



Research Question

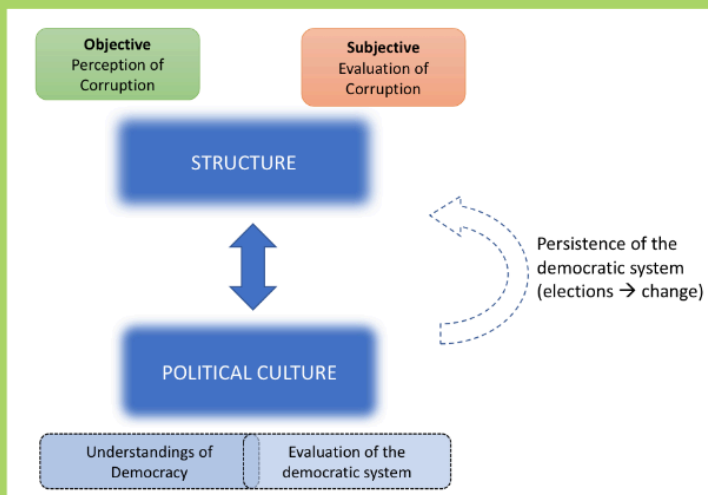
What is the impact of the perception of corruption on the understanding of democracy in Europe?

Theoretical derivation

- Definition of corruption: **“the misuse of public office for private gain”** (Sandholtz and Koetzle 2000, 32)

“Corruption and corruption perception can be considered as cultural phenomena because they depend on how a society understands the rules and what constitutes a deviation.” (Melgar/Rossi)

- Up to now: few systematic examination on how corruption affects people’s views of the political system and institutions of government



- Corruption challenges any political system > in particular: **fundamental principles, core values and norms of democracy/democratic governance** (e.g. equal access to public processes; collective decision making)

- **Corruption undermines the principles of democratic accountability, equality, and openness (Dahl)**

Variables

Independent variable:

Perception of corruption
• not possible to measure actual corruption, since qua definition in informal sector

Data: Corruption Perception Index (CPI)



Dependent variable:

Perception of democracy
• Control (vertical/horizontal)
• Equality (social)
• Freedom (press)
(Pickel, 2016: 328)

Data: European Social Survey (ESS)

Control variables:

- Rule of Law
- Average income
- Satisfaction with the current democratic system

Dependent variable and its theoretical embedding

CONTROL

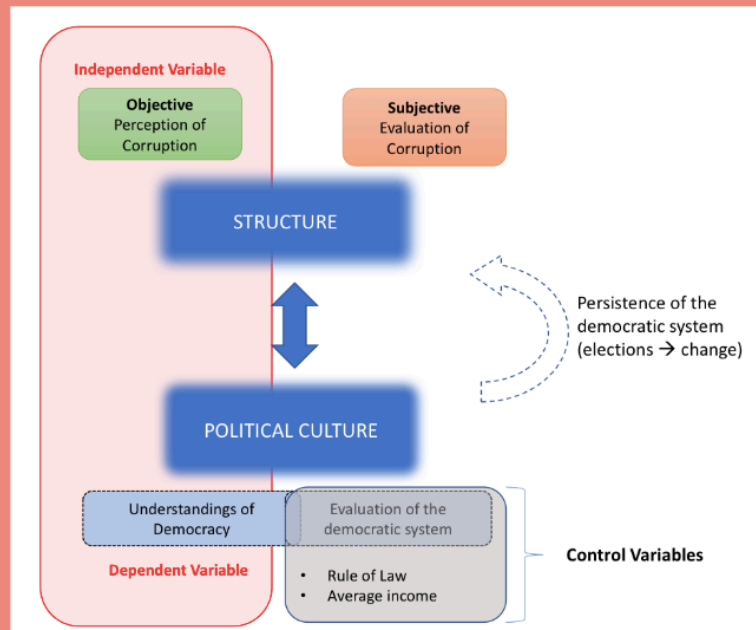
- Corruption as collective action problem – control inhibits illicit behaviour (Kriesi 2013)

EQUALITY

- Less need for extra income opportunity (Rothstein et al 2005)

FREEDOM

- Corruption infringes individual freedom
- Freedom of press exercises control over officials (Brunetti et al 2003)



Selection of countries

Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, UK, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Switzerland, Norway

Not included: Romania

Time frame

CPI 2005/2012
ESS 2012

Analysis

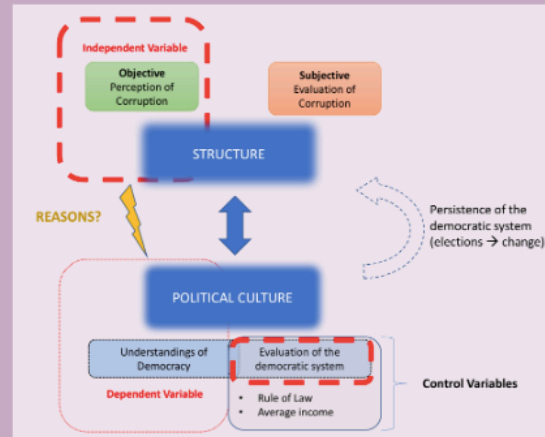
Korrelationen^a

		Freedom of Press	Vertical Control	Equality	Rule of Law	Average Income	CPI Difference 05-12	Satisfaction with Democracy	CPI 2012	CPI 2005	Horizontal Control
Freedom of Press	Pearson-Korrelation	1									
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.567									
Vertical Control	Pearson-Korrelation	.567	1								
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.004									
Equality	Pearson-Korrelation	.115	.629	1							
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.882	.001								
Rule of Law	Pearson-Korrelation	.239	.845	.769	1						
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.262	.000	.000							
Average Income	Pearson-Korrelation	-.257	-.135	-.501	-.024	1					
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.228	.529	.013	.910						
CPI Difference 05-12	Pearson-Korrelation	.219	.252	-.154	-.063	.010	1				
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.303	.234	.473	.773	.964					
Satisfaction with Democracy	Pearson-Korrelation	-.132	.004	-.125	-.211	.529	-.324	1			
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.540	.984	.562	.322	.008	.122		.853	.803	.177
CPI 2012	Pearson-Korrelation	-.163	-.013	.021	-.286	.373	-.433	.853	1		
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.446	.951	.923	.170	.073	.034	.000	.000	.962	.239
CPI 2005	Pearson-Korrelation	-.211	-.085	.057	.249	.313	-.663	.803	.862	1	
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.323	.659	.791	.240	.137	.000	.000	.000	.000	.545
Horizontal Control	Pearson-Korrelation	.513	.751	.446	.691	.062	.201	.177	.239	.130	1
	Stp. (2-seitig)	.010	.000	.029	.000	.773	.347	.409	.262	.545	.010

^a Korrelation ist bei Niveau 0,01 signifikant (zweiseitig).
^b Korrelation ist bei Niveau 0,05 signifikant (zweiseitig).
^c Listenweite N=24

Interpretation

- no significant correlation between corruption and the understandings of democracy in the examined time frame and selection of countries
- any defect on the structural level (corruption) does not affect the understanding of democracy
- norms and values on the individual understanding of democracy are strongly consolidated
- **HOWEVER:** satisfaction with the democratic system is significantly influenced by the perception of corruption



Outlook

- Longterm changes of understandings of democracy (another serie of ESS?)
- Lack of a broader set of data for individual evaluation of corruption (subjective)
- Review of all existing social surveys to get a more holistic view on objective perception of corruption
- Country specific analysis of existent institutions (Commission on Combating Corruption)

Literature

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