, and Chile. Their model identifies groups of actors with similar ideologies but differing political behavior, advancing the analysis of voting behavior and ideology.

- Kertcher and Zwilling, in “*The Meaning of Sentiment Analysis of UN Speeches on the Russia-Ukraine War: A Comparative Study Using VADER and BERT NLP Techniques*,” use UN speech data to compare two large language model (LLM). Their analysis highlights how these models perform in a highly politicized and diplomatic context, contributing to the advancement of narrative analysis using large language models.
- In “*Measurement of Event Data from Text*,” Brandt and Sianan evaluate how political event data are currently measured in computational political science. They identify three key challenges: classification sites, persistent analytical weaknesses, and discrepancies between machine-coded and ground-truth data. Their work outlines ideas for the future evolution of automated event analysis.
- In “*Augmenting Surveys with Social Media Discourse on the Workings of Democracy from a Cross-National Perspective*,” Reveilhac and Morselli compare how data derived from social media can be combined with opinion survey data. They demonstrate how democracy-related themes can be extracted from politicians’ messages.
- Arletti et al., in “*Making Online Polls More Accurate: Statistical Methods Explained*,” explore how online polls can be improved through various statistical techniques. By addressing response bias, they offer practical guidance for enhancing data quality in online polling.
- Assanti, in “*Configuring High-Performance Work Systems in Public Administration: A Set-Theoretic Approach to Explain Organizational Performance in Swiss Municipalities*,” investigates how human resources (HR) practices influence municipal performance. Using data from 119 Swiss municipalities and a two-step qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), he demonstrates how different work systems affect administrative outcomes.
- In their research note “*Transitioning from Interviewer-Administered to Self-Administered Survey Modes: Implications for the Quality of Measures of Political Attitudes and Behavior*,” Alkoç and Ernst Stähli argue that the pandemic reshaped survey research. Drawing on data from the European Values Survey and the Swiss MOSAiCH study, they show that self-administered surveys can yield results comparable to face-to-face interviews, with important implications for future survey design.

- Endut proposes a new model—the *Political System Index*—which applies Niklas Luhmann’s systems theory in a practical framework. Bridging political theory and empirical modeling, this contribution has the potential to influence future research on political systems and communication.

These articles contribute to advancing methods in political science and invite other researchers to further apply, refine, and innovate these concepts, models, and approaches to enhance political science research in the future.

## Author contributions

J-ER: Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

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